

# DEMON MAGIC

## The Second Stormbringer® Companion

DITILLO, FREEMAN, GAMBLER, LIPPERT, WILLIS, DAY, SCHULTZ



# Stormbringer<sup>®</sup> Excitement!

DEMON MAGIC is the second companion for Stormbringer<sup>®</sup>, the roleplaying game of action and adventure in the Young Kingdoms.

Authorized by fantasy author Michael Moorcock, DEMON MAGIC includes all necessary statistics, maps, and plans, and contains many original illustrations. Among its contents are:

- The Velvet Circle: a scenario in seven chapters, which takes many sessions of play to conclude. The adventure includes a complete red-light district, with business notes and a plan of the Circle.
- Sorcerer's Isle: a shorter, more intense scenario to fill one or two evenings.
- Runes of Rathdor: analyzes and describes the properties of six magical runes discovered during the reign of the 42nd Emperor of Melnibone.
- Sanity for Stormbringer<sup>®</sup>: introduces the optional characteristic of SAN into Young Kingdoms play.
- Six new creatures, six nationalities, seven new Demon abilities, and five new magic items.

## More Adventures, Creatures, and Magic

You must have a copy of the Stormbringer<sup>®</sup> rules to fully utilize this supplement.



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# DEMON MAGIC

## The Second Stormbringer Companion

by

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# Adventures, Creatures, and Magic

# introduction

*Welcome to the second in the Stormbringer Companion series. This volume has been put together with eyes toward filling in a few chinks in the official rules (like the "Seeing in the Dark" module on page 22), to extending the rules (the introduction of sample runes and their effects), and to showing off the flexibility and fun inherent in the system (the redoubtable demonship Habnikav in the "Sorcerer's Isle" scenario, for instance). Also in that scenario are the first Stormbringer rules for ghosts. Mark L. Gambler's Sanity rules offer a way to make heavy-metal-style adventurers a bit more 'sensitive.' Arno Lipfert contributes optional rules of several types – new Demon special abilities which are rather less crooked, the useful runes of Rathdor, magic items which begin to illustrate just how powerful a Young Kingdoms sorcerer could become, and a nice bundle of new races. Larry DiTillio's scenario rounds out the book, and it is filled with his special humor; the bawdy-town of the Velvet Circle can (and deserves to be) visited many times.*

*As always, we'll be interested in your comments and questions.*

*Lynn, Sandy, and all of Chaosium*



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# Sanity for Stormbringer

by Mark L. Gambler

"... now wounding Yyrkoon in the right side with a blow strong enough to have killed any other man. Yyrkoon laughed then — laughed like a gibbering demon from the foulest depths of Hell. His sanity had broken at last and Elric now had the advantage."

— The Weird of the White Wolf

This article introduces the optional characteristic of Sanity (SAN) into the world of the Young Kingdoms.

The intent of these mechanics is to characterize the way that Chaos warps and shocks the mind, spirit, and soul, as portrayed in Moorcock's writings. For instance, Theleb K'aarna delved deep into the black arts to wreak vengeance upon Elric. But when at last the Prince of Ruins caught up with Theleb at Nikorn's villa, the Pan Tangian is described as half-gibbering, hunched and twisted, tittering to itself, and as having once been a man. Again, when the magic mirror in Dhoz-Kam was broken, the escaping souls killed or drove most of the citizens insane. Yet again, when the minor heroes were incorporated into the stuff of the four-who-are-one and they took the shape of Gagak in fighting Agak, the minor heroes were greatly affected — and some went insane.

These optional rules also limit sorcerers who summon demons for every occasion. For example, Stargrim is an Eshmirian warrior-priest in my campaign. He released all his demons after each adventure and then summoned new ones. A powerful sorcerer, Stargrim had no worries about losing binding attempts, and releasing demons gave him ELAN since his patron god was Arioch. Since incorporating Sanity into the game, Stargrim must consider the effects of consorting with entities which can slowly drive him insane — he can no longer take demon-summoning so lightly!

These rules are adapted from mechanics originating in *Call of Cthulhu*. Unlike that game, however, Young Kingdoms characters do not suffer SAN rolls for stumbling over corpses or for witnessing frightening events. After all, Chaos is normal in the Young Kingdoms, and personal combat is there a way of life.

Further, characters in *Stormbringer* do not experience temporary insanity as often as in *Cthulhu*. There the average investigator is much less robust and powerful than the average *Stormbringer* player-character — the latter is more likely to be slowly worn down to permanent insanity than

he is to snap into and out of temporary insanity as a defense mechanism. Sanity should not become overriding in *Stormbringer*, because that would not be true to the stories and their reliance upon physical action.

## Sanity Mechanics

Each character receives a new characteristic, Sanity, which is abbreviated SAN. A character's SAN equals his POW x5, plus or minus relevant nationality modifiers. A character's SAN does not change because his POW later changes. Write down half of the character's starting SAN as his Temporary Insanity Score (TIS); the character's TIS never changes.

### NATIONALITY SAN MODIFIERS

Melniboneans +20	Oinans -10
Pan Tangians +10	Yuans -10
Eshmirians +5	Orgians -20
Myrryins +5	

Occasionally, a character must receive a successful SAN roll or lose some of his SAN. The roll is made using percentile dice; a successful roll is equal to or less than the character's SAN at the time of the roll. Any loss of SAN is probably permanent.

*EXAMPLE: Pan Tangian sorcerer Tarz has POW 16; his SAN is therefore figured as  $16 \times 5 = 80$ . As a Pan Tangian, his nationality modifier of +10 makes his starting SAN 90.*

Tarz's SAN never will be higher than 90, his starting score, but later experiences may cause his SAN to go below 90. Tarz's TIS is one-half of 90, or 45; that reference number will never change. Even after years of study and summonings raise Tarz's POW to 20, his maximum SAN is 90, and his TIS remains 45.

Use the *Notes* box in the skills portion of the character sheet to record current SAN. Character starting SAN and TIS should be written in ink; current SAN should be written in pencil.

If a character ever loses SAN greater than or equal to his TIS in a ten-minute (50 melee turn) period, he then goes temporarily insane. Roll for the character once on the Temporary Insanity Form table and once on the Temporary Insanity Time table. The Form table shows how the character is affected, and the Time table shows for

how long the character is affected. Time, potent drugs, or godly intervention might heal the temporary insanity, though making a drug for calming the mind requires a Plant Lore skill of at least 91%, and such a drug will be hard to find ready-made.

#### FORM OF TEMPORARY INSANITY

roll 1D6	resulting insanity
1	catatonia; assume fetal position
2	stupefaction; babble incessantly
3	paranoia; unreasoning suspicion
4	phobia; take on great fear of that which caused the insanity
5	amnesia
6	attempt suicide; but note that the attempt should be easy to foil

#### TIME OF TEMPORARY INSANITY

roll 1D8	time temporarily insane
1	10 minutes
2	1 hour
3	2 hours
4	10 hours
5	1 day
6	2 days
7	7 days
8	14 days

When a character's SAN reaches zero, he becomes permanently and completely insane, and he is now played by the gamemaster as a pawn of Chaos. The only cure for permanent insanity is an act of a god; gods may prefer that a character remain insane, or they may not care enough to act, or the character's insanity may be part of a vast scheme toward unfathomable ends. Whatever the reason that a god does anything, players should understand that gods always drive hard bargains.

#### Restoring Sanity Points

A character can regain Sanity points, but never to an amount exceeding his starting Sanity. As a rule of thumb, SAN points return when characters defeat a god or thwart a god's plan. Defeating a god as Elric did, and perhaps as only Elric could, should bring a large Sanity gain. Banishing a god might be worth 30 SAN points. Foiling the plan of a god could be worth as much as 20 SAN points, depending on how hard the god was trying. All Sanity gains are entirely at the discretion of the gamemaster, the sole judge of the situation and of what is appropriate.

#### Sanity Costs by Situation

The following entries discuss those Sanity-shaking situations which can be expected especially during *Stormbringer* play. Most of the examples are drawn directly from the stories and novels. Gamemasters will be able to think up additional situations.

##### *Horrible Natural Deaths*

Some natural deaths may be so awful that characters witnessing the situation or the disfigured body must accept

the results of a SAN roll. If the SAN roll succeeds, the character loses no Sanity; if it fails, the character loses 1D6 SAN. For example, Tarz the sorcerer calls on a long-time friend. Even though servants say the friend is at home, Tarz can't find him. A thorough search finally locates the friend in the hunting-tiger's cage, with the tiger busily gnawing on the remains of its former master. Tarz's player must make a SAN roll for his character. He rolls 74, under Tarz's current SAN of 90, and Tarz is grief-stricken for his friend, but loses no SAN because of the manner of death. On another occasion, Tarz sees a person dead from a terrible disease — the body is bloated and grotesquely distorted, and the stench is shocking. The gamemaster requires another Sanity roll; this time Tarz's player rolls a 93, indicating that Tarz is greatly upset by the scene. The SAN loss roll is 1D6, and the player rolls a 4; Tarz's SAN is now 86. Gamemasters may want to exempt Melnibonans from this particular category — some of the most gruesome deaths of all times were engineered by the lords of Imrryr!

##### *Horrible Unnatural Deaths*

Sorcerous or Chaotic deaths can be more mind-shaking than natural deaths. In such a situation, a successful Sanity roll still costs 1 SAN point; an unsuccessful Sanity roll costs 1D6 SAN. Remember that when Theleb K'aarna summoned the Elenoin to fight the warriors of Tanelorn, they



Tarz loses some SAN points

first killed and ate Carkan of Pan Tang. After seeing this, Moorcock describes the warriors of Tanelorn as hysterical with fear and disgust, and they fling themselves at the Elenoin. Another example might be witnessing Stormbringer sucking the soul from a victim as the unfortunate dies. Again, Melniboneans might be exempted from Sanity loss in this category.

### *The Stuff of Chaos*

It is reasonable to call for a Sanity roll when adventurers see the stuff of Chaos. In this case a successful Sanity roll should cost no SAN, but a failure costs 1D8 SAN. Remember that when Earl Aubec first visited Castle Kaneloon and saw the churning power of Chaos, he commented that it would take a truly robust mind to withstand the presence of the swirling Chaos-stuff. Surely some of the adventurers in your campaign need testing! Another illustration is the tower of Voilodion Ghagnasdiak, also called the vanishing tower. Seeing a tower shimmer and wink out of existence should force adventurers to the very edges of their minds.

### *Chaotic Changes*

If a character knows that something odd or Chaotic is happening to him, his player must make a Sanity roll for him. Minor incidents call for no loss of Sanity if the roll succeeds, and a loss of 1D6 SAN if the roll fails: suppose Tarz finds a Demon of Knowledge in the form of a small black cat. Before the cat answers a question, it bites Tarz on the arm and sucks a little blood. Every time this takes place, Tarz must receive a successful Sanity roll or lose 1D6 SAN. A major incident requires the loss of 2 SAN points if the roll succeeded, and 1D8+2 if it failed. In the fiction, a good example occurs when Elric enters Balo's citadel. In that strange palace, Elric was terrified when he saw that he had been turned into a ghost. An adventurer might be affected similarly when he feels a Demon weapon sucking strength from him.

Special cases occur when incredible things happen to a character, such as being turned into an ooze creature by the "Spell of Life" in the Crystal of Daerdaerdarh adventure in the *Stormbringer Companion*. In that case, a game-master could fairly ask a player to make a Sanity roll against a tenth of his adventurer's current SAN; failing that, the adventurer should lose 50 SAN. These very powerful and very strange Chaotic changes should be handled by the gamemaster as he sees fit.

As befits them, Melniboneans should be exempt from all but the most powerful Chaotic changes.

### *Horrible Monsters*

Initial encounters with certain creatures should require Sanity rolls, but later viewings of the same creature should not require additional SAN loss. In *The Weird of the White Wolf*, for example, the Dragons swoop for vengeance against the escaping reaver fleet. Count Smiorgan, who had never known fear, is described as having horror in his eyes. The Sanity-altering effects of Dragons and other creatures can be found on the table at the top of the next column.

Gamemasters may want to later charge Sanity costs for viewing the same creature if considerable time has passed, or if the first encounter went badly for the adventurers.

### SANITY LOSS: HORRIBLE MONSTERS TABLE

<i>creature</i>	<i>SAN roll succeeds</i>	<i>SAN roll fails</i>
Dragon	1D4	1D8+1
Kyreee	1D4	1D10+1
Oonai	1D4	1D8+1
Mist Giant	1D4	1D8+1
Sea Serpent	1	1D6
Viridian Shrieker	1	1D6
Air Shark	0	1D4
Beetle of Kaleef	0	1D4
Bronze Gryph	0	1D4
Chaos Butterfly	0	1D4
Clakar	0	1D4
Creature of Matik	0	1D4
Crimson Xoar	0	1D4
Elenoin	0	1D4
Golden Ice Hound	0	1D4
Grahluk	0	1D4
Olab	0	1D4
Hunting Dogs of the Dharzi	0	1D4

As an example of using this table, suppose that Tarz and companions are attacked by an Oonai. The Pan Tangian's player must make a Sanity roll against Tarz's SAN of 86. The player rolls 43, a success but only a relative success, since the table rules that 1D4 SAN must be lost even after a successful roll. The player rolls 1D4 for Tarz's actual SAN-point loss; the result is 2. Tarz's current Sanity is adjusted to 84, but Tarz will never suffer another Sanity loss just for seeing an Oonai.

Exempt Melniboneans from Sanity loss in this category.

### *Seeing Demons*

Judging by Moorcock's writings, viewing elementals does not affect a character's Sanity, but seeing the real form of a demon does. After the visage of a particular demon causes a Sanity roll for a character, that character's Sanity is no longer vulnerable to that demon's natural appearance. If the demon is bound into something like a weapon or a door, then no Sanity roll should be requested, since the character is not seeing the demon in all of its glory. Shape-changers should not prompt more than one Sanity roll. Note that a summoning sorcerer must make a SAN roll for each demon summoned — even demons which end bound into objects. The table below describes the effects upon Sanity of seeing a demon.

### SANITY LOSS: THE DEMON TABLE

<i>type of demon</i>	<i>Sanity roll succeeds</i>	<i>Sanity roll fails</i>
Combat	1	1D8
Protection	1	1D6
Possession	1	1D8
Desire	0	1D6
Knowledge	0	1D4
Travel	0	1D4

Suppose that Tarz the Pan Tangian sorcerer is summoning a Demon of Combat to bind into a broadsword. He performs the summoning ceremony, and the demon Ralthag appears. Tarz's player must make a Sanity roll against Tarz's current SAN of 84. The roll, a 92, fails. The player now rolls 1D8 to determine Tarz's Sanity loss: the result is 6 – Tarz's new current Sanity is 78.

#### ELEMENTAL RULERS

Mortals frequently hide their eyes or back away when an Elemental King is present, and with good reason: even with a successful Sanity roll, the affected character loses 1 SAN; a failing Sanity roll costs 1D6+1 SAN. Once a particular ruler has been seen by a character, the appearance of that ruler will not prompt another such roll for that character. Exclude Melniboneans from any Sanity rolls for the appearance or presence of Elemental Kings.

#### BEAST LORDS

Beings of immense power and antiquity, the beast lords certainly radiate enough strength to rattle the nerves of newcomers. When Elric summons Haaashaastaak, the lizard master, that worthy's appearance causes Yishana to gasp in awe. For seeing a beast lord, a successful SAN roll should still cost the character 1D4–1 SAN points; for an unsuccessful Sanity roll, the Sanity cost should be 1D8+1 SAN points. If a character sees a particular beast lord again, the gamemaster should not ask for a Sanity roll. And, once again, beast lords should not prompt Sanity rolls for Melnibonean characters.

#### LORDS OF LAW AND CHAOS

The most Sanity-warping event possible is the meeting of a character and a god. Most mortals cannot bear to look upon a god or even hear the voice of a god. When Rackhir first sees Arioch in the Pulsing Cavern, he screams in horror. Even Elric, who does the best with the gods, is upset occasionally at the appearance of his patron deity – when fighting Yrkoon's guards in Cymoril's bed chamber, Elric is described as having bile flood into his mouth when Arioch appears. When making a Sanity roll for any character who sees a god, add 10 percentiles to the result. And no one gets used to seeing a god; request a Sanity roll every

time a divinity is encountered. Until a character receives a successful 'first encounter' roll on the table below, subsequent appearances of the god are still evaluated on the 'first encounter' half of the table. Players must write down which gods have been met, and whether or not a Sanity roll has succeeded for that god.

Chaos gods can appear breathtakingly-beautiful or horrendously grotesque at the gamemaster's discretion.

god	first encounter		subsequent encounter	
	SAN roll fails	SAN roll succeeds	SAN roll fails	SAN roll succeeds
god of Law	1D8+1	1D4	1D4	0
Chaos god (beautiful)	2D10	1D10	1D8+1	1
Chaos god (grotesque)	3D10	2D10	2D10	1D4

As an example, Tarz has botched a mission and thereby invoked the wrath of Arioch. The Knight of Swords appears and forces Tarz to grovel. Then Arioch appears in his most grotesque manifestation – Tarz's player must make a Sanity roll: he rolls 70, but since Arioch is a god, the gamemaster adds 10 to the result, totaling 80. Tarz's current Sanity is 78, so the player fails. Since poor Tarz has never seen Arioch before, the SAN-point roll is 3D10. The actual result is 16. Tarz's new current Sanity is 62. If he sees Arioch again, his player must still roll on the 'first encounter' portion of the table.

#### Conclusion

With minimal effort, the adoption of these optional rules can add additional tension and considerable entertainment to *Stormbringer* play. Regaining Sanity should mostly remain the consequence of adventurer effort; don't let too many Sanity-restoring potions and gimmicks cloud man's heroic struggle against entities stronger and smarter, but not more brave.

#### Contents of the first Stormbringer Companion

New Creatures: *Bronze Gryphs, Crimson Xoars, Viridian Shriekers, Golden Ice-Hounds, Chaos Butterflies, Beetles of Kaleef, Owls of Xerlerenes, Air Sharks of Xerlerenes, Boatmen of Xerlerenes, The Kyrenee.*

Notables of Melnibone: *Cymoril, Dyvim Tvar, Doctor Jest, Magum Colim, Valharik, Saxif D'aan, J'osui C'reln Reyr, Dyvim Tarkan, Sadric the Eighty-Sixth.*

Exotic Treasures: *Ash of the Elenoin, The Hair of the Dog, The Mirror of Memory, Dragonteeth, Potion of Alacrity, Oonai Tertium, Thamo-flogue Skin, Skrelar Rods, Arsus Cure, Bevus Poultry, Amorous, Stavodus, Waterhorses.*

Scenarios: *Sea Battle at Melnibone, Karyzoon's Quest, Into the Marshes of Mist, Hall of Risk, The Crystal of Daerdaerdarth, Eye of the Theocrat.*

# New Demon Special Abilities

by Arno Lipfert

## — For Demons of Combat and Desire —

**SHOCK** — each time the demon strikes, it delivers an electrical shock of 1D8 damage. Leather or barbarian armor fails to protect against such damage only when the demon penetrates to cause the damage. Half- and full-plate armor conduct electricity, so against such foes the demon need only hit to deliver electrical shock damage. Parrying such a shock attack with a metal weapon causes the same damage unless the hilt is non-conductive or unless it is wrapped heavily with non-conductive material. A metal-weapon parry against such an attack may cause the weapon to be fumbled.

**PARALYSIS** — if the demon succeeds in a POW vs. POW struggle, he injects a paralytic nerve poison into the target. The poison's effect instantly immobilizes the opponent, but his heart, lungs, etc., continue to function, as do his thoughts. Once paralyzed, victims ordinarily topple over unless specifically propped up.

**TELEKINESIS** — the ability to move material objects with mental force. Only demons with DEXs greater than zero can perform telekinesis; the number of DEX points that a demon has determines the number of objects which it may in any one combat round manipulate telekinetically. The demon's POW points must at least be equal to the total SIZ of the item or items to be levitated; it cannot affect anything larger than that. If the demon intends to hurl objects rather than to glide them gently along, then each point of extra POW allotted to the hurl adds 1D3 damage to the target if the missile hits. If the missile is also dropped from a height, add appropriate routine fall damage if the item is roughly of character SIZ or greater; use the Falling Damage table [3.9.4.3]. The demon has its DEX x3 chance to hit with any missile.

A demon also can use telekinesis to deflect any one missile attack during a combat round.

## — For Demons of Knowledge —

*Using these two abilities, the demon must have described to it exactly what the questioner wishes to see or know; a clumsily-posed question releases the gamemaster from any responsibility to the truth. Similarly, unbound demons have strange senses of humor and vengeance; the gamemaster may arrange such reports as he desires.*

**SCRYING** — the ability to see people, places, and things without physically being there. The questioner must define a focus for the demon, a specific person, geographical point, or a specific item: for example, the Lady Cymoril of Melniboné, the tower of Yrkath Florn on the Argimillar coast, and Stormbringer the demon sword. The demon

may magically recreate for the questioner what the demon sees, or he may describe the scene and fill in the details which the questioner desires to know. All scrying takes place in the present; most demons focus on the target from above. The demon can see around the target for POW x1 meters in any direction. If the target is large ("Show me the battle barge of Yrkoon") then the demon centers his scry. By that example, he might be able to see part-way up any masts, all of mid-ships, most of the way down to the bilges, but probably not see either bow or stern.

**CLAIRVOYANCE** — clairvoyance resembles scrying, except that it is concerned with the future, not the present. With this ability, a Demon of Knowledge can see forward to a specific time for 1D4 minutes. Since the link of events to the future is indeterminant, the demon has a nominal chance equal to his INT to guess exactly the right stream of events which completely leads to that future which eventually transpires. Events a few minutes distant are much more likely to be correctly understood than events years or centuries away. The demon never volunteers to the questioner the significance of any vision.

## — For Demons of Knowledge and Desire —

**PSYCHOMETRY** — the ability, by means of an object, to envision the location of the object's owner or of someone significantly associated with the object. The area seen is POW x1 meters in any direction from the person who is the focus; similarly, the psychometry is performed in present time. The demon may provide the questioner with a vision of the area, or verbally describe it. Unlike scrying, the demon can give geographical or planar location for the person ("Six days toward the sunrise from the Donjon of K'jarel").

**TELEPATHY** — with this ability, the demon can know another being's thoughts, converse mind-to-mind, and sense the presence of a non-demon mind. The range of telepathy is the demon's INT in meters. To know another's mind, that mind merely must be within range. Telepathy is not blocked by any intervening material wall.

To know a specific piece of information requires a POW against POW struggle resolved on the resistance table. If the demon succeeds, and then receives a successful INT x1% roll, then the information is his. The demon can also mind-block against such intrusion; in this case, his and his master's Power are combined to resist the POW attack.

To converse mind-to-mind, the recipient of the probe must offer no resistance; success is then automatic.

Sensing another mind cannot be prevented by any mind-block technique. Note, however, that a demon cannot use telepathy to sense another demon.

# SORCERER'S ISLE

by Kevin Freeman

*This scenario is set after the sack of Imrryr, when the Young Kingdoms were rife with pirates and adventurers. Gamemasters may place this adventure earlier merely by changing the Sadric number.*

## The Apparent Situation

For a month or more, rumors have flown about concerning unusual shipping losses sustained by the great merchants of the Young Kingdoms. Now the players' doughty adventurers have been summoned before a mysterious group of masked men and women who ask the adventurers to undertake a mission of importance: the masked group exhibits fine jewels and clothing; they are undoubtedly rich, though the adventurers notice no other clues. The masked spokesman says that the task is dangerous, and that it involves a sea voyage.

In return, the group (they are in fact some of the merchants who have sustained those shipping losses) offer a one-quarter share of all treasures and artifacts recovered, use of a sturdy sea-going vessel, modest Demon help, pardon for all past crimes in whatever nation or city in which the group is assembled (Argimiliar, Filkhar, Lormyr, Isle of Purple Towns, and Shazaar are specially appropriate), and a cash bonus: the spokesman takes from a fat pouch 20 gleaming Large Gold pieces and spreads them out on the velvet tablecloth. He says he does not know the actual amount of treasure involved, but that it will be guaranteed to be at least 15,000 Large Bronzes. He calls for the adventurers to decide whether they will accept the task.

If the adventurers attempt to haggle, the spokesman sneers, replying that his consortium desires to hire brave men and women of action, not lily-souled accountants. As the other masked members laugh at the jest, the spokesman repeats his offer, but does not increase it: he is a man who knows value, and he makes a generous offer because the peril is great. If the adventurers don't accept, he dismisses them as inappropriate.

If the adventurers failed to accept, later that day they encounter Gars the Enlister, a cunning fellow with an indifferent reputation for honesty. Gars says he's looking for some men to pick up some special goods and to bring them back to this port: the sea voyage is only a few days, he swears, and there's five Large Gold pieces for them now, and five more when they return.

Of course this is the same deal as from the masked merchants, except that good old Gars is skimming off half the cash and the entire adventurer share of any treasure. If the adventurers take this deal, be sure to find a way to let them learn their mistake — but only when you want to eliminate Gars the Enlister from play.

Gars' stats will be found in the statistics section at the end of this adventure.

## The Problem

Whether from the masked spokesman or from Gars, the adventurers get much the same information. Up to a thousand years ago, the sorcerer Nisadnemep (*ni-SAD-ni-mep*) ruled the seas surrounding his island, Nisadnemepuur, by means of a great whale-like Demon, Lvthn (*LUV-thin*), which he used to sink passing ships — seizing their cargoes for his own and dedicating the captured crews to his bloody god. The terror ended when a great assault was mounted upon the fortress isle, and Nisadnemep was gradually forgotten. Wizards and scholars believed the great sorcerer was dead, and that his great white demonfish was dead, or dormant at the bottom of the sea.

But in recent weeks, many ships have disappeared in the western seas. Until a few days ago, an eastern pirate fleet was thought to have slipped unnoticed through the straits and to be at work. Then a merchant/priest of Filkhar survived an attack by the divine intervention of Arkyn (who transported him safely back to Filkhar). The priest swore that his ship was attacked and rent to pieces, all its sailors swallowed, by a gigantic fish. Now Nisadnemep is thought to have somehow returned to life and dispatched his dread Demon to renew its ancient depredations.

The adventurers' mission is to scout Nisadnemepuur, learn whether or not Nisadnemep still lives, capture or kill him if he does, and to bring back the great wealth which may be somewhere on the island. The employers do not think it likely that the adventurers can achieve so much, and will be satisfied merely to know whether Nisadnemep indeed lives. But high earnings for the adventurers depend on winning treasure. Since Imrryr was sacked, no records of the great assault survive to inform the adventurers.

## The Actual Situation

A renegade Melnibonean sorcerer who for centuries fought against his homeland, Nisadnemep became more powerful as Melnibone declined. At last Sadric the Eighty-Fifth, Elric's great-grandfather, in league with Straasha, eliminated Nisadnemep utterly. The crumbling skeleton of Nisadnemep's demonfish can be seen on the island, carried there by the fury of the final battle. A few of Nisadnemep's bound demons still do Nisadnemep's will, most importantly the mighty Rraalkraag, the Spirit Ward who is ward-pacted against Demons of Knowledge seeking information about Nisadnemepuur.

Lysansiptra (*lis-an-SIP-trah*) is a rich merchant in the land or city location of the adventurers. Appropriate to the times, she gained her riches through personal daring and magical shenanigans, not by tedious trade and princely favor. Of all the Young Kingdoms' great merchants, Lysansiptra's achievements typify the ambitions of most adventurers.

Several years ago, Lysansiptra obtained six magical water-breathing devices from a relic near Nieva. Guessing that the Fish Lord craved such artifacts for his servants, she summoned P!p!pp'hhhh'p to bargain. In return for the breathing devices, this far-sighted woman asked command of a megalodon; the Fish Lord agreed.

Then Lysansiptra set agents combing the navies of the Young Kingdoms; among the women's division of the Dharjorian navy they found what Lysansiptra sought — a dissatisfied captain, unhappy mates, and a powerful experimental bireme, the demonship Habnikav (*HAB-ni-kov*). When next the Habnikav and its crew put to sea from Gro-moorva, it never returned. Extensive searches uncovered no trace, nor could Demons of Knowledge find her; ship and crew were declared lost, perhaps because of some flaw in the craft's magical protection or operation. No second prototype was built.

Lysansiptra had once been shipwrecked and stranded on Nisadnemepuur, which lays south of Melnibone. Legends of the sorcerer and his horrible demonfish kept ships from approaching the island; Lysansiptra also feared the legends, fearing to leave the island until months later, when her magic attracted a vessel far off course and she saw that it could safely reach the island. In the meantime she explored Nisadnemepuur, learning its secrets.

She now conspired with Captain Zillah and her crew to mutiny and to sail the Habnikav to Nisadnemepuur. The merchant intended to revive the legends of the sorcerer by commanding her megalodon to attack shipping in the region. The great fish would devour the contents of a ship, swim to the island, and vomit its treasure onto the beach. The novice pirates would stroll down and gather up the loot. Since the Spirit Ward erases all sign of human movement or construction within the reef; the Habnikav would be invisible in the island's harbor unless one actually went to Nisadnemepuur and looked around.

When at least a gnome-load of gold and jewels have been gathered, about as much as Lysansiptra thinks politic to grab, she'll return the megalodon to P!p!pp'hhhh'p, summon the pirates, and divvy the loot. Because she's careful to what she agrees, Lysansiptra usually is able to keep her bargains and still make excellent profits. She'll let the pirates have their third, and they're welcome to the Habnikav as well. She already has checked up on the pirates once, found them doing their duty, and left with none of them the wiser. She won't come again for several weeks unless something unexpected happens. Until Lysansiptra releases the megalodon, no one can sail to or from the island without risking the jaws of the giant shark.

### An Honest Estimation of Chances

Considering the growing treasure and the wonderful bireme as potential reward, adventurers should find the island a profitable challenge. Most of them probably will die there; even minus its sorcerer and demonfish, Nisadnemepuur will be a tough nut to crack. Adventurers should include good fighters and good sorcerers.

Since Lysansiptra is member to the merchant consortium hiring the adventurers, she'll notify the pirates that the adventurers are on the way. Play the pirates as efficient

### THE SECRET OF THE HABNIKAV

No one in the Young Kingdoms (or any other plane) has been able to locate Habnikav, crew, or demons because as part of Nisadnemepuur, Rraalkraag the Spirit Ward shields them all. If Rraalkraag dies, or if the Habnikav passes beyond the reef, then ship, crew, and demons can be found by the worst sorcerer on the plane.

And, alas for the new pirates, all the names and characteristics of the demons are on file in the Naval Sorcery office: if the authorities ever have reason to remember the Habnikav, they will know exactly how to attack and destroy the prototype. The crew's hope of successful (that is to say, long) piratical careers depends upon their willingness to do nothing spectacular and to leave no clues.

That's also why Lysansiptra is unafraid to unleash them after the island escapade: a bireme far at sea, with no Demon protection, will sink in ten minutes, and leave no witnesses.

fighters with steady nerves who have been hired mostly for just such duty — the pirates may in fact be surprised by the adventurers, but they should not be surprised that the adventurers have come.

Mercenaries, the pirates might be willing to side with the adventurers, if the price is right: but if the adventurers attack without warning or provocation, the pirates resist stoutly, retreating into Nisadnemep's redoubt to take advantage of the bound-demon defenders, or onto the Habnikav if the adventurers are land-bound; if they can, they will eliminate such threatening intruders. As women arrayed against what is likely to be an all-male adventurer group, the pirates have additional reason to suspect the intentions of adventurers encroaching upon their paradise.

If the adventurers manage to gain the loot, their players should remember that the merchants expect the treasure to be returned, and may hire a second party of adventurers to enforce their claim. Even if the adventurers triumph over every obstacle, it is always dangerous to sell or exhibit items belonging to murdered men — friends and relatives have a way of noticing, and of bringing forth accusations.

### Adventurer Resources

The adventurers get immediate cash so that they can provision the *Dulcet*, a stout little merchant ship about 60 feet long, rather like a Scandinavian knorr. She can be sailed, though not easily, by a skeleton crew of two-three who are prepared to cast a sea-anchor at night; five adventurers will be needed if a storm arises. Gamemasters may furnish her with a pacifistic crew, and Gars can lend a hand if he goes along. Presumably all adventurers have innate ability to handle ships. If convenient, allow the adventurers safe passage to Nisadnemepuur.

The adventurers also receive a group pardon for past crimes so that any imprisoned adventurers can be released, and so that they can move about freely. This portion of the hiring fee can be an impressive way to demonstrate the extent of the power of the expedition sponsors: previously contemptuous or dangerous officials now whine servilely; necessary sailing papers are cleared in seconds; provisions are cheap and of superb quality; shop-keepers are respectful and force gifts upon men whom they might

have spat at the day before. Play this up. Flatter the adventurers, and make them feel glorious and omnipotent. Some will not come back, after all.

Along with the gold, the pardons, and the ship comes the most enigmatic gift: the use of two hybzees, a species of Demon introduced in this scenario. Considerable information about hybzees is available in an accompanying box — photocopy it or make it otherwise available to show the players, so that they can deploy the hybzees efficiently. The stats for the actual hybzees provided can be found in the statistics section at the end of this scenario.

If they're smart, the adventurers'll send the hybzees on to tour Nisadnemepuur before setting human foot on it. An attentive tour by these little demons reveals a lot, if they report it. Judge whether they do or not by giving the

the adventurers chances during the voyage to make friends with the hybzees. The hybzees bring along their own food but, if the humans ignore initial hybzee rebuffs and persist in offering delicious tidbits, then the hybzees may incline to friendliness. Remember that these hybzees are not bound: the adventurers must ally these neutrals before they can expect the hybzees to interpret their contracts in a favorable fashion.

Hybzees cannot be expected to report the properties of spore runners or pointer plants, or to judge the toxicity of the snakes. For obvious reasons hybzees do not like caves, and will not enter them without prompting, but they may see humans going in and out of Nisadnemep's redoubt during the day. Daytime hybzee scouting missions will definitely notice and stay far away from the lava wasps —

## HYBZEE DEMONS

Hybzees are specialized Demons of Transport. These small, faerie-like Demons hail from various of the Colored Hells. A small flying humanoid, an individual hybzee has membranous wings, pointed elfin ears, high cheekbones, and forehead antennae. Hybzee skin color varies, matching the color of the hell from which it comes.

Attributes	Skills
STR 2	Dodge 85%, Hide 15%, Listen 50%, Move
CON 3D8	Quietly 90%, See 70%, Sing 60%, Taste
DEX 2D8+8	80%.
SIZ 1	
POW 3D8+8	Hit Points: 5
INT 2D8	Armor: none
CHA 3D8	

weapon	attack	parry	damage
Bite	35%	—	1D2

*NOTE: hybzees are flying demons: they walk about as well as birds do, and do not enjoy the activity. They do not swim at all, and will attempt to land and take shelter if the weather is rainy or if the winds are gusty (you would, too, if you were SIZ 1).*

### Casting Flight

Human wizards and masters of the various hells employ hybzees to enable groundlings to fly. The hybzee uses 1 point of temporary POW per 4 SIZ points (or fraction thereof) to allow the target to fly. If the flight is to include major artifacts such as armor, weapons, and supplies, that bulk must be paid for as well, and must be fastened to or tied to the hybzee's living target. To accept the power to fly, the target must have INT.

Casting flight fails only if the hybzee has POW unequal to the task requested. When the hybzee flight ability is successfully cast on a target, the target's body exhibits a slight glow the color of the hybzee's hell of origin. So long as the target is empowered to fly, it retains the glow. Hybzee cast flight lasts for one hour; it can be renewed routinely, at the same cost as the original empowerment — but the target must land for the renewal.

Once successfully cast, the target may fly at will, willing speed and direction as well. The flyer can achieve maximum air speeds of 50 mph after two minutes of gentle acceleration; the same amount of time is required to decelerate. A hybzee is able to reach the same maximum speed in a few seconds. The empowering hybzee must be able to see its target while the target flies or the target falls from the sky; similarly, if the empowering hybzee dies, the target falls.

The target may dive, hover, and climb as she or he pleases. Players should remember that inexperienced flyers have a DEX x3% chance to successfully perform complex maneuvers

or sudden evasions, and a DEX x1% chance to land within 10 feet of where he or she wants to land. A hybzee-powered flyer behaves as if unaffected by gravity, but the flyer is vulnerable to updrafts, turbulence, and storms. The attack chance of a magicked flyer fighting a naturally-flying creature (dragon, clakar, myhrrn, etc.) is reduced by 40 percentiles because of inexperience at flying and fighting at the same time. If two so-empowered flyers fight, they each receive the same penalty to their combat skills.

### Cargo SIZs

Together with the target SIZ, add the appropriate object SIZ to find the total needed hybzee POW expenditure to confer the flight ability. The following are some indicative SIZ points of likely cargoes.

1 dagger	6 half plate armor
3 2H weapon	4 nomad armor
3 shield	2 leather armor
2 1H weapon	7 1 week's food for 1 person
8 full plate armor	21 1 week's water for 1 person

### Other Abilities and Characteristics

Unbound hybzees with INT+POW totals of 32 or more can function as Demons of Knowledge.

A hybzee can, once weekly, open a gate for itself and seven others to other planes: the chance of success is equal to 2% x(POW+INT) of the hybzee. The gate closes as soon as the last person steps through.

A hybzee can act by itself as a messenger on either a one-way or a round-trip; lengthy journeys involving a number of specified stops can be arranged. If a journey cannot be completed without pausing to regain POW, the hybzee waits until all its temporary POW is restored. As a messenger, the hybzee can transport material items for the object SIZ costs outlined above.

Day or night, a hybzee always dimly glows with the color appropriate to its plane of origin. In complete darkness, the glow of a hybzee can illuminate a 1-meter radius brightly enough for reading. Some master alchemists have devised hybzee de-glow washes which block the internal glow for up to an hour.

Proportionately, a hybzee devours enormous amounts of food — its SIZ in food daily, and twice its SIZ in food daily when empowering the flight ability upon another being. Perhaps because of its physical energy requirements, a hybzee regenerates only one-quarter of its POW every 24 hours. A hybzee prefers a diet of fruit, especially bananas and mangoes, but can reluctantly digest anything that a human can.

Hybzees are notoriously impatient, petulant, and hard to manage. If they see merit in mortals they serve, however, they will accommodate them, and even honor the bravest of their masters.

they'll turn around immediately and streak back to the ship. Unless specifically instructed otherwise, the hybzees report all quantities as 'none,' 'some,' or 'many.'

Hybzees can act as aerial spotters at sea, though the rainy weather near the island increasingly limits their usefulness.

Because of the demonfish tale and the surrounding reef, the adventurers probably ask the hybzees to bring them ashore. The island offers only two places with enough open space to guarantee that clumsy adventurers won't slam into a tree or a rock — the goat plain and the toxic clearing. But let the players decide where their adventurers want to land.

If using the hybzee as a Demon of Knowledge to investigate the island, the hybzee contemplates for a moment. Suddenly an enormous Demon materializes, grabs the hybzee (which squeals piteously once), bites off the little creature's head, then swallows the rest. The demon, who looks a lot like the fellow on the front of this book, then disappears, leaving behind a scent of sulphur and a few flecks of hybzee blood. For the past 2700 years, a similar fate has awaited every Demon of Knowledge attempting to investigate Nisadnemeppuur. If an adventurer uses his own Demon of Knowledge, it likewise experiences automatic destruction.

## A Gazetteer

Most of the features of Nisadnemeppuur are explained in this section. One place, Nisadnemeppuur's lava cave redoubt, is complex enough to be in its own section, which follows this one.

Nisadnemeppuur is about eight miles long and a mile to two miles broad. On it, a low extinct volcano, its ridges hewn sharp by the rain and completely jungle-clad, dominates the western island. A wide grassy plain, ending for the most part at the sea in overhanging clay shelves and cliffs, makes up the eastern end of the island. The more central lava cliffs rise to 300 feet above the plain, then slope bowl-like to the harbor. A lower ridge of lava shields the harbor from persistent southeast winds.

Lysansiptra thoroughly briefed the pirates about the island and the rebout, and they have confirmed her information for themselves. They don't go near the clearing or the lava cliff, and they never wander the jungle at night.

**THE CLEARING:** in this area Nisadnemeppuur had dumped all the left-over potions, bastard brews, mistaken mixes, and putrid powders which he and his short-lived assistants made during their island tenure. The potency and toxicity of the chemicals and fouled magics scorched the original jungle and gradually chewed into the soil and rock beneath. The spreading corruption finally reached the harbor stream, diverting it and finally being cleansed by it.

At first a lake filled with horrors and then a malignant swamp, the clearing drained centuries ago. Now the place is a comparatively gentle copse about a half-mile broad, filled merely with deadly plants, carnivorous insects, and poisonous adders. There are a lot of small animal bones here; a successful See roll uncovers a very old human skull and pelvic bone.

Spore runners and Origimides serpents complement each other in their effects and should be encountered as a unit. Call for See rolls. Reward each failure with a POW x4% chance to avoid stepping on a spore runner chain, and a POW x3% chance to avoid stepping close to an adder. Spore runner information is found in an adjacent box; since the serpents are found in many places on the island, see the statistics section at the end of this adventure for some serpents. Airborne adventurers are likely to land here; gamemasters may want to add to the arsenal for the clearing.

At the northwestern corner of the clearing sprawls the bones of Lvthn, whose great corpse was swept here from the sea by one of Straasha's waves. The white ribs rise up to 30 yards above the ground, towering over the trees and shrubs of the surrounding low jungle. These bones are a significant geographical feature on the island. The bones rise from barren sands which glow slightly, still contaminated by formerly great forces which destroyed the beast. The sands are of no danger to humans.

A character with Plant Lore or Poison Lore of 60% or more realizes that a pound of Lvthn bone, ground up, made into a paste, and applied to a wound or swallowed will heal up to 6 points of damage in 24 hours. This bone is worth about 1 Small Gold per pound to knowledgeable buyers; if more than 50 pounds of it is offered in a particular city, the value drops greatly.

### SPORE RUNNERS

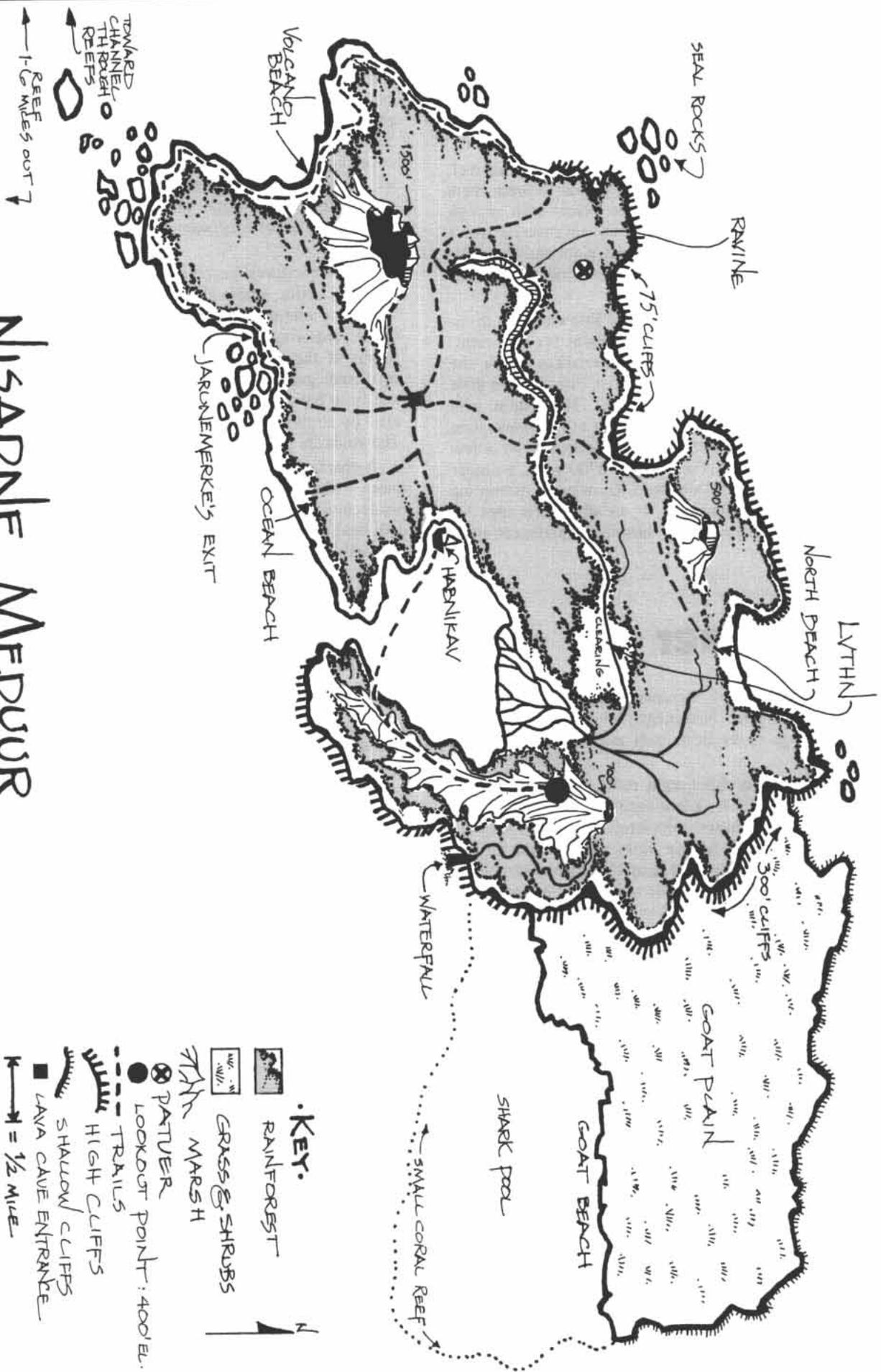
Chains or strings of these cherry-sized white fungi can be found in and around the clearing during and just after a rain. A spore runner grows to maturity and dies in a few hours; stepping on an adult or a few hours of dryness causes the puffball-like fungus to explode, sending out new spores. Most humans (90%) are allergic to these spores. A reaction takes place on contact, with symptomatic red welts, itching, and swelling — the maddening irritation demands immediate treatment.

A walker has a 20% chance to step on one or more spore runners each time he is in or near the clearing. One or more spore runner attacks do a total of 1D6 points of damage, characteristically to the legs. The victim must halt, wash the swelling area, and apply First Aid or healing potions agreeable to the gamemaster. Failure to quickly remove the source of irritation allows the spores to work into the skin, causing blood poisoning. Without treatment, the victim dies within 1D10+ CON hours of contact. Successful First Aid in the first 10 hours halts the poisoning; First Aid thereafter has no effect.

**THE CONE:** a small volcanic formation, the cone has not been seriously eroded. It is a cinder cone, a huge pile of red, walnut-sized-and-smaller kernels of ash. Enough rain falls on the island that jungle plants thrive even on these steep, seemingly soilless flanks. The vegetated top of the cone is merely flat, a few yards across. It offers a spectacular view of the seacliffs to the west.

**GOAT BEACH:** mostly freshly-collapsed rubble from the cliffs, this beach is at the southeast end of the island, a tiny sandy area about 15 yards wide and 3-4 yards deep. It is an unimportant formation, except that the megalodon, an easily-disoriented creature, sometimes mistakenly vomits up treasure here. The pirates hate it when this happens: they have to row for miles, risking coral reefs and

# NISADNE MEPUR



hungry sharks to reach this unreasonably-dangerous place. The treasure tour usually goes to the high point of the lava ridge, using Zillah's crystal seer to study goat beach for signs of metal. A successful See roll or a POW x4 roll shows what might be bare human footprints, ones weeks old.

**THE GOAT PLAIN:** hundreds of wild, ill-smelling, short-haired goats crop this broad, featureless shelf. Springs at the base of the lava cliffs supply water during infrequent dry spells. Beneath the grass, an orange clay layer about 30 feet thick overlays a fourth layer of basalt; the basalt, exposed at about sea level, protects the clay from quick wave erosion, but incidental action has uniformly worn the clay into cliffs except at goat beach, where the cliff has collapsed and is climbable. The basalt underlay extends into the sea as an off-shore reef; the shark pool, now encrusted with coral, is part of this formation.

Adventurers wandering across the goat plain during daylight have a 90% chance to encounter one or more lava wasps, particularly if the adventurers wear shiny armor.

**HARBOR:** well-protected from all but great storms, the harbor is usually calm and without surf. At its deepest it is about 50 feet deep in a line running from the harbor mouth to where the harbor stream debouches. For the rest, the water shelves gradually and concludes in mud/pumice flats of very liquid viscosity. When the pirates row over to the lava ridge to make a visual search of goat beach, they go near high tide, so that they don't have to brave the mud. It is possible for armored characters to drown in this mud (just as they could in water) if they fail to receive a POW x3 or less roll on 1D100. On the west side of the harbor, a small point juts into deeper water, and that is where the Habnikav is moored — securely tri-anchored into the mud and roped to convenient shoreline trees. A box on the next page holds more Habnikav information, as well as full statistics for its bound demons.

**HARBOR STREAM:** so-called because it empties into the harbor where the Habnikav is anchored. Like the ocean stream, it has cut deep ravines into the lava; at the point where the trail crosses the harbor stream (and down stream from there) the slopes are gentler and more accessible. Only at the marsh is the grade of the stream gentle enough to form pools which are too deep to wade. As it flows through the clearing, the harbor stream is about 30 feet wide and four feet deep. Many old and fresh human footprints are found in the mud where the trail cross the harbor stream.

**JUNGLE:** growing in great tangles and thickets, the west and central parts of the island are densely covered by low trees, shrubs, and vines; this forest is everywhere, covering the volcano, the cone, and the lava ridge. Only the hordes of hungry goats keep the jungle from the eastern part of the island as well. Otherwise, except for the scant intervals of the narrow, steep beaches, only the clearing, the marsh, and the goat plain offer significant open space for hybzee-flight amateurs to land.

Many varieties of fruits grow in the jungle, including mangoes and bananas, and pointer plant groups frequently are seen. A blue orchid of rare fragrance grows along the

ocean stream. At night, Origimides (*OR-i-JIM-i-deez*) serpents are abroad throughout the forest; in daylight they are found only in the clearing and the marsh, sunning themselves. A shy, nocturnal, raccoon-like mammal is the largest ground animal found in the forest.

There are no paths except those marked on the map, along which the pirates go. None of the trails is visible from the air, nor are the streams, except at the clearing.

**LAVA CAVE REDOUBT:** this complex of tunnels and rooms has its own section later in this adventure.

**LAVA CLIFFS:** three layers of basalt form the cliffs, each flow set back a few yards further than the one just beneath it, creating distinct ledges to the cliffs. Each flow is at least 30 feet high, unclimbable without gear or a Climb of 70% or better. At both ends, the cliffs drop sheerly into the sea. Though small trees and shrubs occupy the ledges, the ledges are notable as the home for lava wasps, who construct on them personal shelters from mud, rock, and vegetable fiber, or else inhabit the shallow caves occurring in the higher two layers. These lava wasps carefully inspect or deal with every largish daytime intruder nearing their nests.

**LAVA RIDGE:** the ridge is a high basalt arm which joins and is actually part of the lava cliff formation stretching north-south across the island. The ocean stream has cut a 100-foot-deep canyon between the lava ridge and the uplifted block forming the lava cliffs. The surface of the ridge is extremely rough — many large boulders and jagged crustal holes make movement across it difficult. As elsewhere, vegetation clings everywhere, camouflaging most of the holes and tiny caves: this is the best hiding area on the island — there is enough rainwater for drinking, but few food plants grow here.

**MARSH:** a saltwater tidal marsh, its mostly filled with big lilies and rafts of floating vines. Adventurers arriving here via hybzee begin to drown, just as they do in the larger harbor. Other than water, adders, and deep mud, nothing is specially malignant in this tranquil place. The fishing in the late afternoon is excellent. Though gamemasters may want to add crocodiles, etc., to this area, players strive to keep adventurers out of swamps, so populating such an obvious and avoidable trap hardly seems worth the effort. In the afternoons and evenings, swarms of biting insects are a great nuisance. The largest lily pads can support an unarmored man; on calm days one might pole across the marsh on such a craft. The harbor is too exposed for lily pad crossings without a succession of Tumble and Balance rolls; rowing a lily pad to sea calls for an ingenious death equal to the stupidity prompting the attempt.

**NORTH BEACH:** a narrow, very steep sand beach; this is the most dangerous possible landing site on the island because of a powerful undertow. Reduce all Swim skills by 30 percentiles along this beach. A successful See roll or a POW x4 or less roll reveals many fresh and booted human footprints along this beach, leading to a trail which goes west.

**OCEAN BEACH:** another narrow (3-5 yards), shelving beach, but here the currents are weak. This is where the megalodon is instructed to vomit all treasure, and where it

actually does so 70% of the time. Successful See roll or a POW x4 roll notices many fresh, booted, human footprints along this beach, leading to a trail heading north.

**OCEAN STREAM:** so-called because it runs directly into the sea. Except for the few yards where it first rises, the whole of this stream runs within a progressively-deepening canyon cutting down a hundred sheer feet before the way suddenly opens to the sea and a spectacular 200-foot waterfall. The canyon is climbable everywhere, but is steep and slippery — reduce Climb skills by 20 percentiles. The ocean stream is swift and shallow, about 15 feet across at the bottom, filling the whole bottom of the canyon; the canyon is not much wider at the top; this can be a dark and scary place during a storm.

**THE SHARK POOL:** a hollow within the sea-level basalt layer, Nisadnemep long ago made here powerful magic which caused the sharks of these waters to pass through the pool when they neared the island. This lure originally allowed the sorcerer to attract and enroll many sharks in a

powerful sea army. To present-day sharks, if they think about it at all, the pool seems a particularly pleasant place through which they are glad to pass. At any time there are 1D6 tiger sharks in this area; the section discussing how to land on Nisadnemepuur contains their statistics.

**VOLCANO:** rising quickly to about 1500 feet, this small volcano is long-extinct. The rain and heat have worn away the soft pumice and lava, forming spiny ridges and spectacularly-sculpted cliffs. Vegetation clings everywhere. The perilous way from the pirate camp to volcano beach follows the top of two narrow ridges; the drop-off to one or both sides is from 50-300 feet for most of the distance. The volcano crater is an unremarkable shallow depression filled with vegetation; the cross on the map marks the highest point on the island, a large boulder on the crater's northwestern lip. Clouds often cover the top, even on days otherwise clear.

**VOLCANO BEACH:** unless the pirates row here, this beach is dangerous to reach. They go here only if the look-

### THE HABNIKAV 'Fleet-Buster'

This experimental Demon Bireme is 60 feet long, has a beam of 15 feet, a draft of 18 inches (unloaded), takes 10 officers and crew, and has a nominal cargo capacity of 4 tons — or 40 rowers with oars. She can, however, be maneuvered and sailed by one person who knows how to command the demon oars and demon rudder.

Twelve water-level demon oars, six to a side in a single bank propel this craft. Configured for a second bank of 40 ordinary oars wielded by mortals — hence her technical classification as a bireme — those ports have been closed and the oars stowed since her maiden voyage. She also mounts a single mast and can deploy a single large square sail. She makes 12 knots using the 40 ordinary oars, and averages 28 knots under demon oar power. The two types of oared propulsion cannot be used together — mortal oars quickly snap. Speed from the sail mostly depends on wind speed.

Because of her demon hull, the Habnikav can travel the high seas at high speeds in rough weather — a feat impossible to normal galleys — but the human crew is violently thrown about, taking 1D6 damage hourly unless they lash themselves down. The Habnikav was designed for a small crew, containing tiny cabins and storage for a month's water and food.

Repainted a dull sea-green, the tilt of her prow has been left crimson. Her sail is still the naval original, and bears a symbol characteristic of her nation or place of origin.

Every ten days, Captain Zillah checks the ship, makes sure it has been reprovisioned with fresh food and water, and puts the craft through trials back and forth across the harbor. She does not want to be surprised by any punitive expedition.

As anchored in the harbor, working the Habnikav free takes the crew about an hour with a favorable wind. By sacrificing both the main and secondary anchors, and cutting the shoreline ropes, the Habnikav could be underway in about ten minutes.

#### prow

*Demon of Protection bound to hull: Razool*  
 oar 1 — Kraza'lon      oar 2 — Alphir  
 oar 3 — Rogular      oar 4 — Mishbarit  
 oar 5 — Obrestimal    oar 6 — Ziparzah  
 oar 7 — Billagig      oar 8 — Ikakik  
 oar 9 — Er'chinbo    oar 10 — Targroovm  
 oar 11 — Dinchipip    oar 12 — Yarfooma  
 Karzzahl, demon rudder

#### stern

The preceding list shows the relative positions of the demons when looking down on the ship.

The Demon of Protection bound to the Habnikav's hull is a permanent fixture, always functioning. The bound demon oars and rudder need individual instruction by name. All the pirates know these names, and any one of them could maneuver the ship.

#### RAZOO, Demon Hull, Demon of Protection

CON 50 SIZ 60 INT 7 POW 20

Razool is wardpacted against water.

#### KRAZA'LAN, Demon Oar 1, Specialized Demon of Combat

STR 70 CON 40 SIZ 15 INT 7 POW 6

DEX 12 HP 43 Spec. Ability: Regeneration

#### ALPHIR, Demon Oar 2, Specialized Demon of Combat

STR 70 CON 38 SIZ 15 INT 6 POW 11

DEX 12 HP 41 Spec. Ability: Regeneration

#### ROGULAR, Demon Oar 3, Specialized Demon of Combat

STR 70 CON 34 SIZ 15 INT 9 POW 16

DEX 12 HP 37 Spec. Ability: Regeneration

#### MISHBARIT, Demon Oar 4, Specialized Demon of Combat

STR 70 CON 44 SIZ 15 INT 11 POW 13

DEX 12 HP 47 Spec. Ability: Regeneration

#### OBRESTIMAL, Demon Oar 5, Spec. Demon of Combat

STR 70 CON 48 SIZ 15 INT 9 POW 14

DEX 12 HP 47 Spec. Ability: Regeneration

#### ZIPARZAH, Demon Oar 6, Specialized Demon of Combat

STR 70 CON 31 SIZ 15 INT 8 POW 18

DEX 12 HP 34 Spec. Ability: Regeneration

#### BILLAGIG, Demon Oar 7, Specialized Demon of Combat

STR 70 CON 31 SIZ 15 INT 14 POW 11

DEX 12 HP 34 Spec. Ability: Regeneration

#### IKAKIK, Demon Oar 8, Specialized Demon of Combat

STR 70 CON 41 SIZ 15 INT 11 POW 12

DEX 12 HP 44 Spec. Ability: Regeneration

#### ER'CHINBO, Demon Oar 9, Specialized Demon of Combat

STR 70 CON 40 SIZ 15 INT 6 POW 18

DEX 12 HP 43 Spec. Ability: Regeneration

out on the volcano actually sees the megalodon belch up treasure here – and then Zillah usually sends a gnome to make the pickup, because the trail is so steep and slick that only an entity affiliated with the earth can make an easy transit. Successful See or POW x4 rolls at the beach reveal a few old humanoid footprints, perhaps leading toward a steep, jungle-covered ridge.

This part of the island generally is the wettest, and the vegetation here is mist-shrouded and unusually luxuriant.

## Getting Ashore

The tropical waters are warm and startlingly clear. The sunsets are magnificent. One day the adventurers notice a cloud at the horizon that does not move – slight condensation above the island. Then a squall sets in. The next morning the lookout shouts, “Land ho!” The island is

about 10 miles away. The adventurers (if you have properly salted them with tales of the demonfish) will be eager to go ashore. If they approach in the ship, the lookout soon spots the encircling reef, which is 3-4 miles from the island: to cross the reef in the Dulcet (or in its dinghy), they must wait for high enough tide to float them across.

But if the adventurers circumnavigate the island while outside the reef, they spy an irregular break through the 60-yard-wide barrier. This narrow channel is 30 feet wide and nearly 40 feet deep – plenty of draft even for a fully-loaded Dulcet.

Getting the Dulcet through this channel may require both calm seas and one or more successful POW x3 rolls. Merciful gamemasters might allow an extra POW x1 roll if one is missed. Adequate (10 or more) undines match the Dulcet’s buoyant length and take her through without incident. With fewer than 10, calculate the chance to get through via undine as number of undines x10% – eight undines offer an 80% chance, for instance.



*The Habnikav in sea-trials, using conventional oar-power*

**TARGROOVM, Demon Oar 10, Spec. Demon of Combat**  
 STR 70 CON 39 SIZ 15 INT 6 POW 17  
 DEX 12 HP 42 Spec. Ability: Regeneration

**DINCHIPIP, Demon Oar 11, Specialized Demon of Combat**  
 STR 70 CON 41 SIZ 15 INT 10 POW 14  
 DEX 12 HP 44 Spec. Ability: Regeneration

**YARFOOMA, Demon Oar 12, Spec. Demon of Combat**  
 STR 70 CON 45 SIZ 15 INT 12 POW 12  
 DEX 12 HP 48 Spec. Ability: Regeneration

**KARZZAHL, Demon Rudder, Spec. Demon of Combat**  
 STR 70 CON 54 SIZ 23 INT 5 POW 7  
 DEX 15 HP 65 Spec. Ability: Regeneration

## Swimming Ashore

Kindly gamemasters probably let the adventurers arrive in the Dulcet. Unless the gamemaster has special uses for her, let the megalodon come upon the Dulcet after or while the adventurers are going ashore. This will dislodge cautious adventurers who have schemed out ways to make the hybzees do all the shore work. As the giant jaws close, even the most faint-hearted find the water more enticing

than the megalodon's gullet. Later, if necessary, the adventurers could find extra-useful gear vomited up on an island beach.

Adventurers in the water sink to the bottom if they wear metal armor; if they wear wooden or leather protection, they can stay afloat only if they attempt to do nothing but swim. Sinking adventurers who are shedding their armor are helpless for the entire combat round. Most

### NISADNEMPUUR TIDE TABLE

day	high	low	high	low
1 (+2,-2)	1:52a	8:23a	12:30p	7:20p
2 (+2,-2)	2:59a	9:31a	1:55p	8:27p
3 (+3,-3)	4:04a	10:38a	3:03p	9:59p
4 (+5,-5)	5:11a	11:44a	4:20p	11:03p

Parenthesized numbers are the in-feet, sea-level changes for high and low tides. The surrounding reef is covered by this

much water at high tide, or that much exposed at low tide. Pro-rate the difference for intermediate times. Mariners among the adventurers notice that Nisadnemepuur's tides do not coincide with those normal for these seas. A Demon of Knowledge informs the questioner that residual magic around the island acts as a drag upon the local ocean waters. If the adventurers ask the Demon of Knowledge what the magic is, that demon is immediately eaten by a very large and ugly demon who appears, gobbles, smiles, and disappears.

### THE MEGALODON (and the sharks)

Extinct in our time, the megalodon could be found while the Young Kingdoms rose, flourished, and fell. This example is a monster, about 80 feet in length with a jaw opening in which a man can stand upright. Be sure not to identify it as a megalodon to the players — let them believe, if they wish, that Lvthn still lives. Descriptions should emphasize that the Great Fish is bigger than the Dulcet, very powerful, and that it has enormous teeth — all fully true.

The megalodon normally feeds on whales, dolphins, and lesser sharks, but this one has special instructions from P!p!pp'hhhh'p: (1) patrol the waters around Nisadnemepuur. (2) attack ships, eat men, swallow metal and rocks from ships, spit out wood. (3) vomit metal and rocks on island beach just before high tide. (4) do this until P!p!pp'hhhh'p commands that you stop.

The megalodon attacks without warning, sinking its great jaws into the keel of the ship and methodically biting the vessel apart from underneath. Under special compulsion, it will not attack like the great white shark, which first slashes and then circles, waiting for the prey to bleed to death.

#### THE MEGALODON

STR 65 CON 20 SIZ 60 INT 3+4 POW 12  
DEX 16 HP 68 (CON+SIZ-12) Armor: 15-point skin

weapon	attack	parry	damage
Bite	80%	—	10D6
Ram Ship	35%	—	special

NOTES: the Ram Ship attack must be judged by the gamemaster; the megalodon has a 35% chance to smash the hull of a normal ocean-going vessel or of upsetting a raft; it can make such an attack every 10 combat rounds. The 3+4 INT includes 4 points loaned to it by the Fish Lord so that it might correctly perform its duties; once Lysansiptra releases the beast, those points are lost — a tragedy, if only it could remember.

#### TIGER SHARKS

These predators range the warmer oceans of the world. They are omnivorous and hungry: they feed on fishes, other sharks, turtles, mollusks, garbage, and sometimes on humans. Reaching lengths of 18 feet, they are called tiger sharks because of the dark vertical bands decorating their backs. Tiger sharks hunt singly, performing slash attacks with their teeth. Several or many sharks may be attracted to the same prey or locality and make vicious multiple attacks — the so-called feeding frenzy.

The strategy of the shark (and its degree of hunger) is up to the gamemaster. Sharks, like other predators, generally are uninterested in attacking creatures close to their own size: unusual motion, unusual reflectivity, blood, or thrashings-about in the water which resemble death throes court shark attacks. In calm seas, these sharks may attack in water as shallow as four feet.

#### TIGER SHARK

STR 5D6+10 SKILLS: Dodge 45%, Swim 100%,  
CON 3D6 Listen 45%, Move Quietly 90%, Scent  
SIZ 3D6+10 85%, See 25%, Track Scent 55%.

INT 3  
POW 2D6 Hit Points: CON+SIZ-12  
DEX 3D6+6 Armor: 3-point skin

weapon	attack	parry	damage
Bite	50%	—	(STR/6)D6+remainder

NOTE: all tiger sharks have the same Bite attack percentage.

#### SIX TIGER SHARKS with identical attacks

weapon	attack	parry	damage
Bite	50%	—	(STR/6)D6+remainder

#### SHARK ONE

STR 24 CON 14 SIZ 22 INT 3 POW 9  
DEX 17 HP 24 3-pt. skin damage: 4D6

#### SHARK TWO

STR 30 CON 16 SIZ 20 INT 3 POW 10  
DEX 20 HP 24 3-pt. skin damage: 5D6

#### SHARK THREE

STR 28 CON 17 SIZ 27 INT 3 POW 8  
DEX 19 HP 32 3-pt. skin damage: 4D6+4

#### SHARK FOUR

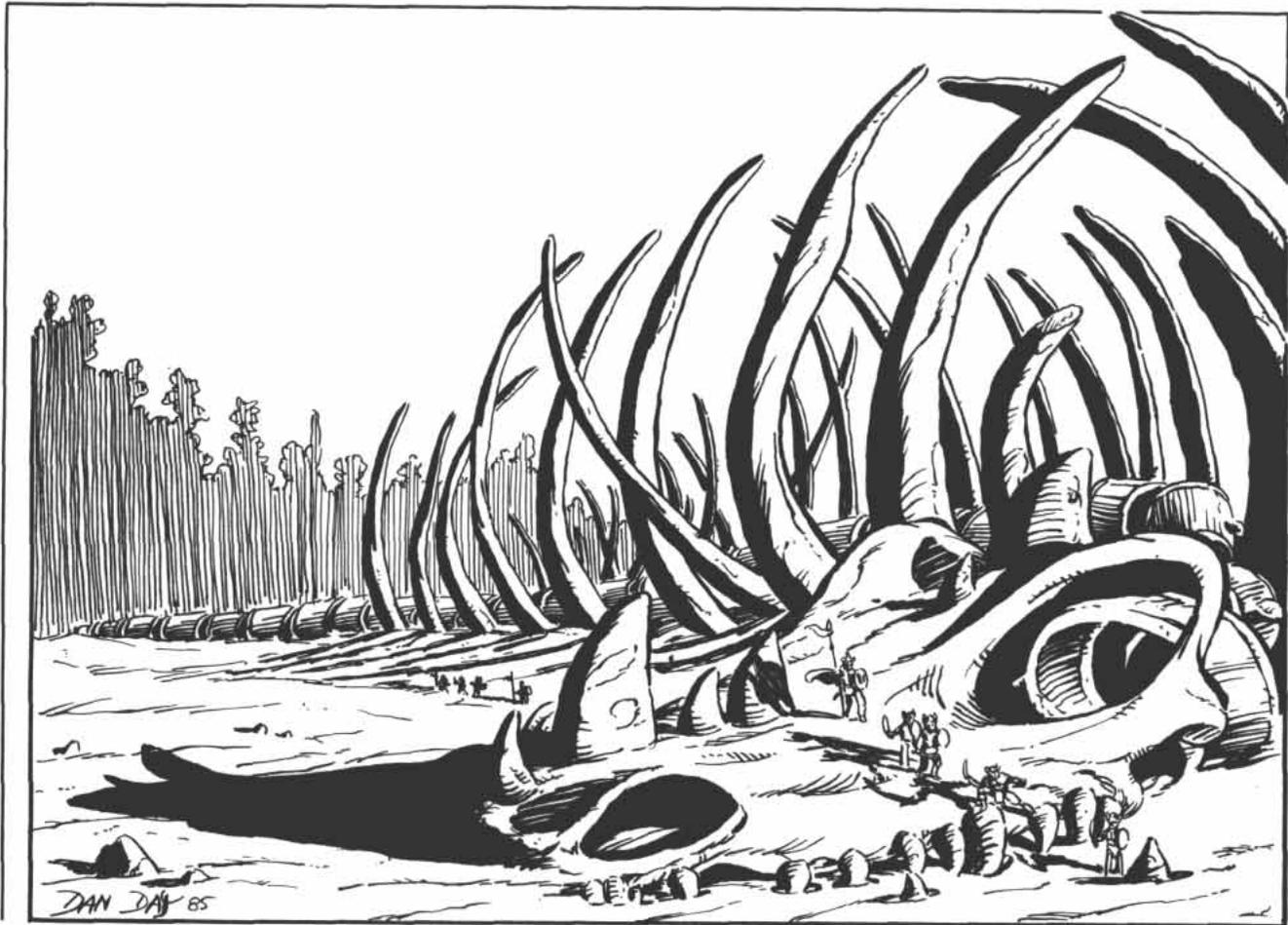
STR 40 CON 18 SIZ 28 INT 3 POW 12  
DEX 24 HP 34 3-pt. skin damage: 6D6+2

#### SHARK FIVE

STR 27 CON 7 SIZ 20 INT 3 POW 5  
DEX 15 HP 15 3-pt. skin damage: 4D6+3

#### SHARK SIX

STR 15 CON 3 SIZ 13 INT 3 POW 2  
DEX 9 HP 4 3-pt. skin, damage: 2D6+3



*The Lvthn*

unarmored swimmers fight at a 25 percentile disadvantage; swimmers of more than 60% skill fight at a 10 percentile disadvantage.

The commotion attracts local tiger sharks at the beginning of the third combat round — use the stats on p. 16. It will be most dramatic if all the sharks appear at once — they're in competition with a megalodon, after all. A single tiger shark might not even be noticed.

If the megalodon scores a critical hit, he swallows his target, who takes 1D6 incidental damage while being swallowed and then sustains 1 point of damage from stomach acid and fumes each combat round thereafter. Unless the character has special defenses, he cannot last the 1D100+50 combat rounds until the megalodon spits up the ship's nails, tankards, the adventurer, and the other loose change it has salvaged from the briny deep. Weapon attacks from within the stomach do not have to penetrate the megalodon's armor — they're already inside it.

### Rowing Ashore

The Dulcet carries a 10-foot dinghy with 1000-pound capacity — 3-4 adventurers and a little cargo — but it has but two oarlocks and so takes a long time to get anywhere, whether rowed by one man or two. The beam is 4.5 feet; it draws 2 inches empty and another inch for each 100 pounds of weight.

If the adventurers decide to row in, they can move two armed and armored men ashore per trip if two row; ingoing trips with two rowers move at 6 miles per hour, and outgoing trips with one rower and an otherwise empty boat also move at 6 miles per hour.

Allow the adventurers to work out their own landing site and logistics; do keep track of elapsed time if the Dulcet stays beyond the reef (even the row boat cannot cross the reef at low tide). Check the tide table.

### Flying In Via Hybzee

The most appealing way (because it's the easiest) is to have the hybzees fly in the adventurers. A party of four who go armored in full plate, taking multiple weapons and a week's supply of food and water have a nominal weight of 232 SIZ. Rizum and Mizum, the two hybzees, have 24 and 20 POW respectively, so that Rizum could move 92 SIZ daily, and Mizum could move 76 SIZ daily (leaving 1 point of POW unused, so that they did not die). Therefore most of such an expedition could be moved quickly, leaving only a little water to be brought in after the hybzees have regained their POW. But remember that hybzees regain only ¼th of their temporary POW per day: if the expedition wanted to get back quickly, they'd have to abandon everything and swim for it.

Yet hybzee transport is quick — from beyond the reef to the island in less than five minutes, and it is safe if a reasonable landing site is selected.

At night, the tell-tale hybzee glow could easily be blocked by having the hybzee ride or fly behind and above the adventurer, who does not shine with anything like hybzee power.

Night-flying is dangerous. The party becomes separated unless specific signalling arrangements are made, only the goat plain can be visually located, and the chance to land either at the clearing or at the goat plain without sustaining 1D6 fall damage is decreased to POW x1%. At night, adventurers attempting to land on sites other than the goat plain or the clearing risk 2D6+1D6 damage if the POW x1 roll fails.

Adventurers landing in daylight on the goat plain or the clearing take no damage. Adventurers landing elsewhere on the island in daylight risk 2D6 damage if a POW x3 roll fails.

Superb flyers, hybzees themselves never run such risks unless buffeted by storms or high winds.

### Adventurer Objectives

Unless the players have been unusually haphazard, the adventurers know the location of the Habnikav (the implications of a bireme hundreds of miles to sea is food for thought) and of the great skeleton in the clearing, and likely know that one or more women can be found somewhere near the ship. The adventurers probably land at the clearing, along ocean beach or north beach, or possibly in the shallows near the Habnikav. Allow them to discover any trail in the area, or let them hack their way through the underbrush long enough to make them wish for a trail. The trail net leads to the lava caves.

If they capture one or more pirates, let the pirates mention the loot they have gathered as proof of ransom, and allow them to explain their piracy operation. Do not mention the Habnikav's demons unless the adventurers ask questions which require those explanations. All of the pirates have been in the navy long enough to have learned never to volunteer information.

The adventurers' real task is to load a lot of treasure and return home safely with it. Capturing all the pirates will not weaken the demon guardians of the caves, nor make the megalodon less hungry.

## Daily Living

Heat and humidity prompt most of the pirates to stay in the caves in the afternoon; they look for treasure when tides and daylight coincide (Zillah's gnome helps locate treasure buried in the sand). The pirates normally sleep outdoors at night in their private lean-to bungalows. Unless they are going abroad in the sun, the pirates have mostly given up wearing clothing. Readers may decide that these pirates have a pretty nice life. That's true, and that's why some adventurers become pirates. More personal information about the pirates is found with their statistics at the end of this scenario.

Since Lysansiptra sent her warning, all the pirates wear daggers, always go armed on the treasure searches, and always designate an armed guard at camp and at the Habnikav in the daytime. The following details normal daily routine.

**DAWN TO 11AM:** at first light, the night guard leaves the sleeping area and climbs the volcano to search the sea for incoming ships. Depending on the tides, the three treasure-hunters-of-the-day go to ocean beach, then to north beach, and then row to the lava ridge to inspect goat beach, always looking for valuables belched up by the megalodon. If they find any, they stop the search and tote the spoils to the camp. If there's a lot, they get Zillah to send a gnome, who can carry it on into the treasure room in the lava cave redoubt. Since the megalodon at most strikes only once in a 24-hour period, they are not overworked. There is a 10% chance that the beast left treasure, unless the Dulcet has just been eaten – then there's a 100% chance. Choose a beach.

Meanwhile, pirates not on treasure or guard duty begin to wake up 1D6 per hour, Zillah first. They make breakfast. The waterwoman for the day brings ten gallons from the upper harbor stream. They gossip, repair equipment, argue, wager, and fight. Several may go to the Habnikav to stow or retrieve items, replenish its stores, etc. Cooking requires a fire; a small fire is kept going most of the time, frequently it is smokey from wet wood. Rena is full-time cook; she never looks for treasure or works on the ship. On days without duty, Tristra sneaks away to Patuer, bringing meat or fish if she can.

**11AM-1PM:** lunch time, usually in the cave to escape the rains and increasingly humid heat.

**1PM-3PM:** snoozes, games, scrimshawing Lvthn bone, etc.

**3PM-4PM:** thunderstorms usually wake everyone from their siestas and other activities.

**4PM-7PM:** a second treasure tour may be made if the first netted nothing.

**7PM-10PM:** dinner for the pirates in the main hut. Zillah leads minor religious activities. Stories are told, songs sung, dances danced.

**10PM-2AM:** fires die; first guard posted; sleeping arrangements arranged; treasure hunters and water-carrier for the next day scheduled.

**2AM-DAWN:** second guard is awakened; first guard sleeps. During this time, it is rare that any of the pirates awaken for any reason.

### Pateur And Jarunemerke

Besides the pirates, the various demons, and the lava wasps, two other intelligent entities dwell on Nisadnemepuur: the shipwrecked sailor Pateur (*pa-TOOR*), whom the pirate Tristra loves and has given her protection to, and a chaos-infected merman, Jarunemerke (*jzah-ROON-un-merk*). Since Jarunemerke lives in the lava caves or in the sea just adjacent to an underwater entrance to the caves, his entries occur in the appropriate portion of the lava cave redoubt material.

Pateur stays in a small, dry, orchid-covered thatch hut not far from the dangerous cliffs which he originally climbed to safety. He is the sole survivor of the first Argimiliar ship which the megalodon attacked. Tristra found him when she was fetching water from the harbor stream, and quickly fell in love with him; she keeps him unknown to the rest of the pirates because most of them would much

rather kill Pateur than share a single coin with him or risk an informant who might later compromise them. Tristra plans to smuggle him aboard the Habnikav just before the pirates depart; then they both will desert the ship at its first port and live happily ever after.

**PATEUR, Age 22, Sailor of Argimiliar and Beloved of Tristra**

STR 15    CON 14    SIZ 14    INT 12    POW 12  
DEX 13    CHA 14    HP 16    Armor: none

*weapons*                    *attack*    *parry*    *damage*  
Shortsword                75%        64%        1D6+1

SKILLS: Balance 55%, Climb 56%, Climb Rigging 80%, Dodge 60%, Fish 30%, Hide 67%, Navigate 20%, Shiphandling 50%, Swim 74%, Tie Knot 70%.

Though tired of eating bananas, Pateur is content with his life at the moment and with his chances to return home with a rich wife. He would regard adventurer offers to rescue him of not much worth, since the adventurers likely would offer to kill his lover and seize her fortune in the same breath.

Depending on the position the adventurers take, Pateur forms a useful gamemaster reserve if the adventurers do too well or do too poorly. Don't spring him on the players without some preparation, though – let the bushes rattle once or twice if the adventurers go near his hut, let them glimpse an indistinct form, let them find a single water-filled size 13 footprint in the mud, etc.

**The Huts**

As they've become at-home on the island, the pirates have built a series of small, peaked-roof thatch sleeping shelters.

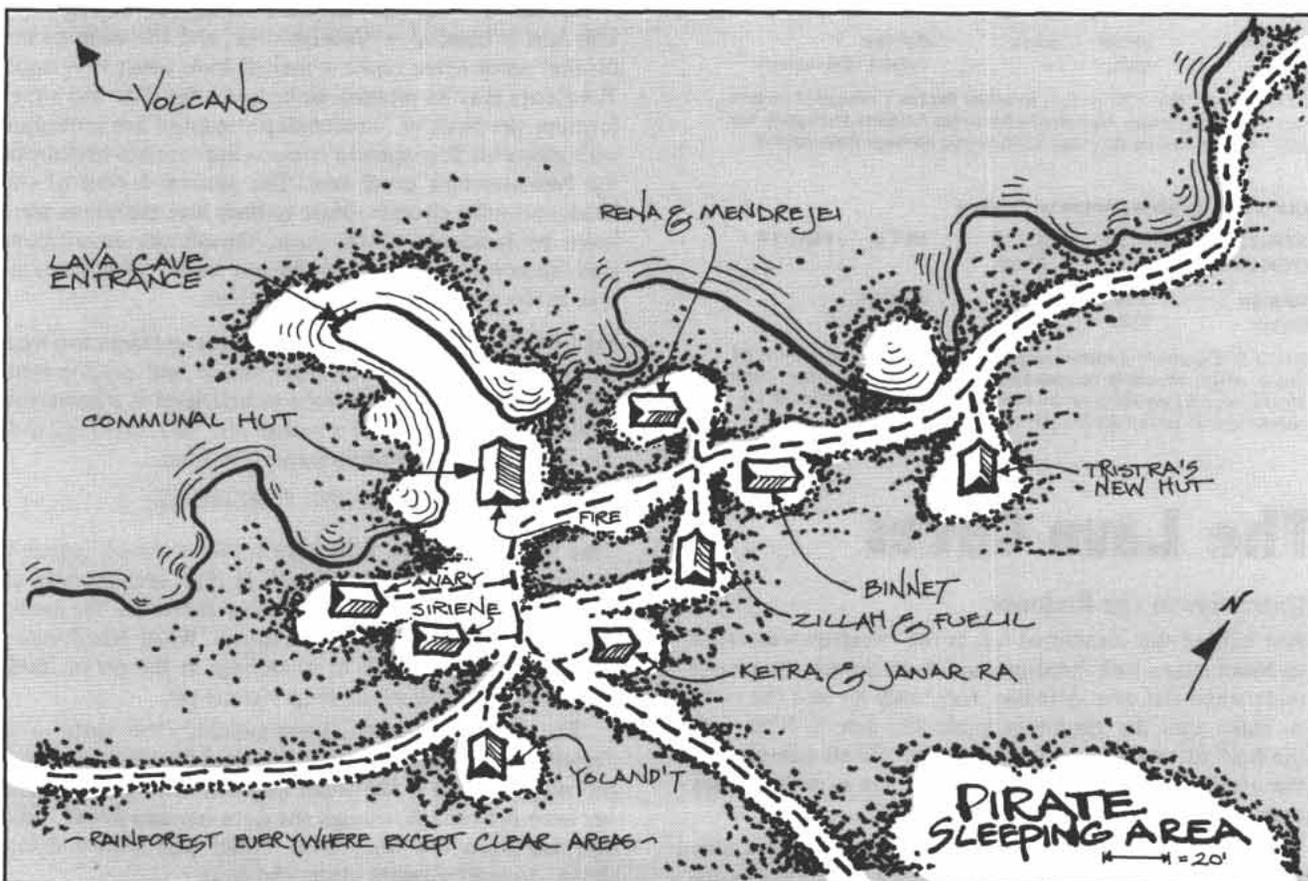
**CLIMATE**

Afternoons are hot and humid: average daily high temperature is 94 degrees F, average daily low temperature is 76 degrees F, average humidity is 90%. In the fall and spring, gentler winds blow from the southwest; in the summer and winter, the winds blow from the southeast. Average daily rainfall is nearly one-half inch. The adventurers arrive during one of the two rainy seasons – rainfall is 1-3 inches daily. Afternoons and nights may be humid and usually are wet. Mornings and evenings can be exceptionally pleasant.

**LOCAL DAILY WEATHER**

<i>approximate time of day</i>	<i>weather</i>
12mid/5am	scattered showers.
5am/11am	clearing; lower humidity
11am/3pm	scattered showers
3pm/4pm	sometimes heavy rains with thunder and lightning; strong gusts of wind
4pm/7pm	clearing; steady seasonal breeze from south-east or southwest
7pm/9pm	breeze stops; occasional showers
9pm/12mid	light-to-steady rain

These shelters are informal; they have no internal divisions or stationary walls; they do have lashed bamboo flooring, block foundations, and large woven mats which can be positioned to block wind-driven rains. A larger communal hut was built around a rock on which a cooking fire is kept; a cupola was made for the smoke. The pirates gather in the communal hut much of each day. Since the huts are strictly temporary, no one bothers to cut down surrounding trees – occasionally a limb or a coconut falls through



### WHAT'S IN THE HUTS?

If all the pirates walked up to the cinder cone to watch the sunset, which they often do, and if they left behind everything they owned except demon weapons and armor, here is what a search of the huts would uncover.

In the communal hut, a few cooking utensils can be found, and some musical instruments and two half-finished reed mats. There is a pink porcelain statuette of Straasha in one corner. Total worth: about 10 LB.

In each sleeping hut, per occupant, these used items: 1 dagger, 1 suit of half plate with helmet, 1 shield, 1D2 other weapons, 1D3 changes of clothes, a pair of boots, several dashing hats, an eyepatch or two, assorted tools (marline-spikes, augurs, adzes, hammers, etc.), 1D10 LB in small change, earrings, belt buckles, etc. The total value of these items averages 100 LB per person.

The great treasure is kept safely within Nisadnemep's lava cave redoubt.

a roof, but the secluded intertwining of building and jungle is pleasant, and pirates care about pleasing themselves.

All of these huts can be crawled under; none of the roofs can support more than SIZ 10. With a successful POW x3 or less roll, the climber recognizes his peril before putting his weight on a roof and bringing down the entire building.

As flimsy as they are, nonetheless the huts are well-protected. Zillah has ordered two bound Demons of Combat to defend the immediate area. Wakaa (*wah-KAH-ah*) customarily roosts in a tree just outside the communal hut, and invisible Corpoe (*KOR-poe*) hovers near the ceiling of the communal hut. Both have instructions to attack no pirate, though Zillah could change that instruction any time she wishes. If the adventurers approach, Wakaa will fly to meet them and warn them to come no closer. If the adventurers ignore the warning, Corpoe attacks from the rear, then Wakaa from the front.

#### WAKAA, Demon of Combat usually in large bat form

STR 18	CON 21	SIZ 16	INT 14	POW 17
DEX 18	CHA 4	HP 23		
<i>weapon</i>	<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>	
Bite	65%	—	1D10+1D6+venom	

*NOTE: roll CON x3% or less to avoid Wakaa's venom if its bite attack does damage. The victim becomes helpless with pain for 1D8 rounds, taking an extra 1D4 points damage each round.*

#### CORPOE, invisible Demon of Combat

STR 27	CON 30	SIZ 10	INT 8	POW 14
DEX 20	CHA 3	HP 30		
<i>weapon</i>	<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>	
Gnash	75%	—	1D10+2D6	

*NOTES: Corpoe is a rather stupid, constantly-biting mouth of sharp teeth, invisible to mortals (though not to other demons). Mortal attacks on Corpoe are reduced by 20 percentiles in all conditions in which its invisibility might be a factor.*

## The Lava Caves

### Entrances to the Redoubt

Just behind the communal hut is the overgrown entrance to Nisadnemep's old headquarters. Even though the pirates understand the cave defenses, they only go into the place to make sure the gnome gets past the demon N'dii with the load of treasure, or to cool off in the antechamber in the afternoons. Who would want to live in a cold, dark cave in the middle of a tropical paradise?

A second entrance to the lava caves is 30 feet underwater, among the rocks west of ocean beach. Two moray

eels live in the flanks of the simple hole; they are aggressive and may (60% chance) bite, though they do not bother Jarunemerke when he passes by. Neither eel has armor-value skin. Both have a Bite attack of 50% and do 1D6+1 damage.

#### MORAY EEL ONE

STR 17	CON 15	SIZ 11	INT 2	POW 9
DEX 16	HP 18			

#### MORAY EEL TWO

STR 16	CON 15	SIZ 10	INT 2	POW 10
DEX 17	HP 18			

This sea entrance is completely filled with water for 200 yards; it is pitch black for that distance, finally opening up into Jarunemerke's cave. An adventurer could find his or her way along this irregular, narrow passage in about an hour. Jarunemerke swims it in a few minutes.

### The Lava Caves

Lava caves form when the crust of a flow hardens while the still-molten lava beneath continues to move, eventually evacuating tubes and chambers beneath hardening rock. This lava is basaltic, a blackish rock, and the walls of the formed tubes often retain a melted look when they cool. The floors may be pitched, or be quite flat. The lava tubes forming the basis of Nisadnemep's redoubt are grotesque with glassy black congealed stone — appropriate backdrops for Nisadnemep's cruel arts. The general layout of the headquarters is circular. Most tunnels and chambers were hewn by hand out of the rock; though the descriptions may be convenient, nature did not build these caves to spec as the adventurers encounter them.

**THE DOORWAY:** completely filling the entrance is a massive bronze door, covered with brazen and cryptic symbols. Growing out of the door at belt level is a powerful-looking bronze replica of a human arm and reaching hand. At eye level in High Melnibonean is written,

*SPEAK FRIEND AND BE RELEASED*

This is Nisadnemep's little joke on unexpected guests. If the reader actually says "friend" in High Melnibonean to the door, a trap in front of the door opens and the speaker falls 12 feet, taking 2D6 damage. When Nisadnemep lived, he kept hundreds of bloodbugs in the pit to finish off the victim; now it's an empty stone pit.

The door was once demon-guarded; the sentry was dispelled to its plane during the final battle as a Search roll may indicate — the small finger of the reaching hand has been broken off, though the door remains intact. Anyone can open the door from either side with a strong shove. A counterweight closes the door.

**THE ANTECHAMBER:** logically enough, once the door closes, there is no light. When the pirates visit the caves, usually they come only as far as this large, bare chamber – sleeping here in the afternoons, propping open the door slightly to relieve the darkness. The antechamber is 20 degrees cooler than the midday outside temperature; further in, the redoubt is cool enough to call for extra clothing.

In this spacious (10,000+ square feet) chamber, Nisadnemep's scurrying slaves once welcomed kidnaped nobles or fought over the fabulous treasures that the sea brought to them. The finery and pomp has vanished, leaving behind not even bones.

Apart from two chests and the bundles of rushes which the pirates maintain as individual beds, the furnishings are two empty water gourds, a bamboo flute, and a water pipe. Frequently the floor is deep with sand; this is true throughout the redoubt.

The two chests contain Captain Zillah's library. She keeps them here so that they do not rot from the humid climate. Of the 306 books and scrolls here, 112 are worth 3-8 LB, 80 are worth 200-500 LB, and 105 are worth 80-120 LB. Some books are common, some are rare. Many are collections of histories and legends.

Nine of the books are worth mentioning. One, the *Atlas of Zarre*, is a fat folio of maps, Melnibonean in origin, about 400 years old. The sheets show 200 large- and small-scale locations in the Young Kingdoms. All of the maps are in excellent condition. Anyone with Make Map less than 70% gains 5 percentiles in that skill by perusing this

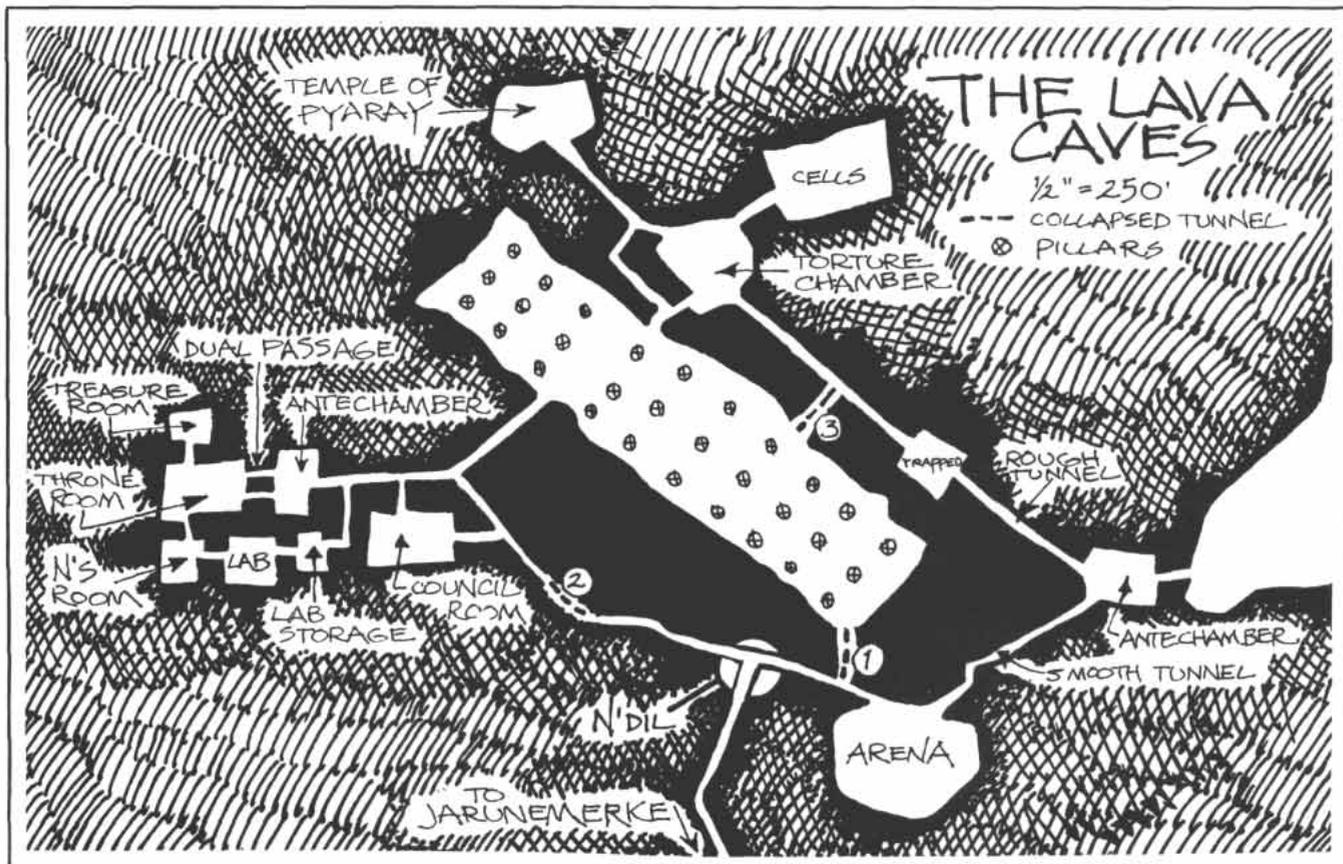
work for one week. Artful as well as wonderfully accurate, the folio is worth 7300 LB. All of the writing is in Low Melnibonean.

A set of three books, the *Red Grimoire*, is intended to help a sorcerer move from second to third rank. Each volume requires 20-INT months of concerted study and a successful POW x4 or less roll on D100 in order to study the next book in the series. When all three have been digested, the character is a third-rank sorcerer. Pan Tangian in origin, no more than 200 years old, they are written in Common and are worth 9000 LB as a set.

Two books, the *Annals* and the *Late Annals of the Bright City*, are companion works of Melnibonean myth and legend, spanning a period from 8350 to 550 years ago. Each takes a week to read; at that time, the reader's Music Lore skill is increased by 15 percentiles. The pair of volumes is worth 380 LB.

A thin copyist's scroll, *A Tale of Doom*, is written in High Melnibonean, but in a modern hand. It contains the true story of how Nisadnemep offended Pyaray and was deserted by the god, and how Straasha and Sadric then took their vengeance. It specifically says that Nisadnemep and Lvthn were killed.

A second scroll on fresh parchment, *General Instructions*, is in Lysansiptra's hand. It details the password for N'dii, the route to the treasure room, a warning about the pit at the entrance, dire general warnings about unspecified traps and demons within the redoubt, and an explanation of the Lvthn skeleton and its curative powers. It also contains instructions for retrieving vomited treasure and



## SEEING IN THE DARK

The darkness of Nisadnemep's cave is absolute; no handy glowing fungus, no distant fire, no subterranean moon exist as handy crutches. Adventurers either must bring illumination or feel their way through the dark.

A hybzee sheds plenty of light by which to fight; a standard torch burns for one hour and illuminates a 5-yard radius well enough to Search by or to fight by. A standard candle burns for 2 hours and lights a one-yard radius well enough to Search by. Dropped torches ordinarily do not go out but only illuminate half the area of a held torch; dropped candles go out 90% of the time. A fire elemental can manifest flames equivalent in light and heat to a 6-foot-high bonfire. An unshuttered lantern furnishes the same light as a torch; a shuttered lantern illuminates well enough to read by an area 3 yards square at 10 yards distance.

One can see a light source from much further away than a light source can adequately illuminate. One might spot a steady torch at night from a mile or more, for instance.

### Skills Modifications Prompted by Darkness

When fighting, etc., in pitch-black conditions, halve relevant skills, rounding down any fractions. Skills such as Listen, Taste, or Memorize obviously are unaffected by darkness. The gamemaster always decides what skill is or is not affected. Ask for POW x3 or POW x4 stumble rolls occasionally for darkness-bound adventurers to remind the players of the problem.

When fighting by candle, torch, or lantern light, reduce appropriate skills by 20 percentiles.

When fighting by the light of a salamander, subtract no percentiles if the light is within 10 yards of the salamander; subtract 20 percentiles as appropriate within the next 10 yards.

When fighting in starlight, moonlight, etc., make similar skills reductions in the 10-30 percentiles range — one wants fights, not clown acts.

for treasure room procedures, and a sketch map of the island. The last page is Lysansiptra's contract with the pirates, though she is not named.

The final book is quite thick. It is bound in metal, with a metal clasp and a small lock (STR 5). This is Captain Zillah's diary, *My Voyages*, in which she has kept accurate entries for 15 years. It details how she joined the navy, became an officer, and her many battles. From it, readers form an image of a resolute, cool, intelligent leader, who could make a formidable foe. The last year's entries frequently discuss the upcoming mutiny, and identify her profound dissatisfaction with the bureaucrats who kept her from better serving her ruler. Lysansiptra's name is mentioned several times, and many more by implication. Lysansiptra is famous in the Young Kingdoms; most of the adventurers know of her, and several may have worked for her. If they did, they might still be secretly in love with this striking and powerful woman.

With so many books, the adventurers need about 30 man-hours of effort before they have leafed through all of them. If they undertake the search, parcel out the major titles, leaving the *General Instructions* and *My Voyages* to the last.

Two tunnels open from the 30-foot-high antechamber. A wide, frequently-traveled (the sandy floor shows many

footprints) tunnel leads left; a narrow, hard-rock tunnel leads right.

Unless noted, all rooms and tunnels are 12 feet high.

**THE TUNNELS:** the left-branching tunnel, leading both to Jarunemerke and all the way to Nisadnemep's inner sanctum, is smooth-floored and smooth-walled, broad enough and high enough for two men to fight abreast in them. The right-branching tunnel, leading to the torture chambers, the Pyaray temple, and connecting to the left or smooth tunnel is narrower, lower, and rough-textured: one man could hold off many here. The right or rough tunnel gives the impression of having been cut from the rock; the left or smooth tunnel seems to have been naturally formed — or at least to have been formed by means of great heat, not chisel and sledge. All the rock is black or dark gray. For the most part, no sign or decoration interrupts either tunnel.

## The Smooth Tunnel

**THE ARENA:** the smooth-tunnel footprints do not go into this vast room. Created to serve an arena and assembly hall, one enters at stage level through any of 20 archways; the 100 seat/steps lead up from there — the place is fully 400 feet across. No torch or candle can light to the furthest seat or even to the 100-foot ceiling. Through an open pit in the floor, one dimly hears and smells the sea. There is a strong odor of fish. As in the antechamber, nothing of value remains here.

A successful Scent, Search, or See roll locates a steps section on which 22 gutted and fileted sea bass have been spread open and left to rot.

**THE FIRST COLLAPSE:** as the adventurers go along this part of the tunnel, they may notice (via any successful Track or INT x2 roll that several sets of footprints are humanoid, but not human. If any of the adventurers have much experience with gnomes, they recognize the unusual prints as gnome-prints.

About 300 feet along the tunnel, a mound of rubble extends halfway across the tunnel, fanning out from a broad archway. Ten man-days of effort would remove enough stone that the adventurers could use this entrance to crawl through into the Garrison Hall and approach the great ghost-dike from the rear.

**THE GUARDPOST:** 500 feet further along the smooth tunnel, the roof raise to 20 feet from the floor, and forks into two branches identical to the tunnel they've been traveling. To take either way, the passersby must deal with N'dii (*en-DYE-ee*), a Demon of Protection which Nisadnemep bound at this intersection.

A large lightning bolt, noticeable with a successful See roll, has been chiselled in the stone about 50 feet toward the tunnel's land entrance (the one behind the pirate huts). A successful Search roll shows that the sand of the floor near the intersection has been scorched in places. A successful Scent roll reveals ozone in the air. But by the time any of this has been noticed, N'dii has appeared.

### N'DII, Demon of Protection

STR 0      CON 60      SIZ 9      INT 8      POW 24  
DEX 18      HP 60      Armor: special

weapon	attack	parry	damage
Lightning Bolt	100%	special	4D6+1D6+3

*NOTE: N'dii's lightning attack can be dodged, but otherwise always hits; targets wearing metal armor can dodge successfully only by receiving a critical dodge roll.*

N'dii takes shape as a blue-glowing man of small stature, who floats a few feet above the sandy floor. The demon is a hold-over employee of Nisadnemep's who was left undestroyed because its pass-phrase was known. N'dii speaks only High Melnibonean. The phrase which permits passage was a familiar (a thousand years ago) High Melnibonean jingle:

*P'rathit char pos't'ay debrastit,  
Nerbonnay disano' mo jenjimamit!*

This couplet translates roughly as 'A wise man knows his friends; a secure man knows his enemies.' N'dii will give a clue to the pass-phrase rhyme in High Melnibonean, but only someone who knows High Melnibonean at 60% or better, and who receives a successful INT x4 on D100 can answer correctly. Lysansiptra easily guessed the rhyme, and all of the pirates learned it from her in order to deposit booty in the treasure room.

*N'dii's Parameters:* Since N'dii hasn't seen Nisadnemep lately, its orders haven't been changed: it lets pass any one person or any one group a member of which knows the couplet. It cannot be argued from its duty, but attacks only those who try to pass without uttering the couplet, or those who attack it first.

Usually N'dii remains stationary when it attacks, hovering out of sword-reach where the roof of the tunnel rises high at the intersection; it can, however, pursue interlopers for 100 feet along any of the three tunnels.

N'dii hurls one 4D6+3+1D6 lightning bolt per combat round, effective to 20 feet; metal armor (because it is conductive) will not block this damage. Since the incurred damage is uniform, there are no critical hits for this attack.

Those touching N'dii with a conductive metal weapon take N'dii's attack damage, but N'dii is also injured for that amount. Demon weapons will not damage N'dii, but take to their CONs N'dii's standard attack damage. N'dii is wardpacted against missiles. Composed of electrical energy, it is immune to poisons, fire, etc.

If a party makes it past N'dii but does not dispatch the demon, it remembers them and will not allow them to pass again, even if they now know the password.

**THE PIT OF JARUNEMERKE:** beyond N'dii's guardpost, the right-hand way can be seen to be mostly blocked by another cave-in. The adventurers can actually scramble over this and continue toward the treasure but, if they turn left, they find Jarunemerke where Nisadnemep's escape tunnel meets the sea.

Though as broad as before, this tunnel slopes down consistently, arriving at sea-level as it opens at a watery grotto — Jarunemerke's pit. Jarunemerke is here 70% of the time, floating in the clear, dark, crystalline waters. On sunny days a single shaft of sunlight enters through the roof a hundred feet overhead and strikes the shimmering

pool. From here on, the tunnel is underwater and pitch-black, taking half an hour to grope along, though Jarunemerke needs only three minutes to make the trip.

Metal items glint on a grotto shelf a few feet below the water surface: a sword with a ruby in the hilt worth 200 LB, and 5 SG in coins beside it. A Search through the sand uncovers a ring matching the sword; the ring has wrought in it the eight arrows of Chaos and has a nominal value of 75 LB.

### JARUNEMERKE

Jarunemerke is humanoid to the hips, and fishlike thereafter. He has short, downy hair on his head; his features and body are streamlined in a way alien to humans. Rather than being flesh-colored above the waist and silvery-gray below, Jarunemerke is uniformly dark blue-gray.

#### JARUNEMERKE, Immortal Merman and Nisadnemep's Victim

STR 18      CON 13      SIZ 14      INT 19      POW 13  
DEX 14      HP 15      Armor: 5-pt skin + Regeneration

weapon	attack	parry	damage
Narspear	89%	56%	1D8
Narsword	90%	78%	1D8
Kiss	100%	—	special

**SKILLS:** Call Sea Life 95%, Dodge 57%, First Aid 89%, Grow Sea Plant 75%, Hide 88%, Listen 70%, Music Lore 76%, Orate 70%, Persuade 95%, Speak Low Melnibonean 10%, Speak Merfolk 80%, Scent 56%, See 67%, Summon Undine 93%, Swim 100%.

Nisadnemep brought Jarunemerke to Nisadnemepuur as one of many prisoners, and performed magical experiments on the merman, attempting to unlock some of the secrets of demon regenerative powers. The sorcerer partially succeeded: Jarunemerke can regenerate his life at the rate of 1D6 hit points per combat round.

But the experiments had dismaying side-effects. Jarunemerke's saliva is a vector for a Chaotic disease, The Rot, which automatically infects the recipient who fails a CON x2 roll. The disease, once contracted, can be healed only by the intervention of a god; the recipient dies in CON months after contracting it. After a while, boils, tumors, and eruptions cover the victim's body.

Further, and alarmingly to Nisadnemep, Jarunemerke appeared to be immortal and invulnerable. This is not the case. Normal damage does regenerate, but demon weapons do their damage, and the mortal merman also can be killed by normal damage from fire (though that may be hard to apply). Severed limbs, head, etc., can grow into new Jarunemerkes of precisely the same characteristics and skills as the original merman — though this has never happened. The old limb is regenerated in CON hours; the new Jarunemerke awakens in CON days.

To control Jarunemerke, Nisadnemep arranged that the merman must constantly eat rotten flesh or suffer intense pain. Originally Jarunemerke ate of the corpses which Nisadnemep had thrown down the arena well; now the merman catches sea bass and has an undine lift him up the well with his catch, which he lays out to rot. When it is foul enough, he returns. During Nisadnemep's long reign over the island, the merman acquired a taste for humans; though friendly, temptation might cause him to finish off a wounded adventurer left with him for treatment and protection.

Jarunemerke understands only that he heals quickly, has lived a long time, was tortured horribly by Nisadnemep (whom he hated), and that he has an unnatural, despicable craving for rotten flesh. He is quite insane. At first, strangers frighten him; then he becomes overbearing toward them. He has not seen anyone since Lysansiptra. A male adventurer came about a century earlier, but Jarunemerke treacherously slew him and (later) ate him, because the man carried a pungent cheese in his pack.

**THE SECOND COLLAPSE:** from N'dii's guardpost, adventurers must crawl over the rubble from a second cave-in to go deeper into the volcano along the smooth tunnel. Call for Balance rolls not to dislodge minor rocks (1D3 damage to clumsy adventurers). Successful Scent rolls detect the fragrance of mangoes; if the adventurers use light sources with exposed flames, successful INT x2 rolls notice a draft here. The sunny outdoors is only about 40 feet overhead, though heavy jungle growth blocks stray light. About eight man hours of work could open a new entrance, either from inside or outside. Gamemaster's choice whether N'dii notices or acts upon this potential violation of its instructions.

**THE COUNCIL ROOM:** once clearing the second collapse, the council room is nearly a quarter of a mile down the smooth tunnel. Though the sandy floor and the coming-and-going footprints continue, now mangled pieces of armor and weapons can be found, enough that any adventurer systematically gathering them soon staggers under a heavy burden of indifferently-valuable war tools. The interior of the redoubt is unusually dry – bits of woven hangings portraying gruesome and savage scenes still cling to surfaces, and here and there an intact furniture leg emerges from the sand. Niches and notches for torches and sentries occur. The silence of the caves is absolute. All hints of the sea (except the sand) are gone.

The tunnel forks. The right-hand way leads to another intersection, in turn leading to the garrison hall or toward the throne room. The leftward way proceeds for little more than 100 feet, passing two small anterooms, one to either side of the tunnel, each eight feet square and utterly barren, even of debris.

After a few more feet, the tunnel opens quickly into the council room, a chamber about 100 feet long by 40 feet wide. Three broad steps lead down into it.

In the center of the room, as fresh as it was a thousand years ago, shines a 20-foot-long scale model of Nisadnemeppur as it existed before the overwhelming attack. Towers, splendid palaces, mighty fleets (judging by the docks and shipyards), and gigantic walls gleamed where now only beaches and jungles can be seen. Viewers understand that Nisadnemeppur was no petty sorcerer but a wizarding of daunting power and skill. What the adventurers know as glorious would have been unremarkable on Nisadnemeppur at its height. Founded magically, these wonderful creations were obliterated by yet-greater magics. Not a stone nor a foundation trench remains on the surface as evidence.

A successful roll of INT x3 or less on D100 or a successful Search roll leads an adventurer to notice small hinges cunningly inset in the volcano portion of the model. There, sections of the island model actually pull up and to the sides to reveal the tunnels and chambers which the adventurers are exploring. Glowing notations in High Melnibonean name each place: 15%+ High Melnibonean reliably translates the writing. A successful Make Map or Memorize roll gives the adventurers the complete layout of the redoubt as it exists, with the exceptions that collapses, traps, demons, etc., are unnoted. Two of the tunnels leading to the garrison hall have since collapsed – the adventurers have had to pass at least one such collapse if they entered the redoubt by land.

Apart from the apparently demon-protected map, only debris seems to litter the council hall. A thorough search of the hall takes two man-hours: the search turns up one valuable artifact, a small ivory casket the lid of which is inlaid with a cruel, realistically-rendered male face – a portrait of Nisadnemeppur himself. This casket is priceless to certain collectors. An uninformed collector still would pay 300 LB just for the craftsmanship.

*Though the way continues from this point, the narrative returns to the land-entrance antechamber, to examine the right-hand, or rough tunnel way.*

### The Rough Tunnel

The right-hand way from the antechamber is narrow and roughly-finished; both ceiling and floor are rocky and uneven. Attempting to run or to fight here causes stumbles, tumbles, fumbles, extinguished candles, and dropped loot. This tunnel is narrow enough that a single skillful swordsman could long delay any band of foes who lacked archers or Demon assistance.

**THE TRAPPED ROOM:** for 300 yards the tunnel is of rough stone. Then the way abruptly broadens, straightens, and smooths for 20 yards. With the benefit of light, a successful See or Search roll spots one torch bracket on each side of the chamber, spaced evenly at every other yard for the distance of the chamber: ten on the left side and nine on the right, with a space for a tenth. The builder of this area wanted it to be well-lit.

If the adventurers have a good light source – a hybzee scout or a shuttered lantern, perhaps with a reflector or a lens – then they can read the sign chiselled prominently into the stone at the far end of this area. Its large, white, High Melnibonean letters say, in effect:

***THIS AREA IS TRAPPED.  
PROCEED BY THE COLOR OF THE DAY.***

Anyone with 21% or better High Melnibonean translates this writing; those with less skill have the same translation problem as does the hybzee in the next paragraph.

The hybzee scout does not know High Melnibonean, nor can it function as a Demon of Knowledge to learn about this inscription without being instantly devoured by the island guardian. Carefully-worded inquiries about High Melnibonean vocabulary lets the hybzee correctly translate all but the word 'trapped' (*s'sool*): half of this word's meanings have to do with taxes, and in this context it appears most likely that *s'sool* means toll, or road tax. Even the incorrect translations should give adventurers pause.

A successful INT x2 roll grants an adventurer a perceptive idea. The adventurer turns and looks at the rock wall behind. Sure enough, there is an identical inscription just behind him or her, written so that people approaching from the other direction also would be warned.

Surely every adventurer recognizes this as a trapped chamber. The floor is made up of one-yard-square tile outlines covered with thick dust – six such tiles wide and 20 tiles long, totalling 120. If the adventurers clear away some of the dust, (sending a hybzee to blow away some by wing power, for instance), they see a simple pattern. From the land-entrance side of the chamber, the three

right-hand files are shiny black tiles, and the three left-hand files are shiny white tiles. Thus all 60 tiles on the right-hand side of the long chamber are black, and all 60 tiles on the left-hand side of the chamber are white. There are cracks between each tile, and no sign of grout or concrete. Thin wires hang randomly from the ceiling.

The two side walls of the chamber are of stone smoothly polished to four yards above the floor; the planes of the walls are broken only by the 19 torch brackets. The ceiling is rougher but essentially a flat surface.

From the cave entrance-side of the chamber, the iron brackets emerge above the centers of the second, fourth, sixth, etc., tiles — the even-numbered tiles if the tiles of a file were consecutively numbered. The brackets are iron arms sticking out at 15 degrees inclination from the wall; a torch can be slipped into the 1.5-inch metal ring at the end of each arm. A successful See or INT x3 or less roll reveals that the fourth bracket on the right-hand or black-tile side is missing. Below the bracket's position are clumps of dust thicker than at other spots on the floor — hundreds of years ago, an adventurer penetrated this far and here was crushed to death. (Even his jewelry was squashed: the remnants of a silver bracelet and a ring are worth 25 LB.)

Wearing armor, it takes an adventurer about five seconds to run across this treacherous footing to the other end of the trapped area. If the runner receives a failed Balance roll, he falls in the slick dust of the floor and doesn't start to run again until getting a successful Balance roll. His player may attempt such a roll once every melee round; the runner may attempt no other action than rising.

**THE TRAPS:** the tiles are the tops of magically-powered pistons, which move upwards or downwards instantaneously to a predetermined distance. A control can make them all move up to completely block the tunnel, or lower them all to create a pit. Any actual piston movement provokes a thick, blackish cloud of dust; collapse of the floor stirs up a cloud which takes four melee rounds to see through.

(1) In the first mode, single tiles can be triggered to smash upward independently by the exertion of the equivalent of SIZ 3 (30 pounds) of force on any bracket: the tile beneath the disturbed bracket raises and smashes its passenger against the stone ceiling, the piston itself stopping three inches from the ceiling. Brushing against a randomly-space wire hanging down triggers the same abrupt response. The rise of the piston is so fast that there is no time to jump away from, dodge, or otherwise evade the situation. If two or more adventurers are standing beneath the bracket, the one receiving the highest POW x5 roll is the one squashed. The others manage to fall away onto adjacent tiles, and take 1D3 incidental damage.

The force of the piston's acceleration harms the unlucky adventurer for 1D6+2 points of damage, whether or not he or she wears Demon Armor. If the adventurer does not wear Demon Armor, he or she sustains 40 points of damage. If wearing full Demon Armor, the actual blow against the ceiling is completely negated.

After smashing its passenger against the ceiling, the piston returns to rest with its top at floor level, forming one of the 'tiles.' The upward sweep of the floor incidentally destroys another bracket leaving 18. Be sure to describe the gory effects of this event.

(2) When the caves were held by Nisadnemep, the floor was set each day to a color of the day, either black or white. The third tile stepped on, to the equivalent of 30 pounds of force, cause that entire color to fall away instantaneously for a distance of 36 feet, doing 4D6 falling damage to each adventurer suffering the drop. Adventurers sustaining major wounds continue to lose hit points until receiving aid. Armor, even Demon Armor, is no protection against such a fall. After one minute the piston or pistons rise instantaneously to their floor-level positions, incidentally doing another 1D6+2 points damage to any surviving passengers.

The 3- x20-yard long, 12-yard-deep pit so formed is in area the size of one color of tile. Its walls are glassy-smooth, impossible to climb. A hybzee or a Demon of Transport comes in handy.

No one knows the last color of the day; roll for it randomly. Once tripped, the floor thereafter is randomly tripped — roll for the trigger-color once every minute thereafter for the next hour. After that, the floor resets to the specified color of the day (whatever color the game-master originally rolled).

At the interior end of the trap, just around an outcrop of rock, are two large levers — one black, one white. Each has three positions (up, down, center), commanding that color of piston to be lowered like a pit, raised like an impenetrable wall, or to create the passage which the adventurers see. Each lever requires STR 5 to adjust it to another position.

At the center position, there is a horizontal slot or notch into which the arm can be pushed; that neutralizes both triggers and makes that color floor completely safe for passage. At present each lever is in a center position, but neither is in a safety notch. The floor is randomly armed.

Beyond the outcrop and the levers, two stone benches have been cut out of the rock. Perhaps guards rested here. Beyond them, the rough tunnel resumes.

**THE THIRD COLLAPSE:** about 100 yards along this interior section of the rough tunnel, a tunnel branches to the left but ends in a few feet at a wall of rubble. This was another way into the garrison hall and armory, which also was destroyed in the final assault. Its 50 yards of stone could be cleared, however, in 20 man-days of work.

Beyond the collapse, the rough tunnel continues for about 120 yards, then stops at the gate to Nisadnemep's intelligence section — his torture chambers.

**THE TORTURE CHAMBERS:** this large space, almost like an amphitheater, is behind a narrow, solid-iron door bearing the sign of Chaos. The iron door itself is of STR 65; the demon bound to the front of it is Raltos.

**RALTOS, Bound Demon of Protection**

STR 20	CON 70	SIZ 16	INT 12	POW 18
DEX 4	HP 74	Armor: special		

Raltos has no attack, but it has enough INT to instantly shape-shift to appear to be specific kinds of defensive barrier. Gamemasters may be able to use that ability to advantage, depending upon the adventurers' attacks.

Raltos can talk, and courteously allows passage of the adventurers from either direction if they tell him, in High Melnibonean, "Open in the name of mighty Nisadnemep!"

The 'torture chambers' are essentially one large, oddly-shaped room about 50 yards wide and long, subdivided by stone partitions which rise only seven feet from the floor; the ceiling is another five feet higher, and unsupported by internal walls or pillars. Athletic adventurers can, if they wish, pull themselves onto the maze of partitions and — crouching — walk along the foot-wide tops. There are ten modular rooms inside this large room. Divide the space randomly or give it a pattern. Each of the sub-rooms contains a stone table with attached iron manacles and shackles. A human femur and human bone fragments, belt buckles, needles with wooden handles, branding irons, grommets, lengths of rope which crumble at the touch, odd links of chain, bits of fabric, and so forth (worth 5 LB total) litter the floor.

Drudges, Nisadnemep's inquisitors found their interrogative tasks merely distasteful. After work, they would tell each other, "If I didn't do it to them, they'd do it to me," and all of them would nod and drink themselves into stupors. Passionless, lacking great cruelty or profound guilt, all traces of them have vanished. Their final victim, however, still keeps a ghostly vigil here: Braxasz (*BRAXS-az*), a valiant adventurer captured during the last days of Nisadnemep's tenure, lingers here bound by grief of dying and of envy for the living. His presence lurks in the fourth modular room which the adventurers enter. The only clue to his presence is one brass button on the floor. The button is embossed with the single arrow of Law. Just before he attacks, Braxasz's glowing, ectoplasmic body becomes visible, and he seems to clutch his target, though the target feels nothing but fear. No weapon or ordinary demon has effect upon Braxasz, nor does Braxasz or other ghosts have effect upon demons, though demons can see the ectoplasmic forms once a ghost manifests.

With POW 19, Braxasz the ghosts attacks the POW of the first adventurer entering the room, using a POW against POW attack to be resolved on the resistance table. If the attack succeeds, Braxasz absorbs 1D3 POW from the adventurer. If the attack fails, Braxasz will not attack that adventurer again. Braxasz then attacks the next adventurer to enter the room, but with his new POW (if it has changed). He continues the attacks until defeated by all the adventurers, or until he has drained all their POW. The attacks are made one per melee round as long as any being remains anywhere in the entire torture chambers complex. The ghost will not leave the torture chambers to pursue fleeing adventurers. After 1D4+2 melee rounds, Braxasz snaps back to ground state, returning to the chamber where he died, there to brood until someone else disturbs his presence.

An Agent or Priest of Law can, if he thinks about it, ask Braxasz to leave the Young Kingdoms plan and to proceed to Paradise, as his work is done here. Braxasz will promptly go.

The four entrances to the torture chambers lead, respectively, to the garrison hall and armory, to the temple of Pyaray, to the cell block, and back down the rough tunnel to the outside.

**THE CELLS:** the tunnel to the cell block is four yards wide, of smooth stone.

Nisadnemep's drudges drew their stock from a set of 400 holding pens and long-term cells, each a rectangle approximately 5 x8 feet square. Regular cells can be distinguished by the tiny holes in the floors for sanitary needs. Four long corridors lead from an administrative area nearest to the torture chambers; on each side of each corridor 50 identical cells are found, numbered consecutively 1-400. Most are locked; through the peephole for each cell, human or humanoid bones may be seen if some way can be found to light the interiors. There is nothing of value in the cell block, but it would take 15 man-hours to search the place well enough to be sure of that.

A display board schematic at the right of the cell block entrance shows all the cells, with the last occupants' names scrawled in High Melnibonean. In cell 88, one Braxasz is listed. A jumble of keys is piled below the schematic; each numbered key opens only the corresponding cell.

All of the cells are closed by solid iron doors (STR 60) broken but by a peephole which opens from the outside only. The door hinges are on the outside. An iron bar and a padlock secures each cell.

**TEMPLE TO PYARAY:** a long, narrow, smooth tunnel two yards wide leads to the wide, barren chamber (about 120 feet square) in which Nisadnemep offered sacrifices to Pyaray, and there communed with the Chaos Lord. This rectangular room was hand-carved from the lava. In its center is a fat supporting column of limestone, which Nisadnemep had brought from a cave in Pan Tang. Selected for its color (red, violet, puce, and jaundice yellow), the column is decorated with tentacular and octopoidal motifs, and numerous Pyarayan designs.

The column acts as a powerful antenna which channels life-force to Pyaray, and any Chaos Priest or Agent will immediately understand that functioning. Agenthood to Pyaray can be attempted here with the proper POW sacrifices. Anyone killed in this room has all his or her POW drawn into Pyaray; the twitching corpse crumbles into dust in 1D3 melee rounds after death.

One can reach the Pyaray temple either directly from the torture chambers or by means of a side tunnel connecting with the tunnel from the torture chambers to the garrison hall and armory.

**THE GARRISON HALL and ARMORY:** this enormous hall is some 1600 feet long, 400 feet wide and 50 feet high. A series of enormous stone pillars bear the weight of the roof. Originally, wooden floors and walls within this shell divided the hall space into a city-sized warren of rooms, streets, bridges, offices, and pleasure nooks, all permeated by the reek and bustle of Nisadnemep's riggings for war. At the outer end of the great hall, near the tunnel leading to the arena (the first collapse), were stored the hundreds of chests and racks holding the standard-issue crossbows, swords, armor, etc., with which Nisadnemep's army could be equipped on short notice. Perhaps the sorcerer intended that the force deploy upon the island; perhaps those who stayed here were merely an elite fraction of Nisadnemep's total might, here to guard him and make him glorious.

The present garrison hall and armory is a different vision. The great waves which swept the island clean also tore into the volcanic redoubt, breaking through at what

is shown on the plan as the third collapse, but almost surely came in at the many minor ducts and vents necessary to the facility. Water flow through the main hole amounted to 157,000 cubic feet per second – enough to completely fill the lava caves complex in about four minutes, and undating everything but the upper levels of the garrison hall in less than two minutes. The nominal velocity of the inflow was 60 miles per hour, but the compressive effects of the tunnels also led to air shocks of massive power and local water velocities of dizzying speed. Sleeping inhabitants, Nisadnemep among them, never had a chance to wake. Only in the garrison hall can the adventurers see the scale of the assault.

The two open tunnels to the garrison hall are six yards wide, opening abruptly into the vast chamber. No hybzee light nor any lantern or torch light or any combination of them can show the farther side, or either end. The adventurers receive an impression of chill darkness and of ominous power – nothing more. They can see the ceiling if they try, and can make out one or more of the 20-foot-thick rough-lava pillars which support the roof.

The black lava floor is mostly smooth and featureless; an occasional depression contains sand and tiny chips of wood. The entire floor has a slight slope toward the arena (or southeast) corner, to aid in drainage. Searches toward the northwest corner yield nothing but a plain, narrow, completely unmagical gold ring wedged in a crack. The ring is worth 20 LB.

Far across the hall, an identically-wide tunnel leads to the smooth south or main tunnel of the complex, in turn leading either out of the caves or to Nisadnemep's command/throne area.

If the adventurers go toward the southeast end of the hall, they begin to notice larger, more frequent lengths and chunks of wood (which disintegrate upon contact). There are also circular depressions 10-50 feet across which the swirling flood scoured from the rock: these especially are filled with sand and wood chunks. Occasionally a small piece of metal or pottery can be found – an ancient coin, a clasp, a dagger, a cup handle. The *Stormbringer* (p.17, first edition) price list offers ideas for what to find, but nothing should be very valuable. Give every adventurer at least a 50% chance to find some small item. Nisadnemep's men frequently wore tunics with brass shoulder buttons embossed with a stylized fist; the adventurers often find these nice souvenirs.

When the party comes within 400 feet of the southeast end of the hall, the blackness before them begins to be broken by faint lights which bob and shift. The forms are so feeble, so indistinct, and there are so many that even a successful INT x3 or less roll yields guesses like 'magical fire' or 'auroral display' – both wrong. If the adventurer already has encountered a ghost (Braxasz, for instance) and receives a successful INT x½ or less roll on D100, he or she guesses the truth: shimmering not far ahead, thousands of ghosts lurk in the endless night of the garrison hall and armory.

Straasha's attack obliterated the soldiers and structures of the garrison hall. When the waters swept out, everything passed through or headed toward the drain tunnel (the first collapse) at the southeast corner of the hall. When the tunnel collapsed, the waters drained more slowly. A great mound of refuse, corpses, artifacts, armor, and treasure

## ABOUT GHOSTS

Any living thing born upon the plane of the Young Kingdoms and which may be said to be natural to that plane may become a ghost upon death, if conditions are proper. These conditions are mysterious and possibly random; no sorcerer knows how to or has ever been able to deliberately create a ghost. Gamemasters should reserve ghosts entirely for their own uses.

A ghost is the soul of a mortal being, always by definition one possessing INT, which is inexplicably caught to the plane of the Young Kingdoms – usually the soul is reluctant to leave the plane for powerful or obsessive emotional reasons.

All ghosts have two characteristics, INT and POW, and the entities may manipulate those characteristics in typical ways – becoming visible, moving or throwing an object, making a sound of distress, becoming a duplicate of the living person as he or she was just before dying, and so forth.

Some ghosts merely repeat the same action or scene over and over; others are more malignant, vengefully attacking the living who later happen to intrude. All ghosts are, by normal standards, insane.

A ghost who attacks mortals usually attacks either by matching its POW against the target's POW on the resistance table, or by using its POW to physically hurl objects at a target: the formula is 1 SIZ and 2 yards distance for expenditure of 1 temporary POW point.

At least three types of ghost are known. The haunt, which is bound within and activates an entire structure, is not considered here. The ordinary ghost differs from the wraith mainly in that it can be exorcised or dispelled by an Agent or Priest of its alignment. The wraith is normally a soul bound to a spot by a god, and its POW must be destroyed before it is vanquished from the Young Kingdoms plane. The ordinary ghost materializes just before it attacks, usually being distinctly bluish in color; the wraith may be invisible or may always be visible as a whitish transparent form. Characteristically, electrical discharge occurs between the ground and the wraith, or between grouped wraiths.

was left piled against the now-closed exit, in a dike or barrow 40 feet high and 200 feet long. There is more than 200,000 LB in jewelry, coins, usable armor, and curios which could not pass on into Straasha's domain. Unfortunately, more than 2000 ghosts defend this wealth, condemned by Pyaray to hold what they can of this plane even in death. These ghosts, unlike Braxasz's, cannot be commanded to depart, for their god has commanded that they stay.

At 150 feet from the nearest ghost, the ghostly nature of the wavering lights becomes clear. Wise adventurers retreat before such a spectacle. Any adventurer receiving a successful INT x2 or less roll on D100 (and having encountered Braxasz) notices that these ghosts are whiter in color than the blue-white Braxasz, and that occasional electrical discharges pass between the ghosts, or the ghosts and the barrow. Knowledgeable sorcerers among the adventurers may be able to correctly identify these ghosts as a special sub-type, wraiths.

If the adventurers press forward, a single wraith attacks the lead adventurer when the party closes to within 100 feet of the barrow. If the attack is fended off, or if the group still presses forward, ten wraiths attack when the distance narrows to 50 feet, and 100 attack at ten feet. An adventurer may suffer multiple attacks in a melee round. Each attacker has 2D6+6 POW, each wraith attacks

once per melee round on the resistance table against the POW of the target, and loses or gains 1D3 POW with each failed or successful attack. A wraith continues to attack so long as it has POW, so long as the target lives, and so long as the intruders are within 100 feet of the barrow.

These wraiths will not attack Priests of or Agents of Pyaray, but such worthies receive mental instructions to leave this holy hall at once.

If the adventurers have a hybzee, they can send it forward to inspect the situation, staying themselves at a safe distance. The hybzee flies without trouble through the wraiths and inspects the mound at its leisure. It brings back tales of thousands of ghosts, crumbling skeletons, intact demon armor, coins and jewels embedded in rotten wood, crumpled armor, broken spears, and bent swords. It specially mentions a valuable-looking emerald-and-gold brooch. Have the hybzee assure the adventurers that great treasures are everywhere in the rubble.

If the adventurers instruct the little demon to bring back anything valuable, it does its best, but the first time that it actually moves a valuable, the poltergeists among the wraiths begin to hurl old bones and rocks at it. The hybzee screeches loudly and races back to the adventurers, who in turn begin to be pelted with valueless detritus. Escalate the size and damage-potential of the hurled objects so that it is obvious to all the players that if the adventurers do not move away, soon boulders will be flying at them.

How the adventurers solve this tempting problem could be an evening's fun in itself, or a good reason to return to Nisadnemepuur at some later time. A shipload of valuables and merchandisable metals awaits the solution.

## The Inner Chambers

*Now the narrative returns to the smooth or south tunnel, just beyond the fork leading to the garrison hall.*

As they move down the smooth tunnel, on the left side of it the adventurers see a mangled iron door, open and unclosable, bearing the sign of Chaos. Through it, a long corridor leads from the smooth tunnel to another plain iron door bearing the Chaos rune. This door too has been smashed aside and lays like crumpled paper. This was the delivery entrance to Nisadnemep's work area; the room within was his lab storage space. This room, about 100 feet square, has been systematically emptied. Lysansiptra did it — the few intact pieces which she found here considerably increased her magical powers.

She missed one item. Hanging on the back of the broken demon door is a pair of plain black leather gloves linked with a four-foot length of braided leather. A Chaos rune decorates each glove. These are demon gloves: they increase any wearer's hand dexterity to DEX 20, and his or her total hand strength to STR 40, whether one or both gloves are used — enough strength to effortlessly snap the neck of or to crush the hand of an opponent. The wearer must realize that the increase in strength is purely of hand strength — the wearer cannot punch or lift or tear with greater power, only grip more strongly: for example, the wearer could easily catch a comrade falling past him, but would have normal difficulty pulling up the fellow adventurer to safety.

Similarly, the increase in Dexterity purely involves such tasks as shuffling cards, catching small objects, calligraphy, and picking locks. The gloves do not improve any combat skill.

### RORK, Demon of Combat Bound to Demon Gloves

STR 40	CON 25	SIZ 1	INT 1	POW 12
DEX 20	HP 18	Armor: special		
<i>weapon</i>	<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>	
Hand Squeeze	100%	•	3D6+12	

*\*These gloves can be used to parry weapons, and of course take damage only from demon weapons. The wearer's base chance to parry with them is his Agility ability (see first edition Stormbringer, section 2.5.4). The parry with these gloves can be improved like any skill.*

Across the room from the smashed outer door exists an intact iron door, closed. This awesome demon door was never broken; what baffled the power of sorcerers, an army, and (obliquely) of a god probably cannot be penetrated by pilfering adventurers. Kraajzeesh (*kraw-JEESH*) the Great is the bound demon. It admits only Nisadnemep, whom it hasn't seen in a while.

### KRAAJZEESH THE GREAT, Demon of Protection

STR 100	CON 120	SIZ 17	INT 8	POW 23
DEX 0	HP 125	Armor: Regeneration		

If the adventurers ignore the crumpled outer door which opens into the main tunnel, they arrive at the ceremonial forechamber after a few more yards.

**THE FORECHAMBER:** when Nisadnemep held court, here were gathered his satraps, cronies, henchmen, noble hostages, and visitors whom he wished to impress. The stone walls, floor, ceiling, and pillars of this great room (100 by 400 feet) are every inch carved and embossed with the cruel and awesome feats of Nisadnemep. Here the wizard sinks a fleet, there he smashes a city, over there he receives chests of gold in tribute. Originally gold leaf covered these surfaces, but that was torn away. About 50 small petals of gold can be found in the deep sands covering the floor, but little trace remains of the cloth-of-gold hangings, three-inch-thick rugs, the ebony kneeling posts where captives swore fealty or died, and so forth.

**THE DUAL PASSAGES:** facing the throne room a right and a left passage lead to it from the forechamber. The dual passages are another example of Nisadnemep's sense of humor. When court was called, visitors were allowed to proceed through the right-hand passage, to which is bound a gate demon. Walkers are convinced that the throne room is about a hundred feet ahead but, as they walk, their destination seems to get further away. (In fact, the faster they walk, the more quickly their objective recedes.) Then they experience a sensation something like a blink, and find themselves in the archway of the passage at the edge of the forechamber, facing away from the throne room.

Nisadnemep would laugh at consternated visitors, shouting pompously that only those of the left-hand path, the darker way, could reach Nisadnemep the Mighty. When leaving the throne room, the same magical condition obtained, but this time only the right-hand way could lead from Nisadnemep — the left-hand way led back to him. Therefore, standing in the forechamber, only the left-hand passage gains the throne room; standing in the

throne room, only the right-hand passage allows exit. Consequently Nisadnemep needed only one demon for the effect.

**THRONE ROOM:** this hall is about 130 x170 feet, with ceilings 40 feet high – an area about half-again as large as the forechamber. This impressive space has excellent acoustics. The sculpted walls piously depict the depredations of Pyaray: many of the monsters, victims, etc., have been individually defaced and broken, but the writhing mass of forms still is, as a whole, horrible to look upon. The inlaid marble floor is mostly covered with drifts of sand, in which the adventurers find a seashell or two, an ancient starfish, and other hints of Straasha's sway. Two rows of widely-spaced, undecorated columns march west to east, trisecting the room.

At the western end of the room sits the remaining furnishings of the throne room: a pink marble dais surmounted by a superbly-carved armless throne of gray-green jade. The throne weighs about a ton, and would be worth 10,000 +1D10 x1000 LB to a collector. It is anchored to the dais by four iron bolts, each of STR 35. All is protected by a Rune of Preservation and by a Demon of Protection (see below).

The throne is magical in several ways. An important aspect is that an occupant who concentrates on the High Melnibonean word for 'vanish' becomes invisible for one hour, a useful capacity for an ambitious, back-stabbing sorcerer. The person rendered invisible may move about and still remain visible. Of the pirates, only Zillah has ever sat here, and only she (through luck) knows this secret of the chair – even Lysansiptra does not. Those who become so-invisible can see normally, but can also see anyone else who is currently invisible. Conceivably a group of people could sit one after the other on the throne and become invisible. A person rendered so-invisible can become visible at any time by concentrating on the High Melnibonean word for 'reappear.'

A magnificent crown has been casually thrown over a finial on the back of the throne. The crown is of solid gold. Upraised fists form the crenelations rising above the temple band; 99 large, excellent diamonds decorate it. The crown might be worth up to a million LBs, but only Nisadnemep can move it or remove it from the finial.

A powerful Demon of Protection guards both the throne and the crown, and a Rune of Preservation (see the "Runes of Rathdor" article elsewhere in this book) guards the Demon of Protection. The rune is now very weak, with a current POW of only 7687 points – in slightly more than 21 years, the rune protection completely dissolves, and then only the demon Gortek will defend this nearly priceless treasure.

#### **GORTEK, Demon of Protection**

STR 0      CON 95      SIZ 12      INT 8      POW 28  
DEX 0      HP 95

A successful INT x1 roll or a successful Search roll at half or less of actual percentage causes an adventurer to examine the dais around the throne; he or she spies sand in the cracks around one of the marble blocks. The block, an exact cube of marble one foot square, can be wedged out with a knife. Beneath the cube is a recessed handle of bronze. Pulling on the handle (the attached marble weighs

70 pounds) lifts a second marble cube identical to the first. When the second cube is freed, it begins to glow with a powerful orange color, pulsing in intensity like the effect of a 20th century warning light, but remaining cool to the touch.

Beneath the second cube can be seen a simple iron disk with the sign of Chaos embossed upon it, attached to a third marble surface. To this disk is bound Rraalkraag (*RAWL-krawg*), the great spirit ward who has defended Nisadnemepuur for 27 centuries. If the disk is destroyed or is moved from this location, Rraalkraag goes free and Demons of Knowledge can safely investigate the island.

#### **RRAALKRAAG, Greater Demon of Protection (Spirit Ward)**

INT 18      POW 115      (in 22-point Chaos disk)

The glowing marble cube settles to a steady shine in about 15 minutes, giving off about as much light as a 100-watt lightbulb. It makes a fine light source if the adventurers want to tote around a 70-pound flashlight. The cube will shine constantly for 10+1D20 years.

At the west ends of the north and south walls, two-yard-wide passages lead, respectively, to Nisadnemep's treasure room and to his personal chamber and laboratory.

**THE TREASURE ROOM:** those who ransacked and destroyed Nisadnemep's redoubt took care to clean out the treasury. When the adventurers reach the doorway, the floor beyond will be depressingly bare of valuables. But Lysansiptra, for reasons of her own, specified that the pirates place all recovered treasure here, and this they have done. Zillah's gnome dumbly carries in everything the pirates recover, dropping it against the far wall. That wall is nearly 100 feet from the door; with a good lantern, the adventurers might spot the gleam of metal without going inside the room. A complete listing of the treasure room contents is given on the next page; it is unnecessary that players know of everything in the hoard.

#### **Lysansiptra's Precautions: The Spirit Ward**

Lysansiptra specified the old treasury for two good reasons. First, it is the most secure point on the island. And secondly, to make the room even more secure, Ragaz, one of her lieutenants, has bound there a spirit ward to guard the contents of the room. It is bound to an iron Chaos nail which Ragaz has carefully tapped into the ceiling. Only a thorough examination of the ceiling can locate the nail. Elifans, the spirit ward, has simple instructions: (1) admit all into this room, but let no items of significant value be taken out until Ragaz so commands; (2) allow elementals and living creatures passage in and out so long as the first rule is not violated; (3) dissuade or kill anyone or anything violating these rules.

Elifans' POW will be matched against the POW of the summoner in case an elemental is used in an attempt to bring out the treasure room loot.

#### **ELIFANS, Greater Demon of Protection (Spirit Ward)**

INT 24      POW 90      (in 7-point Chaos nail)

Naturally, Elifans does not manifest when anyone goes into the treasure room, or even when they make a selection of the treasure – only when they try to carry out loot.

## THE TREASURE

13,640 LB in coin  
302 SS in coin  
100 LS in coin  
61 SM in coin  
13 LG in coin  
8 MS in coin  
21 daggers  
3 target shields  
3 Filkharian pikes  
2 Lormyrian axes  
40 shortwords  
10 scimitars  
2 suits of full-plate armor (SIZs 13 and 15)  
a silver service worth 3200 LB  
170 carats of uncut emeralds  
4 small jade statuettes of Chaos gods  
1 5-carat cut sapphire  
14 iron kettles (various sizes)  
237 bronze pins and buttons  
21 bronze belt buckles  
19 ceramic oil lamps  
11 fish hooks  
3 iron anchors (SIZs 26, 42, and 55)  
5 amphorae of fine wine (full and sealed)  
24 marlinespikes  
2 canvas awls  
1 silver goblet worth 50 LB  
5 horseshoes  
1159 nails of various sizes and metals  
18 bronze hand mirrors  
5 glazed bowls, all chipped  
1 iron triangle, with loops for wall-mounting

### Magical Items

1 aluminum fan with 12 sylphs bound to it  
1 set of virtuous leather armor (POW 14, SIZ 11)  
1 Demon Battleaxe (GLEMEN'L: STR 40, CON 22, INT 12, POW 18 doing 1D8+2+4D6 damage)  
1 gold figurine of a cat, attached to a gold chain (gold is worth 187 LB): a Demon of Knowledge is bound to the charm  
1 spyglass of eastern workmanship (6X optics) to which a 22-point Demon of Desire has been bound

*None of the magic items have been tested or studied by the pirates.*

In that case, in a penetrating voice, invisible Elifans threatens, "Take no thing of value, mortals; be gone from this warded place." If the adventurers decide to fight, Elifans casts a magic illusion causing any Demon Armor or Demon Weapon brought in by the adventurers to appear to whisper to their owners, "Beware, master! This is a great power threatening us! Risk us not!" (This is true, though the bound demons are in no danger.) Roll Elifans' INT separately against each adventurer's INT, and resolve the combat on the resistance table. Adventurers winning the contest can question their weapons to deduce the truth.

If the adventurers fight anyway, then the fight is POW against POW, but the adventurers' POW is added together and forms a single defending value. Even a powerful band of adventurers stands a reasonable chance of losing. If they lose, they die on the spot: make sure that the players understand the situation and are willing to gamble. If the adventurers win, the ward dies and each adventurer picks up 1D4 permanent POW as well as the loot.

If the adventurers decide to put down the treasure and retreat, Elifans stops them. "O mortals, you have done wisely, yet you may not remove aught of value, for I am so charged. Your weapons, your armor, your rings, your coins you must leave to me." Again, the demon weapons seem to cringe and whine if the illusion has not been penetrated, apparently backing up Elifans' demands.

If the adventurers divest themselves of their valuables and try to go out, Elifans stops them once more. "O mortals, gladly I let you live, yet if you would leave alive, your clothes as well you must leave." If the adventurers agree to be completely fleeced, Elifans lets them go.

In fact, the adventurers, just like anyone else, may come and go as often as they like, with the condition that, each time they go, that they go as bare as they were born.

The treasure room is also reachable by Lysansiptra's Gateway Opener. Nisadnemepuur isn't a reachable destination for Demons of Transport so long as Rraalkraag eats every demon who tries to find out anything about the island — including where it is and where one might land. Lysansiptra, however, has been to Nisadnemepuur and has been able to telepathically transfer her knowledge of the treasure room location to Felkrish, her bound Gateway Opener.

## GATE TRAVEL

Lysansiptra prefers interplanar travel for covering long distances on the Young Kingdoms plane. Exhaustive study of the relations of the Infinite Planes allows her (but not tyro adventurers) to know where and on what plane to gate to in order to be able to return to the Young Kingdoms at or near the desired place. She, her companions, guards, and slaves stroll through Felkrish's gate to the appropriate plane, wait (rarely more than a day — they'll have a picnic or camp overnight) for propitious alignment, and return.

Adventurers who wish to learn this technique should be prepared for 10+1D100 years of study and experimentation: Lysansiptra, intelligent and always lucky, needed to spend only 18 years before she achieved practical interplanar travel. Adventurers intent upon random experimentation have 1D100 days to wait between each transit as well as random success and failure in summoning Gateway Openers.

Though sometimes interplanar difficulties cause other manifestations, for the most part gates appear as an octagonal doorway edged subtly with blue fire, but through which one can easily see or step into the contacted plane.

Gates usually appear with a slight pop! and frequently smell of ozone. Anything can pass through a gate so long as it is less in SIZ than the Opener's POW. A gate can stay open for minutes equal to the demon's POW, though the demon can reestablish the contact at a chance of its POW x3%, and with an expenditure of 1 point of temporary POW.

**THE ALARM:** if Elifans dies, then Lysansiptra's lieutenant (Ragaz the Reckless) awakes before dawn convinced that his demon no longer exists. Since his leader trusts him, she assembles a war band and departs for the island. They reach Nisadnemepuur 1D4 hours after sunrise, coming through the gate in the treasure room, and scouting and securing their way down both the smooth and the rough tunnels. They'll aim to recover the treasure and to eliminate or come to terms with the apparently-powerful force which destroyed Elifans. If the adventurers have had an easy time of it, turn loose Lysansiptra and her cut-throats on them; if they've had a difficult time, maybe the

surprise attack should be weaker, or maybe come just too late for anything but pursuit.

Since there's no telling in advance, gamemasters will find Lysansiptra and her band in the statistics section at the end of this adventure.

### The Rooms to the Left

**NISADNEMEP'S CHAMBER:** facing the throne in the throne room and then turning left brings the adventurers to a 20-foot-wide corridor lined with guard niches. This way leads to Nisadnemep's private chamber, 85 x 130 feet, a single room larger than a half-dozen ordinary houses. Befitting this intimate space, the ceilings are a mere 22 feet high.

As in other parts of the redoubt, most of the glories housed here either were swept away or carted off. The south wall once bore a gigantic fresco of the powerful mage, but what water did not ruin was destroyed by the swords and warhammers of Sadric's inspection party. A swimming pool is filled mostly with sand. Several marble slabs, apparently tabletops, lie broken on the marble floor. A mound of refuse lays in the southeast corner of the room — more crumbling wood and fabric.

An adventurer sifting through the sand of the swimming pool finds one extraordinary object: when some sand is pushed aside, something tiny leaps up out of it to a few feet, lays quietly for about a melee round, then hops again and again randomly. The adventurer can easily catch it and hold it still, though it will twitch 4-5 times a minute. A successful First Aid or INT x4 roll identifies the object as a portion of a human fingerbone, probably the tip section of the left forefinger. Though there is no way to learn this unless Rraalkraag has been freed or until the adventurers leave the island, but this chunk of bone is all that remains of great Nisadnemep, rival to emperors and gods, and of his awesome powers. Nisadnemep enjoyed casting powerful energies through this digit, and it retains enough energy yet to make it leap like a jumping bean. As a curio, some rich idiot might be willing to pay a great deal for it. The bone might at least supply a colorful curse for the adventurers — "By the fingerbone of Nisadnemep!" and so forth.

Lysansiptra also found this thing, but she was so lonely and the futility of effort it seemed to symbolize was so powerful to her that she threw sand on the thing and fled the chamber, never entering the lab at all.

**THE LAB:** a narrow, featureless, 50-foot corridor leads to the lab from Nisadnemep's chamber. Intervening doors at either end of the corridor have been ripped from their hinges and lie mangled on the floor. The adventurers have to walk over the wreckage to enter and exit the corridor. As they do, the heavy metal shifts and grinds loudly, and the noises make loud echoes.

The lab is 135 feet square — not much smaller than the great throne room. Six 100-foot-long obsidian tables still remain in place. These were the work surfaces upon which Nisadnemep achieved so many of his wonders. On the walls, a stone frieze of a wyrm nearly encircles the room; on the ceiling is a large sunburst of a multi-limbed creature something like an octopus.

As elsewhere in the redoubt, Straasha's cleansing waters swept away most of what was valuable and destroyed

nearly all of the rest. Adventurers receiving successful POW x2 or less roll on 1D100 find a random small item. Use the nearby bauble table, or make up your own.

### NISADNEMEP'S BAUBLES

#### 1D6 resulting find

- 1 a small fisherman's lead weight, ordinary except that half of it has been turned into gold through Nisadnemep's alchemy.
- 2 a white marble which rolls up an incline (gathering speed to the top) but which will not roll down.
- 3 a hand mirror reflecting light left for right, so that adventurers see themselves as others see them.
- 4 a bronze cup which, when upright, refills itself with vinegar from nowhere (on its side, a steady trickle comes out forever).
- 5 a narrow, foot-long roll of a flexible substance upon which words can be written and erased by thought.
- 6 a black rose which never decays, and whose scent so allures that while wearing it an adventurer increases his or her CHA by 1 point.

The far exit is the other side of the demon door which the adventurers may have encountered earlier; they are not likely to penetrate it or want to if their Make Map skills are sharp.

**OGOON:** when the adventurers turn to leave the lab, a voice exclaims, "O please do not go, mortals! I have so enjoyed watching you and hearing you."

The voice comes from above. When the adventurers lift their lights, they see that the whole 100-foot width of the creature decorating the ceiling has begun to stir and writhe in a faintly ominous way. If the adventurers attack, or if they bolt from the room (30% chance the centipus reverts to old habits and attacks), then a straight-forward fight occurs.

If they parley, Ogoon the centipus, an entity from Dark Hell, tells them that Nisadnemep bound him here with certain instructions which have made Ogoon's life very difficult. Nisadnemep said merely, "I charge you to protect me as I require," and hung Ogoon on the ceiling. Well, Ogoon made sure to suck away poisonous gases and such, that he caught the sorcerer or the sorcerer's flask after he tripped but before he fell, etc. — easy feats for a denizen of Dark Hell — but when Straasha attacked so successfully, Ogoon began to believe that Nisadnemep actually wanted to lose, and so Ogoon did nothing to oppose the assault. "No insult intended," he says, "but you mortals are very hard to understand. You never say what you think you say." When Nisadnemep died, Ogoon imagined that he would be unbound and could return to Dark Hell.

Nothing so simple happened. Ogoon now believes that he heard only part of the instructions, or that Nisadnemep re-bound or double-bound him in some unimaginable fashion, intending that Ogoon, who witnessed and remembers so many of the wizard's experiments, would clarify or confirm Nisadnemep's intentions to other sorcerers, or to historians, or to Melniboneans, or to kings, or to some other mortal audience.

Briefly put, Ogoon does not swim well and is justifiably afraid of the sharks which mill (or used to — he hasn't

been outside in a thousand years and more) in the millions (or used to) around the island. He wants a lift to a land where he can find release. "I haven't had any babies since I got here," he says, "and fully half of my arms have hatchling buds." Inspection does show that many arms end in knots rather than tips.

If the adventurers have a boat, Ogoon weighs four tons.

#### OGOON, Centipus from Dark Hell

STR 30	CON 20	SIZ 50	INT 11	POW 12
DEX 22	CHA 10	HP 58	Armor: 4-point skin	
<i>weapon</i>		<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>
Arm	40%	35%	3D6+2	
Beak	55%	—	5D6+4	

**NOTES:** of Ogoon's 50 usable arms, he can attack or parry with 15 in any one melee round. Ogoon is not a magical creature per se, though he certainly is alien. He has no demon powers or abilities.

# Statistics

#### CAPTAIN ZILLAH, Leader of the Pirates and Commander of the Demonship Habnikav

STR 15	CON 18	SIZ 15	INT 21	POW 23
DEX 18	CHA 18	HP 21	Armor: Invisible Demon	
<i>weapon</i>		<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>
Demon Broadsword	90%	88%	1D8+1+3D6	
Battle Axe	94%	76%	1D8+2	
Dagger (thrown)	70%	—	1D4+2	
Target Shield	—	80%	1D6	
Cat-O-Nine-Tails	50%	—	shock*	

\* for each blow, unarmored target must receive successful CON x3 or less roll on D100, or take 1 point damage. Armored targets take no damage from this disciplinary weapon. An immobilized target is automatically hit.

**SKILLS:** Ambush 67%, Balance 65%, Climb 45%, Dodge 55%, Evaluate Treasure 35%, First Aid 40%, Listen 60%, Make Map 25%, Memorize 50%, Move Quietly 85%, Navigate 50%, Orate 92%, Persuade 87%, Pick Lock 30%, R/W/S Common 85%, R/W/S Low Melnibonaeon 60%, R/W High Melnibonaeon 45%, R/W/S Mabden 40%, Search 55%, See 65%, Shiphandling 80%, Swim 70%, Tactics 70%, Tie Knot 60%.

#### LORG, DEMON BROADSWORD

STR 30	CON 40	SIZ 3	INT 12	POW 24
DEX 1	CHA 1	special ability: Strength Drain		

#### WAKAA, DEMON OF COMBAT (usually a large bat)

STR 18	CON 21	SIZ 16	INT 14	POW 17
DEX 18	CHA 4	HP 23		
<i>weapon</i>		<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>
Bite	65%	—	1D10+1D6+venom	

**NOTES:** Wakaa normally is bound to the area around the communal hut. Roll CON x3% or less to avoid Wakaa's venom if its bite attack does damage. The victim becomes helpless with pain for 1D8 rounds, taking an extra 1D4 points damage each round.

#### CORPOE, INVISIBLE DEMON OF COMBAT

STR 27	CON 30	SIZ 10	INT 8	POW 14
DEX 20	CHA 3	HP 30		
<i>weapon</i>		<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>
Gnash	75%	—	1D10+2D6	

**NOTES:** Corpoe normally is bound to the area around the communal hut. Corpoe is a rather stupid, constantly-biting mouth of sharp teeth, invisible to mortals (though not to other demons). Mortal attacks on Corpoe are reduced by 20 percentiles in all conditions in which its invisibility might be a factor.

#### KROK, DEMON ARMOR

CON 80	SIZ 15	INT 7	POW 22
special ability: Invisibility			

**SUMMONINGS:** *Elementals:* Undines 89%, Gnomes 78%, Sylphs 50%. *Demons:* Combat 60%, Knowledge 45%. *Elemental Ruler:* Straasha.

Zillah knows enough of magic, politics, and Lysansiptra to strive never to cross that wealthy merchant. She believes her mutiny was very risky, even though the pirates seem to be safe for the moment. She has several plans for disguising the Habnikav after they leave the island, and has toyed with staying in the area and using Nisadneme-puur as a long-term base. She intends to protect the Habnikav no matter what, and would much rather lose the treasure than her fine demonship. If adventurers fall into her hands, she will question them thoroughly and try to arrive at an understanding. Without a deal, the adventurers must die.

#### FUELIL, Dharijoran First Mate

STR 15	CON 15	SIZ 12	INT 16	POW 12
DEX 19	CHA 14	HP 15	Armor: Demon Full Plate	
<i>weapon</i>		<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>
Light Mace	96%	89%	1D6+2	
Javelin	80%	—	1D8+2	
Self Bow	76%	—	1D8+1	
Target Shield	—	65%	—	

**SKILLS:** Balance 80%, Climb 75%, Conceal 60%, Dodge 80%, First Aid 50%, Hide 75%, Listen 50%, Move Quietly 60%, Music Lore 45%, Navigate 70%, Persuade 55%, Plant Lore 45%, Search 60%, See 45%, Sleight of Hand 60%, Speak Common 78%, Tie Knot 80%.

Fuelil was born into a circus family and worked as an aerialist for some time before joining Dharijor's navy. She is friendly to those she knows, but not trusting, and is suspicious of strangers. She is not a disciplinarian, and tends to mother the crew.

#### KETRA, Dharijoran Sailor

STR 12	CON 15	SIZ 12	INT 14	POW 14
DEX 15	CH 13	HP 15	Armor: Leather	
<i>weapon</i>		<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>
Sling	90%	—	1D6+1	
Scimitar	62%	58%	1D8+1	
Target Shield	—	55%	1D6	

**SKILLS:** Balance 60%, Climb 70%, Dodge 50%, First Aid 60%, Hide 50%, Jump 55%, Listen 45%, Make Map 30%, Memorize 35%, Move Quietly 55%, Persuade 80%, Plant Lore 55%, Poison Lore 70%, Ride 20%, Scent 15%, Search 40%, See 60%, Sing 60%, R/W/S Common 60%, Tie Knot 40%, Tumble 30%.

Ketra is cold and vicious when the odds are on her side. Genuinely psychotic, she can accommodate superior force, then turn on an opponent and destroy him or her. She is an accomplished murderess, and enjoys making poisons. She and Janar Ra make a covert and dangerous pair.

#### JANAR RA, Dharijoran Sailor

STR 16	CON 17	SIZ 16	INT 9	POW 11
DEX 11	CHA 8	HP 17	Armor: H. Plate/Leather	
<i>weapon</i>		<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>
Sea Axe	80%	75%	2D6+2	
Lormyrian Axe	78%	70%	2D6	
Throwing Axe	69%	—	1D8+2	

**SKILLS:** Ambush 60%, Balance 35%, Climb 30%, Dodge 40%, Evaluate Treasure 20%, Sharpen Cutting Edge 70%, Speak Common 50%, Swim 35%.

Janar Ra is ugly, brutal, and untidy. She is greedy and envious, without the intelligence and skills which could make her fantasies of wealth and power come true. When

she is angry, she goes into the jungle and hacks away at trees; when she is very angry, she sullenly sharpens her axes: the rest of the pirates do not disturb her while she sharpens her axes.

#### MENDRJEI, Dharijoran Sailor

STR 12      CON 17      SIZ 9      INT 11      POW 13  
DEX 14      CH 15      HP 17      Armor: H. Plate/Leather

<i>weapon</i>	<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>
Broadsword	72%	58%	1D8+1
Target Shield	20%	70%	1D6

SKILLS: Balance 71%, Climb 70%, Climb Rigging 100%, Dodge 75%, Evaluate Treasure 74%, Hide 40%, Listen 50%, Move Quietly 60%, Plant Lore 50%, Sailmaking 85%, Search 30%, See 40%, Speak Common 60%, Swim 90%, Tie Knot 85%, Weave 82%.

The pirates' sailmaker and net-mender, Mendrjei is well-liked but does not go out of her way for any of them except Rena. Mendrjei is materialistic and, while not stupid, is not interested in things of the imagination. She does not trust sorcerers or others who rely on magical aid. If the Habikav goes down at sea because the demons are freed, it will be Mendrjei who shouts, "I told you so!"

#### RENA, Dharijoran Sailor

STR 11      CON 12      SIZ 8      INT 16      POW 18  
DEX 18      CHA 16      HP 11      Armor: H. Plate/Leather

<i>weapon</i>	<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>
Thrown Dagger	95%	—	1D4+2
Dagger	80%	80%	1D4+2
Falchion	78%	76%	1D6+2

SKILLS: Ambush 70%, Balance 35%, Climb 60%, Conceal 40%, Dodge 70%, First Aid 40%, Hide 60%, Jump 70%, Listen 60%, Move Quietly 85%, Navigate 20%, Persuade 65%, See 60%, Speak Common 75%.

Rena is Siriene's young kitchen-helper. If the adventurers see someone fetching water from the harbor stream, it is likely Rena. Agile, clever, and daring, she might lead them on an interesting chase.

#### BINNET, Second Mate

STR 13      CON 13      SIZ 10      INT 14      POW 15  
DEX 11      CH 12      HP 13      Armor: H. Plate/Leather

<i>weapon</i>	<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>
Sea Axe	70%	70%	2D6+2
Dagger	45%	40%	1D4+2

SKILLS: Climb 65%, Dodge 55%, Evaluate Treasure 70%, First Aid 65%, Listen 80%, Make Map 45%, Memorize 40%, Move Quietly 45%, Navigate 65%, Persuade 70%, Plant Lore 33%, Speak Common 55%, Speak 'pande 45%, Speak Mabden 30%, Speak Orgjenn 15%, Swim 75%.

MAGIC ITEM: Binnet wears a gold ring to which is bound Galanj, a Demon of Desire. Galanj appears as a small, beautifully-formed, blue-skinned woman with unusually large ears. She follows Binnet everywhere.

#### GALANJ, BOUND DEMON OF DESIRE

STR 25      CON 61      SIZ 6      INT 12      POW 17  
DEX 1      CHA 23      HP 58

Binnet is an independently-minded woman, reliable and courageous, who is quite loyal to Zillah. She comes from a noble family and (correctly) sees many of the other pirates as beneath her in taste, ability, and judgment. She often keeps to herself.

#### ANARY, Dharijoran Sailor

STR 16      CON 14      SIZ 10      INT 14      POW 12  
DEX 15      CHA 10      HP 14      Armor: H. Plate/Leather

<i>weapon</i>	<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>
Scimitar	78%	68%	1D8+1
Javelin	80%	—	1D8+2
Target Shield	—	80%	1D6

SKILLS: Ambush 44%, Climb 67%, Conceal 80%, Dodge 55%, First Aid 30%, Hide 75%, Jump 70%, Listen 60%, Move Quietly 80%, Scent 58%, Set Trap 85%, Speak Common 50%, Swim 55%, Tie Knot 40%, Track 69%.

Anary comes from a homesteading family in the wilds of Dharijor. At times needing them for survival, she developed animalistic senses. Authorities once employed her to track down a criminal, much as they might have used a dog. She is quiet, accomodating, secretive, and uncomplaining. As part of a group, she could do anything without fearing the consequences.

#### SIRIENE, Dharijoran Cook/Sailor

STR 13      CON 16      SIZ 14      INT 13      POW 10  
DEX 12      CHA 12      HP 18      Armor: H. Plate/Leather

<i>weapon</i>	<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>
Falchion	82%	58%	1D6+2
Cleaver	80%	—	1D6+1
Target Shield	—	55%	1D6

SKILLS: Climb 40%, Cook 80%, Dodge 45%, Evaluate Treasure 30%, Juggle 23%, Move Quietly 20%, Plant Lore 28%, Poison Lore 87%, Scent 35%, Search 20%, Sing 55%, Speak Common 45%, Taste 50%, Tie Knot.

Amiable and happy in her present circumstances, Siriene does not trust men, and will work to eliminate any male adventurers who come to call. She is an expert poisoner.

#### TRISTRA, Dharijoran Sailor

STR 11      CON 18      SIZ 14      INT 13      POW 13  
DEX 15      CHA 16      HP 20      Armor: H. Plate/Leather

<i>weapon</i>	<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>
Broadsword	65%	59%	1D8+1
Target Shield	25%	88%	1D6

SKILLS: Climb 35%, First Aid 94%, Listen 55%, Navigate 15%, Plant Lore 35%, Poison Lore 15%, Scent 45%, Search 55%, Sing Speak Common 60%, Taste 45%.

Tristra is unusually kind and tender, and could not resist Patuer's helplessness when she found him half dead. He found this round, affectionate woman very sweet, and they fell in love. Tristra moved from the hut she shared with Yoland't, making that pirate most unhappy. If the others find out about Patuer, most of them will want to kill Tristra as well as him.

#### YOLAND'T, Dharijoran Sailor

STR 11      CON 13      SIZ 13      INT 14      POW 15  
DEX 18      CHA 11      HP 14      Armor: H. Plate/Leather

<i>weapon</i>	<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>
Light Mace	90%	62%	1D6+2
Dagger	75%	67%	1D4+2
Target Shield	—	50%	1D6

SKILLS: Climb 63%, Conceal 45%, Cut Purse 70%, Dodge 68%, Hide 55%, Listen 60%, Move Quietly 50%, Persuade 75%, Search 44%, Set Trap 50%, Sleight of Hand 35%, Speak Common 50%.

From adolescence, Yoland't was a member of a thief gang in Gromoorva. When her leader was caught and

hanged, she joined the navy to avoid capture. She has progressively become more and more honest. Tristra's abrupt departure from the hut puzzled and saddened her. Yoland't is the only pirate who cannot swim.

### LYSANSIPTRA, Wealthy Merchant and Fourth-Level Sorceress

STR 13 CON 16 SIZ 11 INT 21 POW 25  
DEX 17 CHA 21 HP 16 Armor: Demon Full Plate

weapon	attack	parry	damage
Demon Falchion	96%	90%	1D6+2+5D6+1D8
Thrown Dagger	90%	—	1D4+2

SKILLS: Ambush 65%, Climb 50%, Conceal 54%, Credit 95%, Dodge 61%, Evaluate Treasure 88%, Hide 40%, Listen 75%, Make Map 40%, Memorize 78%, Move Quietly 50%, Orate 55%, Persuade 90%, Pick Lock 31%, Plant Lore 59%, Poison Lore 50%, Ride 60%, See 70%, Seduce 80%, Set Trap 75%, R/W/S Common 80%, R/W/S Low Melnibonean 40%, R/W/S High Melnibonean 75%, Speak 'pande 40%, Speak Mabden 40%, Speak Orgjenn 20%, Tactics 90%, Tie Knot 61%.

#### RANTRAP, BOUND DEMON FALCHION

STR 34 CON 55 SIZ 3 INT 8 POW 23  
DEX 3 CHA 18 HP 49 Special Ability: Shock

GISHAZA, BOUND DEMON FULL PLATE ARMOR  
CON 85 SIZ 11 INT 4 POW 23 CHA 19  
Special Ability: Regeneration

#### FELKRISH, BOUND DEMON OF TRANSPORT (Gateway Opener)

STR 16 CON 32 SIZ 24 INT 16 POW 16  
DEX 24 CHA 16 HP 44 Special Ability: Bound\*

\* Felkrish is a gift from Eequor.

#### LIZAN, BOUND DEMON OF DESIRE

STR 25 CON 24 SIZ 9 INT 12 POW 16  
DEX 15 CHA 17 HP 24

#### GROLOON, DEMON FIGHTER

STR 38 CON 24 SIZ 3 INT 12 POW 18  
DEX 19 CHA 3 HP 18

weapon	attack	parry	damage
Bite	80%	—	1D10+2D6

Groloon usually occupies a ring worn by Lysansiptra. When fighting, Goloon takes the form of a mangy cat which stalks its target, usually severing an extremity in a single attack.

#### TANAVON, BOUND DEMON OF KNOWLEDGE

CON 22 INT 80 POW 15

#### BODEEN, BOUND DEMON OF TRAVEL (Transporter)

STR 35 CON 18 SIZ 16 INT 12 POW 8  
DEX 12 CHA 17 HP 22

Bodeen appears as a comfortable stuffed-leather chair.

#### GARG, BOUND DEMON OF POSSESSION

POW 57

Garg occupies Lysansiptra's left earring. She will not use Garg except in the most dangerous situation. Lysansiptra found the earring in Nisadnemep's chamber — just before she found the fingerbone.

SUMMONINGS — *Elementals*: Gnomes 97%, Salamanders 96%, Undines 95%, Sylphs 50%. *Demons*: Combat 95%, Desire 88%, Knowledge 79%, Possession 67%, Travel 90%. *Elemental Rulers*: Straasha, Grome. *Beast Lords*: P!p!pp'hhhh'p.

### RAGAZ THE RECKLESS, Henchman

STR 20 CON 18 SIZ 17 INT 14 POW 16  
DEX 19 CHA 17 HP 23 Armor: Demon Full Plate

weapon	attack	parry	damage
Demon Lormyr. Axe	95%	90%	3D6+1D6+3D6
Demon Long Spear	85%	55%	1D10+1+1D6+3D6
Broadsword	80%	75%	1D8+1+1D6
Tower Shield	55%	95%	1D6+2+1D6

SKILLS: Ambush 35%, Climb 60%, Cut Purse 82%, Dodge 63%, Juggle 47%, Move Quietly 72%, Orate 44%, Persuade 87%, Sing 48%, Sleight of Hand 50%, Speak Common 69%, Speak Low Melnibonean 40%, Tactics 35%.

#### LUG, BOUND DEMON FULL PLATE ARMOR

CON 40 SIZ 17 INT 5 POW 14 CHA 15

Special Ability: Regeneration

#### EVAK, BOUND DEMON LORMYRIAN AXE

STR 31 CON 35 SIZ 5 INT 1 POW 13

DEX 3 CHA 12 HP 31 Spec. Abil.: Regeneration

#### ELIFANS, BOUND DEMON OF PROTECTION

INT 24 POW 90

Elifans is the formidable Greater Demon who guards the island treasure.

SUMMONINGS: none.

### HOT MAB, Henchwoman

STR 15 CON 20 SIZ 14 INT 19 POW 20  
DEX 19 CHA 18 HP 22 Armor: Demon Full Plate

weapon	attack	parry	damage
Demon Battle Axe	88%	80%	1D8+2+1D6+3D6
Shortsword (left)*	85%	80%	1D6+1+1D6
Shortsword (right)*	84%	76%	1D6+1+1D6
Target Shield	25%	90%	1D6

\* Mab can fight with two shortswords — using either or both to attack or to parry.

SKILLS: Balance 65%, Climb 75%, Dodge 70%, Evaluate Treasure 51%, Jump 60%, Listen 50%, Move Quietly 85%, Navigate 40%, Persuade 55%, Pick Lock 90%, Set Trap 45%, Sing 44%, Speak Common 60%, Speak Mabden 32%, Track 54%.

#### GLYZYL, BOUND DEMON FULL PLATE ARMOR

CON 50 SIZ 14 INT 3 POW 14 CHA 13

Special Ability: Regeneration

#### ROMP, BOUND DEMON BATTLE AXE

STR 31 CON 30 SIZ 5 INT 1 POW 10

DEX 2 CHA 12 HP 26 Wardpact: D. of Desire

#### PRETIG, BOUND DEMON OF DESIRE

STR 12 CON 55 SIZ 12 INT 13 POW 19

DEX 14 CHA 20 HP 55

Pretig is an average-sized blue human, naked, of wonderful handsomeness, who leaves no footprints where he walks.

SUMMONINGS: *Elementals*: Salamanders 69%, Sylph 50%.

*Demons*: Combat 76%, Knowledge 57%.

### JANREEL, Gofer for Ragaz

STR 13 CON 16 SIZ 12 INT 14 POW 12  
DEX 14 CHA 17 HP 16 Armor: Demon Full Plate

weapon	attack	parry	damage
Melnibonean Bow	85%	—	2D6+1+1D6
Broadsword	80%	67%	1D8+1+1D6
Tower Shield	—	75%	—

SKILLS: Balance 45%, Climb 55%, Dodge 55%, Jump 40%, First Aid 75%, Hide 51%, Move Quietly 40%, Memorize 40%, Persuade 81%, Plant Lore 34%, Poison Lore 14%, Speak Common 58%.

#### STEADFAST, BOUND DEMON ARMOR

CON 68 SIZ 10 INT 12 POW 20

SUMMONINGS: *Elemental*: Gnome 50%.

### TOO SWEET, Gofer for Hot Mab

STR 18 CON 17 SIZ 18 INT 12 POW 11  
DEX 16 CHA 16 HP 23 Armor: Demon Full Plate

weapon	attack	parry	damage
Melnibonean Bow	85%	—	2D6+1+1D6
Broadsword	80%	67%	1D8+1+1D6
Heater Shield	—	70%	1D6

SKILLS: Climb 62%, Evaluate Treasure 61%, First Aid 55%, Make Map 61%, Memorize 50%, Move Quietly 50%, Orate 50%, Navigate 70%, Set Trap 91%, Sing 21%, Speak Common 79%, Taste 34%.

SWAGUM, BOUND FULL PLATE DEMON ARMOR  
CON 55 SIZ 18 INT 13 POW 22

SUMMONINGS: *Elementals*: Salamanders 56%, Undine 50%. *Demons*: Knowledge 51%, Combat 36%.

## The Hybbees

### RIZUM, Hybbee from Yellow Hell

STR 2 CON 19 SIZ 1 INT 13 POW 24  
DEX 21 CHA 14 HP: 5 Armor: none

<i>weapon</i>	<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>
Bite	55%	—	1D2

SKILLS: Balance 80%, Dodge 85%, Hide 90%, Move Quietly 96%, Navigate 50%, Persuade 90%, Pick Lock 70%, Sing 60%, Speak Common 45%, See 60%.

### MIZUM, Hybbee from Green Hell

STR 2 CON 20 SIZ 1 INT 11 POW 20  
DEX 23 CHA 19 HP: 5 Armor: none

<i>weapon</i>	<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>
Bite	77%	—	1D2

SKILLS: Balance 90%, Dodge 95%, Hide 80%, Move Quietly 95%, Navigate 65%, Orate 35%, Persuade 80%, Sing 58%, Speak Common 40%, See 66%, Search 38%.

Hybbee general characteristics are found near the start of this adventure, on page 10.

## Origimides Serpents

During the days, these adders may be found sunning themselves or retreating to dry shelter when it rains. A hunting snake, the origimides is found everywhere on the island at night, searching out rodents, birds, and smaller snakes of other species. Characteristic pale-green crescent moons decorate the backs of most origimides. Lengths may be up to two yards. On Nisadnemepuur, this species is of two potencies: adders in and near the clearing and along the harbor stream are doubly poisonous from long affiliation with the toxic clearing; adders found elsewhere are of lesser potency.

Skills and attacks of these serpents are essentially identical.

### ORIGIMIDES 1

STR 4 CON 6 SIZ 2 INT 2 POW 3  
DEX 9 HP 6

### ORIGIMIDES 2

STR 7 CON 8 SIZ 2 INT 3 POW 4  
DEX 10 HP 8

### ORIGIMIDES 3

STR 5 CON 11 SIZ 2 INT 1 POW 3  
DEX 18 HP 11

### ORIGIMIDES 4

STR 9 CON 18 SIZ 3 INT 4 POW 2  
DEX 15 HP 18

### ORIGIMIDES 5

STR 5 CON 13 SIZ 3 INT 2 POW 2  
DEX 13 HP 13

### ORIGIMIDES 6

STR 6 CON 11 SIZ 4 INT 4 POW 3  
DEX 15 HP 11

### ORIGIMIDES 7

STR 8 CON 13 SIZ 4 INT 3 POW 4  
DEX 18 HP 13

### ORIGIMIDES 8

STR 6 CON 10 SIZ 2 INT 1 POW 2  
DEX 7 HP 10

<i>weapon</i>	<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>
Poisonous Bite	90%	—	5D6/10D6

*NOTES: these snakes do 10D6 damage along the harbor stream and the clearing, 5D6 damage elsewhere. The 22mm-long fangs penetrate leather, but not plate. The injected poison is hematoxic and neurotoxic: immediate local swelling, pain, and discoloration; in 5-60 minutes, difficulty in speaking and breathing, disorientation, yellow or filmy vision. Injected tissue may become necrotic in a few days, with gangrene setting in 1-3 days thereafter.*

SKILLS: Ambush 70%, Climb 40%, Hide 80%, Move Quietly 90%, Swim 90%.

## Lava Wasps

Scattered along the slopes of the lava cliffs are the individual nests of about 50 lava wasps. The lava wasp is the island's sole large predator; such wasps subsist on the herds roaming the goat plain. Lava wasps may have been created by Nisadnemep, or be byproducts of his toxic wastes dump. Occasionally a lava wasp comes to sip from the beautiful giant orchids bordering the clearing. In the months that the pirates have been present, pirates and wasps have learned to respect each others' stings. Humans moving in the daytime among the goats are liable to attack from these insects.

The lava wasp is a man-sized insect marked with horizontal yellow and blue-black wavy stripes. In flight, its wings make a sustained roar hearable a half-mile or more distant. Strangers nearing the lava cliff nests from any direction are subject to ear-shaking overflights by about 20 of the huge wasps, with a 50% chance that 1D3 wasps actually attack. Glinting metal or bright colors attract lava wasps, a reason beyond comfort that the pirates often go unclothed.

The stinger of a lava wasp is sword-length, doing broadsword damage. Upon a successful stinger attack, the lava wasp injects a powerful venom rendering its victim permanently comatose. The wasp takes the victim to its nest, and then either eats the unfortunate or adds the victim to an accumulating collection intended to be walled off with a wasp egg. Such victims become the larder for the larva emerging from the egg.

No potion exists which can cure a victim of lava wasp venom; the target dies in CON days after injection. Nisadnemep may have grown a plant, or tried to, which contained anti-venom properties; perhaps Plant Lore studies in the clearing would uncover such an agent.

For an insect, the lava wasp's brain is quite large. A brave and persistent adventurer could (25% chance after three months of single-minded effort) achieve enough communication with a particular wasp that it would agree to carry him or her to the next island. But it would surely

strain an insect's nervous system to have a delicious human in claw for many minutes and do nothing worthwhile with it.

### LAVA WASP

STR 4D8+12      SKILLS: Balance 85%, Dodge 75%, Fly  
CON 3D8+10      95%, Make Map 20%, Navigate 65%, Orate  
SIZ 1D8+15      30%, Plant Lore 20%, Scent 60%, Track  
INT 1D8+2      35%, Taste 70%.  
POW 2D8      Hit Points: CON+SIZ-12  
DEX 3D8+10      Armor: 9-point exoskeleton

weapon	attack	parry	damage
Sting	90%	—	1D8+1+venom

### BIG-STINGER

STR 28      CON 30      SIZ 19      INT 6      POW 11  
DEX 27      HP 37      Armor: 9-point exoskeleton

### BLUE-BOTTOM

STR 40      CON 22      SIZ 17      INT 5      POW 14  
DEX 23      HP 25      Armor: 9-point exoskeleton

### KID-SHAFTER

STR 17      CON 30      SIZ 16      INT 3      POW 5  
DEX 14      HP 17      Armor: 9-point exoskeleton

### SHARK-NICKER\*

STR 43      CON 33      SIZ 23      INT 10      POW 16  
DEX 33      HP 44      Armor: 9-point exoskeleton

\* so-known to her peers for countless quixotic attempts to snatch a shark from the shark pool.

### GARS THE ENLISTER, Local Con-Man

STR 16      CON 15      SIZ 18      INT 13      POW 12  
DEX 11      CHA 11      HP 21      Armor: H. Plate/Leather

weapon	attack	parry	damage
Heavy Mace	75%	55%	1D8+2
Quarterstaff	60%	57%	1D8
Target Shield	50%	67%	1D6

SKILLS: Ambush 25%, Conceal 45%, Credit -10%, Cut Purse 45%, Dodge 55%, Evaluate Treasure 60%, Hide 50%, Listen 60%, Move Quietly 45%, Orate 50%, Persuade 70%, Pick Lock 30%, Set Trap 42%, Speak Common 66%, Taste 23%.

MAGIC ITEM: small silver bracelet contains a bound salamander.

## NEW MAGICS

# Runes of Rathdor

by Arno Lipfert

Study of ancient grimoires reveals little about the daring mortals who extended our knowledge of magic. We have, however, identified one Sarowlon Rathdor, master of runic writing, who lived during the reigns of the 41st and 42nd emperors of Melnibone. Rathdor's great magical powers were famous in his time. Only the runes included in this article have positively been identified as discovered by Rathdor; many other runes exist, and it may be that he is responsible for many more which we do not now know.

Simply put, a magical rune is a two-dimensional projection of a shape whose properties can open a pinhole into another plane of existence. Each rune opens into a different plane, and each plane has different properties. When the rune is incised, inscribed, or drawn upon solid matter of this plane, energies enter here which can charm, warn, harm, heal, or curse. If the rune can be found and mutilated or erased, then the effect of the rune is broken, and the rune must be re-established from scratch.

Rathdor specialized in single runes which had precise effects, rather than in runes which could be combined in many ways to form many different effects. Nonetheless, deciphering his runes cost considerable life and property. The rune drawings are working representations, doubtless refinable. Some runes can have long spans of effect. All of them are sustained by sacrificed temporary POW, usually (in the cruel Young Kingdoms) drained from victims by ritual murder — one or more victims whose personal Power pours into the rune and is stored there until activated,

triggered, or broken. Most runes are of unknown strength — conceivably of low POW, possibly of hundreds of points.

While the shape of a rune is important, the size of it is in general unimportant: the inscriber is free to draw small versions or to use metal stamps to apply it. But if the size of the rune becomes too small for normal countermeasures in play, gamemasters should freely rule that the size of the rune was so small that the process of creation went awry, and that the POW was wasted.

C'LORYA, the Warded Barrier — this rune can be placed over a door, a window, or within any room with only one opening. Whoever encounters the ward is denied passage



through the warded opening or into (or out of) a room with one opening. To move through such a ward, the character must receive a successful POW against POW roll on the resistance table. If the attacker succeeds, he passes through the warded barrier, breaking the ward in the process. If he fails, the ward remains in place and he loses 1 point of POW, regained naturally at the rate of 1 point per hour. Such a rune may be so set that it allows specified personalities to pass without effort, while resisting all others. The inscriber of the particular rune may remain telepathically aware of it, if he desires, so that he instantly knows if the ward is being attacked or has been broken. There is no limit to the number of such runes an individual can create, nor the range of the telepathic link. Only one such rune can guard an individual opening or room.

SH'KE'HEH, Shape Change — having inscribed this rune upon any non-living item, the inscriber can change the item's outward appearance, in this limited only by his POW and his imagination. Each point of POW temporarily sacrificed allows the inscriber to affect 1 SIZ point of the object; an equal number of POW points to SIZ points must be temporarily sacrificed before the item can be transformed. Only appearance is affected: a SIZ 3 wooden box which is turned into an apple becomes a wooden SIZ 3 apple. The inscriber may will any desired color change. The number of SIZ points never changes in such a transformation; if a portion of a shape-changed item is removed or damaged, the item cannot be re-transformed unless a fresh rune is inscribed. A shape-changed item always bears the rune somewhere; the rune disappears when the inscriber wills the item to reassume its original shape. There is no POW cost to bring an object back to its ground state. Once shape-changed, an object stays shape-changed for at least a decade; gamemasters have final say as to when something snaps back to original shape.



SHAHAHL'NYA, Illusion — drawing, incising, or inscribing this rune at a particular location creates a focus for the subsequent creation of an illusion at that point. The illusion will seem solid and capable of doing damage if so intended, or as insubstantial and horrifying as a wraith. Once the rune is in place, the inscriber wills the illusion into existence by sacrificing 1 point of temporary POW for each 10 SIZ or fraction thereof that the illusion is to assume, and another point of temporary POW for each minute that the illusion is to last beyond the first minute. A SIZ 18 demon of combat, for instance, would require 2 points of temporary POW to create, and it would disappear after 60 seconds. For another point of temporary POW, it would last 120 seconds and then wink out of existence. The inscriber may leave the scene of the illusion, and the illusion will continue to move about — but it will not react to anything happening around it any more than a television screen reacts to incidents in your living room. If the inscriber stays within POW x4 meters of the illusion, he may mentally control the movements of the illusion until it disappears. Any combat moves an illusion makes do no damage, no matter how credulous the opponent suffering the apparent sword-stroke, etc. An illusion has no weight or resistance to touch, and it cannot move or be moved from an area within POW-of-the-inscriber meters of the focusing rune.



VISS'THAR, Invisibility — the invisibility rune is a counterpart to the illusion rune. An object inscribed, incised, or drawn upon with the rune vanishes from sight when the inscriber wills. The object actually is still present, and can be scented, touched, tasted, and heard — but not seen. There is no shadow, shimmer, or distortion to hint that the object is present. Causing an item to vanish costs 1 point of temporary POW per 10 SIZ points; each 10 minutes after the first ten minutes costs an additional 1 point



of POW to extend the invisibility regardless of SIZ. This rune does not work upon living or animate flesh. The item to be affected must be contiguous in a structural sense. It would be possible to render a castle invisible, but the furniture, weapons, staff, etc., in the structure would remain visible, as would hangings, pets, and barrels of oil — but dungeons and battlements would disappear, leaving the water in the moat miraculously suspended, as though Moses had just passed by. The effect of the rune cannot be broken unless the now-invisible rune itself is somehow located and physically altered or erased, or until the POW in the rune is exhausted.

KAE'YAR'TALA, Preservation — with this rune, the inscriber can preserve objects (not living or animate entities) from the ravages of time, weather, etc. The cost is 1 point of temporary POW per SIZ point of object to be protected, per 24 hours of protection. The item to be preserved must be physically contiguous. One may or may not be able to normally use items so preserved: a sword so protected would not break, for instance, and a preserved house would not change in any manner — it could be lived in, but the shutters wouldn't move; if the roof leaked previously, it would continue to leak. If the rune were placed on a bottle of wine, the wine cork and the wine would not leave the bottle, and the bottle could not be casually broken, nor could the preserving rune be affected until its POW was exhausted. Demon weapons can affect this rune, however; if a demon weapon does damage to the protected item equal to or more than the rune's current POW, then the rune is broken and the protected item must absorb any excess damage.



ISTA and ORFA, Hot and Cold — once activated by one point of temporary POW, such a rune is a conduit for cold or heat. A character might use the rune to start a campfire or chill his beer, or he might put such a rune on an arrow to further damage a target. Once drawn, incised, or inscribed upon an item, and a point of temporary POW sacrificed into the rune, the rune may be activated at will within POW x10 meters of the inscriber then or at any later time. An additional temporary point of POW must be sacrificed for each SIZ point above 1 which the item has. The runes do heat or cold damage of 1D6 per SIZ point per combat round. Armor decreases the effectiveness of the rune as a medium for attack; ignore a rune attack which hits but which does not penetrate armor for the following number of combat rounds: 4 for leather armor, 7 for barbarian armor, and 8 combat rounds for half- and full-plate armor. At the gamemaster's option, the heat or cold from the rune may linger for that number of combat rounds equal to the number of rounds which the target requires to pull out a lodged missile or other weapon. If such runes are in play, gamemasters should take care to describe the rising steam or smoke, fire, frost, or forming ice, so that players have fair knowledge of what threatens their adventurers.



*For the mind of Man alone is free to explore the lofty vastness of the cosmic infinite, to transcend ordinary consciousness, to roam the secret corridors of the brain where past and future melt into one ....*

# Magic Items

by Arno Lipfert

## *Binding Wand*

Carved from the seventh sinistral rib of a dragon, a binding wand is covered with runes and is made completely from bone. Only one wand can be made from the rib, and the process of creation is difficult: each effort takes about a month and has a 1% chance to succeed. A demon then must be bound in normal fashion into the wand. Though of human-forearm heft and size, such a wand becomes progressively more delicate, each century losing 1 hit point from its original 12. After 12 centuries, it crumbles into dust, freeing the demon bound within it. If, however, the wand takes normal damage from a fight or fall, it breaks if the damage exceeds the CON of the bound demon.

Such a wand has several intriguing properties.

(1) Though a binding wand binds but one demon, it increases the binding potential of the wand's owner — the owner of one wand thus may bind ½ CHA+1 demons, and the owner of two could bind two extra demons, up to a maximum of CHA demons under his control, enabling specialized demon design.

(2) Even if all other demons are released by an unsuccessful binding, any demons bound by a wand remain under control of the owner.

(3) If a wand is stolen or lost, and the new owner can learn the name of the demon locked to it, the new owner may normally employ that demon. Forgetful sorcerers may actually scratch the individual demon's runes on the wand; a *Demon of Knowledge* has a ½INT chance to know the name of the demon in the wand.

(4) If the wand is damaged, or if the twelve centuries of the wand's effective existence are over, then the bound demon is released; when it is, it automatically attacks (if possible) the current owner of the wand.

In all cases the owner of the wand is defined as he who originally bound the demon or he who last instructed or employed the demon.

## *Bracelet of the Justicar*

This bracelet gives the wearer the ability to read the emotions of intelligent beings within POW x3 meters of the wearer. Among the most obvious reactions, the central gemstone glows brightly if a lie is told within the wearer's range, appears to whirl rapidly within range of a thief, and pulses and vibrates if anything is removed from the wearer without his permission.

The bracelet is a gold band incised with interlocking triangles, in which is set a large gemstone resembling a fire opal. The gem is from another plane and has properties peculiar to that plane. The stone was given to a favorite Justicar by a mysterious High Priest of Law to wear at courtly functions. The Justicar, whose office combined

the powers of king and high judge, had the bracelet made and the stone mounted in it. In a later time the reigning Justicar lent Aubec the bracelet to help him during his quests, and the bracelet was assumed lost with Aubec's body. But uncorroborated testimony states that Aubec lost the item before he arrived at the castle and went into the Chaos stuff. If the bracelet has been recovered, collectors may have stumbled onto its significance — or it may yet grace the den of some creature as its prize treasure.

## *Crystal of Almagorath*

The crystal is a fist-sized, 12-pointed, translucent star made of diamond. It is immune to physical damage; rumor has it that, to destroy it, one must travel to the plane of crystal and there hurl it into the volcano that makes all the crystal in the world. Only Almagorath, its creator, knows the secret of the crystal's construction.

The possessor of the crystal can trap victims within the crystal by attacking them POW against POW on the resistance table. The struggle is quite lengthy, however, since the crystal must attune itself to the target during the attack, which takes 1D50+10 combat rounds to resolve. During the attack, neither the attacker nor the target can move or attend to other matters. If the attack fails, then attacker and target are as they were before the attack.

If the attack succeeds, a scarlet beam from an empty point of the crystal sprays the target, miniaturizes the target, and draws the target into the point, and there stores him. If all 12 points are filled, the attacker should first mentally release an occupant to make room for a new victim. A prisoner within the crystal is unaware of the passing of time, and needs no air, water, or food; he does not age. He becomes conscious only when the owner of the crystal instructs him or commands him.

The crystal of Almagorath offers a safe place to hide prisoners whom cruel tyrants do not wish to murder outright, and any demon can be bound within one of the 12 points. Only the owner ordinarily knows who is stored within the crystal, though a *Demon of Knowledge* has an INT x2 chance to know whether or not a particular person or entity is trapped therein. Only the person who trapped a victim ordinarily can release that victim, but anyone who understands the properties of the crystal can fill the crystal and then deliberately exceed its capacity. When that happens, a random prisoner is set free — perhaps someone grateful to be free, perhaps someone or something angry at having been imprisoned.

Destroyed in the volcano of crystal, Almagorath's creation allows any demons to return to their home planes, but imprisoned mortals from the Young Kingdoms die when the crystal is destroyed.

## *Mordaga's Throne*

Somewhere in the vast mountains separating the Sighing Desert from the Weeping Wastes, Mordaga's Throne rises out of a granite slope, with mystical runes carved around the granite sides of the great throne, and with two cruel granite eyes staring from the front of the chair above a seal bearing the eight-legged radiance of Chaos.

Having found this desolate spot and clambered up onto the enormous throne (it is five times normal size in all dimensions), the seeker has a chance to speak directly to Arioch. The chance is the seeker's POW x1; he can attempt to speak once per day, at twilight, when the world seems both to be dissolving and reforming. The seeker must be alone. He may ask or say anything; Arioch replies according to his godly will, and might quickly end the session or keep it going for hours. The longer the conversation, the more likely that the god tricks or manipulates the seeker.

No one knows who carved Mordaga's Throne. It is named after a jester and gossip famous during the reign of the 378th emperor of Melnibone, who took a vow of silence after sitting in the chair.

## *Soul Globes of Kolos Thr'n'ar*

A sorcerer-noble of Pan Tang, Kolos Thr'n'ar wielded great power. His ambitions led him to attempt to summon an alien god to the Young Kingdoms, to there rule the entity, and to thereby rule the world. This plan was never carried out. In the attempt, however, Kolos the Ingenious wrought seven *soul globes*, devices each of which can store a maximum of 400 POW.

A soul globe is a tan, hand-sized ball made of an unknown but ceramic-like substance. Such a globe is imperv-

ious to destruction unless the wielder of that globe openly declare "I break thee," and hurl the globe to the floor, smashing it. One becomes the wielder by possessing it and mastering the guardian key within it; the study and self-preparation for the task requires 60-minus-POW weeks. Then the possessor's chance for mastery is 50% + 1 percentile per point of his INT+POW in excess of 32 (or minus 10 percentiles per point of his INT+POW under 24).

To fill a soul globe with power, the wielder must engage a target in a struggle resolved as a POW against POW roll on the resistance table, and win. Since the attack involves attuning the globe to the target, the soul globe must be kept within a few meters' proximity of the target for the target's POW in hours (Kolos sacrificed slaves to energize his globes; he had no interest in creating a single overwhelming weapon). When a soul globe has Power in it, it glows; when it is filled, it shines brightly enough to illuminate a small room, but is cool to the touch. In an attack upon a target or for any purpose, the wielder may draw up to his own current POW in POW from a soul globe, effectively doubling his own POW. If such a doubled attack fails, the POW of the wielder is sucked into the globe instead of the target's. The wielder must be touching the globe to receive Power from it.

Some say that the souls of those devoured by the globe remain in a nimbus around the globe, troubling the sleep of wielders who keep their globes nearby. It is in any case certain that such a globe kills its victims — they can never be rescued from a soul globe.

Four soul globes are known destroyed; one is suspected to be present in Pan Tang; the location or existence of the remaining two is unknown. Gamemasters must decide whether or not a globe contains POW and, if so, how much. The random POW roll for a soul globe is 4D100.

### NEW RACES AND SPECIES

# Creatures

*by Arno Lipfert*

## *Merfolk*

Merfolk are children of Straasha, and uniformly loyal to him. These children of the sea look like humans down to the hips; there their bodies scale, turn to a silvery green, and become fish-like. Merfolk have downy short hair on their heads, but no other body hair; reports of long hair on the females seem to be wishful thinking. Though reproduction is oviparous, males and females have vestigial outer nipples, and random females are full-breasted.

A sociable and long-lived people, merfolk are almost always found in groups of a dozen to a hundred. They do not build permanent homes, and are usually nomadic like dolphins, though some tribes may live in the same underwater caverns for months or years before moving on. Merfolk prefer saltwater, finding freshwater survivable but distasteful.

Merfolk, by the favor of Straasha, have unusual powers over denizens of the sea. They can, for instance, call sea life to them and instruct the fish, mollusk, etc., to perform simple, very short-term tasks. Intelligent sea-living beings such as dolphins can be called — but may not come. By speaking or singing words of praise, they can accelerate the growth of any sea plant, and have it grow to direction (some stories of sea monsters may come from rapidly-growing beds of seaweed), at a rate of 10 meters per combat round.

Most Merfolk weapons are of narwhal horn which, in their hands, has the property of moving aside water without resistance: underwater, a merman can swing his ivory narwhal sword as fast as a human can swing his sword through air. Narweapons therefore have the same characteristics as human weapons because they are constructed

for effectively the same conditions. Unlike human weapons, narweapons do damage according to the POW range of the narwhal species (1D8): narword, narspear, and nararrow have the same damage roll. Out of water, narwahl horn dies quickly, turning brittle within an hour.

As a secondary sexual characteristic, song is unique to mermaids, whose voices entrance mermen and human males alike. The song of the mermaid is powerful, and carries far underwater. Some unhappy mermaids surface and sing in the air, to tantalize surface-world males. Mermen respond to the songs only during the spring and fall mating seasons, but mermaid songs drive human males mad with desire at any time — roll the character's INT x3% or less to resist; a critical success means the character is immune and need never again even bother to resist. Human males receiving a failed roll throw themselves overboard and happily drown while striving to reach the source of allurements.

#### AVERAGE ADULT MERFOLK

<i>characteristics</i>	<i>average</i>	
STR 4D6	14	ARMOR: 1-point subcutaneous layer.
CON 3D6	10-11	HP: 10-11 (average)
SIZ 3D6	10-11	SKILLS: Scent 85%, Sing 95% (females only), Swim 95%.
INT 3D6	10-11	
POW 4D8	18	
DEX 3D6+3	13-14	
CHA 3D6	10-11	
<i>weapon</i>	<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i> <i>damage</i>
narword	50%	30%    1D8
narspear	40%	15%    1D8

#### Will-o-the-Wisps

Hailing from the elemental plane of Air, these free-willed creatures owe less allegiance to Lassa and her sons than do others of that plane. Nonetheless, will-o-the-wisps must do favors for her in return for a way to cross to the plane of the Young Kingdoms. Once there, any will-o-the-wisp can return to the plane of Air whenever it wishes.

In the Young Kingdoms, a will-o-the-wisp takes the form of a free-floating ball of luminescent gases which roil and froth about as the creature travels. A will-o-the-wisp is insubstantial and cannot be harmed by physical weapons: it can pass through solid walls, and occasionally is seen vanishing at one point and languidly reforming at another after slow teleportation. Such an entity also can move or hurl one inanimate object at a time by means of telekinesis — use the will-o-the-wisp's POW against the object's SIZ on the resistance table. Since the object is guided, the range is line-of-sight, and the hit is automatic. Living or animated entities can also be so-moved, but the will-o-the-wisp first must receive a successful POW against POW roll on the resistance table if the target resists levitation.

A will-o-the-wisp can rearrange itself to wear the semblance of any being or creature it desires, but the glow from its body cannot be negated. The glow in any form makes visible an area around the will-o-the-wisp equal to 1/5th of the will-o-the-wisp's POW, rounded up.

The maximum volume which such an entity can occupy equals its POW in cubic meters. As it becomes larger, its powerful radiance diminishes to a luminous, unearthly blue.

The demon abilities of Life Drain and Strength Drain can directly harm will-o-the-wisp POW, possibly lowering it for future attacks. A Fear attack can chase a will-o-the-wisp back to its home plane. Virtues can do their POW in damage with a successful attack, possibly destroying the will-o-the-wisp.

Will-o-the-wisps love to sing, but rarely talk to residents of the Young Kingdoms plane. Sorcerers believe that the gigantic quantities of inert matter in the Young Kingdoms plane fascinates these energy creatures, but genuine knowledge of will-o-the-wisps remains as elusive as the entities themselves.

#### WILL-O-THE-WISP

<i>characteristics</i>	<i>average</i>	
SIZ 1-to-POW	11-12	ARMOR: insubstantiality
INT 3D8+5	18-19	HP: equal to POW
POW 3D8+10	23-24	SKILLS: Music Lore 50%+INT, Persuade 70%+1D10%, Sing 80%+1D10%.
DEX 3D6+2	12-13	
CHA ½INT	9	

Determine damage done by telekinetically-hurled object by adding object's SIZ and will-o-the-wisp's POW, and finding that sum on the accompanying table.

<i>sum of object SIZ and hurler POW</i>	<i>damage roll</i>
1-15	1D10+1
16-30	2D10+2
31-45	3D10+4
46-60	4D10+8
61-75	5D10+16
etc.	etc.

#### Seloroks

Some believe this species to be spawned from the chimerical Oonai. A selorok has the ability to change its physiology and body chemistry in response to damage or to alien environment. Response is quick; the transformation is half-completed in the combat round following the initial need for the change, and complete in the round after that. Since seloroks are stupid beasts, the threat must be obvious and immediate; changes are instinctive.

Gamemasters should freely characterize selorok transformations — the selorok might alter color, or size, or turn into a rock with legs. Descendants of Oonai are under no obligation of consistency, or of showing anything.

A change starts only in the round following a combat round in which the selorok takes damage from a physical attack. In the next round, the selorok deflects damage from the same kind of attack in an amount equal to half of its CON. In the following round, it deflects damage from the same kind of attack in an amount equal to its full CON. Seloroks are vulnerable to magical attacks, but resist poison and poison gas, fire, acid, impact attacks (bricks, clubs, spittoons, etc.), and cutting attacks (swords, daggers, axes, etc.). Treat demon-weapon attacks as occurring in two parts — the selorok can deflect ordinary sword damage, for instance, but not the magical component of the attack. If a selorok falls a very long way, it would have time to respond (as much as it could) to the impact damage which a fall causes.

During its transition round, the selorok is half-its-CON resistant to the old attack type and half-its-CON resistant to the new attack type. A selorok at rest has no unusual



*Will-o-the-Wisp*

resistance to physical damage. Once damaged, the creature requires its POW in minutes to relax; once it feels safe, the selorok requires two combat rounds to return to its naturally-vulnerable state.

Seloroks in the wild look like pink, hairless, fat humans of unusual largeness. They have clawed feet and hands, and vaguely-human, fleshy faces. They forage in family groups; their diet and behavior resemble those of pigs.

#### ADULT SELOROK

<i>characteristics</i>	<i>average</i>	
STR 6D8	27	ARMOR: very special
CON 8D8	36	HP: CON+SIZ-12
SIZ 4D8	18	SKILLS: See 40%
INT 4	4	
POW 4D8+8	26	
DEX 4D8	18	

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Attack</i>	<i>Parry</i>	<i>Damage</i>
Claw	50%	30%	2D6+2D6
Bite	35%	—	1D10+2D6
Stomp	25%	—	1D8+2D6

#### Windwolves

At rest on the ground, these creatures look like unusually-large wolves with silver-blue fur. They are found in small families or in larger packs of 1D20+3 members; characteristically, they build low wooden sleeping platforms, roofs, and windbreaks of fallen trees and branches gathered in the temperate forests they prefer.

When a wind wolf runs, his feet leave the ground and he begins to fly, normally with his legs outstretched and his mouth slightly open. The wind wolf picks up speed quickly; as he does, his body becomes rigid and glass-like, and takes on translucency. Blue-gray ectoplasm streams out far behind the flying wind wolf, like a stratospheric vapor trail. When the wind wolf spots his prey or an enemy, he may emit a low moan or whistle chilling to the listener. The attacking wind wolf, now of great body hardness, generally performs slashing attacks with teeth or claws. Sometimes a wolf deliberately slams into a target to bring it down or stop it from reaching shelter. A wind wolf can catch anything he wants to — his top flight speed is about four times the pace of a running horse.

Wind wolves are fairly intelligent and can understand Common Tongue though they cannot speak it. Their services may be obtained through Lassa or through Roofdrak; such service is rare.

Few ever forget the sight and horrible calls of a pack of wind wolves winding through the aisles of a forest, intent upon a tasty victim.

#### WIND WOLF

<i>characteristics</i>	<i>average</i>	
STR 3D6+6	16-17	ARMOR: 2-point fur on the
CON 4D6+6	20	ground; 12-point shell in the
SIZ 2D6+3	10	air.
INT 2D6+6	13	HP: CON+SIZ-12
POW 3D6	10-11	SKILLS: Dodge 70%+1D10%,
DEX 3D6+6	16-17	Fly 100%, Hide 70%+1D10%,
		Search 70%, See 70%.

<i>weapon</i>	<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>
Slam	DEX x3%	—	*
Bite	55%	—	1D8
Claw	45%	—	1D4+1

\* a successful Slam knocks the target to the ground, doing an incidental 1D6 damage to the target.

#### Unicorns

Unicorns prefer temperate climates and forested foothills. These intelligent, solitude-loving creatures are innately magical and can make fearsome foes, but they are rare in the Young Kingdoms; few fighters ever encounter them.

While alive, a unicorn can do points of damage equal to its POW with its horn, even against demon armor or virtuous armor, and does double damage on a critical hit. A unicorn may reduce the damage done by its horn attack if it wills a limit beforehand. The victim of a successful horn attack is always shed by the organ; normally the unicorn then wheels and tramples the target, doing double damage with a critical hit. The unicorn's bite, kick, rear and plunge, and trample are not magical, and can be lessened or deflected by any sort of protection.

In the Young Kingdoms, unicorns and human maidens do not seem to display any special propensity for or have special significance to one another; perhaps both are so rare that they seldom meet.

While its owner lives, a unicorn's horn never breaks. Ivory in life, the horn grays and embrittles after death. Long ago, sorcerers could remove and keep alive unicorn horns, but that skill long has been lost. A few living horns survive, and their properties are remarkable. The living horn by itself does not make a usable weapon, but several have been hollowed and made into flutes; these instruments can call any equine creature to the player of the flute. When dipped into liquid, a living horn changes color if poison is present — the reaction to the potency of the poison ranges from pale blue to an angry blue-black.

#### ADULT UNICORN

<i>characteristics</i>	<i>average</i>	
STR 4D6+20	34	ARMOR: 5-point enchanted
CON 3D6+6	16-17	hide.*
SIZ 4D6+10	24	HP: CON+SIZ-12
INT 4D6+6	20	SKILLS: Jump 90%, Listen
POW 5D6	17-18	85%, Scent 90%, See 95%,
DEX 4D6+4	18	Swim 95%.

<i>weapon</i>	<i>attack</i>	<i>parry</i>	<i>damage</i>
Horn	95%	95%	POW**
Trample	65%	—	4D6+3D6
Bite	30%	—	1D10+3D6
Kick	30%	—	1D20+3D6
Rear & Plunge	30%	—	2D8+2D6+3D6

\* the hide is protection against demon weapons.

\*\* does this amount of damage against any foe or protection; does double this amount on a critical hit.



# THE VELVET CIRCLE

by Larry DiTillio

*Several months ago a fleet of vessels from varied nations of the Young kingdoms set sail for the Dreaming City of Imrryr. With plans of the sea maze provided by Elric, this fleet was able to fall upon the proud Melnibonean city and ravage it. News of this deed spread far and wide through the Young Kingdoms. For many it was a cause for rejoicing. But for one, the downfall of Imrryr provoked black thoughts of vengeance, vengeance enough to make the Lords of Chaos themselves laugh in warped appreciation. In this scenario, the adventurers will meet this man and unwittingly cast their lot with him, as his plan of revenge enters action.*



The adventurers begin their odyssey in the port city of Ilmar, in the nation of Ilmiora. They have been drawn to Ilmar by strange, recurring dreams. These dreams always end with the phrase, "Bright Dawn, Velvet Circle." (See *the Adventurer Handouts*.)

In an attempt to discover the meaning behind these odd dreams, the adventurers have discovered that the Velvet Circle is the name of a most festive site in Ilmar, a walled-off pleasure district referred to as "the place where

the lawful go to be chaotic." The adventurers can now either make inquiry or actually explore the Circle to discover that "Bright Dawn" is the name of a tavern on Quaffer's Way, the main thoroughfare of the Velvet Circle. (More details on life in the Velvet Circle are found in chapter 7, starting on page 72.)

When an adventurer actually enters the Bright Dawn, the gamemaster should direct his attention to a booth bearing a sign reading "Reserved for Dreamers." Should the adventurer state that he is a dreamer, the owner of the Bright Dawn will be summoned and suggest they share a few pleasant drinks at the table while awaiting other dreamers. No further information is forthcoming from anyone in the tavern. All the adventurers involved in this adventure arrive, as if by happenstance, within a few hours of one another.

Once all the adventurers are together at the table, they are approached by an exotic woman. She is very lovely, and walks with a pronounced limp. She asks, "Are you the ones who dream of the golden wheel?" If all the adventurers answer in the affirmative, she asks them to come to the Dark Pearl at midnight for an audience with her master. If the adventurers ask why, she ventures only that it will answer their dreams. She gives the adventurers directions to the Dark Pearl, but answers no more questions (she actually knows no more answers). She will not give away the name of her master, nor say anything about him. She fears her master too much to violate his orders, no matter how the adventurers bribe, cozen, or threaten her. Her name is Ochina. She is Jharkorian and her limp is due to the fact that her left foot is that of a jungle cat. Since she wears a long gown, a *See roll* is necessary to determine this. She can be followed easily once she leaves the tavern, but doing so gets nothing. She is simply a messenger from the Dark Pearl, and returns there after relaying the message. She will not tarry with the adventurers for any reason outside of them physically forcing her to do so. In such a case, the Bright Dawn's owner will summon his bouncers to expel such rowdies from his establishment.

Should any of the adventurers tell Ochina that they have not dreamed of a golden wheel, that adventurer is not invited to meet with Ochina's master.

It is possible that an adventurer might investigate the Dark Pearl before going to the Bright Dawn. This changes

## ADVENTURER HANDOUTS

You have been having the following recurring dream.

A person in ornate silver armor etched with wyvern sigils walks towards you out of a swirling mist. Dark, gold-flecked eyes peer at you through a visored helm, also in the shape of a wyvern. The figure points to his right and you turn to look. In the air spins a gold octagon. It whirls faster and faster. Its light nearly blinds you, but you can make out indistinct unearthly shapes within the spinning gold. You hear distant demonic laughter. The octagon suddenly shatters and you find yourself in an underground passage. Ahead is a mammoth slab of metal. As you look, it falls toward you. Just before it crushes you, you hear a voice call, "Velvet circle, bright dawn," and then you awaken, drenched with sweat.

You have been having the following recurring dream.

You are in a hot, dry place. You peer over waving hills of sand. In the distance is a waterhole surrounded by colorful tents. Many barbarians in wooden armor stand stiffly around, armed with bows of horn. A hawk screams as it circles the camp. You look up. The sun is a golden octagon and as you watch, the octagon begins to spin faster, faster, faster. A voice you do not know screams a warning, "Beware!" A bow thrums and an arrow hisses through the air. "The Brass Dog holds the key!" shouts another voice. Dark faces rush towards you and more bows twang. "Velvet circle, bright dawn," says a deep voice far away. As the faces draw near, you awake, shaking.

You have been having the following recurring dream.

You go through a door that is not a door. There is a smell of age around you. The light here is strange, sickly, and pinkish. The light comes from a book on a pedestal before you. You go forward knowing that you must obtain this book, but you hear a chilling laugh followed by a growl. You look around, but nothing can be seen. You turn back to the book, but you cannot reach it, for a golden octagon spins in the air before it, faster, faster, faster. The growling grows louder, multiplies. A shape leaps at you. A dog. No, not a dog, a monster! Its jaws gape and it is at your throat. You hear a voice intone ritualistically, "Velvet circle, bright dawn." The jaws close slowly – and you awaken, your heart pounding.

You have been having the following recurring dream.

You are in a small town somewhere. It is hot, and the inhabitants are dressed like desert dwellers. Smiling men in crimson armor walk the streets. They smile at you. You are suddenly standing before a temple of some kind. The doors burst open. It is dark inside, deep and dark. An axe falls somewhere. "Chop!" You hear it. The floor beneath your feet seems covered with blood. A howl issues from the blackness of the temple. The howl grows closer, louder. Then it stops, as a golden octagon fills the doorway. The octagon spins, faster, faster, faster. A voice is heard over the howling. "Velvet circle, bright dawn." The octagon disappears and the howling closes in. You can see it. It's horrible, a beast from Chaos itself. It springs at

you. Its hot breath stings your eyes. You awaken and cannot fall asleep again for a long time.

You have been having the following recurring dream.

You are riding in a forest with others, looking for someone. There is music, strange music, unearthly. And then there is a man with the face of a woman and the strangest musical instrument you've ever seen. He hails you but you understand neither his words nor his music. He leads you somewhere. A tomb, perhaps. There is death here, but the man with the face of a woman seems not to notice or fear it. You feel it, but cannot turn back. Blackness looms ahead; suddenly, out of the blackness a golden octagon whirls towards you, spinning faster, faster, faster. "Velvet circle, bright dawn," says a voice far behind you. You turn to see the voice and there is a man in a silver wyvern-shaped helm. He beckons you and behind him you see a magnificent city burning. You are about to ask him what it means when you wake, puzzled and a bit afraid.

You have been having the following recurring dream.

You are walking down a passageway, a natural passage through a dark cavern. Ahead is a soft roaring. "There is the jade tiger," speaks a voice next to you. You turn and look to see a half-a-man, split down the middle. He turns and his half-mouth smiles. Then he vanishes. Then you look ahead to see the jade tiger hanging in mid-air. Its mouth opens and out comes a golden octagon, which spins faster, faster faster. It blots out the jade tiger. A voice calls, "Velvet circle, bright dawn." And the octagon disappears. The tiger is gone, too, replaced by another face. A woman's face. No, not a woman. As it draws near you see that it is a demon. It reaches for you. You realize that if only you still had the half-a-man with you, you could keep it away. You awaken. You think that you very well might need a drink.

## THE RITUAL OF CHARANTIS

*Provide only to someone who has read The History of Charantis.*

"By this ritual I, Charantis, called forth the spirit of Lord Untar, my father long dead. First must be prepared a small bowl of purest silver, of a depth no greater than the length of a man's small finger and of a diameter no wider than a man's palm. While the silver is still hot, inscribe the Five Ancient Runes which link the Kingdom of the Dead to the Kingdom of the Living." [The runes and their order of inscription are given.]

"When the bowl is prepared, procure a dram of blood from a newborn babe, and one from a man or woman on the verge of death, the feather of a nightbird, the core of a living root of witches' bell, and some token allied with the spirit of he who is to be called back.

"When all is ready, take the bowl and the rest and hie thee to some place free of the voice of humankind, a place where the sun does not touch. At the hour of the wolf, fill the bowl with the ingredients in the precise order that you procured them, whatever that may be. Speak the Runes also, in the order proper, and cry out, 'Far beyond the crescent, gray the sun, black the moon, the road ends and begins, blood, bell, bird, bring *name* back!'

"Then repeat the Runes slowly and continuously and thou shalt see thy beloved spirit once again. Perform this ritual properly and only in the greatest of need. The dead are sacred."

## GAMEMASTER INFORMATION ON DREAMS

**DREAM 1:** this dream foreshadows the meeting with Kolan Tal and warns the adventurer about the deadfall trap at the tomb of Sekis. If the adventurer asks if Kolan Tal looks like the man in his dream, the answer is yes. If he asks if the bronze slab at the tomb looks like the slab in his dream, the answer is again yes.

**DREAM 2:** this dream foreshadows the journey to Ginjada Oasis and the meeting with Akkrat Bey. It is a mild warning to play it cool. If the adventurer asks if Ginjada is reminiscent of his dream, the answer is yes.

**DREAM 3:** this dream foreshadows events at the tomb of Sekis and is intended to make the adventurer wary when there, as well as foreshadow the hunting dogs of the Dharzi. If the adventurer asks if the book is the same as the one in his dreams, the answer is yes.

**DREAM 4:** this dream foreshadows possible events in Fakash and centers them on the temple. If the adventurer asks if the temple of Mardek looks like the one in his dreams, the answer is yes. If he asks about the temple of Vorain or any other temple, the answer is no.

**DREAM 5:** this dream foreshadows the meeting with Ovamilyon, gives a little warning about the tomb of Sekis, and foreshadows the meeting with Kolan Tal and even provides a little background on him. The burning city is of course Imrryr, as any Melnibonean adventurer will recognize. If the adventurer asks if Ovamilyon and his music are the ones from his dream, the answer is yes. Same with Kolan Tal. If he has been to Imrryr, he will recognize the burning city, even if he is not Melnibonean.

**DREAM 6:** this dream foreshadows the meeting with the demoness Tyik Tyva, hints about the Jade Tiger box, and implies what's inside. If the adventurer asks if the demon's cavern looks like the one in his dream, the answer is yes. Tyik Tyva and the Jade Tiger box are also from the dream, but it is doubtful the adventurer will have time to ask about them. If he asks if the half-a-man looks like the man on the medallion, the answer is "possibly."

Adventurers sometimes feel that all their dreams will be made clear in the Velvet Circle. This is of course untrue. However, be prepared for lots of questions and activity such as adventurers trying to find temples or tombs in the Circle. This is good, and means that the players are paying heed to the warnings. It also means they may get a bit sloppy later when the actual warning comes true. It is not necessary to ensure that a character with a specific dream play his dream out. For instance, the adventurer who dreams about the falling slab need not be the one the slab falls on. In fact, he should be able to avoid it. The point is whether he pays enough heed to his dream to warn others or stay out of trouble himself.

Six dreams are provided. If you have more than six players, you'll need to make up more dreams, or split up some of the dreams into two parts. If you play with less than six, you may either not hand out one or more dreams, or cleverly combine two or more dreams into a single dream.

## GAMEMASTER INFORMATION THE KEY TO THE RITUAL OF CHARANTIS

This long and complicated ritual is usable to bring back any spirit gone on the Plane of the Dead. The purpose can be for a consultation of some sort, or just to allow a person to see his Uncle Rascar again. In this scenario, it is the only way to activate the power of the Wheel of Sadric IX and carries great risk.

To perform this ritual, the adventurers must have the pure silver bowl made as described. Then they must obtain a drop of blood from a newborn babe, and one from someone on the verge of dying. This last means that the blood must come from someone who is alive when the blood is donated, but who dies within a day of the ritual's performing. This basically means that a human sacrifice must be performed, unless the blood comes from someone rapidly dying of a disease or who is mortally wounded. The adventurers must get the feather of a nightbird (an owl or nighthawk would do) and the core of the root of the witches' bell plant. The witches' bell grows in moist parts of the Forest of Troos, as well as in a few other forests and fens around the Young Kingdoms. It is rare. Its flowers can be crushed, burned, and inhaled like incense, which puts one in a trance adding 15 percentiles to the user's chance to summon a Demon of Desire, while the trance lasts (about a day). The root core can be brewed into a tea which adds 1D10 to the user's STR for 1D6 hours. One root provides 1D4 doses of this tea. A Plant Lore of 80% is needed to know this plant and its uses. It is possible that witches' bell might be available from a herbalist, but it is quite expensive. The last thing the adventurers will need is a token connected with the spirit to be summoned. This must be an item the dead person was very fond of, or which has some other special link. In the case of Sadric IX, the Wheel functions as this token.

Once all the elements are gathered, the summoner and his companions must gather in a place that the sun can't touch, and where human voices (other than those of the summoners) cannot be heard. At 5 a.m., they begin the ritual as prescribed. At least half an hour of chanting the Runes is needed for the ritual to work. If done properly, the summoner rolls his POW x 5 or less, and if successful, the summoning is a success. The desired spirit shows up and remains on the mortal plane for 1D3 hours.

If the ritual is not a success, it must be done all over again. The ritual's caster loses 2D10 points of POW temporarily. This POW returns after a day. However, if the ritual is used more than once in a month, the POW loss is permanent, though a demon of desire could restore it in this case.

The summoned spirit is immune to harm. It cannot be ordered to do anything. It speaks whatever languages it spoke in life.

nothing. He will still have to meet the other adventurers at the Bright Dawn to get the interview set up. However, should he mention his dreams in the Dark Pearl there is a 65% chance that the fact will be relayed to Kolan Tal or Shirana. In this case, one of the Pearl's employees suggests to the adventurer that some interesting fact about his dream may be discovered at the Bright Dawn. (*The gamemaster should note exactly what the adventurer says, since only mention of a dream relating to a golden wheel gets the appropriate attention.*)

When all the adventurers are gathered together, they may discuss their dreams freely within character. The gamemaster should not allow the players to simply read their dreams from their handouts. Dreams are meant to be vague portents, and the players must interpret these portents within character. The gamemaster should expressly forbid one player from reading another player's handout.

Although the scenario is set up with the assumption that the adventurers are not originally acquainted with each other, it can be played quite well even if they are old comrades. In fact, the adventure runs more smoothly in such a case. If the adventurers are old friends in your game, the players can discuss the significance of their dreams much earlier, though this must still be restricted to in-character discussions.

Having received their terse invitation, the adventurers can do what they please until midnight. They can arrive at the Dark Pearl anytime they please. Shirana will not allow them to lounge around her waiting room for long. The adventurers may, if they wish, partake of some of the outlandish pleasures available at the Dark Pearl while they wait (these pleasures are *extremely* expensive). Or they may simply go elsewhere until midnight. (*Details of the Dark Pearl's layout and the pleasures available are found in the description of the Velvet Circle.*)

No one in the Dark Pearl ever mentions Kolan Tal. Not the patron, nor the proprietor, nor any employee. Who Kolan Tal is and what he wants should remain a complete mystery until the adventurers first encounter him.

Come midnight the adventurers are escorted by Shirana to the room of Kolan Tal. Shirana supplies any form of refreshment the adventurers desire, then leaves, begging them to wait till her master arrives. This wait is ten to fifteen minutes, during which time Kolan Tal is secretly watching the adventurers through a spyhole on the north wall. If someone should steal anything from the room, or go rummaging through Tal's personal effects, Tal will mention it during the interview, springing it on the adventurers at the most advantageous psychological moment. If the adventurers simply sit and chat, he watches and listens for about ten minutes (naturally, any chat about their current situation interests him), then comes to meet them. He is accompanied by his two Silent Ones, hulking eunuch guards who seem to be at least partly Shazaarian. Once he enters the room, he proceeds silently to his chair, sits facing the adventurers, removes his wyvern helm, scans each person slowly, then speaks.

"I am Kolan Tal. And you are the Dreamers, the chosen of the gods. You are here to aid me, for which you will receive the greatest gift possible — immortality. You are to undertake two tasks for me, the first in the Forest of Troos, the second in the village of Fakash. If you lack horses or weapons or provisions, these I shall provide. I leave with the dawn so I require your answer now. Will you fulfill the glorious destiny for which you have been summoned to me?"

At this point the players are likely to have a question or two. Following are Kolan Tal's answers to the most likely questions. The gamemaster must *ad lib* any other replies needed.

*What exactly do these tasks entail?* — "In Troos, a messenger of the gods shall lead you to a book written in an ancient tongue. The nature of this tome is of no concern to you. Your task is simply to obtain it. Once you have done so, you will take the book to Fakash. There you shall seek out a man of far Eshmir. His name is Chunloom. He resides at an inn known as the Black Camel. Show him the book, and give him this."

At this point Kolan Tal gestures to one of his Silent Ones. The guard hands him half of a medallion. The original medallion would have shown a man from the waist up, with the head of a crane. His arm holds a curved sword upraised. Since the medallion is broken, it only shows half the creature's torso and head. (*This medallion is important in Chapter Five, so the gamemaster must be aware of who has it and where they are keeping it.*)

"Chunloom shall show you the other half of this medallion and give to you a jade box, carved in the shape of a tiger. Bring the box and the book back to me and you shall receive the reward of life everlasting."

*What's in the book? What's in the box?* — "As I have stated, the nature of the book is of no concern to you. The same holds true for the box. And a warning. Do not attempt to open the box. It would mean your death."

*Are these tasks dangerous?* — The second should not entail any undue risk. The first may well cost some of you your lives. But is that so much to risk for *eternal* life? Besides, it is only speculation on my part that the book I seek is guarded. It is logical to assume so, but the book is very old, and its guardian may be long gone."

Note to the gamemaster: Kolan Tal really doesn't know what the first task involves so far as danger is concerned. And he is overly optimistic about the ease of the second.

*Why don't you get this book and box yourself?* — I must attend to another task. Its nature is also of no concern to you."

*What did you mean when you called us the chosen of the gods?* — "Exactly what I said. You have been selected by certain gods, who sent you the dreams to bring you here. These are not the lords of Chaos or Law, but beyond those. I myself have only recently been contacted by them, and they have told me that this world of ours heads towards a doom unimaginable. The author of this doom is to be the albino Elric, he who was once emperor of fair Melniboné. He is powerful and the gods of Chaos pander to his whims. But with that book and the contents of that

box I can forestall this doom and bring down the White Wolf. I know not why you in particular have been selected, but take my words as utter truth, you have been. This is why I offer you the gift of eternal life. You can turn me down, aye, but you cannot hold back the doom that threatens this world. Serve me, ye chosen, and we and our world shall live forever."

Note to the gamemaster: Tal is not quite on the up and up here, though he is something of a prophet. In truth, he loyally serves Chaos, and it is they who are responsible for the dreams. Tal is trying to hasten the doom of the Young Kingdoms, as revenge for the destruction of Imrryr.

*Who is this messenger of the gods you spoke of?* – "I know not. He shall manifest himself when the time comes."

*How do you plan to grant us immortality?* – "In my travels in far Eshmir, I happened upon a magical formula. For many decades I sought the ingredients for this elixir, and these ingredients were both rare and dangerous to procure. I succeeded. This elixir will provide you with eternal life."

Naturally the adventurers should be a tad skeptical about this claim. If they seek proof, Tal pulls a bellrope near his chair and a few moments later, Shirana appears. Tal asks any skeptics to draw their weapons and strike her down. If the offer is taken, Shirana calmly offers herself for the slaughter. Adventurers can hack away at her, but she takes no damage. This has nothing to do with immortality, however, but is rather invulnerability. It is that elixir (described on page 59 of *Stormbringer*) which Kolan Tal is really offering. If an adventurer has a magic weapon, Kolan will recognize it and stop that person from striking, exclaiming that the elixir is not proof against magic, and he doesn't want Shirana hurt. Tal figures that eternal life is a better incentive than temporary invulnerability. An adventurer should only be allowed to question the true nature of the elixir if he has heard of the elixir of invulnerability in game context. Adventurers may suggest that Kolan Tal used some form of magic to protect Shirana, but he denies this.

*What more reward can you give us?* – "If the offer of eternal life is not enough for you, what do you wish?"

The adventurers can bargain for money or magic or whatever. Kolan Tal offers 1 Large Gold per man and, if successfully bargained with, will go up to a maximum of 5 Large Gold per man. As for magic, he offers no items, but may offer to teach spells or summonings to the adventurers. The exact nature of any such bargain is up to the gamemaster, based on the adventurer in question and Kolan Tal's own abilities. Tal will not offer anything up front as an act of good faith. The adventurers must accept the bargain as is, or reject it.

*What if we refuse?* – "That is your choice."

Tal calmly allows any adventurers to leave if they refuse his offer. Later that night, he sends a demon of combat after each of them in turn. If the demon fails to kill them all, they're lucky. The scenario then ends here, unless the adventurers decide to follow it up for some other reason. Kolan Tal leaves for Melnibone at dawn; he only makes the offer once.

*Can you tell us what our dreams mean?* – "I do not know what dreams you have had."

If the adventurers discuss their dreams, Tal offers no interpretation, for in truth, he has no idea what the interpretation is. Nor would he tell them if he could. Obviously the dreams bespeak danger and death, so he advises them to be cautious and remember the dreams in their tasks.

*When do you wish us to begin?* – "As soon as possible. Great events are in motion and we must act quickly."

The adventurers can decide when they set out for Troos, but the gamemaster should urge them to tarry in Ilmar no more than a few days.

This should cover most of the adventurers' questions and give guidelines toward answering any other possible queries. Once the adventurers have agreed to the task set for them, Kolan Tal bids them goodnight and tells them that Shirana can handle any details needing to be arranged, such as transportation, weapons, etc. He does not provide any magical assistance. Nor does he talk about his personal life, commenting that his identity is of no concern to them. But naturally it is of interest to the gamemaster. Here is information concerning Kolan Tal's abilities, background, plans, and plots.

#### KOLAN TAL, Melnibonean adventurer

STR 17            ARMOR: demon half-plate with CON 70.  
 CON 16            Hit Points: 19  
 SIZ 15            SKILLS: Climb 24%, Dodge 48%, Jump 24%,  
 INT 17            Hide 57%, Swim 85%, Balance 26%, Listen  
 POW 23            85%, Scent 65%, Search 75%, See 83%, Taste  
 DEX 18            55%, Track 35%, Credit 75%, Persuade 85%,  
 CHA 18            Ambush 45%, Conceal 35%, Hide 55%, Move  
                          Quietly 77%, Evaluate Treasure 80%, First  
 Aid 30%, Make Map 75%, Memorize 68%, Music Lore 15%, Nav-  
 igate 38%, Plant Lore 75%, Poison Lore 65%

SUMMON ELEMENTALS: Air 73%, Earth 95%, Fire 57%,  
 Water 96%

SUMMON DEMONS: Combat 94%, Desire 58%, Knowledge 96%,  
 Possession 59%, Protection 79%, Travel 76%

OTHER SUMMONINGS: Strassha, Grome, SkaraKwa (Lord of  
 Wyverns)

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Battle Axe	95%	90%	1D8+2+1D6
Melnibonean Bow	75%	65%	2D6+1+1D4
Falchion	68%	65%	1D6+2+1D6

Kolan Tal is a Melnibonean Lord, a powerful sorcerer and warrior, and a loyal servant of the gods of Chaos. When the forces of the Young Kingdoms were ravaging the city of Imrryr, Kolan Tal was far off, seeking one of five special items. These five items were five golden Melnibonean Wheels. Each Melnibonean Emperor produced one such wheel in his or her lifetime (except Elric, whose reign was too short), and the actual value of these wheels (of which there are 427) is incalculable. However, Tal is interested in five specific wheels, to wit: the Wheel of Terhali, the Green Empress; the Wheel of Iuntric X, the father of Terhali; the Wheel of Kahan VII, horror-haunted 329th emperor of Melnibone; the Wheel of Ormeyo XV, and the Wheel of Sadric IX. Kolan Tal is a great scholar and in his study of the various emperors he learned that these five wheels each possessed powers useful for the study of the Planes of Chaos and its gods. He also learned that if he could obtain all five, he could possibly use them

to open a bridge between Chaos and the Young Kingdoms, a bridge even the Lords of Law would be helpless to close.

Kolan Tal's motivation when he began his quest 15 years ago was simply scholarly. His only desire was to return to the Dragon Isles with his Wheels and devote the rest of his days to the study of Chaos. At the same time Tal, much like Elric, was interested in viewing first-hand what the peoples of the Young Kingdoms were like. He traveled far and wide in search of the Wheels, coming at last to far Eshmir where he found the first, that of Sadric IX. Finding and obtaining were two different tasks, however. The Wheel of Sadric IX was possessed by a powerful sorcerer of Eshmir, a worshiper of Kakatal named Jagun Amsha, also referred to as the Face of Flame. Amsha prized the Wheel highly and would not surrender it. Demons of Desire could not steal the Wheel, for all the Wheels were heavily wardpacted against such attempts. So Kolan Tal began to plot, a subtle and intricate plot in which a member of Amsha's staff was won over to his side. This man was Chunloom, whom the adventurers are to meet in Fakash.

Before the plan could be put into operation, Kolan Tal received a prophetic vision which showed him the destruction of Imrryr and Elric's part therein. Outraged, Tal tried to make his way back to prevent this, only to be thwarted mysteriously again and again. He arrived too late to save his beloved Imrryr, but not too late to plan revenge on the Young Kingdoms and Elric. In ruined Melnibone he found none other than Dr. Jest, the Royal Torturer (Moorcock created this deliciously bizarre character, but never told us what happened to him in the siege. In this scenario, it is theorized that he survived.) The good Doctor agreed to help Kolan Tal, but warned him that Elric was mightier than when he sat on the throne of Melnibone. Tal decided that the best way to deal with him was to continue his quest for the Wheels. He could then use this power to bridge Chaos and the Young Kingdoms; Chaos would destroy the upstart invaders of Melnibone, and Tal himself, with power from the Lords of Chaos, would finish Elric.

Tal's first step was to find himself an inconspicuous base of operations. He chose the Dark Pearl. Since Ilmar is a port city, this enabled him to keep track of events all over the Young Kingdoms. Tongues are loose in the Velvet Circle, and law is not prized. Hence Tal became privy to many a secret uttered by those who partook of the decadent delights of the Dark Pearl. Meanwhile in Eshmir, hundreds of miles away, Chunloom stole the Wheel of Sadric IX. Chunloom also learned of a book that would help Kolan Tal use the Wheel and sent this information to his Melnibonean comrade. They decided that Tal would somehow locate the tome, deliver it to Fakash, and that Chunloom would pass on the Wheel. Kolan Tal managed to contact a minor Duke of Chaos, and inveigled him into sending dreams to suitable messengers, who could gain the tome and the Wheel while Kolan Tal took on other necessary labors.

Kolan Tal is a sorcerer of the 4th level. The Wyvern is something of a totem to Kolan Tal. He possesses a Drag-onstone of POW 24 (described on page 18 of *Storm-bringer*) on a silver chain which is always on his person.

Bound into his ornate silver half-plate is *Shungosa*, a demon of protection. When meeting with Tal, adventurers each may try one See roll at 15 percentiles chance reduction. Successful adventurers briefly glimpse a baleful red eye which appears in the elaborate filigree of the armor, then disappears. This glimpse should hint to the spotter that Tal wears demon armor. In a fire-opal ring on his left hand, Tal has a bound fire elemental. He always travels with Uour and Nargab, the two Silent Ones. They are utterly loyal to him. They bear demon blades.

#### SHUNGOSA, demon of protection in armor form

CON 70 POW 39 SIZ 15

#### UOUR, Silent One

STR 16 ARMOR: 1D6-1 leather  
 CON 14 Hit Points: 15  
 SIZ 13 SKILLS: Dodge 62%, Ambush 68%, Ride  
 INT 10 75%, Move Quietly 65%, Hide 45%, Jump  
 POW 11 58%  
 DEX 16  
 CHA 8

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Demon Scimitar	82%	80%	1D8+1+1D6+4D6

#### UOUR'S DEMON SCIMITAR

STR 40 CON 80 SIZ 2 CHA 2

#### NARGAB, Silent One

STR 14 ARMOR: 1D6-1 leather  
 CON 16 Hit Points: 20  
 SIZ 16 SKILLS: Dodge 74%, Ambush 88%, Ride  
 INT 12 85%, Move Quietly 55%, Hide 35%, Jump  
 POW 9 48%  
 DEX 14  
 CHA 10

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Demon Scimitar	93%	82%	1D8+1+1D6+4D6

#### NARGAB'S DEMON SCIMITAR

STR 40 CON 80 SIZ 2 CHA 2

In his personality, Kolan Tal is a true Melnibonean. He enjoys decadent pleasures, despises all other peoples of the Young Kingdoms, and feels no compunction in using them to get what he wants. He is subtle, but an occasional proudly-arrogant note appears in his voice as he speaks. He is a handsome individual, cruelly good-looking with dark eyes flecked with gold and long dark hair streaked with gray. He is tall of stature and dark of complexion. He has crossed many deserts and wind-swept mountains. His skin is leathery and lined. Those who cross him die, either by the edge of his finely-worked axe or one of his powerful summonings. Tal naturally favors Melniboneans, and if one of the adventurers is of that race, Kolan Tal directs most of his remarks to that person. Depending on such an adventurer's reactions, Tal may even confess his real plan to his fellow Melnibonean, taking him into his confidence. The gamemaster should not let other adventurers in on this unless the Melnibonean character agrees to share what he has learned. Obviously, an Agent of Law should want nothing to do with this plan. If one of the adventurers is such an agent, the gamemaster must be extremely careful in what Kolan Tal says.



The adventurers can take any route they please into the Forest. Obviously, they must travel on the blind faith that the messenger of the gods promised by Kolan Tal will show up sooner or later. The gamemaster must decide for himself how long he wishes to let the adventurers wander aimlessly around Troos, waiting for this messenger. If so desired, a random encounter table can be used to lengthen this portion of the scenario (such an encounter table can be found in *The Stormbringer Companion*, published by Chaosium).

The Forest of Troos is thick, vast, sprawling, and filled with magically-prompted changes in vegetation and animal life. It is an appropriate setting for almost anything in the way of surprises that gamemasters might plan to or suddenly decide to unleash. The terrain is mostly level or rolling, and there are few significant landmarks by which adventurers can orient themselves. Even rivers do not seem larger, smaller, swifter, or deeper in particular. If there are sorcerers among the adventurers, they will (with appropriate See, Scent, Plant Lore, etc., rolls) notice useful flowers, herbs, mosses, and leaves which can be gathered and saved for later use. If the gamemaster wishes, he might let the party pick up a few valuable lichens or barks on the way, if their cash is low.

At the time and place chosen by the gods (i.e., the gamemaster) the adventurers hear a very strange sound, an eerily-pitched string-like sound akin to a cat with its tail on fire or a hummingbird's orgasm (depending on your taste for dissonance). This soon gives way to other sounds; sighing flutes, a piano-drum combination, seven brass cymbals, a bass vibrato, dueling kotos, all in a whirlwind frenzy of the oddest music Young Kingdom ears have ever heard. As the adventurers approach the source of this musical curiosity, they espy a most amazing fellow. This character's face is feminine, as thin and delicate as a fashion model's. The hair framing this face is pastel green with streaks of gold and silver. The eyes are deep amber, the lips a soft-molded line of purple. The body, however, is definitely masculine, thick, muscular, and formidable. This curious mixture is attired in a short, tunic-like robe which flows constantly between shades of white and gold. On his head is an extremely wide-brimmed hat of white, around which is a band of pink crystal

droplets. His feet are encased in knee-high gray boots which occasionally steam and smoke. A curious weapon hangs at his side. It seems to be an elongated "U" of crystal. A hilt of silver-speckled gray stone is located at the base of the "U," forming a strange, two-bladed sword. In the center of the weapon's hilt is another droplet, identical to those worn on his hat. The weapon is not on a belt of any type, nor in a scabbard. It simply hangs by his side as if by magic.

This apparition's name is Ovamilyon. The sounds the adventurers hear come from his biomyon, an instrument looking something like a sitar with clusters of weird flesh-like globes at either end. Its strings are thin scarlet filaments, along a bluish-metal shaft. He hails the adventurers when he spots them, and stops playing, but he does not rise. He lays his biomyon down and speaks.

"Hail, friends! I have spent considerable time awaiting your arrival. You are on some form of quest, I take it? Of course — why else would I be here? No need to tell me the nature of your quest, unless you wish to do so. Shall we be off? I've important business back in Shangasdrian."

The adventurers may have some questions. Ovamilyon will be glad to answer them, though he is a bit impatient to get underway. He is quite sociable, and inordinately fond of women. He approaches any female in the party with outlandish flattery and flamboyant hand-kissing, eye-batting, etc. He is always polite, but far more responsive to women than men. Here follow Ovamilyon's answers to the most likely questions.

*Are you the messenger of the gods we were told to expect?* — "Messenger of the gods? I suppose one could say so. Though be it a whim of deities or mere happenstance I cannot truthfully say. If you told me exactly which gods you have in mind ...?"

If the adventurers decide to elaborate and mention the Lords of Law and Chaos, they discover that Ovamilyon hasn't the foggiest notion of these concepts or deities. Nor is he at all familiar with the Young Kingdoms nor any of their residents. The name Kolan Tal means nothing to him.

*Who are you, and how did you come here?* — "My name, dear ones, is Ovamilyon, greatest bard of Shangasdrian, City of Bards. How I came here, I haven't a clue. One minute I was laboring on a torrid love ballad for a lady of most statuesque proportions, the next (Ovamilyon now plays a weird chord on his biomyon — *Garoung!*), here I was in this bizarre forest. Of course, it isn't the first time. Over the years I've traveled to many an odd world to help many such as you. Whether the forces that compel me are good, evil, or merely blessed with insane humor, I know not. I know only that once I arrive, it is my task to point some person or persons the way to the object of their quest. And since I am in a hurry to return home, I suggest we begin. These sendings are deuced inconvenient."

*Where is Shangasdrian?* — "On the world of Danderos, a sphere I believe none of you are familiar with. It is a most wonderful city, dedicated to the scribing of music of

a sphere I believe none of you are familiar with. It is a most wonderful city, dedicated to the scribing of music of all sorts. I hunger for its shining streets and music-filled plazas no matter where I travel. Shall we proceed?"

*What do you know about Kolan Tal and this book we are to obtain for him?* – "Kolan who? A book is it this time? Well, you are seeking it, not I. How should I know anything about it?"

At this point it should be clear that Ovamilyon knows nothing whatsoever about their task or anything about the Young Kingdoms. They can ask further questions about his home plane, and he can fill them in, but with increasing impatience to get on with the search. The gamemaster should improvise any answers needed based on the above information.

When the adventurers decide to proceed on their search, Ovamilyon tells them all to stand quietly around him, concentrating on their quest. Slowly he plucks the strings of his biomyn until the instrument answers with a whistling sound. Ovamilyon then seems to enter a trance and begins to walk, his head pressed close to his instrument. His hands idly pluck the strings or caress one of the globes as he moves. He can be spoken to, but his answers are abrupt and often irrelevant.

How long it takes him to get to where the adventurers want to go is up to the gamemaster. If the gamemaster wishes to have the adventurers encounter dangers in the Forest of Troos while accompanying Ovamilyon, make sure the adventurers realize that Ovamilyon cannot take action while in the midst of his trance state and must be protected. Ovamilyon eventually reaches the destination – the Tomb of Sekis, described later.

#### OVAMILYON, bard of Shangasdrian

STR 18	ARMOR: 1D20 force field while holding sword.
CON 24	
SIZ 16	Hit Points: 28
INT 20	SKILLS: Dodge 58%, Ride 34%, Listen 69%, Orate 85%, Persuade 75%, Sing 99%, Move Quietly 63%, Evaluate Treasure 78%, Memorize 95%, Music Lore 98%
POW 20	
DEX 15	
CHA 17	

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Disarm	Damage
Ionic Sword	95%	95%	75%	3D6+1D6

NOTES: this weapon, a mixture of science and sorcery, is only wieldable by Ovamilyon. Anyone else attempting to touch it receives a shock that literally throws the hand off the hilt or blade and delivers 1D3 of burn damage. This weapon can affect demon armor, and behaves as if it had a POW of 35 when so doing.

When the weapon is held in Ovamilyon's hand, it generates a sparkling force field which works just like armor.

Ovamilyon can use either his Parry or Disarm skill in any given melee round. He usually uses his Disarm skill against human foes. A successful Disarm means that Ovamilyon's enemy has been deprived of his weapon (this skill is useless vs. unarmed targets).

Ovamilyon is one of those hapless souls who is blessed or perhaps cursed by forces beyond himself to play a minor role in cosmic dramas throughout a multitude of worlds. He has become used to being periodically "bleeped" from his home plane of Danderos to lead someone to something. He faces his odd lifestyle with a shrug and a song.

His unusual appearance, melding a very feminine face with a burly masculine body, often causes him problems in the planes he visits, particularly when his womanizing streak takes over. His voice ranges from a squeaking falsetto to a deep bass when raised in song. His speaking voice is predominantly masculine and very rich and golden.

His personality inspires trust, and he can be trusted. If attacked by those he has come to help, he defends himself, trying to avoid killing if possible. As he is from another dimension, a demon of knowledge can tell the adventurers nothing about him. His odd weapon and musical instrument are usable only by him, for they are attuned to his life's energies. The biomyn itself is partially organic – a life-form.

Besides sword and biomyn, Ovamilyon also carries three small insects which look something like a cross between a slug and a beetle. These are called *potorinos*, and they are translation devices. Potorinos work in the following manner; the potorino is placed against the forehead, whereupon the little bugger immediately burrows into the brain. This process is completely painless, though a small pricking sensation is felt. Of course, having a bug bore into your skull can cause a little consternation, but Ovamilyon assures all that no harm is possible. Once the potorino is in place, any words heard or text read appears as if written or spoken in the person's own tongue. The potorino dies in 3D6 hours after implanting itself in a human brain. It neatly dissolves and seals the hole in the forehead, all good as new. When it dies, the host can no longer translate anything. Ovamilyon does not require the devices in the Young Kingdoms, due to a sorcerous/scientific implant which works on many planes, including this one. But he may offer the potorinos to the adventurers if they wish help in translating the book they seek.

Ovamilyon also bears 5 small crystal drops. These drops heal 2D6 points of damage if placed on a wound, as well as sealing the wound. They also draw out up to 2D6 points of poison. Once used, the drop changes color from clear to a pleasant green, and becomes useless for healing. Ovamilyon gives these crystals freely to anyone who asks, but does not mention them until they are needed. He always gives one or more to any female who strikes his fancy (and all females do). The drops are beautiful and have a liquid feel to them. If he gives a drop as a present, Ovamilyon will not mention the object's healing properties unless specifically asked if the drop has any special powers.

Ovamilyon drinks in the atmosphere and information of the world around him, storing it in his memory for use in future songs. He is a most cheerful person and should be run flamboyantly and with just a trace of mystery. Remember also that Ovamilyon knows absolutely nothing about the Young Kingdoms or their workings.

#### The Tomb of Sekis

When the gamemaster decides that Ovamilyon has led the adventurers on a long-enough journey, the biomyn begins playing an exotic passage over and over. Ovamilyon shouts "Ah-ho! We're there!" and comes out of his trance. He

rushes forward through the trees, his instrument still playing. When the adventurers follow, they see a 4-foot-high, 30-foot-across mound of earth in a clearing. The mound is blackened and nasty-looking; nothing grows on it. Atop the mound are four ancient stone pillars, one of which has toppled over. The pillars are eight feet high. All the pillars are covered with carvings and symbols in the tongue of the long-extinct Dharzi.

Only a character who can read High Melnibonean has any chance of reading these symbols. His chances of success are equal to *half* his normal High Melnibonean percentage. The inscription states that the pillars stand atop the tomb of the renegade Dharzi Lord Sekis, that he is buried alive here for eternity, and an eternal curse shall be levied on any who dare disturb his rest. Ovamilyon may offer one of his potorinos to an adventurer seeking to translate the symbols, if he understands that this is what the adventurer is attempting.

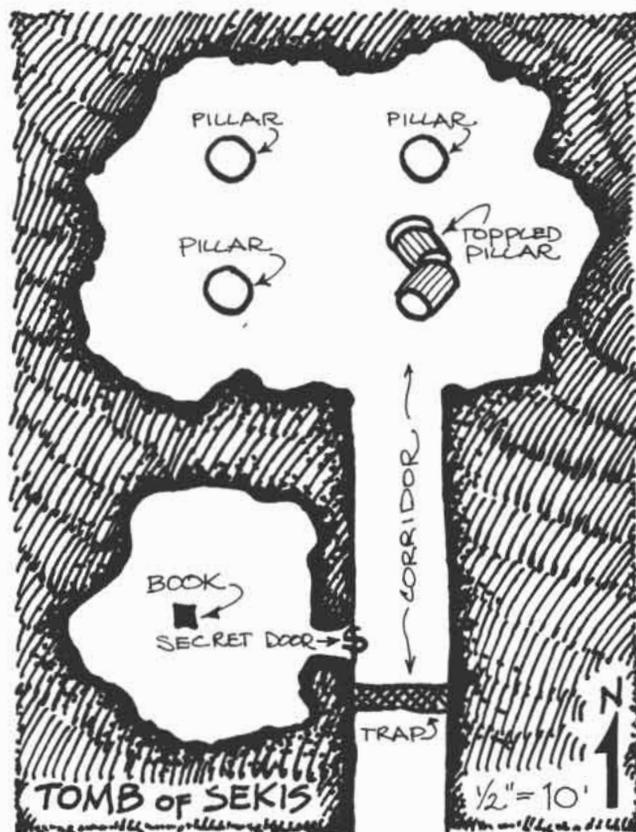
Ovamilyon stands blithely on the center of the mound and smiles, for the characters have reached their goal, and soon he will be back in his beloved Sangasdrilan. He says as much. It is now up to the adventurers to enter the tomb. Ovamilyon will not help in this. His only task now is to wait until the adventurers have what they are looking for, then disappear.

The entrance to the tomb lies beneath the toppled pillar. A successful Search roll is needed to spot it. Once found, the pillar must be moved aside to get to the hole, a task requiring at least 36 points of STR. Once the pillar is moved aside, a hole big enough for even the largest man to climb down is exposed. The hole drops straight down 6 feet to a set of stairs leading down. The stairs are merely packed earth and go down 10 feet to a corridor. This corridor is about 10 feet wide and high and leads straight ahead for about 25 feet. The air smells strongly of earth. It is dark. The adventurers will need a light source. The sides of the corridor are also dirt, as is the floor. There are no visible signs of support timbers. If the characters try, they'll find that they can indeed burrow through the walls rather easily.

At the end of the corridor is an immense bronze door, 9 feet high and 9 feet wide. A single large ring is in the very center of the door. More Dharzi symbols are cast into the door's surface. If translated, they read, "To those who disturb the dead, let death come."

The door is a death-trap, not really a door at all, but merely a heavy slab of bronze, a deadfall. If the ring is pulled heavily, the slab simply drops forward (always forward, as it rests against a solid wall). The "door" smashes down covering the last three yards of the corridor. Anyone in this area is categorically killed — squashed beneath a ton of bronze.

A kind-hearted gamemaster may allow characters a DEX x 5 roll to jump out of harm's way. This roll should be modified by circumstances. For instance, if the characters are bunched up before the door, the roll should only be DEX x 3 for those in the front. This trap can easily be avoided, if the adventurer with the appropriate dream recognizes it and warns everyone. This trap cannot kill Ovamilyon, because he is staying on the surface, waiting for his trip home, which will arrive when the adventurers find their book.



Once the door is dealt with, remaining adventurers can search for the true tomb entrance, which is located directly to the right of the bronze door and consists of a secret door of metal covered by dirt. Any character making a successful Search roll in this area brushes away some dirt and finds the metal. Another Search roll is then needed to find the hidden switch. This is 6 feet up on the wall to the right of the door and looks like a root growing out of the earth. When pulled, the adventurers hear an ungodly rasping of ancient gears, and the door slowly slides to the right, opening the tomb cavern. The air which wafts out is musty and awful, but not dangerous. A sickening pink glow oozing from a pedestal 20 feet from the door is immediately visible. The glow comes from a closed book atop the pedestal. It is bound in a blackish material (in fact, human skin). The glow barely illuminates a cavern of gray stone, the ceiling of which rises high into shadow. The cavern is irregular and encompasses an area roughly 40 feet in diameter. The pedestal is in the center.

As soon as the adventurers open the door (which is only wide enough for one person at a time to stand in) they hear a high-pitched cackle that sends a shiver of fear through even the bravest. From somewhere in the cavern (the exact location cannot be pinpointed) a voice is heard: "Welcome, strangers. What do you seek?" The voice is heard in the native tongue of all adventurers.

The adventurers can answer the voice, which is that of Sekis himself, but by no means does Sekis show himself. If they merely race for the book and try to grab it, they are hurled backwards by an eldritch force. This force is akin to being swatted by a giant hand, and even demons cannot resist it. Adventurers are thrown against a wall and

akin to being swatted by a giant hand, and even demons cannot resist it. Adventurers are thrown against a wall and must succeed in a CON x5 roll or be stunned for 1D6 rounds. If the CON roll succeeds, there is no effect. The force otherwise does no damage. This force should give ample evidence to the adventurers that the book cannot be taken easily. If the adventurers try to negotiate with the unseen voice, he tries to lure them all into the cavern, saying anything he thinks will lead to that desired result. The adventurers can leave, reclosing the door, but they then will not have fulfilled their mission.

When the adventurers do enter the cavern, Sekis gives out another terrible cackling laugh and speaks an incantation in Dharzi. This incantation summons 6 Hunting Dogs of the Dharzi. The animals leap right out of the solid walls of the cavern, from about 10 feet up. The adventurers must each attempt a Dodge roll. If it fails, that person has been knocked off his feet and cannot parry the subsequent beak/claws attack. A knocked-down adventurer must succeed in a STR vs. STR roll against the dog to throw it off and rise.

In an attempt to lure the adventurers into the cavern, Sekis will only summon one dog per adventurer in the room. He summons another, up to his maximum of 6, each time another adventurer enters to help his comrades. If all the adventurers enter, he simply summons all 6 dogs at once. He himself enters the fray only when all the intruders are engaged or if he can summon no more dogs.

At all times, whether or not in melee, he remains hidden, laughing in his horrible choked cackle. This laugh is so hideous that all the adventurers find their nerves on edge and, and are thus less competent. The chances for success in all skills is reduced by 5 percentiles while Sekis is laughing. This effect can be overcome by the music of Ovamilyon. If an adventurer runs back upstairs to get Ovamilyon, he will come down and strum a tune on his biomyon which cancels out the effect of Sekis' laugh. If the adventurers are hard-pressed by the Dharzi dogs, Ovamilyon may possibly forget his music and join in the fray, at the gamemaster's option. With him on their side, the adventurers should easily be able to take on the hunting dogs and Sekis.

#### HUNTING DOGS OF THE DHARZI

##### Dog One

STR 11      ARMOR: none  
 CON 17      Hit Points: 15  
 SIZ 7      SKILLS: Track 90%, Search 25%, Climb  
 INT 2      50%, Dodge 45%, Jump 65%  
 POW 10  
 DEX 17

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Claws (2)	20%	05%	1D8+1
Beak	25%	—	1D6+1

##### Dog Two

STR 14      ARMOR: none  
 CON 10      Hit Points: 10  
 SIZ 10      SKILLS: Track 90%, Search 25%, Climb  
 INT 5      50%, Dodge 43%, Jump 58%  
 POW 12  
 DEX 10

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Claws (2)	20%	05%	1D8+1
Beak	25%	—	1D6+1

##### Dog Three

STR 11      ARMOR: none  
 CON 15      Hit Points: 12  
 SIZ 6      SKILLS: Track 90%, Search 25%, Climb  
 INT 4      50%, Dodge 48%, Jump 53%  
 POW 17  
 DEX 15

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Claws (2)	20%	05%	1D8+1
Beak	25%	—	1D6+1

##### Dog Four

STR 10      ARMOR: none  
 CON 15      Hit Points: 14  
 SIZ 8      SKILLS: Track 90%, Search 25%, Climb  
 INT 6      50%, Dodge 41%, Jump 68%  
 POW 15  
 DEX 15

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Claws (2)	20%	05%	1D8+1
Beak	25%	—	1D6+1

##### Dog Five

STR 14      ARMOR: none  
 CON 18      Hit Points: 15  
 SIZ 6      SKILLS: Track 90%, Search 25%, Climb  
 INT 2      50%, Dodge 47%, Jump 46%  
 POW 17  
 DEX 18

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Claws (2)	20%	05%	1D8+1
Beak	25%	—	1D6+1

##### Dog Six

STR 12      ARMOR: none  
 CON 13      Hit Points: 11  
 SIZ 7      SKILLS: Track 90%, Search 25%, Climb  
 INT 3      50%, Dodge 44%, Jump 55%  
 POW 14  
 DEX 13

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Claws (2)	20%	05%	1D8+1
Bite	25%	—	1D6+1

If the adventurers try to run away from the hunting dogs, Sekis will let them flee. However, he will send the hunting dogs after them to track them down and kill them the next day. He cannot come himself, of course.

#### SEKIS, Renegade Lord of the Dharzi

STR 6      ARMOR: none  
 CON 10      Hit Points: 2  
 SIZ 1      SKILLS: Dodge 85%, Hide 99%, Jump  
 INT 18      95%, Climb 98%  
 POW 18      SUMMONINGS: Dharzi Hunting Dogs 100%  
 DEX 18  
 CHA 0

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Bite	75%	—	1D4 + poison

Sekis is a former lord of the Dharzi who was magically punished for attempting to steal the book which rests in this cavern. The nature of this punishment becomes apparent the moment the adventurers spot Sekis. In the days of the Dharzi, this site was not a buried earthen mound, but the lords of the Dharzi could visit it to peruse the book. Now, the Dharzi have gone and only Sekis remains.

Sekis is only a head, with four spiny, spider-like appendages and large, razor-sharp teeth. He scuttles about the cavern, on walls, floor, and ceiling, hiding in the shadows, suddenly leaping from hiding, jumping to a foe's shoulder, leg, or head, and biting.

His bite is venomous, injecting a spasmodic which causes the victim to go into an uncontrollable fit for 1D20 minutes. The venom's potency is 20. If the victim resists it with his CON, he withstands it and does not go into spasms. The hunting dogs will immediately stop attacking anyone that has fallen into a fit. If they win the fight, they can eat him anyway. In any case, the poisoned character is no further threat in this fight.

Sekis is quick and sneaky and does not go against a foe face-to-face, always attacking from hiding and leaping away afterwards, using Jump and Hide to escape scrutiny. He is doomed to keep attacking until all intruders are killed.

To get to the book, Sekis must be slain. When this is done, the pink glow ends and the book can be taken. As long as Sekis is alive, the book is untouchable. Remember that the pink glow is the only real source of light in the cavern, and that it becomes pitch-black when Sekis dies, unless one of the adventurers has cleverly kept a torch burning. Sekis is not that difficult to kill, but his presence and his ability to summon the hunting dogs should make for a hair-raising experience for the adventurers.

Since the way out is straight-forward, have them make Balance or other rolls on the way, so that the presence of shadowy forces is implied.

### The Book

When Sekis and his dogs are done for, the adventurers can take the book for which they came. This book is in the tongue of the Dharzi; anyone wishing to read it must receive a successful skill roll either half or less of his Read High Melnibonean, or use one of Ovamilyon's potorinos. Ovamilyon will offer their use if the adventurers make it plain that they wish to read the book. The book, called *The History of Charantis*, chronicles the life of a great Dharzi lord named Charantis. The long and pedantic text fascinates only the scholarly. Halfway through the book is a meticulous account of a ritual by means of which the spirit of one dead can be called back to the mortal plane for consultation. This is the information for which Kolan Tal wants the book. If the adventurers read the book, the ritual is found only after ten hours of reading. An adventurer merely browsing through the book must receive a successful POW x1 roll every 1D4 hours of browsing to stumble across the ritual. Details of the ritual are found in the Adventurer Handouts.

Once Ovamilyon has seen the adventurers secure the book, they have about 5 minutes of his time to get one of the potorinos. Then he begins to fade and with a last strum of the biomyn he bids them adieu, disappearing back to his own dimension.

Other than the ritual of raising the dead (called the Ritual of Charantis), the book is valuable only to collectors and scholars studying the Dharzi. However, such pedants would pay a healthy sum for it, up to a maximum of 10,000 Large Bronzes. An adventurer can realize this by means of a successful Evaluate Treasure roll. Of course, selling the book takes time, and constitutes a betrayal of Kolan Tal.

When the adventurers have their book and Ovamilyon has vanished back to his own dimension, they can move on to Fakash and their meeting with Chunloom.

Depending on the amount of damage the adventurers have sustained, you may wish them to camp overnight or for several days near the tomb. Minor adventures may be called for while one or more adventurers heal.



As the adventurers wend their way out of the Forest of Troos, toward the town of Fakash, along the road they hear the harsh laughter of several men and the pitiful shrieks of a young girl. These sounds come from somewhere in front of them (around a bend in the road if the adventurers are on horseback or afoot, or from beneath the trees if the adventurers are traveling via air).

If the adventurers investigate, they see a brightly-painted one-horse wagon halted in a clearing. The wagon is festive-looking, painted in dark reds, golds, and rich greens. The horse that pulls it is quite large, the size of a Clydesdale, and is colored an odd violet hue. Three rough-looking louts in motley armor are assaulting a raven-haired girl of about 17. Their vile intents are obvious and will swiftly be realized if no one interferes. Nearby, an old woman sprawls on the ground, evidently dazed by a brutal blow.

If the adventurers charge into the situation, one of the louts bops the girl on the head and she falls unconscious. Then they draw their weapons and the fight is on. The gamemaster can at his option increase the number of villains to give the adventurers a better fight. These extra opponents can be inside the wagon looking for loot.

If the adventurers approach quietly and cautiously, they can see more detail. The men are all Vilmirans, one (Briago) a bearded handsome man with a broadsword, wearing half-plate and helm; the second (Ardrong) a huge brutish dolt with a scarred face, a battle axe on his belt, and leather armor; the third (Lambros) a thin blond boy no older than 16 himself, but with a nasty manic look to him. Lambros bears a shortsword and several daggers and is also in leather. The old woman and girl look like Eshmirans. Three horses are tethered to a tree near the wagon. The men are intent on rape and only take heed of the adventurers if they interfere.

### THREE THUGS

#### BRIAGO, Vilmirian brigand

STR 13      ARMOR: 1D8 helm and half-plate  
 CON 10      Hit Points: 10  
 SIZ 11      SKILLS: Dodge 53%, Ambush 85%, Move  
 INT 13      Quietly 44%, Hide 58%, Ride 76%, Jump 58%  
 POW 8  
 DEX 13  
 CHA 15

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Broadsword	56%	64%	1D8+1
Dagger	47%	47%	1D4+2

#### ARDRONG, Vilmirian brigand

STR 16      ARMOR: 1D6-1 leather  
 CON 11<sup>10</sup>      Hit Points: 17<sup>16</sup>  
 SIZ 18      SKILLS: Dodge 37%, Ambush 20%, Move  
 INT 6      Quietly 19%, Hide 25%, Ride 54%, Jump 13%  
 POW 7  
 DEX 7<sup>5</sup>  
 CHA 3

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Battle Axe	61%	33%	1D8+2+1D6

#### LAMBROS, Vilmirian brigand

STR 9      ARMOR: 1D6-1 leather  
 CON 9      Hit Points: 10  
 SIZ 13      SKILLS: Dodge 35%, Ambush 52%, Move  
 INT 10      Quietly 36%, Hide 48%, Ride 83%, Jump 49%  
 POW 10  
 DEX 9  
 CHA 10

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Shortsword	45%	55%	1D6+1
Thrown Dagger (5)	50%	—	1D4+2
Dagger	25%	23%	1D4+2

All that can be seen has now been seen. The adventurers must decide now whether to interfere, watch, or move off.

Briago is the leader of the group and can be negotiated with, if the adventurers approach easily and with no overtly hostile intent. He even can be bought off. Ardrong and Lambros listen to him, but Lambros is psychotic, appearing pliable one moment and going into a berserk killing frenzy the next. If Briago thinks the adventurers can beat him, he's likely to flee. If he himself is killed, Ardrong is 85% likely to flee and Lambros is 35% likely to flee. If Lambros doesn't flee, he goes into a frenzy and tries to kill everyone around him, including Ardrong.

If Briago thinks he can take the adventurers, he'll try to lure them a bit closer and then give an inaudible signal

to his companions to attack, taking the adventurers by surprise. If he is uncertain of his chances, Briago will play it by ear. Much depends on how the adventurers approach the situation.

If the adventurers sit back and watch, like jackals, all three men eventually violate and kill the girl, finish off the old woman, burn the wagon, and ride away. The adventurers should exercise some heroic decency before this happens. If they don't, I submit that they have no place being the heroes in *your* campaign.

If the gamemaster adds some more brigands to the situation, he should decide when watching adventurers see or are seen by them. Extra brigands are only after money, with no interest in murder or rape, but they are still under Briagos' leadership and support him in battle.

If the brigands are killed or driven off and the horses they rode searched, the saddlebags yield 200 LB, 5 six-carat opals (300 LB each), about 15 pieces of jewelry (worth 1D100 LB each), some provisions, and anything else the gamemaster wishes to donate. Also on the horses are some saddle blankets, rope, cooking utensils, several wineskins of an awful Lormyrian wine, tobacco, and several briar pipes. The horses are average riding horses.

If the adventurers rescue the girl, they learn that her name is Jyaolina and the older woman is her grandmother Kakata. They travel the Young Kingdoms together. Jyaolina performs a graceful and elegant dance of her native Eshmir. Kakata tells fortunes by the sifting together of colored sand. They were heading for the desert town of Fakash to wait for a caravan when the robbers attacked. If the adventurers admit that they are also headed toward Fakash, she begs them to accompany her and her grandmother to protect them from further indignities. If the adventurers are crass enough to ask for payment or reward, she offers several pieces of jade jewelry worth, in total, about 100 LB — the totality of hers and her grandmother's wealth.

#### JYAOLINA, Eshmiran folk dancer

STR 9      ARMOR: none  
 CON 12      Hit Points: 11  
 SIZ 8      SKILLS: First Aid 45%, Music Lore 68%,  
 INT 16      Plant Lore 35%, Dance 88%, Sing 75%, Craft  
 POW 15      (seamstress) 55%  
 DEX 16      LANGUAGES: Read Common 50%, Speak  
 CHA 18      Common 89%, Read Eshmiran 100%, Speak  
                  Eshmiran 100%

*No effective attacks*

#### KAKATA, Eshmiran fortune-teller

STR 6      ARMOR: none  
 CON 5      Hit Points: 2  
 SIZ 6      SKILLS: First Aid 75%, Scent 53%, Taste  
 INT 18      65%, Music Lore 65%, Plant Lore 78%  
 POW 18      LANGUAGES: Read Common 35%, Speak  
 DEX 9      Common 65%, Read Eshmiran 83%, Speak  
 CHA 10      Eshmiran 100%

*No effective attacks*

The gamemaster should urge the adventurers to accompany Jyaolina and Kakata for at least one night. If they do not, they are passing up some good information. However, if they cannot be convinced, tough luck. Move on to the next chapter.

If the adventurers do agree to travel with Jyaolina and Kakata, the old woman offers to perform a divination for them, *gratis*. She does not press if they refuse, but she will offer again each night until they accept or they reach Fakash. If the adventurers accept, Kakata takes her bottles of colored sand and begins to pour sand onto a piece of sheepskin. She then shifts the sand with her fingers as she chants in the Eshmiran tongue. Should any of the adventurers be familiar with that language, the phrases are recognizable as exhortations to reveal the future, coupled with various names. A sorcerer or priest has a 50% chance to recognize these names as those of spirits. The adventurers see Kakata's eyes widen as she reads the sand.

"A great battle comes. Mighty forces struggle. The gods laugh and dreams tell all. The silver wyvern seeks vengeance upon the white wolf. Pieces in the cosmic game, unknowing, unknowing. Death, demons . . . the way is strewn with peril!"

As Kakata's voice rises, suddenly Jyaolina cries out and rises, her body twitching wildly, her eyes glazed over. She begins to shout, but her voice switches between three distinct entities from moment to moment. At one moment her voice is deep, growly, and demonic (an entity of Chaos); at the next golden and soft-spoken (an entity of Law); and finally her voice becomes that of a dead relative or comrade of one of the adventurers. If there is some deceased adventurer whom everyone knew and liked, the gamemaster should use him as this voice. Otherwise, invent some dead relative or lover. For instance, "It's the voice of your uncle who died of the fever. He was a great favorite of yours." Jyaolina speaks;

*The Chaos Voice:* "Flee, flee, flee, human slime. The world is not yours to destroy."

*The Law Voice:* "Take heart, take heart. In the coin is the power."

*The Adventurers' Comrade's Voice:* "For this were you born. Fulfill your destiny."

Jyaolina switches from voice to voice in a very disconcerting fashion, repeating the phrases over and over and faster and faster until the phrases all melt into one another. This is a good opportunity for the gamemaster to do a bit of high-class roleplaying as he enacts the prophecy. If the gamemaster is not quite schizoid enough or hasn't the talent for rapid-fire voice changes, he may just narrate the prophecy and how it's delivered. Jyaolina reaches a peak in this jumble of voices, then suddenly returns to her own voice and says;

"Fakash. The full urn. Vultures in crimson. The brass dog. The axe falls. Blood! Tiktyva holds the Wheel. Death, death! Ginjada, Ginjada!"

The gamemaster should ensure that the adventurers all understand that this last is in Jyaolina's own voice. These phrases all denote key people or places to come, and the gamemaster can add such clues as he wishes, keeping the mystery alive but giving the adventurers more to go on.

Nothing can interfere with the prophecy, short of knocking Jyaolina cold or killing her. Even if she is shaken violently, she does not come out of the trance until she has said all. Kakata comes out of her trance immediately

when this happens. She is quite shaken, for though she herself has a gift for telling the future, her granddaughter has never shown evidence of it. She begs the adventurers not to touch the girl until the spirits leave her, though she has no way of preventing the adventurers from doing so.

When finished, Jyaolina suddenly keels over, fainted dead away. When she awakens, she recalls only being confronted by a darkness with three pairs of eyes glowing at her from the night. She remembers nothing she said.

When the prophecy is ended, an anxious Kakata tells the adventurers that she no longer wishes to travel with them. She believes that the adventurers are caught up in events of cosmic significance, which her foresight cannot unravel. She has no part in their destiny.

She gives one of the adventurers a stone talisman depicting a two-headed dog standing atop a mysterious rune. The talisman is on a leather thong to be worn around the neck. She says that it gives protection against evil magic. The adventurers should only get this talisman if they have heard the prophecy. Kakata normally wears it around her neck and she knows that it has a great deal of magic power. She says that the adventurers' destiny is greater than hers, and that it is time to pass it on.

This talisman adds 20 to the defender's POW for purposes of defending against the attacks of demons of possession or any type of eldritch magic affecting the mind of the victim (hypnosis, confusion, domination, the causing of panic or fear, etc.) The talisman cannot be used for any other purpose, nor should its use be explained.

Once the prophecy has been delivered and the talisman passed over, Kakata and Jyaolina make haste to leave the adventurers. If they are stopped, they try to escape at the first opportunity. Detaining them gets the adventurers nothing.

The prophecy comes from the forces of the Cosmic Balance, hence the voices of Chaos, Law, and humanity. Besides providing clues, the prophecy should instill a sense of participation in an episode of grand import and as well strengthen what Kolan Tal has told them.

Kakata cannot interpret the dreams of the adventurers.

One final note: the oddly-colored horse which pulls their wagon is actually a Demon of Transportation. It was a gift to Kakata from an Eshmiran sorcerer and she has no inkling of its true nature. She knows that it is magical, for it needs neither rest nor food, and can essay any terrain without peril. If the adventurers ask about it, she knows only that it was a gift and that it is a wondrous creature. She will not sell it nor give it up, though it could of course be stolen from her. She calls the animal Galvada. Unlike most Demons of Transportation, this one travels only at normal speed for a horse, but also never needs to rest. It cannot speak.

**"GAVALDA," Yrgoral — demon of transportation**

STR 30 CON 10 SIZ 38 INT 3 POW 13  
DEX 6 CHA 10

Once the adventurers have had their prophecy, they can continue on to Fakash without further incident.



Fakash is a small walled town on the edge of the Weeping Waste. Surrounding the town is a series of wells, flowing with fresh, sweet water. Four more wells are inside the town proper. The town serves caravans entering and leaving the Weeping Waste, usually on their ways to Eshmir. Of late, fewer caravans arrive at Fakash, deterred by rumors of strange disappearances at that stopping-place.

The adventurers may hear these rumors on their way to Fakash, depending on the gamemaster. The rumors are quite true, as the following background information makes clear.

#### THE SITUATION IN FAKASH

In Fakash is a temple of Mardek, one of the gods of Law. Unfortunately, though the temple still appears dedicated to Mardek, it is actually now the domain of Alban Ishna, high priest to the chaotic Lord Hionhurn the Executioner. Alban slew the priests of Mardek and turned the lower level of the temple (once an underground lake) into a chaotic bastion of Hionhurn. Using his demon, Gogona, which is enclosed in an amulet about his neck, he has forced the people of Fakash to submit to the terror of the Executioner. The townsfolk are too frightened to resist, and now do Alban Ishna's bidding. Alban still keeps the Temple of Mardek's facade intact, and prefers to let the sheep-like folk of the town do his dirty work. He is secure in the temple thanks to the Vultures in Crimson, loyal assassins to Hionhurn, and another big reason why the townsfolk obey Alban.

The Vultures stalk the town in the guise of temple guards. They always look for likely outsiders to sacrifice to Hionhurn. They then direct the townsfolk to capture them. For this reason, the townsfolk are very unkind to strangers — they hope that travelers will be offended and leave town before being caught by the Vultures. Alban is also helped by nine lesser priests of Hionhurn and of course by the pet demon. Alban and the priests masquerade as priests of Mardek whenever outsiders are in town. They seldom mix with the townsfolk.

Though the situation in Fakash is not directly connected to the adventurers' quest, it does make things a bit more difficult because of an unlucky twist of fate. Chunloom, the adventurers' contact here, has become a victim of Alban Ishna and his Chaos priests. Alban knows nothing about the jade box, for Chunloom hid it in the

desert before entering Fakash, in a cavern near Ginjada Oasis. Alban found a map leading to the cavern on Chunloom's sacrificed corpse and sent three of his priests to the desert to check it out. The priests have not yet returned; why this is so will be made clear in the next chapter. They took the map with them. Alban also has the other half of the medallion which matches the one the adventurers carry. This is located in his quarters in the temple. If the adventurers encounter Alban Ishna, and he sees or is told of this medallion, he will order the holder of it taken prisoner immediately.

When the adventurers encounter the Vultures in Crimson, one or more are marked as likely sacrifices. Agents of Law are always so marked, followed by Nobles, Sorcerers, and Priests. If none of these types are among the adventurers, the characters with the highest Charismas are chosen. If there are any obvious servants of Chaos in the group (such as a priest of Arioeh), he will not be chosen and at the gamemaster's discretion may even be approached by one of the priests of Hionhurn with an offer to view a sacrifice (*not* one of the sacrifices of his traveling companions, however).

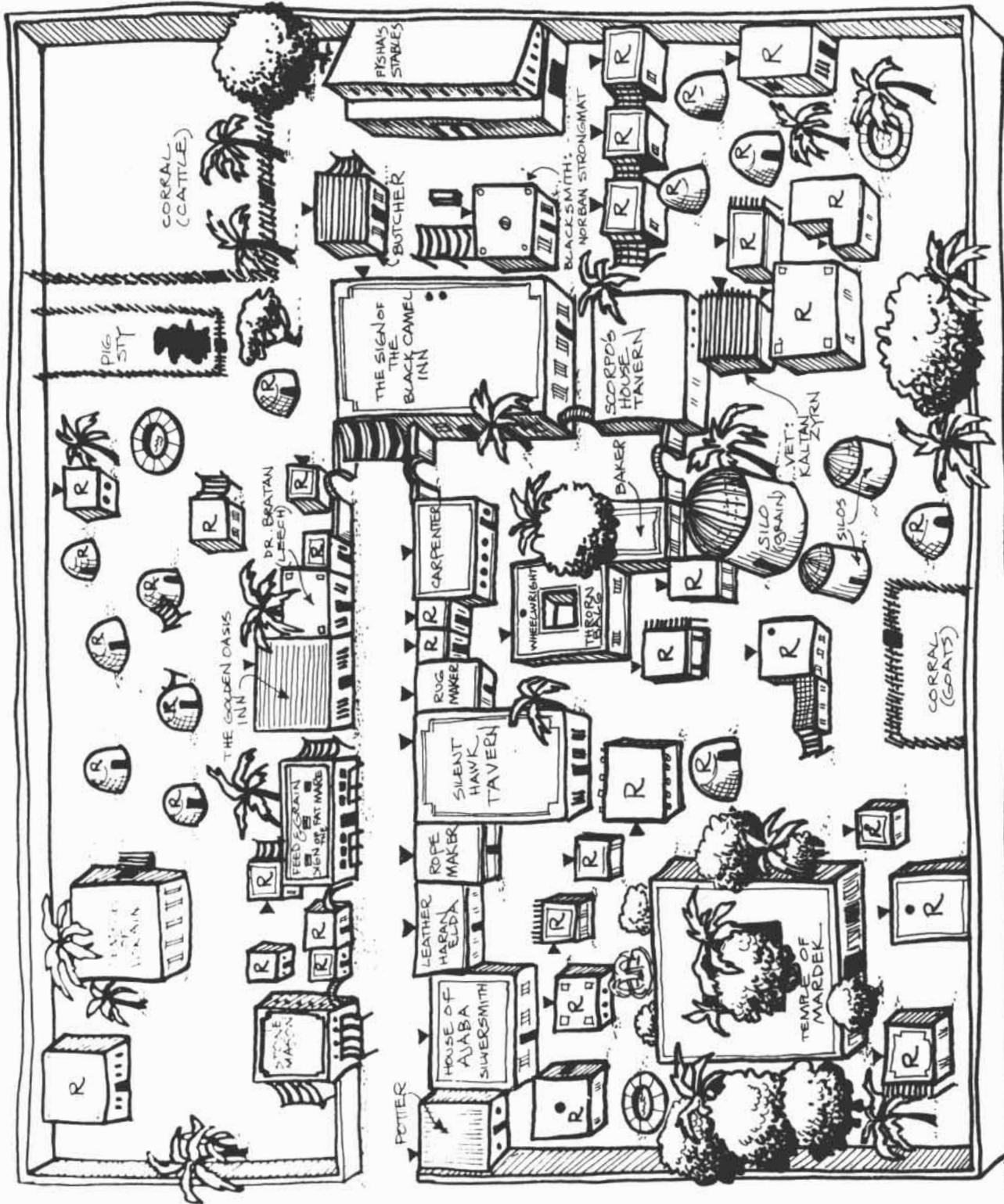
The marked victim(s) will be beset by no less than six townsfolk each as the victim sleeps — subdued, bound, gagged, and delivered on the sly to the temple. The townsfolk are cautious, and make sure it is always very late and that the victim is isolated. If the adventurers do not stay the night in Fakash, naturally this will not occur.

The gamemaster may permit Listen rolls reduced by 25 percentiles (it's hard to listen while asleep) to hear the townsfolk creep up. The townsfolk use clubs, but do not try to kill victims, only knock them out. They flee if confronted by sorcery or a victim who kills two or more of the villagers and doesn't seem subduable. Such a failure provides a good chance for the adventurers to confront townspeople and get some information. Remember that the townsfolk are not villainous by choice.

If one or more of the adventurers is captured and taken to the temple, they are placed in the holding cell in the lower level to await sacrifice. The gamemaster should consider those adventurers on-hold until their comrades come to the rescue or leave Fakash. In the latter case, the gamemaster should allow the prisoner to implement some plan for escape. This should not be easy. If the escape fails, the character should be sacrificed. Basically, it should be nearly impossible to escape without magical help.

Townsfolk always tell a victim's comrades that they know *nothing* about any disappearance. They take the pains to clean out the victim's room and make sure the victim's horse is gone.

The adventurers can, of course, use a Demon of Knowledge to try to unearth the truth. Failing this, there is one last hope. Several citizens of Fakash have nearly reached their limit, and five will go so far as to give out information. These people are Kaltan Zyrn, an animal doctor; Norban Strongmat, the blacksmith; Haron Elda, a leatherworker; Thron Balg, the wheelwright; and Dr. Bratan, the town leech. If the adventurers speak with any of these characters, they will be surreptitiously told to enquire at the temple of Vorain. The shops of these characters are noted on the map of Fakash. One of these fellows may even take action on his own, strolling nonchalantly by the adventurers and dropping a note as he passes.



R = RESIDENCE  
 ▴ = DOOR  
 H-H = 10'

# FAKASH

The adventurers may decide to go to the temple of Vorain on their own. If they decide instead to go to the temple of Mardek, they will naturally get no help whatsoever and put the Vultures in Crimson on the alert besides. The Vultures will then watch them closely until the adventurers leave town.

### IN FAKASH

When the adventurers enter Fakash, one thing is apparent — the residents are quite disturbed by their presence. As they ride down the dusty streets, they are pointedly ignored, glared at, and see children pulled out of sight. If they talk to anyone, they get either no answer or as curt and surly a reply as possible. This air of xenophobia should strike the adventurers as odd in a caravan town.

The adventurers might notice some of the Vultures in Crimson walking the streets. The Vultures are quite friendly and interested in the adventurers' presence. They approach and politely enquire what the adventurers are doing in Fakash and suggest an inn (the Golden Oasis) if they are staying overnight. If the adventurers ask after Chunloom, the Vultures can give no help. They don't know the name, though they know there are Eshmiran visitors in town, two men and a woman who seem to be adherents to some odd Eshmiran religion. They arrived shortly before the adventurers. The Eshmirans are staying at the Black Camel, a somewhat inferior inn.

For each hour spent in public, the adventurers have a 50% chance of running into some of the Vultures. The Vultures wear half-plate armor over crimson tunics and breeches. They carry scimitars and target shields. They wear no helmets (they do wear turbans to guard against the hot sun) and if asked, claim to be guards from the temple of Mardek. They always travel in twos or threes. Any adventurer succeeding in a See roll when dealing with the Vultures notices that the townsfolk avoid them and look at them fearfully or with glaring hatred. However, no townsfolk (even the brave five) dispute their claims to be temple guards or say anything much about them to the adventurers.

The adventurers' first step in Fakash may well be to go to the Black Camel and ask for Chunloom. They are told by the proprietor that no such person is staying at the inn, nor has such a person been seen. There are some Eshmiran visitors recently arrived — this very day, in fact — but none are named Chunloom. The Eshmirans are now in the common room of the inn sharing a meal.

If the adventurers arrive very late at night, the Eshmirans will of course not be eating. The clerk simply says that Eshmirans are staying at the inn and gives the adventurers a room number, simultaneously suggesting that they wait until morning to contact the Eshmirans.

If the adventurers opt for a room at the Black Camel, the clerk rents it very reluctantly (in keeping with the desire of the townsfolk to have strangers pass through and not stay the night). This should strike the adventurers as an odd attitude for an innkeeper. No more than two of the adventurers are allowed to stay in any single room.

This does not prevent the adventurers from purchasing several rooms but holing up in one. They will be uncomfortable. When they take a room, they are asked how long

they are staying and must pay in advance. All transactions in Fakash must be paid in advance.

Once the adventurers determine that Chunloom is not at the Black Camel they have several options. They can search the town (futile — no one in town admits to ever having dealt with such a person), use a Demon of Knowledge (which, if successful, tells the adventurers that Chunloom is dead, who killed him, and why), track down one of the clues from Jyaolina's prophecy (any townsman is 75% likely to know of Ginja Oasis and the Brass Dog), or talk to the Eshmiran visitors.

If the adventurers decide to travel on to Ginja Oasis, move on to the next chapter. If they seek out the Eshmirans, however, read on.

### THE ESHMIRAN VISITORS

Two men and a woman of Eshmir are currently in Fakash. They seem to be pilgrims or monks of some Eshmiran cult. They are attired in black and gold robes, and each wears a skullcap of gold, trimmed with black. There are no sigils on the robes, but each person wears a medallion and ring showing a bird of gold on a background of black, with a red flame motif behind the bird. If asked, they tell anyone interested that they are brothers and sisters in the Order of the Fire Bird, an order which worships a god of neither Law nor Chaos, whose avatar is the golden phoenix. They are in Fakash seeking a brother of their order by the name of Chunloom. Their purpose is to warn him of deadly peril and convince him to return to Eshmir and the safety of their order. He is imperiled by Jagun Amsha, a vile sorcerer, who claims that Chunloom has taken an artifact of great power from him. They claim no knowledge of such a deed, but admit that their order is in rivalry with Amsha, and state that they and their order back Chunloom unconditionally against Amsha, whether or not he stole the artifact.

This information can either be gathered directly from the Eshmirans, or by making mention of Chunloom in their presence, in which case the Eshmirans approach the adventurers. The Eshmirans also approach the adventurers if they notice the medallion half given them by Kolan Tal. The gamemaster must keep track of this medallion's location.

In actual fact, the Eshmirans are not monks but assassins. They are a Triad (a 3-person hit squad) of the White Eel society, an order of deadly killers from Eshmir. They have been hired by Jagun Amsha to find and kill Chunloom and return the Wheel of Sadric IX to him. Once they make a connection between Chunloom and the adventurers, they watch the adventurers like hawks. Since their main goal is the Wheel, they follow the adventurers if they believe the adventurers will lead them to it. They, too, believed Chunloom would be at the Black Camel, and are investigating what happened to him. They can save the adventurers some legwork by informing them that no one in town has seen Chunloom.

Like the adventurers, they are well-aware that things in Fakash are not what they seem and that the townsfolk are behaving oddly. They do not know about the chaotic goings-on, but will ally with the adventurers vs. the priests of Hionhurn if they believe this action will lead them to

Chunloom or the Wheel. They won't deliberately assassinate any of the adventurers (they are not being paid for that, after all), but defend themselves as necessary. If the adventurers should lead them to the Wheel, the Triad will attempt to kill or incapacitate the adventurers and take the Wheel, in that order.

If the adventurers do not catch on to what is happening in Fakash, the gamemaster may decide that the Triad finds out on their own and informs the investigators. They may also be used to inform the investigators where a comrade chosen for sacrifice has been taken. They won't try to stop the townsfolk from taking anyone prisoner, but may join a rescue attempt if it seems to coincide with their goals.

The Triad is led by Tagan Yo. Yunverm of Elwher and Sezana of Phum (a lovely, green-eyed woman who is most persuasive) are his aides.

Any character from Eshmir may receive an INT roll attempt. If the roll is INT x5 or less on D100, then that character knows of the Order of the Fire Bird. A second INT roll may be attempted. If successful, he has heard of the name of Jagun Amsha, and confirms that the fellow is a powerful sorcerer. Since the adventurers know nothing of Chunloom's background or the involvement of Jagun Amsha, all this information should be quite a surprise. It is likely but not absolutely necessary that the adventurers deal with the Triad, possibly in a friendly fashion.

#### TAGAN YO, assassin of Eshmir

STR 13      ARMOR: 1D8-1 leather and padding  
 CON 15      Hit Points: 15  
 SIZ 9      SKILLS: Dodge 62%, Listen 84%, See 57%,  
 INT 15      Hide 76%, Move Quietly 65%, Ride 53%,  
 POW 20      Poison Lore 45%, Pick Lock 62%, Ambush  
 DEX 16      75%, Disguise 95%  
 CHA 14

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Shortswords (2)	73%	73%	1D6+1
Self Bow	65%	—	1D8+1
Fist (brass knuckles)	59%	65%	1D6

NOTES: Tagan Yo fights with a shortsword in each hand.

He also carries a fire elemental bound into a ring on his left hand. He uses the elemental as needed and may put it into one of his shortswords.

He also carries three Morphus gas bombs in his robe. These are small crystal globes filled with a potency 16 sleep gas. If the globe is broken, a sphere of gas 6 meters in diameter emanates from it. Anyone caught in it must resist with their CON vs. the gas's potency. If they fail, they fall asleep for 1D10+10 minutes. The gas acts right through the skin and does not need to be inhaled to be effective. The cloud itself dissipates rapidly (1D6 melee rounds).

#### YUNVERM OF ELWHER, assassin of Eshmir

STR 17      ARMOR: 1D8-1 leather and padding  
 CON 16      Hit Points: 17  
 SIZ 13      SKILLS: Dodge 50%, Listen 60%, See 68%,  
 INT 12      Hide 65%, Move Quietly 60%, Ride 33%,  
 POW 13      Poison Lore 35%, Ambush 70%, Disguise 70%  
 DEX 13  
 CHA 10

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Long Spear	61%	62%	1D10+1+1D6
Throwing Axe	54%	48%	1D8+2+1D4
Daggers (2)	40%	38%	1D4+2+1D6
Fist (brass knuckles)	39%	35%	1D6+1D6

#### SEZANA OF PHUM, assassin of Eshmir

STR 15      ARMOR: 1D8-1 leather and padding  
 CON 12      Hit Points: 11  
 SIZ 8      SKILLS: Dodge 38%, Listen 65%, See 78%,  
 INT 14      Hide 70%, Move Quietly 75%, Ride 63%,  
 POW 10      Poison Lore 40%, Ambush 65%, Disguise 85%,  
 DEX 17      Cut Purse 46%  
 CHA 16

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Darts (10)	60%	—	1D3
Light Mace	50%	49%	1D6+2
Fist (brass knuckles)	40%	35%	1D6

NOTE: carries vial with 10 applications of Fly Dance poison potency 10 for tipping her darts. If the victim's CON is overcome by the poison, he goes into uncontrollable muscle spasms, twitching like a dying fly for 1D10+5 minutes. In addition, the victim takes 1D6 damage. If the victim resists the poison, he only takes the 1D6 damage (this poison damage is in addition to the wound caused by the dart itself).

Her ring carries a hidden pin poisoned with Opia poison potency 13. If the victim's CON is overcome by this poison, he goes blind in one round and remains that way for 1D10+10 rounds.

#### THE TEMPLE OF VORAIN

Besides the temple of Mardek, the town of Fakash also has a smaller temple dedicated to Vorain the Builder, a god of Law. He is the patron deity of architecture and building. He taught mankind how to construct the temples of Law and how to build strong, straight structures. Vorain's temple seems to be closed. Its doors and windows are bricked over and no one is seen going in or out. Ordinary townsfolk tell the adventurers that the priest therein has become hopelessly insane and bricked in the windows himself. They hint that he is too old and has delusions. They warn the adventurers not to speak with him, claiming that it could be dangerous.

The five townsfolk who send the adventurers to this temple of course pass on no such rumors.

If the Vultures in Crimson see the adventurers approach the temple of Vorain, they direct them not to try to enter, giving the same reasons as the townsfolk. The Vultures won't physically try to stop the adventurers from entering, but will keep a close watch on them from then on if they manage to speak with the priest. There is a 50% chance that Vultures are in the area when the adventurers near the temple.

To see the priest, the adventurers have to persistently pound on the temple doors and shout until Alden Kartellan appears. He peers at them with a mixture of fear and contempt through a tiny peephole, which shows only his aged eye and a bit of his face. He speaks.

"Begone, ye minions of Chaos. Ye cannot trick me so easily. Begone lest I bring the righteous wrath of the Builder upon you."

After his little speech, Alden is about to slam the peephole closed. The adventurers must speak up in an attempt to convince him that they must speak with him and are not minions of Chaos. Persuade rolls are applicable. If the adventurers have been directed to the temple by one of the townsfolk, mentioning that person's name increases the chances of success by 25 percentiles. If one of the adventurers is an Agent or priest of Chaos, no such Persuade rolls can possibly work. If all attempts fail, the adventurers may try again, but Alden will not open his peephole again for at least an hour, so they may have to wait a bit. Seemingly insane, the old priest is under a lot of pressure.

If the adventurers do manage to gain admittance, Alden has them sit down and makes a little speech. It is obvious that he is used to sermonizing.

"Fakash is cursed, aye, cursed by the hordes of Chaos. You've seen them, those red-garbed slayers who stalk our town. Aye, they, and that foul priest who leads them. It is the Lords of Chaos they serve and blood and death are their only goals. Woe unto us, woe. Were I not so aged, I could bring the power of Vorain upon them and destroy the temple they have befouled. But I barely keep my own person safe from their demons. I dare not venture out. They trade in fear, you know, and except for a few, all here bow to their will. 'Tis a shame on us all, that this town which once walked happily in the shining light now does the foul urging of Chaos. Aye, many a stranger has fallen to them, too many, and each vile murder is another stain on the honor of Fakash. I pray to Vorain for succor, but he does not heed me. Perhaps I am too weak, too frightened. Perhaps the curse is too great, the shame too strong. Yet, if any would aid me, gladly would I brave the very gates of that temple of Chaos itself to stop this madness. But they fear the demon. Who is to blame them?"

Obviously, the adventurers can offer to help Alden against the forces of Chaos if they wish. Questioning Alden further is rather futile — he has said basically all he knows. He has no idea of how many Vultures or chaos worshipers are involved. He knows only that Alban Ishna is the priest of some Lord of Chaos and that the townsfolk capture strangers for execution at Ishna's behest. He theorizes that both Chunloom and their friend (if a party member has been kidnaped) are victims of Ishna's, but cannot offer any proof of this. He does not know about the lower level of the temple. He knows that all the trouble started only a few months ago and that, if it continues, Fakash is a doomed town. He knows, too, that so far his temple has remained inviolate, presumably thanks to his prayers and the grace of Vorain. If the adventurers agree to assault the temple, Alden does all he can to help, including getting assistance from the five townspeople brave enough to defy Chaos.

A secret passage leads from the temple of Vorain to a well outside, the one located just east of the temple of Vorain (see the map of Fakash), and this passage can be used to enter the temple for clandestine meetings. Alden warns the adventurers to keep their eyes open for the Vultures in Crimson, especially when using the secret passage. Alden writes letters to the five townspeople willing to help, and it is up to the adventurers to deliver the letters and convince the townspeople to lend their hands. The temple of Vorain makes a good staging area for an assault, but the adventurers need not use it if they have a better idea. The adventurers should not be met with too much resistance from the townsfolk, as it is a good idea to have lots of warm bodies in an assault.

Of course, the adventurers may believe Alden is just crazy (and Alden should be played by the gamemaster in a manner that suggests this). Or the adventurers may not want to get mixed up with an attack on the chaotic priests. The adventurers should not be forced to liberate Fakash, in any case. However, Agents of Law could not possibly pass up this chance.

If the adventurers do not help the old priest, he begs them to leave Fakash before they, too, become victims. The townsfolk participating in the raid are somewhat fearful, especially of the demon, and are unlikely to take the lead. Alden wants to come along, though his age limits his combat effectiveness.

## TOWNSMEN OF FAKASH

### ALDEN KARSTELLAN, priest of Vorain, an Ilmioran

STR 8	ARMOR: 1D8-1 barbarian
CON 4	Hit Points: 4
SIZ 9	SKILLS: Dodge 31%, Jump 12%, Listen 36%, See 30%, Hide 45%, Move Quietly 43%, Plant Lore 61%, Persuade 42%, First Aid 61%, Credit 42%
INT 14	
POW 12	
DEX 8	LANGUAGES: Read Common 100%, Speak Common 100%, Read Low Melniboean 63%, Speak Low Melniboean 35%, Read High Melniboean 61%, Speak High Melniboean 55%
CHA 9	

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Light Mace	32%	49%	1D6+2
Target Shield	35%	33%	1D6

### NORBAN STRONGMAT, blacksmith, an Argimilian

STR 13	ARMOR: 1D8-1 half-plate
CON 13	Hit Points: 14
SIZ 13	SKILLS: Dodge 64%, Jump 35%, Listen 28%, See 54%, Hide 15%, Move Quietly 53%, Craft (blacksmith) 85%, Craft (weaponsmaking) 48%
INT 12	
POW 8	
DEX 19	
CHA 14	

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Battle Axe	70%	71%	1D8+2+1D6
Forge Hammer	78%	55%	1D6+2+1D6

### THORNBALG, wheelwright, an Ilmioran

STR 17	ARMOR: 1D8-1 half-plate
CON 9	Hit Points: 10
SIZ 13	SKILLS: Dodge 24%, Listen 26%, See 20%, Hide 15%, Move Quietly 33%, Craft (wheelwright) 65%
INT 8	
POW 5	
DEX 8	
CHA 6	

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Broadsword	56%	51%	1D8+1+1D6

### KALTAN ZYRN, veterinarian, a Vilmiran

STR 18	ARMOR: 1D10-1 lamellar
CON 16	Hit Points: 18
SIZ 14	SKILLS: Dodge 74%, Jump 52%, Listen 68%, See 65%, Hide 75%, Move Quietly 63%, Ride 83%, Craft (veterinary) 98%, Make Map 58%, Plant Lore 70%, Evaluate Treasure 88%, First Aid 65%
INT 16	
POW 17	
DEX 16	
CHA 14	

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Broadsword	85%	83%	1D8+1+1D6
Shortsword	75%	85%	1D6+1+1D6
Dagger	66%	70%	1D4+2+1D6

### HARON ELDA, leatherworker, a Weeping Waster

STR 11	ARMOR: none
CON 8	Hit Points: 7
SIZ 8	SKILLS: Dodge 24%, Listen 38%, See 25%, Hide 35%, Move Quietly 36%, Ride 53%, Craft (leatherworking) 65%, Craft (cobbler) 45%
INT 12	
POW 12	
DEX 7	
CHA 8	

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Dagger	27%	29%	1D4+2

**DR. TRIGO BRATAN, leech, an Ilmioran**

STR 10      ARMOR: none  
 CON 12      Hit Points: 12  
 SIZ 11      SKILLS: Dodge 42%, Listen 58%, See 65%,  
 INT 15      Hide 21%, Move Quietly 25%, Ride 43%,  
 POW 10      Craft (physick) 63%, Plant Lore 35%, Poison  
 DEX 12      Lore 45%, First Aid 75%  
 CHA 13

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Attack</i>	<i>Parry</i>	<i>Damage</i>
Dagger	36%	19%	1D4+2

**THE TEMPLE OF MARDEK**

Mardek is one of the gods of Law. He is known as the Full Urn, and his province is water, particularly Fresh Water. Mardek brings the rain, purifies the lakes and rivers, and sees that their course runs true and natural. He is a natural ally to Strassha. His symbol is the Urn and he is usually represented as a sturdy, middle-aged man with a flowing blue beard pouring water from an urn. Mardek was, of course, a very favored god in the desert town of Fakash. He showed the original inhabitants of the town the wells which keep the town thriving. Should the minions of Chaos be ousted, the people of Fakash will ask for a new priest of Mardek to take over the temple's operation. Though a few townsfolk still stubbornly pray to Mardek in the temple, most avoid the place.

The adventurers can come up with whatever plan they please to assault the temple. The gamemaster need only keep the following information in mind.

1) There are sacrifices to Hionhurn in the lower level of the temple every single night. These sacrifices begin at midnight and take several hours to complete. During the festivities, all the priests of Hionhurn and the bulk of the Vultures in Crimson are in the lower half of the temple. Two Vultures are always on guard at the main entrance to the temple, and two more are always at the entrance to the lower level. Sacrifices are carried out by Alban Ishna and the other priests with a special consecrated axe. Interrupting a sacrifice causes the servitors of Hionhurn to attack in full force.

The duty of the Vultures on guard is not to fight, but to warn those below of any intrusion. If the adventurers open a frontal assault, one or both of the Vultures go into Alban Ishna's quarters, lock the door, and descend to the lower level through the trapdoor beneath Ishna's desk. The Vultures in Crimson then respond to the attack, issuing out of this same trapdoor in force.

2) If the adventurers decide to attack the temple at a time other than during a sacrifice, only the usual two Vultures guard the main entrance. Another 1D4 hang around the temple idly. The rest are about the town, but they come running back to the temple if an alarm is raised. The town of Fakash is small enough that the Vultures can probably hear the noise of an attack anywhere in town.

When no sacrifice is occurring, the priests, including Ishna, are in the upper level of the temple, scattered about through the rooms. They join in any fight. Since the temple operates in daytime as if it were a normal temple of Law, entrance is permitted without undue hassle. However, worshipers are carefully watched by the Vulture guards and one or more of the priests. If the adventurers

are under suspicion, and enter the temple as if to worship, more guards and priests are summoned to keep an eye on them. This is done as casually as possible, but should be pretty obvious to the adventurers. After about 11:00 pm, temple doors are closed and barred. Entry is no longer permitted until the next morning. The Vultures in Crimson respond to knocks on the door, but allow no one to enter. The temple windows are also shuttered and barred at night.

3) In any attack on the temple taking place at a time other than during a sacrifice, Alban Ishna's priority is to have intruders slain or captured for sacrifice. But if the battle goes badly for him, he flees to the lower level with any priests or guards that can attend him. There, he unleashes his Demon of Combat, Gogona, against the invaders. He may do this in the upper level, but this is not his preferred plan. If the battle goes badly even downstairs with Gogona in the fray, Ishna plays his ace. He smashes the glass statue on the lower level and releases the awful stuff of Chaos upon the intruders. Alban may also open the secret entrance through the fountain, hoping to get some of the assault force with the stair traps (see the description of the temple to see how these things function). If Ishna is captured, sufficient persuasion (physical or mental) causes him to talk freely about Chunloom. Ishna may be Chaotic, but he is as fond of life as anyone.

All Ishna knows about Chunloom is that he was a fine subject for sacrifice. He also knows that Chunloom had a map to Ginjada Oasis and that the three priests sent there to investigate have not returned. He also knows that Chunloom carried half of a medallion and can tell the adventurers where the other half is hidden in his (Ishna's) quarters.

4) The functioning of the temple of Mardek always strikes any devoted worshiper or Agent of Law as substandard. Such individuals feel that "this is an odd way for priests of Law to act." If adventurers know the true situation, this need not be pointed out.

5) If the adventurers succeed in stopping the reign of terror in Fakash, the townsfolk are extremely grateful and treat them as outright heroes (which they are). They also freely confess the fate of Chunloom and pass on the fact that Alban Ishna sent three of his nine priests out into the Weeping Waste in the direction of Ginjada Oasis.

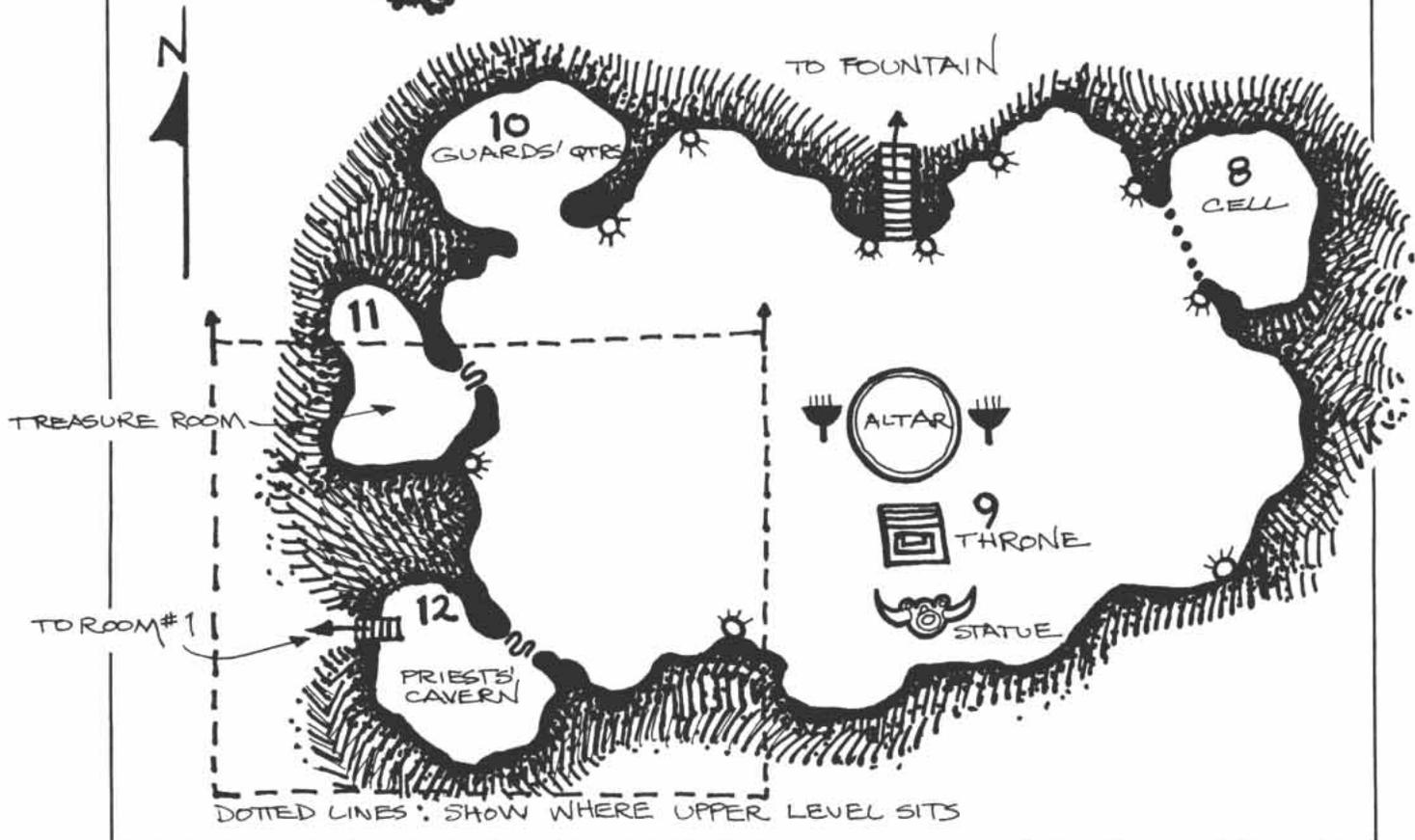
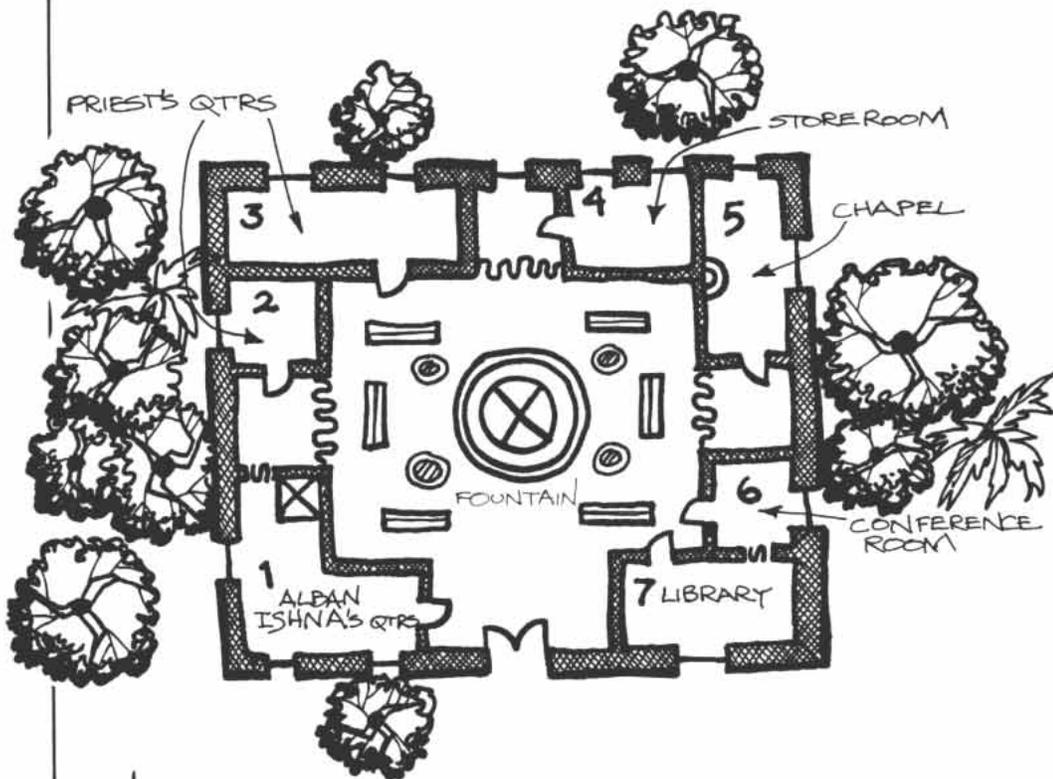
6) The gamemaster should ensure that the adventurers pick up at least one clue that the temple of Mardek and the priests therein have a connection with Chunloom. If they attack the temple, make certain they find the medallion in Ishna's quarters, or hear of Chunloom from Ishna or the townsfolk. If the adventurers fail in an assault on the temple, they probably will all be killed, but if one manages to escape, the gamemaster must determine how that person must proceed. Remember that Alban Ishna wants his set-up kept secret, and goes to great lengths to destroy anyone who knows the truth. He may even petition Hionhurn himself for aid.

7) Due to the fact that the temple is now a bastion of Chaos, any attempt by a servitor of Law to contact a lawful god is reduced by 25 percentiles. Demons can be summoned normally. The chance for elementals is reduced by 10 percentiles, but bound elementals can be used at will.

# THE TEMPLE OF MARDEK

•KEY•

- ↔ = 10'
- CELL BARS
- ☞ TORCH
- ⌋ CURTAIN
- ⌋ DOOR
- ⌋ WINDOW
- ⌋ SECRET DOOR
- ▭ BENCH
- ⊗ TRAP DOOR
- ☞ BRAZIER
- 🌳 TREE
- ▨ STAIRS
- ⊗ MAIN STATUE
- ⊙ LARGE PLANTERS WITH TREES



## THE TEMPLE OF MARDEK: UPPER LEVEL

**EXTERIOR:** this is a symmetrical building of blue stone. It is very clean and neat. Two large double doors provide entrance and there is a multitude of blue stained-glass windows filling the temple with a soft, watery glow when the sun strikes them. These windows are all fitted with barrable iron shutters now, and the double doors can also be barred from within. A peephole is located in the left door to scan visitors. During the day, the doors are left open to maintain the air of peace.

**THE WORSHIP AREA:** the double doors of the temple open on a large space in which an eight-foot statue of Mardek rises from the center of a pool. A hole in the base of the statue seems to imply that once he stood in a fountain instead of a pool. (In happier days, this fountain was fed by the lake below, but no longer.) Stone benches surround the statue. Curtained alcoves exist to the north, east, and west of the worship area.

1) Alban Ishna's quarters — this is a perfectly reasonable-looking room, with bookshelves, a bed, a small hearth, and built-in bronze candleholders on the walls. In the northeast corner of the room is a table and chair serving as a writing desk. Beneath this table is a concealed trapdoor leading to a narrow spiral stone staircase descending to the lower level. The handle to the trapdoor is concealed beneath a flagstone in the floor. Separate Search rolls are needed to find both the door and its handle. The trapdoor can be barred from below.

The half of the medallion stolen from Chunloom is in plain sight on the top of the writing desk. Naturally Ishna does not freely admit how he obtained it.

On the north wall, to the west of the trapdoor, is a secret door leading into the alcove to the north of this room. It is opened by pushing a candleholder imbedded in the wall. The holder is pushed up to swing open the door. A handle permits opening the door from the other side. The secret door is barrable from inside and is heavy wood, banded with iron.

2) Quarters of the priests Nardo Goren and Phinian Sav — these two priests are second-in-command in the temple. Their quarters are stultifyingly uninteresting.

3) Quarters of the lesser priests — these quarters are little more than a series of bunk beds. There is room for nine priests here, but only six now occupy it. Nothing of any interest is here except for the priests' clothing and personal goods.

4) Storeroom — for temple vestments, candles, oils, food, and so forth. Nothing else is here.

5) Chapel — this is a private chapel holding a small statue of Mardek. It was for the private worship of the priests, and is naturally not used now.

6) Conference Room — contains a large table and several chairs. There is a secret door in the south wall, opened by pressing down on a candleholder mounted on the wall nearby.

7) Library — this study room is filled with many tomes regarding Mardek and the Lords of Law. Nothing here is of much interest except to scholars of Law. The secret door to the conference room is openable also from this side, again by pressing down on a candleholder.

## TEMPLE OF MARDEK: LOWER LEVEL

**THE STAIRWAY DOWN:** the main entrance to the lower level is beneath the statue of Mardek. The urn held by the statue is merely twisted to the right, whereupon the entire fountain slides north, revealing a staircase.

This winding way descends 200 feet to the lower level. The descent is trapped, with a separate trap 50 feet down, 100 feet down, and 150 feet down. The stairs are ten feet wide. The traps are encountered in the following order.

A) a pressure plate here causes the step directly in front of those descending to flip open while five spears thrust out to the step above. Each spear does 3D6 damage to anyone on the step. The spears are 2 feet apart. A luck roll (POW x 2 or less on 1D100) permits a potential target to be missed, and a See roll may permit the user to spot the hinge in the step immediately below before it activates.

B) here is a tripwire hidden by cobwebs and dust. A See roll at -25% is needed to spot it. Only the characters in the front can succeed. When tripped, a cloud of gas shoots out from the ceiling and fills a thirty-foot section of corridor. This gas is Luptak, a nerve toxin. Each person exposed must succeed in a roll of CON or less on 1D100 to resist. Failure indicates that the character's DEX is lowered by 5D6 for 6D6 minutes. Successfully resisting the poison indicates that the character is immune to it and never need roll again. Should a victim's DEX be reduced to zero, he falls into a fit and cannot do anything for the allotted time, except conceivably fall down the stairs.

C) a simple false stair; parchment painted to look like stone. It covers a ten-foot-deep pit, in which resides a demon of combat summoned by Alban Ishna. It attacks when it hears someone fall. The pit covers the full width of the stairs, and so is ten feet broad, but it is only 3 feet across on the short axis, restricting free movement and preventing anyone trapped from using weapons larger than shortswords or daggers.

### SNAKE DEMON

STR	21	CON	20	SIZ	20	INT	4	POW	11	
DEX	16	CHA	1	Hit Points	28					

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Attack</i>	<i>Parry</i>	<i>Damage</i>
Crush	40%	—	2D6

NOTES: this demon looks like a huge skinned boa constrictor. It attacks by trying to loop its body around an enemy and crush it to death. Once it has successfully hit an enemy, it remains attached and keeps doing the same 2D6 damage each round until either it or its foe is dead. If the victim succeeds on a POW x 3 roll he can have his weapon arm free to keep fighting even when being constricted. The creature has no mouth, and so never bites.

The inhabitants of the temple know where the stair traps are, and simply step over them when they descend. Any yelling or screaming carries down to the guards below.

**ENTRANCE:** the staircase ends in large double doors, always guarded by two Vultures in Crimson. These doors can be barred from within, and contain hidden peepholes to allow people to see out.

**THE INTERIOR OF THE LOWER LEVEL:** this is a damp cavern of black stone. The lake which once was here is buried under a cave-in engineered by the chaotic priests now in residence. A three-foot-high octagonal altar marks the former center of the lake. Its stones are usually moist.



Beside the altar stand two four-foot-tall braziers filled with oil and always kept lit. If a brazier is flipped over at a foe, that unfortunate takes 3D6 fire damage.

1) in the northeast portion of the cavern is a cell, actually a cave with iron bars set across the entrance. One of the Vultures on guard duty has the key. There is always at least one guard stationed here. Inside this cell are always 1D6 prisoners. The gamemaster should decide if any of the prisoners can be helpful to the adventurers. If one of the adventurers' comrades has been taken prisoner, he will be held captive here. Chunloom is not here — he has long since been sacrificed.

2) to the south of the altar sits a large throne on a four-step-high dais. This is where Ishna sits to preside over sacrifices. There is one sacrifice each night, as long as the supply of wayfarers holds out. Behind the throne is a glass statue of Hionhurn, filled with a swirling dark smoke (the stuff of Chaos). If the temple is overwhelmed, Ishna busts the statue and releases this stuff, which slowly fills the cavern. Anyone unfortunate enough to be caught in it is mutated horribly and perhaps driven mad. The gamemaster may invent his own mutations or use the Teleportation Mishap table in the rulesbook to determine the results. A very strong-willed person may be able to temporarily. Each round that the mists engulf a character and he receives a successful POW x2 roll or less on D100, he is unaffected. Only 15 points of damage break the statue.

3) in the northwest corner is an off-cavern where the Vultures sleep and play cards, or dice and drink. There is nothing much interesting here.

4) in the east wall is a secret door leading to the temple's treasure hoard. This hoard consists of 10,000 Large Bronzes worth of coins, gems, statuettes, and jewelry. There are no extraordinary coins or magical devices. The door is well-hidden, and is opened by a button hidden in the base of the torchholder set in the wall just to the south of it. The torchholder must actually be removed from the wall, and the inside bottom of the holder pressed to open this door. The door can neither be opened nor closed from inside.

5) to the south is another small cavern with stairs leading up to the trapdoor in Alban's quarters. It is curtained where it enters the temple. This cave contains the priestly vestments for priests of Hionhurn, and the sacred Axe of the temple. This is an all-metal weapon encrusted with 20 rubies, each worth 400 LB. As a weapon, it operates as a Lormyrian axe. The temple Axe has no special magic powers but is obviously valuable. It is clearly visible on the wall of the cavern.

## THE PRIESTS OF HIONHURN (less three)

### ALBAN ISHNA, high priest of Hionhurn, an Ilmioran

STR 8	ARMOR: 1D6-1 leather
CON 13	Hit Points: 13
SIZ 9	SKILLS: Dodge 35%, Jump 25%, Listen 40%,
INT 17	See 43%, Hide 66%, Move Quietly 70%, Dis-
POW 19	guise 80%, Persuade 93%, Plant Lore 50%,
DEX 10	First Aid 60%, Credit 55%
CHA 17	LANGUAGES: Read Common 100%, Speak
	Common 100%, Read High Melnibonean 65%,
	Speak High Melnibonean 40%, Read Low Melnibonean 75%,
	Speak Low Melnibonean 45%

SUMMONINGS: Earth Elementals 55%, Fire Elementals 43%, Demons of Combat 73%, Demons of Travel 36%

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Light Mace	28%	25%	1D6+2
Dagger	56%	51%	1D4+2

NOTES: wears axe-shaped talisman around neck which contains the powerful demon Gogona (see below).

Alban Ishna is a cunning and dangerous man. He is also quite persuasive and, in dealing with him, adventurers may well believe he is the priest of Law he claims to be. He carries no weapons other than a dagger when in the upper level of the temple and keeps even that hidden. He is thoroughly dedicated to Hionhurn and loves sacrificing victims to the Executioner. He is also an opportunist and any profit to be made interests him. He is treacherous and greedy, maintaining alliances with chaotic adventurers only for a brief time, soon stabbing any new-found 'friend' in the back — literally.

### GOGONA, demon of combat

STR 30 CON 80 SIZ 30 INT 9 POW 12  
DEX 6 APP 1

ARMOR: 8 point skin

Hit Points: 98 <sup>88</sup> <sup>78</sup> <sup>66</sup> <sup>54</sup> <sup>42</sup> <sup>32</sup> <sup>21</sup> <sup>2</sup>

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Sacred Axe	34%	20%	3D6+3D6
Claws (2)	50%	35%	1D6+3D6

NOTE: the Sacred Axe mentioned above is the temple sacrificial Axe. Gogona only uses it if it is given him by a priest or if he is ordered to get it. Otherwise, he just attacks with his claws.

Gogona has the chaotic feature of Sleep. Anyone touched by him must resist with their POW vs. his POW or fall asleep for 1D8 minutes. Anyone hit by Gogona is considered to be touched, even if the damage bounces off armor.

Gogona is a huge lump of dead-looking gray flesh. Two long clumsily-jointed appendages end in large black talons. He is slow and stupid, but is also extremely tough. Gogona has no mouth, but has eyes scattered about the vaguely head-shaped portion of his anatomy. He also has a nose slit through which ugly garumphing sounds emanate.

Gogona ignores any foe who falls asleep, moving on to other prey. The priests of Hionhurn take all sleeping victims prisoner for sacrifice if Gogona is victorious.

Gogona was not originally summoned by Alban Ishna, as is evident by his extreme might. However, he is bound to Alban Ishna's service. If Gogona's binding object (the talisman) is destroyed, he goes berserk and tries to kill anyone near him for 1D6 rounds, after which he fades back to his own plane. Ishna must pronounce Gogona's name aloud to summon him out of the talisman. He pronounces the name backwards to return the demon back to the talisman.

### NARDO GOREN, chief priest of Hionhurn, an Ilmioran

STR 14	ARMOR: 1D6-1 leather
CON 15	Hit Points: 17
SIZ 14	SKILLS: Dodge 43%, Jump 28%, Listen 30%,
INT 13	See 31%, Hide 36%, Move Quietly 39%, Dis-
POW 13	guise 60%, Persuade 32%, Plant Lore 42%,
DEX 13	First Aid 42%
CHA 7	

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Broadsword	66%	53%	1D8+1D6
Dagger	37%	42%	1D4+2+1D6

NOTE: has belt buckle in which an air elemental is bound.

**PHINIAN SAV, chief priest of Hionhurn, an Argimilian**

STR 17      ARMOR: 1D8-1 half-plate  
 CON 14      Hit Points: 14  
 SIZ 12      SKILLS: Dodge 43%, Listen 56%, See 33%,  
 INT 14      Hide 42%, Move Quietly 46%, Disguise 35%,  
 POW 16      Persuade 35%, Plant Lore 47%, First Aid 45%,  
 DEX 9      Credit 35%  
 CHA 5

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Heavy Mace	51%	21%	1D8+2+1D6
Dagger	43%	40%	1D4+2+1D6

**ORPHEL ZIMIN, priest of Hionhurn, an Ilmioran**

STR 8      ARMOR: 1D6-1 leather  
 CON 15      Hit Points: 15  
 SIZ 9      SKILLS: Dodge 24%, Jump 32%, Listen 24%,  
 INT 10      See 35%, Hide 58%, Move Quietly 32%, Dis-  
 POW 5      guise 50%, Persuade 27%, Plant Lore 43%,  
 DEX 9      First Aid 45%  
 CHA 9

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Scimitar	55%	63%	1D8+1
Dagger	29%	35%	1D4+2

**UNTRIM URO, priest of Hionhurn, an Eshmiran**

STR 9      ARMOR: 1D6-1 leather  
 CON 16      Hit Points: 16  
 SIZ 11      SKILLS: Dodge 48%, Listen 47%, See 33%,  
 INT 16      Hide 78%, Move Quietly 45%, Disguise 56%,  
 POW 14      Persuade 27%, Plant Lore 50%, First Aid  
 DEX 10      53%, Credit 57%  
 CHA 5

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Scimitar	56%	40%	1D8+1
Dagger	49%	43%	1D4+2

**KAJAK BYN, priest of Hionhurn, a Dharijoran**

STR 10      ARMOR: 1D6-1 leather  
 CON 18      Hit Points: 18  
 SIZ 9      SKILLS: Dodge 35%, Jump 35%, Listen 63%,  
 INT 11      See 23%, Hide 37%, Move Quietly 76%, Dis-  
 POW 12      guise 76%, Persuade 35%, Plant Lore 49%,  
 DEX 13      First Aid 45%, Credit 64%  
 CHA 12

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Spear	47%	36%	2D6
Dagger	34%	43%	1D4+2

**VEERN ORL, priest of Hionhurn, an Ilmioran**

STR 13      ARMOR: 1D8-1 half-plate  
 CON 16      Hit Points: 15  
 SIZ 8      SKILLS: Dodge 81%, Listen 56%, See 55%,  
 INT 12      Hide 36%, Move Quietly 78%, Disguise 86%,  
 POW 12      Persuade 33%, Plant Lore 48%, First Aid  
 DEX 10      42%  
 CHA 15

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Spear	22%	25%	2D6
Dagger	41%	41%	1D4+2

**THE VULTURES IN CRIMSON — assassin/guards****NAJ GORUK, a Weeping Waster**

STR 9      ARMOR: 1D8-1 half-plate  
 CON 16      Hit Points: 16  
 SIZ 11      SKILLS: Dodge 45%, Jump 255, Listen  
 INT 6      30%, See 45%, Hide 67%, Move Quietly  
 POW 14      60%, Ambush 55%, Sandbag 65%, Disguise  
 DEX 9      36%  
 CHA 9

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Scimitar	56%	58%	1D8+1
Target Shield	—	47%	—

**SHAZI TRICORN, a Dharijoran**

STR 12      ARMOR: 1D8-1 half-plate  
 CON 11      Hit Points: 12  
 SIZ 13      SKILLS: Dodge 55%, Jump 35%, Listen 38%,  
 INT 12      See 40%, Hide 57%, Move Quietly 50%, Am-  
 POW 7      bush 35%, Sandbag 45%, Disguise 66%  
 DEX 9  
 CHA 12

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Scimitar	54%	57%	1D8+1
Target Shield	—	47%	—

**ADRAL GREENSLAN, an Ilmioran**

STR 15      ARMOR: 1D8-1 half-plate  
 CON 10      Hit Points: 10  
 SIZ 11      SKILLS: Dodge 65%, Jump 38%, Listen 30%,  
 INT 8      See 54%, Hide 57%, Move Quietly 45%, Am-  
 POW 17      bush 65%, Sandbag 85%, Disguise 35%  
 DEX 16  
 CHA 6

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Scimitar	63%	66%	1D8+1+1D6
Target Shield	—	55%	—

**HOGAN ORNEST, a Purple Townsman**

STR 12      ARMOR: 1D8-1 half-plate  
 CON 11      Hit Points: 12  
 SIZ 13      SKILLS: Dodge 35%, Jump 25%, Listen 45%,  
 INT 13      See 60%, Hide 45%, Move Quietly 35%, Am-  
 POW 8      bush 47%, Sandbag 45%, Disguise 46%  
 DEX 10  
 CHA 9

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Scimitar	58%	50%	1D8+1+1D6
Target Shield	—	45%	—

**OCON LAUP, an Ilmioran**

STR 10      ARMOR: 1D8-1 half-plate  
 CON 10      Hit Points: 10  
 SIZ 12      SKILLS: Dodge 55%, Jump 47%, Listen 53%,  
 INT 9      See 65%, Hide 45%, Move Quietly 45%, Am-  
 POW 10      bush 77%, Sandbag 65%, Disguise 25%  
 DEX 16  
 CHA 14

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Scimitar	62%	64%	1D8+1
Target Shield	—	46%	—

**MACUL TARNBAL, an Ilmioran**

STR 12      ARMOR: 1D8-1 half-plate  
 CON 13      Hit Points: 9  
 SIZ 5      SKILLS: Dodge 34%, Jump 42%, Listen 36%,  
 INT 12      See 60%, Hide 65%, Move Quietly 43%, Am-  
 POW 13      bush 28%, Sandbag 15%, Disguise 45%  
 DEX 8  
 CHA 11

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Scimitar	51%	57%	1D8+1
Target Shield	—	48%	—





Beyond some low, cruel mountains and a riverless valley, Ginjada Oasis is a small desert watering hole some 20 miles from Fakash. It is also the encampment of Akrat Bey and his desert raiders. Akrat Bey is better known as the "Brass Dog," for reasons no one recalls. However, the epithet is not generally used in his presence. The camp consists of a dozen or so tents among the palm trees at the west lip of the watering hole. His tent, a large square one of purple silk, is easily distinguishable from the rest.

Akrat's band consists of 35 fierce Weeping Wasters. The band survives by raiding small towns and villages as well as caravans crossing the Waste. Any traveler in the desert is subject to their inspection, and anyone approaching the oasis is set upon and brought before the Brass Dog himself. At least five raiders always stand guard around the oasis, usually hiding among the dunes surrounding the palms. If the adventurers wish to sneak up on the oasis, they must each succeed in a Hide roll to get within 100 yards without being spotted. If the adventurers just ride in, they are quickly surrounded by raiders training desert bows at their chests. Resistance brings an immediate attack, and with this many adept archers, that would mean a quick shuffling off of the mortal coil.

Akrat Bey is not a mean-spirited man, and seeks only a tribute of some sort from those crossing "his" desert. Negotiations for the exact amount of the tribute are carried out with great formality and according to Akrat's sense of hospitality. In any case, the adventurers must be ready to cough up some cash, gems, or jewelry, lest the Brass Dog decide they'd be better off staked out on an anthill. Drawing weapons is a definite no-no while within the Brass Dog's camp. Weapons are not confiscated, however, unless the adventurers seem bent on armed insanity.

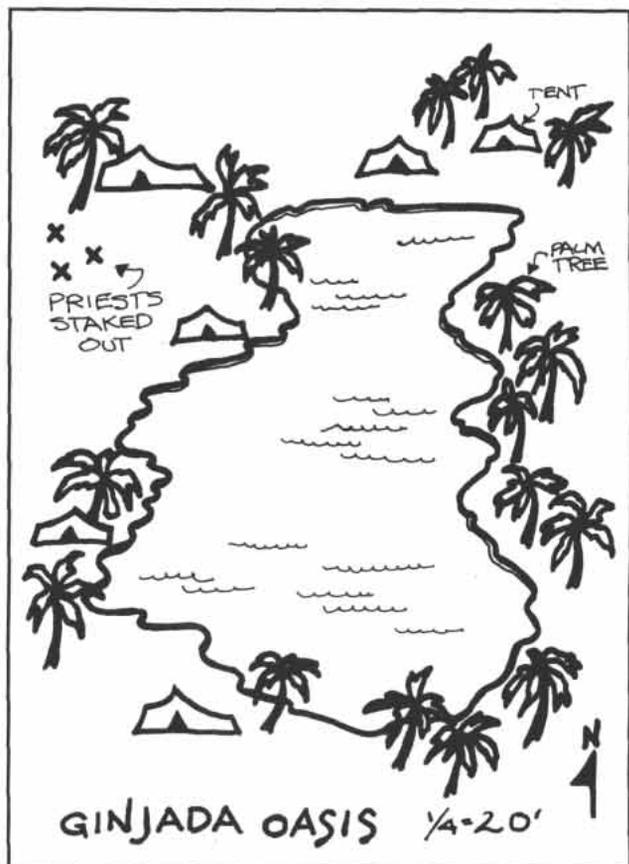
Currently, Akrat Bey has three "guests" in his camp. These are the three priests of Hionhurn sent by Alban Ishna to find out whither Chunloom's map leads.

Akrat hates priests of Chaos, as do his men. The priests were intercepted and are now staked out in the sun, slowly dying for the raiders' amusement. The map is now in Akrat Bey's possession. The priests can be seen right next to Akrat's tent and are unlikely to survive another day.

Akrat Bey won't tell the adventurers about the map, but, if the adventurers talk to the priests and promise to free them, the priests will talk all about it. Akrat Bey never listens to any pleas for mercy for these minions of Chaos. In fact, such pleas on the part of the adventurers would convince him that they, too, are chaotic, and he may well have them staked out next to the priests. The adventurers can offer to set the priests free and then simply renege on the deal, but the priests are cagey. They won't tell the adventurers precisely what they were up to, but only hint that the priests can share a great treasure, if freed. Naturally, once freed, the priests attempt to return to Fakash and get Ishna's help to destroy the adventurers. If Ishna has been defeated and the adventurers inform the priests of this, the priests may be convinced to rely more on the adventurers' help.

Another possibility is to be straightforward with Akrat Bey. The adventurers may just tell him that they are after something and think the priests know where it is. In such a case, Akrat Bey gladly negotiates for possession of the map. His price is exceedingly high. If this price cannot be met somehow, no map.

The adventurers can steal the map. This is not terribly difficult to do, for Akrat keeps it in a small unlocked jeweled coffer in his tent. If they negotiate with him for the map, they see Akrat Bey take it out of this coffer. A successful uninterrupted Search of Akrat's tent also turns it up. This tent is difficult to enter. There are always guards at the entrance, and two more guards constantly circle it.





Another solution is to convince Akrat Bey that what the map leads to is dangerous, and can only be acquired by the adventurers. Akrat is likely to believe this, because he has already sent men to follow the map, and they have not returned. If so convinced, Akrat Bey accompanies the adventurers to the site of the cavern with at least ten men. He still demands a fee for permitting the adventurers to use the map.

If one of the adventurers is a sorcerer capable of summoning a demon or elemental, Akrat Bey and his raiders can easily be panicked. The Brass Dog and his men are all thoroughly frightened of magic, and flee wildly if a demon or elemental crop up in their midst. This would leave the adventurers alone with the priests for 1D10 + 4 minutes (the time necessary for the desert raiders to screw up their courage and return with the intent of killing the demon and those who summoned it). Naturally the raiders will not simply allow someone to sit and perform conjurations. In fact, if they see evidence of such, they immediately slay the offender. Essentially, sorcerers and priests should keep a low profile, as these Weeping Wasters do not fancy the eldritch arts or their practitioners.

The action at Ginjada Oasis should be a good opportunity for role-playing as the adventurers take on a potentially dangerous situation that is best handled by tact and diplomacy. The only thing the adventurers require is the final clue to the cavern where the subject of the quest lies. Obviously, there are several ways to obtain it. If the adventurers decide to simply charge in with swords waving, then you as the gamemaster should be unmerciful and fill them full of Weeping Waste arrows. Otherwise, keep them on the hook, but don't be unkind or unfair. Remember the players do not know everything that has happened, and may not immediately follow the right course. Their encounter with the Brass Dog should cost them some cash and a lot of anxiety, but in the end should net them the final piece of the puzzle.

DAN & DAVE DAY 85

*Akrat Bey and some desert raiders*

**AKRAT BEY, THE BRASS DOG, leader of the desert raiders**

STR 17      ARMOR: 1D8-1 barbarian  
 CON 13      Hit Points: 13  
 SIZ 11      SKILLS: Dodge 68%, Listen 56%, See 40%,  
 INT 12      Hide 65%, Move Quietly 53%, Ride 86%,  
 POW 12      Ambush 58%, Jump 36%, Evaluate Treasure  
 DEX 13      75%, Orate 75%  
 CHA 15

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Scimitar	66%	73%	1D8+1+1D6
Target Shield	45%	58%	1D6+1D6
Desert Bow	70%	—	1D10+2+1D4

Akrat Bey is a swart son of the desert with strong notions of hospitality. If he likes you, you're in for wine, women, and song. If he doesn't, you could be staked out in the sun, cut to ribbons by a gauntlet of Weeping Waste scimitars, or used as archery targets. Either way, you're his guest. He talks grandly in great flowery phrases and loves to hear people respond in kind. He does not like tight-lipped men. Play him big and grand. After all, he's backed up by 35 raiders!

The statistics on the following pages represent average desert raiders. Of Akrat's three dozen followers, ten are repeated here for gamemaster use. Feel free to shift statistics or skills percentages up or down as desired.

**DESERT RAIDERS, All Weeping Wasters****Raider One**

STR 13      ARMOR: 1D8-1 barbarian  
 CON 15      Hit Points: 15  
 SIZ 10      SKILLS: Dodge 60%, Listen 35%, See 40%,  
 INT 11      Hide 60%, Move Quietly 45%, Ride 80%,  
 POW 10      Ambush 50%, Jump 35%  
 DEX 12  
 CHA 10

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Scimitar	50%	40%	1D8+1
Target Shield	35%	45%	1D6
Desert Bow	50%	—	1D10+2

**Raider Two**

STR 13      ARMOR: 1D8-1 barbarian  
 CON 15      Hit Points: 15  
 SIZ 10      SKILLS: Dodge 60%, Listen 35%, See 40%,  
 INT 11      Hide 60%, Move Quietly 45%, Ride 80%,  
 POW 10      Ambush 50%, Jump 35%  
 DEX 12  
 CHA 10

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Scimitar	50%	40%	1D8+1
Target Shield	35%	45%	1D6
Desert Bow	50%	—	1D10+2

**Raider Three**

STR 13      ARMOR: 1D8-1 barbarian  
 CON 15      Hit Points: 15  
 SIZ 10      SKILLS: Dodge 60%, Listen 35%, See 40%,  
 INT 11      Hide 60%, Move Quietly 45%, Ride 80%,  
 POW 10      Ambush 50%, Jump 35%  
 DEX 12  
 CHA 10

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Scimitar	50%	40%	1D8+1
Target Shield	35%	45%	1D6
Desert Bow	50%	—	1D10+2

**Raider Four**

STR 13      ARMOR: 1D8-1 barbarian  
 CON 15      Hit Points: 15  
 SIZ 10      SKILLS: Dodge 60%, Listen 35%, See 40%,  
 INT 11      Hide 60%, Move Quietly 45%, Ride 80%,  
 POW 10      Ambush 50%, Jump 35%  
 DEX 12  
 CHA 10

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Scimitar	50%	40%	1D8+1
Target Shield	35%	45%	1D6
Desert Bow	50%	—	1D10+2

**Raider Five**

STR 13      ARMOR: 1D8-1 barbarian  
 CON 15      Hit Points: 15  
 SIZ 10      SKILLS: Dodge 60%, Listen 35%, See 40%,  
 INT 11      Hide 60%, Move Quietly 45%, Ride 80%,  
 POW 10      Ambush 50%, Jump 35%  
 DEX 12  
 CHA 10

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Scimitar	50%	40%	1D8+1
Target Shield	35%	45%	1D6
Desert Bow	50%	—	1D10+2

**Raider Six**

STR 13      ARMOR: 1D8-1 barbarian  
 CON 15      Hit Points: 15  
 SIZ 10      SKILLS: Dodge 60%, Listen 35%, See 40%,  
 INT 11      Hide 60%, Move Quietly 45%, Ride 80%,  
 POW 10      Ambush 50%, Jump 35%  
 DEX 12  
 CHA 10

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Scimitar	50%	40%	1D8+1
Target Shield	35%	45%	1D6
Desert Bow	50%	—	1D10+2

**Raider Seven**

STR 13      ARMOR: 1D8-1 barbarian  
 CON 15      Hit Points: 15  
 SIZ 10      SKILLS: Dodge 60%, Listen 35%, See 40%,  
 INT 11      Hide 60%, Move Quietly 45%, Ride 80%,  
 POW 10      Ambush 50%, Jump 35%  
 DEX 12  
 CHA 10

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Scimitar	50%	40%	1D8+1
Target Shield	35%	45%	1D6
Desert Bow	50%	—	1D10+2

**Raider Eight**

STR 13      ARMOR: 1D8-1 barbarian  
 CON 15      Hit Points: 15  
 SIZ 10      SKILLS: Dodge 60%, Listen 35%, See 40%,  
 INT 11      Hide 60%, Move Quietly 45%, Ride 80%,  
 POW 10      Ambush 50%, Jump 35%  
 DEX 12  
 CHA 10

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Scimitar	50%	40%	1D8+1
Target Shield	35%	45%	1D6
Desert Bow	50%	—	1D10+2

#### Raider Nine

STR 13      ARMOR: 1D8-1 barbarian  
CON 15      Hit Points: 15  
SIZ 10      SKILLS: Dodge 60%, Listen 35%, See 40%,  
INT 11      Hide 60%, Move Quietly 45%, Ride 80%,  
POW 10      Ambush 50%, Jump 35%  
DEX 12  
CHA 10

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Scimitar	50%	40%	1D8+1
Target Shield	35%	45%	1D6
Desert Bow	50%	—	1D10+2

#### Raider Ten

STR 13      ARMOR: 1D8-1 barbarian  
CON 15      Hit Points: 15  
SIZ 10      SKILLS: Dodge 60%, Listen 35%, See 40%,  
INT 11      Hide 60%, Move Quietly 45%, Ride 80%,  
POW 10      Ambush 50%, Jump 35%  
DEX 12  
CHA 10

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Scimitar	50%	40%	1D8+1
Target Shield	35%	45%	1D6
Desert Bow	50%	—	1D10+2



Through hook, crook, or sheer luck, the adventurers have found the cavern where Chunloom hid the Jade Tiger Box and the Wheel of Sadric IX. This cavern is three miles to the east of Ginja Oasis, nestled among some dry hills. If by some chance the adventurers get to these hills without map or guide, they must make Search rolls to find the cavern entrance. Otherwise, they can find it automatically. If Akrat Bey and his men are with the adventurers, Akrat takes the lead in entering the cavern. If any of the Eshmirans from Fakash are along, they take the rearward position.

The cavern has a single passage going down a hundred yards, then forking. At this fork, the left passage leads to where the adventurers wish to go. The right passage simply goes down for 500 yards and dead-ends. If the adventurers pause to search at the fork, an adventurer receiving a successful Track roll sees that several men walked down the left passage recently. (These were the men that

Akrat Bey sent to seek out the treasure.) The cavern is pitch black, and illumination is needed to explore it.

The passage that dead-ends is only a minor annoyance. If you, the gamemaster, are feeling fiendish, you could put some peril there — a trap, an animal, a rockfall, etc.

The correct passage eventually opens into a large cavern, with an irregular ceiling. The first thing the adventurers notice here are dark stains on the floor. These are blood stains. The next thing they are likely to notice are several mutilated bodies, scattered across the west side of the cavern. These are Akrat Bey's men. They cannot be seen until the adventurers enter the middle of the cavern. The blood stains, however, are near the entrance.

If Akrat Bey is with the adventurers, he and his men hesitate at this point. They knew the dead men, and are justifiably afraid of whatever killed them. Because the passage into the cavern is narrow, the adventurers must push their way past Akrat's men to get into the front. When what killed the men is seen, the adventurers must get out of the way or be trampled by fleeing desert raiders.

Hidden in a rocky niche in the southwest part of the cavern is a demon guardian left by Chunloom. She is named Tyik Tyva and is both hideous and cunning. The Jade Tiger box hangs from a thong around her waist.

Tyik Tyva does not attack until she is spotted. Then she strikes swiftly from her niche with her long tentacles, trying to kill everyone remaining in the cavern. Tyik Tyva can see in the dark, so her first action is always to grab any torch or lantern from the hands of its bearer. Then she carries out her attacks in the dark, where she has a notable advantage.

If Akrat Bey and his men are with the adventurers, they flee wildly when Tyik Tyva is spotted. It is a nice touch to let one of the raiders be caught and slaughtered so the adventurers can build up some anxiety. In an hour or two, Akrat may return to his camp, get the rest of the raiders, and return, but this is unlikely. In any case, the adventurers have plenty of time to do their job and get out. By no means should Akrat Bey and his raiders stay around to help defeat Tyik Tyva. This would make things too easy for the adventurers in the cavern, and then too hard later on, when Akrat Bey would demand the Jade Tiger box for himself and refuse to give it up.

Tyik Tyva can be defeated in two ways. The first is simply to slay her. This can be done with any kind of weapon except missile weapons (spears, bows, thrown knives, etc.) for she is wardpacted against these. If a demon or elemental is called up against her, she tries to render the summoner unconscious. Only if this is impossible will she fight the summoned thing.

The second way to defeat Tyik Tyva is much easier. She need merely be shown the medallion (both halves joined together) that the adventurers have. Naturally, they must first have obtained the other half from Alban Ishna's quarters in the temple of Mardek. If this is done, Tyik Tyva ceases hostilities and hands over the box to the adventurer with the medallion. She then vanishes, returning to her own plane with a sharp explosion.

Negotiating with Tyik Tyva is possible. However, the only language she speaks is High Melnibonean. The negotiator must convince her that Chunloom is dead. The negotiator must succeed in both his Speak High Melni-



bonean skill and his Persuade skill to succeed, as well as showing her half of the medallion. If he succeeds, she hands over the box and vanishes. If he fails, she attacks. Tyik Tyva never permits more than one person to speak with her, and demands that the negotiator come forth alone and all his companions stay where she can see them. Failure to comply results in instant attack. She watches all adventurers while negotiating and any false move starts the battle again.

#### TYIK TYVA, Demon of Protection

STR 18	ARMOR: none
CON 40	Hit Points: 40
SIZ 10	SKILL: Dodge 53%
INT 9	LANGUAGE: Speak High Melnibonean 50%
POW 15	CHAOTIC FEATURES: See in Darkness,
DEX 16	Levitate, Wardpact vs. all missile weapons
CHA 2	

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Head Tentacles (2)	65%	—	1D6/1D3 choke
Bite (1)	40%	—	1D4
Arm Tentacles (2)	55%	67%	1D8+2 whip
Chest Blades (1)	100%	—	2D8

NOTES: Tyik Tyva has the appearance of a naked woman with long black hair. Sprouting from her temples are two wiry tentacles about a yard long each. In place of arms she has two more wiry tentacles, these about two yards long each. Two gleaming sword blades jut from her naked breasts, and her teeth are razor-sharp.

Each round she uses her two head tentacles to grab for a target's throat. If both tentacles hit, she chokes her victim for 1D6 damage/round. If only one tentacle hits, the damage is only 1D3 points per round, and she continues to attempt to hit with her other tentacle. The choke damage is automatic and each round of choking she also attempts to bite her victim. To break free of the choke, the victim must overcome her STR with his own. He may try this each round.

In addition to her head tentacles, she attacks with both arm tentacles each round. She can use them to whip, parry, or grab a foe. If she grabs, the tentacle does no damage, but on the next

round she pulls the victim into her body swiftly, attempting to impale him on her chest blades. A STR vs. STR roll may be attempted on the first round she catches a victim to avoid being pulled onto her chest.

Once the adventurers have dealt with Tyik Tyva, their quest is at an end. They have the Jade Tiger box and can decide what to do with it. If they decide to open the box, they quickly find (unpleasantly) that it is a Demon Box with a POW of 50 and a CON of 25. Any non-magical weapon or tool hitting it has a 50% chance of breaking. Trying simply to open the box subjects the opener to a POW vs. POW roll. If this roll should fail, the person dies. A demon could be summoned to try and open the box, but it would be subject to the same POW vs. POW roll. The only way to safely open the box is via an incantation which only Kolan Tal knows.

If lucky adventurers manage to shatter the box's lid (by dealing 25 points of damage to it at once) or otherwise open the box, they find a Melnibonean Wheel imprinted with the visage of Sadric IX. Obviously, the monetary value of this is great, but more importantly, the Wheel has magic power. Unfortunately, to activate its power, one must also call up the spirit of Sadric IX, a task not without danger. The Ritual of Charantis gives the secret for doing this. This is of course the reason that Kolan Tal desires the book from the Tomb of Sekis.

If the adventurers read their book, learn the ritual, call up Sadric IX, and succeed, they see his stern, ghostly figure appear before them. Sadric speaks in an unearthly voice, asking for the Wheel. He promises the adventurers all sorts of power for the Wheel. If the Wheel is given to his spirit, Sadric immediately makes a possession attack against the one who gives it. Sadric's POW is 5D8 and the attack is treated exactly as if Sadric were a demon of possession. If it succeeds, Sadric possesses his target, and the target becomes the former Melnibonean Emperor in temperament and personality. He becomes cruel, stern, dominating, and a master schemer. All skills and abilities of the person possessed remain the same. However his INT is changed to 27 and his POW to 5D8. Sadric's POW must be rerolled every few hours (at the gamemaster's option). As a spirit, Sadric's POW fluctuates.

If Sadric fails to possess his victim, or if he is ever exorcised, he returns to the Plane of the Dead, and the adventurers must perform the Ritual of Charantis all over again to get him back. Remember to reroll his POW every time he is summoned.

The correct way to handle Sadric is to use the ritual to summon him up, then attempt to bind him into the Wheel. This binding is carried out exactly like any demon binding, except that if the attempt fails, Sadric immediately possesses the binder, no roll necessary. If the binding succeeds, Sadric is bound into the Wheel and the powers of the Wheel are usable by the binder only. If another should try to use the Wheel, he must engage Sadric in a POW vs. POW struggle. If he fails to overcome Sadric, Sadric is again returned to the Plane of the Dead. If he succeeds, then he takes the place of the original binder. This technique is not described in the book from the Tomb of Sekis, nor will Kolan Tal ever hint at it. The adventurers must figure it out for themselves. If one of them is a sorcerer or priest, the gamemaster may wish to permit them

some sort of chance to figure it out through their knowledge of the arcane.

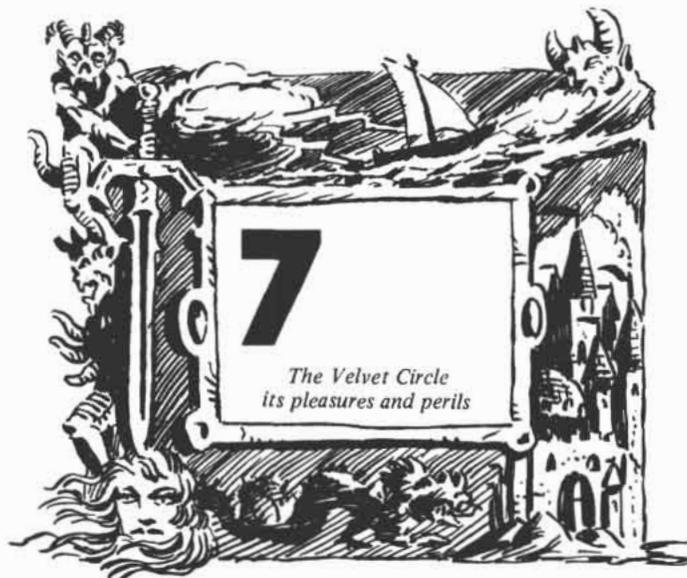
If Sadric is bound into the Wheel, the binder gains several magic powers. First of all, the Holder of the Wheel adds the Power of Sadric's spirit to his own for all purposes (remember to reroll this on 5D8 whenever used). Second, the Holder of the Wheel can command Sadric's spirit to possess any living being touched by the Wheel. This possession attack matches Sadric's POW of 5D8 against the POW of the target. If it succeeds, the target is possessed by Sadric for one day. While in another body, Sadric always tries to get control of the Wheel, by stealing it or killing the one holding it. To return Sadric's spirit to the Wheel, it need merely be shown to him. If Sadric is permitted to possess the target's body for more than one day, the binding ends and he can no longer be forced back into the Wheel. Sadric does not attempt to flee his binding, and wants to remain as near the Wheel as possible. Lastly, the Wheel can be used to dominate any living being, simply by displaying it and willing the target to fear the wielder. The target must then roll his POW + INT or less on 1D100. If he fails, he becomes terribly afraid of the Wheel's Holder and does whatever he says, short of harming himself. The person is not an automaton, and if the Wheel's Holder is not there to dominate him, he is free to do what he likes. This spell of domination always lasts 1D6 hours. For every hour so-dominated, the target gets another POW + INT roll to break the domination. At any time, the Wheel's Holder can display it to the target again and thus reinforce the domination for another 1D6 hours. To use this power, Sadric's spirit must occupy the Wheel, not be out possessing another. Only one target at a time can be so dominated.

Obtaining the power of the Wheel should be extremely difficult. Even impossible. Only a very competent sorcerer should even attempt it.

### THE CLIMAX

If the adventurers decide simply to leave the book and Wheel alone and return them to Kolan Tal as directed, Tal takes them, pays the adventurers whatever he promised them, and takes off for Melniboné to hide the Wheel there until he wishes to use it. If the adventurers decide to keep the Wheel and book for themselves, after 1D10 days Kolan Tal shows up and attempts to slay the possessor of the Wheel and take it.

By the way, if the adventurers do play it fair with Kolan Tal, he gives them their "immortality" — actually merely a single dose each of the Elixir of Invulnerability. Of course, these doses soon wear off and the adventurers are again subject to death, but it should be amusing to watch them charge into melee thinking they are invulnerable. In fact, this is what Kolan Tal hopes for. Once he gets what he wants, he leaves all survivors alone. They are beneath his contempt if they are not Melnibonéan, and know to little about his plot to jeopardize it. Should the adventurers wish to keep helping him "save the world," the gamemaster can pen his own follow-up scenarios. Possibilities include a quest for another of the Wheels, a mission to find Elric, or even a quest to the Planes of Chaos or Law to consult with the gods. It's up to you.



The Velvet Circle is a lively, garishly-luxurious place, more than suitable for the varied lusts and pleasures of hot-blooded (and cold-blooded) wastrels. Every form of pleasure imaginable can be obtained within the sun-baked walls separating the Velvet Circle from the city outside.

When first visiting the Velvet Circle, the adventurers likely will be concerned with the Bright Dawn tavern and the Dark Pearl inn. A brief tour of the Circle provides the gamemaster with colorful, transferable background.

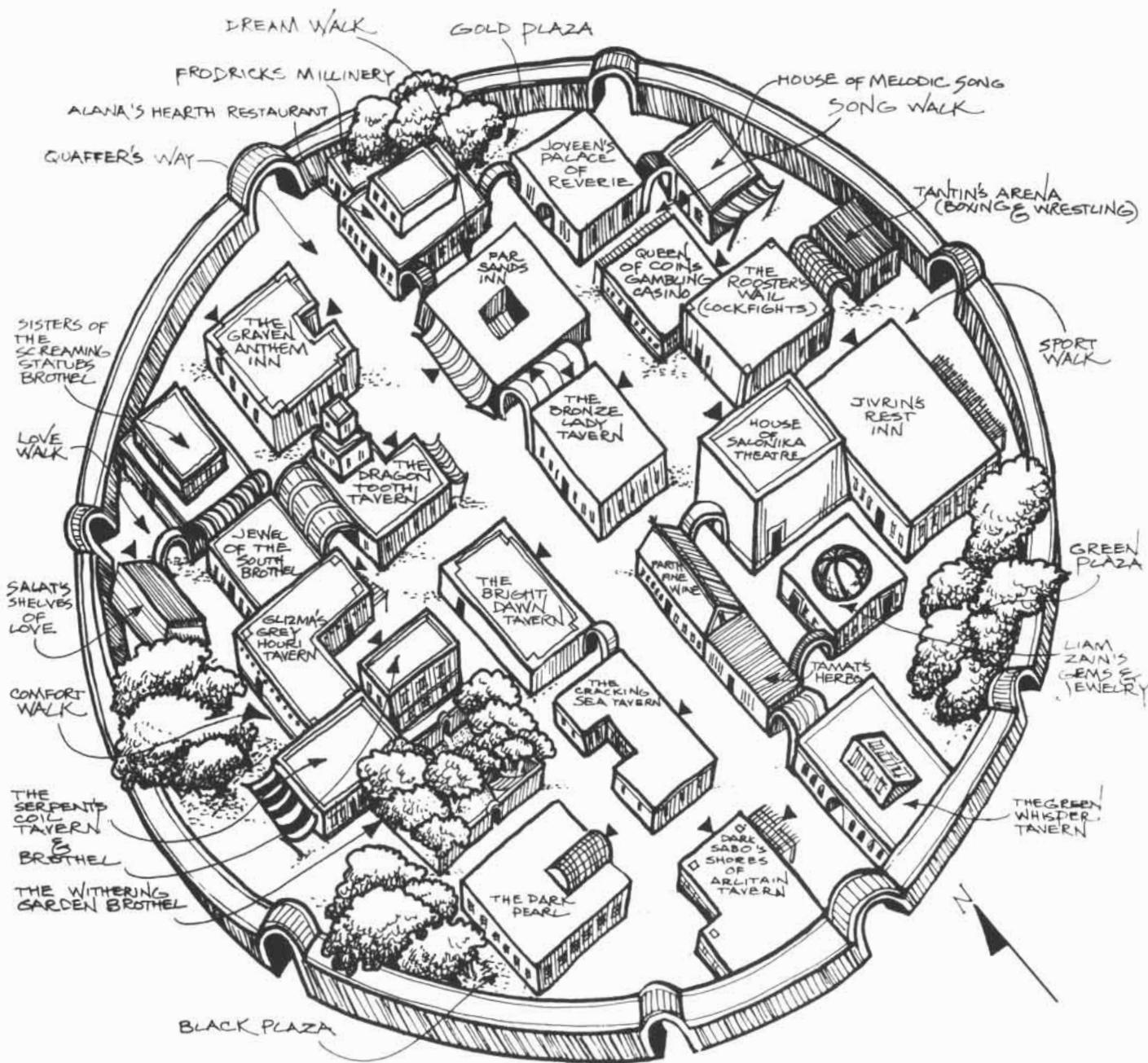
Adventurers can get carried away with the numerous and unusual offerings of the Circle, and have a wonderful time. Now and then remind them that a story's waiting.

**ENTRANCE:** the Velvet Circle is surrounded by a twelve-foot-high circular wall of multi-colored stone. There are eight gates in the wall: the two at the north and south ends of Quaffer's Way are the main gates, and they are always open. The six side gates are usually locked, openable at the convenience of the city guard. Four city guardsmen keep watch at each main gate. They look over everyone entering and leaving the Circle; this is their regular duty, and they've been at it a long time. They know the regulars, the owners, and the workers, and unusual strangers stand out like sore thumbs. The Circle does not encourage riff-raff to enter, but the guardsmen can be bribed: since the bribe is for four, it can be expensive. The city guard doesn't enter the Circle except in pursuit of a suspect or in case of fire or riot. At such times, more guards are summoned while the main gates are locked to keep the action contained. About fifty guards can arrive quickly, so advise the players to control impulses toward melees while in the Circle.

Only guardsmen are allowed on the broad walkway formed by the top of the wall; this regulation is routinely ignored.

**INNER WALKWAY:** it is not obvious from the plan, but a walkway parallels the inner side of the wall. Only a few torches light it, and many deals are consummated in this relatively private place. One can move around the Circle at night with little chance of being spotted. This walkway is also convenient for avoiding the bustling crowds which choke the streets of the Circle from dusk to dawn, and sometimes make quick movement impossible.

CITY



THE VELVET CIRCLE  
IN THE CITY OF ILMAR.

▶ HIDDEN DOORWAY    ◄ — ◄ = 30'

CITY

**THE CIRCLE PROPER:** the main thoroughfare of the Velvet Circle is a wide cobbled street known as Quaffer's Way. This street is lit by colorful paper lanterns hanging by ropes stretched between the various buildings along the street. The resultant illumination is quite lively and adds greatly to the feeling of festivity promoted here. Lining Quaffer's Way is a variety of taverns, inns, and shops. The Circle is small, so there are only a few streets. All are marked by plaques on the corners of buildings. Sport Walk, to the east of Quaffer's Way, leads to a theater, a casino, a boxing/wrestling arena, and a cockfighting arena. Dream Walk leads to Joveen's Palace of Reverie, where folk indulge in altering their consciousnesses. Comfort Walk is the Velvet Circle's red light district, containing a mixed bag of brothels catering to every taste. Black Plaza and Green Plaza are spacious open areas with benches for revelers to rest a moment. Dark Pearl is in Black Plaza. Only the inns are open 24 hours a day. The taverns and brothels open at dusk, as do the places along Sport Walk. Shops like Parth's Wines and Tamat's Herbs open late in the afternoon and close about midnight, unless business is really hot. Joveen's opens after dark.

### The Taverns of the Velvet Circle

In the following descriptions, prices are designated 'low,' 'moderate,' or 'high.' Gamemasters may suit these descriptions to their own economic frame. In our campaign, 'low' price meant a small bronze for the cheapest beer in the house up to three LB for the best liquor in the house. 'Moderate' meant one LB for the beer and a small silver for the good stuff. 'High' indicated a small silver for cheap beer and up to a large silver for expensive hooch. This is per drink. Bottles or jugs cost five times as much.

1) **BRIGHT DAWN** — this tavern, owned by a native son of Ilmar named Thal Binder, is the finest tavern in the Circle. Prices are high and poorer adventurers will need to nurse their drinks. Its walls are covered with brilliant murals depicting glorious sunrises, and it is lit to a pleasant golden hue by tinted-glass globes hanging from the ceiling. Bright Dawn has tables, private curtained booths, and a large sunken center area. Tables stand in this sunken area, but no booths. Staircases lead down into it from all sides. The Bright Dawn is a decorous establishment, and the owner frowns on outrageous behavior or drunken rowdiness. Most of its bouncers are former city guardsmen.

2) **DARK SABO'S SHORES OF AFLITAIN** — this is a rowdy spot, owned by a Shazaarian named Dark Sabo. Its prices are moderate and its fare are the usual tavern drinks; ale, beer, wine, cider, grog. The house specializes in exotic tidbits prepared in the Shazarian fashion. It is popular with visitors from the Western Continent, and has a hot-blooded atmosphere that often leads to brawls. The bouncers here are all Shazaarian, and are mainly cousins or former associates of Sabo's. Their favored method of dealing with troublemakers is to slit their hamstrings. A rumor that Sabo was a pirate once periodically makes the rounds of the bazaar. This rumor is true.

3) **THE CRACKING SEA** — Armad Thunderhead was a ship captain from the Isle of Purple Towns. He lost his ship in a storm and was washed ashore in Ilmar, as the only survivor. He took this as an omen, and opted for the life of a landlubber, opening the Cracking Sea tavern. His

prices are low, and in addition to standard tavern fare, he serves a most potent grog of his own devising. It is only available here. The Cracking Sea has a nautical motif, and is a favorite stop for ship captains, naval commanders, mates, and any common seamen able to slip past the guard. The conversation here is salty at all times and brawls are frequent. The bouncers are all ex-sailors and quite adept with sea axes.

4) **THE GREEN WHISPER** — this is the quietest and darkest establishment in the Circle. Some are surprised when they learn it is a tavern. The lighting is soft green, making everyone hard to recognize. The prices are high and all potables are the finest available, as a result of the owner's noble tastes. The owner is Annelda Zorn, a former noblewoman of Pikarayd who fell on hard times. She tried to solve her problems by stealing state secrets from the rulers of Pikarayd. She succeeded, and was betrayed by her co-conspirator. She wound up with a great deal of money and a slit throat. Fortunately, her co-conspirator could not find where she had hidden the money, and the slit was not deep enough to kill her, but Annelda now has an odd whispery voice. She has long since taken a horrible revenge upon her enemy and her past is now only a pale memory. Despite the high prices in this tavern, the selling of drinks and food is not Annelda's main source of income. She traffics in spying and assassination. Annelda's experience in these matters convinced her that there was a good deal of both profit and power to be gained, and she soon made the Green Whisper into a clearing-house and rendezvous for spies and killers from every nation of the Young Kingdoms. Many nobles meet here to arrange sinister matters of state and her steady clientele of freelance spies and assassins assures that any matter can be handled with appropriate discretion. The Green Whisper is a fine place for adventurers to become embroiled in political intrigue or foul murder plots.

5) **THE BRONZE LADY** — Kallewn Aiglo, a Lormyrian, inherited this tavern from his shrewish wife. His wife, it seems, was an amateur sorceress of sorts, but one day bungled a tricky conjuration and was transformed into a bronze statue by the offended demon. Kallewn mourned briefly and put the statue in the center of the tavern as a showpiece, changing the name of the tavern in memory of his wife. At least, that is the story Kallewn tells. Ever since his wife vanished (most people do not believe the tale of demons and sorcery) the tavern has been a lively place devoted to dancing and budding romance. Kallewn Aiglo is a happy man. His prices are moderate and his clientele is mainly composed of young noblefolk.

6) **THE DRAGONTOOTH TAVERN** — this watering hole is owned by one Magan Landreen, an ex-warrior from Vilmir whose claim to fame is the slaying of a dragon. A brace of dragon teeth decorate the rim of his hardwood bar. Who can say whether Magan's claim is true or not? He has certainly shown no signs of utmost bravery or extreme skill in battle since taking up residence in the Velvet Circle, though he'll fight anyone who disputes his claim to being a dragonslayer. Anyone bringing in the tooth of a dragon drinks free for the night. And the tooth is given a place among the collection around the rim of the bar. Magan's prices are low, and the fair is standard. His clientele is primarily composed of warriors and soldiers, and

for this reason brawls are common. Also for this reason, weapons may not be drawn in the tavern. Anyone doing so is quickly, efficiently, and bloodily dealt-with by Magan and his bouncers. His men have notoriously-tough reputations among Circle habitués, and all are former-warrior buddies of Magan.

7) **THE SERPENT'S COILS** – this is the only tavern in the Circle not located on Quaffer's Way. It is also the biggest dive in the Circle. Its prices are lower than low, and it is owned by a Dharijoran named Adou Kadi. This Dharijoran-looking tavern is popular with those who can't afford anywhere else. It also has a small brothel attached to it. The bouncers here are ex-boxers from Tantin's Arena. They work cheap and are fairly indulgent with rowdy behavior.

### **The Brothels of the Velvet Circle**

In these descriptions, 'low' prices range from 10-20 LB for a simple delight up to 100 LB for something fancy. 'Moderate' costs 20-30 LB for the basics up to 200 LB for exotic pleasures. 'High' costs 50 LB for the simple stuff and up to 500 LB for more unusual desires. The men and women in the brothels vary in appearance as well. The more handsome and beautiful individuals are found in the more expensive brothels.

1) **DARK PEARL** – the Dark Pearl is a large octagonal edifice of black stone with a large iron door. Above the door is a sign showing an open oyster shell holding a dark pearl. This brothel is owned by Shirana of Shazar, a dark and cruelly-beautiful woman. Kolan Tal is her silent partner. His Melnibonean preferences provide good decadent ideas for customers. Also, Shirana adores him. Dark Pearl specializes in the most exotic of sensual delights. Various sense-heightening herbs and aphrodisiacs are served as a matter of course, and patrons can fulfill any fantasy they can describe to Shirana. There are two floors of pleasure rooms. In the waiting area of the downstairs section is a wall with four large windows, each giving a view of a cubicle where various sensual acts are constantly performed for gaping clients awaiting their turns. Nothing so simple as a mere love-wrestle is performed here, and the prices are steep (100 LB gets you in the door). One of the features of the Dark Pearl is the opportunity to spend an evening with a beast-man or a beast-woman. These are people who have been mutated into bastard animal forms by Kolan Tal's sorcery. One such person is always part of the peepshow in the waiting area. The girl Ochina who invited the adventurers to the Dark Pearl in the Bright Dawn tavern is currently in the process of undergoing such a transformation, hence her cat-like foot.

All the pleasure rooms have secret niches and peepholes both for the practice of voyeurism and to secure information about clients. The staff of the Pearl consists of quite attractive men and women (the Dark Pearl caters to both sexes) and at least six bouncers – all skilled assassins recruited by Kolan Tal. The Dark Pearl doesn't like troublemakers. Even getting into the Dark Pearl without an invitation is difficult. Prospective clients are first studied through a peephole, and shabbily-dressed or distinctly unelegant types are turned away, unless they flash some heavy cash. Kolan Tal doesn't get too involved in

the running of the business, but woe to any who try to cause trouble when he's on the premises.

Beneath the building is another series of rooms, built by Kolan Tal. He uses these rooms to practice sorcery and conjure demons as needed. No one is allowed into these rooms but Kolan Tal, Shirana, and slaves destined for sacrifice. There is a secret passage in Kolan Tal's main sorcery chamber that leads to a well-hidden spot just outside the Circle. Kolan Tal uses it to come and go, helping him maintain his low profile. There are stories about Shirana's mysterious partner all over the Circle, but none are spoken too forthrightly, out of fear.

The decor of the Dark Pearl is outrageously decadent and rich. Melnibonean adventurers find themselves quite comfortable here.

2) **THE WITHERING GARDEN** – the Withering Garden is the brainchild of Letella Jil, a native of Eshmir. It consists of a very nice square garden surrounded by eight-foot-high walls. The garden is full of colorful plants and trees. Patrons enter through either of the two entrances, pay money to the attendants on duty, and then wander the garden paths, searching for their choice of the evening. A number of young ladies lounge separately in small clearings amidst the trees and plants. These clearings are lit by colored paper lanterns. When a patron finds the girl of his choice, he merely enters the clearing and proceeds. Walking through the garden and hearing the sounds of love wafting from the various groves is quite a unique experience. Prices are low and satisfaction is guaranteed. The Garden caters only to male customers.

3) **THE SERPENT'S COILS** – this is the brothel attached to the Serpent's Coils tavern. Like the tavern, prices are low and atmosphere is nil. Indeed, the brothel is nothing more than a large common room with numerous bunk-style beds. Turnover is quick. The main attraction of the establishment is the fact that all its ladies have been trained in a Dharijoran love technique known as the Slithering Serpent. This strange contortion is quite pleasurable and just the thing for adventurers seeking new styles of delight. Like the Whispering Garden, the Serpent's Coils is only for heterosexual male customers.

4) **GLIZMA'S GRAY HOURI** – to Glizma Norja, owner of the Gray Houri, elegance is the key to pleasure. All her ladies are trained dancers, conversationalists, and servitors. Here, pleasure is taken as much in the quiet, decorous ways of the employees as it is in physical contact. Rowdiness is definitely frowned upon. The main patrons of the Gray Houri are effete nobles who respond well to the luxurious treatment given them. Prices are high, but include drinks, tidbits of food, and hookahs of *sazerain*, a mild aphrodisiac. The Gray Houri caters to a few exotic tastes, but nothing too abnormal.

5) **JEWEL OF THE SOUTH** – this pleasure shop is owned by Nagal Nari, a man from Argimiliar. Its attraction is women from the various regions of the Southern Continent: Pikaraydians, Oinswomen, Yu women, etc. It is heavily patronized by visitors from the south who miss home-style loving, and by those who are curious as to the difference in Southern Continent women. Prices are moderate, and the decor is all Southern Continent style. Men only are taken as customers.

6) **SISTERS OF THE SCREAMING STATUES** – this somewhat grim-looking establishment caters to those who commingle pleasure and pain. The place is owned by Argo Sanfin, a Pan Tangian priest of chaos. Workers in the Sisters are all Pan Tangian. Two classes of people work here, those who enjoy giving pain and those who must take it. The men and women in the latter role are slaves, and the decadent clientele forces a high turnover among them. Those who command behavior and inflict pain are children, lovers, or siblings of folk turned into screaming statues in the city of Hwamgaarl. Here they can earn enough money to free their loved ones, though it takes time. Many enjoy their work, and are of high status in Circle society. Prices are high; the clientele ranges in intelligence, skill, and perceptiveness. People of all tastes are welcome in the Sisters of the Screaming Statues.

### The Inns of the Velvet Circle

Inns are taverns which also offer food and sleeping rooms. They are patronized by people who want to sleep the night off, or by the owners of the various shops in the circle. Adventurers can stay in these inns. 'Low' prices are 20 LB for a shared room, 40 LB for a private. 'Moderate' prices are 40 LB for a shared room, 80 LB for a private. 'High' prices are 60 LB for a shared room, 200 LB for a private. Food and drink prices are the same as for taverns.

1) **THE GRAVEN ANTHEM** – the Graven Anthem has good food and entertainment (singers, stage magicians, etc.) though their stock of drinkables is only ordinary. The prices here are low. The establishment is owned by Almay Gordo, a Vilmiran and a fine singer in his own right. Almay is serious about his entertainment, and anyone loudly not paying attention to it, or interrupting the performers is summarily booted out.

2) **FAR SANDS INN** – this inn is owned by Sedrin Horl, a man from the Weeping Wastes who gave up his barbarian ways to settle in the city. The inn has a desert look to it, and though the food is only adequate, there is a delicious wine that many come to enjoy. The bouncers are all tough-looking Weeping Wasters. Prices are moderate.

3) **JIVRIN'S REST** – this, the finest inn in the Circle, is owned by Jivrin Harla, a woman of Ilmiora who began her career as a courtesan in Glizma's Gray Hour. Food and drink are excellent here, as is service. There is a standing never-claimed offer of 1000 LB for any insect or vermin found within her establishment. Her prices are high, but not worth it. Jivrin is popular in the circle, and anyone giving her trouble receives the same.

### Other Establishments

1) **SALAT'S SHELVES OF LOVE** – Salat Wiz is a Jharkorian who specializes in erotic writings and paintings. He has collected a wide variety of such things and sells them to interested parties. Prices are always high, but much of the work here is as beautiful as it is stimulating. Some, of course, is simple dross from unclean minds.

2) **FRODRIK'S MILLINERY** – Frodrik's sells stunning clothing of silk and cotton. It is customary in the Circle to buy a favorite courtesan some nice garment from Frodrik's. Frodrik's makes clothes for both men and

women, unsuitable for treks through the wilderness, but handy for an evening's pleasure. Prices are moderate to high for clothing. The owner is Frodrik of Hellwood, a Tarkeshite.

3) **ALANA'S HEARTH** – this is a restaurant with good home-style cooking at reasonable prices. Alana is another courtesan who changed professions. This was wise, as she is much better at cooking than she was at lovemaking. The food here is good and beer and wine are available. Good smells constantly waft from Alana's, enticing the hungry inside. It is most crowded just at dusk, and customers may have to wait a half-hour or more to get a table then. Many of the girls who work in the Circle are friends of Alana's and patronize the Hearth frequently. Alana is a kind-hearted person and does her best to please customers. She is Vilmiran.

4) **PARTH'S FINE WINES** – this is strictly a wine shop, with a variety of excellent wines for sale. Its owner, Lazlek Parth is an Ilmioran knowledgeable on all matters pertaining to the wine-making art. Prices are high for his wines, but well worth it. Parth does carry the pale yellow wine that drives men mad. He is a supplier of wine for many taverns and inns in the circle.

5) **TAMAT'S HERBS** – Tamat, a native of Filkhar, sells all sorts of herbs and spices. His most popular herbs are aphrodisiacs, and he has a wide variety of these. His most expensive herbs are those usable in sorcerous rituals. The gamemaster may want to stock Tamat's with useful items like herbs of healing or similar elixirs, but such items are always priced very high, and Tamat never has too many doses. Tamat can classify most plants or herbs and is a good source of information for those seeking this type of knowledge. He gives nothing away for free, and must be paid well before he gives out any of his hard-earned knowledge. Tamat also buys rare herbs and spices from adventurers. If the adventurers offer to seek out rare plants, Tamat may make a deal, if it profits him more than them. This can be a way to earn some money on a proposed trek through the Forest of Troos.

6) **LIAM ZAIN'S GEMS AND JEWELRY** – Liam Zain is a Vilmiran gem expert. He buys and sells all manner of precious stones and settings, and gives fair prices to all sellers. However, he does not buy trash or ordinary stones, and less-valuable gems such as opal or topaz must be either extremely fine or placed in an excellent setting before he is interested. He appraises any gem at the nominal fee of one LB per item. He offers to buy any gem appraised that interests him. Fooling him in the subject of gem lore is impossible. He has a fondness for Melniboean jewelry and tries to buy any that crosses his path. He makes very cunning items of jewelry with secret compartments for poison, messages, etc. if a patron desires.

7) **HOUSE OF SARONIKA** – Saronika is a woman of Argimiliar who is a great patron of the theatrical arts. At the House of Saronika, a repertory company puts on dramas and comedies for the amusement and enlightenment of interested patrons. The cost of entrance is one SB, which entitles the purchaser to one show. There are two shows a night, plus matinees over the weekend. The



*two adventurers ponder a bargain*

plays presented vary greatly, but historical pieces are popular, as are satires on local government. Saronika mounted a stunning piece of drama depicting the fall of Imrryr a few months ago, but the show closed quickly after the mysterious deaths of several main actors (a piece of “criticism” on the part of Kolan Tal, though no one dares accuse him of it). Crowds here can get boisterous and noisy, especially when they dislike a particular work or a particular thespian. Throwing harmless objects and food is tolerated in the theater, but actually trying to skewer an actor is not, and bouncers are on hand to deal with such inappropriate behavior.

8) **QUEEN OF COINS CASINO** – this is run by Tarabeth, a woman from Jharkor who brooks no nonsense from her customers. Broken bones are handily dealt out to those getting too loud; extreme infractions result in a quick death via sword, dagger, or axe. Heavily armored guards infest the Queen of Coins, for gambling means lots of flowing cash. The Queen of Coins boasts a variety of complex dice games, several open card games, and the opportunity to bet on virtually anything a patron can come up with. Tarabeth is wily, and never takes sucker bets. If an adventurer wishes to gamble here in hopes of picking up quick cash, the gamemaster can either play out any games possible (a game of craps is easy to do in game context, but a card game is not) or come up with some mechanic to simulate the gaming. As a suggestion, I espouse the Gambling skill. Or the gamemaster could simply figure out the character’s chances of winning and roll percentile dice. The Queen of Coins runs a fair game and do not cheat. Cheating is a capital offense here.

9) **TANTIN’S ARENA** – Tantin Yavro is a native of Pan Tang. This rather sweaty place features bare-knuckles boxing and freestyle wrestling. Admission is an LB and usually the bouts are quite exciting. Lots of betting goes on here, and the Queen of Coins also takes bets on the nightly bouts. A rather sour ale is the only libation served, but it only costs a SB to purchase. Most people think it is hardly worth it and bring in their own snacks and beverages. Every now and again there are grudge matches here between two old foes (the most popular are the bouts between women, especially prostitute, enemies), and occasionally these matches involve weapons, though no one ever admits there are fights to the death here. There is a 25% chance on any one night that such a match is to be held. Patrons can put up money and fight personally against any of the professionals in Tantin’s stable. Boxing matches are always to a knock-out, and the boxers’ hands are bound in leather straps, sometimes studded with metal like a Roman cestus. Wrestling matches end either in a pin or by submission. Usually a wrestling match is done for two out of three falls. Boxers simply employ their Fist attack skill, but when the loser’s hit points reach zero, he is knocked out, not killed. A critical hit when boxing indicates that normal damage is done instead of the special ‘false’ damage normally inflicted in boxing. Wrestlers use the new skill of Wrestling. Wrestlers can use punches or kicks, though these are basically against the rules. A patron wishing to box or wrestle must wager at least a small silver. Odds are figured by the toughness of his house opponent. Grudge matches between outsiders require no wager.

**BIG BYARD, Champion Boxer of Tantin's, an Ilmioran**

STR 18      ARMOR: none  
 CON 18      Hit Points: 25  
 SIZ 19      SKILL: Dodge 87%  
 INT 4  
 POW 9  
 DEX 14  
 CHA 6

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Fist (2)	95%	97%	1D3+1D6

NOTE: Byard's fist parry is only effective vs. other fists.

**TARGA OF JHARKOR, Champion Wrestler of Tantin's**

STR 16      ARMOR: none  
 CON 17      Hit Points: 21  
 SIZ 16      SKILL: Dodge 65%, Wrestling 94%  
 INT 8  
 POW 10  
 DEX 17  
 CHA 8

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Fist (2)	67%	47%	1D3+1D6
Kick	58%	—	1D6+1D6

NOTE: Targa's fist parry is only effective vs. other fists.

9) **THE ROOSTER'S WAIL** — this small arena is owned by Jalo Hawkstar, an emigre from the Weeping Waste. Here fighting cocks are pitted against one another for the delight of blood-crazed crowds. Betting is heavy, and, again, bets on these fights are also booked in the Queen of Coins. Rivalry is intense. Anyone with a fighting cock is free to participate against one of Jalo's fine fighting birds or against another patron's bird. An entry fee of one small silver is required to send a bird into the ring. The current acknowledged champion of the Rooster's Wail is Jalo's cock, Desert Spur, that has beaten over 200 opponents to date, and is by far the best fighter the Rooster's Wail has ever seen. Jalo dearly loves the bird. Dead birds are either returned to their owner or sent to Alana's Hearth to be used in a curious stew prepared there.

10) **HOUSE OF MELODAC** — Melodac is a Vilmiran who is partial to good music. He opened his song house to indulge himself in this greatest of pleasures. Admission is two LB, for which a customer may sit for an hour or two and listen to all manner of singers, accompanied by the fine musicians of the establishment. Not all the singers are terrific, especially since Melodac lets anyone so desiring to warble a tune. Singers who do not come up to standard usually end their performance in a shower of fruit and vegetables. Wine and beer is served here for an SB per glass. A nice cold plate, with fruit, vegetables, and cheese, is available for an LB. Even an adventurer could try to sing if so inspired, using their Sing skill. If successful, the listeners may shower them with coins (depending on the singer's skill, from 1D10 to 1D100 SBs). If the skill roll fails, it's fruit salad time. The best singers from Melodac's often do stints at the Graven Anthem inn.

11) **JOVEEN'S PALACE OF REVERIE** — Joveen Urtal is a woman from Dharijor whose stock-in-trade is exotic drugs. In her Palace of Reverie, patrons lounge on silken couches and indulge in a variety of mind-altering substances, at high prices. Boisterousness and riots are not a problem here — most patrons are barely capable of movement. Depending on the substance, a dreamer can be

rendered *non compos mentis* anywhere from one to twelve hours. Charges include the cost of the drug and the space. The most popular drug is a dried flower called Spirit Tail, which induces a trance state in which colorful and often erotic hallucinations are seen. The trance lasts about an hour. Joveen sells her wares for outside use, but her prices are three times what she would get for the same thing used on the premises. At the gamemaster's discretion, Joveena may have some drugs usable for demon summonings and the like. The air in Joveen's is always pungent with the smell of incense and the drugs themselves. Most of her wares are doled out in hookahs, but some of them are eaten, and others injected with small silver needles. Many of the drugs are addictive, providing Joveen with many steady customers. Joveen carries small darts on her person that are tipped with a drug capable of putting a full-grown elephant to sleep in 15 seconds. It works somewhat faster on humans interrupting the quiet dreaming of the palace. Joveen tosses these little barbs with a skill of 75%, and they do no damage other than a pin prick. Firella, a lovely woman, plays the harp softly in Joveen's Palace, the better to dream by.

**RANDOM INCIDENTS IN THE VELVET CIRCLE**

Roll 1D20 once for every hour the adventurers are abroad in the Circle. On a roll of 11-20, nothing unusual happens. If 1-10 is rolled, check the following incidents for a result. Once a result has happened, it cannot happen again. If it is obtained a second time, either reroll or treat the roll as 'no result.'

1) A gorgeous, elegantly-dressed person of the opposite sex makes a bold advance on one of the adventurers, suggest a quiet dinner for two at a local inn, and offers to pay. This individual actually is a Demon of Desire, who means to kidnap the adventurer, and take him or her to a sorcerer in the city, who needs a sacrifice. The demon tries to use drugged wine on the character during dinner. The potency of the wine is 13. If it overcomes the victim's CON, he gets very sleepy in 1D6 minutes and falls sound asleep within a half-hour. A Taste or Scent roll reveals a slight smokiness in the wine. If the drugging attempt fails, the demon reverts to its true physical form and attacks at the most convenient moment, in an attempt to render the victim unconscious. The demon kills only if severely threatened or wounded. Should the victim be subdued, the demon teleports with his or her unconscious form to the sorcerer. The demon is then promptly released from this plane, and the sorcerer immediately sacrifices the victim in order to summon a Demon of Combat.

**NYARI, demon of desire**

STR 16      ARMOR: none  
 CON 7      Hit Points: 8  
 SIZ 13      SKILLS: Dodge 76%, Ambush 67%  
 INT 18  
 POW 15  
 DEX 13  
 CHA 18

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Fingernails (2)	49%	58%	1D8+1D6
Slap	63%	—	1D6+1D6
Spit	50%	—	special

NOTE: victim of spit must Dodge or be blinded by a glob of slimy mucus, taking 1D3 rounds to remove.

Nyari can project a gorgeous form, either male or female, at the gamemaster's whim. Its true form is that of a woman with 12-inch nails like daggers, jutting out of her webbed hands. She uses these for killing enemies. For subdual, she uses the spit attack described above or a slap of her webbed hands.

2) A drunken young noble, named Aslang Trimuth, bumps into one of the adventurers. He then insults the adventurers roundly. He is drunk enough to fight almost anyone. If he is killed or badly injured, the adventurer responsible is set upon by the city guard within the hour and hauled off to a dark dungeon. Aslang is the son of a high city official. The adventurer may or may not be held for trial. If not, he will simply be left to rot in his cell.

#### ASLANG TRIMUTH

STR 10            ARMOR: none  
 CON 11           Hit Points: 13  
 SIZ 14           SKILL: Dodge 32%  
 INT 8 (4)  
 POW 9  
 DEX 11 (5)  
 CHA 12

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Shortsword	43%	35%	1D6+1

NOTE: Aslang is currently quite drunk, and must use the statistics in parentheses rather than his real INT and DEX.

3) A shady-looking character tries to sell the adventurers a map to a fabulous treasure hidden in R'lin K'ren A'a. The map looks very old and has Melnibonean symbols on it. He wants 100 LB for it, but can be bargained down to 75. He tells them that one part of this fabulous treasure is a statue with huge eyes of jade. The map is in fact genuine. However, depending on the time period of your campaign, Elric may already have been there and found that the treasure was not quite what it seemed. A gamemaster could use this as a springboard to another adventure.

4) A thief attempts to cut an adventurer's purse. He has a Cutpurse skill of 55% and carries a dagger with an Attack of 48% and a Parry of 34%. He tries to flee if his Cutpurse attempt fails.

5) A Pan Tangian girl dressed in a skimpy outfit, and with obvious and numerous bruises on her body runs up to the adventurers begging them for help. She is a slave who works at the Sisters of the Screaming Statues brothel and wants to leave. A little after the girl arrives, two large Pan Tangian ruffians show up. They wear half-plate and carry broadswords and throwing axes. They intend to drag the girl back to the brothel and try to skewer anyone who attempts to prevent them.

#### PAN TANGIANS

##### Number One

ARMOR: 1D8-1 half-plate            Hit Points: 15

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Broadsword	45%	52%	1D8+1+1D6
Throwing Axe	35%	—	1D8+2+1D4

##### Number two

ARMOR: 1D8-1 half-plate            Hit Points: 15

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Broadsword	45%	52%	1D8+1+1D6
Throwing Axe	35%	—	1D8+2+1D4

If they are outnumbered, they race back to the brothel and return with at least 6 more men just like them. If a fight develops and the Pan Tangians seem to be winning, the woman will try to ingratiate herself by stabbing an adventurer in the back — literally. She has a dagger, and attacks at 23%. Since her target will be unsuspecting, her chances to hit are doubled. If the adventurers save her, she sticks to them like glue, unless given a large sum of money and escorted out of the Circle.

6) A conman tries to sell one of the adventurers a magic gem of levitation. He even gives it to the adventurer to try, telling him to squeeze it. If the adventurer does so, he levitates straight up to a maximum height of ten feet. He cannot move sideways. When he wants to come down, the conman tells him to ease off on the squeezing, and he then gently wafts down. The conman makes sure this demonstration is done in a wide open area, away from crowds, preferably in the inner walkway encircling the Velvet Circle. He offers the gem for 200 LB, but can be bargained down to 100. There's a catch, which he does not tell his customers about. The gem only works three times, then losing its power completely. He has several gems, but also doesn't tell his customers about that. He uses his 74% Sleight of Hand to switch gems if someone wants more than three demonstrations. If he is attacked or caught, he uses one of the gems to levitate out of trouble if practical, or to run if levitation is impractical. He is unarmed.

7) A brawl! Wherever the adventurers are, they are suddenly overrun by a gigantic tavern brawl. Fists and feet are flying, and all of the adventurers get at least swung at before they can move off. Figure a 50% chance of getting hit. No weapons are being used at the moment, but there is a 25% chance per round the brawl proceeds that a weapon will be drawn. This turns the brawl into a melee. After 6 rounds, in either case, the city guard shows up to break up the fight and arrest everyone they can catch. In a brawl, all fist and foot damage should be considered temporary damage, leading to a knock-out, rather than to a death.

8) The adventurers hear a cry for help. A moment later two men race out of a side alley with bloody daggers in their hands. The men also wear shortswords and leather armor. They are assassins. They attack anyone who tries to stop their getaway. Only the adventurers are close enough to make such an attempt. If the adventurers go to see who cried for help, they find the victim, a wealthy merchant. He will die in 1D6 rounds if a successful First Aid is not performed on him. If the adventurers save his life, he gives them a reward of 1D100 large silvers. The city guard arrives at the scene in 1D10 + 6 minutes.

#### ASSASSINS

##### Assassin One

ARMOR: 1D6-1 leather            Hit Points: 12

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Shortsword	55%	73%	1D6+1
Dagger	60%	68%	1D4+2
Thrown Dagger	40%	—	1D4+2

### Assassin Two

ARMOR: 1D6-1 leather

Hit Points: 12

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Shortsword	55%	73%	1D6+1
Dagger	60%	68%	1D4+2
Thrown Dagger	40%	—	1D4+2

9) A swarthy little man carrying a gunny-sack bashes into one of the adventurers and goes flying. The sack falls to the ground. The unlucky adventurer must succeed in a STR x5 roll on D100 or fall down. If the little man is challenged in any way (even by an angry comment), he takes off, leaving the sack behind. If he is not bothered, he slowly edges up to the sack, grabs it, and continues running with it. In the sack is the prize fighting cock Desert Spur (see the description of the Rooster's Wail). The little man stole it from Jalo Hawkstar, hoping to make some money with Desert Spur in another city. Jalo sent 5 tough guys out to find the thief and they show up in about a minute. They do not know the thief, but have orders to seize him and bring him back to Jalo. They are not too bright and attack quickly, ignoring excuses. Anyone they spot with the bird is considered by them to be the thief, and anyone helping that person must also be a thief. The real thief runs the instant he spots these men, if he can. If he can't get away, he tries to convince Jalo's thugs that the adventurers are the thieves.

### JALO'S THUGS

#### Thug One

ARMOR: 1D6-1 leather

Hit Points: 13

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Falchion	55%	60%	1D6+2+1D6

#### Thug Two

ARMOR: 1D6-1 leather

Hit Points: 13

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Falchion	55%	60%	1D6+2+1D6

#### Thug Three

ARMOR: 1D6-1 leather

Hit Points: 13

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Falchion	55%	60%	1D6+2+1D6

#### Thug Four

ARMOR: 1D6-1 leather

Hit Points: 13

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Falchion	55%	60%	1D6+2+1D6

#### Thug Five

ARMOR: 1D6-1 leather

Hit Points: 13

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Falchion	55%	60%	1D6+2+1D6

10) A rabid wardog jumps one of the adventurers. This dog is foaming at the mouth. The dog's STR is 16, and the adventurer he leaps at must resist the dog's STR with his own or be knocked down. The dog bites once a round if his target is not knocked over, and bites twice a round if the target is knocked over.

### RABID DOG

ARMOR: 1 point fur

Hit Points: 14

Weapon	Attack	Parry	Damage
Bite	35%	—	2D4

NOTE: anyone bitten must match their CON vs. the potency 16 rabies injected. If the rabies potency overcomes the victim, he dies of rabies in 1D100 days. There is no cure.

### NEW SKILLS

**SANDBAG:** this skill is the ability to deliver a forceful blow to an appropriate spot on an opponent's head and thus knock him unconscious. Such a blow can be delivered by a blackjack-style weapon, sandbag, etc. Any helm covering the head negates any chance for a Sandbag attempt to succeed. The attack must be performed from behind, without the target being aware (Move Quietly and Hide rolls are appropriate). If the Sandbag roll fails, the blow simply glances off, or misses completely. If the roll succeeds, the target must receive a CON x3 roll attempt on D100. Success indicates that he is stunned only for 1D6 rounds. Failure indicates that he is knocked cold for 1D3 hours. Sandbag attempts also deliver 1 point of damage, and give the victim a terrific headache.

Sandbag is a Manipulation skill.

**DISGUISE:** this is the ability to change one's appearance, voice, and mannerisms so as to pass for someone you are not. Any Disguise-using character must succeed in his Disguise skill roll whenever anyone who might see through the Disguise is in sight. If the roll fails, those in view get a See roll which if successful penetrates the Disguise. If the Disguise roll succeeds, the disguise is successful. Some material components are needed, such as wigs, costumes, but a Disguise roll may be allowed at a reduced percentage for a hasty disguise utilizing only voice and body language. When a disguise is penetrated, the viewer does not automatically recognize the individual. He simply knows that the person is not what he seems.

Disguise is a Stealth skill.

**WRESTLING:** the user of this skill must decide whether he wishes to attempt a take-down, a hold, or a pin, and then attempt a Wrestling skill roll. A pin can only be attempted if, on the two rounds immediately preceding, the wrestler succeeded in a hold and take-down, in that order. Two characters may match their Wrestling skills. If both succeed in a skill roll, neither gets to do what he wants. If a Wrestler gets a hold on another, a STR vs. STR roll must be made to see if the hold is broken. If not, the wrestler with the hold adds 10% to his take-down roll.

This is an Agility skill.

**GAMBLING:** a gambler must place a bet on some game of chance and try to succeed in his skill roll. If he succeeds, he wins the bet. Otherwise, he loses. This skill can be used to simulate a long evening of wagering simply by having the adventurer make a number of gambling rolls and deciding what amount of money is won or lost on each roll. The skill should not be used to resolve bets whose outcome depends upon a non-chance contest. For instance, if an archer bets that he can hit the bullseye with his arrow, his Bow Attack is used, not his Gambling skill.

This is a Knowledge skill.

