

SONG  
OF THE  
BEAST  
GODS



LEGEND COMPATIBLE

# SONG OF THE BEAST GODS

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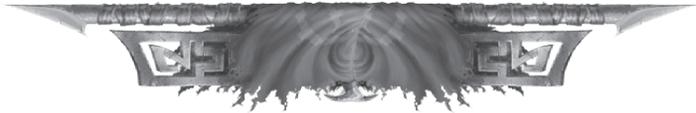
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# INTRODUCTION



*'Strange hybrids walked the earth when it was young; gigantic, lumbering creatures -- half-beast, half-man. Human imagination alone did not create the gigantic serpent Set, carnivorous Bubastis, and great Osiris. I thought of Thoth, and tales of harpies; thought of jackal-headed Anubis and the legend of werewolves.'*

— Robert Bloch: The Secret of Sebek

The land of Yar-Ammon is old, and even older are its gods. From the dawn of time, when bands of hunter-gatherers roamed the land, men and women shared a sacred bond with the beasts they hunted. The primal people bowed before colossal statues of wild beasts, and the priests of Yar-Ammon wore animal masks in imitation of their gods. Each beast had its own cult; each city its own idol.

In the city of Khadis, where the hyena was sacred, the Great Red Sphinx was placated every year with offerings of treasure and blood. The people heaped silver and gold at the feet of the sphinx and feasted on the intoxicating wines prepared by the priests. And then the drunken revelers fell upon the city's criminals and prisoners of war and hurled them over the city walls to the hyena packs waiting below.

But things are different today. Before his death two and twenty years ago, the High King of Yar-Ammon instituted the worship of an (until then) unknown god, called the First One, and known variously as Zothur, Zoth-Ur, or Xoth-Ur. Taking the title of Kingpriest and Prophet of the First One, the king sent his new priests from Amenti to all the lesser cities of the land, and demanded that the old ways of beast-worship be abandoned.

The emissaries of the Kingpriest were not well received everywhere, but in Khadis, the petty king Akhtesh had recently lost his queen while she was giving birth to Nathifa, the second of the king's daughters. Akhtesh meekly accepted the Kingpriest's decrees, as announced by the sinister priests of Zothur: As a sign of his will to break with the old ways, Akhtesh was forced to exile the priests of the hyena-cult, deface the Great Red Sphinx, and sacrifice his oldest daughter, Nekhtra, who had been groomed to become high priestess of the hyena-cult since early childhood.

But the king's chief steward, Hykshah, was a secret priest of the hyena-cult. He dressed up a slave-girl as Nekhtra and handed her over to suffer death at the hands of the priests of Zothur, while the real princess was taken into the desert and left in the care of a tribe of wild nomads.

## RECENT EVENTS

Princess Nathifa, who grew up under the tutelage of the priests of Zothur, never learned that she had an older sister. That is, not until now, twenty-two years later, when her father, King Akhtesh, has grown old and is suffering from dementia. Nathifa is preparing to become Queen when she hears certain rumors. She secretly sends her handmaidens into the desert to investigate.

However, other schemes are coming to fruition. For at this time, Nekhtra has secretly returned to Khadis after two decades of hiding in the desert. Together with Hykshah and a group of palace guards who are loyal to the hyena-cult, Nekhtra takes her sister captive and impersonates her. The old and demented king does not notice the difference, and Hykshah and his loyal men ensure that the men and women of the court are kept in the dark.

But Nekhtra's plan is far more sinister than simply taking the power behind the throne in Khadis. When the stars are right, Nekhtra and Hykshah plan to sacrifice Nathifa in a sorcerous ritual called the Song of the Beast-Gods, which will transform Hykshah and his loyal men into monstrous beast-men, and Nekhtra herself into an abominable hybrid between woman and hyena. With her new power and legions of beast-men, the new queen of Khadis will usher in a new age of beast-worship in all of Yar-Ammon.



### THE SONG OF THE BEAST-GODS

The ritual known as the Song of the Beast-Gods must be performed on a night when the stars are favourable, by one caster and one or more assistants. A human sacrifice must be provided for each of the participants.

The caster lights incense, and chants a series of guttural barks while slitting the throats of the sacrifices with an iron knife. At the completion of the ritual, as the caster succeeds on a Hard Lore (Beast Gods) test, each participant touches the body of a sacrifice and draws the life-force out of him, gaining 5 temporary Hit Points and +1 Armour per location.

As that effect fades, a more significant transformation affects the participant: Each assistant becomes a beast-man of Khadis (see page 40), while the caster undergoes a painful transformation into a true monster. In the case of the hyena-cult, the resulting hybrid creature is a mix of both humanoid and animal features, with a hyena head and lower torso of a human; other beast-cults know the secrets of transforming into other monsters equivalent to minotaur's, harpies, medusas, and others. Any spellcasting ability is retained in the new form, as well as any other special abilities.



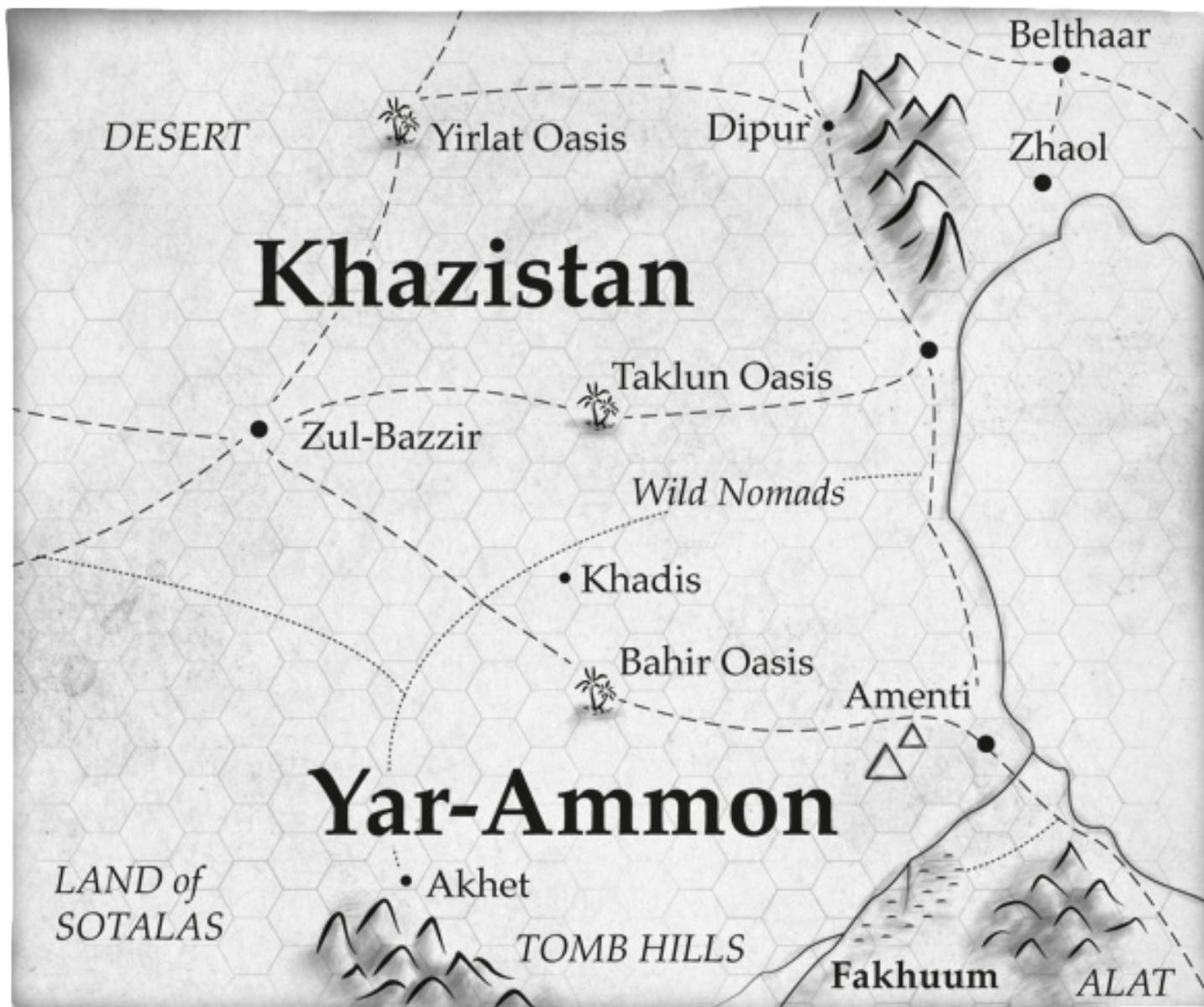
## THE SETTING

The adventure takes place in the World of Xoth, an original sword and sorcery setting inspired in part by Howard's Hyboria, Smith's Zothique, Leiber's Nehwon, Carter's Lemuria, Saunders' Nyumbani, and the Wilderlands from Judges Guild.

Visit <http://xoth.net/blog> for more information about the setting, additional rules and guidelines, and links to even more material.

## A WORD TO THE WISE

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



# STARTING THE ADVENTURE



The adventure begins when the Player Characters are resting at an oasis in the deserts of Yar-Ammon. A band of slavers arrive at the oasis with a group of female captives, including the beautiful Anat. Hykshah has learned that Nathifa's handmaidens have left the city and has arranged for them to be captured by a band of foreign slavers

## STANDARD MAP FEATURES

**Scale:** Unless otherwise noted, each square on the gridded maps equals 5 by 5 feet.

**Orientation:** All maps are oriented north (top) to south (bottom).

## THE OASIS OF TAKLUN

The Taklun oasis is situated on the dusty caravan road between grand Khazabad and the desert city of Zul-Bazzir. South of the oasis is the land of the Khazraj tribes, wild and unpredictable nomads who roam the deserts between Khazistan and Yar-Ammon. Their loyalties are constantly shifting.

The oasis itself is small but quite lush, with dense ranks of palm trees surrounding a small lake a few hundred feet across. There are no permanent settlements here; travellers usually just pitch their camel-hair tents in makeshift camps for a few days before they move on. Wild beasts may also come here, attracted by the lake-water.

## DESERTS OF YAR-AMMON

**Climate:** Very Hot

**Terrain:** Desert

### Random Encounters (roll d20)

1. Border guards
2. Sandstorm
3. Hyena pack
4. Bandits
5. Village or nomad camp
6. Khazraj (wild nomads, opposed to central authority)
7. Priests with entourage (determine cult randomly)
8. Noble with entourage
9. Abandoned camp
10. Scorpion
11. Poisonous snake
12. Corpse of man or beast
13. Animal herders
14. Caravan
15. Quicksand
16. Dying man or woman
17. Partially buried box with 200 SP inside.
18. Wrecked caravan
19. Sandblasted skeleton
20. Escaped criminals or slaves

## THE SLAVE CARAVAN

Use the following encounter to get the Player Characters involved with the events unfolding in the city of Khadis.

A fat merchant approaches the oasis of Taklun from the southeast with his camels, guards, and several female captives. This is Nallah, an agent of the notorious Slave Sultans of Al-Qazir. He has been secretly hired by Hykshah, steward of the king of Khadis, to track down and capture the handmaidens of princess Nathifa. Having accomplished the first part of his mission, Nallah is now on his way to dispose of his captives in the slave-markets beyond Zul-Bazzir, far away to the west.

## Nallah (Male Slave Merchant)

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

Combat Actions	3
Damage Modifier	+1D2
Magic Points	12
Movement	8m

*Armour:* None

*Traits:* None.

*Common Skills:* Athletics 47%, Brawn 56%, Culture (own) 98%, Dance 36%, Drive 41%, Evade 61%, Evaluate 86%, First Aid 28%, Influence 89%, Insight 69%, Lore (regional) 84%, Perception 76%, Persistence 64%, Resilience 64%, Ride 70%, Sing 44%, Sleight 69%, Stealth 71%, Swim 45%, Unarmed 51%

Strike Rank	+14
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*Advanced Skills:* Acrobatics 47%, Commerce 81%, Courtesy 71%, Gambling 70%, Language (native) 95%, Mechanisms 72%, Oratory 58%, Streetwise 68%

### Combat Styles

Tricky Knife (dagger, scimitar, net) 52%

### Weapons

Type	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Dagger	--	S	S	1D4+1 Bleed, Impale	6/8
Scimitar	--	M	M	1D8 Bleed	6/10

**Possessions:** Camel, scimitar, dagger, pouch with 150 SP, one dose of blue whinnis poison (see below).

**Description:** Surprisingly strong and agile for a person of his bulk.

**Tactics:** Attempts to attack from atop his camel, calls his guards, throws a poisoned dagger (use stats for Potent Snake Venom on page 85 of the *Legend Core Rulebook*). He is a coward at heart and if cornered he'll attempt to strike a deal (only to betray his allies later). He may also attempt to escape combat if hard pressed and near death.

## Nallah's Guards (4 Nomad Male Slavers)

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

**Combat Actions** 3 *Armour:* Light leather, -1 Armour Penalty

**Damage Modifier** +1D2

**Magic Points** 10 *Traits:* None

**Movement** 8m

**Strike Rank** +13(+12 when armoured)

*Common Skills:* Athletics 52%, Brawn 54%, Culture (own) 58%, Dance 24%, Drive 22%, Evade 59%, Evaluate 26%, First Aid 26%, Influence 24%, Insight 34%, Lore (regional) 78%, Perception 64%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 69%, Ride 32%, Sing 22%, Sleight 24%, Stealth 36%, Swim 27%, Unarmed 47%

*Advanced Skills:* Language (native) 76%, Lore (tactics) 68%, Streetwise 52%, Survival 62%, Track 56%

### Combat Styles

Slaver (scimitar, short bow, net) 67%

### Weapons

Type	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Net	--	S	L	1D4 Entangle	2/20
Scimitar	--	M	M	1D8 Bleed	6/10
Short Bow	80m	L	--	1D6 Impale	4/4

**Possessions:** Pouch with 8 SP, Short Bow, Scimitar, Net.

**Description:** Leather armoured guards of the caravan, armed with nets and scimitars. Rough looking and ready for a fight.

**Tactics:** They will harry foes with ranged attacks, attempting to use their nets to entangle if they can.

## Anat, Favoured of Nathifa (Female Handmaiden)

		<b>1D20</b>	<b>Hit Location</b>	<b>AP/HP</b>
<b>STR</b>	10	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
<b>CON</b>	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
<b>SIZ</b>	11	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
<b>INT</b>	12	10-12	Chest	-/7
<b>POW</b>	14	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
<b>DEX</b>	17	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
<b>CHA</b>	16	19-20	Head	-/5

<b>Combat Actions</b>	3
<b>Damage Modifier</b>	+0
<b>Magic Points</b>	14
<b>Movement</b>	8m

*Armour:* None

*Traits:* None

*Common Skills:* Athletics 57%, Brawn 26%, Culture (own) 84%, Dance 63%, Drive 27%, Evade 64%, Evaluate 68%, First Aid 29%, Influence 92%, Insight 56%, Lore (regional) 94%, Perception 81%, Persistence 73%, Resilience 69%, Ride 41%, Sing 70%, Sleight 88%, Stealth 89%, Swim 32%, Unarmed 37%

<b>Strike Rank</b>	+15
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*Advanced Skills:* Acrobatics 57%, Courtesy 58%, Disguise 68%, Language (native) 78%, Mechanisms 69%, Seduction 78%, Streetwise 70%

### Combat Styles

Dancing Knife (dagger, kukri, dart blade) 57%

### Weapons

Type	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Dagger	--	S	S	1D4+1 Bleed, Impale	6/8

**Possessions:** Pair of earrings (5 SP).

**Description:** Anat has a delicate nose, supple body and scented hair.

**Tactics:** Using eye contact, sign language and/or writing in the sand, she tries to get the Player Characters to help the women escape by defeating the slavers. If forced to fight she tries to rely on stealth and use her dagger.



## Handmaidens of Nathifa (3 Female Handmaidens)

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

<b>Combat Actions</b>	3
<b>Damage Modifier</b>	+0
<b>Magic Points</b>	10
<b>Movement</b>	8m

*Armour:* None

*Traits:* None

*Common Skills:* Athletics 45%, Brawn 21%, Culture (own) 75%, Dance 54%, Drive 25%, Evade 50%, Evaluate 54%, First Aid 25%, Influence 78%, Insight 52%, Lore (regional) 70%, Perception 62%, Persistence 49%, Resilience 44%, Ride 32%, Sing 41%, Sleight 54%, Stealth 50%, Swim 32%, Unarmed 30%

<b>Strike Rank</b>	+13
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*Advanced Skills:* Acrobatics 35%, Courtesy 54%, Disguise 44%, Language (native) 74%, Mechanisms 64%, Seduction 54%, Streetwise 59%

### Combat Styles

Maiden's Kiss (dagger, kukri) 50%

### Weapons

Type	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Dagger	--	S	S	1D4+1 Bleed, Impale	6/8

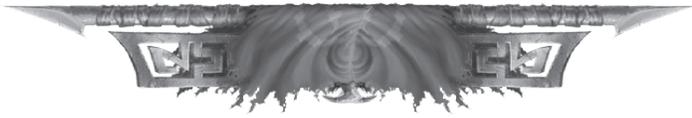
**Possessions:** Small earrings (5 SP)

**Description:** Scantly clad beautiful girls, they are all bound and gagged.

**Tactics:** If forced to fight they will go in for the kill with their daggers.

**Note:** The above assumes Anat and the handmaidens are armed, although they obviously lack weapons so long as they are captives of the slavers. Anat and the other handmaidens were sent on a mission by princess Nathifa of Khadis to discreetly investigate certain rumors among the Khazraj nomads. Disguised as dancing-girls, they sat on the laps of old desert sheikhs and heard the generation-old tale of a city girl who was delivered into the hands of the nomads. A night of pleasure, should they so desire, awaits the Player Characters if they are successful in freeing the handmaidens. However, Anat also explains that she is the servant of the royal princess of Khadis, a city not too far away, and that greater rewards await the Player Characters there.

# THE CITY OF KHADIS



The city of Khadis is located near the northern border of Yar-Ammon, close to the territory of the Khazraj nomads. Despite its modest size, the city-state has its own ruler who calls himself 'king', although he is in fact the subject of the High King of Yar-Ammon, who sits on the throne in Amenti.

Khadis is surrounded by a solid wall, 30 feet tall, with six great towers and two city gates. The following numbered locations are the main points of interest in the city.

## 1. South Gate

This is the main gate into the city. The caravan road goes south to the Bahir Oasis. Donkeys laden with handicrafts and pottery leave Khadis to return with cotton, papyrus and jewelry from Amenti. The gate is flanked by great pylons. There are always 12 guards on duty, commanded by a guard captain.

## 2. Processional Way

The paved street that leads into the city from the south gate is flanked by twin rows of weathered, headless sphinxes. Closer study of the large stone statues reveals that the giant bodies are those of hyenas, and that the heads appear to have been chipped off by chisels, rather than by weather and the ravages of time.

## 3. Market Square

Lively trade is conducted in the bazaars here, where everything from food to weapons and golden jewellery can be found. Coverings of cloth are suspended over the square to shield the merchants and the customers from the glare and heat of the sun. Along the edges of the square are several tall obelisks; one is painted with an image of a king and his daughter, another has a half-erased image of a sphinx surrounded by rich treasures.

## 4. The Faceless Sphinx

The grand square in front of the palace is dominated by a huge stone idol, 30 feet wide, 70 feet long, and 50 feet tall, in the shape of a sphinx. The body is sculpted in the shape of a hyena, with folded wings along its sides. But the most striking feature is its faceless head.

The people of Khadis, regardless of social standing, will be unwilling to speak about the sphinx and why it is faceless. A successful Routine Influence test might give the Player Characters some information, but the subject will certainly anger and irritate the wrong people if the Player Characters are asking around blindly.

Between the forelegs of the sphinx is a hidden doorway that can be discovered with a Difficult Perception test. The door is massive (8 in. thick; Armour 10; HP 70; Hard Brawn test to lift or break open). The passage beyond the door is protected by a freezing ward trap (which causes 2D6 points of damage per location) placed there by a now-dead cult priest; only members of the hyena-cult can pass here without triggering the trap. The corridor leads via a stairway to Area 12 in the vaults beneath the sphinx.

## 5. Royal Palace

The palace is located behind the inner city wall, which is 20 feet tall. The palace district is the exclusive domain of the king and his family, as well as courtiers, royal scribes, favoured merchants, palace guards, and servants. The palace is described in more detail in the next chapter.

## 6. Barracks

East of the palace compound, behind a separate inner wall, are the barracks of the city-state's armed forces. The commander, Kheraf, dwells in the great east tower connected to the city wall.

**Possessions:** Torch, manacles, rope and a pouch with 50 SP inside.

Also in this district is the city's well, which provides water to all its inhabitants. A constant stream of people comes here to fill their jars and amphorae with water during the day.

## 7. East Gate

The trail leads north and east, through the land of the wild Khazraj nomads, and then on to Khazabad, glittering capital city of Khazistan.

## THE CITY OF KHADIS

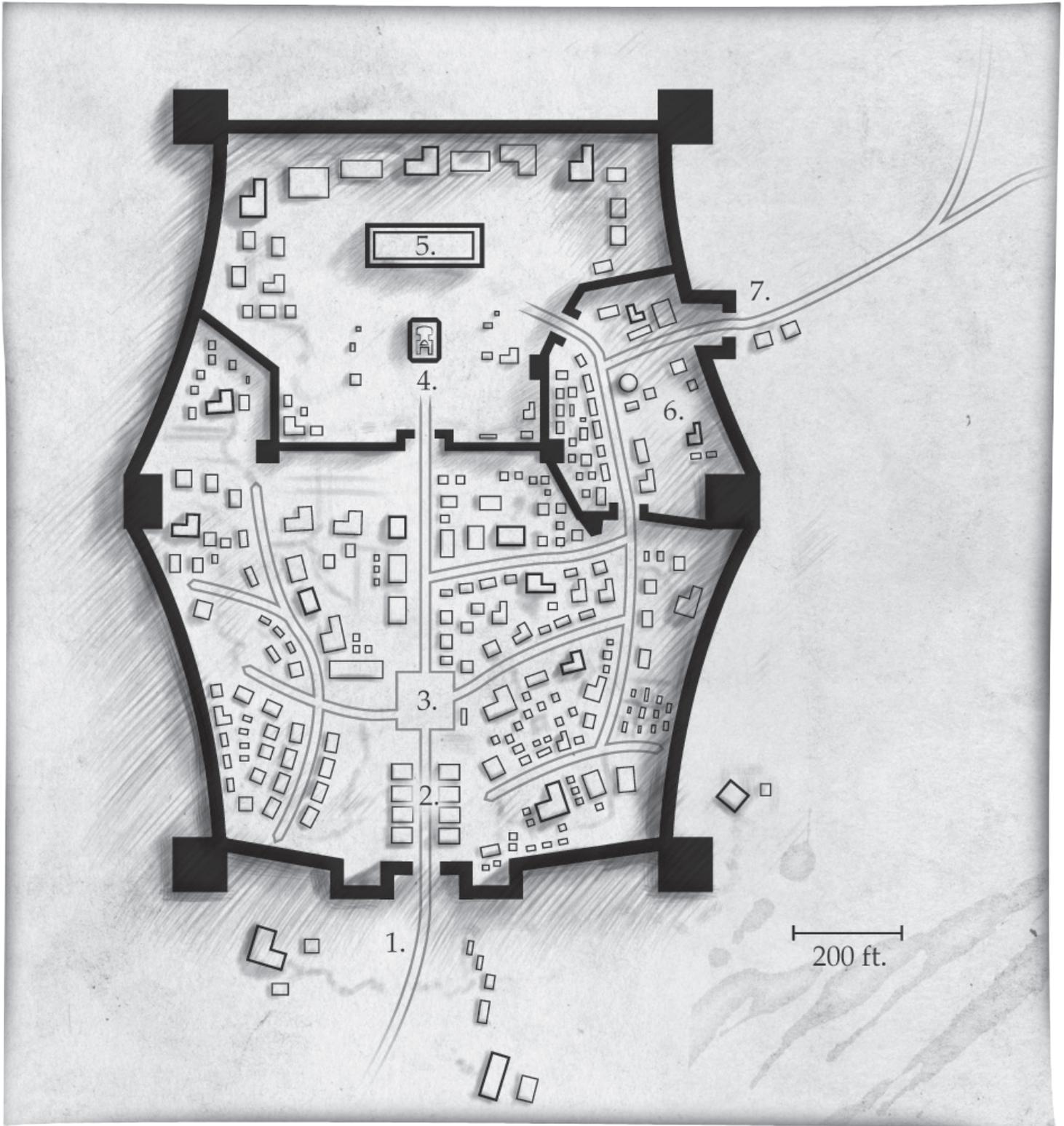
**Size:** Small City

**Population:** 8,000 (80% Yar-Ammonite, 15% Khazistani, 5% Other)

**Government:** Monarchy

**Armed Forces:** 400 light infantry, 150 camel-riders, and 50 palace guards.

**Notable NPCs:** King Akhtesh; Princess Nathifa; Hykshah, King's Chief Steward; Kheraf, Military Commander; Courtiers; Royal Scribes; Caravan Masters; Master Craftsmen; Anat, Nathifa's Handmaiden.



## City Guard Captain of Khadis (Male Guard Captain)

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	2/6
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	2/6
SIZ	15	7-9	Abdomen	2/7
INT	12	10-12	Chest	2/8
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	2/5
DEX	10	16-18	Left Arm	2/5
CHA	10	19-20	Head	-/6

**Combat Actions** 2 *Armour:* Hard leather, -3 Armour Penalty

**Damage Modifier** +1D4

**Magic Points** 11 *Traits:* None

**Movement** 8m

**Strike Rank** +11 (+8 when armoured)

*Common Skills:* Athletics 31%, Brawn 66%, Culture (own) 93%, Dance 20%, Drive 41%, Evade 60%, Evaluate 52%, First Aid 42%, Influence 80%, Insight 63%, Lore (regional) 84%, Perception 63%, Persistence 62%, Resilience 73%, Ride 41%, Sing 21%, Sleight 20%, Stealth 22%, Swim 30%, Unarmed 56%

*Advanced Skills:* Courtesy 42%, Language (native) 92%, Lore (tactics) 70%, Streetwise 76%, Track 81%

## Combat Styles

City Guard Captain of Khadis (Scimitar, Heavy Mace, Javelin, Mancatcher) 71%

## Weapons

Type	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Scimitar	--	M	M	1D8 Bleed	6/10
Heavy Mace	--	L	L	1D8+1 Stun Location, Sunder 1D10+1 (2H)	6/10
Javelin	30m	H	--	1D8 Impale, Pin Weapon (Shield)	3/8

**Possessions:** Manacles, hooded lantern, pouch with 12 SP inside.

**Description:** A rough looking bearded man with thick leather armour. He carries a scimitar and has wary eyes.

**Tactics:** Enemies are cut-down first, ask questions later. Lawbreakers are punished to the full extent of the cities laws, usually violently.

## City Guard of Khadis (12 Male Guards)

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

**Combat Actions** 2 *Armour:* Hard leather, -3 Armour Penalty

**Damage Modifier** +1D2

**Magic Points** 10 *Traits:* None

**Movement** 8m

**Strike Rank** +10 (+7 when armoured)

*Common Skills:* Athletics 34%, Brawn 47%, Culture (own) 80%, Dance 20%, Drive 20%, Evade 55%, Evaluate 50%, First Aid 30%, Influence 70%, Insight 50%, Lore (regional) 80%, Perception 50%, Persistence 59%, Resilience 59%, Ride 25%, Sing 20%, Sleight 20%, Stealth 20%, Swim 26%, Unarmed 29%

*Advanced Skills:* Courtesy 25%, Language (native) 80%, Lore (tactics) 50%, Streetwise 50%, Track 52%

## Combat Styles

City Guard of Khadis (scimitar, sword & shield, javelin) 64%

## Weapons

Type	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Scimitar	--	M	M	1D8 Bleed	6/10
Buckler	--	M	S	1D3	6/8
Javelin	30m	H	--	1D8 Impale, Pin Weapon (Shield)	3/8

**Possessions:** Rope, torch, pouch containing 2 SP.

**Description:** Tough looking men armoured in hard leather, carrying scimitars, javelins and shields.

**Tactics:** The guard attempt to backup their captain and move on his orders.

**Note:** South of the gate is a caravanserai building and stables for camels, donkeys and horses. The greedy proprietor charges 3 SP per night per visitor, and 1 SP per day for each animal placed in the stables.

## Kheraf, Military Commander

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

**Combat Actions** 2 *Armour:* Hard leather armour & steel breastplate, steel helm, -5 Armour Penalty

**Damage Modifier** +0

**Magic Points** 13

**Movement** 8m

*Traits:* None

**Strike Rank** +11 (+6 when armoured)

*Common Skills:* Athletics 22%, Brawn 78%, Culture (own) 94%, Dance 21%, Drive 23%, Evade 70%, Evaluate 53%, First Aid 22%, Influence 77%, Insight 70%, Lore (regional) 84%, Perception 72%, Persistence 76%, Resilience 85%, Ride 73%, Sing 24%, Sleight 21%, Stealth 22%, Swim 22%, Unarmed 62%

*Advanced Skills:* Courtesy 73%, Language (native) 93%, Lore (tactics) 90%, Oratory 79%, Streetwise 74%

### Combat Styles

Military Commander (khopesh, mancatcher, sword & shield) 85%

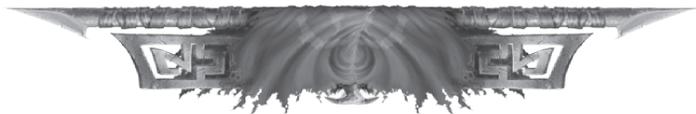
### Weapons

Type	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Khopesh	--	M	M	1D6+2 Bleed	3/10
Kite Shield	--	H	S	1D4	4/18

**Description:** Kheraf is middle-aged, with full mustache and beard, and cold eyes. He is loyal to the old king and averse to risk, and will not interfere in palace business without an extremely good reason.

**Tactics:** The captain is a canny warrior, he attempts to use his shield to intercept enemy attacks and hit hard with his khopesh.

# THE PALACE OF KHADIS



The royal palace is a huge building, 250 feet long and 100 feet wide, constructed from limestone. It has a single story aboveground, although there are dungeons and vaults beneath it.

**Standard Features:** Outer walls are 5-foot thick masonry walls. Inner walls are standard masonry walls. Unless noted otherwise, all the interior doors are 1 in. thick; Armour 4; HP 25, Difficult Brawn test to break down. Difficult Mechanisms test to open. The outer doors are reinforced doors, 2in. thick; Armour 6;HP 30, Hard Brawn test to break down. They have excellent locks which require a Hard Mechanisms test to open. The outer doors can also be barred with wooden bars (Difficult Brawn test to smash). The Ceiling height is 10 feet in all rooms except where noted.

**Lighting:** The rooms and corridors are lit with common lamps (normal illumination 15 ft.; increased 30 ft.; duration 6 hours/pint) placed at regular intervals. Servants take rounds through the palace refilling the lamp oil.

**Sounds and Odours:** The scents of perfumes, incense and food are mixed throughout the palace, and most areas are filled with background noise from people talking.

**Encounters:** Check occasionally for random encounters with palace staff or guests.

## I. Palace Gates

The main entrance to the palace is located on the west side of the building, where a set of heavy double doors is guarded by groups of elite warriors. Unless the palace guards are in a state of alarm, the gates are always open during the day. At night, the gates are always closed and barred shut from the inside.

## 2. Guard Rooms

A contingent of palace guards is always present here. There are five guards in each room, although at night half of them are sleeping, and two of these guards will be pacing around in Area 3. The rooms have arrow slits (granting improved cover to the guards behind it) opening up on the stairs in the main hall.

If the palace gates are attacked, the guards sound the alarm and take up position at the top of the stairs, while one guard remains behind in each chamber to fire ranged weapons through the arrow slits.

The guard captain sits at a small desk in Area 2A, unless he is escorting important visitors into the throne room, in which case he brings along two of his underlings.

## 3. Hall with Pool

This large, pleasant hall is decorated with green plants and sweet-smelling, brightly coloured flowers. A few wooden chairs are placed in the corners of the room. The pool in the centre is 15 feet deep and the water surface is dotted with lotus flowers.

Any creature that drinks of the sweet water gains the benefit of a *Channel Strength* spell (Page 179 of the *Legend Core Rulebook*), although this will only benefit a creature once per 24-hour period (and anyone caught quaffing from the king's pool is sure to attract a forceful response from the palace guards).

## 4. Secondary Entrance (North)

This entrance is used by guards and servants. The room is also used as a cloakroom where visitors to the palace leave their outer cloaks, as well as any weapons, before entering the throne room and the corridors beyond. Make a Routine Sleight test opposed by the guards' Perception in case any visitor wants to conceal a weapon (or other restricted item).

## 5. Armoury

This room has racks of weapons, mostly spears, and ammunition for ranged weapons (arrows and crossbow bolts). A few sets of scale mail are stored here as well; the guards may don them if they are alerted to trouble and have time to prepare. The guard captain carries the key to this room.

## 6. Secondary Entrance (South)

This room is similar to Area 4.

## 7. Storage

This large storage room contains shelves stacked with jars of lamp oil, spare pottery, and woollen blankets. Along the floor are crates of dried fruit and meat, huge sacks of grain, and huge amphorae filled with wine and ale. In one corner are three large bales of silk (worth 100 SP each) and a small hardwood box filled with sweet-smelling incense (worth 150 SP). The chief steward of the palace carries the key to this room.

## 8. Antechamber

This waiting room is furnished with several comfortable chairs and small wooden tables set with silver trays of fruit and cakes, and a small selection of beverages. A servant stands discreetly in each corner of the chamber.

The tall double doors leading to the throne room (Area 16) are carved with a large image of a robed king bowing before a (faceless) sphinx idol.

## Anur, Palace Guard Captain

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

<b>Combat Actions</b>	2
<b>Damage Modifier</b>	+1D4
<b>Magic Points</b>	10
<b>Movement</b>	8m

*Armour:* Chainmail and chain coif, -7 Armour Penalty

*Traits:* None

**Strike Rank** +11 (+4 when armoured)

*Common Skills:* Athletics 33%, Brawn 76%, Culture (own) 80%, Dance 22%, Drive 22%, Evade 69%, Evaluate 40%, First Aid 22%, Influence 70%, Insight 60%, Lore (regional) 80%, Perception 60%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 63%, Ride 42%, Sing 20%, Sleight 22%, Stealth 22%, Swim 30%, Unarmed 68%

*Advanced Skills:* Courtesy 40%, Language (native) 90%, Lore (tactics) 65%, Streetwise 45%

### Combat Styles

Palace Guard Captain (1H sword, sword & dagger, polearm) 68%

### Weapons

Type	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Falchion	--	M	M	1D6+2 Bleed	6/10

**Possessions:** Ornate belt pouch with 60 SP, ivory-hilted eating dagger, ceremonial armour (not worn) worth 110 SP.

**Description:** A serious eyed man with a look of grim determination about him. He wears a suit of full chainmail, with the palace guard tabard over it.

**Tactics:** The Palace Guard Captain wields his falchion with powerful attacks, striking at the most dangerous opponent first.

## Palace Guard of Khadis

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

<b>Combat Actions</b>	2
<b>Damage Modifier</b>	+1D2
<b>Magic Points</b>	10
<b>Movement</b>	8m

*Armour:* Chain shirt, hard leather helm, -5 Armour Penalty

*Traits:* None

*Common Skills:* Athletics 33%, Brawn 65%, Culture (own) 82%, Dance 22%, Drive 22%, Evade 57%, Evaluate 50%, First Aid 32%, Influence 60%, Insight 45%, Lore (regional) 81%, Perception 48%, Persistence 40%, Resilience 59%, Ride 32%, Sing 20%, Sleight 22%, Stealth 22%, Swim 28%, Unarmed 48%

<b>Strike Rank</b>	+11 (+6 when armoured)
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*Advanced Skills:* Courtesy 23%, Language (native) 85%, Lore (tactics) 46%, Streetwise 40%, Track 42%

## Combat Styles

Palace Guard of Khadis (scimitar, mancatcher) 67%

## Weapons

Type	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Scimitar	--	M	M	1D8 Bleed	6/10

**Possessions:** Manacles, torch, rope, 30% chance of 30 SP on their person.

**Description:** These men are clad in well kept chainmail shirts, with light clothing underneath. They usually carry scimitars though one or two are often armed with mancatchers to bring criminals down quickly.

**Tactics:** The Palace Guard follow the orders of their superior officers to the letter.

## 9. Corridors

Areas 9A and 9B are identical, each being a long and wide corridor, decorated with green plants. The flagstone floors are spotless and polished. Colourful wall paintings depict a long line of kings and queens. Hyenas are shown several places as proud protectors of the royal family, rather than as cowardly carrion-eaters.

## 10. Courtiers Lounge

Courtiers who attend the king's court frequently use this room to rest or work. It is equipped with a comfortable sofa, well-crafted chairs and a sturdy desk. There is a 50% chance of encountering a courtier here. Roll 1D8 to determine his current activity:

1. Sleeping on sofa, with jewellery and rings (worth 200 SP) deposited on desk
2. Beating a slave
3. Counting money (300 SP), possibly (25%) of foreign mint
4. Making love to a female (75%) or male (25%) servant
5. Writing a secret letter to a foreign power
6. Being blackmailed by another courtier
7. Drinking, and being loose-mouthed (50%) or aggressive (50%)
8. Studying a map

Note that some of these activities may also be overheard in the corridor outside with a Routine (if it is quiet) Perception test. If it's loud outside the door, then the test becomes Difficult.

## 11. Hall of Records

This is the domain of scribes and literate servants, for it contains the written records of the palace's administration. Wooden shelves are stacked high with yellowed sheets of papyrus, vellum rolls, and dust-covered clay tablets. Studying an appropriate topic in the hall of records for at least two days grants a +10% bonus to any appropriate Lore test. The Hall of Records is overseen by Teharut, the chief scribe of the city, and a small army of lesser scribes and servants.

## 12. Shrine

The door to this room is locked and protected with another frost ward trap (2D6 cold damage to all locations) that affects anyone who is not a cultist of Zothur. The floor, ceiling and walls of the chamber inside are painted black and studded with crystal rock to represent the stars of the night sky. In the north wall is a 'false door', a door-frame without a door. Touching the doorway affects a non-cultist quite dramatically, they instantly take 3D6 damage as though they have been immersed in lava as the spell on the door takes effect, this applies to all locations.

## 13. Guest Chambers

The southern wing of the palace contains a handful of guest rooms, which are furnished with several soft beds, wardrobes, chairs and a large table, all constructed from imported hardwood.

## 14. Guest Chambers

This room is similar to Area 13.

This is the room the Player Characters will be given if they come to Khadis as honoured guests for having rescued Anat and the other handmaidens of the princess (see the Oasis of Taklun chapter).

## 15. Guest Chambers

This room is similar to Area 13.

It is currently inhabited by a group of merchants who have come from Yemar in the land of Jairan to negotiate the terms of a loan, for the king of Khadis fears aggression from Khazistan and seeks to raise money for mercenaries. The merchants' leader is one Jhawil, a smiling man with oiled black hair, a greedy heart, and great capacity for alcoholic drinks.

## 16. Throne Room

Herein is the grand throne room of the palace, a place usually filled with nobles, courtiers, scribes and petitioners. But king Akhtesh has grown old and demented, and appears here with less and less frequency. When he does attend the court, it is always with the support of his chief steward, Hykshah, and his beautiful daughter, princess Nathifa (in reality the king's long-lost daughter, Nekhtra, in the guise of her sister).

The walls are hung with tapestries and banners, and the floor is covered with magnificent rugs from nearby Jairan. At the back of the room, opposite from the tall double doors (see Area 8) is a large raised dais upon which stands the throne.

In front of the dais is a large concealed trapdoor; it can tilt down towards the throne and throw anyone there down into a subterranean room below and slide shut, trapping the victims in the darkness below. The trapdoor is operated by pulling a lever in the observation room (Area 21) behind the throne.

**Camouflaged Pit Trap:** This trap affects all targets in a 20-ft. square area. It requires a Hard Perception test to spot, a Difficult Mechanisms test to disable it and a Difficult Evade test to avoid. Failure results in a 30 foot drop (5D6 Damage to four random locations).

Four palace guards are stationed in the throne room at all times, one in each corner.

## 17. Dressing Chamber

This room is used by the king and courtiers to prepare for appearances in the throne room. The wardrobes contain two complete royal outfits (worth 200 SP each), four noble's outfits (worth 75 SP each), and ten courtier's outfits (worth 30 SP each).

There is a 50% chance that 1D2 servants or slaves are present here during the day.



## Teharut, Chief Scribe

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

<b>Combat Actions</b>	3
<b>Damage Modifier</b>	-1D2
<b>Magic Points</b>	10
<b>Movement</b>	8m

*Armour:* None

*Traits:* None

*Common Skills:* Athletics 22%, Brawn 20%, Culture (own) 97%, Dance 24%, Drive 25%, Evade 24%, Evaluate 93%, First Aid 68%, Influence 84%, Insight 79%, Lore (regional) 97%, Perception 79%, Persistence 86%, Resilience 38%, Ride 25%, Sing 25%, Sleight 24%, Stealth 28%, Swim 19%, Unarmed 22%

<b>Strike Rank</b>	+14
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*Advanced Skills:* Courtesy 48%, Culture (various) 72%, Language (native) 90%, Lore (city history) 82%, Lore (nobility) 87%, Lore (city geography) 88%, Lore (ancient magic) 90%, Oratory 65%

## Combat Styles

Bookworm (dagger) 37%

## Weapons

Type	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Dagger	--	S	S	1D4+1 / 1D4 Bleed, Impale	6/8

**Possessions:** Several worn parchments, a musty old book and a copper talisman worth 2SP. The musty old book requires a successful Routine Lore (history) test to fully understand, it allows the Player Character to improve their Knowledge History skill as per the rules on improvement.

**Description:** Teharut is old and very knowledgeable about the history of the city and the royal family, but will only share it with those he regards as intellectuals, as demonstrated by a Routine Lore test in any Lore based subject/skill. People find him difficult to converse with, for he has a tendency to ramble on about irrelevant details and tangential anecdotes; if consulted as a sage, quadruple the normal amount of time required to answer a question.

**Tactics:** If a fight ever broke out, he'd be useless in that regard. He might stab once with his dagger, and then run.

## Nasith and Tarur, Acolytes of Zothur

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

Combat Actions	2
Damage Modifier	+1D2
Magic Points	14
Movement	8m

*Armour:* None

*Traits:* None

*Common Skills:* Athletics 24%, Brawn 27%, Culture (own) 80%, Dance 55%, Drive 24%, Evade 50%, Evaluate 45%, First Aid 20%, Influence 80%, Insight 59%, Lore (regional) 85%, Perception 54%, Persistence 68%, Resilience 54%, Ride 24%, Sing 29%, Sleight 25%, Stealth 30%, Swim 26%, Unarmed 34%

Strike Rank	+10
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*Advanced Skills:* Courtesy 55%, Language (native) 85%, Lore (religion) 50%, Lore (history) 55%, Manipulation 64%, Meditation 58%, Oratory 69%, Sorcery (Zothur's favour) 64%

*Magic:* Grimoire (Zothur's favour); Banish, Diminish (STR), Diminish (CON), Intuition, Restoration, Wrack, Palsy

### Combat Styles

Beast Warder (1H sword, dagger, quarterstaff) 65%

### Weapons

Type	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Quarterstaff	--	M	L	1D8 Stun Location	4/8
Dagger	--	S	S	1D4+1 / 1D4 Bleed, Impale	6/8

**Possessions:** A few scraps of parchment, a hidden symbol of Zothur and 3 SP each.

**Description:** Nasith is tall and gaunt; Tarur has flabby skin and reeks of sweat. Both are dressed in plain grey robes. These young acolytes are fairly recent arrivals in the city, for Yasath, the old priest who mentored Nathifa in her youth, has returned to Amenti. The acolytes have not had time to establish any relationship with Nathifa, and she has been avoiding them recently. The king and his steward were only happy to see Yasath leave, and their enmity, although concealed, has carried over to the new acolytes.

**Tactics:** They try to work in tandem to harm and disrupt any attackers should a fight break out.

## 18. Conference Room

The room contains a large wooden table and eight chairs. It is used by the king and courtiers to hold private conferences.

Two palace guards watch this and adjoining rooms.

## 19. Lounge

The walls are covered with blue tapestries here. A low table is set with half a dozen bottles of expensive wine and liquor (worth a total of 150 SP). Several chairs and a silken divan are placed around the table.

In one corner is a large stuffed polar bear, originally from the cold wastes beyond Tharag Thule, a rare sight indeed in this arid region.

## 20. Chambers of the Chief Steward

This is the private residence of Hykshah, the king's steward and the major-domo of the palace. The rooms are simple and the furnishings are spartan; Hykshah cares little for material wealth, having been surrounded by it all his life. He values personal strength, and fears growing old and weak like the king. The steward has been a secret member of the hyena-cult for the last two decades, and his schemes are finally coming to fruition.

As steward, Hykshah commands the palace guard, but day-to-day leadership is delegated to Anur, the guard captain (see palace Area 2). Only a dozen of the palace guards have been initiated into the forbidden hyena-cult. Kheraf (see city Area 6) is the commander of the rest of the city's armed forces.

## 21. Observation Room

This chamber behind the throne room has a small peek-hole into the throne room and a lever to operate the trapdoor (Routine Perception test to notice either). The priests of Zothur are fond of spying from this chamber, but recently Nathifa (Nekhtra) has banished them from this wing of the palace.

## 22. Hall

This hall is empty. There is a locked door on the east wall that provides access to the servant's wing of the palace (Areas 24 to 27).

## 23. Stairway

The stairway leads down to the palace dungeon (see dungeon Area 1). There is a single palace guard posted here; he is one of Hykshah's trusted men.

## 24. Servants

This is a simple and unadorned room used by servants and slaves who wait here when they are not attending their masters. There are simple sleeping-mats in the corners, scraps of food, and several

small boxes filled with spare clothes and personal belongings. There are 40 slaves and servants in the palace, but no more than a handful of them are here at the same time.

## 25. Kitchen

The palace kitchen contains a good amount of food and drink (and even more is stored in Area 7). There are three slaves more or less permanently on duty here.

## 26. Hall

This room is mostly frequented by servants (from Area 24) or palace guards (from Area 28).

## 27. Empty Room

This bare room has arched doorways in all directions except to the south, where the wall is covered with a large mural that depicts a beautiful young woman (princess Nathifa). The princess is shown wearing a diadem of platinum, and stands against a black background studded with silver stars. It takes a Difficult Lore (Religion or Theology) test to associate the painting with the cult of Zothur (or Zoth-Ur or Xoth-Ur), the obscure star-god of the royal house of Yar-Ammon.

## 28. Guard Room

Four palace guards are stationed at this lesser entrance, which is mostly used by servants and slaves. Some courtiers, well-known to the guards, also use this door to enter and exit the palace unannounced.

## 29. Conference Room

The room is intended for private meetings, but does not see much use. It is furnished with table and chairs.

There is a single guard posted to this room; it is one of Hykshah's trusted men.

## 30. Princess Nathifa's Chambers

Princess Nathifa's personal chamber is decorated with silken tapestries and cushions. In one corner is a table with food platters of silver (worth 125 SP); in the opposite corner is a small polished steel mirror, various perfumes and oils (among them a *potion of truth*), and two pearl necklaces (worth 100 SP each).

The real princess Nathifa is held imprisoned (see Area 14 of the subterranean vaults) and is impersonated by her older sister Nekhtra, who is frequently seen in this chamber to support the deception (although she is just as often elsewhere with Hykshah).

**Potion of Truth:** The imbiber must make a Hard Persistence test or be forced to reveal 1D4 secrets to the questioner. Once four secrets of the questioner's choosing have been revealed, the effects of the potion wear off and the imbiber falls into a dreamless sleep for 1D6 hours.

## Hykshah, Steward of the Palace

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

Combat Actions	2
Damage Modifier	+1D2
Magic Points	13
Movement	8m

*Armour:* None

*Traits:* None

*Common Skills:* Athletics 27%, Brawn 59%, Culture (own) 83%, Dance 57%, Drive 26%, Evade 56%, Evaluate 74%, First Aid 23%, Influence 88%, Insight 68%, Lore (regional) 85%, Perception 63%, Persistence 76%, Resilience 62%, Ride 26%, Sing 47%, Sleight 27%, Stealth 53%, Swim 30%, Unarmed 57%

Strike Rank	+12
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*Advanced Skills:* Acrobatics 57%, Courtesy 74%, Disguise 54%, Language (native) 89%, Lore (hyena god) 79%, Manipulation 68%, Meditation 66%, Oratory 87%, Seduction 54%, Sorcery (beast howl) 67%, Survival 70%, Track 76%

*Magic:* Grimoire (beast howl) Damage Enhancement, Damage Resistance, Dominate (canines), Tap (STR), Wrack

### Combat Styles

Vicious Bloodletter (dagger, war maul, kukri, official baton) 70%

### Weapons

Type	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Official Baton	--	M	S	2D4 Stun Location	4/10

**Possessions:** Fine robes, official baton, hidden beast-cult talisman and a book. The old leather bound tome is full of crude drawings of bestial carnal rites.

**Description:** Hykshah is middle-aged but in good physical form. The natural colour of his hair and beard is red (with a few specks of grey), but he dyes it black and keeps it neatly cropped and oiled. He wears magnificent robes of office and carries a wooden baton tipped by metal spikes (treat as a morningstar). Only careful examination of the baton (A successful Routine Evaluate or Craft (appropriate type) test reveals that the spikes were originally carved in the shape of hyena claws.

**Tactics:** He attempts to take on the weaker foes first casting Damage Enhancement on his baton, then harrying them with spells and trying to whittle enemies down.

## Palace Servant or Slaves

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

<b>Combat Actions</b>	2
<b>Damage Modifier</b>	-1D2
<b>Magic Points</b>	11
<b>Movement</b>	8m

*Armour:* None

*Traits:* None

**Strike Rank** +11

*Common Skills:* Athletics 27%, Brawn 60%, Culture (own) 81%, Dance 24%, Drive 58%, Evade 54%, Evaluate 72%, First Aid 22%, Influence 54%, Insight 31%, Lore (regional) 70%, Perception 31%, Persistence 32%, Resilience 60%, Ride 33%, Sing 23%, Sleight 24%, Stealth 32%, Swim 20%, Unarmed 52%

*Advanced Skills:* Courtesy 52%, Language (native) 82%

## Combat Styles

Servant's Quandary (unarmed, dirk or improvised weapon) 52%

## Weapons

<b>Type</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Reach</b>	<b>Damage</b>	<b>AP/HP</b>
Unarmed	--	S	T	1D3 Grip, Take Weapon	As Arm
Dirk	--	S	S	1D3+2 Bleed, Impale	6/6

**Possessions:** 1 SP, a few scraps of food, servant's clothing.

**Description:** A motley collection of various men and women drawn from the lower ranks of the city. These are the lifeblood of the palace and come in different shapes, sizes and cultures.

**Tactics:** They are not really used to fighting, some of them (20% chance) may grab improvised weapons or eating irons. There is a 5% chance one of them is armed with a concealed dirk about their person.

### 31. Princess Nathifa's Bedroom

This bedroom is furnished in opulent fashion, with silken sheets and cushions, and blankets and rugs made of fur from desert fox and rabbit. The floor is strewn with fresh white rose petals every day by palace slaves and handmaidens.

### 32. Handmaidens

The slave-girls of princess Nathifa dwell here, and the chamber is filled with all manner of fine-spun clothes and wigs, oils, perfumes, and jewelry. Anat (see the Oasis of Taklun chapter) and the other handmaidens rest or gossip here when they are not attending the princess or away on errands outside the palace.

### 33. Empty Chamber

This antechamber and the adjoining bedroom are both empty.

### 34. Empty Bedroom

Although the bed here is still made and the floor is swept clean every day, the room has not been used since the queen died in childbirth a generation ago.

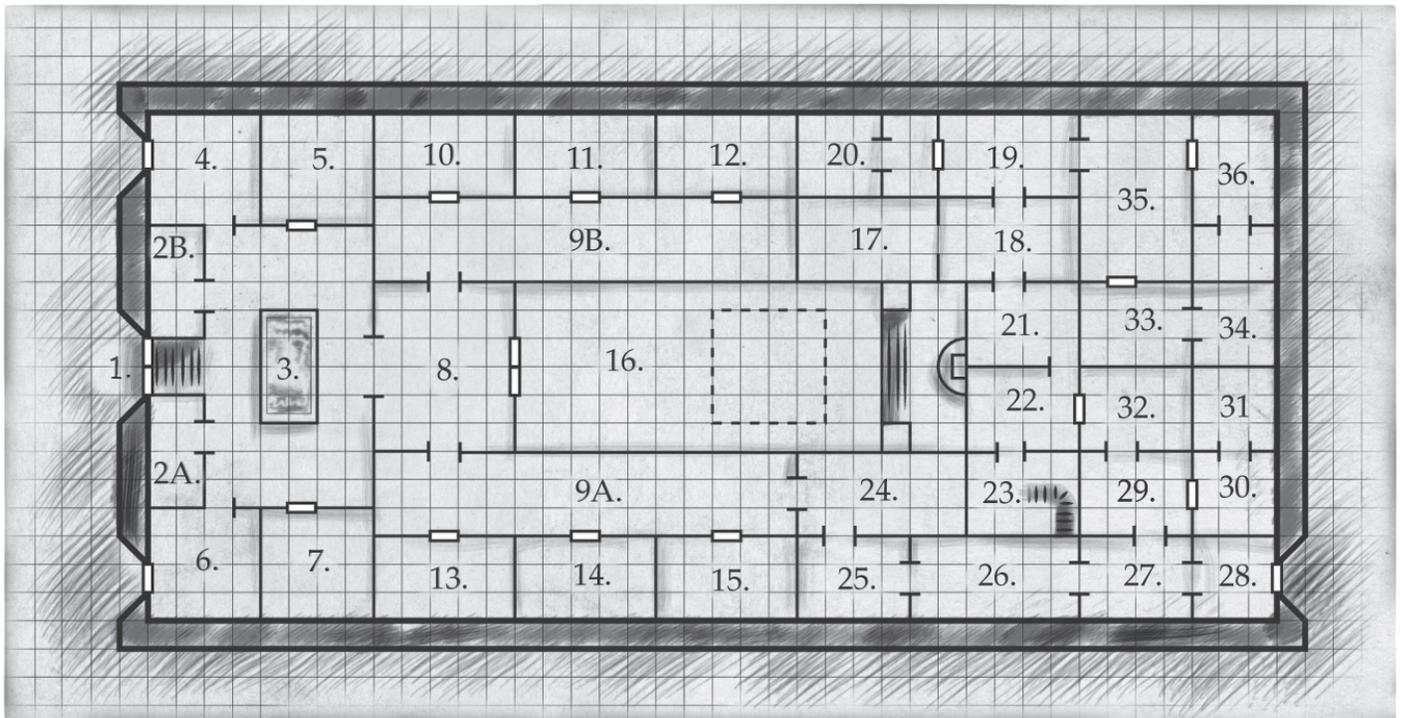
### 35. Kings Lounge

These days, the old king spends much of his time half-asleep in this large chamber. It is decorated in true royal style, with colourful paintings of his family on the walls, which reminds him of happier times when his queen was still alive. Two palace guards are always placed near the door, and a single slave sits quietly in one corner.

### 36. King's Private Rooms

The outer room is a study. A cedar wood desk inlaid with ivory is set with several small golden figurines of animals, including lions, bulls, elephants and crocodiles (total of twelve figurines worth 100 SP each). A locked box (requires a Hard Mechanisms test to unlock, or a Routine Brawn test to break) is protected with a ward trap of fire (Difficult Perception test to detect, damage 3D6 per location) and contains a golden sceptre (worth 1,000 SP), an exquisite dagger (worth 300 SP), and a bag of semiprecious stones (worth a total of 2,000 SP).

The inner chamber is a bedroom. The bed has a canopy of red silk and soft white cotton sheets embroidered with golden thread.



## Akhtesh, Old King of Khadis

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

<b>Combat Actions</b>	2
<b>Damage Modifier</b>	-1D2
<b>Magic Points</b>	12
<b>Movement</b>	8m

*Armour:* None

*Traits:* None

*Common Skills:* Athletics 22%, Brawn 19%, Culture (own) 84%, Dance 67%, Drive 35%, Evade 71%, Evaluate 96%, First Aid 25%, Influence 83%, Insight 54%, Lore (regional) 84%, Perception 54%, Persistence 54%, Resilience 70%, Ride 75%, Sing 56%, Sleight 27%, Stealth 25%, Swim 19%, Unarmed 52%

<b>Strike Rank</b>	+13
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*Advanced Skills:* Commerce 56%, Courtesy 60%, Language (native) 76%, Lore (history) 64%, Lore (nobility) 70%, Lore (tactics) 66%, Oratory 70%

### Combat Styles

Kingly Might (mace, 2H sword, 1H spear) 52%

### Weapons

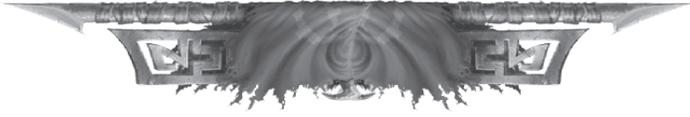
Type	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Mace	--	M	S	1D8 Stun Location	6/6

**Possessions:** Magnificent fine robes and jewelled rings (worth 1,000 SP)

**Description:** The king wears a magnificent robe, but his beard is white and his eyes are tired. The old king's mind is clouded by dementia and he leaves most affairs to his steward and the men of the court. In truth, Akhtesh has tired of life and looks forward to the day when he can finally rest.

**Tactics:** The king is not so grand at fighting these days, he might order invisible guards from long past to attack any opponents and charge into battle against his enemies. Though inside his mind he's fighting a different war from many years ago.

# PALACE DUNGEONS



## 1. Stairway

These stairs lead down from Area 23 of the palace.

## 2. Hall

On the south wall of this hall is a locked double door, decorated by the image of a crowned ruler surrounded by ranks of mummified warriors. The doors lead to the catacombs beneath the palace.

There is a single palace guard posted here, he is loyal to Hykshah.

## 3. Corridor

This broad corridor is unlit.

## 4. Pit Chamber

This chamber lies directly beneath the trapdoor in the throne room (Area 16 of the palace). If the trapdoor is activated, the noise will alert the prison keeper in Area 6, who activates the portcullises to seal any new arrivals inside the pit.

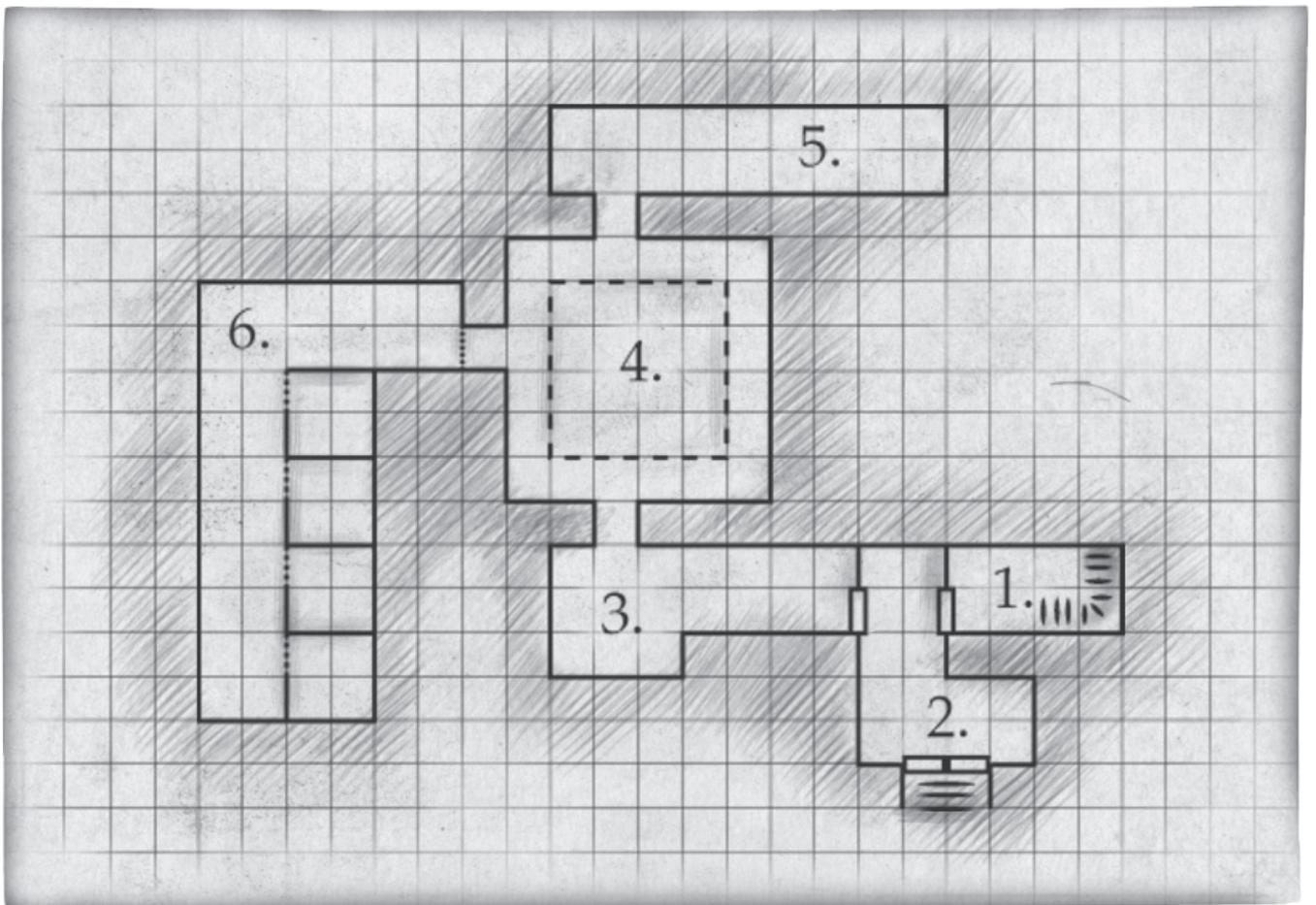
## 5. Storage Area

There are crates here with various kinds of equipment (ropes, chains, hammers, locks) and supplies (oil, torches, canvas, bricks), as well as a small armoury with light armours (soft leather and hard leather) and weapons (maces, spears and daggers).

## 6. Prison

Four large prison cells are here, only two of which are currently occupied (determine race, sex and crime randomly, and perhaps insert replacement Player Characters as appropriate).

The area is supervised by Irun, a gruff, middle-aged man who spends far too much time down here in the dank dungeons rather than in the sunlight above. He is pale-skinned, sadistic and perhaps not completely sane anymore. A lever in the north eastern corner of this area controls the three portcullises around Area 4.



## Iron, Gaoler and Master Torturer

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

<b>Combat Actions</b>	2
<b>Damage Modifier</b>	+1D2
<b>Magic Points</b>	10
<b>Movement</b>	8m

*Armour:* Hard leather, -3 Armour Penalty

*Traits:* None

### Strike Rank

+13 (+10  
when  
armoured)

*Common Skills:* Athletics 72%, Brawn 70%, Culture (own) 90%, Dance 54%, Drive 26%, Evade 82%, Evaluate 90%, First Aid 26%, Influence 56%, Insight 60%, Lore (regional) 88%, Perception 70%, Persistence 60%, Resilience 79%, Ride 26%, Sing 18%, Sleight 74%, Stealth 76%, Swim 28%, Unarmed 72%

*Advanced Skills:* Acrobatics 72%, Language (native) 88%, Lore (tactics) 60%, Mechanisms 66%, Oratory 28%, Streetwise 58%, Track 62%

### Combat Styles

Old Ball and Chain (battleaxe, ball & chain, mace) 72%

### Weapons

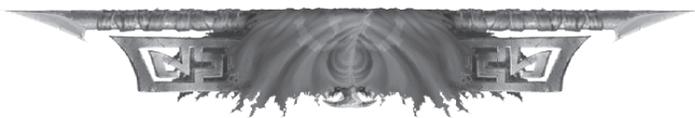
Type	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Ball & Chain	--	M	M	1D6+1 Entangle, Stun Location	6/8
Battleaxe	--	M	M	1D6+1/1D8+1 Bleed, Sunder (2H only)	4/8

**Possessions:** Torturer's tools, manacles, a few pulled teeth and a blood-stained love-letter.

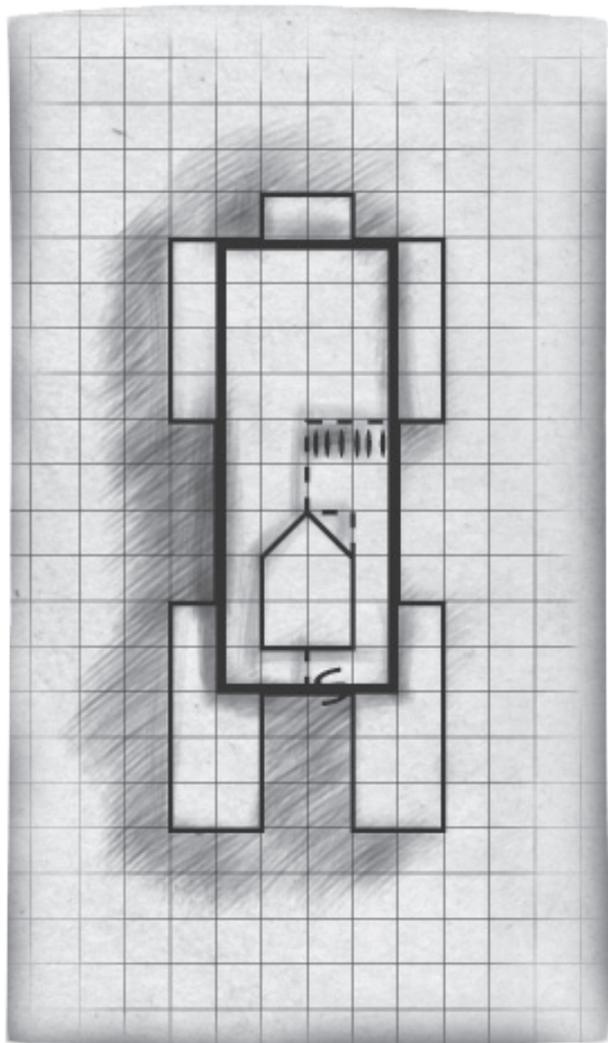
**Description:** Tough, middle-aged and brutal looking with very pale skin. He has the air of a madman about him.

**Tactics:** He will use his ball & chain to attempt to entangle and stun enemies, wielding his battleaxe in the other hand to finish them off.

# THE SECRET OF THE FACELESS SPHINX



Beneath the great sphinx (see Area 4 of the city) is a maze of catacombs and crypts, built long ago by the hyena-cult and still used by those who secretly worship the forbidden beast-gods. The subterranean vaults can be accessed either from the palace dungeons (Area 1 of the vaults connects to Area 2 of the palace dungeons) or from the door and passageway between the paws of the great sphinx (Area 12 of the vaults connects to Area 4 of the city).



## THE VAULTS BENEATH THE FACELESS SPHINX

**Standard Features:** Unless noted otherwise, all interior doors are stone doors: 4 in. thick; Armour 10;HP 70, Hard Brawn test to break down. Hard Mechanisms test to open if described as locked. Ceiling height is 10 feet in all rooms except the central chamber (Area 5).

**Lighting:** The vaults are unlit, except for the areas described as having human guards (who carry torches) or residents (who use oil lamps).

**Sounds and Odours:** The vaults are silent. There is a musty smell in the air from the tombs.

**Encounters:** Check occasionally for random encounter with wandering guards (from Area 2).

### 1. Corridor

This narrow corridor leads from Area 2 of the palace dungeons and into the catacombs and mummy-vaults beneath the sphinx.

### 2. Guard Room

Hykshah has posted two of his trusted men from among the palace guard to watch over this room. Since this room is at the other side of a heavy set of doors, the guards are not particularly attentive; they make their Perception tests at -40% (Hard).

### 3. Antechamber

An alcove in the southern end of this small chamber contains two small incense burners of bronze (worth 25 SP each), as well as three blocks of special incense.

**Incense of Well Being:** When burnt for 8 hours this heady strong-smelling incense will restore 3HP per location to anyone who sleeps in the smoke.

### 4. Guard Room

Two palace guards, loyal to Hykshah, sit idle in this room, playing dice.

### 5. Columned Hall

Six tall, slender columns support the ceiling of this huge hall, which is shrouded in darkness. Ceiling height is a full 30 feet here, leaving parts of the room in dim light even if torches are carried.

On the north wall is a large mural that depicts a king and a queen, flanked by hyena guardians painted with glowing yellow eyes. There is a secret door in the mural that can be opened by pressing the left eye of the leftmost hyena (Requires a Difficult Perception test to



## The Guardian Beast, Embalmed Massive Hyena

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
<b>STR</b>	3D6+12	23	1-3	Right Hind Leg	2/6
<b>CON</b>	3D6	11	4-6	Left Hind Leg	2/6
<b>SIZ</b>	2D6+12	19	7-9	Hindquarters	2/7
<b>INT</b>	6	6	10-12	Forequarters	2/8
<b>POW</b>	3D6	11	13-15	Right Front Leg	2/6
<b>DEX</b>	3D6+6	17	16-18	Left Front Leg	2/6
			19-20	Head	2/6

<b>Combat Actions</b>	3
<b>Damage Modifier</b>	+1D8
<b>Magic Points</b>	11
<b>Movement</b>	13m
<b>Strike Rank</b>	+14

*Armour:* Embalmed fur and hide. No Armour Penalty.

*Traits:* Night Sight, Life Sense, Formidable Natural Weapons

*Skills:* Athletics 75%, Evade 55%, Perception 67%, Persistence 57%, Resilience 55%, Stealth 69%, Survival 58%, Track 70%

### Combat Styles

Fearsome Guardian (bite, claw) 70%

### Weapons

Type	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	--	M	T	1D8	As for Head
Claw	--	M	M	1D6	As for Leg

**Possessions:** None

**Description:** This massive beast has glowing red eyes, sharp teeth and claws. It does not move until activated and when it does so, it does with frightening speed.

**Tactics:** The guardian attacks the nearest Player Character and attempts to bite them first.

## Nathifa, Princess of Khadis

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

<b>Combat Actions</b>	3
<b>Damage Modifier</b>	+0
<b>Magic Points</b>	16
<b>Movement</b>	8m

*Armour:* None

*Traits:* None

*Common Skills:* Athletics 48%, Brawn 33%, Culture (own) 89%, Dance 84%, Drive 32%, Evade 82%, Evaluate 78%, First Aid 26%, Influence 86%, Insight 76%, Lore (regional) 90%, Perception 76%, Persistence 87%, Resilience 70%, Ride 87%, Sing 84%, Sleight 64%, Stealth 36%, Swim 72%, Unarmed 78%

<b>Strike Rank</b>	+13
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*Advanced Skills:* Acrobatics 78%, Art 84%, Commerce 58%, Courtesy 78%, Culture (various) 70%, Language (native) 98%, Lore (tactics) 70%, Oratory 84%, Seduction 78%

### Combat Styles

Princess of Khadis (short sword, chakram, dagger) 83%

### Weapons

Type	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Short sword	--	M	S	1D6 Bleed, Impale	6/8

**Possessions:** She only has her ragged prison clothes.

**Description:** Nathifa is fair-skinned, almost pale, having spent most of her youth inside the walls of the palace, in the care of servants and priests of Zothur. Her hair is naturally dark, but she dyes it blonde. Of nature, she is haughty and arrogant, for she has been groomed to rule since she was a child. When she came to suspect that she had a unknown older sister, Nathifa felt betrayed by the priests of Zothur. But any feelings of familial affection towards her sister were naturally smothered when Nekhtra returned to Khadis only to capture and imprison Nathifa. Her statistics above include a weapon, but she is of course unarmed, bound and gagged as long as she is imprisoned.

**Tactics:** If freed she can fight as well as anyone else and doesn't hesitate to prove it. She will seek to find and confront her sister, perhaps even trying to end the other woman's life out of anger.

## Nekhtra, the Chosen One of the Beast-Gods, Cultist of the Hyena

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

<b>Combat Actions</b>	2
<b>Damage Modifier</b>	+1D2
<b>Magic Points</b>	16
<b>Movement</b>	8m

*Armour:* None

*Traits:* None

*Common Skills:* Athletics 66%, Brawn 47%, Culture (own) 90%, Dance 75%, Drive 38%, Evade 72%, Evaluate 98%, First Aid 27%, Influence 96%, Insight 76%, Lore (regional) 95%, Perception 76%, Persistence 80%, Resilience 74%, Ride 58%, Sing 60%, Sleight 30%, Stealth 62%, Swim 26%, Unarmed 66%

<b>Strike Rank</b>	+11
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*Advanced Skills:* Acrobatics 76%, Art 74%, Commerce 68%, Courtesy 58%, Disguise 88%, Language (native) 98%, Lore (hyena god) 89%, Manipulation 76%, Meditation 77%, Oratory 84%, Seduction 88%, Sorcery (beast howl) 70%, Survival 78%, Track 75%

*Magic:* Grimoire (beast howl): Damage Enhancement, Damage Resistance, Dominate (canines), Dominate (human), Tap (STR), Palsy, Wrack, Holdfast, Shapechange (human) to (hyena)

### Combat Styles

Bestial Bloodletter (dagger, war maul, kukri) 80%

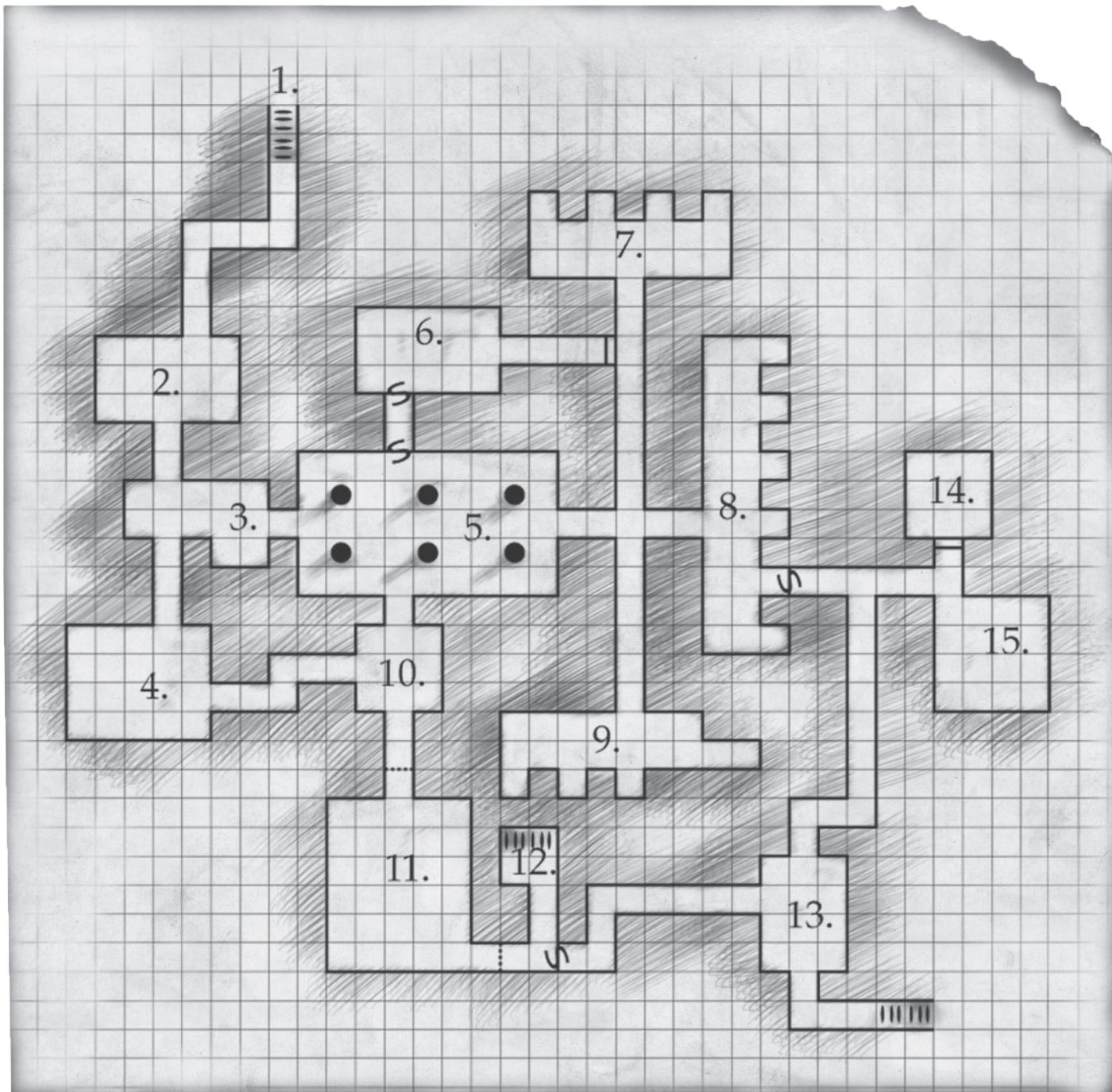
### Weapons

Type	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Dagger	--	S	S	1D4+1 / 1D4 Bleed, Impale	6/8

**Possessions:** Makeup, wig, fine clothing befitting her sister. Various rings, necklaces and jewellery worth 1,500 SP. Poisoned hairpin (uses snake venom from the *Legend Core Rulebook*, 50 SP).

**Description:** Nekhtra's skin is dusky from years spent dwelling in the desert, so she must wear a heavy layer of makeup to impersonate her sister, and she wears a blonde wig for the same purpose. Her natural hair is long and dark with the shine of silk.

**Tactics:** She will use seduction to try and poison her enemies before a fight can even break out. If a fight does break out, she will try and hold an enemy with her spell before she stabs them with her dagger. If she's losing she'll turn into a hyena and try to escape.



notice that this eye is a slightly different colour than the rest, the paint having been rubbed off by repeated use of the secret door). The secret door leads via a short tunnel to the embalming workshop (Area 6).

This hall is a meeting-room for the hyena-cultists. There is a 75% chance that Hykshah and/or Nekhtra is here with 1D6 minions, planning the upcoming ritual they are about to perform.

## 6. Embalming Workshop

The door to this room is locked, although a secret entrance exists. The chamber has stone tables filled with obsidian knives, bronze hooks, pottery jars filled with foul-smelling herbs and sticky resins, as well as numerous baskets filled with strips of linen bandages. A healing draft (restores 5 HP to each location) can also be found among the embalming equipment.

In the northwestern corner of the room stands a bronze hyena-headed mask. If a spellcaster who understands necromantic magic wears the mask, he may cast necromantic magic with little or no cost in Magic Points (the cost is cut in half), although the casting time increases dramatically by four times the amount and the wearer can only make zombies from partially intact corpses if they possess the magic to do so. The mask takes its toll from the wearer. The wearer's CON is reduced by half for the remainder of the day. The mask was worn by the chief embalmer of Khadis in ages past, although with the fall of the hyena-cult, no one has taken his place and proper embalming is no longer carried out in the city.

## 7. Animal Crypts

The alcoves in the northern wall are filled with mummified cats and hyenas, several dozen of each. Inside one of the mummified cats is a bronze key that fits any locked door on this level (such as Areas 6, 14 and 15).

## 8. Hybrid Crypts

On the floor along the west wall of this hall are a dozen alabaster jars filled with strong-smelling spices and incense (worth 20 SP each), as well as an ornate wooden chair set with lapis lazuli (the wood breaks into pieces if the chair is moved, but the decoration is worth 100 SP).

Along the east wall is a series of alcoves. At first glance these alcoves appear to be filled with regular mummies, but closer inspection will reveal a grisly sight: The mummies are hybrids, part human and part beast, stitched together after death by the embalmer. There are mummies with the hands and feet of hyenas, as well as hyena-headed mummies and even one that has the lower body of a hyena and the torso and head of a human.

Several hybrid (beast-stitched) mummies are found in the crypts, the exact number left to the Games Master to decide.

One of the alcoves has a concealed door hidden behind the mummified body (Requires a Routine Perception test to spot). The corridor beyond the concealed door leads to Nekhtra's lair (Area 15).

## 9. Unfinished Crypts

These crypts look (and are) very old, yet the eastern half is still unfinished. In the centre alcove is the mummified body of the late queen of Khadis; four golden amulets (worth 50 SP each) can be found inside the linen wrappings. However, the alcove is protected by a magic trap – in this case it is another fire ward trap which causes 4D6 damage to each location when triggered. The trigger in this case is the removal or attack upon the mummy.

The mummies in the two other alcoves are ancient; if either one is disturbed, it crumbles in a 10-foot cloud of dust similar to the disease of Soul Palsy found in the *Legend Core Rulebook* on page 81.

## 10. Royal Statue

In the centre of this room is a tall granite statue of a king. Twisting its head to the right opens the portcullis to the south. Twisting the head to the left triggers a trap; an old and rusty blade that emerges from the statue's abdomen (A successful Difficult Evade test avoids this, otherwise a failure results in 1D6 damage to the affected location, determined by the Games Master). The trap can be disabled if the Player Character makes a successful Hard Mechanisms test. Failure in this case also triggers the trap. The trap will reset after it has been triggered unless disabled.

## 11. Chamber of the Beast

A fearsome undead guardian is here, created by a now-dead high priest of the hyena-cult. It is an embalmed prehistoric hyena, almost twice the size of regular hyenas, and it rests on a small dais in the centre of the room. Members of the hyena-cult (and those accompanied by cult members) can freely pass it, but if anyone else enters the chamber, the beast animates. When the beast leaves its dais, the metal portcullises to the north and east drop down, sealing trespassers inside the room with the guardian.

## 12. Stairway to Sphinx

The stairway ascends to a room inside the great sphinx (Area 4 of the city).

## 13. Hall

Two palace guards, secret members of the hyena-cult, are watching this room. They use the secret doors in Areas 8 and 12 to enter and exit.

The corridor from the south door winds east and eventually exits inside the well in the barracks district of the city (Area 6 of the Khadis city map). The twisting passages between here and there teem with rats and other vermin.

## 14. Prison of Nathifa

When Nekhtra secretly returned to Khadis, she and Hykshah moved swiftly to abduct princess Nathifa. Nathifa has been holed up in this prison since then, while Nekhtra impersonates her younger sister. The guards (from Area 13) bring her food and water once per day.

## 15. Lair of Nekhtra

Nekhtra uses this large room, close to her sister's prison, as her temporary lair. Of course, since Nekhtra is impersonating Nathifa, she often dwells in the personal chambers of the princess (Area 30 of the palace) as well.

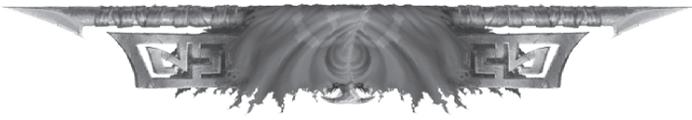
In addition to a simple bed, there is a wooden chest here (locked and trapped. The lock is of extremely high quality and requires a

Hard Mechanisms test to open it. The trap can be detected with a Difficult Perception test and disabled with a Difficult Mechanisms test. Failure or triggering the trap results in 1D2 points of damage to the arm and the effects of potent snake venom from the *Legend Core Rulebook* on page 82.) The chest contains items required to perform the ritual known as the Song of the Beast-Gods.

This includes a set of thirteen golden figurines; twelve hyena-headed men and a hybrid with the lower body of a hyena and the torso and head of a human female. There are also several blocks of incense, a dagger with a *Bladesharp 3* spell cast upon it, and a yellowed papyrus scroll. The latter is a sacred text, written in archaic Yar-Ammonite and known as the *Book of the Beast*. Among other things, the text contains the description of the ritual that Nekhtra is about to attempt.



# DEVELOPMENT



The preceding chapters have described the city of Khadis and its districts, locations and important non-player characters. What follows is a possible outline of how the adventure could unfold once the Player Characters get involved. Feel free to change anything to improve the game and in particular to respond to the actions of the Player Characters that may alter the assumptions made here. And remember that although this outline is presented as four sequential phases, the intention is not to railroad the Player Characters through a predetermined 'storyline'. The Player Characters should be free to choose their own path (even if that means avoiding the city of Khadis!), but at the same time, the campaign world should be a living place where events happen even if the Player Characters are not around to trigger them (so Nekhtra's evil plans will go ahead whether the Player Characters visit Khadis or not).

## Introduction

The Player Characters encounter the slavers at the Oasis of Taklun. Assuming the Player Characters free the women from the slavers, the Player Characters are taken to the city of Khadis to receive their reward from princess Nathifa, the mistress of Anat and the other handmaidens. If the Player Characters ignore the slavers or fail to free the captives, they may continue to Khadis as normal travellers. Once there, they may overhear palace rumours from a drunken guard or a worried slave, and decide to investigate. Alternatively, members of the hyena-cult may raid the foreign quarter at night to find suitable sacrifices for the ritual they are about to perform.

## Challenge

If the Player Characters come to Khadis as honoured guests, there is an audience with the old king Akhtesh, the princess (actually Nekhtra impersonating Nathifa), and Hykshah, the king's steward. After the audience, Anat warns the Player Characters that something is wrong – the princess was acting strangely. Eventually Anat also reveals what she learned from the nomads in the desert (essentially, that a young girl was delivered into the nomads' care twenty years ago by a man who did not reveal his identity but paid the sheikhs well; and that this girl disappeared into the desert when she came of age). The Player Characters should realise that they are in danger, but must discover who they can trust in the palace.

Trying to expose Nekhtra by speaking to the king is fairly useless, due to his demented condition and the influence Nekhtra has on him. The courtiers and the common palace guards are held in check by Hykshah and his men, and dare not act unless they have solid evidence that something is wrong, and someone to lead them. The acolytes of Zothur, if alerted, will try to get a message to their

masters in Amenti, while attempting to use the Player Characters to protect their own skins in the meantime. If the Player Characters try to leave, they are told that they are honoured guests and must wait in the palace for a feast to be held in their honour, where they will receive their reward for rescuing Anat and the others from the slavers. They are essentially kept in house arrest until Nekhtra is ready to strike. One possible escape route for Player Characters wanting to flee is via the tunnels beneath the palace, which pass through the old tombs and vaults of the hyena-cult; this also happens to be where princess Nathifa is kept prisoner, so the Player Characters may unwittingly stumble across her while trying to flee.

On the other hand, Player Characters without a connection to the court should now have started their own investigations which lead them toward the palace and/or the vaults beneath it, based on rumours from the palace and revealed bits of history from the city's past.

## Climax

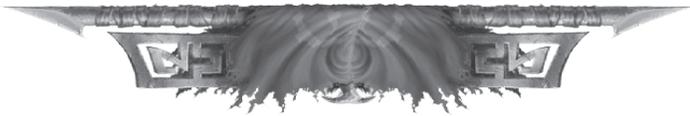
Hykshah and Nekhtra get ready to perform the ritual called the *Song of the Beast-Gods*. During this ritual, which must be performed 'when the stars are right', Princess Nathifa will be sacrificed, along with twelve other victims. Nekhtra plans to include the Player Characters among those twelve, especially if the Player Characters start to suspect the truth. The ritual will take place in Area 5 of the palace vaults, with two captives bound to each of the six pillars. At some point before the ritual there will be an attempt to capture the Player Characters. Nekhtra, acting as Nathifa, may simply offer the Player Characters a 'guided tour' of the catacombs beneath the palace, where the palace guards loyal to the hyena-cult will ambush them. Other alternatives include the use of drugged food, seduction attempts on individual Player Characters, or, if everything else fails, trumped-up charges of theft or treason to imprison the Player Characters in the palace dungeons.

## Resolution

If the Player Characters manage to defeat Nekhtra, or at least foil her plans, princess Nathifa is restored to the throne (as acting regent until her father dies, and as queen after that). She rewards the Player Characters with a fair amount of gold (up to 2,000 SP per character), and offers them positions in her palace guard or as wandering agents and emissaries. This can present many opportunities for the Player Characters, but they will also be subject to the thousand intrigues of the court. Furthermore, Nathifa has many unpleasant traits (although she hides them well), and ultimately views the Player Characters as expendable.

If the Player Characters fail to stop Nekhtra from performing the ritual, she and her minions undergo the transformation into hybrid beasts. Nekhtra uses her new powers to control the minds of the courtiers and military officers. When she has consolidated her power base, she captures and kills all priests of Zothur, and restores the worship of the great sphinx with blood sacrifice to fuel her sorceries. When this news reaches the Kingpriest of Amenti, he will surely send his war-chariots against Khadis... and the empire of Khazistan will watch while the Yar-Ammonites fight among themselves

# NEW PROFESSION: THE CULTIST



Driven by a powerful desire to serve their chosen master or mistress, these people come from all walks of life. They might be savage tribesmen from dark jungles or decadent nobles from sand-covered cities, spreading their chosen god's power across the landscape.

**Cultural Background:** All

**Common Skill Bonuses:** Influence +20%, Lore (cult related) +5%, Persistence 15%, Insight +10%

**Advanced Skills:** Oratory, Teaching, Meditation

**Magic:** Sorcery (grimoire)

## CULTS

Each cultist must choose a cult. For examples of cults, and their initiation rites and secrets, see *The Spider God's Bride*.

Two additional cults are detailed below.

## THE BEAST-GODS OF YAR-AMMON

Until very recently, the Yar-Ammonites worshipped an ancient pantheon of beast-headed man-gods, disturbing fragments of a lost age. These gods, said to have brought knowledge and wisdom to the first civilisation of Yar-Ammon, were usually depicted as humanoids with the heads of hyenas, rams, goats, vultures, and other animals. The priests of Yar-Ammon often wore masks in imitation of their gods. The cult consisted of several sub-cults, each devoted to a particular beast, although there was supposedly a secret grand hierarch controlling them all.

The ancient practices of the beast-cults were outlawed a generation ago, when the royal house of Amenti established the cult of Zothur, but there are many among the common folk who still follow the old ways.

### Magic

Sorcery Grimoire (beast howl): Damage Enhancement, Damage Resistance, Dominate (species), Tap (STR)

### Membership

**Novice:** The initiate to this cult must choose a patron animal and then mate with it.

**Apprentice:** An apprentice must at least have four of the cult's skills at 30% and have drunk a pint of animal blood in a dark ritual to the gods.

**Adept:** Adepts must have at least four of the cult's skills at 40%. They gain a bonus of +10% to their Survival skill due to intense training in the cult's bestial ways.

**High Priest:** High Priests must have at least four of the cult's skills at 50%. High Priests are taught the spell Shapechange (human) to (chosen patron beast) and become more feral in nature as they begin to unravel the secrets of the beast cult. They gain a +25% bonus to their Survival skill. The Shapechange spell is a variant of the (human) to (species) magic found in the Legend Core Rulebook. They also gain access to the Song of the Beast Gods, which is described on page 2.

**Combat Style:** Bestial Bloodletter (dagger, war maul, kukri)

**Cult Skills:** The Cult offers training in: Brawn, Culture (own), Evade, Perception, Resilience, Stealth, Unarmed, Acrobatics, Lore (beast gods), Manipulation, Meditation, Survival, Sorcery (beast howl grimoire), Track.



# ZOTHUR, THE FIRST ONE, THE STAR-GOD OF YAR-AMMON

Before his death two decades ago, the High King of Yar-Ammon instituted the worship of an (until then) unknown god, called the First One, and known variously as Zothur, Zoth-Ur, or Xoth-Ur. Taking the title of Kingpriest and Prophet of the First One, the king sent his new priests from Amenti to all the lesser cities of the land, and demanded that the old ways of beast-worship be abandoned

## Magic

**Sorcery Grimoire (Zothur's favour):** Banish, Diminish (STR), Diminish (CON), Intuition, Restoration

## Membership

**Novice:** To be initiated into the cult the applicants must be pure-blooded male descendants of the royal house of Amenti.

**Apprentice:** An apprentice must have four of the cult's skills at 45% and are taught to be better speakers; they gain a bonus of +5% to their Oratory skill.

**Adept:** Adepts must have at least four of the cult's skills at 50%. They are taught to be effective speakers and now gain another +5% to their Oratory skill.

**High Priest:** High Priests must have at least four of the cult's skills at 60%. High Priests of Zothur are extremely gifted speakers (+10% atop their previous skill training in Oratory) and can speak with large crowds, showing intense zealous conviction. They are taught the Calm of Zothur for their grimoires. They are so well trained they also gain a bonus of +15% to their Influence skill.

**Combat Style:** Beast Warder (1H sword, dagger, quarterstaff)

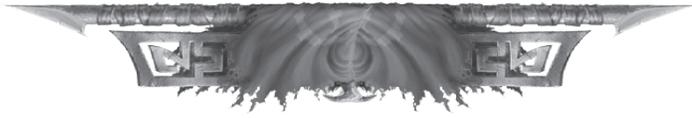
**Cult Skills:** The Cult offers training in: Culture (own), Dance, Evade, Evaluate, Influence, Insight, Manipulation, Meditation, Perception, Stealth, Art, Courtesy, Sorcery (Zothur's favour grimoire)

**New Spell:** Calm of Zothur

Instant, Ranged, Rank High Priest of Zothur only

This powerful spell from the grimoires of Zothur reverts a transformed human back from their bestial form. It can be resisted through a Hard Persistence skill test. If effective, the spell instantly forces the target humanoid to return back to their true form and lose all bonuses from their bestial nature. It also stuns them for three combat rounds.

# CULTURAL ARCHETYPES



In a typical sword and sorcery campaign such as that presented in the World of Xoth, the traditional demihumans do not exist, and the majority of characters are human. The following broad cultural archetypes can be used to distinguish between characters that would otherwise have the same racial abilities.

Use the cultures on page 15 of the Legend Core Rulebook in addition to the new cultures presented here, which echo the works of Robert E. Howard and others, to evoke the diversities of the sword and sorcery genre.

## ENLIGHTENED

A few great civilisations rise above others and gain half-mythical status. Learned beyond normal men, people of enlightened cultures are builders of cyclopean pyramids and towers that pierce the skies. Their magnificent buildings can last forever, and likewise the flesh of the enlightened ones can withstand the passage of time like no other mortals.

### As Civilised with the following additions:

**Common Skill Bonuses:** +35% to Culture (own) and Lore (regional), +25% to Evaluate and Influence, they also gain +5% to Perception tests when stonework and traps are involved.

**Combat Styles:** Enlightened Adventurers choose one Combat Style from the following and gain a +5% bonus; 2H spear, 2H sword, bow, crossbow, dagger, polearm, rapier, spear and shield, spear, sword and shield.

**Advanced Skills:** All civilised Adventurers gain the following **Advanced Skills;** Courtesy, Language (Native) +50%. In addition, enlightened Adventurers choose from three Advanced Skills from the following: Art (any), Craft (any), Language (any), Lore (any), Mechanisms, Play Instrument, Streetwise.

**Starting Money:** Enlightened begin the game with 5D6x80 Silver Pieces.

**Magic:** As Civilised cultures.

## DECADENT

Great civilisations reach their peak and eventually start to decline. Such fallen empires are ruled by jaded nobles, corrupt priests and wicked slave-traders. Demon-worship, human sacrifice and drug abuse is all too common in these cultures.

### As Civilised with the following additions:

**Common Skill Bonuses:** +35% to Culture (own) and Lore (regional), +25% to Dance and Sleight, they also gain +10% to Resilience.

**Combat Styles:** Decadent Adventurers choose one Combat Style from the following and gain a +5% bonus: 2H spear, 2H sword, bow, crossbow, dagger, polearm, rapier, spear and shield, spear, sword and shield.

**Advanced Skills:** All decadent Adventurers gain the following **Advanced Skills:** Courtesy, Language (native) +50%, and Seduction +15%. In addition, decadent Adventurers choose from three Advanced Skills from the following: Art (any), Craft (any), Dance, Language (any), Lore (any), Mechanisms, Play Instrument, Streetwise.

**Starting Money:** Decadent begin the game with 6D6x85 Silver Pieces.

**Magic:** As Civilised cultures.

## DEGENERATE

The last survivors of decadent civilizations start to feud over dwindling resources, or are driven away by stronger cultures. Fleeing into the wilderness, or deep underground beneath their ruins, they start to inbreed and devolve into something no longer entirely human. Degenerates may outwardly resemble savages, but they carry the evil taint of fallen empires.

### As Civilised with the following additions:

**Common Skill Bonuses:** +35% to Culture (own) and Lore (regional), +25% to Persistence and Brawn, they also gain +15% to Resilience.

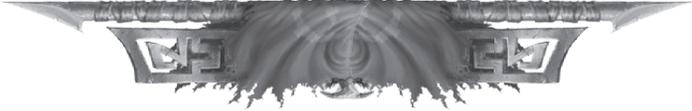
**Combat Styles:** Degenerate Adventurers choose two Combat Styles from the following and gain a +10% bonus: 2H spear, 2H sword, bow, crossbow, dagger, polearm, rapier, spear and shield, spear, sword and shield.

**Advanced Skills:** All degenerate Adventurers gain the following **Advanced Skills:** Courtesy, Language (native) +50%. In addition, degenerate Adventurers choose from three Advanced Skills from the following: Art (any), Craft (any), Dance, Language (any), Lore (any), Mechanisms, Play Instrument, Streetwise.

**Starting Money:** Degenerate begin the game with 5D6x60 Silver Pieces.

**Magic:** As Civilised cultures.

# NEW MONSTERS



## Embalmed Creature (Mummy)

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6+12	23	1-3	Right Leg	3/8
CON	3D6+12	23	4-6	Left Leg	3/8
SIZ	2D6+6	13	7-9	Abdomen	3/9
INT	2D6+6	13	10-12	Chest	3/10
POW	3D6	11	13-15	Right Arm	3/7
DEX	2D6	7	16-18	Left Arm	3/7
CHA	1	1	19-20	Head	3/8

Combat Actions	2
Damage Modifier	+1D6
Magic Points	11
Movement	6m
Strike Rank	+10

*Armour:* Bandages and toughened, wizened skin. No Armour Penalty.

*Traits:* Disease Immunity, Poison Immunity, Life Sense.

*Skills:* Possesses the same skills from life, though some skills may be modified by the creature's new Characteristics.

*Magic:* Double Magic Point costs for any magic the creature knew whilst alive.

## Combat Styles

Any used in life, Grasp 55% (where applicable)

## Weapons

Type	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Any used in life					
Grasp	--	M	T	1D6+1D6	As for limb

**Notes:** Wrapped from head to toe in ancient strips of mouldering linen, this creature moves with a shuffling gait.

An embalmed creature is an undead guardian created through a lengthy mummification process, during which all of the body's major organs are removed and replaced with dried herbs and flowers. After this process, the flesh is anointed with sacred oils and wrapped in purified linens. Many creatures can be turned into undead guardians like this; large cats, wolves, crocodiles and so on are some examples of the creature which can be used.

STR and CON are doubled for any embalmed/mummified creature. This example is based on the Mummy from Monsters of Legend and is a humanoid creature.

## Hybrid (Beast-Stitched) Mummy

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
<b>STR</b>	3D6+12	23	1-3	Right Leg	3/8
<b>CON</b>	3D6+12	23	4-6	Left Leg	3/8
<b>SIZ</b>	2D6+6	13	7-9	Abdomen	3/9
<b>INT</b>	2D6+6	13	10-12	Chest	3/10
<b>POW</b>	3D6	11	13-15	Right Arm	3/7
<b>DEX</b>	2D6	7	16-18	Left Arm	3/7
<b>CHA</b>	1	1	19-20	Head	3/8

<b>Combat Actions</b>	2
<b>Damage Modifier</b>	+1D6
<b>Magic Points</b>	11
<b>Movement</b>	6m
<b>Strike Rank</b>	+10

*Armour:* Bandages and toughened, wizened skin. No Armour Penalty.

*Traits:* Disease Immunity, Poison Immunity, Life Sense.

*Skills:* Possesses the same skills from life, though some skills may be modified by the creature's new Characteristics.

*Magic:* Double Magic Point costs for any magic the creature knew whilst alive.

### Combat Styles

Any used in life, Claw 55%, Peck 55%

### Weapons

Type	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Any used in life					
Claw	--	M	T	1D6+1D6	As for arm
Peck	--	S	T	1D4+1D6	As for head

**Notes:** These grisly monsters are created by the beast-cults of Yar-Ammon, who exhume and steal embalmed bodies of humans and animals from their tombs and stitch them together using a mix of parts from both.

Each cult tends to use animal parts from its own patron beast, so the cult of the hyena-god would create hybrids of mummified humans and hyenas, while the cult of the vulture-god would use parts from embalmed vultures, and so on.

These are variants of the creature based Mummy and are usually humanoid in nature, though there are examples of such Mummy creatures made from a mix of avian and beast parts. This creature has the claws of an eagle for example, the head of an eagle and the legs and body of a man.

## Beast-man of Khadis

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6x2	21	1-3	Right Leg	1/5
CON	3D6	11	4-6	Left Leg	1/5
SIZ	2D6+6	13	7-9	Abdomen	1/6
INT	2D6+6	7	10-12	Chest	1/7
POW	3D6	11	13-15	Right Arm	1/5
DEX	3D6+3	14	16-18	Left Arm	1/5
CHA	3D6	11	19-20	Head	1/5

Combat Actions	2
Damage Modifier	+1D4
Magic Points	11
Movement	12m
Strike Rank	+11

*Armour:* Tough hide. No Armour Penalty.

*Traits:* Night Sight (if beast has it)

*Skills:* Athletics 80%, Evade 55%, Perception 50%, Persistence 43%, Resilience 43%, Stealth 55%, Survival 40%, Track 50%

## Combat Styles

Beastial Rage (bite, claw) 60%

## Weapons

Type	Range	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	--	L	S	1D8+1D4	As for Head
Claw	--	M	M	1D6+1D4	As for Arm

**Notes:** A beast-man is created by the ancient ritual known as the Song of the Beast-Gods. The ritual transforms an ordinary human into a stronger, more powerful creature, with traits resembling the cult's patron animal. In ancient times, legions of such feral creatures served the priests of Yar-Ammon more or less openly.