

AZAG



CREDITS

Writers:

Lex Mandrake (rules/fiction/setting)
Chris Boudreau (rules/setting)
Diogo Nogueira (fiction/setting)
Safia Aldulaijan (fiction/setting)
Mahar Mangahas (fiction/setting)

Artists:

Luis Melo (Cover)
Logan Stahl (Interior Art)
Daniel Walthall (World Map)

Music:

Loot the Body

Playtesters:

Chris Boudreau
Safia Aldulaijan
Logan Stahl
LB Hackemup
Jorphdan
Ben Abbot
Peter Brown
Lizzy Dorrell
Kelly Moore
Brandon Owen
Dan Ouellette
Kyle Goines
Sam Cooper

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CONTENTS

Pg1 - **Foreword**

Pg2 - **The Name of the World**

Short Fiction by Lex Mandrake

Pg4 - **Section 1: Rules**

Basic, Complex, and Optional Tools for Running the Game

Pg9 - **The City of Masks**

Short Fiction by Diogo Nogueira

Pg11 - **Section 2: Characters**

Creation and Advancement

Pg13 - **The Dream of The Amaranthine City**

Short Fiction by Lex Mandrake

Pg15 - **Section 3: Abilities**

Talents, Spells, and Their Uses

Pg22 - **The Invasion**

Short Fiction by Mahar Mangahas

Pg24 - **Section 4: Items**

Mundane Objects and Magic Item Tables

Pg29 - **The Webs of Byzarion**

Short Fiction by Lex Mandrake

Pg31 - **Section 5: Places**

Descriptions and Encounters

Pg47 - **The Intractable General**

Short Fiction by Safia Aldulaijan

Pg49 - **Section 6: People**

Motivations and Plot Hooks

Pg64 - **The God in Silver**

Short Fiction by Lex Mandrake

Pg66 - **Section 7: Monsters**

Statistics and Lore

FOREWORD

Welcome to my book! Thanks for buying it! I procrastinated as much as possible in its creation. In fact this foreword is the last bit of writing I'm doing.

You know what an RPG is right? If not, it stands for Role Playing Game. This particular kind is played using paper, pencil, and dice (or equivalent). A group of Players and a Game Master (GM) get together to do some shared storytelling. Rules mechanics and rolls of the dice randomize elements of that story, hopefully to its benefit.

Let's drill down a little more shall we? This game is inspired by some very good and cool stuff. Mechanically this is a 'rules hack' of Advanced Fighting Fantasy as detailed in the 1989 book *Dungeoneer!* I've also stolen a bit of math from Daniel Sell's *Troika!* Though, I've departed in some significant ways, like creating a Social Encounter system, or throwing out damage charts in favor of polyhedral dice. I try to keep the rules fairly modular, so if you'd like to ignore some of them it shouldn't be too big a deal. One of the things I try to do here is create tools that GMs can use during play to improve the impact of their scenarios. For instance, there's a modifier system which replaces static bonuses with a flexible dice chain.

What about the setting? What about the favor of the thing? Well, like far too many before me, I find myself drawn to the Sword & Sorcery pulps of old. While I like Howard's *Conan*, I think the really weird corners of Appendix N don't get referenced enough. All we got from Vance was a lousy spell system, and there just so much more in *Dying Earth*. Lovecraft gets referenced a lot but hardly ever his *Dream Cycle* stuff, and it's super interesting weird fantasy. Speaking of weird fantasy, Clark Ashton Smith's *Hyperborea* is delightfully strange. Throw in some of the off kilter humor of Leiber's *Lankmar* too, why not?

I'll tell you why not! This genre is deeply problematic! Heaven forbid a woman in a Conan story not be completely sexualized. Lovecraft certainly never passed up an opportunity to portray people of color as alien or bestial. There's a lot that you can and should criticize these authors for. So how do we write Sword & Sorcery material in light of this? Well we can start by dropping the negative stuff, but I wanted to go further. I hired some extremely talented people from all over the world to give their own perspectives on the genre. The way they've helped craft this setting is really awesome, or at least I think so.

This all brings us, in a roundabout way, to the kind of setting material you're going to see in this book. Sure there's flavorful spells and items but there's also: short fiction, npc generators, and location tables. There's a lot of world to dive into here. As a forewarning there are a few subjects appearing in this work you should be aware of. Of course violence is prevalent but we really tried to put as much weight in problem solving and negotiation. There are some references to drug use, mental illness, and disability that some may find uncomfortable. That's totally fair and we've tried to keep this content in the peripheral. Basic Safety Tools have been included as well. I think it's really important that people are talking about these kinds of topics before play so no one is blindsided.

Now to switch gears. This project isn't just writing! I worked with three wonderful artists on this book. As someone who cannot draw, bouncing visual ideas off artists is a rare treat. It's a whole other dimension of the world building that is crucially important. Speaking of other dimensions to the project, there's a component which you may or may not engage with depending on how you purchased the book. I'm talking, of course, about the music. Weird Fiction is...weird, and I always felt that psychedelic rock paired very nicely with it. So I reached out to the wildly talented Levi of Loot the Body. He was more than happy to contribute and his instrumental work really speaks for itself.

To wrap up I feel really lucky to have been able to do this project. All the people I worked with really floored me with their contributions. A special shout out to my regular co-author Chris. He's been humoring my ideas for years and he did a lot of heavy lifting in here. I can't thank him enough for that. Basically, if you like the stuff in here, read that credits page. Go support those people like you're supporting me. Thanks everyone!

- Lex

THE NAME OF THE WORLD



***My homeland has never had a name.
Though many have claimed names for it.***

To the decadent Amaranthine Sorcerers it is Mashngi, the Great Dream. Sword smiths of mountainous Larfar say it is called Talgurtheron. The eternally bickering priest kings of Barbasdu can all agree its name is Anshar. It was declared Erim when the army under that banner sought to revive the glory of the old dynasties at the point of a spear. Some, who have fallen to madness, call it for the demon god they believe to have shaped it. The terrible and undying Azag, from whose temple and veiled priests, no traveler has ever escaped.

I have traveled far, by painted sail and desert mount. Through saurian jungles and down silver avenues. I have made it my life's ambition to witness every corner of my world. Those sights and tribulations are graven upon my soul.

In the year of moving stone I held watch above the broken pass where the hard lands of X'nak border the verdant valley of Quoz. As you well know, the battle was immeasurable. Such were the armies of the warlock Torach, whom he clad in bronze and magic. Many had surmised their leader was invincible as he strode the bloody causeway, striking down foes with the power of his living armor. Few remain who saw that Torach was indeed, just a man. How his unstoppable force was brought low by the melodic hymns of the orchid groves. I watched as an empire of carnage realized the true beauty of nature and threw down their swords.

In the summer of crawling ice I climbed the great creeping glacier to divine what phenomenon caused its growth. I crept through those groaning mirror caverns and beheld the servants of Zuthaggwa in their writhing dance. Such rituals were bestowed by their alien master, and I can only guess the outer thing's true motivations. However, it is well known that after its shrines were restored in the settled lands, not one inch has the glacier moved.

In the last days of Noxtolar I sailed the rim of the Crescent Sea for that ill-fated city. Passing the hushed necropolis of Kaimanu, with its cyclopean salt-swept streets and robed Toogs, who laugh strangely under the horned moon. The gentle winds bore us past this and The Yielding Plain abutting the Amaranthine City, only to falter at stately Lariyan. Its azure gardens and emerald streams tempted us, but it does not do to dwell there. As time works weird phases in that sweet smelling place. Finally we arrived at southern Noxtolar, where its twin golden rulers had grown lethargic, hiding behind the power of their glyph gate. My companion stole from their treasure vaults an obsidian blade that had belonged to the heroes of old. This caused our quick departure.

So many tales could I tell of daring battles and unknown magic. Of wicked acts overcome by compassion or fury. I have experienced more than most in my life. When I began to pen this work I was asked by my kin if I would be the one to name this place. I can only say that my homeland has many names.

***Best we deny them all, and call it for ourselves, for that is the true
freedom of the world.***

RULES

Safety Tools

After you have gotten your game group together but before you do anything else, take some time to talk as a group about the kind of game you want to play. It's important for everyone at the table to establish things that would make the participants in the game uncomfortable during play. This is especially important information for the GM, who will need to take it into account when designing and running the adventure.

There are many clear and helpful Safety Tools available. The one recommended in this game is the *Lines and Veils* system.

- **Line** - "a hard line" this is content that should not be brought up or part of the game in any way.
- **Veil** - a type of content that can appear but not be focused on, if this content comes up in play it should be "cut away" or "faded out" from Go around the table and have everyone bring up any Lines or Veils that are important to them.

How to Roll

There are two main types of rolls, *Opposed Rolls* (often referred to as *Rolling Against*) and *Unopposed Rolls* (often referred to as *Testing*). In either case, you roll 2d6 and take the total.

Making an attack is an example of an *Opposed Roll* in which you and your opponent both roll a set of dice. After relevant bonuses are added, the high roll wins.

Searching is an example of an *Unopposed Roll* in which you *Test* your *Awareness Ability* or *Luck* in order to find something. Rolling under an established *Threshold* means you are successful.

Opposed Roll ties and meeting a *Threshold* exactly count as a player success.

Modifying Rolls

When a situation is tilted in a negative or positive way, the GM may choose to modify the dice rolled to reflect these dynamics. This is accomplished by changing the die type involved, the higher the die the more impactful the situation. Dice may be changed from 2d6 to 2d8, 2d10, or 2d12 depending on severity. For example, a thief that is loaded down with treasure may attempt to escape a falling portcullis, but since they are heavily encumbered the GM makes them use d8's on their *Test* roll. Or, a warrior may be fighting while in total darkness. Their enemy can see fine but they cannot. Here the player's dice would be unchanged but GM would choose to roll 2d10 for their enemy. In some aspects of the game, such as *Social Encounters*, this difficulty chain is already built in, but can still be further modified at the GM's discretion. When a die type moves up or down the chain it is often referred to as moving a number of steps.

The Stats and Their Uses

- **Skill** - A representation of how good your character is at anything they're trained in. Typically this number is added to the number of points you have in any given *Ability* to provide you with a total bonus or roll under *Threshold*.

- **Stamina** - A representation of your characters health and endurance. Things that reduce *Stamina* include; taking damage from an attack, casting a spell, or running full tilt for an extended period. When you are brought to zero *Stamina* you fall unconscious and must be healed or given time to recover. If you would lose *Stamina* while unconscious in this way you will die.

- **Luck** - A representation of how lucky your character is. This stat is *Tested* in a variety of situations, but is reduced by 1 point every time it is *Tested* successfully. *Luck* is often called on when trying to avoid something harmful and you lack a specific *Ability* for that situation. It is also how you can attempt to perform most *Abilities* untrained.

RULES

Social Encounters

Social Encounter mechanics are triggered when the players and a GM controlled entity are at odds with each other in a nonviolent way. When a GM or Player starts a *Social Encounter* follow these steps:

1. Determine Opponent Disposition

Monsters and NPCs have *Disposition* lists ranging from 1 to 6, with 1 being the worst and 6 being the best. If the opponent has no predetermined list the GM may use this general one:

- 1- Hostile d12
- 2- Angry d12
- 3- Wary d10
- 4- Indifferent d8
- 5- Friendly d6
- 6- Helpful d4

When the *Social Encounter* begins, the GM will tell the players where their opponent is on that scale and the players convey where they would like their opponent to be.

2. Roll in Secret

Now the players roll 2d6 and their opponent rolls two of the die type designated by their *Disposition*. Both the GM and the Players hide these values for now.

3. Up the Ante

Going around the table, each participant in the *Social Encounter* may choose to *Ante*. Doing so represents the players or their opponents adding to their side's argument in an attempt to tilt the odds in their favor. This can be illustrated by offering relevant or valuable items, offering an important piece of information, or taking a persuasive action. When a player does this they spend 1 *Luck* and roll 1d6. The GM may choose to lower or raise this *Luck* cost depending on the narrative. GM controlled participants can *Ante* but do not spend *Luck* to do so. All *Ante Dice* are revealed and kept on the table.

4. Fold or Double Down

After everyone has had a chance to *Ante*, the players or their opponent have the option to *Fold*. Doing so ends the *Social Encounter*. If the players *Fold* there is no change in their opponent's *Disposition*. If the opponent *Folds* they give in to the player's argument and their *Disposition* changes immediately.

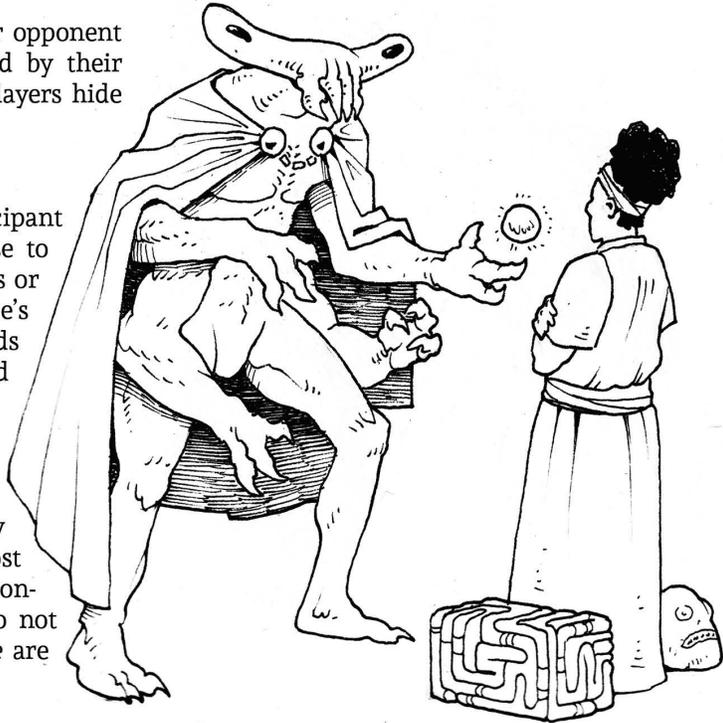
Alternatively, the Players may choose to *Double Down*. Doing so takes us back to *Step 2*, adding more secret dice to both side's pools and giving another chance to *Ante*, *Fold*, and *Double Down*. This comes with the risk of a worse resolution, as described below.

5. Reveal and Resolve

Both sides reveal all hidden dice and add any *Ante Dice* to that value. Whichever side has the higher value wins.

If the players win, the opponent's *Disposition* is set to wherever the players want.

If the players lose, their opponent's *Disposition* drops by 1 step, then another step for each time the players *Doubled Down*. This may trigger a combat, depending on how far the opponent has been pushed.



RULES

Combat

Combat in Azag is fairly freeform. When tensions come to a head and a fight breaks out the GM will ask what the players are doing and indicate what their foes are doing. Then actions happen. After everyone has had the chance to act once the round is over and this exchange begins again.

Important Notes on Combat:

- Unless stated otherwise, every combatant is only able to deal damage once in a round.
- With your GMs permission, many *Talents* can be attempted untrained by substituting your *Luck Stat*.
- Feel free to attempt any kind of action you can imagine, then work out with your GM which *Ability* may apply and if the situation or task would impose any modifiers.

Actions in Combat

Here you will be making *Opposed Rolls*, *Unopposed Rolls*, and other kinds of rolls as indicated by your *Abilities*. Sometimes you won't need to roll depending what kind of action you're taking. These are the categories that most actions fall into:

Movement: position yourself however you would like. You can close the distance between yourself and a target that is *Nearby* you. This assumes you would also be taking another action. If you would like to move farther your GM may allow it at the expense of doing anything else in the round.

Quick Actions: make a general action that can be done quickly, like drawing a weapon or cutting a rope. You GM may allow you to do this in conjunction with *Movement* or another action below but usually not both.

Ranged Attacks: *Roll Under* your *Ranged Weapons Talent* to hit, and if successful roll damage dice as indicated by the weapon. After you hit them, your target may either try rolling under *Reflexes* to dodge all damage or roll their *Armor Die* to prevent that much of the damage.

Melee Attacks: *Roll Against* your target. If you roll higher, roll damage dice as indicated by your weapon. If they roll higher they roll damage dice against you as indicated by their weapon or stat block. Whoever is taking damage may roll their *Armor Die* to prevent that much damage.

Spells: *Roll Under* your established spell *Threshold* as described in the *Abilities* section. Play out the effects of the spell.

Slow Actions: make a general action that takes time to complete, like interacting with a trap or subduing an enemy. Usually this action cannot be used in addition to another but your GM may decide otherwise depending on the situation.

Initiative

What the players choose to do is what determines when they act within the round. Here is the priority of each action, from quickest to longest:

- **Movement**
- **Quick Actions**
- **Ranged Attacks**
- **Melee Attacks**
- **Spells**
- **Slow Actions**

If more than one combatant falls into the same initiative spot, their actions happen simultaneously. In the case of *Opposed Rolls* this reduces the number of rolls made. For instance, if a player and their opponent both make melee attacks they only need to make one opposing roll.

RULES

Measurements

Time:

- **Combat** is measured in rounds. Each round is generally assumed to be 10 seconds, although tracking this time is unnecessary in most situations. See *Combat* and *Initiative* for more information.
- **Traveling** over long distances where the players are not expected to role play out their interactions are intended to be glossed over with a brief narrative. See *Traveling* for more information.
- **In-Game Time** outside of the two situations above is treated exactly like real time. Use a clock or timer to keep track of how long the players take to accomplish tasks. Make sure everyone around the table is aware of this time. Things like enemy patrols or timed traps are also relevant here. Players may always choose to skip ahead by doing very little for a set amount of time.

Distance:

- **Close:** anything within arms reach, generally understood as melee weapon distance in combat.
- **Near:** anything that is within movement distance in a brief period of time, generally understood as something a player can get to in a round of combat if they hurry.
- **Far:** anything that is a significant distance but still within sight, generally understood to be within range of a bow but unable to be reached by foot in a single round.

Size/Weight:

- **Small/Light:** ranging from a ring to a small statue
- **Medium/Moderate:** a person or equivalent
- **Large/Heavy:** a typical mount to a good sized boulder
- **Huge/Very Heavy:** a galley ship and bigger

Traveling

Covering large distances is meant to be told like a story. Here the players roll on a table associated with the area they are traveling in or through and see what kinds of encounters befell them during the journey. A low roll represents a difficult encounter while a high roll is an easier or possibly beneficial one.

These encounters are never meant to block the players progress but they do incur other costs. To encourage a collaborative narrative these encounters should be presented as questions, such as: "You found yourselves chased by a terrible monster, how did you escape it?" After the players talk about what they did the GM adds to the story by presenting the cost or benefit gained through their roll.

Locations in the *Places Section* of this book each present a d6 encounter table, but the GM may also make one themselves. Below is a list of guidelines for costs and benefits corresponding to the traveling number rolled. The GM may apply them to one or more party members depending on the situation.

1. Harrowing Passage (worst penalty)

- Lose A Magic Item OR
- Lose 2d6 Stamina OR
- Lose 1d6 Luck

2. Difficult Passage (light penalty)

- Lose A Mundane Item AND
- Lose 1d6 Stamina OR
- Lose 1d3 Luck

3. Risky Passage (penalty/benefit)

- Lose A Mundane Item OR
- Lose 1d6 Stamina and Gain 1d3 Luck OR
- Lose 1d3 Luck and Gain 1d6 Stamina

4. Uncertain Passage (penalty/benefit)

- Gain A Mundane Item OR
- Lose 1d6 Stamina and Gain 1d3 Luck OR
- Lose 1d3 Luck and Gain 1d6 Stamina

5. Casual Passage (light benefit)

- Gain A Mundane Item AND
- Regain 1d6 Stamina OR
- Regain 1d3 Luck

6. Fortuitous Passage (best benefit)

- Gain A Magic Item OR
- Regain 2d6 Stamina OR
- Regain 1d6 Luck

RULES

Spending Luck

Whenever a player would like to tip the odds of a roll in their favor or mitigate a disastrous outcome they may be permitted to spend points from their *Luck Stat* to accomplish this. This assumes the roll is not already using their *Luck Stat*. Exactly what kinds of rolls and how they are affected can be decided by everyone at the table prior to beginning play. Here are some examples of ways *Luck* can be spent:

- **Increasing Thresholds**
(e.g. *Talents*, *Spells*, *Ranged Attacks*)
- **Adding Value**
(e.g. *Melee Attacks*, *Damage*, *Armor Rolls*)
- **Avoidance**
(e.g. no *Magical Calamity* on spell failure)
- **Recovery**
(e.g. restoring *Stamina*, stalling death)

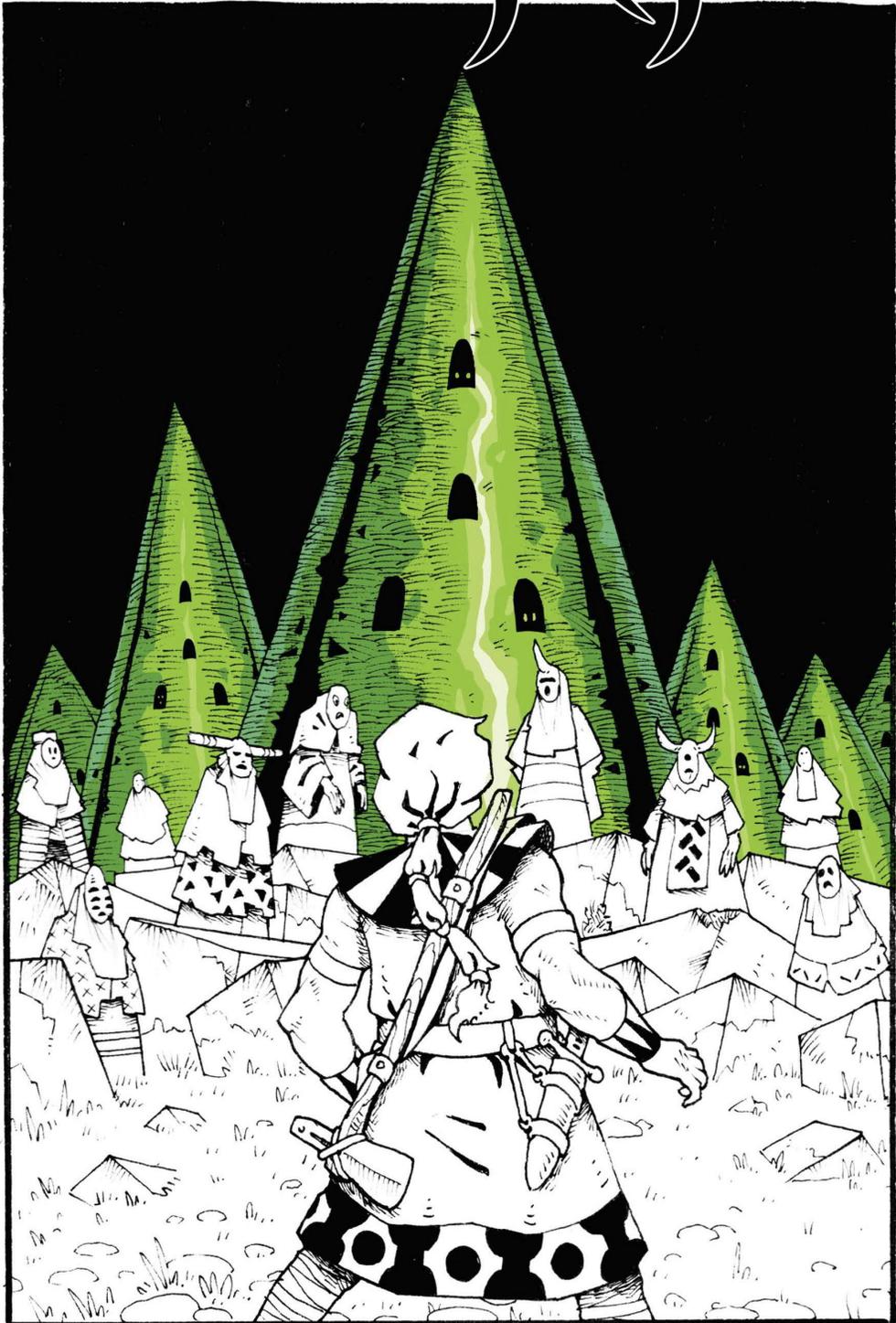
Using Abilities Untrained

Many *Abilities*, especially those without prerequisites, are things any adventurer can try to do. If they wish to, they can do so by substituting their *Luck Stat* for any *Threshold* or bonus an *Ability* would call for. Succeeding will drain the character's *Luck*, but it will also provide them justification to learn that *Ability* between adventures as detailed in the *Characters Section*.

Some *Abilities* may require materials to attempt. Picking a lock for example, would require some sort of tool even if trained. The GM may allow something as simple as a small dagger, but they may also take this as an opportunity to modify the roll against the player.

Similarly, *Spells* would require some instruction on how they may be cast, such as a tablet inscribed with the incantation or another caster helping the character through it. Again, the GM can modify this roll as fits the narrative.

THE CITY OF MASKS



As Millaketh walked down the wide avenue past the cracked stone gates, she squinted her eyes to look into the shadows.

There she saw the silhouettes of a dozen robbed figures, wearing dark cloaks and glistening masks of varied designs. Some were decorated with paints, symbols and even jewels, all of them facing her with emotionless facedes. Some of these symbols she recognized from the pages of the Forbidden Tome of the Seven Mouthed Prophet she had peered in the so-called Invisible Library of Malazar.

Surrounded by these ghostly figures, her warrior's heart was beating as strong as the drums of the people from her tribe. Her hands went almost instantly to her axe, but before she could draw it, three of them were upon her, with their hands raised, as if showing they meant no harm. Their hands were covered in rags inscribed with ancient arcane glyphs, and their fingers were strangely longer than she expected.

"You cannot come to our home and hide who you are and your intentions. In Ksamath, everyone shows exactly who they are and do not hide behind their flesh. State your purposes, foreigner." The strong and echoing voice came from the central figure, wearing a lustrous silver mask, with circling patterns and a fire yellow gem in the forehead. Even though the figure spoke alone, their voice sounded like a chorus of speakers. However, all of the other cloaked figures were dead silent and immobile, as if they were marble statues with cold stares.

"You are the ones not showing who you are! You are all cloaked and wearing masks to hide your faces and expressions! I am not even sure you're humans!" Millaketh's voice forced a tone of rage and determination, but her blood was as cold as the ice covering The Valley of the Frozen Pilgrims. She wasn't sure she would get out of that place alive. She wasn't even sure she was supposed to be there. But something inside her was sure this is where the Crown of the First Moon would be found. Not that this mattered much at that moment.

"Who are you, barbarian?" questioned the figures.

"I am Millaketh, from the rime covered timberlands of Larfar. I seek no trouble, just shelter. I have crossed the Walls of Star Kings and the The Valley of the Frozen Pilgrims, and my bones need respite" she responded.

For a moment, they all stood in complete silence. Time seemed frozen for hours, even though Millaketh knew only a few brief moments had elapsed. She was ready to draw her axe and fight for her life when the same figure spoke again.

"Come forth, Millaketh of Larfar. The Seer of All Realities will gaze into your eyes and see every reflection you will ever cast. If you are telling the truth, you will have a true face, like all of us. What you call a mask, for our people, is the depiction of our pure selves.

The cloaked figure with the gemmed mask, who seemed to be the leader, turned around and started walking slowly towards the shadowy entrance of a conical high structure which seemed to be made entirely of a dark-green crystal. The others closed in on Millaketh who didn't see any other option besides following them.

She could sense the reverberations of chaos becoming stronger as she approached the foreboding portal of that tower.

CHARACTERS

Character Creation

1. Determine your three stats:
 - *Skill* - roll 1d3+3
 - *Stamina* - roll 2d6+12
 - *Luck* - 1d6+6
2. Generate one magic item from the tables located in the *Items Section*.
3. Choose three mundane items from the *Items Section* and add them to your inventory. Assume you have basic things like clothes and a few days of nourishment.
4. Distribute a number of points equal to your *Skill Stat* among whatever *Talents* and *Spells* you wish, located in the *Abilities Section*.
5. Create three *Character Traits*. Write these as ways in which the character behaves, using only a sentence or two each. Using “always” or “never” in these statements is usually helpful.
6. Talk with the other players in the group to establish a *Group Dynamic*. The dynamic illustrates how the party typically works together either in a positive or negative way. This assumes the party have adventured together at least briefly in the past. Your group may choose to skip this step and revisit it after your first session or adventure together.
7. Name your character.

Examples of Character Traits:

- *I always act before I think*
- *I always get nervous around magic*
- *I never lose my temper*
- *I never allow myself to get dirty*

Examples of Group Dynamics:

- *We enjoy conning unsuspecting rubes.*
- *We have honed our tactical skills as a team.*
- *We often fight over shares of the treasure.*

Between Sessions

At the end of each session, or at the beginning of the next, the players and GM should talk about the recent events of play.

In doing so, highlight times in which *Character Traits* were role-played especially well. For each of these moments, the GM gives the player in question a d6, which can be rolling to restore their character's *Stamina*.

Similarly, find a moment in which the players as a whole did something especially indicative of their *Group Dynamic*. For each of these moments the GM rolls 1d6 and restores that amount of *Luck* to each character.

Finally, this is a good time for the GM to check in with players about their comfort levels around the events that unfolded in the session. Then ask for any changes or additions to the *Lines* or *Veils* currently in use.

CHARACTERS

Between Adventures

After an adventure is over players can decide how their characters hone their talents for the next outing. In addition, any non-permanent loss to characters three main stats is rejuvenated. This assumes that characters have some significant amount of down time before their next played adventure. This time also gives the players the opportunity to rework their *Group Dynamic* based on ways it may have changed due to the narrative of the last adventure.

Character Advancement

While between adventures a player can choose to increase their *Ranks* in already trained *Abilities*. To do this they roll 1d6 once for each *Ability* they wish to improve. If they roll under their current *Use Tally* for that *Ability*, its *Rank* is increased by 1 and its *Use Tallies* are removed.

To learn a new *Ability* a player must pick one and declare it. Typically, one that they attempted untrained or has some narrative reasoning for their desire to learn it. They may do this only once between each adventure. Then the GM either rolls or picks from the chart below to help explain what learning this new *Ability* cost the character.

1. The process was dangerous and you nearly died, leaving a terrible scar. Reduce your *Stamina* total by 4
2. Strange forces cursed you for your pursuit of knowledge. Reduce your *Luck* total by 2
3. This training was so consuming it caused you to ignore the upkeep of another skill. Reduce your *Rank* in a random trained *Ability* by 1.
4. The price demanded for your training was a powerful relic you possess. Lose 1 random magic item.
5. There are those who believe your new training should have been forbidden. Your GM chooses a powerful NPC or Monster that hunts you in the next adventure.
6. You find yourself deeply indebted to those who trained you. Your GM chooses a powerful NPC or organization that makes a single demand of you in the next adventure.

THE DREAM OF THE AMARANTHINE CITY



Three times Voon had dreamed of The Amaranthine City, and three times they were snatched away, waking in a shivered sweat.

Each time they had stepped closer to the heart of the citadel. Each time they had gazed upon The Maelstrom's Eye, to see how the light played across its perfectly cut angles and silver filigree. That prized gemstone could no doubt purchase an empire, but the Violet Sorcerers hoarded it away for use in their strange enchantments.

Truly it was an unjust world, thought Voon as they made ready to depart. It seemed the nearer to the city they became, the more vivid the dreams. They mapped the halls of the sorcerers' stronghold in the thief's mind and somehow the rogue knew it was true. Voon would hardly deny this destiny of riches, nor did they feel they could have, even upon finding malevolence in its origin.

The city gates were easy enough. Voon had only to dress in a hempen robe and sway in pretended rapture to be labeled just another pilgrim from idol-strewn Barbasdu. They prowled across the grand square under cover of night, slipping catlike past sentry and guardpost. Passing starlight silhouetted conical towers, engraven with patterns of fauna and set with turquoise.

The first true test of Voon's profession presented itself at the citadel's threshold. There was no door to prevent egress but rather a shimmering field, smooth as glass and hard as iron. The thief pondered only a moment before producing a teak ocarina, which upon playing, emitted a sound beyond the keen of mortals. This vibration quickly cracked the enchantment, its shattered panes dissolving to vapor before even striking the ground.

The halls were dim and sinuous, though the dreams had shown the way. Many times they passed chambers of blue-veined marble, each containing robed figures lying upon crystal plinths in a death-like slumber. Every one was surrounded by a king's ransom, but Voon remained untempted. Finally, they ascended to a grand hall. Pillars wrought of silver vines supported a dome of sapphire stars. At the center stood a figure in tense repose. She was handsomely dressed, and adorned with talismans of blue opal. Her face was neither young nor old, but ageless and strange. Beyond her, the thief's prize.

Before Voon could act, a sudden wind howled through the rotunda, ushering a crimson cloud of vile purpose. It swirled before the ageless figure and when it dissipated another magician stood opposed. He was painted in the symbols of his undying patron and carried a staff of blackened oak twisted into the shape of a tortured soul. They did not speak, though Voon sensed there were likely curses echoing through the chambers of their minds. Suddenly the air sparked between them and the world went mad.

The air tore and poured forth visions of empires long dead, only to be swallowed in sights of those yet to be. Roaring prismatic bolts ricocheted between worlds, an errant light hitting the bronze brazier beside the thief. This instilled the furnishing with weird life and it reared back like a beast, the blue coals of its basin now the lapping tongues of a maw. Voon dodged between its creaking legs and made a wild sprint for the gemstone. Behind them the ageless warlock seemed to be dying, burning blood running from her eyes and lips.

The thief's fingers wrapped around the diamond at last!

...Then they awoke, only a day's march from The Amaranthine City.

ABILITIES

Abilities are things your character is trained in doing. With *Abilities*, your character's *Skill Stat* is involved. Either it has allowed you to purchase said *Ability* on character creation, is adding to your likelihood of success, or both. *Abilities* are broken into two categories: *Talents* and *Spells*.

On *Character Creation* you put a number of points based on your total *Skill Stat* into any *Abilities* you would like. The number of points in each *Ability* is referred to as your *Rank*. An *Ability* cannot have more than 6 *Ranks*. Be sure that you place at least one point into a prerequisite *Ability* before you place points in the one that requires it.

Calculating Talents: *Talents* are written out in a few different ways, indicated in each after their name. *Roll Under* means you take your *Rank* in the *Talent* and add your *Skill Stat* value, this determines your *Threshold*. *Roll Bonus* is determined in the same way but is written with a plus sign to indicate that it will be added to a roll. *Special* can usually be listed as just your *Rank*.

Using A Talent: *Talents* are meant to trigger in different situations based on their type. *Roll Under* is used when *Testing*, like trying to resist some effect or otherwise perform some feat. Here you roll 2d6 and attempt to get equal to or below your established *Threshold*. *Roll Bonus* is used when *Rolling Against* an opponent. Here you roll 2d6 and add the established bonus. *Special Talents* typically tell you in what situations they will trigger, either optionally or automatically.

Casting A Spell: When casting a *Spell*, pick any amount of your current *Stamina Stat* and lose it. Then add that value to your *Rank* in the *Spell* you are casting. This creates the *Threshold* for your roll. Check the spell for any other requirements. Then roll 2d6 and attempt to get equal to or below this *Threshold*. If you succeed the spell is cast. If you fail roll on the *Magical Calamities* table located at the end of the spells section.

Use Tally: When you use an *Ability* in play, mark that it has been used on your character sheet. This will be important to know during *Character Advancement*.

TALENTS:

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| - Constitution | - Intimidation |
| - Reflexes | - Coerce |
| - Strength | - Persuasion |
| - Willpower | - Folkways |
| - Light Weapons | - Animal Sense |
| - Quick Strike | - Armor Specialist |
| - Heavy Weapons | - Awareness |
| - Sunder | - Forbidden Lore |
| - Ranged Weapons | - Lock Picking |
| - Called Shot | - Lucky |
| - Deception | - Stealth |
| - Defraud | - Backstab |
| | - Wayfinding |

TALENTS

- **Constitution** - *Roll Under* - You are hale and hearty. When you would need to resist an ailment, like poison or disease, you may choose to *Test* this *Ability*. On a success you avoid or mitigate any negative effects.

- **Reflexes** - *Roll Under* - You are adept at avoiding danger. When a situation calls for you to dodge. Such as a *Ranged Weapon Attack*, certain *Spells*, and some environmental hazards, you may choose to *Test* this *Ability*. If you are wearing armor, add your *Armor Die* to this roll. If your roll is successful you avoid any negative effects.

- **Strength** - *Roll Under* - Your brawn is unmatched. When you wish to perform a feat of physical prowess, such as bending bars or lifting gates, you may be asked to *Test* this *Ability*. On a success you will accomplish this task.

- **Willpower** - *Roll Under* - Your mind can overcome many obstacles. When your mind is under assault by a supernatural force, you may choose to *Test* this *Ability*. On a success you resist any negative effects.

TALENTS

- **Light Weapons** - *Roll Bonus* - You have trained in the use of lighter weapons. When you roll against an opponent in combat while wielding a light weapon, add your *Ranks* here as well as your *Skill Stat* to your roll.

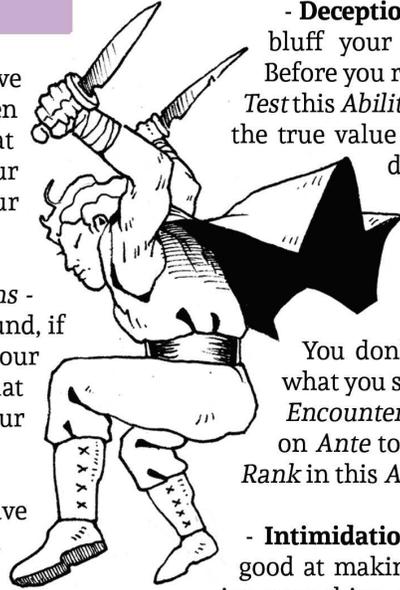
- **Quick Attack** - *Requires: Light Weapons - Special* - Strike swiftly. At the start of a round, if you are within range to hit a target with your light weapon you may make an attack that cannot be contested. Then lose 4 minus your *Ranks* in this *Ability* from your *Luck*.

- **Heavy Weapons** - *Roll Bonus* - You have trained in the use of heavier weapons. When you roll against an opponent in combat while wielding a heavy weapon, add your *Ranks* here as well as your *Skill Stat* to your roll.

- **Sunder** - *Requires: Heavy Weapons - Roll Under* - Your strike damages armor or weapons. When you hit and deal damage with a heavy weapon you may *Test* this *Ability* to reduce the die your opponent uses for their armor or weapon damage. This die can only be reduced to zero at the GM's discretion, if so the weapon or armor is destroyed.

- **Ranged Weapons** - *Roll Under* - You have trained in the use of bows and thrown weapons. When you make an attack with a ranged weapon add your *Ranks* in this *Ability* as well as your *Skill Stat* to your roll.

- **Called Shot** - *Requires: Ranged Weapons - Special* - You aim with a high degree of accuracy. If your die would be modified because of attempting to hit a specific target, the GM must reduce the modified die type by a number of steps equal to your *Rank* in this *Ability*.



- **Deception** - *Roll Under* - You can bluff your way out of anything. Before you roll an *Ante Die* you may *Test* this *Ability*. On a success you hide the true value of the roll and instead display a maximum of whatever *Ante Die* was used.

- **Defraud** - *Requires: Deception - Special* - You don't really mean much of what you say. At the end of a *Social Encounter* restore any *Luck* spent on *Ante* to each player up to your *Rank* in this *Ability*.

- **Intimidation** - *Roll Under* - You're good at making others so afraid they give something away. After initial rolls are made but before *Ante* in a *Social Encounter* you may *Test* this *Ability*. On a success reveal one of your opponents dice at random, or both dice if you immediately spend 3 *Luck*.

- **Coerce** - *Requires: Intimidation - Special* - You can browbeat people into submission fairly well. After all *Ante* have been placed but before dice are revealed, you may spend 7 *Luck* minus your *Ranks* in this *Ability*, if you do, your opponent is forced to *Fold*.

- **Persuasion** - *Special* - You have a way with words. When you are in a *Social Encounter*, increase your *Ante Die* type by one step for each *Rank* you have in this *Ability*. Whatever you are conversing with must have more than animal-like but also but less than god-like intelligence for this *Ability* to work.

- **Folkways** - *Requires: Persuasion - Roll Under* - You are knowledgeable in the customs of many cultures and classes. When upping the *Ante* in a conversation you may *Test* this *Ability*. On a success, you may up the *Ante* for free. If you fail, you may attempt this *Ability* again a number of times equal to your *Rank*.

TALENTS

- **Animal Sense** - *Roll Under* - You are trained in handling animals and beasts. Before you would roll against the disposition of a being who possesses animal-like intelligence you may *Test* this *Ability*. On a success, reduce their *Disposition Die* towards you by one. On a failure you may attempt this *Ability* again a number of times equal to your *Rank*.

- **Armor Specialist** - *Roll Under* - Your movements are hindered little by your armor. When in a situation where your *Armor Die* would penalize your roll, such as using *Reflexes* or *Stealth*, reduce the armor's die type by one for each *Rank* in this *Ability*.

- **Awareness** - *Roll Under* - You have trained to sharpen your senses. If you choose to inspect your surroundings you may discover hidden things. When you *Test* this *Ability*, your GM may make this search take time. On a success, ask your GM one specific question about the thing you searched, they must answer truthfully.

- **Forbidden Lore** - *Roll Under* - You have studied strange and mystic writings. When trying to understand something about the supernatural you may have your GM *Test* this *Ability* and hide the result. Then ask them a yes or no question about the topic rolled. If the roll was successful they must give you the correct answer, if the roll is not successful they must give you the incorrect answer. If you are attempting this *Ability* untrained you lose *Luck* regardless of the roll.

- **Lock Picking** - *Special* - You have learned the art of opening things that are intended to be closed. When you wish to pick a lock roll 2d6. If both rolls are even the lock opens. If both rolls are odd your lockpick breaks. If one die is odd and the other even nothing happens. You may reroll one of your dice as many times as you have *Ranks* in this *Ability* before the lock breaks.

- **Lucky** - *Roll Under* - Fortune favors you more than most. Whenever you would lose *Luck*, you may *Test* this ability. On a success you regain 1d3 *Luck* instead. You may only use this *Ability* a number of times each *Adventure* equal to your *Rank*. This *Ability* cannot be used Untrained.

- **Stealth** - *Roll Under* - You are adept at avoiding notice. When you wish to hide from view have your GM *Test* this *Ability* and add your *Armor Die*. You may choose to spend 3 points of *Luck* to reveal the roll. Otherwise your GM will tell you if the roll was a success or failure, they do not need to be truthful. If something is attempting to find you while you are successfully hidden they must *Test* one die type higher for each *Rank* you have in this *Ability*. Attempting this *Ability* untrained always causes you to lose *Luck*.

- **Backstab** - *Requires: Stealth - Special* - You can perform a perfectly placed attack as long as no one notices. When you deal damage with a melee attack while your target is unaware of you, you may spend *Luck* equal to the *Ranks* you have in this *Ability*. If you do, multiply your weapon damage by 1 plus the number of *Ranks* in this *Ability*.

- **Wayfinding** - *Special* - You are especially aware of how to safely get from one place to another. When making a *Traveling* roll, increase the number rolled by X, where X is your *Rank* in this *Ability*.

SPELLS

SPELLS:	
Chant of Aegis	Mirror of Fate
Charm of Connection	Mists of Time
Cloak of Shadows	Sympathetic Sphere
Command Elements	Telekinesis
Essence Syphon	The Violent Cloud
Mind Web	Toll of Ruin
	Weirding

SPELLS

- **Chant of Aegis** - The sounds of this chant manifest a translucent field of resistance. This field covers either a *Large* pre-designated area you have marked or a dome around you and everything *Near* you. When casting, choose either Magic or Physical Matter, the thing you chose finds it difficult to penetrate the field. If Magic is chosen, spell effects that would cross the field don't, and spells trying to go through have their final casting result multiplied by your *Rank* in this *Ability* plus 1. If Physical Matter is chosen, arrows and other flying debris that would cross the field don't, and creatures trying to move through it must *Test Luck* or appropriate *Ability* with their result multiplied by your *Rank* in this *Ability* plus 1, or be repelled.

This spell remains active as long as you keep chanting.

- **Charm of Connection** - When standing at a point of intersection between two elements or natural features you summon up powerful enchantments to aid your allies. Pick a bonus to apply to a number of allies equal to your *Rank* in this *Ability* from the list below. Then pick an additional one for each element you are *Near* to. (e.g. shoreline for water and earth, mountaintop for stone and air)

- **Great Cunning** - increase all your dice in *Social Encounters* 1 step per *Rank*

- **Incredible Strength** - lower dice 1 step in *Strength Tests* and add bonus melee damage of +1 per *Rank*

- **Sure Protection** - increase or gain *Armor Dice* of 1 step per *Rank* that impose no penalty

- **Mystical Resistance** - increase your *Test Threshold* against any spell by +1 per *Rank*

- **Swift Speed** - lower dice 1 step in *Reflex Tests*, move faster, and make an additional attack with damage each round

When you move away from these connected natural elements this spell ends.

- **Cloak of Shadows** - You don a shroud of woven magic that makes you invisible, semi intangible, and nearly weightless. Those who rely on sight cannot see you, objects pass through you, and a single bound can send you flying into the air, only to drop gently thereafter. When you would come into physical contact with anything *Test Luck*. On a success you pass through it easily. On a failure it wrenches through you, dealing 2d6 *Stamina* damage.

You can also extend these powers to any living creature you touch. Reaching out to hold them and willing their inclusion in the magic causes their intangibility and thus they become solid to you. Letting go ends this effect on them.

This spell ends when you would be exposed to any bright source of light, such as daylight or close proximity to the torch.

SPELLS

- **Command Elements** - You assert your will over a source of water, fire, earth, or air that you are *Close* to. Alter the element in a minor way around you. (freezing water, softening stone, fanning flame) If this would deal damage, deal $Xd8$, where X is your *Rank*. You may create a more powerful effect by picking a number of options equal to your *Rank* from the Positive list and once from the Negative list below:

Positive:

- **Shaped** - affects everything in a line, cone, or sphere
- **Combined** - add an additional element effect
- **Arcing** - effect leaps to targets equal to your *Rank* that you can see
- **Sentient** - the element behaves like a creature you control

Negative:

- **Slow** - effects take multiple rounds to complete
- **Weak** - reduce any effect dice by 2 steps
- **Volatile** - 1 in 4 chance of affecting an unintended target

If you create an ongoing effect you must stay *Close* to the element. (touching stone, feeling the heat of fire) If a creature would be able to resist an effect they may *Test Luck* or appropriate *Ability*.

- **Essence Syphon** - You reach out and connect your life energy to another being, then manipulate their flow. When you cast this spell touch any other living thing, then roll $1d6$. Choose which of the connected lifeforms loses that amount of *Stamina* and which gains it. You may then multiply one of the lifeforms total *Stamina* gained or lost by your *Rank* in this *Ability*. If the lifeform touched is unwilling they may *Test Luck* or an appropriate *Ability*. If they succeed no *Stamina* is lost or gained by either side.

- **Mind Web** - Create a mental link between yourself and any creatures who bear a special mark or move through a warded area. When you cast this spell mark the foreheads of yourself and any number of intelligent creatures with a sigil in ink or equivalent. You know the thoughts of those creatures and can communicate telepathically with them. You may also similarly mark the entrances and exits of any structure in this way and be able to read the thoughts of those inside.

At any time you may try to obtain a piece of information from the memory of one affected by this spell. Any unwilling creature may *Test Luck* or appropriate *Ability* to resist. On a success you lose $1d6$ *Stamina*. On a failure you learn the information you wish.

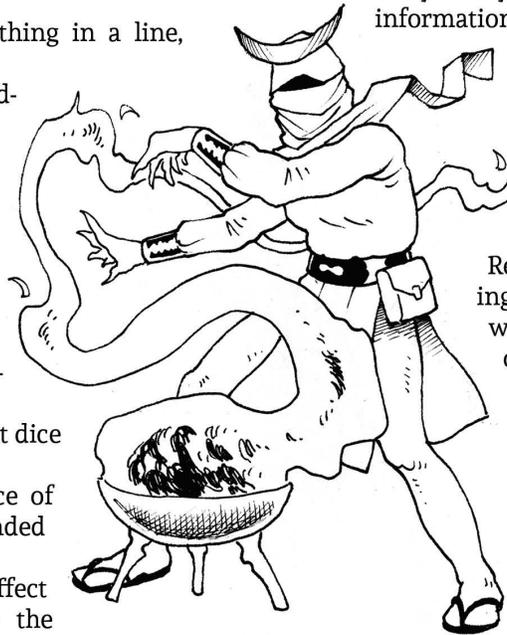
Removing or otherwise tampering with the drawn sigils in any way ends the effect on the area or individual.

- **Mirror of Fate** - A quicksilver disk materializes in the air, floating immediately in front of you and following as you move. Within its surface is a shifting morass of possible futures. By concentrating on the mirror you

can attempt to perceive a place, person, or thing as it was, is, or likely will be. Have your GM *Test* your *Luck* and not reveal the result. If the test was successful the mirror reveals the true information. If the test was unsuccessful it reveals false information. You do not lose *Luck* upon a successful *Test*.

You may also force a creature to stare into the mirror, if you do so they must *Test Luck* or appropriate *Ability* to resist. On a failure they are completely mesmerized for as long as the mirror is within their sight.

If you break eye contact or are unable to see the mirror for any reason, this spell ends.



SPELLS

- **Mists of Time** - Vaporous trails of incandescent fog curl forth from your body. This magic can be directed as you wish to one object or creature which rapidly ages upon contact.

When you attempt to age anything non-living, *Test Luck*. On a success it is aged to the point of being destroyed. Magic items or creatures may be more difficult than mundane ones, as per your GMs discretion.

A living creature can *Test Luck* or appropriate *Ability* to resist this effect. On a failure they lose half their current *Stamina*, rounded down, as they visibly age. This aging may also impose other penalties to physical activities at the GMs discretion.

After you successfully age something, this spell ends unless you immediately spend half your *Stamina*, rounded up, or destroy one magical item in your possession.

- **Sympathetic Sphere** - You create a bubble of force tied to the magic and integrity of an item. When you cast this spell, hold a magic item in your hands. A sphere of semi-translucent energy of any size from *Small* to *Large*, is created hovering at a point you can see. It can then be moved to any point you can see. It can be formed around a creature or object but if its target wishes they may *Test Luck* or appropriate *Ability* to escape upon its creation. Breathable air and a normal temperature is maintained within the sphere. If moved to strike a target it deals Xd8 damage, where X is your *Rank* in this *Ability*.

Whenever the sphere would hit an object with any force, *Test* a *Threshold* of 10 plus your *Rank* in this *Ability*. Each time you do this and succeed, reduce that *Threshold* by 1 and the item the sphere is tied to is visibly damaged. If you fail, the item is destroyed and this spell ends. If you stop holding the item for any reason this spell ends. While an item is tied to the spell in this way its other magical properties are muted.

- **Telekinesis** - You move an object or creature you can see by the sheer power of your will. The amount of weight you effect is determined by the number of *Ranks* in this *Ability*, from *Light* to *Very Heavy*. Your *Rank* also determines how many things you can move at one time. Objects or creatures can be held in place or thrown, with damage determined by your GM. Typically, dealing Xd10, where X is determined by size category or distance covered, with *Small* being 1 and *Huge* being 4.

This spell is maintained through your immobility. If you move, or are caused to move, the spell ends.

- **The Violent Cloud** - You summon a tornado of black and crimson smoke from the sky. When you are outside or have sight and access to the open sky this spell calls forth a living wind funnel to any point you can see. It takes up a *Huge* area and can be ordered to either batter this area with winds or enclose those in it and lift them away.

If directed to cause destruction, any creatures within it must *Test Luck* or appropriate *Ability* to avoid being thrown and crushed. On a failure they are thrown in a random direction determined by the GM and take Xd8 damage, where X is your *Rank* in this *Ability*.

If directed to lift anything within it, the funnel can carry its occupants up to one days travel away in a matter of minutes. Those unwilling may *Test Luck* or appropriate *Ability* to avoid this.

After the cloud performs one of these tasks this spell ends.

- **Toll of Ruin** - You issue forth a powerful sound, capable of harming flesh and magic. When you cast this spell every creature other than you who is capable of hearing it takes Xd10 damage, where X is your *Rank* in this *Ability*. Anyone forewarned can cover their ears and prevent the damage from this spell. Ongoing spells, magical effects, and magical items are disrupted and stop working upon being hit by this sound.

You lose the ability to speak immediately after casting this spell and may choose to stay this way. For as long as you do, the magic you've disrupted continues to be negated.

SPELLS

- **Weirding** - Images from your mind leap forth into the real world. Closing your eyes and visualizing something brings it to life with visual, audible, and other sensory effects that are totally convincing. Whenever an intelligent creature interacts with these illusions they may *Test Luck* or appropriate *Ability*. On a success they notice something off about the conjurations and are no longer affected by them. On a failure they are affected by the illusions as if they were real. The size and number of these illusions is determined by your *Rank* in this *Ability*, from *Small* to *Huge*.

If you open your eyes this spell ends.

SPELLS

Spell Duels: At the beginning of the round, when someone announces they will cast a spell, anyone else who has the ability to cast may attempt to engage the caster in a *Spell Duel*. If they do, the opposing caster chooses a spell from their repertoire and casts it, spending *Stamina* and adding their *Rank* as normal. However, rather than having its normal effect this spells magical energy is focused solely on countering the opponent's spell.

Instead of creating a *Testing Threshold*, both casters use their spell numbers as bonuses in an *Opposed Roll*. If the original caster wins their spell goes off as normal. If the caster attempting to counter wins they force their opponent to trigger a *Magical Calamity*.

Magical Calamities (Roll 3d6)

- 3 Your blood boils and burns. Drop to 0 *Stamina* immediately.
Turn into a small animal of a type
- 4 determined by the GM. Can only turn back if a caster *Near* you rolls odd numbers on a spell.
An evil version of you materializes. They have
- 5 your statistics and a desire to kill you and take your place.
Gravity reverses for everything *Near* you for
- 6 1d6 Rounds.
A Large section of terrain *Near* you breaks
- 7 violently apart.
Non-magical forged metals *Near* you melt
- 8 and become useless.
Lose a function of your body until the next
- 9 session of play. Roll 1d4: 1-Sight / 2-Speech / 3-Hearing / 4-Motor Skills
Roiling smoke pours from you, filling the
- 10 *Nearby* area. It obscures vision and provokes fits of coughing. Takes an hour to dissipate.
Nature inverts near you. Water turns to fire,
- 11 fire turns to ice, barren ground grows plants, lush vegetation withers and dies, etc.
Visions of past or future events fill the air
- 12 around you for 1 minute. Anyone in sight must *Test Luck* or *Willpower* to avoid being stunned until they subside.
The spell is cast, but it affects unintended
- 13 targets or its effects are the opposite of intended. GMs choice exactly how the spell is reversed.
A random Large piece of the environment
- 14 animates into a hostile creature. GM uses any creature statistics that feel are appropriate.
Bolts of energy ricochet, potentially hitting
- 15 anything within a *Far* distance. They must *Test Luck* or *Reflexes* to avoid damage equal to your spell roll, reduced by armor.
Magic tampers with your biological age. Roll
- 16 2d12. If the result is even, age up that many years. If odd, age down that many.
Your body permanently changes. Roll 1d6:
- 17 1-More Eyes / 2-More Mouths / 3-Translucent Skin / 4-Chitinous Shell / 5-Hand Wings / 6-Rubbery Bones
You are frozen in a crystal prison, only able to
- 18 converse telepathically. Freed only by a spell or item determined by the GM.

THE INVASION



by Mahar Mangahas

***One foot in the ocean, one on the shore. / One foot in the day, one in the night.
Power found at the In-Between / This is the way of my People.***

Such thoughts ran through Ningning's mind as they considered the strange ships breaching the horizon of the aquamarine waves. Large sails imposed themselves in the path of the winds, forcing the poor spirits to push the ponderous vessels forward. Unlike the dragonfly-swift *bangka* of their People, outriggers capable of darting movements, these ships seemed like boulders rolling on the waves. A *bangka* would not survive colliding with them. Ningning felt that they looked like armored cockroaches with filthy white wings: cruel, greedy, and implacable.

Ningning bit their lip. Possible hostility had to be considered. They were not naive. Others had come before, intent on pillaging coveted resources: gold, a material so pedestrian, it was laughably fought for; spices and herbs that the gods found flavorful; and magic, their thaumaturgy composed from theories that the People had ransacked from the gods of aether and nether, magic held by the Ones-in-Between.

As they were shrewd in the ways of humans and spirits, the Ones-in-Between were oft-credited keeping the beauty of their lands inviolate, shepherding the disparate wills of the People into a temporary whole. When asked why such was their task, One mentioned pleasant trivialities - a gentle warning that discouraged curiosity. Still, it was clear to the obtuse that the Ones-in-Between were motivated by a calling higher than the petty machinations for power that heated the blood-politic of the *datu* and their clans, buzzing as they did through their archipelago of hives.

"And so it seems," Ningning muttered, "again we must do our job."

Being One-in-Between meant locating the self at the nexus of natural forces, to accept and reject life's contradictions. It was every One's destiny to center themselves, yet stand aside. In so doing, they earned great power but were respected and feared outcasts.

We stand at the edge

Life, Death. / Freeborn, Conquered. / Heaven. Hell.

The most powerful of the Ones-in-Between bore a nexus of concepts inside them - paradoxes that were both meaningless and profound. It was to Ningning's advantage that they had one such nexus, operating between and beyond the tawdry definitions of male and female. To Ningning, such distinctions did not matter. They simply were.

Ningning's power gave voice to needs and summoned the Islands to action. And thus, they did.

We are siblings, you and I. / Of the same blood, Of the same clay.

Conjoined

Whole

Ready for Victory.

Such was the call. Glorious was the reply.

Together, We are Invincible.

Very well, thought Ningning. I must battle.

With an arrogant flip of their ebony hair, Ningning strutted to the harborfront to lend their support to the warriors, stirred by their magic. The pier, already fortified by the coral barriers grown to defend the port, bristled with the warriors' spears. Though impressive, Ningning remained focused on filling others with power.

They glistened with it, magic granting them preternatural physical aptitude - a side effect of Ningning's primary enchantment. Their spell made the warriors impervious to fear and coercion, a fleet that would enter combat fiercely, confident in their immunity from manipulation. Already, the warriors were leaping to their individual *bangka*, unfurling brightly colored sails that reflected red and violet chevrons rippling over the harbor.

Ningning smiled grimly. Whatever these cockroach-ships were, they would find the Islands were no defenseless land, instead an unfettered nation of indomitable spirit.

ITEMS

Mundane Items

General Items: Anything that reasonably goes into an adventurer's pack. Things like Rope, Torches, a Set of Lock Picks, or a Crowbar. Items of significant value, such as a bag of coin or a precious gem may also be admissible. Consult your GM on the specific items you want, just keep the setting in mind.



Weapons:

Light Weapons (one handed)

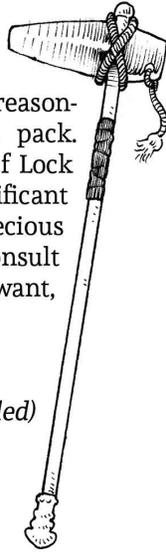
- Dagger 1d10+1
- Sword 3d4
- Spear 2d4+2
- Staff 1d6+2
- Mace 1d8+2

Heavy Weapons (two handed)

- Great Sword 3d6
- Maul 1d12+2
- Axe 2d10

Ranged Weapons (come w/ammo)

- Shortbow 2d6
- Longbow 1d10+3



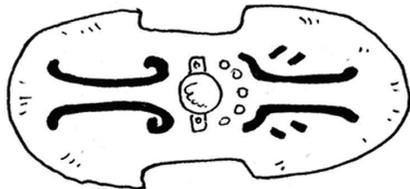
Armor and Shields: Worn armor comes in three types; *light*, *medium*, and *heavy*. Each set of armor provides the player with an *Armor Die*. In most situations, when a player takes damage they may roll their *Armor Die* and reduce the damage by that amount. This die is also added to certain kinds of other rolls, like sneaking or dodging, to increase their difficulty.

- *Light Armor:* 1d6

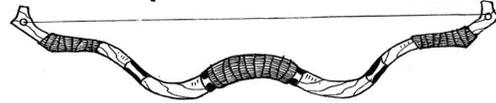
- *Medium Armor:* 1d8

- *Heavy Armor:* 1d10

- *Shields* are used to prevent all damage from a single applicable force once per round. However, whenever they are used, the player must *Test Luck*. On a failure their shield is broken.



Resources and Ammunition: When a character has a large quantity of some item that they need to use to perform a task, such as arrows for their bow, this item need not be tracked individually. Instead, you may choose to have the character *Test Luck* after expending a large number of these items, such as after a battle. On a success they still have a reasonable number. On a failure they are now out of them.

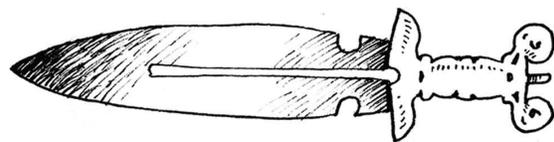


Discovering Items: When the party comes upon treasure not specified in the adventure, the GM may choose to generate that treasure randomly. First roll to see what the characters would find using the table below, then proceed from there.

Roll	Find
1	Nothing
2	1d4 random General Items, and 1d4 random Weapons or Armor/Shields
3	Mundane items of great monetary value
4	1d4 random Potions
5	A Magic Item
6	1d4 random Magic Items or Results 2 and 5

Potions: When generating consumables roll on the table below.

Roll	Type	Effect
1-3	Healing Potion	Restores 2d6 <i>Stamina</i> or removes a <i>Poison</i> or <i>Disease</i> on drinking
4-5	Luck Potion	Restores 1d6 <i>Luck</i> on drinking
6	Cursed Potion	Appears as a Healing or Luck Potion but on drinking reduces max <i>Stamina</i> and <i>Luck</i> by 1d8 and 1d6 respectively. This effect can be removed with a <i>Potion of Healing</i>



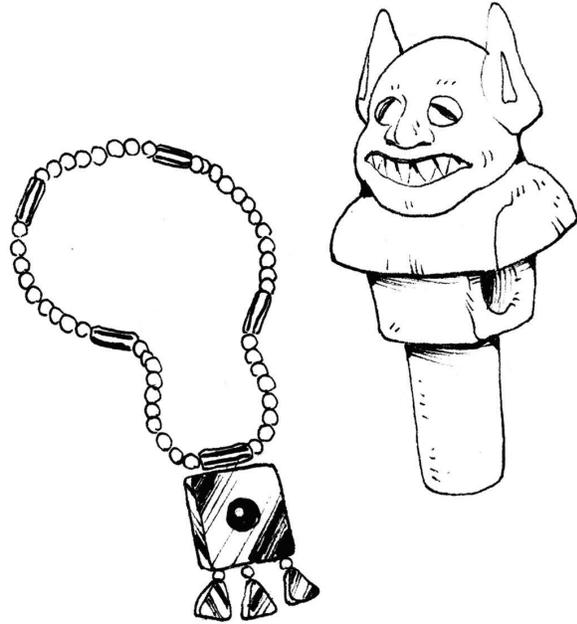
ITEMS

Magic Items

When generating magic items, roll for item type, prefix, and suffix from the tables below.

Item Type (2d12)

2	Crown	14	Shortbow
3	Staff	15	Light Armor
4	Longbow	16	Girdle
5	Maul	17	Dagger
6	Ring	18	Medium Armor
7	Helm	19	Mace
8	Idol	20	Axe
9	Spear	21	Talismen
10	Tome	22	Heavy Armor
11	Shield	23	Mask
12	Gemstone	24	Great Sword
13	Sword		



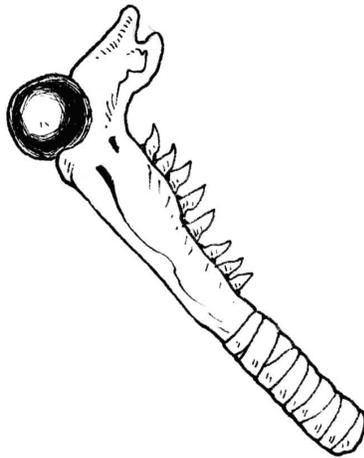
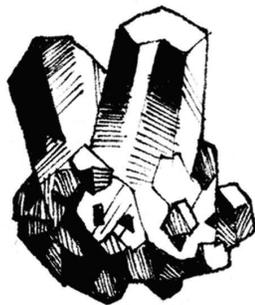
Prefix (2d12) (continued on next page)

Roll	Type	Effect
2	Null	Everything that is touching this item is rendered non magical or unable to cast spells for as long as it is in contact.
3	Glyphed	When anyone holding, wearing, or wielding this item would cast a spell, any <i>Stamina</i> spent counts as double for the purposes of the spell <i>Threshold</i> .
4	Unseen	This item, and any living thing it is touching of <i>Medium</i> size or small, is rendered invisible.
5	Nephrite	While holding, wearing, or wielding this item gain 3 <i>Ranks</i> in the <i>Ability</i> of your choice. If you lose this item's affect you cannot gain it again until the next session of play.
6	Obsidian	If you would drop to 0 <i>Stamina</i> while holding, wearing, or wielding this item and there is another living creature close to you, <i>Test Luck</i> , on a success take 1 point of <i>Stamina</i> from them.
7	Azure	Holding wearing or wielding this item grants you immunity to the effects of extreme cold.
8	Beryl	All sound within a <i>Near</i> area of this item is negated.
9	Amaranthine	While holding, wearing, or wielding this item any dice your roll when casting a spell are modified down 1 Step.
10	Copper	While holding, wearing, or wielding this item if you would lose <i>Stamina</i> reduce that loss by 1.
11	Bone	This item glows faintly when undead are near it.
12	Bronze	While holding, wearing, or wielding this item your maximum <i>Skill Stat</i> increases by 1
13	Silver	While holding, wearing, or wielding this item your maximum <i>Stamina Stat</i> increases by 6
14	Golden	While holding, wearing, or wielding this item your maximum <i>Luck Stat</i> increases by 2

ITEMS

Prefix (2d12) (continued from previous page)

Roll	Type	Effect
15	Crystal	Pick three random spells. Whoever is holding, wearing, or wielding this item has 1 Rank in each of them. Their Ranks may be increased as normal and if so are retained upon loss of this item with a -1 Rank penalty.
16	Ivory	This item gently pulls in the direction of the nearest source of magic.
17	Amber	While holding, wearing, or wielding this item your <i>Armor Dice</i> do not count against rolls for sneaking.
18	Luminous	This item emits a pale glow. Anything illusory or magically concealed that is illuminated by this glow is revealed for what it really is.
19	Crimson	Holding, wearing, or wielding this item grants you immunity to the effects of extreme heat.
20	Ochre	Each time this item comes into contact with non magical metal roll 1d4: On a 4 nothing happens, on a 2 or 3 the metal being touched rusts and is destroyed. On a 1 both the metal being touched this item are destroyed.
21	Diamond	When this object would be destroyed, <i>Test Luck</i> , on a success this object is not destroyed
22	Living	As an action you may <i>Test Skill</i> to make this item reshape itself into any mundane item of <i>Medium</i> size and <i>Moderate</i> weight or smaller and lighter.
23	Mirrored	If a living creature touches this item they are transported to a small extra-dimensional room within it. They can leave at any time by touching the walls of this space.
24	Opal	Any creature touching this item is frozen in time. They cannot be harmed and do not age but are completely immobile and unthinking.



ITEMS

Suffix (2d12) (continued on next page)

Roll	Type	Effect
2	Of Azag	Once per adventure you may beseech Azag for a boon involving Magic or Knowledge. You GM will award you anything from these categories that you ask, within reason. Afterward roll 1d10, on a 1 Azag's servants perceive you as a threat.
3	Of Reflection	Whenever a spell would affect you, you may <i>Test Luck</i> . On a success the spell affects its caster in the way it would have affected you instead. On a failure this item is destroyed.
4	Of Charm	Every creature you interact with while holding or wearing this item has their <i>Disposition Die</i> improved by 2 Steps.
5	Of Alacrity	While holding, wearing, or wielding this item, you may spend 1d4 <i>Stamina</i> to move a standard movement distance even if you have already moved this round.
6	Of Memory	Roll 1d10 when finding this item. This is the number of charges it has. If you would trigger a <i>Magical Calamity</i> spend 1 charge and prevent it.
7	Of Dreams	When you sleep with this item on your person you may ask the GM one question about the world. They then present the answer in the form of a cryptic dream. After you awake roll 1d12, on a 1 this item is destroyed.
8	Of Negation	Roll 1d10 when finding this item. This is the number of charges it has. Whenever magic of any kind would affect you, negate its effects and remove a charge from this item.
9	Of Regeneration	At the end of each session of play, automatically restore 1d10 <i>Stamina</i> .
10	Of The Past	When this item comes into contact with another inanimate object you may <i>Test Luck</i> . On a success your GM will answer any one question about the object.
11	Of Protection	If you would roll an <i>Armor Die</i> to reduce damage while you are holding, wearing, or wielding this item, add +1 to the number rolled.
12	Of Might	While wearing, wielding or holding this item, any <i>Test of Strength</i> or similar is modified down by 1 step.
13	Of Luck	At any time you may <i>Test Luck</i> . On a success regain 1d8 <i>Luck</i> , on a failure lose 1d4 <i>Luck</i> . If this item would cause your <i>Luck</i> to go to 0 it is destroyed.
14	Of Sorcery	Pick a random spell. You may now cast that spell at a rank of 6 while holding, wearing, or wielding this item. Whenever you do, roll 1d8, on a 1 this item is destroyed after the spell is cast.
15	Of The Thief	You may <i>Test Luck</i> to gain incredible speed for a few moments. Allowing you to perform a quick action before anyone can react.
16	Of Etherealness	At any time you may <i>Test Luck</i> . On a success, gain the ability to pass through solid matter for 10 minutes. On a failure lose half your <i>Stamina</i> , rounded up.
17	Of The Netherworld	You may use an action to touch this item to a dead creature, if you do so <i>Test Luck</i> . On a success you may ask one question and their spirit will answer through their body. They will not lie but can only tell you what they knew in life.
18	Of Opening	Roll 1d6 when finding this item. This is the number of charges it has. You may spend a charge and use an action to unlock any lock or open any doorway that you can see.
19	Of Imprisonment	This item is possessed by an otherworldly entity. At any time you may ask the spirit a question and have the GM roll 1d6: On a 1-2 the spirit knows the answer and will tell you, on a 3-4 they know but will tell you the opposite, on a 5-6 they will not know.

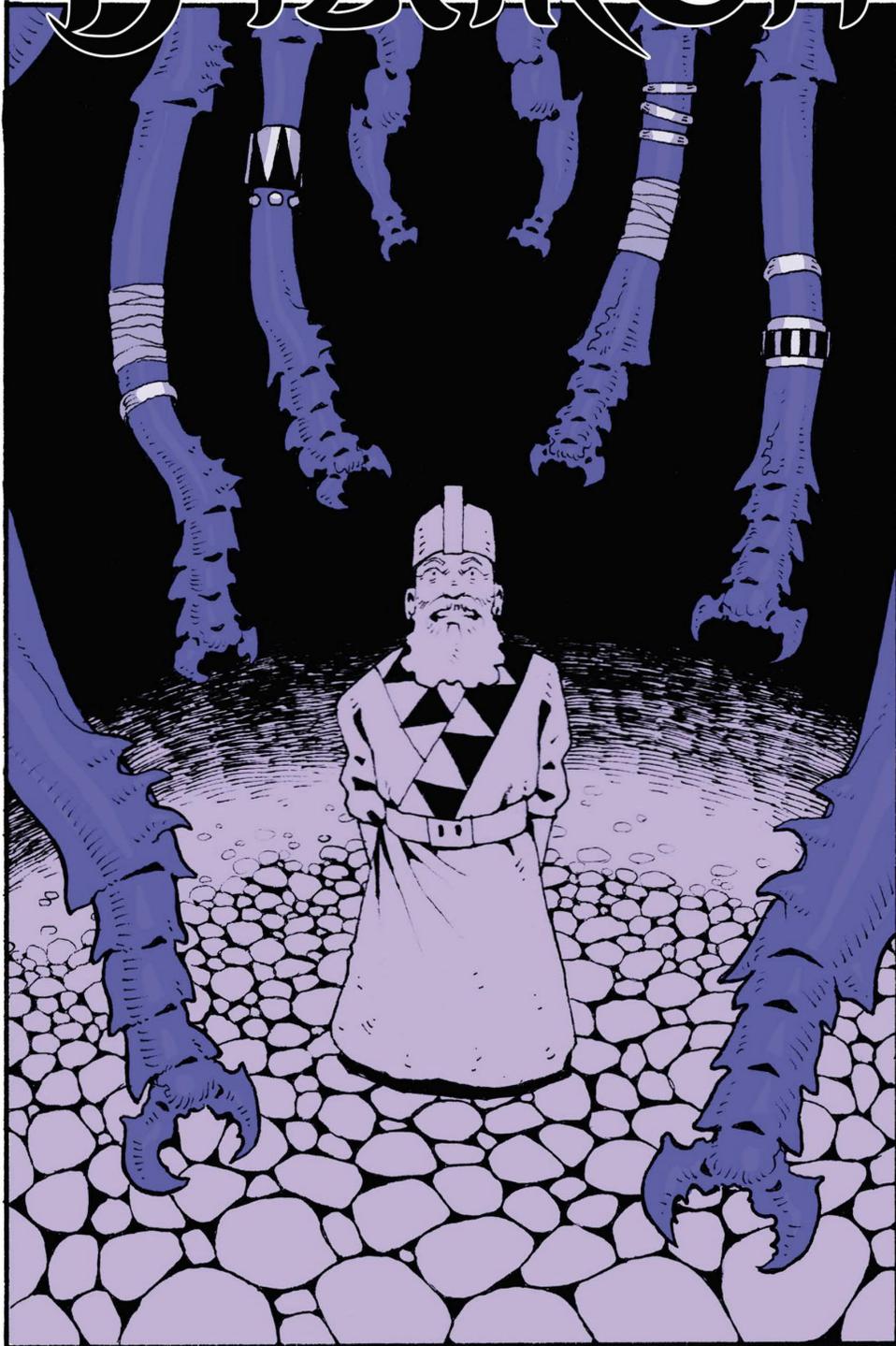
ITEMS

Suffix (2d12) (continued from previous page)

Roll	Type	Effect
20	Of Spell Eating	Whenever a creature Near you casts a spell you may <i>Test Luck</i> , on a success regain 1d10 <i>Stamina</i> and add that number to the creature's spell test roll
21	Of The Leech	While wielding, holding, or wearing this item if you deal damage to a living creature with a weapon, regain <i>Stamina</i> equal to the damage dealt.
22	Of Fortune	When a magic item is generated you may choose to roll the Prefix and Suffix twice and take whichever combination you choose. You cannot do this again until the next session of play.
23	Of Mastery	Once at the end of each session, you may roll 1d4, on a 1 or 2 pick an <i>Ability</i> you are trained in and increase it by 1 <i>Rank</i> . On a 4 this item is destroyed.
24	Of Zuthaggwa	Once per adventure you may beseech Zuthaggwa to rescue you from a dire situation. Your GM will remove the danger, within reason. Afterward roll 1d10, on a 1 Zuthaggwa's servants perceive you as a threat.



THE WEBS OF BYZARON



“Ugh, spiders”

groaned The Fakwon as he brought his fist down on the small indigo arachnid which had been scurrying across his cafe table.

“Seems the whole city is thick with them, they don’t bite but I’d rather not have them in my tea.” he smirked and brought the steaming tin cup to his painted lips.

“And the city nobles? They do not bite over such business as ours?” Questioned The Fakwon’s associate as they turned their ochre eye skyward in contemplation.

“No worry, all have been duped by the ensorcelled coin, and the enchanter who glamoured it, well...he has taken up residence in the Netherworld. Your blades are off to some frigid bandit usupur in Larfar even now. No one in the city knows our shaded works but thee and me. X’nak merchants are fools to shun this place. It is the intersection of the world, and ripe for graft.”

Hours hence, as the haze of dusk settled on Byzaron, The Fakwon sauntered from the mosaiced tearoom. With his mind pacified by pipe smoke, he passed the squat tenements of the Drifters Square, the great wheel of the Water Weighers, and the upturned idols of the Rogues’ Quarter. All curiously deserted for this time of evening. He wheeled past both the crimson and violet arches of the Seven Ever-Open Gates. Not but wind-swept sand intruded them. Stumbling into a basalt statue the merchant disturbed a moonbathing Gruo. She spread her shimmering wings to regain balance on her now teetering eidolon, croaked irritation in her people’s complex tongue, and took flight.

There were no midnight deals between star-signed mystics, no reveling hunters exhibiting horn or tooth, no cutpurses baring lute-shaped daggers. It seemed only the great windcatcher towers would not be dissuaded from their nightly ritual of howling the breath of the Leviathan's Steppe across the rooftops. Here was where The Fakwon stopped, contemplating a particular vaulting structure with a smirk. It was said these towers were the home of the hidden overseers of the city. How could that be, he thought, when there was no door across their archways. Only offerings of sweet nectar and words of warning. The interior was dark and seemingly uninhabited. Beginning to think the city's reputation was more superstition than fact, he entered.

There was nothing. No furniture, no rooms, just a wide stone chamber that must have ascended all the way to the tower's apex, though he could see little above his head. The wind rushing through the structure, sweeping downward in torrents, demonstrated its vastness. Growing bored, the merchant decided to return to his rented room and recount his earnings. He turned to leave and couldn't.

The Fakwon found himself pinioned as if by tense ethereal strands. That was when he heard the clicking, almost inaudible beneath the wind, but something, or many somethings, were descending the tower. Gripped by fear, he tried again in vain to run. In the corner of his vision he glimpsed a long indigo appendage. Suddenly a thought pierced his mind as if forced in from without. Then he knew:

No one can cheat the masters of Byzaron.

PLACES

Below are the main regions of the known world and specific locations within them. Following, there are short descriptions of each location accompanied by a Traveling encounter table. Please refer to the map for specific placement.

The Coin Roads

The central inland area of the continent. Hot and arid wastelands with numerous trade routes.

Includes:

- The Alabaster Maze
- The City of Byzaron
- The City of Masks
- The Leviathan Steppe
- The Monoliths of Iboru
- The Tower of the Bat

The Crescent Sea

The ocean and western coast. Tropical climate with curved shoreline ranging from jagged cliffs to sandy beaches.

Includes:

- The Coral Islands
- The Hushed Necropolis of Kaimanu
- The Invisible Library of Malazar
- The Last Acropolis
- The Time Gardens of Lariyan
- The Yielding Plain

The Shadow of the Great Glacier

The northern and northeastern areas. An ice wall giving way to some tundra and chilly mountains but climate quickly warms to central temperatures within a short distance.

Includes:

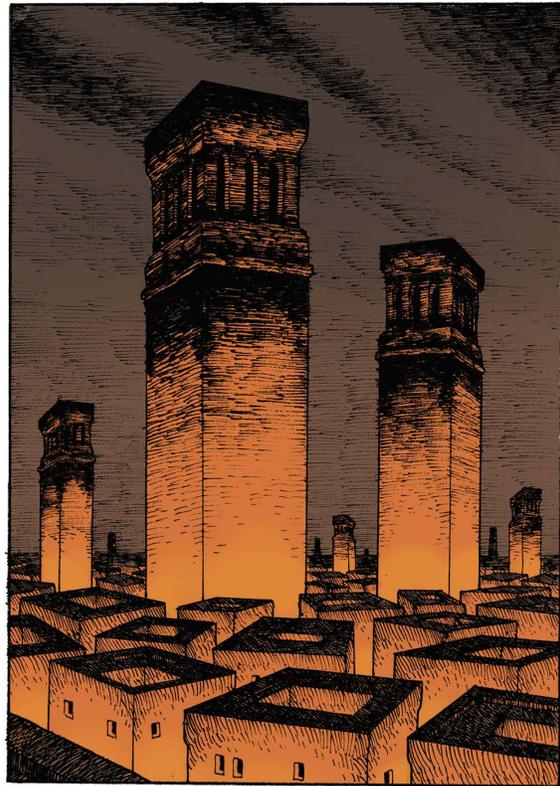
- The Amaranthine City
- The Caverns of the Silver God
- The City of Barbasdu
- The Copper Veins
- The Crawling Glacier
- The Frostfire Peaks
- The Mountains of Larfar
- The Sunset Sea
- The Valley of the Frozen Pilgrims

The Verdant Basin

The south and southeast areas. Hot and humid settled lands giving way to jungle and ancient structures.

Includes:

- The Beryl Scale
- The Bottomless Vaults of Noxtolar
- The City of Noxtolar
- The Pylons of Prophecy
- The Subterranean Caldera
- The Valley of Quoz
- The Walls of the Star Kings



PLACES

The Alabaster Maze

Lying serenely within a quarry of glass is a most elegant white labyrinth. The Gnorthaq build it, hauling the stones in their chitinous claws and carving the fine detail with their nimble feelers...obviously. These expert craftspeople hone their skills here before venturing forth to serve kings and merchants. Each generation the maze grows. Those who traverse it tell tales of water that flows through air and the crashing echo of its passing.

1. A massive sheet of white stone came crashing down on you in a tight corridor of the labyrinth. How did you pull yourself out of this mass of rubble, and what did you leave buried under the rock?

2. You became hopelessly lost in the labyrinth with no chance of escape. A being in the form of an albino bat offered to guide you out of the maze for a price. What did the bat ask of you?

3. You came upon one of the famous floating rivers of the labyrinth. Swimming with the current led to your destination quickly, but it was a turbulent ride. What was swimming in the river like, and what got lost along the way?

4. You ran out of rations in the maze and had to barter for more at a Gnorthaq encampment. Gnorthaq are notoriously difficult for humans to understand. What was your end of the barter, and what was the Gnorthaq "food" like?

5. You found a Gnorthaq encased in amber, still alive due to their strange biology. You figure they were grateful for the rescue because they went about crafting a unique item as soon as they returned to camp. How did you free the Gnorthaq from the amber, and what did they craft for you?

6. You discovered a forgotten tomb deep in the maze dedicated to one of the original labyrinth builders. A powerful item was still clutched in their desiccated claws. What was the tomb like, and what item did the ancient builder hold?

The Coin Roads

The City of Byzaron

The crossroads of all trade and riches. Seven colored gates welcome transients to its crowded tenements, elaborate pleasure halls, and thief-choked markets. There is only one law in Byzaron; that a reasonable percentage goes to the hidden masters in their windcatcher towers. Truly, these psychic spiders know all within the city walls.

1. Your mind was enthralled by a powerful spider Matriarch because of some minor economic slight against the city. What trials and tribulations did you endure to break the spell?

2. Even with your guard up the city of thieves got the better of you. You were the target of a master thief and they led you on a merry chase. What was the outcome of your entanglement?

3. You found yourselves muscled into a high-stakes gambling game where you were meant to play patsy. When things went south, how did you get through the game without getting killed?

4. While passing by the biggest tea house in the city an inebriated Steppe Hunter challenged you to a test of skill. You won, but he was a very sore loser. How did you remedy this situation and what did you walk away with?

5. You happened upon the mugging of a wealthy merchant and managed to defeat their assailant. Overjoyed, they offered you anything they had. What did you ask for?

6. Unbeknownst to the schemers, you were privy to the planning of an important heist. One that could take down or rise up any thieves guild in the city. How did you broker this information to your advantage?

PLACES

The City of Masks

From afar this cyclopean ruin of jade conical towers appears as a great still forest. The inhabitants of this silent place, who know it as Ksamath, follow a being called The Seer of All Realities. They have been taught that the face we display is false and only a mask can truly portray one's personality. They say The Seer looks into everything that you are or can be. From this knowledge it forms your mask.

1. The Seer of All Realities looked within you and saw a great darkness that their followers must eradicate. The whole city was after you. How did you make it out alive?

2. A great beast stalked Ksamath, hungry for the precious stones used in its occupants' face coverings. Together with The Seer you destroyed the monster. What was this thing and how costly was the battle?

3. One of The Seer's followers was seen without their mask through no fault of their own. This offence meant death, but you saved them from execution and in so doing assured that you would never again be welcome. How harrowing was your escape?

4. Attempting to sneak into the city, you donned masks stolen from other occupants. This led to you needing to perform their roles or risk discovery. While annoying and confusing, this did give you a chance to learn more of the city's secrets. What did you have to do and what did you find out?

5. While waiting for your masks to be made you chanced to glimpse in The Seer's divining pool. You were almost overwhelmed as you were shown inner truths of your existence. Though brief, the experience left you somewhat enlightened. What did you see?

6. The Seer of All Realities looked within you and saw a great light that their followers revered. The Seer crafted you a mystic mask to aid in your quests. What was its power?

The Coin Roads

The Leviathan Steppe

These arid plains beyond Byzaron were once the bottom of some vast sea. The bones of an aquatic monster, many days ride in length, dominate the landscape. It is in the niches of this dead calcium that all manner of predators have made their warrens. Merchant caravans and travelers are wise to consult a Gruo, who live in nearby burrows. Or perhaps hire a hunter from the city, though little of their monster slaying braggadocio is often true.

1. Your actions led to the spirit of the Leviathan to awaken. They caused the earth to split and crash like waves. How were you able to outrun this angered spirit, and what was damaged in the process?

2. A band of Gruo raiders fell upon you with lightning speed. How did you handle the stick-up, and what was lost to the locust because of it?

3. The trip across the steppe took longer than you expected, and you ran out of rations. Luckily, you found strange silver berries growing on squat bushes. They were nourishing, but they didn't agree with you. How did these strange steppe berries affect you?

4. You found a clutch of strange, rock hard eggs nestled in the bones of the Leviathan. Seeing no parent around, you approached the nest, and the eggs started hatching. What hatched out of the eggs, and what did you do afterwards?

5. You stumbled upon a Gruo encampment that was celebrating a successful lion hunt. They invited you to enjoy the festivities. How did these locusts celebrate, and what did you learn?

6. You came upon a large caravan abandoned on the plains. There were no signs or tracks of the people and beasts driving this caravan, as if they disappeared. However, all the goods they were transporting were intact. What goods and luxuries was the caravan holding?

PLACES

The Monoliths of Iboru

These basalt faces that tower above even the greatest lizards, were carved at the height of Erim before it fell and receded to New X'nak. They are the likeness of the threefold sons of Iboru, who were potent magicians in their day. Those who cite the correct phrases beneath the right stars can speak to the stones and learn their power. That, or you discover some lost writings in the ruin beyond, whichever is easier.

1. You have stumbled upon the vile rituals of Lukkor The High Deceiver under the horned moon. Their warlocks took you as a sacrifice but something went wrong. The ritual was disrupted and you had the chance to flee. What caused the magic to go awry?

2. The voices of the stones chant obscenely. Without the magics to understand them you were driven mad for a time. The next day finds you alive and beyond their range but not without consequences. What terrible acts were you driven to?

3. Restless Dead stalked the stones. Cursed to fight the final battle of Erim for all eternity they attacked you, thinking you their ancient enemy. How did you put them back in the ground?

4. You crossed the path of a warlock pursued by Vengeful Spirits. They tore at you, demanding recompense. Luckily you figured out their need just in time. What had the warlock done to awaken them and how did you send them back to the netherworld?

5. A pair of X'nak warlocks were camped in the ruins to observe a celestial alignment. They welcomed you to join in their festivity and shared news of their travels through nearby lands. What did you learn from these sages?

6. The stones spoke and through some happy providence you understood. Suddenly you knew how to craft a magic item or brew a wondrous potion, but these thoughts were fleeting. What did you create while this wisdom lingered?

The Coin Roads

The Tower of The Bat

In this shimmering marble tower, cylindrical and featureless, dwells the wicked sorcerer Uxar. This mage has struck some sort of deal with the spiders of Byzaron, allowing them to act with impunity in the city. Their tower, with its lizard infested outer garden, is all but impregnable. Though, given the rumors of magical treasure within and the tower's placement in a city of thieves, many try to enter.

1. Uxar descending upon you like a storm of sorcerous fury for your trespass. The battle nearly destroyed you but at the last moment you were able to turn one of his wicked enchantments back upon him. How did you do it?

2. The shimmering diamond seemed like treasure, but nothing is as it appears in the sorcerer's abode. Touching it drew you into a haunted crystalline world which you barely escaped. What cunning plan got you out?

3. You accidentally broke an idol containing a powerful monster. Its first impulse was to feast upon you but somehow you convinced it otherwise. What was this horrible thing and what did you say to it?

4. The air split with magic as you stumbled upon Uxar and an alien beast doing battle. Your aid granted the creature an upper hand and drove the battle away, but not without significant risk. What was Uxar fighting and how did you help it?

5. You came upon Uxar's vacant meditation room. The sorcerer was away a long while and you were able to sample his lavish foods and magical herbs. Where was Uxar and how did you pass your time?

6. In a hidden chamber you discovered a prisoner tormented by the vines of a magical plant. Freeing them, you found them to be Pelian, a powerful magician of the Crescent Sea. They thanked you by whisking you from the tower. What other gifts did they bestow?

PLACES

The Coral Islands

Lush archipelagos dotted by structures of shaped coral. Each with its own ruler. These island fiefdoms war often, but stand united against invaders from the mainland. In such dire times their greatest enchanters, the Ones-In-Between, lead the people. Legends say their great magics were discovered in the netherworld.

1. While traveling between islands you were caught in a violent storm. Your boat capsized, throwing the crew and yourself into the dark and turbulent waters. You eventually made it to land, but how did you survive being adrift and what -- or who -- was lost to the ocean's depths?

2. You committed an atrocious insult to the Datu of an island you visited, and were condemned to die. What was the horrible blunder that insulted the Datu so, and how did you convince them not to kill you?

3. You were caught by an invading force from another island. Being an outlander, the invaders offered you a deal: be a spy for us, or we'll kill you. How far did you go along with this deal, and what did you find out?

4. You took part in a hunt for a giant sea serpent. You were the first to hook the beast. How did you kill it, and what part of the serpent were you given as a reward?

5. You aided in fending off invaders from the mainland. The Ones-In-Between spun magical enchantments to bolster the troops, yourself included. What boon did the enchantment grant, and what were the lasting effects?

6. You came across a young child fighting for their life with a sea-beast. You slew the monster and saved the child, who happened to be the heir apparent of a small island. The Datu rewarded you greatly for saving their child and commissioned a celebration. What were the festivities like, and what were you gifted?

The Crescent Sea

The Hushed Necropolis of Kaimanu

A seaside complex of strange towering structures, shrouded in darkness and mystery. The attendants of this place are often Toogs who go robed and cowed into the world. Picking certain bodies of the dead to take and inter within their catacombs. None can say why these particular individuals are taken, or how deep the chambers go. Only that it is deeply sacred and these secrets are closely guarded.

1. You have disturbed the ancient dead! The undertakers dealt swift and unforgiving retribution on you before exiling you from the necropolis. What was your offence and how did they respond?

2. A weird presence fell over Kaimanu as one of the undying patrons attempted to force their way into the necropolis. Their presence twisted and destroyed all it touched. How and why were you spared?

3. In the lowest catacomb chambers you saw something that rattled your soul: a door to the netherworld. What strange visions lay within and how did they affect you?

4. It is forbidden to speak within the halls of the necropolis, yet when you saw a monk's life in danger you called out to save them. This was met with a bizarre reaction. How were the undertakers both grateful and condemning at once?

5. There was a mother pleading that her lost child be accepted into the necropolis. The monks were hesitant but thanks to you they finally relented. How did you convince them and did you accept the mother's reward?

6. A group of Toogs were perplexed over how to honor a newly arrived body. You realized that these rites were known to you and with your help the body was interred. The monks heaped praise and rewards upon you. How did you know what to do and what was your reward?

PLACES

The Invisible Library of Malazar

Where the waves break on open air along the ragged coast can be found a great repository of knowledge. Warded by more magic than this grand illusion and a steep ascent besides. Within are secrets melted into tablets of crystallite, or blue veined silver, or burnished obsidian. Like the structure itself they are less seen and more felt for their information. None shall be removed, or their borrower will find the place has taken something in return.

1. A tablet was taken during your trip through the library. The many tongued keepers of that place accused you of the theft and tried to enact terrible punishments. Who were the real culprits and how did you escape?
2. Warlocks from distant lands offered you riches for escort through the library. When they found the text they sought you were betrayed and had to fight your way out. What knowledge had driven them to kill and how did you best them?
3. Tempted by a particularly mysterious text, you read it and your mind was invaded by a powerful imprisoned spirit. How were you able to remove it from your mind and how did its presence affect you?
4. Some errant magic filled the halls of Mazalar, causing the library's subjects to literally leapt from the script. These wild illusions quickly faded but still imparted on you terrible and wonderful information. What was it?
5. Severe weather prolonged your stay but so too did the flowing water allow you to find a secret reading room. You discovered some marvelous fictions while you passed your time. What stories did you leisurely read?
6. A curator offered the librarians miracles or merchandise to buy a text. When rebuffed they simply took it and were destroyed in their escape, but this did make you the new owner of their offering. What knowledge had they sought and what had they offered?

The Crescent Sea

The Last Acropolis

In ages past, dynasties of sloth spanned the world. It was before the dawn of bronze. When the teachings of ancient beings were widely shunned. The last empire of this naive age raged against its fall by building fortresses against time. Noxtolar may have been one, but the acropolis certainly is. It's form rejects change. As such it is just as perfect as when created. If only the people were so imbued. None still occupy it. Those who try to discover why find themselves similarly vanished.

1. You were blinded by a bolt of green light in the sky. When you opened your eyes you stood in the distant past. You found a ritual that could bring you back to your time, but it went awry. What was this magic and how did it go wrong?
2. You were captured by Restless Dead gladiators and thrown into a coliseum to do battle. What undead horrors did you face, and how did you survive the pit?
3. You found an ancient game board set to be played. You foolishly moved a piece, magically locking yourself into playing this game against people of the past until you win. You have no idea what this game is or how to play it. How did you overcome this time-lock and win the game?
4. After being injured, you found an apothecary's shop with perfectly preserved ancient medicines. You didn't recognize any of these curatives, but you tried your best to apply them. What kind of strange remedies were in this shop, and how did you attempt to use them?
5. You came upon a marketplace crowded with the still walking bodies of people who once lived here. Mummified vendors offered samples of goods preserved by this place's magic. What ancient goods were for sale, and how did they affect you?
6. A ten foot tall, vaporous image of a man enrobed in silk and diamonds stood atop the apex of the acropolis. This was the last emperor of a vast, ancient, and forgotten realm. They treated you as royal visitors. What lost knowledge did they share, and what ostentatious gifts were you given?

PLACES

The Time Gardens of Lariyan

Lush and finely kept terraces of scintillating flora dominate this place. At a distance it seems encased in a wall of wavering heat but that is not so. What you see is a distortion of time, not air. Those who walk the silver flower paths lose all sense of hour and day in their delight. So too does the past and future lose sense of them. There is no loss in Lariyan and so, many who go there are utterly lost.

1. The promises of an eternity of leisure proved too seductive. You were trapped for time unknown until a realization broke you free. What caused you to turn away from the gardens and how difficult was that experience?

2. You fell upon a strange pocket of time. It threatened to age you extremely old or young, but with some quick thinking you escaped. What was your desperate plan to get out alive?

3. You stumbled upon an endless duel between two evenly matched and particularly famous, warriors of history. So caught up in their battle were they that you came under attack as well but escaped before great harm befell you. Who were these fighters and how did you withdraw?

4. A beast of myth crossed your path. Its demeanor was inscrutable but the chance to study, or hunt the creature was too alluring to pass up. While it ultimately eluded you, what was it and what could you have obtained?

5. There was a stranger who had lost their will to leave, but after talking with you they regained their love of adventure. Useful tools or minor magics from a forgotten time were offered in thanks. What did you tell them and what did you take?

6. You waited long in the gardens, conversing with the displaced rulers, sages, and heroes of old. Never did you forget your quest and your new friends sent you off with their blessings. What did they share with you?

The Crescent Sea

The Yielding Plain

Travelers avoid this strange land beyond Amaranth. At a glance it is an ordinary ochre waste, largely flat and populated by shrub growth. To walk across it invites disaster as at any time the earth itself will part and swallow up the traveler, then simply reform. Worse yet are the horrible crimson mists that drift along the plain with sinister purpose. They seek out living things to drown their lungs in red vapour. All while sucking the moisture from their bodies.

1. The Red Mist crawled silently among your group and without warning its draining tendrils were sucking the life from your body. How did you escape this malevolent vapour?

2. You stumbled upon a patch of terrible quicksand that threatened to swallow you forever. How did you crawl from the engulfing earth?

3. After sliding into the tunnels beneath the plain you were confronted by gibbering voles. By what means did you pacify those beasts?

4. You found a bush that produces a rare spice that only grows on the plains. As you tried to pick it, the bush wrapped a thorny vine around your arms and started to pull you underground. How did you escape this carnivorous plant, and what did you come away with?

5. You found a wayward caravan slowly sinking into the plain. How did you save the caravaneers from a horrible death, and how did they repay you?

6. A sinkhole opened beneath you, but instead of burying you under tons of soil it revealed an ancient sunken structure. Investigating inside you found forgotten wonders. What was this place and what did it hold?

PLACES

The Amaranthine City

Opulent towers of crystal and marble that seemed to grow overnight. They had, in fact, been summoned from some other place or time by the city's rulers; a cabal known as The Amaranthine Sorcerers. This order draws power from a mysterious patron who demands only a tithe of dreams from any within the metropolis. Now, either the wizards or their master grow ambitious and seek conquest of further realms.

1. For whatever reason, you neglected to sleep within the city walls. Leaving the dream tithe unpaid and the sorcerers wanting. They appeared before you demanding recompense and threatening dark curses. What did you sacrifice to appease them?
2. The dreaming god tricked you. You were lured by the promise of riches and magic only to be used as pawns in one of their unfathomable games. What was this setup and how were you made to take the fall?
3. In the great square a magician dazzled and amazing until they tempted fate with one too many spells. You were among many caught in the calamity of that errant magic. What strange effects did it impart?
4. A twisted beast summoned from beyond stalked the crystal towers in the night. You crossed its path and sent it back to the netherworld. What scars of battle and gifts of the gracious sorcerers did you collect?
5. You found yourselves summoned by the dreaming illusions of a mighty wizard. They spoke to you in riddles but offered chambers in their violet citadel. How did you pass the time in this wonderful place?
6. At dusk a mysterious and powerful being appeared before you. If granted you a wondrous gift with no explanation before fading into the setting sun. What boon did this mysterious stranger grant to you?

The Shadow of the Great Glacier

The Caverns of the Silver God

This recently unearthed complex of tunnels near Barbasdu begin as natural rock but quickly shift to worked stone. Some ancient people built this place as a prison for the still more ancient Silver God. The god in question manifests as a sphere of living mercury and commands sonic powers great and terrible. The dungeon crawls with guards of opal and gold as well as newer inhabitants that thrive in the dank cave climate.

1. You found a secret passage into The Silver God's chamber. You could not understand the meaning of its strange hums but the conversation obviously went south. It produced a bone-shattering sonic blast that rippled through the tunnels. How did you stop this blast from killing you, and what gear was damaged in the sonic wave?
2. You came upon the horde of the Argent Python, a monstrosity large and cunningly intelligent silver snake. What did you have to give up in evading or persuading this dangerous creature?
3. An Opal Guardian blocked your progress through the caves. They cited ancient law and their duty to uphold it while threatening harsh punishment. How did you get around them?
4. You found a Barbasduin pilgrim willing to guide you through the tunnels if you helped them collect enough molten silver to construct an idol. What dangers were involved in collecting the molten metal, and how did the pilgrim help you on your quest?
5. You infiltrated a maintenance room full of unactivated gold guardians. What did you do with the guardians, and how did you spend your time in the room?
6. For whatever reason, The Silver God took a liking to you, and let you rest in one of their treasure rooms undisturbed. What did you find there, and how did you spend your night?

PLACES

The City of Barbasdu

A great organ of civilization perched along the cliffs to the south of the glacier's shadow. Domed stone structures part along great shrine laden avenues. Here is where all gods known in the densely settled places of the world originate. Its people are as fickle as they are zealous. New gods are discovered regularly, gain popularity, then go out of fashion and are forgotten. All in a few moons.

1. The people of Barbasdu saw your actions as a direct insult to their current most beloved god. They spit upon you and threw you in prison until you offered repentance. What horrible atrocity did you commit and how did you atone?

2. Your actions have led to the scaffolding outside a new temple to collapse, ruining months of work. What was the blunder that led to this damage, and how did you handle the aftermath?

3. You were swept up in a mass chanting in the streets to a god of visions and fortunes. You lost yourself in the swaying bodies and words. What visions greeted you, and what did they tell you about yourself?

4. You partook in a harvest festival featuring a local delicacy you'd never tried before. Your body reacted to the food ... interestingly. What was the local delicacy, and how did your body react?

5. You recognized an old and out of fashion idol that the elders of your family used to talk about. You greeted the lone priest tending the shrine in a traditional manner, pleasantly surprising them. What did this God mean to your family, and how did the priest react to your knowledge of it?

6. Your arrival in the city coincided with a day of jubilant prophecy. The citizens paraded you down The Street of Shrines, throwing offerings to you. What was this great celebration and what were you given?

The Shadow of the Great Glacier

The Copper Veins

An infamous strip mine at the edge of The Sunset Sea. Renowned as the richest source of Copper in the world. Production never ceases, though the land changes hands every time a new empire rises up and requires the resource. Miners speak of a hollow earth beneath, and structures unlike anything seen in a thousand thousand years.

1. While lost, deep within the mines, you mistakenly entered the lair of a Dasarisan. The scaled monstrosity looked upon you with a vicious hunger and keen intellect. How did you escape those echoing caverns alive?

2. You passed through a tunnelway filled with viridian smoke. It stung your eyes and throats. Quickly you realized it would sap your strength as well. How could you have combated these effects in your scramble for safety?

3. First your map, and then your sense of direction failed you, as you became hopelessly lost in the mine tunnels. What did you do to navigate out of those twisting, unpredictable corridors?

4. You passed through an area that the miners use to rest. Some of the workers questioned your presence there, while others just wanted to sleep off a hard day's work. They made it clear looters and saboteurs were not welcome. How did you respond?

5. You discovered an untouched grotto off a narrow side passage. It contained faintly glowing moss and fleshy white bundles of mushroom caps. You seemed to remember hearing that these rare fungi had restorative properties. What use did you find for them?

6. You fell into a cavern containing structures of some unknown and indestructible material. Odd devices hummed to life at your approach but upon touching one you were spirited magically to the surface. However, the trip did leave you with a strange boon. What was it?

PLACES

The Crawling Glacier

For as long as anyone can remember it has been there. Like a great chill shadow hanging over the world. Its ice seems alive with the vile purpose of entombing all things. Those who have tried to stand against its progress have been swallowed up. Only showing reverence to certain otherworldly powers has slowed the glacier's advance.

1. Delving into deep chasms of ice you came face to face with Zuthaggwa in their grand chamber! The god slept but even then the ripples of its mind nearly destroyed you. Why did the toad-faced patron not awaken and destroy you?
2. The ice itself seemed to reform around you as you traveled, blocking the tunnels you entered and leading you deeper into the glacier. How did you escape this malevolent force of nature without being frozen alive?
3. You found a ritual chamber adorned with carvings in the countenance of Zuthaggwa. They whispered to you that you would stay warm here if you only gave up something in return. What did you offer to that strange patron for respite?
4. Writhing demons stalked you through the ice but by sheer luck you were able to kill one. As its body gibbered and dissolved you discovered it was once something quite different. What had the creature been and what did this mean?
5. When you were attacked by glacier cultists a venerable mammoth herder came to your rescue. Together you thwarted the cult and celebrated around a roaring fire. What was the cult's plan to grow the ice?
6. Frozen in the tunnels you discovered the remains of a great king who had attempted to destroy the glacier and was entombed. The caves did not approve of your presence but you did have time to grab a piece of the king's regalia before fleeing falling ice. What was it?

The Shadow of the Great Glacier

The Frostfire Peaks

Dividing the lands of the Amaranth from the Sunset Sea is a high and perilous mountain chain. Their black rock burns with unnatural heat, while fissures and cracks reveal a frozen core. These opposed elements cause the whole range to be cloaked in thick mist. Families of sightless chiropteran creatures live here, basking on the hot stones and drinking in the fog. Their origin is unknown but many carry idols of Azag.

1. While traversing the mountain peaks you stumbled upon an idol of weird AZAG, and in your shock you accidentally shattered it. Such an insult often provokes a terrible curse. What dread befell you?
2. The extreme weather differences in the mountains tormented you. From walking across blistering stone to spelunking through frigid blasts. How did your bodies survive these severe conditions?
3. You came across a flock of sightless chiropterans, lazily lying down in your path. They did not notice your presence as you approached. How did you handle this?
4. You found a lost group of Amaranthine soldiers that have been led astray by the mists and plunged into an icy cavern. They had all but succumbed to exhaustion and frostbite. In what way did you interact with them?
5. While finding easy passage across the mountain range, you came across a spot that was well shrouded in mist and offered a comfortable refuge. What did you do in this unlikely resting space?
6. Among the burning stones your keen eyes spotted a skeletal body, ancient and fused to the rock. In its hands however, was gripped a perfectly preserved wooden box, warded against destruction by strange sigils. What did this find contain?

PLACES

The Mountains of Larfar

Neigh untraversable without a local guide. These jagged peaks look as if they were colossal crashing waves, turned to stone by strange eons. Their hollow crooks house the greatest sword casters in the world. Often you can come upon some aged artisan, searching for the perfect earth from which to craft their master mold. Outsiders may not participate in the smelting, but may pay for the product in magic or song.

1. You slipped and fell into a crevasse on the mountain range. Your leg got wedged between rocks, trapping you. You spent several days in that dark prison. How did you survive the ordeal, and what grueling process did you undergo to free yourself?

2. While staying with a Larfarian smelter, you accidentally broke one of their sword molds. This is a crime usually punishable by death. How did you convince the smelter to let you live?

3. While lost in a mountain pass you came upon the hovel of a witch. She agreed to guide you through the mountains in exchange for a piece of your essence. Did you agree to this deal, and if so what did the witch take?

4. You found an idol of a winged serpent, an old and forgotten god. The serpent came to you in your dreams and offered you great power if you brought their name back to the ears of the Larfarrians. Did you proselytize for the serpent, and if so, what powers were you granted?

5. You found a vast underground lake heated by deep volcanic activity. The cavern offered respite from the whipping winds and jagged peaks of the mountains. How did you spend your time in this safe haven?

6. A master smith perked up when they heard you humming a song taught to you by your grandmother. They offered to make you anything within their skill if they could only hear that song again. How did this master smith know your song, and what did you ask to be made?

The Shadow of the Great Glacier

The Sunset Sea

Far inland, between the Frostfire Peaks and The Copper Vein, is this ocean of deep red sand. It is known as the Tafoukt Desert by those nomadic people who make it their home. Called the Tifawin, these amber-robed warriors wield blade and spell in equal measure. They are also known for their ophidian duck-billed mounts, which are as quick as they are loyal. Many Tifawin range far from their desert home and are held in high esteem throughout the lands for their martial skills.

1. Without warning a gigantic Tafoukt Scorpion erupted from below and attacked. Its lightning fast movement barely left you time to react and its shrill shriek rattled your senses. How did you escape when this beast descended upon you?

2. As you traveled through the hot desert sands, your mind and body ached from the beating sun. You hallucinated vivid images that you could not help but believe. What was this mirage?

3. You were ambushed by Tifawin warriors who were patrolling their domain. They had blades at the ready and they brooked no trespass. How did you handle yourselves in this tense situation?

4. You happened upon a flock of Duck-Billed Ophidians. These animals, typically prized as mounts, were wild and untamed, belching flame at random. How did you soothe them?

5. You spotted a strange obelisk in the middle of the desert that glimmered like a starry night sky. Curiously one of your number touched the obelisk, and were filled with a vision of the past. What did they see?

6. You found an inviting oasis, with clear blue water, tall shady palms, and lush vegetation. There were signs that others had dwelled here in days long past. How did you spend your time in this beautiful place?

PLACES

The Valley of the Frozen Pilgrims

A great blinding expanse of wind-whipped snow at the foot of the great glacier. One day it will be another victim of the ice sheets advance. Legends speak of prophetic visions beneath scintillating lights. The faithful of Barbasdu are particularly called to this land as a holy quest, but few survive the temperatures. What a fool's errand it is to walk that blinding expanse.

1. You foolishly traveled farther from camp than the locals cautioned and got caught in a blinding snowstorm. You were lost in the bone snapping cold and relentless wind for over a day. What physical trauma did you suffer, and how were you able to find your way back to safety?

2. You didn't secure your food bag properly and it was dragged off by a Felidax in the night. A resupply was several days off, and you needed to enact extreme rationing. How did you survive this hunger, and what social tensions resulted from it?

3. You came across a bedraggled pilgrim on the plains who had gone mad. After babbling inanely, the pilgrim lunged at you. How did you escalate or de-escalate this situation, and what was the outcome?

4. As you laid on your bedroll, watching the tide of dancing lights roll across the sky, your mind was taken by dreams and premonitions. What did the visions portend, and how did they make you feel?

5. You came upon a hot water geyser that erupted from the cold ground, leaving hot steamy pools. Pilgrim caravans gathered around the geyser for the few days it was active. How did you relax, and what did you hear from those there?

6. You led a lost pack of mammoths back to their herd. Upon reaching the herder camp, you were rewarded with a celebration and a feast. What did this celebration look like, and what boon did the herders gift to you?

The Shadow of the Great Glacier



PLACES

The Beryl Scale

In a world crawling with saurians The Beryl Scale is a nest. Most reptilian creatures trace their lineage to the steaming jungles of the south. Hunting here is generally forbidden to honor and preserve the animal populations. Aside from a multitude of species, the growths hide expansive caves of volcanic rock, prophecies carved in stone, and the barrier that guards the edge of the world.

1. Your careless bumbling through the jungle enraged a massive Oxodalocus from their nest. How was your equipment severely damaged by the magma spewed from this horrific monster, and how did you survive the encounter?
2. You traversed across a patch of unstable ground that gave way into the sinking caldera below. What was lost to the sinking maw, and how did you crawl out of this certain doom?
3. You were stung by a strange insect and came down with an even stranger illness as a result. What were the symptoms of this bizarre virus and how did you overcome it?
4. You tripped and fell into a Monitor nest, knocking yourself out. When you came to, you were being doted on by a mama saurian who thought you were one of her young. She didn't let you leave the nest. How did you escape this overprotective mother?
5. You came upon a grove of trees bearing very ripe fruit. They were delicious, rejuvenating, and intoxicating. What were the effects of these strange fruits and how did you feel the next day?
6. You wandered into a group of basking cultists worshiping an effigy that coincidentally looked like you. They believed you to be a great spiritual figure summoned by their prayer. How did they deify you and what gifts were you presented?

The Verdant Basin

The Bottomless Vaults of Noxtolar

No one can say how deep the treasure vaults go beneath the golden palace. They are the pride of Noxtolarian royalty and the envy of every ruler and thief in the world. More items of unique and wondrous magic are always being hoarded. So too must this wealth's protection be ever increased.

1. Too late you realized you had activated a terrible trap. The doors sealed shut, spikes descended upon you, poison darts flashed by, and noxious gas crept in. How did you dodge these wicked gears?
2. A beautiful mirror proved to be more dangerous than it appeared. Your very reflections attempted to pull you into the cursed glass. How did you outsmart these shadow doubles?
3. You came across Voon, the master thief, as they were trying, unsuccessfully, to dismantle a trap. They offered you part of the prize for assisting and you agreed, but you should have known better than to trust a thief. How did you work together and what did you end up with?
4. The highest of the royal catalogers had become hopelessly lost in the vaults. They begged for guidance out with all your trespasses forgiven. Did you help the hapless collector?
5. Through some erosion of the ancient construct's senses, an opal guardian mistook you for a royal entourage. While it served your every wish, anything that would betray your true identity would mean your death. How did you keep up the charade?
6. Shockingly, there before you was a prized magical item. It's protections had broken due to age and neglect. It was yours for the taking. What was it?

PLACES

The City of Noxtolar

Prophecies of doom surround this place. Words which go unheeded by its beautiful, twin, gold-painted rulers. Why should they worry? The great glyph gate has kept the city safe for a thousand years. The main concern of these people is their comfort and wealth. They will only venture from Noxtolar to barter for more riches and are somewhat hapless targets.

1. You fell victim to the great greed of the doomed city. The twin rulers desired something that you owned and tried to take it. How did you escape their curators?

2. You entered the city without permission from its golden rulers and were thrown into their royal dungeons. Luckily, many of the royal jailors stink of corruption. How did you bribe your way out?

3. There was an opulent manse, completely unbarred and unguarded. Its occupants spent their time lazing in a drugged haze. What seemed like an easy respite turned to horror when you were accosted by the beast that fed on the stupefied citizens. How did you escape this thing?

4. Near the gate you were accosted by an ignored doomsayer. They imparted frightful visions of the cascading events leading to Noxtolar's fall into your minds. What did you learn from this chilling experience?

5. You came across a curator bemoaning their worthless find. You immediately saw that while not powerfully magical, the item did have value. It was easy to convince the haughty noble to give their treasure to you. What was it?

6. For no specific reason, the twin rulers found you delightful. They invited you into their court for a night of feasting, dancing, and debauchery. You awoke before the revelers and had free reign of the palace for a short time. What did you do?

The Verdant Basin

The Pylons of Prophecy

Wondrous azure arches, hidden among jungle vines, and painted with the last testaments of the imperial seerers of old. Even then, these reckless foretellings of weil and woe were forbidden to be written. However, when these structures proved to be quite indestructible the last rulers of the world resorted to the next best thing. Giants of copper and malice prevent any from deciphering the refused words.

1. Upon the arches you beheld omens of doom that shook you to your core. What terror did they describe?

2. Your trespassing awakened one of the Bronze Giants. How did you escape the wrath of the pylon's protector, and what was lost in the process?

3. You met a pack of mischievous monkeys hanging from the arches. They snatched some of your gear and started playing with it, impersonating you. How did you deal with these primates?

4. You came across a babbling cultist driven mad trying to understand the prophecies. They grabbed you and started rambling, but the things they said involved aspects of your life you had never told anyone else. How did you deal with the cultist, and what did you learn from their ramblings?

5. A group of scholars studying the pylons got pinned down by a Bronze Giant. How did you heroically save the scholars, and what did they give you in return?

6. Upon the arches you beheld words of great fortune that lifted your spirits. What joy did they bring?

PLACES

The Subterranean Caldera

Naturally formed lava tunnels that twist like nesting serpents below the mesozoic growths of The Beryl Scale. Geothermal springs bubble in chambers hundreds of feet high. Their water is known to change the creatures that bath in it. What were once harmless crustaceans became crawling behemoths that rule the caverns. Lately, people whisper of cults throwing themselves into the pools for obscene power.

1. A lava surge flooded the tunnel you were traveling in, nearly killing you. How did you narrowly escape this tide of magma, and what injuries were incurred in the escape?

2. You stepped on and broke a Caldera Crawler egg in the dark, awakening and angering the mother. How did you deal with this vicious beast hunting you in the pitch black tunnels of the caldera?

3. You came upon an old and blind cultist of The Black Skies who had made their home in a pocket of the caldera. They offered to help you traverse this dangerous territory. What kind of help did they offer, and for what price?

4. You slipped and fell into a potent geothermal spring. While you were able to escape quickly, you still felt the effects of the spring days later. In what ways did that quick bath change your physiology?

5. You found a stable and calm chamber of the caldera that was rife with iridescent, swaying mushrooms. The mushrooms were nutritious, restorative, and ... fun. What did you experience during your night in the mushroom cave?

6. You found a sinkhole that recently opened, revealing an ancient temple to a forgotten god. The sediment of the caldera kept this temple in pristine condition for centuries. What forgotten knowledge or relics did you obtain from this archaic shrine?

The Verdant Basin

The Valley of Quoz

Cradled by tall mountains at the edge of what is now X'nak lies a small but verdant vale. The soil there can nurture any plant and the climate is supernaturally perfect. Great tangleroot hearts grow here which could nourish an army, and so many have tried to reap this place for that purpose. Luckily the flowers of Quoz have achieved a kind of sentience and with it the power to disarm their aggressors with the power of soothing melodies.

1. You felt a sudden prick only to discover a swarm of biting insects thickening around you. As they stung, your speech slurred, movement slowed, and desired to itch your skin to the bone. How did you escape these creatures alive?

2. Carnivorous plants trapped you within their sweet sap and slowly closed their fronds around you. How did you escape before being digested alive?

3. You spotted humanoid figures painted in strange sigils harvesting the Tangleroot Hearts of the wood. The orchids sang in desperation to save their kin but no sound seemed to pierce the figure's seal. How did you react to this?

4. You stumbled onto an ancient weapon driven into the trunk of a tree and grown around over the ages. When you touched it the armament fell to dust but released some latent magic. What was this weapon and what did it contain?

5. The day started with a downpour but by noon the clouds parted and a brilliant rainbow spanned the vale. The light reflecting through it in that special place had restorative powers. How did it affect you?

6. As you traveled through these lush grounds, a melodic tune called you forth, beckoning you to come rest. You were weary from travel, and were tempted to give in. Did you ward off the temptation, or succumb?

PLACES

The Walls of the Star Kings

In the beginning, a council of godly beings crowned in beautiful stars descended from the night sky. From these diadems they shaped walls of brilliant light. Why? None can say. All that is known is that none have been able to cross them and view what lies beyond. Many assume it is the edge of the world and this barrier was to prevent us from wandering off, like children in a crib.

1. You climbed to the top of the walls and looked beyond! You saw visions of things that could not be and you felt them begin to destroy your body and mind. You were plucked from death at the last moment, but by who, and what did you see?

2. A doomed warlock raved among the parapets. They had tried to call forth a god and it had filled them with volatile power. The unchecked magic would have destroyed you too had you not fled. What were the sorcerer's last words?

3. As you approached the walls a group of pilgrims begged you to turn back. When you refused one threw himself at you, attacking wildly. You slew the zealot but were so overwhelmed with shame that you heeded their final wish. Why had they done this?

4. The light shifted strangely and you saw a faintly flickering god of light. This humanoid effigy spoke in bright pulses that imprinted a message on your mind, coupled with the need to flee. What did it say and why did this make you turn back?

5. You somehow found yourself outside of the view of the walls. Your memory full of half formed images. What do you think happened?

6. Within a curtain tower there appeared to you a wondrous crown of light. Touching it transported you beyond the light of the walls but not empty handed. What did you find in your possession?

The Verdant Basin

THE INTRACTABLE GENERAL



Her scream echoes across the desert as she raises her hand to the sky commanding hundreds of Amaranthine soldiers to charge.

The army of war mounts kick up plumes of red sand and storm towards enemy warriors spread out in front of a mining town. General Amanar Baragsan rides forward, her dark brown eyes studying the battlefield as clashing swords and spears ring in the air. The colossal red mountains dwarf the armies beneath.

The cobalt robes of her fighters mix with the opposition's amber attire. She will see the flag of Tifawin topple to the ground, this will be their last rebellion against Amaranthine rule. First blood spills on the Tafoukt desert and is swept by rolling sands. She focuses on an enemy unit and her muscles spasm as power surges through her body. Wind whirls around the Tifawin men catching them in the eye of a conjuring storm of black and crimson smoke. Their screams barely escape as their bodies are flung.

The heat from the battle and sun causes sweat to drip down her forehead, and she is surrounded by dead warriors in blue robes. She underestimated the Tifawain, but it was not over. She has Gurzil on her side and his magical boons, and this victory will build a legacy for her and her son.

"This is unacceptable. I will not fail."

As long as she has power this battle will not be lost, and the Tifawin copper mines will be plundered for the glory of Amaranth. A cry from a warrior lunging with a spear calls her attention. With a quick swing of her arm a booming force sweeps out from her causing him to fall and be trampled beneath hooves and dust.

She finds Commander Izem leading the Tifawin army, and thunder sounds as tendrils of lightning spark from his fingertips. The tendrils gather in a hovering sphere, and begin to deliberately cut through the Amaranthine army. Every soldier caught convulses from electrocution.

Amanar's eyes twitch and her body shakes as her hand grips the talisman draping her shoulders, drawing power from it. Her grandfather's voice fills her mind as she struggles.

There is no room for weakness in magic, control or succumb.

Her ancestors sank an island in their wrath, she will not be weak. She lost people passing through the impregnable Frostfire Mountains, and now more lie dead on the ground. She cannot fail.

Her talisman glows as the earth quakes, a gash splits beneath Commander Izem's feet. His casting hand jerks as he struggles to focus and his glowing tattoos fade. Amanar sees him bringing the sphere towards her, and she accelerates her spell.

The commanders struggle, each of them covered in blood from allies and foes. The sphere expands and moves erratically till it reaches Amanar and explodes in thunderous fury, rippling through the desert. The fissures arch and grow, swallowing both commanders.

Amanar smells her flesh burning as she hurtles downwards until collapsing into a metal surface, her bones crack on impact. She glimpses rusted structures taller than any temple as blood sputters from her mouth.

"No. I."

Her hands clutch the talisman. She sees Izem impaled by a stalagmite, and many soldiers in blue fall to their death as her spell runs rampant.

"I am sorry."

PEOPLE

Following are a series of NPC generators and plot hook matrices for them. Roll for each NPC column separately. Each set is divided by the geographical regions established in the Places section.

The Coin Roads NPCs

	Background	Motivation	Unique Trait
1.	X'nak Warlock	Owes a great debt to a ruthless guild leader	Can sense the luck around people and try to make good use of them
2.	Guild Prowler	Is wanted for a major theft	Will change allegiances at the drop of a hat
3.	Steppe Hunter	Wants to defeat a legendary creature to prove their worth	Respects only other hunters that have proven their valor
4.	Dust Pirate	Get enough riches to provide for their poor family	They know a lot of people that owe them favors
5.	Spider Acolyte	Needs one last item to complete their strange collection of trinkets	They are always accompanied by dozens of small spiders informants
6.	Fakwon (Spice Merchant)	Wants to make a name of themselves and be remembered	Their entire body is covered in tattoos they believe give them powers

The Coin Roads Plot Hooks

Background Roll	Motivation Roll	Plot Hook
1.	1.	This down-on-their-luck Warlock took a bad bet against Bombyx Tussar, head of Byzaron's silk weavers guild. Bombyx demands a Beryl Emperor-Moth's egg, a rare and giant treasure found deep in the jungles of the Verdant Basin as payment.
2.	1.	They used to be the best. Now, middle-aged and in gambling debt to the Gruo Guildmaster Chun, they've come out of retirement. A visiting general from Amaranth should satisfy the account.
3.	1.	This hunter got played by Takamma, the Second Shield of the courier's guild, on a caravan protection job that was rigged to fail. The hunter now owes restitution on the lost goods plus interest. They think Takamma's head may be a quicker repayment.
4.	1.	This young thief has been under the thumb of "The Diplomat," an enigmatic fence from The City of Masks, since they were born. In the shadowed city where no one can hide, the thief plans their escape.
5.	1.	This bumbling acolyte made the fatal mistake of dropping an egg-sac of Anelosimus of the Fourth Tower. The spider will generously forstal the psychic entombment of the acolyte if they can procure a replacement egg for Anelosimus to feed on. Specifically one from a Caldera Crawler.
6.	1.	This X'ankian spice merchant has run afoul of Baramak, the head of the Byzarian butcher's guild, for delivering rotten curing powder. The merchant must now harvest curing salts from The Leviathan Steppe, or it will be their head on the butcher's block.

PEOPLE**The Coin Roads Plot Hooks**

Background Roll	Motivation Roll	Plot Hook
1.	2.	This upstart mage wanted a quick route to power. They saw no better way than pilfering the Vaults of Noxtolar. Now the royal hounds have tracked them far and will not rest until the item is returned.
2.	2.	This rookie thief made the mistake of pocketing a gemstone that belonged to their last target. Now a vengeful spirit demands the stone be returned to its original resting place. The pickpocket hides in the City of Masks, hoping to find a way to banish the ghost and keep the gem.
3.	2.	Having pursued a pack of Scrofa to the Monoliths of Iboru, this hunter struck and took their bounty. Unknown to them, it was a crime in ancient Iboru to hunt and harvest in the city grounds. Ancient Koeta, undying law keepers of the old city, have risen to enact justice.
4.	2.	This young dust pirate found a friendly monkey outside The Tower of the Bat and took it as a pet. Unbeknownst to the pirate, the monkey belonged to Uxar. He has sent swarms of his winged emissaries to find and punish the young pirate for their unwitting crime.
5.	2.	In an attempt to impress their matriarch, this acolyte stole fossilized eggs from The Leviathan Steppe, awakening the ghost of a prehistoric and unknowable creature. This spectre threatens the entire city.
6.	2.	This spice merchant somehow stolen a tangleroot heart from The Valley of Quoz. A hired alchemist had been breaking it down for sale but mistakenly created a deadly pollen-borne pathogen with their chemical meddling. Now the merchant is unwittingly spreading a disease that could wipe out the whole city.
1.	3.	This warlock seeks to slay the White Ramel of Iboru, the liver of which contains a substance known as the Bile of Fear. Only the X'nak mystics know the ritual that takes this fluid and makes it possible for use in beguiling their enemies in feelings of anxiety and doom.
2.	3.	This young and naive prowler seeks to impress the guild master with the mounted head of the Beryl River Togere. Unfortunately, they lack any skill in tracking or the ways of the wilds and are in dire need of help, lest they become the lion's next meal.
3.	3.	This hunter is the heir apparent of their family. Only the ceremonial Steppe Lion hunt remains. However, they have been cursed for failure by a X'nak warlock, a secret they have hidden. The hunter must deal with this curse before the ceremony, or they will surely die.
4.	3.	With their skif wrapped in the cured entrails of the Great Desert Roboga, this pirate would show their dominance of the dunes. They will travel to the City of Masks to find how they might fell this beast.
5.	3.	The Spider-Masters always hunger for more delicious wealth. This acolyte's tower has tasked them with finding a Dasarisan and learning locations of ancient treasures. The acolyte anxiously scours Byzaron for anyone who could help them track and hunt the beast.
6.	3.	A handsome contract from none other than the twin rulers of Noxtolar has landed on this fakwon's desk. The requested: a Caldera Crawler scent gland. The problem: this merchant has no hunting experience. They are rapidly seeking a mercenary team to take on the job.

PEOPLE**The Coin Roads Plot Hooks**

Background Roll	Motivation Roll	Plot Hooks
1.	4.	This warlock seeks to plunder the horde of Lukkor, The High Deceiver of the X'nak, and flee with their family to the Crescent Sea. They are willing to cut in any skilled thieves to aid in the plan.
2.	4.	This young thief seeks to make their family extremely wealthy by stealing the jewel-encrusted mask adorning the statue of The Seer of all Realities in the center of Ksamath. This is a score that many have tried, and those that tried were never heard from again.
3.	4.	This hunter's prey is the Argent Python, a massive serpent that is said to slither through the Caverns of the Silver god. It's plate-sized silver scales would fetch enough money to support this hunter's family for generations to come.
4.	4.	This pirate knows of a convoy heading from Byzaron to Kaimanu. The cargo is to be skulls made of diamond. Hitting the Toog convoy quickly and getting out of there could set up this pirate and their family for life.
5.	4.	This acolyte's Matriarch wants them to convince the Gnorthaq to leave the Alabaster Maze, and come work exclusively for her tower. In return, the Matriarch will share her riches with the acolyte. The Gnorthaq are notoriously difficult to communicate with.
6.	4.	This spice merchant has one last chance to pay off their gambling debt and support their family. They know of an extremely rare spice, the Kalabka Nut, that grows exclusively in The Yielding Plain. Now they must gather the courage to enter that cursed place.
1.	5.	This young X'nakian is obsessed with collecting the teeth of Torach, or at least what they believe are the teeth of Torach. Only his right molar remains, buried somewhere in The Valley of Quoz, where the great warlord ended his terrible reign
2.	5.	This thief has been systematically stealing every plate and piece of silverware from a wealthy merchant that slighted a friend of theirs. Only one butterknife remains, but the merchant is on high alert. The thief will need fellow experts to pull off the butterknife heist.
3.	5.	This hunter has been weaving a necklace made of Lava Clam pearls, and needs one more to finish the sting. The clams can usually be found on the jungle floor, but due to a change in weather, they have swam down into the Subterranean Caldera.
4.	5.	With an obsession for collecting the earrings of famous dust pirates of yore, this young brigand sets out to find one last pair. The famous pirate in question is Kamil the Quick, who was last seen trying to sneak into the Time Gardens of Lariyan, but never came back
5.	5.	As an attempt to impress their tower, this acolyte has assembled a meal of the finest minted coins from across the world. All that remains are the twin coins worn on the foreheads of the Twin Rulers of Noxtolar.
6.	5.	This Fakwon is obsessed with the fragrance line of a famous, and now deceased, Byzaron perfumer. The last bottle of her perfume is in the hands of a ruthless guild master, who is not willing to sell. The Fakwon is in search of mercenaries to steal it and has even employed a skilled alchemist to create a clever replica.

PEOPLE

The Coin Roads Plot Hooks

Background Roll	Motivation Roll	Plot Hooks
1.	6.	This warlock seeks to summon and bind an otherworldly patron named Ong for fame and power. They will travel to the Wall of the Star Kings to wail the name of this lion-faced entity to call him from the beyond. Even if successfully called, these beings do not take kindly to attempted bindings.
2.	6.	This prowler wishes to pull off the heist that so many have tried, and died in trying. To steal the Eye of The Bat, Uxar's greatest treasure, from the tower that bears its name.
3.	6.	Against common sense and the law, this hunter wishes to travel far afield to the Beryl Scale. Their prey is the Oxodalocus, a rare golden Carnivorous Monitor that is said to bask in the pools of the Subterranean Caldera.
4.	6.	This pirate wishes to be remembered for leading the raid to end all raids, to pass the Glyph Gate and sack the city of Noxtolar. First they will need to unite the pirate bands if they are to stand a chance.
5.	6.	In a city of secrets, espionage is valued above almost everything else. This acolyte wishes to bring down the southeasterly windcatcher tower, staging a conflict between the spiders of the city. The average person will never know their name, but those who matter will.
6.	6.	This spice merchant wishes to open the gates of Noxtolar to foreign trade, with him being the first to make an offer on items from the royal trove. This would be the first time in history anyone has been able to purchase from the twin rulers but it will take some delicate diplomacy or expert subterfuge.

PEOPLE

Following are a series of NPC generators and plot hook matrices for them. Roll for each NPC column separately. Each set is divided by the geographical regions established in the Places section.

The Crescent Sea NPCs

	Background	Motivation	Unique Trait
1.	Necropolis Monk	Desires to discover the secrets of the Invisible Library of Malazar	They have a glass eye who can see people's auras.
2.	Time Garden Dweller	Preserve the time flower which holds the memories of the world.	They can identify multiple timelines and where they connect.
3.	Makata (poet)	Produce work-immortal.	Conducts debate through poetry and rhyming verse (balagtasán)
4.	Suitor/Suittress	Prove one's worth to their prospective spouse's family.	Earns dowry through service to spouse's family for one year.
5.	Datu (chieftain)	Rule over chaotic polity.	Insight honed to a razor's edge.
6.	One-in-Between	Keep peace in the Islands. by balancing disparate forces.	Favored, yet outcast, in Island society; magician.

The Crescent Sea Plot Hooks

Background Roll	Motivation Roll	Plot Hook
1.	1.	Having acquired a map that supposedly shows a secret entrance to the Invisible Library of Malazar, they are seeking a group of like-hearted individuals to break into this legendary place. But the forbidden tomes are all theirs.
2.	1.	Seeking to escape the grips of the Time Garden on their life, they seek an entrance to the Invisible Library of Malazar to break the ancient sorcery of the place and become finally free.
3.	1.	Having never been recognized for their writing talents, they want to find the secret poems of the Tongueless Poets of legend to plagiarize their work and finally achieve fame.
4.	1.	In an effort to reduce the tension between the houses of themselves and their betrothed, they want to find out the secrets of sorcery to make the lands of their people fertile again so both houses remain in their territories.
5.	1.	Having had their island kingdom taken by a rival chieftain, they seek the halls of the Invisible Library of Malazar to discover the ancient powers and pacts their lineage is rumored to have with sinister creatures from beyond.
6.	1.	Hearing about the ancient rituals that kept peace for millennia in the past, they desire to enter the Invisible Library of Malazar to rediscover them to save their land.

PEOPLE**The Crescent Sea Plot Hooks**

Background Roll	Motivation Roll	Plot Hook
1.	2.	As the time flower is dying, they seek other courageous people to venture deeper into the Necropolis to find the Soil of a Thousand Deaths to plant it in, so it will live forever.
2.	2.	As a member of the Chromatic Expressionists, this Garden dweller believes that the Time Flower's influence is wasted on a society in stasis. They wish to liberate the flower to Barbasdu, where the memories may be praised in real time.
3.	2.	This makata believes that the best way to preserve and spread the flower's knowledge is through poetry. They have a massive manuscript written, but need a wealthy benefactor to publish it. They will tour the great cities of the world to find one.
4.	2.	To prove themselves worthy of marriage, they were assigned a quest to recover the flower and keep it from falling in the wrong hands.
5.	2.	Seeking the wisdom of past rulers, they plan on consuming a tea made with the flower to absorb all the knowledge and insight they need to be the leader their people need, preserving these memories in their bloodline.
6.	2.	Foreseeing a bloody war due to many seeking the same flower, they wish to steal it from the garden and hide it in a secret vault below The Acropolis.
1.	3.	They have a connection to the spirits of ancient masters and want to immortalize this wisdom in scriptures that will last a thousand lifetimes. Their fellow monks however, feel this would be heresy.
2.	3.	This gardener's landscaped arrangements are so perfect they mesmerize the viewer with their beauty. Though they all seem to befall some strange accelerated pocket of time after completion. The gardener must find the source of this curse.
3.	3.	Every writer wishes to have their work enshrined in the everlasting Invisible Library of Malazar, and this makata is no different. But the journey to the library is treacherous, and it's secrets are often deadly.
4.	3.	Once they have married into the chieftain's family they will forge a new nation that will last a thousand lifetimes. Unfortunately they plan to do this at the tip of a spear and bring about untold suffering.
5.	3.	Knowing they are soon to pass from this realm they want only to codify their law so that their people may rule themselves with justice, courage, wisdom and love. Only a stone from The Acropolis would be suitable for such work.
6.	3.	They are negotiating a treaty between two nations that have been at war for as long as anyone can remember. Supernatural forces are trying to sabotage their efforts.
1.	4.	They have renounced their vows and left the monastery on a quest to recover the long lost sunken relic of their loved one's family. They believe the dreams they are having will guide them to it.
2.	4.	Even though forbidden to do so by the rules of the garden, they will steal the rare and life giving fruits of the Golden Tree to give them as gifts to their betrothed's family.

PEOPLE**The Crescent Sea Plot Hooks**

Background Roll	Motivation Roll	Plot Hooks
3.	4.	Being unable to impress their prospective spouse's family, they have decided the best dowry will be the fins of a Hunter Terois. Though they won't admit it, they will need help catching the dangerous creature.
4.	4.	In a desperate attempt to gain the favor of the person they love, the suitor will challenge their island's greatest warrior for a seat at their leader's council. This bullheaded move is likely to only get them killed.
5.	4.	This ruler has fallen in love with an infamous pirate. Now they must escape their leadership responsibilities and pretend to know the seas in order to impress them.
6.	4.	In love with the offspring of a Datu, they seek to give up their powers in order to prove it. However, this could spell doom for the kingdoms.
1.	5.	Having seen visions of what the future holds for their people, they left the Necropolis to aid their community and lead them into a better future, following the teaching of their order.
2.	5.	After eating the seeds of wisdom from the ancient trees of the garden, they believe they are the only one capable of ruling their community in a way to save them from a catastrophic future.
3.	5.	Unable to seize power directly, but always hungry for control, they use their writings to manipulate the populace. Soon the kingdom will fall completely to their influence.
4.	5.	Long ago their family was exiled to the sea. Now, after decades, they are sneaking back in, seducing and manipulating their way back up. Those responsible for their downfall will soon suffer dire consequences.
5.	5.	This chieftain has been dethroned by a cunning and charismatic pirate lord. They will pay anything to gain control of their lands again.
6.	5.	Having spent a lifetime so close to power but never in control they have lost their way. Now they use their position to play rivals against one another and solidify their influence. Soon it will be too late.
1.	6.	They seek hidden knowledge of their order to keep opposing Datu's in check, sometimes working with or against them.
2.	6.	They believe events in the garden are connected to life on the islands. When a tree died and was rotting, a great plague savaged the islands and only after it was removed, the plague was cured. They seek to further the harmony of this connection for the good of everyone.
3.	6.	After decades studying the magical power of words and songs, they are obsessed with crafting the perfect poem that soothes the spirit and unifies souls, so that peace can finally come to the Crescent Sea. Now they seek only the inspiration for such a piece.
4.	6.	They have no love for their future spouse, but have been told marriage is the only way to seal an alliance that will secure peace. They know there must be another way to unite their people.
5.	6.	After decades of seeing the people of the sea fighting one another and becoming weaker against outside threats, they decided to seek another way. They wish to find the hero who will unite their people as one.
6.	6.	The elements rage unchecked across the Crescent Sea. Only this One-In-Between has the power to calm them, but they are gone, kidnapped. They must be found before more destruction is wrought.

PEOPLE

Following are a series of NPC generators and plot hook matrices for them. Roll for each NPC column separately. Each set is divided by the geographical regions established in the Places section.

The Great Glacier NPCs

	Background	Motivation	Unique Trait
1.	Barbasdian Pilgrim	Obsessed with getting their deity to the best shrine in Barbasdu	Bears the scars of a magical calamity
2.	Idol Stonecrafter	Refuses to pay the Amaranthine Dream Tithe	They can actually talk to stone.
3.	Larfarian Swordsmith	Uncover the mysteries of the Valley of Frozen Pilgrims	They can feel threatening events before they happen.
4.	Tifawin Warrior	Avenge the death of their mentor, killed by their former friend.	They can survive with very little even in the coldest weather.
5.	Amaranthine Sorcerer	Discover the secret of life after death in The Crawling Glacier.	They can see glimpses of the future in the boreas.
6.	Mammoth Herder	Find the whereabouts of their partner and children.	Half of their face is constantly covered in ice crystals.

The Great Glacier Plot Hooks

Background Roll	Motivation Roll	Plot Hook
1.	1.	Having unearthed the idol from The Crawling Glacier, this determined pilgrim makes the long walk to Barbasdu with it tied to their back. They have come to make friends with the idol, talking to voices that others cannot hear.
2.	1.	The perfect image of divinity came to them in a dream and it came with a name. Vrakathni, Queen of the Plains! This stonemason is maniacally determined to carve the mammoth-headed vision into the great shrines of Barbasdu, laws be damned.
3.	1.	The Larfarrians believe great souls may reside in the bronze of a blade, and this swordsmith is determined to cast a deity into their weapon. The only material suitable for the job is rumored to lie deep in the Caverns of the Silver God.
4.	1.	This honorable warrior has been barred twice from the great shrine and now from the city itself. They plan to infiltrate the shrine by cover of night, across the rooftops of Barbasdu, to enshrine their deity.
5.	1.	This sorcerer is not content with placing their deity in the high house of Barbasdu, they wish to make the priests of the shrine believe in the idol's greatness as well. The sorcerer will infiltrate their dreams and take their minds.
6.	1.	Haunted by dreams of a mammoth-headed deity taller than the Great Glacier, they now believe the shrines of Barbasdu to be the rightful grazing ground of the magnificent beasts. These woolly giants will be mounted and ridden to the gates of the city to take their rightful home.

PEOPLE**The Great Glacier Plot Hooks**

Background Roll	Motivation Roll	Plot Hook
1.	2.	This pilgrims deity considers the dream tithe to be anathema. They attempt to hide away from the Dream Stalkers by sleeping in loud or tumultuous places, so their shorter rests don't give the creatures time to find them.
2.	2.	After years of being hunted by Dream Stalkers, this stonemason has come across ancient knowledge they believe will nullify The Dreaming God's power. It resides in the stones of the Alabaster Maze. They mean to journey there at great expense so they may be once more free to dream.
3.	2.	This Lafarian has little interest in finding tricks around the dream tithe. They want to take more direct, more permanent, action. They will make the Amaranthine Sorcerers intimately familiar with the edge of their blade.
4.	2.	This warrior was captured by Amaranthe soldiers after a defeat on The Sunset Sea. They were brought to The Amaranthine City but escaped before being forced to pay the tithe. Now they are on the run, trying to get back home.
5.	2.	This sorcerer sits on the Council of Chaldeans. A radical among their peers, this sorcerer seeks to undermine their dreaming patron. To do this they must steal the Warp & Weft, the fabric of all dreams, and rend it asunder.
6.	2.	This herder's tribe has a parable detailing how, of all the mighty creatures, only the mammoth is free to dream. This herder seeks to be reborn as one, and finally free their mind. It is said the sorcerer who sits atop the Tower of the Bat knows this ancient ritual of transformation.
1.	3.	As many have before them, these pilgrims embark across the tundra to receive celestial visions. This particular excursion is well funded and is offering good coin to make sure they return safely.
2.	3.	Legends say the mystic lights above the valley are the faces of great gods. This crazed idol maker must see them and commit their shape to stone, whatever the cost.
3.	3.	The swordsmith believes a rare substance called Star Metal fell from the sky into the valley and desires it for their craft. Little do they know that this substance is actually a piece of an ancient creature.
4.	3.	With their tribe under threat, this warrior seeks an advantage from the Gods. They believe there is sacred knowledge in the snow-swept, star speckled valley, but only for those with the endurance to learn it. This Tifawin knows they have such endurance.
5.	3.	This upstart sorcerer wishes to impress the Council of Chaldeans. Their mission is to steal the powers of that valley's gods for their patron. They will call down the dancing lights and catch them in a mystic crystal.
6.	3.	The words of the wind and rumble of the mammoth's march once filled The Valley and it's people with life and strength. The herder believes the spirits of old are still there, and they know how to push back the glacier's advance before it's too late.

PEOPLE**The Great Glacier Plot Hooks**

Background Roll	Motivation Roll	Plot Hooks
1.	4.	The worship of Kalmektu has always been niche. This pilgrim was part of her 10 known devotees. The elder was killed by their friend in a drunken argument, and Kalmektu's idol was stolen. This pilgrim will face the perils of the Frostfire Peaks to return the idol, and exact revenge against their former friend.
2.	4.	Tough times led this stonemason's business partner to steal the work of their former teacher. Whether the killing was intentional or not, it doesn't matter. This stonemason must journey to the Alabaster Maze and seek out the Gnorthaq grandmaster who taught their teacher so that they might rebuild the school.
3.	4.	Doubt was cast over the leadership of the Sterkar Crucible, and the Old Smith was usurped and killed. In an attempt to halt a civil war from breaking out in the mountains, this journeyman smelter must confront the usurper, their brother, and set right what has been made wrong.
4.	4.	Convinced they have been tricked by sorcery, they seek their former friend to understand what happened. They are obliged to avenge their mentor's death but will not believe it was their friend without evidence.
5.	4.	Two magical proteges coveted their teacher's power, but one crossed the line when they committed murder to obtain it. To cover their crime they imprisoned the innocent student in the dream realm. Now the trapped young sorcerer searches the dreams of others for aid.
6.	4.	This herder's sister has killed the family matriarch and driven the herd south to the Leviathan Stepe in search of more fertile grazing land. This was an un-honorable killing and the herder seeks to convince the hoard of their sibling's treachery, peacefully or not.
1.	5.	Miasmic visions from the Glacier have invaded this pilgrim's mind, convincing them of a powerful God trapped in the ice. If they can bore through the permafrost and free the God, they will be given eternal life.
2.	5.	While many see the Glacier as a source of impending doom, this idol crafter sees a great canvas with which to honor their God. They will carve a colossal effigy, and gain the knowledge of its divine spirit.
3.	5.	Lafarians believe that a soul can be cast into a blade. This particular smith believes that ore harvested from beneath the permafrost can render that soul indestructible. Against the beliefs and wishes of their Crucible, they seek to mount the ice wall and mine their immortality.
4.	5.	Exiled from their tribe for a minor indiscretion, this warrior wanders the world seeking a new faith. They believe living, and surviving, on the Great Glacier will prove their strength and endurance to the God under the ice, and will grant them a life beyond this one.
5.	5.	The cabal of Amaranthine Sorcerers seek their lost member, who they last divined deep within the glacier, attempting to steal secrets from a god. No doubt the mage suffers in the clutches of Zuthaggwa's servants.
6.	5.	The remains of ancient matriarchal mammoths are trapped deep in tunnels beneath the Glacier. This herder wishes to brave the icy tunnels to commune with the spirits of the mammoths so they may learn the truth of their reincarnation.

PEOPLE

The Great Glacier Plot Hooks

Background Roll	Motivation Roll	Plot Hooks
1.	6.	This pilgrim shunned all other aspects of their life to follow a prophet. A prophet they have recently learned was false. They now seek to reconnect with their family in The Sunset Sea, but the only adequate guide home is an old, cantankerous Tifawin that demands more than he is worth.
2.	6.	This stonemason lost their family tragically. They believe crafting effigies of them from stone of The Alabaster Maze may let them commune with them once more. If only once more.
3.	6.	This Larfarian's family was taken in a brigand raid. Tracks of the raiding party lead towards Byzaron. This Larfarian marches towards Byzaron with the intent, and bronze, unexpected in the City of Spiders.
4.	6.	After years fighting others' battles as a mercenary, they returned home to find their loved ones gone and in their place only a coin with a strange symbol. Now they wander the land in search of answers.
5.	6.	The Dreaming God has gone too far! The spirits of this mage's family have been taken beyond the veil while they dreamed. Now the sorcerer will do anything to reunite the minds and bodies of their kin.
6.	6.	This herder's husband and son entered the Amaranthine City to seek help for their tribe against Larfarian raiders. They have been gone too long. The herder has resigned to brave the twisting city of crystal and dream to find their family.



PEOPLE

Following are a series of NPC generators and plot hook matrices for them. Roll for each NPC column separately. Each set is divided by the geographical regions established in the Places section.

The Verdant Basin NPCs

	Background	Motivation	Unique Trait
1.	Noxtolarian Exile	Prove their innocence before their people	Painted in the sigils of an otherworldly patron
2.	Saurian Herder	Find the remains of the First Egg	Can imitate almost any sound with their voice
3.	Orchid Singer	Find their long lost sibling	They can identify any type of flower and fruit without difficulty
4.	Jungle Guide	Knows a terrible secret that may put them in great danger	They can understand saurian beasts and sense their presence.
5.	Royal Curator	Find the legendary masks of The God Speakers	Their face is covered in symbols and arcane characters.
6.	Basking Cultist	Sabotage their rival's efforts.	They seem to never blink and their eyes express no emotion.

The Verdant Basin Plot Hooks

Background Roll	Motivation Roll	Plot Hook
1.	1.	This Noxtolarian was framed for the robbery of a bronze idol. They know the real perpetrators were a small band of thieves that camp outside of the Beryl Scale. They must return the idol if they are ever to enter their home again.
2.	1.	After being wrongly accused of cattle raiding by the council of Ixtaml, this herder must journey into the Subterranean Caldera and procure a Monitor egg as penance. They are not expected to survive this ordeal.
3.	1.	This singer has been accused by the Cattleya Choir of "betraying the melody," leading to acres of orchids succumbing to blight. They must meditate and pray before the Wall of the Star Kings in the hope of getting their melody back.
4.	1.	The Beryl Guide Guild has framed this guide for the death of several notable Barbasduin pilgrims who were never under their watch. They seek to infiltrate the guild's archives to deliver proof of their innocence.
5.	1.	This curator was psychically tricked into buying a false gem from the spiders of Byzaron. Upon presenting the gem to the nobility, they were shamed. The rulers suggested they would forgive this insult if the curator were to procure a beating heart from a Bronze Giant that guards the Pylons of Prophecy.
6.	1.	This cultist's jilted ex-lover has accused them of worshipping the Moon King. To prove their loyalty, they must climb to the top of smouldering Mt. Kirmak in the Frostfire Peaks and retrieve a perfect sunbleached opal.

PEOPLE**The Verdant Basin Plot Hooks**

Background Roll	Motivation Roll	Plot Hook
1.	2.	Seeking to return to their city and family, they must bring back an item of extreme value. They have heard rumors that the remains of The First Egg are guarded by ancient blind saurians in a collapsed temple deep in the jungle. If this exile could steal it, they would be welcomed back.
2.	2.	After being cursed by a warlock, this herder has a permanent psychic link with their herd. And the herd thinks of one thing, loudly, "egg. Egg. EGG! EGG!" So in an attempt to save their sanity, the herder and herd travel deep into the Beryl Scale to possibly find the nest of the First Egg.
3.	2.	The shell of the First Egg is said to resonate in a divinely perfect tone. If this singer could find the Egg hidden in the Beryl jungle, and study it's pitch, their grove would grow stronger and more resilient.
4.	2.	After becoming greatly inebriated in the Noxtolarian pleasure-domes, this guide has agreed to a lucrative, but delusional quest from a noble: to find the First Egg. They will guide the princeling into the Yaxa swamp in hopes the noble will get sick and die.
5.	2.	After ample research, this curator has reason to believe the First Egg's remains are in a lost branch of the Noxtolarian Vaults. The curator wishes to hire a crack team of infiltrators, as the protections and protectors of the lost parts of the Vault are deadly and unknown.
6.	2.	The cult believes the First Egg was the old sun that bathed the world, and when it cracked it gave birth to the Saurians. This cultists endeavours to find what remains of the Egg in the calderas of the jungle and bring it back to their family.
1.	3.	This exile seeks the Horn of Ozomatica, a magical item that amplifies the voice of it's user a hundred fold. They will use it to call over the guarded walls of Noxtolar, so that their sister will know they are alive.
2.	3.	This herder's sister, an explorer and scholar, was researching the Pylons of Prophecy when something went wrong. The herder knows that if they can meet face to face, she will shake off whatever force possesses her, but first she must be found deep in the jungle.
3.	3.	Singers of the orchard born as twins share a harmonic bond with their siblings. This singer's twin was captured by raiders off the coast of the Crescent Sea when they were children. They now travel the coast, endlessly singing a dirge for which they hope to find the harmony
4.	3.	This guide's brother, a fellow explorer, long ago took a group to the Wall of the Star Kings, where they all disappeared in a blinding green light that filled the night sky. Years later, this guide has seen the green lights in the sky again, and travels to the wall in search of their brother.
5.	3.	This curator has come across a curious magical item that captures the speaker's voice. They are looking to hire a group of infiltrators to take their message to the Time Gardens of Lariyan and find their sister, and play her the message begging her to return.
6.	3.	A familial split early in this cultist's life led to their brother being taken to the Cult of Black Skies, mortal enemies of the Basking Cultists. Now an adult, this cultist seeks to enter enemy territory and find his brother at any cost.

PEOPLE**The Verdant Basin Plot Hooks**

Background Roll	Motivation Roll	Plot Hooks
1.	4.	This former royal guard knows that The Twin Rulers of Noxtolar are not real. They are an elaborate illusion created by a pair of magical coins. This truth could lead to the collapse of the city from within.
2.	4.	This herder knows that a great disease is about to spread among the saurians, potentially wiping them out and destroying the delicate ecosystem of the Beryl Scale. What's more, this herder knows the disease is man-made, and comes from the City of Masks.
3.	4.	This singer knows that there is a Byzaronian plot to take over the Valley of Quoz, and that the newly seated First Voice is working on the side of the spiders.
4.	4.	This guide knows that because of the meddling of X'nakian warlocks, the caldera will soon violently erupt. This eruption could destroy the jungle and blacken the sky for years.
5.	4.	This curator knows that The Glyph Gate's protective magic is dying and cannot be restored. What's more, they know exactly when it will happen. While the twin rulers believe them to be mad there are many forces who would kill for this information.
6.	4.	This cultist knows from unearthed ancient tablets that the god the Cult of Black Skies wishes to usher into this world is not a benevolent deity as they believe, but a horrific power from beyond that was locked away by the Star Kings.
1.	5.	It is said that only the God Speakers may pass the Glyph Gate of Noxtolar uninvited. This exile intends to find the truth of that by braving the Subterranean Caldera in search of their masks so the exile may return home.
2.	5.	Some cults believe that the saurians were the first creatures to walk the world, and it was the God Speakers who ushered them here. This herder thinks that if they control the masks, they can control all saurians. They will travel to the Walls of the Star Kings to try and decipher the locations of the masks.
3.	5.	This singer was taught about The First Choir, called God Speakers in other lands. They sang the valley to life long ago, but their ways have been lost. This singer wishes to seek out their masks, hidden somewhere in the valley of Quoz
4.	5.	This guide has been hired by a group of Barbasduin pilgrims who believe the God Speakers were, in fact, gods themselves. The guide has been hired to take them to the Pylons of Prophecy so the pilgrims may divine the location of the masks and take them back to their holy city.
5.	5.	The masks have long been sought by curators, and this curator thinks they have tracked them down. The seat of an ancient king has been unearthed deep in The City of Masks. This curator seeks to hire discrete and fast moving operators to retrieve the masks before anyone else finds them.
6.	5.	This cultist believes that the God Speakers may be resurrected using their masks, and the Speakers will lead the cult to the next world. This cultist has heard that the masks are being hidden away in The Valley of Quoz, which they will attempt to infiltrate.

PEOPLE**The Verdant Basin Plot Hooks**

Background Roll	Motivation Roll	Plot Hooks
1.	6.	This exile's former business partner, and fellow exile, has obtained a blank re-entry pass to the city. If only they could sneak into his camp nearby and take it for themselves.
2.	6.	This herder's rival has finally bred Leptosauri that can sustain flight above the canopy. A monopoly on these transport beasts would destroy this herder's business. They seek to infiltrate the rival's breeding pen, and destroy the eggs in a way that looks like a predator ate them.
3.	6.	This singer has been trying to become the Lead Voice of the Cattleya Choir their whole lives, and their rival is about to take that position instead. This singer seeks to covertly poison their rival's tea with Tafoukt venom, burning out their vocal chords.
4.	6.	This guide's rival has secured a lucrative contract to bring wealthy Noxtolarians to the Wall of the Star Kings. Before they embark, this guide wants to smear Laxtaki musk on the rival's clothes in an effort to make the pack animals wild and drive off the rival, allowing the guide to swoop in and take the contract.
5.	6.	This curator's rival has found primary source documents detailing the construction of The Glyph Gate, information once thought lost. This curator wishes "something unfortunate" to happen to the rival before they return to the city, and is willing to pay handsomely for that wish to come true
6.	6.	The Cult of Black Skies are attempting to summon the Moon King in the Yaxa Swamp. This cultist has procured a sealed jar containing Red Mist from Uxar and wishes to unleash this terrible death upon the ritualist, but once unleashed it is unclear how such a beast could be stopped.

THE GOD IN SILVER



The eyes opened, and their gaze was flame.

It was quick thinking and a shield of crimson hue that spared the life of Millaketh the barbarian. She turned the lancing beam that was the creature's vision back upon it, but while saving the warrior from harm it did little but shower sparks across her enemies broad frame. It advanced, shifting limbs of living opal. Seeming to determine it could not fell her with it's scalding sight, the otherwise expressionless killer lifted a pair of hooked blades, each larger than it's target.

That was when Millaketh heard the weird phrases of Evogh behind her as he held aloft his serpent fanged dagger. From his moving lips poured a noxious vapour, that curled across the antediluvian corridor and wrapped around the mighty beast they fought. It's hide seemed to corrode and crack as the mist seeped into every pore. Before the monster could reach Millaketh it fell to dust, undone by sorcery.

Millaketh recalled how she nearly left the sorcerer to drown at the mercy of the Red Mists. Now she was glad she had overlooked the strange man's penchant for the mystic arts. This was not the first time his craft had saved them. Though a shiver still crossed her spine when he spoke of his ultimate quest; to study at the feet of the ill-whispered AZAG, who dwells beyond the Walls of the Star Kings.

"Here Millaketh, my servant has read the way to the inner sanctum" gestured Evogh. He was listening again to his dagger, which held some foul familiar pulled forth from the netherworld and bond in the ornate blade. He looked at her, then back at the knife and his face flushed.

"Does your fiend blade mock me, again?" growled the warrior.

"If the Larfarian's wit was any duller, it would be not unlike a millstone!" whispered a voice that only the magician could discern.

"No, it speaks of other things" lied Evogh. He was not convincing.

They crawled onward, plumbing the depths of the hitherto unexplored cavern. It's entrance had been exposed following a freak lightning strike just north of the cliff carved dwellings of Barbasdu. That holy city had taken the lightning as prophecy and offered payment for its exploration in golden Byzarian rings. The possibility of otherworldly forces at work did not give our adventurers pause. After all, the Barbasdu marked most things as prophecy.

The mortared stone gave easily to the barbarian's thews. Upon entering, a torch revealed a bizarre and unearthly sight. The walls and steps of this subterranean amphitheater were carved with sets of parallel lines that divided at hard angles. All seemed to emanate from the bottommost center, over which hovered a perfectly smooth silver orb about a human's height off the ground and nearly as large in diameter.

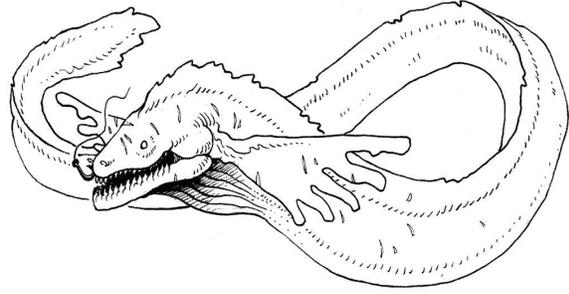
What's more, it seemed to...react to the intruder's presence. The sphere's surface rippled like mercury and called out from across the ages. It's voice was like thunder and the room shook. No doubt this thing could bring the catacomb down upon them if it wished. It's tongue was too old for either delver to understand, but the demon blade did. As Evogh looked up at Millaketh with some mixture of horror and fascination he translated:

"It demands freedom"

MONSTERS

There are many strange, terrifying, and wondrous creatures in the known world. In this section you will find a sampling of them. Each includes information useful both in *Combat* and *Social Encounters*. Note that for Monsters and NPCs there is no *Luck Stat*. When necessary they *Test Skill* instead. If any would cast a spell they use their *Skill* as a *Threshold* and can spend *Stamina* at the GMs discretion. Monsters have *Disposition* tables unique to them, indicating how they will act in various situations depending on their temperament. Some will never be kind to the players, no matter how much they are coaxed, while others do so more easily than most people. Finally, some monsters will have a number in parenthesis next to their damage value. This is the number of times they can deal damage in a single round.

Bronze Giant
Caldera Crawler
Carnivorous Monitor
Dasarian
Dream Stalker
Duck-Billed Ophidian
Herbivorous Antherodon
Hunter Terois
Night Jackal
Opal Guardian
Orchid of Quoz
Pterosaur
Red Mist
Restless Dead
Spider-Master of Byzaron
Tafoukt Scorpion
Vengeful Spirit
Weeping Ghost
Winged Eel
Zuthaqqwa's Essence



MONSTERS

Bronze Giant

I have traveled deep into the steaming jungles to read the painted arches of destiny. There I was denied by those cursed servitors of the old dynasty. Their heads caught among the bows even as their tears watered the roots. Many call them tyrants, and it is true that a sweep of their fist can destroy, but I pity them greatly. Never have I beheld a creature of such sorrow as one that knows fate and can do nothing to change it.

Skill: 6
Stamina: 40
Armor: 1d8
Damage: 2d12
Size: Huge

Disposition:

1. Resentful
2. Bitter
3. Brooding
4. Sorrowful
5. Wistful
6. Obtuse

- **Metal Body, Living Heart** - While their bodies are made of metal, within beats the heart of a human. It makes them sentimental and forlorn. It can also be pierced to fell the titan. An adventurer can *Test Luck* to search for the latch to access this heart but it is a difficult task on such a massive creature, not to mention The Giant will likely be trying to throw them off its body.

- **Bound by Prophecy** - The Giants guard the Pylons of Prophecy as decreed by the last emperor. They cannot leave as they have read the stones and seen that they never do. Whether this is some trick or a true fate is the subject of much discussion among magi.

MONSTERS

Caldera Crawler

The caldera's underbelly was a series of countless lava-borne borrows, ascending a mile at a glance. Voon was midway through considering the strength of their climbing accessories when a low croaking groan shook the cavern. Emerging from a nearby shaft was a gargantuan beast of glistening coils, multi-jointed legs, and uncertain movements. It raised its wide-set snout and inhaled the sweet smelling vapors that drifted from the central primordial pool before letting loose a somehow louder bellow. Voon decided now was the best time to vacate the chamber.

Disposition:

Skill: 5	1. Hackled
Stamina: 40	2. Cagey
Armor: 1d10	3. Guarding
Damage: 3d6+2	4. Patrolling
Size: Huge	5. Unsure
	6. Soaking

- **Steam Spewer** - Crawler's spend most of their leisure time wading in the hot springs of the caldera. This heats their bodies to the point that they can release a sulfurous blast which corrodes ordinary metal. If they do so, any character close to the beast must *Test Luck* with a failure meaning one of their metal items is now destroyed.

- **Fiercely Territorial** - Being that they subsist mostly on a diet of the small crustaceans from the pools, these large creatures are not usually hostile to people. However, they defend their spawning grounds with a terrible rage. Given how big these creatures are their egg pools tend to encompass large areas and are easy to stumble upon, and difficult to escape.

Carnivorous Monitor

We were somewhere near The Caldera entrance when they set upon us. Three lizards as big as carts. Our X'naki wizard summoned up a cloak of shadows over us and for a moment I thought we were safe. The creatures just stood stock still, those wicked tongues darting in and out, waving around. Then without even looking one lunged forward and took off the mage's arm.

Disposition:

Skill: 8	1. Enraged
Stamina: 20	2. Cornered
Armor: 1d6	3. Prowling
Damage: 2d6 (2)	4. Cautious
Size: Large	5. Indifferent
	6. Basking

- **Smell Fear** - When attempting to hide or interact with The Monitor, players must *Test Luck*, or *Willpower* to maintain their composure. On a failure the lizard smells the fear on this character and attacks.

- **Potent Venom** - Venom sacks beneath The Monitor's teeth deliver a powerful toxin upon a successful bite. Once in the victim's system it causes them to bleed easily, adding an extra 1d6 to any applicable damage until the end of the play session.

MONSTERS

Dasarisan

The titan lizard twisted its long neck toward Sebile, horns pointing in accusation. How terrible it is to be the sole focus of such a creature's attention. Locked in a gaze, she felt herself slip into strange eons within the depths of its eyes. Memories of times so alien she barely recognized her world. Calling upon the discipline in which she had trained, Sebile tore herself from the mental link. From the corner of her vision she saw the dragon was weeping. It too had remembered.

Skill: 8
Stamina: 45
Armor: 1d10
Damage: 2d10+4
Size: Huge

Disposition:

1. Desolate
2. Reclusive
3. Irritable
4. Inscrutable
5. Forlorn
6. Sagely

- **Freezing Poison** - The claws of The Dasarisan constantly drip a fluorescent bluish liquid that serves as a potent venom. If it enters the body of a healthy creature their blood will quickly begin to freeze. They must *Test Luck* or *Constitution* to avoid being completely immobilized. Further, every round they are not exposed to heat they lose 1d6 *Stamina*. Notably, if this venom enters a creature afflicted with an ailment, magical or earthly, it will be removed with no negative side effects.

- **Ancient Intellect** - No one is sure how old The Dasarisan is, as there are no records predating it. Many ancient beings spend their time bartering their knowledge to mortals but this elder lizard is an exception. It angrily wishes to be left alone and does not talk, but in rare cases it has chosen to share its memories with another. This is accomplished through direct eye contact. The receiver must *Test Luck* or *Willpower* with a failure halving their total *Luck* score. On a success however the GM will impart any one piece of information the player desires that this being would know. Secrets of history, spells, or whatever seems appropriate.

Dream Stalker

Every time I close my eyes I see it. At first it's something else, some other thing from waking life that it wears like a mask. A disguise that slips when it gets close, as its pupils constrict to slits and its craws protract. The pain will end, it hisses, if you return to The Amaranthine City and pay the tithe to The Dreaming God. Oh how I pray that is true.

Disposition:

Skill: 12
Stamina: 12
Armor: 1d12
Damage: 1d12+2 (3)
Size: Medium

1. Focused
2. Driven
3. Distracted
4. Confused
5. Blurred
6. Ephemeral

- **Nightmare Visitor** - The Stalker only exists in dreams. Unless it has been ordered to kill, it will often play with its prey, battling them within an inch of their life. These wounds appear on the waking body and allow for no recovery of *Stamina* between *Adventures* or *Sessions*, if applicable.

- **Dream Curse** - This creature cannot be destroyed by normal means. It can be defeated in the dream but will simply return upon the next sleeping. The only way to rid the sleeper of this monster is to fulfill the task it asks, or destroy whomever commands it.

MONSTERS

Duck-Billed Ophidian

They'll buck, but that's just because this herd hasn't been tamed for riding yet. Don't worry, it's no different from any other two legged saurian. Well...except the fire breathing.

	Disposition:
Skill: 4	1. Aggressive
Stamina: 6	2. Spooked
Armor: 0	3. Listless
Damage: 1d4 (2)	4. Calm
Size: Large	5. Dependable
	6. Affectionate

- **Desert Mounts** - Unlike most saurians, these Ophidians are native to The Sunset Sea and subsist mostly on smaller insects. The Tifawin train them as mounts because of their speed, ability to completely avoid overheating in the desert sun, and perfect sense of direction.

- **Fire Breathing** - When threatened or commanded these Ophidians can ignite the desert air with their curious beaks and belch forth a powerful flame. The fire can extend to anything in front of and nearby the Ophidian to deal 2d12 damage and can be halved by a *Test of Luck* or *Reflexes*. Unfortunately it is not a reliable talent, with the chances of the animal performing it only 1 in 6 when attempted.

Herbivorous Antherodon

I've got some desert antherodons, they've got the clay colored back fin. Or maybe you're interested in a coastal one. Those webbed feet are for paddling through the shallows while it grazes on kelp. They're all good-tempered, there's really go bad way to go with this saurian.

	Disposition:
Skill: 4	1. Ill-tempered
Stamina: 20	2. Grumpy
Armor: 1d6	3. Mischievous
Damage: 1d8	4. Peaceful
Size: Large	5. Sympathetic
	6. Kind

- **Taste Emotions** - While off-putting to some, the large three-pronged tongue of The Antherodon serves a variety of useful functions. Most commonly used to wet the creature's eyes it can also allow them to gain an insight into the feelings of whatever it comes into contact with. When a character is licked by an Antherodon the saurian's disposition will change depending on how the character feels toward it. Friendly emotions are met positively while hostility is the opposite. This also makes it nearly impossible to mislead one that has tasted you.

- **Pack Animal** - Antherodons are the most heavily domesticated animal in the world. A favorite among merchants for their ability to haul goods across long distances. Herders shepherding packs of these gentle giants can be found all over.

MONSTERS

Hunter Terois

Do not go swimming in the far reefs. Down in that weightless underworld it lurks, beautiful stripes catching shards of sun like the coral cave in which it dwells. The Hunter will come upon you too quickly, with fins like spears and wanting jaws. In an instant you will be gone, to swim among the reefs forever.

	Disposition:
Skill: 6	1. Eating
Stamina: 25	2. Hunting
Armor: 1d4	3. Lurking
Damage: 2d8	4. Calculating
Size: Large	5. Dismissing
	6. Sleeping

- **Paralytic Toxin** - The spines that cover The Terois contain an extremely potent venom. When a living creature comes in contact with the fish they must *Test Luck* or *Constitution*. On a failure their body goes rigid. After a few minutes they begin to be able to move again, but with difficulty until the end of the session.

- **Swallow Whole** - Typically, after The Terois has immobilized any *Medium*-sized prey, it simply eats them in a single bite. All it needs is a successful attack to ingest the victim. Its trouble is holding the creature inside. Assuming they can move, any attack from within is not only uncontested but has a 1 in 4 chance of causing the victim to be belched up. Damage from the stomach acid is much the same as The Terois' normal damage, happens every round, and is quite unavoidable.

Night Jackal

Three bats hang from the edge of my bed, laughing laughing til they're fed.

Two bats hang from the edge of my bed, whispering secrets in my head.

One bat hangs from the edge of my bed, now I know when I'll be dead.

- *Childrens' Rhyme*

	Disposition:
Skill: 3	1. Terrified
Stamina: 5	2. Startled
Armor: 0	3. Wary
Damage: 1d4	4. Interested
Size: Small	5. Comfortable
	6. Joyval

- **Flying Pests** - The Jackals love to roost in old buildings in heavily populated areas, where they can beg and whine for fruit. They call to each other in a sound not unlike human laughter, which tends to keep residents up at night.

- **Secret Whisperers** - Wives' tales say that Jackals will tell the future of those who befriend them. While it is true that Jackals will mimic speech to "converse" with those they are comfortable with, they only have a 1 in 6 chance of having any cryptic precognitive powers.

MONSTERS

Opal Guardian

Though it is itself a tempting treasure, look to what is beyond the body of the gemstone man. They were built in ages long past by the gods of earth and air, to keep the secrets of their power and jail the memories of their folly.

	Disposition:
Skill: 10	1. Combative
Stamina: 20	2. Hawkish
Armor: 1d8	3. Martial
Damage: 3d4 (2)	4. Stalwart
Size: Large	5. Respectful
	6. Servile

- **Endless Protectors** - Each guardian was created from mystic gemstones for a single purpose. Being that they are not alive in the traditional sense, they do not age nor they require food or sleep. They simply stand ready to perform their function. Though they are far from mindless. After all, they need to understand what they're doing.

- **Burning Gaze** - In addition to sophisticated combat training and any metal weapons The Guardian may possess, it also employs a powerful beam attack from its polished eyes. This beam acts as a *Ranged Attack* and assuming it deals damage the target is set aflame. They will continue to take 2d6 damage every round until a successful *Luck Test*, *Reflexes Test*, or significant amount of water.

Orchid of Quoz

The Valley has a defense better than any fortified wall. After all, what is more effective; to keep one's enemies at bay, or to remove their vicious intent altogether?

	Disposition:
Skill: 10	1. Dissonant
Stamina: 4	2. Wilting
Armor: 0	3. Taut
Damage: 0	4. Harmonious
Size: Small	5. Caring
	6. Sweet

- **Nature Guardians** - These orchids grow in the magical soil of The Valley of Quoz. It is their home, and being that they possess a sagely intellect, they seek to protect it. Travelers can converse with the plants by gently touching their petals and conveying their thoughts. They then receive an emotion in response.

- **Song of Peace** - When threatened or worried for their home, these plants will vibrate their leaves and stalks in a way that generates beautiful melodic tones. So beautiful they will calm intruders and leave them feeling as though any plan to cause harm to the valley is deeply immoral. This change of perspective can only be prevented or reversed with powerful magic.

MONSTERS

Pterosaur

Milaketh followed the flight of the saurians for three days. At first she thought they were headed toward Noxtolar as is many of kin's want. However, this flock veered into the jungle and dropped down among a basalt ruin. This had to be the place the sword had awakened.

Disposition:

Skill: 6	1. Ferocious
Stamina: 10	2. Ornery
Armor: 1d4	3. Mean
Damage: 1d8 (2)	4. Loud
Size: Medium	5. Jittery
	6. Flighty

- **Sky Masters** - These winged saurians are powerful aerial predators. They subsist on a diet or whatever they can carry back to their nests, from lesser lizards to small children. So skilled are they in flight that any attacks they make from the air are *Unopposed* as they are able to tear at their target and swoop away so quickly.

- **Drawn to Magic** - Through so aberration of evolution, or perhaps magical tampering, the Pterosaur can unconsciously sense magic. They literally flock to it, particularly magical items which they like to take and adorn their nests.

Red Mist

We doubled back along the plain. Kept to the high crags and only moved with the wind. Yet somehow it was always there, just ahead, creeping across the path. All our attempts to go around it wore out the party, then just as we would stop to rest, the mist was there. It knew, don't ask me how, but it knew. That crimson demon, waiting for us to be too tired to escape, so it could kill us slow, like it wanted.

Disposition:

Skill: 12	1. Insatiable
Stamina: Special	2. Greedy
Armor: 0	3. Violent
Damage: 2d8	4. Malevolent
Size: Large	5. Enigmatic
	6. Intimidated

- **Gaseous Form** - Being that The Mist is...mist, physical attacks have no effect on it. However, when any spell is cast or magical effect present while close or in the creature it finds it difficult to hold its form together. In this case The Mist must *Test Skill* every round or be destroyed, with additional magic effects modifying this roll by *1 Step* each. Many have attributed a wicked intelligence to The Mist and as such it often can be forced to flee through a show of mystical might.

- **Life Leech** - The mist's primary source of nourishment is to drain the moisture from living beings. It does this by entering their body through the respiratory system. This is often described as feeling as if the victim is drowning.

MONSTERS

Restless Dead

Do not interrupt the sages as they move about the still battlefield. They are more important than all the generals put together for they make sure the dead stay beyond the veil. I have seen the hubris of armies that do not observe the custom of their slain foes. They are victorious at sunset and butchered by dawn.

	Disposition:
Skill: 4	1. Unhearing
Stamina: 14	2. Resolute
Armor: 1d4	3. Certain
Damage: 2d4	4. Slow
Size: Medium	5. Confused
	6. Pleading

- **Improper Burial** - These poor people either died with no burial, were buried in a way unacceptable to their customs, were disturbed from their rest, or called back by evil magic. In any case, even if they are defeated in battle, they will simply rise again on the next moonrise if the circumstances of their waking are unresolved. Alternatively they could be utterly destroyed until nothing but dust remains, but this has a 1 in 6 chance of imposing a curse devised by the GM.
- **Delusions of Time** - Their minds are greatly fogged from crossing the netherworld. It is difficult for them to understand what is happening around them but they mostly assume that they are still alive and act in the function they did in life.

Spider-Master of Byzaron

Each transaction within the walls of Byzaron must have no less than ten percent of final value delivered to one of the great wind towers within the moon. These offerings of wealth shall be left at the base of the structure. You are not to enter the towers or attempt contact with the masters at any time. - Spider Acolyte Decree

	Disposition:
Skill: 8	1. Punitive
Stamina: 18	2. Commanding
Armor: 1d4	3. Nefarious
Damage: 3d6 (4)	4. Enigmatic
Size: Large	5. Transactional
	6. Uninvolved

- **Psychic Watchers** - Anyone within the walls of Byzaron rightly fears its reclusive overlords, though few understand the depths of their power. These spider-like creatures monitor the minds of everyone in their domain. Without a way to block their magic anyone fighting the spiders is at a significant negative modifier to anything they do. In addition, these creatures deal their damage by lashing their opponent's mind rather than flesh, which cannot be reduced by armor.
- **Wealth Devourers** - Unlike most living things, these arachnids subsist on a diet of precious metals. Their gluttonous appetites are why they tax their citizenry so heavily.

MONSTERS

Tafoukt Scorpion

I'm telling you, we were crossing the desert on our way to Barbasdu when this huge insect burst out of the earth! It killed our extra mount before I could even unsheath my sword. Then it...screamed at us? Whatever it did the burning was so intense I passed out. When I came to it was gone with a few more of our livestock. What? No, I didn't just burn my hand in a fire to cover up for losing your merchandise!

	Disposition:
Skill: 10	1. Sneaking
Stamina: 12	2. Vocal
Armor: 1d6	3. Uncertain
Damage: 1d12 (3)	4. Skittish
Size: Large	5. Burrowing
	6. Grooming

- **Stealthy Killers** - These Scorpions typically bury themselves in the red sands of their home and lie in wait for the vibrations of prey above. Then they leap from the ground and attack. When characters are near such a hiding place the GM *Tests* their *Luck* or *Awareness* in secret. On a success they notice the creature and on a failure the creature may attack unopposed and deal maximum damage.

- **Unearthly Shriek** - The chitter of The Scorpion has a strange supernatural power. The sound waves it emits rapidly heat any metal they come into contact with. Assuming that such items are not dropped or removed, they will burn for 1d6 *Stamina* each round for several minutes.

Vengeful Spirit

Return what you have stolen. *Rasped the fakwon as his head lolled to the side. His hands gripped the wooden table between them and it split. The prowler took a step backward, confused as to what had happened to his business partner. The eyes of the fakwon bulged even as they rolled back into his head. The prowler gripped his recently acquired ruby tighter, realizing what this was about.*

	Disposition:
Skill: 10	1. Furious
Stamina: Special	2. Demanding
Armor: 0	3. Irritated
Damage: Special	4. Edgy
Size: Medium	5. Rational
	6. Benevolent

- **Intangible Possessors** - Spirits can only interact with the mortal world in a limited number of ways, such as making noise or moving objects with the force of a strong wind. They become threatening however when they possess an NPC, creature, or other non-player entity. They act with the statistics of the possessed except they use The Spirit's *Skill Stat* and *Disposition*. Additionally, they make physical related rolls with a positive modifier. If the possessed is killed the spirit will take until the next sunrise to find a new body. They can also be banished from the body, but only if a ritual approved by the GM is completed.

- **Unfinished Business** - Spirits act in the mortal world not because they wish to but because they are forced to. They must satisfy whatever obligation binds them. Perhaps that is to fulfill a vow they made in life or they have been summoned by magic. Fixing the root cause of why they are here is the only way to be rid of them.

MONSTERS

Weeping Ghost

The gibbering thing crawled forth from the shadows of the far wall. Groping towards the warrior with a mass of suctioned, overly-jointed, and blubbery fingers. All the while its wide toothy mouth cried out in the voice of the dead merchant. Her half eaten body slumped in the monster's hiding place.

	Disposition:
Skill: 8	1. Cruel
Stamina: 18	2. Spiteful
Armor: 1d12	3. Murderous
Damage: 3d4+3	4. Hateful
Size: Medium	5. Hungry
	6. Afraid

- **Clever Imitators**- Anyone who is unlucky enough to be eaten by this loathsome monster is doubly cursed. Thereafter The Ghost can speak with the voice of that individual. Though the creature is not particularly smart, it does understand that the sounds of a person in distress bring more victims running to its hiding place.

- **Sorcerous Creations** - Weeping Ghosts are not born so much as they are made by a series of esoteric rituals involving large albino toads. As such, magic has strange effects on their bodies. Not only is it more potent, with any dice involved modified against the creature, but also having a 2 in 4 chance of triggering a *Magical Calamity* on the creature after they have been affected.

Winged Eel

Yes! You got one! Young too, you can tell by the length of the head fins! Wait...No! Don't look directly at it! The eel's body'll catch the light when it twists! Damn...you let it go...now what are we gonna eat?

	Disposition:
Skill: 6	1. Vicious
Stamina: 8	2. Turbulent
Armor: 0	3. Darting
Damage: 1d8 (2)	4. Evasive
Size: Medium	5. Retreating
	6. Cowering

- **Scintillating Colors** - In order to escape predators The Eel can flex certain muscles that capture ambient light, split it into a multitude of colors, and reflect it at anything near the creature. This light can be startling but not harmful, rather, it's color attracts other predatory oceanic life. There is a 1 in 4 chance that something much bigger will be fast approaching.

- **Agile Swimmer** - The slim snaking form of The Eel is nearly impossible to catch in its native habitat. If this creature attempts to flee or maneuver itself in the water, it does so with a significant modifier.

MONSTERS

Zuthaggwa's Essence

I reeled as my blow rebounded off the squat statuette. All at once the bulbous eyes and broad grin of the repugnant face began to weep a viscous black fluid. It pooled in impossible amounts upon the floor. Then it began to move. Churning and writhing as it pulled itself up in flowing shapes. Multitudes of segmented limbs formed to support its ever expanding bulk. It seemed to sense me, sloshing in my direction.

Disposition:

Skill: 10	1. Ravenous
Stamina: 34	2. Starved
Armor: 1d10	3. Peckish
Damage: Special	4. Inquisitive
Size: Varies	5. Placid
	6. Satiated

- **Adaptable Mass** - The Essence can reform and shape its oozing bulk in whatever way fits its current situation. Allowing it to hunt prey through any environment or obstacle.

- **Engulf and Consume** - Its mindlessness is broken only by a sporadic need to feed. When anything living comes into contact with The Essence it must *Test Luck* or *Reflexes*. On a success they avoid the beast but on a failure they are stuck and begin to be engulfed, immediately losing half their current *Stamina*. On the following round they may *Test Luck* or *Strength* to escape. On a success their total *Stamina* is reduced by 3 and they lose a body part, but otherwise escape. On a failure they are consumed utterly.

THE KNOWN WORLD

