# SPIDER COD'S BRIDE



LEGEND COMPATIBLE

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# INTRODUCTION



The nostalgia of things unknown, of lands forgotten or unfound, is upon me at times. Often I long for the gleam of yellow suns upon terraces of translucent azure marble, mocking the windless waters of lakes unfathomably calm; for lost, legendary palaces of serpentine, silver and ebony, whose columns are green stalactites; for the pillars of fallen temples, standing in the vast purpureal sunset of a land of lost and marvellous romance. I sigh for the strange and hidden cities of the desert, with burning brazen domes and slender pinnacles of gold and copper, that pierce a heaven of heated lazuli.

- Clark Ashton Smith: Nostalgia of the Unknown

Welcome to a world where men are mighty, women are voluptuous, kings are cruel and hidden terror lurks in every brooding ruin. It is an age of splendorous but decadent kingdoms, where armies clash at the whims of depraved nobles and the bloody sword of an adventurer can topple empires.

This book uses the standard *Legend Core Rulebook* to enable you to create exciting pulp fiction games reminiscent of such authors as Robert E. Howard, Clark Ashton Smith, Fritz Leiber, Michael Moorcock and Charles R. Saunders.

The first part of the book contains background information and new rules. The second and biggest part of the book contains a collection of sword and sorcery adventures which can be run in the campaign-world described in this book (the *World of Xoth*), or easily tweaked for play in Howard's Hyboria, Smith's Zothique, Leiber's Nehwon, Carter's Lemuria, Saunders' Nyumbani, the Wilderlands from the Judges Guild, or your own campaign world.

Read on, and prepare for high adventure, as the players cut a crimson swath through savage jungle kingdoms and thronged desert cities. From the forbidden catacombs of Belthaar to the sunken temples of Namthu, a world of adventure awaits you!

# **CAMPAIGN GUIDELINES**

In sword and sorcery, the world is dominated by human races; other races (usually degenerate survivors of an earlier age) and supernatural monsters exist only in hidden or lost enclaves far from human civilisation. Combat is bloody and brutal, and magical healing does not exist. The use of real magic or sorcery is uncommon and when used its effects tend to be subtle. Sorcerers are almost always villains, tainted by cosmic evil. Permanent magical items are extremely rare and never for sale.

To establish the proper atmosphere for the adventures contained within this book, you are strongly encouraged to make use of the following guidelines in your campaign.

# Out With Morality

While the sword and sorcery genre certainly has its own set of clichés, it differs from high fantasy in that there is no delicate balance between good and evil, with fair and noble elves valiantly fighting against stupid, evil orcs. Rather, it is a grim world where might makes right; a world of cruel kings, barbarous fighters, beautiful but seductive women, with ambitious sorcerers and foul demons lurking in the shadows.

Individuals within this world are defined by their motivation, culture, and personal ambitions and ethics. Having adventurers act according to their own motivation creates much more interesting plots and storylines than simply 'I'm good, you're evil' plotlines. The players will simply have to judge for themselves whether a Non-player is evil based on his or her actions.

Note that while cosmic evil may exist in this genre, there really is no such thing as 'cosmic good'.

# Monsters Are Truly Monstrous

Good sword and sorcery tales include a certain element of brooding horror. The monsters encountered by the protagonists are often unique or exist in isolation. Many monsters are simply giant or prehistoric versions of natural animals such as snakes, apes and bats.

A good rule of thumb is to have the players encounter at most one or two different monster types in a single adventuring session. Dungeons stocked with different monsters in each room should be avoided, since it quickly breaks atmosphere and strains credibility.

# Magic Is Mysterious

While almost every sword and sorcery tale seems to include a foul demon, an ancient wizard risen from the dead, or a cult of snake-worshipping priests, these settings are usually referred to as low magic, at least when compared to the typical high fantasy, quasi-medieval settings so common in roleplaying games.

The major difference is that in sword and sorcery stories, magic is not used as a replacement for technology. Spells and magic items are not used to perform every little task and make life more convenient for the caster. Rather, magic is a corrupting force that can be dangerous to both health and sanity; it is only used when the sorcerer deems it absolutely necessary.

Common people working their shops or fields, and the majority of soldiers, thieves and merchants, have likely never seen a true magician or seen a spell cast or held a magical item. Magic is generally feared and most magicians (but not all) are associated with dark curses, evil gods and unbearable secrets which 'Man Was Not Meant To Know'. Even priests are usually feared and held in awe by the common man.

In savage areas, magic is widely feared and misunderstood, the province of tribal witchdoctors and shamans, who claim to protect the rest of the tribe from the vengeful spirits and demons that surround them.

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# A Word to the Wise

This book makes occasional references to mature themes such as human sacrifice, slavery, drugs, racism and perverted sexuality. Such themes, which are staples of the sword and sorcery genre, are simply assumed to be unpleasant but undeniable facts of life in the grim fantasy world described. The sensible reader should quickly note these themes are not the focus of the book; they are not explored in-depth, nor are they used gratuitously. Remember this is a work of fiction and the themes in this book should not be taken as an endorsement of these things in the real world. That said, let's get on with the game.

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The select few who are able to use magic and cast spells guard their secrets jealously and attempt to use it to their advantage, often to the detriment of others and sometimes also to themselves.

Magical items are rare and are almost never for sale, although on rare events one will turn up in a market, unrecognised for its true value. Spellcasters might be willing to cast some spells for pay, depending on the individual's motivation or greed. Non-players, allowing you to take each adventure in whatever direction you desire.

In any case, you should view the Adventure Synopsis included in each chapter as merely a possible outline of events. Feel free to ignore it, wholly or in part, inserting your own plots or events to improve upon the scenario as written. The actions of the players may derail the original outline but if this happens, just go with the flow and determine the logical response from Non-players based on their capabilities and motivations.

# The Road Ahead

The opportunities for further adventures in the *World of Xoth* are endless. Perhaps the players are shipwrecked on the bleak shores of the cannibalistic Ikuna tribes, or they may encounter a Zadjite merchant-fleet headed for the Silver Lotus Isles. The party can explore the ancient ruins and ziggurat-temples of the Sunken Isles of Ptahaana, or head back to the warring city-states of Susrah to enlist as mercenary captains.

If the players have played through all the adventures in this book, chances are that at least some enemies manage to escape alive and might come looking for them. But these are tales for another day... and perhaps another book.

# THE ADVENTURES

This section provides some tips for running the adventures in this book

# Story-Driven versus Location-Driven Play

The adventures in this book are inspired by the sword and sorcery fiction of the pulp era. Each adventure is built around a sequence of scenes – encounters or locations – that (hopefully) combine to form an exciting story, with the players acting as the protagonists. To avoid railroading the players through a fixed plot, the goal has been to give them plenty of choices with regard to how they resolve a specific situation. Also, there are many possible conclusions to each adventure and often, additional adventures can be extrapolated from the consequences of the players' actions during each adventure.

Even so, some Games Masters and players may not like the sequential nature of such story-driven adventures. Should you prefer a more free-form, location-driven style of play, where the players are free to wander around, exploring new areas and stirring up trouble, this book presents you with plenty of maps and full descriptions of locations, as well as the statistics and motivations of



# PLAYER RACES



Torches flared murkily on the revels in the Maul, where the thieves of the east held carnival by night. In the Maul they could carouse and roar as they liked, for honest people shunned the quarters, and watchmen, well paid with stained coins, did not interfere with their sports. In one of these dens merriment thundered to the low smokestained roof, where rascals gathered in every stage of rags and tatters—furtive cut-purses, leering kidnappers, quick-fingered thieves, swaggering bravoes with their wenches, strident-voiced women clad in tawdry finery. Native rogues were the dominant element—dark-skinned, dark-eyed Zamorians, with daggers at their girdles and guile in their hearts.

# - Robert E. Howard: The Tower of the Elephant

The following subchapters describe the various human races found in the *World of Xoth*. Elves, dwarves, halflings and other non-humans are not appropriate in a sword and sorcery campaign, at least not for players. Survivors of older, pre-human races, such as the giant-kings of Kuth and the Yalothan snake-men, exist only in small numbers and are primarily intended as Non-players and villains.

Each race has certain racial traits that distinguish it from other races, shown as a minor bonus to one or more of their Characteristics.

There is no common Language skill in the *World of Xoth*. Each race speaks its own language and many people know at least one or two additional language skills (usually the languages of neighbouring countries).

# Azimbans

Also known as the 'dwellers in the cities of stone' by their tribal neighbours, the Azimbans have an old culture centred around their stone fortresses and bird-worship.

**Physical Description:** The black warriors of Azimba are tall, strong and proud, known for their discipline in formations with shield and spear. The men are usually shaven-headed, and the wearing of brightly coloured robes and feathered plumes is common.

**Religion:** The god of the Azimbans is Jul-Juggah, a reptilian bird-god that must be propitiated with human sacrifice. His feather-cloaked priests know the secret spells to summon lesser winged lizards, survivors of a lost age.

Racial Traits: +1 to STR and SIZ

# Bhangari

The mysterious eastern realms of Laksha, Ghoma and Azjan are inhabited by a multitudinous people known for their fierce warrior

castes, master craftsmen, skilled herbalists and ranks of ascetic priests. The Bhangari live in great walled cities and build temples that soar to the sky.

**Physical Description:** Of medium height, with golden skin and delicate features. The men keep their black hair cropped short and dress in simple cotton garments, while the women wear colourful silken gowns and weave their hair in long braids. The armies of Laksha, Ghoma and Azjan wear medium armour decorated with silver and gold; the officers have turbans set with feathers or gems to denote their station.

**Religion:** Not much is known about the cults of the east. The cult of the ape-god Simatala originated in the land of Laksha and there are several cults that worship aspects of the elephant.

Racial Traits: +2 to CHA

# Djaka

The Djaka are the pygmies inhabiting the Silver Isles of the Eastern Ocean. They live in jungle caves and know the secrets of the rare lotus herbs that grow only on their islands.

**Physical Description:** Short of stature (even adults are rarely 1.5 metres tall) with curly black hair and dark, wrinkled skin; dressed in loincloths and jewellery of feather and bones, and armed with hunting bows and blowpipes.

**Religion:** The Djaka worship as gods the monstrous slugs of colossal size that inhabit the marshes and swamps of the Silver Isles.

Racial Traits: +2 to DEX, -2 to SIZ.

# Ghazorites

The Ghazorites are a sub-race of the Susrahnites, who dwell in and around the great port-city of Ghazor on the coast of the eastern ocean. The Ghazorites are known both as avaricious merchants, ruthless warriors and excellent sailors.

**Physical Description:** Slightly smaller of stature than their plains-dwelling brethren, Ghazorite men and women often have some foreign blood, the result of intermingling of races. Such crossbreeding usually manifests as a flat nose, blond hair, green eyes, swarthy skin, or some other unusual feature.

**Religion:** The Ghazorites worship the gods of Susrah, in addition to many strange gods brought to the city by foreign sailors, mercenaries and merchants.

Racial Traits: +1 to any Characteristic

#### Ikunas

The cannibalistic tribes of the Ikuna lands are a constant plague upon the neighbouring nations. From their homeland south of the Hills of the Dead, between the jungle and the coast, the Ikunas wage a war of terror upon the Zadjites, Azimbans and anyone venturing into the southern waters. Few dare go into these lands; likewise, an Ikuna raiding party on the warpath is something best avoided.

**Physical Description:** Black-skinned with wavy hair and slightly green-tinted eyes that give them a preternatural, fearsome appearance. The Ikuna warriors are heavily muscled and move with pantherish grace, clad only in loincloths. The women, who are often shamans and tribal priestesses, adorn themselves with necklaces of bone and teeth.

**Religion:** The Ikunas worship several tribal gods, some of which are simply deified serpents, giant bats and great lizards from the nearby jungles of Yalotha. But also on the blood-stained altars in the witch-houses of the Ikuna are grotesque idols of older demon-gods and grinning, inhuman skulls of unnatural proportions.

Racial Traits: +1 to STR and DEX

# Jairanians

Dwellers in the desert-cities of the west, the Jairanians are renowned as master craftsmen, breeders of fine horses and cunning thieves. Mercenaries from the cities of Jairan are employed across the continent.

**Physical Description:** Light brown skin, deep brown eyes, wearing loose pants and short vests.

**Religion:** Various grim gods are worshipped among the Jairanians, including Yadar, Othabbhon and even Al-Tawir.

Racial Traits: +1 to INT

# Khazistanis

Conquering horsemen of the north-western steppes, the Khazis or Khazistanis are a proud people, and justly so. From humble nomadic roots, they have established an empire with glittering cities stretching from the Eastern Sea to the deserts of Jairan, and scores of caravans bringing tribute and loot to the proud nobles of Khazabad. The ruling warrior caste consists of mounted archers riding magnificent purebred horses into battle.

**Physical Description:** Tan-skinned, brown-eyed and black-haired. The Khazis are generally lithe of build, although large individuals certainly exist. The men sometimes wear turbans and grow long moustaches or beards. The women usually wear veils and robes.

**Religion:** The Khazis primarily worship Yadar and Nhakhramat, neither of which are native Khazistani gods but whose cults have replaced former elemental and ancestor worship.

Racial Traits: None

# Khazrajites

The nomadic tribes of the northwestern desert are descended from Khazistani stock. Calling themselves the Khazraj, they are a free-willed, fierce and stubborn lot; a constant menace to caravans and travellers.

**Physical Description:** The Khazrajites are physically identical to the people of Khazistan but of a slightly darker tan due to their exposure to the desert sun. Adult men usually grow thick, black beards and wear white *khaftan* robes and silver-hilted scimitars.

**Religion:** Chief among the gods of the desert is Al-Tawir, the Ancient One, although his name is more often used in curses than in prayer. Still, the nomads fear the Lord of the Empty Wastes and make small offerings to avoid getting lost or suffering from hunger and thirst.

Racial Traits: +1 to POW

# Khoran

The Isles of the Sea Reavers are inhabited by dangerous men and cunning women from many nations and their couplings have brought forth many who are born as natives of the isles, in the fortified pirate-city of Khora. Such children usually inherit the worst traits of both parents.

**Physical Description:** The skin-tone of Khorans range from the icy white of Tharag Thulans to the night-black of Ikunas but is usually somewhere in-between. They dress in gaudy pantaloons and adorn themselves with gold earrings and ivory-hilted knives pilfered from burning merchant-vessels.

**Religion:** The gods are more feared than worshipped in the lawless port of Khora but even the Sea Reavers occasionally offer sacrifice to the gods of the sea and the sky. Akhlathu, the god of twisted fate, is also a popular patron of many pirate crews.

Racial Traits: +1 to DEX and CHA

# Kuthan, Halfbreed

The pureblooded giant-kings of Elder Kuth took human concubines, and the result of these unions were halfbreeds, exceptional humans who would usually (but not always) serve as loyal agents of their powerful masters.

**Physical Description:** Of normal human size, but usually heavily muscled and wielding huge swords crafted by the giant-kings. **Religion:** Believing themselves the sons of gods, the Kuthan halfbreeds demand to be worshipped as demi-gods.

Racial Traits: +4 to STR, -2 to DEX

# Kuthan, Pureblood

The people of Elder Kuth, known as the 'Giant-Kings,' is a race believed to have become extinct after the fall of their ancient empire. The decayed ruins of their cyclopean cities can still be glimpsed in the western wastes.

Physical Description: Rumoured to have been fully 9 feet tall (or even taller, by some accounts), the Kuthans were truly giants among men.

Religion: The Giant-Kings

of Elder Kuth were themselves worshipped as gods by their human slaves, servitors and concubines.

**Racial Traits:** +4 to STR and SIZ

# Lamurans

The men of Lamu are regarded as a degenerate and evil people by other nations, a belief that mainly springs from ignorance but is strengthened by the fact that the Lamurans have unnaturally keen eyesight in the dark, and that they worship many weird and loathsome gods in the isolation of their remote hill kingdom.



**Physical Description:** Gaunt of build and pale-skinned, with long flowing hair, although the priests are often shaven-headed. The Lamurans dress in flowing robes and wear distinctive tall caps, often wound around with turbans.

**Religion:** The cult of Yot-Kamoth is best-known but a multitude of other deities is worshipped.

Racial Traits: +2 to POW

# Mazanians

Deep in the southern jungles rise the moss-grown palisade walls of the Mazanians, a matriarchal society whose female warriors raid into the surrounding lands for male slaves. The jungle kingdom is ruled by the black sorcerer-queen of Boma-Ya, the forbidden city of the amazons.

**Physical Description:** Female Mazanians are all stunningly beautiful, since all girls with the slightest physical flaw are quickly abandoned in the jungle. These copper-skinned warriors are not shy about using their charms to distract male opponents.

**Religion:** The gods of the Mazanians are not well-known. Some say they worship female snake-beings, others that their queen is the thrall of a male demon-god.

Racial Traits: +4 to CHA

# Nabastisseans

The sun-drenched land of Nabastis consists of a collection of city-states ruled by petty kings with their own armies of bronze-armoured pikemen. While the interior terrain is dominated by rolling hills and forest-covered mountains, the coast has sandy coves nestled amid jagged cliffs. The cities along the coast are centres of trade and are protected by fleets of trireme galleys.

The great city of Khargamum is well-known for the temple of Apsis, with its vast library-halls, founded by the scribes and philosophers of ancient Nabaos and Totha.

**Physical Description:** Bronze-skinned, with gleaming white teeth and curly black hair, and short of stature. The Nabastisseans dress in brightly coloured robes, and don breastplates and full helmets when going to war.

**Religion:** The Nabastisseans have few gods of their own but tolerate the temples of foreign gods to be built in their cities. The coastal peoples usually make small offerings to the gods of the sea before setting out on voyages of trade or war.

Racial Traits: +1 to CON, -1 to SIZ

# Ptahaanans

Like the people of Elder Kuth, the Ptahaanans are believed to have become extinct during the last days of their bloodstained empire. The bulk of the Isles of Ptahaana sunk beneath the waves in ancient times, perhaps as a result of failed sorceries.

**Physical Description:** Surviving depictions of the Ptahaanans show them as short of build, with bronze skin and slightly slanted eyes. Other sources claim they were tall, with elongated skulls and fingers, clad in voluminous robes that concealed blasphemously mutated bodies.

**Religion:** The Ptahaanans are said to have worshipped Ia-Azutlatl, the 'Blood-God,' atop their stepped pyramids.

Racial Traits: +2 to INT and POW

# Shomas

The kingdom of Shoma is rich in gold, to the extent that even the king's great herds of cattle wear golden ornaments. There are many skilled artisans and goldsmiths among the Shoma. Outside of the capital city of Katanga, the land is peopled by semi-nomadic tribes.

**Physical Description:** Dark brown skin, with close-cropped curly black hair. The Shoma dress in simple loincloths but even commoners are often adorned with golden jewellery.

**Religion:** Nataka, the ivory woman, is worshipped among the nobles and upper class, while various tribal gods are revered by commoners.

Racial Traits: None

# Susrahnites

The fertile plains of Susrah are home to a race renowned for their skill in war and their religious devotion.

**Physical Description:** Broad-shouldered, with hooked noses and black, curly hair, the Susrahnites are dressed in flowing robes. The men braid their long beards. The women are lithe, wearing golden armbands and necklaces of pearl; they are prized as slaves in Taraamite seraglios.

**Religion:** Nowhere, except perhaps in Yar-Ammon, can there be found as many gods as in the city-states of Susrah. Above the hundreds of lesser gods arise the names of greater deities such as Baal-Khardah, Belet-Lil, Maggash, and Yammosh.

Racial Traits: +1 to DEX, -1 to INT

# Taikangians

The realm of Taikang is near-mythical, a land of teeming yellow masses, bamboo towers and serpentine dragons. Few westerners have ventured here but merchants who brave the unknown can make a fortune when they return with caravans of silks, lotus flowers and painted ceramics.

**Physical Description:** Lithe and yellow-skinned, with slanted eyes and long, black hair. Both men and women dress in silk if they can afford it, although the commoners often wear little more than a loincloth.

**Religion:** The chief god of the Taikangians is Wa-Ying, the so-called 'Emperor of Hell'.

Racial Traits: +1 to CHA

# **Taraamites**

The plains and highlands of Taraam are inhabited by a people known both for the sophistication of their culture and their talent for intrigue. A caste of mounted warriors is the backbone of their army, which threatens the lesser cities of Susrah and Nabastis with destruction unless tribute continues to flow into the thousand-columned palace of Achad. Taraam's royal palace is a also a place of thousand intrigues, where the eunuchs and priests of the court wear coats of golden brocade and baggy silk pants, great scimitars always at their side.

**Physical Description:** Male Taraamites usually favour short, trimmed beards. Warriors carry straight short swords and lances, and dress in robes decorated according to their status, with the king's personal guard wearing gold-trimmed robes and circlets of gold, in the fashion of princes.

**Religion:** Ahyada, the 'high god', is the chief god of the Taraamites, served by an influential priesthood of astrologers and omen-readers.

Racial Traits: None

# Tharag Thulans

Also known as Tharagians, these northern tribesmen inhabit the cold wastes at the edge of the world. In each generation, there are always some northerners who leave their ancestral lands to escape the ancient blood-feuds of their clans and explore the decadent empires of the south.

**Physical Description:** Dressed in wolf-skin cloaks and tall boots of wolverine-fur, these barbarians of the north have long, yellow beards, white skin and piercing blue eyes.

**Religion:** The Tharag Thulans revere the Moon-God, the Wolf-God and the Skull-God.

Racial Traits: +1 to STR and CON

# Yar-Ammonites

Also known as the 'kingdom of tombs', Yar-Ammon is a land covered with desert and haunted by ancient sorceries. The silent streets and broad ceremonial avenues of black-templed Amenti is a awesome sight to behold. The papyrus used by the scribes and sorcerers of Yar-Ammon is harvested from the inland marshes of Fakhuum.

**Physical Description:** Tall and slender, with bronze skin, dark hair and black eyes. The nobles and priests wear golden pectorals and masks carved with beastly visages, while commoners dress in simple garments of white linen.

**Religion:** The ancient ancestors of the Yar-Ammonites, who are worshipped as gods, are depicted as beast-headed humanoids. These ancient ones are said to have had lives spanning millennia; they brought humankind knowledge and civilisation. Some claim they returned to the stars from whence they came after being buried in the depths of the black pyramids of Amenti.

Racial Traits: None

# Zadjites

The turbaned fire-worshippers of Zadj are an offshoot of the Jairanian race in the west. They have exploited the riches of their new homeland well, and grown rich as spice merchants and slave-traders. Having brought with them a high level of culture from Jairan, the Zadjites are skilled artisans and Iraab, the marble capital by the sea, is a centre of learning as well as rich trade and exquisite craftmanship. The interior plains and forests of Zadj are dominated by the fortress-city of Al-Qazir, also known as the City of Slave Sultans, for it is held by a council of slavelords who only pay lip service to the emir of Iraab.

**Physical Description:** Swarthy, turbaned, wearing colourful robes and gold-hilted curved daggers. The raven-haired Zadjite women are famed for their sensual beauty; they are often scantily clad and adorned with glittering jewellery.

**Religion:** The Zadjites hold 'the Sacred Flame', a nameless elemental god, above all others.

Racial Traits: +2 to CHA

# Zorabi

These tribesmen inhabit the Zorab mountains that jut up between Lamu and Khazistan. The southernmost tribes have accepted the overlordship of the Khazistanis, at least in name, while the rest are opportunistic raiders who feud incessantly among themselves.

**Physical Description:** These mountain wolves wear white turbans and heavy cloaks, and are armed with scimitars and shortbows. They have long black beards, and their brown skin is wrinkled by the sun and mountain winds.

**Religion:** There are few priests among the Zorabi, but worship of certain Lamuran gods is probable.

Racial Traits: +2 to CON



# **MAGIC**



The room was large, high-vaulted, and lit by a dim window looking forth between unpruned cypresses toward the black sea. No flames arose from the myriad lamps to assist that baffled daylight; and shadows brimmed the place like a spectral fluid, through which the vessels of wizardry, the great censers and alembics and braziers, seemed to quiver like animate things. A little past the room's centre, his back to the doorway, Vacharn sat on an ebon trivet before the mirror of clairvoyance, which was wrought from electrum in the form of a huge delta; and was held obliquely aloft by a serpentining copper arm. The mirror flamed brightly in the shadow, as if lit by some splendour of unknown source; and the intruders were dazzled by glimpsing of its radiance as they went forward.

# - Clark Ashton Smith: Necromancy in Naat

Swords and Sorcery magic is usually more subtle and a lot darker than in other worlds. The magic of Conan for example has shape-changing wizards who do not throw fireballs, they do not hurl bolts of lightning – not as though that is banned in Spider God's Bride but it should be restricted to a few exceptions at least. Swords and Sorcery is all about Elder Gods, pacts with Beings of Immeasurable Power and skin-twisting Necromancers who bring legions of the dead to life with a snap of their cracked fingers.

There are temples to forgotten mind-bending entities where ancient cults practise cannibalism, ritual sacrifice and bloody rites to evoke mists which turn whole kingdoms mad. There are witches who draw kings into lustful orgies for power, leaving them old, frail and without a crown. There are things we do not speak of lurking against the barriers of reality and just waiting to punch through the hole into the real world.

These are the worlds where the hero's sword cleaves against the blood-iron hide of the abomination, or the seven headed hydra. The ice sorcerer summons a rank of cold elementals to freeze the hero's heart. These are the worlds of Hyboria, Xoth and Lemuria where magic is stronger than steel and blood is the river of life which powers foul sorceries.

# **SORCERY**

Legend has the Sorcery Magic System which fits the Sword and Sorcery trope fairly well. There are numerous spells which echo the magic which is often found in this genre. These spells on their own are fine when used with this book and many of the Non Player Characters described in the various adventures have these magic spells (and associated Grimoires) as part of their statistic blocks.

Depending on the various cultures which use magic it may be the case that the Grimoire in question is not a book. It may well be a series of intricate glyphs written on a human femur, or carved across a skull in a mix of grave dust and blood. It may be inked on human skin which has been stretched across two wooden sticks. The real power of magic for a Swords and Sorcery Games Master is to evoke the atmosphere of these worlds, and making magic alien and dangerous is a great way to do this.

Most other game systems assume magic is just a case of throwing a ball of superheated plasma or fire at an enemy. These spells (as mentioned previously) are often not found in the Sword and Sorcery genre and instead there are other darker magic powers which can often use the essence of a person's soul to trigger them.

Imagine a simple spell in *Legend* – that of *Palsy* which paralyses one random location on the target. This is a great Swords and Sorcery spell, for Xoth it brings to mind the powerful sorcerer pointing their finger-bone from an aged crone, killed under the light of the full moon whilst their other hand clutches a blood red tome bound in iron. The sorcerer has a nubile servant chained against a nearby wall and as the spell takes hold against our hero, he looks as the servant slumps, a ghostly flowing silver image screams its way into the finger-bone and there is the sound of a heartbeat.

Our hero cannot move, his legs are unable to bring him to exact vengeance upon the sorcerer who just murdered his sister to fuel that self-same spell.

Yet power has a cost and now Thakkun-Dah, Sorcerer of the Blood Sand, reels backwards a little as he feels the very fabric of his body begin to unravel. His already wizened skin becomes a little more sallow and his eyes milky white. All of this paints a vivid picture which *Legend* can simulate when using the Sorcery rules found on page 190 of the *core rulebook*.

So how does all of this relate to the rules? This is just flavour and an example of how the Games Master can tailor the spells found in the Sorcery section to their whim. The first thing that needs to be done is to revise how a spell is cast in Xoth's world (or another Swords and Sorcery setting). There are a few things a Games Master can do to accomplish this and introducing various costs to Sorcery Magic is definitely the way forwards.

This elevates magic in a Swords and Sorcery campaign into a respected power and makes it often beyond the scope of normal adventurers. Ideally, as a Games Master it is advised to keep such magic to your Non Player Characters and Eldritch Beings. After all, how many Player Characters are going to want to sacrifice a person to accomplish a spell to inflict madness upon a mighty queen thus sending her to war against a neighbouring kingdom?

The supplement *Arcania of Legend: Blood Magic* is an excellent source of ideas and alternate magical systems for the World of Xoth. It provides rules such as Concert Casting, Summoning and even expands on the ideas put forwards here regarding Swords and Sorcery. It is beyond the scope of this book to replicate the magic found in the supplement and so there are a slew of Swords and Sorcery flavour spells for use with Sorcery and some extra rules to allow *Spider God's Bride* to be used as is.

Caveat: animal sacrifices are very weak sources of power and provide only half the Magic Points.

# The Cost of Magic

Consider the previous scenario of the Sorcerer, Thakkun-Dah. In *Legend* Sorcery terms there needs to be a cost applied to the casting of *Palsy*.

Magic Points must come from the victim. These are channelled from the unfortunate sacrifice via a Soul Siphon (usually through an item of some kind, specifically designed for such a spell). They grant the caster Magic Points 1 for 1 based on the victim's own magical potential (soul) draining their POW. Once POW reaches zero then the victim dies and the body can be used as a component part for a necromantic ritual or further blood rite.

Spell casting costs are doubled or tripled. This models the greater cost in power for the spell in question, many Swords and Sorcery magical rites and spells take a greater source of power to perform. Some of them might require more than one caster as well. In this case by tripling the cost of the magic points used, it is possible to allow more than one caster to pay the cost of the spell (more on that later).

The time to cast the spell can be altered. Many Swords and Sorcery spells appear to take much longer to cast compared to their standard fantasy counterparts. So multiplying the spell casting times by a factor of ten is a good base to start with. It is also possible to extend the casting times for greater magic, those spells which affect whole kingdoms and require multiple sacrifices to perform. These can take weeks to cast or days and can be the basis of whole Swords and Sorcery campaigns.

There is always a cost to dark magic. Sorcery in Swords and Sorcery is often dark; it uses victims, souls, blood and other energies to perform. So there is always a cost to these kinds of spells – it can be as simple as a loss of Hit Points from several random locations, or as life changing as the weight of years. Thakkun-Dah found this out when he cast his magical Palsy spell upon our hero. He was aged by a few years, when you apply that to an already decrepit old sorcerer, he needs to be careful.

There can be a cost in blood. Swords and Sorcery magic really paints a vivid (and often red) picture of the ancient sorceries. So blood is a natural catalyst for many of the spells in the genre. An unwilling or willing victim must be used to power the spell. This might cost their life or just a few Hit Points of magic. If you triple the costs of course then that's a lot of blood if you take it as read you're exchanging Hit Points on a 1 to 1 basis.

There may be a cost in materials depending on the spell in question. Not just blood, perhaps the caster must also throw in bone dust, broken glass, an expensive item or eyes of newt. The Games Master is encouraged to invent different material costs for the spells in the Sorcery section of the *Legend* rules.

None of these are hard and fast rules of course, they are guidelines for the Games Master to add flavour to Swords and Sorcery magic. One caveat to remember is that a victim who is wounded via sacrifice cannot be healed by magical means; the very nature of the sacrificial wound is magical in of itself and cannot be treated with

further mystical healing. This cuts down the potential problem with victims being used as a constant source of Magic Points, being healed and wounded over and over again.

# I failed you my Lord

The price of failure for magic in a Swords and Sorcery campaign is very different to the usual fantasy fare. In these worlds there are beings who are watching the sorcerer's every move, or magic which is capable of sucking the life from the spellcaster instantly let alone the victim. In *Legend* there are rules for skill failures and for spell failures when using magic. This supplemental system gives a Sword and Sorcery tang to the proceedings.

Tasty morsel: Our sorcerer has a pact with a powerful Elder Being. He has cast a spell which not only drew Og Yado's attention, he intoned the name of the being in an improper manner (a critical fumble on his skill test) – the Elder Being is unhappy with Yamon our sorcerer and he shows his displeasure by sucking the poor fellow into a soggy and decidedly watery domain for an eternity. Where he eats him slowly for a period of a thousand years.

Struck blind: The caster has overreached magically and now they must pay the price, their sorcerous power rips through every inch of their body and in this case burns out their eyes.

Backlash: The caster becomes a focal point for a magical explosion which causes damage to everything in a 20m radius. Each creature caught in the blast must make a Difficult Evade test or take 1D4 damage per Magic Point used in the casting of the spell to 3 random locations. So 3 Magic Points would be a powerful backlash that caused 3D4 damage.

Disintegration: The sorcerer has failed so badly that in a screaming wail of agony they vanish into a charred little pile of dust on the floor.

Mind-blown: In a sudden and perilous turn of events the miscast spell robs the sorcerer of all their mental faculties. Their INT drops to zero and they are rendered incapable of doing anything but drooling on the floor.

Possession: Many Swords and Sorcery adventures and media often focus on the idea of demonic beings, beings locked away from the world for centuries. Many sorcerers serve these creatures unwittingly or by their own volition. When they fail a spell which evokes their pact-demon, things can go awry quickly. The sorcerer must make a Difficult Persistence test or be possessed by the demon for a period of time. Particular mean Games Masters can actually



Carle - Note to Children

use this as a great adventure hook or turning point as part of an adventure if the evil Non Player Character sorcerer fails their test. That is seriously half the fun of the genre.

Cursed: Conan is full of curses and cursed witches, wizards. What happens if the curse comes from a failed magical spell? In this case the curse can be anything from an unease felt around the caster by others, to bad luck and misfortune dogging their every move. It might mean that their love interest is doomed to perish in a terrible manner and everyone they have ever been close to is fated to follow. The Games Master is encouraged to expand this bad luck and once again it can make a great hook for a sorcerer based adventure where the Player Characters are helping a cursed sorcerer look for a way to break the spell.

# THE TAINT OF SORCERY

The users of magic make a choice between staying sane and 'human,' or wielding terrible spells at the cost of their sanity. Note that this is one of the reasons why master sorcerers prefer to have thralls (apprentices or acolytes) working for them, casting tainted magic so they don't have to do it themselves.

Some spells are considered tainted, black magic spells; typically spells which summon evil beings, or which inflict fear, harm, or pain upon others (the specific list of tainted spells is left up to the Gamesmaster to create based on his own campaign). When casting a black magic spell, the caster must make a Persistence test with a penalty equal to 2% times the Magnitude of the spell plus any existing points of Taint. Failure will result in gaining a point of Taint.

Taint warps the mind, setting the sorcerer on the path to madness and death. A character who has a Taint score equal or greater than to 25% of his POW score is mildly tainted. A character who has a Taint score equal to or greater than 50% of his POW score is moderately tainted. A character who has a Taint score equal to 75% or more of his POW score is severely tainted.

The Games Master should apply one of the following penalties as soon as a character acquires the appropriate level of taint.

# **Mild Mental Taint Effects**

- Mild paranoia (Persistence test to avoid turning against ally or henchman, once every 3d6 days)
- Disorientation (-10% penalty on Perception tests)
- Increased aggressiveness (Persistence test to avoid combat at any provocation)
- Mild hallucinations (during every round of combat, has 5% chance of attacking a non-existent foe)
- Nightmares (has 20% chance to prevent any restful sleep)

# **Moderate Mental Taint Effects**

- Hears voices of evil spirits (-20% penalty on Listen tests)
- Severe paranoia (Persistence test to avoid turning against ally or henchman, once every 3d6 days)
- Fits of uncontrollable disturbing laughter (-20% penalty on Influence tests)
- Prone to fits of extreme rage (Difficult Persistence test to avoid combat at any provocation)
- Addiction to exotic drug (must consume a drug worth at least

- 50 SP per dose, once every 1d6 days)
- Cannibalism (must consume freshly killed human flesh once every 2d6 days)
- Deviant sexual behaviour (must engage in sexual behaviour that is considered amoral by local culture once every 2d6 days)
- Minor obsession (must work toward gaining or have access to an object of obsession every week or suffer a level of Fatigue)

# **Severe Mental Taint Effects**

- Irresistible murderous urges (Hard Persistence test to avoid combat at any provocation)
- Fits of lunatic paranoia (Difficult Persistence test to avoid turning against ally or henchman, once every 3d6 days)
- Utter megalomania (Persistence test to retreat from combat, even against clearly superior foes)
- Major obsession (must work toward gaining or have access to an object of obsession every day or suffer a level of Fatigue)

When the character's Taint score equals or exceeds his POW score, he dies, falls into a coma, or becomes irrevocably mad and/or the hopeless thrall of a demonic, extra-planar being (Gamesmaster's choice).

Taint can be reduced at the rate of 1 point per month by completely avoiding casting spells, avoid any place where magic is cast, and any item or device that may cause taint. At the end of the month, the caster can make a Difficult Persistence test, with an additional penalty of half the current Taint score, to reduce taint by one point.

In addition to spellcasting, exposure to certain accursed locations and items can also cause Taint. For every 24 hours spent in a tainted place or in contact with a tainted object the character must make a Difficult Persistence test with an additional penalty of half the current Taint score + 5% for every 24 hours of consecutive exposure.

# With a Little Help

The Swords and Sorcery genre is packed with various examples of magic being cast by multiple individuals. Consider the Temple Dance scene from Conan where Thulsa Doom is turned into a giant snake, this is perfect for Concert Casting, however if you do not own *Arcania of Legend: Blood Magic* the following simple system can be tailored to allow a *Legend* sorcerer in Xoth to perform similar rituals, spells and rites.

When casting a spell which involves more than one person, the costs for that spell are paid by each sorcerer in the group. If the spell uses ritual sacrifice or soul sucking items, then the cost in humanoid victims is largely left up to the Games Master to determine. Swords and Sorcery works best when the stakes are high and nothing raises the stakes more than a whole city in peril from a particularly powerful spell.

The High Priest or Ancient Sorcerer is the focal point of the rite; they are the ones who make the Sorcery casting skill rolls. Each participant other than the caster can make their own separate roll and then apply a bonus of +5% per 5 participants who succeed, to the caster's skill test.

So if five Apprentice sorcerers aid an Ancient sorcerer with a skill of 80% that's +5% to his skill for having more than one caster. This gives him 85% and a good chance of performing that spell.

When a group spell or ritual fails, the curse or backlash from the magic can affect all participants. There are rumours that in the deepest and darkest reaches of Xoth whole villages have vanished overnight when their High Shaman failed to observe the proper protections and rites, all that was left were charred ashes and a humble reminder that magic is a force to be reckoned with and not just a simple tool to throw a rock a few feet.

# Places of Power

Places of Power help the aspiring or elder sorcerer to perform their spells with a better chance of success, they confer various bonuses based on the type of place and can offset some of the darker costs of the Sorcery magic. Of course some of these places can also place their own cost upon the caster, their colleagues and victims depending on the type of location. Note here that the use of magic spell actually refers to major magic and not some tiny spell which the elder beings, demons, undead spirits and the like would consider beneath their notice.

**Stone Circle**: The archetypical Swords and Sorcery setting for magical rituals, the stone circle confers a bonus of +10% to the casters spell casting test. It also can be a place of human or animal sacrifice. There is a 50% chance evil spirits are bound to the stones and they take a cost of 1D4 CON from each participant in the circle.

Ancient Temple: Temples to snake cults, three-headed goat demons, bizarre tentacle beings of unknowing intellect and more. These are the blood and sand drenched ruins of an age undreamed of, these are where the cultists of the Hyena God draw their knives across the throats of a whole settlement to perform gore-laden rites to their deity. This Place of Power confers a +15% to the casters skill test, and often comes with a grisly cost. There is a 20% chance that one or more of the participants in the spell will be transformed or shape-shifted into a terrible abomination bent on destruction.

**Battlefield:** Where blood has been spilt, where swords have been drawn in terrible conflict over the centuries – these are the Places of Power where sorcerers can extend their necromantic rites to summon grave beings of unwavering loyalty. This place confers +10% to the casters magical skill test, and has the added danger of gathering the interest of the spirits and other creatures close by. There's a 50% chance per spell cast at a Place of Power such as this a few undead will come to see what is going on. They are usually hostile to the caster and resent being summoned back from the dead.

Forest Clearing/Grove: These Places of Power can be anything from vibrant jungle like locales, deep woods, ancient groves and forgotten forest shrines to blackened husks of trees where proud people once came to worship. These Places of Power often confer +5% to the casters skill test and can be used as a supplemental source of Magic Points by the caster. Each Magic Point represents a bush, a sapling or a small tree consumed by the magic. If the location has a guardian then there's a 65% chance they will be summoned to investigate the magic.

**Desert Shrine:** In a world like Xoth, like so many other Swords and Sorcery settings there are old ruined temples lost to the annals of time. There are also strange shrines raised in the name of forgotten and dark beings, these Places of Power grant a boon to the caster and confer +5% to any spell tests made there. They are also a source

of extra-planar contact and there is a 5% chance that any magic cast in one of these locations draws the attention of the being associated with it, for good or ill.

**Graveyard:** Where there are old tombs, ancient graves, unhallowed or hallowed earth there are powerful spirits who flit between the cracks of reality. It is here in a Place of Power such as this where the sorcerer can gain an army if they have the right magic. Graveyards confer a +10% skill bonus to Sorcery tests and any necromantic spells are increased to +20% making them a prime spot for necromancers to visit. There is a 40% chance when a magic spell is cast inside the graveyard that it will raise an extra D6 undead to serve.

**Boneyard (contains animal skeleton)**: Here in this Place of Power there is often a huge skeleton or a collection of such, elephant, dinosaur (for those ancient jungle adventures) or even a giant fire-breathing draconic substitute. Sorcery magic cast here gains a +5% per large animal skeleton (up to 10 skeletons). Any backlashes which occur in this Place of Power are often doubled due to the magical energy which roils around them. There is also a 10% chance that some spells may well animate a giant, mindless, rampaging animal skeleton and this is considered to be hostile to all participants.

**Cave**: Old Mountains hide a great many secrets, there are the far reaches of the world where deep caves are so close to fonts of great power that they gain a slew of magical energy where a sorcerer can perform spells with great ease. The deeper the cave the more magical power it accrues from the earth itself – so caves can have +5%, +10%, +15%, +20% to simulate this. They come with little or no personal cost or risk either, which is why a great deal of dark rituals are performed out of sight and mind in the depths of these wayward places.

**Tower:** Under ashen skies ancient magic users cried out, they called to beings which one might call gods. These beings looked down and mostly laughed, yet they left a modicum of power as a sign of (some) good faith. The Tower is a typical Sword and Sorcery Place of Power and is often the site for complex rituals to summon dragon-like beings to smite the sorcerer's enemies. Spellcasters here gain +10% to their spell casting tests and the place itself halves the cost of Magic Points used.

**Burned Village**: You can still hear the cries of the dying; the smell of burnt flesh lingers on the wind every day. The burned settlement/village is a powerful location for darker magic, necromancy and even demonology. It is here that a caster gains +25% to their magic skill tests if they are performing a dark ritual. There is a 10% chance per hour of the ritual or 5% per Magic Point cost that the angry spirits of the victims seek out the caster and attempt to exact brutal justice.

**Mountain/Volcano:** There are ancient cults and shamanistic traditions which call to powerful gods across time and space. Volcanoes are a fantastic place for a finale where the powerful Non Player Character bad guy is about to throw the victim into the fire-laden depths to awaken the Fire Lizard God. These Places of Power confer a bonus of +15% to all magic skill tests made here in pursuit of human sacrifice by fire. There is a danger however that the volcano may blow (%5 chance) and scatter flying debris across the participants.

**Mire/Swamp:** Where forgotten tribes of humans, half-man half serpent and savage bestial sub-humans dwell, there are swamps and

mires. These Places of Power are steeped in savage tradition and are perfect focal points for dark rituals to slithering unnamed horrors which stalk the surrounding swamps. The sorcerer who uses this Place of Power gains +25% to their magical skill tests, however, there is a danger that the very self-same giant alligator or tentacle horror comes to check out the magic cast and attacks the sorcerer and his cabal.

# **NEW SORCERY**

These new spells form the backbone of Swords and Sorcery, they are designed to mimic the flavour of the genre and make a few assumptions regarding that magic. There are no flaming balls of doom, no arcing bolts of lightning or words that kill. There is however heart-popping magic which tears a living heart from inside someone's ribcage and more. These are the magic spells which dare to flirt with the power of dark beings, call upon things beyond the stars and should put the fear of Yot-Kamoth into the soul of every Xoth player. For those sorcerers wanting to call on the power of gods and demons, keep your eyes on the Gods/Cults and Demons chapter of this manuscript. Each cult is described as a Sorcerous cult as per the *Legend* core rulebook.

# **Bone Dance**

Concentration, Resist (Resilience)

The Necromancer Oloth Dai developed this powerful spell many thousands of years ago, it was thought lost to the vaults of time and buried in the ruin of the wizard's lair. It has been found again and discovered to the detriment of all. The spell appears written on the body of a deceased human male (30 years old) and his preserved skin is inked with the ritual in full. It takes seven full moons for the sorcerer to understand the ritual written on the skin. By the end of the lunar period the sorcerer must make a successful Routine Persistence test or lose 1 point of INT as the spell's complexity eludes him.

Once the sorcerer understands the spell it appears upon his body as a form of tattoo. He can now remember the spell perfectly.

The sorcerer can target a victim with a maximum CON of three times the spell's Intensity. If the target fails to resist, each Combat Action they take damage equal to half the Intensity of the spell directly to each location (ignoring armour). Once every location has been reduced to a Major Wound, then the victim's skeleton rips free of the body in a spectacular manner leaving the skin and organs to drop to the floor.

The skeleton is treated as a typical *Legend* skeleton though it can obey complex instructions and is completely loyal to the caster.

# Heart Rip

Concentration, Resist (Resilience)

Swords and Sorcery media has several scenes where the villainous sorcerer pulls the still-living heart from the friend of the hero, or attempts to end the heroes' life in such a manner. Consider the evil

sorcerer from the Sword and the Sorcerer, pulling Cromwell's heart from his chest almost as blood pours down the skin of the man. This spell is similar to Extract Heart from *Arcania of Legend: Blood Magic* and functions the same. It has been repeated here since it is a quintessential Swords and Sorcery flavour magic.

The Sorcerer targets a victim with a maximum CON of three times the spell's Intensity. If the target fails to resist, each Combat Action they take damage equal to half the Intensity of the spell to the chest location (ignoring armour). Once the chest is reduced to a Major Wound then the target's heart flies free in a spectacular and grisly manner, landing in the Sorcerer's outstretched grasping hand.

A variant of this spell allows the still beating heart to reveal a secret to the Sorcerer that the victim's spirit must reveal.

Another variant allows the Sorcerer to use the heart to heal as per the *Treat Wounds Sorcery* spell on page 208 of the *Legend* rules.

# **Beast/Animal Transformation**

The Shapechange (Species) to (Species) spell outlined on page 205 of the *Legend* core rules works very well for a Swords and Sorcery campaign. It mimics the human sorcerer who can transform into a large mountain lion, or a great bear. With some tweaking and the limits on size removing, it can be used to simulate the High Priest of a Snake God Cult twisting and transforming into a giant serpent.

# Demon's Gate

Arcania of Legend: Blood Magic introduces the Summoning skill; however this is beyond the scope of this book to include. So summoning extra-planar beings is more down to flavour than raw mechanics in this book. The way summoning works in this book breaks down the art into a series of steps which must be completed carefully.

**Step 1:** Magical Protective Circles/Wards – the caster uses their Grimoire skill to construct a perfect magical protection. If it fails then they get a Routine Perception test to notice their mistake, if they fail this then the wards are not setup correctly and the summoned creature will be able to break free and cause havoc.

**Step 2:** Using a new Advanced skill called Summoning (INT+CHA) – the caster makes a Summoning skill test and attempts to use this to bring the entity into the world. This is opposed by the creature's Persistence; if the caster fails the Summoning test then the creature does not appear and there is a 20% chance of a backlash of some kind. If the creature fails its Persistence test then it is brought before the caster.

**Step 3**: Binding – once the caster has brought the entity to this world he must bind it. This is where the creature can break free of the symbol if it has not been setup correctly in Step 1. The caster makes an opposed Persistence test against the demon in question and if he fails then the demon breaks free of the protections, or returns to its own dimension. If he succeeds then the demon is bound and the caster is then free to negotiate terms of service.

Demons are powerful beings and should be afforded respect in a Swords and Sorcery setting, so they will always look for a way to turn any deal to their advantage as well as possibly betray the caster further down the line.

Games Masters can use the rules for group casting in this chapter to add an extra layer of flavour to the simple summoning system.

# Magic Item

Magic in Swords and Sorcery isn't just about spells and arcane rites, there are also ancient and mysterious items which are created by long-dead sorcerers and contain potent magical spells. There are also simple alchemical tricks which allow a sorcerer-priest to get the drop on their enemies with a variety of powders, potions and concoctions. There's no hard and fast list of magic items for a Sword and Sorcery campaign but here is a sample magic item which is mentioned in the Spider God's Bride Adventure on Page 45. It is an orb of Witch-Fire.

A smooth glass object sits on a small velvet cushion. It is roughly 6 inches in diameter and has a highly polished surface. Inside the ball of crystal is a roaring conflagration of dark blue flame.

The orb of Witch-Fire was created by a long-forgotten sorcerer during an age which has yet to be pinpointed by historians. The object can be hurled like any other thrown object and bursts upon impact leaving a blazing mixture which ignites instantly and burns with a fierce fire across a 10m diameter circle. Any creature caught in the impact area must make an immediate Difficult Evade test or take 2D6 fire damage to all locations. The Witch-Fire burns for 1d4 minutes before it goes out, the Witch Fire can also ignite any combustible material in the radius (50% base chance +5% per minute the fire burns for). The orb is consumed at the moment of impact so it cannot be reused.



# CULTS, GODS AND DEMONS



In the temple of the city of Morm, which lies between the desert and the sea, are two images of the god Amanon, a bronze image facing an iron image, across the fires and blood-stains of the alter-stone. When the gory sunset of the day of sacrifice is over and the writhing fires of the sacrifice are dead, and the moon smiles with a cold and marble smile on the blackened altar — then Amanon speaks to Amanon, with a voice of iron, and a voice of bronze...

- Clark Ashton Smith: The Image of Bronze and the Image of Iron

# THE NATURE OF THE GODS

Here is the big secret: True deities do not exist. Most of the gods are simply monstrous or alien creatures of flesh and blood; others don't even exist except as an invention of the cult, a ruse by the priests to gain power and influence over the worshippers.

A priest is usually just another type of sorcerer, whose spellcasting ability is independent of the god he claims to worship. The gods *rarely* grant spells and powers to their followers directly. They can, however, teach spells and other secrets to humans (just like two humans can teach each other magic), and they often live long and so accumulate a lot of knowledge which they may (or may not) share with their servants. Even so, some of the creatures worshipped as gods have alien minds and/or do not care or know about their followers, making it difficult from the priests to benefit from such knowledge.

On the other hand, the gods gain several benefits from having a human priesthood, including sacrifices of food, wealth, slaves, and willing servants. Blood sacrifices from the cult can also empower magic cast by the god, or increase its innate powers.

The following types of creatures are often labelled gods and worshipped or placated by humans:

Demons, a definition that is itself somewhat problematic. Any creature with innate supernatural or magical abilities may be called a demon. Examples include elementals, proper demons, and unique beings such as Rahma.

Creatures from other planets and stars, from the void between the stars, and the black gulfs of space (also called aliens or extraterrestrials).

Monstrous and prehistoric animals, such as giant serpents, lizards, spiders, and dinosaurs.

Undead and spirits are sometimes worshipped as gods.

# **CULTS**

The following lists the various religious cults of the world, describing their priests, temples, rituals, and secrets. Many of the cult descriptions are mere sketches of the cult itself and a Games Master is encouraged to expand on these to fit their own design. The imitation rituals and rites, the extra skills and spells are all mutable and changeable.

# Ahyada, the High God of Taraam

Ahyada is the bringer of truth and protection to the people of Taraam, and the patron of the royal house of Achad as well. He grants visions and omens to the king, which is interpreted by astrologer-priests and soothsayers. Amulets of Ahyada are said to be effective wards against demons.

# Magic

**Sorcery Grimoire (Light of the Truthseeker):** Banish, Damage Enhancement, Intuition, Mystic Vision.

# Membership

# Novice

To be initiated into this cult, the hopeful must have been wronged by demons, demonic forces or have a strong desire to defend the weak against the insidious demon.

# Apprentice

An apprentice must at least have four of the cult's skills at 35% and have killed or banished at least one minor demon.

# Adept

Adepts must have at least four of the cult's skills at 50%. They are granted a bonus of +10% to their Persistence tests when under attack by demonic influences. They are also given an amulet which offers them protection from dark magic conferring a bonus of +25% when resisting such spells from a demonic source.

# **High Priest**

High Priests must have at least four of the cult's skills at 75%. A High Priest has been subjected to secret rituals where their third eye has been opened and can now see demonic influences on the mortal world, which appear like oily or sooty fingerprints. They can also see the demon inside a possessed person after years of being taught the signs to look for. They gain +20% to their Manipulation skill when casting the Banish spell due to a high level of training and study.

**Combat Style:** Truthbringer (Dagger, 1H Sword, Crossbow, Morningstar)

**Cult Skills:** The Cult offers training in: Healing, Influence, Languages (demonic), Lore (demons), Meditation, Oratory, Perception, Persistence, Sorcery (Light of the Truthseeker Grimoire), Stealth, Manipulation.



# Aklathu, the God of Twisted Fate

Figurines of this god, who has few temples and no priests (and is thus not a true cult), depict Akhlathu as a deformed dwarf, whose facial features even show a hint of retardation. Many Susrahnites swear 'By Akhlathu's Beard!' when in trouble. This is also a god of thieves and gamblers. Since he has no temples or formal priesthood there are no grimoires, cult skills or teachers for this god's religion. Sometimes a lone wanderer appears and claims to be a prophet of Aklathu, however, this often ends badly for the traveller. If they're not set upon by superstitious villagers or angry locals, they vanish mysteriously without a trace a few days later and no one knows why.

# Al-Tawir, the Ancient One, the Sleeper Beneath the Sands

Some say that Al-Tawir dwells in the black gulfs between the stars, others that he sleeps in a sealed and forbidden tomb beneath the desert sand. Al-Tawir is one of the Old Gods. The nomads hear his voice in the howling of the desert winds, and they see his face in the rage of sandstorms. He is the emptiness of the desert, associated

with getting lost, with thirst and hunger, with darkness, and with sandstorms.

# Magic

**Sorcery Grimoire (Rage of the Desert):** Abjure Air, Abjure Water, Smother, Wrack

# Membership

# Novice

The aspirant must brave a vicious sandstorm; those who come out of this ordeal alive are considered to be strong enough to endure the worship of Al-Tawir.

# Apprentice

An apprentice must at least have five of the cult's skills at 30% and have brought themselves near death through starvation.

# Adept

Adepts must have at least five of the cult's skills at 45%. Adepts are taught to make the best use of their available resources when crossing the desert, so they gain a bonus of +10% to Survival skill tests.

# **High Priest**

High Priests must have at least five of the cult's skills at 75%. High Priests of the cult are taught the Abjure Food spell for their Grimoires.

Combat Style: Stormrage (Dagger, Scimitar, Axe, Bow)

**Cult Skills:** The Cult offers training in: Perception, Persistence, Resilience, Ride, Stealth, Unarmed, Meditation, Survival, Sorcery (Rage of the Desert Grimoire), Manipulation, Track

# Baal-Khardah, the Sun-God of Susrah

The lord of the sky, protector and judge of humankind, Baal-Khardah is a distant god, usually worshipped only by nobility. The common people tend to favour the more earthly passions of his mate, Belet-Lil. His lavish temples are filled with ram-headed statues, golden sun-discs, and sacred swords.

# Magic

**Sorcery Grimoire (Sunfire):** Glow, Regenerate, Restoration, Treat Wounds

# Membership

# Novice

The novice of Baal-Khardah must spend the day naked and basking in the heat of the sun, drawing in the sun's rays and energy. At the end of the day when the last rays die in the heavens, the aspirant must present themselves before a temple shrine and if the god is willing the golden sun-disc will reflect the aspirant's inner light.

# **Apprentice**

An apprentice must have at least four of the cult's skills at 35% and have tended the sun god's temple daily, cleaning and doing chores for at least three months. They must make sure that all the god's sun-discs are perfectly clean and have no dust or dirt upon them.

# Adept

An adept must have at least four of the cult's skills at 45% and have spent a great deal of time in meditation, focussed on the burning light of Baal-Khardah.

# **High Priest**

The High Priest must have at least four of the cult's skills at 70% and have led at least three major rituals to the god under the blazing light of the sun.

**Combat Style:** Solar Guardian (1-H Sword, Sword&Shield, Spear, Chakram)

**Cult Skills:** The Cult offers training in: Influence, Insight, Perception, Culture (Susrah), Healing, Lore (Baal-Khardah rituals), Meditation, Sorcery (Sunfire Grimoire), Manipulation.

# Belet-Lil, the Moon-Goddess of Susrah

Voluptuous mate of Baal-Khardah, and earth-mother, Belet-Lil is a goddess of fertility, revelry, and beauty. She is very popular among the Susrahnites, not least due to the large numbers of temple prostitutes found in every city.

# Magic

**Sorcery Grimoire (Passion of the Moon):** Enhance (CON), Enhance (CHA), Regenerate, Restoration.

# Membership

# Novice

The lucky novice of the cult must first undergo a rite of passage, for the aspirant it is a time of ritual and scented baths. Then a night of revelry and orgy follows where the aspirant is judged by the higher peers of the cult and hopefully found worthy.

# **Apprentice**

Apprentices of the cult must have at least five of the cult's skills at 30% and regularly participate in the temple's revelry, fertility rites and have at least one companion of any gender.

# Adept

Adepts of the cult must have at least five of the cult's skills at 40%. They are initiated into the cult's deeper rituals and gain a +10% bonus to all Resilience tests when fending off disease due to careful study of the unguents and alchemical concoctions used by the cult.

# **High Priest**

High Priests of the cult must have at least five of the cult's skills at 70%. High Priests of the cult are well trained in the wiles of Seduction and gain a bonus of +20% to their Seduction skill tests, as well as being equally devious at resisting the wiles of others with a +20% to their Persistence skill tests when being manipulated or seduced.

Combat Style: Moon Dancer (Scimitar, Chakram, Dagger, Bow)

**Cult Skills:** The cult offers training in: Dance, Evade, Influence, Insight, Perception, Resilience, Sing, Stealth, Courtesy, Seduction, Streetwise, Sorcery (Passion of the Moon Grimoire), Meditation, Manipulation.

# Ia-Azutlatl, the Blood-God of Sunken Ptahaana

The true form of Ia-Azutlatl is unknown, but he is one of the Old Gods; some even claim that he is the greatest and oldest of those ancient ones. It is known that the blood-druids of now-sunken Pthaana worshipped him with ceremonies of mass slaughter atop their stepped pyramids of green stone. Today, his name survives only in the rituals of the witch-women of the black Ikuna savages.

# Magic

**Sorcery Grimoire (Heart's Blood):** Damage Enhancement, Enhance (STR), Regenerate, Tap (CON)

# Membership

#### Novice

To be considered for membership of this cult the novice must sacrifice a human life, then rip out the heart and devour it.

# **Apprentice**

Apprentices of the cult must have at least five of the cult's skills at 25%. They must have killed and eaten at least one person in a major ritual in a lunar month. They must also drink a half-pint of blood per week.

# Adept

Adepts of the cult must have at least five of the cult's skills at 45%. The Adept is also now responsible for killing one willing or unwilling sacrifice at any major ritual with the cult's ritualistic knife. They are now more in-tune with the cult's blood drenched rituals and gain a bonus of +10% to their Manipulation skill tests when using the Tap (CON) spell.

# **High Priest**

High Priests of the cult must have at least five of the cult's skills at 80%. High Priests are very gifted with the cult's magic and now gain access to the Tap (STR) spell as part of their Grimoire.

**Combat Style:** Savage Blade (1-H Sword, 2-H Sword, Dagger, Axe)

**Cult Skills:** The cult offers training in: Brawn, Resilience, Unarmed, Lore (Blood rituals of Ia-Azutlatl), Survival, Sorcery (Heart's Blood Grimoire), Meditation, Manipulation.

# Jul-Juggah, the Devil-Bird of Azimba

The sweltering plains of Azimba are dotted with hundreds of monstrous statues of lizard-birds. Whether these grim effigies were crafted by an older civilization, or placed there more recently by the feather-cloaked shamans of Jul-Juggah, is not known.

# Magic

**Sorcery Grimoire** (Skyfeather Book): Dominate (Avian), Project (Sight), Project (Hearing), Wrack

# Membership

# Novice

Novices of the cult must undergo the 'Leap of the Worthy' where they are taken to a high promontory and must throw themselves off. The fall is extremely dangerous with high wind currents before they hit the 'Beak of Jul-Juggah', a mysterious cleft in the earth which slows the descent of the worthy and claims the lives of those who are not.

# **Apprentice**

Apprentices of the cult must have five of the cult's skills at 35% and have tamed at least one avian creature.

#### Adept

Adepts of the cult must have five of the cult's skills at 50%. They must have tended at least one Devil-Bird egg and make sure it hatches.

# **High Priest**

High Priests of the cult must have five of the cult's skills at 75%. They are given a new spell for their Grimoire from the teachings of the cult: Fly.

Combat Style: Devil Bird (Scimitar, Dagger, Mancatcher)

**Cult Skills:** The cult offers training in: Brawn, Evade, Perception, Resilience, Sing, Acrobatics, Track, Unarmed, Sorcery (Skyfeather Book Grimoire), Meditation, Manipulation.

# The Living Flame, Nameless God of Zadj

The Zadjites worship a nameless elemental god, the Living Flame, above all other gods. The priests tend everburning fires in their marble temples. Fire is considered pure; both the dead and the unbelievers are cast into the flames to be purified. Fire also imbues metal with a spark of the divine; the priests of the Living Flame are skilled metal-workers and weaponsmiths.

# Magic

**Sorcery Grimoire** (Forgeflame): Glow, Animate (Metal), Enhance (STR), Form/Set (Metal)

# Membership

# Novice

Novices of the cult must have crafted at least one item made of metal in their lifetime; it need not be the best made item in the world. They must also undergo a rite where they take a metal bowl inscribed with a flame icon, carry it between their arms and walk a short distance to a plinth. At the end of the ritual they are branded with the Fires of Purity and may join the order. A Games Master may wish to impose a Hard Resilience test as part of this rite.

# Apprentice

Apprentices of the cult must have six cult skills at 30%. They must also have crafted at least three good quality metal items in their time with the cult.

# Adept

Adepts of the cult must have six cult skills at 40%. They must have crafted six items of good quality made from different metals in their time with the cult. They now gain a bonus of +10% to any Resilience tests which involve fire due to their involvement with the cult's fire rituals.

# **High Priest**

High Priests of the cult must have six cult skills at 75%. They must have crafted at least one exceptional metal item in their time with the cult. They must also have stoked a forge at least once per day. High Priests are trained smiths so they gain a +20% to their Craft based skill tests.

**Combat Style:** Foehammer (Great Hammer, Burning Glove, War Hammer)

**Cult Skills:** The cult offers training in: Brawn, Evaluate, Resilience, Unarmed, Craft (Armourer), Craft (Weaponsmith), Craft (Blacksmith), Meditation, Sorcery (Forgeflame Grimoire), Manipulation.

# Maggash, the Brazen God of Zhaol

Abominable are the brass idols of Maggash, the fire-god of Zhaol, and even worse are the rites of the priesthood, which include the burning of infants as sacrifice. The priests of Zhaol accept no other

god than their own, and worship of other gods is strictly forbidden and punishable by death.

Maggash is sometimes depicted as a bull, or a bull-headed humanoid.

# Magic

**Sorcery Grimoire** (Maggash's Fire): Animate (Fire), Damage Resistance, Enhance (CON),

# Membership

#### **Novice**

Novices of the cult must attend a ritual where they witness the burning of an infant. They must also be part of this ritual, pulling the lever which tumbles the child into the flaming abyss below. Those who succeed are judged by Maggash's High Priests, those who balk are captured and burned alive as an offering to placate the god who is easily offended.

# Apprentice

Apprentices must have five of the cult's skills at 40% and they must have nominated at least one child sacrifice in a year.

# Adept

Adepts must have five of the cult's skills at 55%, they must have attended six child-burning rituals and led at least one of those in a year.

# **High Priest**

High Priests must have five of the cult's skills at 85%. They must always be the ones to lead the cult's ceremonies. Maggash offers the greatest rewards to those who sacrifice their own new-born children (there is a 5% chance he will offer some kind of boon, such as a heightened fire resistance). High Priests teach the new High Priest the Shapchange (Human) to (Minotaur) spell for their Grimoire.

**Combat Style:** Raging Bull (Axe, War Hammer, 2-H Sword, War Gauntlets)

**Cult Skills:** The cult offers training in: Brawn, Perception, Resilience, Unarmed, Lore (Fire Rites of Magaash), Survival, Track, Meditation, Sorcery (Magaash's Fire Grimoire), Manipulation.

# Nhakhramat, the Six-Armed Woman

The ivory woman, said by some to be the mate of Yadar, is worshipped largely by Khazistanis who disapprove of Belet-Lil's open sensuality, which is a source of conflict between the Khazistanis and the Susrahnites.

# Magic

**Sorcery Grimoire** (Succour's Kiss): Intuition, Neutralise Magic, Restoration, Treat Wounds.

# Membership

# Novice

Novices of the cult must successfully negotiate a test of verbal charms with one of the temple's High Priests. If they come across as genuinely pleasing, willing to learn and most of all subtle when it comes to seduction, they have a good chance of being accepted.

# Apprentice

Apprentices of the cult must have at least four of the cult's skills at 35%; they must have had at least one successful relationship in

their time with the cult and have helped/healed at least one person, mentally or physically.

# Adept

Adepts of the cult must have at least four of the cult's skills at 45%.

# **High Priest**

High Priests of the cult must have at least four of the cult's skills at 70%. They are taught the Mystic Vision spell for their Grimoire. There is a rare chance (5%) that a High Priest will possess the Poison Immunity heroic ability.

Combat Style: Quiet Kiss (Iris, Kris, Kunai, Dart Blade)

**Cult Skills:** The cult offers training in: Athletics, Dance, Evade, First Aid, Influence, Insight, Perception, Persistence, Sing, Acrobatics, Courtesy, Healing, Lore (Carnal Arts), Meditation, Seduction, Sorcery (Succour's Kiss), Manipulation.

# Nwanga Zhaal, the Lord of Beasts

Known and feared across the Jungle Kingdoms, this bloodthirsty god is master of the beasts that howl at the moon. His shamans are always served by packs of dominated or bonded animals.

# Magic

**Sorcery Grimoire** (Blood Moon): Enhance (STR), Enhance (CON), Shapechange (Human) to (Canine), Regenerate.

Heroic Abilities: Mighty Blow, Tireless

# Membership

# Novice

Under the light of the full moon in the remote places of the world, the aspirant must track and kill a deer or elk with their bare hands. Then they must eat the beast's flesh whilst slathering themselves from head to toe in its blood. If they are accepted they will dream of running on all fours.

# Apprentice

Apprentices of the cult must have five of the cult's skills at 45%, they must have killed and hunted locally to the cult's lair and brought back at least the lion's share for the cult's High Priest of any kills they made.

# Adept

Adepts of the cult must have five of the cult's skills at 55%. They must participate in regular hunts, hunting at least one human prey in their time with the cult.

# **High Priest**

High Priests of the cult must have five of the cult's skills at 75%. They must have cast the Shapechange (Human) to (Canine) spell at least once and hunted six different types of prey animals in their time with the cult (in that form). They also gain the Dominate (Canine) spell for their Grimoire.

**Combat Style:** Beast Claw (Cestus, Moon Axe, War Gauntlet, Bow (any))

**Cult Skills:** The cult offers training in: Athletics, Brawn, Perception, Resilience, Stealth, Unarmed, Survival, Track, Sorcery (Blood Moon Grimoire), Meditation, Manipulation.

# Othabbhon, the Guardian of the Gates

Depicted as a horse-headed humanoid clutching a bronze key, this mysterious god is a protector of homes and vaults, as well as the guardian of secret and hidden places.

# Magic

**Sorcery Grimoire** (Gatekeeper): Holdfast, Intuition, Neutralise Magic, Protective Ward

# Membership

# Novice

Novices of the cult must keep at least one minor secret and refuse to part with it for three months. They must also guard a home or a vault for a week and allow nothing to break in.

# Apprentice

Apprentices of the cult must have five of the cult's skills at 40% and have spent one night on guard outside a home or vault for at least a month. They must also know at least a major secret and refuse to part with it.

# Adept

Adepts of the cult must have five of the cult's skills at 60%. They must be good secret keepers and have guarded places skilfully. Their time with the cult teaches them to be more insightful so they gain +10% bonus to Insight skill tests.

# **High Priest**

High Priests of the cult must have five of the cult's skills at 80%. They are the keepers of great secrets and must ensure forbidden knowledge remains hidden. Their skill with mechanisms is such that they treat any lock as one difficulty lower in terms of opening it with a Mechanisms skill test. This is not supernatural or a gift, it is a result of study in the cult's various secret temples.

**Combat Style:** Guardian Gate (Shield, Sword&Shield, 1-H Sword)

**Cult Skills:** The cult offers training in: Atheltics, Evade, Insight, Perception, Resilience, Stealth, Mechanisms, Meditation, Sorcery (Gatekeeper Grimoire), Manipulation.

# Simatala, the Ape-God of Laksha

Turbaned priests strangle sacrificial victims on the white jade altars of this grim ape-god of the east, whose cult has even begun to spread to the west.

# Magic

**Sorcery Grimoire** (Call of Simatala): Damage Enhancement, Dominate (Apes), Enhance (STR), Wrack

# Membership

# Novice

Novices of the cult must face down a great ape in combat and survive; they do not have to kill the beast, but those who do prove they have the strength to compete in the order and the power of Simatala in their veins.

# Apprentice

Apprentices of the cult must have four of the cult's skills at 45% and have dominated at least one ape using the Dominate (Apes) spell.

# Adept

Adepts of the cult must have four of the cult's skills at 60%. They must have performed at least one strangulation sacrifice during their time with the cult. They are trained climbers and gain a bonus of +10% to any tests made involving scaling surfaces or climbing.

# **High Priest**

High Priests of the cult must have four of the cult's skills at 75%. They are taught the Shapechange (Human) to (Ape) spell and may add it to their Grimoire.

**Combat Style:** Strength of Simatala (Great Club, Great Hammer, Garrotte)

**Cult Skills:** The cult offers training in: Athletics, Brawn, Culture (Apes), Evade, Resilience, Stealth, Unarmed, Acrobatics, Meditation, Survival, Track, Sorcery (Call of Simatala Grimoire), Manipulation.

# Yaathra Yok, the Wise One

This is an elephant-headed god of the east, revered for its great strength and wisdom. Temples of the cult contain rich treasures of ivory.

# Magic

**Sorcery Grimoire** (Wisdom of the Ancients): Enhance (INT), Enhance (STR), Intuition, Telepathy

# Membership

# Novice

Novices of the cult must spend a great deal of time in the templelibraries of the cult and absorb much information. At the end of the month they are tested by the High Priests and judged to see if they are worthy of acceptance.

# Apprentice

Apprentices of the cult must have at least five of the cult's skills at 45%. They must have taught at least one person in their time with the cult and instructed them in the lore of the god.

#### Adept

Adepts of the cult must have at least five of the cult's skills at 55%. They must be able to teach competently and have a Teaching skill of at least 75%, they must have taught at least three people in their time with the cult. They gain +10% to their Lore skill tests due to years of study leafing through ancient scrolls and musty tomes.

# **High Priest**

High Priests of the cult must have at least five of the cult's skills at 80%. Their Teaching skill must be 85% or more and they must have taught at least a class with more than six people in it in their time with the cult. High Priests of the god have a bonus of +20% to all Insight tests and +15% to Lore based skill tests due to their intensive learning and training. There is a rare chance (5%) that a High Priest will possess the Loremaster Heroic Ability.

Combat Style: Strength of the Ancients (War Hammer, Axe, War Maul)

**Cult Skills:** The cult offers training in: Culture (Any), Evaluate, Influence, Insight, Lore (Any), Perception, Resilience, Meditation, Oratory, Teaching, Sorcery (Wisdom of the Ancients Grimoire), Manipulation.

# Yadar, the Lord of Death and Secrets

The mysterious high god of the Khazistanis, Yadar, is said to live in the desert and to collect the souls of every living man and woman when they give up their final breath.

Yadar is associated with scorpions and bats. Many carry charms and amulets in the image of Yadar, said to ward against disease and violent death.

Such worship is often personal and unorganized, since the locations of Yadar's temples are generally kept secret and known only to the priests. The cult is suspected to have subterranean shrines which are in cities, and temples in desert ruins. The nomads stay well away from such ruins, since any who stray too close disappear without a trace.

# Magic

**Sorcery Grimoire** (Keeper of Death): Palsy, Phantom (Sight), Phantom (Sound), Phantom (Touch), Smother

# Membership

### Novice

Novices of the cult must spend a night locked in a mausoleum said to be haunted by ghoulish creatures, come morning if they are still alive they are considered for membership to the cult.

# **Apprentice**

Apprentices of the cult must have at least four of the cult's skills at 35% and have assisted an Adept in a funerary rite.

#### Adept

Adepts of the cult must have at least four of the cult's skills at 50%. They must also have aided two Apprentices in teaching them about the cult's funerary rites. Adepts now gain a bonus of +10% when using Stealth to bypass undead/un-living creatures due to their cult's secretive training in temples and forbidden chambers.

# **High Priest**

High Priests of the cult must have at least four of the cult's skills at 70%. They must be regular teachers and assist Adepts in their understanding of Yadar's lore. High Priests are also taught the knowledge of the Shapechange (Human) to (Giant Scorpion) spell for their Grimoires.

**Combat Style:** Reaper (Dagger, Scimitar, Short sword)

**Cult Skills:** The cult offers training in: First Aid, Insight, Perception, Resilience, Stealth, Courtesy, Healing, Lore (undeath), Meditation, Oratory, Sorcery (Keeper of Death Grimoire), Manipulation, Teaching

# Yammosh, the Sea-God of Ghazor

The greatest temple of this Susrahnite sea-god is located in the sinful port city of Ghazor, although sailors from many nations offer sacrifice to him before setting out on long ocean voyages. It is said that he grants his most fervent followers the very power to control the wind and waves; to those who draw a blade in his name he gifts the fury of the seas and the crushing power of the tsunami.

# Magic

**Sorcery Grimoire** (Windwalker): Animate (Wind), Animate (Water), Form/Set (Wind), Form/Set (Water)

# Membership

# Novice

Novices to the cult are taken to the Chamber of Waves in a nearby cave and told to climb in to a specially prepared pit. After three soulful ringing bells are sounded the gates are opened and the lid closed. The rushing tide pours water into the chamber and if the novice is alive after 4 minutes they are admitted into the cult.

# Apprentice

Apprentices of the cult must have at least five of the cult's skills at 40%, they must have been on a ship at least once in their time with the cult.

# Adept

Adepts of the cult must have at least five of the cult's skills at 50%. They are expected to crew a ship at least twice per month and gain a bonus of +10% to any Swim tests when made in calm or stormy waters due to their tough sea-based training.

# **High Priest**

High Priests of the cult must have at least five of the cult's skills at 70%. It is expected they are a captain of a sailing ship or hold a prominent position aboard such a vessel. High Priests must have a 65% Boating skill and a 70% Shiphandling skill. They are taught the Abjure (Air) spell for their Grimoires.

Combat Style: Tidal Wave (1-H Sword, Spear, Trident)

**Cult Skills:** The cult offers training in: Athletics, Brawn, Dance, Evade, Resilience, Sing, Swim, Unarmed, Boating, Commerce, Meditation, Shiphandling, Sorcery (Windwalker Grimoire), Manipulation

# Yibboth, the Sacred Toad of Fakhuum

Despite having its cult-centre deep within the poisoned marshes of Fakhuum, whether Yibboth is part of the true Yar-Ammonite pantheon is uncertain; some claim he is one of the Old Gods. The priests of Yibboth are reputed to worship a golden "frog-thing", along with mummified crocodiles and all manner of water lizards and giant toads.

# Magic

**Sorcery Grimoire** (Toad-eye): Damage Resistance, Diminish (CON), Hinder, Teleport

# Membership

#### **Novice**

Novices of the cult must drink down a cup full of Fakhuum's lethal swamp water, they are judged by the frog-god and if they are found worthy they will survive. If not then the priests hurl the body into the swamp and it rises the next night as a ghoul loyal to the frog-god and a protector of the swamps.

# **Apprentice**

Apprentices of the cult must have four of the cult's skills at 35% and have lured at least one person to the cult. (For good or ill)

# Adept

Adepts of the cult must have four of the cult's skills at 45%. After months of rigorous training and exposure to the swamp, Adepts now gain a bonus of +10% to their Resilience tests when dealing with poison or poisonous fumes/gases.

# **High Priest**

High Priests of the cult must have four of the cult's skills at 65%. High Priests learn the spell Regenerate for their Grimoire.

Combat Style: Battletoad (Ball&Chain, Chain, Dagger)

Cult Skills: The cult offers training in: Evade, Perception, Resilience, Swim, Meditation, Survival, Sorcery (Toad-eye Grimoire), Manipulation, Track

# Yot-Kamoth, the Spider-God of Lamu

The Lamurans bow before black idols of Yot-Kamoth, the monstrous eight-legged god worshipped for centuries in the mountain fastness of Lamra, the capital city. In truth, the priests of the spider-god are the royalty of Lamu, for they wield considerable influence and for a common man to resist their demands is a certain death sentence.

# Magic

Sorcery Grimoire (Silken Web): Hinder, Holdfast, Palsy, Wrack

# Membership

# **Novice**

Novices to the cult must undergo a ritual where they place their hand into a specially prepared obsidian box. Inside this box is a temple-bred spider with lethal venom, if the candidate is found worthy by Yot-Kamoth then they are allowed to survive. If they are unworthy they are paralysed by the venom and thrown into a massive spider-infested pit usually beneath the temple where they nourish the next generation of temple-bred spiders.

# **Apprentice**

Apprentices of the cult must have five of the cult's skills at 45% and have been bitten by temple-bred spiders to help them gain immunity to their venom.

# Adept

Adepts of the cult must have five of the cult's skills at 60%. They are given the task of breeding the temple-bred spiders and gain a bonus of +10% to any test which involves climbing, after months of temple training on the climbing walls they learn to spot available handholds and routes.

# **High Priest**

High Priests of the cult must have five of the cult's skills at 80%. They are in control of selecting applicants to the cult, overseeing the spider breeding. They are taught an additional spell for their Grimoire: Enhance (DEX). There is a chance (8%) that a High Priest may have the Poison Immunity Heroic Ability.

Combat Style: Spider Bite (Chain, Dagger, Rapier)

Cult Skills: The cult offers training in: Athletics, Evade, Influence, Insight, Perception, Resilience, Stealth, Acrobatics, Meditation, Seduction, Survival, Track, Sorcery (Silken Web Grimoire), Manipulation.

# Zanthiss, the Great Serpent

The ancient demon-serpent of Yalotha, in some worlds known as Hassith-Kaa, is the father of various ophidian races and a master of sorcery. Zanthiss is currently believed to be confined to an extradimensional prison, or perhaps banished to a remote star, after the downfall of the serpent-empire of Yalotha.

However, cults of Zanthiss still lair in ancient temples, with writhing serpent-pits, giant slithering temple snakes, malachite altars stained with the blood of centuries of sacrifice, and demonguarded vaults wherein lie hidden the lost papyri of jungle-lost Yalotha.

To become an initiate of the cult, the candidate must survive the lethal bite of a sacred temple cobra. Ascension to greater titles within the priesthood may involve the bites of greater and more poisonous snakes.

# Magic

Sorcery Grimoire (Snake Charmer): Diminish (CON), Dominate (Snakes), Palsy, Wrack

Heroic Abilities: Poison Immunity, Reincarnation (Cobra)

# Membership

# Novice

Novices of the cult must enter the chamber where the sacred temple cobra is kept. They spend a night in the same room as the snake and attempt to commune with it. Should they succeed, they will the snake with their force of mind, to bite them. If they survive the bite they are admitted into the cult.

# Apprentice

Apprentices of the cult must have five of the cult's skills at 45% and survive the bite of another lethal snake.

Adepts of the cult must have five of the cult's skills at 55%. They must have dominated at least one snake in their time with the cult through magic.

# **High Priest**

High Priests of the cult must have five of the cult's skills at 70%. They gain the knowledge of the Shapechange (Human) to (Cobra) spell after years of careful study under the previous High Priest of the cult. There is a (10%) chance that a High Priest may have the Reincarnation (Cobra) Heroic Ability.



Combat Style: Serpent's Kiss (Dagger, Fanged Shield)

**Cult Skills:** The cult offers training in: Dance, Evade, Influence, Insight, Resilience, Sleight, Stealth, Acrobatics, Lore (Forbidden Snake-cult rituals), Meditation, Sorcery (Snake Charmer Grimoire), Manipulation.

# **MINOR GODS**

There are several minor gods who are not detailed in the scope of this book in terms of cult related worship, they are provided to give Games Masters insight into the skeleton of the cult and can be expanded on further. The Gods of Yar-Ammon make an appearance in Song of the Beast Gods which is forthcoming.

# The Gods of Tharag Thule

Among the gods worshipped in the cold wastes of the north are the Moon-God, the Wolf-God, and the Skull-God.

The Moon-God is served only by female priestesses; old hags and crones are respected omen-readers and oracles among the Tharagians.

The Wolf-God is a god of strength, war, and bloodlust. Tribal chieftains are often also priests of the Wolf-God.

The Skull-God is the lord of the dead and the king of ghosts; this god has no priests or followers, but each village has a hut set up with a skull-adorned altar where he is placated with offerings.

# The Gods of Yar-Ammon

The Yar-Ammonites worship an ancient pantheon of beast-headed man-gods, disturbing fragments of a lost age. Depictions of these gods, said to have brought knowledge and wisdom to the first civilization of Yar-Ammon, include serpent-headed, vulture-headed, hyena-headed, and crocodile-headed humanoids. The priests of Yar-Ammon often wear masks in imitation of these gods.

# **EQUIPMENT**



The Coven-Master gave to me a phial
Of the dread opiate that is the key
To dream-gates opening upon a sea
Of acherontic vapours; mile on mile
Stretched ebon coasts untrod, wherefrom aspire
Pylons of rough-hewn stone climbing to skies
Alien-constellated, where arise
Grey mottled moons of cold and leprous fire.
I saw — and screamed! And knew my doom of dooms
Learning at last... where the Black Lotus blooms

— Lin Carter: Dreams from R'lyeh

This chapter details new weapons and armour, as well as other items and equipment found in typical sword and sorcery settings, including herbal poisons and alchemical powders and elixirs.

# MONEY AND WEALTH

The economy of the World of Xoth is based on copper, silver and gold coins. Each country has its own names and shapes for these coins, but in practice they are usually interchangeable, although some money-changers can be found in certain cities. In uncivilised areas, bartering with livestock, slaves, ivory, gems and similar items is more common than using coins.

Use the standard *Legend* prices for goods and services unless otherwise noted in this chapter.

# **WEAPONS**

Iron and bronze weapons are the campaign standard, and are used by most cultural groups. The exceptions are the Zadjites, who craft superior steel weapons; the ancient Yar-Ammonites, who wield archaic weapons of bronze; and the people of the jungle kingdoms, who fashion weapons primarily from wood, bone, or flint. Warriors from these places may sometimes possess superior weapons gained from trade or conquest, of course.

Use the rules in *Arms of Legend* for weapons and armour made of different materials.

# New Weapons

The following weapons are new. Some are regional items, produced in one region but due to their excellent craftmanship or unique properties are often purchased or stolen by foreigners,

finding their way into far-away lands. Outside of their native region, the asking price might be considerably higher than the listed cost.

**Axe, Elephant:** A two-handed exotic melee weapon. This is a huge axe with a crescent-shaped blade, used by the warriors of Azimba to hamstring elephants. It can also be used with devastating effect against lesser foes, of course. Some ivory-hunters among the Zadjites also carry these weapons.

**Dagger, Curved:** A light, simple weapon also known as the *jambiya* or *khanjar*. This weapon is favored by nomads and cultists alike. It usually comes with a curved scabbard, sometimes inlaid with silver, gold or ivory. The curved dagger is produced primarily in Jairan and Khazistan. It cannot be thrown effectively.

**Dagger, Stabbing:** This slightly curved dagger, also known as the *pesh kabz*, has a massive handle but ends in a sharp point. With its good solid grip and perfect balance, warriors of Susrah and elsewhere value this dagger for its ability to pierce armour. The *karud* is a straight-bladed variation of the pesh kabz, with similar statistics.

**Knife, Ikuna:** The name of this heavy sword-knife is something of a misnomer, since they are in fact iron blades from an unknown civilisation that predates the Ikunas by several centuries. The weapons are highly prized among the savage Ikunas, who have not yet mastered the art of forging metal weapons but who occasionally find these knives in ancient ruins in the Hills of the Dead.

**Longbow, Susrahnite:** The archers of Susrah are famed for their mighty composite longbows, which can kill a man from great range. All Susrahnite longbows have thick corded drawstrings.

**Scimitar, Great:** Also known as the *tulwar* or *kilij*, this mighty curved sword is frequently used by palace guards, eunuchs and officers of Khazistan and Zadj.

**Shortbow, Khazistani:** This small but powerful weapon is wielded by the horsemen of Khazistan, as well as the nomads of the Khazraj clans. All Khazistani shortbows are strung twice over to help maintain tension.

**Staff, Long:** A long shaft of hardwood that has been carved and shaped, likely in a low fire or over warm coals.

**Sword, Sickle:** A shallow-curved blade, the sickle sword is an ancient weapon used first and foremost in Yar-Ammon, as well as certain parts of Susrah. The hooked shape of a sickle sword provides the wielder with a +10% bonus to attack any opponent that is not carrying a Large-sized weapon or is bearing a shield.

# **ARMOUR**

In sword and sorcery campaigns, adventurers tend to use light or medium armours. To reflect this, all heavy armour is five times more expensive than the price listed in the *Legend Core Rulebook*.

# New Armours

The following armours are new. As for the new weapons listed above, many of these armors are regional variants, but are less often found in foreign lands than regional weapons. The asking price outside the native region may still be much higher than the listed cost, due to the trophy value of such items.

**Furred Leather Armour:** This armour, while little more than a heavy fur pelt stitched to a thick leather cloak, still provides some



Weapon	Damage Dice	STR/DEX	Size	Reach	Combat Manoeuvres	ENC	AP/HP	Cost
Axe, Elephant	1D10+1	12/9	L	L	Bleed, Sunder	3	4/10	50 SP
Dagger, Curved	1D4+1	-/6	S	S	Bleed	_	6/8	4 SP
Dagger, Stabbing	1D4	_/_	S	S	Impale	_	6/8	4 SP
Knife, Ikuna	1D6+1	6/7	M	S	Bleed, Impale	_	6/7	6 SP
Scimitar, Great	1D10	8/10	L	L	Bleed, Sunder	3	6/10	75 SP
Staff, Long	1D6	8/7	M	L	Stun Location	2	4/9	_
Sword, Sickle	1D8	6/11	M	M	Bleed	2	6/8	20 SP

		Damage			STR/		Combat			
Weapon	Damage	Modifier	Range	Load	DEX	SIZ	Manoeuvres	<b>ENC</b>	AP/HP	Cost
Longbow, Susrahnite	1D8+1	Y	165m	1	11/9	Н	Impale	2	4/8	125 SP
Shortbow, Khazistani	1D6+1	Y	90m	1	9/11	M	Impale	1	4/4	100 SP

Armour	AP	ENC	Locations Available	Cost per Location Armoured
Furred Leather	2	3	Chest and Abdomen	75 SP
Crocodile Hide	3	2	All	200 SP

measure of protection against blows. It is a very common item, worn by northern barbarians, Khazistani horsemen, Zorabi hillmen and Ikuna savages, and others.

**Crocodile Hide Armour:** This armour, common only in Yar-Ammon, provides medium protection yet is light and flexible. It also does not hinder Swimming Skill Tests nearly as much as other armour; imposing only half the normal penalty.

# ALCHEMICAL AND HERBAL POWDERS

Powders can be thrown up to 6 metres, spreading in a 6-metre radius cloud, affecting all creatures within the area.

**Berserking-Powder (250 SP):** This blue-white powder causes madness. Creatures who fail a Resilience test enter a rage and attack the nearest creature for 1d6 rounds.

**Blinding-Powder** (50 SP): This thick black dust causes temporary blindness. Creatures who fail a Resilience test are blinded for 3d6 rounds.

**Dreaming-Powder (100 SP):** This pale yellow powder causes hallucinations and strange visions. Creatures who fail a Resilience test are utterly confused and halve all their skill scores for 1d8 rounds.

**Fire-Powder (50 SP):** This deep red powder ignites upon contact with air, and is therefore always kept in some kind of container, made from glass, ivory or clay. The explosion causes 4d4 points of damage to all affected creatures; divided evenly among their Hit Locations.

# Herbal Drugs

Herbal drugs are treated as a special form of poison that have beneficial effects but require saving throws against the harmful side effects. Characteristic damage caused by such herbs does not begin to heal naturally until after the (beneficial) effects of the drug wear off. At the Games Master's option, repeated use of any of these drugs may cause addiction.

**Grey Desert Lotus (20 SP):** The powdered leaves of the Grey Lotus is a popular drug among the Khazraj nomads of the al-Khazi Desert. A creature that drinks a concoction of water mixed with the powdered leaves gains a +2 bonus to STR for 1d3 hours but must make a Difficult Resilience test or suffer 1 point of POW damage. Another test must be made 1 minute later and if failed the creature becomes nervous, skittish and panicked.

Red Lotus of Ghoma/Ghoma-Weed (50 SP): This herb, with its characteristic red leaves, is calming both for the body and the mind.

It is harvested by ascetic priests in the tropical realm of Ghoma. A creature that chews on the red leaves ignores all levels of Fatigue as well as gains a +20% bonus to Persistence tests made against fear for 1d4 hours but must make a Difficult Resilience test or suffer 1 point of DEX damage. Another test must be made 1 minute later, and if failed the creature becomes nervous, skittish and afraid.

**Silver Lotus (100 SP):** Found only in the dark depths of certain caves on the Silver Lotus Isles in the Eastern Ocean, guarded by hostile pygmies, the fragile leaves of this lotus are destroyed by direct exposure to sunlight. This potent herb induces sleep, grants pleasurable dreams (but sometimes strange visions and nightmares), and for magic-users, it boosts and restores magical power. A creature that inhales the smoke produced by burning the dried and crushed silver leaves must make a Difficult Resilience test or suffer 1d3 points of POW damage. Another test must be made 1 minute later, and if failed the creature falls unconscious for 1d6 hours.

# Other Alchemical and Herbal Items

**Barafa-Grape** (75 **SP):** Found only in the deep jungles of the south, the bright yellow berries of the *barafa*-tree can be used to coat blades and arrow-tips. Anyone struck by such weapons must make a Difficult Resilience test or halve its effective DEX for 1d4 minutes. Like other poisons, a new dose must be re-applied to the weapon whether the test fails or not.

**Green Fire-Resin (2 SP):** This sticky resin is prepared from several plants and mixed with secret alchemical ingredients first discovered by the priests of Yar-Ammon. Any torch soaked with the resin burns three times longer than a normal torch but gives off a weird green light. One dose is enough to treat 10 torches.

**Khanquah-Fungi (100 SP):** Picked from the sheer cliff walls of the Zorab mountains, this fungus is the bane of sorcerers when dried and mixed with blood to produce a foul-smelling soup. Spellcasters who imbibe this concoction must make a Difficult Resilience test or be unable to concentrate properly for 2d8+8 hours, which effectively prevents the affected creature from casting spells. This herbal brew is often force-fed to captured sorcerers, or served to master wizards by ambitious apprentices.

**Purple Leaves of Uthjar (50 SP):** The utility of this rare plant is well-known far outside its native realm but has never been successfully cultivated elsewhere. A creature that chews on the purple leaf gains a +20% bonus to Persistence tests made against mind-affecting influences for 3d10 minutes.

# KNIFE OF THE NECROMANCER



Wisely did Ibn Schacabao say, that happy is the tomb where no wizard hath lain, and happy the town at night whose wizards are all ashes

- H. P. Lovecraft: The Festival

# INTRODUCTION

In the city of Belthaar, there once lived a great wizard by the name of Ikhtanabu Xul. He was well versed in the arts of sorcery, and his red tower was filled with strange treasures and iron-bound books of arcana. The wizard's life was one of luxury and pleasure, served as he was by servile eunuchs and dutiful apprentices.

As he grew old, Ikhtanabu Xul's beard became white as snow, and he began to fear death, for that he should lose all his accumulated knowledge and be denied his worldly pleasures. The wizard studied forbidden books of necromancy to learn the secret of immortality. While Ikhtanabu Xul learned many secrets of the tomb, he did not find the recipe for the coveted elixir of life, nor any spells that could prolong his life beyond the number of years allotted to him by the black candles of life that burn in the secret temples of Yadar.

Thus the necromancer died, old and weak and bitter, and his last instruction to his chief apprentice, Arakshat, was to be preserved by the arts of the embalmer and placed in a private tomb, safe from the depredations of ghouls and tomb-robbers, hoping for some future resurrection by the spells of his apprentice.

Unfortunately for the dead wizard, the loyalty of his apprentices was as short-lived as his own quest for immortality. Within months, the apprentices of Ikhtanabu Xul had squandered their former master's wealth on feasts and debaucheries and rivalries, each trying to become the new master of Ikhtanabu's tower.

The chief apprentice, Arakshat, ultimately had all his rivals killed, maimed, imprisoned, or banished; but the infighting had left Ikhtanabu's wealth spent and his precious library scattered. Arakshat took what was left, sold his master's ravaged properties, and left the city of Belthaar, and was never seen in its precincts again.

Years later, a pack of hungry ghouls, attracted by the bituminous scent of Ikhtanabu Xul's mummified corpse, burrowed into the necromancer's private tomb in the catacombs of Belthaar and devoured his well-preserved body. Now it became evident that not all of Ikhtanabu Xul's necromantic studies had been in vain, for certain secret spells protected the wizard's repose, and his evil shade was released after the feasting of the ghouls. The shade was unable to rest before it had exacted Ikhtanabu Xul's revenge upon his treacherous apprentices but it was bound to the tomb and needed a living host body to leave.

Thus the wizard's shade inhabited a silvered ritual dagger prepared for this purpose until the broken tomb was discovered by a lowly tomb-robber. This thief, Taziz by name, managed to snatch the valuable-looking dagger from the tomb before he was beset by hungry ghouls and was forced to flee.

Out of the catacombs, in the dingy back alleys of the city, the shade of the necromancer possessed the body of the hapless thief, Taziz. However, before Taziz/Ikhtanabu could return to the tomb or seek out revenge on his former apprentice, the tomb-robber was assailed by a band of thugs, whose leader, Jahwar, had glimpsed the silver knife carried by Taziz and decided to take it from the lone man.

# **ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS**

The players are passing through the back alleys of Belthaar and come across Taziz/Ikhtanabu just as Jahwar and his thugs slay the thief and take the dagger. These merciless thugs do not want to leave any witnesses to their murder and so attack the players.

Assuming the players defeat Jahwar and his men, they find the silver dagger. Sooner or later, one of the players or a Non-player become possessed by Ikhtanabu Xul's shade and this eventually leads the players to the wizard's tomb.

The city's catacombs are a maze of tunnels, alcoves and crypts. A sinister order of priests known as the Keepers protects the entrances to the catacombs and the players must sneak past these custodians to gain access.

Massive rats, monstrous maggots and hungry ghouls roam the catacomb tunnels. The players must find the defiled tomb of Ikhtanabu Xul and re-imprison or lay his shade to rest. If they fail, the necromancer tries to use one of the players as his host body in his quest to gain revenge on his former apprentice. Arakshat is now a powerful wizard in his own right and the player's body will surely perish in such a confrontation!

# THE CITY OF BELTHAAR

This city, located west of the Ophrat river, is one of the smallest city-states of Susrah, with a population of only 12,000 people, yet its foundations are ancient and its gloomy, serpentine streets wind their way between mighty monuments and hoary towers. There are temples and ziggurats dedicated to Belet-Lil, Baal-Khardah, Yadar and a multitude of others.

Belthaar is currently ruled by the petty king Simashattar III, whose army of 2,000 pikemen and 500 charioteers is involved in a three-way war with its bigger neighbours, Zhaol and Ghezath. Despite his small army, Simashattar has avoided defeat by capturing a princeling of Ghezath and holding him hostage. At the same time, he is secretly negotiating a separate truce with emissaries of Zhaol.

# 

**Poison traps:** A note on poison traps in the Necromancer's Knife and other adventures, use the rules for Blade Venom found on Page 81 of the *Legend* core book as well as the poisons outlined in the Poison appendix at the end of the book.

# City Guard of Belthaar - Male Susrahnite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	2/5
CON	10	4-6	Left Leg	2/5
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	1/6
INT	11	10-12	Chest	1/7
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	1/4
DEX	12	16-18	Left Arm	1/4
CHA	10	19-20	Head	<b>-/5</b>

Combat Actions	2	Armour: Leather Shirt and Hard Leather Pants2 Armour Penalty
Damage Modifier	+1D2	
Magic Points	10	Traits: None
Movement	8m	
Strike Rank	+12	Common Skills: Athletics 52%, Brawn 42%, Culture (Own) 32%, Dance 24%, Drive 24%,
	(+10 in	Evade 61%, Evaluate 43%, First Aid 25%, Influence 52%, Insight 53%, Lore (Regional) 54%,
	armour)	Perception 53%, Persistence 43%, Resilience 47%, Ride 24%, Sing 22%, Sleight 25%, Stealth
		33% Swim 26% Unarmed 38%

Advanced Skills: Courtesy 63%, Language (Native) 73%, Lore (Tactics) 57%, Streetwise 45%

# Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Short Sword	_	M	S	1D6, Bleed, Impale	6/8
Javelin	30m	Н		1D8, Impale, Pin Weapon (shield)	3/8

# **Combat Styles**

City Guard (Sword, Javelin, Shield, Crossbow): 69%

Possessions: Leather shirt and pants, short sword, javelin, 3 SP.

**Description:** These guards wear simple grey uniforms over their armour.

Tactics: The city guards hurl their javelins first, before surging into melee with their swords.

# Guard Captain of Belthaar - Male Susrahnite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	2/5
CON	10	4-6	Left Leg	2/5
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	2/6
INT	12	10-12	Chest	2/7
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	2/4
DEX	13	16-18	Left Arm	2/4
CHA	10	19-20	Head	2/5

2
-1D2
0
3m
-13
+10 in
rmour)

Armour: Leather Shirt and Hard Leather Pants with Hard Leather helm. -3 Armour Penalty

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 54%, Brawn 54%, Culture (Own) 40%, Dance 23%, Drive 23%, Evade 71%, Evaluate 42%, First Aid 25%, Influence 50%, Insight 60%, Lore (Regional) 54%, Perception 62%, Persistence 40%, Resilience 55%, Ride 43%, Sing 20%, Sleight 35%, Stealth 50%, Swim 26%, Unarmed 49%

Advanced Skills: Courtesy 82%, Language (Native) 72%, Lore (Tactics) 74%, Streetwise 57%

# Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Longsword	_	M	L	1D8, Bleed, Impale	6/12
Longsword 2H		L	L	1D10, Bleed, Impale, 2H Sunder	6/12
Hoplite Shield		Н	S	1D4	6/18

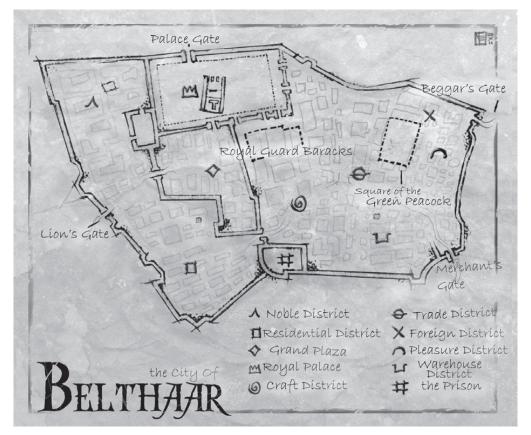
# **Combat Styles**

City Guard Captain (Sword, Shield, Javelin, Spear, Crossbow): 80%

**Possessions:** Leather hauberk and pants, hoplite shield, longsword, 12 SP. Leather helmet. A pair of iron manacles to restrain prisoners with. There is a 60% the guard captain has a javelin for ranged attacks.

Description: Guard captains are typically in their late twenties, with scarlet sashes over their grey uniforms to denote status.

**Tactics:** Most of these junior officers follow their men into combat, eager to gain glory. They are not easy to outwit tactically and they make the best use of their forces. Some guard captains will throw a javelin first before they close in for melee combat. They will focus on the most dangerous foe in a fight and order their men appropriately.



# The Necromancer's Knife

The dagger has a handle of ivory and a silver blade, with black runes etched into it. It is evidently an item of some value and likely a funerary item. The black runes are personal symbols of the long-dead sorcerer Ikhtanabu Xul, as any sage worth his salt will attest to.

Having found the dagger, there are several things the players might do:

• Keep the dagger and do nothing:
One of the players, or a Nonplayer (preferably a close contact),
will eventually be possessed by
the necromancer's shade and seek
out the tomb. The other players
must follow in order to rescue
their friend. If this happens while
the players are still at the Dirty
Dog Inn, there is a half-drunken
night-guard by the name of Zaarek
who sees the possessed adventurer
leaving, and can point the players
in the right direction.

# STARTING THE ADVENTURE

Consider any of the following hooks to get the adventure started.

- Bring the players directly into the action with the events described in the first subchapter, *The Trail from the Tomb*. It is assumed that the players already know each other, but that they only have a few silvers left and currently live hard in the slum quarters of Belthaar, soon having to resort to thievery if nothing better comes up. Perhaps they players are the only surviving members of a mercenary company that was wiped out in a recent battle between two of the Susrahnite city-states.
- Alternatively, the players can come into the possession of Ikhtanabu Xul's knife by some other method. Perhaps they stole it from the tomb-robber Taziz themselves, or perhaps one of the players bought it in the bazaar (the knife having passed from Taziz, through Jahwar, to a merchant).

# The Trail from the Tomb

The players are returning to their current home, the Dirty Dog Inn, from a night of drinking, spending their last silvers in one of Belthaar's cheapest dives, when they walk into a dimly lit square and see a young man (Taziz) being slain by a band of thugs.

Even if the players try to avoid trouble, they are attacked by Jahwar's gang who do not want to leave any witnesses to the murder. Lives are cheap in the slums of Belthaar; better to kill a few more strangers than risk being crucified by the city guard for theft.

Unless the players fight for their lives and defeat the thugs, the adventure comes to an abrupt stop here. Assuming they are victorious, the players probably loot the fallen bodies and find, among other things, the silver knife of Ikhtanabu Xul.

- Try to find out more about the dagger: An adventurer who succeeds with an Insight or Culture (local) test may learn that the dagger once belonged to a wizard whose tomb is now unknown, since after his death his apprentice left the city and has not been seen for years. Another test reveals the names of the wizard and his apprentice and a third test gives the adventurer some clues as to the location of the tomb (in the city's catacombs, near the Square of the Green Peacock). The same information can be obtained from a sage (a well-known sage of the city is called Etanashu and can be found in the Trade District).
- Sell the dagger: The players may try to sell the dagger. In this case, they reach an agreement with a fence (preferably one they know and will trust to keep the dagger until he finds a buyer) who gives them half the sum up-front, the other half when he has found a buyer. When the players return the next day, the fence is gone; he has been possessed by Ikhtanabu Xul and a successful Perception test in the area reveals that he was seen headed for the Square of the Green Peacock.
- Report to the city guard and give them the dagger: This is unlikely, but possible. The city guard of Belthaar is notoriously incompetent and corrupt, a fact which is revealed with a Perception or Culture (local) test. If the players are foolish enough to go to the city guard, they are detained for questioning in a prison cell while the guard captain investigates and examines the dagger. Unless the players resist detainment, they watch helplessly from behind bars as the guard captain is possessed by Ikhtanabu Xul (although there is no visible sign of possession, a successful Insight test gives a player a suspicion that something is wrong) and suddenly leaves the guard-house with the knife. After a day or two, when the captain fails to

# Jahwar - Male Susrahnite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	1/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	1/5
SIZ	14	7-9	Abdomen	1/6
INT	12	10-12	Chest	1/7
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	1/4
DEX	15	16-18	Left Arm	1/4
CHA	12	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 11

Movement 8m

Strike Pank +14 (+12 in

Armour: Leather Shirt and Soft Leather Pants. -2 Armour Penalty

Traits: None

Strike Rank +14 (+12 in armour) Common Skills: Athletics 51%, Brawn 45%, Culture (Own) 40%, Dance 27%, Drive 26%, Evade 60%, Evaluate 64%, First Aid 27%, Influence 44%, Insight 43%, Lore (Regional) 54%, Perception 58%, Persistence 42%, Resilience 53%, Ride 31%,

Sing 23%, Sleight 67%, Stealth, 57%, Swim 28%, Unarmed 31%

Advanced Skills: Language (Native) 74%, Survival 73%, Track 24%, Mechanisms

57%, Streetwise 53%

Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Short Sword	_	M	S	1D6, Bleed, Impale	6/8

# **Combat Styles**

Thug (Dagger, Club) 75%, Gladiator (Axe, 1H Sword, Javelin, Shield): 67%

**Possessions:** Leather shirt and pants, short sword, 4 SP. Small carved ivory handled eating knife, which cannot be used for combat. (worth 1 SP)

**Description:** Slightly overweight yet surprisingly nimble, Jahwar has dark hair and a few missing teeth. He claims to have been a gladiator in his youth.

**Tactics:** Jahwar tries to work with his henchmen to get into a good flanking position. He prefers to employ sneak tactics and often bides his time picking the right moment to strike.

Notes: Jahwar does not own a dagger or an axe, but due to his time as a gladiator he possesses the skills to use both.

# Jahwar's Thugs - Male Susrahnite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/4
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/4
SIZ	8	7-9	Abdomen	<b>-/5</b>
INT	10	10-12	Chest	-/6
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	-/3
DEX	11	16-18	Left Arm	-/3
CHA	9	19-20	Head	-/4

<b>Combat Actions</b>	2	<b>Armour:</b> None
Damage Modifier	+0	
Magic Points	10	Traits: None
Movement	8m	
Strike Rank	+12	Common Skills

Common Skills: Athletics 37%, Brawn 35%, Culture (Own) 36%, Dance 24%, Drive 26%, Evade 42%, Evaluate 34%, First Aid 29%, Influence 34%, Insight 29%, Lore (Regional) 44%, Perception 48%, Persistence 32%, Resilience 43%, Ride 29%, Sing 23%, Sleight 34%, Stealth 30%, Swim 28%, Unarmed 41%

**Advanced Skills:** Language (Native) 69%, Survival 72%, Track 24%, Mechanisms 37%, Streetwise 43%

# Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Short Sword	_	M	S	1D6, Bleed, Impale	6/8

# **Combat Styles**

Thug (Club, Dagger): 62%, Jahwar's Training (1H Sword, Javelin, Shield): 59%

Description: Grim-faced and unwashed, these thugs are true gutter-rats of Belthaar.

**Tactics:** Jahwar's henchmen gang up on a single victim at a time, starting with the weakest-looking character. They attempt to bring them down by cutting with their swords, or smashing at the character with their clubs. If too many of them fall in combat they will attempt to flee or at least regroup with their master.

**Notes:** Jahwar's thugs can also use a Sword and Shield though they don't currently have one. They may well try and wrest one from any adventurers in combat though.

return, the junior city guards blame his disappearance on the players and the 'cursed dagger' they brought to the guard-house; unless the local magistrate is somehow bribed the players are likely to be found guilty of witchcraft and crucified. This could take the adventure in a whole new direction and is left up to the Games Master to develop further.

During their investigation, one of the players is likely to be possessed, as described later (as long as they keep the dagger, that is; if the players leave the knife with a sage, for example, the sage may become possessed instead).

# The Wizard's Shade

The basic premise of this adventure is that someone who comes into contact with the necromancer's silver dagger will eventually be possessed by the shade of Ikhtanabu Xul. It is best if the party includes or seeks out a Non-player who can be possessed, since otherwise one player will be prevented from controlling his adventurer for one or more gaming sessions. Ideally, this Non-player should be someone the players care about, since otherwise they have little reason to try to rescue him from his fate (but see the case of the guard captain, above, for an example of how it can be in their interest to rescue strangers who have been possessed). Alternatively, let an adventurer be possessed but let the player control a pre-generated (or create a new) secondary adventurer during this adventure.

Exorcism: Once Ikhtanabu Xul succeeds in possessing a victim, the wizard takes control over that adventurer's body while suppressing its mind. The wizard then waits until a suitable moment to leave the party (such as when others are asleep, or when alone on some errand) and head back for the tomb. It is thus highly unlikely that the other players will notice that something is wrong (possibly with an Insight test, but only if there is good reason to suspect anything) and will not have the chance to try to get an exorcism before it is too late (the possessed adventurer having left for the catacombs already). Even if the other players do somehow detect that their friend has been possessed, and manage to restrain him (as well as protecting themselves from possession), they probably do not have any way to exorcise the shade themselves. It is easiest to deal with the shade in its tomb; however, the shrine of the Keepers also contains a scroll which can prove helpful in dealing with the restless shade (see The Shrine of the Keepers).

The priests of the major cults in the city (there is a temple to Belet-Lil, and another to Baal-Khardah) are not going to perform an exorcism unless well-paid (at least 500 SP) or if the players have good connections (but the adventure assumes they are foreigners or new-comers to the city). In short, unless the players (and the Games Master) are prepared to take this adventure in an entirely new direction as the players undertake a quest for a temple, the players must likely go to the catacombs to put the wizard to rest.

The Square of the Green Peacock

The Square of the Green Peacock is located at the border between Belthaar's Trade and Pleasure Districts, and as such it attracts a curious mix of merchants and entertainers, the latter including skilled dancers, fakirs and stage-magicians, as well as animal-handlers with trained beasts and sword-masters staging

mock combats with their apprentices. And of course there are the ever-present beggars and cutpurses among the crowds, too.

The large square, 35 metres long and 25 metres wide, is practically deserted at night. It is well-known that there is an entrance to the city's catacombs here, and few care to dawdle around after sunset, when the sinister priests known as the Keepers come out to perform their grisly funerary duties.

The entrance doors to the catacombs are sealed and locked during the day, but at midnight the Keepers walk in solemn procession out from the funerary shrine at the eastern side of the Square, across the plaza and into the catacombs. The priests carry embalmed corpses that reek of bitumen and spices into the crypts, as well as golden urns that contain the ashes of lesser men and women. This they do every night, except on nights when the stars move into certain dire constellations and it is deemed ill-fated to open the doors to the tombs.

The players have likely come to the Square of the Green Peacock because they know that Ikhtanabu Xul's tomb is located in the catacombs somewhere near the square. However, the entrance to the catacombs is guarded by the Keepers and the priests refuse to let anyone into the tombs in spite of any wild stories the players may try to impress on the guardians concerning dead necromancers and possessing shades. The silent, skull-masked priests say nothing, but state to the Players in unmistakable sign language that it is forbidden to enter the tombs.

However, the catacombs are far from impregnable. Both tombrobbers and ghouls know of secret entrances from dilapidated buildings in the back streets of the Square of the Green Peacock. It is such a hidden entrance Ikhtanabu Xul uses to return to his tomb after he has possessed a suitable host, and he plans to leave by the same way after he has retrieved his items from the crypt (see The Tomb of Ikhtanabu Xul).

There are several ways the players can gain entry to the catacombs:

- Kill or incapacitate the guards: A simple, but unwise, approach is to attack the Keepers who guard the catacomb entrance. Unless they can be taken wholly by surprise, the priests flee and alert their brethren in the Shrine adjacent to the Square of the Green Peacock, who respond in force. In any case, the priests who guard the entrance do not carry the special keys required to open the doors, which must then either be broken down by force, or picked by a skilled thief.
- Find a secret entrance: Players who investigate (and possibly break into) the buildings surrounding the plaza might find one of the hidden entrances to the catacombs with a successful Perception test. Roll 1D3 to determine which entrance was found. There is also a secret entrance tunnel from within the Shrine of the Keepers.
- Infiltrate a funerary procession: Since the priests wear robes and masks, and usually remain silent during their nocturnal ceremonies, it is possible for suitably disguised players to infiltrate a funerary procession passing from the Shrine of the Keepers and into the catacombs. Perhaps the players can craft replicas of the robes and skull-masks, or sneak into the shrine and steal such items, or perhaps they must defeat a couple of priests and take their equipment. Infiltrating the procession requires successful use of the Disguise skill and possibly also Influence tests (in case of talking, or if called upon to perform priestly rites).

- Sneak into the shrine during a procession: It is easier to sneak into the shrine at midnight, when most of the priests have left as part of a funerary procession. Inside the shrine, the players can find the keys to the catacomb entrance, as well as a scroll that enables them to deal with the restless shade of Ikhtanabu Xul, or they can steal priestly robes and skull-masks that allow them to infiltrate the cult. They might also find a secret tunnel that leads from the shrine and directly into the catacombs; but in this case they must deal with the corrupt priest Othbanes and his ghoulallies (see *Area 8 of the Shrine*).
- Play dead: A party prepared to deal with the consequences could let one or more of the players feign death in order to be taken away by the Keepers and carried straight into their temple! Assuming such adventurers manage to fool the priests, the 'corpses' will be left unsupervised on a bier in the embalmer's chamber for some time, allowing the Players to get up and sneak around the shrine, hopefully finding the way out before the master embalmer and his entourage arrive... Players who pretend to be dead must make a Simple Influence test opposed by the Perception test of an Non-player who examines the body. An adventurer with 35% or higher in Disguise can add a +5% bonus to this use of the Influence skill.

# The Cult of the Keepers

The following information can be obtain by a adventurer making a successful Streetwise or Culture (local) test at the listed modifier, or by consulting with a sage.

**Simple:** It is the custom and the law that all who die within the walls of Belthaar, from commoners to kings, are delivered into the hands of the silent priests of Yadar after their death.

**Routine:** It is the sacred duty of these Keepers to remove the corpse and to wash and purify the body. If the bereaved have left a well-filled purse for the Keepers, the corpse is usually preserved and embalmed with utmost skill by the priests; otherwise the corpse is burned and the ashes placed in urns of clay, bronze, or sometimes even gold.

**Routine:** The Cult of the Keepers also maintains and guards the extensive network of catacombs and crypts beneath the city, where the urns and the mummies are placed after the funereal ceremonies. No-one except the priests are allowed to enter the catacombs but on certain days friends and family of the deceased may come to the Shrine of the Keepers and place offerings on the altar of Yadar to ensure the well-being of lost ones. It is even said that when such offerings are plentiful, the priests may unlock the doors to the catacombs and allow brief visits to private crypts.

**Difficult:** Others whisper that the mute, cowled priests are actually ghouls, who carry away and eat the dead and that they guard only empty urns and coffins in the catacombs. Such rumors remain unproven.

# THE SHRINE OF THE KEEPERS

As noted previously, the players may seek to sneak into the fane of the mortuary cult. This charnel house is located on the east side of the Square of the Green Peacock. It is silent and looks abandoned during the day; however, the skull-masked priests within come out at night to perform their duties, including collecting the dead from the streets and houses of the city.

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# The Shrine of the Keepers

**Standard Features:** Unless noted otherwise, all interior doors are good wooden doors (AP 4; HP 10; Lock Modifier -10% if described as locked). Ceiling height is 3.5 metres in normal rooms and corridors.

**Lighting:** All areas of the shrine, except the kennel, are lit with wall-hung torches. An acolyte of the cult is assigned to make sure that the torches are always burning, day and night.

# 

# I. Portico and Forecourt

The entrance to the shrine consists of three huge marble pillars topped by a beam inset with rows of human skulls, upon which the ceiling rests. Beyond the columns, a broad stairway leads up into the forecourt.

Supplicants are allowed to enter the shrine with gifts and offerings on certain holy days, during which the double doors of the fane are wide open but watched over by 1D3 priests.

# 2. Kennel

The kennel has six large cages, each holding a chained dog. The priests use these huge, snarling, black beasts both to guard the shrine and to track down tomb-robbers when patrolling the catacombs. The dogs obey the priests and quickly jump in the throat of opponents if unleashed. At night, two of these dogs stand guard at the entrance to the catacombs.

# 3. Priests' Rooms

These spartan sleeping rooms belong to the acolytes of the order. The senior acolyte, Tahn Jeigen, bears the special title of Keeper of the Catacombs and holds the keys to the catacomb entrance in a silver chain around his neck, even when asleep.

# 4. Hallway

This spacious area connects the forecourt (Area 1) with the sanctum (Area 10). Visitors and supplicants must pass through two sets of iron double doors (AP 8; HP 20; Lock modifier -15%), each guarded by a single priest, to reach the shrine.

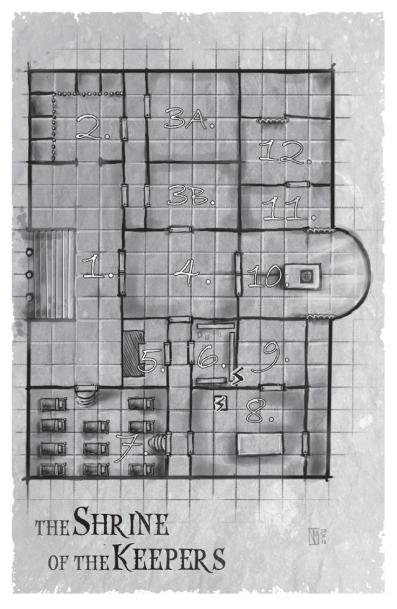
# 5. Furnace

This room is usually unbearably hot. It contains a huge stone furnace, fuelled by coal, that is used to cremate the corpses of the poor. When the furnace is burning, black foul-smelling smoke rises from the shrine's roof through a chimney that is just large enough for a SIZ 14 creature to squeeze through and descend (or ascend, if seeking to escape) with an Athletics test.

There is a 25% chance that 1D2 acolytes are here, refilling or cleaning out the furnace.

# 6. Chamber of Urns

The walls of this chamber are filled with wooden shelves, upon which are set hundreds of urns. Most of the urns are of clay, but



20% are of bronze (worth 10 SP each) and 5% are of gold (worth 25 SP each). A few of these urns are filled with ashes from the furnace (Area 5) and are due to be taken down and placed in the catacombs; the remaining urns (80%) are empty.

# 7. Morgue

The two doors leading into this large room are both adjacent to short stairs of worn stone. The stairs are 3.5 metres tall and the ceiling height is 6 metres. In the chamber are several rectangular stone slabs. The skull-masked priests carry the dead from the city on biers of blackened leather with handles of polished bone, and place their bodies here, covering the corpses with purple funerary shrouds until they are ready to be taken either to the furnace (Area 5) or the embalming chamber (Area 8).

Since the room is below ground level, it is somewhat cooler than the rest of the building, which slows decay and helps prevent the outbreak of diseases. Yet, the stench of death and decay is overwhelming and living creatures who stay in the room for more than 1 round must succeed on a Resilience test or be sickened for 1D6+4 minutes.

There is a 10% chance that 1D3 acolytes are here, carrying a fresh corpse into the room or preparing to move a body away.

# 8. Embalming Chamber

This grisly chamber is the domain of Othbanes, senior priest of Yadar and master embalmer (see Area 9). The room features a workbench filled with mummification tools, such as knifes, hooks, and saws, as well as jars filled with herbs, oils, and resins.

Before mummification, the corpses are drained of blood which is collected in small golden bowls and later poured into the large bowl in the sanctum (see Area 10). Then, the internal organs are removed and moisture is taken by covering the body in salts. The body is treated with special herbs and resins, then wrapped up in cloth and in some cases decorated with protective amulets, jewellery and face masks.

In the north-western corner of the room, beneath a loose flagstone, is the secret entrance (Difficult Perception test to find) to a tunnel that leads into the catacombs beneath the Shrine of the Keepers. Only Othbanes and his ghoul-allies know about this secret door.

Often, ghouls emerge from the secret tunnel and feast upon the corpses that Othbanes has brought into the embalming chamber from the morgue (Area 7). The corrupt priest provides the eaters of the dead with fresh corpses in return for jewellery and other items the ghouls have stolen from the tombs below.

There is a 20% chance that 1D4+1 ghouls suddenly emerge from the tunnel when the players are here and a 40% chance that Othbanes is present in the room.

# 9. Master Embalmer's Office

This is the study and sleeping quarters of Othbanes. A small bookcase is filled with a number of scrolls and parchments that deal mostly with medicine and anatomy. When not working in the embalming workshop or studying his books, the priest rests on a comfortable divan of green silk.

A sturdy chest (AP 6; HP 12; Lock modifier -15%) stands in one corner; Othbanes has the key. This trapped chest (Difficult Mechanisms test to disarm; Difficult Resilience test if failed/ ignored, or suffer 1D6 poison damage) contains several items traded from the ghouls, including four pieces of green silk, each wrapped around an object. Inside the first are two ancient books on alchemy (worth 50 SP each). The second piece contains a small cedar box inlaid with painted ceramic tiles (worth 5 SP). The box holds six linen handkerchiefs embroidered with an 'H' (worth 1 SP each). Inside the third piece are five daggers, balanced for throwing (worth 10 SP each). Each one is set with a small obsidian in the pommel. The fourth length of silk is wrapped around a small jewellery box, which holds a jewellery set consisting of a gold ring (worth 20 SP), a bracelet (worth 40 SP) and a necklace (worth 55 SP). Under the silk-wrapped bundles are three belt pouches. The first holds copper (187 CP), the second contains silver (41 SP), and the third has some gold with a smattering of other metals (64 SP worth).

# 10. Sanctum

In the gloom of this ghastly chapel stands a 3 metre tall statue of the death god of Susrah, cloaked in a hooded robe of real cloth, its arms held out to receive offerings. The statue itself, which has the body of a young and powerful man but whose hidden face is that of a grinning skull, is of polished ebony, while the cloth is embroidered with golden thread. In each of its outstretched hands is a yellowed scroll; the scroll in the right hand contains writings that could teach powerfully good-aligned

Guard Dogs (6)						
	Dice	Avera	age	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6	11		1–2	Right Hind Leg	2/5
CON	3D6+3	14		3–4	Left Hind Leg	2/5
SIZ	2D6+3	10		5–7	Hindquarters	2/6
INT	5	5		8-10	Forequarters	2/6
POW	3D6	11		11–13	Right Front Leg	2/5
DEX	3D6+3	14		14–16	Left Front Leg	2/5
CHA	_			17–20	Head	2/5
Combat Ac	tions	2		Armour	: None	
Damage Mo	odifier	+0				
Magic Poin	ts	11		Traits: N	light Sight	
Movement		10m				
Strike Rank	K.	+10		<b>Skills:</b> Athletics 80%, Evade 55%, Perception 60%, Persistence 43%, Resilience 52%, Stealth 55%, Survival 40%, Track 60%		
Weapons Type Bite	Range —	Size M	<i>Reach</i> T	Damage 1D8	<i>AP/HP</i> As Head	

# **Combat Styles**

Down Boy (Bite): 65%

incantations, while the left contains runic script of protection and warding off of spirits.

In front of the idol is an altar, also made from polished ebony, with inlays of ivory and silver in the shape of skulls. There is a scattering of gold and silver coins and other valuables upon the altar (a total of 250 SP), left there by supplicants who have dared visit the charnel temple to pray for the deceased. Black, greasy candles burn slowly on the altar, representing the dwindling of life force within every living person. It is said that the priests can kill a person simply by extinguishing a candle that has been inscribed with the true name of the victim.

To the left of the altar is a large golden bowl (worth 350 SP) inscribed along its rim with the archaic cuneiform script of Susrah. A successful Lore (Arcane) test allows a character to read the following on the bowl:

The bones of the dead go to the tomb but the blood serves forever the god.

The bowl itself contains a dark crimson, semi-solid liquid, which upon examination proves to be coagulated blood.

At the chief priest's command, or when the items on the altar or the statue are disturbed, the blood in the bowl comes alive as a large, slug-like creature, crimson in colour and terrible to behold as it rears up from the bowl and moves to devour the profaners, after which it returns to the bowl.

There is a 30% chance that the chief priest, Kuri-Ussar, is here along with 1D4+1 lesser priests, performing a grisly ritual.

A blood golem can only be killed by fire or magic. Normal weapons merely pass through the golem's coagulated mass without causing damage (though they themselves will be damaged by the golem's blood-acid if it overcomes the weapon's Armour Points). Because of a blood golem's caustic nature, neither acid nor poison has any effect on it.

A blood golem attacks by moving next to its intended victim and attempting to envelop it. A blood golem's attack may not be parried – the creature will simply slide around the parrying weapon to engulf its foe. An attacking blood golem will wrap itself around one of its victim's Hit Locations.

Once the golem has enmeshed a victim, it will continue to inflict blood-acid damage with the intent of dissolving and consuming its victim. The Hit Location will continue to take 1D6 points of damage every round. Armour will protect against this damage until it is dissolved by the golem.

# II. Vestry

This is the antechamber to the chief priest's office (Area 12), but it is also where the acolytes prepare for ceremonies and put on their purple vestments. Hanging on pegs along the walls are 1D6+1 such robes, as well as the grisly skull-masks of bone that the lesser priests use (the senior priests have skull-masks of jade and gold).

There is a 20% chance that 1D2 acolytes are here, preparing for a ceremony in the sanctum.

# 12. Chief Priest's Office

The chief priest administers the cult from this opulent room, filled with expensive hardwood furniture. Along a wall are several small cages filled with poisonous black desert scorpions.

Behind a silken curtain is Kuri-Ussar's private quarters, furnished with a bed and wardrobe. Also here is a big chest (AP 5; HP 10; Lock modifier of -10%) that is trapped (Mechanisms test to disarm; Difficult Resilience test if failed/ignored or suffer 1D4+1 damage to the Chest from cardiac seizures). The chest contains 4,000 SP.

# The Keepers (16) - Funerary Priests of Belthaar, Male Susrahnite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	13	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	11	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	10	10-12	Chest	<i>–</i> /7
<b>POW</b>	14	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	13	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	13	19-20	Head	<b>-/5</b>

Traits: None

Combat Actions	2	<b>Armour:</b> None
Damaga Madifian	. 0	

 Damage Modifier
 +0

 Magic Points
 10

 Movement
 8m

 Strike Rank
 +12

Common Skills: Athletics 47%, Brawn 35%, Culture (Own) 39%, Dance 34%, Drive 26%, Evade 62%, Evaluate 37%, First Aid 40%, Influence 44%, Insight 39%, Lore (Regional) 47%, Perception 58%, Persistence 42%, Resilience 53%, Ride 39%, Sing 27%, Sleight 35%, Stealth 40%, Swim 32%, Unarmed 51%

**Advanced Skills:** Courtesy 40%, Language (Native) 75%, Lore (Undead) 60%, Language (Other GM's choice) 35%, Manipulation 57%, Sorcery (Death's Laugh) 60%

**Grimoire (Death's Laugh):** Phantom Sense (sight), Phantom Sense (sound), Phantom Sense (touch), Palsy

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Quarterstaff	_	M	L	1D8, Stun Location	4/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Battle Priest: (Quarterstaff, Club): 47%

**Possessions:** Clothing, quarterstaff, 8 SP. There is a 30% chance that at least one of the priests will be carrying a small golden idol, this is worth 50 SP. They have ancient books with their sorcery within (Grimoires) hidden in the temple.

**Description:** Dressed in purple hooded robes, with white bone skull-masks, these priests may easily be mistaken for undead by the superstitious, and they may also use their spells to reinforce such beliefs.

**Tactics:** The Keepers prefer to stay out of melee, but if combat breaks out, they use their staves to best effect since they have received good combat training as part of temple life. A few priests try to slip away and alert their superiors. They will use Palsy to hinder characters and if they can setup in advance, they will attempt to trick foes by pretending to be undead using their Phantom Sense magic.

# Ghouls (2-5)

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	
STR	4D6	14	1-3	Right Leg	<b>-/5</b>	
CON	3D6	11	4-6	Left Leg	<b>-/5</b>	
SIZ	2D6+6	13	7-9	Abdomen	<b>-/6</b>	
INT	3D6	11	10-12	Chest	<i>–</i> /7	
POW	3D6	11	13-15	Right Arm	-/4	
DEX	3D6	11	16-18	Left Arm	-/4	
			19-20	Head	<b>-/5</b>	
Combat Ac	tions	2	Armour	: None		

<b>Combat Actions</b>	2	Armour: None
Damage Modifier	+1D2	
Magic Points	11	Traits: Poison
Movement	8m	
Strike Rank	+11	Skills: Athletics 40%, Evade 40%, Perception 30%, Persistence 43%, Resilience 43%
		Stealth 40%, Unarmed 60%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Claw	_	S	M	1D4+1D2	As Arm
Bite	_	S	T	1D6+1D2	As Head

#### **Combat Styles**

Ravenous Dead (Claw, Bite): 65%, Howl 100%

Ghouls employ a blood chilling howl in combat. When a ghoul howls, every creature in a radius equal to the ghoul's POW in metres becomes Demoralised (as the Common Magic spell) unless he can overcome the ghoul's Persistence with his Resilience in an opposed test. The Demoralise effect continues until all howling stops. Any who are able to resist the howling must resist again every round for a total of five successive rounds, after which they are considered immune to the howling's effects for a week.

Countermagic, Shield and Spell Resistance offer no protection against the effects of a ghoul's howl.

The bite of a ghoul is venomous, with the following Characteristics:

**Application:** Injection.

Onset time: 1D3 Combat Rounds.

**Duration:** 1D10 Hours.

Resistance Time: The victim must make a Resistance roll at the end of the Onset Time. Failure indicates that Condition has taken effect.

Potency: 22.

**Resistance:** Resilience. **Conditions:** Paralysis.

Antidote/Cure: Healing Magic only.

#### Othbanes - Master Embalmer and Corrupt Priest, Male Susrahnite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	12	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	<b>-/7</b>
INT	14	10-12	Chest	<b>-/8</b>
<b>POW</b>	12	13-15	Right Arm	<b>-/5</b>
DEX	13	16-18	Left Arm	<b>-/5</b>
CHA	10	19-20	Head	-/6

**Combat Actions** 3 Damage Modifier 0 **Magic Points** 12 Armour: None

Traits: None

Movement 8mStrike Rank +14

Common Skills: Athletics 45%, Brawn 35%, Culture (Own) 88%, Dance 43%, Drive 35%, Evade 66%, Evaluate 54%, First Aid 37%, Influence 60%, Insight 61%, Lore (Regional) 83%, Perception 56%, Persistence 64%, Resilience 58%, Ride 45%, Sing 32%, Sleight 33%, Stealth 37%, Swim 36%, Unarmed 35%

Advanced Skills: Courtesy 64%, Language (Native) 74%, Lore (Funerary Rites) 88%, Language (Ghoulspeak) 64%, Manipulation 66%, Oratory 42%, Sorcery (Death'S Embrace) 63%

Grimoire (Death's Embrace): Animate (Bone), Animate (Dead flesh), Attract (Harm), Castback,

Hinder, Palsy, Smother, Tap (CON)

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Dagger	_	M	L	1D4+1-1D2, Bleed, Impale	6/8

#### Combat Styles

Bloody Knife (Dagger, Dirk, Kukri): 65%

Possessions: Clothing, dagger, 24 SP. Othbanes also carries a few grisly things on his person, a severed finger which he can use to tempt ghouls. A small box with a tiny heart inside and a pair of rings made from human bone (from a sacrificial victim).

Description: Dressed in purple and silver robes, with a green jade skull-mask. Othbanes deals with the ghouls that haunt the catacombs of Belthaar, and he knows of several secret tunnels beneath the city. The ghouls bring items pilfered from the tombs to Othbanes, while he keeps the locations of their lairs secret.

Tactics: Othbanes will trade the information about the secret tunnels for his life if he is in mortal danger.

Notes: Othbanes command of the undead comes from his unique ability to communicate with the ghouls, who he treats with respect and understanding. To him they are more than soldiers and tools, they are odd friends. If Games Masters want a more traditional evil necromancer type, then there are various rules beyond the core book which deal with necromancy and the undead.

# Blood Golem - Guardian of the Shrine

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	1D6	3	1-20	Body	<b>-/15</b>
CON	3D6	11			
SIZ	6D6+6	21			
INT	1	1			
POW	3D6	11			
DEX	1D6	3			
Combat Act	ions	1	Armour:	None	
Damage Mo	difier	+0			
Magic Point	rs .	11	Traits: Po	oison	
Movement		6m			
Strike Rank		+2		hletics 40%, Evade 40% 0%, Unarmed 60%	%, Perception 30%, Persistence 43%, Resilience 43%,

# Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Envelop	_	S	M	1D6	As Body

# **Combat Styles**

Attack (Envelop): 100%

#### Kuri-Ussar - Chief Priest, Male Susrahnite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	13	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	14	7-9	Abdomen	<b>-/7</b>
INT	15	10-12	Chest	<b>-/8</b>
POW	13	13-15	Right Arm	<b>-/</b> 5
DEX	12	16-18	Left Arm	<b>-/</b> 5
CHA	14	19-20	Head	-/6

<b>Combat Actions</b>	3
Damage Modifier	+1D2
Magic Points	13
Movement	8m
Strike Rank	+14

**Armour:** None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 46%, Brawn 58%, Culture (Own) 70%, Dance 31%, Drive 30%, Evade 64%, Evaluate 69%, First Aid 57%, Influence 88%, Insight 63%, Lore (Regional) 85%, Perception 48%, Persistence 66%, Resilience 56%, Ride 45%, Sing 47%, Sleight 46%, Stealth 47%, Swim 47%, Unarmed 46%

**Advanced Skills:** Courtesy 69%, Healing 58%, Language (Native) 89%, Lore (Funerary Rites) 90%, Language (Ghoulspeak) 49%, , Manipulation 70% Meditation 46%, Oratory 67%, Sorcery (Death's Kiss) 75%

**Grimoire (Death's Kiss):** Attract (Harm), Damage Resistance, Holdfast, Palsy, Protective Ward, Spell Resistance, Tap (STR), Tap (CON), Wrack

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/H1</i>
Scimitar	_	M	L	1D8, Bleed	6/10

#### **Combat Styles**

Stylish Blade (Scimitar, Great Scimitar, Falchion): 70%, Hurl Scorpion 65%

**Possessions:** Clothing, scimitar, 43 SP. 8 black scorpions in cages around Kuri's lair. Kuri also has 3 doses of anti-venom in tiny phials in a small pouch.

**Description:** The chief priest of the temple wears purple robes with gold trim and wears a golden skull-mask. Behind the mask is an unwholesome and ugly face, and an unpleasant personality to match, for Kuri-Ussar lusts after the dead.

Tactics: Kuri-Ussar delights in using his scimitar against weak enemies. However, he is no fool and does not attack heavily armed foes; he prefers to employ cunning in those cases. Kuri-Ussar uses his magic to its best effect; he debilitates foes and then moves in to rip them apart with his scimitar. If he's given a chance to prepare in combat, he will cast any protective magic prior to battle and move to a defensible position. He also has a special trick he likes to use against his enemies, since he keeps small poisonous scorpions (8) in cages around his lair. At any time in combat he can pick one of these up and use a Combat Action to hurl it at a character. This tiny scorpion has 1HP and may well die when thrown (70% chance). It is treated like a weapon for the purpose of this adventure. If Kuri-Ussar manages to hit with his Combat Style it is considered that the scorpion has found a weak point in the target's armour and now the victim needs to resist the poison.

**Notes:** Games Masters might also want to consider giving Kuri access to the Cult of Yadar, since he seems to be fond of scorpions. In this case he will gain the Grimoire of the cult, the Combat Styles and other cult related skills and powers.

# IN THE CATACOMBS OF BELTHAAR

The main entrance to the catacombs of Belthaar is located on the north side of the Square of the Green Peacock. A few secret entrances also exist. The Keepers guard the main entrance but are unaware of the secret entrances used by tomb-robbers and ghouls.

The catacombs are a true maze of tunnels, alcoves and crypts. Many wandering creatures may be encountered here, as well as tomb-robbers and purple-robed priests with their guard dogs.

A few sample tombs are described along with Ikhtanabu Xul's tomb; the Games Master may wish to expand the adventure by placing additional encounters and tombs that can be explored by the players.

I. Tomb Entrance

The forbidding, heavy double doors to the catacombs are of iron. The keys to the doors are held by the so-called Keeper of the Catacombs, a senior priest (see Area 3 of the Shrine of the Keepers). If there is a procession carrying urns or mummies from the shrine to the catacombs, the Keeper of the Catacombs walks in front of the procession and unlocks the doors.

From sunset to sunrise, when most people shun the Square of the Green Peacock, four priests stand guard at this entrance, along with two guard dogs. During the day, the entrance appears unguarded, but there are secret servants of the Keepers who mingle with the crowds in the Square and keep watch, alerting the priests if anyone tries to breach or bypass the doors to the catacombs.

#### 2. Mausoleum

Beyond the entrance doors is a large hall, its roof upheld by a dozen square columns. The Keepers sometimes use this room to perform rituals.

To the sides of the hall are alcoves, protected with iron portcullises (AP 8; HP 20) that contain the sarcophagi of Belthaar's nobles and royalty. None of the bodies within have been buried with treasure (unless the Games Master deems otherwise) but any violation of the royal crypts is punishable by death.

Several tunnels lead from the mausoleum hall to the network of lesser crypts that make up the catacombs.

# 3. Secret Entrances

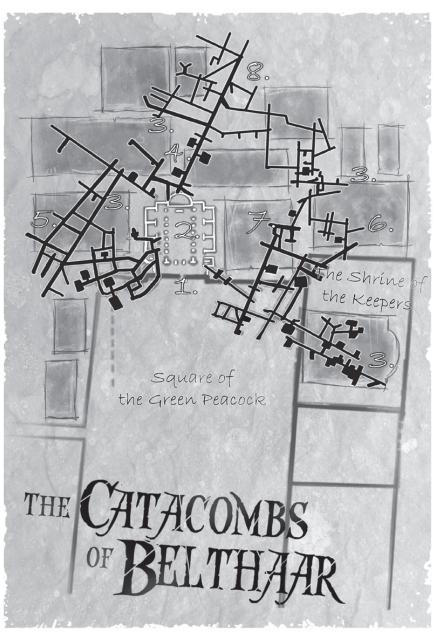
There are four different hidden entrances, including one from the Shrine of the Keepers (see Area 8 of the Shrine). The other three entrances are located in the cellars of dilapidated buildings nearby. After having found the correct building, it requires a Perception test to discover the actual tunnel entrance, which is typically concealed by rubble or loose flagstones.

Both tomb-robbers and ghouls use these secret entrances to come and go; make an extra check for random encounters each time the players pass by.

#### 4. Catacomb Tunnels

The walls of the catacomb tunnels are plain and unadorned. To the sides of each tunnel are alcoves and doors, some of which are broken down or burrowed around.

Also remember that the players must carry torches to see in the darkness, while many of the creatures that roam the tunnels have abilities to overcome the situation, allowing them to effectively ambush them.



# 5. Sample Tomb I

This is a typical crypt, a small, sealed chamber filled with dozens of urns. 1D10 urns are of bronze (worth 10 SP), the rest are made from clay. The name of the deceased is usually carved on the urn. Each urn is stoppered and then sealed with wax; inside is a handful of ash (worthless in most cases, although the ashes of certain individuals might be of interest to sorcerers and necromancers).

# 6. Sample Tomb 2

Family crypts such as this one are uncommon in the catacombs. The door is nondescript so as not to attract tomb-robbers. The interior walls are covered with plaster and painted in bright colours with scenes of family life and pleasures. The tomb has not been violated and still contains four wooden coffins. Inside each coffin is a mummy, coated with resin and wrapped in cloth. Each mummy wears amulets and jewellery worth 3D6 x 10 SP.

# 7. Sample Tomb 3

The door to this T-shaped tomb has been broken down long ago. The floor of the main corridor is littered with broken clay urns and the ashes of the dead mingled with the dust of ages. In each of the two alcoves at the end of the corridor stands a stone sarcophagus, its heavy stone lid broken and shattered. The mummies within have been stripped of all valuables and jewellery; pieces of decaying cloth hang in tatters around their ill-treated bodies.

#### 8. The Tomb of Ikhanabu Xul

The door to Ikhtanabu Xul's tomb is still sealed with a heavy stone slab (AP 6; HP 25) but there is a half-concealed tunnel (spotted with a Perception test) not far away, burrowed by the ghouls, that leads into the chamber.

The wizard's name and title is chiselled into the door but it requires a Lore (history) test to recognize it. More obvious, the door is carved with the same black runes as found on Ikhtanabu Xul's silver knife.

Realising he was dying, the old wizard paid the cult of the Keepers handsomely to be able to construct a private tomb, and to allow his apprentices to enter and leave the tomb freely as they prepared for his burial.

Ikhtanabu Xul was mummified by one Shalgi-Ram, the predecessor of the current master embalmer, Othbanes (see Area 9 of the Shrine). Shalgi-Ram was also bribed so that he would allow the necromancer's apprentices to return and retrieve the corpse at some future date, when they had mastered some dark spell of resurrection. But due to the infighting amongst the apprentices (see the *Introduction*), this scheme never came to fruition. Furthermore, Shalgi-Ram died himself a few years later (some suspect that he was poisoned by Othbanes), and Ikhtanabu Xul's tomb was forgotten until the ghouls found it.

The stone sarcophagus rests on a raised dais in this chamber which is 10 by 10 metres. Ghouls have broken the lid and devoured the necromancer's corpse, leaving his bones scattered around in the tomb; a Perception test reveals that the marrow has been sucked out of the bones.

There is a secret compartment (found with a Perception test) within the base of the sarcophagus that contains a pouch of semiprecious, uncut gems (worth 250 SP in total) as well as two large, iron-bound tomes of arcana. The wily Ikhtanabu Xul placed these items here, unbeknownst to his apprentices, while his tomb was being built. Retrieving the books is the reason why the wizard must return to his tomb before he seeks revenge on his apprentice.

The haunt is the spirit of a person who died before completing some vital task. A haunt inhabits an area within 20 metres of where its body died and never leaves this area (note – a haunt in possession of a material body can leave its area and must often do so in order to finish its task). It desires but one thing; final rest. To accomplish this, it must possess a living creature and finish the task that prevents it from achieving everlasting slumber. A haunt only attacks humanoid creatures.

**Dexterity Damage:** The touch of a haunt deals 1 point of DEX damage to a living foe. A creature reduced to 0 DEX by a haunt is subjected to its Malevolence, detailed below. DEX damage dealt by a haunt cannot be healed by any means while the haunt possesses the host's body.

**Malevolence:** Once per round, a haunt can merge its body with a physical creature whose DEX has been reduced to 0, similar to common possession.

The target can resist the attack with a successful Persistence test. A creature that successfully resists is immune to that same haunt's Malevolence for one day. If the test fails, the haunt vanishes into the target's body (whose DEX temporarily returns to normal) and attempts to complete its unfinished task. If the haunt completes its task, it leaves the host and fades away forever.

When the haunt leaves the host, the host's DEX drops back to 0. If the host body is slain while the haunt is in possession of it, the creature becomes tied to that area and can never leave. Its unfinished task remains the same.

A haunt's natural form is that of a translucent image appearing much as the person did in life. As a Combat Action, it can alter its form so as to appear as a floating, luminescent ball of light (possibly being mistaken for a will-o'-wisp in this form). In this form, it cannot use its touch attack or its Malevolence.

A haunt remains in one form or the other until it chooses to assume a new one. A change in form cannot be forcibly altered. A haunt cannot change forms while possessing a host.

In most cases, it is difficult to destroy a haunt through simple combat. The 'destroyed' spirit will restore itself in 1D4 days. Even

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#### The Tomes of Ikhtanabu Xul

Written in Susrahnite. Fragments of the tomes are found in the books of Ikhtanabu Xul's apprentices.

Market Value: 8,000 SP.

#### 

Haunt -	The Shade of Ik	htanabu Xul			
	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	-		1-20	Presence	-/13
CON	-				
SIZ	-				
INT	2D6+6	13			
POW	2D6+6	13			
DEX	3D6	11			
Combat A	Actions	2	Armour	: None. No Armour	Penalty
Damage N	Modifier	+0			
Magic Po	ints	13	Traits: I	Life Sense	
Movemen	t	10m			
Strike Rai	nk	+12	Skills: E	wade 65%, Perception	n 62%, Persistence 87%, Resilience 85%, Stealth 60%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Touch	_	S	M	1 DEX	As Presence

#### Combat Styles

Touch 65%

The haunt is the spirit of a person who died before completing some vital task. A haunt inhabits an area within 20 metres of where its body died and never leaves this area (note – a haunt in possession of a material body can leave its area and must often do so in order to finish its task). It desires but one thing; final rest. To accomplish this, it must possess a living creature and finish the task that prevents it from achieving everlasting slumber. A haunt only attacks humanoid creatures.

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A haunt remains in one form or the other until it chooses to assume a new one. A change in form cannot be forcibly altered. A haunt cannot change forms while possessing a host.

In most cases, it is difficult to destroy a haunt through simple combat. The 'destroyed' spirit will restore itself in 1D4 days. Even the most powerful spells and rituals are usually only temporary solutions as a haunt that would otherwise be destroyed returns to its area with a successful Persistence test. The only way to get rid of a haunt for sure is to use some kind of miraculous incantation or allow it to finish the task that holds it to the material world.

In this adventure, in addition to the means specified above, the spirit of Ikhtanabu Xul can also be laid to rest by destroying (burning) his arcane tomes and books.

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# **CONCLUSION**

When Ikhtanabu Xul possesses a character, he heads first back to his tomb to retrieve his books and treasure. He stays in the tomb for several days, studying his books, then eventually leaves the city of Belthaar in search of his former apprentice, now a powerful sorcerer in his own right.

To be successful, the players must intercept the possessed adventurer in the tomb or before he leaves the city, and lay Ikhtanabu's shade to final rest, likely by destroying the necromancer's books.

Alternatively, they can strike a deal with the restless spirit and help it gain revenge by tracking down the former apprentice. In this case, a whole mini-campaign could be built around the hunt for Arakshat.

If the players fail: Using a possessed body, Ikhtanabu Xul will seek out his former apprentice Arakshat to gain revenge. Unless the players intervene, the possessed body must surely perish when the two wizards clash!



# THE SPIDER GOD'S BRIDE



In the city of Lamra, in the land of Lamu, the dreaded priests of Yot-Kamoth have built a temple to house their god, a colossal eight-legged spider-idol, carved from the black stone of a fallen star. Great is the power of the spider-priests of Lamu, for they outnumber even the austere priestesses of Nhakhramat and the muffled priests of Yadar and they ride as kings through the shadowed streets of Lamra.

But though the iron-fisted rule of the priests is largely uncontested, such ruthless men and women as worship Yot-Kamoth are often at war with each other, driven by ambition and power-thirst.

One such ambitious priest was Yetara, who wove webs of intrigue and plotted to overthrow his superiors in the spider-cult. Before his plotting came to fruition, Yetara's plans were discovered by the spies of the high priest, the old but wily Hamadara. Yetara barely escaped Hamadara's vengeful wrath with his life, but was forced to flee hastily from Lamu.

Years earlier, before becoming a priest, Yetara had travelled in the lands to the south. In the city of Zul-Bazzir, he became acquainted with another foreigner, the Eastern sorcerer Zheng-Ya of Taikang. Seeking refuge from the assassins of Hamadara and the cult of Yot-Kamoth, Yetara now flees southwards towards Zul-Bazzir along with his servant Sefu, a giant tribesman of Shoma.

To spite Hamadara, Yetara kidnaps Daniya, a beautiful templevirgin of Yot-Kamoth, whom he intends to give or sell to the *bey* (governor) of Zul-Bazzir for inclusion in the ruler's harem. Thus Yetara hopes to buy additional favor and protection in Zul-Bazzir.

Unknown to all but the girl, Daniya, the so-called templevirgin, has performed certain profane rites of carnal supplication in the shrine of the spider-idol, and has been impregnated by a manifestation of Yot-Kamoth. She now carries the unborn spawn of the spider-god in her womb, and although there are as yet no physical signs of her blashemous pregnancy, this child of Yot-Kamoth is soon to be unleashed upon the world.

The tale begins as Yetara hires the players as additional bodyguards on the way to Zul-Bazzir.

# **ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS**

The players guard Yetara's small caravan as it passes through the mountain passes of Kharjah, dealing with the Zorabi tribes who guard the passes and collect tolls from passing caravans.

Entering into the al-Khazi desert, the caravan makes a short stop at the Oasis of Yirlat. Somewhere along the route, wild Khazraj nomad raiders may attack the caravan.

Entering the city of Zul-Bazzir, the party faces leprous beggars, haughty Khazistani guard-captains and skulking thieves. The

players can spend their time trading for items in the bazaar, or waste their money in the pleasure district.

Meanwhile, Yetara locates the house of Zheng-Ya but finds the sorcerer mysteriously missing. Awaiting his friend's return, the priest moves into the mansion and continues to hire the players to guard against his nameless enemies. Some days later, assassin-cultists of Yot-Kamoth, who have followed the caravan to Zul-Bazzir from Lamu, launch an assault on the mansion in the dark of night.

During the attack, Yetara flees down into the dungeons of the mansion with the girl Daniya. To the Lamuran priest's surprise, she backstabs him and feeds upon his life-energy to spark the birth of the spawn of Yot-Kamoth that she carries in her womb. After the birth, she hides the corpse of Yetara.

Assuming the players are successful in Drive the assassins from Lamra away, they investigate Yetara's disappearance and explore the dungeons of Zheng-Ya's house. They discover a webbed cocoon; inside is the spawn of Yot-Kamoth. The adventure climaxes with a bloody confrontation between the players and the spawn of the spider-god, as well as Daniya and her secret lover Sefu.

#### STARTING THE ADVENTURE

Consider any of the following hooks to get the adventure started:

- Penniless in the small city of Belthaar, the players sign up as caravan guards on a small caravan headed for Zul-Bazzir, a city in the al-Khazi desert.
- Fleeing some enemy (possibly the authorities), the players need to get away fast. They hire on as caravan guards to disguise and get away from the city unnoticed.
- The players, while traveling in the desert, are beset by raiders, looted of their equipment and left to die of thirst in the unforgiving heat of the trackless waste. Yetara's caravan comes across the half-dead characters. Sefu offers to help the players if they join the caravan as guards after they recover.

# THE MASTER'S CARAVAN

The spider-priest Yetara, his servant and bodyguard Sefu, and the dancing-girl Daniya are fleeing from Lamu, headed for the deserts of Khazistan and the golden-domed city of Zul-Bazzir. Their small caravan consists of Sefu on his warhorse, four mercenaries from Khorsul on foot, as well as Yetara and Daniya, who each ride their own camel in a canopied howdah that conceals the rider from prying eyes. In addition, there are four pack camels that carry dried food rations and water-skins.

Sefu hires the players somewhere along the way, preferably before the caravan reaches the mountain pass at Kharjah. The adventurers are offered a pay of 1 SP per day, and a bonus of 25 SP each if they successfully reach Zul-Bazzir (adjust this amount if the players are experienced).

Day-to-day leadership of the caravan is handled by Sefu; Yetara and Daniya mostly remain behind the veils of the canopies atop their camels. The players are simply told that these camels are occupied by 'the Master' and one of his female slaves. On the rare occasions that the players see the Master, he is wearing a long-sleeved, hooded robe that conceals his hands and face.

Any attempt to try to talk to the slave girl is quickly stopped by Sefu. If the players somehow manage to speak with Daniya, she feigns

#### Yetara, Outcast Priest of Yot-Kamoth - Male Lamuran

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	10	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	11	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	16	10-12	Chest	-/7
<b>POW</b>	14	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	14	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier +0

Magic Points 14

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +15

Armour: None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 64%, Brawn 31%, Culture (Own) 82%, Dance 48%, Drive 38%, Evade 68%, Evaluate 70%, First Aid 40%, Influence 88%, Insight 55%, Lore (Regional) 77%, Perception 60%, Persistence 68%, Resilience 44%, Ride 38%, Sing 48%, Sleight 38%, Stealth 60%, Swim 42%, Unarmed 34%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 64%, Courtesy 50%, Healing 50%, Language (Native) 80%, Lore (Yot-Kamoth) 72%, Manipulation 60%, Meditation 48%, Oratory 48%, Streetwise 38%, Survival 36%, Sorcery (Silken Web) 62%

Grimoire (Silken Web): Hinder, Holdfast, Palsy, Wrack

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HI
Quarterstaff	_	M	L	1D8, Stun Location	4/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Temple Failure (Quarterstaff, Dagger): 64% (no longer uses Spider Bite Style)

**Possessions:** Quarterstaff, grey hooded robe, Lamuran turbaned cap, emerald spider signet ring (worth 75 sp), 1 dose of blinding-powder, 1 dose of dreaming-powder, 150 sp.

**Description:** Yetara is middle-aged, thin and wiry, with a clean-shaven pate and staring dark eyes lined by heavy eyebrows. He wears a grey hooded robe with long sleeves, as well as a turbaned cap in the Lamuran fashion. Now an outcast from the cult of Yot-Kamoth, he has vowed to some day return to Lamra and exact revenge upon his former cult brothers, claiming the position of high priest that he thinks he deserves. **Tactics:** In general, Yetara stays away from physical combat and lets Sefu deal with opponents. The priest uses his staff to strike against lightly armoured opponents, and finally uses his alchemical powders when in personal danger.

**Special Note:** Since Yetara has been cast out from his cult, he does not currently gain any benefit from his rank within it. He has lost his Sorcery Grimoire but his stat-block accounts for the recovery of that magic book should it come to pass.

# Sefu, Yetara's Bodyguard - Male Shoma

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	3/7
CON	16	4-6	Left Leg	3/7
SIZ	16	7-9	Abdomen	4/8
INT	13	10-12	Chest	4/9
POW	13	13-15	Right Arm	4/6
DEX	12	16-18	Left Arm	4/6
CHA	14	19-20	Head	6/7

Combat Actions 2

Damage Modifier +1d4

Magic Points 13 Movement 8m

Strike Rank +13 (+7 when

armoured)

Armour: Scalemail Shirt, Banded Skirt and Full Helm: -6 Armour Penalty

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 43%, Brawn 82%, Culture (Own) 56%, Dance 48%, Drive 25%, Evade 79%, Evaluate 27%, First Aid 25%, Influence 48%, Insight 56%, Lore (Regional) 56%, Perception 61%, Persistence 26%, Resilience 77%, Ride 30%, Sing 27%, Sleight 26%, Stealth 30%, Swim 32%, Unarmed 58%

Advanced Skills: Gambling 36%, Language (Native) 77%, Survival 69%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Broadsword	_	M	M	1D8, 1d8+1 Bleed, Impale	4/14

#### **Combat Styles**

Lion's Den (Broadsword, War Maul, Dagger): 79%

Possessions: Broadsword, dagger, chainmail, lion-skin cloak, 45 SP.

**Description:** Sefu is a black-skinned giant, with a muscular body and gleaming white teeth. He wears a lion-skin cloak over his armor. His demeanor is rather social and outgoing, even towards relative strangers (such as the Player Characters). He has been a loyal servant of Yetara for over a decade, but has recently been seduced by Daniya and is now secretly her thrall.

**Tactics:** Sefu lacks any effective ranged weapons and prefers to close with enemies as fast as possible, using his anger to deal massive damage. He risks his own health to protect Daniya from harm.

# Danyia, Bride of the Spider-God - Female Lemuran

•		~		
	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	10	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	<b>-/7</b>
INT	13	10-12	Chest	-/8
POW	15	13-15	Right Arm	-/5
DEX	16	16-18	Left Arm	<b>-/5</b>
CHA	16	19-20	Head	-/6

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +0 Magic Points 15 Movement 8m Strike Rank +15 **Armour:** None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 46%, Brawn 22%, Culture (Own) 66%, Dance 52%, Drive 31%, Evade 52%, Evaluate 59%, First Aid 39%, Influence 82%, Insight 48%, Lore (Regional) 56%, Perception 48%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 28%, Ride 41%, Sing 51%, Sleight 62%, Stealth 59%, Swim 24%, Unarmed 36%

Advanced Skills: Acrobatics 56%, Courtesy 49%, Disguise 39%, Healing 38%, Language (Native) 79%, Mechanisms 59%, Oratory 41%, Seduction 59%, Streetwise 51%, Track 37%



Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Curved dagger	_	S	S	1D4+1 Bleed	6/8

# **Combat Styles**

Venomous Bride (Dagger, Kukri, Blowgun): 56%

**Possessions:** Curved dagger, blowgun and six darts with two doses of medium spider venom in a small leather pouch, red silk dress, veil set with pearls (worth 20 SP).

**Description:** Daniya appears as a simple but beautiful slave girl, wearing only a gauzy dress of red silk, held around her slim waist by a gilded belt. She has black hair and the face below her dark, seductive eyes is hidden by a short silvery veil set with pearls.

**Tactics:** The spider-god's bride does not risk her life in direct confrontation, but prefers to use her skills of persuasion and seduction to further her goals. She appears to be harmless, but can strike suddenly with a poisoned dagger in the back. If forced into melee, she attempts to flank and sneak attack enemies, using her Athletics skill to get away from dangerous opponents. She also attempts to try and get into a position where she can use her blowgun and spider venom laced darts.

to be a simple dancing-girl, a slave owned by Yetara. She does not appear to have much information to offer the players. The girl might, if she thinks she can benefit from it, pick a strong but weak-willed adventurer among the party and try to seduce him during the long trek (either role-played, or through use of her Influence skill), like she has done with Sefu. Daniya will then try to turn this adventurer against his friends and companions at the most opportune time.

The travel time from Belthaar to the Kharjah Pass (170 miles) is approximately seven days (assuming the caravan is slowed by the Khorsulan mercenaries who don't have mounts, the caravan can cover 24 miles per day on plains with roads). Crossing into the trackless al-Khazi desert, it takes a fortnight to reach the Oasis of Yirlat (another 170 miles), where the water-skins must be refilled and new food rations must be bought. The caravan then proceeds south towards Zul-Bazzir (150 miles from Yirlat), finally seeing the ivory minarets and spires of the city after another 12 days.



The caravan eventually reaches the foothills of the mighty Zorab mountains separating the plains of Susrah from the steppes and deserts of Khazistan. The only easily accessible crossing for hundreds of miles is at the Kharjah Pass (although several secret passes, known only to the Zorabi mountain peoples, are rumoured to exist).

The pass is guarded by mountain tribes loyal (at least in name) to the *padishah* of Khazistan. The Zorabi inhabit small, impregnable stone towers carved into the mountain-sides. At the western end of the Kharjah Pass, there are two stone towers, each housing around 50 warriors. Travellers are typically approached by troops consisting of 10 warriors; several more if large caravans are coming through.

The tribesmen collect taxes from caravans passing through the pass. They claim one-tenth of the value of trade goods carried (the majority of this tax is in turn supposed to be brought as tribute to



Khazabad), as well as 1 SP for each man, horse or camel making the passage. However, the tribesmen are not above demanding much more if they think they can get away with it.

## THE AL-KHAZI DESERT

The wastelands of the al-Khazi Desert are harsh and inhospitable to city-dwellers, ignorant of the secrets of the nomads. Essential information regarding danger from starvation, thirst, heat and weather hazards can be found in the *Legend Core Rulebook*. The most important information is summarised here.

#### Terrain and Climate

The majority of this desert is covered with vast sand dunes, broken up by areas of stony desert with hills, jagged rocks and wind-worn cliffs.

The al-Khazi desert is very hot (the average daytime temperature is 92 degrees Fahrenheit).

Each hour, unless they get the chance to cool off (by reaching shade, travelling at night, doused with a gallon of water and so on). Adventurers must make Difficult Resilience tests (-2% penalty for each previous test) or suffer 1 point of damage to the Chest Hit Location. Those wearing heavy clothing or armour of any sort suffer a -20% penalty to this test. An adventurer who takes any damage from heat exposure suffers from heatstroke and also gains a level of Fatigue.

An adventurer with the Survival skill may receive a bonus to this test and may be able to apply this bonus to other adventurers as well. A successful Routine Survival Skill Test allows a adventurer to gain a +5% bonus on all Resilience tests against severe weather while moving up to one-half the adventurer's overland speed, or gain a +20% bonus if stationary. The adventurer may grant the same bonus to one other character for every 5% by which the test result passes.

To avoid the deadly heat of the desert sun, caravans often travel at night instead of during the day but this brings an increased risk of encountering predatory animals and other things that shun the rays of the sun.

# Hunger and Thirst

Creatures without food and water will suffer a slow and painful death. In normal climates, adventurers of SIZ 9-13 need at least a gallon of fluids and about a pound of decent food per day to avoid starvation. (Smaller creatures need half as much, while larger creatures need double the base amount.)

In very hot climates, such as deserts, creatures need double the base amount of fluids to avoid dehydration (2 gallons per day for SIZ 9-13 creatures). This does not apply to those who rest during the day and travel only by night, or those accustomed to the hot environment, such as nomads and their camels and other desert natives. One gallon of water weighs around 8 lbs.

An adventurer can go without water for 1 day plus a number of hours equal to his CON score. After this time, the adventurer must make a Routine Resilience test each hour (-2% penalty for each

previous test) or sustain 1d4 points of damage to the Abdomen Hit Location.

An adventurer can go without food for three days, in growing discomfort. After this time, the adventurer must make a Routine Resilience test (-2% penalty for each previous test) or sustain the same damage as dehydration.

Camels suffer no damage the first six days without water. Horses suited to the desert environment are light horses and light warhorses. They need to rest and drink water daily.

Adventurer who have taken nonlethal damage from lack of food or water gain a level of Fatigue. Damage from thirst or starvation cannot be recovered until the character gets food or water, as needed.

Adventurers with the Survival skill can survive by hunting and foraging. A successful Difficult Survival test for food, and a Difficult Survival test for water allows a character to move up to one-half the adventurer's overland speed while hunting and foraging for food and water.

#### The Wolves of the Desert

At the fringes of the Khazistani empire, the wild Khazraj nomads (themselves descended from the same racial stock as the Khazistani peoples) are a constant menace to caravans and travelers; sometimes even outlying villages and towns of Khazistan, Yar-Ammon and Jairan are subject to raids from these free-willed nomad clans.

If the Games Master wishes a confrontation with these nomads somewhere between the Zorab mountains and the city of Zul-Bazzir, use the following statistics.

#### The Gates of Zul-Bazzir

After the hardships of the burning desert, approaching the city of Zul-Bazzir ringed by its lush green palm groves is at first like seeing a shimmering mirage rise from the red sands. The long journey has come to an end, but the players' adventures may just have started.

# THE CITY OF ZUL-BAZZIR

**Zul-Bazzir:** Population 33,000; Mixed (Khazistani 70%, Yar-Ammonites 15%, Susrahnites 10%, Others 5%).

Authority Figures: Khadim Bey, male Khazistani (governor).

Important Adventurers: Abu Khafi, male Jairanian (tavernowner and lotus-trader); Khadar Tarka, male Khazistani (commander of the palace guard); Kojo, male Zimban (ivory and gold trader); Melik Khan, male Khazistani (general addicted to the silver lotus); Murad Shah, male Khazistani (noble plotting against the governor); Onura, female Khazistani (harem-girl); Osan Kadri, male Khazistani (courtier and secret agent of the padishah); Ramzan, male Shoma (chief eunuch); Shalmasar, male Sushrahnite (governor's chief astrologer and vizier).

**Others:** Mercenary city guards, Yemarite (2,000); Royal cavalry, Khazistani (800); Palace guards, Khazistani (300).

**Notes:** Zul-Bazzir was founded by Yar-Ammonite traders settling in the Oasis of Zul some five centuries ago. The city grew quickly into a major centre of trade, a stopover for all major caravan routes through the al-Khazi desert. In the last century, Zul-Bazzir

#### Mercenaries of Khorsul - Male Susrahnites

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	15	1-3	Right Leg	2/6
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	2/6
SIZ	15	7-9	Abdomen	2/7
INT	10	10-12	Chest	2/8
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	2/5
DEX	13	16-18	Left Arm	2/5
CHA	8	19-20	Head	2/6

Combat Actions 2 Armour: Hard Leather Shirt, helmet and Leggings: -3 Armour Penalty

Damage Modifier +1d2

Magic Points 10 Traits: None

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +12 (+9 when armoured)

Common Skills: Athletics 38%, Brawn 60%, Culture (Own) 50%, Dance 21%, Drive 23%, Evade 61%, Evaluate 18%, First Aid 33%, Influence 16%, Insight 20%, Lore (Regional) 50%,

Perception 50%, Persistence 40%, Resilience 68%, Ride 53%, Sing 18%, Sleight 21%, Stealth

33%, Swim 29%, Unarmed 43%

Advanced Skills: Gambling 30%, Language (Native) 68%, Lore (Tactics) 40%, Survival 44%,

Track 34%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Great axe	_	Н	L	1D12+2 Bleed, Sunder	4/10
Long bow	175m	Н		1D8 Impale	7/7

#### **Combat Styles**

Mercenary Trained (Great Axe, 1-H Sword, Sword&Shield, Bow): 63%

**Possessions:** Leather armour, Great axe, Long bow, 20 arrows, 5 SP.

**Description:** These mercenaries are battle-hardened men with plenty of scars. They have irregular clothing and worn equipment. They follow orders and remain loyal only as long as they get paid.

Tactics: The mercenaries stay behind cover and attack enemies using bows, if possible. In melee, they charge and show no mercy.

# Warriors of Kharjah - Male Zorabi

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	12	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	13	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	1/7
INT	11	10-12	Chest	1/8
<b>POW</b>	11	13-15	Right Arm	1/5
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	1/5
CHA	10	19-20	Head	-/6

Traits: None

**Combat Actions** 2

Damage Modifier +0

Magic Points 12 Movement 8m

Strike Rank +13 (+12 with

fur cloak)

Armour: Fur Cloak: -1 Armour Penalty

Common Skills: Athletics 61%, Brawn 60%, Culture (Own) 72%, Dance 24%, Drive 25%, Evade 63%, Evaluate 21%, First Aid 25%, Influence 20%, Insight 22%, Lore (Regional) 72%, Perception 57%, Persistence 42%, Resilience 61%, Ride 50%, Sing 21%, Sleight 24%, Stealth

50%, Swim 25%, Unarmed 26%

Advanced Skills: Language (Native) 81%, Lore (Tactics) 32%, Survival 44%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Club	_	M	S	1D6 Stun Location	4/4
Short bow	80m	L		1D6+1 Impale	4/4

#### Combat Styles

Tribal Warrior (Club, Bow, Hatchet): 66%

Possessions: Club, Short bow, 20 arrows, fur cloak, horn, 1d4 SP, hatchet.

Description: These mountain-men wear cloaks of wolf fur, white turbans, and all warriors have full beards bristling with curly black hair. Tactics: If combat breaks out, the Zorabi tribesmen fight long enough to sound the alarm (each warrior carries a horn for this purpose), then withdraw up into the mountains while their allies in the stone towers rain down a deadly hail of arrows upon the troublemakers. PCs who have offended the Zorabi at the entrance to the pass can expect to be ambushed by several groups of mountain tribesmen while traveling through the ravine. In the case of combat, remember that Yetara's caravan includes several Khorsulan mercenaries that fight alongside the PCs.

# Yilgrah, Nomad Subchief - Male Khazrajite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	2/7
CON	16	4-6	Left Leg	2/7
SIZ	16	7-9	Abdomen	2/8
INT	12	10-12	Chest	2/9
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	2/6
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	2/6
CHA	12	19-20	Head	-/7

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier +1D4

Traits: None

Magic Points 11 Movement 8m

when armoured)

mans: Noi

Strike Rank +13 (+10

Common Skills: Athletics 60%, Brawn 31%, Culture (Own) 84%, Dance 26%, Drive 25%, Evade 48%, Evaluate 24%, First Aid 26%, Influence 69%, Insight 23%, Lore (Regional) 84%, Perception 33%, Persistence 22%, Resilience 72%, Ride 25%, Sing 23%, Sleight 26%, Stealth 66%, Swim 32%, Unarmed 40%

Advanced Skills: Language (Native) 74%, Survival 67%, Track 58%

Armour: Hard Leather shirt, leggings. -3 Armour Penalty

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HI
Scimitar	_	M	M	1D8 Bleed	6/10
Dagger		S	S	1D4+1 Bleed, Impale	6/8
Khaz Short bow	80m	L	_	1D6+1 Impale	4/4

#### **Combat Styles**

Noble Warrior (Scimitar, Dagger, Short Bow): 60%

**Possessions:** War camel, gold-embroidered saddlecloth (worth 30 SP), dagger, gold-hilted scimitar (worth 45 SP), Khazistani Short bow, 20 arrows, 20 SP in an good quality leather pouch.

**Description:** Yilgrah, son of a Khazraj *shaykh*, sports a drooping moustachio that frames his wicked smile. He rides a rare grey-haired camel with a gold-embroidered saddlecloth. He is a harsh leader, feared among his men, not least because of his family connections. His armour is of fine make and denotes his nobility.

**Tactics:** Yilgrah values his noble hide and stays behind his men during combat, targeting weak-looking opponents with his own attacks. If things go against him, he attempts to flee; if cornered he will promise anything (including a great ransom paid by his father) to be set free, but his word cannot be trusted and he betrays the player characters at first opportunity.

## Khazraj Raiders (8) - Male Khazrajite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	12	1-3	Right Leg	1/6
CON	13	4-6	Left Leg	1/6
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	1/7
INT	11	10-12	Chest	1/8
<b>POW</b>	11	13-15	Right Arm	-15
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	-/5
CHA	10	19-20	Head	-/6

Combat Actions 2

Damage Modifier +0

Armour: Fur armoured chest, leather leggings. -1 Armour Penalty

Magic Points 12

Traits: None

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +13 (+12 Common Skills: Athletics 61%, Brawn 65%, Culture (Own) 62%, Dance 24%, Drive 25%, Evade when armoured) 63%, Evaluate 21%, First Aid 25%, Influence 20%, Insight 22%, Lore (Regional) 62%, Perception 53%, Persistence 22%, Resilience 81%, Ride 45%, Sing 21%, Sleight 24%, Stealth 30%, Swim

25%, Unarmed 26%

Advanced Skills: Language (Native) 81%, Survival 64%, Lore (Tactics) 62%, Survival 64%, Track 44%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Scimitar	_	M	M	1D8 Bleed	6/10
Dagger		S	S	1D4+1 Bleed, Impale	6/8
Khaz Short bow	80m	L	_	1D6+1 Impale	4/4

#### **Combat Styles**

Barbarian Nomad (Scimitar 60%, Dagger 42%, Short Bow): 66%

Possessions: War camel, dagger, scimitar, Khazistani Short bow, 20 arrows, 1d4 SP.

**Description:** These Khazraj raiders are lean, wolfish men dressed in gleaming white *khalats* and green turbans. Their skin is a wrinkled bronze. The nomads sit easily atop their camels, striking down foes with curved swords.

**Tactics:** In the event of a direct confrontation, the Khazraj attack from a distance, using their bows from atop their war camels. They attempt to circle around the caravan until their foes close. Being opportunistic raiders, they flee into the desert if their leader is slain, if more than half their number is slain, or if they face a group of well-equipped and clearly skilled opponents (but no one dares retreat before their leader flees).

*Special Notes*: War camels are trained to fight while carrying a rider, but the rider cannot also attack unless he succeeds at a Routine Ride test. The camel's bite has a 25% skill to hit and causes 1d4+1 damage.

#### Leprous Beggar-Thieves of Zul-Bazzir - Male and Female Khazistani

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	10	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	11	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	11	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	10	10-12	Chest	-17
<b>POW</b>	11	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	15	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	9	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 2

Armour: None, they only wear rags. No Armour Penalty

Damage Modifier +0

Magic Points 11 Traits: None

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +13 Common Skills: Athletics 65%, Brawn 21%, Culture (Own) 50%, Dance 24%, Drive 26%, Evade

45%, Evaluate 49%, First Aid 25%, Influence 18%, Insight 30%, Lore (Regional) 50%, Perception 71%, Persistence 22%, Resilience 32%, Ride 26%, Sing 20%, Sleight 64%, Stealth 75%, Swim 21%,

Unarmed 25%

Advanced Skills: Acrobatics 45%, Language (Native) 69%, Mechanisms 55%, Streetwise 51%,

Survival 42%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HI</i>
Dagger	_	S	S	1D4+1 Bleed, Impale	6/8

#### Combat Styles

Filthy Stabber (Dagger 38%, Kris knife, Kukri, Dirk): 45%

Possessions: Dagger, filthy ragged cloak and clothes, (30% chance of 1d3 SP).

**Description:** Clad in rags, these beggar-thieves are the dregs of society in Zul-Bazzir. Their dark bronze skin is severely wrinkled from sun exposure, and their dirty faces show only a few good teeth left. Simply by being exposed to them for more than a few minutes, the player characters risk being infected with a life-threatening disease.

**Tactics:** These thieves work in groups, mingling with and harassing the party, begging for coins, while using their Sleight skills to steal the PCs' possessions. They generally avoid combat, seeking to flee and disappear into nearby buildings or crowds, but if cornered, they gang up on a single opponent, hoping to kill them quickly.

**Disease: Filth Fever Application:** Contact **Onset Time:** 1D6 hours **Duration:** 1D6+3 weeks

**Resistance Time:** Weekly. The first Resistance roll must be made at the end of the Onset Time, then weekly thereafter. Successfully resisting the disease allows the Adventurer to avoid suffering the Conditions until the next roll must be made. Victims of Filth Fever may appear to recover only to suffer a relapse later.

Potency: 55+CON of carrier (11).

Resistance: Resilience.

**Conditions:** Fever. If the Resistance roll fails then the victim suffers the next Condition, which is Maiming. If another Resistance roll is failed then the victim collapses into a coma, finally a third Resistance roll is made to avoid the ultimate Condition: Death.

**Antidote/Cure:** Cure Disease spells and certain kinds of forbidden alchemy. It is an extremely virulent disease and spreads like wildfire through the beggar community.

# City Guards, Mercenaries of Yemar - Male Jairani

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	13	1-3	Right Leg	2/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	2/5
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	2/6
INT	12	10-12	Chest	2/7
<b>POW</b>	11	13-15	Right Arm	2/4
DEX	10	16-18	Left Arm	2/4
CHA	11	19-20	Head	2/5

Combat Actions 2 Damage Modifier +1D2

Traits: None

Magic Points 11 Movement 8m

Strike Rank +11 (+8 when

armoured)

Common Skills: Athletics 43%, Brawn 56%, Culture (Own) 54%, Dance 21%, Drive 21%, Evade 50%, Evaluate 43%, First Aid 32%, Influence 42%, Insight 43%, Lore (Regional) 54%, Perception 53%, Persistence 32%, Resilience 54%, Ride 31%, Sing 22%, Sleight 21%, Stealth 22%, Swim 25%, Unarmed 33%

Armour: Hard Leather Shirt and leggings. Hard leather helmet. -3 Armour Penalty

**Advanced Skills:** Courtesy 23%, Language (Native) 73%, Lore (Tactics) 44%, Streetwise 52%, Track 34%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Scimitar	_	M	M	1D8 Bleed	6/10
Javelin	30m	Н	_	Impale, Pin Weapon (Shield)	3/8
Target Shield	_	L	S	1D6 Impale	4/12

#### **Combat Styles**

Ask Questions Later (Scimitar, Javelin, Target Shield, Mancatcher): 53%

Possessions: Leather armour, scimitar, heavy wooden shield, javelin, 1d8 SP.

**Description:** The mercenary men of Yemar are stone-faced killers, known for their callousness. They wear uniforms of red leather.

# Guard-Captains of Zul-Bazzir - Male Khazistani

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	15	1-3	Right Leg	5/6
CON	13	4-6	Left Leg	5/6
SIZ	14	7-9	Abdomen	5/7
INT	11	10-12	Chest	5/8
<b>POW</b>	13	13-15	Right Arm	5/5
DEX	12	16-18	Left Arm	5/5
CHA	12	19-20	Head	6/6

Combat Actions 2 Armour: Chainmail Shirt and Skirt, full metal face helm. -8 Armour Penalty

Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 13 Traits: None
Movement 8m

Strike Rank +12 (+4 when

armoured)

**Common Skills:** Athletics 52%, Brawn 54%, Culture (Own) 82%, Dance 24%, Drive 25%, Evade 59%, Evaluate 43%, First Aid 23%, Influence 74%, Insight 44%, Lore (Regional) 82%, Perception 67%, Persistence 36%, Resilience 61%, Ride 35%, Sing 25%, Sleight 24%, Stealth

23%, Swim 28%, Unarmed 37%

Advanced Skills: Courtesy 43%, Language (Native) 83%, Lore (Tactics) 72%, Streetwise 55%,

Survival 46%, Track 34%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Falchion	_	M	M	1D6+2 Bleed	6/10
Khaz Short bow	80m	L		1D6+1 Impale	4/4

#### **Combat Styles**

Palace Guard Captain (Falchion, Khazistani Short bow, Mancatcher, Dagger): 70%

Possessions: Chainmail, falchion, Khazistani Short bow.

**Description:** The guard-captains are powerful and broad-shouldered, hand-picked soldiers of the Khazistani army, clad in gleaming armour and gilded helmets. They are often assigned to guard duty in the palace and as officers on special missions, and are fiercely loyal to their noble superiors.

Tactics: The officers stand and fight as a matter of personal honour, and often refuse to summon help even if defeat seems imminent.

was conquered by the Khazistani horsemen coming out of the western steppes. A sizeable population of Yar-Ammonites remain, along with people from Susrah, Jairan and elsewhere, and the city remains a thriving place of commerce. Located on the westernmost edge of Khazistani influence, the city is often threatened by foreign invasion and raids. Despite this, Zul-Bazzir is unwalled, although the governor's sprawling palace-citadel is protected by a tall inner city wall. The *bey* (governor) of the city depends heavily on mercenaries, mostly from Yemar, to defend against occasional Yar-Ammonite intrigues, Jairanian ambitions, and the raids of wild Khazraj nomads.

Typical houses are one- or two-story buildings with flat roofs. Nobles and wealthy merchants live in walled mansions with lush gardens and artificial pools. Between the outer districts where foreigners and slaves throng, and the golden minarets and spires of the inner citadel, are bustling markets and bazaars. Lesser streets wind their way through the maze-like districts of the city, where thieves skulk and revellers feast at night.

The Citadel: The great citadel of the governor rises above the crowded streets of Zul-Bazzir. This walled district contains the governor's palace, the grand court, a labyrinthine harem said to have a hundred bedrooms, a temple dedicated to Nhakhramat the sixarmed ivory goddess, as well as barracks housing Khazistani officers and Yemarite mercenaries.

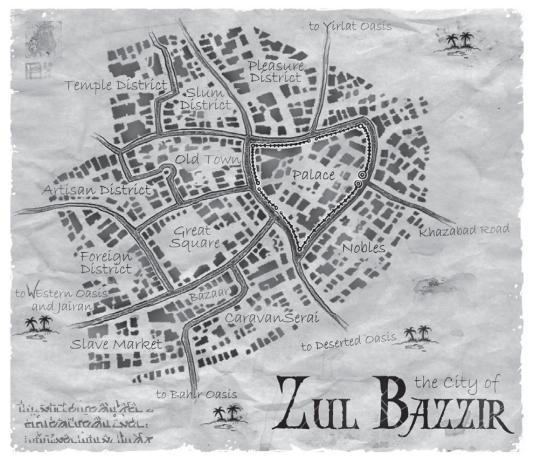
**Noble District:** Occupied by Khazistani nobles, officers and merchants, this district has broad streets and walled mansions. Slaves care for the desires of the Khazistani nobles in their lush gardens here, day and night.

Caravanserai: The caravans entering and leaving Zul-Bazzir are based in this district, with its warehouses, stables and sleeping-halls. Camels and horses are bought and sold here as well. The area is plagued by beggars and thieves preying on new-comers, as well as more respectable-looking people trying to attract customers to the Pleasure District. In reality, many foreigners are led into ambushes by such people.

There are plenty of mercenaries and hired guards here, looking after valuables from the caravans and guarding the warehouses in the area.

Bazaar: The bazaar is bustling with activity during daylight hours. Almost anything can be bought or bartered for here, including food and drink, clothing, silks of distant Taikang, equipment and tools, weapons and armour, pottery, Jairanian carpets, gems, and jewellery fashioned by Susrahnite and Zadjite artisans. Camels and horses are offered across the street, in stables near the caravanserai. Among the more special offerings in the bazaar are caged exotic animals and birds, medicinal herbs, talismans and amulets said to ward off evil, rare books and maps, as well as large and small statuettes of gods and demons.





Extraordinary items, such as poison, silver lotus juice and certain alchemical powders, are usually not found in the Bazaar, and are only available to those who have special contacts (a Streetwise test [-10%] in the Pleasure District directs a player in the right direction if he wishes to buy such items).

**Slave Market:** An adjunct to the bazaar, the slave market is filled with imports from the empire of Khazistan. Largely run by slavers from Khazabad, the slave market is busy, with daily displays of human wares. Once a week, special offers such as daughters of nobles, virgins, and mighty warriors whose wills have been broken by the whip, are auctioned off.

**Foreign District:** Home to people of predominantly Susrahnite origin, this district contains a small shrine to Belet-Lil. Many of the Yemarite mercenaries in the city's employ, as well as other foreigners, have their houses here. This district is also the place to look for healers and those skilled in the use of medicinal herbs.

**Artisan District:** Here one finds the workshops and warehouses of the city's artisans. Makers of expensive wares, such as swordsmiths and gem-cutters, usually do not trust the governor's soldiers and keep a few hired guards as backup in the case of burglary.

**Old Town:** This is the oldest existing district of the city, hailing from the time when the city was little more than a collection of mud-brick houses clustered around a central well. The old town is still important, due to the existence of underground tunnels that lead water from here to the rest of the city. The district is otherwise noted for its many sages, scholars and students of the arcane.

**Temple District:** In this maze of alleyways and tall walls is a number of temples and shrines devoted to various gods.

Located here is a temple dedicated to the beast-headed Yar-

Ammonite pantheon. Near the temple is a small necropolis, where mummified Yar-Ammonites as well as preserved animals lie entombed for eternity. Poor and desperate people from the nearby slums sometimes try to break into these tombs to steal valuables, which then surface for sale in the bazaar. However, buying such tomb jewellery is associated with a certain risk: it might be cursed, or the priests of Yar-Ammon might take offense and send assassins after the blasphemers.

**Slum District:** Home to the poor, homeless and diseased, and plagued by the occasional fire, this is a place best avoided. Unless, of course, one needs to hide from the authorities. The Yemarite mercenaries of the city guard rarely venture into this part of the town.

Pleasure District: A large district filled with all manner of depravities, including gambling-houses, drinking-houses, bordellos, fighting-pits and lotus-smoking dens. Thieves, thugs, prostitutes and slavers abound. This is a great place to waste silver coins quickly. One of the most notorious locations of the district is

the House of Abu Khafi (see the adventure *The Jewel of Khadim Bey* for more information about this location). Also in this district is a 'temple' to Belet-Lil, in reality little more than a gathering-place for orginatic revellers.

# ZUL-BAZZIR ENCOUNTER TABLES

Refer to the following encounter table for random encounters in the city of Zul-Bazzir. Roll 1d10 and add +4 to the roll if the player characters are in the Bazaar, Caravanserai, Pleasure District, Slave Market or Slum District. Likewise, subtract 4 from the roll (minimum result of 1) if the players are in the Citadel, Noble District, or Temple District. Add a cumulative +2 to the roll at night. Then roll percentile dice to determine the exact nature of the encounter.

Unless specified otherwise, each NPC is either male (50%) or female (50%); use the population breakdown for the city (see sidebar) to determine the race of each NPC (for example, a random NPC is 70% likely to be a Khazistani, 15% likely to be a Yar-Ammonite, and so on).

**Artist:** Expert in his field. **Assassin:** A trained killer. **Astrologer:** A scholar.

**Bandit:** A thief with no honour. **Beggar:** A hungry commoner.

City Guard: Tough spearman or swordsman.

**Commander:** Leader of the Guard.

#### Die Roll

(1d10)	Encounter
1	Noble (20%), Commander (30%) or Courtier (50%)
2 3	Priest (60%), Astrologer (30%) or Soothsayer (10%)
3	Palace guard (70%), Torturer (10%) or Guardian
	Animal (20%)
5	Doctor (50%) or Healer (50%)
5	Eunuch (20%), Entertainer (30%), Concubine or
	Courtesan (50%)
6	Sage (30%) or Scribe (70%)
7	Labourer (25%), Servant (25%), Slave (30%) or
	Messenger (20%)
8	Soldier (20%), Mercenary (30%), Nandit (10%),
	Nomad (20%), City Guard (20%)
9	Merchant (60%) or Trader (40%)
10	Craftsman (75%) or Artist (25%)
11	Thief (40%), Thug (25%), Smuggler (15%) or
	Beggar (20%)
12	Drunken Reveler (30%), Prostitute (30%), Escaped
	Slave (20%) or Gambler (20%)
13	Cultist (25%), Assassin (25%) or Slaver (50%)
14+	Wild/Escaped Animal (60%) or Madman (40%)

Concubine: A female sexual slave.

**Courtesan:** A female commoner with social grace.

Courtier: A skilled aristocrat. Craftsman: Expert in his field. Cultist: Devotee to a dark god. Doctor: Expert in the medical field.

Drunken Reveller: Too much to drink, and a hot temper.

**Entertainer:** Expert in his field.

**Eunuch:** A slave that has been neutered, possibly to stem aggression.

**Gambler:** An expert with one game or another.

Guardian Animal: These include trained dogs, leopards and lions.

**Healer:** Expert in the medical field.

**Labourer:** A commoner of unskilled crafting. **Madman:** A commoner given over to lunacy.

**Mercenary:** A savage sellsword.

**Merchant:** Expert in the economic field.

**Messenger:** A simple courier, possibly with good news.

**Noble:** A noble aristocrat. **Nomad:** A desert wanderer.

Palace Guard: A skilled fighter with good training and equipment.

Priest: A leader within a structured religion.

Prostitute: A common male or female ready to sell their bodies.

**Sage:** A scholar of ancient lore.

**Scribe:** An expert chronicler for the nobility. **Servant:** A paid servant of a wealthy noble.

Slave: An unpaid servant.

**Slaver:** A savage warrior who trades in lives.

**Smuggler:** An expert at getting things in and out of the city.

**Soldier:** A trained warrior working for the governor.

**Soothsayer:** Expert in looking for answers within the future. **Torturer:** An expert in inflicting pain and getting answers.

**Thief:** A taker of possessions.

Thug: An uncouth mugger or gangland enforcer.

Trader: A merchant who travels.

Wild/Escaped Animal: Almost any kind of animal, including exotic ones, could have escaped from captivity.

# THE HOUSE OF THE DRAGON

Zheng-Ya's mansion is located on a quiet street in the Foreign District of the city, well hidden by a tall masonry wall. Behind the nondescript but heavy gate, the house stands out as a special dwelling with its Eastern-style architecture, slanted roofs, well-trimmed gardens, pagodas and dragon-flanked entrance doors.

Construction of the mansion began three decades ago, when Zheng-Ya, an affluent, silken-robed sorcerer of Taikang, came to the city of Zul-Bazzir to study the lost languages and forgotten arts of the Giant-Kings of Elder Kuth. The slant-eyed sorcerer arrived from across the sea with an entourage of slaves and servants, settled among the golden domes and ivory minarets in the desert, and built the mansion now known as the House of the Dragon.

The garden, ringed by the outer wall, contains a small dwelling for the servants and a set of stables near the main gate. A freshwater well is located within a circular clearing in the garden. A small pagoda stands west of the main house. The broad stairway leading up to the double entrance doors of the mansion is flanked by two massive dragon statues carved from green stone.

**Development:** Yetara arrives at the mansion with his caravan but finds the house empty and his former acquaintance missing. The priest of Lamra takes up residence in the house, awaiting Zheng-Ya's return. He dismisses the Khorsulan mercenaries that followed his caravan, but asks the players to remain hired guards in his service for a few more weeks. If they accept, the adventurers are quartered in the servants' house, and assigned to guard duty in the garden surrounding the mansion and outside the main gate.

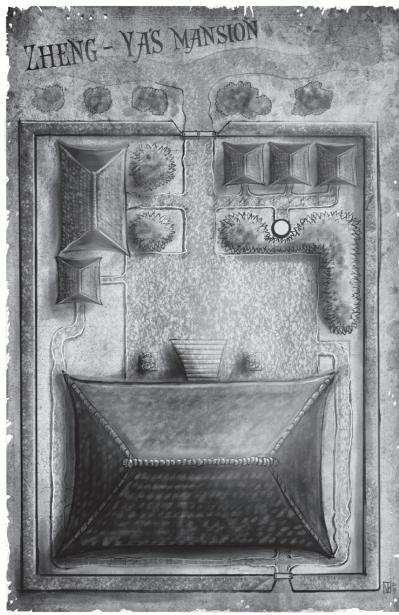
If the adventurers say no to Yetara's offer, he offers them a higher wage to stay on. If the adventurers still refuse, consider moving the timing of the cultist attack so that it happens before the players have a chance to leave the house. Optionally, the cultists of Yot-Kamoth might ambush the adventurers after they have relocated to another part of the city (probably still within the Foreign District), in order to capture and interrogate the adventurers before the assassins assault the mansion itself. If the adventurers defeat the cultists and return to the mansion, continue with the Spawn of the Spider God section.

#### 

#### The House of the Dragon

**Standard Features:** Unless noted otherwise, all interior doors are good wooden doors. Ceiling height is 10 feet in normal rooms.

**Lighting:** During the day, rooms facing the garden are lit by sunlight coming through narrow, barred windows. Interior rooms are lit by small oil lamps carved to resemble fire-spitting dragons, while rooms below ground are illuminated by wallhung torches.



#### I. Outer Wall and Garden

The outer wall is a 10 feet tall masonry wall. Facing the palmlined main street to the north is a heavy wooden double door that can be barred from the inside. On the south side of the outer wall, facing nondescript residential houses, is a smaller door (but with the same statistics) that can be similarly barred.

#### 2. Servants' House

This house is a simple one-room barrack. It contains very little in the way of furniture; Zheng-Ya's servants slept on the floor and kept their belongings in small wooden boxes in the corners. Yetara places the players in this house if they stay on as his guards.

#### 3. Stables

Each of these three small buildings can hold two horses or camels. The stables currently house Sefu's warhorse and the camels of Yetara and Daniya, as well as any mounts the adventurers may have brought to Zul-Bazzir.

#### 4. Well

The well is 10 feet in diameter and 30 feet deep. The water comes from a natural wellspring that itself originates in the underwater springs that formed the oasis of Zul before the city was built. Private wells such as this are rare in the desert city; most houses are supplied by small aqueducts or by water carried from central wells.

# 5. Pagoda

Next to the main house is a small garden pavilion, built in imitation of the great towers of Taikang's cities. It overlooks the garden and the courtyard in front of the mansion.

# 6. Courtyard and Dragon Statues

A broad, open space opens up in front of the mansion-house of Zheng-Ya. A broad stairway descends from the massive double doors. The doors are flanked by a pair of crouching dragon-statues. Each statue weighs in excess of 1,000 lbs. and is carved from a curious, but non-precious, green stone.

#### 7. Entrance Hall

The main doors open up into a grand entrance hall whose walls are hung with a handful of long, narrow silken tapestries inscribed with Eastern calligraphy. Doors lead from the hall to the library, the meeting room, and to a corridor that connects with the bedrooms.

To the left of the entrance stands a great metal gong, held suspended in ropes from a wooden rack. A padded hammer rests below the great disc. When struck with the hammer, the gong produces a loud, sonorous tone that can be heard easily throughout the entire house and even in the rooms below ground with a successful Routine Perception test.

# 8. Meeting Room and Dining Hall

The sorcerer of Taikang used to receive visitors here, in a large room dominated by an oval teak table. Eight regular chairs are placed around the table, while a ninth chair, furthest away from the door, is high-backed with armrests carved in the shape of lion claws. Zheng-Ya and his guests also usually took their meals in this room.

# 9. Kitchen

In addition to a well-furnished kitchen, this room also contains a walk-in pantry, filled with salted meats, dried rice, bottles of oil, and similar foodstuffs. Several sleeping mats are tucked away in a corner, having perhaps belonged to the cook and his serving-girls.

# 10. Library

Zheng-Ya used this large room as his study. The doors are secured with good locks (they require a Difficult Mechanisms test to open). A thick, hand-woven Khazistani carpet (worth 250 SP) covers the floor. Surrounding a massive hardwood desk and a comfortable chair are several hundred books, scrolls, journals, and maps, all neatly stored in bookshelves along the walls.

The collection includes historical chronicles of Taikang, Khazistan, and Jairan; a Taikangian dictionary; collections of prayers and incantations of the East; several texts containing spells and incantations (as determined by the Games Master); as well as Zheng-Ya's own work-in-progress, the *Scrolls of the Shadow Dragon*. The entire collection is easily worth over 7,000 SP if sold to a collector, but the books are probably most useful to scholarly player characters who can use the collection in their own research. Consider reducing the difficulty of certain Lore tests if the players study relevant material in these books beforehand. Most books in the library require knowledge of the Taikangian language to be useful, of course.

#### II. Stairway

The stairway leads from the ground floor and down to the dungeons below.

#### 12. Master's Bedroom

The walls of this opulently furnished chamber are painted with erotic scenes in the Eastern style. Next to the large bed is a wooden wardrobe filled with Taikangian silken robes of various colours. The bedroom smells of scented candles and sweet incense.

#### 13. Bedrooms

Next to the master bedroom are several smaller bedrooms, usually intended for guests and sometimes for Zheng-Ya's concubines. The furniture of each room is plain and includes a bed, a small table, a pair of chairs, and a shelf able to hold clothes and personal items.

#### 14. Prison Cells

Of these twin cells, each 10 feet by 10 feet, one is empty while the other contains the bones of a rat-gnawed skeleton, its forearms still held by rusty iron chains. The yellowed skull rests in a corner, staring blindly ahead. Behind the skull lurks a small but deadly spider; if disturbed, it attacks using its web. The doors of the cells are still locked but the locks are in poor condition – they require an Easy Mechanisms test to open, or an Easy Brawn test to break.

#### 15. Corridor

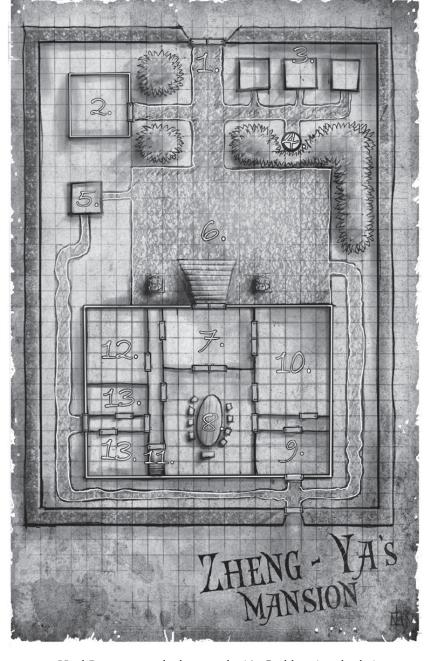
The 10 feet wide corridor leads from the stairway to the double doors of the sorcerer's arcane workshop.

#### 16. Storeroom

The door to this side chamber is locked. The room itself contains several jars and boxes filled with miscellaneous tools and equipment, such as ropes, picks and shovels, hammers, some sheets of canvas and several flasks of flammable oil.

# 17. Arcane Workshop and Spider Shrine

This large underground chamber was the secret laboratory of Zheng-Ya. The heavy wooden door is bronze-reinforced (Requires



a Hard Brawn test to bash or sunder it). Coal burning slowly in a large brazier illuminates the room with a flickering light, casting long shadows onto the walls. The marble floor is inscribed with arcane symbols and summoning circles. To the north is a clean marble slab, five feet tall, used as a work table or to place sacrifice upon. To the east is a raised platform, 10 feet tall, with stairs leading up from the lower floor and towards a recess in the eastern wall. Total ceiling height is 20 feet.

Yetara has taken over the room for his own dark purposes. He has placed a small cage filled with tarantulas (statistics similar to tiny monstrous spiders) atop the marble table. Hung on the eastern wall, left of the raised platform, is a large black tapestry embroidered with a purple spider (worth 300 SP). The outcast priest stole the tapestry from the temple of Yot-Kamoth before fleeing from Lamra.

**Development:** See the Spawn of the Spider-God section for more information about possible developments in this room.



#### 18. Secret Room

A secret door (Difficult Perception test to spot) on the southern wall of the workshop leads into a small hidden vault. On the vault's floor lies the black-robed body of an old man; this is the corpse of Yetara hidden here by Daniya (if the players investigate this room before the events of the Daggers from Lamra, the priest has yet to be slain and so this chamber is empty). Yetara's right hand still wears a gold ring set with an emerald; inside the small gem is the frozen shape of a tiny black spider. This ring identifies Yetara as a priest of the spider-cult of Lamu; characters may recognise its significance with a Routine Lore (theology) test.

Next to the corpse stands a locked wooden box (A Difficult Mechanism test to open the lock). It contains 500 SP in mixed coins (mostly Khazistani silvers, but also 150 square ivory coins from Taikang), as well as a cloth-of-gold bag with an *orb of witch-fire* (see the Magic chapter).

#### Daggers from Lamra

Hamadara, the high priest of the spider-god's temple in Lamra, has dispatched a group of assassin-cultists to hunt down and slay Yetara and to retrieve the dancing-girl Daniya from the clutches of the outcast. These fanatical disciples of Yot-Kamoth have trailed Yetara's caravan across the al-Khazi Desert, and have finally caught up with the rogue priest.

**Development:** The assassins strike at night, after having scouted out the defences of Zheng-Ya's mansion for some days. They quickly scale the outer wall with grappling hooks and attack from several directions at once. They use their Stealth skill to close with any

guards posted in the garden (most likely one or more of the adventurers, if they are still hired by Yetara as guards), then attack, firing their poisoned crossbow bolts from within 30 feet of the opponent. When the guards in the garden are pacified, they proceed to the main doors and breach them using their thievery skills.

If the adventurers detect the intruders and sound the alarm, Sefu arrives in the garden after 1d4+2 rounds (he has not had the time to don his armour) and joins the adventurers in the fight against the assassins.

Meanwhile, unknown both to Sefu and to the adventurers, Yetara and Danyia flee down into the dungeons beneath the mansion. If the disciples of Yot-Kamoth are defeated, Sefu asks the adventurers to join him while he goes to test if his Master is safe. If Sefu is slain during the fight, the players probably enter the mansion to report back to Yetara or to investigate his whereabouts.

Spawn of the Spider-God When the assassins from Lamra attack

When the assassins from Lamra attack the mansion, Yetara knows his enemies have

finally caught up with him and he flees down into his workshop (Area 17) with Daniya and bolts the door from within. To the old priest's great surprise, however, Daniya drives a dagger into his back while he is busy locking up the chamber. Then, the darksome dancing-girl uses Yetara's blood to fuel a blasphemous ritual that climaxes with the agonising birth of the Spawn of Yot-Kamoth, a hideous hybrid of man and spider. Daniya's loins sprout long, sticky strands of cobweb that attach to the floor and the ceiling. In the centre forms an opaque cocoon, where the Spawn of Yot-Kamoth quickly grows to maturity. Regaining her strength, Daniya drags Yetara's corpse into the secret vault (Area 18) and hides it there.

When the adventurers reach the bronze-reinforced doors of the chamber, Daniya removes the bolt from within when she recognises the adventurers' voices, or that of Sefu. Once they are inside the chamber, Daniya tries to deceive them into believing that the form inside the cocoon is Yetara, who ordered her not to open the doors to anyone and then sealed himself with the cocoon.

She pretends to break down, and with tears flowing, she tells the story of how she was kidnapped from the temple of Lamra, where she was forced to dance before the black idol of Yot-Kamoth, and brought southwards by the rogue priest Yetara. She claims to have no wish to return to Lamu, and pleads to stay under the protection of the adventurers.

However, strangely, she also resists the destruction of the cocoon ('the old priest did not harm me in any way on the long road from Lamra to Zul-Bazzir'). She attempts to convince the adventurer who is the most likely to support her (using her Influence skill).

It is not possible to determine who is inside the cocoon from the outside; the webs are simply too thick. If the cocoon is cut open, the Spawn of Yot-Kamoth emerges and attacks the nearest creature (but

# Disciples of Yot-Kamoth, Cultists from Lamra (6) - Male Lamuran

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	10	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	11	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	13	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	18	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	10	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 3

Armour: Robes. No Armour Penalty

Damage Modifier +0

Magic Points 10 Traits: None

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +16 Common Skills: Athletics 60%, Brawn 21%, Culture (Own) 86%, Dance 28%, Drive 29%, Evade

71%, Evaluate 43%, First Aid 31%, Influence 60%, Insight 29%, Lore (Regional) 81%, Perception 59%, Persistence 57%, Resilience 54%, Ride 29%, Sing 21%, Sleight 28%, Stealth 71%, Swim 22%,

Unarmed 58%

Advanced Skills: Acrobatics 60%, Courtesy 53%, Disguise 73%, Language (Native) 73%,

Mechanisms 61%, Streetwise 41%, Track 60%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Stabbing dagger	_	S	S	1D4 Impale	6/8
Light crossbow	100m	L		1D8 Impale	4/5

#### **Combat Styles**

Variant Spider Bite (Chain, Dagger, Rapier, Crossbow): 78%

**Possessions:** Stabbing dagger, light crossbow, 20 crossbow bolts, five doses of secret venom, superb quality thieves' tools, rope and grappling hook, 1d10 SP.

**Description:** The assassins sent after Yetara by the temple of the spider-god in Lamra are swarthy-skinned men, trained to move with feline grace and strike with the suddenness of a cobra. On missions, they are clad in close-fitting clothes and dark cloaks, but at all other times blend in by wearing regular clothes. Each cultist has a small black tarantula tattooed on his chest, identifying him as a member of the cult of Yot-Kamoth.

**Tactics:** The cultists employ poisoned crossbow bolts from a distance. If opponents come close, they attempt to flank and sneak attack, with daggers likewise poison-tipped. Being fiercely loyal to the cult, and fearing the consequences of a failed mission, they fight to the death rather than surrendering to superior opponents. They reveal little or nothing if interrogated, even on the pain of death.

**Notes:** These cultists are actually temple-assassins, trained to the rank of Adept. They do not use sorcery and gain a bonus of +10% to any climbing based tests due to their training in the temple of Yot-Kamoth.

#### Secret Venom

**Application:** Injected. **Onset Time:** 1D6 minutes. **Duration:** 1D4 Hours.

**Resistance Time:** Hourly. The first Resistance roll must be made at the end of the Onset Time, then daily thereafter. Successfully resisting the poison means that the victim manages to stave off the effects and have woken up, yet they are still groggy from the poison.

Potency: 40+15 (CON of Spider).

Resistance: Resilience.

**Conditions:** Unconscious. The victim becomes immediately lethargic on a failed Resistance roll and falls into a deep sleep. The victim may resist the effects hourly; if they succeed or the Duration expires they awake feeling nauseous, groggy and lethargic. They immediately gain a level of Fatigue in addition to any suffered previously.

**Antidote:** Certain plant saps and berries can help stave off the poison's effects if consumed prior to being injected with the venom. Only magic can bring an unconscious Adventurer round from the deep sleep it induces.



not Daniya). If the cocoon is set on fire (something Daniya attempts to prevent at all costs), the flames quickly consume the cocoon and a badly burned spider-thing emerges one round later, with only half its normal Hit Point total.

If the party leaves the cocoon alone and retreat up to the mansion above, Daniya sneaks down into the chamber later that night, cutting open the cocoon and sending the Spawn of Yot-Kamoth after the adventurers, while she and Sefu follow behind.

If the adventurers insist on harming or destroying the cocoon, Daniya draws a hidden dagger at the most appropriate moment and uses her sneak attack on an unsuspecting victim. At the same time, the Spawn of Yot-Kamoth breaks out of its cocoon (taking 1d2 rounds to break down the webs) and then attacks the adventurers.

If Sefu is present, he is revealed as a thrall of Daniya if combat breaks out. He seeks to defend the woman while the thing in the cocoon starts to twitch and break out of its webs to attack the players.

Note that after a day or two, the stench from the corpse in the vault (Area 18) will make the vault's location evident to anyone present in the workshop (Area 17) with a successful Insight test.

**The Spawn of Yot-Kamoth:** See the Monster appendix.

#### Conclusion

If the adventurers manage to slay or drive away the Spawn of Yot-Kamoth, Daniya realises that she has been defeated and tries to bargain with the adventurers. She claims that she, as the mortal bride of the spider-god, is now very valuable to the cult, and pleads with the adventurers to return her to Lamu, where the high priest of Yot-Kamoth would pay a sizeable ransom for her return. There is some truth to this, and such a deal could lead to several interesting story threads as the adventurers become embroiled with the spider-cult. Adventurers less motivated by wealth may simply decide to kill the troublesome dancing-girl but others may have objections to slaying an opponent (and especially a woman) who has surrendered.

If both Sefu and Daniya perish, the adventurers most likely claim the Taikangian's mansion for themselves. It is up to the Games Master to determine what has happened with Zheng-Ya and why he suddenly left his house along with all his servants. The sorcerer may eventually return, and with the help of Khazistani magistrates and soldiers attempt to force the adventurers out of the mansion; or the Taikangian could deal with the adventurers on his own, using spells and summoned demons from afar.

If the players fail: If the adventurers lose the fight with the spider-god's bride and her unholy spawn, Daniya attempts to capture the adventurers alive. They can then be transported back to Lamra by other cultists and sacrificed to Yot-Kamoth, while Daniya and Sefu remain in Zul-Bazzir as agents of the spider-cult. The adventurers can attempt to escape along the way or when they reach the temple of Lamra.

# THE JEWELL OF KHADUM BEY



There are discontented nobles in Zul-Bazzir who conspire against the *padishah* of Khazistan. In secret, torch-lit chambers deep beneath their marble-walled mansions, they scheme and plot to overthrow the great king's governor, Khadim Bey and to seize control of Zul-Bazzir.

Whispers of treason have reached the *bey*'s ears but as yet the traitors remain nameless and unknown. To aid the governor, the padishah has sent a personal agent to Zul-Bazzir, to help infiltrate and identify the disloyal nobles.

Through their own spies in the governor's palace and harem, the scheming nobles know that the royal agent has arrived from Khazabad, posing as a lowly captain of a cavalry squad. To avoid revealing themselves, the rebel nobles need outsiders to assassinate the royal agent and try to set up the player adventurers to do so.

# ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The adventurers are approached by Sabiha, a female thief who claims to have stolen a valuable gem from the governor's palace. While the thievery itself was successful, she was apparently betrayed by her partner-in-crime, one Osan of Khazabad, who left her for dead and ran away with the stolen gem.

Sabiha hires the adventurers to go after Osan and slay him, offering them a share of the stolen gem's worth if they manage to retrieve the jewel. The party tracks Osan through the desert, to a ruined temple of Yadar and eventually cross swords with the thief and his henchmen.

Sooner or later, the adventurers realise that they have been tricked, and that Osan is in fact an agent of the padishah. From here, there are several possible outcomes. If Osan was killed, the adventurers are now criminals who face execution by the Khazistanis if their implication in the murder becomes known. They probably want to seek out Sabiha, both to exact revenge and to prevent her from reporting them to the governor's men. This, as it turns out, may take them further into the conspiracy against Khadim Bey.

If, on the other hand, the adventurers discover Sabiha's deception before slaying Osan, and they can somehow convince the royal agent of their allegiance to the padishah, the adventurers may join Osan in the search for Sabiha and the traitorous nobles she works for. This takes them first to the disreputable House of Abu Khafi, and possibly on to the mansion of one of the traitorous nobles, a lotus-addicted general.

Before they can return to Zul-Bazzir to deal with Sabiha, however, the adventurers face a cult of cannibalistic nomads who use the ruined temple as their nocturnal meeting-place.

## STARTING THE ADVENTURE

Consider any of the following hooks to get the adventure started.

The adventurers have just arrived in the city of Zul-Bazzir, and are selected by the conspirators because they are outsiders who know little of the politics of the city and, in case of failure, cannot be traced back to the scheming nobles.

The adventure works best for adventurers who are already on the wrong side of the law, since it assumes that the players will ally with a thief.

# A CRY FOR VENGEANCE

Read or paraphrase the following to the players. This text describes events that happen off-stage and foreshadow the players' meeting with the thief Sabiha.

#### 

The night is black under a faint crescent moon. Silence hangs over Khadim Bey's domed palace like a thick veil. Two cloaked figures climb silently over the towering wall. Time passes; the palm trees in the palace garden rustle softly in the sultry night wind. When the two figures emerge and descend the citadel wall a half-hour later, the hood of one falls temporarily away to reveal the face of a female, with long black hair and yellow eyes, like those of a cat. Suddenly, torches flare on the battlements and guards shout out alarms. Chaos ensues, but the two figures disappear into the shadows of the city.

#### 

The following day, the adventurers are out on some trivial errand, perhaps visiting the bazaar or the city square. The same rumours can be heard everywhere; daring thieves entered the grand palace last night and stole a very valuable emerald from the *bey*; a gem which on special occasions sat squarely in the navel of the governor's favourite concubine, a beautiful girl from Azjan in the East. A successful Streetwise test reveals information about the emerald.

**Simple Streetwise test:** The gem is worth over 5,000SP.

**Routine Streetwise test:** The jewel was cut more than 600 years ago by the peerless artisan Shembuj.

**Difficult Streetwise test:** The crown of the wicked Raj of Uthjar supposedly had this jewel set into it.

Confirming that there is more to these tales than mere rumours is the fact that the city watch are conducting random searches in the bazaar and elsewhere. The adventurers are approached by an especially haughty and devoted Khazistani officer, named Hassan Sadi and his troop of Yemarite mercenaries. He interrogates the adventurers very thoroughly, asking uncomfortable questions and orders his men to inspect the belongings of the party in search of the stolen jewel. The less resistance the adventurers offer, the better; if necessary, the guard-captain orders the adventurers stripped naked or even arrested. The adventurers should walk away from this encounter with an extreme dislike of Hassan Sadi.

# Hassan Sadi, Guard-Captain of Zul-Bazzir - Male Khazistani

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	15	1-3	Right Leg	5/6
CON	13	4-6	Left Leg	5/6
SIZ	14	7-9	Abdomen	5/7
INT	11	10-12	Chest	5/8
<b>POW</b>	13	13-15	Right Arm	5/5
DEX	12	16-18	Left Arm	5/5
CHA	12	19-20	Head	6/6

**Combat Actions** 2 Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 13 Movement 8m

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 52%, Brawn 54%, Culture (Own) 77%, Dance 34%, Drive 35%, Strike Rank +12 (+4 when armoured)

Evade 74%, Evaluate 43%, First Aid 23%, Influence 74%, Insight 44%, Lore (Regional) 72%, Perception 74%, Persistence 56%, Resilience 71%, Ride 55%, Sing 25%, Sleight 24%, Stealth

Armour: Chainmail Shirt and Skirt with full plate helm. -7 Armour Penalty

23%, Swim 28%, Unarmed 47%

Advanced Skills: Courtesy 53%, Language (Native) 73%, Lore (Tactics) 77%, Streetwise 65%

Weapons

Туре Range Size Reach Damage AP/HP Falchion M M 1D6+2 Bleed 6/10 Khaz Short bow 80m L 1D6+1 Impale 4/4

#### Combat Styles

Leopard's Pride (Falchion, Khazistani Short bow, Spear): 72%

Possessions: Chainmail, falchion, Khazistani Short bow, polished gold helmet.

Description: Hassan is clean-shaven, heavily muscled, with shoulder-length black hair and slanted eyes. He wears a golden helmet, burnished armour, and a cloak of leopard-skin slung across his shoulders. He is reputed to be a distant relative of Khadim Bey, and a rising star in the Khazistani army.

Tactics: If combat breaks out, Hassan targets the most powerful-looking opponent, in order to gain as much glory as possible.

# City Guards, Mercenaries of Yemar - Male Jairani

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	13	1-3	Right Leg	2/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	2/5
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	2/6
INT	12	10-12	Chest	2/7
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	2/4
DEX	10	16-18	Left Arm	2/4
CHA	11	19-20	Head	4/4

Combat Actions 2

Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 11
Movement 8m

Strike Rank +11 (+7 when

armoured)

**Armour:** Hard Leather Shirt and pants with scale helm. -4 Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 23%, Brawn 46%, Culture (Own) 64%, Dance 21%, Drive 21%, Evade 60%, Evaluate 63%, First Aid 22%, Influence 62%, Insight 23%, Lore (Regional) 74%, Perception 53%, Persistence 42%, Resilience 64%, Ride 31%, Sing 22%, Sleight 21%, Stealth 22%, Swim 25%, Unarmed 43%

Advanced Skills: Courtesy 43%, Language (Native) 73%, Lore (Tactics) 54%, Streetwise 32%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Scimitar	_	M	M	1D8 Bleed	6/10
Javelin	30m	Н	_	Impale, Pin Weapon (Shield)	3/8
Target Shield	_	L	S	1D6 Impale	4/12

#### **Combat Styles**

Yemar Guardsman (Scimitar, Javelin, Target Shield, Sword&Shield): 68%

**Possessions:** Leather armour, scimitar, heavy wooden shield, javelin, 1d8 sp.

**Description:** The mercenary men of Yemar are stone-faced killers, known for their callousness. They wear uniforms of red leather.

Tactics: The foreign city guards (grudgingly) do as they are told by their Khazistani officers. They summon help only if sorely outnumbered.

# Sabiha, Betrayed Thief - Female Jairanian

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	12	1-3	Right Leg	2/6
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	2/6
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	2/7
INT	13	10-12	Chest	2/8
POW	12	13-15	Right Arm	2/5
DEX	16	16-18	Left Arm	2/5
CHA	14	19-20	Head	-/6

Combat Actions 3

-0

Damage Modifier +0 Magic Points 12

Traits: None

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +15 (+13 Common Skills: Athletics 58%, Brawn 24%, Culture (Own) 66%, Dance 50%, Drive 38%, when armoured) Evade 72%, Evaluate 87%, First Aid 29%, Influence 68%, Insight 55%, Lore (Regional) 56%

Armour: Soft leather shirt and leggings. -2 Armour Penalty.

Evade 72%, Evaluate 87%, First Aid 29%, Influence 68%, Insight 55%, Lore (Regional) 56%, Perception 75%, Persistence 54%, Resilience 44%, Ride 58%, Sing 46%, Sleight 80%, Stealth

79%, Swim 34%, Unarmed 28%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 58%, Commerce 47%, Courtesy 57%, Disguise 82%, Gambling 45%, Language (Native) 87%, Mechanisms 69%, Seduction 57%, Streetwise 66%, Track 35%

Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Short sword	_	M	S	1D6 Bleed, Impale	6/8
Dagger		S	S	1D4+1 Bleed, Impale	6/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Twin Blade (Short sword, Dagger, Throwing Dart): 73%

**Possessions:** Leather armor, two short swords, dagger, 41 sp.

**Description:** Tan, with long dark hair and yellow eyes, Sabiha is an exotic beauty, although she often uses her disguise skills to appear far less attractive to avoid undue attention.

Tactics: Sabiha tries to avoid combat if at all possible, but if forced into melee she attacks with her twin blades.

# A WOMAN SCORNED

Later the same day, the adventurers are approached by a cloaked female adventurer. This is Sabiha, an agent of the scheming nobles of Zul-Bazzir. She reveals to the adventurers that she was one of two thieves who stole the jewel from the *bey's* palace, but that her partner Osan betrayed her and fled east into the desert to meet and sell the gem to a third party (a merchant or noble from the rival realm of Zadj to the southeast).

Her story is mainly true, except that Osan was not involved in the theft, of course, and that the rebel nobles still have the jewel and will use it to fund their secret insurrection against the governor and the padishah.

Sabiha offers to split the spoils if the adventurers go and kill the 'traitor' and bring back the gem. She confirms that the emerald is worth 5,000 SP or more, if the right buyer can be found.

The adventurers might wonder why this unknown woman has chosen to confide in them. Some questions the adventurers might ask are:

Why choose us for this mission? 'Time is precious and I don't have much time to look for suitable allies. You seem able and hopefully you are trustworthy.'

Why shouldn't we just report you to the city guard? I assume you are more interested in sharing the profits from the sale of the gem, than in helping that viper, Hassan Sadi, gain glory in the eyes of his superiors?' (If the earlier encounter with the city guard captain was played out properly, this argument should certainly strike a chord with the players.)

Why don't you go after Osan yourself, or at least follow us along? 'The treacherous dog Osan tried to kill me. He didn't succeed, but his blade cut deep into my leg. I can't fight, much less run.' (Indeed, the woman walks with a limp — the wound is real but she fakes the limping.)

Where do we meet up with you once we return? 'If you are able to slay the traitor - and by Aklathu's beard I hope you do! - bring me his head so I can know that revenge is mine. If you are successful, meet me in the Yar-Ammonite necropolis in the Old Town. There is an empty tomb near a faceless black sphinx. I'll be waiting for you there.'

The Games Master should extrapolate answers to any other questions the players might have from the information given above.

# RENDEZVOUS IN THE RUINS

Sabiha gives the adventurers directions to track down Osan. As far as she knows, he took his horse on a direct eastern path out of the city, towards a ruined temple in the desert, where he was to meet with certain Zadjite merchants or thieves who would bring the stolen gem on to their own masters in marble-walled Iraab by the Eastern Ocean.

Osan, the king's agent, has indeed ridden east towards the ruins, but he does not carry the stolen gem, nor is he to meet with Zadjite thieves. The purpose of his nocturnal trip is to meet with messengers of the padishah from Khazabad, to report his latest intelligence and to receive new instructions from the king.



#### 

#### The Ruined Temple of Yadar

**Standard Features:** Unless noted otherwise, all interior doors were originally of wood and have long since rotted away. Ceiling height is 10 feet in normal rooms.

**Lighting:** During the day, the crumbling ruins are illuminated by sunlight penetrating through cracks in the walls and ceiling. The underground chambers are unlit and pitch black, although there are wall-set sconces where new torches can be placed.

#### 

It is approximately 20 miles of trackless desert from the city to the ruins and it takes 5-6 hours to get there on horseback. If the adventurers are mounted, there is an incident along the way: One of the horses, randomly determined, missteps on the top of a sand dune, falls down and badly damages its leg. The rider must make a Difficult Ride test or suffer 1d4 points of falling damage as the horse trips and falls. A successful Difficult First Aid test makes the horse able to walk but at half speed. Otherwise, the horse's leg is broken; the animal cannot walk at all and is better left in the desert.

If the adventurers ride at half speed (or walk), darkness has fallen when the party approaches the ruins; if they abandon the wounded horse and move at full speed they get to the ruins at dusk.

# I. Upper Ruins

In the vicinity of several sandy hills, and somewhat obscured (Routine Perception test to spot) by a cluster of palm trees, stands a partly ruined building of black stone. Although the presence of vegetation marks this as a valuable source of water, the place has an evil reputation and is avoided by locals and travelers alike (see the Blood of the Brotherhood section for more information).

Only fragments remain of a wall that once ringed the shrine. Three Ride horses are tied to the trees nearby. Osan and his two contacts are holding a meeting in the columned hall below (Area 4).

Two arched doorways, to the north and west, provide entry into the main building, which is silent and cloaked in pitch darkness. Remember that the adventurers need torches inside and in the chambers below, and that, even with torches, visibility is quite limited. NPCs are able to detect the player adventurers by the torches they carry and vice versa.

#### 2. Priests' Chambers

The main room of the temple's ground level is empty, its floor covered with sand and strewn with shards of broken pottery and other worthless refuse.

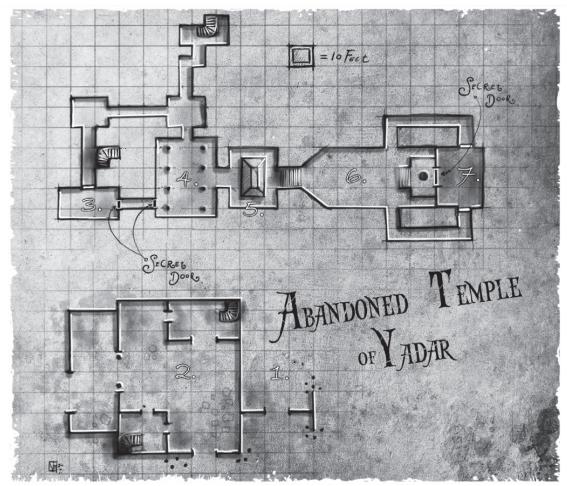
The smaller chambers - to the northwest and southeast - are less sandy. In each chamber is a staircase that winds its way down 45 feet to the subterranean level of the temple.

On a landing halfway down the stair from the north-western room are the skeletal remains of an ancient priest. The clothing has long since rotted away, and the skull was evidently cracked open by a bronze mace that still rests in the dust a few feet away (Routine Perception test to spot the mace).

#### 3. Vault with Iron Door

Used as a vault by the old priests of Yadar, this chamber is sealed by a black iron door. The image of a great fanged bat with outstretched wings is carved in bas relief upon the door's surface, ringed with cryptic writing. A successful Simple Lore test reveals that the text is a curse that threatens to bring the 'demons of the night' upon those who enter the chamber unbidden. The lock was originally of very good quality but is now time-worn and somewhat easier to pick open (requiring an Easy Mechanisms test).

Under some rubble (Simple Perception test) in the north-western corner of the room is a treasure chest that contains a pile of silver coins (500 SP total), a silver mirror, an ivory buckle in the shape of



a serpent (worth 80 SP) and a set of twin daggers set with tiny gems (worth 100 SP each).

There is a secret door in the southern wall of the vault (Simple Perception test) that connects with the columned hall (Area 4) through another secret door.

#### 4. Columned Hall

Eight large columns of stone are spaced evenly out in this rectangular chamber. The walls are painted with scenes of death, disease and decay, in the tradition of Yadar's cult. There is a secret door hidden within a painting of a skeleton (Routine Perception test) that leads to the vault (Area 3).

When the adventurers reach the ruined temple, Osan is in this chamber conducting a meeting with his contacts, the messengers from the padishah's court in Khazabad. They have set a single torch in an old sconce on the northern wall, providing shadowy illumination for the edges of the room.

Osan has brought his pet, a trained leopard, with him and the great cat now lurks in the dark square chamber east of the columned hall. Due to the leopard's low-light vision, it is likely to detect any intruders carrying torches before they spot the cat.

**Development:** Unless the adventurers enter the columned hall through the secret door, or approach in total darkness, they are likely to be seen first by the leopard. Each adventurers should make a Routine Perception test against the leopard's Stealth skill. Characters who fail cannot act during the surprise round, when the leopard pounces upon the foremost party member.

At the same time, the leopard lets out a great roar that alerts Osan and his allies to the presence of enemies. The Khazistanis draw their weapons and prepare for combat. If the adventurers are getting thrashed by the leopard, Osan and his men charge into the fray; conversely, if the leopard is quickly slain by the players, the Khazistanis withdraw towards the sacrificial pit (Area 5) where Osan's henchmen take up positions near the entrance, trying to cut down their opponents as they cross into the chamber. Osan places himself south of the pit and fires upon the opponents with his bow. He might also try to push opponents into the pit during melee (using a bull rush attack).

If the players simply wade into combat and try to cut down Osan, he fights back and does not reveal his position as royal agent if he thinks he and his men can beat the party. Should they manage to slay Osan (remember that Sabiha asked for his head as proof of his death) or take him prisoner, the player characters probably learn the truth, either from the scroll found on Osan's corpse, or through interrogating the royal agent. Osan may also reveal who he really is if the adventurers attempt to parley with the Khazistanis instead of attacking outright.

In any case, at the end of this encounter the adventurers are likely to learn that they have been fooled by Sabiha (and worse, the stolen gem is nowhere to be found). Their next course of action depends to a certain degree on whether Osan is still alive or not:

If the adventurers killed Osan (and learned the truth from the scroll he carried, or through interrogation of his allies), they probably wish to return to Zul-Bazzir and confront Sabiha, both for revenge and to learn more about the stolen gem. Clever adventurers should suspect that the female thief has set up a trap for them and proceed with caution.

It is also possible, of course, that the adventurers remain ignorant of the true identity of Osan (by not bothering to search his corpse, or not being able to read Khazistani, for example) and return to the appointed meeting with Sabiha, only to walk straight into a trap (see the Treachery in the Tomb section).

If the adventurers learn the truth about Osan before he is killed and assuming they are able to convince the royal agent of their loyalty to the Khazistani empire (a successful Influence Skill Test can influence Osan in the right direction but this test should be made with severe penalties if the adventurers attacked and almost killed him), they might be able to form a temporary alliance with Osan. The royal agent believes he can use the adventurers to track down the nobles who plot against Khadim Bey, as well as retrieve the stolen jewel (which the adventurers probably intend to keep for themselves, should they find it). If they reach an agreement, Osan asks the adventurers to return to Zul-Bazzir to find Sabiha, while he himself pretends to be dead.

# 5. Sacrificial Pit

The muffled priests of Yadar the death-god disposed of the bodies of sacrificial victims in this grisly pit. The pit is 20 feet deep, and is now filled with the cracked skulls and yellowed bones of dozens of victims. A small viper snake hides among the bones, striking out against anyone who enters the pit (adventurers may fall into the pit while fighting against Osan and his allies; see Area 4).

#### 6. Inner Shrine

The ceiling of this domed chamber is 35 feet above the smooth stone floor. In the southern end of the room, on a raised dais 5 feet high, is a faceless statue of black stone, fully 25 feet tall. The statue is sculpted to hold a stone bowl in its cupped, outstretched hands. The contents of the bowl is not visible from below. A Simple Athletics test is required to climb up the statue to reach the bowl.

In the bowl lurks an Enveloping Ooze that appears as a puddle of water. It takes a successful Simple Perception test to detect the ooze for what it is. An adventurer who fails to notice it is automatically hit with its acid damage (which may ruin the adventurer's armour, if any).

The ooze moves very slowly and the best way to flee from it is probably to jump down from the statue to the floor below (a 20 feet drop).

An Enveloping Ooze attacks by moving next to its intended victim and attempting to envelop him. This attack has a base 100% chance of success, although the victim may use his Evade skill or his Athletics skill to jump out of the way. Using Athletics rather than Evade results in the Skill Test being Difficult rather than Routine. An Enveloping Ooze's attack may not be parried – the creature will simply slide around the parrying weapon to engulf its foe. An Enveloping Ooze will wrap itself around one of its victim's Hit Locations.

Once an Enveloping Ooze has enmeshed a victim, it will attempt to hang on and continue to inflict acid damage, with every intent of dissolving and consuming its victim. Every round a creature's Hit Location is enmeshed by an Enveloping Ooze, that creature will take eight points of acid damage to that location. Armour will protect against this damage until it is dissolved by the Ooze. An

# Osan Kadri, the Padishah's Secret Agent - Male Khazistani

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	5/6
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	5/6
SIZ	14	7-9	Abdomen	5/7
INT	12	10-12	Chest	5/8
<b>POW</b>	13	13-15	Right Arm	5/5
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	5/5
CHA	14	19-20	Head	-/6

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier +1D2

**Armour:** Chainmail Shirt and Skirt. -6 Armour Penalty.

Magic Points 13

Traits: None

Movement 8m

ment 8m

**Strike Rank** +13 (+7 when armoured)

Common Skills: Athletics 65%, Brawn 75%, Culture (Own) 74%, Dance 53%, Drive 27%, Evade 78%, Evaluate 66%, First Aid 26%, Influence 78%, Insight 55%, Lore (Regional) 84%, Perception 65%, Persistence 56%, Resilience 89%, Ride 82%, Sing 37%, Sleight 28%, Stealth 66%, Swim 68%, Unarmed 70%

Advanced Skills: Courtesy 56%, Language (Native) 86%, Lore (Tactics) 64%, Streetwise 60%,

Survival 75%, Track 70%

# Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Scimitar	_	M	M	1D8 Bleed	6/10
Khaz Short bow	80m	L		1D6+1 Impale	4/4

# **Combat Styles**

Padisha's Trust (Scimitar, Khazistani Short bow, Dagger): 80%

**Possessions:** Riding horse, chainmail, scimitar, Khazistani Short bow, 20 arrows, sealed scroll with message to padishah (written in Khazistani), 50 sp.

**Description:** Osan has plain features and a drooping moustache.

**Tactics:** Osan values his own hide, and lets his henchmen protect him, although he is a skilled fighter and does not flee from combat unless the odds seem overwhelming.

# Messengers from Khazabad - Male Khazistani (2)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	2/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	2/5
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	2/6
INT	11	10-12	Chest	2/7
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	2/4
DEX	12	16-18	Left Arm	2/4
CHA	10	19-20	Head	3/5

Combat Actions 2

Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 11

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +12 (+9 when

armoured)

**Armour:** Hard Leather Shirt and Leggings. -3 Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 51%, Brawn 52%, Culture (Own) 72%, Dance 22%, Drive 23%, Evade 59%, Evaluate 41%, First Aid 23%, Influence 60%, Insight 52%, Lore (Regional) 72%, Perception 51%, Persistence 37%, Resilience 59%, Ride 63%, Sing 21%, Sleight 22%, Stealth

23%, Swim 26%, Unarmed 46%

Advanced Skills: Courtesy 31%, Language (Native) 76%, Lore (Tactics) 52%, Streetwise 51%,

Track 33%

# Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Scimitar	_	M	M	1D8 Bleed	6/10
Khaz Short bow	80m	L		1D6+1 Impale	4/4

# **Combat Styles**

Khazistanti Messenger (Scimitar, Khazistanti Short bow, javelin): 52%

Possessions: Riding horse, studded leather, turbaned helmet, scimitar, Khazistani Short bow, 15 sp.

**Description:** Hook-nosed, with turbaned helmets and cloaks over their armour.

**Tactics:** These spies take orders from and protect Osan, but not if their own lives are at stake. However, they know that they are doomed if they flee and Osan survives. Therefore, they are much more likely to flee if Osan is killed first.

adventurer caught by an Enveloping Ooze may attempt to escape by making another Routine Evade or Difficult Athletics Skill Test.

# 7. High Priest's Chamber

Accessible from either of the two corridors leading from the inner shrine (Area 6), or through a secret door behind the cult statue (Difficult Perception test), this large chamber once belonged to the high priest of Yadar's cult.

Sitting on a massive, high-backed chair carved from stone, the wizened form of the mummified high priest is still present in the chamber, covered with dust and cobwebs. A tattered black cloak with gold trim hangs on the shoulders of the resin-soaked corpse; the cloth crumbles as soon as it is touched.

In the high priest's lap rests a masterwork curved dagger whose black onyx handle is scorpion-shaped. Around the mummy's neck hangs a golden amulet (worth 150 SP). At its feet is a small copper chest that contains a pile of ancient coins (5d8 x 10 SP and 10d8 x 10 cp) and a single bottle of *dream-elixir*.

The chest is trapped with a poison needle trap (Difficult Perception or the victim must make a Routine Resilience test to avoid 1d4 points of damage per minute to Chest Hit Location).

# BLOOD OF THE BROTHERHOOD

The now-ruined temple was originally built by the priesthood of Yadar some six or seven centuries ago. The small shrine was sacked and burned by a passing army of Yar-Ammonites two centuries later, who also put the majority of the grisly death-priests to the sword. As the Yar-Ammonites settled in the nearby Oasis of Zul and that place grew into the city of Zul-Bazzir, the last high priest of the death-cult died, and the nameless temple fell into desolution and decay. Due to its evil reputation, the place was shunned by all, except those that willingly seek out the dark places of the earth where the tomb-worm gnaws upon the marrow of those who died knowing blasphemous secrets and forbidden spells.

In recent times, the ruined temple has attracted a group of cultists known as the Brotherhood of the Red Seal. This cult consists of men from different Khazrajite nomad clans who meet in secret every month, at nights when the moon is not visible in the night sky. They worship the lord of the empty wastes, al-Tawir, the Ancient One, with murder and blood sacrifice, believing that the god will in turn grant them protection against hunger and thirst and the evil spirits of the desert and give them strength to overcome their enemies (several of these boons are supposedly gained through the eating of human flesh). The cult's leader carries the object that has given the brotherhood its name, a small disc crafted from an unknown red metal, inscribed with what the sorcerer believes to be the nine secret names of al-Tawir.

As it happens, the moon is hidden this particular night and the night sky is illuminated only by a gem-studded carpet of stars. As the adventurers are about to leave the ruined temple, whether they are alone or in the company of Osan, the Brothers of the Red Seal are gathering in the vicinity of the ruins.

There is a 50% chance that the cultists have already discovered any horses belonging to Osan, his contacts, or the adventurers. If this is the case, the cultists are alert, with drawn weapons, and are already moving towards the ruins to investigate. If the horses remain undiscovered, the cultists are scattered in small groups some 50-100 feet away from the temple ruins. Among them is a group of 1d3+3 bound and gagged captives, who are about to be sacrificed. The captives are either from Zul-Bazzir (40%), Khazrajite nomads (30%) or travellers from other regions (30%).

Adventurers who succeed at Routine Perception Skill Tests when they emerge from the staircases in the temple may detect the cultists before the party stumbles upon them by accident.

**Development:** The cultists attempt to capture and sacrifice – and eat – the players. They flee in all directions if more than three-quarters of their number is slain (the cultists are fearful of failing their grim god but they are not mad – not yet, anyway). If the adventurers are able to detect the cultists before they themselves are spotted, they may be able to sneak past the Brotherhood (as determined by a combination of Routine Stealth tests). Any adventurers sneaking out are sure to see the captives who are about to be sacrificed and must determine if they want to risk their own lives to save the innocent.

# TREACHERY IN THE TOMB

Assuming the players return to Zul-Bazzir, they can either go directly to the agreed-upon meeting with Sabiha in the tomb, or they can be more cautious and seek out the yellow-eyed woman elsewhere (where she is more likely to be unprepared).

If the adventurers have slain Osan and go directly to the tomb, they walk straight into a trap. Sabiha has delivered an anonymous message to the governor and Khadim Bey has sent a squad of city guards to the tomb with orders are to seize and arrest the adventurers for the murder of Osan. The city guards hide around the empty tomb, moving in when the adventurers have entered the building. The Khazistani captain leading the city guards is none other than Hassan Sadi (see the A Cry for Vengeance section). If the adventurers have brought with them the severed head of Osan, per Sabiha's wishes, their fate is sealed unless they can fight their way out of the tomb.

While the city guards have orders to capture the adventurers, they do not hesitate to use lethal force if their own lives are threatened. If the adventurers are captured, or allow themselves to be captured, they are taken in chains to the dungeons beneath the citadel for torture and interrogation. Unless the adventurers are capable of talking themselves out of this situation, a chance to escape should present itself to the adventurers before they are beheaded or impaled outside the gates of the citadel; perhaps a slave girl that is the secret spy of some palace faction catches the eye of a handsome adventurer and helps them escape by drugging the jail keeper, or something similar.

If the adventurers killed Osan, but take precautions before going to the tomb, a successful Routine Streetwise Skill Test in either the Bazaar, Caravanserai, Pleasure District, Slave Market or Slum District reveals that a woman that matches Sabiha's description frequents a place called the House of Abu Khafi, often in the company of a black mercenary (if the Skill Test succeeds by –5% or more, the players also learn that this man's name is Ibo). The adventurers may repeat the Streetwise test if it fails the first time, but this may draw attention and alert Sabiha to the fact that the adventurers are asking around for her. The Games Master should

# **Enveloping Ooze**

	r	0				
		Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR		1D6	3	1-20	Body	0/15
CON		3D6	11			
SIZ		6D6	21			
INT		1	1			
POW		3D6	11			
DEX		1D6	3			
CHA		1	1			

Combat Actions 1

Damage Modifier +0

Magic Points 11

Movement 1m

Strike Rank +2

**Armour:** None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 6%, Evade 6%, Perception 12%, Persistence 22%,

Resilience 22%, Stealth 4%. **Advanced Skills:** Track 35%

### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Envelop	_	M	M	8 (Acid)	As for Body

# **Combat Styles**

Tentacle Ooze (Envelop): 100%

An Enveloping Ooze attacks by moving next to its intended victim and attempting to envelop him. This attack has a base 100% chance of success, though the victim may use his Evade skill or his Athletics skill to jump out of the way. Using Athletics rather than Evade results in the skill test being Difficult rather than Routine. An Enveloping Ooze's attack may not be parried – the creature will simply slide around the parrying weapon to engulf its foe. An Enveloping Ooze will wrap itself around one of its victim's hit locations.

Once an Enveloping Ooze has enmeshed a victim, it will attempt to hang on and continue to inflict acid damage, with every intent of dissolving and consuming its victim. Every round a creature's hit location is enmeshed by an Enveloping Ooze, that creature will take eight points of acid damage to that location. Armour will protect against this damage until it is dissolved by the Ooze. A character caught by an Enveloping Ooze may attempt to escape by making another Routine Evade or Difficult Athletics skill test.

# Brothers of the Red Seal: Cannibal-Cultists of a Dark God - Male Khazrajite (20)

Combat Actions 2

Damage Modifier +1d2

Magic Points 9 Movement 8m Strike Rank +12 Armour: None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 49%, Brawn 49%, Culture (Own) 60%, Dance 21%, Drive 22%, Evade 46%, Evaluate 38%, First Aid 23%, Influence 16%, Insight 19%, Lore (Regional) 60%, Perception 44%, Persistence 38%, Resilience 50%, Ride 27%, Sing 17%, Sleight 51%, Stealth 58%, Swim 26%, Unarmed 49%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 49%, Language (Native) 68%, Lore (Blood rituals of Ia-Azutlatl) 50%, Survival 49%

### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Scimitar	_	M	M	1D8 Bleed	6/10

# **Combat Styles**

Savage Blade (1-H Sword, 2-H Sword, Dagger, Axe): 59%

**Possessions:** Clothing, scimitar, 2 gp. One of these cultists carries a small ceramic red disc which functions as a Palsy spell. It affects a 20m radius and targets the Head location of all creatures who fail their Resistance tests. The disc is activated when blood is splattered upon the surface. The item is destroyed upon use.

**Description:** The cultists wear red robes, and black scarves that conceal the lower half of their faces.

**Tactics:** cultists attempt to surround enemies and stab them to death.

Development: The cultists attempt to capture and sacrifice — and eat — the Player Characters. They flee in all directions if more than three-quarters of their number is slain (the cultists are fearful of failing their grim god, but they are not mad — not yet, anyway). If the PCs are able to detect the cultists before they themselves are spotted, they may be able to sneak past the Brotherhood (as determined by a combination of Routine Stealth tests). Any characters sneaking out are sure to see the captives who are about to be sacrificed, and must determine if they want to risk their own lives to save the innocent.

# Ibo, Sabiha's Companion - Male Ikuna

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	14	7-9	Abdomen	2/7
INT	12	10-12	Chest	2/8
<b>POW</b>	11	13-15	Right Arm	2/5
DEX	18	16-18	Left Arm	2/5
CHA	12	19-20	Head	-/6

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 11

Movement 8m

**Strike Rank** +15 (+13

when armoured)

Armour: Leather Shirt and pants. -2 Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 62%, Brawn 53%, Culture (Own) 74%, Dance 30%, Drive 29%, Evade 66%, Evaluate 54%, First Aid 30%, Influence 24%, Insight 23%, Lore (Regional) 74%, Perception 68%, Persistence 22%, Resilience 68%, Ride 34%, Sing 23%, Sleight 70%, Stealth 75%, Swim 28%, Unarmed 32%

Advanced Skills: Acrobatics 52%, Language (Native) 74%, Survival 55%

# Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Ikuna Knife	_	M	S	1D6+1 Bleed, Impale	6/7

### Combat Styles

Ikuna Bloodletter (Ikuna Knife, Dagger, Spear): 62%

Possessions: Leather armour (shirt and leggings), Ikuna knife, 5 sp.

**Description:** Tall, black-skinned, with a simple robe used to conceal his armour.

**Tactics:** Ibo employs a variety of tactics. He always enters a rage, and then either flanks and sneak attacks, or tries to grapple weak-looking opponents. Being lightly armed and armoured himself, he stays well away from people in heavy armour wielding heavy weapons.

also roll for random encounters if the players venture into these city districts.

If Osan is still alive and allied with the players, he warns them against going to the meeting in the tomb (which he correctly suspects is a trap). Osan wants Sabiha and her masters to believe that he is dead, and instructs the adventurers to go looking for the raven-haired thief while he hides and observes from afar. He does not want to involve the governor or the city guard, because the news that he is alive will soon spread through the palace and the disloyal nobles will be harder to root out. The adventurers can use Streetwise tests, to find Sabiha. The clues all point to the House of Abu Khafi.

# THE HOUSE OF ABU KHAFI

The notorious House of Abu Khafi is located in the Pleasure District of Zul-Bazzir. To outsiders, it looks like an ordinary (although perhaps disreputable and bawdy) tavern and gambling house but those who frequent it know that the proprietor, Abu Khafi, offers more than strong drink and games of dice to his clientele. There are private rooms beneath the house where lotus-smokers lie in drugged sleep, and other lusts can be sated, too, for a price.

**Development:** The adventurers are here to look for Sabiha, who is known to frequent the place along with a male companion named Ibo. A good approach is to enter the house as regular guests, possibly in disguise and simply wait for either Sabiha or Ibo to appear. They can then be shadowed when they leave the tavern and dealt with in some dark alley without alerting Abu's many thugs and guards.

If the adventurers simply walk into the tavern and start asking questions about Sabiha and Ibo, the staff become suspicious and report back to Abu, who in turn warns the two thieves and sets up a trap for the adventurers: He instructs one of his henchmen to pose as a regular guest and approach the adventurers, offering information

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### The House of Abu Khafi

**Standard Features:** Unless noted otherwise, all interior doors are good wooden doors. Ceiling height is 10 feet in normal rooms.

**Lighting:** The ground and upper levels of the house are lit by a multitude of oil lamps and candles. The corridors in the basement are illuminated by wall-hung torches, while the private chambers below ground have medium-sized braziers that provide both warmth and illumination.

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in exchange for a handful of silver coins. This 'guest' then tells the adventurers that he has seen Ibo lying comatose in one of the private rooms in the basement, enjoying the strange visions and pleasurable sensations of the silver lotus. If the adventurers investigate, the door to the basement is slammed shut behind them as soon as they enter the corridor (Area 9), and Abu's thugs attack through several secret doors. Abu, Ibo and Sabiha watch from the secret corridors (Area 10) but lend their strength to the thugs if necessary.

### I. Entrance and Hall

The main door to Abu's gambling-house is a strong wooden door (Difficult Brawn test to break) that can be barred from the inside and has a small peek-hole used by the guards to screen would-be visitors.

Abu currently employs eight guards; three watch the doors and the others remain on alert to deal with troublemakers inside the



house or in the basement. Weapons are not allowed inside the house and must be left with the guards in the entrance hall. The guards search guests for hidden weapons but they are not very diligent. With a successful Routine Influence test and a handful of gold coins, the guards can also be bribed to allow a guest to enter with a small (concealed) weapon.

### 2. Main Room

This large, rectangular room has a ceiling height of 15 feet. A dozen round tables are placed throughout the room. At each table, a handful of patrons are busy gambling and betting in various games, which include dicethrowing (2 SP to enter, roll highest of 4d6 to win), knife-throwing directed at the eastern wall (5 SP to enter, lowest ranged attack roll at 30 feet range wins) and arm-wrestling (lowest Routine Athletics Skill Test).

Any moderately lucky or successful adventurers (having won at least 100 SP) might be accused of cheating (35% chance) or be approached by one of the serving-girls working for Abu (20% chance).

Cheaters are surrounded by 1d3+2 other patrons who try to pick a fight with the character using concealed or improvised weapons (taking a -10% penalty to attack rolls in the latter case). Determine the nationality and profession of such brawlers randomly.

Conversely, the serving-girls join a lucky winner at his table for a while, while tempting him to spend his hard-won coins in the comfort of the private rooms below (where he can be drugged and robbed).

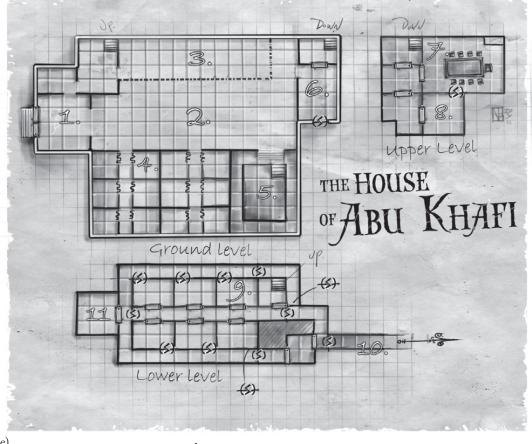
### 3. Bar

The bar serves local specialties (such as palm wine, 1 SP per cup) as well as exclusive imports (Susrahnite grape wine, 5 SP per cup; Taikangian rice-liquor, 10 SP per cup).

The bartender is a gaunt and swarthy, middle-aged man named Yazd, who hails from the Eastern realm of Laksha. He becomes suspicious if strangers come asking for Sabiha or Ibo, but feigns indifference and claims not to have seen them ('not recently, anyway'). A successful Simple Insight test can reveal that the barkeep is lying. As soon as he gets the chance, Yazd sends one of the serving-girls to alert Abu, who arranges a trap for the adventurers as described previously.

# 4. Semi-Private Booths

For two silver coins, patrons can be seated in one of these 12 booths, where a measure of privacy can be had behind a thin curtain. Some guests use the booths to talk with each other in private, others to play exclusive dice-games with higher stakes than in the main room, and yet others enjoy the exotic dancing skills of Abu's serving-girls here. Each room is comfortably furnished with silken cushions, up to four chairs, and a low table.



5. Fighting-Pit

On special nights, brutal gladiatorial games are held in this square pit, five feet deep and floored with stone. It costs 2 SP to watch, and spectators huddle in the cramped space around the pit, betting on their favourites. Abu usually hires a couple of broke and penniless thugs or mercenaries to fight one-on-one duels; he sometimes throws in a wild beast for good measure. The winner gets the prize money, usually around 40-50 SP.

All kinds of weapons are allowed, as long as the two combatants agree. Fights are supposed to end when the first combatant is incapacitated but people are killed more often than not. Such would-be champions are hauled out of the pit and disposed of through the back door nearby.

### 6. Back Door

This door has the same statistics as the front door (Area 1). It exits to a dark alleyway littered with filth and refuse. Rats and stray dogs scurry about in the shadows. Several other narrow streets connect with this alley here; Abu's henchmen and contacts often use this door to come and go on their illicit errands.

# 7. Conference Room

A massive wooden table, ringed by half a dozen chairs, stands in the centre of this large room, where Abu and his contacts often meet to discuss business. Ibo and Sabiha might be found here, too. There is a 25% chance (rolled separately for each Non-player) that any of the three are present in the room at any given time.

There is an elaborate marble fireplace in the eastern corner of the room; the floor is carpeted with a heavy Jairanian rug (worth 200 SP).

# Abu's Guards - Male Jairani (8)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	15	7-9	Abdomen	-17
INT	10	10-12	Chest	-/8
<b>POW</b>	10	13-15	Right Arm	-/5
DEX	12	16-18	Left Arm	-/5
CHA	10	19-20	Head	-/6

**Combat Actions** 2

Damage Modifier +1D4

Magic Points 10

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +11

**Armour:** None

Traits: None

**Common Skills:** Athletics 28%, Brawn 31%, Culture (Own) 60%, Dance 22%, Drive 22%, Evade 54%, Evaluate 60%, First Aid 22%, Influence 50%, Insight 20%, Lore (Regional) 60%, Perception 30%, Persistence 40%, Resilience 58%, Ride 22%, Sing 20%, Sleight 27%, Stealth

22%, Swim 30%, Unarmed 58%

Advanced Skills: Commerce 30%, Courtesy 30%, Language (Native) 80%, Lore (Tactics) 60%,

Streetwise 40%

### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Club	_	M	S	1D6 Stun Location	4/4

# **Combat Styles**

Heavy Hitter (Club, Warhammer, 1-H Hammer): 63%

Possessions: Clothing, club, 2 sp.

Description: Little more than street thugs, these mercenary guards have unkempt hair and beards and filth-stained clothing.

**Tactics:** Used to dealing with drunken patrons and other bothersome customers, these guards are ill-suited to fighting well-armed and armored opponents (but neither will Abu Khafi allow such people into his establishment).

# Abu's Serving-Girls - Female Jairani (4)

Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
10	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
11	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
11	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
12	10-12	Chest	-17
12	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
16	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
14	19-20	Head	-/5
	10 11 11 12 12 16	10 1-3 11 4-6 11 7-9 12 10-12 12 13-15 16 16-18	10 1-3 Right Leg 11 4-6 Left Leg 11 7-9 Abdomen 12 10-12 Chest 12 13-15 Right Arm 16 16-18 Left Arm

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +0 Magic Points 12

Strike Rank +14

**Armour:** None **Traits:** None

Magic Points 12
Movement 8m

Common Skills: Athletics 56%, Brawn 21%, Culture (Own) 84%, Dance 30%, Drive 28%, Evade 62%, Evaluate 86%, First Aid 28%, Influence 78%, Insight 54%, Lore (Regional) 74%, Perception 64%, Persistence 44%, Resilience 42%, Ride 28%, Sing 46%, Sleight 70%, Stealth 68%, Swim 21%, Unarmed 26%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 46%, Courtesy 76%, Disguise 56%, Gambling 34%, Language (Native) 76%, Mechanisms 48%, Oratory 46%, Seduction 76%, Streetwise 56%

Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Stabbing Dagger		S	S	1D4 Impale	6/8

# **Combat Styles**

Whirling Dervish (Stabbing Dagger, Kris Knife, Chakram): 66%

Possessions: Scanty clothing, stabbing dagger, 1 sp.

**Description:** The very definition of saucy wenches, these girls have been carefully recruited by Abu Khafi to be his eyes and ears among the customers, providing him with a wealth of information that he can use to blackmail or influence others. These girls have been trained as fine thieves and fairly decent spies.

**Tactics:** Although they prefer to stay out of combat, the serving-girls can be deadly if they work together to flank and sneakily attack unsuspecting victims using stealth.

# Yazd, Barkeeper - Male Bhangari

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	14	7-9	Abdomen	-7
INT	12	10-12	Chest	-/8
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	-/5
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	-/5
CHA	10	19-20	Head	-/6

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +1D2 Magic Points 10

Movement 8m Strike Rank +13 **Armour:** None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 48%, Brawn 77%, Culture (Own) 54%, Dance 24%, Drive 24%, Evade 68%, Evaluate 62%, First Aid 26%, Influence 45%, Insight 22%, Lore (Regional) 59%, Perception 57%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 58%, Ride 24%, Sing 70%, Sleight 39%, Stealth 26%, Swim 28%, Unarmed 78%

**Advanced Skills:** Courtesy 52%, Craft (Domestic) 76%, Gambling 62%, Language (Native) 72%, Oratory 60%, Play Instrument (Lute) 84%, Streetwise 50%

# Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Hatchet	_	S	S	1D6 Bleed	3/6

# **Combat Styles**

Another Round? (Hatchet, Club, 1-H Axe): 68%

**Possessions:** Clothing, hatchet, 3 sp, Lute.

**Description:** Middle-aged and swarthy, with a short white turban wrapped around his head.

Tactics: Yazd keeps a hatchet ready behind the bar in case of emergencies, but can also fight well without weapons.

# Abu Khafi, Tavern-Owner and Lotus-Trader - Male Jairanian

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	10	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	13	10-12	Chest	-17
<b>POW</b>	13	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	18	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	14	19-20	Head	<b>-/5</b>

**Armour:** None

**Combat Actions** 3

Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 13

Movement 8m Strike Rank +16

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 32%, Brawn 26%, Culture (Own) 76%, Dance 32%, Drive 31%, Evade 86%, Evaluate 87%, First Aid 31%, Influence 88%, Insight 71%, Lore (Regional) 96%, Perception 81%, Persistence 71%, Resilience 70%, Ride 61%, Sing 27%, Sleight 82%, Stealth

81%, Swim 24%, Unarmed 42%

Advanced Skills: Courtesy 77%, Craft (Poisons) 76%, Craft (Domestic) 71%, Language (Native)

82%, Lore (Alchemy) 76%, Mechanisms 71%, Streetwise 77%

Weapons

Туре Size Reach AP/HP Range Damage Curved Dagger S S 1D4+1 Bleed 6/8

### Combat Styles

Scorpion's Sting (Curved Dagger, Dart, Light crossbow): 78%

Possessions: Fine clothing, exquisite curved dagger, two doses of large scorpion venom, keys to all doors in house, 99 sp.

Description: Shaven-headed, with a well-oiled beard and a sly grin to match. Abu is a native of Jairan to the west, and so are most of his staff. He wears fine quality silken clothing.

Tactics: If forced to fight, Abu positions himself so as to gain flanking and moves to stealthily attack with his poisoned dagger.

**Venom:** (See Knife of the Necromancer Page 26)

### 8. Office and Bedchamber

Abu is a man who likes to mix business and pleasure; his office is next door to his lavish bedchamber. In the tavern-keeper's desk is a locked compartment (Difficult Mechanism Skill Test used to open) that contains a pile of gold coins (2,000 SP total), a silver collar (worth 75 SP) and a golden snuff box (worth 25 SP). The compartment is trapped with a poison needle trap (It requires a Hard Perception to detect or the victim must make a Hard Resilience test; failure means 1d6 damage to random Arm Hit Location).

Next door, a circular bed, covered with the pelts of exotic animals (various furs, worth 150 SP), is usually kept warm by a handful of off-duty serving-girls (see Area 2 for statistics).

### 9. Lotus-Rooms

The basement of Abu Khafi's house has six special rooms where a guest's lusts, whether for the sensuous dreams of the silver lotus, or for other, more obscene desires, can be satisfied. The door to each room is of average quality (Requires a Routine Mechanisms test to open) and can be locked by the guest from the inside; Abu also has a key with which he can unlock any of these doors from the outside.

Inside each chamber is a low table surrounded by comfortable cushions. A silvered brazier (worth 30 SP) stands in the corner, providing illumination and warmth. The powdered leaves of the silver lotus can also be burned in the brazier to produce a thin grey smoke that instils pleasant dreams and visions in the mind of any who inhale the vapours.

For each room, there is a 50% chance that it is occupied by 1d3 lotus-smokers, with a 75% likelihood that each is asleep. Adventurers entering an occupied chamber without holding their breath must make a Simple Resilience Skill Test to avoid the effects of the residual (but diluted) vapours (initial damage 1 POW, secondary damage unconsciousness for 3d10 minutes). Another test must be made 1 minute later, even if the first test was successful.

There is a secret peek-hole in the wall farthest from the door in each chamber, which Abu's henchmen use to spy upon his guests, to learn secrets that can be used for blackmailing. The peek-hole is itself set within a secret revolving door that can be locked from the outside (from Area 10). The presence of both peek-hole and secret door must be detected separately with a successful Routine Perception test.

# 10. Secret Corridors and Escape Tunnel

A narrow corridor runs along the back wall of each lotus-room and connects with the main corridor through several secret doors (Routine Perception test to detect). Abu's guards and serving-girls know about these secret doors; but only Abu knows about the secret door in the far eastern wall that runs for another 40 feet and then connects with a sewer tunnel. There is a spiked pit trap 25 feet down the secret tunnel (Hard Perception test to detect, Routine Evade test to avoid; failure means 2d6 hits for 1d4+2 damage each).

### II. Lotus Vault

This room has a strong wooden door trapped with a wall scythe trap (a difficult perception test to detect, Routine Evade test to avoid; failure means 2d8 damage to one Hit Location). The vault contains Abu's supplies of silver lotus (worth over 10,000 SP) and other items, including a rack with three silvered scimitars (worth 105 SP each) and a large bronze bowl inscribed with Susrahnite

cuneiform around its rim (worth 200 SP). The room can also be used as a safe retreat in case of trouble, since the door can be barred from the inside (a difficult brawn test required to break it open).

# **SLAVES OF THE SILVER LOTUS**

The adventurers can confront Sabiha and her companion Ibo either inside the House of Abu Khafi, or they can shadow the two thieves when they leave the gambling-house. This night, Ibo's mission is to deliver a dose of silver lotus from Abu Khafi to Sahiba's master, the Khazistani general Melik Khan. The general is addicted to the lotus and must cooperate with the rebel nobles to get what he craves. Note that Melik Khan does not know the identity of the rebel nobles; Sabiha is the link between the nobles and the general.

Ibo and Sabiha stop and talk briefly in a dark and deserted square some streets away from Abu's house, then Sabiha returns to the gambling-house while Ibo heads for the general's mansion. The adventurers can track Ibo as he leaves the Pleasure District and heads for the wealthy Mansion District. Ibo stops at certain points to make sure he is not being followed; make Ibo's Perception test opposed by the Stealth skills of the adventurers at such occasions.

Unless hindered by the adventurers somewhere along the way, Ibo reaches the walled mansion of Melik Khan, where he approaches the main gate and is let inside by the guards. Usually Sabiha delivers the goods to the general, so neither the gate guards nor Melik Khan himself are familiar with Ibo and his appearance, but the black mercenary knows a secret password – "achad" – that gets him past the guards.

If the adventurers stop and confront Sabiha as she returns to the gambling-house, or if they confront Ibo before he enters the mansion, they discover that neither has the stolen gem; they say Melik Khan has it. Both Ibo and Sabiha can help the players get past the general's guards if they are forced to do it (with a dagger pressed against their back). The thieves may also try to recruit the adventurers to their cause and to double-cross Osan if they are allied with him.

If the adventurers are allied to Osan, he asks the adventurers to sneak into the general's mansion and learn what they can, rather than sending in a squad of city guards, which would alert the rebel nobles.

### I. Outer Wall

The general's mansion is surrounded by a 15 feet tall superior masonry wall covered with white plaster and decorated with bas-reliefs of scenes of hunting and warfare.

The double doors at the gate are strong wooden doors that can be barred from the inside and require a Difficult Athletics Skill Test to open. Two guards are posted outside at all times, including one

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### The Mansion of Melik Khan

**Standard Features:** Unless noted otherwise, all interior doors are good wooden doors. Ceiling height is 10 feet in normal rooms.

**Lighting:** The interior of the mansion is lit by wall-hung torches. The garden is unlit and cloaked by darkness during the night; the guards carry torches when doing their rounds outside.

guard captain, while a third guard stands inside, behind the barred gates, looking out through a small peephole. The guard on the inside only opens the gates on orders from the guards outside. In case of trouble, he runs back to the house to alert the remaining guards.

**Guard-Captain, male Khazistani:** This guard-captain uses the same statistics as Hassan Sadi (see above).

**Guards, male Jairani (2):** These soldiers have the same statistics as the city guards.

### 2. Garden

The large mansion-house is fronted by a lush garden planted with palm trees and bushes, tended to by meticulous gardeners and servants. In the south-eastern corner of the garden is a large pool, 10 feet deep, filled with freshwater. The general often entertains important guests here, comfortable in the shade of a silken canopy, attended by slaves who wield large fans of ostrich feathers.

# 3. Stables

This small stone building has a wooden roof. It can accommodate up to six mounts; currently there are two light Ride-horses,

two light warhorses and Melik Khan's own heavy warhorse here. The general's steed, called *White Crescent*, is a magnificent black Khazistani stallion with a single white sickle-shaped spot on its forehead. It can easily be sold for triple the normal price outside Zul-Bazzir (it would instantly be recognized as the general's property in the city).

### 4. Main Entrance

From the garden, a short but broad stairway (five feet tall) leads up to a portico. Two guards are always stationed in front of the double doors leading into the main court (Area 7).

**Veteran Guards, male Jairani (2):** These soldiers have the same statistics as the city guards; adding a +10% bonus to all of their attack rolls.

# 5. Servants' Room

This simple room is shared by a dozen servants, cooks, gardeners and stable-boys. The servants take turns sleeping on the cold stone floor when they are not on duty. The tyrannical master of the servants is the eunuch Abdur, who is also the steward of the house and, as the general's cup-bearer, tastes all food and drink brought before Melik Khan.

### 6. Guards' Room

Slightly more comfortable than the servants' room (Area 5), this is the living room of the general's house guards. These include two guard captains, one of which is always posted outside the gates (Area 1), while the other is in charge of security in the rest of the



house or rests in this chamber (50% chance of either). The guards (but not the officers) sleep in their armour and are ready to respond to trouble in a few rounds after shaking off sleep.

**Guard-Captain, male Khazistani:** This guard-captain uses the same statistics as Hassan Sadi.

**Guards, male Jairani (6):** These soldiers have the same statistics as the city guards.

### 7. Inner Court

This huge courtyard is open to the skies above but has been designed to be covered in comfortable shadows during most of the day. Along each long wall are five slender stone columns topped by carved eagle heads.

The general receives guests and takes his meals here, reclining on a pile of cushions and pillows in the southern end of the courtyard, with his comely wife Nishat and two small children at his side.

### 8. Kitchen

Close to the inner court is a large kitchen, filled with fresh food and good wine. Servants scuttle to and from this area on their way to other parts of the general's mansion. At night, there is a 25% chance of meeting a desperate servant who is here stealing food from the pantry. If caught by Abdur, he faces flogging or worse.

# 9. Master's Bedroom

This square room is the bedchamber of Melik Khan and his young wife Nishat, a noble lady of Susrah. Nishat has given her husband two children, and the marriage is seemingly a good one but as Melik Khan drifts ever stronger into the addictive ecstasies

# Abdur, Cup-Bearer and Steward of the House - Male Zadjite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	15	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	14	7-9	Abdomen	<b>-/7</b>
INT	13	10-12	Chest	-/8
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	-/5
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	<b>-/</b> 5
CHA	9	19-20	Head	-/6

**Combat Actions** 3

Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 11

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +14

**Armour:** None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 29%, Brawn 29%, Culture (Own) 86%, Dance 23%, Drive 25%, Evade 58%, Evaluate 72%, First Aid 27%, Influence 83%, Insight 24%, Lore (Regional) 81%, Perception 69%, Persistence 22%, Resilience 64%, Ride 25%, Sing 20%, Sleight 23%, Stealth 27%, Swim 27%, Unarmed 29%

Advanced Skills: Courtesy 52%, Language (Native) 82%, Streetwise 30%

# Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HI
Stabbing Dagger	_	S	S	1D4 Impale	6/8

# **Combat Styles**

Panicked Attack (Stabbing Dagger, Kukri): 59%

Possessions: Clothing, stabbing dagger, 23 sp.

**Description:** The eunuch is potbellied, with ponytail hair. He wears an eyepatch, for his left eye was put out many years ago for some unknown crime, and he was banished from his native land of Zadj.

**Tactics:** Abdur is not much of a fighter, but he knows how to wield a dagger to defend himself. However, he is more likely to flee and summon the guards than to oppose a group of armed intruders. He knows that Nishat, the general's wife, has an affair with a guard captain and uses this to blackmail her. Abdur also knows about Melik Khan's addiction to the silver lotus, but remains loyal as long as it serves his own interests.

# **Servants -** *Male and female Khazistani (12)*

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	9	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	11	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	11	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	11	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	12	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	12	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	12	19-20	Head	-/5

**Combat Actions** 2

Damage Modifier -1D2

Magic Points 12 Movement 8m

Strike Rank +12

Armour: None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 21%, Brawn 20%, Culture (Own) 52%, Dance 22%, Drive 24%, Evade 24%, Evaluate 41%, First Aid 23%, Influence 40%, Insight 23%, Lore (Regional) 52%, Perception 23%, Persistence 24%, Resilience 22%, Ride 24%, Sing 22%, Sleight 22%, Stealth 23%, Swim 20%, Unarmed 31%

Advanced Skills: Courtesy 21%, Language (Native) 71%

Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Unarmed	_	M	M	1D3	As Arms

### **Combat Styles**

Improvised Weapons (Bottle, chair leg, table leg, vase): 33%

**Possessions:** Clothing, 1-2 cp.

**Description:** Non-descript male and female servants of the household.

Tactics: They may throw a few punches or use improvised weapons, mostly however they act scared and create confusion/chaos in combat. They will fetch the guards if threatened, or at least try to.

# Melik Khan, Cavalry General and Secret Slave of the Silver Lotus - Male Khazistani

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	2/6
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	2/6
SIZ	15	7-9	Abdomen	5/7
INT	13	10-12	Chest	5/8
POW	12	13-15	Right Arm	5/5
DEX	12	16-18	Left Arm	5/5
CHA	12	19-20	Head	-/6

**Combat Actions** 2

**Armour:** Chain Shirt, Hard Leather leggings. -5 Armour Penalty.

Damage Modifier +1D4

Magic Points 12

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +12 (+8 when

armoured)

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 28%, Brawn 31%, Culture (Own) 86%, Dance 54%, Drive 44%, Evade 79%, Evaluate 65%, First Aid 25%, Influence 89%, Insight 55%, Lore (Regional) 96%, Perception 75%, Persistence 64%, Resilience 78%, Ride 84%, Circle 14, 26%, Science 20%, Resilience 78%, Ride 84%, Ride

Sing 34%, Sleight 24%, Stealth 25%, Swim 30%, Unarmed 68%

Advanced Skills: Courtesy 75%, Language (Native) 95%, Lore (Tactics) 91%,

Survival 66%

### **Combat Styles**

Cavalry General (Scimitar, Spear): 88%

Possessions: Chainmail, leather leggings, fine quality scimitar, 91 sp.

**Description:** Middle-aged, bald-headed, with haggard eyes and a drooping moustachio, Melik Khan's appearance is slowly starting to take on the look of a lotus-addict. Even so, he is a wealthy and influential man, and he commands several cavalry companies.

Tactics: Although weakened by age and drugs, the general is still a formidable foe when armed with his weapon of choice, the scimitar.

of the silver lotus, his wife has sought consolation in the arms of one of the guard-captains of the house. At any night when Melik Khan is downstairs (see Area 12), comatose from the vapors of the lotus, there is a 75% chance that his wife summons her lover to the general's own bedchamber.

# 10. Stairway

The staircase is 40 feet deep and ends in the chambers below the mansion-house.

# II. Cells

There are two large cells in the basement. They are rarely used, except to hold fresh slaves who have not yet learned to obey Abdur; the steward enjoys purchasing rebellious individuals (at a cheap price) from the slave market, then breaking their wills using his whip here.

### 12. Private Chamber

This simple room has a low divan set against one wall, next to a medium-sized brazier. It is where Melik Khan sates his desire for the silver lotus. Abdur makes sure no one enters the cellar when the general lies in drugged slumber here.

### 13. Storeroom

Secured by a simple lock (Requires a Simple Mechanics test to open) is a storeroom filled with supplies and equipment required to run the estate, such as clothes, dried food, blankets, bottles, ropes and torches.

# CONCLUSION

The outcome of this adventure depends on several circumstances, among them whether the players allied with Osan, or killed the royal agent and also how deep into the conspiracy against the governor the player characters are willing to go (or be dragged, as the case may be).

One possible outcome is that the players ally with Osan and help him find and capture or kill the agents of the disloyal nobles (and perhaps even expose the lotus-addicted general) and deliver the stolen jewel back to the governor. If successful, the players may be rewarded by Khadim Bey himself and perhaps recruited as his trusted agents, no doubt to the envy of many courtiers and palace toadies; the players then have to fight enemies both inside and outside the palace.

Another possibility is that the players end up on the side of the rebels, joining their secret insurrection that works to assassinate Khadim Bey and seize power in Zul-Bazzir. Even if they are successful in this long-term goal (which might be the climax of several adventures), the players have probably outlived their usefulness by then and their reward from the city's new rulers may ultimately be a dagger in the back or a poisoned chalice.

A third outcome occurs if at any point, the players simply decide to leave the city behind and seek their fortunes somewhere else. Although somewhat cowardly, it is certainly possible. If the players manage to flee with the Jewel of Khadim Bey that should be considered a victory, although they will be chased by agents of the governor to the borders of Khazistan and beyond.

If the players fail: There are several opportunities for the players to fail during this adventure. They can be eaten by cannibal-cultists, imprisoned by the city guard, ambushed by Abu's thugs in his lotus-house, or simply defeated in battle. The text offers several suggestions along the way for how failure can be handled. In general, remember that the player characters can always try to shift their allegiances if and when things go sour; for example, if they have allied with Osan and get caught by Melik Khan's guards, they can always betray the royal agent and join up with the rebels. Hopefully, the players are able to play the two factions against each other and end up on top of the game. Otherwise, they may find it best to flee the city of Zul-Bazzir.

# THE EIDOLON OF THE APE



From the distant land of Laksha in the East comes the terrible cult of the ape-god, Simatala. The adepts of this evil religion are reputed to offer up human sacrifice on the cold stone altars of their bestial god. Such victims are killed by ritual strangulation at the hands of the turbaned priests, who are grim and austere men that know secret techniques of unarmed combat.

The adepts seek to perfect their minds and bodies through a strict regime of meditation and self-denial. They revere the strength and ferocity of the taloned man-apes native to the jungles of Laksha, and craft idols of white jade in the image of those great apes.

In the last decade, this sect has established a foothold in the city of Jhaddar under the leadership of a *maharishi* (teacher) known by the name Sog Sodhi. No locals are allowed into the ranks of the cult, but a steady trickle of adepts from the East flock to this outpost fane. Amid rumours of kidnappings and human sacrifice by the cult, and despite its self-proclaimed asceticism, the temple of the ape continues to grow in power and influence.

# **ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS**

The basic premise behind this adventure is simple; the players must assault or infiltrate the temple of Simatala. Through several possible starting points, the adventurers find reason to enter the temple of the ape and trade blows with the adepts of Simatala.

The adventurers face dangerous opponents and overwhelming strength, and, since this adventure is designed with low experienced adventurers in mind, theadventurers must likely rely on stealth and discretion, and not brute force, to avoid defeat at the hands of the cult.

A secret entrance to the temple in the city's sewer tunnels provide the adventurers with a chance to enter the temple undetected. The players can also come up with other plans to sneak or bluff their way into the temple, of course.

# STARTING THE ADVENTURE

Consider any of the following hooks to get the adventure started.

- An aquaintance of the players (such as friend, relative, lover, or perhaps even a party member) is kidnapped by the cult of Simatala. The adventurers must sneak into the temple on a rescue mission.
- An item of considerable value is said to be safeguarded inside the temple of the ape. Perhaps the talons of the ape-god's statue are said to be of pure gold, or the high priest owns a scroll that contains (the missing fragments of) a rare and powerful

- magical ritual. Based on such rumours, the adventurers decide to sneak in and steal the item (or someone hires the adventurers to do so).
- A rival cult spreads rumours of the valuable item(s) mentioned above. The rumours may or may not be true; the primary goal of the rival is to tempt thieves and adventurers to attack the temple of the ape.

# THE SEWER TUNNELS

The adventurers can learn that there is a network of sewer tunnels beneath Jhaddar, and that one of these tunnels is said to pass by the dungeons of the temple of Simatala. A successful Streetwise test provides the adventurers with the necessary information.

Such sewer entrances are sealed with iron grates (They require Difficult Brawn or Mechanics tests to break or pick open). They are otherwise unguarded.

The sewer tunnels themselves are unlit and filled with knee-deep, stinking, fetid, brown water. It costs double normal movement to move into a square filled with knee-deep water, and all Routine Athletics tests in such a square are treated as Difficult.

### Sewer Encounters

Check for random encounters every 10 minutes in the sewer tunnels. An encounter occurs on a roll of 1-2 on 1d6. Then roll 1d8 to determine the nature of the encounter.

1d8	Encounter
1	Collapsed (60%) or flooded (40%) tunnel
2	Pit
3	Pocket of poisonous gas
4	Slime, mould or fungi
5	Water serpent
6	Rat swarm
7	Giant slug
8	Thieves

**Collapsed Tunnel:** The tunnel has collapsed, making it impassable. There is a 10% chance that the tunnel collapses while the adventurers are present, dealing 3d6 points of damage distributed evenly amongst Hit Locations. A successful Evade skill test reduces damage by half per Location (minimum of 1).

**Flooded Tunnel:** The tunnel gradually slopes into a water-filled section, 3d6 x 3 metres long, before it emerges on the other side. The submerged tunnel is pitch black, but daring adventurers may swim through it.

**Giant Slug:** This is in fact an Enveloping Ooze. It takes a Difficult Perception test to notice it before it attacks.

**Pit:** Debris covers a narrow pit, 1d6 x 3 metres deep. It takes a Routine Perception test to detect the pit.

**Pocket of Poisonous Gas:** A square room adjacent to a sewer tunnel is filled with poisonous gas. It takes a Routine Insight test to detect the presence of the invisible, near-odourless gas. After 2 rounds, all present must make a Routine Resilience test or suffer 1d4 points of Strength damage, and another 1d4 points of Strength one minute later if a second test is failed.

### 

# The Temple of Simatala

**Standard Features:** Unless noted otherwise, all interior doors are strong wooden doors (-10% to force open). Ceiling height is 3 meters in normal rooms.

**Lighting:** The corridors of the lower temple are dimly illuminated by a weird green light from torches dipped in a secret alchemical substance. The upper temple is lit by oil lamps both a night and during the day.

# 

**Rat Swarm:** This is either a swarm of normal rats (50% chance), who usually run away, or 1d10+10 giant rats (50% chance) who are more aggressive.

**Slime, Mould or Fungi:** Although a glistening organic sludge coats almost every wall in the sewers, this is an encounter with a horrid formless creature of some kind.

**Thieves:** A group of 2d4 thieves, lepers, beggars or other outcasts who make their home in the sewers. They are inexperienced thieves for the most part, but their leader is a skilled warrior.

**Water Serpent:** This is a regular (SIZ 8) constrictor snake, although there is a 10% chance that it will be a giant constrictor snake.

# THE LOWER TEMPLE

For each corridor the players enter into, there is a 20% chance of encountering 1d3 adepts.

I. Sewer Landing

A sturdy stone landing is raised 3 meters from the floor of the sewer tunnel. From the landing, a narrow corridor with steep stairs leads up (to Area 2). A short distance away from the landing, there is a hidden door (It requires a Difficult Perception test to spot) that also leads into the temple, through a narrow corridor, a locked door, and another secret door at the end of the corridor.

# 2. Chamber with Ape Statue

A man-sized stone statue of a grinning ape with outstretched arms stands in the centre of this square chamber. It can be recognized as a representation of Simatala with a successful Routine Lore (theology) test.

The door in the east wall leads to a narrow corridor, which is trapped with a pit trap (Routine Perception to spot and avoid it; otherwise 12 meter fall). In addition, a stone slab closes over the pit once the trap is triggered (Difficult Brawn test to move the slab from outside, if trying to move the slab from in the pit, this also requires a Routine Athletics test to climb up to the slab).

In the west wall is a hidden stone door (It requires a Routine Perception test to spot), the door requires a Difficult Brawn test to move it. The door can be opened by placing a small weight (1 ENC or more) in the ape statue's outstretched hands; it stays open for 2d6 rounds before it slowly slides back into position.

# 3. Spartan Rooms

These three rooms are identically furnished with eight simple sleeping-mats on the floor of each room. The rooms contain practically nothing of value. There is a 35% chance of encountering 1d4 adepts in each room, with a 50% chance that any adepts encountered are asleep (determined separately for each NPCs).

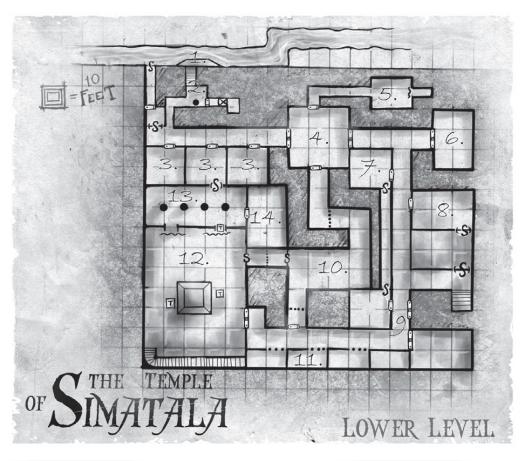
# 4. Square Hall

This large square hall has double doors on the western and eastern walls, and simple doors to the north and south. The double doors are of bronze, carved with bestial ape-images. All doors are unlocked.

# 5. Trapped Chamber

A narrow corridor opens into a small square chamber. A curtain on the east wall conceals a dead end. When someone steps on the floor in front of the curtain, three jade jars fall from the ceiling; each cracks and releases a small venomous scorpion in the vicinity of the creature that triggered the trap. The scorpions, once released, attack the nearest creature.

The trap can be avoided if the adventurers make a successful Routine Perception test to spot the trap trigger. To disable the trap requires a successful Routine Mechanisms test.



# Adepts of the East, Cultists of Simatala - Male Bhangari (24 total)

Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
16	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
10	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
13	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
13	10-12	Chest	-/7
12	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
16	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
10	19-20	Head	-/5
	16 10 13 13 12 16	16     1-3       10     4-6       13     7-9       13     10-12       12     13-15       16     16-18	16       1-3       Right Leg         10       4-6       Left Leg         13       7-9       Abdomen         13       10-12       Chest         12       13-15       Right Arm         16       16-18       Left Arm

Combat Actions 3

Armour: None

Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 12

Traits: None

Movement 8m Strike Rank +15

Common Skills: Athletics 62%, Brawn 61%, Culture (Own) 76%, Dance 26%, Drive 28%, Evade 57%, Evaluate 53%, First Aid 29%, Influence 50%, Insight 25%, Lore (Regional) 66%, Perception 55%, Persistence 44%, Resilience 45%, Ride 28%, Sing 32%, Sleight 26%, Stealth 39%, Swim 26%, Unarmed 60%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 72%, Courtesy 53%, Culture (Apes) 81%, Language (Native) 73%, Lore (Simatala rituals) 71%, Lore (Tactics) 58%, Survival 60%

Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Unarmed	_	M	M	1D3	As Arms

# **Combat Styles**

Strength of Simatala (Great Club, Great Hammer, Garrotte): 60%

**Possessions:** Simple white robe, black turban, garrotte.

**Description:** Dressed in tight-fitting Eastern robes and adorned with white turbans, the cultists of Simatala move stealthy like slithering serpents.

**Tactics:** The adepts use Athletics to surround opponents and grapple. They always attack in groups, beating one target into submission before moving on to the next. Unlucky victims may be subject to strangulation attacks.

**Notes:** These cultist adepts gain +10% to all tests made when climbing or scaling surfaces. They are not magically inclined however and have no magical skills.

# Ranuga, the Master Strangler - Male Bhangari

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	18	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	15	7-9	Abdomen	-17
INT	13	10-12	Chest	-/8
POW	15	13-15	Right Arm	-/5
DEX	16	16-18	Left Arm	-/5
CHA	16	19-20	Head	-/6

**Combat Actions** 3

Damage Modifier +1D4 Magic Points 15

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +15

**Armour:** None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 67%, Brawn 49%, Culture (Own) 80%, Dance 32%, Drive 31%, Evade 72%, Evaluate 69%, First Aid 29%, Influence 72%, Insight 28%, Lore (Regional) 76%, Perception 48%, Persistence 60%, Resilience 59%, Ride 31%,

Sing 31%, Sleight 32%, Stealth 29%, Swim 30%, Unarmed 69%

Advanced Skills: Courtesy 69%, Culture (Apes) 66%, Language (Native) 79%, Lore (Simatala rituals) 75%, Lore (Tactics) 61%, Manipulation 68%, Meditation 70%, Oratory 61%, Sorcery (Call of Simatala) 71%, Survival 67%, Teaching 69%, Track

Grimoire (Call of Simatala): Damage Enhancement, Dominate (Apes), Enhance (STR), Palsy, Wrack

# Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Unarmed	_	M	M	1D3	As Arms
Quarterstaff	_	M	L	1D8 Stun Location	4/8

# **Combat Styles**

Power of Simatala (Great Club, Quarterstaff, Garrotte): 69%

Possessions: Green silk robe, black turban, quarterstaff, two gold rings (worth 100 sp each), monkey-shaped talisman on golden chain (worth 50 sp).

Description: Clad in voluminous Eastern robes of the finest silk and a black turban, Ranuga sports a goatee and a perpetual smirk on his handsome face. Despite the teachings of the cult, Ranuga is vain and enjoys material pleasures. The acolytes fear him, perhaps even more than the high priest.

Tactics: Ranuga prefers to stay back and let his underlings fight, although he quickly steps in if opposition seems stiff, for failing to deal with intruders would limit his chance of advancement in the cult.

# 6. Master Strangler's Room

The double doors to this room are locked and trapped with a poisonous needle trap (The trap requires a Hard Perception test to notice, a Hard Mechanisms test will disarm the trap; failure results in the trap shooting 1d4 darts with 55% attack skill. Each dart inflicts 1D3 damage and requires a Routine Resilience skill test if it causes damage. A failed test results in 1D6 Constitution damage).

Beyond the doors is the chamber of Ranuga, the Master Strangler and second-in-command of the temple. His chamber is furnished with soft Jairanian rugs, a silken couch, and a ceiling of beaten copper carved with scenes of human sacrifice. A tiger fur (worth 35 SP) hangs on the northern wall. There is a 25% chance that Ranuga is here, sleeping behind locked doors; he is otherwise performing a ritual in the inner sanctum (50% chance) or meeting with Sog Sodhi in the upper temple (25% chance).

# 7. Meditation Rooms

The rooms along the southern corridor are used by the adepts of the temple for prayer and meditation. A secret corridor (it requires a Routine Perception test to spot) connects the two rooms. There is a 25% chance of encountering 1d3 adepts here, with a 50% chance that any adepts encountered are busy meditating (their meditations mean that they make opposed Perception tests at -10%).

### 8. Alchemical Lab

South of Ranuga's chamber is an alchemical laboratory in which certain temple adepts experiment with various concoctions. Glass vials, clay jars, and small boxes of mineral powders are neatly stacked on shelves along the walls. Two doses of *smoke-powder* and one dose of *fire-powder* can be found among the boxes (if the boxes are searched the powder requires a Routine Perception test to spot).

A set of merchant's scales stands on a table, next to a pair of tongs. In one corner is a pedestal with a human skull on top; the skull is trapped and filled with *fire-powder* that bursts into flame when the skull is moved or otherwise disturbed (a successful Difficult Perception test reveals this trap). The explosion causes 4d6 points of damage in a 5m radius (it requires a Routine Evade test for half damage) and the noise may also alert any temple priests in adjacent rooms.

There is a hidden door (it needs a Difficult Perception test to spot) in the south wall that exits to the corridor outside, nearby the staircase to the upper temple.

# 9. False Door

Close to the staircase that leads to the upper temple level is a false door. It appears locked, but resists any attempts to pick the lock. This iron door is magnetic, causing metal weapons striking it to become stuck; a successful Difficult Athletics skill test is required to pull stuck items free. Those wearing breastplates or heavier armour and come within 2 meters of the door must make a Routine Evade test to avoid being stuck.

# 10. Temple Ape Lair

Six months ago, Ranuga and a handful of acolytes travelled to the docks of Khazabad at the behest of the high priest and secretly purchased a captured flesh-eating jungle ape from a merchantcaptain of distant Laksha. The red-furred monstrosity was drugged and hidden in a wagon, then smuggled back into the city of Jhaddar, where it was chained in the temple dungeons. Sog Sodhi hopes to procure a female specimen also, in order to breed several additional man-apes in captivity, which can be used to guard the temple or be unleashed upon the high priest's enemies.

The current temple ape lairs in this chamber, leashed to a long chain that allows it to move about the entire chamber. Along the corridors leading into the ape lair are pressure-sensitive flagstones (they require Difficult Perception tests to spot) that trigger hidden iron portcullises (needing Hard Brawn tests to break or force open). These fall down 3 meters behind the character stepping on the flagstones, effectively imprisoning such intruders with the rabid ape and possibly cutting them off from allies. Characters who stand in the squares adjacent to the falling portcullis must make a Routine Evade skill test to avoid them; those who fail suffer 3d6 points of damage and are knocked prone. There are hidden levers (they require Difficult Perception tests to spot) near each of the doors which can be used to open and close the portcullises. A secret tunnel (it requires a Difficult Perception test to spot) leads from this chamber to the Inner Sanctum (Area 13); the tunnel is likewise trapped with a falling portcullis.

The red-furred man-ape quickly moves in to attack and rend anyone foolish enough to enter its lair. The mere sight of the dire ape forces a Routine Persistence skill test in order to act in the first round.

# II. Prison Cells

Along the southern corridor are cells holding prisoners to be sacrificed to Simatala. There is a 50% chance of each cell being occupied by 1d3 prisoners. Determine the race and profession of each prisoner randomly.

Prisoners who detect the adventurers will plead with them to be released; if ignored they become frustrated and noisy, which may alert any temple priests nearby.

### 12. Inner Sanctum

This sanctum is smaller than the shrine (Area 3) of the upper temple, and is used for smaller ceremonies as well as certain grisly rituals best performed below ground where screams are muffled by heavy stone walls. There is a 50% chance that Ranuga and 1d4+4 adepts are here when the players enter.

A set of double bronze doors open up into the inner sanctum. The ceiling height is 10 meters. A raised platform, 3 meters high, runs along the south wall. In the centre of the room is a large, 5 meters tall, green jade statue of Simatala. Around the statue is a raised dais, 2 meters tall.

The spots marked (T) are trapped with metal claws that immobilizes the victim (treat as if entangled) if the trap 'hits' (a Hard Perception test locates the trap; a Hard Mechanisms test disarms it; causes 1d6 damage to random Leg Location upon failure).

# 13. Columned Hall

Two curtains on the north wall of the inner sanctum conceal exits to a columned hall. The eastern exit is trapped with a metal claw trap (as described above). A single locked door in the columned hall leads to the high priest's study.

# Savage Ape

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	6D6+15	36	1–2	Right Hind Leg	3/8
CON	2D6+6	13	3–4	Left Hind Leg	3/8
SIZ	4D6+12	26	5–7	Hindquarters	3/9
INT	7	7	8-10	Forequarters	3/10
POW	3D6	11	11-13	Right Front Leg	3/7
DEX	3D6+3	14	14–16	Left Front Leg	3/7
CHA	7	7	17-20	Head	3/8

**Combat Actions** 2 Damage Modifier +2D6 Magic Points 11

Traits: None

Movement 8m Strike Rank +11

Common Skills: Athletics 59%, Brawn 67%, Evade 42%, Perception 49%, Persistence 43%, Resilience 50%, Stealth 41%, Unarmed 62%

Advanced Skills: Acrobatics 59%, Survival 60%, Track 72%

Armour: Skin, muscle, hair. No Armour Penalty.

# Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	_	M	Τ	1D8	As Head
Unarmed		M	L	1D3	As Arms
Grapple		M	M	Special (See below)	As Arms

# **Combat Styles**

Ape Attack (Bite, Fist, Grapple): 67%

Special Rules: If the grapple attack succeeds, the Games Master should resolve combat normally using the grapple rules from the Legend: Core Rulebook. Savage apes will always attempt to inflict pain on any creature they are grappling.

Notes: Savage apes are quite large creatures, with strength in excess of what might be expected even from their massive frames. Apes are naturally quadrupeds, but are also comfortable walking and standing on their hind legs. Savage apes are primarily vegetarian, though they often supplement their diet with insects and the occasional small animal. They are most often found in small family groups led by an old silverback male.

14. Study

The study is furnished with silken wall hangings, a ceiling of beaten silver, a high-backed hardwood chair, and a mahogany desk inlaid with ivory. Atop the desk are ink and quill and a selection of papers, parchments, and papyri that include the administrative records of the temple.

The desk has three drawers; inside the second is a locked box (it needs a Difficult Mechanisms test to open it) with 500 SP and a vial of *silver lotus juice*.

# THE UPPER TEMPLE

Note that the upper temple is a dangerous place for less-experienced players, as they risk running into the high priest and his bodyguards. Nevertheless, the ground level of the temple is detailed here in case the adventurers are reckless enough to attempt a direct assault on the fane of Simatala, or to sneak or bluff their way through the upper level. Also, the cultists are no fools and Sog Sodhi will respond in force if the adepts in the lower temple discover the players and manage to flee and alert their superiors.

I. Temple Wall and Courtyard

The main temple building is ringed by a 6 meter tall superior masonry wall (it requires a Difficult Brawn test to break). The main gate, in the western wall, is of iron (this needs a Hard Brawn test to break).

The courtyard is patrolled by eight temple guards, half of which are always stationed at the gate. During the day, the gate is generally left open; it is closed and barred at night. The temple receives few visitors and the guards have orders to thoroughly inspect all strangers, who must state their business with the temple or be turned away. If in doubt, the guards summon one of the high priest's bodyguards (see Area 13) to deal with the situation.

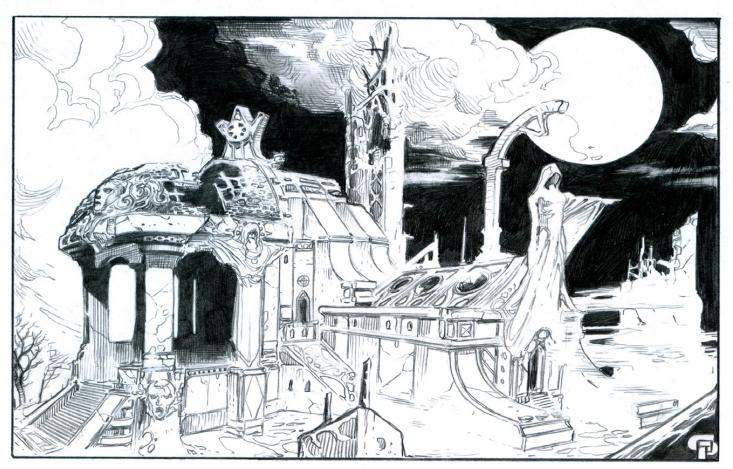
# 2. Temple Entrance

A broad stairway leads up to a columned portico. Beyond a pair of strong wooden doors is the shrine of the ape-god. An additional four temple guards are posted on the portico. There are auxiliary doors at the back of the temple used by the temple guards to enter and exit the building; the wandering guard patrols check these doors with regular intervals.

# 3. Shrine of Simatala

This huge rectangular room is dominated by a 5 meters tall white jade statue of a grinning man-ape with taloned hands and feet. There is a secret door (this needs a Difficult Perception test to spot) in the wall behind the bestial idol. At any given time, there is a 50% chance that 1d3+2 adepts are here, engaged in meditation and prayer (see Area 3 of the Lower Temple for statistics). The high priest, Sog Sodhi, is here 15% of the time, along with two of his bodyguards (see Areas 13 and 14 for statistics).

A number of continually burning bronze censers fill the shrine with the sickly sweet smell of *incense of hallucination*. The priests and adepts of the temple are immune to its effects due to long-term exposure, but any others (including the temple guards) must



either hold their breath here or become suddenly confused and erratic (a Routine Persistence test helps stave off this effect).

# 4. Temple Guard Barracks

Several spacious rooms at the back of the temple house the temple guards. Each room is furnished with eight simple beds, a few chairs and a table, upon which is a scattering of copper coins, food scraps, dice, and a few half-empty bottles of wine. Half of the temple guards are sleeping or relaxing in these rooms while the other half is on duty, but if alerted to trouble they quickly gather their weapons and hastily don their armour.

Temple Guards (12)

# 5. Stairway to Lower Temple

The stair in this crescent-shaped room at the back of the temple leads down to the Lower Temple. An iron portcullis (requires a Difficult Brawn test to force open) can be lowered from the ceiling at a landing 5 meters downstairs. The high priest and his adepts may use this

portcullis to seal the upper or lower temple level if they are alerted to the presence of intruders.

# 6. Kitchen

The temple kitchen is spartan and the pantry contains little except large sacks of rice and water-filled clay jars, as befits an order of ascetics. Junior priests perform all menial tasks such as cooking and cleaning as part of their training; the temple does not employ any slaves or servants.

# 7. Dining Hall

The dining hall seats up to 30 people around a sturdy wooden table. The junior priests eat once per day at sunrise, while the high priest and his henchmen eat at sundown.

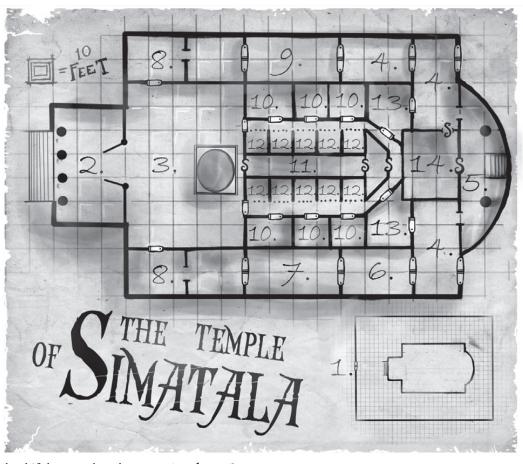
### 8. Meditation Rooms

The priests of the temple practice meditation techniques in several large rooms, sitting immovable and silent in the lotus position for hours on end on the cold stone floors.

There is a 25% chance of encountering 1d2 adepts here (see Area 3 of the lower temple for statistics), with a 75% chance that any adepts encountered are busy meditating (suffering a -10% penalty to opposed Perception tests).

# 9. Training Hall

When not meditating or sleeping, cult members can perfect their martial arts skills using this well-equipped training hall. It is furnished with soft mats, racks with wooden practice swords and staffs, and several different training apparatuses.



# 10. Acolyte Rooms

These six rooms are reserved for members of the cult who have gained the special title of Adept of the Yellow Mountain. The title alludes to the fact that the ape-god Simatala is believed to live atop a mist-shrouded 'Yellow Mountain.' To advance beyond an Initiate level within the cult, each adept must undergo a special trial of strength, willpower and martial arts prowess.

### II. Secret Corridor

A secret corridor leads from the shrine (Area 3) to the back of the temple, near the high priest's chamber (Area 14). Each door in the secret corridor is concealed to appear as part of the wall (they require Routine Perception tests to detect); they can be opened by pressing small, hidden pressure-plates near the floor.

# 12. The Apes of Wisdom

The cult of Simatala worships the strength of the great jungle apes of Laksha, but through his studies in the west, Sog Sodhi has learned of the religious significance of baboons in the nearby land of Yar-Ammon, where these small but aggressive and carnivorous creatures are associated with bloodthirst, fertility, oracles, and hidden wisdom.

The high priest has procured a number of baboons from Yar-Ammonite temples, often through bribery and theft of sacred animals believed to have oracular powers. In the babbling and screaming of such sacred baboons, the adepts of Simatala seek to find wisdom and hidden truths, so far without much luck.

Each of these square cells contains two baboons. They are highly aggressive and attempt to bite anyone coming near.

# Temple Guards - Male Bhangari (8)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	2/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	2/5
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	2/6
INT	10	10-12	Chest	2/7
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	2/4
DEX	12	16-18	Left Arm	2/4
CHA	11	19-20	Head	2/5

Combat Actions 2 Damage Modifier +1D2 Magic Points 11 Movement 8m

Strike Rank +11 (+8 when

armoured)

**Armour:** Studded Leather and leather helmets. -3 Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 41%, Brawn 62%, Culture (Own) 60%, Dance 23%, Drive 23%, Evade 59%, Evaluate 41%, First Aid 22%, Influence 52%, Insight 21%, Lore (Regional) 60%, Perception 51%, Persistence 42%, Resilience 59%, Ride 23%, Sing 22%, Sleight 23%, Stealth 22%, Swim 26%, Unarmed 36%

Advanced Skills: Courtesy 31%, Language (Native) 71%, Lore (Tactics) 50%

# Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Kukri	_	M	S	1D6 Bleed	3/7
Buckler		M	S	1D3	6/8

# **Combat Styles**

Temple Guard (Kukri, Buckler, 1-H Sword): 56%

Possessions: Studded leather, buckler, kukri, keys to temple gate and temple entrance, 1d6 sp.

Description: Eastern warriors, with distinctive curved blades and colourful armour

**Tactics:** These guards are not part of the religious hierarchy of the cult. They are loyal to the temple as long as they get paid, but do not risk their lives unless they believe that failure will cause the cult to hunt them down.

# Adepts of the Yellow Mountain - Male Bhangari

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	18	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	11	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	15	7-9	Abdomen	-17
INT	13	10-12	Chest	-/8
POW	13	13-15	Right Arm	-/5
DEX	16	16-18	Left Arm	-/5
CHA	11	19-20	Head	-/6

Combat Actions 3 Armour: None

Damage Modifier +1D4

Magic Points 13 Traits: None

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +15 Common Skills: Athletics 69%, Brawn 68%, Culture (Own) 86%, Dance 27%, Drive 29%, Evade 69%, Evaluate 44%, First Aid 29%, Influence 72%, Insight 46%,

Lore (Regional) 86%, Perception 31%, Persistence 66%, Resilience 67%, Ride 29%,

Sing 24%, Sleight 27%, Stealth 59%, Swim 29%, Unarmed 79%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 64%, Courtesy 44%, Culture (Apes) 66%, Language (Native) 74%, Lore (Simatala rituals) 66%, Lore (Tactics) 57%, Survival 61%, Track

60%

Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Unarmed	_	M	S	1D3	As Arms

# **Combat Styles**

Fist of the Ape God (Punches, Kicks, Grapples): 74%

Possessions: Golden coloured robe, black turban.

**Description:** Similar to the other adepts of the temple, but with golden robes to mark their status.

**Tactics:** Grapple attacks are a favourite of these unarmed fighters.

**Notes:** The Adepts gain a +10% skill test bonus when attempting to scale or climb.

# Baboon

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	2D6+6	13	1–2	Right Hind Leg	1/4
CON	3D6	11	3–4	Left Hind Leg	1/4
SIZ	2D3+1	5	5–7	Hindquarters	1/5
INT	6	6	8-10	Forequarters	1/6
POW	3D6	11	11-13	Right Front Leg	1/3
DEX	3D6+6	17	14–16	Left Front Leg	1/3
CHA	2D6	7	17-20	Head	1/4

**Combat Actions** 2

Damage Modifier -1D2

Magic Points 11 Movement 8m

Strike Rank +12

Armour: Hide. No Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

Skills: Athletics 80%, Evade 47%, Perception 42%, Persistence 43%, Resilience 43%,

Stealth 55%, Unarmed 42%, Survival 48%, Track 47%

Weapons

AP/HP Туре Size Reach Damage Range Bite S Τ 1D8 As for Head

**Combat Styles** 

Baboon Teeth (Bite): 42%

Notes: Baboons are large, ground-dwelling monkeys, inhabiting both tropical and sub-tropical savannahs.

# High Priest's Bodyguards - Male Bhangari (2)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	18	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	16	7-9	Abdomen	5/7
INT	10	10-12	Chest	5/8
<b>POW</b>	12	13-15	Right Arm	5/5
DEX	12	16-18	Left Arm	5/5
CHA	11	19-20	Head	5/6

**Combat Actions** 2

Damage Modifier +1D4

Magic Points 10

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +11 (+6 when

Armoured)

Armour: Chainmail Shirt and Coif. -5 Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 85%, Brawn 79%, Culture (Own) 80%, Dance 23%, Drive 24%, Evade 79%, Evaluate 21%, First Aid 22%, Influence 22%, Insight 22%, Lore (Regional) 80%, Perception 72%, Persistence 54%, Resilience 83%, Ride 44%, Sing 23%, Sleight 23%, Stealth 72%, Swim 32%, Unarmed 50%

Advanced Skills: Language (Native) 71%, Lore (Tactics) 70%, Survival 66%

# Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Great Scimitar	_	L	L	1D10 Bleed, Sunder	6/10

### **Combat Styles**

Brutal Guardian (Great Scimitar, 2-H Sword, War Maul): 75%

Possessions: Chainmail, great scimitar, white turban.

Description: These bearded and turbaned brutes carry large oriental swords, and have embroidered tunics over their glittering armour.

Tactics: These skilled fighters employ powerful attacks, brutal charges, and martial savagery to good effect.

# Sog Sodhi, High Priest of Simatala - Male Bhangari

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	16	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	18	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	16	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	19	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +1D4 Magic Points 16 Movement 8m

Strike Rank +13

**Armour:** Robe. No Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 79%, Brawn 75%, Culture (Own) 89%, Dance 42%, Drive 41%, Evade 87%, Evaluate 75%, First Aid 55%, Influence 80%, Insight 70%, Lore (Regional) 80%, Perception 79%, Persistence 75%, Resilience 70%, Ride 41%, Sing 41%, Sleight 52%, Stealth 77%, Swim 55%, Unarmed 80%

**Advanced Skills:** Courtesy 80%, Culture (Apes) 90%, Language (Native) 85%, Lore (Simatala rituals) 95%, Lore (Tactics) 77%, Manipulation 79%, Meditation 80%, Oratory 70%, Sorcery (Call of Simatala) 80%, Survival 77%, Teaching 70%, Track 75%

**Grimoire** (Call of Simatala): Damage Enhancement, Dominate (Apes), Enhance (STR), Palsy, Wrack, Shapechange (Human) to (Ape), Smother, Holdfast

### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Quarterstaff	_	M	L	1D8 Stun Location	4/8
Unarmed	_	M	S	1D3	As Arms

### **Combat Styles**

Savage Ape (Quarterstaff, Unarmed): 80%

Possessions: Blue silken robes, turban inset with fire opal (worth 1,000 sp), fine quality quarterstaff, globe of entrancement.

**Description:** Oiled black beard, turban set with gem, unnaturally tall, blue silken robes with gold trim. Sog Sodhi does not care for material wealth in itself, but craves power over other people, who are seen as inferior by the conceited magician.

Tactics: The high priest takes a defensive stance as any alarm is raised. He will try to kill or immobilise heavily armed fighters and rival clergy.

### 

### Globe of Entrancement

This small blue-white globe can be hurled at an opponent up to 6 meters away (no attack skill is required). The globe explodes in mid-air and releases a sparkling rain of phosphorescent blue mist. The target must immediately succeed in a Routine Persistence test or become entranced and do nothing for 1d6 rounds. This is a single-use item.

Difficult Craft (alchemy) test to make. Market Price: 100 SP.

# 

### 13. Antechambers

Each of these large and comfortable rooms is occupied by one of Sog Sodhi's bodyguards, who are hand-picked fighting-men from Ghoma. They attend the high priest at a moment's notice whenever he requests it. They do not belong to the religious hierarchy of the temple, but command the temple guards, and often go on special missions outside the temple.

# 14. High Priest's Chamber

The high priest Sog Sodhi works and sleeps in this large but surprisingly spartan chamber, furnished only with a simple bed, a chair and a desk, and a cupboard filled with sorcerous paraphernalia.

A heavy chest (requires a Difficult Brawn test to force open, or a Hard Mechanisms test to pick) is hidden under a flagstone in the floor (It can be spotted with a Difficult Perception test); it is protected with a dose of *fire powder* spell and contains the funds of the temple (currently some 30,000 SP worth of silver and gold coins).

There are two secret exits (they require Difficult Perception tests to spot) in the room which can only be opened from the inside (treat as a regular wall from the other side). Only the high priest knows about these means of escape.

# CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this adventure depends on the original mission of the adventurers and their reason for going into the temple of Simatala. Even if the adventurers successfully infiltrate the temple and manage to get out alive, they may have further adventures in which they are hunted down by the acolytes of the cult.

If the adventurers fail: adventurers captured by the cultists of Simatala face a horrible sacrificial death on the white jade altar of the grisly ape-god. If he is in a good mood, the high priest Sog Sodhi might instead enslave any adventurer characters captured alive, poisoning them and withholding the antidote in order to send them on a mission to further his own evil plans.

# THE CRYPT-THING OF KHORSUL



"As I told you longe ago, do not calle up That which you can not put downe; either from dead Saltes or out of ye Spheres beyond. Have ye Wordes for laying at all times readie, and stopp not to be sure when there is any Doubte of Whom you have."

- H. P. Lovecraft: The Case of Charles Dexter Ward

# INTRODUCTION

The monarchs of Taraam and Lamu both lay claim to the mountainous border area between the two nations, but in truth local strongmen hold the real power. In the forested valley of Khorsul, slashed in two by the fast-flowing Suliyah river, two ruthless men spend their days and nights pursuing a generations-old feud between their clans.

Numas of Taraam is lord of a fortified estate on the cultivated plains of the valley floor, south of the river. His fields and groves of fruit trees are worked by Taraamite serfs. Numas' forefathers bought a piece of land from the impoverished line of Gasparus, who were forced to sell some land in order to survive.

Gasparus is a minor, impoverished noble of Lamu. His family has been charged with defending the mountainous borders of Khorsul in southeast Lamu against Taraam and Susrah. He lives in an old border fortress, an impregnable mountain castle. He lords it over several clans of goat-herders and herders of long-horned cattle, who live in a small village near the castle.

Numas and Gasparus are rivals and the people of the divided valley live with an uneasy peace. Gasparus envies the wealthy Numas, while Numas considers Gasparus an uncivilized brute, little more than a bandit chieftain.

The scholarly Numas, in his late forties, secretly dabbles in sorcery. He seeks eternal life, or at least to extend his lifespan. Numas has acquired certain texts from Susrahnite scholars, and has performed several dreadful rituals and experiments on his serfs. One of these rituals failed miserably, and the serf who seemingly died, was raised as a horrible, unkillable, undead "thing".

By use of an amulet procured previously from priests of Belet-Lil, Numas kept the thing at bay while his mercenaries managed to seal the undead in a stone sarcophagus. But the noble feared having the thing on his estate and sought to hide his sorcerous dabbling from his servants and the king's ear. Therefore, Numas trusted to his henchman, Iskander, to take the sarcophagus up into the mountains and seal it in a cave to prevent it from breaking free.

But Iskander betrayed Numas. He returned from the mountains, only to steal the amulet from Numas and flee the manor-house

along with a handful of Numas' mercenary guards. The band sought refuge in the castle of Gasparus. With the amulet in his possession, the Lamuran is now blackmailing Numas. If the Taraamite doesn't give up his riches and his lands to Gasparus, the Lamuran threatens to unleash the crypt-thing.

Numas has a problem. The castle of Gasparus is impregnable to his mercenaries. He needs to retrieve the amulet, then destroy the crypt-thing. Only Iskander knows where in the mountains the thing is hidden, so he needs the Lamuran taken alive.

# ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

Through appropriate circumstances (see suggestions below), the player characters come into the employ of Numas. The Taraamite explains his feud with Gasparus and his "brigands". He feeds the players lies about how Gasparus is rumored to dabble in sorcery. Fearing that he will become the target of a 'death spell,' Numas says Gasparus has an amulet which protects against sorcery, and he wants the adventurers to steal it from the Lamuran.

The adventurers can either proceed directly to sneak into or attack Castle Gasparus, or they can spend some time in the area to investigate Numas' claims. If the truth is revealed, they might even switch sides and try to unleash the crypt-thing on Numas to get revenge. But Numas has many spies and he sends his Susrahnite mercenaries after the adventurers.

On the other hand, if the adventurers manage to steal back the amulet without uncovering the truth, Numas sends them into the mountains to find and destroy 'a sorcerous abomination created by Gasparus.' If Gasparus is still alive, he arrives with his men to make sure Numas falls victim to his own sorcery.

Of course, once the crypt-thing is destroyed, Numas has no more use for the adventurers, and will seek to betray them as soon as possible.

# STARTING THE ADVENTURE

Consider any of the following hooks to get the adventure started:

- One of the adventurers is a distant relative of Numas. The adventurer receives a plea for help from Numas and is honourbound, by virtue of his noble blood, to come to his relative's assistance.
- The party is traveling through the mountains and valleys near the Lamuran border when they are attacked by an overwhelming force of hill bandits (who may or may not be in league with Gasparus). The adventurers are rescued by a troop of mercenaries in the employ of Numas, and are invited back to his mansion.
- A servant of Numas hires the adventurers as mercenaries in one of the southern cities. With the servant as guide, the adventurers travel north towards the mountainous border area between Taraam and Lamu.

# THE SORCERER AND THE WOLF

The adventure begins when the adventurers arrive at the estate of Lord Numas in the valley of Khorsul. Servants take care of baggage and bring the adventurers refreshments. Then Numas meets with the adventurers in the dining hall and tells them about his feud

with Gasparus, 'the Wolf,' whose Lamuran horsemen are a constant harassment to his estate and the peasants working the fields and orchards. Gasparus has become wealthy from this raiding, while Numas is on the verge of financial ruin.

Worse yet, it is rumoured that Gasparus is dabbling in sorcery and Numas fears that he may soon be the target of a dread curse or death spell. But Numas knows that Gasparus has a medallion of Susrahnite origin, which can protect the wearer against sorcery. Numas wants the adventurers to sneak into the castle and steal the amulet, then return to the estate with it. Gasparus himself should not be harmed, since that could spark off a full-scale war between Lamu and Taraam.

Furthermore, if possible, Numas also wants the adventurers to kidnap Gasparus' 'son' (here he gives a description of Iskander, who has an ugly red scar across his right cheek), so that Numas may hold him for ransom to negotiate and get back some of the wealth which Gasparus' raiders have stolen from the estate.

**Development:** Unless one or more of the adventurers are honour-bound or willing to help Numas for free, the Taraamite lord offers to reward each adventurer with up to 250 SP (adjust as appropriate to your adventurers) for retrieving the amulet and kidnapping Iskander.

The adventurers might wonder why Numas doesn't send his own mercenary guards to Castle Gasparus, in which case he responds that the Susrahnite mercenaries are good for guard duty and fighting, but other, adventurers more specialised skills are required for sneaking into the castle.

The Games Master might allow a Routine Insight test to get the feeling that something is wrong, but only if a player has a specific reason to suspect Numas.

Numas expects the adventurers to set off for Castle Gasparus as soon as possible, although the adventurers might want to explore the estate, or speak with Numas' servants. Numas is no fool and has one or more of his guards follow the adventurers around to make sure that they can't do either. Determined adventurers might still be able to create a diversion. For exploration of the estate, see the description below. With regard to an interrogation of the servants, although the servants fear their master and are reluctant to speak

### 

### The Amulet of Belet-Lil

This small golden amulet, carved with the image of the goddess and hung from a thin golden chain, was crafted by the priest Narnash-Girbu of Ghezath.

If the wearer is a spellcaster, the amulet raises his effective POW by +2.

For any wearer, the amulet confers a limited protection against undead, for the wearer can force all undead within 5 meters to freeze in place unless it passes a Difficult Persistence skill test. However, for each round that this power is in effect, the wearer is drained of life and suffers 1 point of temporary Constitution damage. If Constitution reaches zero, the wearer dies. The *Amulet of Belet-Lil* cannot be used by creatures without Constitution scores.

with the strangers, a successful Simple Influence Skill Test allows the adventurers to learn that Numas is not as poor as he pretends, and that he is quite a harsh master towards his serfs; sometimes people have been whipped to death for disobedience or indolence, but after all, that is the rightful privilege of a feudal lord of Taraam. The servants do not know about Numas' sorcerous dabbling, however, and the Susrahnite mercenaries are not talking.

# THE VALLEY OF KHORSUL

The valley is divided by the Suliyah river. On the north side of the river is the small village which gives the valley its name. Further to the north is the foothills of the Lamuran mountains. Castle Gasparus is built in a steep hillside there. The south end of the valley is covered with forest, except for the fields and orchards belonging to Numas' estate. There is a lake in the center of the valley; the south shore is snake-infested marshland, while the north shore of the lake is rocky with several small bays. A dozen fishing vessels belonging to the villagers of Khorsul can be found there.

# The Goat-Herder's Story

A small but well-kept stone bridge spans the Suliyah in the center of the valley. The bridge is unguarded.

Near the bridge is a little-used trail (requires a Simple Perception test to discover) that leads towards the western forest. The main road continues due north from the bridge.

**Development:** If the adventurers choose to follow the trail, they reach the forest when they see a young boy being attacked by a monstrous boar. The boy has climbed up a tree, but the boar is about to crush the tree with a powerful charge.

If the adventurers save the boy, Pavlas, he offers them information in return. Pavlas tells the adventurers that he saw a group of men transporting a large, bulky object, some sort of box or crate, drawn by two horses, up into the mountains some weeks ago. The leader had an ugly red scar across his face. The adventurers may make a Simple Insight test to recognize this as Iskander from Numas' description of Gasparus' 'son.' Pavlas memorized the location and can actually lead the party to the secret cave in the mountains. If the players go to the cave, don't forget that they are likely being shadowed by the mercenaries of Numas.

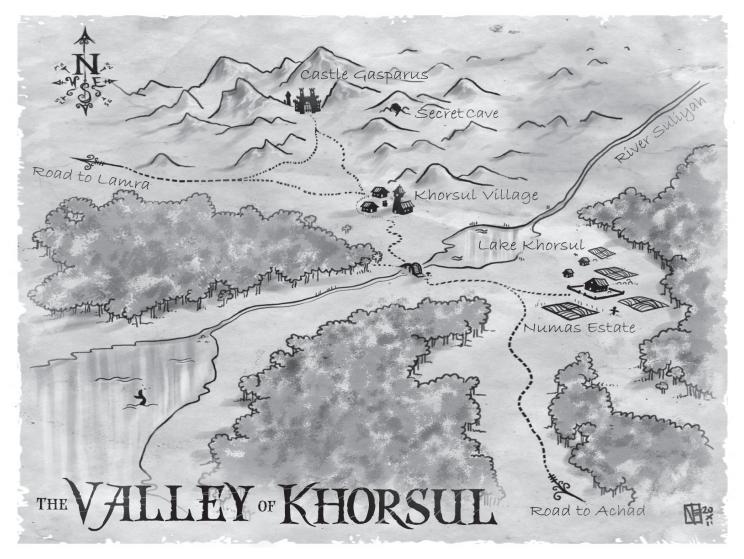
# THE VILLAGE OF KHORSUL

**Khorsul:** Population 220; Isolated (Lamuran 96%, Taraamites 3%, Others 1%).

Authority Figures: Zhakov, male Lamuran Ftr2 (village elder). Important Characters: Baikar, male Lamuran (blacksmith); Mihalek, male Lamuran (agent of Gasparus).

**Notes:** The village of Khorsul sits in the foothills of the Lamuran mountains a few miles away from Castle Gasparus. The place stinks of garbage and filth, and the buildings are ramshackle, built from crudely hewn logs and stone from the hills. The poor souls who call this home and eke out a living here are goat-herders, hunters, and fishermen of the nearby lake. Still, they are men and women of Lamu and live under the protection of Gasparus and his horsemen.

Noteworthy locations in the village include the market square, a smithy, and a small tavern. The place rarely receives visitors, and the



locals look upon all strangers with great suspicion. Gasparus has a few spies among the men here, reporting back to him on any unusual events.

**Development:** If the adventurers make a stop in the village, they quickly realize that the people are impoverished, and find the villagers (male and female Lamuran Com1) quite unfriendly, if not outright hostile. It requires a successful Difficult Persuade test to learn anything useful from the villagers. This includes commonly known facts about the valley and Castle Gasparus. If asked directly about it, all in the village will deny that Gasparus has anything to do with sorcery. If the Difficult Persuade test was successful, a Simple Streetwise test can be made to learn that a former servant from the estate across the river has recently taken up abode in Castle Gasparus and now works as Gasparus' lieutenant.

# THE ESTATE OF NUMAS

The estate of the Taraamite noble Numas covers several acres. There are grain fields, orchards, and groves of citrus trees. Close to a hundred serfs work on the estate. In addition, there are two dozen mercenaries employed by Numas to keep guard against Gasparus and the Lamurans on the other side of the river.

# I. Outer Wall

The gravelled road leading up the estate is flanked by neat rows of planted trees. The outer wall is a 5 meter tall superior masonry wall (requires a Difficult Brawn test to force or break it).

### 2. Main Gate

The gate is a strong wooden door (requires a Routine Brawn test to force or break it). The gate can also be barred from the inside; which elevates the test to a Difficult Brawn test. The coat-of-arms of Numas is painted in silver and red across the door.

There are two mercenary guards (see Area 13) posted at the gate.

### 3. Stables

This simple, rectangular building holds half a dozen horses, including a white mare used by Numas himself. This has the statistics of a light warhorse. The remainder are auburn stallions, heavy horses used as workhorses on the fields.

### 4. Storehouse

This large toolshed is locked. It contains a collection of various tools and farming equipment, including hammers, shovels, picks, baskets and boxes, lengths of rope, and flasks of oil.

# Wild Boar

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6+6	17	1–2	Right Hind Leg	3/6
CON	2D6+9	16	3–4	Left Hind Leg	3/6
SIZ	2D6+3	10	5–7	Hindquarters	3/7
INT	5	5	8-10	Forequarters	3/8
POW	3D6	11	11–13	Right Front Leg	3/5
DEX	3D6	11	14–16	Left Front Leg	3/5
			17–20	Head	3/6

Combat Actions 2 Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 11

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +11

Armour: Tough hide. No Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

Skills: Athletics 25%, Evade 55%, Perception 50%, Persistence 43%%, Resilience

58%, Stealth 55%, Survival 50%, Track 25%

Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Tusk	_	M	Τ	1D8 Impale	As for Head

# **Combat Styles**

Feral Attack (Tusk): 65%

**Notes:** Boars are wild, feral pigs with wiry coats, long tusks and extremely poor dispositions. They are omnivorous, though the majority of their diets is composed of roots and berries. They are ferociously territorial creatures, who will attack a much larger creature without hesitation. Their tusks can impale.

#### 

#### The Estate of Numas

**Standard Features:** Unless noted otherwise, all interior doors are good wooden doors. Ceiling height is 3 meters in normal rooms.

**Lighting:** The estate is illuminated by wall-hung torches in most rooms.

#### 

## 5. Well

The well is 15 meters deep, fed by an underground stream of the Suliyah river to the north. The well is protected by a wooden roof.

#### 6. Portico

The entrance to the estate is decorated by five circular columns of stone, carved with the heraldry of Numas. The main door is a strong wooden door (requires a Routine Brawn test to force or break).

There is a single mercenary guard (see Area 13) posted outside the main door.

# 7. Dining Hall

This large hall is decorated with rows of antlers set along the walls. The floor is covered by carpets of intricate Taraamite design. Candles set in silver candlesticks illuminate the room. There is a

great table of hardwood here, with chairs for eight persons to dine in addition to the lord of the estate, whose high-backed chair is placed against the eastern wall.

#### 8. Kitchen

Here are tables and cupboards with wooden utensils, dried herbs, fresh meat, and a collection of fine wines. There are 1d3 servants here at any time during the day.

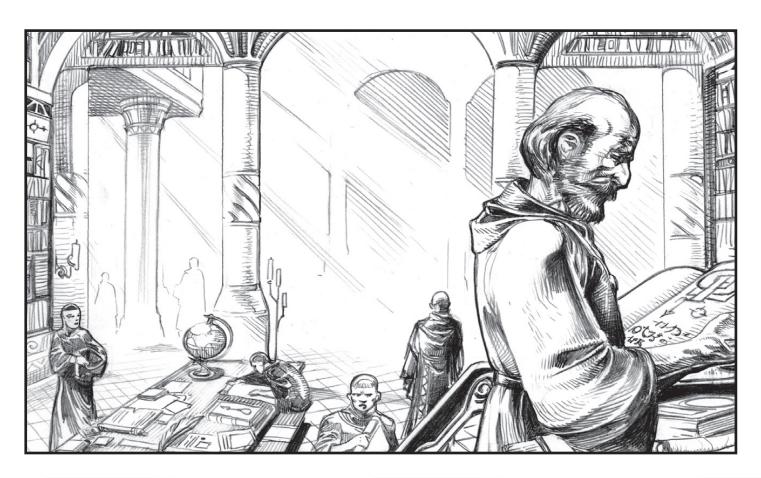
# 9. Servants' Wing

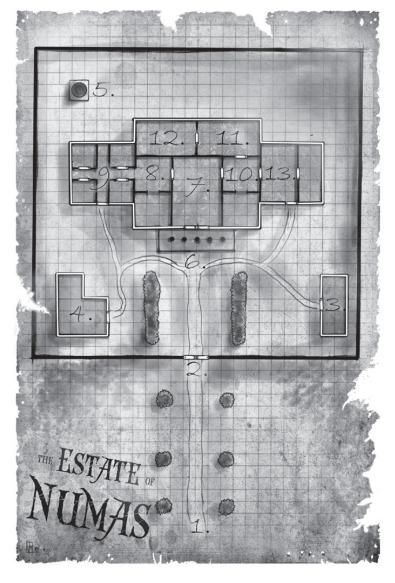
The servants of the estate live in these small chambers in the north wing of the mansion. Their situation is slightly better than that of the serfs working the fields, but on the other hand they are more frequently subject to the sadistic whims of Numas. The unmarried girls among the servants are often taken to the master's bedroom; those who refuse are flogged or worse.

There are around 15 servants in the mansion, and more than 80 working in the fields.

# 10. Lounge and Library

The outer room has four cedar wood chairs, one in each corner. Behind a crimson curtain to the west is a small library. The modest collection of books, parchments and even some Yar-Ammonite papyri is quite valuable (worth a total of 2,000 SP), but is mostly poetry, historical treatises and other quite ordinary books. The sorcerous tomes Numas has procured are hidden in his secret chamber (below Area 12).





#### II. Master's Office

This opulent room has a fireplace, several silver-framed paintings with motifs from the court life of Achad, and a cedar wood desk set with a feathered ink pen and a stack of papers related to the administration of the estate. The door to the room is always locked.

#### 12. Master Bedroom

Like Numas' office (Area 11), this room is also always kept locked. A large bed covered with stained silken sheets stands against the northern wall. The floor is a mosaic with erotic scenes of horned satyrs and winged succubae. A secret trapdoor is cleverly hidden within the mosaic (requires a Difficult Perception test to spot). If the trapdoor is not opened the proper way, the intruder risks releasing a dose of contact poison (Difficult Mechanisms test to disarm; Difficult Resilience test or suffer 1d6 damage to Chest Hit Location).

The secret entrance leads down, by a short flight of stairs, to a rectangular room which has the same dimensions as the bedroom above. This is Numas' secret magic-working room. There is a great pentacle painted with blood on the floor, and heavy black candles are placed along the walls. On a shelf along the northern wall are

several clay tablets of Susrahnite origin. These contain magical spells, necromantic rites and studies on the subject of eternal life.

#### 13. Barracks

These spacious rooms hold the mercenary guards which Numas employs. In the outer room are ten comfortable chairs and a worn table upon which are scattered scraps of food, playing-cards and dice. The inner room is furnished with a dozen green divans. Hidden under a loose floorboard (requires a Difficult Perception test to spot) is a silver helmet (worth 40 SP) and a pile of gold coins (a total of 85 SP).

# **CASTLE GASPARUS**

The castle is located among the steep slopes of the Lamuran mountains, just above the tree line, overlooking the Khorsul valley from a strategic position. A narrow, winding path leads from the valley up to the castle. The hills around the fortress are steep and difficult to climb (Difficult Athletics test).

#### I. Gatehouse

The winding trail from the valley eventually leads up to the forbidding, 6 meter tall castle walls (Routine Athletics test to climb). Right in front of the gatehouse is a 20 meter deep ravine; the bottom of the chasm is filled with a mix of bones and garbage. A drawbridge can be lowered from inside the gatehouse to allow visitors entry. It takes a move action to lower the drawbridge, but the bridge doesn't come down until the beginning of the lowering adventurer's next turn. It takes a single combat action to raise the drawbridge; the drawbridge is up at the end of the round.

Further back, there is a wooden portcullis (Difficult Brawn test to force or break open). In the gatehouse above, there is a murder hole for pouring boiling water (2d6 points of damage, unload every other round) or rocks (1d6 points of damage) down on intruders while they assault the portcullis.

The gatehouse towers have arrow slits which provide cover to the guards, who are armed with longbows. Archers in the towers gain a +5% to attack rolls for attacking from higher ground.

There are two guards (see Area 3) posted in each tower at any time.

#### 2. Stable

This long wooden building holds two dozen light warhorses of Lamuran breed, as well as grain-sacks, saddles and one suit of chain shirt barding for Gasparus' steed, a magnificent black stallion. The door to the stable is locked.

#### 

#### Castle Gasparus

**Standard Features:** Unless noted otherwise, all interior doors are good wooden doors. Ceiling height is 3 meters in normal rooms.

**Lighting:** The castle halls are illuminated by greasy torches set in wall sconces.

#### Lord Numas, Master of the Estate - Male Taraamite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	16	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	14	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	14	19-20	Head	-/5

**Combat Actions** 3

Armour: None

Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 14 Movement 8m Strike Rank +15 Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 28%, Brawn 27%, Culture (Own) 82%, Dance 28%, Drive 28%, Evade 68%, Evaluate 70%, First Aid 30%, Influence 68%, Insight 55%, Lore (Regional) 87%, Perception 60%, Persistence 68%, Resilience 54%, Ride 28%, Sing 28%, Sleight 28%, Stealth 30%, Swim 26%, Unarmed 38%

**Advanced Skills:** Courtesy 69%, Craft (Bone carving) 60%, Healing 50%, Language (Native) 80%, Lore (Undead) 87%, Manipulation 70%, Meditation 55%, Oratory 58%, Seduction 60%, Sorcery (Breath of Undeath) 77%, Teaching 50%

**Grimoire** (Breath of Undeath): Animate (Dead flesh), Attract (Magic), Banish, Damage Resistance, Diminish (CON), Hinder, Palsy, Spirit Resistance, Wrack

50% Chance: Bone Dance (New spell)

Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HI
Bastard Sword	_	M	M	1D8+1 Bleed, Impale	4/12

#### **Combat Styles**

Fake Fighting Man (Bastard Sword, 1-H Sword, Dagger): 63%

Possessions: Noble's clothes, bastard sword, two gold rings (worth 100 sp each).

**Description:** Lord Numas is middle-aged, but still handsome, tall and regal. He wears a purple cloak of Ghazorite wool and always carries his heirloom sword in his belt, to keep up the appearance that he is a fighting-man rather than a spellcaster.

**Tactics:** Numas has not yet mastered many directly offensive spells, so he prefers to stay away from melee, relying on his intimidating presence to avoid opponents.

# Zaltutim, Mercenary Captain - Male Susrahnite

Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
18	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
12	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
15	7-9	Abdomen	-/7
12	10-12	Chest	6/8
10	13-15	Right Arm	-/5
16	16-18	Left Arm	-/5
10	19-20	Head	-/6
	18 12 15 12 10 16	18       1-3         12       4-6         15       7-9         12       10-12         10       13-15         16       16-18	18       1-3       Right Leg         12       4-6       Left Leg         15       7-9       Abdomen         12       10-12       Chest         10       13-15       Right Arm         16       16-18       Left Arm

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier +1D4

Magic Points 10

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +14 (+11

when armoured)

**Armour:** Breastplate. -3 Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 34%, Brawn 73%, Culture (Own) 74%, Dance 26%, Drive 26%, Evade 77%, Evaluate 42%, First Aid 28%, Influence 50%, Insight 32%, Lore (Regional) 84%, Perception 72%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 84%, Ride 56%,

Sing 20%, Sleight 26%, Stealth 48%, Swim 30%, Unarmed 64%

Advanced Skills: Courtesy 62%, Gambling 42%, Language (Native) 72%, Lore

(Tactics) 79%, Streetwise 55%, Survival 52%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Scimitar	_	M	M	1D8 Bleed	6/10
Sushranite Bow	90m	Н		1D8+1 Impale	4/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Numas' Captain (Scimitar, Bow (any), Dagger, 2-H Sword): 74%

**Possessions:** Breastplate, scimitar, Susrahnite longbow, 30 arrows, 45 sp.

**Description:** Zaltutim is the leader of a mercenary company and Numas' current right-hand man. He was ever in the shadow of Iskander, Numas' former favourite, and looks forward to getting his revenge on the man now that he has fallen out with Numas.

**Tactics:** Zaltutim's tactics are simple. Like his fellow mercenaries, he attempts to take down as many opponents as possible with his bow first, then leaps into melee with his scimitar.

# Mercenary Guards - Male Susrahnite (20 total)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	2/6
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	2/6
SIZ	14	7-9	Abdomen	2/7
INT	10	10-12	Chest	2/8
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	2/5
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	2/5
CHA	10	19-20	Head	-/6

Combat Actions 2 Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 10

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +12 (+9 when

armoured)

Armour: Studded Leather. -3 Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

**Common Skills:** Athletics 40%, Brawn 50%, Culture (Own) 60%, Dance 24%, Drive 24%, Evade 58%, Evaluate 50%, First Aid 24%, Influence 50%, Insight 20%, Lore (Regional) 60%, Perception 40%, Persistence 40%, Resilience 44%, Ride 24%,

Sing 20%, Sleight 24%, Stealth 24%, Swim 28%, Unarmed 40%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 50%, Courtesy 62%, Gambling 33%, Language (Native)

70%, Lore (Tactics) 50%, Streetwise 40%, Survival 42%, Track 32%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Scimitar	_	M	M	1D8 Bleed	6/10
Sushranite Bow	90m	Н	_	1D8+1 Impale	4/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Mercenary Trained (Scimitar, Sushranite Bow, 1-H Sword): 60%

Possessions: Studded leather, scimitar, Susrahnite longbow, 30 arrows, 1d8 sp.

**Description:** These are mercenary warriors from the Susrahnite city-states to the south. They are dressed in a variety of styles, reflecting their individual natures.

Tactics: The guards use their bows to wear down opponents before they close with their swords.

# Lamuran Warriors, Wolves of Gasparus - Male Lamuran (30 total)

Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
18	1-3	Right Leg	4/6
12	4-6	Left Leg	4/6
15	7-9	Abdomen	4/7
11	10-12	Chest	4/8
10	13-15	Right Arm	4/5
16	16-18	Left Arm	4/5
9	19-20	Head	4/6
	18 12 15 11 10 16	18 1-3 12 4-6 15 7-9 11 10-12 10 13-15 16 16-18	18       1-3       Right Leg         12       4-6       Left Leg         15       7-9       Abdomen         11       10-12       Chest         10       13-15       Right Arm         16       16-18       Left Arm

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier +1D4

Magic Points 10

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +14 (+8 when

armoured)

**Armour:** Scale Mail and scale helmets. -6 Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 59%, Brawn 58%, Culture (Own) 72%, Dance 25%, Drive 26%, Evade 67%, Evaluate 55%, First Aid 27%, Influence 48%, Insight 21%, Lore (Regional) 62%, Perception 61%, Persistence 20%, Resilience 39%, Ride 61%, Sing 19%, Sleight 45%, Stealth 47%, Swim 30%, Unarmed 44%

Advanced Skills: Courtesy 30%, Language (Native) 70%, Lore (Tactics) 57%,

Survival 32%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Battleaxe	_	M	M	1D6+1 Bleed, Sunder (2H only)	4/8
Heavy Crossbow	150m	Н	_	1D10 Impale, Sunder	4/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Mountain Combat (Battleaxe, Heavy Crossbow, Spear): 68%

Possessions: Scale mail, battleaxe, heavy crossbow, 12 bolts, light warhorse, spear, 1d4 sp.

**Description:** Fierce mountain-men with grizzled beards, mistrust in their eyes and cold steel in their hands, these men are very loyal to Gasparus and seek to protect his lands and villages against any intruders.

**Tactics:** If encountered outside Castle Gasparus, these men are mounted on light warhorses and use their spears to great effect. They tend to charge into combat on their warhorses. When defending the castle, they employ their heavy crossbows from behind arrow slits, gaining cover, or otherwise wield battleaxes to engage foes in melee.

#### Iskander, the Traitor - Male Taraamite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	14	7-9	Abdomen	5/7
INT	14	10-12	Chest	5/8
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	5/5
DEX	20	16-18	Left Arm	5/5
CHA	10	19-20	Head	-/6

**Combat Actions** 3

Armour: Chain Shirt. -4 Armour Penalty.

Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 11 Movement 8m

**Strike Rank** +17 (+13

when armoured)

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 76%, Brawn 65%, Culture (Own) 88%, Dance 30%, Drive 31%, Evade 75%, Evaluate 64%, First Aid 34%, Influence 20%, Insight 25%, Lore (Regional) 88%, Perception 80%, Persistence 52%, Resilience 64%, Ride 56%, Sing 21%, Sleight 85%, Stealth 79%, Swim 48%, Unarmed 46%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 76%, Commerce 64%, Language (Native), Lore (Tactics)

73%, Mechanisms 74%, Streetwise 71%, Survival 23%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Glaive	_	M	L	1D8+1 Bleed	4/10
Dagger (thrown)	10m	S	_	1D4 Bleed	4/6

#### **Combat Styles**

Tricky Fighter (Glaive, Dagger, Shuriken)

Possessions: Chain shirt, glaive, four daggers, 25 sp.

**Description:** With beady eyes, and greasy dark hair framing a thin face, Iskander is no ladies' man. Furthermore, he has a sizeable red scar across face, the result of a sword-duel some years ago.

Tactics: Iskander uses his glaive attacks to maim foes quickly; he may also throw daggers at short range if he can get into position to do so.

# Lord Gasparus, the Wolf - Male Lamuran

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	20	1-3	Right Leg	4/8
CON	18	4-6	Left Leg	4/8
SIZ	19	7-9	Abdomen	4/9
INT	12	10-12	Chest	4/10
POW	12	13-15	Right Arm	4/7
DEX	12	16-18	Left Arm	4/7
CHA	12	19-20	Head	-/8

**Combat Actions** 2

**Armour:** Scalemail. -5 Armour Penalty.

Damage Modifier +1D6

Magic Points 12

Traits: None

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +12 (+7 when

armoured)

Common Skills: Athletics 72%, Brawn 74%, Culture (Own) 84%, Dance 24%, Drive 24%, Evade 80%, Evaluate 24%, First Aid 24%, Influence 69%, Insight 54%, Lore (Regional) 84%, Perception 74%, Persistence 54%, Resilience 83%, Ride 49%,

Sing 34%, Sleight 34%, Stealth 49%, Swim 60%, Unarmed 56%

Advanced Skills: Courtesy 57%, Culture (Wolves) 79%, Language (Native) 74%,

Lore (Tactics) 69%, Survival 75%, Teaching 34%, Track 40%

Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Greatsword	_	Н	L	2D8 Bleed, Impale, Sunder	6/12

#### **Combat Styles**

Bite of the Wolf (Greatsword, Greataxe, Poleaxe): 80%

Possessions: Scalemail, greatsword, 81 sp

Description: A giant of a man, Gasparus is bald-headed but full-bearded. He wears a great cloak of dire-wolf skin over his heavy armor, and wields a great two-handed sword. True to his name, he keeps a pair of trained wolves as his pets.

Tactics: Gasparus delights in battle, and a favourite tactic is to crush opponents' weapons before cleaving into them with ease.

#### 3. Barracks

This hall is filled with bunk beds and dust-stained blankets. Scraps of food, small weapons and pieces of armour are scattered around the room. Around a third of Gasparus' men can be found here at any time, with a 70% chance that they have 1d3 visiting girls from the village.

The smaller room to the east is the private quarters of Iskander, who used to be Numas' henchman but betrayed him and is now the lieutenant of Gasparus. It has plain and unadorned blue tapestries hanging on the walls, a medium-sized bed, and a worn but comfortable chair.

#### 4. Well

The well is 18 meters deep, fed by a small mountain-stream of ice-cold water. Any adventurer falling into the well suffers 1 point of damage from hypothermia per minute of exposure, in addition to the falling damage.

#### 5. Secret Door

This door is well-hidden (requires a Difficult Perception test to detect) and only Gasparus and a few of his men (including Iskander) know about it. It offers a quick escape path into the mountains behind the castle.

#### 6. Kitchen

A cooking-pit is in the west corner of this room. On a round table are leftover pieces of meat and a half-empty bottle of wine. A small pantry has two shelves with dried cheeses, herbs, and bottles of goat-milk. A serving-boy-turned-chef is ever-present; he sleeps under the table when not making or serving food.

#### 7. Feasthall

The walls of this grand hall are hung with displays of crossed axes and longswords. Placed in the middle of the room is a long wooden table which seats two dozen men. Against the east wall, below a canopy of black cloth embroidered with silver thread, is the great cedar wood chair where Gasparus sits when he holds his revelries here. After a feast, the place is usually strewn with wooden food-trays, half-empty drinking-horns and pools of greenish vomit.

#### 8. Armoury

These locked storehouses are filled with weapon racks and crates of supplies and equipment. The weapons include throwing axes, longspears, arrows and quivers and a few swords.

#### 9. Private Chambers

Gasparus has several rooms to himself in this section of the castle. The main entrance door from the courtyard outside is always locked. Inside these quarters is a bedroom with a large bed and a wardrobe and a lounge with a small fireplace and several stuffed animal-heads on the walls. Finally, there is a locked treasure room which contains Gasparus' modest wealth; three small bags filled



with gold coins (a total of 1,500 SP), a wooden box stuffed with straw and filled with delicate Taikangian porcelain (worth 700 SP), and finally an iron chest with various bits and pieces of silver and bronze jewellery (worth 800 SP).

# The Thing in the Cave

The secret caves where Iskander and his men hid the undead thing which Numas raised during his necromatic experiments is located in far up in the mountains, north of the village of Khorsul and east of Castle Gasparus.

# THE MOUNTAINS OF KHORSUL

The area is criss-crossed by goat-trails, many of which are nothing more than narrow ledges bordered by sheer drops. Heavy fog that obscures vision can roll down from the upper mountain slopes in minutes and rockslides are a common danger. To make matters worse, several large packs of wolves hunt in these mountains.

For every half-hour of travel in the mountains, roll on the table overleaf:

# Wolves, Trained Pets of Gasparus (2)

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6	11	1–2	Right Hind Leg	2/5
CON	3D6+3	14	3-4	Left Hind Leg	2/5
SIZ	2D6+3	10	5–7	Hindquarters	2/6
INT	5	5	8-10	Forequarters	2/7
POW	3D6	11	11–13	Right Front Leg	2/5
DEX	3D6+3	14	14–16	Left Front Leg	2/5
			17-20	Head	2/5

Combat Actions 2 Damage Modifier +0 Magic Points 11 Movement 10m Strike Rank +10 **Armour:** Fur, Hide. No Armour Penalty.

Traits: Night Sight

**Skills:** Athletics 80%, Evade 55%, Perception 60%, Persistence 43%, Resilience 52%, Stealth 55%, Survival 40%, Tracking 60%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Bite	_	M	Τ	1D8	As for Head
Claw		M	M	1D3	As for Leg

#### **Combat Styles**

D: D 11 /1 10)

Wolf's Fury (Bite, Claw): 60%

Die Roll (1d8)	Encounter
1	Narrow ledge
2	Rockslide
3	Heavy fog
4	Pack of wolves
5	High pass
6–8	No encounter

**Heavy Fog:** A heavy fog appears in 1d6 rounds. The fog obscures all sight beyond 2 meters. Creatures 2 meters away have concealment (attacks by or against them have a 20% miss chance). The fog lasts for 3d10 rounds before it dissolves.

**High Pass:** Ascending to the highest slopes of low mountains, or most normal travel through high mountains, falls into this category. All non-acclimated creatures labor to breathe in the thin air at this altitude. Adventurers must succeed on a Routine Resilience skill test each hour or gain a level of Fatigue. The fatigue ends when the adventurer descends to an altitude with more air. Acclimated adventurers do not have to attempt this test.

Narrow Ledge: The sloping trail passes a narrow ledge, slippery from recent rain or fog, which requires a successful Routine Athletics skill test to pass. There is a 20% chance of the presence of a field of shifting gravel, which increases the Athletics tests to Difficult. Creatures failing their test fall 2d4×3 meters down into a chasm below. It takes a Difficult Athletics skill test to climb out the chasm.

**Pack of Wolves:** A hungry pack of 1d6+10 wolves starts to track and hunt down the adventurers. There is a 50% chance that the alpha male of the pack is a dire wolf with double normal Damage Modifier. The pack flees if more than half its members are killed, or if the alpha male is slain.

**Rockslide:** Rocks fall from above in a 10-meter wide field. Adventurers in the slide zone take 2d6 points of damage, or no damage at all if they make a Routine Athletics test. Adventurers in the slide zone who fail their tests are also buried.

Adventurers take 1 points of damage per minute while buried. If such a adventurers falls unconscious, he must make a Routine Resilience test. If it fails, he takes 1d6 points of damage each minute thereafter until freed or dead.

Adventurers who aren't buried can dig out their friends. In 1 minute, using only her hands, a adventurers can clear rocks and debris equal to five times her heavy load limit. The amount of loose stone that fills a 2-meter-by-2-meter area weighs one ton (2,000 pounds). Armed with an appropriate tool, such as a pick, crowbar, or shovel, a digger can clear loose stone twice as quickly as by hand. You may allow a buried character to free himself with a Difficult Athletics test.

#### I. Cave Entrance

The entrance to the caverns is located behind several large boulders. It takes a Routine Perception test to find the cave opening. It is pitch dark within the tunnel.

#### 

#### The Secret Caves of Khorsul

**Standard Features:** Ceiling height is 5 meters in all caves unless described otherwise. Moving across the rough and uneven cavern floor requires Athletics tests. Several large boulders are scattered around, these may provide cover or a place to hide for ambushing creatures. There are several chasms of variable depth; assuming creatures survive a fall they may climb up with a Routine Athletics test.

**Lighting:** The caverns are unlit.

#### 

#### Spider-Cave

This large grotto is the lair of a cave-spider, one of Lamu's many native monstrous spiders. It hangs in the darkness of the ceiling and drops down on unsuspecting victims.

The giant spider featured here is a web-spinning spider, which hunts by spreading its webs over an area where potential prey is likely to cross. When a potential prey creature wanders beneath the web, the spider rushes over and begins spewing webbing all over its intended victim.

The webbing of a giant spider acts as an area-effect *glue* spell with a STR equal to the spider's POW. The web's Hit Points are double its STR. When a web reaches zero Hit Points, a hole large enough to allow a SIZ 15 creature to pass has been created. Any weapon striking a strand of webbing will do damage, but it also may become stuck. Flaming weapons never become stuck, and always inflict double damage on webbing. However, webbing will not ignite.

Giant spiders are extremely intelligent creatures, though they are still just animals and their INT is fixed.

#### 3. Grotto with Great Chasm

This huge cavern is split in two by a wide chasm, 15 meters deep. At the bottom of the fissure is a silver ring with Numas' heraldic emblem on it (worth 35 SP); it was lost by one of Iskander's men when they carried the sarcophagus (see Area 6) through here. It takes a Routine Perception test to see the ring.

*Development*: If a fight breaks out here, opponents may try to bull rush the adventurers into the chasm.

# 4. Natural Bridge

This is a narrow natural bridge, 2 to 3 meters wide, that spans a 25 meter deep chasm. Iskander and his men had great difficulty dragging the sarcophagus across the bridge.



#### 5. Bat-Cave

Several thousand small bats rest here during the day. The floor is covered with guano, making the floor slippery and increasing the difficulty of Athletics tests by a step, so a Simple becomes a Routine and so on. The stench forces creatures to make a Routine Resilience skill test or become sickened for 1 minute.

If the bats are disturbed, they seek to flee out of the cavern. A swarm deals automatic 1d3 damage to any creature whose space it occupies at the end of its move, dispersing if they suffer 10 hp of damage or more.

#### 6. Sealed Cave

The cave is sealed with a pile of rocks, placed as to make it appear natural (requires a Routine Perception test to spot this). Inside the cave is a plain and unardorned stone sarcophagus (it needs a Difficult Athletics test to open) which holds the un-killable cryptthing that Numas raised during his necromantic experiments.

# Lamuran Cave Spider

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	2D6+12	19	1	Right Fourth Leg	4/8
CON	3D6+6	17	2	Left Fourth Leg	4/8
SIZ	4D6+12	26	3	Right Third Leg	4/8
INT	8	8	4	Left Third Leg	4/8
POW	3D6	11	5-11	Abdomen	4/10
DEX	2D6+9	16	12	Right Second Leg	4/8
			13	Left Second Leg	4/8
			14	Right First Leg	4/8
			15	Left First Leg	4/8
			16-20	Thorax	4/11

Combat Actions 2 Damage Modifier +1D8

Magic Points 8

Movement 8m/18m (in

own web)

Strike Rank +12

**Armour:** Chitin: No Skill Penalty

Traits: Poison (bite), Wall Walking

**Skills:** Athletics 100%, Evade 40%, Perception 65%, Persistence 43%, Resilience 61%, Stealth 85%, Track 40%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Bite	_	M	T	1D6+poison	As for Head
Web	_	L	L	Entangle	4/19

#### Combat Styles

Spider Spider (Bite, Web): 65%

**Notes**: The giant spider featured here is a web-spinning spider, which hunts by spreading its webs over an area where potential prey is likely to cross. When a potential prey creature wanders beneath the web, the spider rushes over and begins spewing webbing all over its intended victim. The webbing of a giant spider acts as an area-effect *glue* spell with a STR equal to the spider's POW. The web's Hit Points are double its STR. When a web reaches zero Hit Points, a hole large enough to allow a SIZ 15 creature to pass has been created. Any weapon striking a strand of webbing will do damage, but it also may become stuck. Flaming weapons never become stuck, and always inflict double damage on webbing. However, webbing will not ignite. Giant spiders are extremely intelligent creatures, though they are still just animals and their INT is fixed.

Spider venom has the following Characteristics:

**Application:** Injected. **Onset Time:** 1D3 Rounds. **Duration:** 1D3 Days.

Resistance Time: Daily. The first Resistance roll must be made at the end of the Onset Time, then daily thereafter. Successfully resisting the

poison allows the victim to avoid suffering the Conditions until the next roll must be made.

**Potency:** 40+CON of Spider (17)

Resistance: Resilience. Conditions: Paralysis.

Antidote/Cure: Healing skill and magic

# The Crypt-Thing of Khorsul - Undying Creation of Numas (blood wight)

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	10D6	35	1-3	Right Leg	-/9
CON	5D6+30	48	4-6	Left Leg	-/9
SIZ	30	30	7-9	Abdomen	-/10
INT	5	5	10-12	Chest	-/11
POW	5D6	18	13-15	Right Arm	-/8
DEX	2D6	7	16-18	Left Arm	-/8
			19-20	Head	-/9

Combat Actions 1

Damage Modifier +2D6

Magic Points 18

Movement 6m

Strike Rank +6

**Armour:** None

Traits: Formidable Natural Weapons, Life Sense

Skills: Athletics 42%, Evade 14%, Perception 23%, Persistence 36%, Resilience

96%, Stealth 45%, Unarmed 42%, Track 53%

Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Claw	_	M	M	1D4	As Arms
Engulf	_	L	T	Special	As Body

#### **Combat Styles**

Wight's Cold (Claw): 52%, Engulfing Mass (Engulf): 100%

Tactics: A blood wight enters combat slashing with its claws. Given a chance, it grabs the closest opponent and engulfs it, holding it inside its body until it drowns. Drowned foes are ejected from the blood wight's body into a heap on the ground (the blood wight later devours any creature it kills). A blood wight's natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction. Attacks that hit an engulfing blood wight deal half their damage to the monster and half to the trapped victim. An engulfed victim must hold its breath as long as it remains trapped or begin to drown (see the *Legend Core Rulebook* for the rules on drowning). A trapped victim can break free with a successful Difficult Unarmed skill test. A blood wight's body can engulf 30 SIZ worth of opponents.

**Special:** A blood wight is a very dangerous creation, and thus it cannot truly be killed until its creator (Numas) has been dealt with. Until then, it will regenerate fully regardless of the damage done to it...it will find a way out of rockfalls, climb up sheer cliffs to get out of ravines and pull itself back together if dismembered. It takes 2D4 Rounds to regenerate back to full health.

Development: If the sarcophagus is broken open, the "thing" within emerges and fights its way through whoever stands nearby, seeking to leave the cave and find Numas. It cannot truly die before its creator is killed — for who can kill what is already dead? Its dead flesh heals itself, and it suffers no harm from fire or acid. It could possibly be destroyed, or perhaps only delayed, by throwing it into a ravine and dropping a rockslide on top of it.

If Numas knows the player characters (or anyone else) are going to the caves, he sends his mercenaries after them to locate the cave and stop anyone from breaking open the sarcophagus, at least until he knows how to destroy the monster for good.

**Tactics:** A blood wight enters combat slashing with its claws. Given a chance, it grabs the closest opponent and engulfs it, holding it inside its body until it drowns. Drowned foes are ejected from the blood wight's body into a heap on the ground (the blood wight later devours any creature it kills). A blood wight's natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Attacks that hit an engulfing blood wight deal half their damage to the monster and half to the trapped victim. An engulfed victim must hold its breath as long as it remains trapped or begin to drown (see the *Legend Core Rulebook* for the rules on drowning). A trapped victim can break free with a successful Difficult Unarmed Skill Test. A blood wight's body can engulf 30 SIZ worth of opponents.

**Special:** A blood wight is a very dangerous creation, and thus it cannot truly be killed until its creator (Numas) has been dealt with. Until then, it will regenerate fully regardless of the damage done to it...it will find a way out of rockfalls, climb up sheer cliffs to get out of ravines and pull itself back together if dismembered. It takes 2D4 Rounds to regenerate back to full health.

# CONCLUSION

The players may go to Castle Gasparus directly, or they may try to investigate the situation first. Several clues should suggest that not everything is as it seems.

If they go to the castle, the adventurers can sneak in, or assault Gasparus' guards directly. The adventurers ultimately face either Gasparus or Iskander or both, and these reveal the truth to the adventurers; that Numas is the real sorcerer, and that the cryptthing he created is hidden in the mountains. Gasparus will not give the amulet to the adventurers in any event.

The adventurers may either go back to the estate for a show-down with Numas (in which case Numas will be waiting for them with an ambush or some other treachery), or they may try to unleash the crypt-thing on Numas. In the latter case, Numas will have followed the party with a band of Susrahnite mercenaries, and there is a showdown in the caves as the players try to open the sarcophagus before they are overwhelmed by the mercenaries.

There is also the possibility that the adventurers stumble upon the forest-trail near the bridge across the river Suliyah and meet Pavlas the goat-herder, who can take them directly to the secret cave, although in this case they are likely followed by Numas' mercenaries and the final showdown plays out much like the previous case.

If the adventurers have reason to suspect early on that Numas is lying, they might decide to confront him before going to Castle Gasparus. Still, unless they find the secret sorcery room, it is hard to prove anything more than dishonesty. Numas has plenty of guards to hide behind, making him difficult to kill even if the adventurers find out the truth. Once Numas decides that the player characters are not the useful pawns he thought them to be, he seeks to have them killed.

If the players fail: The adventurers have little value to either of the two lords of the valley except as pawns and servants. Swift death awaits once they become useless, either from a dagger in the back or a poisoned chalice. Smart adventurers may decide to switch sides one or more times during the adventure to avoid such a fate.

# THE VAULT OF YIGTHRAHOTEP



"Kull stood alone, his mind a-whirl. Neophytes of the mighty serpent, how many lurked among his cities? How might he tell the false from the true? Aye, how many of his trusted councilors, his generals, were men? He could be certain — of whom?"

Robert E. Howard: The Shadow Kingdom

In the centuries after the fall and devastation of Elder Kuth, the former slave peoples of the giant-kings migrated north and east to settle in the lands of Susrah. An offshoot of these proto-Sushrahnites, called the Ishrah, chose instead to wander south into the hills of what is now the black kingdom of Shoma.

In the jungled hills of Shoma, the Ishrah discovered rich deposits of gold and precious stones. They enslaved the native tribes and set their new slaves to toil day and night in the mines. The small kingdom of the Ishrah prospered and a series of purple stone fortresses was built to control the mines.

Driven by greed, the Ishrah forced their slaves to dig ever deeper into the rich ore, until one day the toiling workers unearthed a series of stone chambers beneath the mine tunnels. The priests of the Ishrah studied the weird pictograms on the walls and deemed it unwise to disturb these prehuman vaults. The mine was sealed off and declared taboo by the priests and soon the surrounding area was abandoned by the Ishrahnites.

Centuries later, the area was re-settled by a native tribe, the Wamuba, who built a village in the shadow of the ruined stone citadel of the Ishrahnites. When the chieftain of the Wamuba died without leaving a male heir, the chieftain's oldest wife, Nugga-Tikanda, seized power and declared herself 'Queen' of the tribe. Those who resisted Nugga-Tikanda's claim to the throne were soon slain or exiled, for the new queen was a witch who used curses and necromancy against her enemies. Having mastered an abominable rite of longevity, Nugga-Tikanda started a reign of terror which has lasted for two centuries.

# **ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS**

The adventurers are hired by a group of Susrahnite traders who have found clues to the whereabouts of a lost gold mine. These traders are in fact serpent-men, in disguise, survivors of a lost age who seek to free a serpent-king, the ancient Yigthrahotep, who lies slumbering in the pre-human vaults beneath the mine.

The players travel along with the 'Susrahnites' through the desert and into the kingdom of Shoma. The final piece of the key to open the vault, which was re-sealed by the priests of the Ishrah, can be found in the temple of Katanga, the capital city of Shoma.

Reaching the lost mine, the players must deal with the Wamuba tribesmen and their mad witch-queen, then explore the tunnels and chambers beneath the mine. When the vault is found, the serpentmen drop their disguises and attempt to sacrifice the player characters to the awakened serpent-king Yigthrahotep.

#### STARTING THE ADVENTURE

Consider any of the following hooks to get the adventure started.

- A scholar among the adventurers finds and studies a clay tablet that contains tantalizing hints of a lost gold mine in the jungles south of Shoma. The adventurers set out on an expedition on their own. As they search for the keys to the lost mine, they are approached by a group of foreign merchants.
- The adventurers are hired as mercenaries or caravan guards by foreign merchants who are travelling south. When the caravan reaches Shoma, it becomes apparent to the adventurers that the merchants are looking for a lost gold mine somewhere in the jungle. The adventurers are promised a share of the loot if they help find the lost mine.

# THE LEGEND OF THE PURPLE SPIRES

The Ishrahnites wisely re-sealed the ancient vault they unearthed in their mines (see the Introduction), by placing powerful warding spells on the doors to prevent anyone from going into (or breaking out of!) the vault. But according to the laws of sorcery, there is no magic that cannot be undone, and for all seals there must exist a key.

The priests of the Ishrah therefore covered the vault doors with hundreds of arcane sigils and cuneiform script. Three of the symbols, placed randomly among the other sigils, are the keys to opening the vault. To preserve the keys (as they must be, otherwise the seal is voided), the priests carved each symbol on separate objects, which were then handed on to different guardians and carried away. Over the centuries, the keys changed hands multiple times, and eventually their significance was lost.

The three objects each containing a part of the key to the vault are a clay tablet, a golden figurine, and a marble flagstone. The clay tablet is assumed to somehow fall into the possession of the adventurers (see below), while the golden figurine has been found by a group of serpent-men. The marble flagstone is currently set in the floor of the inner shrine of Nataka in the city of Katanga.

# THE CLAY TABLET OF ZHAOL

The clay tablet written by the priests of the Ishrah eventually found its way to the city of Zhaol the Accursed (so called by its neighbouring peoples for its wickedness) where the stone rested for centuries. Only recently, the tablet came to the city of Zul-Bazzir through a merchant, or perhaps a thief or sorcerer. It is assumed the adventurers start this adventure with the tablet already in their possession, but a separate introductory adventure could easily be created wherein the adventurers find or steal the tablet.

The tablet, little more than a square foot in size, has now broken up into three pieces, of which the largest is missing (and is, in fact, forever destroyed).

The first remaining piece is covered with cuneiform script. It requires a successful Difficult Lore test to read what turns out to be a myth-poem:

Men of bronze, masters of fire
Kings of black jungles beneath a purple spire
Mad blind hands reach into the night
To plumb abysses dead to human sight
The Sons of Ishrah adorned with glittering stones
The earth yields riches but claims black bones
Tunnels in the earth, and vaults, too
Secrets of a lost age remain taboo
The one-eyed keeper of secrets knows the way
To the ivory goddess who holds the key all must pray

Further research on the Sons of Ishrah with a Difficult Lore (history) Skill Test, makes it apparent that the myth-poem refers to the area which is now the black kingdom of Shoma. A successful Difficult Lore (theology) test also reveals that the ivory goddess is Nataka, a female deity whose temple is in Katanga. If the adventurers lack the appropriate knowledge skills, they might seek out a sage to help them study the clay tablet.

The other remaining fragment contains a single cuneiform symbol, whose large size makes it of special significance. This is, of course, one of the keys to the vault of Yigthrahotep, although the adventurers have no way of knowing this yet.

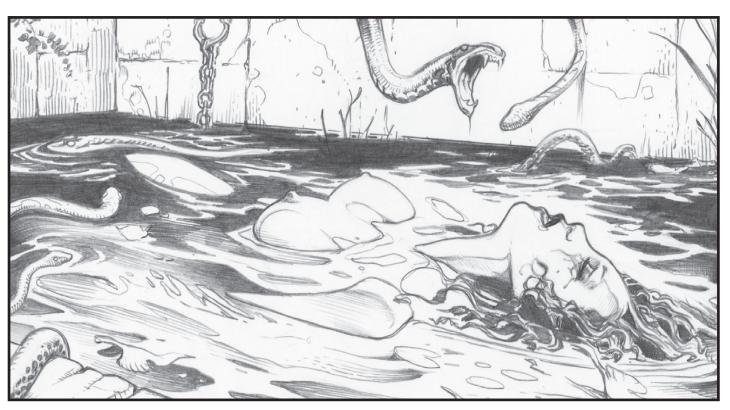
# THREE MEN OF SUSRAH

Whether the adventurers begin to prepare for an expedition to the south or not, they are eventually approached by a group of three men, claiming to be merchants of Susrah. Through rumors and a network of spies and informants, they have learned that the adventurers have the clay tablet.

The chief merchant, who calls himself Ursib, carries a small, 1-foot tall golden figurine of Aklathu, a minor god in the pantheon of Susrah. The statuette is in the shape of a potbellied, bearded dwarf with deformed, perhaps even retarded, facial features and a wicked grin. Also of note, the left eyesocket of the figurine is empty, while the right socket is set with a small gem. Carved under the feet of the figurine is a cuneiform symbol. It only takes an Insight test to figure out that this symbol is somehow related to the symbol on the clay tablet (see above).

Ursib does not initially show the figurine to the adventurers. Rather, he states flatly that he and his fellow merchants are looking for a lost gold mine somewhere to the south of the black kingdom of Shoma, which is supposedly sealed by sorcery that requires knowledge of three sacred symbols to open. Since both the merchants and the players have a part of the puzzle, Ursib suggests that they cooperate to find the mine, and split evenly any treasure found. The adventurers have (or at least are assumed to have) expert fighting skills, while the merchants have money to pay for mounts, supplies and equipment. Play out these negotiations as you see fit.

If he gets a chance to study the clay tablet, Ursib concludes that the third and final part of the key is kept in the temple of Katanga. If the adventurers are on their own, or refuse to let the merchants study the tablet, this information could be given to the players through a sage (unless they figure it out from the poem themselves, of course).



#### Merchants of Susrah - Male Serpent-men Walkers-Among-Men (3)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	3/6
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	3/6
SIZ	15	7-9	Abdomen	3/7
INT	13	10-12	Chest	3/8
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	3/5
DEX	20	16-18	Left Arm	3/5
CHA	12	19-20	Head	3/6

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +1D4

Magic Points 10 Movement 8m Strike Rank +17 Armour: Scales in Snake-man form. No Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 56%, Brawn 31%, Culture (Own) 86%, Dance 62%, Drive 50%, Evade 70%, Evaluate 85%, First Aid 33%, Influence 64%, Insight 53%, Lore (Regional) 86%, Perception 63%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 58%, Ride 60%, Sing 42%, Sleight 77%, Stealth 73%, Swim 60%, Unarmed 66%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 66%, Commerce 70%, Courtesy 70%, Language (Native) 85%, Mechanisms 78%, Streetwise 66%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Snake-Hands	_	M	M	1D4+1 Poison	As Arms
Kukri		M	S	1D6 Bleed	3/7
Dagger	_	S	S	1D4 Bleed, Impale	6/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Striking Serpentine (Snake-Hands, Kukri, Dagger): 66%

Possessions: Merchants' clothing, kukri, 3 daggers, 100 sp, golden figurine of Akhlatu (carried by Ursib).

**Description:** Dressed as regular caravan-masters, these Snake-men are similar to normal men in all respects. It is only when they shed their magical disguises that their true nature is revealed: Blue-green scaly skin, a snake-like head, and arms which end in viper-heads instead of hands.

**Tactics:** The walkers-among-men stay disguised as humans as long as possible, dropping their disguises only when they are sure that they are going to kill their surprised victims. They open combat using their blinding spray, then use their Acrobatics to get behind and flank opponents, so that they can attack.

#### **Special Rules**

**Blinding Spray:** Once every 1d4 rounds, a common Snake-men can spew forth a line of milky-white liquid that causes blindness for 6 rounds to any creature struck. A Routine Evade skill test can avoid the effects. The spray has a range of 6 metres.

**More Human than:** This breed of Snake-men known as the "Walkers-among-men" have an innate ability which functions similar to the Shapechange spell. The variant is Shapechange (Snake-men) to (Human). It does not cost them Magic Points and allows them to appear human. If they are slain they revert to their true form.

#### **Snake-Men Poison**

Application: Injection/Smeared.

Onset Time: Nausea after 1D3 minutes, Paralysis after 3D6 minutes.

**Duration:** 1 hour.

**Resistance Time:** The victim must make a Resistance roll at the Onset Time of each stage of the poison. Failure indicates that Condition has taken effect.

Potency: CONx2 (28)
Resistance: Resilience.

**Conditions:** Nausea, Paralysis. The venom initially causes the victim to start feeling nauseous if the first Resistance roll is failed. The location bitten then suffers Paralysis if the second Resistance roll is failed.

**Antidote/Cure:** Anti-venom. Some cultures have perfected anti-venom remedies which have a Potency of 1D20+10. The anti-venom must be introduced with a successful First Aid or Healing roll and add their Potency as a bonus to the victim's Resilience roll to fight the venom throughout its duration.

#### ロスローダインにはしたす かいころにんだいこうじつにじょうにに

#### Secret History: The Children of Zanthiss

Aeons ago, a race of highly intelligent ophidians known as the serpent-kings ruled the primeval jungles of the continent. It is said that the great demonic serpent-god Zanthiss created this race from ordinary reptiles, and taught them the secret of sorcery. The serpent-kings used ape-men and primitive humans as slaves, and crossbreeding is said to have produced the Serpent-men, who had the bodies of men and the heads and hands of serpents, and some among them had the sorcerous ability to disguise as true men.

A sudden slave uprising, perhaps assisted by disloyal serpentmen, caused the decline and fall of the serpent-kings. They were driven back into the dwindling jungles of Yalotha, and Zanthiss himself is said to have been banished to a frozen star when his cyclopean black fane was sacked and destroyed at the height of the uprising.

Only in isolated pockets did there remain serpent-men, servitors of Zanthiss who were able to blend into human society. The once-great and immortal serpent-kings went into hibernation to survive, sleeping through the ages in sealed vaults beneath the earth.

# **UNMASKING THE SERPENTS**

Although the adventurers are likely to distrust the 'merchants,' the true nature of the serpent-men is revealed only near the end of the adventure. That said, it is possible for the adventurers to discover the truth earlier. For example, if a merchant is killed, he reverts back to his true, serpent-headed self. The DM may also allow especially suspicious adventurers to use Difficult Insight skill tests to try to see through the (magical) disguises of the serpent-men.

If the merchants are unmasked, there will probably be a violent confrontation with the adventurers. Even if the adventurers defeat the serpent-men, the adventurers are unlikely to discover the true purpose of the false merchants. The serpent-men would rather fight to the death than surrender and reveal that they are seeking to free the ancient serpent-king Yigthrahotep (in which case the adventurers might decide to stay away from the mines altogether).

Thus, barring any additional research by the adventurers, it is likely they continue on their quest to find the 'lost gold mine' even if the true nature of the merchants is revealed.

# **ACROSS THE DESERT**

The expedition must travel the long way from Zul-Bazzir to Katanga. The first leg of the journey is through the trackless sand dunes of the al-Khazi Desert, then through the desert wasteland known as the Desolation of Elder Kuth, and finally into the Parched Lands, a bleak savannah teeming with wild beasts.

Refer to the description of the al-Khazi desert for details of terrain and climate, the dangers of hunger and thirst, and random encounters on the first leg of the journey.

It is assumed that the adventurers and their allies, including the

merchants of Susrah and any Khazistani soldiers or mercenaries following them, travel on horses or camels. Additional pack camels are probably required to carry extra water, supplies and equipment through the desert.

Under normal circumstances, it takes around 35 days for a party on horseback or camel to reach Katanga (700 miles from Zul-Bazzir, through trackless desert and plains).

As the expedition travels across the desert, the DM should roll for random encounters or insert appropriate encounters as he sees fit. There are a few special events which should happen in the listed sequence, as described below.

## WRATH OF THE KHAMSIN

Somewhere past halfway to Katanga, an oppressive wind suddenly blows up. An adventurers who makes a Routine Survival skill test realizes that this is the dreaded sandstorm known among the local nomads as the *khamsin*.

In game terms, this is a greater duststorm (a duststorm accompanied by windstorm-magnitude winds) that deals 1d3 points of damage per round to exposed Hit Locations upon anyone caught out in the open without shelter.

Fortunately, the howling winds also reveal a range of rocky outcroppings, about half a mile away, where the adventurers can seek shelter. Horses and camels can reach shelter in 12-13 rounds. Heavily loaded steeds might move slower. To reach shelter in time, it might be necessary (depending on the current hit points of the players and the damage inflicted by the sandstorm) to spur the mounts to greater speed with Ride tests. Note that this doubles the sandstorm damage inflicted to the mount.

**Development:** Regardless of whether the adventurers manage to reach shelter, a number of the Khazistani soldiers who accompany the adventurers, as well as several pack camels or horses carrying water and equipment, are killed by the raging sandstorm (it is assumed that the NPCs were blinded by the storm and lost sight of the hills, or that they had too few hit points to reach shelter in time).

As the storm recedes, the adventurers find that the only other survivors are the three merchants of Susrah and 1d3 of the Khazistani soldiers. There is little water left and the party eventually faces the danger of death by thirst. Exactly how much water is left after the sandstorm is left up to the DM to determine. Nevertheless, it is too late to turn back, and the merchants of Susrah insist that the party should continue south.

# SLAVERS FROM THE EAST

The expedition (or rather, what remains of it after the sandstorm) eventually reaches the Parched Lands, which is the savannah between the Desolation of Elder Kuth and the kingdom of Shoma. The terrain changes from a sandy wasteland to dry plains dotted with rock outcroppings, areas of short grass, and the occasional tree.

As the adventurers and their companions cross this landscape, they spot a column of people moving in the distance, going from west to east, directly crossing the path of the adventurers. Assuming the adventurers move closer, it becomes apparent that this is a band of mounted slavers herding a number of slaves towards the east.

These slavers are in the employ of the infamous Slave Sultans of al-Qazir, a notorious fortress-city of Zadj. There are 12 Zadjite slavers on riding horses led by a slavelord riding a Zadjite light

# Makhtisar, Zadjite Slavelord - Male Zadjite

Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
18	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
13	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
16	7-9	Abdomen	5/7
13	10-12	Chest	5/8
13	13-15	Right Arm	5/5
15	16-18	Left Arm	5/5
14	19-20	Head	-/6
	18 13 16 13 13 15	18       1-3         13       4-6         16       7-9         13       10-12         13       13-15         15       16-18	18       1-3       Right Leg         13       4-6       Left Leg         16       7-9       Abdomen         13       10-12       Chest         13       13-15       Right Arm         15       16-18       Left Arm

**Combat Actions** 3

Armour: Chain Shirt. -4 Armour Penalty.

Damage Modifier +1D4

Magic Points 13

Traits: None

Movement 8m **Strike Rank** +14 (+10

when armoured)

Common Skills: Athletics 58%, Brawn 79%, Culture (Own) 96%, Dance 39%, Drive 47%, Evade 79%, Evaluate 87%, First Aid 28%, Influence 88%, Insight 71%, Lore (Regional) 96%, Perception 70%, Persistence 59%, Resilience 59%, Ride 68%, Sing 47%, Sleight 29%, Stealth 28%, Swim 31%, Unarmed 73%

Advanced Skills: Commerce 67%, Courtesy 71%, Gambling 66%, Language (Native) 97%, Streetwise 60%, Track 81%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Bastard Sword	_	M	M	1D8+1 Bleed, Impale	4/12
Net		S	L	1D4 Entangle	2/20

#### **Combat Styles**

Slave Master (Bastard Sword, Net, Mancatcher): 70%

Possessions: Chain shirt, bastard sword, net, 24 sp.

Description: Clad in expensive clothing beneath his armour, this is a broad-faced, tall man with a hoarse voice. He is ruthless and seeks only to maximize profit.

Tactics: Makhtisar attempts to disarm or trip opponents with his unarmed skill, or entangling them using his net. Only if this fails does he fall back on his sword-skills.

# Zadjite Slavers - Male Zadjite (12)

Value 1D20 Hit Location A	AP/HP
<b>STR</b> 14 1-3 Right Leg 2	2/5
<b>CON</b> 12 4-6 Left Leg 2	2/5
<b>SIZ</b> 13 7-9 Abdomen 2	2/6
INT 10 10-12 Chest 2	2/7
<b>POW</b> 10 13-15 Right Arm 2	2/4
<b>DEX</b> 14 16-18 Left Arm 2	2/4
<b>CHA</b> 10 19-20 Head -	-/5

Combat Actions 2
Damage Modifier +1D2
Magic Points 10
Movement 8m
Strike Rank +12 (+9 when armoured)

Armour: Leather Shirt and Pants: -3 Armour Penalty.

**Traits:** 

Common Skills: Athletics 43%, Brawn 42%, Culture (Own) 70%, Dance 24%, Drive 24%, Evade 63%, Evaluate 60%, First Aid 24%, Influence 50%, Insight 30%, Lore (Regional) 70%, Perception 40%, Persistence 40%, Resilience 69%, Ride 68%, Sing 20%, Sleight 24%, Stealth 24%, Swim 26%, Unarmed 48%

**Advanced Skills:** Courtesy 40%, Language (Native) 70%, Lore (Tactics) 50%, Survival 32%, Track 52%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Scimitar	_	M	M	1D8 Bleed	6/10
Net		S	L	1D4 Entangle	2/20

#### **Combat Styles**

Slaver (Scimitar, Net): 57%

**Possessions:** Leather armour, scimitar, net, 1d10 sp.

**Description:** Dressed in simple grey kaftans, with leather armour on top and red turbans wound around their heads.

**Tactics:** These hardened men work in teams; some use their scimitars against armed and armoured opponents, while others throw their nets to entangle foes.

# Royal Cattle-Herders, Spearmen of Katanga - Male Shoma (1 spearman per 5 cattle)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	10	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	10	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 2
Damage Modifier +1D2
Magic Points 10
Movement 8m
Strike Rank +12

Armour: None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 63%, Brawn 27%, Culture (Own) 70%, Dance 54%, Drive 24%, Evade 68%, Evaluate 20%, First Aid 44%, Influence 20%, Insight 30%, Lore (Regional) 80%, Perception 55%, Persistence 30%, Resilience 69%, Ride 24%, Sing 60%, Sleight 24%, Stealth 69%, Swim 56%, Unarmed 68%

**Advanced Skills:** Language (Native) 90%, Lore (Grazing Pastures) 70%, Survival 62%, Track 72%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Shortspear	_	M	L	1D8+1 Impale	4/5
Shortspear	25m	M	_	1D8+1 Impale	4/5
Short bow	80m	L	_	1D6	4/4

#### **Combat Styles**

Tribal Warrior (Shortspear, Short bow, Shield&Spear): 49%

**Possessions:** Loincloth, shortspear, shortbow, wooden buckler, golden armband (worth 10 sp).

**Description:** The Shoma spearmen wear headdresses of ostrich plumes. They decorate their spears with feathers and beads. They have brightly adorned shields as well.

**Tactics:** These warriors use their bows from a distance, then enter a rage and attack with their spears. They can quickly close with their enemies due to their great speed. Should they find themselves hard pressed, they will retreat and use their spears&shields to harass enemies and defend themselves.



warhorse. They have captured 32 slaves, among which are 12 men and 20 women, mostly of Shoma origin but also some Azimbans (1d3 men and 1d8 women - male/female Shoma/Azimban).

## THE NAMELESS OASIS

Approximately 100 miles north of Katanga is a small oasis that is the first (or the last) stopping-point for many caravans bound out of (or into) the city of Katanga. There is a small pool of fresh water here, ringed by palm trees.

# THE GOLD OF KATANGA

Katanga is the only city of importance in the kingdom of Shoma; the lesser 'cities' are merely crude villages scattered across the grassy plains. South and east of Katanga are the Shining Hills, junglecovered highlands that abound with gold.

Approaching the city, great herds of cattle can be seen; these belong to the king himself and many of the animals wear ornaments of beaten gold. Each herd consists of 1d4 x 100 animals; about 10% of these wear gold worth 20-50 SP each. The herds are protected by Shoma spearmen (one spearman for every five cattle).

# THE CITY OF KATANGA

Katanga is surrounded by a wooden palisade, inside which over 8,000 people huddle together in wretched huts. The spacious inner city (which includes the royal palace and cattle pens, the temple of Nataka, and the goldsmiths' workshops) is ringed by a great mudbrick wall. The inner city gates are adorned with massive ivory tusks taken from the greatest specimens of elephants; there are 12 spearmen at each gate who make sure that only nobles, royal guards, priests, merchants and foreign dignitaries are allowed entry.

The average citizens of Katanga are poor, but free, for the rulers of the Shoma do not keep slaves. However, people do not live to be old, so a large percentage of the population are children and young adults. Most live in buildings of sun-dried mud with roofs of straw along with their animals, such as goats and fowls.

The current king is Mashota, a middle-aged man with many wives and several young heirs, all fighting for the king's attention and favours. Should the players for some reason seek an audience, it would be unwise to mention their mission to find and loot the lost mine; the king's soothsayers and priests will warn against disturbing the sealed mines, and beside, the greedy Mashota would want the gold for himself were anyone to break the ancient taboos.

# THE TEMPLE OF THE WHITE GODDESS

The ancient Ishrahnites worshipped a mother-goddess known as Belet-Lil. The members of that race are long dead, but reverence for the white goddess has survived among the upper classes of Shoma, who know her as Nataka. In the inner city of Katanga, there is a great circular tower which is home to the black priests who study and preserve the ancient lore of the Ishrahnites who once sealed one of the mines with mighty spells.

A successful Routine Lore (theology) test reveals that Belet-Lil and Nataka are equivalent, even though the name and the rites of the latter have been garbled by centuries of local language and traditions.

**Development:** The third part of the key to open the sealed vault of Yigthrahotep is a symbol carved on a marble

flagstone in the temple of Nataka. If Ursib and his henchmen are with the adventurers, he asks the adventurers to go into the temple to find and copy the symbol. While it would be possible for one of the merchants, as a serpent-man, to take the shape of and impersonate a priest, this would obviously reveal their true nature to the adventurers, and besides, the serpent-men prefer to let the adventurers deal with the guardians and traps of the temple.

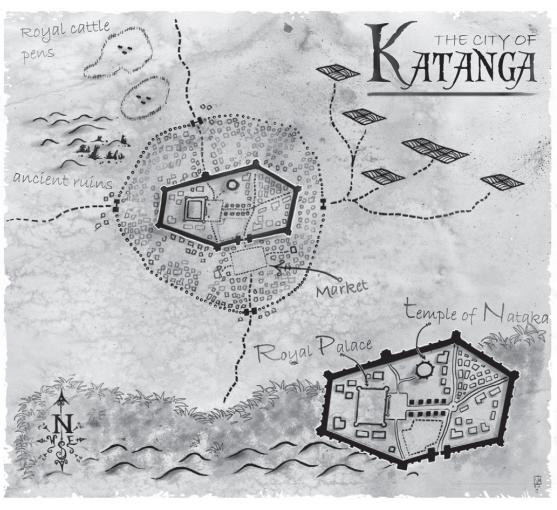
Of course, non-priests are not allowed into the inner shrine, so the adventurers must use bribes, stealth, create some diversion, or even risk a direct assault on the temple to gain access. If using bribes, Insight tests can be used to determine the reactions of the priests. A successful Difficult Streetwise test points the players in the direction of a corrupt priest named N'Kruma (see Area 4) who might be willing (if the price is right) to drug one of the temple gate guards at night, allowing the party to enter the sanctum.

#### 

#### The Temple of Nataka

**Standard Features:** Unless noted otherwise, all interior doors are good wooden doors. Ceiling height is 6 meters.

**Lighting:** All rooms of the temple are lit with torches set in wall brackets of carved ivory.



# I. Temple Compound

The temple is an ancient stone tower, circular in shape, four stories and 25 meters tall. The tower is surrounded by a 5 meter tall wall with three gates. One priest (see Area 4 for statistics) is always posted at each gate, day and night.

During the day, both priests and visitors to the temple can be found wandering around in the spacious yard in front of the tower. In the south-eastern corner of the compound is a set of great wooden drums, which the temple priests employ to communicate with fellow priests in the villages of Shoma using the secret language of the talking drums.

#### 2. Entrance

A huge wooden door is the only entrance into the temple tower; during the day, this door is wide open and even at night it is rarely locked. The high priest relies on the guards (and the temple guardian; see Area 7) to keep out those who attempt to enter the temple unlawfully.

# 3. Chamber of Worship

The worshippers of the ivory goddess Nataka (who include the nobles, merchants and artisans of Katanga, but not the common people) are only admitted into the ground floor of the tower. In this great audience chamber, the priests accept the offerings and gifts of the faithful, in return for blessings and omens. Occasionally, if

## Priests of Nataka - Male Shoma (24 total)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	12	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	10	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	11	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	13	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	12	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	12	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +0 Magic Points 12 Movement 8m Strike Rank +14

Armour: None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 61%, Brawn 23%, Culture (Own) 76%, Dance 26%, Drive 26%, Evade 67%, Evaluate 25%, First Aid 27%, Influence 24%, Insight 60%, Lore (Regional) 91%, Perception 70%, Persistence 64%, Resilience 65%, Ride 26%, Sing 24%, Sleight 26%, Stealth 42%, Swim 22%, Unarmed 66%

**Advanced Skills:** Language (Native) 85%, Manipulation 65%, Meditation 54%, Survival 52%, Sorcery (Temple Magic) 76%, Track 53%

**Grimoire (Temple Magic):** Diminish (DEX), Dominate (Human), Hinder, Holdfast, Palsy

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Light mace	_	M	S	1D8 Stun Location	6/6
Fists		M	M	1D3	As Arms

#### Combat Styles

Temple Guardian (Light Mace, Fists, Spear): 61%

Possessions: Green robe, light mace, golden armbands (worth 10 sp), 1d10 sp.

**Description:** Shaven-headed, dressed in flowing green robes and adorned with golden armbands, these priests perform the day-to-day duties in the temple.

**Tactics:** The priests rely on their great numbers if facing intruders. Some attack with their maces, while others try to use unarmed strikes on opponents to disable them. They rely on some defensive spells and will use Holdfast to try and keep opponents locked in place.

# N'Kruma, Corrupt Priest of Nataka - Male Shoma

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	12	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	10	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	11	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	14	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	12	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	16	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	12	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +0 Magic Points 12 Movement 8m Strike Rank +15

Armour: None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 63%, Brawn 28%, Culture (Own) 88%, Dance 48%, Drive 28%, Evade 67%, Evaluate 26%, First Aid 30%, Influence 24%, Insight 76%, Lore (Regional) 93%, Perception 71%, Persistence 64%, Resilience 55%, Ride 38%, Sing 34%, Sleight 28%, Stealth 55%, Swim 22%, Unarmed 48%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 58%, Language (Native) 76%, Lore (Rituals and Rites) 78%, Manipulation 80%, Meditation 74%, Survival 52%, Sorcery (Temple Magic) 84%, Track 50%

**Grimoire (Temple Magic):** Attract (Missiles), Banish, Castback, Diminish (STR), Diminish (CON), Dominate (Human), Palsy, Phantom (All), Wrack

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Light mace	_	M	S	1D8 Stun Location	6/6

#### **Combat Styles**

Temple Priest (Light Mace, Quarterstaff, Fists): 48%

Possessions: Green robe with gold trim, flanged light mace, large golden earrings (worth 20 sp each).

**Description:** In his early thirties, N'Kruma is tall and gaunt, and very quick. He is in fact a spy of the southern realm of Mazania, although he will take a bribe from anyone if he thinks he can get away with it.

**Tactics:** N'Kruma avoids battle if possible, using his high Influence skill to intimidate others. He prefers to use his magic from a distance, and quickly flees if he feels cornered.

a noteworthy visitor comes to the temple, the high priest makes an appearance and utters an important prophecy after the sacrifice of a gold-adorned bull.

The walls of the torch-lit chamber are painted white and decorated with brightly-coloured patterns. Along the walls are flat stone altars with small piles of skulls, having once belonged to important people such as nobles and priests.

#### 4. Priests' Quarters

The shaven-headed priests live in large common rooms on the first floor of the tower. Each room holds six priests and their personal belongings. Among the priests, there is an individual named N'Kruma who is willing to betray his fellow priests if the reward is great enough (see above).

#### 5. Antechamber

At the top of the stairway to the second floor hangs a black silken

curtain. Behind the curtain is a small antechamber. At the other end of the antechamber is a locked wooden door inset with ivory pieces in the shape of a skull. Only the high priest, Yama-Thembu (see Area 8), has the key to this door.

#### 6. Inner Sanctum

The door to this room is locked. The inner sanctum is a large chamber. It appears to be square, with black silken tapestries hanging from ceiling to floor, but the sanctum does in fact fill the entire second floor of the tower except for the antechamber (Area 5). Standing on a circular dais is a life-size ivory statue of a voluptuous woman, seemingly carved from a single piece of ivory.

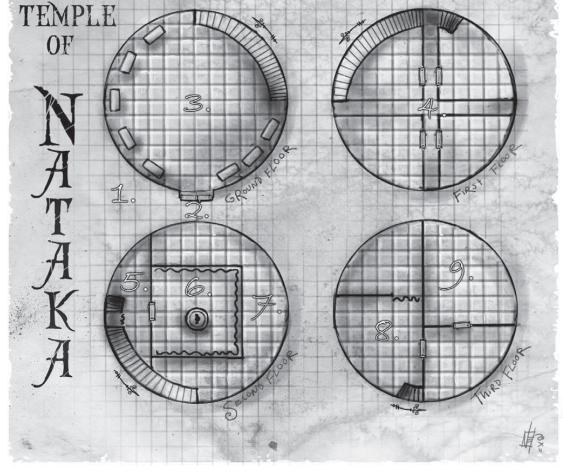
The marble floor around the dais is covered with cuneiform in archaic, proto-Susrahnite script. A Difficult Language or Lore test is required to read the words:

Praise the Ivory Goddess! Praise the Mother Goddess! Her lips are sweet, life is in her mouth.

Those foolish enough to kiss the statue or otherwise touch her lips discover that the opposite is true, for the statue's mouth has been smeared with a terribly lethal contact poison (Difficult Resilience test at, or suffer 2d6 damage to Chest Hit Location) by the priests to prevent such blasphemies.

One of the flagstones on the floor is of a slightly different colouration than the rest (because it is far older), which can be discovered with a Difficult Perception skill test. This flagstone contains a single symbol which is the third part of the key to Yigthrahotep's vault.

There are several incense burners in the room, and the whole



chamber smells slightly of lotus fumes. A chair is set near the centre of the room, with its back to the statue. This chair is used by female oracles who, according to the teachings of the priests, are possessed by Nataka and speak prophecies from the goddess.

# 7. Temple Guardian

Hidden behind the silken tapestries of the sanctum is the monstrous guardian of the temple. A terrible four-armed demonape is chained to the western wall, but the leash is long enough to allow it to roam freely on the whole second floor of the tower. It obeys only the high priest, who has instructed it to kill anyone else entering the sanctum. The demon-ape scents intruders and tears down one of the three large tapestries as it attacks.

# 8. High Priest's Quarters

The high priest, Yama-Thembu, occupies a spacious chamber on the topmost floor. A curtain separates his bedroom and the study, from where he administers the temple and the cult. During the day, there is a 50% chance that Yama-Thembu is here; otherwise he is in the royal palace, offering his advice to the king. At night, the high priest can be found sleeping in his bedchamber, but he keeps a trained panther in the study to warn him of intruders. A small wooden box (requires a Simple Brawn test to force it open, or a Routine Mechanisms test to pick it open) in the high priest's study contains 2,000 SP worth of gold ingots; hanging on the walls and heaped on Yama-Thembu's bed are half a dozen lion and leopard furs (worth 75 SP apiece).

Temple Guardian - Demon-Ape

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	6D6+15	36	1-2	Right Leg	5/8
CON	2D6+6	13	3-4	Left Leg	5/8
SIZ	4D6+12	26	5-7	Abdomen	5/9
INT	7	7	8-11	Chest	5/10
<b>POW</b>	3D6	11	12-13	Upper Right Arm	5/7
DEX	3D6+3	14	14-15	Upper Left Arm	5/7
			16-17	Lower Right Arm	5/7
			18-19	Lower Left Arm	5/7
			20	Head	5/8

**Combat Actions** 3

Damage Modifier +2D6

Magic Points 11

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +11

Armour: Natural fur and hide. No Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

**Common Skills:** Athletics 67%, Brawn 68%, Evade 60%, Perception 51%, Persistence

34%, Resilience 45%, Stealth 55%, Unarmed 59%

Advanced Skills: Acrobatics 70%, Survival 80%, Track 70%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Bite	_	M	T	1D8	As Head
Claw		M	M	1D4	As Arms
Double claw		M	M	2D6	As Arms
Grapple		M	M	Special	As Arms

#### **Combat Styles**

Great Demon Ape (Bite, Claw, Double-Claw, Grapple): 59%

**Notes**: If the grapple attack succeeds, the Games Master should resolve combat normally using the grapple rules from the *Legend Core Rulebook*. Demon-Apes will always attempt to inflict pain on any creature they are grappling.

Development: The players do not really need to enter the high priest's chamber to complete their mission within the temple, but they might be tempted to explore the upper levels of the tower. Depending on how the adventurers deal with the temple guardian (see Area 7), the noise from battle might alert the high priest (as well as the common priests) to the party's presence. If caught trespassing the temple, any surviving intruders are hauled to the royal palace and likely face a death sentence unless quick wits (Influence) or brute force is employed to avoid it (it is also possible that Ursib and his henchmen can help the adventurers to escape).

On the other hand, if the adventurers are detected but manage to defeat and/or kill the priests of the temple, they become outlaws and will be hunted by members of the king's own personal guard. In this case, it would be best to flee the city of Katanga as soon as possible.

**9. Temple Library**The shelves in this room are filled with clay tablets inscribed by the long-dead priests of Belet-Lil. Many of the tablets have not yet been deciphered by the black priests. An adventurer who spends 6d10 minutes searching the library and makes a successful Difficult Lore test gains a basic understanding of the history of the Ishrah as described in the introduction to the adventure, except (of course) the last part about the coming of the Wamuba tribe, which happened after the clay tablets were inscribed.

Also, with a successful Difficult Perception test, a clay tablet containing 1d3 randomly determined spells can be found in the library.

# BENEATH THE PURPLE SPIRE

After their visit to the temple of the ivory goddess, the players have learned the last piece of the secret that enables them to reopen the sealed mines of the Ishrah. From the city of Katanga, the expedition must continue into the jungle hills south of the city.

# INTO THE JUNGLE

The uplands south and east of Katanga are known as the Shining Hills. Like the Ishrahnites before them, the Shoma people operate several gold mines in these hills, all owned by the king and protected by his loyal spearmen.

To reach the lost mine, the adventurers must travel due south of Katanga, into trackless, jungle-covered hills. Horses and camels are useless in such terrain; but mules or donkeys are a good alternative that can be used to carry supplies and equipment through the rugged hill terrain.



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# Yama-Thembu, High Priest of Nataka - Male Shoma

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	11	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	-17
INT	18	10-12	Chest	-/8
POW	13	13-15	Right Arm	-/5
DEX	13	16-18	Left Arm	-/5
CHA	12	19-20	Head	-/6

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +0 Magic Points 13 Movement 8m Strike Rank +16 **Armour:** None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 39%, Brawn 34%, Culture (Own) 96%, Dance 25%, Drive 26%, Evade 26%, Evaluate 30%, First Aid 31%, Influence 24%, Insight 36%, Lore (Regional) 96%, Perception 76%, Persistence 66%, Resilience 83%, Ride 26%, Sing 25%, Sleight 25%, Stealth 46%, Swim 25%, Unarmed 29%

**Advanced Skills:** Commerce 40%, Courtesy 40%, Language (Native) 90%, Lore (Temple Rituals) 90%, Manipulation 86%, Meditation 86%, Survival 67%, Sorcery (High Priest) 89%, Track 42%

**Grimoire (High Priest):** Banish, Damage Resistance, Diminish (INT), Diminish (CON), Diminish (STR), Fly, Haste, Hinder, Smother, Tap (SIZ)

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HI
Quarterstaff		M	I.	1D8 Stun Location	4/8

#### Combat Styles

Barely Able (Quarterstaff): 29%

Possessions: White robe with gold trim, quarterstaff, golden pectoral (worth 150 sp), key to inner sanctum.

**Description:** The high priest is middle-aged and potbellied. He has great influence at court and has the king's ear and protection.

**Tactics:** Yama-Thembu is no melee combatant, relying solely on his skills, acolytes, spells and trained pet to protect him. He will use the TAP (SIZ) spell to wither his foes, and Diminish (INT) to damage magic users ability to harm him.

#### Panther

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6+6	17	1–3	Right Hind Leg	1/6
CON	3D6	11	4–6	Left Hind Leg	1/6
SIZ	2D6+12	19	7–9	Hindquarters	1/7
INT	5	5	10-12	Forequarters	1/8
POW	3D6	11	13–15	Right Front Leg	1/5
DEX	2D6+12	19	16–18	Left Front Leg	1/5
			19-20	Head	1/5

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier +1D6

Magic Points 11

Movement 12m

Strike Rank +15

**Skills:** Athletics 60%, Evade 65%, Perception 70%, Persistence 43%, Resilience 43%,

Stealth 90%, Survival 45%, Track 60%

Armour: Fur: No Skill Penalty

Traits: Night Sight

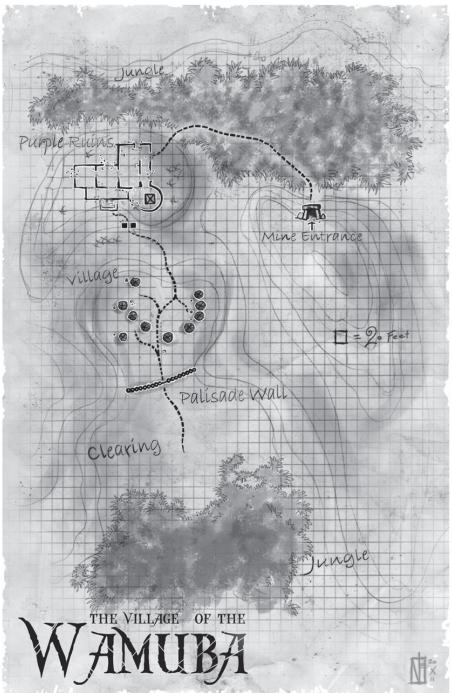
Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Bite	_	M	T	1D8	As for Head
Claw	_	M	M	1D6	As for Leg

#### **Combat Styles**

Snarling Fury (Bite, Claw): 60%

**Notes:** A panther is a large hunting cat. These creatures live in forests and jungles, sometimes ranging out into nearby savannahs, plains and even deserts. They will prey on anything they can kill, but they are wily animals and will not attack a foe with superior numbers or one that is obviously more than a match for them.



Vines, roots, and short bushes cover much of the ground. A space covered with light undergrowth costs double movement to move into, and it provides concealment. The thick undergrowth in the jungle means that any Athletics skill tests are made one step higher than normal, so a Simple becomes a Routine and so on.

The climate of the Shining Hills is very hot. Adventurers must make a Routine Resilience skill test each hour or take 1d4 points of damage to the Chest Hit Location. Adventurers wearing heavy clothing or armour of any sort take a -15% penalty on their saves. An adventurer with the Survival skill may receive a bonus on this saving throw and may be able to apply this bonus to other adventurers as well. Adventurers reduced to unconsciousness begin taking lethal damage (1d4 points per hour).

# THE VILLAGE OF THE WAMUBA

The lost mine of the Ishrahnites is approximately 150 miles south of Katanga. Treat the terrain as trackless hills, covered with jungle. A purple spire, actually the ruins of a small fortress built from purple stone, marks the site of the mine (although the actual mine entrance is overgrown by vines and hidden from sight).

The ruined fortress stands on the eastern slope of a jungle valley. A black tribe known as the Wamuba settled in the valley two centuries ago, clearing away the vegetation in the eastern part of the valley and constructing a wooden palisade across the valley floor. They built their small huts of wood and mud inside the palisade, in the shadow of the purple ruins. The tribe avoided the ancient fortress, believing it to be cursed, but the chieftain's oldest wife, Nugga-Tikanda, secretly delved into the ruins. It was whispered that she learned the dark arts of witchcraft from the dead spirits of the Ishrah within the ruins. Not long after, the chieftain died from a sudden wasting disease, and Nugga-Tikanda seized rulership of the tribe.

The Wamuba live in almost total isolation from the outside world. There are currently around 300 members of the tribe; two-thirds are adult warriors and the rest are young boys. If the adventurers enter the village, they soon notice that there are no women to be seen anywhere. Also, due to inbreeding (see below), many of the tribesmen have gross physical defects, such as missing or bulging eyes, weirdly twisted arms or feet, purple boils or cysts, extra or missing digits on hands or feet, and so on. The majority are still capable warriors, however.

The important NPCs of the village include:

- Nugga-Tikanda, Witch-Queen of the Wamuba: Nugga-Tikanda is the despotic female ruler of the tribe. She is in fact a two hundred year old crone, sustained by sorcery, although her physical form is young but massively obese. The witch-queen is not wholly sane.
- Tibaa, Tribal Champion and Royal Consort: Tibaa, a powerful warrior, is Nugga-Tikanda's current favourite, champion and consort. He enjoys his current position and acts ruthlessly in order to preserve it against any potential rivals.
- Mwanza 'the Hunchback,' Village Elder and Chief Steward:
   Mwanza is an old, hunchbacked man who oversees the village and acts as the queen's messenger. He speaks a basic form of the Shoma language, which allows him to communicate with strangers.

**Development:** As the adventurers approach within a mile or two of the valley, they are spotted by Wamuba sentries who hide in the dense undergrowth. Imitating animal sounds, the sentries alert the tribe to the presence of intruders. Mwanza and the villagers have

#### Wamuba Tribesmen - Male Wamuba (200 total)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	10	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	10	19-20	Head	-/5
INT POW DEX	10 10 14	10-12 13-15 16-18	Chest Right Arm Left Arm	-/7 -/4 -/4

Combat Actions 2 Damage Modifier +1D2 Magic Points 10 Movement 8m

Strike Rank +12

Armour: None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 68%, Brawn 52%, Culture (Own) 70%, Dance 44%, Drive 24%, Evade 53%, Evaluate 20%, First Aid 24%, Influence 29%, Insight 30%, Lore (Regional) 70%, Perception 55%, Persistence 40%, Resilience 64%, Ride 24%, Sing 40%, Sleight 24%, Stealth 49%, Swim 26%, Unarmed 38%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 48%, Language (Native) 80%, Lore (Tactics) 30%, Survival 52%, Track 52%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Shortspear	_	M	L	1D8+1 Impale	4/5
Shortspear	25m	M		1D8+1 Impale	4/5
Short bow	80m	L		1D6	4/4

#### **Combat Styles**

Savage Protector (Shortspear, Shortspear (thrown), Short Bow 50%, Spear&Shield): 58%

**Possessions:** Loincloth, bone necklace, shortspear, shortbow, 1 dose of sassone leaf residue. There is a 30% chance that some of these warriors have a shield on their backs.

**Description:** The Wambua are naked except for simple loincloths. Their skin is tattooed, and they wear bone necklaces and carry wooden shields. Around 20% of these warriors have gross physical defects due to inbreeding.

**Tactics:** They fight using bow and spear, and then close in with spear and shield. Some of the warriors coat their weapons with poison from the leaves they carry. This poison is equivalent to potent snake venom from the *Legend* rulebook.

#### Mwanza, the Hunchback - Male Wamuba

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	12	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	14	10-12	Chest	-/7
<b>POW</b>	13	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	15	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	12	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier +0

Magic Points 13

**Movement** 8m (he pretends to be slower due to hunchback moving at 4m)

Strike Rank +15

**Armour:** None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 67%, Brawn 59%, Culture (Own) 88%, Dance 49%, Drive 28%, Evade 60%, Evaluate 26%, First Aid 39%, Influence 74%, Insight 57%, Lore (Regional) 88%, Perception 82%, Persistence 56%, Resilience 64%, Ride 28%, Sing 25%, Sleight 27%, Stealth 44%, Swim 24%, Unarmed 32%

**Advanced Skills:** Courtesy 76%, Language (Various) 96%, Lore (Tactics) 68%, Survival 65%, Track 76%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HI</i>
Quarterstaff	_	M	L	1D8 Stun Location	4/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Big Stick (Quarterstaff, Club): 67%

**Possessions:** Loincloth, cloak of monkey-skin, quarterstaff, pouch with herbs, pouch with 10 small obsidian stones (worth 10 sp each). **Description:** An old and hunchbacked man, Mwanza is both smarter and faster than he looks. His knowledge of the Northern languages makes him useful to Nugga-Tikanda. He speaks Wamuba, Shoma, Azimban.

Tactics: Mwanza rarely gets into combat himself; as the village elder he commands the other tribesmen.

orders to bring any foreigners back to the village, if necessary as captives. A band of 2d10+30 Wamuba warriors surrounds the party and herd the adventurers along back behind the palisade wall.

Unless the adventurers resist, they are escorted to the village behind the palisade wall by the tribal warriors. Once inside the village, the strangers are directed into a hut where some simple food has been prepared for them. Mwanza appears and tells the adventurers that they must select a champion among themselves, who is to 'entertain' the queen of the tribe, Nugga-Tikanda. If the adventurers refuse to appoint a champion, Mwanza declares the strongest-looking male adventurer to be the champion.

It is possible, of course, that the adventurers choose to fight the tribesmen instead of following the Wamuba to their village. If a fight breaks out, the tribesmen attempt to capture the adventurers alive, but they do not hesitate to kill opponents that they consider too dangerous to let live. If the adventurer are defeated, any survivors are taken back to the village. The strongest-looking adventurer is selected to fight against the tribal champion, and things develop more or less as described below. On the other hand, if the adventurers manage to defeat or flee from the Wamuba, despite being severely outnumbered, this part of the adventure plays out somewhat differently. The adventurers can either sneak into or attack the village and/or the purple ruins, or try to avoid the Wamuba while they look for the hidden entrance to the mine which must be somewhere in the vicinity of the purple ruins. Meanwhile, Nugga-Tikanda will send out search parties to find and capture the intruders. Adjust the following events as you see fit.

# WINNING THE QUEEN'S FAVOUR

Assuming the chosen adventurer accepts his role as champion, he is escorted (along with the rest of the party, including the merchants of Susrah) from the village to the purple ruins in the hills above. Here, the tribe gathers in the courtyard of the fortress, the partly crumbled walls of which serve as an amphitheatre.

The champion selected from among the adventurers must prove his worth by defeating the current tribal champion, Tibaa. The rules are simple; the fight is to the death. Wearing armour is forbidden, and use of sorcery is of course considered cheating. The champions must fight on a 2 meter wide log which rests across a 10 meter deep pit. At the bottom of the pit are several cave openings; a giant centipede lurks inside one of the cave tunnels and darts out

to attack anyone who falls into the pit. The walls of the pit have been greased with animal fat to prevent the centipede (as well as combatants falling in) from climbing up. During the fight, a dozen spearmen guard against interference from the other adventurers.

**Development:** Before the fighting begins, the obese queen of the tribe is carried into her seat by six bearers, who strain under the weight of the litter. At Nugga-Tikanda's signal, the combatants face off against each other.

If the adventurer wins, he is declared the new tribal champion and a great feast is to be held to celebrate his victory. On the other hand, if defeat seems imminent for the adventurer, Nugga-Tikanda stops the fight by ordering Tibaa to stand back instead of delivering the fatal blow. In this case, it is assumed that the queen of the Wamubas has taken a liking to the adventurer despite his lacking fighting skills, and declares the stranger to be her new consort. If this happens, the adventurer gains the enmity of Tibaa and his henchmen. Either way, a feast is held to celebrate the adventurer and the new champion among them.

#### THE THING IN THE PIT

Centipedes have long sinuous bodies and a head tipped with a pair of poison claws. Each of its many legs ends in a needle-sharp point equipped with a smaller version of the venom glands found on its head.

Centipedes, large or small, are nocturnal predators that hide from the light of the sun in small burrows or shaded places. At night, the centipede comes out to hunt. It is perfectly willing to slip into a firelit camp in order to seize a likely prey before rushing back to its nest.

The centipede is a complex creature, with an equally complex hit location system. The body is divided into multiple segments, with each hit location covering one or two of these segments. The segments are numbered from one through 18, with segment one being immediately behind the head and segment 18 being the creature's posterior. If the centipede's head is reduced to zero Hit Points or lower, it begins to thrash frantically, but the fight is over and the creature will soon die. If any of the other segments are brought to zero Hit Points, but not destroyed, the centipede will lose 1m from its movement rate. If enough locations are incapacitated to reduce the creature's movement to zero, it will die.

# Tibaa, Tribal Champion - Male Wamuba

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	20	1-3	Right Leg	-17
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	-/7
SIZ	17	7-9	Abdomen	-/8
INT	10	10-12	Chest	-/9
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	-/6
DEX	16	16-18	Left Arm	-/6
CHA	10	19-20	Head	-/7

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier +1D6 Magic Points 11

Movement 8m Strike Rank +13 Armour: None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 86%, Brawn 72%, Culture (Own) 80%, Dance 66%, Drive 27%, Evade 82%, Evaluate 20%, First Aid 26%, Influence 40%, Insight 51%, Lore (Regional) 60%, Perception 56%, Persistence 52%, Resilience 83%, Ride 27%, Sing 41%, Sleight 26%, Stealth 51%, Swim 34%, Unarmed 66%

**Advanced Skills:** Courtesy 55%, Language (Native) 92%, Lore (Tactics) 75%, Survival 75%, Track 80%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Great club		Н	L	2D6 Stun Location	4/10

#### **Combat Styles**

Protector (Great Club, Fists, Grapple): 79%

Possessions: Loincloth, hide armour (not worn in arena), great club.

**Description:** Tall, heavily muscled and fearsome, Tibaa's face is disfigured by purple boils, a birth defect caused by the tribe's inbreeding. Owing more to his great strength than his looks, Tibaa is the queen's current favorite.

**Tactics:** Tibaa seeks to defend Nugga-Tikada, the Tribal Mother, at all costs. When fighting above the pit, he uses his great strength to try to push opponents into the pit.

# Monstrous Centipede

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	8D6	28	1	Segment 18	4/5
CON	12D6	42	2	Segment 17	4/5
SIZ	12D6	42	3	Segment 16	4/5
INT	1	1	4	Segment 15	4/5
POW	2D6+3	10	5	Segment 14	4/5
DEX	3D6	11	6	Segment 13	4/5
DLZI	320	11	7	Segment 12	4/5
			8	Segment 11	4/5
			9	Segment 10	4/5
			10	Segment 9	4/5
			11	Segment 8	4/5
			12	Segment 7	4/5
			13	Segment 6	4/5
			14	Segment 5	4/5
			15	Segment 4	4/5
			16	Segment 3	4/5
			17	Segment 2	4/5
			18	Segment 1	4/5
			19-20	Head	4/8

Combat Actions 2 Armour: Chitin exoskeleton: No Skill Penalty

Damage Modifier +2D6

Magic Points 10 Traits: Poison

**Movement** 12m **Strike Rank** o

Skills: Athletics 60%, Evade 25%, Perception 55%, Persistence 40%, Resilience

100%, Stealth 70%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Mandibles	_	M	M	1D8 Poison	As for Head

#### **Combat Styles**

Chomp (Mandibles): 69%

#### **Combat Notes**

Centipede venom is as follows:

**Application:** Injection.

Onset Time: Nausea after 1D3 minutes, Paralysis after 3D6 minutes.

Duration: 1 hour

Resistance Time: The victim must make a Resistance roll at the Onset Time of each stage of the poison. Failure indicates that Condition

has taken effect. **Potency:** 60.

Resistance: Resilience.

**Conditions:** Nausea, Paralysis. The venom initially causes the victim to start feeling nauseous if the first Resistance roll is failed. The location bitten then suffers Paralysis if the second Resistance roll is failed.

Antidote/Cure: Anti-venom. Some cultures have perfected anti-venom remedies which have a Potency of 1D20+10. The anti-venom must be introduced with a successful First Aid or Healing roll and add their Potency as a bonus to the victim's Resilience roll to fight the venom throughout its duration.



However, if one of the centipede's segments is destroyed, all segments behind that one will be incapacitated and immobile. Meanwhile, all segments ahead of the one destroyed will attempt to run away, carrying the creature's head with them.

# A FEAST FOR THE CHAMPION

The feast is held in the village at nightfall the same day; it quickly develops into drunken revelry as the tribesmen consume prodigious quantities of banana wine. Nugga-Tikanda herself is not present during the feast.

Adeventurers who use the occasion to speak with the hunchback, Mwanza, can learn the following about Nugga-Tikanda with a successful Streetwise test based on the difficulties below.

Easy Streetwise: 'She is very old.'

**Simple Streetwise:** 'It is said that she murdered her husband, the last chieftain of the Wamuba.'

**Routine Streetwise:** 'She knows the secrets of witchcraft which has made her immortal.'

**Difficult Streetwise:** 'She is the mother of us all ---- every living man of the tribe is both her husband and her son.'

With a successful Influence test that alters Mwanza's attitude from indifferent to friendly, the hunchback can also tell the adventurers about the long-abandoned mines of the Ishrah, and how to find the mine entrance despite the heavy jungle growth which now conceals it. If the test somehow changed Mwanza's attitude to helpful, he adds that the upper level of the mines is now inhabited by a band of degenerate savages, the descendants of those Wamuba tribesmen who were driven away by Nugga-Tikanda when she usurped the last chieftain.

During the feast, the tribesmen get drunk and it is easy for the adventurers to sneak out of the village, should they so desire (possibly to try to find the mines, or even to confront Nugga-Tikanda). If the adventurers do stay until the height of the feast, around midnight, a group of Nugga-Tikanda's personal guards appear and talk to Mwanza. The hunchback then announces to the adventurers that the queen wishes to mate with her new consort; the celebrated champion must follow the queen's guard alone back to the purple ruins.

#### THE KISS OF DEATH

Nugga-Tikanda has lived for two centuries by mating with her own sons, but this abominable inbreeding produces both physically and mentally retarded children, and each subsequent generation weakens the effects of the immortality rite. The witch of the Wamuba needs the blood of outsiders to improve the genetic pool of the tribe and boost the effect of her rituals, and has therefore selected the most physically impressive member of the party as her new consort. Note that if the queen's former favourite, Tibaa, is still alive, he tries his best to bring the new

consort into disfavour, but at the same time cannot act directly against the orders of the queen.

Development: The actions of the adventurer who has been chosen as the queen's new consort determines what happens next. If the adventurer agrees to fulfil his duties as the queen's consort, he is escorted by the queen's guard back to the purple ruins. He must surrender his weapons and armour to the guards before being allowed into the royal bedchamber. The guards remain within earshot of the bedchamber while Nugga-Tikanda mates with the chosen consort. Due to her sorcerous preparations, a single union is 80% likely to result in pregnancy and can produce as many as 2d6 children. Even so, the queen keeps the adventurer around for up to 1d3 months before she tires of him and orders him killed (and then takes a new consort from among the other adventurers). In the meantime, the adventurer enjoys the privileges of being the queen's chosen consort. He and his friends are free to wander around the village and the surrounding area (including the lost mine), but are only allowed into the purple ruins when summoned by the queen.

If the adventurer refuses to go with the queen's guards, a fight likely breaks out in the village as the guards try to grapple and pin the adventurer, then tie him up with ropes and drag him along forcefully. If the adventurers defeat the guards, one or more loyal tribesmen (who have not already passed out from excessive consumption of banana wine) flee from the village and try to warn Nugga-Tikanda, who sends more guards after the adventurers.

The queen has some treasure in her personal chamber; a golden cup (100 SP), a bag filled with pearls (400 SP), a wooden box with 4 large pieces of gold (250 SP each), a damaged bronze timekeeping device (of Ishrahnite origin, appears broken but is

#### The Queen's Guard - Male Wamuba (8)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	15	7-9	Abdomen	4/7
INT	10	10-12	Chest	4/8
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	4/5
DEX	12	16-18	Left Arm	4/5
CHA	8	19-20	Head	-/6

Combat Actions 2 Damage Modifier +1D4 Magic Points 10 Movement 8m

Strike Rank +11 (+7 when

armoured)

Armour: Hide Armour Shirt. -4 Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 73%, Brawn 51%, Culture (Own) 80%, Dance 35%, Drive 22%, Evade 74%, Evaluate 18%, First Aid 22%, Influence 50%, Insight 30%, Lore (Regional) 80%, Perception 65%, Persistence 58%, Resilience 85%, Ride 22%, Sing 48%, Sleight 20%, Stealth 67%, Swim 50%, Unarmed 50%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 58%, Language (Native) 78%, Lore (Tactics) 77%, Survival 84%, Track 84%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Longspear	_	L	VL	1D10+1 Impale	4/10
Hatchet		S	S	1D6 Bleed	3/6

#### **Combat Styles**

Queen's Guard (Longspear, Hatchet, Javelin, Spear&Shield): 78%

Possessions: Hide armor, longspear, handaxe.

**Description:** These are the elite guardians of the queen; four of them are always at the queen's side. **Tactics:** Keep opponents away using their reach weapons, working together to form a spear-wall.

# Nugga-Tikanda, Witch-Queen of the Wamuba - Female Corpulent Wamuba

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	<b>-/9</b>
CON	22	4-6	Left Leg	<b>-/9</b>
SIZ	19	7-9	Abdomen	-/10
INT	14	10-12	Chest	-/11
POW	13	13-15	Right Arm	-8
DEX	8	16-18	Left Arm	-/8
CHA	11	19-20	Head	-/9

Combat Actions 2 Damage Modifier +1D4 Magic Points 13

**Movement** 3m (due to her

weight)

Strike Rank +11 (+7 due to

her corpulence)

**Armour:** None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 39%, Brawn 35%, Culture (Own) 98%, Dance 19%, Drive 12%, Evade 36%, Evaluate 25%, First Aid 57%, Influence 82%, Insight 82%, Lore (Regional) 93%, Perception 92%, Persistence 66%, Resilience 94%, Ride 21%, Sing 54%, Sleight 19%, Stealth 37%, Swim 38%, Unarmed 60%

**Advanced Skills:** Courtesy 85%, Healing 67%, Language (Native) 98%, Lore (Temple Rituals) 78%, Manipulation 88%, Meditation 81%, Survival 75%, Sorcery (Witch Queen) 91%, Teaching 60%, Track 46%

**Grimoire (Witch Queen):** Animate (Dead flesh), Attract (Magic), Attract (Missiles), Attract (Spirits), Diminish (CON), Dominate (Human), Dominate (Apes), Holdfast, Neutralise Magic, Palsy, Smother, Tap (CON), Wrack

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Fists	_	M	M	1D3	As Arms

#### **Combat Styles**

Bully (Fists, Unarmed): 60%

**Possessions:** Loincloth, bone necklace, gold nipple rings (worth 25 sp each).

**Description:** Obese beyond imagining, Nugga-Tikanda is a repulsive sight as she is carried around half-naked on a litter by four of her bodyguards.

**Tactics:** Nugga-Tikanda relies on her bodyguards for protection, but relishes the casting of necromantic style spells and magic that induces pain. If her guards do not keep her out of melee, she tries to grapple and crush opponents under her revolting body mass.

**Notes:** Nugga-Tikanda is in fact the mother of the entire tribe; female babies are slain shortly after birth. The queen's sons mate with their own mother in an abominable fertility rite when they reach the age of manhood, a sorcerous process which extends the lifespan of the sorceress at the expense of her sanity and the well-being of her offspring.

The queen has some treasure in her personal chamber: A golden cup (100 sp), a bag filled with pearls (400 sp), a wooden box with 4 large pieces of gold (250 sp each), a damaged bronze timekeeping device (of Ishrahnite origin, appears broken but is worth 800 sp if repaired for 100 sp), three large worn silver-embroidered tapestries (100 sp each), two human skulls painted with green paint, the dried husk of a black scorpion, four dark crimson poison berries and some withered herbs (worthless).

#### Okala Berries

**Application:** Injection.

Onset Time: Nausea after 1D3 minutes, Paralysis after 3D6 minutes.

**Duration:** 1 hour

**Resistance Time:** The victim must make a Resistance roll at the Onset Time of each stage of the poison. Failure indicates that Condition has taken effect.

Potency: 60.

Resistance: Resilience.

**Conditions:** Nausea, Paralysis. The venom initially causes the victim to start feeling nauseous if the first Resistance roll is failed. The location bitten then suffers Paralysis if the second Resistance roll is failed.

**Antidote/Cure:** Anti-venom. Some cultures have perfected anti-venom remedies which have a Potency of 1D20+10. The anti-venom must be introduced with a successful First Aid or Healing roll and add their Potency as a bonus to the victim's Resilience roll to fight the venom throughout its duration.

worth 800 SP if repaired for 100 SP), three large worn silverembroidered tapestries (100 SP each), two human skulls painted with green paint, the dried husk of a black scorpion, four dark crimson poison berries (Difficult Resilience testif ingested; initial damage 2d6 to Abdomen Hit Location; test again daily for 1 additional point of damage until passed), and some withered herbs (worthless).

# THE LOST MINES OF THE ISHRAH

When the ancient Ishrahnites discovered the pre-human vaults below their own mine tunnels, the lower tunnels were blocked with rubble and the mines were eventually abandoned. Centuries later, when Nugga-Tikanda seized leadership of the Wamuba tribe, a group of male warriors opposed her rule. After a short power struggle, most of these warriors were killed by Nugga-Tikanda's followers and the rest were driven away from the village, along with their women. Seeking refuge in the upper levels of the abandoned mines, these outcasts eked out a meagre life here for generations, plotting to return to overthrow Nugga-Tikanda, but inevitably falling into sharp decline due to their isolation. After a time, the men were killed in battle with Wamubans loyal to Nugga-Tikanda, or fell prey to wild animals.

However, several of the outcast women were captured by a local tribe of man-apes, who forcibly mated with the captives. From this union has sprung a tribe of semi-intelligent ape-men, who inhabit the mine's upper caverns. They master the use of fire, primitive weapons and simple tools, but are otherwise as apes. These primitives viciously defend their territory against any intruders, including Nugga-Tikanda's tribesmen (who now mostly ignore the savages but sometimes clash with the ape-men's hunting bands).

#### I. Cave Entrance

The cave entrance is concealed by several layers of thick vegetation. It can be found with a Difficult Perception test, or by observing the coming and going of the ape-men who inhabit the mines beyond. It is also possible to find the cave entrance by spotting these ape-men outside the mines and using the Track Skill to follow them back to their lair.

For each hour, there is a 20% chance to encounter 1d4 ape-men outside the cave.

#### 2. Great Cave

There is a 50% chance that a band of 1d4+4 ape-men are encountered in this large cave. In the cavern wall is a hidden entrance (Difficult Perception test) to the tunnel leading upwards to the cavern of the ape-men (Area 3).

# 3. Upper Cave

This cavern is 30 meters in diameter, and the ceiling is 6 meters tall. There are 1d10+10 ape-men warriors in the cavern, as well as twice that number of non-combatants (women and children).

Scattered in the corners of the cave are various items such as bone and stone tools, scraps of food, and heaps of debris and offal.

#### 4. Dead End

A tunnel leading from the main cave (Area 2) is filled with various mining equipment, but most is in poor shape, being broken, rusted, or decayed.

#### 5. Mine Shaft

A tunnel leads down to the main shaft. There is no lift in the shaft; such equipment of wood and rope has decayed long ago. A Difficult Athletics test is required to descend (or a Routine Athletics test with a knotted rope).

If there are surviving ape-men in the mines, they might hide in the dark tunnels opening up upon the shaft and throw rocks down on the adventurers as they attempt to descend.

On the far side of the shaft is an primitive forge hall with cobwebbed furnaces, bellows of near-decayed animal-skin, dry vats that once held water, rusted pincers, and so on.

#### 6. Mine Tunnels

The shaft is 50 meters deep. Along the length of the shaft are several mine tunnels. These are wholly or partly excavated. The ape-men might retreat and hide in these dark tunnels if they are defeated in the upper caverns.

# 7. Fungi Cave

One of the mine tunnels ends in a large natural cavern filled with weird fungi. Several of the fungi are edible, as identified with a successful Routine Survival or Routine Lore (Nature). The ape-men also harvest fungi here.

#### 8. Natural Cave and Chasm

On the lowest level of the mine, to the west, is another natural cavern, then a tunnel leading to a deep natural fissure, 30 meters deep. The edges are jagged and it requires several Difficult Athletics tests to climb down. The bottom of the chasm contains several bones, both human and animal.

Also on the bottom is a fast-flowing, freezing cold underground river. The river leads to a boggy marshland, about 2 miles from the village of the Wamuba, which is the abode of a giant dire frog. The murky swamp water is a meter deep, and creatures without natural Swim-based movement must wade through it at half speed, cannot run or charge, -5% to attack rolls, and -10% to Dexterity-based skills.

#### 9. Abandoned Tunnels

These tunnels are the deepest tunnels dug by the ancient Ishrahnites before they discovered the pre-human chambers beneath the mines. The walls are rough and the floor is covered by loose rocks and debris.

#### 10. Blocked Tunnel

The main tunnel, which leads to the sealed door beyond, has

# Ape-Men - Male (30 total)

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	4D6	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	3D6	11	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	3D6+2	13	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	1D6+2	6	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	2D6+3	10	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	4D6	14	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	2D6	7	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 2 Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 10 Movement 8m Strike Rank +10 Armour: Loincloth: No Armour Penalty.

Traits: Night Sight

**Skills:** Athletics 50%, Evade 35%, Perception 40%, Persistence 38%, Resilience 44%, Stealth 45%, Survival 42%, Track 43%

# Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Club	_	M	S	1D6 Stun Location	4/4
Thrown Rock	10m	S	_	2D4	2/2

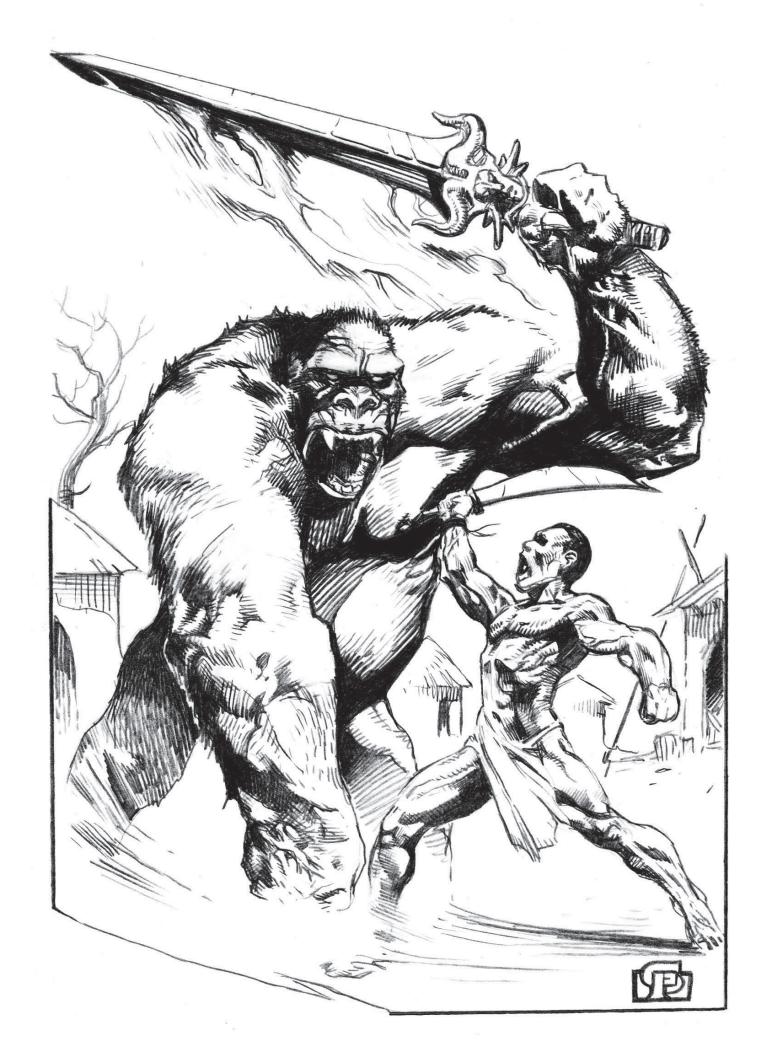
#### **Combat Styles**

Ape Man (Club, Thrown Rock): 54%

Possessions: Furry loincloth, club.

**Description:** Stunted and filthy, with unkempt hair and beards, these ape-men could easily be mistaken for true apes were it not for their simple clothing and use of weapons.

**Tactics:** The ape-men attack in packs, using a combination of raw power and rage to deliver a devastating first blow. If facing superior foes, they quickly retreat into the darkness of their caves to regroup and prepare another ambush.



# Yigthrahotep - Ancient Serpent-King of Yalotha

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR		35	1-6	Tail	8/12
CON		29	7-14	Body	8/14
SIZ		35	15-20	Head	8/12
INT		35			
POW		20			
DEX		13			
CHA		20			

Combat Actions 2

Damage Modifier +2D6

Magic Points 20 Traits: Poison

Movement 10m

Strike Rank +24 Skills: Athletics 85%, Evade 45%, Lore (Ancient Times) 85%, Persistence 60%,

Armour: Scales: No Skill Penalty

Resilience 62%, Stealth 55%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Bite	_	M	M	1D8 Poison	As Head
Grapple	—	L	T	1D10 Constrict	As Tail
Spit	10m	M	_	Special Venomous	As Head

#### **Combat Styles**

Serpent King (Bite, Grapple, Spit): 74%

Constrict: On a successful grapple test, a serpent-king deals 1d10+2d6 points of damage.

**Poison:** The venom of the Serpent King is extremely toxic and deadly (see below)

**Spit:** A serpent-king can spit its venom up to 10 meters as a combat action once each round. Opponents can avoid being hit by this attack by making a successful Routine Evade test against the Serpent-King's Spit attack roll. If failed, the victim is automatically hit in the Head Hit Location.

Serpent-kings can communicate telepathically with any creature within 40 meters that has a language.

*Description*: Yigthrahotep is a survivor from a lost age, when the serpents ruled beneath the youthful sun from the primeval swamps and jungles of Yalotha, the serpent kingdom. Despite being immortal save for violent death, the cold-blooded serpent-kings were driven into retreat and hibernation as climate changes and slave uprisings ended their aeon-long reign.

*Tactics*: Yigthrahotep uses 1d4 rounds to fully recover from his long period of hibernation, during which he suffers a -15% penalty to skill tests. While highly intelligent, his tactics are simple; he spits his poison, then moves in to grab and constrict victims.

#### Serpent King Venom

**Application:** Injection.

Onset Time: Nausea after 1D3 minutes, Paralysis after 3D6 minutes, Death after 6D6 minutes.

**Duration:** 1 hour.

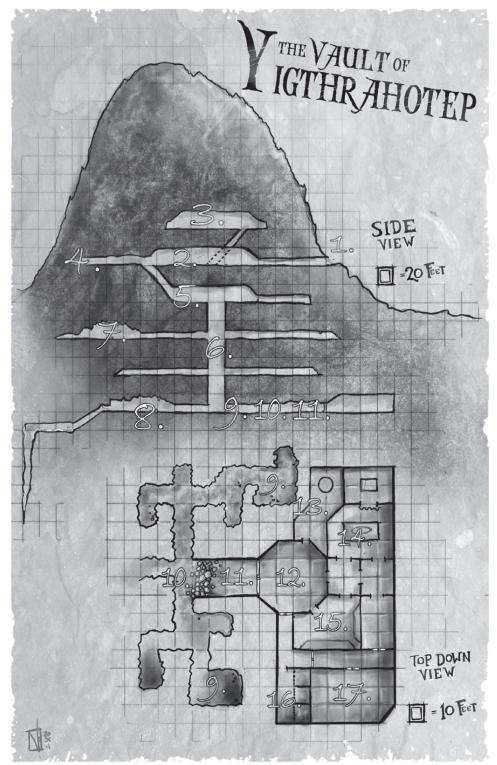
**Resistance Time:** The victim must make a Resistance roll at the Onset Time of each stage of the poison. Failure indicates that Condition has taken effect.

Potency: 70.

Resistance: Resilience.

**Conditions:** Nausea, Paralysis. The venom initially causes the victim to start feeling nauseous if the first Resistance roll is failed. The location bitten then suffers Paralysis if the second Resistance roll is failed. If a third roll is failed the ultimate condition Death takes effect and the target collapses into a coma for a 6D6 minutes and then dies.

Antidote/Cure: Anti-venom. Some cultures have perfected anti-venom remedies which have a Potency of 1D20+10. The anti-venom must be introduced with a successful First Aid or Healing roll and add their Potency as a bonus to the victim's Resilience roll to fight the venom throughout its duration.



been blocked by a huge pile of stones. It is apparent with a Routine Insight test that the pile has been placed there by human hands; in other words, it is not a natural cave-in. It takes several hours to clear away the rocks from the tunnel to allow passage.

#### II. Sealed Door

To the east, behind a partly collapsed tunnel, is a massive door of a curious metal, inscribed with cuneiform symbols. Only by pressing three specific symbols in a specific sequence (or by destroying the three items on which the symbols are written) can the door be opened. Refer to the adventure introduction for more information.

If the wrong glyphs are pressed, or if force is used against the door, a deadly blast affects the intruder. This is a blast of lightning that deals 6d6 points of damage (distributed evenly to all Hit Locations) to anyone in front of the door (Routine Evade test for half damage). The door instantly recharges itself and can discharge one lightning bolt each round. The metal door itself is nigh-impenetrable (It counts as a Formidable Brawn test for all attempts to force open, AP 15, HP 50).

### 12. Octagonal Chamber

Behind the sealed doors are several chambers of a weird, curved architecture. With a successful Difficult Lore (arcana) test, a adventurer realizes that the chambers were probably built by the prehistoric serpent-kings, a race of intelligent ophidians that ruled the world in ages past. This realization is reinforced by paintings on the walls, which depict scenes of primitive men being sacrificed to giant snakes.

**Development:** The adventurers hardly have time to ponder the implications of these revelations, however. As soon as the adventurers enter the main chamber, they hear a slithering sound as a large human-headed snake appears. This is Yigthrahotep, one of the ancient serpentkings of Yalotha, who has been awakened from aeons of slumber. As Yigthrahotep attacks, the merchants of Susrah, who have taken up positions behind the adventurers, finally drop their disguises. Their leader, Ursib, shouts out; "O, great Yigthrahotep, we have come to awaken you from your slumber and release you from centuries of imprisonment! We now offer you these humans as a celebration of your freedom!"

# 13. Serpent-Bowl

This side chamber is dominated by a large, lidded stone bowl engraved with ancient Yalothan hieroglyphs. The bowl has hinges near the lid which allows carrying rods to be inserted,

so that servitors of the serpent-kings can transport their slumbering masters. This is where Yigthrahotep has hibernated through the aeons.

#### 14. Snake-Idol

The smaller chamber beyond is accessed through a heavy curtain of snake-skin. On a raised dais next to the wall is a black staff set with a golden cobra head. To a priest of Zanthiss, this staff manifests several powers. Any non-worshipper touching it is subject to being

bitten by a vicious serpent, manifesting as a striking snake.

**Staff of the Serpent:** This stave allows the priest to summon and automatically dominate 2d6 snakes. The snakes appear immediately in a 3m radius around the wielder and can be commanded to attack foes directly as long as the wielder remains in contact with the staff. The staff can also function as a Dominate (Snakes) spell cast at Magnitude 3.

### 15. Meeting Room

This spacious chamber features several weird, curved benches, ideal for snakes to climb and recline upon. The walls are decorated with serpentine patterns and ancient writings that glorify the might of Zanthiss, including paintings that depict large groups of enslaved humans, dragging massive stones and building cyclopean cities of black stone, overseen by tall serpentine taskmasters.

#### 16. Cells

This section of the vault has three small cells, doubtlessly used to hold human prisoners or sacrifice in ages past. There is nothing but bones and dust here now.

# 17. Fire-Ravaged Chamber

This large room might have been a library or study, but seems ravaged by fire. There is nothing of interest here now, unless perhaps the Games Master wishes to place some kind of clue to the whereabouts of the lost city of serpents in the jungles of Yalotha among the charred documents here.

### CONCLUSION

Even if the adventurers confront and defeat Yigthrahotep, there might be several loose threads. Nugga-Tikanda and her consort Tibaa could still be alive. If Tibaa is alive, he and his men enter the mines, battle any remaining ape-men, and find the shaft. They remove any ropes the adventurers used to descend to the bottom, and guard the shaft night and day, trying to starve the adventurers to death. The adventurers can survive for a long time in the mines if they harvest and eat the fungi in the fungi cavern. However, they will eventually run out of light sources (torches), and water is only available by climbing down to the underground river.

Despite the lure of a 'lost gold mine,' there is little loot to be found in the mines. Some Games Masters might wish to expand the purple ruins with a set of dungeons that once belonged to the Ishrahnite priests and sorcerers, which are still haunted by their ghosts today, and which contain ancient treasures.

In any case, the party must haul whatever loot they find back through the jungle, facing monsters, tribesmen, raiders from Mazania, and royal spearmen of Shoma (for if the king hears about the mine, he claims it as his property). The adventurers might also have made enemies among the priests of Nataka.

If the players fail: There are plenty of places where the adventurers could fail during this adventure. Remember that unintelligent beasts usually devour slain enemies, while intelligent foes might prefer to keep the adventurers alive as prisoners, either to extract information, claim ransom, or force them to accept some kind of dangerous mission. If the adventurers are captured by Yigthrahotep and his serpent-men minions, they might be taken east to the jungles of Yalotha, and into the heart of the lost city of serpents.

# THE SWORDS OF ZAMBALLAH



In the heart of the savage kingdoms of the south stands Zimballah, the so-called City of Stone and capital of Azimba. Flanked by the rival kingdoms of Shoma, Mazania and Zadj, Azimba's proud warriors stand ever ready to go into battle and wreak red ruin with its black spears.

However, due to the primitive weaponry of the Azimbans, only strength of numbers holds back the turbaned raiders of Zadj with their deadly, curved scimitars of tempered steel, fashioned by the weaponsmiths of Iraab under the supervision of furtive fire-priests. On his ivory throne in Zimballah, Mkazwe, king of the Azimbans, has realized the power of the secret of iron.

A group of disloyal fire-priests have come from Zadj to Azimba, driven by the promise of wealth, to teach the king's master-smith the secrets of iron-smithing. Zimballah's own priesthood, the cult of Jul-Juggah, resents the influence of the foreign priests, but seeks to learn their secrets as well.

Spies in Zimballah bring back the news to the nations of Shoma and Mazania, who both lack ironsmithing skills and view the recent developments in Azimba as a threat. Far to the east, the priesthood of the Living Flame in Zadj is determined to hunt down and punish the rogue priests.

# THE SECRET OF IRON

In this adventure, the nations of Azimba, Shoma and Mazania have primitive weapons of wood, bone and flint, as well as some copper and bronze weaponry, while the nation of Zadj produces superior weapons of iron and steel.

Iron ore contains iron combined with oxygen. To make iron from iron ore, the oxygen must be eliminated to create pure iron. This is achieved by burning charcoal with iron ore and a good supply of oxygen, provided by a bellows. This process leaves a porous, spongelike mass which is hammered to remove most of the impurities. The resulting metal is easy to work with, but iron swords do not hold an edge well and are still quite soft.

In fact, early iron swords were inferior to good bronze weapons, but easier production and better availability of the raw material permitted the equipment of entire armies with metal weapons for the first time.

Swords made of steel are far superior to both iron and bronze weapons. Steel is an alloy of iron and a small amount of carbon, made by placing pieces of iron inside a container made from a substance with a very high carbon content. The container is placed in a furnace and kept at a high temperature for several hours or days, during which the iron absorbs some of the carbon from the

container. The resulting mixture of iron and carbon is steel, which is very hard, flexible, stays sharp for a long time, and is more resistant to rust and corrosion than iron.

See the Equipment chapter for more information about different weapon materials.

# **ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS**

The adventurers are hired by a faction that wants to kidnap (or possibly kill) the master weaponsmith of Azimba and his foreign mentors.

The adventurers travel across the plains of Azimba, which teem with wildlife, and reach Zimballah, the City of Stone. Here, they must deal with agents of the other factions seeking to capture or kill the weaponsmith.

Learning that the master-smith resides in the dungeons of the royal palace, the adventurers must decide how to gain access, either by force, stealth, bribes, diplomacy or trickery.

After locating the ironsmith, the adventurers must defeat him and his mysterious mentors, and then escape the heavily guarded city of Zimballah with the captive.

# STARTING THE ADVENTURE

Consider any of the following hooks to get the adventure started:

- The adventurers are employed by an agent of the royal price of Shoma, Gamba, to kidnap the master weaponsmith of Azimba. The reward for bringing him back alive to Katanga is 3,000 SP (adjust as appropriate). The adventurers are instructed to seek out a dancing-girl named Aisha when they reach Zimballah.
- The adventurers are employed by a Zadjite priest named Yilan (who might also accompany the players). The mission is to kill the king's smith, but bring back the rogue priests alive for punishment. In this case it is possible that the party is approached by agents/mercenaries of Shoma who suggest a temporary alliance with the adventurers to get into the royal palace. Once there, however, conflict ensues as a result of different goals.

# THE PLAINS OF AZIMBA

The terrain of northern Azimba is dominated by savannah (treat as trackless plains), while the southern regions are covered by jungles. The main city, Zimballah, is situated to the west, in the foothills of the Shining Hills.

It is approximately 200 miles between Katanga and Zimballah, which means the trip takes around 11 days on foot, half that if riding light horses.

# THE WHITE GOLD

Initially, the adventurers see a flock of vultures some distance away. If they approach and chase away vultures and hyenas, they discover the stinking carcass of a huge elephant with its tusks removed; a successful Routine Insight test allows a adventurer to realise the tusks have been chopped off near the roots using heavy axes.

There are tracks near the carcass, easily followed due to the heavy load the ivory hunters are carrying (a Simple Track Test allows the

# Arahua, Mercenary-Captain of Susrah - Female Susrahnite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	15	7-9	Abdomen	5/7
INT	13	10-12	Chest	5/8
POW	15	13-15	Right Arm	5/5
DEX	16	16-18	Left Arm	5/5
CHA	17	19-20	Head	-/6

**Combat Actions** 3

Armour: Chain Shirt. -4 Armour Penalty.

Damage Modifier +1D4

Magic Points 15 Movement 8m

**Strike Rank** +15 (+11

when armoured)

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 72%, Brawn 71%, Culture (Own) 86%, Dance 53%, Drive 51%, Evade 82%, Evaluate 80%, First Aid 39%, Influence 89%, Insight 68%, Lore (Regional) 86%, Perception 78%, Persistence 80%, Resilience 83%, Ride 71%, Sing 62%, Sleight 43%, Stealth 39%, Swim 50%, Unarmed 72%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 62%, Courtesy 70%, Language (Native) 90%, Lore (Tactics) 86%, Streetwise 82%, Survival 79%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Bastard sword	_	M	M	1D8+1 Bleed, Impale	4/12
Hoplite Shield		Н	S	1D4 —	6/18
Sushranite bow	165m	Н		1D8+1 Impale	4/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Mercenary Captain (Bastard sword, Hoplite Shield, Suashranite Longbow): 82%

Possessions: Chain shirt, hoplite shield, bastard sword, Susrahnite longbow, 120 sp.

**Description:** The former captain of a mercenary company in one of the city-states of Susrah, Arahua is attractive but battle-scarred, with short-cropped black hair. She is the leader of the band and Zama is her lover and bodyguard (although she can hold her own in battle, of course). Born of a Taraamite officer and a Susrahnite princess, Arahua took to a life of adventuring to escape the constraints imposed on females in Susrahnite society.

Tactics: Arahua uses her powerful bow from a distance, then closes and uses her deft blade.

#### Raneb the Tomb-Robber - Male Yar-Ammonite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	12	1-3	Right Leg	1/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	1/5
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	1/6
INT	13	10-12	Chest	1/7
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	1/4
DEX	18	16-18	Left Arm	1/4
CHA	10	19-20	Head	-/5

**Combat Actions** 3

Armour: Leather Shirt and Soft Leather Pants. -2 Armour Penalty.

Damage Modifier +0 Magic Points 11 Movement 8m

when armoured)

Traits: None

**Strike Rank** +16 (+14

**Common Skills:** Athletics 60%, Brawn 32%, Culture (Own) 67%, Dance 36%, Drive 32%, Evade 66%, Evaluate 60%, First Aid 31%, Influence 27%, Insight 27%, Lore (Regional) 66%, Perception 64%, Persistence 32%, Resilience 45%, Ride 40%,

Sing 24%, Sleight 70%, Stealth 75%, Swim 30%, Unarmed 35%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 60%, Language (Native) 87%, Language (Native) 90%, Lore (Tombs and Burial sites) 90%, Mechanisms 88%, Streetwise 87%, Survival 70%

Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Shortsword	_	M	S	1D6 Bleed, Impale	6/8
Dagger	_	S	S	1D4 Bleed, Impale	6/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Artful Rogue (Shortsword, Dagger, Net): 69%

**Possessions:** Leather armor, short sword, dagger, obsidian amulet in the shape of a beetle (worth 25 sp), thieves' tools, flint and steel, bedroll, green cloak.

**Description:** Raneb is lithe, black-haired, with pale skin for a Yar-Ammonite. He is dressed in a green hooded cloak. He is hunted by priests in his native land for tomb-robbing.

Tactics: Raneb fights with one sword in each hand, to maximize the possible damage from sneaky attacks.

# Zama, "the Giant" - Male Shoma

Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
21	1-3	Right Leg	-/7
14	4-6	Left Leg	-/7
18	7-9	Abdomen	-/8
10	10-12	Chest	-/9
13	13-15	Right Arm	-/6
14	16-18	Left Arm	-/6
16	19-20	Head	-/7
	21 14 18 10 13	21       1-3         14       4-6         18       7-9         10       10-12         13       13-15         14       16-18	21       1-3       Right Leg         14       4-6       Left Leg         18       7-9       Abdomen         10       10-12       Chest         13       13-15       Right Arm         14       16-18       Left Arm

**Combat Actions** 3 Damage Modifier +1D6 Magic Points 13 Movement 8m

Strike Rank +12

Armour: None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 60%, Brawn 59%, Culture (Own) 70%, Dance 30%, Drive 27%, Evade 68%, Evaluate 26%, First Aid 24%, Influence 32%, Insight 23%, Lore (Regional) 80%, Perception 78%, Persistence 76%, Resilience 93%, Ride 32%, Sing 29%, Sleight 30%, Stealth 39%, Swim 35%, Unarmed 75%

Advanced Skills: Language (Native) 96%, Lore (Tactics) 40%, Survival 87%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Halberd	_	L	VL	1D8+2 Entangle, Impale, Sunder	4/10
Javelin	30m	S		1D8 Impale, Pin Weapon (Shield)	3/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Barbarian Protector (Halberd, Javelin, 2-H Sword): 77%

Possessions: Loincloth of white ox-skin, halberd, javelin, large golden belt (worth 50 sp).

Description: This huge barbarian has very dark skin, and a handsome face with gleaming white teeth. He is Arahua's lover and protector.

Tactics: Easy to anger, Zama simply enters a rage, charges and attacks.

# Pokot, the Pygmy - Male

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	8	1-3	Right Leg	-/4
CON	10	4-6	Left Leg	-/4
SIZ	7	7-9	Abdomen	-/5
INT	13	10-12	Chest	-/6
POW	15	13-15	Right Arm	-/3
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	-/3
CHA	12	19-20	Head	-/4

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier -1D4 Magic Points 15 Movement 8m Strike Rank +14

**Armour:** None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 42%, Brawn 15%, Culture (Own) 86%, Dance 36%, Drive 34%, Evade 78%, Evaluate 35%, First Aid 27%, Influence 24%, Insight 63%, Lore (Regional) 91%, Perception 68%, Persistence 70%, Resilience 40%, Ride 29%, Sing 27%, Sleight 26%, Stealth 67%, Swim 18%, Unarmed 22%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 32%, Gambling 38%, Language (Native) 95, Language (Other) 88%, Lore (Silver Lotus Islands) 76%, Manipulation 68%, Meditation 80%, Sorcery (Silver Lotus Grimoire) 71%, Survival 55%, Track 75%

**Grimoire (Silver Lotus):** Intuition, Mystic Vision, Regenerate, Restoration, Spirit Resistance, Treat Wounds, Telepathy

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Shortsword	_	M	S	1D6 Bleed, Impale	6/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Harassing Poisoner (Shortsword, Dagger, Kukri): 65%

Possessions: Loincloth, short sword, 3 doses of sassone leaf residue.

**Description:** Pokot is a pygmy from the Silver Lotus Isles, one of the few of his race to have left his homeland. He has the body of a child and the face of an old man. He is quite knowledgeable and is a good tracker.

**Tactics:** Pokot's main function is outside of battle, as a tracker, healer, diviner and interpreter. He is an opportunist with an instinct for survival, so if his allies are about to be defeated, he will either flee, or offer his services to new masters.

#### Sassone Leaf Residue

Application: Injection/Smeared.

Onset Time: Nausea after 1D2 minutes, CON loss after 4D6 minutes.

**Duration:** 2 hours.

**Resistance Time:** The victim must make a Resistance roll at the Onset Time of each stage of the poison. Failure indicates that Condition has taken effect.

Potency: 40

Resistance: Resilience.

**Conditions:** Nausea, The venom initially causes the victim to start feeling nauseous if the first Resistance roll is failed. If a second Resistance roll is failed then the victim loses 1D4 CON.

Antidote/Cure: Anti-venom. Some cultures have perfected anti-venom remedies which have a Potency of 1D20+15. The anti-venom must be introduced with a successful First Aid or Healing roll and add their Potency as a bonus to the victim's Resilience roll to fight the venom throughout its duration.

#### Bearers and Guards - Male Azimban (4)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	10	10-12	Chest	-17
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	13	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	10	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 2 Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 10 Movement 8m Strike Rank +12 Armour: None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 72%, Brawn 67%, Culture (Own) 60%, Dance 23%, Drive 23%, Evade 61%, Evaluate 20%, First Aid 23%, Influence 20%, Insight 20%, Lore (Regional) 50%, Perception 55%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 69%, Ride 28%, Sing 20%, Sleight 23%, Stealth 38%, Swim 26%, Unarmed 27%

Advanced Skills: Language (Native) 70%, Lore (Tactics) 40%, Survival 42%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HI
Shortspear	_	M	L	1D8+1 Impale	4/5

#### **Combat Styles**

One Spear (Shortspear, Javelin): 57%

Possessions: Clothing, shortspear, 1d4 sp.

**Description:** These men are dark-skinned and tall, wearing rag-tag clothing; a mix between loincloths, cloaks and desert robes. They are lean from walking long distances and carrying heavy weights.

**Tactics:** The guards fight well with the shortspear, preferring to keep from throwing it. They flee or surrender if Arahua and one other leader is killed, or if all three leaders except Arahua are killed.

trail to be followed). The trail is less than a day old and leads to a temporary camp on a plain next to a small outcropping of rocks, some 13 meters tall. There is a water-hole nearby. Some lone trees grow on the grassy plain. A few gazelles and other small game roam the plain.

There are 3 light warhorses in the camp (the pygmy, Pokot, does not ride), along with a sizeable collection of equipment and supplies (including dried food and waterskins, enough to last 1 week for 4 persons; these are emergency rations for the leaders, the party otherwise hunts while travelling).

In the centre of the camp is a pile of elephant tusks. There are 9 standard (20 kg) tusks, 4 prime tusks (40 kg), and a single exceptional tusk (100 kg). The total value is 2,200 SP.

During the day, the hunters have 2 guards stationed around the camp. At night, there are 3 guards, plus one of the leaders (roll 1d4 to determine who; each has a 2-hour guard shift). The spotting distance is 6d6 x 3 meters. At night, it is 3d6 x 3 meters if there is moonlight, else the spotting distance is limited to the range of torchlight.

In the case of an attack by night, sleeping adventurers get a Routine Perception test. Sleeping characters are basically prone, and require an action to get up. They may also have to put on armour, unless they were risking Fatigue by sleeping in armour.

If successful in defeating the hunters, the adventurers may sell the ivory in Azimba for a nice profit.

#### THE CITY OF ZIMBALLAH

Zimballah, the capital city of Azimba, is sometimes simply called the City of Stone by virtue of its size and importance. Surrounded by hills, the city has massive walls, towers, and multiple interior

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#### **Trading Ivory**

The value of elephant tusks is as follows:

Туре	Weight (lb.)	Value
Standard tusk	10	100 SP
Prime tusk	20	200 SP
Exceptional tusk (3	50	500 SP
meters long)		17-01-270696-272

These values apply when raw ivory is traded in the jungle kingdoms (Shoma, Azimba and Mazania). The value increases substantially when the ivory is carved and/or traded in other regions. Dead ivory or that which is found on the ground is of inferior quality and very brittle.

A person with average strength can carry one or two tusks, perhaps 3-4 on the back of a horse or ox.

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gates. Close to 18,000 inhabitants throng its inner districts, with several hundred merchants, animal-herders, peasants, mercenaries and beggars living in semi-permanent caravan camps outside the city walls.

Although there are dozens of lesser stone-walled settlements within Azimba's borders, whoever holds Zimballah dominates the region and can claim to be king of Azimba. However, the king must



be on good terms with the cult of Jul-Juggah, whose high priest formally appoints new kings and provides advice and auguries to the royal house. Throughout the land are hundreds of stone statues in the likeness of Jul-Juggah, a great lizard-bird with monstrous features and outstretched, leathery wings. The statues range from 3 to 10 meters in height. They are sacred and offerings (sometimes including blood sacrifice) are regularly placed in front of the statues by the priests of Jul-Juggah. To touch the statues or steal the offerings is an offense punishable by death.

Zimballah is an important trading centre in the jungle kingdoms region. Cattle and ornaments of beaten gold from Shoma, steel swords and cut gems from Zadj, jungle herbs and animal-skins from Mazania, carpets and peacock feathers from Jairan, and even silks and ceramics from far-off Taikang finds its way here. The king levies a tax on all trade; five percent of the market value of all trade goods must be paid to the city guards upon entry into the city.

No one knows who reared Zimballah's massive, concentric walls and circular towers. The outer walls are 12 meters tall and 3 meters thick, and are fitted seamlessly together without the use of mortar (use Difficult Athletics tests for climbing). The city gates (exterior and interior) are gatehouses with two wooden portcullises and murder holes above the space between them. The gates are usually open during the day and locked and barred at night, with 1d4+6 guards stationed near the gate at all times.

Foreigners are free to roam the market and residential districts, although all must return to the foreign district at night, when the gates are closed. At the top of the hillside in which Zimballah nestles is the noble district, which houses the royal palace and temple of Jul-Juggah, the houses of the nobles, as well as the barracks of the king's guard and the city's granaries.

In a desolate valley north of the city walls are the Caverns of Bone, ancient burial-places for the Azimban dead. The high priest of Jul-Juggah has placed a taboo on the valley, preventing people from worshipping their ancestors, claiming the caverns are haunted by the restless and malign ghosts of the dead.

**Development:** As the adventurer reach Zimballah, they have to deal with the other factions in the city, or they might be hunted down by these factions themselves, depending on who the adventurer work for. The following sections describe the relevant factions interested in Abbas, the king's weaponsmith.

# AISHA, THE AGENT OF SHOMA

The voluptuous temptress Aisha is an agent in the employ of the prince of Shoma. She works as a simple dancing-girl in one of the taverns in the foreign district, but has several bodyguards who carry out her orders. Aisha also dabbles with magic; her grandmother was a witch-woman in a small Shoma village.

If the adventurer are on a mission for the

prince of Shoma, they have been told to seek out Aisha. The girl knows that the Azimban king's weaponsmith, Abbas, has started making weapons of iron, although she does not know about the Zadjite priests. She knows that Abbas resides within the royal palace. Aisha knows that there are spies from Mazania in Zimballah, and she knows the location of their safehouse.

# Servants of the Living Flame

The chief priests of the Living Flame in Iraab have sent a group of mercenaries to Azimba to track down and capture the rogue priests. While they have orders to kill anyone who have learned the secret of iron-smithing, the mercenaries are to bring back the rogue priests alive; simply killing them would be too mild a punishment for betraying the cult and revealing its secrets. The mercenaries are commanded by a senior fire-priest named Yilan.

If the adventurers are on a mission to kidnap Abbas, they might come into conflict with this group who seek to kill the master-smith due to his knowledge. On the other hand, the adventurers might actually *be* these mercenaries if the adventure hook starts with the adventurers being hired by the Zadjite priesthood.

#### The Men of Mazania

The Queen of Mazania has three male agents in Zimballah. They know that a group of rogue Zadjite priests reside in the royal palace along with Abbas, but they do not have the resources to infiltrate the palace and kidnap the weaponsmith. Unless they are neutralized before the players enter the palace, these agents of Mazania prepare an ambush for the party as the players try to leave the city, hoping to snatch the king's smith from them and escape back to Mazania.

#### Aisha - Female Shoma

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	10	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	11	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	11	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	15	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	16	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	18	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier +0

Magic Points 10 (6 with amulet)

Movement 8m Strike Rank +16 Armour: None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 56%, Brawn 21%, Culture (Own) 90%, Dance 74%, Drive 26%, Evade 32%, Evaluate 83%, First Aid 31%, Influence 86%, Insight 75%, Lore (Regional) 80%, Perception 75%, Persistence 75%, Resilience 42%, Ride 46%, Sing 68%, Sleight 84%, Stealth 81%, Swim 21%, Unarmed 46%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 56%, Courtesy 73%, Gambling 45%, Language (Native) 83%, Lore (Royal Courts) 76%, Manipulation 70%, Mechanisms 71%, Meditation 70%, Oratory 78%, Seduction 73%, Sorcery (Silken Whisper Grimoire) 71%, Streetwise 68%, Track 71%

**Grimoire (Silken Whisper):** Damage Resistance, Diminish (INT), Dominate (Human), Glow, Haste, Hinder, Hold Fast, Telepathy

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Stabbing Dagger	_	S	S	1D4 Impale	6/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Guile (Stabbing Dagger, Kukri, Chakram): 69%

**Possessions:** Silken loincloth, stabbing dagger, silver armbands (worth 20 sp each), golden earrings (worth 25 sp each). Amulet of the Wandering Mind (worth 300 sp).

**Description:** Always with a lewd smile on her full red lips, Aisha is dark, with curly hair and a full body, which she knows to use to full effect when she deals with men.

**Tactics:** Aisha prefers to let her henchmen deal with opponents. She also has numerous powerful contacts who would be angered if she were harmed in any way.

#### Amulet of the Wandering Mind

This functions as a special variant of the Dominate (Human) spell that she knows. When she clutches this amulet she can dominate one male Human by sacrificing a Magic Point into the device. It can dominate up to 4 Magic Points worth of men at any time and currently Aisha has all 4 points invested in the amulet to control her henchmen. Invested Magic Points return at the rate of one per hour if a target dies or is released. The domination effect lasts as long as Aisha has possession of the amulet, if it is lost or stolen the new owner takes control of the dominated males until such a time they die or are released. This item will only function for a female NPC or character.

#### Aisha's Henchmen - Male Azimban (4)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	14	7-9	Abdomen	-/7
INT	10	10-12	Chest	-/8
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	-/5
DEX	12	16-18	Left Arm	-/5
CHA	10	19-20	Head	-/6

**Combat Actions** 2

Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 12 Movement 8m Strike Rank +11 **Armour:** None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 71%, Brawn 68%, Culture (Own) 60%, Dance 22%, Drive 22%, Evade 59%, Evaluate 20%, First Aid 22%, Influence 20%, Insight 20%, Lore (Regional) 60%, Perception 55%, Persistence 20%, Resilience 73%, Ride 27%, Sing 20%, Sleight 22%, Stealth 57%, Swim 28%, Unarmed 56%

Advanced Skills: Language (Native) 80%, Lore (Tactics) 43%, Survival 74%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Club		M	S	1D6 Stun Location	4/4

#### **Combat Styles**

Protector (Club, Spear, Spear&Shield): 56%

Possessions: Clothing, club, 1d6 sp.

**Description:** These are men which Aisha has charmed, both magically and naturally, and which are intensely loyal to her, each one fighting

for her special favor.

Tactics: Aisha's loyal henchmen would rather die than flee while protecting her.

#### Yilan (High Priest) - Male Zadjite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	12	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	17	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	15	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	13	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	14	19-20	Head	-/5

**Combat Actions** 3 Damage Modifier +0 **Magic Points** 15 Movement 8m Strike Rank +15

Armour: None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 25%, Brawn 79%, Culture (Own) 84%, Dance 57%, Drive 28%, Evade 50%, Evaluate 91%, First Aid 30%, Influence 78%, Insight 67%, Lore (Regional) 89%, Perception 72%, Persistence 60%, Resilience 77%, Ride 28%, Sing 29%, Sleight 27%, Stealth 30%, Swim 24%, Unarmed 75%

Advanced Skills: Courtesy 70%, Craft (Armourer) 79%, Craft (Weaponsmith) 79%, Craft (Blacksmith) 80%, Language (Native) 81%, Lore (Fire Rituals) 86%, Manipulation 75%, Meditation 80%, Sorcery (Forgeflame Grimoire) 77% Grimoire (Forgeflame): Glow, Animate (Metal), Enhance (STR), Form/Set (Metal)

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
War Hammer	-	M	M	1D8+1 Stun Location	3/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Foehammer (Great Hammer, Burning Glove, War Hammer): 75%

Possessions: Yellow robes, tall red turban, golden talisman set with tiny ruby (worth 150 sp). He carries has a flask of sacred oil which he can pour out to summon a special fire elemental. War hammer.

Description: A relatively tall and sinuous man dressed in yellow robes with a prominently large red turban.

Tactics: This man prefers to summon a fire elemental to engage any enemies, then stands back and hurls magic at foes. If he is forced to, he will attack with his hammer.

# Rogue Priests of the Living Flame - Male Zadjite (3)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	12	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	16	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	14	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	12	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	14	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +0 Magic Points 14 Movement 8m Strike Rank +14

Armour: None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 24%, Brawn 49%, Culture (Own) 82%, Dance 26%, Drive 26%, Evade 54%, Evaluate 80%, First Aid 58%, Influence 48%, Insight 50%, Lore (Regional) 97%, Perception 60%, Persistence 68%, Resilience 78%, Ride 26%, Sing 28%, Sleight 26%, Stealth 28%, Swim 24%, Unarmed 84%

**Advanced Skills:** Courtesy 40%, Craft (Armourer) 58%, Craft (Weaponsmith) 60%, Craft (Blacksmith) 67%, Language (Native) 90%, Lore (Fire Rituals) 52%, Manipulation 57%, Meditation 67%, Sorcery (Forgeflame Grimoire) 69% **Grimoire** (Forgeflame): Glow, Animate (Metal), Enhance (STR), Form/Set (Metal)

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
War Hammer	_	M	M	1D8+1 Stun Location	on 3/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Foehammer (Great Hammer, Burning Glove, War Hammer):

Possessions: Yellow robes, tall red turban, golden talisman set with tiny ruby (worth 150 sp).

**Description:** These fire-worshippers wear yellow silken robes and tall red turbans. Their motivation for abandoning the cult is simply wealth; in Iraab, the acolytes of the Living Flame are forced to live ascetic lives, while the senior priests profit greatly from their part in the ironsmithing industry.

Tactics: The priests stand back and use spells from a distance. If forced, they close with their hammers.

#### Fire Elemental

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	4D6	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	3D6	13	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	2D6+3	10	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	3D6	14	10-12	Chest	-17
POW	2D6+3	14	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	144D6	14	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	2D6	8	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +0 Magic Points 14 Movement 8m Strike Rank +14

Armour: None

**Traits:** Breathe Flame

**Common Skills:** Athletics 73%, Brawn 44%, Culture (Own) 88%, Dance 55%, Evade 70%, Insight 63%, Lore (Regional – Plane of Fire) 93%, Perception 73%, Persistence 68%, Resilience 71%, Unarmed 68%

**Advanced Skills:** Language (Native – Fire Elemental) 82%, Lore (Elementals) 79%, Meditation 70%, Manipulation 70%, Sorcery (Burning Halo Grimoire) 77%

**Grimoire (Burning Halo):** Animate (Flame), Attract (Magic), Attract (Missiles), Attract (Spirits), Attract (Energy), Damage Resistance, Form/Set (Flames), Glow, Wrack (special variant)

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#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Scimitar		M	M	1D8 Bleed	6/10

#### **Combat Styles**

Burning Brand (1-H Sword, Dagger, Javelin): 80%

**Possessions:** None, when destroyed it leaves behind a single red ruby worth 200sp

**Description:** Swathed in fire and burning flames, this fire elemental is a bound creature summoned by the fire priest. It appears as a naked black skinned humanoid of either male or female gender with ember-like eyes and a mane of roaring/crackling hair. It can use normal weapons and throw spells.

**Tactics:** It likes to use Breathe Flame (2D6 damage, 1/hour) to open combat and then animates fire. After that it wades in with its sword. **Magic:** The Fire elementals grimoire is actually written in intricate flickers of the flame on its body. It has a special variant of Wrack which immolates the target rather than causes them searing pain, though they don't catch on fire and it functions just like the spell in all other regards.

#### Mercenaries of Iraab - Male Zadjite (5)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	15	7-9	Abdomen	5/7
INT	13	10-12	Chest	5/8
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	5/5
DEX	12	16-18	Left Arm	5/5
CHA	10	19-20	Head	-/6

**Combat Actions** 2

**Armour:** Chainmail Shirt. -4 Armour Penalty.

Damage Modifier +1D4

Magic Points 11 Movement 8m

Traits: None

Strike Rank +12 (+8 when

Common Skills: Athletics 63%, Brawn 56%, Culture (Own) 74%, Dance 22%, Drive 23%, Evade 69%, Evaluate 32%, First Aid 24%, Influence 20%, Insight 23%, Lore armoured) (Regional) 73%, Perception 73%, Persistence 52%, Resilience 73%, Ride 63%, Sing

21%, Sleight 22%, Stealth 34%, Swim 30%, Unarmed 58%

Advanced Skills: Language (Native) 82%, Lore (Tactics) 69%, Streetwise 51%,

Survival 55%

Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HI <sup>-</sup>
Scimitar		M	M	1D8 Bleed	6/10

#### **Combat Styles**

Mercenary (Scimitar, Bow (any), Dagger): 68%

Possessions: Chain shirt, scimitar, 2d10 sp.

**Description:** These mercenaries are young but experienced men from the frontier settlements of Zadj. Tactics: The mercenaries do as they are told by Yilan, but they are only loyal as long as they get paid.

# Agents of Mazania - Male Mazanian (3)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	12	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	13	10-12	Chest	-17
POW	12	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	18	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	12	19-20	Head	-/5

**Combat Actions** 3

Damage Modifier +0

Magic Points 12

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +16

**Armour:** None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 60%, Brawn 54%, Culture (Own) 86%, Dance 60%, Drive 62%, Evade 70%, Evaluate 85%, First Aid 31%, Influence 64%, Insight 45%, Lore (Regional) 56%, Perception 75%, Persistence 64%, Resilience 66%, Ride 40%, Sing 34%, Sleight 80%, Stealth 85%, Swim 44%, Unarmed 55%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 67%, Commerce 60%, Courtesy 65%, Disguise 65%, Language (Native) 85%, Mechanisms 51%, Streetwise 64%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Shortsword	_	M	S	1D6 Bleed, Impale	6/8
Light crossbow	100m	L	_	1D8 Impale	4/5

#### **Combat Styles**

Agent (Shortsword, Light crossbow, thrown dagger): 70%

Possessions: Merchants' clothing, short sword, light crossbow, 10 bolts, 50 sp.

**Description:** The men dress in nondescript clothes and try to pass off as Azimban merchants. Their call themselves Chekwi, Dabir and Idi. **Tactics:** The Mazanians try to stay out of range of heavy weapons. They attack with one weapon in each hand, and work in concert to gain flanking and attack sneakily.

# Dire Ape

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	7D6+15	40	1-3	Right Leg	3/9
CON	2D6+6	13	4-6	Left Leg	3/9
SIZ	5D6+12	30	7-9	Abdomen	3/10
INT	7	7	10-12	Chest	3/11
POW	3D6	11	13-15	Right Arm	3/8
DEX	3D6+3	14	16-18	Left Arm	3/8
			19-20	Head	3/9

Combat Actions 2 Damage Modifier +2D6 Magic Points 11 Movement 8m Strike Rank +11 Armour: Skin, muscle, hair.

Traits: None

**Skills:** Athletics 85%, Brawn 80%, Evade 45%, Perception 40%, Persistence 53%, Resilience 57%, Stealth 25%, Unarmed 69%, Survival 48%, Track 57%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Bite	_	M	T	1D8	As Head
Fist		M	L	1D6	As Arm

#### **Combat Styles**

Pummel Em' (Bite, Fist, Unarmed): 69%

The Cult of Jul-Juggah

Gonda, the high priest of Jul-Juggah, resents the influence of the foreign priests, but seeks to learn their secrets. He has turned one of Abbas' apprentices to his cause. As soon as this apprentice has learned all he can from Abbas and the Zadjites, Gonda plans to kill them off and blame their deaths on Akia, the royal herald. Old Gonda is wily and watches closely any strangers that appear at court.

# THE MAZANIAN SAFEHOUSE

The Mazanian agents in Zimballah pose as simple merchants trading dried fruit and animal-skins. Usually only one of them is seen in the marketplace, while the two others remain in their safehouse, a windowless building in the foreign district of Zimballah. This is a walled house with a central garden (which is not visible from the street). The brick walls are 5 meters tall (Difficult Athletics test to climb).

**Development:** Assuming they know who to look for, the adventurer may scout out the market and shadow one of the agents back to their safehouse in the foreign district. If they kill him, or he doesn't return in a reasonable amount of time, the others realise something is wrong and may send a warning message to Mazania. The Mazanian agents have carrier pigeons that they can send back to Boma-Ya with messages. They have no way of receiving instructions from Mazania, though, except from messengers that come to the city.

#### I. Entrance

From the outside, the safehouse is nondescript, windowless, with a solid wooden door. The door has a small slit that can be opened

to gaze upon and speak with visitors. The inner door (to Area 2) is always closed and locked when visitors are let into the entrance chamber.

# 2. Meeting Room

This plain room is furnished with a low table and wooden chairs. It is used to meet with merchants (some of whom are messengers in disguise).

#### 3. Storeroom

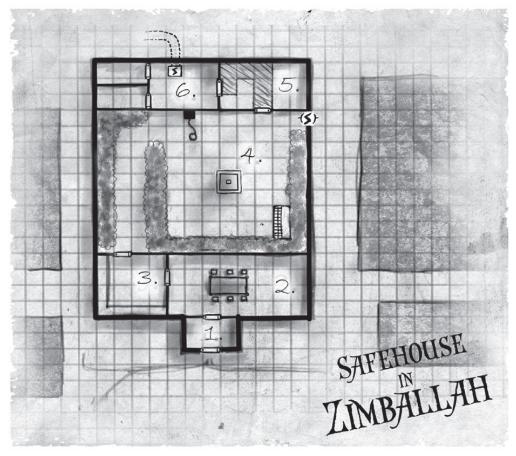
This square room has shelves along the walls filled with various pieces of equipment, including large crates of dried fruit.

If the house is attacked, one of the Mazanian agents may choose to prepare an ambush in this room, hiding next to the door which opens into the room from Area 2, and try to sneak attack intruders as they enter.

#### 4. Garden

In this lush but ill-kept garden are rows of tall bushes and palm trees and a small well (12 meters deep, with 2 meters of water at the bottom). In the south-eastern corner is a cage with 6 carrier pigeons, while to the northeast is a secret exit (Difficult Perception test) to the street outside.

Chained to the northern wall of the garden is a flesh-eating gorilla. Its leash is 10 meters long, allowing it to reach most of the garden. It does not molest the Mazanians, for they feed it a special herbal drug to which the ape is addicted, but attacks anyone else without provocation.



5. Trapped Chamber

This room is trapped. The purpose of the trap is to delay intruders while the inhabitants of the safehouse flee through to Area 6. Stepping outside the shaded area on the map releases a weighted net from the ceiling. The net hits automatically and entangles its victim. Only light slashing weapons can be used to cut the net from the inside. It can be escaped with a Difficult Athletics skill test.

#### 6. Private Chamber

This is where the Mazanians usually dwell. There is a hidden trapdoor in the floor (Difficult Perception test to spot) that leads to cramped escape tunnel exiting in the street behind the house.

The doors to the west lead into two identical bedchambers. In the southernmost bedchamber is a chest with 400 SP and one dose of sleeping draught (treat as oil of taggit).

There is no need for a third bedchamber, as one of the Mazanians is always awake, taking his turn guarding the house.

# THE ROYAL PALACE OF ZIMBALLAH (GROUND LEVEL)

The royal palace is situated at the top of the hill, overlooking the city to the east, and the peaks of the Shining Hills to the west. The northern wing of the palace is a temple dedicated to Jul-Juggah, whose high priest is a trusted advisor to the king. The palace is well-guarded and close nearby are the barracks of the royal guard, with several hundred additional warriors which may be called upon in the event of an attack.

**Development:** The adventurers need to get into the palace, and

there are several viable approaches. The adventurers can attempt a direct assault, enter by stealth (sneaking in, climbing the walls, or searching for a hidden entrance), bluff their way in (from disguising as palace servants to posing as foreign diplomats and requesting an audience with the king), or poison, bribe or even hypnotise the palace guards. They may also create some kind of diversion (from starting a fire to arranging an attack on the city, and so on).

The adventurers will come up with some kind of scheme to get into the palace, and the Games Master should use the provided descriptions of areas and NPCs to react appropriately. Responses from NPCs should be played out according to their intelligence, loyalties and motivations, of course.

# I. Outer Compound

The great compound to the east of the palace building is ringed by a 6 meter tall wall (Difficult Athletics test to climb). Past the gate, which is guarded by eight palace guards, is a massive stairway, flanked by

huge stone bird-statues, that leads into the palace (Area 2). Next to the main entrance is a lesser door that is used by the guards to enter the barracks (Area 3).

In the northern end of the compound is an outdoor platform (Area 13) used by the priests of Jul-Juggah. The platform is 5 meters above ground level.

#### 2. Antechamber

This is a waiting area for courtiers, diplomats and other petitioners to the court. A set of double doors lead into the throne room (Area 7); the doors are carved with scenes of a spear-wielding king, a slayer of lions who triumphs in war and receives tribute from his defeated enemies. Four palace guards stand to attention here, opening the doors for visitors when the royal herald calls them into the court.

#### 3. Barracks

The barracks house a contingent of 24 warriors, a third of whom are asleep at any time. The others are either on guard duty elsewhere in the palace, or relaxing here with food and games of throwing-bones. The room has sleeping-mats, racks for spears and shields, and small wooden boxes filled with equipment and a few personal trinkets.

In case of an emergency, dozens of additional warriors may be summoned from the barracks outside the palace (see the city map).

#### 4. Guest Quarters

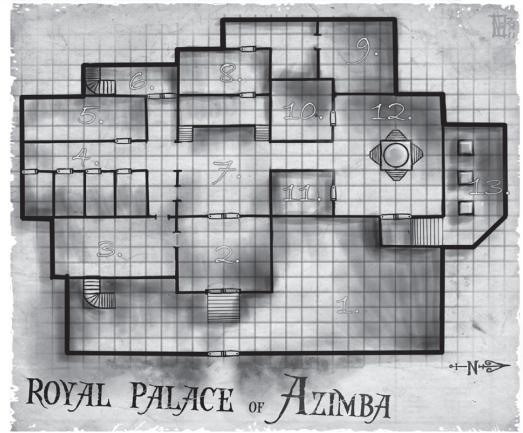
The southern wing of the palace contains the guest quarters, which are simple but well-furnished rooms. There are four suites; each with several 'beds' that consist of monkey-skins and wooden head-rests. There is a 50% chance that each room is occupied

by a foreign diplomat and his or her entourage; determine the nationality of such individuals randomly.

# 5. Slave Quarter

This large room is used both as a kitchen and as a sleeping-chamber for the palace slaves and servants, with the two areas divided by a curtain of palm leaves. The servants sleep on the floor on straw mats. They have access to most of the areas of the palace, except the dungeon level, often being called upon to deliver food and other goods and services to the throne room and the king's quarters.

Among the servants is a young girl, Taita, who is in fact a Mazanian girl captured in an Azimban raid. She resents her enslavement and seeks to flee from Zimballah if the opportunity presents itself. Taita has been sneaking around the palace, eavesdropping on conversations in the palace. She has learned quite a few secrets, and knows that there are turbaned strangers who craft weapons of iron down in the dungeons.





#### Palace Guards - Male Azimban (8)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	10	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	10	19-20	Head	<b>-/5</b>

**Combat Actions** 2

Armour: None

Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 10

Traits: None

Movement 8m Strike Rank +12

Common Skills: Athletics 68%, Brawn 62%, Culture (Own) 80%, Dance 24%, Drive 24%, Evade 58%, Evaluate 20%, First Aid 24%, Influence 55%, Insight 20%, Lore (Regional) 80%, Perception 55%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 64%, Ride 49%, Sing 20%, Sleight 24%, Stealth 39%, Swim 26%, Unarmed 38%

**Advanced Skills:** Language (Native) 90%, Lore (Tactics) 60%, Streetwise 70%, Survival 62%

Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Longspear	_	L	VL	1D10+1 Impale	4/10

#### **Combat Styles**

Palace Guard (Longspear, Spear&Shield, Mancatcher): 73%

Possessions: Loincloth of monkey-skin, longspear, necklace of animal-claws.

**Description:** These men are drawn from the king's countless companies of spearmen.

Tactics: The palace guards fight in formation with their longspears, using their reach to good effect.

#### 6. Stairway

A stairway leads down to the dungeons beneath the palace. There are two palace guards stationed in the chamber, and another two guards next to the door in the corridor outside.

#### 7. Throne Room

This large chamber is furnished with the splendour of a barbaric court. The stone floor is strewn with scented purple jungle flowers. Spears, axes and shields decorate the walls. On a raised platform, 2 meters tall, at the far end of the chamber is a great throne of ivory, carved from the massive tusks of a dozen elephant bulls. Visitors lounge on piles of animal-skins, eating tropical fruits and sipping on banana wine.

When king Mkazwe is present at court, the throne room is filled with nobles, courtiers, concubines, priests, petitioners, entertainers, servants and guards. Four palace guards are stationed at each of the stairs leading up to the raised platform. Sitting at the king's right hand is Gonda, the bird-masked and feather-cloaked high priest of Jul-Juggah, who often whispers into the king's ear while clutching a feather-adorned staff.

Crouching in front of the ivory throne is a pair of male lions. The lions also protect the king when he sleeps (see Area 9).

Next to the entrance stands the royal herald, Akia. He calls visitors from the antechamber (Area 2) and announces the purpose of their visit to the king. Akia is also the king's food-taster and the chief administrator of the palace, commanding the palace guards and overseeing the servants.

#### 8. Antechamber

This room between the throne room (Area 7) and the king's quarters (Area 9) is used by the king to prepare for appearances in the court. It is also sometimes used for private conferences between the king and his advisors and important foreign envoys. Two elite royal guards are stationed here.

#### Elite Palace Guards

Male Azimban (2): See Akia's statistics opposite.

# 9. King's Chambers

This large apartment is split in two, with the outer area being occupied by the royal wives and concubines. This antechamber is decorated with fresh, rainbow-colored jungle flowers. Copper trays with fresh fruits and clay jugs of banana wine abound among piles of gazelle-skin cushions and walls hung with erotic sculptures of ivory. In various small wooden chests and ivory boxes are cosmetics, copper bracelets, gold rings, silver mirrors and small gems worth a total of 2,000 SP. Drawers and wardrobes contain a collection of richly coloured dresses, silken loincloths, gem-studded belts and gold-trimmed shoes, to a total value of 1,200 SP.

The inner chamber is reserved for the king himself. A large wooden bed, blanketed by unblemished zebra-skins, stands in the middle of the room. When the king sleeps or enjoys the company of his wives and concubines in this chamber, his two pet lions doze near the door. Under the bed is a sturdy chest (requires a Difficult Brawn test to force open, or a Hard Mechanisms test to pick open, due to the

quality of the lock) that contains several bags of semiprecious gems (worth a total of 3,000 SP), a dozen small figurines of gold (worth 250 SP each), and a skull-carved bronze urn filled with diamond dust (worth 1,500 SP).

The royal wives and concubines wear earnings and bracelets of brass and copper (worth a total of 75 SP). They are unarmed, but will try to parley with intruders and serve them poisoned food and drink.

#### 10. High Priest's Chamber

This locked room is the personal chamber of Gonda, high priest of the cult of Jul-Juggah. In one corner is an empty wooden cage, apparently used to hold a large bird; the bottom of the cage is covered with the bones of rodents. Shelves along the walls are set with bird-skulls, bundles of black feathers, and jars filled with strange powders and liquids. Next to a simple bed is a large wooden table with three black eggs, about the size of ostrich eggs, protected with a covering of dried twigs. These are dire bat eggs. They can easily be crushed (AP 1; hp 2), but Gonda plans to hatch the eggs and train the hatchlings as his servitors.

A successful Difficult Perception test finds two doses of black lotus extract and a small copper vial filled with burnt othur. There is also a hidden compartment under a loose flagstone (Difficult Perception test) that contains a chest with several golden bracelets and rings (worth 800 SP) and a single black opal (worth 1,000 SP).

#### 

#### Spores of Jul-Juggah

These spores are taken from the nests of the so-called devilbirds of Azimba. They lose their potency after about three months. A clutch of spores can be thrown up to 3 meters from the wielder with a Athletics skill roll. The spores deal 1d6 points of damage to a creature that is hit. They then penetrate the skin and grow, dealing an additional 1d4 points of damage each round for 10 rounds. At the end of this time, the victim is covered with a tangle of vine growths. (The vines are harmless and wither away in 1d4 days.) A successful Difficult First Aid test kills the spores.

#### 

#### II. Lesser Priests' Chamber

This large room is shared by the lesser priests of Jul-Juggah. Each priest has a sleeping-mat and a small chest with personal belongings. Several of the priests also keep small flying creatures such as eagles and bats in cages here, training them as their familiars.

# 12. Temple of Jul-Juggah

It is a testament to the cult's influence in Zimballah that the shrine of Jul-Juggah is more grand and imposing than the palace's throne room. The large chamber, 10 meters high, is illuminated by sun- or moonlight filtering in from somewhere above, and smells of exotic drugs and incense.

A huge, 8 meter tall stone statue stands in middle of the chamber, carved with the mixed features of a flying lizard and a

# Akia, the Royal Herald of Azimba - Male Azimban

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	17	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	10	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	14	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	10	10-12	Chest	-17
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	10	19-20	Head	<b>-/5</b>

**Combat Actions** 2

Armour: None

Damage Modifier +1D4

Magic Points 11

Traits: None

Movement 8m Strike Rank +12

Common Skills: Athletics 81%, Brawn 76%, Culture (Own) 80%, Dance 24%, Drive 25%, Evade 78%, Evaluate 20%, First Aid 24%, Influence 55%, Insight 51%, Lore (Regional) 80%, Perception 66%, Persistence 52%, Resilience 85%, Ride 50%, Sing 21%, Sleight 24%, Stealth 39%, Swim 27%, Unarmed 71%

Advanced Skills: Language (Native) 95%, Lore (Tactics) 65%, Survival 71%

Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Battleaxe	_	M	M	1D6+1 Bleed	4/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Royal Protector (Battleaxe, Spear, Javelin): 78%

Possessions: Loincloth of monkey-skin, cloak of lion-skin, Lion-shaped battleaxe, gold necklace (worth 175 sp).

**Description:** Akia is middle-aged, yet athletic of build. His head is clean-shaven, and he wears a cloak of lion-skin to denote his station, as well as a necklace of gold. Akia is loyal to the king, and resents Gonda the high priest.

Tactics: Rush in and attack with axe. Defend the king from harm.

# King Mkazwe of Azimba - Male Azimban

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	21	1-3	Right Leg	3/6
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	3/6
SIZ	17	7-9	Abdomen	3/7
INT	14	10-12	Chest	3/8
POW	13	13-15	Right Arm	-/5
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	-/5
CHA	12	19-20	Head	-/6

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +1D6 Magic Points 13 Movement 8m

**Strike Rank** +14 (+11

when armoured)

Armour: Hide Vest and Skirt.

**Traits:** 

Common Skills: Athletics 79%, Brawn 83%, Culture (Own) 88%, Dance 66%, Drive 47%, Evade 88%, Evaluate 66%, First Aid 28%, Influence 89%, Insight 92%, Lore (Regional) 93%, Perception 82%, Persistence 71%, Resilience 84%, Ride 62%, Sing 55%, Sleight 56%, Stealth 63%, Swim 63%, Unarmed 65%

**Advanced Skills:** Commerce 66%, Courtesy 91%, Language (Native) 98%, Lore (Tactics) 91%, Oratory 70%, Play (Drums) 72%, Seduction 73%, Streetwise 69%, Survival 75%, Track 76%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Ebony Longspear	_	L	VL	1D10+1 Impale	4/10

#### **Combat Styles**

King's Magnificence (Ebony Longspear, Shield&Spear, Javelin, 1-H Axe): 80%

Possessions: Purple robe, lion-skin cloak, hide armor, ebony longspear, ivory and gold pectoral (worth 450 sp).

**Description:** The current king of Azimba is tall and lean, with grey hair at his temples. Despite his age, he is a fearsome warrior. He wears an ivory and gold pectoral and a cloak of lion-skin over his purple robe. If he expects combat, he dons an armor of rhino hide. **Tactics:** The king has trained all his life with the longspear. He rages and uses powerful attacks to strike down opponents.

# King's Pet Lions (2)

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6+12	23	1–3	Right Hind Leg	2/6
CON	3D6	11	4–6	Left Hind Leg	2/6
SIZ	2D6+12	19	7–9	Hindquarters	2/7
INT	5	5	10-12	Forequarters	2/8
POW	3D6	11	13-15	Right Front Leg	2/6
DEX	3D6+6	17	16–18	Left Front Leg	2/6
			19-20	Head	2/6

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier +1D8

Magic Points 11

Movement 12m

Strike Rank +14

**Armour:** Fur. No Armour Penalty.

Traits: Night Sight

Skills: Athletics 70%, Evade 45%, Perception 55%, Persistence 43%, Resilience 43%,

Stealth 50%, Survival 40%, Track 70%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	_	M	T	1D8	As Head
Claw		M	M	1D6	As Leg

#### **Combat Styles**

Lion King (Bite, Claw, Maul): 70%

**Combat Notes (Maul):** A lion uses its claws to grip and hold prey, then deliver a bite on the next combat action. A similar tactic is used by lionesses when giving chase to prey. Both claws pull the prey to the ground and it suffers falling damage as though falling from 3m before the lioness then inflicts a killing bite.

# Gonda, High Priest of Jul-Juggah - Male Azimban

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	12	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	10	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	11	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	16	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	17	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	10	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	18	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +0 Magic Points 17 Movement 8m Strike Rank +13 Armour: None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 62%, Brawn 78%, Culture (Own) 92%, Dance 28%, Drive 27%, Evade 85%, Evaluate 34%, First Aid 56%, Influence 86%, Insight 83%, Lore (Regional) 97%, Perception 83%, Persistence 74%, Resilience 80%, Ride 27%, Sing 95%, Sleight 28%, Stealth 66%, Swim 22%, Unarmed 22%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 52%, Courtesy 54%, Healing 63%, Language (Native) 94%, Lore (Devil Birds) 77%, Meditation 89%, Manipulation 83%, Sorcery (Skyfeather Book Grimoire) 89%, Survival 57%, Track 66%

**Grimoire (Skyfeather Book)**: Dominate (Avian), Fly, Project (Sight), Project (Hearing), Palsy, Wrack

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Ouarterstaff		M	L	1D8 Stun Location	4/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Variant Devil Bird (Quarterstaff, Scimitar, Dagger, Mancatcher): 77%

**Possessions:** Bird-mask, loincloth, vulture-feathered staff topped with bird-skull, golden armbands (worth 100 sp each), 3 spores of Jul-Juggah.

**Description:** Gonda is old, scrawny and tall, with a wrinkled face partly hidden by his bird-mask. He wears a black loincloth, and armbands decorated with vulture-feathers. The rest of his naked body is tattooed with red paint, depicting various birds and flying creatures.

**Tactics:** The high priest hurls offensive spells at opponents, and summons the devil-birds of Azimba if necessary. Gonda can summon these beasts by spending 1D3 minutes chanting and cavorting, then making a successful Difficult Lore (Devil Birds) test.

#### Spores of Jul-Juggah

These spores are taken from the nests of the so-called devil-birds of Azimba. They lose their potency after about three months. A clutch of spores can be thrown up to 3 meters from the wielder with a Athletics skill roll. The spores deal 1d6 points of damage to a creature that is hit. They then penetrate the skin and grow, dealing an additional 1d4 points of damage each round for 10 rounds. At the end of this time, the victim is covered with a tangle of viny growths. (The vines are harmless and wither away in 1d4 days.) A successful Difficult First Aid test kills the spores.

bat. The statue's outstretched wings and small base makes it somewhat unstable; it is possible to topple it over with a Difficult Athletics test to crush anyone caught below it, dealing 6d6 points of damage divided amongst all Hit Locations.

On the east wall of the shrine is a pair of doors that lead out to the sacrificial platform (Area 13).

There is a 50% chance that 1d4+1 priests of Jul-Juggah are here at any given time.

#### 13. Sacrificial Platform

A set of stairs, 3 meters above the ground of the outer compound (Area 1) lead from the temple of Jul-Juggah (Area 12) to this raised platform which juts out over the adjacent hillside and is 60 feet above the rocks below.

On the platform are three bloodstained stone slabs where victims are tied while the high priest performs the rituals which summon the devil-birds of Azimba. The monstrous birds then feast on the still-living sacrifices, hacking out their entrails with their sharp beaks. Later, the clean-picked bones are thrown over the edge of the platform, leaving the rocky ground deep below filled with sun-bleached skulls and bones. Anyone jumping or falling from the platform is subject to damage from these sharp bones as if they were shortspears, in additional to normal falling damage.

Devil-Birds of Azimba (2-5)

# THE ROYAL PALACE OF ZIMBALLAH (DUNGEON LEVEL)

In the dungeons beneath the royal palace are several prison cells, as well as the royal crypts, storage areas, living quarters, and a large forge used by the king's weaponsmiths.

Development: The actions of the player characters will depend on their exact mission. The fire-priests of Zadj and the king's mastersmith, Abbas, are able to defend themselves well if attacked and also seek to raise the alarm, bringing in reinforcements of guards from the upper level.

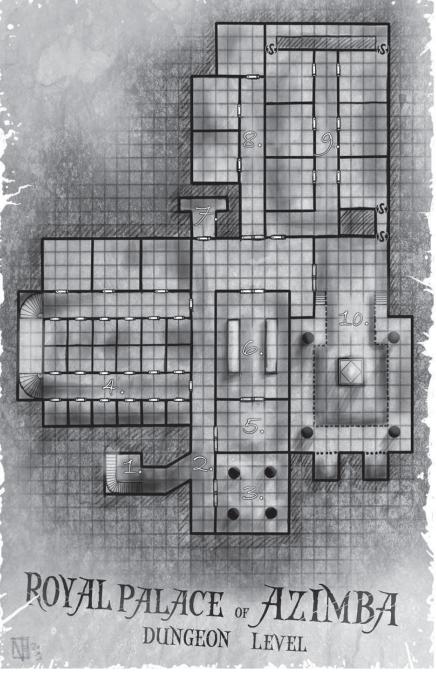
The players may be able to create a nice diversion by freeing the prisoners (in Area 4) and staging a slave riot, although this may put the entire city on full alert and make it difficult for the players to escape Zimballah.

#### 

#### The Royal Palace (Dungeon Level)

**Standard Features:** Unless noted otherwise, all interior doors are strong wooden doors. Ceiling height is 3 meters in normal rooms, and 10 meters in the forge (Area 10).

**Lighting:** Illumination is provided by torches set in brackets along the walls at 12 meter intervals.



I. Stairway

This broad stairway leads 15 meters down from Area 6 in the upper level of the palace. The corridor continues to Area 2.

#### 2. Wide Corridor

This wide corridor connects the various areas of the palace dungeons. Two palace guards patrol the length of the corridor.

#### 3. Cistern

The roof of this chamber is held up by four massive columns. In the middle of the room is a large cistern, 5 meters deep, filled with freshwater, fed by underground pipes which are too small for a medium-sized creature to enter.

# Priests of Jul-Juggah - Male Azimban (8)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	10	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	13	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	12	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	12	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 12 Movement 8m Strike Rank +14 Armour: None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 68%, Brawn 61%, Culture (Own) 86%, Dance 26%, Drive 26%, Evade 58%, Evaluate 25%, First Aid 27%, Influence 24%, Insight 60%, Lore (Regional) 91%, Perception 60%, Persistence 64%, Resilience 60%, Ride 61%, Sing 54%, Sleight 56%, Stealth 62%, Swim 24%, Unarmed 58%

Advanced Skills: Acrobatics 38%, Language (Native) 80%, Meditation 44%, Manipulation 60%, Sorcery (Skyfeather Book Grimoire) 63%, Survival 22%

**Grimoire (Skyfeather Book)**: Dominate (Avian), Fly, Project (Sight), Project (Hearing), Palsy

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Longspear		L	VL	1D10+1 Impale	4/10

#### **Combat Styles**

Fearbird (Longspear, Javelin): 66%

Possessions: Feather-covered black robes, bird-mask, longspear.

**Description:** With faces hidden by bird-masks and bodies covered in voluminous black robes decorated with feathers of vultures and eagles, these priests strike fear into Azimban men and women.

Tactics: The priests use Palsy before they rush in with their longspears and attempt to keep anyone from harming the High Priest, especially as he summons Devil Birds.

#### Tisa the Master-Torturer - Male Azimban

	Value		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14		1-3	Right Leg	<b>-/6</b>
CON	11		4–6	Left Leg	<b>-/6</b>
SIZ	16		7–9	Abdomen	<b>–</b> /7
INT	12		10-12	Chest	<b>-/8</b>
<b>POW</b>	12		13-15	Right Arm	<b>-/5</b>
DEX	14		16–18	Left Arm	<b>-/5</b>
CHA	14		19–20	Head	<b>-/6</b>
Combat A		3	Armour	: None	
Damage 1	Modifier	+1D3			
Magic Po	ints		Traits: N	None	
Movemen	ıt	8m			
Strike Ra	nk	+13	Skills: A	Athletics 46%, Evade	33%, Drive 50%, Evaluate 38%, Influence 53%,
			Insight 5	50%, Language (Nati	ve) 70%, Lore (Torture) 60%, Perception 42%,
			Persisten	ice 55%, Resilience 4	5%, Streetwise 46%, Unarmed 55%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Ball and Chain	_	M	M	1D6+1 Entangle, Stun Location	6/8

#### **Combat Styles**

That Old Ball and Chain (Ball and Chain, 2-H Axe, Spear): 75%

Possessions: Loincloth, ball and chain.

**Description:** Tisa is potbellied, with huge muscled arms. His long and curly hair hangs down on his back in matted dreadlocks. **Tactics:** Although Tisa prefers to abuse helpless prisoners, he is quite adept with the ball and chain, he uses it to trip opponents before slamming them hard with the weapon.

#### 4. Prison Cells

The cells are well-filled with prisoners who await hard work in the forge, torture and interrogation by Tisa the master-torturer, or death upon the altars of Jul-Juggah. Each of the eighteen cells holds an average of three captives, 90% of which are male. Among the prisoners, who are predominantly Azimban natives, is a swarthy, turbaned Zadjite who seeks to escape and wants the player characters to help him (see Gilzan, below).

The larger rooms consist of a torture-chamber and the dwellings of Tisa and the prison guards. There are 4 guards with the same statistics as the palace guards. There is a 25% chance that 1d3 priests of Jul-Juggah are here to pick out victims for their next grisly sacrifice (see Area 13 of the upper level).

#### 5. Storeroom

This storeroom contains dozens of large wooden crates filled with raw iron ore. A pair of locked doors connects this room to the armoury (Area 6).

#### 6. Armoury

All doors to this room are locked; the key is carried by Abbas the master-smith (see Area 10). Wooden shelves and racks in this chamber are stacked with a growing collection of iron weapons, including swords, axes and war spears. Some of the weapons are ready for use, others lack hilts and shafts. A handful of the weapons are masterwork items, including a pair of longspears decorated with vulture feathers and a battleaxe carved with an images of a roaring lion.

#### 7. Latrine

This simple latrine, little more than a 3 meter pit in the floor, reeks of excrement and the walls carry disgusting stains. A character spending more than 5 rounds in the room (for whatever reason) must make a Routine Resilience save or become sickened for 10 minutes.

# 8. Crypts

The entrance to the crypts is locked. The door is inset with a row of yellowed human skulls. A successful Routine Perception test reveals the scuttling of a pack of tomb rats in the corridor behind the door. This cobwebbed corridor leads to three separate tombs. Each tomb contains a large stone sarcophagi and several wall-alcoves; the resting-place of former kings of Zimballah and their wives and concubines.

Each sarcophagus has a heavy lid (requires a Difficult Brawn test to force open) and contains the rotted remains of a king along with  $1d6 \times 100$  sp worth of gold ornaments and other grave offerings. The alcoves contain the skeletons of females.

There is a 50% chance that one sarcophagus actually contains an undead creature instead of a mere corpse.

#### 9. Living Chambers

This area contains the living-quarters of the king's master weaponsmith, Abbas, and his apprentices, as well as the foreign priests of Zadj who have been hired by the king to teach Abbas the art of iron-smithing. The rooms are furnished in spartan fashion with sleeping-mats of animal-skins and wooden tables set with food, tools and equipment.

There are two secret tunnels here; they may be found with a successful Difficult Perception test.

# 10. Forge

The forge is a huge room with a 10 meter tall ceiling. On each side of the chamber, a set of stairs leads up to a 3-meter wide balcony that follows the wall around the room. In the centre of the chamber is a large clay furnace, a heavy anvil, and a stone vessel filled with water. Scattered around the room are heaps of charcoal, raw ore, waste slag, and equipment such as tongs, hammers and aprons.

**Development:** Working in the forge is Abbas the Master-Smith and 1d3 of his apprentices, supervised by the rogue priests of Zadj. If combat breaks out, the Zadjites run up the stairs and cast spells from atop the balcony, while the apprentices of Abbas attempt to protect the master-smith using hammers and tongs as improvised weapons.

#### Rogue Priests of the Living Flame, male Zadjite (3):

See the Priests of the Living Flame for statistics.

**Description:** These fire-worshippers wear yellow silken robes and tall red turbans. Their motivation for abandoning the cult is simply wealth; in Iraab, the acolytes of the Living Flame are forced to live ascetic lives, while the senior priests profit greatly from their part in the ironsmithing industry.

**Tactics:** The priests stand back at first, leaping in to use their fists and staves when confronted.

# **CONCLUSION**

The conclusion to this adventure depends on who the adventurer works for, and the strategy they choose for entering the royal palace of Zimballah. As noted above, there are several options to choose among. They could, for example, start a slave revolt by releasing the prisoners in the palace dungeons, and use the confusion to escape with the weaponsmith. If the adventurers escape the palace, the priests of Jul-Juggah may use divination spells to determine the identity and location of the culprits, and summon one or more devil-birds to hunt the adventurers down on the savannahs of Azimba.

If the players fail: Again, this depends on the exact nature of the adventurers' actions while they are in the land of Azimba. They could very well end up on the sacrificial altars of Jul-Juggah, or they could be stabbed to death by the king's spearmen, or perhaps be engulfed by a fire elemental summoned by the fire-priests of Zadj.

#### Undead Creature

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	4D6	15	1-3	Right Leg	1-/6
CON	3D6	13	4-6	Left Leg	1-/6
SIZ	2D6+6	14	7-9	Abdomen	1-/7
INT	3D6	14	10-12	Chest	1-/8
<b>POW</b>	3D6	13	13-15	Right Arm	1-/5
DEX	3D6	13	16-18	Left Arm	1-/5
			19-20	Head	1-/6

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier +1D2

**Traits:** Life Sense

Magic Points 13

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +14 Skills: Athletics 73%, Brawn 59%, Evade 76%, Perception 72%, Persistence 76%,

Resilience 86%, Unarmed 48%, Track 67%

Armour: Spirit barrier, 1 AP. No Armour Penalty.

Weapons

Type Range Size Reach Damage AP/HP

Battleaxe - M M 1D6+1 Bleed + Special 4/8

1D8+1 Sunder (2H only)

#### Combat Styles

Ghostly Warrior (1-H Sword, 2-H Sword, Battle Axe): 73%

Possessions: Jewelled Battleaxe (worth 150sp), pendant (worth 50sp), jewelled dagger (worth 40sp)

**Description:** This undead being was once a great warrior. Now it is a shadow of its former self, with desiccated skin and greyish eyes which burn with a dark flame. It wears ragged tatters of useless armour and is surrounded by a spectral glow. This glow gives it 1 AP across all locations. Only magic which penetrates magical armour can pass through this shield of force. It wields a gleaming ancient Battleaxe surrounded by a blue frosty shine.

**Tactics:** This ancient undead warrior is a brute in combat and relentlessly tracks foes. It prefers to eliminate caster enemies first and then moves onto stronger warriors.

**Magic:** The Battleaxe has a 1 per hour effect. If the target of a successful attack which deals damage fails a Difficult Resilience test they take 1D3 CON damage due to the chilling spectral cold of the grave.

### Gilzan of Al-Qazir - Male Zadjite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	11	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	13	10-12	Chest	-17
<b>POW</b>	12	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	16	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	12	19-20	Head	-/5
INT POW DEX	13 12 16	10-12 13-15 16-18	Chest Right Arm Left Arm	-/7 -/4 -/4

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 12 Movement 8m Strike Rank +15 Armour: None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 60%, Brawn 47%, Culture (Own) 96%, Dance 28%, Drive 28%, Evade 60%, Evaluate 75%, First Aid 29%, Influence 69%, Insight 25%, Lore (Regional) 91%, Perception 75%, Persistence 79%, Resilience 72%, Ride 68%, Sing 24%, Sleight 28%, Stealth 79%, Swim 25%, Unarmed 40%

**Advanced Skills:** Commerce 75%, Courtesy 55%, Disguise 45%, Gambling 65%, Language (Native) 75%, Streetwise 81%, Survival 73%, Track 79%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Scimitar	_	M	M	1D8 Bleed	6/10

#### **Combat Styles**

Sword & Board (Scimitar, 2-H Sword, Sword&Shield, Bow (any)): 66%

Possessions: Loincloth.

**Description:** This is a Zadjite slaver who has now himself become imprisoned after a failed slave raid on Azimba. He knows of a way out of the palace (through the temple of Jul-Juggah), and may bargain with this information if the player characters agree to set him free. **Tactics:** If he is freed, Gilzan seeks to arm himself with a scimitar or any available weapon.

# THE SLAVES OF THE MOON



"...the cult of death and night, personified by the moon, whose white, implacable, frozen lips were appeased only by the warm blood that flowed upon her altars. They caught the blood in goblets as it ran from the stone grooves... they raised it aloft... and the goblets were swiftly drained in mid-air by the remote goddess, as if the sacrifice had proven acceptable."

- Clark Ashton Smith: An Offering to the Moon

Centuries ago, migrating clans of a light-skinned race — possibly an offshoot of Elder Kuth — enslaved the native tribes and built the city of Kumara in the hills between what is now Shoma and Azimba. Like their ancestors, the elder Kumarans practised dark sorcery and their ruler, the sorcerer-king Ur-Kharra, was known for his great cruelty and decadence.

Ur-Kharra maintained a large seraglio, filled with young girls of many races, procured by slavers in the sorcerer-king's service. One of his black concubines was a girl named Maka, whose family had been slaughtered when refusing to give up their child to the king.

While posing as a servile consort, Maka plotted for revenge against her cruel master. She knew the tribal lore and sneaked out of the city to find a sacred grove of Nwanga Zhaal, the king of beasts, the tribal god of the black Kumarans, in the hills east of the city.

Within the grove, Maka found an instrument with which to slay Ur-Kharra; a bone dagger made from the fang of a great prehistoric beast. Believing that the bane-dagger was a gift from Nwanga Zhaal, the girl vowed that her kin would serve Nwanga Zhaal unto the last generation. That night, the god came to her in the form of a great leopard, and impregnated Maka with a child.

Maka returned to the city and waited until she was called to be Ur-Kharra's bed companion. In his loathsome embrace, she struck down the old sorcerer with the hidden bone dagger before he realized the danger. However, Ur-Kharra was protected by incantations that allowed his life force to escape his body before he died. The sorcerer's ghostly essence fled down to the vaults beneath the king's halls. Here, among the gems and gold of the treasure vault, Ur-Kharra's soul languished until he went insane and his essence finally merged with the treasure itself.

When Ur-Kharra's apparent death become known, the black slaves of the Kumarans rallied to Maka's side. White clashed against black in a great slaughter and hundreds were killed, but in the end the elder Kumarans were overthrown and Maka became the queen of Kumara. The crypt of Ur-Kharra was sealed and declared taboo.

However, Maka and her people soon found out that Ur-Kharra's dying spells had formed an invisible barrier around the entire city, preventing anyone from escaping Kumara.

Nine moons later, Maka gave birth to a daughter, named Natari. The price of the pact with Nwanga Zhaal quickly became apparent; the child craved the taste of fresh human flesh during every full moon. Maka kept Natari's condition a secret among her court, and supplied the girl with white slaves.

The years passed and Natari grew into full womanhood. When Maka died, Natari became the new queen of Kumara and by taking a consort, she passed on her curse to future generations. In each generation, there has always been a girl directly descended from Maka, which is named Natari in honour of the first daughter. The royal family, cursed with therianthropy, has kept its terrible secret and continued to feed on the population, which has dwindled over the years due to the city's isolation.

# **ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS**

The adventurers discover the lost city of Kumara by chance, arriving on the day before the full moon. Assuming the adventurers approach it peacefully, the party is welcomed by the Kumarans and a great feast is held for them during the day, near the central temple-palace. Before darkness falls, the adventurers are sent away to a guest-house.

The current Natari sees the arrival of the adventurers as an opportunity to destroy the remains of Ur-Kharra and break his ancient spells. However, she does not want her family's curse to be revealed, so she orders her kin to leave the foreigners alone during the days of the full moon.

Natari's younger brother, an ambitious prince named Kasozi, seeks to usurp the queen, and realizes that he might use the players as pawns. Kasozi, himself a wereleopard, sends one of his kinsmen to sneak in and attack the adventurers at night. The assassin attacks in animal form and reverts to human form if slain by the adventurers. Interrogating the servants, who have been instructed by Kazosi, the adventurers learn that the queen and her kin are in fact were-leopards, and that they terrorise the city during the full moon; the people would surely be grateful if the evil queen was removed.

Assuming the adventurers attack or sneak into Natari's palace, the so-called Temple of the Moon, they witness the royal family devouring a hapless slave, confirming the words of the servant.

Confronting the queen, who attempts to negotiate if the adventurers defeat her, Natari admits that she is cursed with turning into a beast during the full moon but says the source of the curse is said to be found in the vaults beneath the temple. This curse also prevents anyone from leaving the city, so it is in the interest of the adventurers to lift the curse even if they don't care about the queen's fate

If the adventurers descend into the dungeons beneath the palace, they confront the remains of Ur-Kharra the sorcerer-king. If his soulessence is defeated, a vision of his death at the hands of Maka flashes into the minds of the adventurers.

Kazosi sends some of his henchmen after the adventurers, hoping to make the adventurers believe that Natari has betrayed her deal with the adventurers. If they survive the ambush and return to the throne room, a three-way battle may ensue between the adventurers and Natari and Kazosi, as well as their remaining followers.

# STARTING THE ADVENTURE

Consider any of the following hooks to get the adventure started. The adventurers are travelling through a remote mountain region. Pursued by a large pack of hungry mountain lions, the players flee towards a mist-filled valley. The distant walls of Kumara appear out of the mists and offer a refuge against the lions.

The party is pursuing some fugitive (perhaps a criminal, traitor or former ally) across the wilderness. The tracks lead into a mist-filled valley. The fugitive has taken up refuge in the city.

# The Valley of Mists

The city of Kumara is located in a narrow valley ringed by forested hills. The city sits on the top of a sloped hillside in the centre of the valley and is ringed by massive stone walls. There are two main gates, and a trail leads down from the city to the plains below from each of them.

To the east of the city is a river which is the source of drinkingwater for the Kumarans. Water from the river is also used to irrigate the fields south and east of the city where peasants work to produce

The city and its environs are ringed with a wall of dense mist which has hidden Kumara from the eyes of foreigners for countless generations. The mist is a side effect of Ur-Kharra's powerful bounding spell which prevents anyone from leaving the area. Creatures are free to enter the valley by walking through the mist, but cannot leave unless they succeed in a Difficult Persistence skill test. Those who fail the test are wracked by pains and cannot retry.

Hidden in the hills a few miles east of the city, outside the mist and the bounding spell, is the sacred grove of Nwanga Zhaal where Maka found the bane-dagger of Ur-Kharra (see the adventure background).

# The Sacred Grove of Nwanga Zaal

Located in the hills east of Kumara, this is an ancient place of worship, used by the native tribesmen before the coming of the elder Kumarans to worship Nwanga Zhaal. The black witchdoctors would visit the grove on the nights of the full moon and offer human sacrifice to the ever-hungry animal-god.

In the centre of the grove is a clearing and an outcropping of rock. A large and weathered stone idol stands in the clearing, near a cave entrance in the rock. The cave is filled with skulls and bones and is the lair of the grove's guardian, a huge prehistoric beast believed to be an incarnation of Nwanga Zhaal — or perhaps this creature is the 'god' himself.

The moss-grown idol of black stone is carved in the shape of a snarling leopard's head. It has an AP 8 and 100 hit points. If the idol is disturbed, the guardian of the grove appears from the cave opening, pouncing upon the creature damaging the idol. The very sight of the creature may scare off the weak-willed.

Development: It is extremely unlikely that the adventurers find this hidden grove before their encounters with the inhabitants of Kumara, but they may come here at the end of the adventure (see Concluding the Adventure).

If the idol is destroyed, Nwanga Zhaal's curse of lycanthropy is lifted from Maka's descendants. Also, the guardian of the grove is instantly slain if the idol is broken (although it fights for its life to prevent this, of course).

# THE CITY OF KUMARA

Kumara is currently inhabited by around five hundred darkskinned natives, and a roughly equal number of light-skinned descendants of the elder Kumarans. Since each people has enslaved the other in turn, crossbreeding is not tolerated and children of such unions are quickly put away.

Since the death of Ur-Kharra the sorcerer-king, and the subsequent black rebellion, the blacks have ruled the city with a succession of women named Natari as their queen. The royal family is cursed with lycanthropy but has kept this fact hidden from the general population. To keep their secret, and because the city is isolated, Natari and her kin usually feed upon kidnapped slaves, but as the population slowly dwindles away people are starting to suspect that something is wrong.

Approaching the City

At first look, the city of Kumara appears as a deserted ruin, but as the adventurers close in they realize it is inhabited. The cyclopean stone of the city walls is partly crumbled in several places and crudely repaired with patches of wood and mud-brick. The harvesting season is over and the fields on the plains around the city are abandoned and dry during this time of the year.

Development: adventurers who approach the city walls peacefully find that the gates are opened to them after a short discourse with the guards on the walls. Although the Kumarans speak an archaic language, anyone who knows either Shoma or Azimban will be able to converse with the inhabitants of the city. The arrival of the adventurers is reported to the royal palace. The adventurers are not free to wander the city, but are escorted to a stone building not far from the south gate, where they are quartered until a feast is held in their honour (see below). During their time in the guest-house it becomes apparent that a light-skinned people are kept as slaves by the natives, although the servants are forbidden to speak with the foreigners.

Should the adventurers for some reason decide to attack the city, or act aggressively against the guards, the Kumarans defend themselves as appropriate and attempt to capture the foreigners alive. Captives are taken to the guest-house in chains. No feast is held; instead Kazosi arranges for the servant Upi to free the adventurers and beg them to slay 'the bestial black queen,' Natari.

#### A Feast Before the Moon Rises

If the adventurers avoid aggression against the Kumarans, they are received as guests and a great feast is held in their honour the next day. The people of Kumara gather in the open area below the Temple of the Moon while the queen and her court watch from high atop the temple-hill. The adventurers will not be permitted to speak with the queen or her nobles, who are protected by a full regiment of guards. Should the adventurers try to reach the queen by force, Natari and her nobles retreat behind the walls of the palace-temple, while the guards rush in to subdue the assailants.

Entertainment at the feast includes male and female dancers leaping and cavorting to the primal sounds of wooden drums and bone pipes; games of wrestling and club-fighting; and the display of trained animals.

#### The Guardian of the Grove

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	6D6+15	37	1–2	Right Hind Leg	4/9
CON	3D6	11	3–4	Left Hind Leg	4/9
SIZ	4D6+15	30	5–7	Hindquarters	4/10
INT	5	5	8-10	Forequarters	4/11
POW	3D6+6	16	11-13	Right Front Leg	4/8
DEX	3D6+6	17	14–16	Left Front Leg	4/8
CHA	5	5	17-20	Head	4/9

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier +2D6

Magic Points 16 Movement 12m Strike Rank +11 Armour: Hardened flesh and fur: No Armour Penalty.

Traits: Night Sight

Skills: Athletics 80%, Evade 75%, Stealth 77%, Perception 75%, Persistence 85%,

Resilience 77%, Track 80%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Claw	_	M	M	1D10	As Legs
Bite		M	T	1D10	As Head
Rake		M	M	2D10	_

#### Combat Styles

Guardian Anger (Claw, Bite, Rake): 88%

Possessions: None

**Description:** This hulking monster appears as a giant prehistoric cat-like beast with gleaming eyes and sharp fangs/claws. **Tactics:** The guardian attacks relentlessly and attempts to go after the weaker foes before it concentrates on the stronger.

#### Special Rules

*Rake:* Any combat round in which the Guardian hits with both its claw attack and bite attack against a single target, the Guardian immediately gains a free attack with its rake.

#### Kumaran Warriors - Male Shoma

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	10	10-12	Chest	-/7
<b>POW</b>	10	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	10	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 2 Damage Modifier +1D2 Magic Points 10

Movement 8m Strike Rank +12 **Armour:** None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 69%, Brawn 67%, Culture (Own) 80%, Dance 24%, Drive 24%, Evade 68%, Evaluate 20%, First Aid 24%, Influence 20%, Insight 23%, Lore (Regional) 60%, Perception 55%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 69%, Ride 49%, Sing 20%, Sleight 24%, Stealth 59%, Swim 26%, Unarmed 28%

Advanced Skills: Language (Native) 80%, Lore (Tactics) 60%, Survival 72%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Shortspear	_	M	L	1D8+1 Impale	4/5
Short bow	80m	L	_	1D6 Impale	4/4

#### **Combat Styles**

Warrior Born (Shortspear, Shortbow, Blowgun); 67%

Possessions: Clothing, shortspear, shortbow, 20 arrows, 1d6 sp.

**Description:** These warriors wield spears and black wooden bows; they wear body paint and are decorated with a White Mountain motif.

Tactics: These guards fire their bows, before they close in with spears.

Food is served by light-skinned slaves. The adventurers may be surprised to learn what the Kumarans eat; the wooden trays brought by the servants are filled with all manner of disgusting food. Nothing happens to those who refuse to eat, although the adventurers may believe that they should taste the dishes so as not to offend their hosts.

Adventurers who taste the different dishes must make Routine Resilience skill tests or vomit and become weakened. The Kumarans are used to this food and are unaffected. The dishes include fried grasshoppers and red beetles, fist-sized green snails, and finger-thick pale white maggots.

The feast ends well before darkness falls, after which the full moon quickly appears. After the feast, the player characters are escorted back to the guest-house by a dozen guards.

# THE LEOPARD HUNTS IN DARKNESS

The adventurers share a common room in the guest-house. The room has a 6-meter-tall ceiling. Through a narrow window (too small to climb through for a SIZ 11+ creature) high on the outer

wall the full moon can be seen rising. There are six guards patrolling the corridor outside. The door to the room is of iron and is barred from the outside.

In the south-eastern corner of the room is a secret door (Difficult Perception test to detect) that can only be opened from the outside.

**Development:** In the middle of the night, one of Kazosi's henchmen attacks the party through the secret entrance. He crawls through the corridor in leopard-form and tries to attack by surprise, leaping upon anyone awake within the chamber. If slain, he reverts to human form. When the guards posted outside hear the sounds of battle from within the chamber, they open the iron door and investigate in 3d4 rounds. The guards are loyal to queen Natari and know nothing of Kazosi's plot to stir up the adventurers against the queen; their job is to keep the adventurers imprisoned.

After the attack, one of the light-skinned servants in the guest-house approaches the adventurers. He calls himself Upi and reveals to the adventurers that the queen and her kin are were-leopards who terrorize the city during the full moon. He also suggests that the slaves of the city will rise up against their masters if the 'evil queen Natari' is slain (but they dare not act before she is dead). While there is some truth to this story, Kazosi's plan is to get the adventurers to kill Natari, and then claim the throne of Kumara for himself.



#### Henchman of Kazosi - Male Shoma Were-Leopard (animal form)

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6+6	17	1–2	Right Hind Leg	2/6
CON	3D6	11	3–4	Left Hind Leg	2/6
SIZ	2D6+8	15	5–7	Hindquarters	2/7
INT	5	5	8-10	Forequarters	2/8
POW	3D6	11	11-13	Right Front Leg	2/5
DEX	2D6+12	19	14–16	Left Front Leg	2/5
CHA	5	5	17-20	Head	2/6

**Combat Actions** 3

Damage Modifier +1D4

Magic Points 11

Movement 10m

Strike Rank +12

Armour: Fur: No Armour Penalty. (silver weapons negate)

Traits: Night Sight

Skills: Athletics 88%, Evade 77%, Stealth 79%, Perception 70%, Persistence 75%,

Resilience 75%, Track 77%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Claw	_	M	M	1D6	As Legs
Bite		M	T	1D10	As Head
Rake	_	M	M	2D6	As Legs

#### Combat Styles

Snarling Fury (Claw, Bite, Rake): 71%

Possessions: None.

Description: In their animal form, the were-leopards look just like regular leopards, although they revert to their true human form if slain.

Tactics: A were-leopard in animal form charges his opponents and makes a full attack which includes his vicious rake attacks.

Special Rules

Rake: Any combat round in which the leopard hits with both its claw attacks against a single target, it immediately gains a free attack with its rake. The leopard will hang on to its prey and continue to rake and bite round after round. The target must succeed in a Routine opposed Athletics test against the leopard to break free.

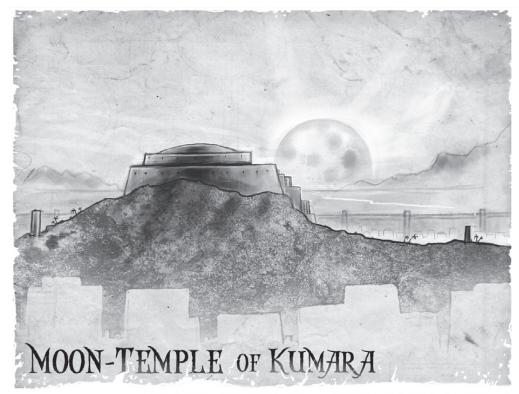
# THE TEMPLE OF THE MOON

Originally a fortress-palace of the elder Kumarans, the central building of the city is now also a temple dedicated to moonworship in honour of Nwanga Zhaal.

The temple sits on a hill, like an acropolis, with a steep zig-zagging set of stairs that lead to the top, 20 meters above the level of the other buildings in the city. The walls of the temple are 10 meters tall and of superior masonry. There are no windows, only arrow slits. Area 18 has no ceiling and is open to the sky, although this is not apparent when viewing the temple from the ground level outside.

There is a single side entrance (Area 12) that can be reached by climbing (Difficult Athletics test), but the guards posted there may easily spot any climbers unless they climb under cover of darkness (but remember that this adventure is set

during the nights of the full moon). In daylight, the side entrance can be seen from below the temple-hill with a successful Difficult Perception test.



#### 

#### The Temple of the Moon

**Standard Features:** Unless noted otherwise, all interior doors are strong wooden doors. Ceiling height is 10 meters in all rooms except the moon-pool (Area 18).

**Lighting:** The corridors and rooms of the temple are illuminated by wall-hung torches. Due to the ceiling height and the limited range of the torches (6 meters), the upper 2 meters of all rooms are shrouded in shadows which provide concealment to any creature hiding there.

#### 

#### I. Grand Staircase

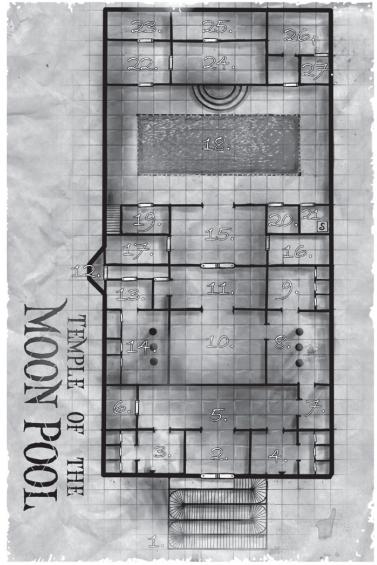
This large stairway zigzags up to the main gates (Area 2) far above ground level. A creature's speed is halved when navigating the stairs (each square costs double movement). The archers in the guardrooms (Areas 3 and 4) have excellent line of sight to anyone approaching this way.

#### 2. Main Gates

The massive front gates are made of iron and can be barred from the inside. Six warriors guard the gates.

**Development:** If intruders are detected, the guards sound the alarm by blowing a goat-horn, then close and bar the doors. They run to take up positions in the guardrooms to each side, from where they fire their bows against the intruders through the arrow slits.

**Kumaran Warriors (6)** 



# Kiuma, Guard Captain - Male Shoma

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	18	1-3	Right Leg	3/6
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	3/6
SIZ	16	7-9	Abdomen	3/7
INT	13	10-12	Chest	3/8
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	3/5
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	3/5
CHA	11	19-20	Head	-/6

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +1D4 Magic Points 11

Movement 8m Strike Rank +14 (+10

when armoured)

**Armour:** Rhino Hide Shirt and Leggings. -4 Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 69%, Brawn 67%, Culture (Own) 80%, Dance 24%, Drive 24%, Evade 68%, Evaluate 20%, First Aid 24%, Influence 20%, Insight 20%, Lore (Regional) 60%, Perception 55%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 69%, Ride 49%, Sing 20%, Sleight 24%, Stealth 59%, Swim 26%, Unarmed 28%

**Advanced Skills:** Language (Native) 82%, Lore (Tactics) 67%, Streetwise 70%, Survival 70%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HI</i> -
Shortspear	_	M	L	1D8+1 Impale	4/5
Short bow	80m	L		1D6 Impale	4/4

#### **Combat Styles**

Shoma Guard Captain (Shortspear, Shortbow, Shield&Spear): 71%

**Possessions:** Hide armor, shortspear, shortbow, silver armbands (worth 35 sp each).

**Description:** The guard-captain wears armor of rhino hide, and silver armbands to denote his rank.

**Tactics:** Kiuma joins his men in defense of the temple. If facing overwhelming opposition, he flees to warn Queen Natari and the other nobles.

#### Henchman of Kazosi - Male Shoma Were-Leopard (hybrid form)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	18	1-3	Right Leg	2/7
CON	16	4-6	Left Leg	2/7
SIZ	17	7-9	Abdomen	2/8
INT	10	10-12	Chest	2/9
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	2/6
DEX	19	16-18	Left Arm	2/6
CHA	10	19-20	Head	2/7

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +1D4

Magic Points 11
Movement 8m

Strike Rank +15

**Armour:** Supernatural Flesh. No Armour Penalty. (silver weapons negate)

Traits: Night Sight

Common Skills: Athletics 77%, Brawn 70%, Culture (Own) 80%, Dance 29%, Drive 30%, Evade 73%, Evaluate 20%, First Aid 29%, Influence 55%, Insight 60%, Lore (Regional) 70%, Perception 66%, Persistence 62%, Resilience 82%, Ride 35%, Sing 21%, Sleight 29%, Stealth 79%, Swim 34%, Unarmed 47%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 79%, Language (Native) 90%, Lore (Tactics) 63%, Survival 77%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Heavy mace	_	L	L	1D8+1 Stun Location, Sunder	6/10
Claw		M	M	1D6	As Arms
Bite		M	Т	1D8	As Head

#### **Combat Styles**

Noble Fighter (Heavy Mace, Claw, Bite, Mace&Shield): 68%

Possessions: Clothing, heavy mace, heavy wooden shield.

**Description:** The moon-cursed nobles of Kumara, in their hybrid form, are leopard-headed with eyes that glow red in the dark, and arms which end in claws.

**Tactics:** The were-leopards use their night sight to good effect, hiding in the shadows until opponents approach, then strike with surprise and great speed.

#### 3. Western Guardroom

The arrow slits in this chamber provide excellent cover and archers firing upon intruders also gain a +5% bonus to attack for being on higher ground.

To the back of the room are several small bedrooms where the guards sleep when not on duty.

#### 4. Eastern Guardroom

This room is similar to the other guardroom (Area 3). Hidden under a rug in one of the bedchambers is a masterwork dagger and a small amethyst (worth 75 SP).

#### 5. Great Corridor

This corridor is of great size. A huge mural covers the wall opposite to the entrance (from Area 2). The painted mural depicts a beautiful black female, with a small girl in her arms, sitting upon a throne surrounded by black courtiers. Everyone in the templepalace, if interrogated, can tell the adventurers that this is a painting of Maka, the first black queen of Kumara, and her daughter Natari.

#### 6. Guard Captain

This is the office and bedroom of the guard-captain, a young and strong man named Kiuma. The plastered walls are covered with crimson tapestries. A large bed stands against the north wall, with a stand of carved wood to one side. In the other corner a wooden folding-screen separates a shelf, sofa and couch from the rest of the place.

#### 7. Antechamber

This chamber is empty save for a few worn rugs on the floor.

#### 8. Hall of Three Columns

In the middle of this hall are three slender stone columns carved with images of war. The room is illuminated by a single torch set in the middle column, leaving the rest of the room in shadowy illumination.

A were-leopard, one of Kazosi's henchmen, hides in the semi-darkness here, with orders to attack any intruders.

#### 9. Laboratory

The door to this chamber is decorated with strange symbols. A successful Routine Lore (mystical) test is required to recognize the sigils as alchemical symbols. The door is locked and trapped with a poison needle trap (Difficult Mechanisms test to disarm); poisoned with blue whinnis (Difficult Resilience or suffer 1d4 damage to affected Hit Location).

Behind the door is a long disused alchemical lab; with crates, boxes, canisters, flasks, jars of dried herbs, animal parts, and other strange items; books, scrolls, bottles and dissection tools litter the tables and dust is everywhere. Among the rubble (Difficult Perception test to spot) is a wooden box with 2 doses of fire-powder, a vial of antitoxin, and a coloured glass vial (worth 20 SP).

Against the northern wall are three small rooms; two of the doors are unlocked and the third door is locked. If the locked door is broken

down by force, several fragile vials of chemical fluids fall down from a shelf and combine to form an explosion that causes 6d6 points of fire damage divided amongst all Hit Locations (Difficult Evade test for half damage) to all within a 5 meter radius. Such an explosion also alerts any nearby guards, who come to investigate in 1d6 rounds.

# 10. Large Hall

This large hall contains a number of headless statues. Further inspection reveals that the sculpted stone bodies do not resemble the black Kumarans, but men of a taller and more powerful build. These are in fact statues of the elder Kumarans, who were themselves descended from the giant-kings of Kuth. The heads of these statues have been smashed in rage by the now-ruling Kumarans, as indicated by the rubble around the feet of the statues.

#### II. Inner Gates

This antechamber is decorated with red tapestries with gold trimming. There is a 25% chance to encounter a Kumaran noble (a were-leopard in human form) making his way to the pool chamber (Area 18) with an entourage of 1d4 guards.

# 12. Watchpost

This small guard-station is 25 meters above the ground. The natural rock surface below is rough (Difficult Athletics test to climb). A single guard is stationed here, with a goat-horn to sound the alarm. The door behind the guard is barred from the inside; the guard knows a secret knock that summons a guard from the nearby guardroom (Area 13) to open the door when required.

**Kumaran Warrior** 

## 13. Guards

Housed in this simple, unlocked room are six guards; two of them are resting here at any time. There are six sleeping-mats here, as well as a weapon rack with spears, clubs and bows. Two large wooden shields are placed in one corner. On a small wooden table is an opened flask of banana wine, some throwing-bones, and a dagger.

Kumaran Warriors (2)

# 14. Personal Chambers and Lounge

Beyond an open archway from the guardroom (Area 13), is a large reception room. Three stone pillars support the ceiling. Half a dozen chairs draped with baboon-skins are placed around a large table, upon which is a selection of fresh fruits, two silver decanters of wine (worth 25 SP each), and an ivory figurine of a dancing woman (worth 50 SP).

Along the southern wall are several locked chambers; these are the bedrooms of lesser nobles and courtiers. Each room contains  $1d4 \times 100$  SP worth of assorted bronze and silver jewelry.

# 15. Great Antechamber

Four black warriors guard the doors inside this antechamber. If the alarm has been sounded, the doors are barred from the inside (they require a Difficult Brawn test to break or force open), else they are unlocked.

Kumaran Warriors (4)

#### 16. Kitchen

A cooking-pit is in the far end of this room. On a table is a pile of fresh meat and vegetables. Jars of spices (worth 200 SP) line the shelves. Currently in the kitchen is a cook and a serving-boy; the former is sleeping and snoring.

#### 17. Disused Storeroom

Entrance to this pantry is through a broken door. In addition to half a dozen empty barrels, boxes, and ewers, a small, sealed clay amphora can be found (Difficult Perception test to spot it amongst the boxes) that contains a handful of ancient gold coins (worth 200 SP). A successful Routine Lore (history) test reveals that the coins are from the fabled era of Elder Kuth.

#### 18. The Moon-Pool

This huge ceremonial chamber is open to the sky above, from which moonlight shines down into a large water-filled pool in the middle of the room. The pool is 6 meters deep and rimmed with white marble tiles. On the far side of the chamber is a high-backed wooden throne set with 12 large pieces of lapis lazuli (worth 50 SP each). The room is illuminated by two large bronze braziers with supports carved in the shape of rhinos.

Gathered here on the night of the full moon is Natari and her kin, the nobles of Kumara, all of whom are cursed with the appetite for human flesh during the full moon. The nobles are were-leopards, lycanthropes able to assume leopard form as well as a hybrid form with the head and paws of a leopard, and the torso and legs of a human. When the full moon shines, they must assume either hybrid or animal form, although even then they can revert to human form for a limited time.

Natari and her kin are not able to spread lycanthropy with their bite or claws; the curse only affects the children of Natari (that is, the girls descended directly from Maka) and the children of any wereleopards who mate with each other. A wereleopard (except Natari) mating with a normal human always produces a stillborn child.

**Development:** To conceal their true nature, Natari and the other nobles remain isolated during the nights of the full moon, keeping only a few trusted guards and servants around. The wereleopards share the flesh and blood of a few unlucky victims, usually old or homeless people who have been kidnapped from the streets of the city, and almost always of the light-skinned slave-caste.

If the adventurers enter the Temple of the Moon during this night, they come upon this ghastly scene of wereleopards about to feast upon a pair of bound male slaves. If combat breaks out, the nobles attack and try to drive the intruders away from the pool. Natari and Kazosi remain at the back near the throne, along with a few bodyguards.

If the queen senses that defeat is possible, she assumes human form and pleads with the adventurers to cease hostilities. She explains that she and her kin are cursed and that the curse originates from an 'ancient demon' imprisoned in the nether vaults of the city. If the adventurers agree to slay the demon they may take any treasure it guards.

The wereleopards have high damage resistance, but are vulnerable to silver. Weapons dipped in the moon-pool are considered silver for 1d3 rounds (if the adventurers need a hint, describe to them how the moon reflects in the pool, making the water look like liquid silver). If a wereleopard is somehow hurled into the pool, he suffers as if he was burned by strong acid (1d4+2 points of damage to each Hit Location for each round he remains in the water).

#### Queen Natari of Kumara - Female Shoma Were-Leopard (hybrid form)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	2/7
CON	16	4-6	Left Leg	2/7
SIZ	16	7-9	Abdomen	2/8
INT	13	10-12	Chest	2/9
POW	16	13-15	Right Arm	2/6
DEX	19	16-18	Left Arm	2/6
CHA	17	19-20	Head	2/7

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +1D4 Magic Points 16

Movement 8m Strike Rank +16 Armour: Supernatural flesh. No Armour Penalty. (silver weapons negate)

Traits: Night Sight

Common Skills: Athletics 47%, Brawn 42%, Culture (Own) 86%, Dance 70%, Drive 35%, Evade 80%, Evaluate 70%, First Aid 32%, Influence 94%, Insight 69%, Lore (Regional) 86%, Perception 69%, Persistence 72%, Resilience 62%, Ride 70%, Sing 70%, Sleight 66%, Stealth 77%, Swim 32%, Unarmed 55%

**Advanced Skills:** Courtesy 75%, Language (Native) 90%, Oratory 80%, Play Instrument (Pipes) 79%, Seduction 77%, Survival 72%, Teaching 75%, Track 74%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Shortsword	_	M	S	1D6 Bleed, Impale	6/8
Claw		M	M	1D6	As Arms
Bite		M	T	1D8	As Head

#### **Combat Styles**

Queen's Right (Shortsword, Claw, Bite, Sword&Dagger): 70%

**Possessions:** Gold-trimmed red robe, shortsword, gold headband set with lapis lazuli (worth 250 sp), golden serpent-armband (worth 75 sp).

**Description:** Natari is beautiful, with soft black skin and long curly hair held up with a gold headband. She wears gold-trimmed red robes, and a golden serpent-armband. In her hybrid form she has a feral beauty about her.

**Tactics:** Natari stays behind the protection of her wereleopard kin and any regular guards present. She favors negotiations if more than four of her kin are killed.

#### Kazosi the Traitor - Male Shoma Were-Leopard (hybrid form)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	22	1-3	Right Leg	2/7
CON	16	4-6	Left Leg	2/7
SIZ	19	7-9	Abdomen	2/8
INT	10	10-12	Chest	2/9
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	2/6
DEX	19	16-18	Left Arm	2/6
CHA	10	19-20	Head	2/7

**Combat Actions** 3

Damage Modifier +1D8

Magic Points 11

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +15

Armour: Supernatural flesh. No Armour Penalty. (silver weapons negate)

Traits: Night Sight

Common Skills: Athletics 81%, Brawn 76%, Culture (Own) 80%, Dance 29%, Drive 30%, Evade 75%, Evaluate 20%, First Aid 29%, Influence 70%, Insight 12%, Lore (Regional) 80%, Perception 71%, Persistence 62%, Resilience 86%, Ride 35%,

Sing 21%, Sleight 29%, Stealth 77%, Swim 38%, Unarmed 82%

Advanced Skills: Acrobatics 71%, Language (Native) 90%, Lore (Tactics) 70%,

Oratory 61%, Survival 87%, Track 86%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Great axe	_	Н	L	1D12+2 Bleed, Sunder	4/10
Claw		M	M	1D6	As Arms
Bite		M	T	1D8	As Head

#### **Combat Styles**

Violent Mood Swings (Greataxe, Claw, Bite): 71%

**Possessions:** White loincloth, belt with golden buckle (worth 35 sp), Great axe, 2 golden rings (worth 100 sp each).

**Description:** Kazosi is dark-skinned and powerfully built, with short curly hair and a short-cropped beard. Kazosi does not like to conceal

his true nature; he wants to be free to roam the city to hunt and kill the humans, whom he considers to be 'lesser creatures'.

Tactics: Kazosi has trouble controlling his bloodlust, so at the slightest provocation he enters a rage and attacks with his formidable axe.

# Natari's Kin, Slaves of the Moon - Male and female Shoma Were-Leopard (hybrid form; 8 total)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	18	1-3	Right Leg	2/7
CON	16	4-6	Left Leg	2/7
SIZ	17	7-9	Abdomen	2/8
INT	10	10-12	Chest	2/9
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	2/6
DEX	19	16-18	Left Arm	2/6
CHA	10	19-20	Head	2/7

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier +1D4

Magic Points 11
Movement 8m

Strike Rank +15

Armour: Supernatural flesh. No Armour Penalty (silver weapons negate)

Traits: Night Sight

Common Skills: Athletics 67%, Brawn 60%, Culture (Own) 70%, Dance 29%, Drive 30%, Evade 68%, Evaluate 20%, First Aid 29%, Influence 55%, Insight 21%, Lore (Regional) 75%, Perception 51%, Persistence 52%, Resilience 62%, Ride 35%, Sing 21%, Sleight 29%, Stealth 54%, Swim 34%, Unarmed 37%

Advanced Skills: Language (Native) 80%, Oratory 63%, Survival 47%, Track 56%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Shortsword	_	M	S	1D6 Bleed, Impale	6/8
Claw		M	M	1D6	As Arms
Bite		M	T	1D8	As Head

#### **Combat Styles**

Moon Slave (Shortsword, Claw, Bite, Chakram): 67%

Possessions: Purple robes, shortsword, golden jewelry (worth 50 sp).

**Description:** These dark skinned men and women are kin of Natari and share her beauty and savage countenance. They wear purple robes and gold bangles set with precious gemstones.

Tactics: The Slaves of the Moon will fight fiercely to protect their queen and engage all intruders using their range of abilities.

#### 19. Private Chambers

This comfortable room is the private lounge and bedchamber of Kazosi, Natari's younger brother. The floor is carpeted with thick rugs, and the walls are hung with wooden shields and weapons such as swords, axes and spears. Behind a blue curtain is a large bed; a female slave is always here. On the southern wall is a secret door (Difficult Perception test) that conceals an alcove that is large enough for one SIZ 10-13 creature to hide in. Kazosi might retreat here and hide if defeat seems imminent.

#### 20. Cell

Behind a wooden portcullis is a small cell that holds 3 prisoners; one young woman and two old men. They were kidnapped from the streets of the city a few days ago and will soon be slain and eaten by Natari and her kin.

# 21. Disused Room (With Secret Trapdoor)

A few pieces of worn furniture sit and collect dust in this littleused room. Unknown to most, except Natari, there is a hidden trapdoor (Difficult Perception test to spot it) in the corner of the room that leads down to the catacombs beneath the palace.

#### 22. Storeroom

Serving as a storage room for the palace-temple, this chamber is filled with chests, baskets and shelves containing dried meats, clothing, and various tools and equipment. There is also a small collection of wine bottles (worth 150 SP in total).

#### 23. Servants

This chamber houses four trusted servants who know the true nature of Natari and the other nobles. There is little of value in this room.

# 24. Queen's Lounge

The door to this chamber is locked. In each corner of the room is a large red clay vase with white paint depicting the ancient masters of Kumara. On the walls are wooden masks crafted by the black Kumarans. The floor is covered by red, black and white carpets.

# 25. Queen's Bedroom

This chamber is lit by half a dozen small oil lamps of silver (worth 15 SP each) and smells pleasantly of perfume. A large mirror (worth 100 SP) stands against one wall. Next to a bed of cedar wood is a cupboard containing Natari's make-up, oils and perfumes (worth 75 SP in total). Several wardrobes contain a large collection of fine clothes (worth 1,000 SP in total).

#### 26. Shrine

The entrance to this shrine is locked, and the door is decorated with scenes of leopards killing prey. The interior walls of the shrine are covered with thin sheets of ivory. Close to the far wall is a raised stone slab, covered with purple cloth and set with a small silver figurine (worth 150 SP) of a leopard-deity; this is an image of Nwanga Zhaal, of course.

#### 27. Treasure Room

The door to this chamber is locked; Natari has the key. In addition, the doorknob is smeared with contact poison (Difficult Perception test to notice; Routine Mechanisms test to disarm; Difficult Resilience test to avoid poison's 1d6 damage to Chest Hit Location).

Inside the small square room are four wooden boxes. The boxes contain a small pile of silver fox fur from far-away Tharag Thule (worth 250 SP in total), a silver-bladed longsword in a fine scabbard (worth 100 SP), a dozen golden rings and armbands (worth 350 SP in total), six bales of silk (worth 150 SP), and a small collection of parchment scrolls that describe the founding of the city (value variable).

# THE CRYPT OF UR-KHARRA

The tunnels and chambers beneath the palace were extensive, but most of them have caved in since Ur-Kharra's death. From a hidden trapdoor (see Area 21, above), a spiral staircase descends about 50 meters before it ends in a square chamber (see Area 1, below).

#### 

#### The Crypt of Ur-Kharra

**Standard Features:** Unless noted otherwise, all interior doors are stone doors. Ceiling height is 6 meters.

**Lighting:** The chambers in the crypt are unlit. The creatures here detect victims by sensing vibrations. If the player characters bring light sources into the crypt, hostile creatures will usually be able to detect the players first and attack with surprise.

#### 

# I. Square Chamber

The stairs from the upper level of the temple-palace end in this empty and undecorated room.

#### 2. Corridor and Bronze Door

The corridor is strewn with dust-covered rubble. Nothing appears to have moved here for years. The corridor ends in a locked bronze door (treat as stone door) inscribed with an image of a crowned and robed man who must be around nine foot tall, judging by the size of the servants depicted next to him. A successful Routine Lore (history) test reveals this to be tantalizing evidence of the fabled giant-kings of Kuth.

#### 3. Cobwebbed Room

The spiders from the pillared hall (Area 5) have placed their near-invisible but strong webs across this room. Approaching creatures must succeed on a Difficult Perception test to notice a web; otherwise they stumble into it and become trapped as though by a successful web attack. If any noise is made during attempts to untangle from the web, the spiders quickly come to investigate.

#### 4. Secret Tomb

The door to this secret tomb is hidden (Difficult Perception test to detect). The chamber is sealed and opening it releases a cloud

of poisonous grey dust. Creatures within 3 meters of the door must make a Difficult Resilience skill test or suffer from madness and hallucinations, entering a berserk rage and begin attacking the nearest creature. The effect lasts for 1d10 rounds.

The tomb contains a large, unadorned stone sarcophagus. The heavy lid can be smashed or lifted (AP 8; hp 60; requires a Difficult Brawn test to force open). The sarcophagus is empty except for a gem-set diadem (similar to the crown depicted on the mural in Area 5). Ur-Kharra hid the crown here, deep beneath the earth, to prevent other sorcerers of Elder Kuth from discovering its location by scrying. Discovering the true history and properties of the diadem would be an adventure in itself.

#### 5. Pillared Hall

This is the lair of a pair of crypt spiders. They have grown big and hungry by feeding on rats and other vermin entering this chamber through small ventilation shafts. The far corner of the room is covered with webs, but this requires a Difficult Perception test to detect.

This ceiling of this great hall is upheld by

six square pillars of unadorned, partly cracked stone. Each pillar is actually in rather fragile condition (AP 4; hp 20). It is also possible to topple a pillar instead of breaking it (Difficult Athletics test). A toppled pillar causes 6d6 points of damage distributed to all Hit Locations (Difficult Evade test for half damage) to adventurer in the path of the falling pillar. Note that breaking or toppling over more than three of the pillars causes the entire ceiling to fall down, with dire consequences for those caught beneath it (Games Masters should give warnings...but 12D6 damage would not be unbelievable). If this room caves in, it seals off the chambers beyond for further exploration unless several days or weeks are spent clearing the rubble.

The entire northern wall of the hall is covered with a grand mural which depicts Ur-Kharra, the ancient sorcerer-king of Kumara, a light-skinned man of giant (3-meter-tall) proportions, draped in dark green robes and crowned with a gem-set diadem. He is surrounded by light-skinned men of lesser stature as well as kneeling ranks of black servants. There is a secret door cleverly hidden (Routine Perception test) within the painting; it is opened by pressing the left hand of the image of Ur-Kharra.

#### 6. Side Chamber

This floor of this room is strewn with debris, including a rusted battle-axe, an empty scroll case, and a pile of rat bones.

#### 7. Secret Room

This is the antechamber to the throne room (Area 8), reached through the secret door in the mural on the other side (see Area 5).



#### 8. Old Throne Room

A grand throne stands against the far wall of this lavish chamber. The throne is flanked by a pair of large, ornately carved bronze braziers. In front of the throne are a dozen age-worn wooden chests. The chests have all but crumbled due to rot, causing their contents to spill out across the floor; a large pile of gold coins interspersed with gems and golden jewellery such as armbands, necklaces and rings. This is truly an ancient king's hoard!

Development: The hoard appears to contain around 8,000 SP worth of ancient gold coins and jewellery. However, it is unlikely that the adventurers will be able to appraise the hoard. After a few rounds, preferably when the players are busy collecting the treasure, the pile of gold suddenly starts to melt and flow together into a single amorphous blob of molten gold. This is actually the current shape of Ur-Kharra, whose insane soul-essence has taken residence in the sorcerer-king's hoard of yore. It lashes out against the nearest creature and fights until destroyed.

If the golden ooze is defeated, it dissolves into a pool of stinking acid. A spectral scene flashes past the adventurers' eyes during its death-throes: A vision of the city of Kumara in its prime with a tall, robed man sitting on a throne; a black harem-girl kneeling in front of an idol of a snarling leopard; the same girl caressing the king, then backstabbing him with a fang-shaped dagger; and finally a spectral figure emerging from the dying king's body and merging with the treasure chests next to the throne. This vision of past events should leave the adventurers with quite a few questions for Natari when they return to the palace above.

# Crypt Spiders (2)

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	1D6+6	10	1	Right Fourth Leg	3/3
CON	3D6	11	2	Left Fourth Leg	3/3
SIZ	2D6+6	13	3	Right Third Leg	3/3
INT	8	8	4	Left Third Leg	3/3
POW	2D6	7	5-11	Abdomen	3/6
DEX	2D6+9	16	12	Right Second Leg	3/3
			13	Left Second Leg	3/3
			14	Right First Leg	3/3
			15	Left First Leg	3/3
			16-20	Thorax	3/5

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier +0

Magic Points 7 Traits: Poison, Wall Walking

Movement 6m

Strike Rank +16 Skills: Athletics 75%, Evade 40%, Perception 65%, Persistence 31%, Resilience 43%,

**Armour:** Chitin. No Armour Penalty

Stealth 85%, Track 40%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Bite	_	M	T	1D6+Poison	As Head
Webbing-	L	L	Entangl	es —	4/10

#### **Combat Styles**

Spider Spider (Bite, Webbing): 60%

Possessions: None, but there's a 30% chance each spider to find 1D10x2 sp.

**Description:** These 'small' giant spiders are typical of their kind.

Tactics: They prefer to lurk and use their webbing, sneaking around unless forced into open confrontation.

#### **Spider Venom**

**Application:** Injected. **Onset time:** 1D3 Rounds. **Duration:** 1D3 Days.

Resistance Time: Daily. The first Resistance roll must be made at the end of the Onset Time, then daily thereafter. Successfully resisting the

poison allows the victim to avoid suffering the Conditions until the next roll must be made.

Potency: 40+11 (CON of Spider)

**Resistance:** Resilience. **Conditions:** Paralysis.

Antidote/Cure: Healing skill and magic.

# Ur-Kharra's Serpent of the Pit (giant constrictor snake)

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6+24	35	1-6	Tail	3/12
CON	3D6+18	29	7-14	Body	3/14
SIZ	3D6+18	29	15-20	Head	3/12
INT	3	3			
POW	2D6+6	13			
DEX	2D6+6	13			
CHA	3	3			

**Combat Actions** 2

Armour: Scales. No Armour Penalty.

Damage Modifier +2D6

Traits: None

Magic Points 13

mants: None

Movement 6m (8m swim) Strike Rank +8

**Skills:** Athletics 85%, Evade 65%, Perception 74%, Persistence 70%, Resilience 73%,

Stealth 75%, Track 72%

Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Bite	_	L	T	1D6	As Head
Constrict		Н	T	1D8	As Body

#### **Combat Styles**

Snake Lord (Bite, Constrict): 63%

Combat Notes: The Serpent's bite is not venomous, and inflicts normal damage.

If the Serpent's constriction attack hits, the victim is caught up in the serpent's coils. Each round, the Serpent inflicts its Damage Modifier on the victim. Only the victim's chest armour protects against this damage. In addition to the Hit Point damage caused by the constriction, the victim is unable to breathe and begins to suffocate (see the *Legend Core Rulebook*).

#### Soul-Essence of Ur-Kharra

**Sentient Golden Ooze (hoard-ooze, advanced):** As previous Ooze; except made of molten gold.

*Tactics*: A hoard ooze lies still until it detects a potential meal within range. It then forms a pseudopod and pummels the opponent. Creatures killed by a hoard ooze are devoured.

A hoard ooze's protoplasmic form secretes acid that dissolves organic matter but not metal or stone. Any attack deals acid damage. Non-metallic armour or clothing dissolves and becomes useless immediately unless it succeeds on a Routine Evade test. Wooden weapons that strike the metallic ooze dissolve immediately.

*Special Note*: Due to Ur-Kharra's dying curse, any native of Kumara is completely unable to harm the sorcerer-king's soulessence, whether by weapons or magic.

#### 9. Looted Chamber

This was obviously once a pleasure-chamber, for the plastered walls are painted with all sorts of decadent scenes of erotic pleasures and drug abuse. Furniture such as silken divans and heaps of pillows have long since rotted away, leaving only traces of the former splendour.

Lying face-down in the middle of the room is a giant, 3-meter-tall skeleton. These are the lifeless remains of Ur-Kharra; his life-force escaped his body at the time of death and took refuge in the pile of gold coins in the nearby throne room (Area 8). Next to the yellowed bones of the skeleton is a fang-shaped dagger with a silver sheen.

#### 

#### The Fang of Nwanga Zhaal

This bone dagger resembles the fang of a huge, sabretoothed prehistoric cat. It may (or may not) be an actual tooth from the guardian-beast of Nwanga Zhaal's sacred grove (see The Sacred Grove of Nwanga Zhaal). It once functioned as a magical weapon, allowing spellcasters to be slain with a single hit, but this ability was lost with Ur-Kharra's death. However, it is still usable for other means; it is treated as a silver weapon and inflicts an additional 1d6 points of damage against lycanthropes.

#### 

#### 10. Sealed Chamber

The doors to this small, square room are locked, but a secret door (Difficult Perception test to spot) exists in the wall against the throne room (Area 8). Along the walls are shelves and book-cases lined with iron-bound books, heavy tomes, ivory scroll-cases and maps in all shapes and sizes. This is, of course, the library of Ur-Kharra. Most of the books are written in the lost language of Elder Kuth, which means it will take months or years to decipher the texts, but this is nonetheless a very valuable collection to any sorcerer or sage.

Among the non-Kuthan books are the following:

• The Lectures of Ong the Wise: Written in ancient Bhangarian, it takes 1 week to study, and contains a description of the

- marvels of Laksha, including the Pearl Tower of Nyugarajah and the Seven Veiled Witches.
- Oxanu's Revelations: Written in Lamuran on parchment, it takes 17 days to study, and contains a prophecy involving a Taraamite warlord.
- The Red Codex of Totha: Written in ancient Pthaanan, using black pictograms on red monster hide, it takes 3 weeks to study, and contains a description of the rites and worship of Ia-Azutlatl as well as a false treasure map.

#### II. Bone-Filled Room

The floor of this chamber is strewn with broken skulls, cracked bones and crushed ribcages. In the middle of the room is a circular pit with a 3-meter diameter. The pit is 15 meters deep, leaving the bottom cloaked in darkness unless a torch is thrown down. Coiled up in the bottom of the pit is a giant snake, a half-demonic creature summoned by Ur-Kharra to devour the remains of the men who had failed him and the women he had tired of. The serpent lies dormant in the pit, but is roused by loud noise, bright lights or other disturbances, in which case it slithers up to devour its next meal.

If the Serpent's constriction attack hits, the victim is caught up in the serpent's coils. Each round, the Serpent inflicts its Damage Modifier on the victim. Only the victim's chest armour protects against this damage. In addition to the Hit Point damage caused by the constriction, the victim is unable to breathe and begins to suffocate (see the *Legend Core Rulebook*).

#### CONCLUSSION

The adventure can take many directions depending on how the player characters approach Natari and her fellow were-leopards, and the schemes of Kazosi, which should be adjusted according to the actions of the PCs. In any case, the player characters must destroy Ur-Kharra in order to break the bounding spell that prevents them from leaving the city.

If the sorcerer-king's spirit is laid to rest, the Kumarans can leave the accursed city. By locating the hidden valley with the grove sacred to Nwanga Zhaal, and destroying the stone idol of the beast-god, the curse of Natari and her kin can be lifted. But there are some of the were-leopards, such as Kasozi, who enjoy the power of their cursed form and would seek to prevent the destruction of the idol.

In any case, the black Kumarans remain lords of the city and cruel masters of the light-skinned descendants of the elder Kumarans. Whether Natari is deposed or not, the player characters might get involved in a bloody uprising by the light-skinned Kumarans, with savage fighting in the streets of the city to gain control over its districts.

If the PCs fail: If the PCs are defeated by Natari in the poolchamber, they are imprisoned and then slain during the next full moon. Or perhaps Natari takes one of the PCs as a hostage, forcing the others to enter the crypt of Ur-Kharra. Kazosi's goal is to get the player characters to kill the queen, but after that they are useless to him and he seeks to get rid of them.

# THE DAUGHTERS OF RAHMA



"We stood in the shadow of a broad pillar at one side of the back part of Leniqua's temple. No priest, woman or visitor was in sight but we heard a confused humming of voices at some vague remove. Leniqua's image, presenting its reverend rear, sat on a high dais in the center of the nave. Altar-fires, golden, blue and green, flamed spasmodically before the god, making his shadow writhe on the floor and against the rear wall like a delirious giant in a dance of copulation with an unseen partner."

- Clark Ashton Smith: The Theft of the Thirty-Nine Girdles

There are many depraved cities in the land of Susrah, such as redwalled Zhaol where children are burned as sacrifice to Maggash the fire-god, and the cesspool of vice that is the harbor city of Ghazor. But Yaatana, at the headwaters of the Ophrat river, is said to be the most wicked city of them all, and so all manner of debased folk flock to it, like insects attracted to a greasy torch.

Away from the noisy bazaars and fleshpots, in an abandoned and overgrown park, is an old and hidden temple. In the sewage-flooded temple dungeons, a group of women dedicated to demon-worship have summoned a rat-headed horror from the black gulfs of the outer dark. This demonic being who has taken earthly shape is known as Rahma, and the followers, under the leadership of the high priestess Erishti, call themselves the Daughters of Rahma.

On the surface, the cult of Rahma is apparently an orgiastic cult with sacred prostitutes who use their natural charms to attract male worshippers, like so many other cults in the land of Susrah. In reality, however, the Daughters of Rahma arrange false rituals in order to capture men and sacrifice them to their monstrous rat-god, whose mere touch causes rot and corruption.

Hearing rumours of this new cult, one Serathu, a Yar-Ammonite thief, located the hidden temple and stole away with several valuable items. However, Serathu was soon tracked down by the spies and minions of the cult, but not before he had managed to send off one of the stolen items with a courier to his master, a sorcerer of a neighbouring city.

As Serathu is captured and imprisoned by the Daughters of Rahma, the courier makes his way towards Ghezath. In his haste, the courier falls off his horse, breaks his neck and dies. The players find the corpse and the package along with a cryptic message from Serathu.

# **ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS**

The package contains a metal claw and an encrypted letter. When the letter is unscrambled, it points in the direction of the Susrahnite city of Yaatana, where a fertility-cult called the Daughters of Rahma operates. The adventurers travel to Yaatana and are observed by spies of the cult as they arrive in the city.

The cultists attempt to trick the adventurers into joining one of their orgiastic, drug-fueled rites. Whether or not the players succumb to that temptation, they soon face the rat-headed demongod Rahma, his depraved priestesses, and a horde of leprous worshippers.

## STARTING THE ADVENTURE

Consider any of the following hooks to get the adventure started.

- Use the main hook described under A Feast for the Vultures.
- The adventurers are actually allies or relatives of Serathu, who sends them the package before he is captured by the cult.
- The adventurers arrive in the city of Yaatana en route to some other location. In a back alley in the foreign quarter, they stumble upon Serathu just as he is attacked by the cultistassassins of Rahma.

### A Feast for the Vultures

The adventurers are travelling through the deserts of Susrah when they spot the corpse of a horse and its rider. A small metal box glints in the sun next to the horse. A flock of vultures is busy picking clean the bones.

# The Package

The package is a nondescript, sturdy metal box, approximately one square foot in size. It is secured with a very good lock (requires a Difficult Mechanisms test to open). The key is nowhere to be found.

Inside the box is a rolled parchment sealed with wax, and another box, half the size of the outer box. On the parchment is written the (apparently gibberish) message:

#### DAGERN OONM IN MHAAR FO STUHADERG HET

Unless you prefer to let the adventurers solve the riddle in person, the message can be deciphered with a Difficult Insight test. When unscrambled and read from right to left, the message read reads:

#### THE DAUGHTERS OF RAHMA IN MOON GARDEN

The parchment is signed Serathu.

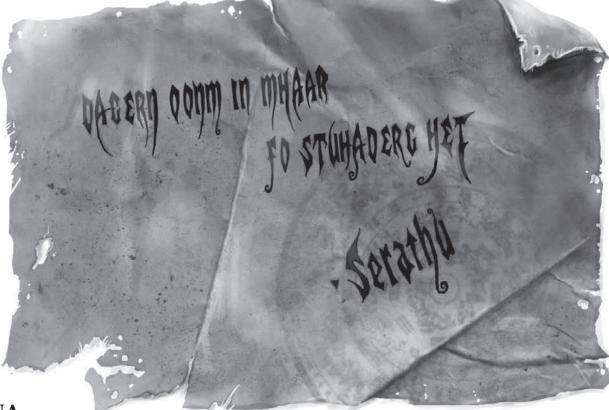
The wooden inner box contains a small device of black metal. It is shaped like some sort of tiny claw or paw. With a successful Routine Insight test, a adventurer realises that the claw may be some kind of key.

**Development:** The claw-key was stolen by the Yar-Ammonite, Serathu, who sneaked into the hidden temple of the cult. After he had sent the item to his master, he was caught by the cult. The Daughters of Rahma have tortured Serathu to find out where the claw has gone, but he has so far resisted the torture and kept his secret. If the adventurers spend too much time getting to Yaatana, Serathu gives in to the torture and reveals the destination of the item. If this happens, assassins from the cult travel to Ghezath to find the item.

If the adventurers go to Yaatana within reasonable time, they might save Serathu and learn his story.

# Researching the Daughters of Rahma

The cult of Rahma is unknown outside Yaatana, but a successful Routine Streetwise or Lore (world) test associates the Moon Garden with that city. The garden is known as a place where fertility rituals are held.



THE CITY
OF YAATANA

This wealthy trading post along the route

from the city-states of Susrah to Khazistan and Jairan in the west is noted for its sinful back alleys and nefarious inhabitants. It is a city of furtive sorcerers, strange and depraved cults, and a place where the most perverted desires can be fulfilled by the arrangements of fat merchants eager to sell anything.

The city is old and surrounded by ancient clay walls which stand 6 to 10 meters high. Tarnished golden domes and marble minarets are visible beyond the walls as one approaches the city. The massive main gate is over 600 years old and receives a constant stream of visitors entering and leaving. With close to 14,000 inhabitants, Yaatana has over 100 temples (and probably double that number of hidden or secret underground shrines), a dozen public bath-houses, and more than 6,000 houses, most of which are several stories high, topped with flat roofs, and decorated with elaborate friezes and intricately carved windows. In the central *souk* (market), a variety of goods, including meat, spices, cotton, silverware, copper, and pottery can be bargained for. There are a number of smaller, more specialized *souks* dealing with slaves, weapons and drugs scattered throughout the city.

Yaatana is ruled by an elected governor (currently a middle-aged man named Akhdari Marza), but the real power is in a council of seven men drawn from the ranks of wealthy merchants, sorcerers, and high priests. The armed forces of the city are mostly comprised of mercenaries; law is enforced haphazardly and most laws are ignored as long as money from trade keeps flowing into the city. The local magistrates are notoriously corrupt and rule in favour of the biggest bribe.

#### At the Gates of Yaatana

When the adventurers come to Yaatana, they may know some or all of the following: That a group or organisation called the

Daughters of Rahma are associated with a place known as the Moon Garden, where fertility rituals are held. Also, someone named Serathu sent an item belonging to this group with a caravan towards the neighbouring city of Ghezath.

**Development:** The adventurers can either ask around for Serathu, the Moon-Garden, and/or the Daughters of Rahma. A successful Routine Streetwise test reveals the location of the Moon-Garden. A Difficult Streetwise test is required for some details on the cult; such as when fertility rites are held and how to join them (you must be invited by someone who has participated before). If asking around for Serathu, a Routine Streetwise test leads to the House of Imran, the inn where the Yar-Ammonite stayed before he disappeared.

The adventurers may get the chance to begin their investigations even before entering the city, for the Daughters of Rahma have spies among the lepers and beggars at the city gate who are on the lookout for foreigners asking about Serathu or the cult. One such beggar-spy, named Abu, approaches the adventurers at the city gate, asking for alms and offering information and gossip in return. Abu serves the adventurers lies about the cult but directs them to the House of Imran if asked about Serathu.

#### The House of Imran

This squalid but cheap tavern and boarding-house is located in the foreign quarter of Yaatana, not far from the city gates. The adventurers get directed here if they have asked around for Serathu the Yar-Ammonite. The adventurers may also choose to sleep here while they are in Yaatana.

Imran the innkeeper can confirm that Serathu stayed at the inn, but that he disappeared around a week ago. Since the Yar-Ammonite owes him money, Imran is also interested in his current whereabouts.

# Abu 'the Leper', Spy of the Cult of Rahma - Male Susrahnite

Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
12	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
12	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
12	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
13	10-12	Chest	-17
12	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
18	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
12	19-20	Head	-/5
	12 12 12 13 12 18	12 1-3 12 4-6 12 7-9 13 10-12 12 13-15 18 16-18	12       1-3       Right Leg         12       4-6       Left Leg         12       7-9       Abdomen         13       10-12       Chest         12       13-15       Right Arm         18       16-18       Left Arm

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +0 Magic Points 12 Movement 8m Strike Rank +16

**Armour:** None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 80%, Brawn 54%, Culture (Own) 76%, Dance 30%, Drive 30%, Evade 76%, Evaluate 80%, First Aid 31%, Influence 24%, Insight 70%, Lore (Regional) 91%, Perception 85%, Persistence 79%, Resilience 64%, Ride 30%, Sing 24%, Sleight 85%, Stealth 91%, Swim 24%, Unarmed 52%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 84%, Commerce 69%, Disguise 69%, Gambling 72%, Language (Native) 75%, Streetwise 79%, Survival 64%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HI
Shortsword	_	M	S	1D6 Bleed, Impale	6/8
Curved Dagger	_	S	S	1D4+1 Bleed	6/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Beggar Thief (Shortsword, Curved Dagger, Kukri): 70%

Possessions: Tattered and dirty clothing, short sword, curved dagger, wooden beggar's bowl, 2 sp.

**Description:** Clad in tattered brown robes that fail to conceal the signs of leprosy (however, this is just part of Abu's disguise and he doesn't actually carry the disease at all).

**Tactics:** Abu conceals his sword and dagger beneath his clothing. If the situation calls for it, he aims for surprise and uses Stealth to gain a quick attack before he flees.

# Elipa (Eanna), Secret Priestess of Rahma - Female Susrahnite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	12	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	14	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	15	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	20	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	17	19-20	Head	<b>-/5</b>

Combat Actions 3
Damage Modifier +0
Magic Points 15
Movement 8m
Strike Rank +17

Armour: None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 77%, Brawn 24%, Culture (Own) 88%, Dance 77%, Drive 35%, Evade 80%, Evaluate 71%, First Aid 54%, Influence 74%, Insight 54%, Lore (Regional) 88%, Perception 84%, Persistence 70%, Resilience 54%, Ride 35%, Sing 72%, Sleight 77%, Stealth 79%, Swim 24%, Unarmed 42%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 75%, Courtesy 75%, Healing 69%, Language (Native) 91%, Lore (Rhama Cult) 75%, Manipulation 69%, Meditation 75%, Seduction 75%, Sorcery (Rat God Grimoire) 70%, Streetwise 76%

**Grimoire (Rat God):** Damage Resistance, Diminish (INT), Dominate (Human), Hinder, Intuition, Palsy, Sense (Flesh)

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Curved Dagger	_	S	S	1D4+1 Bleed	6/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Tricky Combatant (Curved Dagger, Shortsword, Kunai): 67%

Possessions: Scanty clothing, dagger, shortsword, pearl necklace (worth 25 sp), 10 sp.

**Description:** This pretty blonde girl, in her early twenties, appears rather naïve, but is in fact a clever temptress. She serves the cult of Rahma and the high priestess Erishti as a spy and agent.

**Tactics:** In melee, Elipa fights with a sword in one hand and a dagger in the other hand, using Athletics to get into flanking position to get in a quick attack. She also has a small selection of spells she may use both before and during combat.

Erishti's Honeypot
The cult of Rahma believes the adventurers to be in league with Serathu, and they also have the Claw of Rahma which the cult wants back. Once the high priestess, Erishti, learns about the party's arrival from Abu and the other beggar-spies, she tries to lead the players into a trap.

Development: The senior priestess Elipa seeks out the adventurers, preferably while they stay at the House of Imran. Elipa calls herself Eanna and claims to know Serathu. In fact, her story goes, she is a junior member of the cult called the Daughters of Rahma. Serathu was a thief who tried to steal from the cult, but was captured and imprisoned in the temple. Eanna has fallen in love with the prisoner, and she wants to rescue him and flee from Yaatana with him. There are guards watching over Serathu, and she begs the adventurers for help (if necessary, she offers her body as reward). Eanna can smuggle the adventurers into the temple during a fertility ritual, disguised as male worshippers.

If the adventurers agree to help, Elipa/Eanna tells them how worshippers are drugged by drinking the Moon-Juice served by the priestesses (see Area 5 of the Moon-Garden), and instructs the adventurers to pretend to fall asleep to be brought into the temple, where they can wake up, surprise the priests, and interrupt the ceremony. The priestesses and the cultists will be prepared for this, of course, and it is the adventurers who will be surprised.

Eanna claims not to know much about what happens in the actual ritual, since she is just a junior member of the cult. She claims that Rahma is another name for the moon, which is why the daughters of the moon arrange their orgies during the nights of the full moon. Eanna can feed the players with all kinds of misinformation, but she is careful not to lie about facts which can be verified elsewhere.

If the adventurers refuse to help, the beggar-spies of the cult continue to shadow them. Rahma and the priestesses simply wait, expecting the lure of the mysterious Moon-Garden to be irresistible to the adventurers in the end.

# THE GARDEN OF THE MOON

The garden is located in a secluded area some distance away from the noise and bustle of the other city districts. Originally constructed by a wealthy merchant and filled with obscene obsidian statues, it was abandoned and is now a tangled wilderness of palm trees, small ponds and shadowy groves. The place comes alive at night, when strange birds and bats flutter in the air, and other night-animals croak and hiss.

In the centre of the garden is a pavilion surrounded by weird, erotic statues. A half-ruined structure stands on a raised platform; a secret entrance to the sewer-temple can be found here.



If the adventurers come to the garden during the day, they find it deserted and silent. The secret entrance is difficult but not impossible to find, as the adventurers will probably concentrate their searching efforts around the pavilion.

#### 

#### The Garden of the Moon

Standard Features: The wall surrounding the garden is made of hewn stone. The gates are stone doors (AP 8; hp 60; Difficult Brawn test to force open).

Overgrown areas of the garden (see the overview map) effectively entangles a adventurers moving through it. An entangled creature moves at half speed, cannot run or charge, and takes a -10% penalty on all attack rolls and a -20% penalty to Evade tests.

**Lighting:** Illumination is provided by moonlight, as well as by torches carried by the cultists and possibly the players.

#### 

#### I. Main Gate

The main gate is in the southeast corner of the garden. There are several small, dilapidated buildings near the gate; two male cultists hide in the buildings and keep watch over the gate.

Development: If the guards spot intruders, they may deal with them directly (through sneaky attacks) if the intruders are few or seem weak. Otherwise, they signal to the other guards (in Area 2) by imitating the call of a night-bird. A adventurers may make a Difficult Perception test to notice that the bird-call was fake.

## Sons of Rahma, Servants of the Cult - Male Susrahnite (2)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	12	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	10	10-12	Chest	-17
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	18	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	11	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +0 Magic Points 11 Movement 8m

Strike Rank +14

**Armour:** None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 70%, Brawn 24%, Culture (Own) 80%, Dance 29%, Drive 29%, Evade 66%, Evaluate 61%, First Aid 28%, Influence 22%, Insight 21%, Lore (Regional) 80%, Perception 71%, Persistence 62%, Resilience 64%, Ride 39%, Sing 22%, Sleight 69%, Stealth 77%, Swim 24%, Unarmed 40%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 60%, Language (Native) 81%, Mechanisms 53%, Streetwise 62%, Survival 48%, Track 32%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Shortsword	_	M	S	1D6 Bleed, Impale	6/8
Dagger		S	S	1D4+1 Bleed, Impale	6/8

#### Combat Styles

Rhama's Son (Shortsword, Dagger, Sling): 60%

Possessions: Grey robes, short sword, 3 daggers, 2 doses of terinav root poison (see below), 1d4 sp.

**Description:** These are servants of the cult, recruited from among the beggars, thieves and other scum of the city, that have not yet received the "blessing" of Rahma.

Tactics: The guards attack with poisoned blades and look to get behind their foes, or attack from concealed places.

#### **Terinav Root Poison**

Terinav roots are notorious when boiled and brought down to a fine paste at causing confusing effects when introduced to the blood. This sticky red residue can be applied to a blade and once it enters the bloodstream of a victim it acts quickly to disorientate and confuse them.

**Application:** Injection.

Onset time: 1D3 Combat Rounds

**Duration:** 3D6 minutes

Resistance Time: One Resistance roll.

Potency: 45

**Conditions:** Confusion. If the victim fails his Resistance roll the poison spreads quickly through the whole body. The victim cannot use any knowledge, communication or magic based skills for the Duration of the poison.

**Antidote/Cure:** A strong brew of herbal tea local to the region can quickly end the poison's effects, though it causes vomiting and extreme nausea. There's a 10% chance regardless that at the end of the poison's Duration the character will be sick for 1D6 minutes until the poison is fully purged. A successful use of the Healing Skill will help counteract this and also the poison. If the cure is applied successfully before the end of the Onset time then the poison fails to take effect.

#### 2. Ruins Near Gate

Another set of ruined buildings are located close to the gate (Area 1). Another two cultists hide here, looking for trespassers.

**Development:** If they are alerted to danger by the guards at the gate (Area 1), one of the cultists sneaks back to the pavilion (Area 5) and enters the temple to warn the priestesses.

Sons of Rahma (2): As above.

#### 3. North Wall Ruins

Some crumbled ruins are located near the north wall of the garden. There are three cultists here, keeping watch and spying on any intruders. There is a secret entrance to the temple (see Area 4 of the temple) among the buildings here (Difficult Perception test to spot it).

Sons of Rahma (3)

#### 4. Southwest Wall Ruins

Near the southwest wall is a cluster of buildings surrounded by a tangle of palm trees. A swarm of bats nests in the trees; they do not attack unless disturbed.

#### 5. Central Pavilion

In the centre of the garden is a great marble pavilion. In each of the four corners of the pavilion stands a 8-meter tall monolith carved with shapes of intertwined, naked human bodies. A building

once stood in the middle of the pavilion; now only parts of the walls remain standing. The entrance to the sewer-temple below is hidden among the rubble, but can be found with a Difficult Perception test.

**Development:** The Daughters of Rahma arrange their fertility rites on the grass in front of the pavilion. The lesser priestesses, naked except for loincloths of diaphanous green silk, dance and cavort around the pavilion and caress the monoliths. Male worshippers must wear voluminous dun-coloured robes and observe.

At some point in the ritual, the worshippers are offered a sip of the Moon-Juice from the priestesses; no one are allowed to touch the priestesses before they drink, so participants are typically eager to taste in order to get on with the fertility part of the ritual. The Moon-Juice induces a drugged sleep (and strange dreams). While sleeping, the victims are brought down into the temple (see Area 8) beneath the garden, where they are drained of power by Rahma's rotting touch and begin the slow transformation into leprous, half-ghoul servants of the rat-headed demon. The victims are carried back to the garden, where they wake up several hours later. They have no memory of the draining, but (false) pleasant memories from the dreams, and are likely to return to the Moon-Garden for the next ritual.

If the cultists are aware that the adventurers are attempting to infiltrate the cult (in which case the adventurers likely pretend to drink the Moon-Juice), the Daughters of Rahma place the drugged adventurers in large canvas bags before they are taken down to the temple, to prevent them from seeing where they are taken.



# Daughters of Rahma, Lesser Priestesses of the Cult - Female Susrahnite (15)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	11	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	11	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	11	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	12	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	14	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	16	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	15	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +0 Magic Points 14 Movement 8m

Strike Rank +14

**Armour:** None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 47%, Brawn 22%, Culture (Own) 84%, Dance 61%, Drive 30%, Evade 62%, Evaluate 87%, First Aid 48%, Influence 60%, Insight 36%, Lore (Regional) 74%, Perception 66%, Persistence 68%, Resilience 32%, Ride 30%, Sing 29%, Sleight 71%, Stealth 68%, Swim 22%, Unarmed 32%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 47%, Courtesy 72%, Language (Native) 81%, Lore (Rhama Cult) 54%, Mechanisms 48%, Seduction 71%, Streetwise 59%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Curved Dagger	_	S	S	1D4+1 Bleed	6/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Hidden Blade (Curved Dagger, Kukri): 64%

**Possessions:** Green silk loincloth, small curved dagger.

**Description:** The Daughters of Rahma are beautiful temptresses, who lure men into the Moon-Garden of Yaatana to become the unwitting prey of Rahma.

**Tactics:** The lips of each priestess are smeared with moon-juice, enabling them to poison victims by kissing them. In addition, each priestess wears a small concealed dagger in case seduction doesn't work.

# Lecherous Worshippers - Male Susrahnite (30)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	10	10-12	Chest	-17
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	11	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	9	19-20	Head	-/5

**Combat Actions** 2

Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 10

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +11

**Armour:** None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 25%, Brawn 27%, Culture (Own) 80%, Dance 20%, Drive 21%, Evade 33%, Evaluate 69%, First Aid 36%, Influence 48%, Insight 22%, Lore (Regional) 80%, Perception 30%, Persistence 39%, Resilience 64%, Ride 21%, Sing 29%, Sleight 20%, Stealth 21%, Swim 26%, Unarmed 65%

Advanced Skills: Courtesy 29%, Language (Native) 89%, Survival 42%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Club	_	M	S	1D6 Stun Location	4/4

#### **Combat Styles**

Thuggish Beatdown (Club, Quarterstaff, Dagger): 52%

Possessions: Dun-colored robes, club, 1d3 sp.

**Description:** Armed with clubs, staves and daggers. Dressed in loose-fitting robes, these are common men of Yaatana, attracted to the Moon-Garden by the promise of participation in sensuous "fertility rites".

Tactics: This is a formidable mob which fights to protect the priestesses, benefiting from heavy numbers and fanaticism.

#### The Dweller in the Pit

AP/HP
6/9
6/9
6/9
6/9
6/10
6/9
6/9
6/9
6/9
6/8
6/8
6/9

Combat Actions 1

Damage Modifier +1D10

Magic Points 11

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +7

Armour: Rubbery Flesh: No Armour Penalty.

Traits: Night Sight

Skills: Athletics 37% (only in water), Brawn 69%, Evade 55%, Perception 60%,

Persistence 49%, Resilience 80%, Stealth 52%, Survival 60%, Track 77%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Tentacle	_	L	L	Entangle	As Tentacle
Bite		M	T	3D6	As Thorax

#### **Combat Styles**

Hideous Tentacle Beast (Tentacle, Bite): 87%

**Possessions:** None. Though adventurers may find some treasure from previous victims – there is a 25% chance that there's 2d10x100 SP lying at the bottom of the water and a 15% chance that the dweller, if slain has 4d10x100 SP in various coins and other assorted items in its gut.

**Description:** This monster is truly vile. It is composed of blubber, rubbery flesh and long whipping tentacles. Seven eyes surround a leech like mouth and feint green slime hangs around the maw.

**Tactics:** It lurks using Stealth, then attacks with its tentacles attempting to latch on and deliver a follow up bite. If more than two tentacles manage to hit, the creature can attempt to bite as a free attack only at a reduced skill of 70%. Captured victims can try and break free with a Difficult Brawn test.

# Serathu, the Captured Yar-Ammonite - Male Yar-Ammonite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	14	7-9	Abdomen	-17
INT	12	10-12	Chest	-/8
<b>POW</b>	12	13-15	Right Arm	-/5
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	-/5
CHA	14	19-20	Head	-/6

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 12 Movement 8m Strike Rank +13 **Armour:** None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 75%, Brawn 65%, Culture (Own) 84%, Dance 28%, Drive 26%, Evade 73%, Evaluate 56%, First Aid 26%, Influence 58%, Insight 54%, Lore (Regional) 84%, Perception 64%, Persistence 54%, Resilience 69%, Ride 48%, Sing 26%, Sleight 58%, Stealth 66%, Swim 28%, Unarmed 50%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 54%, Commerce 48%, Courtesy 51%, Gambling 68%, Language (Native) 86%, Lore (Tactics) 45%, Mechanisms 76%, Seduction 56%, Streetwise 66%, Track 68%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Ikuna Knife	_	M	S	1D6+1 Bleed, Impale	6/7
Short bow	80m	L		1D6 Impale	4/4

#### **Combat Styles**

Quick and Painless (Ikuna Knife, Short bow, 1-H Sword): 70%

Possessions: Loose green robe, sandals, Ikuna knife, short bow, 20 arrows, small gold scarab amulet thought to bring luck (worth 25 sp).

Description: Serathu is handsome; hawk-nosed, shaven-headed and bronze-skinned. He wears a loose green robe and sandals.

**Tactics:** If he expects combat, Serathu tries to get into armour and to carry a shield.

**Special Note:** The statistics above reflect Serathu with full equipment. In his current state, he is naked except for his loincloth, and has suffered 1d2 damage to all Hit Locations.

#### 

#### Moon-Juice of Yaatana

This purple liquid is a special fruit juice mixed with sleeping draught (see page 82 of the *Legend* rulebook) – it is delivered as a Contact poison from the lips of the priestesses.

Market Price: 110 sp.

# THE SEWER-TEMPLE OF RAHMA

The pleasure pavilion of the Moon-Garden was built atop the ruins of an old sewer system. The cult of Rahma has restored part

of the complex, but there are still many passages which are partly submerged in foul sewer-water. Of course, this does not really bother the rat-headed demon or his leprous servants, but should make the adventurers more wary when exploring the tunnels.

#### I. Sewer Tunnels

The entrance from the pavilion above leads down to this sewer tunnel (1A on the map). There is a 20% chance of encountering 1d3 cultists here. The other tunnels (1B and 1C) lead further into the ancient sewer complex and may eventually (at the Games Master's option) surface elsewhere in the city.

#### 2. Pit

This pit is 12 meters deep and its bottom is filled with 3 meters of murky water. There is no way to cross the chamber, except to jump across the pit (or otherwise cross it). There is a hideous beast dwelling in the pit. It is barely intelligent and lurks in the water using its Stealth skill, and attacks anyone who comes nearby. The cultists know about the beast and occasionally feed it with human corpses and other garbage.

#### 3. Diseased Cultists

In each of these foul-smelling chambers are 1d4 male cultists. There is a 25% chance for each cultist that he has been "blessed" by Rahma's rotting touch and turned into a ghoulish creature.

Next to the room closest to the entrance (Area 3A) are two secret alcoves hidden by pivoting stone slabs (Difficult Perception test to detect) that the cultists use to keep watch over the entrance tunnel; one alcove is accessible from the cultist room (Area 3A). If intruders approach down this corridor, the cultist in each alcove opens the secret door and attempts to attack the character at the rear of the party (who is surprised unless he succeeds at a Perception test opposed by the cultists' Stealth skill).

#### 

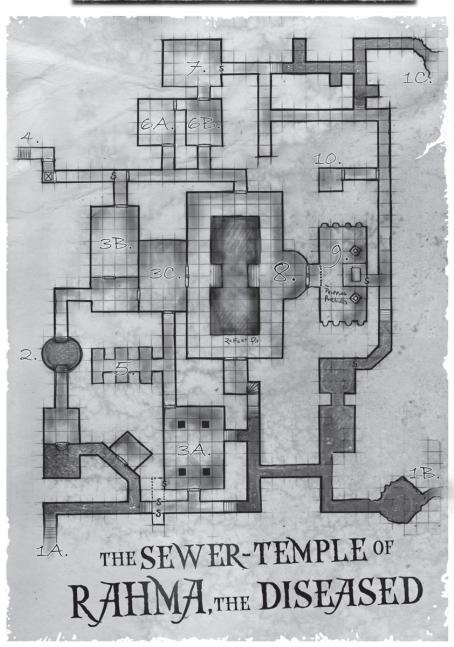
#### The Sewer-Temple of Rahma

**Standard Features:** The doors to most rooms are good wooden doors. The doors to areas 8, 9 and 10 are strong wooden doors (They need a Difficult Brawn test to force open).

Several areas are partially flooded by knee-deep sewage (see the map). This is a thin, black liquid that slows movement by half, and no running and charging is possible.

Unless otherwise specified, secret doors require a Difficult Perception test to detect.

**Lighting:** The sewer tunnels are unlit. Other rooms are lit by torches set into wall brackets.



# Erishti, High Priestess of the Cult - Female Susrahnite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	-17
CON	16	4-6	Left Leg	-17
SIZ	15	7-9	Abdomen	-/8
INT	16	10-12	Chest	-/9
POW	16	13-15	Right Arm	-/6
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	-/6
CHA	18	19-20	Head	-17

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +1D2 Magic Points 16 Movement 8m Strike Rank +15 Armour: None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 28%, Brawn 29%, Culture (Own) 92%, Dance 82%, Drive 30%, Evade 73%, Evaluate 84%, First Aid 69%, Influence 76%, Insight 77%, Lore (Regional) 97%, Perception 72%, Persistence 92%, Resilience 62%, Ride 30%, Sing 79%, Sleight 32%, Stealth 30%, Swim 30%, Unarmed 38%

**Advanced Skills:** Courtesy 90%, Healing 70%, Language (Native) 94%, Lore (Rhama Cult) 92%, Manipulation 89%, Meditation 87%, Seduction 84%, Sorcery (Rhama's Blessed Grimoire) 90%, Teaching 84%

**Grimoire (Rhama's Blessed):** Damage Resistance, Damage Enhancement, Diminish (INT), Diminish (CON), Dominate (Human), Form/Set (Flesh), Hinder, Holdfast, Mystic Vision, Palsy, Protective Ward, Regenerate, Tap (CON), Wrack

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HI
Quarterstaff	_	M	L	1D8 Stun Location	4/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Rhama's Chosen (Quarterstaff, Dagger): 78%

**Possessions:** Green silk dress, gold-adorned sandals (worth 15 sp), ceremonial quarterstaff, golden necklace (worth 200 sp), pearl earrings (worth 25 sp each).

**Description:** Past her youth, but still attractive, Erishti has golden skin, and long, dark hair (which she dyes to conceal grey streaks). She dresses in revealing silken dresses and wears ornaments of gold and pearl.

**Tactics:** Erishti precasts *Damage Resistance* and *Damage Enhancement* before joining combat. She assists the lesser priestesses and Rahma himself with spells, but resorts to attacking with her staff or dagger only if she has no other choice.

# Rahma the Diseased - Obese Rat-Headed Demon from the Outer Dark

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	NA	26	1-3	Right Leg	5/8
CON	NA	18	4-6	Left Leg	5/8
SIZ	NA	24	7-9	Abdomen	5/9
INT	NA	20	10-12	Chest	5/10
<b>POW</b>	NA	15	13-15	Right Arm	5/7
DEX	NA	16	16-18	Left Arm	5/6
CHA	NA	13	19-20	Head	5/8

**Combat Actions** 3

Damage Modifier +1D10

Magic Points 15

Movement 6m (due to

obesity)

Strike Rank +18

**Armour:** Fur, demon skin: No Armour Penalty.

Traits: Formidable Natural Weapons, Life Sense, Night Sight

Skills: Athletics 42%, Brawn 70%, Evade 52%, Perception 67%, Persistence 80%,

Resilience 77%, Stealth 66%, Survival 70%, Track 79%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Claw	_	M	M	2D6 Disease	As Arms
Bite		M	Τ	1D10 Disease	As Head

#### Combat Styles

Rat Attack (Claw, Bite): 80%

**Description:** Rahma, the living rat-god, is an obsese rat-headed humanoid with black skin and long, wicked claws. Those stuck by his claws instantly start to rot and decay, eventually turning into ghoulish servants, slaves to Rahma's will. Rahma is dressed in a simple loincloth of purple silk beneath his great black belly. Rahma needs the claw-key that Serathu stole to be able to leave the temple; otherwise he is confined to the area he was summoned into by Erishti. Rahma's claws carry a rotting disease (detailed below) which has a terrible effect on its victims. A terrible stench surrounds Rahma. Living creatures within 3 meters must succeed on a Routine Resilience test or be sickened for 1d6+4 minutes. Creatures with immunity to poison are unaffected.

#### **Rotting Claw Disease**

The fate of those struck by Rhama's claws is one of madness, decay and eventual death as a living servitor of the obese Rat-god. This disease is the manifestation of the god's will on Xoth and transforms those who die from it into servitors who appear to be undead, yet do not have the same disease carrying infection as their benefactor. (See previously)

**Application:** Contact **Onset time:** 1D6 hours **Duration:** 1D6+2 weeks

**Resistance Time:** Weekly. The first Resistance roll must be made at the end of the Onset time, then weekly thereafter. Successfully resisting the disease allows the Adventurer to avoid suffering the Conditions until the next roll must be made. The effects of the disease manifest visually regardless of the roll made and there's nothing to indicate that the victim is recovering at all. They appear to rot regardless.

Potency: 50+18 (CON of Rhama).

Resistance: Resilience.

Conditions: A failed Resistance roll means each condition takes effect; conditions follow on after each other. Necrosis (all locations), Agony (the victim's body is rotting slowly), Bleeding and finally Death. After Death the victim rises again 2d6 hours later as a servant of Rhama – one of the living dead, gaining Night Sight and no other powers.

**Antidote/Cure:** Only powerful magic can cure this disease. Or if Rhama wills it, he can remove his blessing from the afflicted (this has never been known to happen).

Blessed Sons of Rahma, male Susrahnite (1-4): As above; but with poisoned daggers and Hard Leather shirts. Trait: Night Sight

**Description:** These members of the cult have received the "blessing" of Rahma, and resemble undead creatures (although they are not). They cannot transfer any kind of disease and even though they are hideous to look at their stats are not affected.

**Tactics:** The Blessed Sons of Rahma are able to see in darkness and use it to their advantage.

#### 4. Secret Entrance

A long, slowly descending corridor leads from the ruins in the garden (see Area 3 of the garden) to this part of the temple. There are no guards here, but a 13-meter deep spiked pit trap protects this entrance (Difficult Perception test to notice, Routine Evade test to avoid; 1d6 hits at 2d6 damage each).

#### 5. Cells

There are six small cells in this part of the temple complex. Four cells are currently empty; the fifth holds a male captive. In the sixth cell, chained to the wall, is Serathu the Yar-Ammonite. He has undergone torture to reveal where he sent the *Claw of Rahma*, but has so far resisted interrogation (unless the adventurers have spent an undue amount of time getting to Yaatana, of course).

#### 6. Chambers of the Priestesses

These two rooms (marked A and B on the map) are similarly furnished with dun-coloured tapestries, hardwood tables, and chairs. However, one room is well-kept and orderly, while the other chamber (Elipa's room) is strewn with silken clothing, slippers, scraps of food, and small pieces of jewellery. This reflects the different personalities of the two senior priestesses who serve Erishti and Rahma. Elipa is blonde, while Trizia is red-haired.

Elipa and Trizia, Senior Priestesses of the Cult, female Susrahnite (2)

# 7. Chamber of the High Priestess

The door to this room is locked. The chamber beyond is opulent, decorated with Jairanian carpets and wall hangings from Taikang, furniture of Susrahnite cedar wood, silverware from Taraam, and crystal cups and decanters from Nabastis (worth a total of 1,600 SP). There is a secret door (Difficult Perception test required to detect) in the southern wall. Erishti might flee through this door and hide in the sewer tunnels (Area 1C) if she is defeated.

# 8. Temple and Pit

This large chamber reeks of old filth and sewage. There is a 6-meter pit in the centre of the room, once serving as a basin of some kind but now empty and bloodstained. The floor around the pit is littered with skulls and bones.

#### 9. Inner Sanctum

This is the throne room of Rahma himself. Against the far wall is a massive throne of black stone, flanked by twin braziers of bronze and silver. Behind the throne is a secret door (Difficult Perception test to spot).

There is a portcullis near the entry doors which can be dropped down to trap intruders (Difficult Evade test to avoid getting hit for 2d6 damage). A lever in the throne chair can be used to reset the portcullis.

**Description:** Rahma, the living rat-god, is an obese rat-headed humanoid with black skin and long, wicked claws. Those stuck by his claws instantly start to rot and decay, eventually turning into ghoulish servants, slaves to Rahma's will. Rahma is dressed in a simple loincloth of purple silk beneath his great black belly. Rahma needs the claw-key that Serathu stole to be able to leave the temple; otherwise he is confined to the area he was summoned into by Erishti.

Rahma's claws carry a rotting disease (Difficult Resilience test to avoid losing 1D2 Constitution each round until two tests are passed). When the victim reaches 0 Con, it transforms into a ghoulish Blessed of Rahma in 1d3 minutes.

A terrible stench surrounds Rahma. Living creatures within 3 meters must succeed on a Routine Resilience test or be sickened for 1d6+4 minutes. Creatures with immunity to poison are unaffected.

#### 10. Vault

The vault is protected by two sets of doors. The inner door is trapped with poison gas (Difficult Perception test to notice, Difficult Mechanisms test to disarm; effect; Difficult Resilience test upon exposure to the gas or go berserk and attack nearest creature for 1d6 rounds).

The vault contains the following treasure: A scattering of gold coins (a total of 1,740 SP), an armband of lapis lazuli (worth 40 SP), a small pouch filled with semi-precious gems (worth 200 SP), a masterwork two-bladed sword decorated with Azjani symbols (worth 400 SP), an empty iron box with a good lock (worth 100 SP), an hourglass (worth 25 SP), a small ivory figurine of a Taraamite mounted lancer (worth 75 SP), several long sheets of Yar-Ammonite papyrus (worth 50 SP), and a dozen bottles of green wine (worth 15 SP each).

#### CONCLUSION

What happens in the Moon-Garden of Yaatana depends on whether the adventurers have been tricked to participate in the fertility ritual, or if they attempt to sneak into or even attack the temple directly. In any case, unless the adventurers have taken appropriate countermeasures, the spies of the cult have been shadowing the adventurers and the Daughters of Rahma will be ready with an ambush (although if possible, the cultists prefer to disable the intruders without combat using the Moon-Juice). The temple is full of dangers and there are many hidden tunnels where defeated cultists can hide and regroup before launching a counter-attack.

Even if the adventurers are victorious against Rahma and his priestesses, the male cultists who hide in various parts of the garden may strike against the adventurers when they exit the garden.

If the adventurers fail: If the adventurers are captured by the cultists, they end up as leprous, half-ghoulish servants of Rahma. Smart adventurers may escape this fate by offering to work for the cult, and convincing the high priestess they are more valuable allies without Rahma's 'blessed' touch.

# THE CALL FROM THE ABYSS



"What has risen may sink, and what has sunk may rise. Loathsomeness waits and dreams in the deep, and decay spreads over the tottering cities of men."

- H. P. Lovecraft: The Call of Cthulhu

Ten centuries ago, a rich and prosperous civilization flourished on an island called Namthu in the Eastern Ocean. Its people were expert sailors, and they worshipped the gods of the sea. In the central lagoon of their island, the Namthuans built a great temple. A great hoard of treasure accumulated as sacrifices of gold and jewels, the fruits of flourishing trade, were heaped upon the cyclopean altars of the lagoon-temple.

In the abyss beneath the temple dwelt the living god of the Namthuans, a tentacled monstrosity named Bhaomog by the priests. Some say that this creature was attracted to the island because of the rich sacrifices thrown into the seas by the bearded priests, while others claim that the temple was built in its honour.

The Namthuan priests held sacred a white conch shell, which had two functions: It could be blown as a horn to summon the god of the deep or his servitors; and the whispering voice of Bhaomog could be heard amid the sound of crashing waves when the conch was placed next to the priests' ears (or so the priests claimed).

Captured prisoners of war, including many men and women from the tribes living along the jungle kingdom coast, were ritually drowned and thrown as sacrifice to Bhaomog. Some were transformed into "bloated ones", abominable amphibian servitors of the god, by a spell the priests learned from the whispers of the sacred conch shell.

The high priest of the Namthuans was Pathag Thuul, but among his acolytes were greedy and malcontent men. During an especially grand ritual in Bhaomog's honour, performed under the evil influence of a gibbous red moon, a group of traitors among the priests struck down Pathag Thuul with long knives of Yarthian bane-steel. As the high priest fell to the flood in a crimson pool, the dangerous ritual failed and backfired, and as earthquakes tore apart the lower temple, Bhaomog fell into a deep slumber, buried under tons of rock.

The traitors among the priests used this opportunity to steal much treasure, including the conch horn, and flee. Before they could leave the isle, they faced priests loyal to Bhaomog, who had sealed the temple with magic to prevent anyone from stealing treasure. The dissidents defeated the loyal priests and reached the boats, leaving the isle together with other men and women who fled from the aftershocks of the earthquakes.

The fleeing priests reached the coasts of Susrah, and with the gold stolen from the temple of Bhaomog they bought favour with the king of Ghazor, one Lamki-Ushra. This served to make them enemies of the temple of Yammosh, the native sea-priests of Ghazor.

When the priests of Namthu eventually died, they were buried in the royal family crypts of Lamki-Ushra. The conch shell still rested within the royal palace, in a sealed chest that hid it from divination magic, and out of reach of the cult of Yammosh. The legacy of the Namthuans was eventually all but forgotten.

During the centuries, the city of Ghazor was sacked several times by armies from rival city-states of Susrah, and treasures from the royal palace were looted and carried away. The chest containing the conch shell was deemed to be of little value compared to the gold and gems, and passed through several hands before finally ending up buried in a cave. Recently, the cave was discovered by a shepherd, who sold the chest to a local nomad chieftain. It finally ends up in the hands of the player characters.

#### **ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS**

Bhaomog sleeps in his abyssal prison, but as the centuries pass, the stars move into certain baleful constellations, and the tentacled god stirs. The dreams of one of the sea-priests in Ghazor are invaded by fevered visions of cyclopean temples and sunken treasures. The priest, Dar-Tiglat, learns the story of Namthu and the *Horn of Bhaomog* through these dreams, though he does not realize that he has become the unwitting thrall of Bhaomog.

Dar-Tiglat plans to depose Uktha-Akkar, the current high priest of the cult of Yammosh. He hopes to use the horn to control Bhaomog and his servitors, the bloated ones of Namthu, and to learn the ancient ritual of creating such creatures. With a horde of amphibious warriors and a monstrous sea-god under his control, bringing him the sunken treasures and secrets of the deep seas, Dar-Tiglat can overthrow Uktha-Akkar and become high priest, and perhaps even king of Ghazor.

Through his divination spells, Dar-Tiglat learns that the adventurers have come into the possession of the *Horn of Bhaomog*. Since the scheming priest's resources are limited, he thinks he may use the adventurers as useful pawns. Dar-Tiglat knows where the ancient priests of Namthu are entombed, and that their tomb contains a map to the now-lost isle. Recognising the adventurers as capable individuals, he drops clues so that the adventurers are led towards the tombs to find the map to the island.

When the adventurers find a map pointing to a lost isle with fabled treasures, they need to find a ship that can take them to the island. There are not many vessels in Ghazor's harbor that can make the long trip across the open sea, and Dar-Tiglat arranges it so that the adventurers gain passage on a ship where many of the crew are cultists loyal to Dar-Tiglat.

As the adventurers' vessel leave Ghazor, a pirate captain of the Sea Reavers follows the players, intent on finding and taking the treasure for himself, as well as taking revenge for the murder of his first mate at the hands of the adventurers.

Once on the island, after the players have served their purpose, Dar-Tiglat plans to betray and capture the players, transforming them into bloated ones, the amphibian slaves of Bhaomog.

Meanwhile, Bhaomog himself slumbers and waits patiently in his abyssal prison for the day when he shall once again awaken and rise above the waves to become master of the southern seas.

#### The Horn of Bhaomog

This gnarled conch shell is yellowish in colour and covered by black and purple stains. Approximately 1 foot long, it is quite heavy for its size. It looks very ancient and frail, but is in fact an artefact and cannot be destroyed except by Bhaomog himself. It is primarily a device used to communicate with Bhaomog, although it may have other powers not yet known to man.

Blowing the horn forces a Difficult Persistence test, while placing it next to the ear forces a more difficult Hard test. Blowing it in a land-locked area causes all liquids in small containers (such as water flasks, wineskins, and similar) in a 15 meter radius to turn sour and undrinkable. Blowing the horn near

the ocean causes the local weather to worsen considerably, possibly creating a storm with up to hurricane force winds. If blown within 25 km of the isle of Namthu, it summons 2d10 Bloated Ones but does not give the user any command over the summoned creatures.

An adventurer placing the horn next to the ear will initially hear the whisper of distant waves, but suddenly feels several small tentacles extend from the conch shell, trying to grab the brain of the adventurer. If the Persistence test is failed, the tentacles will actually appear to pierce the brain through the adventurer's ear, and the adventurer's brain is suddenly filled with brief flashes of something large and tentacled moving about in murky waters, accompanied by strange and wailing sounds muffled as if shouting underwater. However, the tentacles are purely a mental effect, a hallucination that causes no physical damage.

At the Games Master's option, Bhaomog may deliver cryptic whispered messages through the horn, and may even try to mentally dominate creatures who listen too long, using its *enslave* ability through the horn.

# STARTING THE ADVENTURE

Consider this hook to get the adventure started.

• Unless you want to play out how the adventurers find come into possession of the *Horn of Bhaomog* as a prelude, this adventure simply starts with 'roll initiative!.' The adventurers have come to Ghazor and to the Harpy's Breath tavern (see below) in search of more information about the mysterious conch shell they have found, and have been drawn into a bar brawl with a band of drunken, swaggering freebooters.



#### THE CITY OF GHAZOR

**Ghazor:** Population 22,000; Mixed (Susrahnites 60%, Nabastisseans 10%, Taraamites 10%, Others 20%).

Authority Figures: Rahim-Dul, male Susrahnite (king).

**Important Characters:** Nerurki, female Ghazorite (chief royal concubine); Hatmash-Ukin, male Ghazorite (navy admiral); Zalzu Khalil, male Taraamite (commander of the royal chariots); Nofruset, female Yar-Ammonite (royal advisor); Kin-Nashu, male Susrahnite (commander of the city guard).

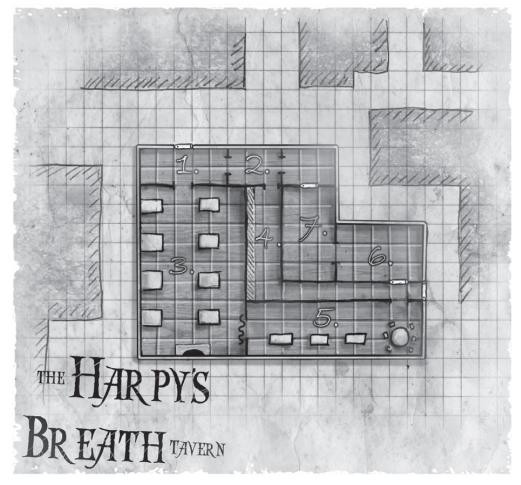
**Others:** City guards, Ghazorite (900); Galley-crews, Ghazorite (1,100); Royal charioteers, Susrahnite (250).

**Notes:** The harbour city of Ghazor is located strategically at the mouth of the Ophrat river. It has a large navy of triremes, which is used to defend against the raids of the Sea Reavers, as well as in occasional clashes with the Nabastissean fleet. As one of the Susrahnite city-states, Ghazor is ruled independently by the petty king Rahim-Dul, but is allied with the other cities of Susrah through treaties and intermarriage.

Much trade flows through the city, arriving by boats from the south, and carried inland by river barges or donkey caravans. Trade goods include Susrahnite wine, spices from Laksha and Azjan, dried fruit, slaves, and pearls harvested off the coast of Zadj.

The main ziggurat of the city is dedicated to Baal-Khardah, but the sea-god Yammosh is more popular among the many sailors and merchant-captains. Offerings of gold and animals are often made to the temple of Yammosh before any sea-voyage.

The southern quarters of the city, home to sailors, slavers, mercenaries and other foreigners, is well-known outside Ghazor for



its many depraved vices and lawless atmosphere. The king and his nobles, busy with their own schemes and pleasures behind massive palace walls to the north, largely ignore the unruly docks. Thus the southern seafront is rarely patrolled by the city guard, but the naval docks to the northeast are well-guarded.

#### Death at the Docks

The adventurers have come to the Harpy's Breath Tavern to meet up with Alcides, a Nabastissean smuggler, thief and spy. Alcides knows the following: That the conch shell was brought to Ghazor hundreds of years ago by 'priests of a sunken isle,' and that these priests were buried in the royal crypts of Lamki-Ushra, situated on the tip of the peninsula that juts out into the harbour of Ghazor.

**Development:** While the adventurers wait for Alcides in the tavern, a drunken, swaggering Khoran freebooter picks a fight with them. If one of the adventurers takes the bait, the rest of the crew quickly join in, turning the fight into a classic bar brawl. Their leader, Zurka, is a friend of the tavern-owner, so the guards remain passive, at least as long as Zurka's men seem to win.

Even if the adventurers are victorious, they should flee the tavern quickly, before more of the *Barracuda's* crew arrive. Having heard the clamour of battle from outside, Alcides waits for the adventurers in the shadowed streets outside the tavern. He demands 250 SP (adjust as appropriate to the wealth of the adventurers) to reveal the existence of the secret tunnels leading into the royal tombs of the peninsula (see below). In any case, Alcides does not join the adventurers on any expedition into the tombs.

# THE HARPY'S BREATH TAVERN

Situated not far from the great lighthouse of Ghazor, this tavern is a run-down affair with stained wooden floors where sailors from many nations revel in the flickering lights of greasy torches. The rowdy establishment is owned by one Yatim, a former sailor. In fact, he is a secret spy for the captains of the Sea Reavers of Khora and his tavern is an occasional safehouse for many pirates.

#### I. Foyer

This cloakroom has pegs on the walls where guests can hang their outerwear in the cold season. The heavy wooden door can be locked and barred from the inside (Difficult Brawn test to force it open).

#### 2. Guardroom

Yatim's guards are stationed here. The guards confiscate any weapon larger than a shortsword (this does not apply to Yatim's favoured guests, such as Zurka and his men). Such confiscated weapons are delivered back to the owner when he leaves the tavern.

#### 3. Common Room

The large common room has eight wooden tables and a scattering of worn chairs. In the corner to the south is a well-stoked fireplace. There are 3d6 patrons here, as well as 1d3 harlots.

#### 4. Bar

The bar is worked by three young, not pretty, but experienced girls. The nearby guards (from Area 2) quickly arrive if the girls are harassed by the patrons.

A long corridor from the bar ends in a back door. This sturdy door has the same statistics as the front door (see Area 1).

# 5. Private Lounge

This semi-private chamber is separated from the common room by a tattered green curtain. It is spacious and furnished with slightly better chairs and tables, and those who pay extra to sit here are wellserved by Yatim's girls.

The lounge is currently occupied by a freebooter named Zurka and other members of the crew of the pirate vessel *Barracuda*.

#### 6. Storeroom

This storeroom contains barrels of ale, dusty bottles of cheap Yaatanan wine, and sundry bits and pieces of equipment and furniture. Under a loose floorboard (Difficult Perception test to spot) beneath an empty crate is a secret chamber, 3 meters by 3 meters. The chamber is currently empty, but is often used to temporarily hide persons or items.

### City Guard of Ghazor - Male Susrahnite

Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
14	1-3	Right Leg	-/4
12	4-6	Left Leg	-/4
8	7-9	Abdomen	2/5
10	10-12	Chest	2/6
9	13-15	Right Arm	2/3
12	16-18	Left Arm	2/3
10	19-20	Head	2/4
	14 12 8 10 9	14     1-3       12     4-6       8     7-9       10     10-12       9     13-15       12     16-18	14       1-3       Right Leg         12       4-6       Left Leg         8       7-9       Abdomen         10       10-12       Chest         9       13-15       Right Arm         12       16-18       Left Arm

**Combat Actions** 2

**Armour:** Studded Leather and leather helm. -2 Armour Penalty.

Damage Modifier +0

Magic Points 9 Movement 8m

Strike Rank +11 (+9 when

armoured)

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 61%, Brawn 57%, Culture (Own) 80%, Dance 22%, Drive 21%, Evade 69%, Evaluate 40%, First Aid 22%, Influence 40%, Insight 35%, Lore (Regional) 70%, Perception 49%, Persistence 48%, Resilience 59%, Ride 41%, Sing 20%, Sleight 22%, Stealth 22%, Swim 26%, Unarmed 36%

**Advanced Skills:** Courtesy 35%, Language (Native) 80%, Lore (Tactics) 60%, Streetwise 59%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Halberd	_	L	VL	1D8+2 Entangle, Impale, Sunder	4/10
Susrahnite bow	165m	Н		1D8+1 Impale	4/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Ghazor City Guard (Halberd, Susrahnite Longbow, Mancatcher, 1-H Sword): 61%

Possessions: Studded leather, halberd, Susrahnite longbow, 20 arrows.

**Description:** The city guards are dressed in distinctive blue guard uniforms.

**Tactics:** The guards control crowds using their Halberds and attempt to keep them under control. They use Entangle first and if there are any heavily armed foes, they'll use Sunder and focus on those first. They work as a team to try and bring the situation under control but they don't risk their lives against overwhelming odds.

# City Guard Captain of Ghazor - Male Susrahnite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	15	7-9	Abdomen	5/7
INT	12	10-12	Chest	5/8
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	5/5
DEX	12	16-18	Left Arm	5/5
CHA	12	19-20	Head	4/6

**Combat Actions** 2

Armour: Chain Shirt and Silver Helmet. -5 Armour Penalty.

Damage Modifier +1D4

Magic Points 11

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +12 (+7 when

armoured)

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 43%, Brawn 76%, Culture (Own) 84%, Dance 24%, Drive 23%, Evade 74%, Evaluate 64%, First Aid 24%, Influence 74%, Insight 67%, Lore (Regional) 84%, Perception 70%, Persistence 67%, Resilience 88%, Ride 57%, Sing 23%, Sleight 24%, Stealth 24%, Swim 30%, Unarmed 72%

**Advanced Skills:** Courtesy 58%, Language (Native) 94%, Lore (Tactics) 79%, Oratory 68%, Streetwise 77%, Survival 69%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Halberd	_	L	VL	1D8+2 Entangle, Impale, Sunder	4/10
Susrahnite bow	165m	Н		1D8+1 Impale	4/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Ghazor Guard Captain (Halberd, Susrhanite Longbow, 2-H Sword): 76%

Possessions: Chain shirt, silver helmet, halberd, Susrahnite longbow, 20 arrows.

**Description:** The guard captains dress in burnished chain shirts, and wear tall silver helmets as a mark of rank.

**Tactics:** These officers employ essentially the same tactics as the regular guardsmen. However, before joining battle, the officer sends one of his underlings to alert other city guards.

#### Yatim's Guards - Male Ghazorite (4)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	14	7-9	Abdomen	<b>-/7</b>
INT	10	10-12	Chest	-/8
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	<b>-/5</b>
DEX	13	16-18	Left Arm	<b>-/5</b>
CHA	9	19-20	Head	-/6

Combat Actions 2 Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 11 Movement 8m Strike Rank +12 Armour: None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 34%, Brawn 75%, Culture (Own) 70%, Dance 22%, Drive 24%, Evade 71%, Evaluate 59%, First Aid 23%, Influence 38%, Insight 21%, Lore (Regional) 60%, Perception 61%, Persistence 62%, Resilience 69%, Ride 24%, Sing 20%, Sleight 22%, Stealth 23%, Swim 40%, Unarmed 69%

**Advanced Skills:** Boating 38%, Language (Native) 89%, Lore (Tactics) 60%, Shiphandling 32%, Streetwise 47%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Club	_	M	S	1D6 Stun Location	4/4

#### **Combat Styles**

Dockside (Club, Sword & Shield, Dagger): 69%

Possessions: Clothing, club, 1d6 sp.

**Description:** These men are hardened thugs from the gutters of Ghazor.

**Tactics:** The guards beat down trouble-makers with their clubs, although they may also use furniture, bottles, etc. as improvised weapons in a brawl. Another favourite tactic is to grab opponents and attempt to get another guard to attack the grabbed foe.

#### Zurka, First Mate of the Barracuda - Male Khoran

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	13	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	15	7-9	Abdomen	5/7
INT	12	10-12	Chest	5/8
POW	12	13-15	Right Arm	5/5
DEX	17	16-18	Left Arm	5/5
CHA	14	19-20	Head	-/6

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +1D4 Magic Points 12 Movement 8m

**Strike Rank** +15 (+11

when armoured)

**Armour:** Chain Shirt. -4 Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 73%, Brawn 76%, Culture (Own) 74%, Dance 61%, Drive 29%, Evade 74%, Evaluate 76%, First Aid 39%, Influence 68%, Insight 69%, Lore (Regional) 74%, Perception 85%, Persistence 54%, Resilience 81%, Ride 47%, Sing 56%, Sleight 71%, Stealth 74%, Swim 79%, Unarmed 73%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 73%, Boating 79%, Commerce 66%, Courtesy 66%, Gambling 64%, Language (Native) 86%, Mechanisms 66%, Seduction 46%, Shiphandling 70%, Streetwise 66%, Survival 45%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Battleaxe	_	M	M	1D6+1 Bleed, Sunder (2H Only)	4/8
Dagger	_	S	S	1D4+1 Bleed, Impale	6/8

#### **Combat Styles**

First Mate (Battleaxe, Dagger, 1-H Sword): 78%

Possessions: Chain shirt, battleaxe, 4 daggers, 3 gold rings (worth 40 sp each).

**Description:** Zurka is tall and thin, with a drooping moustache and his long hair in a ponytail. This swaggering freebooter is the first mate aboard the *Barracuda* and is Captain Yajal's trusted henchman.

**Tactics:** Although Zurka has been drinking heavily, he is not noticeably affected by the alcohol. He throws his daggers, then rages and charges into battle and uses powerful attacks with his axe.

#### Crew of the Barracuda - Male Khoran (10)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	11	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	2/6
INT	10	10-12	Chest	2/7
<b>POW</b>	10	13-15	Right Arm	2/4
DEX	15	16-18	Left Arm	2/4
CHA	12	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 2 Damage Modifier +1D2 Magic Points 10 Movement 8m

**Strike Rank** +13 (+11

when armoured)

**Armour:** Leather Shirt. -2 Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 69%, Brawn 62%, Culture (Own) 80%, Dance 27%, Drive 25%, Evade 60%, Evaluate 62%, First Aid 25%, Influence 24%, Insight 20%, Lore (Regional) 80%, Perception 65%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 62%, Ride 30%, Sing 22%, Sleight 67%, Stealth 70%, Swim 25%, Unarmed 59%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 49%, Boating 55%, Language (Native) 92%, Mechanisms 55%, Shiphandling 51%, Streetwise 52%, Survival 31%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Hatchet	_	S	S	1D6 Bleed	3/6
Dagger		S	S	1D4+1 Bleed, Impale	6/8

#### Combat Styles

Sea Dog (Hatchet, Dagger, 1-H Sword): 66%

Possessions: Leather armour, hatchet, dagger, 1d10 sp.

**Description:** These men are the stereotypical Khoran pirates; clad in a mix of silks and common sailors' clothes, some with eye-patches or silken bandanas. Their skin is a deep bronze, and their arms and faces are scarred by the swords and spears of countless enemies.

Tactics: The crewmembers enter combat and use gang tactics to surround a foe attempting to attack sneakily and flank.

#### Yatim, Tavern-Owner - Male Ghazorite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	<b>-/5</b>
CON	11	4-6	Left Leg	<b>-/5</b>
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	14	10-12	Chest	-17
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	18	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	9	19-20	Head	<b>-/5</b>

Combat Actions 2 Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 11
Movement 8m

Strike Rank +16

**Armour:** None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 82%, Brawn 52%, Culture (Own) 88%, Dance 57%, Drive 68%, Evade 76%, Evaluate 93%, First Aid 32%, Influence 68%, Insight 80%, Lore (Regional) 90%, Perception 75%, Persistence 62%, Resilience 67%, Ride 49%, Sing 60%, Sleight 77%, Stealth 82%, Swim 65%, Unarmed 62%

**Advanced Skills:** Commerce 63%, Courtesy 73%, Craft (Brewer) 72%, Gambling 45%, Language (Native) 93%, Mechanisms 52%, Oratory 40%, Streetwise 75%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Short sword	_	M	M	1D6 Bleed, Impale	6/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Bartender's Surprise (Shortsword, 1-H Sword, 2-H Sword, Net): 77%

**Possessions:** Clothing, 2 short swords, silver necklace (worth 25 sp).

**Description:** Clad in rich clothes, with a long face and greasy dark hair, Yatim is in secret league with Yajal and other captains of the Sea Reavers.

**Tactics:** If Yatim gets involved in combat, he fights two short swords, trying to get into position to flank enemies and get the drop on them from higher elevations if possible.

#### 7. Backoffice

This is the office of Yatim, the tavern-owner. The floor is covered with a stained Jairanian rug. A big mahogany desk stands in one corner; inside its locked drawers (Difficult Mechanisms test to open) are two curved daggers with ivory handles (worth 20 SP each), a pouch filled with semiprecious gems (worth 350 SP), and a golden bracelet in the shape of a serpent (worth 125 SP).

# THE ANCIENT ROYAL TOMBS OF GHAZOR

The peninsula that juts out into the bay of Ghazor today was originally an island. A causeway was eventually built to connect it to the mainland, and it was used for centuries as a fortress, palace, and crypt.

As detailed in the introduction to this adventure, the priests of Namthu who arrived in ancient Ghazor with treasures stolen from the temple of Bhaomog befriended the current king, Lamki-Ushra, and were given the honour of burial in the royal tombs when they died. Thus the bodies of the priests Takahla, Yezir-Kot and Karuma were interred beneath the palace on the peninsula.

However, due to unfavourable weather conditions, with crashing waves and battering winds slowly wearing down the stonework, the old palace-fortress was eventually abandoned. As the city on the mainland grew, a new and grander palace was built on gentler slopes in the middle of the city. The bodies of the old kings and nobles were relocated from the crypts on the peninsula to the new palace in the city, but some tombs, like those of the Namthuan priests, were left untouched.

**Development:** The adventurers have several options for getting into the old royal tombs, including sneaking past the guards on the causeway to the ancient palace, or swimming or taking a small boat across the bay. Once on the peninsula, the adventurers must locate the secret cavern and underwater tunnel that takes them into the tombs (since the entrance from the palace above is buried under tons of rock).

# The Causeway and Gatehouse

Although the peninsula is abandoned, a 6 meter tall gatehouse of stone (Difficult Athletics test to climb) has been placed across the causeway to prevent traffic to and from the ancient palace. The gatehouse is manned by 12 city guards and 2 guard captains. Two-thirds of the guards and one officer are on duty at any time, while the others are asleep or relaxing.

**Development:** If the guards are attacked, they attempt to raise the alarm using a horn, in which case reinforcements arrive from the north city in 2d6+6 minutes. One of the guard-captains (determined randomly as to which one) has a huge gambling-debt and may accept a bribe if the offer is substantial.

# The Bay of Ghazor

The water of the bay is cold, and the waves crash upon the cliffs of the peninsula, making it dangerous to swim (Difficult Athletics test required) and to manoeuvre in small boats (Difficult Boating test to avoid the perils of the water), although the waves are a bit more calm on the northern side facing the bay (Routine Athletics test to swim these waters and a Routine Boating test to navigate via ship).

If the adventurers approach the tip of the peninsula in a boat, they must make a Routine Athletics test to get from the boat to the cliffs, due to the crashing waves. Swimming adventurers, or adventurers in the water from failed tests, must make a Routine Athletics test to climb the rocks up from the water. If the water is choppier than usual the difficulty of the tests increases by one step, becoming Difficult.

Before getting to the peninsula, however, the adventurers must deal with the great sharks that infest the bay of Ghazor. A large shark approaches and attacks any swimmers or small boats without provocation. A Difficult Perception test can be made to detect a big fin in the water before the shark dives and disappears, only to reappear under the boat a few seconds later, attempting to overturn the boat (or simply attack any swimmers). Unless the adventurers spotted the shark, it attacks first before any of the adventurers can react.

Each round the shark charges the boat, each adventurers must make a Difficult Evade test or fall into the water. See the *Legend Core Rulebook* for more information about the effects of water on combat.

#### The Secret Cavern and Underwater Tunnel

There is a hidden cavern (Difficult Perception test to spot) near the cliffs, with a long tunnel eventually leading to the ancient royal crypts (see Area 1 of the crypts). A long stretch (65 meters) of this tunnel is underwater, meaning that adventurers must swim through it to reach the crypts.

# THE RUINS OF THE ANCIENT PALACE

The ruins of the old palace are severely weathered. The outer walls are 10 meters tall (Routine Athletics test to climb) but broken in several places. Everything of value that was not relocated to the new palace has long since been carried away by looters. A successful Routine Perception test allows the adventurers to find a tunnel that leads down towards the crypts, but they soon find this tunnel collapsed. It quickly becomes apparent that it would take weeks to clear the tunnel of rocks. The adventurers will have better progress searching for the secret cavern with the underwater tunnel (see above).

#### I. Flooded Chamber

The underwater tunnel from below terminates in this large square chamber. Three doors are apparent; two are locked while the third is a false, trapped door (Difficult Perception test to notice, Difficult Mechanisms test to disarm; 2d6 damage to random Hit Location).

#### 

#### The Ancient Royal Crypts of Ghazor

**Standard Features:** Unless noted otherwise, all doors are stone doors.

Lighting: The crypts are unlit.

#### 2. Collapsed Chamber

A narrow stairway leads up to this chamber, where the walls have collapsed, blocking further progress into the palace ruins above.

#### 3. Slimy Corridor

This corridor is plain and unadorned. With a successful Difficult Perception test, a adventurers can detect a faint glistening streak of slime across the ceiling. This is a trail left by the monster currently in the antechamber (Area 6).

#### 4. Hall of the Sea

The walls of this chamber are decorated with the shells of snails and fossilized crustaceans. In the centre of the chamber is a large, square pillar painted with blue waves and various types of ancient sailing-vessels.

#### 5. Corridor With Alcoves

There are ten small alcoves in this T-shaped corridor. Each alcove contains a copper urn whose lid is shaped like an octopus, with the tentacles hanging down the sides of the urn.

The urns are inscribed with archaic cuneiform script; a successful Difficult Insight test reveals that the urns contain the ashes of great sea-captains. The urns are worth 75 SP each, but the dust inside is worth even more to a knowledgeable sorcerer, for it can be used as a material component to cast powerful water-based spells.

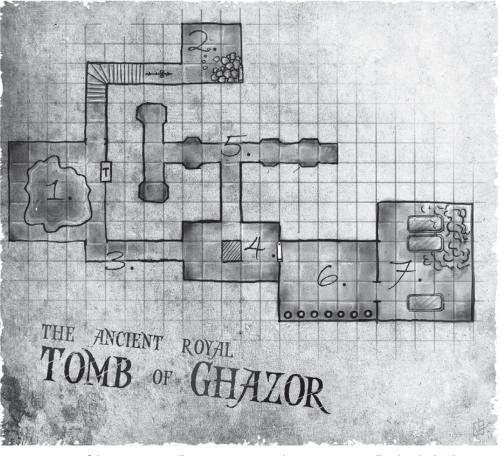
#### 6. Antechamber

The door to this chamber is slightly ajar. Along the south wall is a row of life-size statues of people with unknown racial features.

The opposite wall is painted with scenes that form a story: A group of people lived on an island rich from sea trade, and their temple was heaped with sacrifice to the sea-gods. One image shows a priest with a gold-embroidered robe that seems to receive wisdom and revelations through a conch shell placed next to the priest's ear. The next images show the people fleeing from the island, which is wracked by earthquakes, and coming to Ghazor as it must have existed many centuries ago. The priests among the sea-people are shown offering tribute to the king of Ghazor, and the final image is of the priests being buried under the palace on the island.

In the middle of the room is a human body lying face-down. If the body is turned around, the adventurers see that it is a corpse, which is covered in some sort of slime, and has begun to decay. This is in fact the body of the Namthuan priest Takahla, which has recently been exhumed from his sarcophagus and absorbed by an abominable creature that feeds upon sorcerous energies. The creature attempts to lash out against a surprised opponent, and then withdraw into the grand crypt (Area 7) where its progenitor lurks.

**Slime-Covered Corpse (arcanoplasm):** As Ooze but with semi-humanoid in shambling shape.



Any spell cast at an arcanoplasm is automatically absorbed. This cures 1 point of damage per Magnitude of the spell. Spells that affect an area are not absorbed, but neither do they affect an arcanoplasm. An arcanoplasm cannot absorb divine magic and is affected by it normally.

# 7. The Lurker in the Crypt

This large chamber contains three stone sarcophagi, all with their lids removed, adorned with ancient Susrahnite cuneiform script. A successful Difficult Language test reveals the names of the deceased: Takahla, Yezir-Kot and Karuma, who are further titled "the leaders of the refugees of Namthu, who rest under the protection of king Lamki-Ushra".

There is no time for such sage work initially, however, for the two innermost sarcophagi are covered by a huge, amorphous slime creature, inside which are visible the remains of two human bodies. These are the corpses of the Namthuan priests Yezir-Kot and Karuma, who have been consumed by a vile creature that somehow crept into the crypt and, feeding upon their lingering sorcerous energies, has grown to monstrous proportions.

The Lurker in the Crypt (arcanoplasm, advanced): As Ooze but double all hit points.

**Treasure:** Inside the amorphous body of the monster is an intact copper scroll case from Yezir-Kot's sarcophagus that contains a map showing the way to the isle of Namthu.

#### Sails of Fate

With the map pinpointing the location of Namthu in their possession, the adventurers need a ship to take them to this remote location in the Eastern Ocean.

**Development:** The adventurers look for a ship to take them out to sea. One of the few vessels that is able to make such a long journey on the open seas, and which is currently in port, is the *Water Dragon*, a Nabastissean ship. The first mate, Rashat, is an old henchman of Dar-Tiglat, and he helps the priest and several other cultists to join the crew. Dar-Tiglat masquerades as the new ship doctor, after the old one suddenly falls ill and dies.

As the adventurers search the docks for a suitable ship, they are directed to the *Water Dragon*. The adventurers must negotiate with the captain, who demands a share of any treasure found for himself and his crew. Influence skill tests may determine how successful the negotiations are.

It is possible, but unlikely, that the adventurers do not want to charter the *Water Dragon*, preferring instead to find some other means of transport. This should be difficult, but not impossible. Perhaps there are other captains with vessels worthy of a long voyage, after all, or the adventurers might even buy or commission the building of their own ship (although this certainly does not come cheap). If this happens, the adventure unfolds in a slightly different manner, with both Dar-Tiglat and the *Water Dragon*, as well as the Khoran freebooters of the *Barracuda*, following the adventurers towards the Isle of Namthu, for a three-sided showdown on the shores of the accursed lagoon of Bhaomog.

#### 

#### The Water Dragon

This is a large vessel, 10 meters wide and 30 meters long, built by Nabastissean shipwrights and primarily designed for carrying cargo, although there is a great ballista in the bow. It has three masts, no oars, and moves at an average speed of 2 miles per hour. There are three decks, including the top deck, the crew cabins, and one cargo hold. It has a crew of 40 sailors and 10 officers, including the captain, first mate, and a ship doctor. The ship is worth 10,000 SP. The *Water Dragon* also carries two large rowboats on board.

#### 

#### **Eastern Ocean Encounters**

Assuming good winds, it takes around 15 days from Ghazor to the Isle of Namthu (approximately 700 miles away). Roll on the following encounter table to determine what happens during the sea voyage. Note that many of these events have the potential to derail the adventurers from their primary goal (getting to the island of Namthu); use the encounters as you see fit, or simply skip ahead to Claws from the Abyss.

1d6	Encounter
1	Heavy storm
2	Rats in the hold
3	Broken mast
4	Landfall for repairs
5	Pursued by pirates
6	Mutiny

**Broken Mast:** Bad weather breaks the mast of the ship. There is a 25% chance that a pirate ship (the *Barracuda*) approaches as the *Water Dragon* lies helpless in the water.

**Heavy Storm:** During a heavy storm, a great wave washes over the deck, taking 1d4 crewmembers with it. Any adventurers caught on deck must make a Routine Evade skill test or fall overboard, where a pack of 1d6+5 sharks await hungrily.

**Landfall for Repairs:** Bad weather damages the ship, and the *Water Dragon* must make landfall along the savage Cannibal Coast for repairs.

**Mutiny:** Rumours spread aboard the *Water Dragon* about the 'accursed' isle of Namthu, and mutinous crewmembers capture the captain, demanding he throws the adventurers overboard and returns to Susrah with the ship.

**Pursued by Pirates:** A pirate ship is sighted, possibly by one of the adventurers. Its flag is a red barracuda on black background. Determine the distance between the two vessels when the pursuit starts. Each round thereafter, the captain makes a Routine Ship Handling test. The captain with the best result wins, and may move his vessel 1d6 leagues. If the distance between two vessels is reduced to zero leagues, melee combat can ensue as one vessel is boarded by the other.

Rats in the Hold: Rats have fouled and/or devoured the food onboard, and the remaining food must be rationed. As men grow lean and hungry, a group of sailors may be tempted to mutiny; the adventurers must join the captain in striking the mutineers down (or perhaps join the mutiny).

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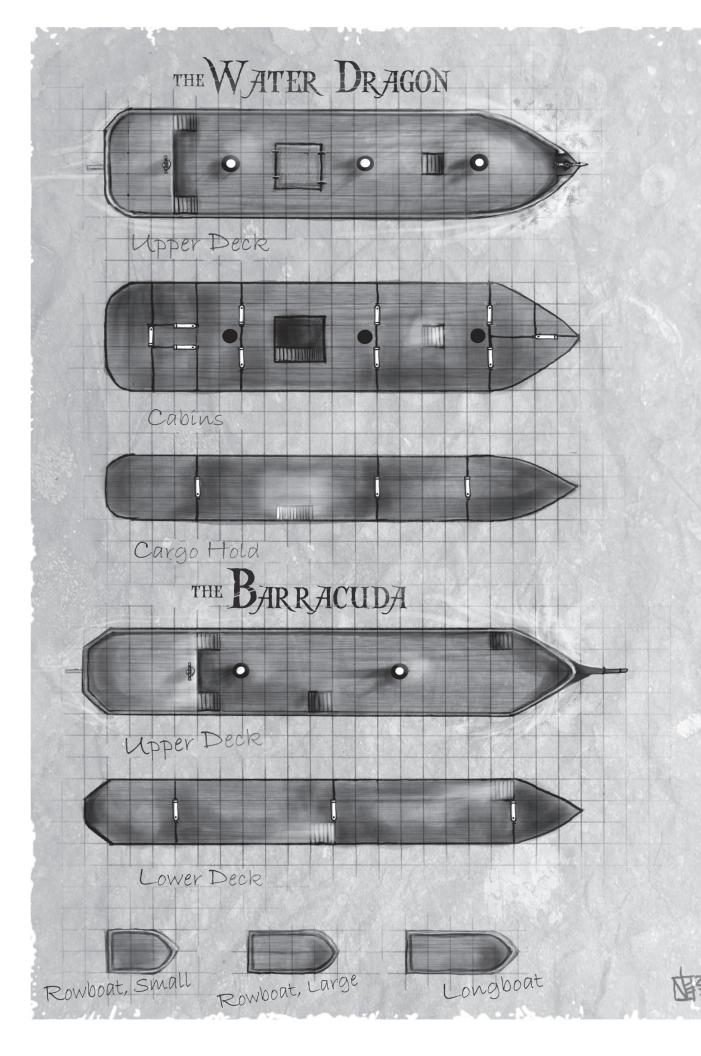
#### The Barracuda

This sleek, ocean-going Khoran galley is 6 meters wide and 33 meters long, and fitted with an iron ram at the bow. It has two sails, forty oars, and moves at an average speed of 3 miles per hour. There are two decks. It has a crew of 60 pirates (who also man the oars when required) and 5 officers. The vessel is worth 12,000 SP. The Barracuda also carries three small rowboats on board.

#### 

Yajal Description: Yajal is middle-aged and potbellied, but big and powerful with rakish good looks. Strangely, Yajal is afraid of water and cannot swim, a fact he has managed to hide from his crew so far. Two decades ago, Yajal was the only son of a powerful merchant house of Nabastis. A rival merchant house arranged for his father to be assassinated, and the young son was accused of the misdeed. Facing corrupt and bribed court officials and city guards, the rightful heir was forced to flee with one of his father's vessels. With his loyal crew, Yajal took up a life of piracy, targeting the vessels of the rival merchant house.

As the years went by with little success, however, Yajal's heart turned black and he began to prey on other, less well-defended ships. There are few of his original crew left, most having been killed and replaced with true pirates from the Isles of the Sea Reavers. His mind and memories (but not his fighting ability) clouded by strong drink, the pirate captain



# Large Shark

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	6D6+24	45	1-3	Tail	6/14
CON	4D6+18	32	4-8	Hindbody	6/14
SIZ	6D6+24	45	9-13	Forebody	6/16
INT	2	2	14	Right Fin	6/13
POW	4D6	14	15	Left Fin	6/13
DEX	2D6+3	10	16-20	Head	6/14

**Combat Actions** 1

Damage Modifier +2D10

Magic Points 14

**Movement** 16m

(swimming)

Strike Rank +6

Armour: Hide. No Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

**Skills:** Athletics 60%, Brawn 60%, Evade 65%, Perception 75%, Persistence 43%,

Resilience 95%, Swim 100%

Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	-	L	T	1D10	As Head
Fin Slash-	M	M	2D8		As Fins

#### **Combat Styles**

Jaws (Bite, Fin Slash): 74%

**Combat Notes:** If the shark's bite attack misses or is Evaded, the shark automatically gains a fin slash attack against its target. If the bite is parried or successfully hits, the shark may not use its fin slash attack.

# Gallas, Captain of the Water Dragon - Male Nabastissean

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	19	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	16	7-9	Abdomen	-/7
INT	13	10-12	Chest	6/8
POW	13	13-15	Right Arm	-/5
DEX	16	16-18	Left Arm	-/5
CHA	13	19-20	Head	-/6

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier +1D4

Magic Points 13 Movement 8m

**Strike Rank** +15 (+13

when armoured)

Armour: Breastplate. -2 Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 90%, Brawn 87%, Culture (Own) 96%, Dance 69%, Drive 49%, Evade 89%, Evaluate 86%, First Aid 29%, Influence 91%, Insight 81%, Lore (Regional) 96%, Perception 86%, Persistence 86%, Resilience 89%, Ride 39%, Sing 76%, Sleight 29%, Stealth 49%, Swim 91%, Unarmed 82%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 95%, Boating 88%, Courtesy 76%, Gambling 86%, Language (Native) 96%, Lore (Tactics) 83%, Oratory 86%, Seduction 86%, Shiphandling 95%, Streetwise 81%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Greatsword	_	Н	L	2D8 Bleed, Impale, Sunder	6/12
Susrahnite bow	165m	Н		1D8+1 Impale	4/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Master of the Deep (Greatsword, Susrahnite bow, 2-H Sword): 92%

Possessions: Metal Breastplate, greatsword, Susrahnite longbow, 30 arrows, 140sp.

**Description:** While Gallas is from Nabastis, his crew is recruited predominantly from Ghazor. The captain is in the prime of his years, and has previously sailed as far south as the Cannibal Coast, and as far east as the kingdom of Laksha.

**Tactics:** While he is skilled with the Susrahnite longbow, it is with the greatsword that Gallas is most deadly, cutting a red swath through enemy crews using powerful attacks.

#### Rashat, First Mate of the Water Dragon - Male Ghazorite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	2/6
INT	11	10-12	Chest	2/7
POW	12	13-15	Right Arm	2/4
DEX	17	16-18	Left Arm	2/4
CHA	12	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +1D2 Magic Points 12 Movement 8m

**Strike Rank** +14 (+12

when armoured)

**Armour:** Studded Leather: -2 Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 76%, Brawn 77%, Culture (Own) 82%, Dance 59%, Drive 29%, Evade 79%, Evaluate 73%, First Aid 28%, Influence 74%, Insight 62%, Lore (Regional) 82%, Perception 78%, Persistence 79%, Resilience 84%, Ride 29%, Sing 54%, Sleight 84%, Stealth 83%, Swim 80%, Unarmed 71%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 75%, Boating 76%, Commerce 63%, Courtesy 53%, Disguise 67%, Gambling 53%, Language (Native) 93%, Lore (Tactics) 62%, Mechanisms 58%, Shiphandling 71%, Streetwise 71%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Short sword	_	M	M	1D6 Bleed, Impale	6/8
Heavy Crossbow	150m	Н		1D10 Impale, Sunder	4/8

#### **Combat Styles**

First Mate (Shortsword, Heavy Crossbow, Dagger): 80%

Possessions: Studded leather, 2 short swords, heavy crossbow, 12 crossbow bolts, 35 sp.

**Description:** Dressed in blood-stained armour and quite feared among the crew, Rashat is in reality Dar-Tiglat's secret henchman, after the priest saved the sailor's life many years ago.

Tactics: Rashat fights with two short swords. He is thoroughly brainwashed by Dar-Tiglat and is willing to die to defend the priest.

### Dar-Tiglat (Sarru the Ship-Doctor), Secret Priest of Yammosh - Male Susrahnite

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	12	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	18	10-12	Chest	-17
<b>POW</b>	14	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	16	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	14	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +0 Magic Points 14 Movement 8m Strike Rank +17

**Armour:** None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 78%, Brawn 74%, Culture (Own) 91%, Dance 75%, Drive 30%, Evade 78%, Evaluate 92%, First Aid 84%, Influence 88%, Insight 77%, Lore (Regional) 95%, Perception 87%, Persistence 83%, Resilience 74%, Ride 30%, Sing 73%, Sleight 30%, Stealth 34%, Swim 80%, Unarmed 28%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 61%, Boating 74%, Courtesy 72%, Disguise 82%, Healing 89%, Language (Native) 87%, Lore (Yammosh) 96%, Manipulation 87%, Meditation 84%, Oratory 84%, Shiphandling 80%, Sorcery (Water Dragon Grimoire) 89%, Teaching 72%

**Grimoire (Water Dragon):** Animate (Wind), Animate (Water), Form/Set (Wind), Form/Set (Water), Abjure (Air), Smother, Tap (SIZ), Tap (CON), Tap (STR)

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Quarterstaff	_	M	L	1D8 Stun Location	4/8
Curved Dagger	_	S	S	1D4+1 Bleed	6/8

#### Combat Styles

Variant Tidal Wave (Spear, Trident, Quarterstaff, Curved Dagger): 79%

**Possessions:** Plain clothes, quarterstaff, curved dagger, 2 doses of *blinding-powder*, 1 dose of *flame-powder*, small lapis lazuli amulet (worth 50sp). His amulet suppresses his dark aura (see below).

**Description:** The elderly "Sarru" is clad in worn clothes, and his head is clean-shaven. This is in fact Dar-Tiglat, a secret priest of Yammosh, who masquerades as the ship's doctor in order to follow the player characters to the Isle of Namthu. Among the ship's crew, there are 15 secret cultists who are loyal to him. Dar-Tiglat's ambition is to use the treasure and magical secrets he expects to find on the island of Namthu to depose Uktha-Akkar, the current high priest of Yammosh in Ghazor. Dar-Tiglat has a powerful dark aura due to his association with black sorceries; his amulet (above) suppresses this.

**Tactics:** While posing as the ship doctor, Sarru/Dar-Tiglat does not use spells in public. Only at the most opportune moment, when he chooses to reveal himself as a priest of Yammosh, is he free to hurl his spells and magic upon enemies. He opens with TAP (STR) on the most powerful of his foes.

Notes: Dar-Tiglat has a bonus of +10% to his Swim tests in stormy or violent waters.

#### Crew of the Water Dragon - Male Ghazorite (40)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	12	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	2/7
INT	10	10-12	Chest	2/8
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	2/5
DEX	15	16-18	Left Arm	2/5
CHA	9	19-20	Head	-/6

Combat Actions 2 Damage Modifier +0 Magic Points 10 Movement 8m

**Strike Rank** +13 (+11

when armoured)

**Armour:** Studded Leather. -2 Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 62%, Brawn 59%, Culture (Own) 80%, Dance 54%, Drive 25%, Evade 65%, Evaluate 69%, First Aid 25%, Influence 38%, Insight 50%, Lore (Regional) 80%, Perception 50%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 59%, Ride 25%, Sing 49%, Sleight 54%, Stealth 55%, Swim 54%, Unarmed 57%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 57%, Boating 74%, Courtesy 29%, Gambling 30%, Language (Native) 79%, Lore (Tactics) 60%, Shiphandling 72%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HI
Short sword	_	M	M	1D6 Bleed, Impale	6/8
Heavy Crossbow	150m	Н	_	1D10 Impale, Sunder	4/8

#### **Combat Styles**

Swarthy Sailor (Shortsword, Net, Spear, Dagger): 69%

Possessions: Studded leather, short sword, heavy crossbow, 10 crossbow bolts, 1d4 sp.

**Description:** Experienced sailors, many of these men have been across the Eastern Ocean with Gallas and his ship. Around 15 of these crewmembers are secretly loyal to Sarru/Dar-Tiglat, the ship-doctor.

**Tactics:** The crewmembers are well-disciplined and fight under orders from Gallas or Rashat (except the secret culitsts who do not obey Gallas once Dar-Tiglat has revealed himself as a sorcerer-priest). Even so, the rest of the crew could also possibly be incited to a mutiny if they become dissatisfied with their officers, their part of the loot, or if facing supernatural dangers way out of their league.

#### Yajal, 'the Serpent,' Captain of the Barracuda - Male Khoran

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	20	1-3	Right Leg	-/7
CON	15	4-6	Left Leg	-/7
SIZ	18	7-9	Abdomen	-/8
INT	13	10-12	Chest	-/9
POW	15	13-15	Right Arm	-/6
DEX	15	16-18	Left Arm	-/6
CHA	16	19-20	Head	-17

Combat Actions 3 Damage Modifier +1D6 Magic Points 15 Movement 8m Strike Rank +14

**Armour:** None

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 60%, Brawn 83%, Culture (Own) 86%, Dance 61%, Drive 30%, Evade 75%, Evaluate 79%, First Aid 28%, Influence 92%, Insight 63%, Lore (Regional) 96%, Perception 78%, Persistence 80%, Resilience 95%, Ride 30%, Sing 71%, Sleight 31%, Stealth 28%, Swim 35%, Unarmed 75%

**Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 65%, Boating 85%, Commerce 79%, Courtesy 79%, Gambling 88%, Language (Native) 89%, Lore (Tactics) 86%, Seduction 69%, Shiphandling 95%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Great Scimitar	_	L	L	1D10 Bleed, Sunder	6/10
Javelin	30m	Н		1d8 Impale, Pin Weapon (Shield)	3/8

#### Combat Styles

Captain's Wrath (Great Scimitar, Javelin, 2-H Sword): 90%

Possessions: Blue silken loincloth, great scimitar, javelin, bronze bracers adorned with lapis lazuli (worth 110 sp).

**Description:** Yajal is middle-aged and potbellied, but big and powerful with rakish good looks. Strangely, Yajal is afraid of water and cannot swim, a fact he has managed to hide from his crew so far. Two decades ago, Yajal was the only son of a powerful merchant house of Nabastis. A rival merchant house arranged for his father to be assassinated, and the young son was accused of the misdeed. Facing corrupt and bribed court officials and city guards, the rightful heir was forced to flee with one of his father's vessels. With his loyal crew, Yajal took up a life of piracy, targeting the vessels of the rival merchant house.

As the years went by with little success, however, Yajal's heart turned black and he began to prey on other, less well-defended ships. There are few of his original crew left, most having been killed and replaced with true pirates from the Isles of the Sea Reavers. His mind and memories (but not his fighting ability) clouded by strong drink, the pirate captain has now all but forgotten his original mission, but if he was somehow reminded of his past and given a chance to strike against his old enemies, Yajal could perhaps yet gain his rightful revenge. **Tactics:** Yajal wields his massive scimitar with both hands, dealing death to left and right – if given a chance he tries to smash his opponent's weapons with Sunder.

#### Bloated Ones, Accursed Servants of Bhaomog - Male Ikuna (20+)

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	2/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	2/5
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	2/6
INT	3	10-12	Chest	2/7
POW	12	13-15	Right Arm	2/4
DEX	6	16-18	Left Arm	2/4
CHA	6	19-20	Head	2/5

Combat Actions 1

Damage Modifier +1D2

Magic Points 12

Movement 8m (Swim 6m)

Strike Rank +5

**Armour:** None, supernatural flesh.

Traits: Life Sense

Skills: Athletics 50%, Evade 28%, Perception 55%, Persistence 68%, Resilience 57%,

Stealth 28%

Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Ikuna Knife		M	S	1D6+1 Bleed, Impale	6/7

#### **Combat Styles**

Rusty Blade (Ikuna Knife, Dagger): 70%

Kiss of the Deep: 72%

Possessions: Rust-covered Ikuna knife.

**Description:** Bloated ones resemble corpses that have been soaked in water for days or weeks. Their putrid bodies are covered with the slime of the sea, and they exude a nauseating stench.

**Tactics:** The bloated ones try to grab opponents and throw them overboard, where more of their brethren await, or they may just use their Kiss of the Deep ability to drown held opponents. They are after the *Horn of Bhaomog*; the bloated ones can sense who carries it, and concentrate their attacks on him or her.

**Kiss of the Deep:** The bloated one will attempt to grapple an opponent and latch its disgusting fleshy lips onto theirs. Once in a grapple the bloated one then floods the lungs of its opponent with salty water causing them to suffer Drowning as per the *Legend* rules. The victim can attempt a Difficult Brawn test to break free once per round.

has now all but forgotten his original mission, but if he was somehow reminded of his past and given a chance to strike against his old enemies, Yajal could perhaps yet gain his rightful revenge.

#### Claws from the Abyss

The night that the vessel carrying the players comes within 30 miles of the island of Namthu, a horde of bloated ones attack by climbing the ship's sides. They can sense the presence of the *Horn of Bhaomog*, and the voice of their god within. After dealing with any guards on deck (which may include the players), they concentrate their attacks on whoever carries the horn.

Throughout the encounter, a heavy storm batters the ship. The rain and waves washing over the deck reduces visibility to half normal (assume starlight conditions). Each round, there is a 20% chance that a big wave crashes into the side of the ship, and everyone must make a Difficult Athletics test or be knocked prone.

#### THE ISLAND OF NAMTHU

The island of Namthu rises majestically above the azure ocean that surrounds it. Namthu is ringed on all sides by jagged, vegetation-covered steep hills (Difficult Athletics test to climb) which are on average, more than 60 meters tall. The highest peak on the island, located to the west, is 100 meters tall. The island itself measures 4 by 3 miles, and the huge lagoon is approximately 2 miles by 1,5 miles across. The water in the lagoon is murky but calm (Routine Swim test). The lagoon is more than 120 meters deep in places; the earthquake-shattered ruins of the Namthuan civilization rests somewhere on the bottom, haunted by bloated ones and other terrors of the deep.

The only entrance to the lagoon is to the east, through an area of broken cliffs and crashing waves (Routine Swim test). The water there is too shallow for large vessels to cross, so smaller rowing-boats must be used to enter the lagoon. A successful Routine Boating test is required to keep a boat away from the cliffs. If this test is failed, the boat is hurled against the cliffs (but not destroyed), and everyone aboard must make a Routine Evade test to stay in the boat; failure means they fall into the water.

There is a small isle to the south of the main island, which is jungle-covered and teeming with thousands of centipede swarms, as well as large and huge monstrous centipedes. The Isle of Worms has never been inhabited. If anyone were to brave the plague of centipedes, they would find that *barafa*-grapes (see the Equipment chapter) grow plentiful here.

# The Secret of the Lagoon

The temple of the ancient Namthuans is located against the hillside on the eastern shore of the lagoon. Due to earthquakes, the rock upon which the temple stands has sunken several meters, so that during high tide, the outer temple is flooded with water. High and low tide occurs twice each day, with approximately six hours between a high tide and a low tide.

Unless the adventurers wait until a specific time, determine randomly (using 1d12) the time of day when the adventurers arrive in the lagoon, and whether it is high or low tide. During the high tide, the temple is completely hidden below water. If the adventurers arrive during the high tide, they probably start to explore other

parts of the island first. When the water level sinks, the temple is revealed. Refer to the following chart:

Hour	Tide	Water Level in Outer Temple
0.5		Chest-high
1		Waist-high
2		Knee-high
2 3 4 5 5.5	Low	Shallow pools of water on floor
4		Knee-high
5		Waist-high
5.5		Chest-high
6	High	Completely flooded
6.5		Chest-high
7		Waist-high
8		Knee-high
9	Low	Shallow pools of water on floor
10		Knee-high
11		Waist-high
11.5		Chest-high
12	High	Completely flooded

Make a note of the time when the adventurers enter the temple. They have up to six hours before the temple is re-flooded. Be careful to track how much time the adventurers spend searching, studying walls, opening locks, breaking down doors, removing rubble, loading and carrying treasure, etc. Combats usually only last less than a minute each, but if the adventurers stop to use the First Aid skill, several minutes will pass each time. See the sidebar for the effects of moving and fighting in water.

**Development:** When the *Water Dragon* arrives at the island, the captain sends the adventurers, along with Rashat the first mate and Sarru the ship doctor and several crew members, into the lagoon in two rowboats. Eventually, the tide recedes and reveals the temple. Unless the adventurers venture into the temple on their own initiative, Sarru insists that the landing-party should explore it. Blowing the *Horn of Bhaomog* has no effect at this time, except to summon more bloated ones, who attempt to snatch the conch shell from whoever holds it.

# The Bones of the Eyrie

A 100-meter tall mountain peak rises from the western hills of the island, overlooking the lagoon. On the north side of the peak is a cave which is the lair of a flock of giant, flesh-eating birds. The birds can be seen, circling around the peak, from the beach area with a successful Routine Perception test. It requires a long series of Difficult Athletics tests to reach the top. The hillsides are strewn with clean-picked human and animal bones (although the human bones are obviously very old).

Priests loyal to Pathag Thuul pursued the slayers of the high priest, but were defeated and slain on the beach as earthquakes wracked the island. The huge birds which nested atop the mountain snatched up the corpses of the priests and flew them to their eyrie, where they picked their bones clean. Even now, the innermost grotto of the eyrie is haunted by undead priests; they cannot rest until their bones receive a proper burial. The birds shun the inner caves, of course.

Outside the caves is a great ledge, strewn with bones, feathers, and bird droppings. The Namthu-birds drop any victims they have snatched up elsewhere onto the ledge, where the victim is beset by the flock, including the young.

The cave entrance leads to a tunnel that splits up into two tunnels. The northern tunnel leads to a series of small caves, where the birds keep their young and their eggs.

The southern tunnel leads to a big grotto, now abandoned by the birds because it is occupied by several skeletons. The skeletons cannot leave the grotto and cannot rest before they receive a proper burial. The clean-picked bones of three human skeletons are scattered across the cavern floor. Among the bones (Routine Perception test to spot) are the following valuables: A buckle adorned with lapis lazuli (worth 75 SP), 42 ancient gold coins (worth 84 SP), and an exquisite curved dagger. The final item is a fist-size glass orb filled with milky-white smoke. The orb is far more sturdy than it looks (AP 8, hp 20), but if it is smashed against the mystic walls in the temple (see Area 8), is breaks easily and shatters the wall as well, ending the spell.

If these skeletons are disturbed in any way, they come to life in a swift manner and attack any intruders.

# THE TEMPLE OF BHAOMOG (UPPER LEVEL)

When the water level recedes during low tide, the cyclopean temple of the Namthuans appears from out of the lagoon. Its massive, slime-glistening walls are covered with seaweed, algae and corals, and a variety of creatures such as snails and starfish crawl across its surface.

#### 

# The Temple of Bhaomog

**Standard Features:** Unless noted otherwise, all doors are stone doors. Refer to the sidebar for the effects of moving around and fighting in the flooded temple.

**Lighting:** The temple is unlit.

#### 

# I. Pier and Temple Entrance

A 30-meter long pier extends from the temple entrance and into the lagoon. The pier was used as a dock for the boats of the Namthuans when the priests and their servants approached the temple.

The temple entrance has no doors, just a huge gaping hole that leads into the darkness inside. Around the entrance are piles of stones that have fallen off the main structure during the earthquakes that shook the temple centuries ago.

#### 2. Immense Hall

This great hall branches off to several lesser chambers along its sides. Straight ahead are chambers devoted to the worship of Bhaomog (see Areas 9 and 14), but entrance to these areas is blocked by an invisible mystical wall (see Area 8).

The walls of the hall, like the building outside, are covered with corals and seaweed. The vast room smells of stagnant water and dead fish.

#### 3. Side Chamber

This small chamber is filled with broken pottery. Murals on the walls show the temple being constructed by the early Namthuans. Golden treasures are shown heaped upon altars glistening with seawater and slime. One disturbing image shows a priest blowing a conch shell to call a tentacled monstrosity out of the depths of the lagoon.

#### 4. Lair of the Bloated Ones

This large room is the dwelling-place for two dozen bloated ones, once-human abominations created by the Namthuan priests using a spell learned from Bhaomog, the god of the deep. These creatures seek to free Bhaomog, but cannot penetrate the wall of force (see Area 8) that keeps them out of the inner areas of the temple. The bloated ones haunt the temple and the lagoon. They attack anyone entering the temple. If a adventurer or NPC carries the *Horn of Bhaomog*, all bloated ones concentrate their attacks on this character, attempting to snatch the conch shell from him or her and use it to awaken their sleeping master.

Bloated Ones, Aquatic Servitors of Bhaomog (24)

#### 5. Chamber

The entrance to this room and the chambers beyond (Areas 6 and 7) is blocked by a large pile of stones, as the walls here have partly collapsed. The amount of loose stone that fills a 2-meters-by-2-meter area weighs one ton (2,000 pounds). In 1 minute, using only his hands, a adventurer can clear rocks and debris equal to five times his heavy load limit. Armed with an appropriate tool, such as a pick, crowbar, or shovel, a digger can clear loose stone twice as quickly as by hand.

#### 6. The Golden Siren of Death

A life-sized golden statue, with the voluptuous upper body of a woman and the lower body of a serpent, stands against the far wall of this small shrine. The statue is very valuable (worth 4,000 SP), but carries a terrible curse: Anyone touching the statue must make a Difficult Insight test or succumb to a telepathic, seductive voice that orders the victim to slay all his companions and then drown himself in the nearest pool of water.

#### 7. Chamber With Wall-Scrawl

Used by lesser priests in ancient times, this room contains a scattering of stone utensils decorated with red and black paint. The wall to the north is covered with a crude mural that has been carved into the stone with a dagger. The mural depicts the high priest of the temple being stabbed to death by traitorous acolytes; the temple being sealed by the spells of the dying high priest; the traitors killing more loyal priests and fleeing from the island with much stolen treasure; and the bodies of several dead priests being carried by huge birds to the island's highest mountain peak.

Giant Flesh-Eating Birds of Namthu (12)

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	6D6+20	41	1-2	Right Claw	3/9
CON	5D6+15	33	3-4	Left Claw	3/9
SIZ	6D6+20	41	5-7	Abdomen	3/12
INT	4	4	8-9	Chest	3/15
POW	3D6	11	10-13	Right Wing	3/12
DEX	3D6+10	21	14-17	Left Wing	3/12
			18-20	Head	3/12

**Combat Actions** 2

Damage Modifier +2D10

Magic Points 11

Movement 4m (20m flying)

Strike Rank +13

Armour: Tough feathers. No Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

Skills: Athletics 80%, Brawn 85%, Evade 65%, Perception 99%, Persistence 70%,

Resilience 78%, Track 70%

Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	<i>AP/HP</i>
Peck	_	L	T	1D8+1	As Head
Claw		M	M	1D6+1	As Claws

#### **Combat Styles**

Flesh Eater (Slashing Peck, Claw): 79%

**Description:** These are literally giant birds with evil looking eyes; they have colourful plumage and blood-stained beaks/claws.

**Possessions:** 40% chance of 1D40x10 SP.

**Tactics:** Giant Flesh-Eating Birds of Namthu typically attack from great heights, diving earthward at tremendous speed. When they cannot dive, they use their powerful talons and slashing beaks to strike at the heads and eyes of targets. The birds fight to the death to defend their young in the eyrie.

Bones of Slain Namthuan Priests (3)

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	2D6+6	13	1-3	Right Leg	-/4
CON	1D6	4	4-6	Left Leg	-/4
SIZ	2D6+6	13	7-9	Abdomen	-/5
INT	0	0	10-12	Chest	-/6
POW	0	0	13-15	Right Arm	-/3
DEX	1D6+12	16	16-18	Left Arm	-/3
			19-20	Head	-/4

**Combat Actions** 2

**Armour:** None

Damage Modifier +1D2

Traits: Dark Sight

Magic Points 11 Movement 8m

Strike Rank +8 Skills: Athletics 37%, Evade 49%, Persistence 0%, Resilience 32%

Weapons

Type Range Size Reach Damage AP/HP
Short sword — M M 1D6 Bleed, Impale 6/8

#### **Combat Styles**

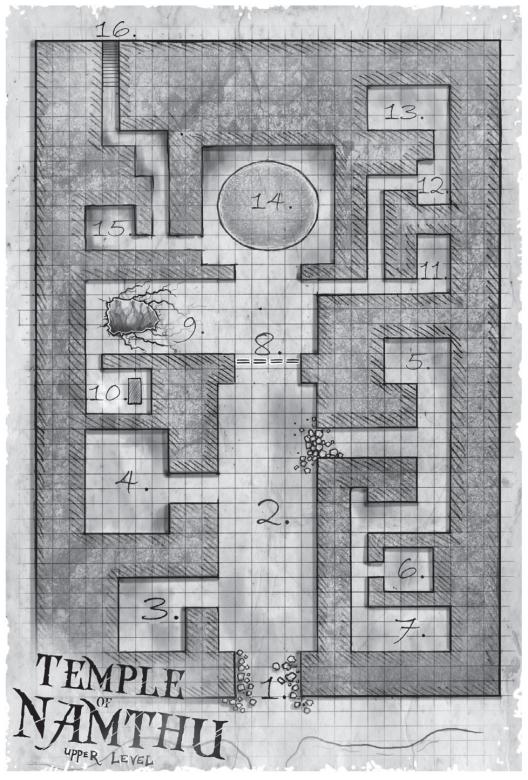
Old Bones (Shortsword, Spear, Dagger): 47%

**Description:** These old bones are animated by the sheer power of an ancient curse, their eyes burn with a hatred of all life.

Possessions: Tattered robes, broken ivory statue, 1D6 SP.

**Tactics:** The skeletons seek to overwhelm foes and rush towards the weakest.

**Notes:** Once the skeletons are down, the players have 1D3 hours to bury their remains and say a blessing, or the skeletons will rise again to continue their unlife.



The skeletal remains of the priest who etched the mural onto the wall before he died rest in a heap on the floor. Among the bones is a bronze necklace (worth 75 SP) and a worn knife, blunt from its use on the wall.

# 8. Mystic Wall of Force

The entry to the hall beyond is sealed with a magical wall of force. Curiously, the force wall does not stop water from flowing though, but it stops solid objects. This allows the bloated ones imprisoned in the inner temple to survive, since they get soaked in water during every high tide.

The wall was raised by the spells of the Namthuan priests and, in addition to the normal ways of dispelling it, can be broken by destroying a white orb that the priests used as a focus for the permanent spell. The priest who held the orb was slain, and his corpse later taken by the flesh-eating birds to their eyrie (see The Bones of the Eyrie). The bloated ones in the temple and lagoon seek to dispel the force wall, but are unable to retrieve the orb, for they cannot be out of the water for long. Besides, the bloated ones are not good climbers, and the Namthubirds would easily pick them off as they climbed the mountainside.

**Development:** Unless the adventurers have some spell that can dispel the force wall, they must climb the peaks to get to the cave and retrieve the orb that acts as a focus for the permanent wall of force. Clues to the logic behind this can be found on the murals in the temple (see Area 7). If the adventurers don't figure this out (allowing them a Difficult Insight test), Dar-Tiglat probably will.

#### 9. Tentacled Idol

A huge and monstrous idol dominates this great hall. The idol is crafted from dark green stone, perhaps jade, and resembles a cross between a giant insect and a squid with demonic features. This is a statue of Bhaomog, of course. It is so expertly crafted and so lifelike that anyone seeing it for the first time must make a Difficult Insight test or become rooted to the spot with fear for 1 minute.

#### 10. Altar of the Sea-Gods

This small shrine adjacent to the huge green stone idol of Bhaomog has a great altar placed against the northern wall. There is a secret compartment within the altar (Difficult Perception test to spot) that contains a silver box filled with 101 perfect white pearls (worth 5,000 SP).

However, anyone approaching the altar without uttering certain arcane phrases sacred to Bhaomog triggers a ritual which covers the entire room with rubbery tentacles that attempt to grab and crush the interlopers.

# II. Preparation Chamber

Ancient bronze bowls and other priestly vessels, green and blue with verdigris, are scattered in this room, once used by the acolytes of the temple for various ceremonial purposes.

Bhaomog, the Sleeper in the Abyss - Ancient God of the Namthuans

	Value	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	56	1-2	Tentacle 1	10/20
CON	24	3-4	Tentacle 2	10/20
SIZ	50	5-6	Tentacle 3	10/20
INT	6	7-8	Tentacle 4	10/20
POW	20	9-10	Tentacle 5	10/20
DEX	23	11-12	Tentacle 6	10/20
CHA	10	13 - 14	Left Arm	10/10
		15-16	Right Arm	10/10
		17-18	Body	10/19
		19-20	Head	10/22

**Combat Actions** 4

Damage Modifier +2D12

Magic Points 20

Movement 10m (20m

swimming)

Strike Rank +15

**Armour:** Gnarled rubbery flesh. No Armour Penalty.

Traits: Poison

Skills: Athletics 85%, Brawn 96%, Evade 70%, Perception 75%, Persistence 75%,

Resilience 85%, Stealth 69%, Track 100%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Tentacle	_	VL	VL	2D10 Constriction	As Tentacles
Bite		Н	T	4D6 Poison	As Head
Arm		L	L	3D6	As Arms

#### **Combat Styles**

Tentacle 110%, Bite 90%, Arm 80%

Description: There are monsters why defy mortal description, masses of tentacles, fanged maw and more eyes than it's comfortable to look at.

Possessions: Bhaomog has 1D10x100 SP in treasures scattered around his lair.

**Combat Notes:** The beast may attack with all eight tentacles simultaneously against as many as four separate targets. It may attack with two tentacles as 1 Combat Action. When a victim has been seized by two tentacles, the tentacles will begin to squeeze, inflicting its damage automatically every round. Armour protects only the initial damage from the strike.

The beast's bite has a vicious toxin laced with it, use the rules for Blade Venom found on page 81 of the *Legend* rules.

Tactics: Bhaomog strikes his opponents with his barbed tentacles, then grabs and crushes with his arms, or drags victims into his huge jaws. Bhaomog usually withdraws from combat if he loses three of his tentacles or both of its arms. Bhaomog regrows severed limbs in 1d10+10 days. Three times per day, Bhaomog can attempt to enslave any one living creature within 10 meters. The target must succeed on a Difficult Insight test or be affected. An enslaved creature obeys Bhaomog's telepathic commands until freed. They can attempt a new Insight test every 24 hours to break free. The control is also broken if Bhaomog dies or travels more than 1 mile from its slave. Bhaomog can jet backward once per round, at a speed of 90 meters. He must move in a straight line. Bhaomog can emit a cloud of jet-black ink in a 25-meter spread once per minute as a free action. The cloud provides total concealment, which Bhaomog normally uses to escape a fight that is going badly. Creatures within the cloud are considered to be in darkness.

Bloated Ones (5): See Area 4 of the outer temple.

#### 12. Antechamber

All furniture in this small room has long since rotted away, leaving an empty room with bare walls.

#### 13. High Priest's Chamber

Once the richly appointed sanctum of Pathag Thuul, the high priest of the Namthuans, this chamber is now filled with rubble. Among the floating debris (Difficult Perception test to discover) is a set of three lapis lazuli cylinder seals (worth 50 SP each) indicating Pathag Thuul's position, and a small iron shield (worth 160 SP).

#### 14. The Pool of Bhaomog

This vast pit is filled with murky water even at low tide. The pit is ringed by stone, a circular wall 1 meter tall. The pit leads down 35 meters to the collapsed underwater cave where Bhaomog sleeps and dreams and whispers to the minds of weak-willed men who heed the call from the abyss.

Bhaomog used to come into the temple through underwater tunnels beneath the temple building and surface in this pool, receiving the adorations of his priests as well as his due offerings and sacrifices. The earthquakes that shook Namthu during the failed ritual when Pathag Thuul was killed sealed the tunnels and even the horde of bloated ones lacks the strength to excavate them.

If the *Horn of Bhaomog* is blown 3 times in the temple, in the inner temple beyond the wall of force area, Bhaomog is awakened from his slumber. It takes him 1d3 x 10 minutes to excavate the rubble and fallen stones that imprison him at the bottom of the pit.

**Development:** If Bhaomog awakens, he waits for the high tide to flood the temple so that he can swim out and into the lagoon and beyond. If the abomination of the deep detects intruders in the temple, he attempts to grab them with his far-reaching tentacles and drag them to their deaths in the depths of the pit.

The thrashing of Bhaomog's tentacles may cause great pieces of stone to fall from the walls and the ceiling. Creatures caught underneath the falling rocks suffer 4d6 points of damage (Difficult Athletics or Evade test for half damage). A failed test means a creature is stuck underneath the crushing weight of the rock and must make a Difficult Athletics test to break free.

#### 15. Chamber of Skulls

This room contains hundreds of human skulls, heaped in a crude pyramid, stained by red algae and green sea slime. They are the remains of sacrificial victims who were not deemed worthy to be fed to Bhaomog or turned into bloated ones.

# 16. Corridor and Stairs to Hillside Temple

The tunnel leads into the mountain and the inner level of the temple.

# THE TEMPLE OF BHAOMOG (LOWER LEVEL)

This part of the temple has been carved out of the bedrock of the steep hillside against which the outer temple stands. Even at low tide, some parts of the inner temple (Areas 3 and 4) remain submerged.

Due to its location at the top of several flights of stairs, the outer sanctum (Area 5) and beyond is never submerged, not even during high tide.

#### I. Antechamber

The corridor from the outer temple (see Area 16 of the outer temple) ends in this square, nondescript chamber.

### 2. Square Hall With Statues

The ceiling of this great hall appears upheld by four huge, squat statues of humanoids whose hands push against the ceiling. The gigantic statues are carved in black stone and have the features of bloated ones. The room reeks of rotten seaweed and dead fish.

#### 3. South Wing

A narrow staircase leads down to a chamber which is always submerged in water, even at low tide. The water is murky and stagnant. Those who dive into it find several items of treasure in the flooded storage magazines here, including a bronze scimitar (worth 25 SP) and copper visored helm (worth 30 SP), a bronze breastplate decorated with gold (worth 250 SP), three small horse figurines in silver (worth 40 SP each), a pile of ancient gold coins (a total of 613 SP), and an iron medallion in the shape of a spider (worth 35 SP).

However, in the water is also a swarm of Namthuan spinal leeches. These vermin appear as 3-inch long transparent leeches. They attach to their prey and drain spinal fluid, thereby inducing paralysis in the victim. When first encountered, a Routine Perception test can be made to avoid them entirely. If this test is failed, the spinal leeches go unnoticed and crawl onto their victim, moving quickly to its spine. A spinal leech needs only a single round to reach its destination. If the target is wearing 5 AP of armour or more, an additional round is added to the time as the leech finds a way underneath its host's armour; two rounds are added if the victim is wearing 10 AP or more.

When a leech attaches itself, the victim may attempt a Routine Insight test. If successful, he feels a strange sensation run down his spine; otherwise, the spinal leech's bite goes unnoticed.

Each round thereafter, a Routine Resilience test must be made or the victim takes 1d6 points of Dexterity damage. At Dexterity 0, the victim is physically paralyzed until his Dexterity score is brought to 1.

The application of fire or salt instantly kills all leeches. They can also be pulled from a host with no ill effects.

# 4. North Wing

Like the south wing (Area 3), this chamber is always submerged. A group of bloated ones lair here. They hide underwater and attempt to attack with surprise, grabbing victims and pulling them underwater to drown them in the murky water.

**Bloated Ones (5)** 

#### 5. Outer Sanctum

On the floor of this large sanctum are four square pools filled with murky water. Painted images on the walls portray rituals wherein captives are offered up as sacrifice to a tentacled monster (Bhaomog, of course) and turned into bloated ones, aquatic servitors of the monstrous god.

#### The Guardian of the Sanctum

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	4D6	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/4
CON	3D6	11	4-6	Left Leg	-/4
SIZ	2D6+2	9	7-9	Abdomen	-/5
INT	3D6	11	10-12	Chest	-/6
POW	2D6+3	10	13-15	Right Arm	-/3
DEX	4D6	14	16-18	Left Arm	-/3
CHA	2D6	7	19-20	Head	-/4

Combat Actions 2 Damage Modifier +0 Magic Points 10 Movement 8m Strike Rank +13 Armour: None. No Skill Penalty.

Traits: None

**Skills:** Athletics 50%, Evade 60%, Perception 60%, Resilience 70%, Stealth 99%, Track 80%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Scimitar	_	M	M	1D8 Bleed	6/10
Dagger		S	S	1D4+1 Bleed, Impale	6/8

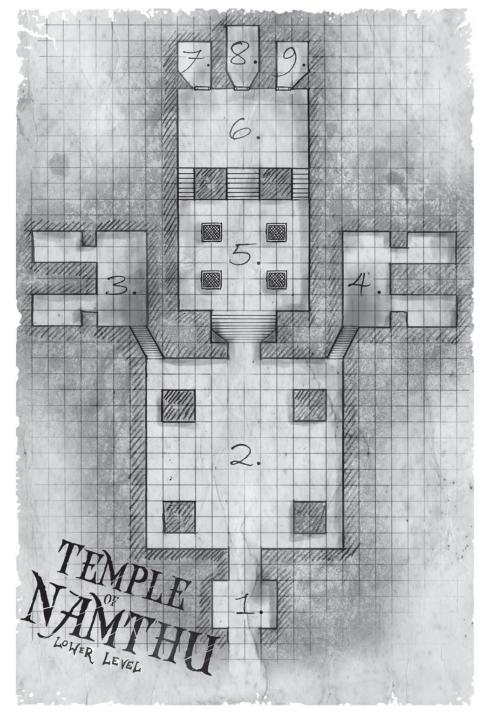
#### **Combat Styles**

Invisible Blade (Scimitar, Dagger, Trident): 69%

**Description:** The invisible warrior moves through the room in just a feint shimmer of hazy light.

Possessions: Scimitar, Dagger, Trident, 20 SP and an old box with an ivory female figure inside (worth 15 SP).

Tactics: Using the Stealth skill the creature tries to ambush unwary opponents and deliver a sneaky attack with its Dagger first.



Between the pools, in the centre of the chamber, stands a pedestal of stone that holds an iron-bound book. This is a tome that contains the spell used to transform humans into bloated ones. If the book is disturbed, opened or removed, its invisible guardian-elemental is instantly summoned and attacks.

**Development:** If Dar-Tiglat is with the players, he lets them spring any traps the iron-bound book might have. If the invisible stalker attacks one of the adventurers, the priest uses this opportunity to betray the adventurers, ordering his men to attack the other adventurers. If possible, Dar-Tiglat tries to capture the adventurers in order to turn them into bloated ones under his command, but his first priority is to get the tome, as well as the *Horn of Bhaomog*, from the adventurers. If the gets the chance, Dar-Tiglat blows the horn to awaken Bhaomog, but to the priest's great surprise, wielding the horn

does not give him any sort of control over or favor with the monstrous god of the deep.

#### 6. Inner Sanctum

The marble floor of this inner sanctum is inscribed with a symbol of death that protects the treasure in the chambers beyond. The symbol is 5 meters in diameter and placed in front of the door to the central treasure chamber (Area 9), although its burst effect easily covers the entire room. The symbol appears as a green and gold mosaic of a great octopus. The senior priests of Namthu were attuned to the symbol when it was created, and thus did not suffer any ill effects from it.

#### 7. South Treasure Chamber

This locked room is stacked with hundreds of painted amphorae, clay jars and copper vessels. However, the exotic wines and strange oils that are contained within these containers have become spoiled after centuries of storage.

#### 8. North Treasure Chamber

Similar to the south treasure chamber (Area 7), this room is locked. It once held large crates of animal furs and bales of exotic cloth from far-away lands, but only tatters of these decayed treasures now remain here.

#### 9. Central Treasure Chamber

The door to this room is magically locked, requiring blood or silver to open. The treasury beyond is filled with golden bowls and gemstudded drinking-cups, chests with gems and coins, a chariot adorned with golden lion heads, heaps of pearls and opals, and an abundance of silver, lapis lazuli and golden rings and bracelets (the whole collection is worth in excess of 75,000 SP).

Any character who finds this great treasure must make a Routine Insight test or become fascinated for 2d6 rounds by the glittering treasure hoard, doing nothing except staring at the gleaming

riches. If the test is failed by 5% or more, the character becomes obsessed with the treasure, claiming all of it as his own and doing everything in his power to secure and appraise the treasure for 1 hour, after which a new test is allowed to shake off the effect. Such treasure-obsessed characters may easily come to blows with other characters if they insist on sharing the treasure.

# CONCLUSION

Multiple developments are possible once the players reach the Isle of Namthu. Can they retrieve the ancient treasures without awakening Bhaomog? Or will Dar-Tiglat's meddling unleash a monster which spells doom for all? A three- or four-way battle could easily be fought on the island, between the players, Dar-Tiglat and his cultists, Gallas and his sailors, and the bloated ones who serve Bhaomog.

Then there is the matter of Yajal and his pirates, who have followed the Water Dragon to the isle. If the players have not encountered the pirates earlier, they may emerge from the lagoon only to find the Water Dragon attacked, and perhaps burned, by the captain of the Barracuda.

And back in Ghazor there is the powerful high priest of Yammosh, Uktha-Akkar, who may take an interest in the player characters if they return with the sunken treasures of Namthu. Perhaps he even has his own spies among the crew-cultists who serve Dar-Tiglat.

If the players fail: Dar-Tiglat prefers to capture the players alive, in order to turn them into bloated ones. Bhaomog himself crushes anyone standing in his path unless they surrender, either willingly or through his enslavement ability. No vessel is safe as the awakened god seeks to restore his sea-empire.

If the players are defeated by Yajal and the Sea Reavers, the pirates will try to ransom them, if possible, instead of killing the players outright.

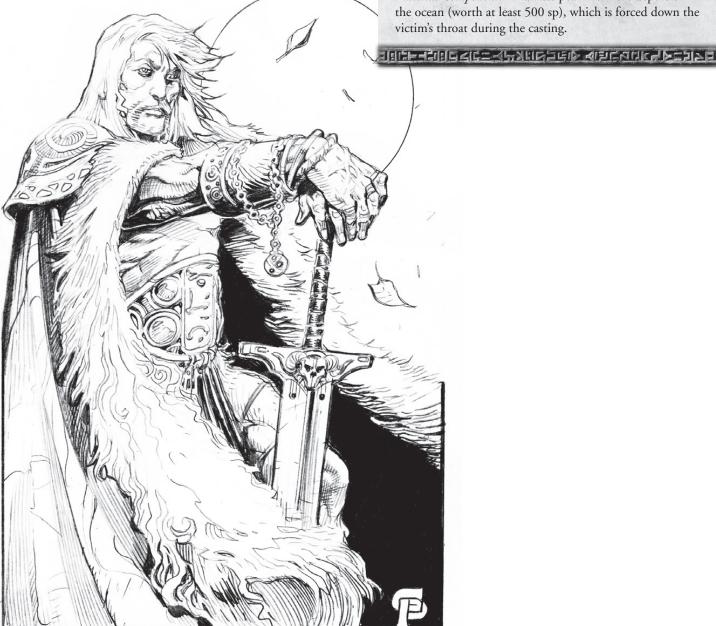
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#### New Ritual: Create Bloated One

Also known as An Offering to the Abyss, this spell transforms a helpless victim into a bloated one, an abominable aquatic creature which is forced to serve the creator, or whoever the creator appoints as the creature's master.

The victim is plunged into a watery pit while the spell is being cast, but instead of drowning, the creature emerges from the pit as a bloated one (see the creature of the same name). At the end of the drowning phase the affected creature must make a Difficult Persistence test, failure results in the spell taking effect and the creature rising as a bloated one from the depths. Success means the creature drowns and is free from the ritual.

Material Component: A flawless pearl from the depths of the ocean (worth at least 500 sp), which is forced down the victim's throat during the casting.



# APPENDIX I



#### **NEW MONSTERS**

This appendix contains new monsters used in this book.

#### Devil-Bird of Azimba

The "devil-birds" of Azimba are dire remnants of a lost age, a cross between flying lizards and giant vampire-bats.

The devil-birds are said to be the offspring of Jul-Juggah, who is sometimes called "the last of the once-dreaded lizard gods". The cult of Jul-Juggah knows secret magic spells and rituals that allow the priests to summon and control these creatures. However, the species are close to extinction, and the priests have taken to capturing eggs and trying to cross-breed the devil-birds with other species such as vultures and bats.

The sight of a devil-bird forces a Difficult Persistence test or be shaken, except to the priests of Jul-Juggah, who are used to the sight of these creatures and often summon them to offer up sacrifices to their god. Victims are typically bound to stone slabs under the open sky to make it easy for the devil-birds to snatch up the sacrifice, or devour it in place.

**Tactics:** Devil-birds attack by diving down on targets, striking them down with razor-sharp claws while they utter their sanity-shattering screeches. They may also attempt to grab victims and fly away with them, or drop opponents from great heights.

The bite of a devil-bird is poisonous. Creatures hit by the devil-bird's bite must make a Routine Resilience test or suffer 1d4 points of Strength damage. One minuter later, the victim must test again or suffer 1d6 points of Strength damage.

#### Spawn of Yot-Kamoth

A Spawn of Yot-Kamoth has the lower body of a large, black-haired tarantula, and a human torso extending from where the spider's head should be.

These dreadful abominations are born from the union of the temple spiders of Yot-Kamoth and a human female, usually one of the so-called temple-virgins that dance and cavort obscenely before the black idols of the spider-god of Lamu during sacred rituals.

The Spawn may be either male or female, though they lack reproductive organs and cannot produce offspring themselves.

Spawn of Yot-Kamoth can throw a web eight times per day. This is similar to an attack with a net but has a maximum range of 20 meters, and is effective against targets up to 10 SIZ larger than the Spawn. An entangled creature can escape with a successful Difficult Evade test or burst it with a Difficult Athletics test.

Spawn of Yot-Kamoth can create sheets of sticky webbing up to 10 meter square. Approaching creatures must succeed on a Perception test to notice a web; otherwise they stumble into it and become trapped as though by a successful web attack. A Spawn of Yot-Kamoth can move across its own web at its normal speed and can pinpoint the location of any creature touching its web.

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#### Devil-Bird of Azimba

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	6D6+10	31	1-2	Right Claw	2/12
CON	5D6+15	33	3-4	Left Claw	2/12
SIZ	6D6+10	31	5-7	Abdomen	2/14
INT	4	4	8-9	Chest	2/15
POW	3D6	11	10-13	Right Wing	2/12
DEX	3D6+10	21	14-17	Left Wing	2/12
			18-20	Head	2/13

Combat Actions 32 Damage Modifier +2D6 Magic Points 11

Movement 4m (18m flying)

Strike Rank +13

Armour: Tough feathers. No Armour Penalty.

Traits: None

**Skills:** Athletics 67%, Evade 55%, Perception 30%, Persistence 47%, Resilience 70%, Stealth 35%, Survival 55%, Track 67%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Claw	_	M	M	1D6	As Claws
Bite		M	T	1D8 Poison	As Head

#### **Combat Styles**

Devil Beak (Claw, Bite): 72%

### Spawn of Yot-Kamoth

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	2D6+12	19	1	Right Hind Leg	3/3
CON	3D6	11	2	Right Centre Leg	3/3
SIZ	2D6+12	19	3	Right Front Leg	3/3
INT	2D6	7	4	Right Fore Leg	3/3
POW	2D6	7	5	Left Hind Leg	3/3
DEX	3D6+3	14	6	Left Centre Leg	3/3
CHA	3D6	11	7-8	Left Front Leg	3/3
			9-10	Left Fore Leg	3/5
			11-12	Thorax	3/5
			13-14	Chest	3/6
			15-16	Right Arm	3/4
			17-18	Left Arm	3/4
			19-20	Head	3/5

Combat Actions 2

Damage Modifier +1D6

Magic Points 7
Movement 10m

Strike Rank +11

Armour: Skin and chitin: No Armour Penalty

Traits: None

Common Skills: Athletics 88%, Brawn 63%, Evade 73%, Perception 54%, Persistence

74%, Resilience 74%, Stealth 81%, Unarmed 33% **Advanced Skills:** Acrobatics 73%, Track 73%

#### Weapons

Туре	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Claw	_	M	M	1D6	As Arms
Bite		M	T	1D6 Poison	As Head

#### **Combat Styles**

Spider God's Fang (Claw, Bite): 78%

**Combat Notes:** A Spawn can lose two of his legs with no loss to mobility (though it is likely to put the Spawn in a bad mood). If he loses three legs on the same side, his Movement is reduced to half and his Athletics skill tests become Hard. A Spawn must lose all the legs on one side of his body to become immobilised.

The Spawn's massive fangs inject venom on a successful Bite attack that inflicts damage

#### Spider Venom of Yot-Kamoth

**Application:** Injected. **Onset Time:** 1D3 Rounds. **Duration:** 1D3 Days.

Resistance Time: Daily. The first Resistance roll must be made at the end of the Onset Time, then daily thereafter. Successfully resisting the

poison allows the victim to avoid suffering the Conditions until the next roll must be made.

Potency: 40+11 (CON of Spawn).

Resistance: Resilience.

Conditions: Paralysis and 1D2 STR damage. Strength will recover naturally over time at a point of STR per hour.

Antidote: Healing skill and magic.

# APPENDIX II



#### POISONS AND TRAPS

Throughout the adventures in Spider God's Bride there are poison traps which default to a base Resilience test. If the Games Master does not feel like using these quick methods to arbitrate *Legend* poisons and would rather rely on the detailed method, here's a few poisons designed from a few sources to make these traps more interesting. If a GM wants to keep things *Legend* flavour but wants to save time then Blade Venom from page 81 of the *Legend* rules works perfectly.

#### Scorpion Venom Blade Trap:

This variety of trapped poison blade causes extreme nausea and paralysis.

**Application:** Injection

Onset time: Nausea after 1D2 minutes (due to potency), Paralysis

after 2D6 minutes. **Duration:** 1 hour

**Resistance Time:** The victim must make a Resistance roll at the Onset Time of each poison stage. Failure indicates that Condition has taken effect.

Potency: 70

Resistance Resilience

**Conditions:** Nausea, Paralysis, Death (very rare). The venom causes the victim to start feeling sick, they begin to shiver and may well vomit for 1D3 minutes sporadically. If the second Resistance roll is failed then the location affected (chosen randomly) begins to suffer paralysis. If the second Resistance roll is critically failed then there is a 5% chance the target will die.

**Antidote/Cure:** There are numerous herbal anti-venoms. The anti-venom must be introduced using a successful First Aid or Healing test. The anti-venom's Potency is 65 and it is added to the victim's Resilience test to help them fight off the effects of the venom throughout its duration.

#### Sleep Blade Trap:

This variety of trapped poison blade knocks out the victim after a short time and causes them intense agony when they awake.

**Application:** Injection

Onset time: Unconsciousness after 1D10 Seconds.

**Duration:** 2 hours.

**Resistance Time:** The victim must make a Resistance roll at the Onset Time of each poison stage. Failure indicates that Condition has taken effect.

Potency: 65

Resistance Resilience

**Conditions:** Unconsciousness, the victim collapses in a heap on the floor for the listed duration. At the end of the duration they will gain a level of fatigue.

**Antidote/Cure:** None, the effects must wear off naturally. An antivenom or foxglove can be applied prior to the effects but not after.

#### Drugged Blade Trap:

This variety of trapped poison blade makes the victim hallucinate wildly and then confuses them for a short time after.

**Application:** Injection

Onset time: Hallucination after 1D3 minutes.

**Duration:** 3 hours.

**Resistance Time:** The victim must make a Resistance roll at the Onset Time of each poison stage. Failure indicates that Condition has taken effect.

Potency: 55

Resistance Resilience

**Conditions:** Wild hallucinations for an hour, at the end of the Duration the victim gains a level of fatigue and undergoes Confusion for 2D6 minutes.

Antidote/Cure: A Healing skill test.

# Agony Blade Trap:

This variety of trapped poison blade causes extreme agony for several minutes.

**Application:** Injection

Onset time: Hallucination after 1D3 minutes.

**Duration:** 3d6 minutes.

**Resistance Time:** The victim must make a Resistance roll at the Onset Time of each poison stage. Failure indicates that Condition has taken effect.

Potency: 75

**Resistance** Resilience

**Conditions:** Agony in extreme waves washes over the victim. They suffer intense pain and have a 30% chance of throwing up (A Routine Resilience test nullifies this) during the duration.

**Antidote/Cure:** A mild herbal drink brewed from certain jungle leaves, it makes the victim vomit up the poison and eases the agony. Healing Skill tests will also help.

# SPIDER COD'S BRIDE

The Spider-God's Bride is a collection of ten blood-red sword and sorcery adventures, inspired by the pulp era tales of Robert B. Howard and Clark Ashton Smith. Venture in the footsteps of Conan the Cimmerian, Satampra Zeiros of Uzuldaroum, Imaro of Nyumbani, and other fabled thieves, reavers and slayers!

You will require the Legend Core Rulebook to run these Adventures.

