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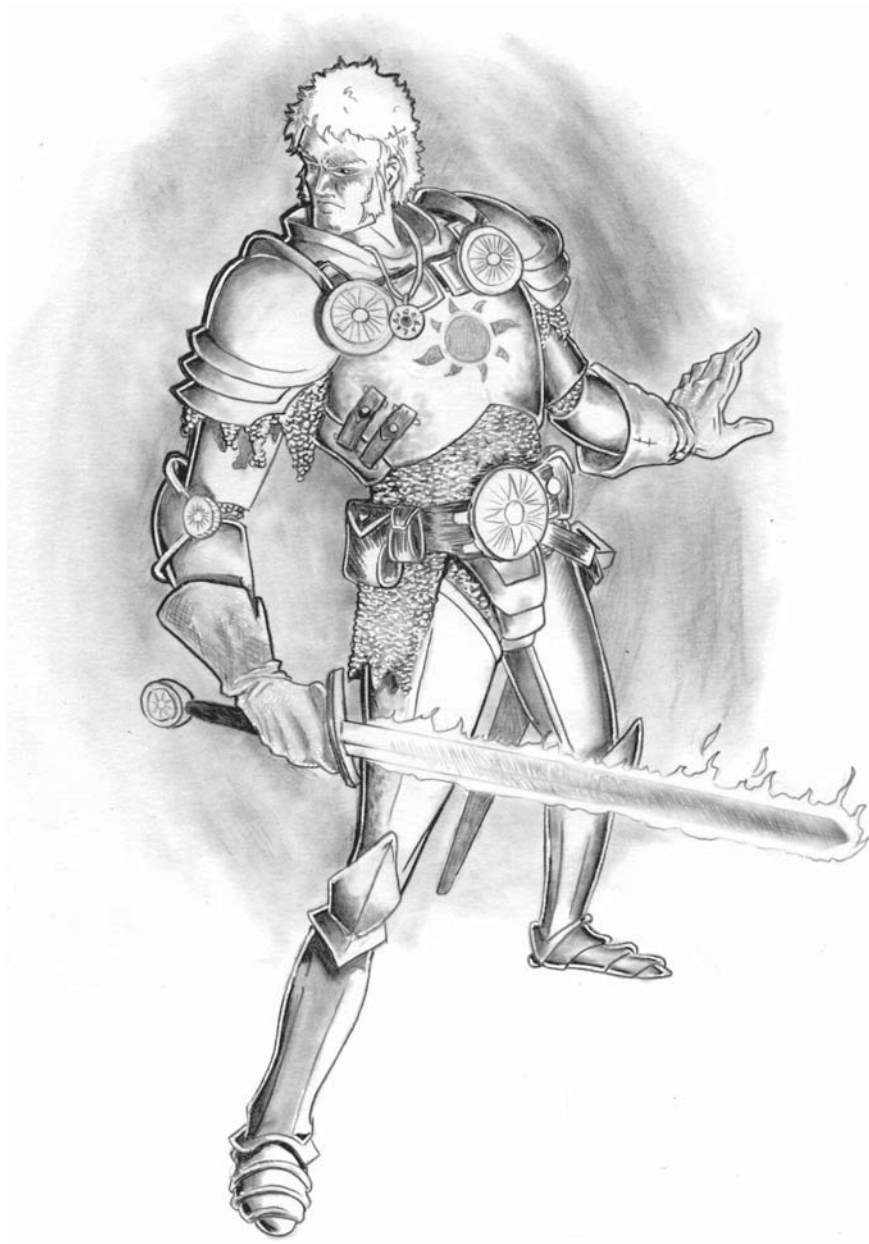
EVERNIGHT



SHANE LACY HENSLEY

EVERNIGHT

by Shane Lacy Hensley



THE DARKEST FANTASY

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DEDICATION

To Bob and Chris, for blowing up one world and creating another.
And of course to the fam--Michelle, KK, and RoRo.

Look for updates at:

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THE MINSTREL'S TALE

You would like a story of the Seven? Of course! They are the most beloved heroes of our land, and I have many tales of their brave deeds. Would you like to hear of the time they slew Tirathrax the dragon? Or of when they fought a dozen giants in the high Mountains of Dread? Ah, wait! I have it. Let me tell one you may not have heard yet. I call it, the Seven and the Troll King.

*King Kaden sat upon his throne, watching the boats in the channel below.
One ship came in, its crew all affright, for some of its mates had vanished that night.*

The ship's captain, Katrina, spoke to the King, for help in fighting whatever dark thing,

Had taken her crew, and butchered them grimly. King Kaden agreed, and listened intently.

Comely Katrina spoke of the blood, they'd found on the deck leading down to the mud.

Scores of tracks down the beach, they followed, then reached,

A cave, dank and dark, leading down to the heart,

Of old caverns, half-flooded. They were called the King's Tunnels.

In ages past, the rulers above, had used them to bury the ones they had loved.

Smugglers used the caverns in times more recent, for crimes against people of Kings Port more decent.

But a dozen years prior, the old king of the City, had cleaned out the caves with no quarter, no pity.

The King's Tunnels sat empty for a number of years, until new horrors moved in, and made them their lairs.

Katrina said monsters, with blue skin and white hair, had taken up residence, deep down in there.

They'd taken their mates, ripped them to shreds, taken them, it seems, right out of their beds.

Sea trolls, they called them. Some said skags, some said manes. Flesh-eating monsters everyone complained.

Katrina's sailors were brave men, honest and bold, but these horrors were too much for their blades to scold.

King Kaden smiled, his countenance most even, and said, "Don't worry, Katrina. I'll send for the Seven."

The Seven had just returned from thwarting some evil, and were in the City to enjoy their rewards, most ample.

King Kaden's call was never ignored, so the City's greatest heroes put on their armor and swords,

They met with Katrina and heard her grim tale, then pledged her by morning, this evil would fail.

They went into the tunnels that very same night, intent on showing the trolls how to fight.

The dwarf known as Urich struck first it is said, lopping off over a dozen trolls' heads.

Next up was Sarrian, brave elven ranger. Her sword slew eight more without any danger.

Wygand the half-orc struck next, snick-snacking his blade through a troll's thick blue neck.

Zelda, the Sun Priest, let the sun in the caves, and vanquished a score of fiends in a fiery blaze.

Spyke it is said, had a very strange ride, 'top a monstrous fish with sharp scales and green hide.

Teeth long as greatswords, eyes shining like beacons, Spyke's twin thieves claws slashed it to ribbons.

Tyvek, the wizard, also drew fame, when he slew a young dragon with his favorite spell, Flame!

Finally the Seven found their way to the hall, where the king of the sea trolls ruled over all.

Grimly, they pushed their way through the trolls, their weapons and spells took a terrible toll.

A hundred monsters died in that room, deep in the King's Tunnels, once again, a dark tomb.

Of course it was Kerreth, brave Knight of the Sun, with whose magical blade, the battle was won.

The Red Knight slashed his way to the throne, where the troll king sat nibbling some poor sailor's bone.

His sword glowed with light, Fury was its name, and it struck down the troll king in furious flame.

The rest of the trolls scattered like ashes, into the tunnels, the caves, and the passages.

The Seven returned to cheers and hurrahs. King Kaden offered them gold, but the Seven, as always, accepted it not.

"Good Captain Katrina," Kerreth then said, "we have done our duty and avenged your poor dead."

"The monsters below were savage and cruel, but they are gone now, and so safe is your crew."

"We don't ask for treasure, we don't ask for fame. We ask only that you remember the flame."

"For it was Solace, the Sun God, who blessed our fine blades, and allowed us to return to the warm light of day."

Beautiful Katrina wept at the words. Love for Kerreth she proclaimed, and was heard.

But the Seven cannot live as you and I. They cannot settle down, raise children, have brides.

Their duty is sacred, to answer the call. To fight for the people. To fight for us all.

A WORLD OF HEROES

TARTH

The world of Tarth is filled with dwarven strongholds, dark elven forests, valleys of merry half-folk, and scattered human cities.

But it wasn't always so.

More than a thousand years ago, a race of savage spider-like creatures infested the land.

Legend says the spiders nearly wiped out the intelligent races. This time of troubles is called "the Scourge." Fortunately, a great human heroine named Tarrian united the elves, dwarves, humans, and half-folk against them. The alliance banded together and battled the arachnoids in the fields, in the valleys, and deep within their very lairs. When the alliance was through, they hunted down any stragglers and eventually drove the entire species into total extinction.

After the Scourge, with no common enemy to fight, the races warred with one another. At least three Great Race Wars have scarred the lands of Tarth. The last was just over a decade ago.

Valusia, the middle kingdom, where our tale takes place, is currently at peace, however, both with the races and with its neighbors. This peace has existed for the last dozen years, since the coming of King Crassus Kaden.

NATIONS OF TARTH

Valusia is the crown jewel of Tarth and the center of the known lands. It is a fair land with a good king. The farms in its green valleys are bountiful, its forests full of game, and its rivers full of fish.

All the races—except the barbaric orcs of the Dread Mountains—live in peace in Valusia. The neighbors to the north, a loose confederation of northmen called the White Towns, are mostly kept at bay by the Dread Mountains. King Kaden reinforces their friendship with lucrative trade agreements. When that doesn't work, his all-volunteer army is more than up to the task of repelling the disorganized barbarians.

The exotic and faraway land of Kos is similarly allied. The bronze-hued people of "the Golden Kingdom" rule the seas, but their allegiance makes them more a mercenary navy for King Kaden than a rival.

Off the southern coast of Valusia are the Dragon Isles, a chain of volcanic islands known for the scores of drakes that dwell in their fiery bowels. Their people raid far and wide in their fire-spewing Dragon Ships, frequently battling with patrols from Kos. But even these tattooed warriors know better than to directly incur King Kaden's wrath.

KINGS PORT, CITY OF HEROES

Kings Port, the capital of Valusia, reflects the prosperity of Valusia and the integration of TARTH's races and cultures. It is not the largest city in the world, but it is the most prosperous and the most peaceful. Its streets are well-patrolled by an incorruptible City Watch, and it has an exotic market for most anything an honest heart desires.

For all its peaceful grace, Kings Port is most famous for its heroes. Members of all the humanoid races come to "the City," as it is often called, to start their careers as legendary heroes.

Humans are the most prevalent race in the City, but thousands of elves, dwarves, half-folk, and demi-humans are found there as well. They are mostly wanderers and crafty adventurers who make frequent stopovers to spend the treasure they take from "dungeon delving," thwarting goblinoid hordes, and of course, saving the world.

Those with troubles frequent the City of Heroes looking for such adventurers as well. A great number of legendary wizards and warriors, Red Knights and rangers, got their starts in Kings Port's gleaming streets. Even the famous Seven began their careers in Kings Port.

THE DRAGON AND THE SHADOW

The place most young heroes frequent for work is the Silver Dragon, an upscale tavern where no violence or unsavory types are tolerated. More experienced adventurers—those with reputations and plenty of suns to spend—can be found in the King's Shadow, a far more exclusive and expensive tavern that lies in the shadow of one of the royal castle's gleaming white towers. This prestigious establishment lies on the King's Road, which leads directly from the prosperous farms of the lowlands into the city and on into the castle.

The people of Valusia consider the City a spawning ground for new heroes who will save them from darkness when times are bad. If a dragon rampages, the people flee together and wait for a savior. If the orcish hordes get too large or overbold, the citizens call on King Kaden to assemble a band of hardened warriors to defeat them.

Of course, many would-be champions go straight to their dooms because of this odd relationship, but many do eventually triumph and become renowned guardians of the more common folk.

A few sages worry that the reliance on "heroes" has made the average man too dependent on others to resolve his problems.



Few listen to such advice though—they are far too caught up in the awe-inspiring tales of legendary quests of larger-than-life adventurers to pay the sages much heed.

THE SEVEN

By far the most famous heroes to have emerged from this relationship are the Seven.

In truth, the “Seven” have often included more heroes, and sometimes less, but their greatest deeds have occurred in the last few years with a core group of renowned adventurers. Everyone knows of Urich the dwarven warrior, Sarrian the elven ranger, Wygand the warrior, Zelda the Sun Priest, the mischievous rogue Spyke, Tyvek the one-eyed fire mage, and the most famous of all, Kerreth the Righteous, the most famous of living Red Knights.

The Seven’s tales are sung by minstrels from Valusia to distant Kos. They are recorded in historical texts and tawdry fiction. They grace the tapestries of a thousand manors. Exquisite signed portraits of the Seven even hang in the mahogany halls of the King’s Shadow.

The Seven’s effect on Valusia cannot be overstated. Those who want to be great heroes model themselves after the Seven. Those who do not crave such action rely on the Seven and others of their ilk to save them from Valusia’s darker inhabitants.

THE WILDERNESS

For the most part, the hills and dales of Valusia are safe, with friendly villagers generously ruled by caring barons and their trustworthy knights. These men keep their local areas cleared of hostile orcs and other monstrosities, while the King’s own patrols keep safe the roads and trails in between.

There are numerous dangers for those who stray from the paths, however. Orcs and other goblinoids still dwell in the Dread Mountains barely a day’s ride from the City, and the occasional dragon from the southern isles is spotted terrorizing outlying villages. Old Sa Karan ruins, the hiding places of humans during the Scourge, also appear from time to time, just waiting—it seems—for hearty adventurers to explore and loot their ancient and forgotten treasures. Even within the City, the King’s Tunnels are occasionally plagued by sea trolls, and the catacombs occasionally give rise to gruesome undead.

More than one hero’s fortune has been made plundering these dangerous locales.

RELIGION

The people of TARTH revere Solace, the Sun God. His divine existence is not debated—the Red Knights and Sun Priests dedicate their entire lives to Solace and are rewarded with visible powers of fire and light in return.

Solace is present in the particular religious beliefs of most races, though humans are the only race who seem to be able to channel his divine powers, for only humans may become Sun Priests or Red Knights.

Elves and half-folk revere Solace as a part of *imana*, the spirit of nature. They believe Solace is but one of these spirits, though without doubt the greatest of them.

Dwarves also revere Solace for his obvious power, but like the elves, do not formally worship him. The dwarves are not particularly religious people, but when they do pray, it’s to Terrax, Lord of the Earth and The God in Darkness. Some dwarves believe Terrax has forsaken the world, or is perhaps even dead, for he does not grant powers to his followers like the Sun God does.

Half-folk have no particular religion, but revere Solace for his obvious power, and conduct their life-ceremonies in his name.

Orcs, and by extension some half-orcs, worship Kargak, a brutal, bestial god of slaughter and savagery.

Some minor religions and cults claim fealty to other gods, and offer proof of their existence in the form of shamanic powers. Most sages believe shamans—such as those of the orcs—are actually mages, working minor magic without any real understanding of where their power comes from.

YOUR ROLE

Overall, TARTH is a very typical fantasy world. The settlements in enlightened and organized kingdoms such as Valusia do quite well, while those within the borders of tyrants, or too near savage creatures, must fend off constant dangers.

Your character is a young man or woman looking to become one of these heroes.

Your tale starts in the City of Kings Port. Let’s make your new hero now.

MAKING HEROES

Making heroes for *Evernight* is as easy as creating characters for any *Savage Worlds* game. You'll find a character sheet designed specifically for this setting both in the back of this book and on Pinnacle's website.

Here's how to start.

1) RACE

First choose a race. The major races of Tarth, a brief description of their history, their benefits, and the rules for playing them are presented on pages 10-15. Choose a race now.

2) TRAITS

Now it's time to figure your hero's attributes and skills.

You start with a d4 in each of your five attributes: Agility, Smarts, Spirit, Strength, and Vigor. You then have 5 points to distribute among them as you choose. Raising an attribute a die type costs 1 point, and you may not raise an attribute above d12.

You also have 15 points to buy your skills. Raising a skill by a die type costs 1 point as long as it's no higher than the attribute it's linked to. It costs 2 points per die type to raise a skill over its linked attribute.

The following skills are available in *Evernight*.

Boating	Persuasion
Climb	Repair
Fighting	Shooting
Gambling	Stealth
Guts	Streetwise
Healing	Survival
Intimidation	Swimming
Knowledge	Taunt
Lockpicking	Throwing
Notice	Tracking

SECONDARY STATISTICS

Charisma is a measure of your hero's likability, and is added to Persuasion and Streetwise rolls. Your Charisma modifier is +0 unless changed by Edges or Hindrances.

Pace is equal to 6 for all but dwarves, who have a Pace of 5.

Parry is equal to 2 plus half your Fighting.

Toughness is equal to 2 plus half your Vigor.

3) SPECIAL ABILITIES

Now decide if you want any Hindrances. If so, you may now use the points from them to gain one of the benefits below. You may take one Major Hindrance (worth 2 points) and two Minor Hindrances (worth 1 point each).

For 2 Hindrance points you can:

- Raise an attribute one die type.
- Choose an Edge.

For 1 Hindrance point you can:

- Gain another skill point.
- Gain an additional \$500

4) GEAR

A hero starts with the clothes on his back and 500 golden "suns," the currency of Tarth. You'll want to spend some of that now on armor, weapons, and whatever other equipment you want. You'll find a complete list starting on page 19. You might want to buy only basic weapons and armor now, and save a few suns for equipment particular to the mission you're about to embark on.

5) BACKGROUND

Finish up by filling out your hero's background. Most characters in *Evernight* should come from Valusia. Your hero may not have been born there, but the last few months of life at least should have been spent somewhere near the City of Heroes.

The dark theme of the later stages of the game has much more resonance if you spend a little time thinking about where your character comes from. Does she have family? If so, where? In the City? In one of the outlying villages? Was she celebrated when she left home for trying to become one of Tarth's heroes? Or did her family chastise her for a fool?

A few notes about how your character got where she is today may help you make certain critical decisions later on.

RACES

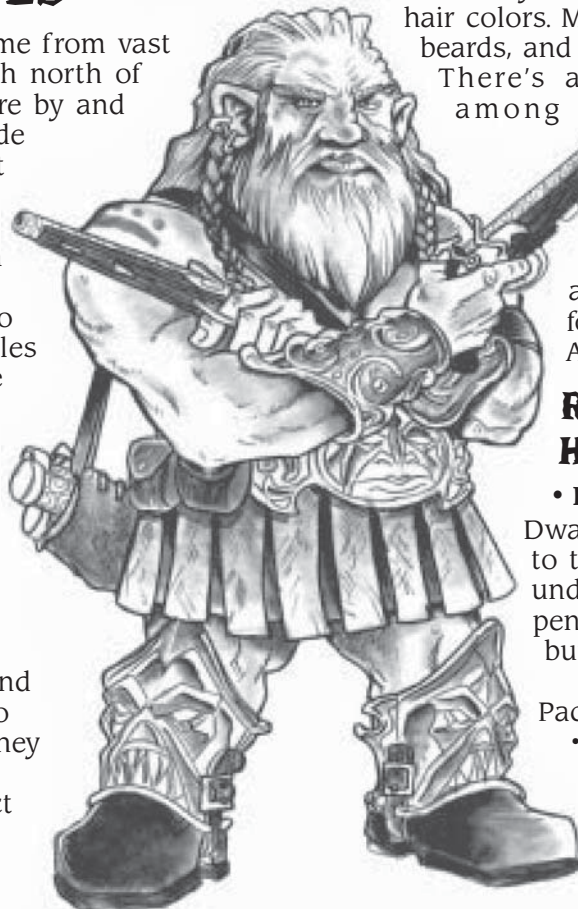
The four civilized races in the world of Tarth are humans, elves, half-folk, and dwarves. Half-elves are also common, and a rare few half-orcs prowl the city-streets as well. These races live in relative peace, but the last Great Race War between the races is only thirteen years past.

Characters in *Evernight* can be elven, half-elven, dwarven, half-folk, half-orc, or human. You can choose any race you'd like—all are equal in different ways. The racial abilities of each are discussed below.

DWARVES

Dwarves originally come from vast caverns beneath the earth north of the White Towns. They are by and large a solitary race, made warlike by their frequent battles with the many brutal creatures they share their subterranean homes with. Their villages are testaments to the life-and-death struggles of their past, for they are always built in easily defensible positions surrounded by barricades of sharpened stakes, pit traps, and other hazards.

Later in their history, with the invention of gunpowder, the dwarves added cannons, mines, and more creative defenses to their ancestral homes. They used these martial advantages to great effect in the last Great Race Wars.



At some point in the past, some dwarven clans moved forth and encountered elves and humans. Their meetings were rarely friendly—the dwarves had little understanding of the elves' love of the "sticky, bug-infested" forests, their eclectic poetry, alien music, or dainty manners. They got along only slightly better with the humans, but could never understand their wanderlust or need to expand their short-lived empires. "Half as long and twice as bright" is how humans view the world—according to dwarves.

Dwarves revere Solace and do not deny his obvious power with humans, but they worship Terrax, the King of the Mountain, the Earthen King, or the Dwarven Lord. In times past, it seems Terrax was also called the God in Darkness, but that term is rarely used these days. Dwarves are not particularly religious anyway. They perform serviceable rituals to Terrax during births, marriages, and funerals, but little else. They are more likely to curse in Terrax's name, or raise a cup to the Earthen King before battle or a night of heavy drinking.

Dwarves live upwards of 200 years. They have ruddy skin and sport all typical hair colors. Most all males grow

There's an unspoken rule among

beards, and are quite proud of them. dwarves that the size of their beards is generally representative of the size of their...courage.

Elves say the dwarves are trying to compensate for their small stature. Among other things.

RACIAL EDGES & HINDRANCES

• Low Light Vision:

Dwarven eyes are accustomed to the dark of the underworld. They ignore penalties for darkness in all but pitch black conditions.

• **Slow:** Dwarves have a Pace of 5".

• **Tough:** Dwarves are stout and tough. They start with a d6 in Vigor instead of a d4.

ELVES

Elves are long-lived souls who originally came from the deep forests. Their treetop homes are connected by walkways and swinging vines, which keep them safe from the terrible beasts that lurked below in ages past. This was particularly true thousands of years ago during the Scourge. Their homes are built of sticks and vines and naturally camouflaged to blend into the thick canopies of the deep woods. It is said that a stranger can stand beneath an entire elven village without realizing it is there.

Life above the forest floor has made the elves cagey hunters. They prefer to fight their prey with guile and cunning rather than brute force. They favor long spears as well as bows and arrows, but dislike weapons that rely on gunpowder, believing that such loud weapons may kill one beast but attract a dozen more. The elves also know the makings of gunpowder are not found in their forests and do not wish to become dependent on the dwarves lest another Great Race War break out.

When young elves reach 50 years old, they are expected to venture out and explore the rest of the world for a few decades. This is called their "Wandering Time." They do this both to fulfill their own natural curiosity and to learn about the world at large. They are also expected to warn their elders of any dire developments occurring outside their arboreal homes.

Many wandering elves begin their journey in Kings Port, hoping to find a group of heroes to join for a few years of adventure and travel. There is no better way to learn of one's neighbors than to fight by their sides.

Fortunately, most elves are well-prepared for their travels. They are used to hunting prey and defending their homes from the high boughs of the trees and

so most are quite proficient with bows when they are but a few decades old. Older elves claim the younger generation are losing their skills, however, because the dangers to their homes are not as great as in previous centuries.

Elves believe all living things—from the earth to the animals to the trees—have spirits. These spirits form a collective consciousness called "imana." Elves don't worship spirits or imana, they simply "respect" it. When an elf shoots a deer, for example, he thanks it for its meat. When he chops down a sapling to make a new bow, he thanks the tree for its strength. They believe in Solace, but recognize him as a powerful spirit of imana rather than a separate entity.

The "fair folk's" belief in imana has caused friction with their neighbors in ages past. When humans cut down too many trees, or dwarves blast apart the mountains indiscriminately, the elves take great offense. A few of these controversies have resulted in violence, and one led to the last Great Race War 13 years prior to the current time.

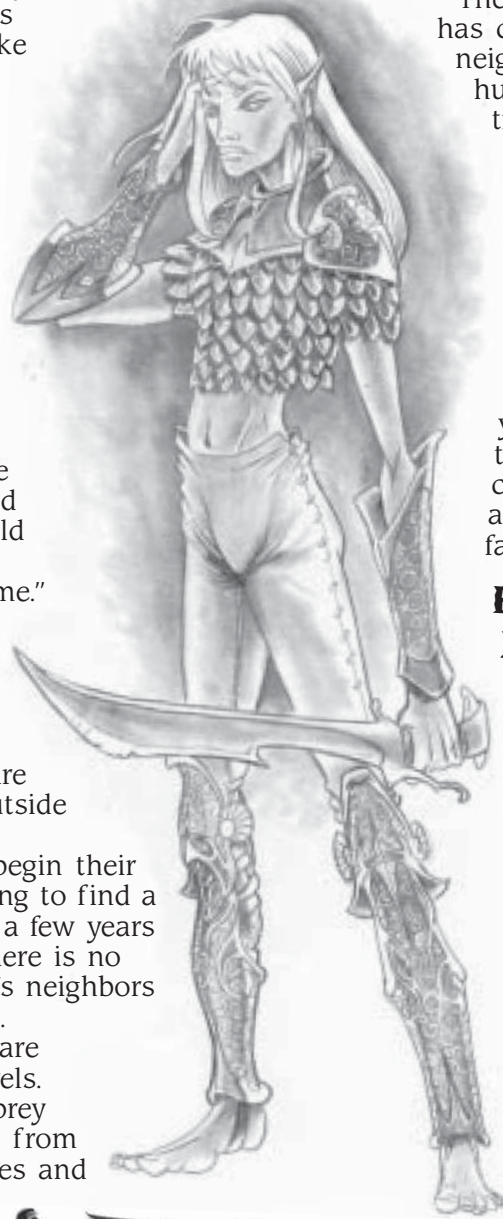
Elves live upwards of 200 years. They have fair skin and their hair includes all typical colors, plus shades of silver and blue. They never grow facial hair.

RACIAL EDGES & HINDRANCES

- **Agile:** Elves are graceful and agile. They start with a d6 in Agility instead of a d4.

- **All Thumbs:** Elves have an inbred dislike of mechanical objects (including crossbows and muskets). They have the All Thumbs Hindrance.

- **Low Light Vision:** Like dwarves, elves have cat-like eyes and so can ignore lighting penalties for all but total darkness.



HALF-ELVES

Half-elves are a solid mix of their two parents. They gain the elves' grace but none of their elegant frailty. They are almost always born of elven mothers and human fathers. Male elves tend to think human women are a bit coarse, but human men see elven women as exotic and extremely desirable.

It is difficult for humans to live in the arboreal world of elves, so most half-elves mature in human settlements where they learn the finesse of their mothers and the adaptability of their fathers. Many of those who wander do so when their human fathers pass on and their mothers return to their own families in the deep forests.

It is their long-lives that often make other humans resent the half-elves. Elven women in human settlements are also frequent targets of jealous suitors when their human husbands become old and unable to perform their spousal duties. Many of their children end up involved in these awkward triangles, and more than a few flee after performing reckless acts of violence in defense of their family honor. Certainly this is not every half-elf's tale, but it is a far too common one.

On the elven side, half-elves are not easily accepted. It takes quite a few years for a village to accept such an individual, even if he or she is accompanied by the elven parent. It isn't so much that the elves resent the person's human side, it's more that their communities are very tight-knit and don't accept any strangers easily. The parent is usually accepted more quickly only because she (or he) likely came from that settlement in the first place, and has now returned home after a few decades "tryst" with a human lover.

Half-elves' life-spans are closer to their human parent than their elven. Most live only to about 100 years. They don't start feeling the effects of age until they reach about 75 however, which is when most settle down or wander into the forests to spend their final years among the elves. Half-elves have a wide variety of hair colors, including all the vibrant hues of the elves. They never grow facial hair, however.

RACIAL EDGES & HINDRANCES

- **Heritage:** Some half-elves retain the grace of their elven mother or father. Others gain the adaptability of their human parent.

A half-elf may either start with a free Edge of his choice (as a human), or a d6 in Agility instead of a d4.

The character's features match this dominance as well, so those who take the free Edge look more human, while those with a higher Agility appear lithe and nimble.

- **Low Light Vision:**

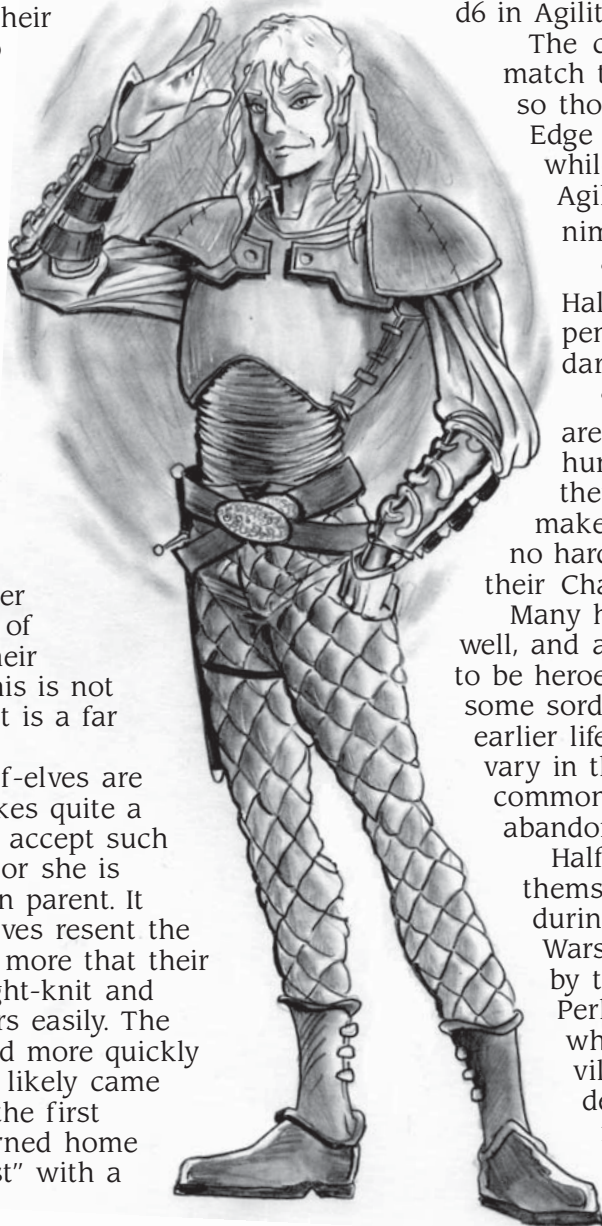
Half-elves ignore lighting penalties for all but total darkness.

- **Outsider:**

Half-elves are never quite accepted by humans or elves as one of their own. This tends to make them wanderers with no hard roots. They suffer -2 to their Charisma.

Many have troubled pasts as well, and are perhaps attempting to be heroes now to overcome some sordid mistake from their earlier life. Most of their stories vary in the details but share a common theme of abandonment and isolation.

Half-elves have found themselves particularly lonely during TARTH'S GREAT RACE WARS, and branded traitors by their foes afterwards. Perhaps worst of all, those who hail from human villages are branded deserters by their neighbors should they refuse to be drafted into service.



HALF-FOLK

Half-folk are short, thin, nimble creatures who hail from a single distant dale on the far western shore of Valusia called Prank's Luck. Sages believe the race was born here and has not strayed far, for though half-folk are found everywhere, this is the only purely half-folk village found anywhere in Tarth.

Most of the "little people" are quite happy with this arrangement and remain among their own kind at Prank's Luck, though they love visitors from the "tall races." Those who wander from home generally do so only when they have forced to leave for some reason or another. A large percentage of wandering half-folk are those who were run out of Prank's Luck, so other races sometimes get the idea the entire race is made up of nothing but mischievous thieves. Nothing could be further from the truth however, for it is the half-folk's belief in fair play that causes these few troublemakers to be exiled in the first place (banishment is the half-folk's most severe punishment).

The rest who wander tend to do so for some noble purpose, such as to find a cure for some disease, or to seek help from heroes or mercenaries when their villages are threatened by orcs, pirates, or other raiders.

Some human sages believe half-folk are the offspring of elves and dwarves. There is some evidence to support this theory. Prank's Luck features burrows concealed beneath the roots of giant trees, and the small folk have a penchant for digging and gems. They also love to scamper into high to pluck the freshest escape hungry limbs fruit or predators.

Purists of the two races violently oppose such ideas. They point to occasional odd couplings that still take place and the fact that no such unions have ever borne children.

In either case, sages agree the half-folk's distinct ancestral home at Prank's Luck is evidence that whatever brought about their creation happened only once in Tarth's unrecorded past.

Half-folk themselves don't seem to care where they came from. Prank's Luck seems to date from about Tarrian's time, but no recorded

histories exist to prove who their founders were, who "Prank" might have been, or just what his "luck" was. The only time the half-folk seem to consider their origin has been during the race wars. They remain unofficially neutral, but members of the race have fought as scouts and agents for humans, dwarves, and elves alike.

Religiously, half-folk believe in the elven concept of *imana*, revering Solace as the most visible and important of the spirits. Like dwarves however, half-folk do not formally worship except during important festivities such as birth, marriage, or death. Unlike dwarves, these events are marked with great celebrations enjoyed by the entire community.

Prank's Luck has a great central gathering area for this very purpose. At the center of the old village is the stump of a great oak tree where celebrators (or village leaders in times of danger) can address the assembled crowd.

Half-folk accept their lot happily, and have an outlook and love of life far greater than their small stature might otherwise indicate.

For whatever reason, there are very few surly half-folk.

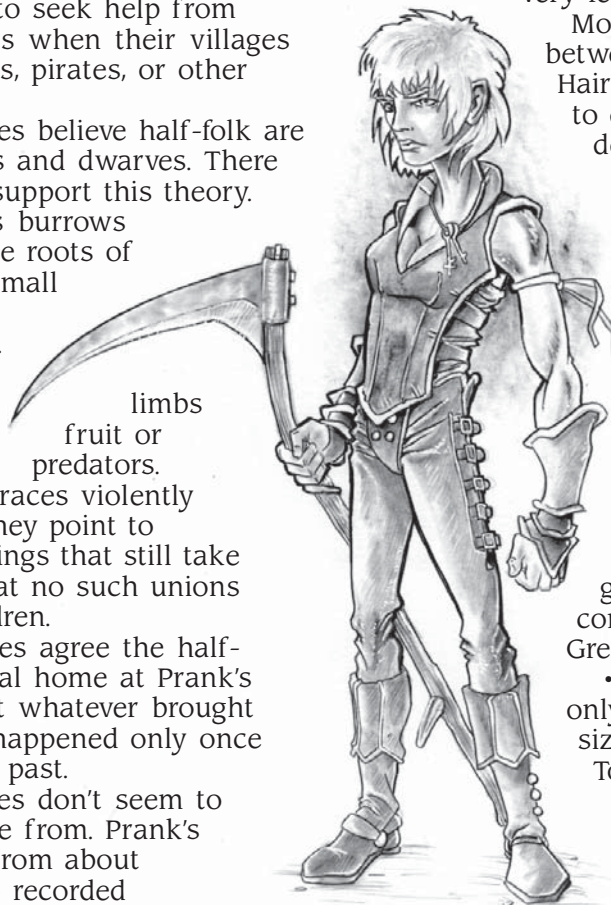
Most half-folk live to be between 80 and 100 years old. Hair color ranges from blonde to dark black. If they are truly descended from elves, they did not inherit their exotic hair colors. Neither do they do grow facial hair as their alleged dwarven ancestors. Bushy hair and long sideburns are quite popular these days.

RACIAL EDGES & HINDRANCES

- **Luck:** Half-folk draw one additional benny per game session. This may be combined with the Luck and Great Luck Edges.

- **Small:** Half-folk average only about 4' tall. Their small size subtracts 1 from their Toughness.

- **Spirited:** Half-folk are generally optimistic beings. They start with a d6 Spirit instead of a d4.



HALF-ORCS

No human male would willingly couple with a female orc, but male orcs have often taken human females during their frenzied raids. Belligerent orcs have been known to rape elves and dwarves as well, but such matings don't take.

Fortunately, half-orc babes are welcome in orcish settlements and thus are spared.

Indeed, such children are treated no different from others of their kind. Half-orc young often have a difficult time growing up however, as they are physically weaker than their full-blooded mates. Most make up for any physical shortcomings they may feel by becoming that much more savage and brutal. Violence is how warriors in the orc community prove their worth to their tribe.

Some half-orcs eventually come into contact with humans, whether by being captured or leaving home of their own accord. Of all the intelligent races of TARTH, half-orcs are by far the least common in any civilized area. Even in an open and enlightened city such as Kings Port, half-orcs make up less than 1% of the total population.

Most who enter the civilized world find work as soldiers or guards. Half-orcs tend to love gunpowder and the massive carnage firearms wreak on their victims. For this reason, half-orcs make excellent musketeers. King Kaden of Kings Port employs several dozen such warriors in

his army alone, and goes out of his way to welcome more when they can be found.

A few rare half-orcs leave their savage homes when they realize just how barbaric the orcs are in comparison to the "pink skins." These wanderers often leave their homes in the dead of night to join the civilized races. They turn their backs on their violent roots and look to redeem themselves. These are perhaps the most heroic souls in all of TARTH, for they struggle daily with their own inner-beasts and bloodlust.

Orcs worship Kargak, the Lord of Slaughter, so some half-orcs secretly continue to worship him as well.

Human sages agree that such a being does not exist, and that the power of the orc shamans comes from "hedge magic" rather than any divine source.

Half-orcs have skin the color of their human mothers with black hair and small eyes. Their features are harsh and angular, like that of their more savage fathers. Their natural life-span is the same as a human, though few live long enough to die of old age.

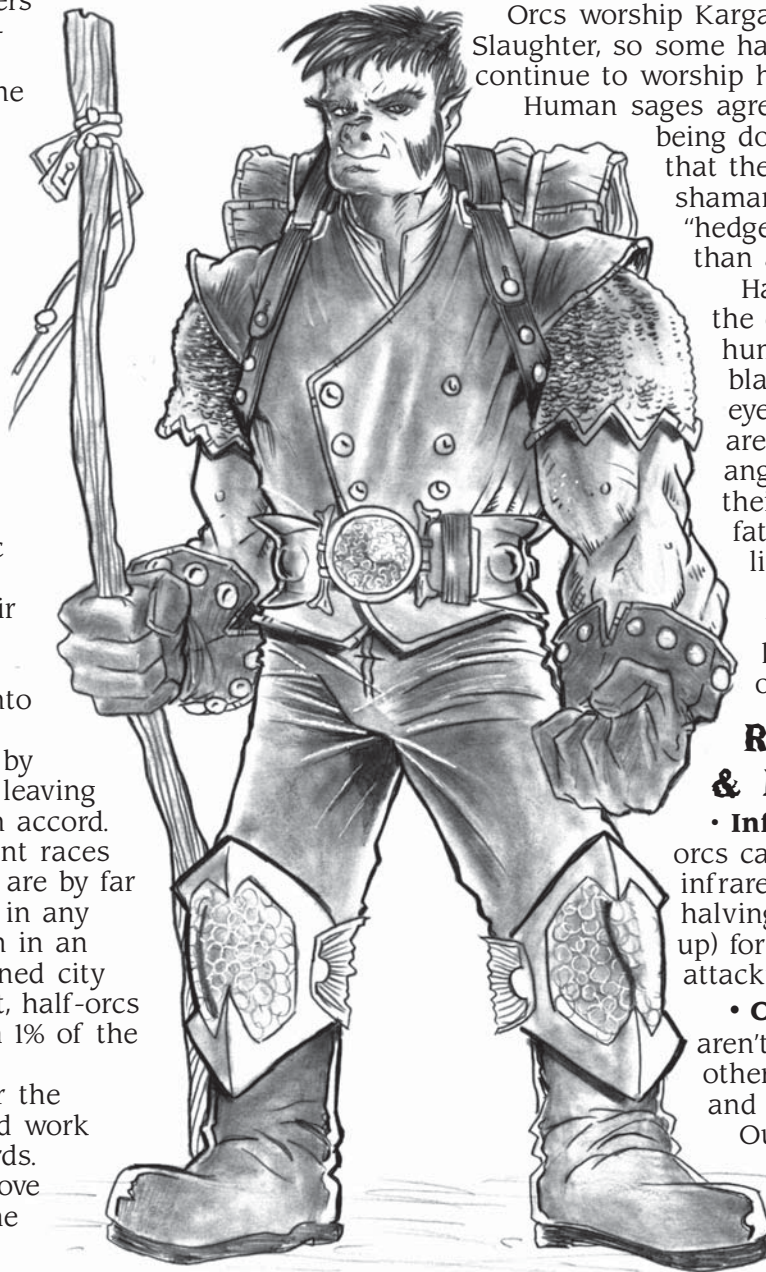
RACIAL EDGES & HINDRANCES

- **Infravision:** Half-orcs can see in the infrared spectrum, halving penalties (round up) for bad lighting when attacking living targets.

- **Outsider:** Half-orcs aren't trusted by most other civilized races, and so gain the Outsider Hindrance (-2 Charisma).

- **Strong:** Half-orcs have some of the strength of their

fathers. They start with a d6 Strength instead of a d4.



HUMANS

Humans are the standard by which all other races are measured. Not because they are the oldest, wisest, or strongest of the races, but because they are the most widespread and varied.

Elves and dwarves, the two oldest races, aren't sure where humans come from. Prior to the Scourge of the spiders, they were known as the Sa Karans, and had powerful magic. Proof of their past lies in the Sa Karan ruins that arise from time to time, and the mysterious blood stones that are sometimes found within.

During this time, Sa Karans were very specifically organized into different groups with particular hair and skin colors. Sages know this today because current generations with pure bloodlines retain their distinct looks.

For instance:

- Valusians have brown hair and green eyes.
- People of the White Towns have shock white hair with skin as pale as ice.
- Humans from the Dragon Isles have dark brown skin with jet-black hair.
- Villagers of the far southeastern coasts of Valusia have red skin and blackish-blue hair.
- The most exotic humans come from the far northeastern land of Kos. They have dark bronzed skin with brilliant red hair. Many have settled in Kings Port where they work for various guilds that trade with their homeland.

After the Scourge, Sa Karan humans left their isolated retreats and gained a new-found love for building structures in the wide-open plains. Perhaps because they simply no longer needed them, humans also forgot how to mine and craft their amazing blood stones.

This is when humans stopped being "Sa Karans" and simply became "humans."

In the thousands of years since the age of the Sa Karans, humans have intermarried and interbred to produce wildly diverse skin tones and hair colors. Sa Karan traits are still dominant in many, but it is not uncommon to see the pale skin of the White Towns mixed with the fiery red hair of Kos these days.

In their relations with other races, humans view elven females as extremely desirable. Many think of male elves as effeminate and flighty because of their love of music and poetry, art forms that aren't appreciated by most "uncultured" humans.

Dwarves garner more respect, but grudgingly. Their martial prowess is highly admired, as is their ability to manufacture gunpowder, muskets, and cannons.

Half-folk are "cute" to most humans, but useful only as scouts and spies in important matters such as warfare.

Humans are unique in that they form nations rather than tribes, and even create and maintain armies

composed of all the races to defend them! This is odd for elves and dwarves, who would never think of allowing the other races to help defend their

homes. During the last Great Race War, most human

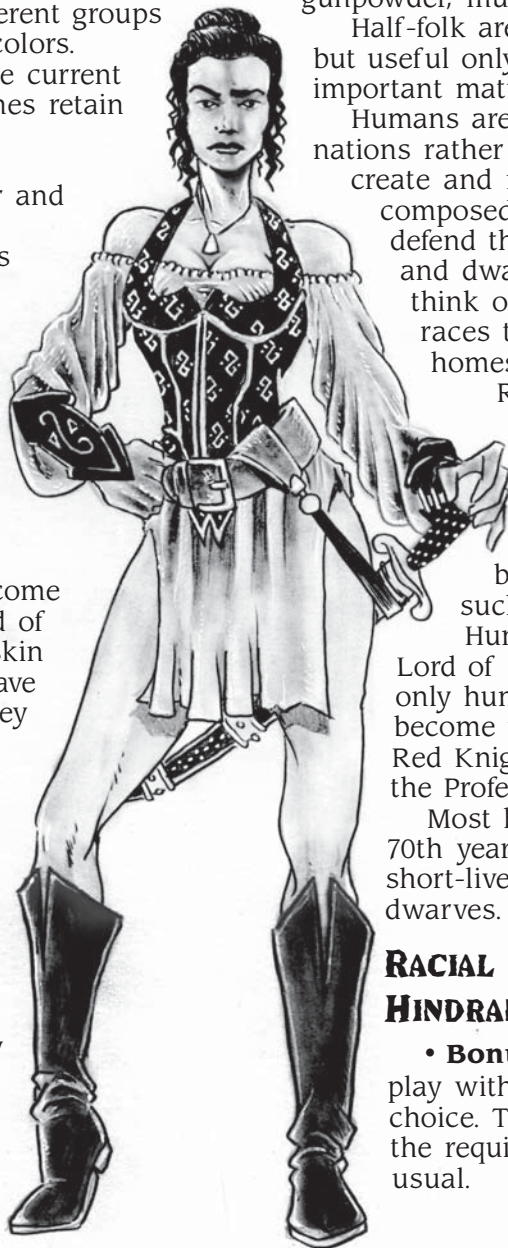
armies released their demi-human soldiers to serve with their own homelands. Only in rigid Kos have nonhumans been imprisoned during such conflicts.

Humans worship Solace, the Lord of Light and Life. In fact, only humans seem able to become the servants of Solace, Red Knights and Sun Priests (see the Professional Edges on page 17).

Most humans perish by their 70th year, making them very short-lived compared to elves and dwarves.

RACIAL EDGES & HINDRANCES

- **Bonus Edge:** Humans start play with one free Edge of their choice. The character must meet the requirements of the Edge as usual.



EDGES & HINDRANCES

HINDRANCES

The following Hindrances are not appropriate for the world of Evernight: Enemy, Wanted.

ALL THUMBS

This Hindrance works as usual. The -2 penalty applies to Repair and Shooting rolls made with crossbows, muskets, pistols, and all other black powder weapons.

EDGES

The following Edges are not appropriate for the world of Evernight: Connections, Noble, Rich.

Characters may be young sons and daughters of wealthy nobles, but only for story purposes. These Edges will be useless for most of the scripted campaign, and so cannot be taken. A character who needs extra funds to reflect such a background can still gain 500 suns for each Hindrance point as usual.

BACKGROUND EDGES

ARCANE BACKGROUND

Weird Science, Super Powers, and Psionics are not allowed.

Characters cannot take Arcane Background (Miracles) on its own, but this Edge comes with the Red Knight and Sun Priest Professional Edges (see below).

Mages are well-known in Tarth, though not common. A character may take the Arcane Background (Magic) Edge as usual. See page 26 for more on mages. Most mages are trained in the musty halls of Mizridoor, an academy for the magically-inclined in Kings Port.

BERSERK

Requirements: Novice, Human

This Edge may only be taken by humans in the world of Tarth. Such humans are exclusively from the White Towns, and invariably have white hair and pale white skin.

COMBAT EDGES

DOUBLE SHOT

Requirements: Seasoned, Elf or Half-Elf with Agility Heritage, Shooting d8+

The elves of the Great Forest are renowned not only for their accuracy with the bow, but for a number of incredible trick shots as well.

Double Shot allows an elf to fire two arrows in his bow at once, firing both at the same target at a -2 modifier to the archer's Shooting dice. The target must be within short range. If the attack is successful, both arrows hit, causing normal damage.

Double shot does not work with crossbows or other ranged weapons—only with bows and arrows.

IMPROVED DOUBLE SHOT

Requirements: Veteran, Double Shot

The elf may attack as above, but ignores the -2 penalty.

SCAMPER

Requirements: Seasoned, Agility d8+, Half-Folk

Half-folk are small and quick. Some make great use of this in combat too, scampering about like monkeys to avoid the furious blows of their larger opponents.

Opponents of man-size or larger subtract 1 from attack rolls against half-folk with this Edge. The benefit only applies when the character is aware the attack is coming, he is unbound and able to move freely, and has no encumbrance penalty.

SUNDER

Requirements: Seasoned, Dwarf

Dwarves have an instinctual knowledge of materials. Those with this Edge know just where to strike objects or armored foes to cause the most damage.

Any hand or ranged weapon in the hands of a dwarf with this Edge ignores 1 point of armor (in addition to any AP value it may

already have). A dwarf with Sunder and a maul, for instance, ignores, 3 points of armor.

The Edge applies against all forms of armor, whether it's natural or crafted.

IMPROVED SUNDER

Requirements: Veteran, Sunder

As above, but the dwarf ignores up to 2 points of armor.

WAR CRY

Requirements: Seasoned, Half-Orc

Orcs and half-orcs both can bellow an ear-splitting, nerve-wracking War Cry that has been known to send lesser foes fleeing from the field.

When used, the character may make an Intimidation roll against all targets in an area (as opposed to a single victim as usual). Place a Large Boom Template adjacent to the half-orc (a 6" area of effect, with the edge adjacent to the half-orc). Every creature within the circle must roll against the half-orc's Intimidation total.

WHIRLWIND

Requirements: Veteran, Agility d8+, Fighting d8+, two weapons

This incredible maneuver was developed by Spyke, the heroic rogue of the famous Seven. When used, a warrior with two weapons spins and dances about, attacking every opponent in his path like a deadly cyclone. On the tabletop, the character makes a running roll and must move that many inches. Every target adjacent to the fighter's path, starting with his initial position, is attacked at -4.

One small downside to this Edge is that every adjacent target must be attacked—whether friend or foe.

IMPROVED WHIRLWIND

Requirements: Veteran, Whirlwind

As above, but the penalty is reduced to -2.

PROFESSIONAL EDGES

AVATAR OF SOLACE

Requirements: Novice, Red Knight or Sun Priest

Red Knights and Sun Priests eventually gain the ability to enchant any weapon they hold with the power of the sun. The blade bursts into flame on command and adds +2 to the weapon's damage. Though servants of Solace call these "sun blades," the ability may be used on any weapon they wield with a metallic head.

An Avatar of Solace may use this ability at will as long as he holds the blade in his hand.

Sun Blades illuminate an area 10" in diameter. They can be used to start fires, but this is a slow process more suitable for creating a small campfire than setting someone alight.

Don't check to see if a foe catches fire from a hit unless the victim is particularly flammable. Even then there is only a 1 in 6 chance of setting the foe alight.

MUSKETEER

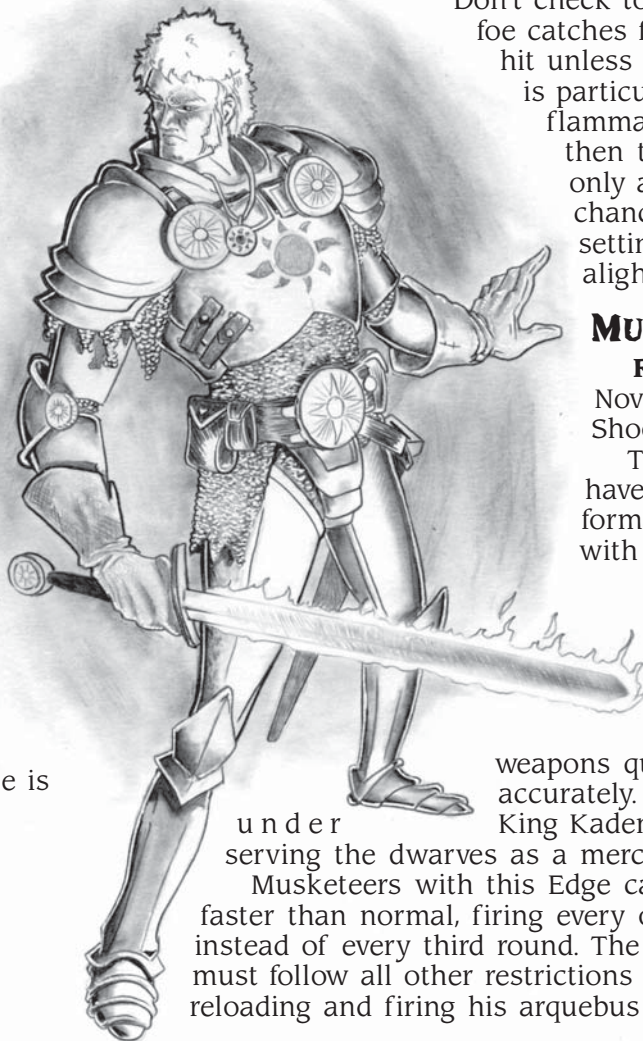
Requirements:

Novice, Shooting d8+

Those who have undergone formal training with a firearm are drilled day and night to fire and reload their

weapons quickly and accurately. Most did so under King Kaden or by

Musketeers with this Edge can reload faster than normal, firing every other round instead of every third round. The character must follow all other restrictions for reloading and firing his arquebus as usual.



RED KNIGHT

Requirements: Novice, Human, Spirit d8+, Strength d6+, Vigor d8+, Faith d6+, Fighting d8+

Red Knights are holy warriors trained in the martial arts and tasked with protecting the people of Tarth from harm.

Becoming a Red Knight is a relatively easy process—at least at the start. The applicant merely approaches a Sun Priest and asks to be taken in. The priest then watches over the young person for several weeks, or sends her on an important mission. If the petitioner seems acceptable, the Sun Priest then petitions Solace for approval.

The knighting takes place beneath the bright sun, where the priest and the applicant sit for an entire day of meditation and fasting. If Solace decides the petitioner is pure of heart, the sun beams down brightly and the knight's skin is forever singed red, as with a light sunburn. The champion is now a Red Knight.

If Solace does not find the knight pure of heart, the sunspot disappears and the would-be hero may not petition again until she performs some great and magnanimous deed to aid the people of Tarth.

On becoming a Red Knight, a character immediately gains the Arcane Background (Miracles) Edge. He may learn any of the miracles listed on page 26, though the first miracle he learns must be *healing*.

Red Knights gain +2 Charisma when dealing with civilized folk who appreciate the workings of the Sun God.

SUN PRIEST

Requirements: Novice, Human, Spirit d8+, Faith d6+

Sun Priests are blessed men and women who dedicate their lives to Solace, the lord of Light and Life.

Becoming one of the Sun God's Chosen is a long and difficult process. A young person starts on the spiritual path by serving in a church as an acolyte for at least five years. Most serve in the church at Kings Port, though there are other houses of worship throughout Valusia.

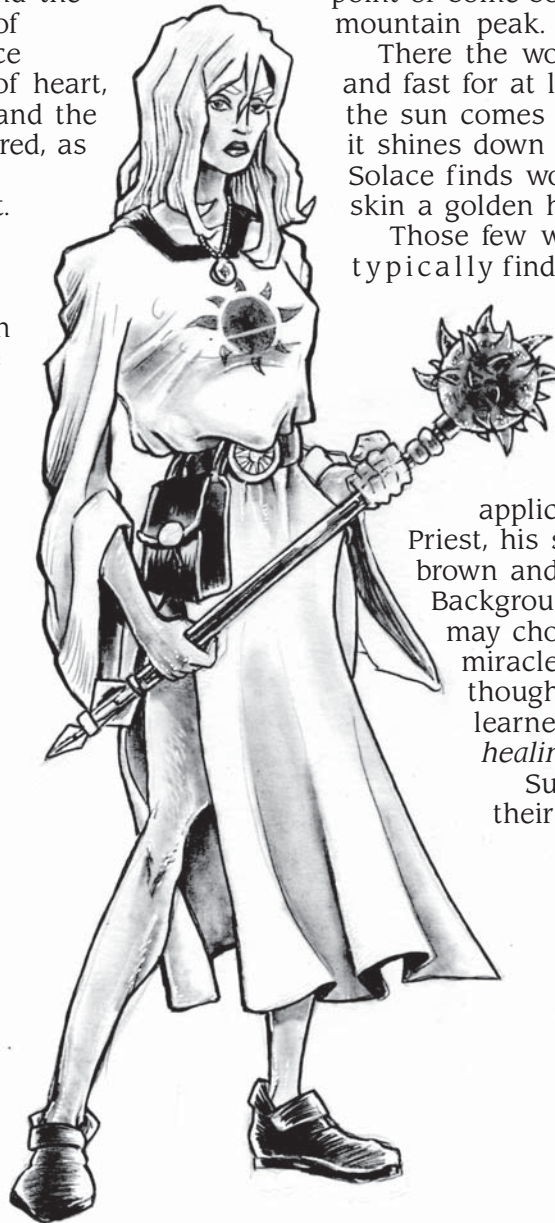
After that time, the senior priest of the church takes those he deems worthy on a long walk in the bright sunshine to a high point of some sort, such as a mountain peak.

There the worshippers meditate and fast for at least 24 hours. When the sun comes up the next morning, it shines down upon those applicants Solace finds worthy and tinges their skin a golden hue.

Those few who aren't accepted typically find their own way from there, but are usually allowed to continue living in and serving the church if they so desire.

The moment an applicant becomes a Sun Priest, his skin turns golden brown and he gains the Arcane Background (Miracles) Edge. He may choose from any of the miracles listed on page 26, though the first miracle learned must always be *healing*.

Sun Priests add +2 to their Charisma.



GEAR

Now that you've made your character, it's time to outfit him with arms, armor, and other gear. Below is a list of the most commonly sought-after goods and services, as well as armor and weaponry.

Your hero has 500 suns to purchase equipment with.

Some of the items for sale are quite expensive because they are rare or on the cutting edge. Technology in Tarth is primarily that of a medieval world. The arquebus has only recently come into common use, though crude cannons have been in use for a few years.

CURRENCY

Though all the old races once minted their own coins, the only currency used in Valusia are golden "suns," in honor of Solace. These are small golden disks about the size of a penny and half as thick. The front shows an image of the sun, while the reverse shows an idealized version of Tarrian, the first Red Knight.



ANIMALS & TACK

Item	Cost	Weight
Kej Hound	250	-
Horse	250	-
Mule	150	-
Saddle	10	10
Kej Hound barding (+1)	50	3

CLOTHING

Normal clothing	20	-
Formal clothing	60	-
Tailored clothing	100+	-
Winter clothes	35	3

COMMON GOODS

Item	Cost	Weight
Backpack	25	2
Bedroll	25	4
Blanket	10	4
Candle*	1	1/2
Crowbar	10	2
Flask (ceramic)	5	1
Flask (metal)	10	1
Flint and steel	3	1
Grappling hook*	50	2
Hammer	10	1
Lantern*	25	3
Lockpicks*	100	1
Oil (1 pint)*	2	1
Parchment (per sheet)	1	1/20
Quiver (holds 20 arrows)	10	2
Rope (10")*	10	15
Pick or Shovel*	5	5
Soap	1	1/5
Torch*	5	1
Whistle	2	-
Waterskin	5	1
Whetstone	5	1

EXOTIC GOODS

Item	Cost	Weight
Elixir of Mizridoor*	250	-
Potion of Healing*	500	-
Potion of Restoration*	100	-
Potion of Strength*	250	-
Sa Karan Blood Stone**	2000	-

FOOD

Type (per serving)	Cost	Weight
Average meal	10	-
Cheap meal	5	-
Expensive meal	15+	-
1 week's rations	25	10
1 day's water (1 quart)	1	2

*See Gear Notes on the following pages.

**See Magic Items on page 25.

ARMOR

Type	Armor	Weight	Cost	Min Str	Notes
Personal					
Leather	+1	15	50	—	Covers torso, arms, legs
Chain hauberk (long coat)	+2	25	300	d6	Covers torso, arms, legs
Plate corselet	+3	25	400	d8	Covers torso
Plate grieves	+3	10	200	d6	Covers arms
Plate leggings	+3	15	300	d8	Covers legs
Pot helm	+3	4	75	d6	50% chance of protecting against head shot
Steel Helmet (enclosed)	+3	8	150	d6	Covers head
Barding					
Kep hound barding	+1	3	50	—	Covers body and head
Shields*					
Small Shield (Buckler)	—	8	25	d6	+1 Parry
Medium Shield	—	12	50	d8	+1 Parry; +2 Armor to ranged shots that hit
Large Shield (Kite, Pavise)	—	20	200	d8	+2 Parry; +2 Armor to ranged shots that hit
Blessed Armor					
Mantle of Solace	+1	5	50	—	Sold only to Sun Priests
Armor of Solace	+3	40	300	d6	Covers torso, arms, and legs; sold only to Red Knights

**Shields protect only against attacks from the front and left (assuming a right-handed character).*

HAND WEAPONS

Type	Damage	Weight	Cost	Min. Str	Notes
Blades					
Dagger	Str+1	1	25	—	
Great sword	Str+4	12	400	d10	Parry -1; 2 hands
Long sword	Str+3	8	300	d6	
Rapier	Str+1	3	150	—	Parry +1
Short sword	Str+2	4	100	—	
Thieves claws	Str+1	1/pair	100/pair	—	Worn on both hands; adds +1 to Climbing rolls as well
Axes					
Axe	Str+2	2	200	d6	
Battle Axe	Str+3	10	300	d8	
Great Axe	Str+4	15	400	d10	AP 1; Parry -1; 2 hands
Hammers & Maces					
Mace	Str+1	2	25	—	
Maul	Str+3	20	400	d10	AP 2 vs rigid armor (plate mail); Parry -1; requires 2 hands
Warhammer	Str+2	8	250	d8	AP 1 vs rigid armor (plate mail)
Pole Arms					
Halbred	Str+3	15	250	d8	Reach 1; 2 hands
Pike	Str+3	25	300	d8	Reach 2; 2 hands
Staff	Str+1	5	10	d6	Parry +1; Reach 1; 2 hands
Spear	Str+2	5	250	—	Parry +1; Reach 1; 2 hands
Lance	Str+4	10	500	d8	AP 1; Reach 2
Blessed Weapons					
Sun Mace	Str+3	2	25	—	Sold only to Sun Priests

RANGED WEAPONS

Type	Range	Damage	RoF	Cost	Weight	Shots	Min Str.	Notes
Axe, throwing	3/6/12	Str+2	1	75	2	—		
Bow	12/24/48	2d6	1	250	3	—	d6	
Crossbow	15/30/60	2d6	1	500	10	—	d6	AP 2; Requires 1 action to reload
Sling	4/8/16	Str	1	10	1	—		
Spear	3/6/12	Str+3	1	250	5	—	d6	
Throwing knife	3/6/12	Str+1	1	50	1	—	—	Balanced to add +1 to Throwing

BLACK POWDER

Type	Range	Damage	RoF	Cost	Weight	Shots	Min Str	Notes
Musket	10/20/40	2d8+2	1	400	10	—	d6	Reload 2
Blunderbuss	10/20/40	1-3d6*	1	400	15	—	d6	Reload 2
Bayonet	—	Str+2	—	20	1	—	—	Attaches to musket or blunderbuss; Str+1 when used as a knife
Pistol	5/10/20	2d6+1	1	250	3	—	—	Reload 2
Cannon**	24/48/96	3d10	1	25	—	—	—	Reload 1 with 4 crew; Reload 2 with less than 4 crew

*A blunderbuss does 1d6 damage at Long range, 2d6 at Medium range, and 3d6 at Short range.

**This is a very early, crude cannon. It fires only solid shot.

AMMUNITION

Ammo	Weight	Cost	Notes
Arrow	1 lb/5	1/2	May be recovered*
Bolt	1 lb/5	1	May be recovered*
Shot & Powder	1 lb/5	2	—
Sling stone	1 lb/10	1/10	Stones can be found for free with a Notice roll and 1d10 minutes searching, depending on terrain

*Outdoors, arrows and bolts have a 4-6 on a d6 chance of being recovered. Underground or indoors, the chance is reduced to a roll of 5-6 on a d6 to reflect the increased chance of breakage.

GEAR DESCRIPTIONS

ANIMALS

Note that animals' Smarts are relative, and are marked with an (A) to remind you that this is animal Smarts. A kep hound with a d6 Smarts, for instance, isn't smarter than your half-orc barbarian, but it is smarter than most horses with a d4(A) Smarts.

HORSE, RIDING

Several large ranches in the long valley of Valusia raise horses. The fertile grasslands and temperate climate are ideal for these fast beasts. Horse ranchers herd their stock to Kings Port once a year for sale. Those that aren't bought in the horse markets there are shipped on to faraway Kos or the Dragon Isles for export.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d12, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d6, Notice d6

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 7

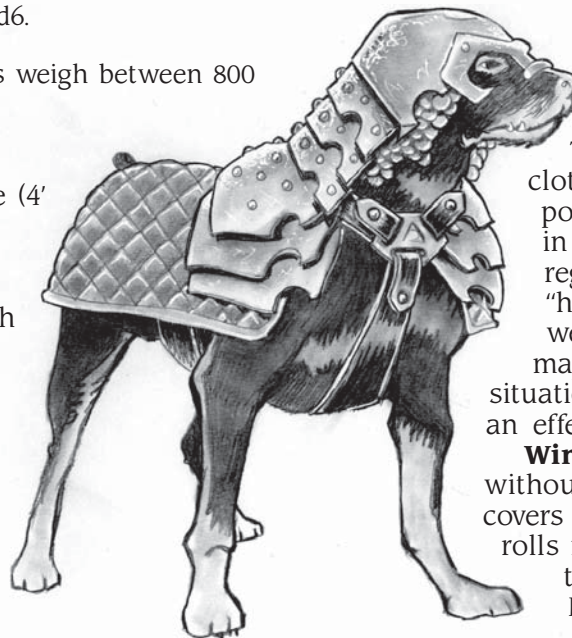
Special Abilities

- **Fleet Footed:** Horses roll a d10 when running instead of a d6.
- **Kick:** Str.
- **Size +2:** Riding horses weigh between 800 and 1000 pounds.

KEP HOUND

Kep hounds are large (4' high) dogs trained from birth to be loyal and obedient servants. They are gentle as lambs with their owners but bloodthirsty and savage to anyone they are ordered to attack.

Kep hounds are trained to obey most simple commands, such as attack, to me, heel, sit, and play dead.



Kep hounds are often armored with simple leather barding that provides 1 point of protection. This costs an additional 50 suns.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Notice d10, Tracking d6 (smell only)

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 4

Special Abilities

- **Bite:** Str+1.
- **Fleet Footed:** Kep hounds roll a d10 when running instead of a d6.
- **Go for the Throat:** Kep hounds instinctively go for an opponent's soft spots. With a raise on its attack roll, the animal automatically hits the target's most weakly-armored location.
- **Size -1:** Kep hounds are relatively small creatures.

MULE

Mules are used to carry the loot of Tarth's great heroes, as well as the bodies of those who were not able to finish their epic quests.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Guts d6, Notice d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 8

Special Abilities

- **Fleet-Footed:** A mule rolls a d8 instead of a d6 when running.
- **Kick:** Str.
- **Ornery:** Mules are contrary creatures. Characters must subtract 1 from their Riding rolls when riding them.
- **Size +2:** Mules are stocky creatures weighing up to 1000 pounds.

CLOTHING

Valusians are a proud people, but rarely haughty. Those dressed in common clothing are not often treated poorly, but those who dress in finery are generally regarded as being of the "heroic" caste. Anyone wearing tailored clothing may add +2 to his Charisma in situations where his status has an effect.

Winter Gear: Characters without warm cloaks and boot covers suffer -2 to their Fatigue rolls in cold weather, such as that found in the high Mountains of Dread.

COMMON GOODS

Candle: A candle provides clear light in a 2" radius for two hours. A candle blows out in a strong wind or whenever the character holding it runs.

Grappling hook and line: A grappling hook is attached to a light line of variable length but usually no more than 15 yards in length). The user throws the hook just as if he were attacking a target. It has a range of 3/6/12. If it "hits," the hook has set and can hold up to 200 pounds of weight.

Lantern: A lantern provides light in a 4" radius for three hours per pint of oil. There is a 50% chance the lantern breaks if dropped, and a 1 in 6 chance it sets normal combustibles alight. (See the rules for Fire on page 97 of *Savage Worlds*.)

Lantern, Bullseye: A bullseye lantern acts as a regular lantern, but also has a shuttered reflective hood that can focus light through a small opening. When used in this way, it provides a cone of light equal to the Cone Template. There is a 50% chance the lantern breaks if dropped.

Lockpicks: A character who tries to pick a lock without these tools suffers a -2 penalty to his roll.

Oil (1 pint): Besides providing light when used in lanterns, oil can also be used as a weapon. This is most commonly done by putting oil in a ceramic flask with a lit fuse. The flask is then thrown at the target where it breaks and the fuse sets the oil alight.

Lighting a fuse requires 1d6 rounds with flint and steel (1 round with open flame), so it's best to light the fuse before a fight starts (a fuse stays alight for 10 minutes).

The flask's range is 3/6/12. Anything it hits is set alight on a d6 roll of 5-6, causing 1d10 damage per round. The fire has a chance of growing each turn as usual.

Pick: Picks are unbalanced as weapons and so inflict a -1 penalty on the user's Parry and Fighting scores. Their damage is Str+2.

Rope (15 yards): The rope can safely handle 300 pounds without worry. For every 50 pounds over that, roll 1d6 every minute or whenever the rope suffers a sudden stress. On a 6, the rope breaks under the strain.

Torch (3 hours): A torch provides clear light in a 4" radius. Properly prepared torches last for one hour. Temporary torches can be made with some wood, rags, and 1 pint of oil for every 10 torches. These last half as long, however.

EXOTIC GOODS

Elixir of Mizridoor: The brilliant yellow goo in this small vile restores 1d6 Power Points to those with the Arcane Background (Magic) Edge. The secrets of its formulation are known only by the master alchemists at Mizridoor, though the potions are sold in alchemist's shops from Kings Port to Kos.

The brew has no effect on any other types of Power Points.

Potion of Healing: Tarth's healing potions are not particularly potent—it seems only Solace can provide truly miraculous cures. When consumed, this blue potion removes one wound. Additional potions can remove additional wounds, but they never remove permanent wounds.

Potion of Restoration: This magical green tonic removes all Fatigue, even if a character is Incapacitated. Characters who are Incapacitated from wounds arise, but do not actually heal any wounds.

Potion of Strength: The hero's Strength Attribute is raised two die types for the next 10 minutes when this red potion is consumed.

FOOD

Kings Port is sometimes called the "Garden" for its ripe fruits, fresh meat, and plentiful vegetables. There are several fresh food markets in the city, as well as several restaurants that prepare the bounty in most delectable ways.

WEAPONS & ARMOR

Below are a few notes on Tarth's particular types of arms and armor.

ARMOR

Armor of Solace: This enchanted plate mail is granted only to the church's Red Knights. It is enchanted in rituals that take weeks to perform, and tailored to the particular knight. This process makes it effectively lighter and more flexible than regular plate mail (it actually weighs nearly the same if carried).

Armor of Solace is actually given to Red Knights, but the "cost" reflects a donation the character gives in exchange for the material cost of the suit.

Should another try to wear the suit, it acts as regular plate mail, including the increased weight.

Leather: Leather armor is soft and supple at the joints for maximum flexibility, with boiled “plates” attached to the forearms, chest, and upper legs.

Chain: Chain mail consists of thousands of interwoven iron links. Many adventurers wear only the shirt, but stronger types can handle the extra weight on their legs as well.

Kept Hound Barding: Those who invest the money—and more importantly time—in training a kept hound want to protect their companions. This lightweight armor protects the animal’s neck and body.

Mantle of Solace: Sun Priests spend hours in contemplation and charitable works, and so do not develop the martial builds of the Red Knights. To protect their brethren from the forces of darkness, the church blesses sacred robes for protection.

These robes only offer protection for Sun Priests. Others may wear them, but gain no armor bonus.

Plate: The heaviest armor is plate mail, but it also provides the most protection. The breastplate, grieves, and leggings are all made of tempered steel, providing excellent protection against most all hand weapons.

Plate mail must be customized to fit a particular person. This requires an hour of time and a Repair roll. If non-tailored armor is worn, the user suffers a -1 penalty to all his physical trait tests.

WEAPONS

Bow: Tarth has not developed the equivalent of the English long bow. This represents a more typical bow with a maximum range of about 200 yards. Bows can be fired every round.

Crossbow: The crossbows of Tarth are “medium” versions of these deadly weapons. They require one full action to reload, and are quite useful at penetrating heavy armor.

Rapier: No special rules are required here, but rapiers are somewhat rare in Valusia. They are slightly more common in faraway Kos.

Great Sword: The snowy-haired barbarians of the White Towns are well-known for these heavy but awkward weapons.

Sun Mace: These heavy maces are fashioned like blazing suns on the end of a short staff. The heavy spiked ball causes grievous damage to those it hits.

Only Sun Priests may purchase these weapons (Red Knights are expected to use

heavier weapons). They are blessed to withstand fire and heat to better serve as the flaming weapons of those who eventually become Avatars of Solace.

Unlike the Armor and Mantle of Solace, these weapons aren’t enchanted, and can be used by others (though it’s considered very rude to do so).

Thieves Claws: These are long blades strapped to the forearms by thick leather and metal buckles. They are dangerous weapons, but also help to scale rough-hewn stone walls and other surfaces that might keep the thief from his ill-gotten gains.

Throwing Knives: Several craftsmen in both Kings Port and Kos pride themselves on making extremely well-balanced knives, perfect as back-up weapons for young heroes in emergencies.

AMMUNITION

It can often become important to know if arrows or bolts are recoverable while adventuring. Outdoors, the chance of recovering an arrow is a d6 roll of 4-6. This represents some being lost or broken in their targets. Indoors, the chance is reduced to a d6 roll of 5-6, as stone walls and other obstructions tend to break such missiles.

***Example:** After a battle, Tara has marked off 6 arrow shots. She wants to recover them, so she rolls 6d6. Half come up 4-6, so she recovers half her arrows. The rest are broken or lost.*

FIREARMS

The firearms of Tarth are flintlock devices. A paper cartridge contains powder and an iron ball. The “shot” is rammed down the barrel, and when the trigger is pulled, the hammer falls onto a piece of flint. The hammer simultaneously punctures the paper cartridge inside the weapon, and the spark ignites the powder, sending the iron ball out at great velocity.

Only the dwarves on the far side of the Dread Mountains currently manufacture powder and firearms.

Moisture: Water is the enemy of gunpowder. Any time powder gets wet, roll 1d6 per shot. On a roll of 4-6 for damp conditions (drizzling rain, wading through a deep stream), the shot is ruined. If the powder was soaked (heavy rain, swimming), each shot is ruined on a d6 roll of 2-6.

Overcharging: Both the musket and pistol can be “overcharged,” meaning the

user puts an extra charge of powder in the shot. Overcharging adds an entire die to the weapon's damage, but risks bursting the barrel. A roll of 1 on the character's attack die (regardless of the Wild Die for Wild Cards) means it has burst the barrel of the weapon and ruined it permanently.

In addition to ruining the weapon, the blast causes 3d6 damage to the user.

Blunderbuss: These heavy guns have trumpet-shaped barrels that scatter several shots at once in a deadly cone. A blunderbuss must be loaded with three shots at once to gain its full effect—otherwise its statistics are the same as a pistol. When fully loaded, the blunderbuss acts as a shotgun so the attacker may add +2 to his Shooting roll.

Blunderbusses cannot be overcharged—they rely more on the shrapnel effect of their shot for their damage than the actual blast.

POWDER AS EXPLOSIVE

Gunpowder can also be used as a low-powered explosive. The people of Tarth call these "powder bombs." A standard bomb requires 10 rounds of shot & powder. This is expensive given the dwarves' high prices for powder, but devastating if used correctly.

To make a powder bomb, the user bundles the shot and powder into a leather sack, pot, or other container, then sets a small fuse into it. The fuse can be set to any delay with a Smarts roll. Failure means the bomb detonates 10-40% earlier or later than expected.

Every 10 shots of gunpowder (about two pounds) causes 2d6 damage in a standard Medium Burst Template. A bomb made with 20 shots does 3d6 damage and uses the Large Burst Template. For larger bombs, each additional 10 shots increases the damage by +2 and the radius by 1'.

MAGIC ITEMS

Magic items are plentiful in the world of Tarth. The personal gear of great heroes—and villains—often becomes "charged" with the power of their deeds, and specialized mages—such as those at Mizridoor—sometimes craft minor devices as well.

POTIONS

A few alchemists exist in the City, and are able to concoct a few common brews. Healing potions are strictly the domain of the Church of Solace, however.

Potions are known by their colors (see Exotic Goods, above). Characters must expend a bit of spiritual energy (in the form of bennies) to use more permanent relics.

RELICS

Enchanted items besides potions come in all shapes and sizes—rings, weapons, armor, and jewelry are all common.

Anyone who touches a magical item instantly realizes it is a thing of power. Even a casual touch alerts a person to the device's nature.

Those who want to actually use an enchanted device must simply open himself up to the relic's power and let its energy flow through him.

In game terms, if the device is usable by the hero, he may spend a benny to learn and access a magic item's abilities and bonuses. If another character wishes to use the item, he must spend a benny to access its abilities as well. No benny, no magical powers.

A character who cannot use the device for some reason cannot learn the device's powers and does not "waste" a benny trying. A gem that grants additional Power Points, for instance, remains a mysterious but obviously magical relic to a warrior with no Arcane Background.

Note that there are some exceptions to this rule. Some devices may be obscured for some reason, while others have unpredictable results when used (like Sa Karan blood stones). Characters cannot learn what these devices do until they use them, but no benny need be spent either.

SA KARAN BLOOD STONES

The early humans who once lived in Tarth had powerful magic that is lost to their descendants today. Those who explore their ruins often find red gems called "blood stones." If the stone is placed against a person's raw breast, it burrows into the flesh, extending red tendrils of painful eldritch energy throughout their body.

The stone then mystically fuses with its host and charges his being with incredible energy. Most hosts become stronger, smarter, or more agile from the stone's mystic energy, but some cannot handle the shock to their mortal shell and perish.

A very rare few gain more bizarre powers. Some of Tarth's greatest heroes have gained the ability to shoot beams of energy, turn invisible, move objects with nothing but their minds, and more!

MAGIC IN TARTH

There are two types of spellcasters in the world of Tarth—wizards and priests (which includes both Red Knights and Sun Priests). On the following pages you'll find more information about these heroes, as well as their spell lists and several new spells.

The miracles and spells available to each are detailed on the sidebar below.

AVAILABLE SPELLS & MIRACLES

Miracles	Spells
Armor	Armor
Blast**	Barrier
Bolt	Blast
Boost/Lower Trait	Bolt
Det/Con Arcana	Boost/Lower Trait
Deflection	Cone of Flame
Dispel	Det/Con Arcana
Fear	Deflection
Fireburst	Dispel
Greater Healing**	Fear
Healing*	Fireburst
Light	Fly
Solar Storm**	Invisibility
Smite	Obscure
Stun	Pawn of Mizridoor
	Puppet
	Quickness
	Smite
	Speed
	Stun
	Telekinesis
	Wall Walker

**must be first choice*
 ***Sun Priests only*

CASTING MIRACLES AND SPELLS

Red Knights, Sun Priests, and wizards alike make simple gestures with their hands to cast their spells. A character whose hands are bound tightly cannot access his arcane powers.

A caster who wants to hide his motions can do so with a Smarts roll. Anyone watching the caster can make an opposed Notice roll to detect the action however. The observer may add +2 to his roll if he is specifically looking for casting motions.

PRIESTS

Both Red Knights and Sun Priests are capable of calling on the holy power of the sun, whom they call Solace, to cast divine miracles. They are trained in the casting of these miracles by more senior priests who are in the twilight of their traveling days.

Most young priests or knights are instructed in the proper rituals for casting miracles at the Church of Solace in Kings Port. Smaller churches exist in most every town in Valusia and Kos, but their attendants are usually too busy keeping up with their constituents' demands to train young apprentices. The White Towns and Dragon Isles also worship Solace, but have no official churches and rarely produce priests or knights.

The first miracle a Sun Priest or Red Knight is taught is always *healing*. The people of Tarth rely on the Church to heal their injuries and cure their ailments.

AVAILABLE MIRACLES

Red Knights and Sun Priests may choose from any of the miracles listed at left.

WIZARDS

Magic flows stubbornly in Tarth. It is much easier, if one is pure of heart, to gain arcane power through the Church of Solace.

That said, some individuals have mastered the eldritch arts, and their powers are quite phenomenal. Those who develop power on their own typically live in isolation and are called "hedge wizards."

More formal schooling is available for those who seem to have a penchant for the arcane. In Valusia, training is offered at Mizridoor, an academy of secretive wizards on the cliffs at the northern end of town.

Tyvek of the famous Seven is the Honorary Head Master of the school, though in truth he rarely does more than visit for short periods to pillage their magical stores. He has never been known to actually teach the school's two dozen or so pupils.

All characters who have the Wizard Professional Edge graduated from Mizridoor, or its sister school "Kos Arcanum" in far-off Kos. No such academies exist in the White Towns or the Dragon Isles, though hedge wizards abound.

Wizards are respected only due to the efforts of Tyvek and other famous sorcerers. Common folk are somewhat afraid of these characters. It's believed by simpler minds that these talented spellcasters should have given their service to Solace instead.

NEW SPELLS

FIREBURST

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2
Range: Flame Template
Duration: Instant
Trappings: A shower of flames

A cone of flame is just that—a large fan of flame that bathes its targets in flame.

When cast, place the thin end of the Flame Template at the character's front. Targets within the template may make Agility rolls versus the caster's Faith or Spellcasting roll to avoid the blaze. Those who fail suffer 2d10 damage.

Victims have a 1 in 6 chance of catching fire as well (see the **Fire** rules in *Savage Worlds*).

PAWN OF MIZRIDOOR

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 3
Range: Smarts
Duration: 3 (1/round)
Trappings: A chess pawn

Students who graduate from the wizard's academy at Mizridoor are given a final gift—a powerful spell called the *Pawn of Mizridoor*.

The spell requires a pawn from Mizridoor's chess set. If the pawn is lost, the spell cannot be cast. (Grand wizards of Mizridoor, it is rumored, can create guardians of the other pieces of the set.)

To cast the spell, the wizard merely pulls the pawn from his pocket and speaks the magical words "From Mizridoor, I summon

thee!" When the piece hits the ground, it transforms into a sturdy soldier who is completely under the wizard's control.

When a pawn suffers a wound, it crumbles to dust. Somewhere in the dust is an intact pawn, magically restored and ready to be summoned again.

When the owner of a pawn perishes, his pawn crumbles to dust as well. It is said that the original pieces of the set, which reside in Mizridoor itself, are tangible artifacts, and do not crumble when their owner perishes.

PAWN OF MIZRIDOOR

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6
Pace: 5; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 10
Gear: Short sword (Str+2), stone skin (+4)
Special Abilities

- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; no additional damage from called shots; piercing attacks do half-damage; constructs do not suffer from disease or poison.
- **Fearless:** The pawns are immune to fear.

SOLAR STORM

Rank: Seasoned, Sun Priests only
Power Points: 5
Range: Faith x 2
Duration: Instant
Trappings: A dazzling swirl of brilliant yellow fire

Perhaps the most devastating display of Solace's fury is *solar storm*, a brilliant, swirling blast of destruction that scathes the Sun Priest's foes in a brilliant blast of sunfire.

The area of effect is a Large Burst Template. Every target within the blast suffers 2d10 damage and runs the risk of catching fire (1 in 6 for most creatures, see *Savage Worlds* page 97).

WALL WALKER

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2
Range: Touch
Duration: 3 (1/round)
Trappings: No visible effect.

Wall walker allows a wizard to function much like a human spider. He can stick to any surface, allowing him to climb walls and even hang from ceilings.

The character can move along such surfaces at his normal Pace. He may also run as usual while skittering along such surfaces.

ARCHETYPES

On the following pages are a number of "archetypes," the most common types of heroes found in TARTH. These characters are Novices, and ready to play as-is. Their traits have been purchased normally, as have their Edges, Hindrances, equipment and powers. We've even figured their secondary statistics for you.

To play an archetype, simply write its statistics down on one of the blank character sheets found on page 144. Give your character a name and you're ready to go!

CUSTOMIZING ARCHETYPES

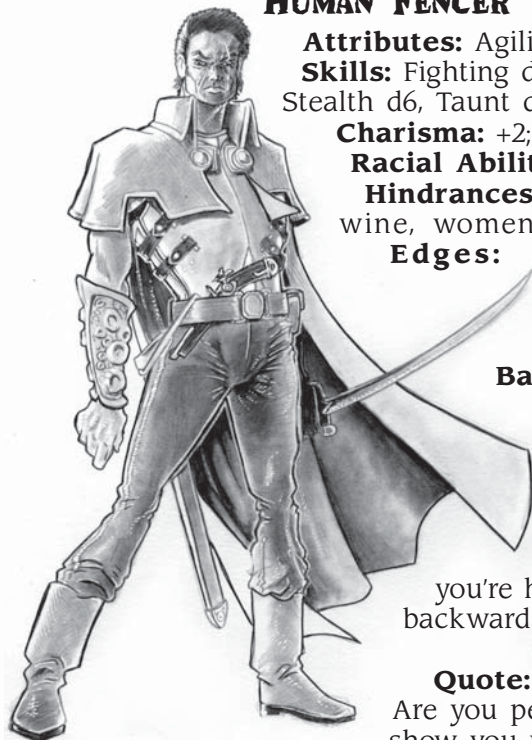
You can customize these archetypes to some extent by swapping out Edges and Hindrances for equivalents, rearranging skills, and of course, repurchasing their equipment. If you decide to do many adjustments, however, it's probably easier to just create your own character from scratch.

All of the adjustments to things like Parry and Toughness are already calculated for you. If a character has leather armor listed in his gear, for instance, his Toughness has been increased by +1. If you alter his gear or traits, you'll need to recalculate secondary traits as well.

We've also figured the weight of each character's gear, as well as his load limit and any penalties for being overly encumbered. Some of the archetypes, such as the slayer, can easily rid himself of his weight penalty by dropping his crossbow once a fight breaks out.

We've purchased only basic arms and armor for these characters. You'll definitely want to use their leftover suns to buy any additional supplies you might need, such as rope, winter clothes, and so on.

HUMAN FENCER



Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d10, Climb d6, Guts d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d4, Stealth d6, Taunt d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6"; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 6

Racial Abilities: None

Hindrances: Overconfident, Loyal, Quirk (Minor, pursues fine wine, women, and high society)

Edges: Attractive

Gear: Leather armor (+1), rapier (Str+1), 300 suns.

Encumbrance: 18lbs; **Limit:** 30; **Penalty:** 0

Background

You hail from exotic Kos, far to the north east of Valusia. You came here several months ago on a Kosian sailing ship, looking to make a name for yourself in the City of Heroes.

You love fine wine, women, and song, and miss the delights of Kos, but perhaps while you're here you can bring a bit of culture to the backward Valusians.

Quote: My, that is an impressive great sword, barbarian. Are you perhaps overcompensating for something? Let me show you what a fencer of the Golden Kingdoms can do!

DWARVEN FIGHTER

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, guts d6, Intimidate d6, Notice d6, Stealth d4, Shooting d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 5"; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

Racial Abilities: Low Light Vision, Slow, Tough

Hindrances: Loyal, Overconfident, Quirk (Minor, constantly looking for strong ale, spirits, and red meat)

Edges: None

Gear: Chain hauberk (+2), battle axe (Str+3), pistol, 10 shots, 80 suns.

Encumbrance: 40lbs.; **Limit:** 40; **Penalty:** -1

Background

Several months ago you left the dark bowels of the earth to see the fabled City of Heroes. Now you're here in Kings Port and looking for work that will bring you fame as well as chests full of golden suns!

Challenges are tougher to find here than you'd thought, however. You couldn't swing a troll's head without hitting a would-be hero.

Perhaps you'll look for challenges the rest are too timid to try. You're afraid of nothing—the axe-masters of your home have taught you well.

Quote: Hah! I'll be comin' for you next, laddie!



HALF-ORC MUSKETEER

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Repair d4, Shooting d8, Stealth d4

Charisma: -6; **Pace:** 6"; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10

Racial Abilities: Low Light Vision, Outsider, Strong

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Greedy (Minor), Vow (overcome your savage heritage)

Edges: Brawny, Musketeer

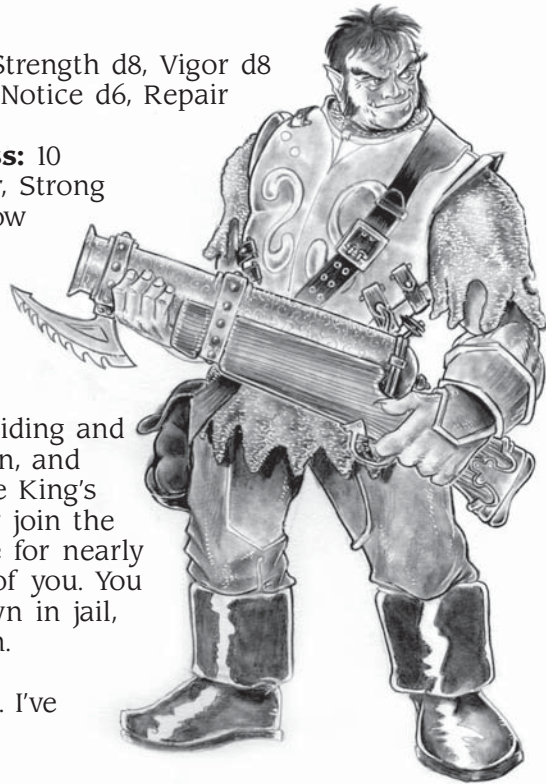
Gear: Blunderbuss with bayonet, 12 shots, plate corselet (+3), 156 suns.

Encumbrance: 44lbs.; **Limit:** 64; **Penalty:** 0

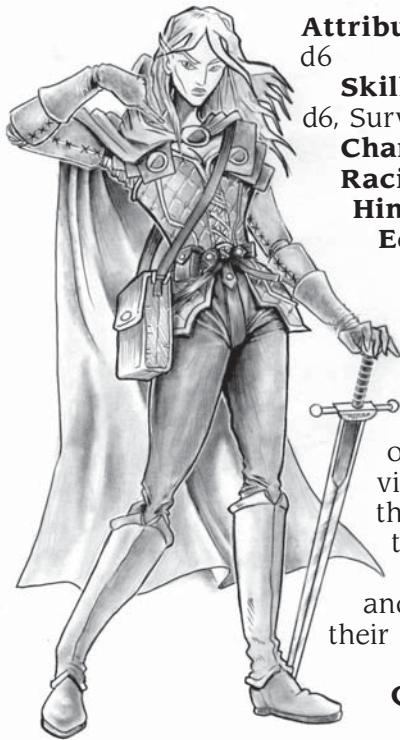
Background

You were raised by orcs, but soon realized raiding and murdering were no way to live. You fled the clan, and eventually wound up in a Kings Port prison. The King's men gave you an option, however—hard labor or join the King's musketeers. You served with honor there for nearly a year before your orcish nature got the better of you. You managed to get discharged without being thrown in jail, and now you're out to prove yourself once again.

Quote: Better not get too close to that thing. I've just reloaded.



ELVEN RANGER



Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d4, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Survival d8, Swim d4, Track d8

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6"; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Racial Abilities: Agile, All Thumbs, Low Light Vision

Hindrances: Cautious, Loyal, Poverty

Edges: Woodsman

Gear: Leather armor (+1), bow, quiver of 20 arrows, short sword, 70 suns.

Encumbrance: 28lbs; **Limit:** 30; **Penalty:** 0

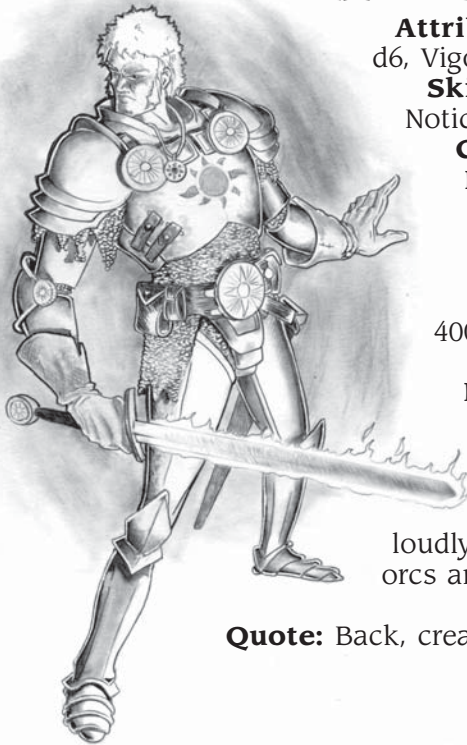
Background

It is your time of wandering. You've come to this city of men to learn about them and the other races who visit this place. Though you are far more comfortable in the wilderness, this city is cleaner and more friendly than you would have imagined.

But now it's time to find work, to accept a dangerous and heroic mission with a band of companions and learn their ways.

Quote: Two hundred yards? Yes. I can hit it.

HUMAN RED KNIGHT



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Faith d6, Guts d6, Healing d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Riding d4

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6"; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9

Racial Abilities: None

Hindrances: Heroic, Loyal, Stubborn

Edges: Red Knight

Power Points: 10; **Miracles:** *Armor, healing*

Gear: Armor of Solace (+3), long sword (Str+3), 400 suns.

Encumbrance: 44lbs; **Limit:** 30; **Penalty:** -1

Background

The day Solace shone down upon you and blessed you with the title of Red Knight was the proudest of your life. Now it is time to seek adventure and glory in the name of Solace; to loudly proclaim the name of your deity to the savage orcs and foul bandits of the outlands.

Quote: Back, creature of darkness, or taste my flame!

HUMAN SLAYER

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Investigation d4, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6"; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Racial Abilities: None

Hindrances: Delusional (Minor, monsters are everywhere), Heroic, Mean

Edges: Level Headed, Quick

Gear: Leather armor (+1), short sword (Str+2), crossbow, quiver with 20 bolts, 77 suns.

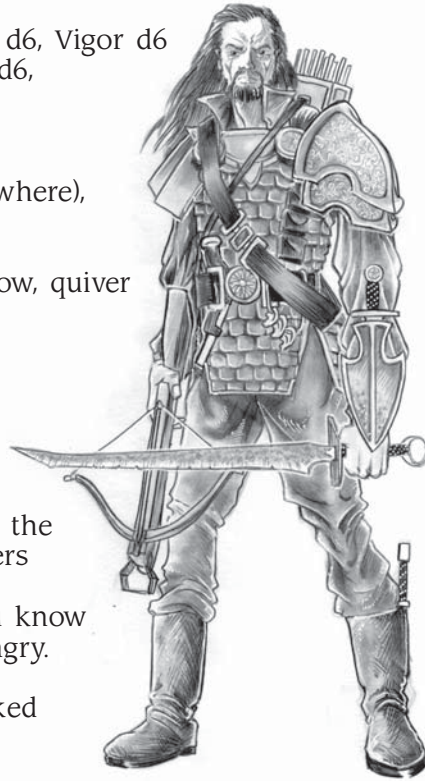
Encumbrance: 33lbs.; **Limit:** 30; **Penalty:** -1

Background

The people of Tarth are blind. They have not realized foul things lurk in the darkness waiting to devour them—as the trolls did your parents long ago. That's why you have taken it upon yourself to seek out the beasts of the forests, the mountains, and even the sewers beneath the "City of Heroes" itself.

Many call you heavy handed and worrisome, but you know the truth. The monsters are out there, and they are hungry.

Quote: Fool! Did you not realize these creatures lurked beneath the very streets on which you live?



HALF-ELVEN STREET RAT

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Lockpicking d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d4, Repair d4, Stealth d6, Streetwise d4, Throwing d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6"; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Racial Abilities: Heritage, Low Light Vision, Outsider

Hindrances: Overconfident, Greedy (Minor), Vengeful

Edges: Ambidextrous, Thief

Gear: Leather armor (+1), claws (Str+1; +1 Climbing), 4 throwing knives (Str+1, +1 Throwing), 150 suns.

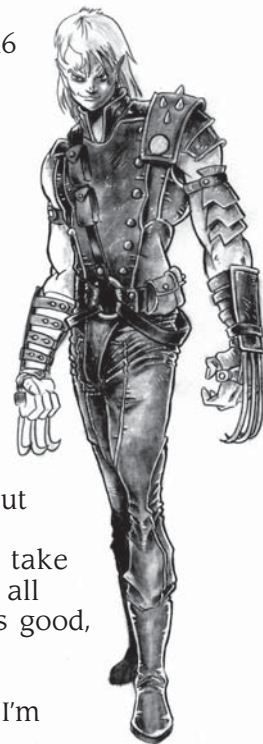
Encumbrance: 20lbs.; **Limit:** 30; **Penalty:** 0

Background

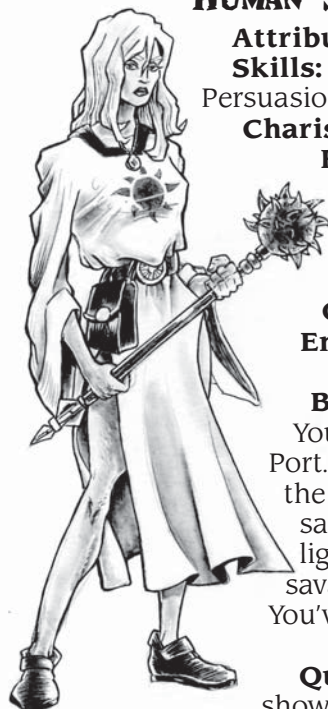
You were raised on the streets of Tarth, stealing food and running from the City Watch. You've been in and out of prison more times than you've had birthdays, but the City Watch has always been quite forgiving—especially when you help them root out some far more dangerous criminal.

Kings Port's dungeons are becoming old, however, so it's time to take some slightly more legitimate work. Perhaps a spot of adventuring all these "heroes" are always talking about. You've heard the treasure's good, at least.

Quote: I rob from the rich and give to the poor. And right now, I'm poor.



HUMAN SUN PRIEST



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Faith d8, Fighting d6, Guts d8, Healing d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d8

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6"; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Racial Abilities: None

Hindrances: Heroic, Habit (Minor, you preach the virtues of Solace constantly), Loyal

Edges: Sun Priest, Power Points

Power Points: 15; **Miracles:** Bolt, healing

Gear: Mantle of Solace (+1), Sun Mace (Str+3), 425 suns.

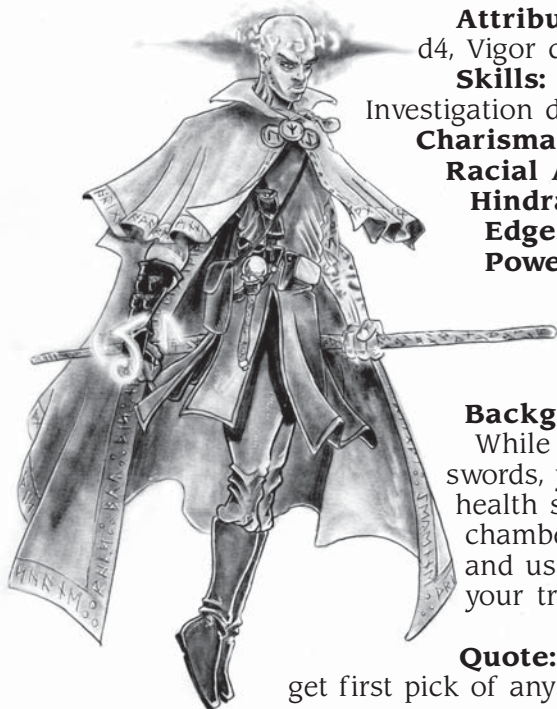
Encumbrance: 7lbs.; **Limit:** 30; **Penalty:** 0

Background

You served Solace for many years in the holy church of Kings Port. After that you spent several more years aiding the sick in the streets of the City. Now it's time to venture out from the safety of the City of Heroes. You have been instructed to bring light to the people of Valusia, heal their wounds, and fight the savage orcs and thieves who plague them. You've been waiting for this all your life.

Quote: Let's shine a little light on the situation. Solace will show us the way.

HUMAN WIZARD



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Guts d6, Fighting d6, Intimidate d6, Investigation d6, Notice d6, Spellcasting d10

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6"; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Racial Abilities: None

Hindrances: Curious, Feeble, Mean

Edges: Arcane Background, Power Points, Wizard

Power Points: 15; **Spells:** Armor, blast, fly

Gear: Staff (Str+1, Parry +1, Reach 1), 495 suns.

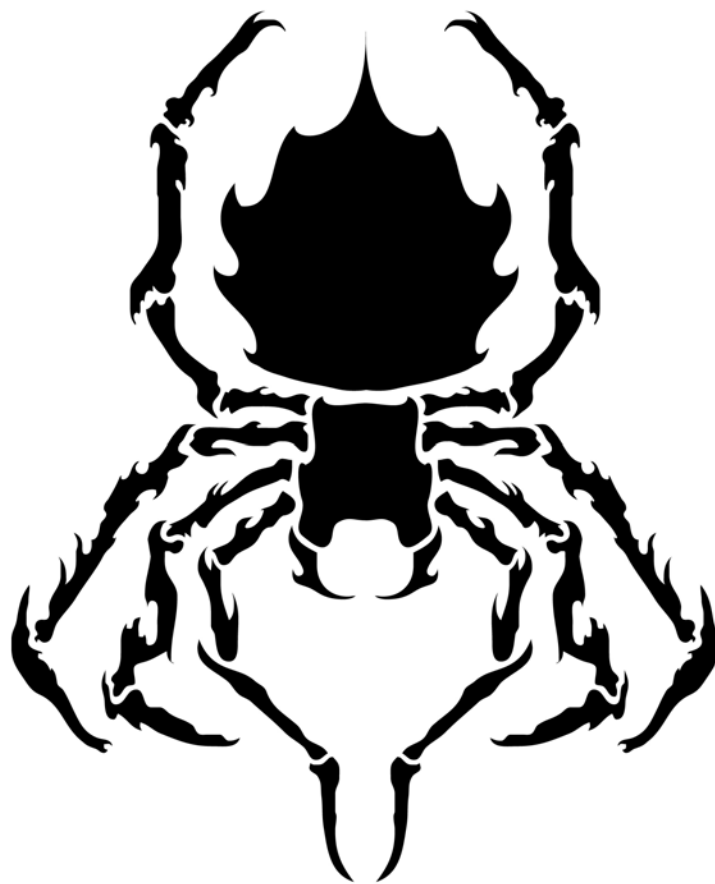
Encumbrance: 5lbs.; **Limit:** 20; **Penalty:** 0

Background

While the other children played silly games with swords, you trained in the great halls of Mizridoor. Your health suffered for your long seclusion in its musty chambers, but at last you are ready to adventure forth and use your eldritch might to show those simpletons your true power.

Quote: Now you ask for my power? Very well. But I get first pick of any relics we find in its lair.

EVERNIGHT PART II



**HERE'S WHERE THINGS GET A LITTLE GRIM, CHILDREN.
DON'T READ THIS SECTION UNTIL YOU'VE BEEN TOLD YOU CAN DO SO BY THE
GAME MASTER. SKIP AHEAD AND IT'LL COST YOU AN ARM AND A LEG. AND
MAYBE YOUR THICK SKULL, TOO!**

EVERNIGHT

Your world has changed.

The mysterious Masters have taken over the world you knew and are dismantling it bit by bit.

But in a world of heroes, there is resistance.

You've now spent a few days at Kings Landing and have learned quite a bit about what happened during the invasion and afterward.

The spike fell a few miles east of Kings Port sometime after midnight. A short while later, an army of spiders issued forth and devastated the countryside. Most of them moved west and attacked the City alongside wither beasts, stompers, and other strange creatures. The Masters led the attack from their flying boxes, and dropped incredibly powerful bombs on resistance strongpoints.

Afterwards, the Masters enslaved those they caught and put them to work looting Kings Port's blasted corpse.

A large number of survivors found their way into the sewers or the Upper King's Tunnels. Lord Herrek the Wolf leads these survivors. He claims to be awaiting the return of King Kaden, who was said to have escaped during the fight.

Only Arwick the Magister knew his true fate, and you watched that unfortunate die in

the slave pits after uttering a single clue—"look for Valador." No one knows what he meant. Valador is a common enough name in Tarth. There could be hundreds of such individuals in the realm.

It is obvious that the resistance must find a way to defeat the Masters. But now is not the time. The survivors must learn that they can no longer rely only on "heroes." There are too few left. They must become heroes themselves. They must learn to fight. Even the young, the old, and the infirm must contribute by assisting those who will eventually take up arms against the hated Masters.

But even with this training, there are too few. You know you must help find other bands of survivors, rally them to your side, learn about the invaders, and eventually forge a plan that can send the Masters back to whatever hellish dimension they came from.

YOUR GOAL

From now until it is time to take the fight to the Masters themselves, it is your job to build and bolster the resistance. You must help feed the survivors, arm them, provide them with light, and most importantly, inspire them with your great deeds.

You and your band should copy the scroll below and use it to keep track of "Resistance Points" you accumulate during this Act.

This represents the morale of the people, their health, and certain other factors that may arise during play. Exactly how to use them will become apparent at the climax of this campaign, during the final battle for Valusia.

YOUR FIRST POINTS

You can claim your first Resistance Point right now if you give your group a heroic name. Some of the other heroic bands in the Warrens are the Spider Slayers, the Storm Grinders, and the Golem Smashers.

Names like these inspire the common folk and help them feel safe. That's very important to these hardy refugees, because they're now stuck in perpetual darkness, and everything else they've ever known lies in ruins hundreds of feet above their heads.

But farmers and merchants can't be turned into great heroes overnight. First you must inspire them with your own daring deeds. Only then will they follow in your footsteps and help reclaim the light that was stolen from them.

HINDRANCES

If you are making a new character after the invasion, you have a few new Hindrances to choose from.

LIGHT SENSITIVE (MAJOR)

Some of the survivors have become too sensitive to the light from their stay in darkness.

When in light equal to a torch's strength or greater (within its template), the character suffers a -1 penalty to all trait tests requiring sight.

The character ignores Dim light penalties, and suffers a -1 penalty from Darkness. He is as blind in pitch darkness as anyone else.

MOON SKIN (MINOR OR MAJOR)

Elves, half-folk, and humans rely on sunlight for certain necessary vitamins. Without it, their skin tends to become unhealthy and eventually even painful.

Those with this Hindrance are already starting to suffer the effects of this condition, which the Sun Priests call "moon skin." It is only available to elves, half-elves, half-folk, and humans. Dwarves, those of orcish descent, and other races do not require sunlight and cannot suffer from moon skin.

THE DEEDS OF

(Permission is granted to photocopy this page for personal use.)

In the first stage of the condition (a Minor Hindrance), wearing heavy clothing (including all armor) is abrasive and painful. When wearing anything heavier than cloth, the unfortunate soul suffers a -1 penalty to all trait tests.

At the beginning of every game session, the victim must make a Vigor roll (she may use her bennies for this roll as usual). Failure means she moves into the advanced stage of the disease (see below). Alternatively, a character can start in the advanced stage of moon skin as a Major Hindrance.

In the second stage, moon skin is almost pure white except for scores of tiny sores and pimples. Wearing anything but pure silk is extremely painful. Armor may not be worn at all, and even non-silk clothes inflict a -1 penalty to all actions.

Only the return of the sun—and therefore the defeat of the Masters—can end this appalling condition. Should that occur, the Hindrance banishes with no additional ill effects.

EDGES

The survivors have learned to deal with their banishment in the darkness. You may choose these Edges as usual, either during character creation or during advancement.

COMBAT EDGES

DARK FIGHTING

Requirements: Novice, Fighting d8+

The land above is cast in perpetual gloom, and the Warrens are even darker. Some warriors have learned to relax their reliance on sight and instead improve their sense of hearing. This can be a lifesaver when battling some loathsome creature in the darkness.

Characters with Dark Fighting halve all Fighting, Shooting, and Throwing penalties for bad lighting (round down). It is *not* cumulative with Low Light Vision or Thermal Vision, but does work in pitch darkness, so that even demi-humans such as elves, dwarves, and half-orcs gain some benefit from it.

This nifty trick is accomplished by sound, so conditions which interfere with hearing negate the Edge's benefits. Spells that deafen, fighting beside a raging waterfall, or magical stealth might all negate the Edge.

TUNNEL FIGHTER

Requirements: Novice, Agility d8+, Fighting d8+

Tunnel fighters have learned to turn the cramped confines of the Warrens to their advantage. These agile warriors run up walls, dart around stalagmites, swing from stalactites, and otherwise use the very walls and ceiling to maneuver his body in incredible ways.

Characters with Tunnel Fighting add +2 to acrobatic tricks (see *Savage Worlds*, page 70), as well as +1 to their Parry. Foes must also subtract 1 when shooting at them with ranged attacks. These bonuses apply anytime they are in underground tunnels or caverns.

PROFESSIONAL EDGES

These Edges may be purchased during character creation normally. Existing characters must meet the additional requirements listed with each Edge.

SCROUNGER

Requirements: Seasoned, Streetwise d8+; at least one week in the Warrens

Scroungers are one of those rare individuals who manage to get vital supplies through a complicated network of contacts and favors. This can mean life or death in the devastated refugee economy.

When purchasing items in King's Landing, the character adds +1 to the number of items found, and reduces the price by 25%.

SLAYER

Requirements: Seasoned; The character must have fought a spider or a Master at least once before.

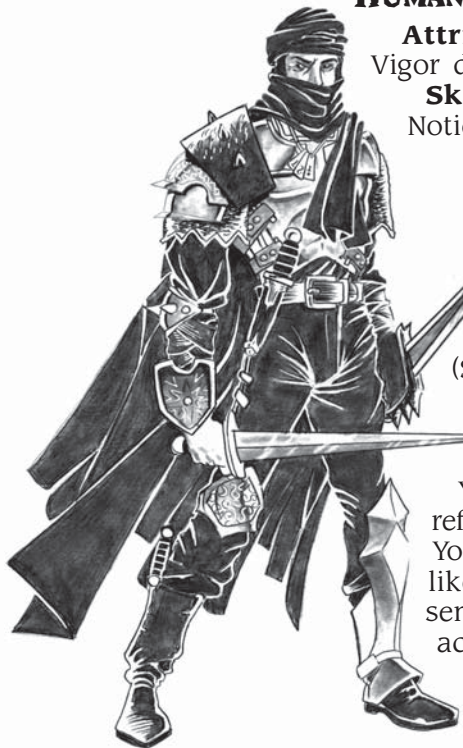
The spider-creatures have several weak spots in their anatomies. Slayers have learned where these sweet spots are. Instead of gaining +2 damage per raise on an attack roll against them, a single raise (or more) doubles the character's damage against them.

This Edge has no effect on any other type of creature, nor does it function with area effect attacks.

NEW ARCHETYPES

You'll find two new archetypes on the following page: Dark Fighter and Light Finder. They may be tailored to your particular tastes as usual.

HUMAN DARK FIGHTER



Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6
Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d10, Climb d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d6,
Notice d6, Stealth d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6"; **Parry:** 8;

Toughness: 6

Racial Abilities: None

Hindrances: Light Sensitive, Loyal,
Vengeful

Edges: Dark Fighting

Gear: Leather armor (+1), twin short swords
(Str+2), 250 suns.

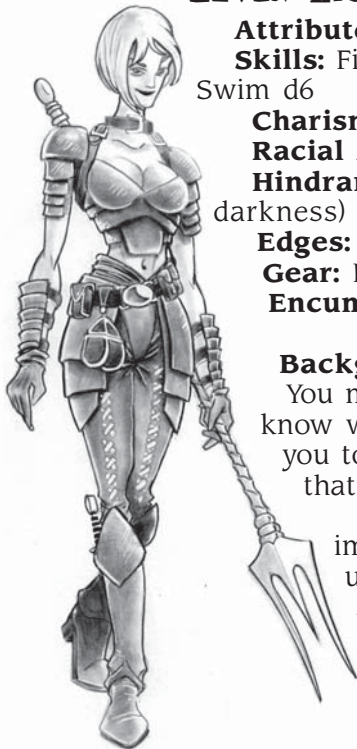
Encumbrance: 23 lbs.; **Limit:** 30; **Penalty:** 0

Background

You retreated beneath the earth with the rest of the refugees, but unlike them, you relished the darkness. You cloak yourself in its embrace, hiding the blackness like an assassin. You quickly learned how to fight by sense and sound, and your eyes have quickly grown accustomed to the perpetual night.

Quote: Lights out!

ELVEN LIGHT FINDER



Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Climb d8, Guts d6, Notice d6, Stealth d8, Taunt d6,
Swim d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6"; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 6

Racial Abilities: All Thumbs, Low Light Vision.

Hindrances: Light Sensitive, Loyal, Quirk (she actually *likes* the
darkness)

Edges: Tunnel Fighter

Gear: Leather armor (+1), trident (Str+2; Parry +1), 200 suns.

Encumbrance: 18lbs.; **Limit:** 30; **Penalty:** 0

Background

You miss the sun, but there are other sources of light if you know where to look. Firefish are plentiful, and gulper eyes allow you to see in the dark without giving yourself away to the things that lurk in the endless night.

Providing light for the people of Kings Landing is an important one. The common folk have all but lost hope, and until it's time to slay the things that blotted out the sun, someone must provide them with light.

Quote: Let me show you the way.

THE NEW ECONOMY

The destruction of Kings Port sent hundreds of refugees into the Warrens. Most took very little besides what they had on their persons at the time of the attack. A few have since crept back into the City to recover some belongings, but most who do so fail to return. Others have scavenged treasures from the tombs in the Upper King's Tunnels or from the wilderness.

Those who have excess goods attempt to sell or trade them for other goods, so a small but critical market has grown in the refugee settlement at King's Landing. You've also learned that a dwarven band deeper in the Warrens is creating gunpowder and selling it to anyone with suns to spare.

Prices for things that can be easily scavenged, found, made, or done without are fairly reasonable. Things that require refined materials and experienced artisans, such as weapons or armor, are in short supply and thus very expensive.

Good food is also very expensive as fruits and vegetables grow only in the wilderness above. There is no beef or wild game to be had, but a few chickens have been brought below and do fairly well in the dark. Most survivors get by on seaweed and cavefish.

CURRENCY

The survivors continue to use golden suns simply because that's what they're used to. Coins can't be eaten, of course, but as long as both Lord Herrek and Drugall's Dwarves support their use, so do the people.

Those who risk their lives gathering food, goods, and light want *lots* of gold to part ways with their treasures. Weapons are in particular demand, as are fresh fruits and vegetables which are extremely difficult to come by in the underworld.

BUYING AND SELLING

Goods are now rated in rarity as well as price: either Common, Uncommon, or Rare. This represents how many of a particular good can be bought or sold in the Warrens each "day."

If a character makes a Streetwise roll, he adds +1 to the roll for each success and raise.

Rarity	Number Available
Common	1d6
Uncommon	1d3
Rare	1d2

ANIMALS

Kep Hound	5000	R
Horse	-	-
Mule	-	-
Saddle	100	R
Elaborate saddle	-	-
Kep Hound barding (+1)	-	-

COMMON GOODS

Item	Cost	Rarity
Backpack	100	U
Bedroll	150	R
Blanket	50	U
Candle (4 hours, 2" radius)	25	U
Crowbar	20	R
Flask (ceramic)	25	R
Flask (metal)	25	U
Flint and steel	100	U
Grappling hook	200	R
Hammer	25	U
Lantern	300	U
Lockpicks	750	R
Manacles	200	R
Oil (1 pint)	100	C
Parchment (per sheet)	20	R
Rope (10")	200	U
Shovel	5	U
Soap	10	R
Torch (3 hours, 10" radius)	100	C
Whistle	10	R
Waterskin	25	C
Whetstone	25	C

CLOTHING

Normal clothing	20	C
Formal clothing	60	R
Silk clothing	1000	R
Tailored clothing	300+	R
Winter cloak	300	U
Winter boots	400	U

EXOTIC GOODS

Item	Cost	Rarity
Potion of Health*	1000	R
Potion of Restoration*	500	R
Potion of Strength*	1250	R
Gulper Juice (5 per eye)	500	R
Troll liver	200	U

FOOD

Type	Cost	Rarity
Bare necessities (provided)	-	C
Average meal	50	-
Cheap meal (troll, rancid fish)	25	-
Expensive meal	15+	-
1 week's rations	25	10

ARMOR

Leather	200	U
Chain hauberk	400	U
Chain leggings	300	U
Plate corselet	1250	R
Plate leggings	800	R
Steel helmet	200	U

Barding

Kep Hound barding	-	-
Plate barding	-	-

Shields

Small shield	100	C
Medium shield	150	C
Large shield	300	R

WEAPONS

HAND WEAPONS

Dagger	50	C
Great sword	800	R
Long sword	500	C
Rapier	600	R
Short sword	300	C

Axes

Axe	300	C
Battle axe	500	U
Great axe	1000	R
Warhammer	500	U
Maul	1000	R

Pole Arms

Halbred	800	R
Lance	-	-
Pike	750	R
Staff	25	C
Spear	500	U

RANGED WEAPONS

Axe, throwing	300	C
Bow	600	C
Crossbow	750	U
Sling	20	C
Spear	500	U

BLACK POWDER WEAPONS

Arquebus	1250	R
Blunderbuss	1500	R
Pistol	600	R
Bombard	-	-

AMMUNITION

Arrow (per 5)	5	C
Bolt (per 5)	10	U
Shot & Powder (5 shots)	25	C
Sling Stone (per dozen)	0	C

SELECTED DESCRIPTIONS

FOOD

The common folk of King's Landing provide fish from the Druskan River and mushrooms from the "Knot," a large chamber a few hundred yards from the settlement where fungus grows a plenty. Everything else must be foraged from the surface, or gathered from the sea caves of the Lower Tunnels. Such items are sold by those brave enough to gather them.

Fruit is essential to staving off moon skin, and so is especially prized. A foraging trip into the dangerous wilds can make a person relatively wealthy should they find an intact source of fruit.

GULPER EYES

Gulpers are big, nasty, tentacled fish that sometimes feed in the cold waters of the Lower King's Tunnels. Their meat is poisonous, unfortunately, but their luminescent eyes provide a much-needed weapon against the darkness.

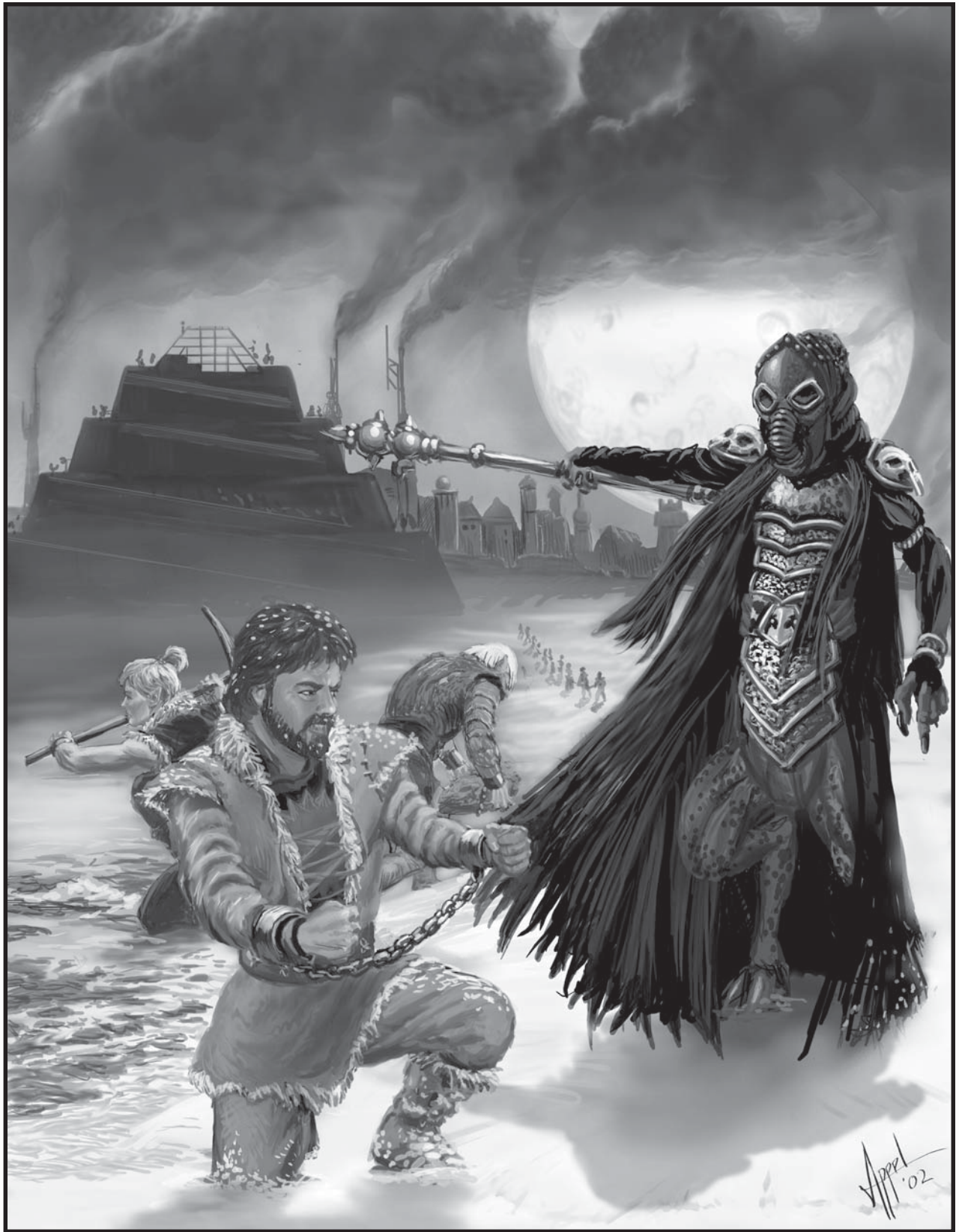
Each eye can be smashed and turned into a viscous brew. Those who drink it gain the ability to see in the dark!

Each eye creates enough elixir for five doses. Humans and half-orcs who imbibe a dose gain the Low Light Vision ability of Elves and other demi-humans for four hours. Demi-humans who already have Low Light Vision gain the ability to see normally even in pitch darkness. Humans can never gain the latter ability.

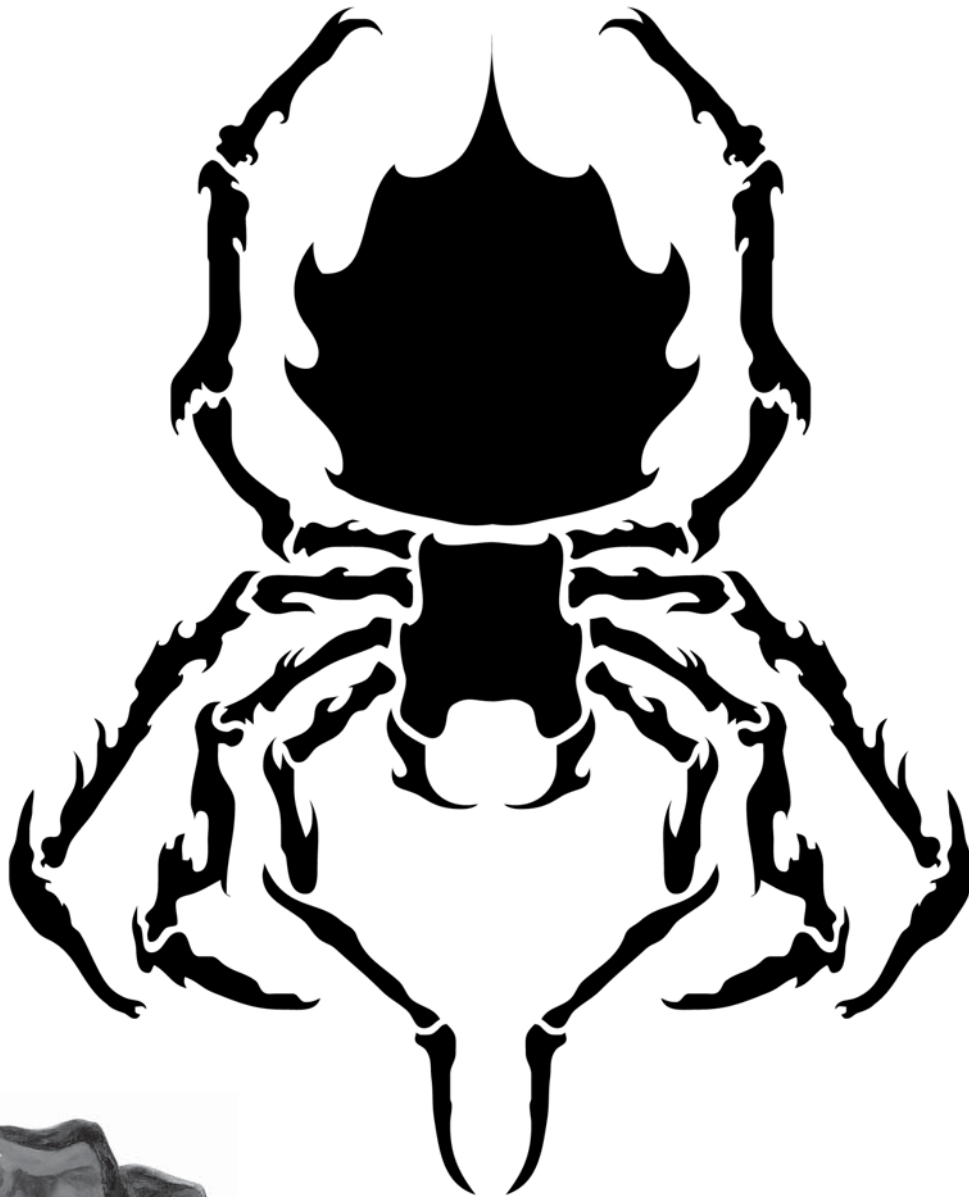
TROLL MEAT

Desperation has caused several important discoveries. One is that troll meat is as nourishing as any other meat, though tough to swallow for most. Troll steaks are simply nourishing food.

Their green, gamey livers are especially disgusting, but store some of the troll's legendary regenerative powers. Those who try to eat them must make a Vigor roll at -2. Failure means the meat is thrown up and ruined. Success means the character instantly recovers one wound. Multiple livers may be digested to recover more wounds, but there must be an hour between each for them to have any effect.



GAME MASTER'S SECTION



YOU CAN READ, CAN'T YA? IF YOU'RE NOT THE GAME MASTER, SPLIT! THERE'S A TON OF GHOULISH GOODNESS IN THE REST OF THIS BOOK, BUT IT'S ONLY FOR THE GOOMBAH WHO'S GOING TO RUN THIS MASTERPIECE. LOOK PAST THIS PAGE AND YOU'LL RUN ALL THE FUN. SO AMSCRAY!

GAME MASTER'S SECTION

The elves of Tarth come from the forests while the dwarves hail from beneath the earth. But few have ever asked exactly what they were hiding from in those dark retreats.

The answer lies in Tarth's past—over five thousand years ago when the elves were still wild things crawling in the treetops and dwarves were savage flesh-eaters burrowing through the dirt like ghouls. Humans and half-folk—as you will see—hadn't even been *invented* yet.

WHAT THE SAGES BELIEVE

Sages of Tarth know the world was once inhabited by horrendous "spider-men." These creatures devoured everything in their paths, and nearly drove the civilized races to extinction. The "Scourge" is why the elves remained in the forests, the dwarves in the mountains, and the humans in scattered caves. It is likely the spiders would have destroyed all life on the planet had Solace not created a mortal champion to defeat them—Tarrian. This woman, the first Red Knight, led a band of heroes made up of all the races—including a legendary half-orc named Garl. It is largely because of Garl that half-orcs are accepted throughout Tarth today.

After many battles against the spiders, it is said that Tarrian discovered the monsters

had a queen. The Red Knight and her band of champions eventually discovered the "great hive," which it is said was located near present-day Kings Port, and battled their way inside. After an epic struggle, the heroes found the queen, destroyed her, and thus ended the scourge of the spiders for all time.

THE SA KARANS

The elves hid in their trees during the Scourge, and the dwarves within the earth. The humans however, hid themselves away in isolated lairs scattered throughout Tarth. Sages know this because they have found dozens of these remote dwellings over the years. These early, cave-dwelling humans are called "Sa Karans."

When the Scourge ended, the humans left their isolated caves and ventured out into the world where they began to make the towns and villages that exist today.

In the caves they left behind, the Sa Karans also left strange secrets their children seem to have forgotten. Chief among these secrets are the blood stones, found littered throughout their ancient lairs. These strange devices "graft" with mortal flesh and blood, granting incredible arcane powers to the fortunate, but driving a few stark raving mad.

WHAT IS TRUTH

The sages are correct that Tarrion was the first Red Knight, and that her band of heroes waged a war of survival against the spiders. But the Sages are completely wrong about the Sa Karans. They were not reclusive ancestors of humans—they were the spiders!

HIDDEN MASTERS

The sages say the spiders that once infested Tarth were four-armed, two-legged creatures—not true spiders of course, but “spider-men.” A few drawings in ancient caverns and in the trees of the elves substantiate these tales. History also portrays the spiders as cunning but not truly intelligent, and ravenous to the point of racial suicide.

But what the sages do not know is what few survived to tell. The spiders were but the dying children of an ancient and far more intelligent race—the Masters.

SECRETS OF THE SA KARANS

The frenzied spider-men that plagued Tarth were all most of the races ever saw. But some men and women were taken to hidden lairs in remote areas where they met the spiders’ “Masters.” These creatures referred to themselves as “Sa Karans,” which means “the Masters” in their mental “tongue.”

The Sa Karans were far more intelligent, could “speak” through visual and emotional telepathy, and possessed incredible psionic powers. They had developed weapons and flying “boxes,” and most of all, could manipulate genetics and evolution.

One of their proudest achievements was to do away with the uncertain process of their own births. The Masters had long since abandoned the messy, unpredictable, and embarrassing mating process in favor of science. New Sa Karans were created within black “seed pods” in the Birthing Chambers of the Great Hive. The creatures did not even have to raise their progeny, for new Sa Karans were born into the world as fully-formed adults in only a few months, and instructed in their racial history by fantastic “teaching stones” that broadcast the race’s most important milestones to their developing minds.

Not only did this avoid the randomness of coupling, but genetic manipulation allowed the Sa Karans to control their race’s very evolution!

ORIGIN OF SPECIES

The Sa Karans captured thousands of primitive elves, dwarves, and orcs—the only sentient races on Tarth at the time—and used their blood and seed to create new and more “useful” species. No living man or woman knows this dark secret, but both half-folk and humans were created in the abominable lairs of the Masters.

Half-folk were a mix of dwarf and elf that somehow gained the worst of both species—the former’s stature and the latter’s frailty. This made them poor servants, so the Sa Karans wiped them out. Had a small band not escaped and reproduced, the half-folk would almost certainly have been eaten to extinction.

The Masters’ next creations made much better slaves. Humans gained the strength of dwarves, the ferocity of orcs, and the stature of elves. They were so successful, in fact, that each Sa Karan hive began to “color” their humans so that they could not be claimed by their neighbors. This is why humans from certain areas of Tarth have such distinctive coloration—the particular combination of skin and hair color is their “brand.”

SUNRISE

The unfortunate captives of the Sa Karans were dissected, forced to commit blasphemous couplings, and inevitably consumed by their captors. The only thing that seemed to bring them hope was the dim light of the sun that peeked through the gloomy mists of Tarth on occasion.

Over time, the sun became something of a god to these sad folk—especially the humans. It gave them peace in these dismal days, and so they called it Solace.

Solace brought hope and life to the desperate slaves praying in the darkness. Tarth itself, once a dark world cloaked in dense fog, began to change as well. The sun slowly grew brighter, burning off the mists so that its rays shone down brilliantly over all the land.

The Sa Karans realized the land was changing, but they were not a religious race and so did not connect the “pagan” rituals of their slaves to the growing brilliance of the sun. At first Solace just made the Sa Karans uncomfortable. A few generations later, it actually poisoned their seed.

DEVOLUTION

Two thousand years ago, 99 out of 100 new Sa Karans were born malformed. These genetic mutants emerged from the seed pods with four arms, mottled carapace, and in a perpetual and ravenous frenzy. These creatures were the spiders the races remember from so long ago.

The spiders proved useful to the Sa Karans, however, so they created thousands of them and turned them loose on the growingly combative lesser races.

THE SCOURGE

The spiders overran Tarth, turning the wild forests and distant mountains red with blood. The elves retreated further into their dark forests and the dwarves burrowed deeper beneath the earth. Only the warlike orcs stood strong, protected by their martial nature, their high mountain caves, and a peculiar immunity to the Sa Karans' mental ability to control minds.

The races remember this time as the Scourge.

TARRIAN

The Scourge threatened to wipe out the races until a girl named Tarrian began to fight back. She gathered anyone who would come to her banner and began using guile and raw courage to kill the horrid things by the score.

Tarrian prayed to Solace during her quest, and took the sacred sun as her personal symbol. During one pitched battle, when it seemed all hope was lost, Tarrian's sword exploded with brilliant fire. The heroine waded into the spiders and cut them down to the last screaming abomination. When the battle was over, Tarrian's skin was singed forever red by the heat of her blade, but nearly two dozen of the vile spiders lie dead at her feet.

Tarrian had become the first Red Knight.

CRUSADE

After the battle, thousands fought their way through the wilds to rally beneath her banner. In time, some of the most fanatical became Red Knights as well. Others with Tarrian's devotion but not her martial prowess became Sun Priests.

Eventually, Tarrian learned of the existence of the Masters themselves. Soon the Sa Karans' isolated lairs became the sites

of vicious and bloody battles, pitting blazing sunlight and raw savagery against psychic sorcery, mad spiders, and the Masters' other monstrous creations.

One by one, the Masters' strongholds fell, and with each victory, her army grew. Finally, Tarrian learned of the Great Hive and the Birthing Chambers hidden within.

THE GREAT HIVE

The surviving Sa Karans and their spider hordes gathered for the final defense of the Great Hive and the all-important Birthing Chambers. The battle was nothing less than a final bid for survival. For the victors, life. Defeat meant certain extinction.

The battle was long and bloody, but the alliance pressed into the Great Hive and to the very doors of the Birthing Chambers itself. Then disaster struck. The last of the Sa Karans triggered a massive explosion within the hive, burying Tarrian's army and the last of the spiders alike.

With Tarrian and her core followers dead, the remaining warriors fell to fighting over leadership. Eventually the brawl turned into a deadly, week-long war. The first great race war left thousands dead, but went unrecorded in history as the races had only just invented writing.

The survivors were no masters of diplomacy, so they decided to go their separate ways to avoid more bloodshed. The elves returned to the safety of the trees, the dwarves to their tunnels, and the few half-folk to a single isolated glen far from the ruins of the Great Hive. Only the humans had nowhere to go, so they built a new settlement on the nearby cliffs. This small village eventually became Kings Port, the City of Heroes.

FORGOTTEN LORE

With their destruction, the Sa Karans faded from memory, but the Scourge is still a part of Tarth's legends, as are the spiders. People know that Tarrian was the first Red Knight, and that she led a band to defeat the spiders. They also know that she eventually discovered some sort of lair near present-day Kings Port where a great battle was fought. The legend of a great queen is untrue, but has come to be part of the lore because none of those who went inside the Great Hive returned to tell the truth.

With Tarrian and her warband's death, details about the Great Hive and the very

existence of the Masters themselves has been forgotten. Neither did the races ever discover the true origins of humans and half-folk. They believe "Sa Karans" were ancient humans who lived in isolated lairs.

But the Masters have not forgotten. The humiliating defeat at the hands of crude creatures of their own making has burned in their powerful psyches for two millennium.

THE SA KARAN SECRET

The destruction of the Great Hive crushed the birthing chamber and the rebellious races inside, but the surviving Sa Karans' had a secret. One of their number had created a fail-safe to protect their race—a portal to another world.

The last Sa Karans transported themselves to a distant, alien planet. There they established a new Great Hive, dominated the strange creatures that lived there, and began to plot their revenge.

The portal still exists today, in a dark cavern deep below the City of Heroes. Over the last millennium, the descendents of the last Sa Karans have created new technology and new servants, but they have yet to find a cure for the degenerative disease that creates the spiders.

As the campaign opens, there are less than 100 true Sa Karans left.

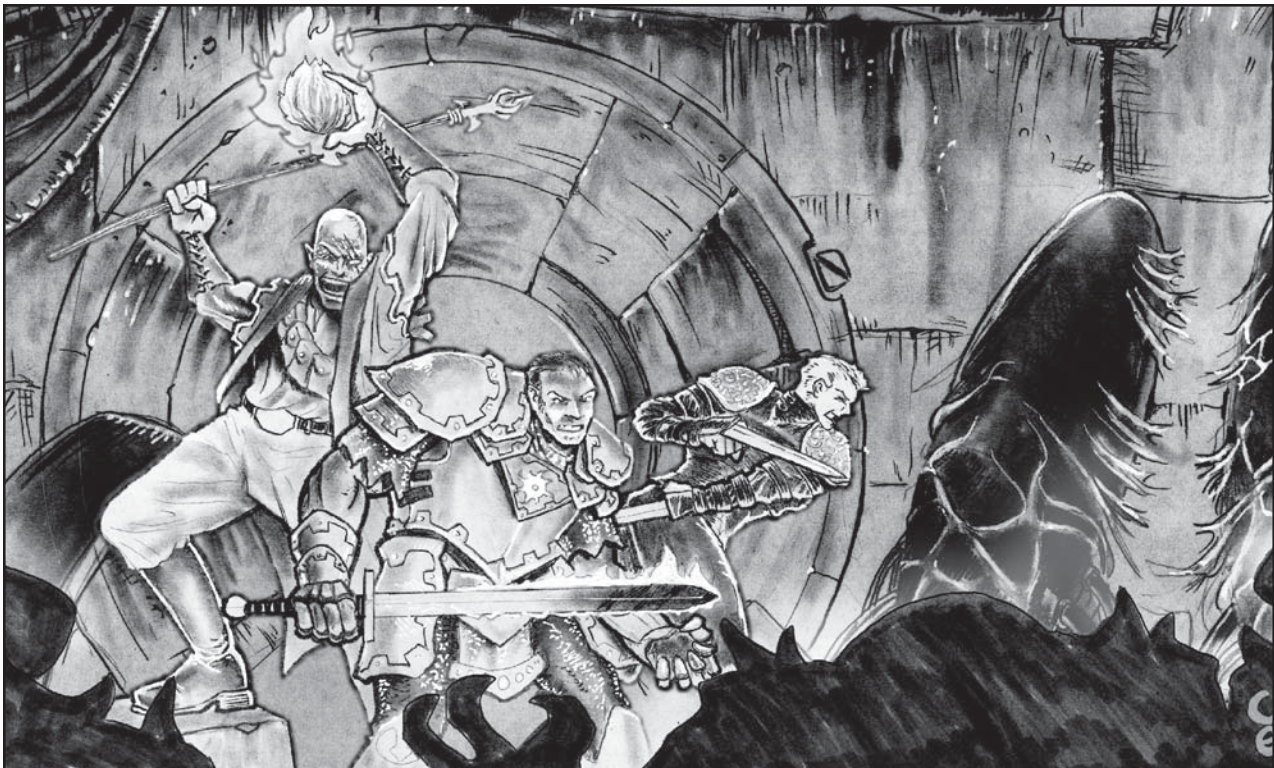
ENTER THE SEVEN

The Masters still use the portal on occasion, secretly spying on the growing races and snatching occasional subjects for experimentation. Their victims are indigents from the streets of Kings Port, lost souls who won't be missed by the meddling "savages" above.

Five years ago, the Masters made the mistake of taking a rebellious young noble who had taken to the streets. The famous Seven were hired to find the teen, and eventually came face-to-face with an actual Master—the first seen by anyone but their rare captives in over two thousand years.

The Master seared Kerreth, nearly killing the Red Knight with a blast from his ebon staff. His friends quickly rallied and mortally wounded the Sa Karan, but then something tragic occurred. Sarrrian the Ranger approached to try and learn something of the horror, but the wizard Tyvek blasted it with flame so hot that nothing was left of the mysterious figure but ashes.

Had the Seven managed to somehow question the thing or even followed its tracks to the portal, the invasion of Tarth could have been prevented and the Sa Karans trapped on their alien home world for all eternity.



A HERO'S FATE

Kerreth's wounds were quickly healed by Zelda the Sun Priest, his friend and lover. The errant youth they'd entered the tunnels to rescue was found nearby, and with little else to report, this tale of the Seven received little play from Tarth's minstrels.

THE CURE!

Unknown to the Seven, the Master they killed had a companion waiting in the shadows beyond. The spy investigated his fallen comrade and sensed something far more fascinating nearby—Kerreth's blood.

The spy's highly-attuned psychic senses detected an odd energy about the Red Knight's life-fluid. It was infused with the holy radiance of Solace. He took as much as he could gather back through the portal and turned it over to other Sa Karans who specialized in such things.

Several years later, a Sa Karan scientist learned that a drop of Kerreth's blood was the cure that would save the entire race! When injected into a seed pod, the blood made the growing creature immune to the degenerative disease that turned a Sa Karan into a spider.

The Masters had already penetrated the King's court in Valusia and knew exactly who Kerreth was, so it was a simple matter to plant a false lead directing him and the rest of the Seven into a deadly trap.

THE TRAP

Lord Herrek, a frequent pawn of the Masters, called for the Seven. He told them there had been a disturbance in the ancient tomb of Valador, a long-dead king of Tarth. The proud Seven rushed down into the Crypts, found Valador's tomb mysteriously open, and eventually found a secret passage to an unexplored cavern below.

Sa Karan assassins were waiting for them.

Three of the Seven died on the spot. Spyke, Tyvek, Zelda, and Kerreth were captured. After a day had passed, King Kaden asked Lord Herrek where he had sent Valusia's greatest heroes. Oddly, Lord Herrek could remember only that he had sent them to the Crypts. He couldn't remember why, nor exactly where within the maze-like catacombs he had instructed them to go.

King Kaden was no fool and realized something sinister was afoot. He tasked his most powerful court mage, Arwick, to find

some way to retrieve the location from Lord Herrek's mind. He also sent several squads of the City Watch to the Crypts to look for the Seven, but they returned empty-handed.

King Kaden always trusted his instincts, and at that moment, they told him the Seven were in dire peril. To save them, he decided to summon some of his greatest heroes and send them into the Crypts.

THE STORY TO COME

This is where the scripted campaign begins, with the player characters delivering a secret message to the renowned Scarlet Riders to answer King Kaden's call.

The following events happen during your campaign, but it's important that you, the Game Master, have a good overview of the big picture. That way you can fill in the details and work out any complications that arise. The player characters must discover the story in pieces as it happens to them.

Their tale begins with a summons to Galstaff Manor, where they are charged with finding and delivering a message to Trabian Galstaff. The young noble is the leader of a group of heroes called the Scarlet Riders.

Trabian's trail leads the party to the Dread Mountains and an ancient Sa Karan ruin. They are there when the Masters strike, and so are safe from the devastation that rolls over the rest of their fair home.

THE INVASION

The invasion occurs just as the heroes finish up Scene Two in Act I. The player characters glimpse only small bits of the action and so are saved from almost certain death, but a full account of the action is revealed here for your reference.

The Sa Karans knew Tarth must be transformed for them to reclaim it. The sun must be blotted and the sky darkened. This would not only make the world more comfortable for the Masters, but also, it was believed, kill the savage's god as well.

The Sa Karans also needed a way to transport their army of spiders and other minions to Tarth. (The portal beneath the City is only usable by the Masters—not their minions.)

To accomplish both these goals, the Sa Karans created the "spikes." These massive constructs serve both as transports for their minions and massive smog factories.

The lower portion of the spikes contain thousands of spiders and other minions. Two massive smokestacks run from deep in the ground up through the spike and into the sky nearly two hundred feet up. Through the pipes billow clouds of thick black smoke designed to blot the sky and kill the sun god himself.

THE VALUSIAN SPIKE

Four spikes were launched from the Masters' home world, shot through space, and slammed into Tarth like knives in the hearts of Valusia, Kos, the White Towns, and the Dragon Isles.

The tale that unfolds in *The Dying of the Light* deals with the Valusian spike. The fate of the rest—and of Tarth itself—depends on what happens here.

The crash of the 300 foot tall spike sundered the earth and could be heard for a hundred miles in every direction. Thousands of villagers, soldiers from the King's patrols, and more than a few wandering adventurers wandered out to investigate. What they saw was a giant tower of blackened steel covered in rippled tubes and belching vents standing in the middle of a giant crevasse.

An hour after it landed, the spike began to hum. Hidden machinery began to thump and bang somewhere deep inside. Dark, gray

smoke belched from flumes high above. The smoke was so great it blackened the stars in less than an hour.

Some of the people stirred. Some approached the spike. A few brave souls even ventured to strike it with their weapons—but even magical blades had little effect on the massive structure.

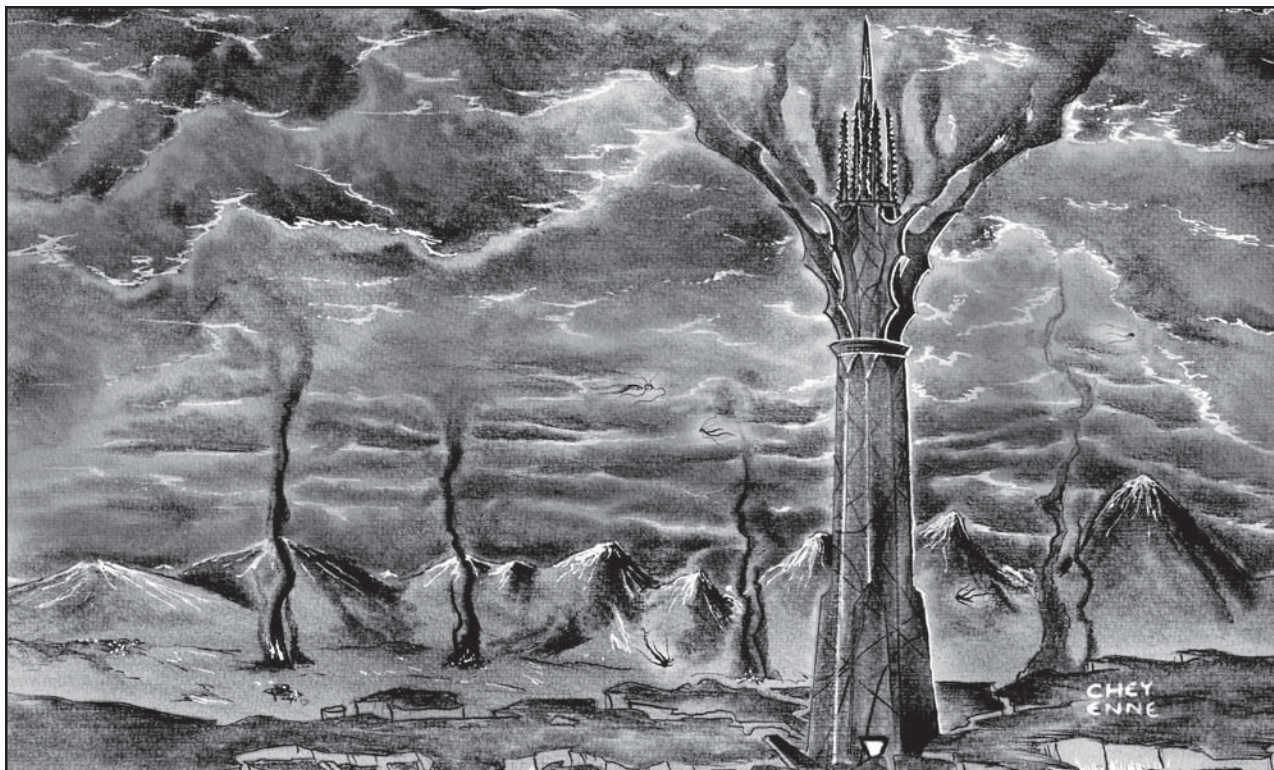
Another hour passed. Strange sounds were heard within. Minutes later, a gangplank opened. The crowd stared into the dark portal beyond but could see nothing.

Suddenly, thousands of ravenous, four-armed, spider-men erupted from the opening. They had backward legs, cloven hooves, and long snouts that writhed like hungry snakes. Beady black eyes rolled madly in their warped skulls, and four horrible arms ending in lanky fingers and jagged black nails slashed murderously at whatever they found before them.

Soon other bizarre beasts emerged from the spike as well. The alien army quickly spiraled out toward the nearest towns and villages, and finally headed toward Kings Port itself!

VALUSIA RAVAGED

Scattered bands of survivors raced back to the City to warn the authorities. King Kaden called up the militia and stationed himself



and the Kings' Guard at the gates. Many of the heroes he had summoned to help find the Seven stood beside him as well, now committed to Kings Port's defense whether they chose it or not.

Kaden raged at the thought of his beautiful kingdom at the monsters' mercy, but wisely kept his strength at the castle.

Hours later, the air was thick with the spikes' gray fog. The Kings' archers waited nervously on the walls alongside his musketeers, mercenaries, and those heroes he could keep from running off to save their families. His swordsmen and the militia stood in the courtyard behind the walls, ready to repel the mysterious invaders should they break through the gates.

MADNESS STRIKES

Hours later, madness struck. Scores of those drafted to help fight in Kings Port's defense suddenly began attacking those around them. Though they did not know it at the time, the pure-breed Sa Karans had emerged from the portal beneath the City and lurked among them. The "traitors" were victims of the Masters' incredible psychic powers—puppets made to dance a bloody jig at the City's most vulnerable moment.

King Kaden had long proved resistant to the Sa Karan infiltrators, but his most trusted champion, Lord Paulus Herrek, was not so mentally adept. "The Old Wolf" went mad and turned on his liege, and would certainly have slain him had not junior members of the King's Guard sacrificed themselves to allow the King's escape.

It was then that the spider-men struck. A thousand "spiders" skittered across the fields of Kings Port to its walls. Archers and musketeers rained death down upon them, but there were far too many. They climbed up the walls like their namesakes and tore through the surprised defenders like fire through cobwebs.

King Kaden and his daughter Rayna were lost in the fighting, but secretly made their way to where they hoped the Seven still lived (their fate is revealed in Act IV).

The walls cleared, the spiders bounded down into the courtyard below to ravage the gathered swordsmen and militia.

ALWAYS WATCH THE SKIES

The survivors of this initial onslaught retreated into various strongholds throughout the City. Within minutes, flying black craft

the size of rowboats drifted overhead. Strange new invaders leered out over the sides—tall humanoids in strange black armor—the Masters. These creatures dropped small cannisters onto the survivor's strongholds from their flying craft. The cannisters detonated on impact with the force of a wagon-load of black powder.

SLAVES TO THE MASTERS

In the days to come, the survivors were gathered together and forced into slavery. The slaves now know bits of the truth. They know the ancient spider-men have returned, and that they are led by far superior Masters. They do not yet know these are the Sa Karans, nor that they were here long before.

The Masters do not speak to their slaves, but communicate thoughts and ideas through visual and empathic telepathy.

In the City, the slaves have been put to work excavating the old Sa Karan tunnels to clear out and reconstruct the ruins of the Great Hive. Outside the City, the slaves are mostly herded together to provide food for the Sa Karans, or used in the Masters' favorite pastime—cruel genetic and breeding experiments.

A few survivors, the most ruthless and treacherous vermin of the races, betrayed their own kind. The "Hunters" were given the best arms and armor of King Kaden's ruined army and sent out to track down any remaining survivors. These scum are fitted with special collars that amplify the Hunters' thoughts, allowing the Masters to constantly check their loyalty—and melt their brains if they betray their new overlords.

THE MASTERS

Non-degenerative Sa Karans—the Masters—are tall, thin creatures with lanky arms, double-jointed elbows, and back-bending legs with cloven hooves. Only males remain—females were bred out of the race many millennia ago when the seed pods made their reproductive capabilities unnecessary.

Physically, the Masters' splotchy skin is shaded in various hues of dark purple, blue, or mauve. It stretches tight over their ribs but hangs in loose flaps over their potbellies—where their abhorrent food is digested and stored.

The Masters breathe air, but don't like the "taste" of clean air. They prefer dark, sooty atmospheres and actually become notably

nauseous on the rare occasions the air isn't polluted enough for them. For this reason, they wear black breathing masks. They also wear light leathery armor for protection and to keep the clean air off their skin.

When their horrible visage is revealed, their awesome aspect is worse than one might suspect. The aliens' skulls are bulbous toward the back to accommodate their massive brains, and their beady black eyes are pupilless—like those of shark's. They have no noses, just two thin slits below their eyes. Their most disturbing feature, however, is their accordion-like snouts—almost like palsied elephants' trunks.

The snouts normally remain retracted on the horrors' faces where they look like fat, wrinkled eels collapsed in upon themselves.

POWERS

Masters are deadly in physical combat, but are far more frightening for their phenomenal psychic powers. They can read thoughts, dominate weak-willed foes, and even channel psionic blasts through special "ebon staves." All Masters have also trained to communicate with and control any and all spiders within 25" (50 yards).

SPIDERS

Spiders are twisted mockeries of the Masters. Their mottled purplish skin is covered in hard, black carapace. Weird blue veins pules just below the surface, giving them an insect-like appearance. Between this, their bloated bellies, and their inexplicable four-arms, the things do truly resemble some sort of grotesque spider-men.

Spiders are inferior to their pure-breed brothers only in intellect. Physically, their rabid aggression, four arms, and voracious

hunger make them far more deadly in a fair fight. Of course, the Masters don't believe in fair fights.

Spiders have none of the psionic powers of their purebred brothers besides that which is required for feeding (see below). Their atrophied minds are muddled mazes of chaos filled with a raw, burning hate for everything that lives.

SPIDER HIVES

Spiders form hives in whatever dark spaces they can find. There they excrete black goo that slowly hardens into brittle black walls. Over time, the oddly-shaped excretions become harder than stone.

The spider's high metabolism and massive excretions use immense amounts of energy. This is what causes their insatiable hunger.

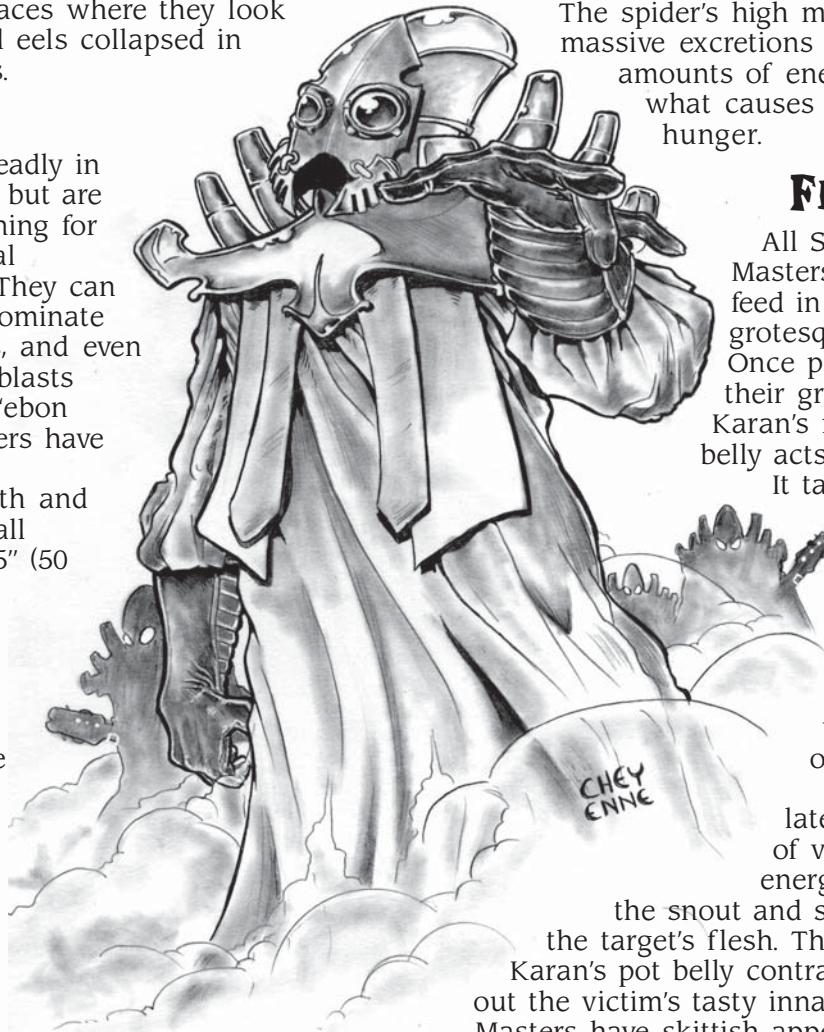
FEEDING

All Sa Karans, both Masters and spiders, feed in a most grotesque manner. Once prey is within their grasp, the Sa Karan's massive pot belly acts like a bellows.

It takes in a deep breath, then quickly exhales to propel its long snout forward, suctioning onto its prey with the force of a vice.

A half second later, a sharp blast of violet psionic energy races down the snout and sears a hole in the target's flesh. Then the Sa Karan's pot belly contracts, siphoning out the victim's tasty innards.

Masters have skittish appetites and often leave their dying prey to waste. Spiders rarely leave anything but shriveled husks.



SPECIAL RULES

Below are a few special rules and reminders you should be aware of before running *Evernight*.

LIGHT

Obviously, light—and the absence thereof—are a large part of the *Evernight* story.

Because most of the campaign takes place in darkness, you need to make sure you're familiar with how light works in the *Savage Worlds* game system.

LIGHT SOURCES

Light sources provide normal illumination within their listed range. A candle, for example, provides clear light in a 2" radius, a torch in a 4" radius.

These sources cast Dim light (-1) at up to twice the listed radius. Anything up to three times the listed radius is in Darkness (-2). Anything beyond that cannot be seen.

Characters with Low Light vision see the same ranges, but ignore the penalties for Dim and Dark light. They are just as blind beyond that range as humans.

Infravision works somewhat differently. The character sees as described above, but can also see any source of warmth in the pitch darkness area beyond.

SA KARAN DARKVISION

Sa Karans have "darkvision." Their actual eyes have Low Light Vision, and their minds project a sort of psionic "sonar" as well. This allows them to see normally even in pitch darkness. In short, Sa Karans *never* suffer penalties due to lighting.

Unfortunately for them, light brighter than a torch—such as the *light* spell or the sun itself, blinds them completely. They suffer -6 to all actions requiring sight when so blinded.

Sa Karan Masters wear masks to protect themselves from sudden flashes of light. As long as they wear their masks, they suffer only a -2 to their actions when faced with bright light.

SA KARAN BLOOD STONES

These small red gems were once "psychic batteries" for the Masters. Several dotted each Sa Karan's lair and provided their owner with additional power for their incredible psionic abilities.

When pressed against the skin of a sentient non-Sa Karan (except for orcs), the stone burrows into the host's skin and grafts with his very essence. The lucky hero becomes smarter, stronger, more agile, or tougher. Less fortunates see a dramatic decrease in their abilities, and sometimes death. Very fortunate individuals might even gain "Wild Powers," psychic powers unleashed from unknown corners of their minds.

A hero who wishes to merge with a blood stone need only place it upon his bare chest. The thing then burrows into the flesh and grafts into the host's flesh, bone, and muscle, as well as his soul.

The process is extremely painful—the hero suffers an automatic wound that only heals through the passage of time, not by magic. Over the next few agonizing seconds a powerful transformation takes hold. The exact result of the merger is determined by fate. In game terms, shuffle your Action Deck and let the hero draw a single card, then consult the table below.

Characters should consider the odds carefully before gambling with such terrible consequences.

CARD DRAW

Card	Effect
Joker	Choice of Wild Power
Ace	Wild Power*
Queen-King	+1 Vigor
Ten-Jack	+1 Agility
6-9	+1 Strength
3-5	+1 Smarts
2	Permanent Crippling Injury

*Roll on the Wild Power table on page 51.

Adding +1 to an attribute means increasing it a die type. A d12 becomes a d12+1, and a d12+1 becomes a d12+2.

Crippling injuries are permanent and unavoidable—sometimes the strain is just too much for a person to bear.

WHITE STONES

White blood stones are occasionally found as well. These stones are less harmful to the people of Tarth, and much less risky. When a character merges with a white blood stone, his player draws two cards from the deck and chooses which one affects his hero.

Needless to say, white blood stones are highly prized. Those who find them become instantly wealthy. The market price for such a stone is 5,000 suns.

MULTIPLE STONES

A character may merge with as many stones as he wishes. He risks misfortune every time he does so, however.

ORCS

Orcs are immune to the Sa Karan's mental powers of detection and domination (but not the blasts of their ebon staves). This same immunity keeps them from merging with blood stones as well.

STATIC

Blood stones grafted into a mortal body also grant the host minor passive resistance to psychic attacks. A character with a single blood stone adds +4 to any resistance rolls versus Psionic powers that are opposed, and has +4 armor against psychic attacks as well (including blasts from ebon staves and the like).

Additional stones have no further effect in this regard.

Wild powers gained by blood stones are not powerful enough to overcome Sa Karan manacles—see page 81. They do not function when a character is shackled by these incredible devices.

WILD POWERS

A character with a Wild Power gains one innate supernatural ability from the list below. He has 5 Power Points with which to use this power, and may purchase the Power Points Edge for it when leveling as he wishes. The power and its Power Points are separate from any existing Arcane Background, and cannot be exchanged. The character may not take any other Power Edges for his Wild Power.

The character uses his Spirit to activate the power. It never suffers backlash—failure simply results in no activation of the power (though the points are spent as usual).

1d20	Wild Power
1	Armor
2	Blast
3	Bolt
4	Boost Trait
5	Lower Trait
6	Conceal Arcana
7	Detect Arcana
8	Dispel
9	Fear
10	Fly
11	Invisibility
12	Light
13	Obscure
14	Puppet
15	Quickness
16	Smite
17	Speed
18	Stun
19	Telekinesis
20	Wave Runner

THE DYING OF THE LIGHT

The remainder of this book is a five act campaign starting before the Masters invade and ending with (hopefully!) their overthrow.

Needless to say, most roleplaying books of this sort are more open-ended. You're given a setting, detail on its threats and inhabitants, and then are left to your own devices to come up with adventures and end the campaign whenever you get bored with it. Some Savage Settings are like that as well—they're an open sandbox for you to do whatever you choose with them.

This book is something different. It's intended for you to run your group through from start to finish and then be done with it. You can certainly go on after the final battle with the Masters, and we've provided an Epilogue for that very purpose (see page 131). In general, however, the main tale of *Evernight* ends after the last scene in Act V.

Each short adventure in this epic saga is designed so that you can read it just before you're ready to run the game with very little additional preparation. You should at least glance over all the scenarios in advance however so that you have a strong idea where things are going in case your group does something completely unexpected.

Here's a quick summary of the adventure that awaits.

ACT I: HEROES

Scene One: The Message: The heroes are hired by the well-known Galstaff family to deliver a message to their wandering son,

Trabian Galstaff. Trabian is a member of an adventuring group known as the Scarlet Riders. Trabian is currently in the Dread Mountains exploring a newly-found Sa Karan ruin.

Scene Two: Aragon: The party travels to Aragon, a village a day's ride from Kings Port. There they discover the exact location of the Sa Karan ruins, and meet a famous bard known as Everheart.

Scene Three: The Savage Hills: The heroes have their first major combat on the way to the ruins when they discover an orc encampment and several captive lumberjacks.

Scene Four: The Sa Karan Ruins: The party finds the ruins and explores its depths. After battling an ancient guardian, they discover the corpses of the Scarlet Riders and an incredible treasure—a Sa Karan blood stone!

Scene Five: The Mountain: Just as the heroes finish their epic fight, the spike lands in the Valusian plain outside King's Port, causing massive tremors all the way to the Dread Mountains. The earthquake causes the ruins to collapse, trapping the adventurers underground. Fortunately, a new exit opens up, and after an arduous trip, the group finds a way out of the earth.

Scene Six: The Savage Caves: The path through the mountain takes the heroes to a small series of caves inhabited by a large orc tribe. The party must battle or sneak their way past these foes to escape.

ACT II: THE FALL

Scene One: Decisions: The heroes now see that Valusia lies in ruins and must decide where to go.

Scene Two: Innocence Lost: A young girl named Tam is discovered in the shell of a ruined house. She is mute, but provides a few scant clues to what happened in the Valusian plains.

Scene Three: The Worst in Men: A group of bandits take advantage of the chaos to stage an ambush.

Scene Four: Fallen Hero: The corpse of Ragulon, a well-known hero of the Golem Smashers, is found on the banks of small stream, crushed by some titanic foe.

Scene Five: Valusia Razed: The group wanders about Valusia and eventually encounters the true identity of Tarth's invaders.

Scene Six: Destinations: The act ends with the warriors' inevitable capture.

ACT III: BONDAGE

Scene One: Slavery: The adventurers become captives of the Masters, but learn some very important secrets in the process. They also meet a mysterious prisoner named Arwick. The King's former mage whispers "Valador" before he dies, a name that has no meaning until Act IV.

Scene Two: An Act of Kindness: The group learns what being a hero really means when another prisoner risks his life to provide them with food and information.

Scene Three: War of the Rats: A rescue party looking for Arwick helps kill the slaves' overseer, frees the adventurers, and leads them below Kings Port to the Warrens.

ACT IV: THE WARRENS

Scene One: The Wolf: Sarah the Sun Priest introduces the former slaves to the refugee settlement of King's Landing and its de facto ruler, Lord Paulus Herrek—the Wolf.

Scene Two: The Lower Tunnels: The party is tasked with gathering much-needed red kelp from the lower sea tunnels, and wind up doing battle with vicious sea trolls.

Scene Three: The Upper Tunnels: The crypt of a long-dead barbarian has been discovered, and the adventurers are given official permission to loot his tomb for useful magical items that might help in the coming fight against the Masters.

Scene Four: The Wilderness: Badly in need of fruit, Lord Herrek sends the team out into the wilderness to the orchards at Oldham Farms. The former asylum is inhabited by a Master and its servants, as well as the ghosts of the lunatics who died there.

Scene Five: Trials of the Red Woman: After their escape from Oldham Farms, the heroes meet a huge warband of orcs. The orcs take them to their lair in the mountains and force them to engage in an ancient ritual—three deadly combats. If the warriors survive, the orcs release the group and pledge their help in the coming counterattack.

Scene Six: The Red Ravager: Back in the Warrens, the heroes search for gulper eyes in the lower sea tunnels. There they run into a deadly villain called the Red Ravager, and learn his dark secret.

Scene Seven: The Inferno: Drugall the dwarf's niece has been kidnapped by Garon the Raider. If the adventurers can return her, Drugall's dwarves vow to join the fight.

Scene Eight: The Vermin Lord: Along with Drugall's niece, the heroes discover a map leading to an ancient tomb—Valador's. There they find another creation of the Sa Karans—the Vermin Lord—and a secret entrance into the ruins of their ancient hive.

Scene Nine: Revelations: In the rubble of the Great Hive, the party learns the true origin of the Sa Karans and other frightening secrets. They do battle with a group of assassins and other guardians before uncovering the holy sword and armor of Tarrian herself.

ACT V: RAGE

The grand finale comes as Drugall—won over by the saving of his niece—comes up with a plan. The bulk of his dwarves will accompany the people of King's Landing and the orcs in the assault on King's Port. A small team of dwarven demolitionists, guarded by the player characters, will head to the spike via a secret tunnel.

At the spike, the heroes discover one last sinister secret—the final fate of Tarth's most famous hero—and rescue Princess Rayna. The brave dwarves sacrifice themselves to finish the mission, and the spike is demolished.

From there the heroes race back to the city ruins and join the assault on the remainder of the Sa Karan's force. The battle won, one of the heroes is crowned King of Valusia.

ACT I HEROES

The first act of *Dying of the Light* begins at the twilight of Tarth's prosperity. The famous Seven have stumbled onto the Masters' plans deep beneath the earth, and are eventually drawn into a trap that dooms the very people they were trying to save.

King Kaden of Valusia summons aid in the form of the land's many heroes. The player characters aren't known yet, but they're hired to find and bring home a group of champions called the Scarlet Riders.

The Riders are nearly a day's ride away from the City exploring Sa Karan ruin. The player characters track them there, explore the ruins, and discover several secrets that later help them understand the cruel nature of Tarth's coming invaders.

Further in the ruin, the heroes discover the bodies of the Scarlet Riders. They have been overcome by ancient guardians left ages ago by the Sa Karans.

Just as the heroes defeat what remains of the guardians, the Sa Karan spike strikes Valusia. The tremor rocks the Dread Mountains and causes massive cave-ins in the Sa Karan ruins where the bloodied heroes fight.

When the tremors finally end, the expedition must exit via a rerouted creek bed. After an arduous journey over many hazardous obstacles, the party emerges in the rear of an orc lair. Fortunately, the large clan that lives there is outside watching the battle on the Valusian plain. With stealth and luck, the party can slip by without incident.

SCENE ONE THE MESSAGE

The epic tale of *Evernight* begins as most heroic tales do in Tarth—in the city of Kings Port.

The heroes have answered a discrete ad to work for the well-known Galstaff family, and are now standing at the gates of the family's manor. It's 10 am on a bright Fall morning.

This is a good time to let your group describe their characters to one another, and tell you why they're here looking for work. Most should simply be looking to make a name for themselves and become great heroes—that's what the City of Heroes is all about, after all. Others may have more nefarious purposes, or are looking to make a few suns to pay the rent.

Some of the adventurers may already be companions, or they may all be complete strangers. Let your group make up their own minds about that now. If some of the group

already know each other and are looking to become famous warriors, you might want to have them come up with a group name. This is the fashion in Valusia, with the most famous of all heroic bands being the renowned Seven.

A common knowledge roll notes the Galstoffs are frequent patrons of the Seven, so this is a great place for anxious heroes to begin their journey into legend. A raise on the roll remembers Galstaff's oldest son, Trabian, is a hero himself—a member of the up-and-coming Scarlet Riders.

THE MANOR

The Galstaff family home sits on the cliffs of Kings Port, just south of King Kaden's castle. The families closest to the castle have the highest prestige, and the Galstoffs are only a half-dozen doors down. It is owned by Jacob Galstaff, a very successful spice-dealer and senior member of the Merchant's Guild.

After your group has introduced themselves, they are eventually noticed by a guard. He asks them their business and then escorts them up a short path and into the manor. There they are shown into a parlor and asked to wait.

Read the following as the party enters the manor.

You're escorted into the stately home, through a set of beautiful hardwood doors and into a massive ballroom. The guard points to a stately parlor to the right and you move to fill the beautiful crushed velvet seats within.

You've barely managed to sit before servants enter and offer you hot tea—spiced with some exotic and unusual scent you've never smelled before. A few minutes later a tough-looking white-haired man in his early '50s enters the room. He is dressed in black pants and a silk scarlet shirt—the Galstaff family colors. "Greetings good sirs and madams. My name is Simon Rutledge. I am Jacob Galstaff's personal advisor.

My master, Jacob Galstaff, needs an urgent message delivered to his son, Trabian. Two days ago, Trabian set out to explore a new Sa Karan ruin found in the foothills of the Dread Mountains. We don't know exactly where the ruins are, but a friend of Trabian's, a ranger named Bareena, will.

You will likely find her in the King's Shadow.

Find Bareena and get directions to the ruins. Master Trabian and his companions are accomplished adventurers, so they should have cleared out whatever dangers they might have found there themselves. You need only worry about the possibility of orcs or bandits along the way.

Deliver the message as quickly as possible and get the Scarlet Riders back here by no later than dinner time tomorrow and we will pay you 50 suns each. Success may also mean you are hired for more challenging tasks in the future. I'm sure I don't need to tell you that my master is quite wealthy and powerful. In fact, it was the Galstoffs who gave the Seven their start.

This is a matter of great importance, so please deliver the message as quickly as possible."

Simon then hands the most respectable-looking character in the party (a Sun Priest or Red Knight if one is present) a message sealed with wax. "This is to be opened only by Trabian," he warns.

Rutledge knows little else, but answers what questions he can. He's not willing to provide equipment or negotiate on the price—he can easily find more adventurers in the City to perform the task if this bunch isn't interested.

Simon is willing to loan the group a horse each if they are in need to get to the ruins in time, but expects them returned unharmed or the damage will come out of the hirelings' pay. It is not acceptable that the heroes walk to the ruins, as that would take far too long.

THE LETTER

Once out of sight, some parties may decide to read the letter. Doing so without ruining the seal requires a Smarts roll at -4.

The text of the letter is below, and is a hint that something big is going on beneath the City. You'll also find a prop for this letter on page 138 that you may hand to your players. We recommend folding the prop and taping it shut, or perhaps even dripping a little candle wax on it to act as an actual seal. If the character opens the letter, the *player* must also break the seal. This will likely make your group take such an action much more seriously than simply saying "I open the letter."

THE KING'S SHADOW

The heroes should now look for Bareena the ranger at the King's Shadow. This is an upscale tavern which lies directly in the shadow of one of King Kaden's towers—hence the name.

You've passed by the King's Shadow before. Everyone who visits the City comes to see its famous doors. Few have been inside, however, for the fee is steep, and its hallowed halls are meant for heroes and their employers.

Standing before the legendary entrance way is a single guardsman dressed in an impeccable green uniform. He wears no weapons nor armor.

The doorman only allows in customers who are relatively clean, and then only for 20 suns a piece (heroes with reputations are not required to pay). Mentioning that the party was sent to deliver a message to Bareena from the Galstaffs also gains admittance for a single character with a successful Persuasion roll.

When one or more of the party enters, read the following.

The door opens into a long hallway made of dark wood. Along the wall are paintings. Your eyes grow wide as you spot some of the most famous heroes of Valusia. You see a picture of Kerreth the Red Knight, Spyke the thief, Ragulon the Golem Smasher, and more. With a little luck, perhaps your own picture will hang upon this wall someday!

At the end of hall is a set of double doors with ornate brass handles. You open them into a dim room filled with beautiful round tables. Above each table are chandeliers mounted with what can only be Sa Karan glow stones.

None of the tables are occupied at this time of day, but you can smell something delicious cooking in the rear. A quick glimpse at the Specials board reveals the cheapest thing on the menu would set you back at least 20 suns.

To your left is at least one familiar scene at least—a burly bartender with white hair smiles at you as he cleans glasses.

"Mornin' folks," he says. "Can I help you?"

Prices for food inside the King's Shadow are generally three times the normal rate.

The bartender is Jonas Sulk, an amiable man who is friendly unless given a reason not to be.

While Jonas is overall helpful, he is at first a bit evasive about Bareena. He says that she had breakfast this morning and then went to perform a small favor for the owners. It is the favor he is reluctant to share. If his attitude is improved by a successful Persuasion roll however, he finally admits the following:

"The King's Shadow has been having vermin problems. The owner hired Bareena to go underground and wipe them out. She went in just an hour ago, but hasn't come back yet. I'm sure she's fine though—they're just rats—and she's a hero, after all."

If Jonas is asked why the City Watch won't take care of the rats, he replies that the Shadow has a long history of hiring heroes. The Watch is also a bit thin this morning, though Jonas doesn't know why (they're combing the tunnels beneath Kings Port for the Seven).

If the team wants to find Bareena, Jonas recommends going in through the entrance behind the Shadow. The area is normally closed off with a locked gate, but he quietly lets them in and urges them not to discuss the problem with others.

INTO THE SEWERS

Read the following as Jonas removes a latched manhole cover to let the heroes into the sewer.

Jonas points south—away from the castle, and bids you good luck. An easy climb later finds you about 20' down in a sloping passageway that runs north-south.

The sewers of Kings Port are surprisingly clean. There are walkways on either side to keep the worst of the filth in the channel between, and the water itself is perfumed once a week to keep the smell down. It is still a sewer of course, so there is a stench, but all in all, this could be much worse.

As the group makes their way down the sewer, they hear the chittering of rats. They arrive at a fill chamber to see a strange sight.

Ahead of you is a spill chamber, a square room designed to slow the flow of the sewage from above. The walkway continues on around the edge, and on into the tunnel on the southern side.

Sitting on the floor in the southern tunnel is an odd sight. A young woman, almost certainly Bareena, rests against the wall with a small shield at her back, surrounded by perhaps a dozen dead rats. She waves you toward her as you approach.

"Thank Solace!" she says. "I didn't think anyone would ever find me!"

Bareena has found the crack the rats are using to travel from somewhere deeper in the sewers.

"I'm glad you came, friends! I've found a crack in the earth that seems to be vomiting rats. I killed the first group that came through, but there are lots more. I seem to have them blocked with my shield now, but the moment I get up they're going to pour out of there like water."

Bareena is willing to go along with most any plan the party might have to help her out. Most likely, this involves simply letting the rats through. This should be an easy fight for the heroes and a good introduction to combat for those who haven't played *Savage Worlds* before. The rats fight to the death. They've been driven out by a large party of Masters moving through the Crypts below, but no one knows this yet.

RAT SWARM

The swarm pours out of the hole the moment Bareena stands. When "killed," the swarm disperses.

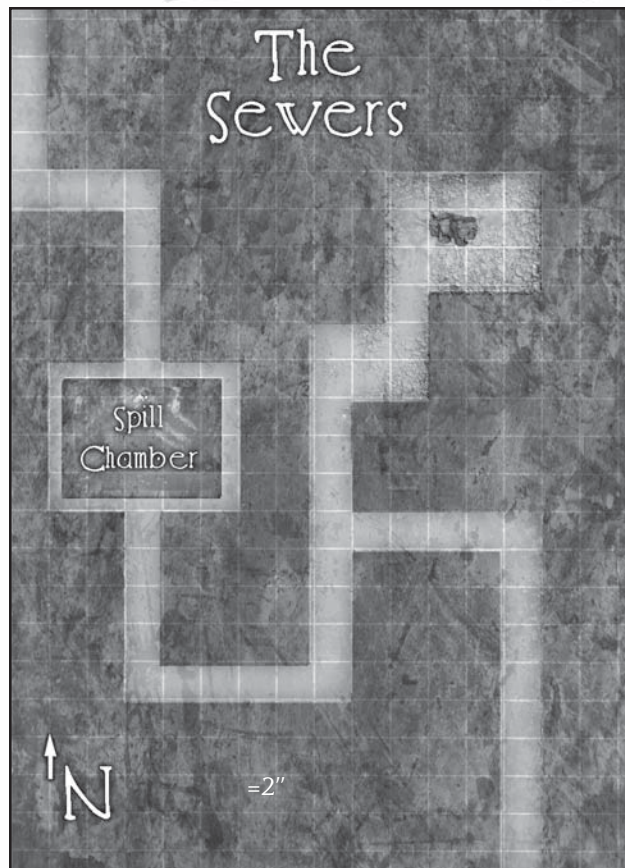
Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d12, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d6

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities

- **Bite:** Every target within the swarm suffers 2d4 damage.
- **Swarm:** The swarm is the size of a Medium Burst Template. Characters can attack each round by stomping, causing their damage in Strength with a successful hit. Cutting and piercing weapons cause no damage to the overall swarm.



BAREENA

Bareena is a beautiful, slim, dark-skinned woman with long golden hair (a native of Kos). She wears green leather armor with a scarlet cape. She is a frequent member of the Scarlet Riders.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Climb d12, Fighting d10, Knowledge (Valusia) d8, Notice d8, Stealth d10, Survival d8, Tracking d10

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8

Hindrances: Heroic, Loyal, Vow (protector of nature)

Edges: Attractive, Block, Combat Reflexes, Woodsman (+2 Tracking, Survival and Stealth)

Gear: Magic leather armor (+2, +2 Stealth), long sword (Str+3)

AFTERMATH

Once the rats are defeated, Bareena is happy to help the heroes find her friends.

"They went to Aragon. You know it? Someone discovered a Sa Karan ruin there. Trabian has always wanted to be the first inside one of those."

Bareena already knows the Scarlet Riders have been summoned (she received the message as well). She doesn't reveal this however, and if asked to accompany the team, says that she needs to visit the Companion's Hospital to get her rat bites treated for disease.

Anyone who makes a Common Knowledge roll knows Aragon lies at the foothills of the Dread Mountains about eight hours distant by horse. It's a small logging town surrounded by a palisade to protect against frequent orc attacks.

Make sure the players know exactly what their characters are taking with them on their trip—their supplies are going to have to last them a long time.

If they want to go shopping before leaving town, they can find anything on the equipment list on page 19.

Read the following when the party finally heads out of town.

It's a bright and beautiful day. Solace shines bright upon the world and the brilliant hills and dales of Valusia fill you with pride. Here and there are scattered farms, with contented people waving as you ride by. You see men contentedly working in the fields, smell fresh bread and pies cooked by women, and smile at small children playing in the meadows and streams as you ride by. Truly this is a blessed land.

There are a few dark clouds on the distant horizon, small but rumbling. With any luck, you should be able to deliver your message and find lodging in Aragon before the storm comes.

About half way through your journey, you spy a band of riders heading your way. You nod at them, then smile as you recognize the symbol on their shields and breastplates. They are a famous band of heroes known as the Golem Smashers. The stories say they destroyed a living warrior of stone created by some mad wizard. The leader of the band, a dwarf named Ragulon, still wares a magical ring made from the golem's hide.

Perhaps one day you and your companions will become a renowned team of monster-slayers such as these. Now you see Ragulon himself. The dwarven warrior nods at you as you pass!

Today, you feel like a hero.

SCENE TWO

ARAGON

Aragon is small logging village at the foothills of the Dread Mountains. There are about 300 souls here, most of whom are large, happy, lumberjacks. The orc tribes live in the foothills as well, so the village is walled and the people well-skilled in fighting, but they don't seem overly worried about it as they have contended with the greenskins since the town was founded.

Read the following as the adventurers arrive.

You arrive in Aragon around dinner time. The village is walled in with wooden palisades, a common defense near the foothills where bands of savage orcs sometimes raid.

It is dark now in this early August air, but you can see torch- and lantern lights emanating from the houses.

The gates are guarded by a pleasant man named Sarrel Fallon. Allow any Red Knight or Sun Priest a Common Knowledge roll at -2 to know him as a former Red Knight. Sarrel lost an arm fighting orcs in the hills near here. He staggered into Aragon and has stayed ever since.

Unless the heroes seem dangerous, Sarrel lets them in. If they tell him why they're here, he suggests they talk to Emil Keswraith, the dwarven prospector who found the ruins. Keswraith is almost certainly in the town's main tavern, the *Axeman's Rest*.

Read the following as the heroes enter the tavern.

The Axeman's Rest is a typical tavern. There are a dozen or so long tables and benches and scores of lumberjacks to fill them. The walls are decorated with old sawbands, slices of timber, and stuffed fish likely caught in the brook you passed over on your way here.

The locals quiet down for a moment as they look you over, but then most smile and raise their cups, welcoming you in.

The barkeep, an older woman with white hair and a motherly figure, smiles at you. "First drink's free for your news, friends!" she says.

"Mother Harkness" is true to her word if the heroes exchange in a little gossip and small talk. She also asks if the group happened to see a couple of lumberjacks who haven't come home yet. No one's really worried at this point, but if they don't make it here in the next few hours they may have to put together a search party.

As long as the characters are friendly, Mother is too. She even ponies up a bowl of delicious quail stew—the evening's meal for the lumberjacks it seems—and eventually points out Keswraith.

KESWRAITH

The dwarf has only started drinking, so he's still quite lucid. He's reluctant to reveal the location of the Sa Karan ruins at first—he doesn't want to send "claim jumpers" after the heroic Scarlet Riders. If he can be convinced that the heroes are not interested in the ruins (most likely by telling the truth and making a Persuasion roll), he eventually relents.

"Them young heroes left just a few hours ago, so you'll have no trouble finding them at the ruins."

Keswraith then leans in close and whispers.

"Follow the river upstream to Griffon Rock, then head due east up the mountain. There should be an old billy goat's trail there. Be careful, for there are orcs about. At the top of the mountain, you'll see an overgrown cave entrance. You'll also have an incredible view of Valusia all the way to Kings Port. The whole trip shouldn't take you more'n six hours or so. You can make it faster if you ride up the goat trail, but I wouldn't advise it unless you were born on horseback. You got all that?"

Keswraith has little else to add except that the heroes had best beware of orcs. They usually start coming down from the hills in the fall to raid for the winter, he says.

EVERHEART'S TALE

Just as Keswraith finishes his tale, a well-known minstrel known as Everheart enters the room.

The crowd suddenly becomes quite loud. Benches squeak as people stand, glasses are spilled, and there's even some applause. "Everheart!" the villagers yell! You've never seen the man personally, but you've heard of him. Everheart is a famous minstrel who travels these lands.

The man is tall and lanky, with coal black hair, a big nose, red cheeks, and the most penetrating eyes you've ever seen. He talks with the locals for a bit, then eventually takes a chair in the center of the room. The crowd becomes quiet, and you realize that to leave now would be very rude. One song, you think. Then you'll need to get on your way if you're to return to Kings Port by dinner tomorrow with Trabian Galstaff.

Now it's time to read "The Seven and the Sea Trolls" from the front of this book. The Seven figure prominently in the story of *Evernight* and your players need to know who they are to deduce some of the mysteries that appear later on.

If you want to make the scene a little more memorable, pass the poem around and let each of your players read a section or two in character. It doesn't make any sense of course—Everheart is telling the tale, not the heroes—but it might be more fun, and is a good way for your shy players to get a little face-time.

After the tale, the crowd is friendly and generous. As long as the heroes are also pleasant, they're treated to a few more rounds. Perhaps Fallon even comes in after his duty to reminisce with his friends. If any of the characters have their own stories to tell, the crowd is eager to hear them, including Everheart, who is always on the lookout for new tales of high adventure.

This camaraderie is very important, so spend a little time with it. Encourage your players to socialize a bit with the villagers. You need to establish that Tarth is a very special world, one that is filled with good people and friendly faces. Play it right and the tragedy that is to come will have a lot more meaning. The light can only die if it shines brightly in the first place.

SCENE THREE THE SAVAGE HILLS

Eventually the heroes must set off into the foothills. They're warned not to go at night by the locals, but the Galstaff's deadline gives them little choice.

The river Keswraith mentioned is close by and easy to follow. The weather is much cooler now than it was earlier in the day, but the heroes probably welcome it as the trek up the hillsides are quite tiring.

Two hours ride up the trail, have everyone make Notice rolls. The highest total hears voices and barking dogs somewhere in the distance. If the group would like to investigate, have them make Stealth rolls. If anyone fails, the orcs ahead are alerted.



YOU MAY NOTICE TARTH IS A LITTLE HEAVY ON THE SUNSHINE AND ROSES. EVEN THE SEWER SMELLS GOOD FOR CRIFE'S SAKE.

THAT'S BECAUSE WE WANT TO BEAT YOUR PLAYERS OVER THE HEAD WITH JUST HOW GOOD THE PEOPLE HAVE IT RIGHT NOW. THAT'LL MAKE THE BAD MOJO THAT'S COMING THAT MUCH WORSE.

IT'S ALSO A MORAL LESSON ABOUT THE PRICE OF LIBERTY BEING ETERNAL VIGILANCE AN' ALL THAT JAZZ.

SO WHATEVER ELSE COMES UP THAT WE DIDN'T COVER, MAKE NICE. THAT DOESN'T MEAN STORE OWNERS GIVE THEM MAGICAL PLATE +50—IT JUST MEANS THEY'RE ACTUALLY FRIENDLY AS LONG AS THEY'RE TREATED DECENTLY.

DON'T WORRY. WE'LL GET BACK TO BEATING DOWN THOSE UPBEAT DO-GOODERS SOON, SLUGGER!

Otherwise they can be taken completely by surprise. Read the following when the group gets within 40 yards.

In a small depression off the left-hand side of the trail are a half-dozen or so beings gathered around a large fire. Two human men lie beside the fire, seemingly bound, while three very large dogs or wolves on chains bark at them ferociously.

A Common Knowledge roll recognizes the captors as orcs. The "dogs" are dire wolves.



ORC, CHIEFTAIN

The chief of this small tribe races to attack the toughest-looking opponent as soon as the battle starts, while trying to make best use of his Sweep ability.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Throwing d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 12

Gear: Plate chestplate (+3), great axe (Str+4; AP 1; -1 Parry); throwing axe (Range: 3/6/12; Damage: Str+2)

Special Abilities

- **Brawny:** Orc chieftains are always the largest of their clans. +1 Toughness.
- **Size +1:** Orcs are slightly larger and fatter than humans.
- **Sweep:** May attack all adjacent foes at -2 penalty.
- **War Cry:** The chieftain may Intimidate all foes within an adjacent Medium Burst Template.

ORCS (6)

One of the orcs' first moves is to release the dire wolves. The rest rush to attack the weakest-looking foes first—usually archers and spellcasters. They leave their chief to tie up any heavily-armored foes until they can mop up their weaker foes and join him.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

Gear: Leather armor (+1), short sword (Str+2); knife (Str+1)

Special Abilities

- **Size +1:** Orcs are slightly larger and fatter than humans.

The Savage Hills

4"

DIRE WOLVES (3)

Dire wolves are large, feral canines used by orcs as attack dogs. They head for the nearest target and attack.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Guts d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities

- **Bite:** Str+2.
- **Go for the Throat:** Wolves instinctively go for an opponent's soft spots. With a raise on its attack roll, it hits the target's most weakly-armored location.
- **Fleet-Footed:** Dire wolves roll d10s instead of d6s when running.

LOOT

In the chieftain's tent is a pile of suns (2d6x10 in total), as well as a couple of knives, whet stones, and other personal belongings he's taken off the locals.

The two captives are prospectors from Aragon captured by the orcs earlier today. They're grateful to the heroes and promise to spread the tale of their rescue to all who will listen.

PRESSING ON

It should be sometime between 11pm and 3am when the group finishes their fight with the orcs. Due to the deadline of their mission, they have little choice but to press on and find the Scarlet Riders this very night.

The long walk up the steep goat trail takes four hours to complete. It's a very difficult task to ride a mount here—anyone who tries must make a Riding roll at -4. Failure results in a rough tumble and 3d6 damage to both horse and rider.

Walking a horse requires no roll, but those on foot (with or without a mount) must make a Fatigue roll after each hour of the steep trek. Those who fail are Fatigued until they are able to rest for at least 10 minutes. The climb isn't deadly, just tiring, so characters can't go beyond Exhausted.

The point of all this isn't really to wear out your heroes, it's just to make them realize they're heading far up into the cold mountains, and it's a long way back down to the bottom.

The heroes are finally in the high peaks of the Dread Mountains, where they discover the Sa Karan ruin and a few hints about Tarth's ancient history.

SCENE FOUR SA KARAN RUINS

Read the following when the heroes finally reach the entrance to the Sa Karan ruins.

You finally reach the top of the peak. As Keswraith promised, you can just make out the distant lights of Kings Port twinkling in the distance.

Loosely tied in a small copse of trees nearby is another welcome sight—four horses. Each bears a saddle and saddlebags, the latter stamped with the image of a red horseman. Below the symbol are the letters "SR." You have obviously found the Scarlet Riders' mounts.

In the saddlebags are personal effects, bread, cheese, and other rations. A Common Knowledge roll notes the food is of above-average quality and perishable—meaning the riders didn't plan on being out in the wilds for long. More than a cursory search of the Scarlet Riders' personal belongings is impolite and unheroic.

This would be a good time for the tired climbers to take a quick rest and rid themselves of any Fatigue they may have acquired during the climb.

ENTRANCE

Near the horses is a small tangle of vegetation atop a small knoll. A little prodding discovers the cave entrance Keswraith described leading down into the earth at a sharp angle. The entrance is somewhat hidden by a tangle of thick vines, but someone has recently disturbed them so little effort is needed to spot the opening.

Inside the dark crack are a few scattered animal bones and piles of leaves—all recently disturbed. It's pitch dark within.

A Tracking roll reveals a party of four people in sturdy boots recently went inside the cavern, but the tracks fade as they enter the stone floor beyond.

The walls of the lair are carved from the natural stone of the mountain by slaves and so appear somewhat crude—particularly to dwarves and other artisans.

Light: Don't forget that it is pitch dark throughout this lair. The heroes must have a light source of their own to avoid the - 6 penalty for any action that requires sight.

K'THYRAAA

A single Master lived in this lair over 1,000 years ago, along with a few dozen spiders and a handful of slaves. This particular Master was called K'Thyraaa (pronounced *kithraah*).

K'Thyraaa specialized in blending the more savage races of the hills. Ogres and frost lords are the product of his life's work, and still roam the surrounding mountains to this day. K'Thyraaa abandoned his lair during Tarrian's time to defend the Great Hive. He took his minions with him, but mercilessly left his slaves trapped inside their squalid pit where they died slow miserable deaths.

1) ENTRANCE

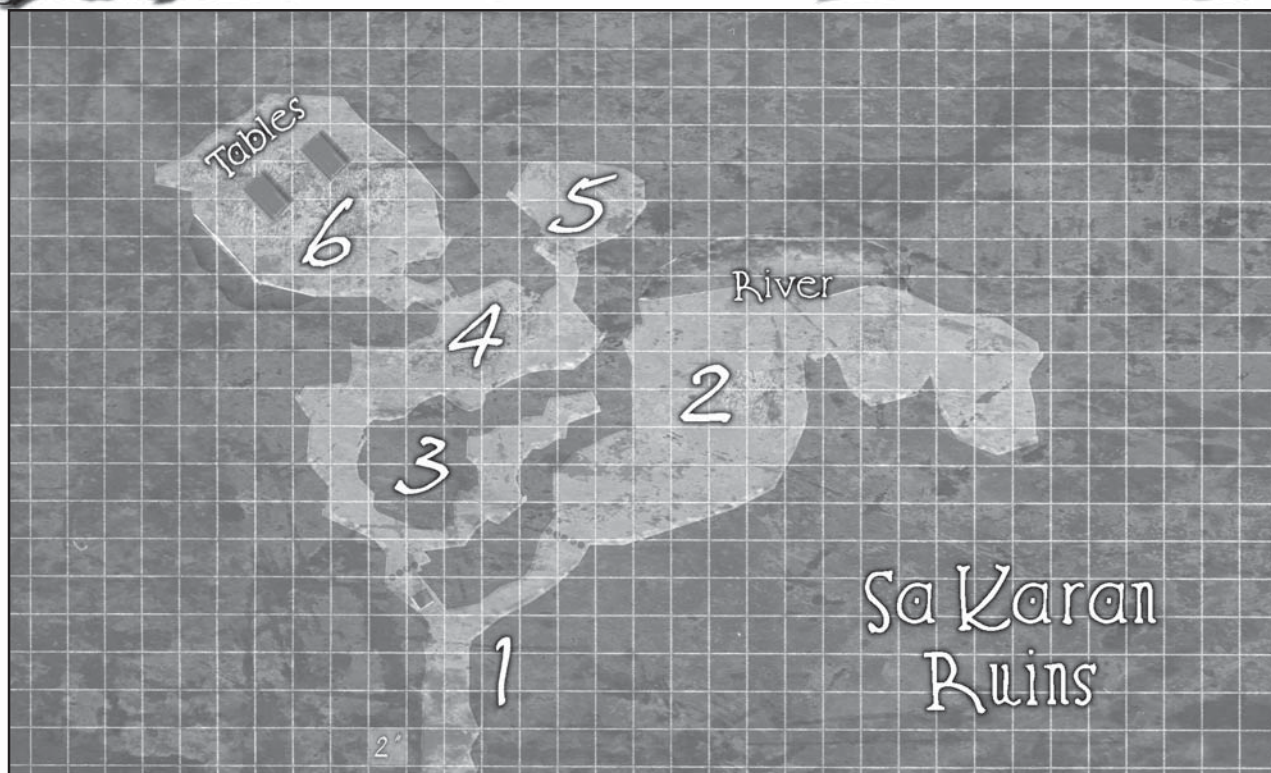
Read the following as the heroes venture deeper into the lair.

Ahead of you is a y-shaped junction. To the left lies across a long-sprung pit trap. At the bottom are old rusted spikes, a few bones, and pieces of rubble. Atop the pit, on the other side, is an iron portcullis. It has long ago been busted open, so it should be a simple climb up the rubble through the hole should you decide to move that way.

The passage to the right was also blocked by a portcullis once, but it too has been bashed open long ago.

The cave opening leads to a y-shaped junction. The right-hand passage leads to the slave pits; the left to the rest of K'Thyraaa's lair. The left-hand passage was once protected by a heavy iron portcullis, but it has long since rusted away. Just in front of it is a 10' deep pit trap, long since collapsed.

A character with a background in traps who makes a Common Knowledge roll realizes the pit was triggered when someone attempted to raise the portcullis without the proper key.



The pit is full of rotted wood (once spikes) and broken stonework from the collapsed floor, but is otherwise empty. The team must negotiate this minor obstacle to proceed. Should anyone happen to fall into the pit, she suffers 2d6+3 damage from the fall and the rough debris.

The pit is fair warning to the heroes that the lair they are about to enter was trapped by its former occupant.

2) SLAVE PIT

The right hand passage leads to an ancient rusted portcullis of crude iron. It was busted open ages ago.

Beyond the jagged bars is a steeply sloping passage into darkness. This is where K'Thyraaa kept his pathetic captives.

Read the following as they wiggle through the twisted bars.

From somewhere below you comes the sound of water. You stop before pressing on however, as not 30 feet from the portcullis lie three fat, humanoids.

The sound of trickling water comes from the back of the cavern where a deep underground stream runs. It was once a source of fresh water to K'Thyraaa's slaves.

Near the entrance are three bloated white corpses. A closer look reveals these stubby humanoids have bulging pink eyes, pale, clammy flesh, and frog-like jaws filled with razor-sharp teeth. The things wear crude armor and carry wooden spears. A Common Knowledge roll reveals these to be cave gnashers, a race of subterranean carnivorous frog-like creatures.

Further down, the floor is covered in numerous bones, old rags that may once have been clothes, and long wooden poles. The bones are of two varieties. The first are the ancient bones of K'Thyraaa's prisoners, left to rot here. Anyone who cares to search through the debris and makes a Common Knowledge roll determines a few of the bones are very ancient. The rest are more recent additions (brought here by the cave gnashers). The latter are mostly those of large fish from the underground river.

The poles are saplings dragged through the stream and into the chamber to make new spears. The gnashers often camp here, and bring the poles with them to sharpen as they lair.

A Notice roll detects faint marks carved along the back wall. They are simple lines in long rows. Altogether, there are 912 of them (this is how a prisoner marked his time).

WATCHERS IN THE STREAM

Six gnashers escaped into the frigid river when the Scarlet Riders attacked hours earlier. They gathered up a few of their companions lurking in other parts of the mountain and have returned to reclaim their campsite.

Just as the party finishes investigating the room, the gnashers return and attack. They are cowardly beasts at heart, so if half their number are slain, the rest attempt to dive into the stream and escape. They won't return this time.

The gnashers watch the heroes from the stream for a while, and strike only when they believe they have surprise.

GNASHERS (6)

The gnashers start their attack by bounding with their spears, then quickly leap from one foe to the next, risking the free attacks their opponents get for the +2/+2 attack bonus.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climb d6, Fighting d6, Notice d4, Swim d10

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Gear: Crude spears (Str+2; Parry +1; Reach 1)

Special Abilities

- **Aquatic:** Pace 6. Gnashers aren't truly aquatic since they are amphibians, but can stay under water for over 30 minutes.
- **Armor +1:** Warty skin.
- **Bite:** Str+1.
- **Bound:** A gnasher can leap 1d6+2" in a straight line to attack with +2 to its Fighting roll and +2 to damage.

3) SPIDER HIVE

This strange tunnel leads more or less straight down. The walls are black and form odd tubes and holes, like the nest of some bizarre bees. You have heard of such places. Spiders once laired here in the time of the Scourge. The creatures must have killed the Sa Karans who dwelled here and taken over.

These was indeed a spider hive, though they were K'Thyraaa's minions—not squatters. The tunnel descends at a near-vertical angle for over 50'. Anyone who touches the old nests notes that they have fossilized and are now as hard as diamonds.

4) PARLOR

This chamber is longer than most. Two openings lead further on into the ruin—one directly ahead of you and one to the left.

Both tunnels that lead off this area are trapped. K'Thyraaa was wary of the creatures he created, so he traded some of his creations with a Master who specialized in traps. Flecks of psychically charged gemstones are embedded in the floor. Anyone who steps on them and doesn't have psychic powers themselves suffers a terrible mental shock and 3d6 damage.

The heroes can either run the gauntlet, taking damage every round they're in this area, or they can straddle the walls and avoid stepping on the gem shards. The latter requires a successful Climbing roll each time the trap is traversed.

5) K'THYRAAA'S CHAMBER

There appears to be nothing inside this ancient chamber but a stone slab, which may once have been some kind of table.

Even the keen intellects of the Masters must occasionally rest. About four hours out of every 48, a Master must lie dormant. They do so on cold stone slabs, with their back-bending legs hanging over the sides.

There is nothing else of interest in this barren chamber. K'Thyraaa took his personal belongings with him when he fled.

6) K'THYRAAA'S LABORATORY

There's something not quite right about this room. Your skin crawls a bit as you enter. You can see three humanoid corpses sprawled about the room—almost certainly the Scarlet Riders.

Mixed among them are two massive things—dead from the green ooze that trickles from their cracked shells. They are some sort of giant crab-like creatures, though each has three spiked legs that lead to a central body. A gaping maw surrounded by three smaller claws sits in the middle of the creature's mass. The things have been cracked open in several locations. Their green blood forms a common pool around the heroes who obviously killed them.

The room that houses this carnage is fairly long and very tall. There are four tables of some sort. Two sit parallel to each other at the rear of the room, and another has been carved from the very stone along the left and right walls.

The ceiling is much more rough than the rest of the ruin. There are deep pockets of darkness and even a few stalactites in here. Lying about the floor is a jumbled mess of ancient wood, shards of glass, and of course, blood—both green and red.

Above the corpses, embedded in the rear wall, is a softly glowing gem. There's no doubt it's a Sa Karan blood.

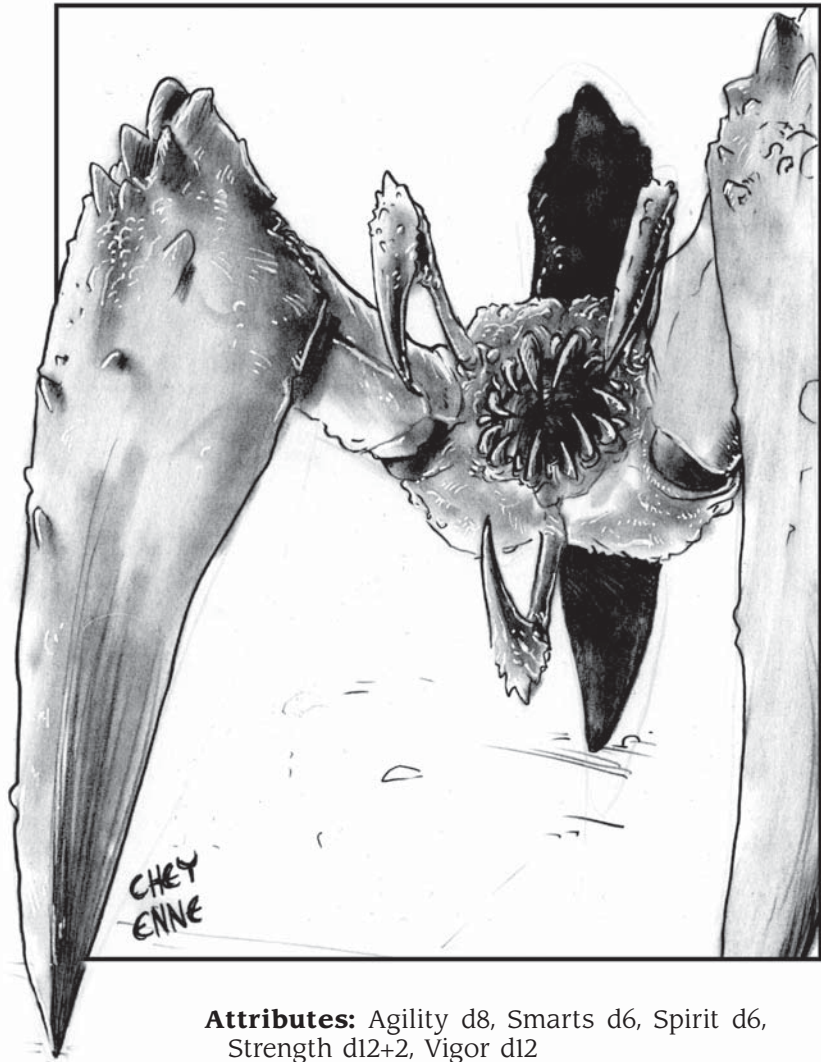
Millennia ago, this room served as K'Thyraaa's laboratory. The two slabs in the rear were once operating tables where countless humanoids were vivisected and studied. The tables to the left and right were once covered with beakers, vials, vats, and other scientific apparatus, but those were smashed or cleaned out when K'Thyraaa fled. The blood stone served to power his experiments.

When the group moves to the rear of the room, perhaps to fetch the stone, the remaining guardian attacks.

SPINNERS

The Scarlet Riders suffered greatly before they figured out how to bypass K'Thyraaa's traps. They were already hurt and out of luck by the time they ran into the lair's timeless guardians—a trio of "spinners."

The guardians won the battle, but two of them were slain. The last has retreated to the ceiling with its prey—the last Scarlet Rider. It remains hidden until one of the heroes pass beneath it, then drops from the ceiling and tries to center itself so as to attack as many foes at once.



Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Climb d4, Fighting d10, Notice d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 12

Special Abilities

- **Armor +4:** Carapace.
- **Empathic:** Spinners "see" by projecting mind waves (for inanimate objects) and reading minds (for prey). They ignore all darkness penalties.
- **Claws:** Str+4; AP 2.
- **Improved Sweep:** Spinners may attack all adjacent foes at no penalty by spinning in place. This makes a loud "clack-clack-clack" sound as their legs strike the stony ground in disturbing rhythm.
- **Level-Headed:** Spinners draw two cards and act on the highest.

LOOT

After the fight, the heroes can search the mangled bodies of the three Scarlet Riders (the fourth is nearly-digested inside the surviving spinner's stomach). One is a young female Sun Priest, another is a large half-orc,

and the last is a handsome young human in shining armor—no doubt Trabian Galstaff.

Altogether, the group finds 73 golden suns, 50' of strong cord (holds 300 pounds), two small knives, and a flint and steel set. Trabian also wears a signet ring with the Galstaff family emblem (a stylized "G"). The Sun Priest wears the Mantle of Solace and carries a Sun Staff. A pouch on her side once held several healing potions. A character in dire need can attempt to lap up the thick blue gunk to restore one wound. It can also be scraped up and stored if someone has a vial or similar container to keep it in.

The half-orc wears a large chain mail hauberk and has a magical maul.

Trabian wears chainmail and has a magical sword. He also wears a magical amulet given to him by none other than Kerreth the Red Knight.

It is not proper for the heroes to take these possessions as their own. Bodies and belongings are expected to be taken back to their families. This will all change at the end of the next scene, however.

Amulet of Luck: Whoever wears Trabian's amulet gets one extra benny per game session (and the first time it is worn as well). It is gold with a red gem in the middle.

Bonebreaker: The half-orc's maul causes Str+5 damage, is AP 2 against rigid armor, and weighs only 15 pounds. It inflicts a -1 Parry penalty as usual.

Legend Maker: In Trabian's bloodstained death grip is an ornate magical long sword given to him on his 18th birthday. Inscribed on the pommel is the name "Legend Maker." A character who picks it up can instantly feel its magic and know its purpose. It adds +1 to the user's Parry and damage rolls.

Potion of Healing: The Sun Priest had several such potions, but their containers are smashed (see above). Anyone who consumes this potion instantly heals one nonpermanent wound.

THE BLOOD STONE

Of course, the greatest prize in the room is the Sa Karan blood stone stuck on the back wall. Prying it loose requires just a few minutes work with a dagger or other blade. Who binds with it (if anyone) is up to the players themselves, of course.

It's a good idea to grab it now, because it will be lost by the end of the next scene with this entire wall.

SCENE FIVE THE MOUNTAIN

The invasion begins a few moments after the spinner has been defeated. Read the following to your group as the cave complex suffers from the aftershocks of the Valusian spike's impact.

A bone-jarring rumble suddenly rocks the mountain. Shock waves slam into the ruin from what could only be an earthquake. Rubble starts to fall all around you—it's a cave-in!

The heroes can try to run out the way they came if they'd like, though they must cross the trap again to leave this chamber. If they do so, they arrive at the entrance just in time to see it collapse completely.

The safest place is the spider hive. The crystallized walls are hard as diamonds and unlikely to collapse. Allow heroes a Common Knowledge roll to realize this. After ten long minutes, the deadly quake finally subsides.

If the group waits anywhere else in the lair, they each suffer 3d6 damage from falling debris (modify this if they have a particularly clever plan to avoid the debris).

If they remain in the lab, they hear crashes throughout the complex, then see the back half of the room collapse and slide away into darkness. Anyone standing in that area must make an Agility roll or be swept into the slide for 3d6 damage.

TRAPPED!

When the characters have finally settled down, they find that the entrance to the cave is sealed. A little searching reveals a new entrance has opened up at the back of the laboratory area. They can follow the sloping debris down into the bowels of the mountain and away from the ruins.

The cavern leading out of the mountain is a creek bed that stretches for miles. See the

map for the important sections of the bed the group must negotiate. The journey ahead is tedious and demanding, both for dramatic effect and to slow the group down. While they're trying to find a way out of their earthen tomb, a trek that lasts over eight hours, the Masters are destroying Valusia.

1) THE CLIFF

The room you visited before has suffered a tremendous collapse, but is more intact than most of the others.

The entire back wall has given way, sending the stone slabs spilling into the darkness beyond. A closer look reveals the room has collapsed into a long slope, and you can just hear rushing water somewhere far below.

The collapse at the rear of the lab has formed a long, sloping cliff nearly 100' high. Large chunks of stone dot the slope, and can be used to anchor climbers as they descend into the darkness. Let the group discuss the best way to make the climb. Make sure to let them make their own plans—that makes the obstacle feel more "real" rather than just asking them all to make Climbing rolls.

When the group is eventually ready to make the descent, each character must make a Climbing roll, at -2 penalty if they don't use a safety line of some sort. Those who fail are Fatigued from bumps and bruises for the next 24 hours. Anyone who rolls a 1 on his Climbing die (regardless of the Wild Die) and doesn't have a rope tumbles to the bottom and suffers 2d6+4 damage.

At the bottom of the cliff, the group finds a shallow, frigid stream. The tunnel it runs through is just high enough for half-folk to walk normally—everyone else must stoop for several hundred yards until they come to the next obstacle.

2) ROCKFALL

Your luck has run out a bit. The earthquake that hit the mountain has caused a small cave-in. The water still flows through it, though slowly, so the tunnel must continue onward, however. You'll have to dig for a bit to keep going.

The shockwave has caused a large portion of ceiling to collapse here. The group must dig out a hole large enough to crawl through before pressing on. This requires a

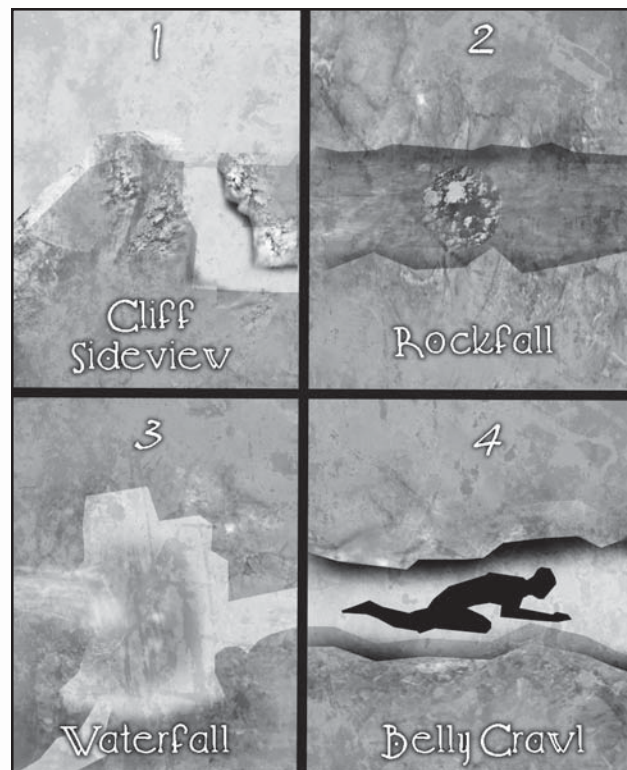
total of four man-hours (so four people can do it in one hour, one man in four, and so on). Everyone who takes part in the digging must make a Fatigue roll for each hour of work. Fatigue gained from this chore is removed by a small meal and a short nap (30 minutes or so).

3) WATERFALL

The trek is starting to wear on you. You're constantly stooped over, wet, and tired. At least traveling seems a bit easier. The stream is moving faster and carrying you along. You go with it, letting the water do your work for you. Now you hear rumbling ahead, like the sound of rushing water. You try to slow yourself...

After following the creek bed for nearly two grueling miles, the party comes to a ten-foot deep bowl where the water pours in rather quickly. Each character must make a Strength roll (or a Swimming roll at -2 if they decide to swim) or be swept into the bowl.

On the other side of the bowl, where the stream once ran, the tunnel is now mostly dry. The stream has been diverted down a new crack in the wall to the right, and is certain death to non-aquatic beings.



Allow those who weren't swept into the bowl to figure out how they want to cross it. Most likely, they will slip one character down the falls with a rope and have him climb up the other side. This is a Climbing roll at -2. A character who fails takes the damage as outlined above.

Of course, there's more here than just a tricky rapid. A group of gnashers have gathered in the bowl to wait out the cave-in, and hide when they hear the heroes approaching. When the first character enters the water, they attack.

Non-aquatic creatures suffer a -1 penalty to physical trait tests in the bowl as they fight the rushing water and struggle to keep their balance.

GNASHERS (2 PER HERO)

The gnashers wait for the first victim to enter the pool, then attack with surprise. If they can incapacitate their prey, they drag him off into the depths via the stream's new path to certain doom.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climb d6, Fighting d6, Notice d4, Swim d10

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Gear: Crude spears (Str+2; Parry +1; Reach 1)

Special Abilities

- **Aquatic:** Pace 6. Gnashers aren't truly Aquatic since they are amphibians, but can stay under water for over 30 minutes.
- **Armor +1:** Warty skin.
- **Bite:** Str+1.
- **Bound:** A gnasher can leap 1d6+2" in a straight line to attack with +2 to its Fighting roll and +2 to damage.

4) BELLY CRAWL

The stream bed is incredibly low on the other side of the bowl—maybe two feet high if you're lucky. You'll have to crawl for a ways.

The passage continues for some time before the old stream bed vanishes into a short, wide tunnel. It's nearly 20' across, but only two feet high. Since the stream was rerouted, however, there's no water other than a few scattered—but freezing—pools. The heroes have to crawl on their bellies for a few hundred yards before they finally finish their trek.

SCENE SIX THE SAVAGE CAVES

The heroes are almost out of the makeshift escape tunnel. As fate would have it, they arrive in the rear of an orc lair. Fortunately for our beleaguered adventurers, the orcs are currently outside watching the battle on the plains of Valusia below.

1) RIVER BED

The adventurers enter the lair from the creek bed at the rear—where the orcs once got their water and hunted for cavefish. A few of the ivory-scaled fish still lie twitching in the shallow pools where they have been stranded by the diverted stream.

The heroes can see they're entering a primitive lair of some sort, but there are no inhabitants currently present. Allow the group to make Stealth roles or prepare themselves as they see fit. When they emerge, they are in area 1, the River Bed.

You've crawled for hundreds of feet—the oppressive weight of the mountain pressing on you every inch of the way. Frigid pools of water from the drying stream have soaked you to the bone and ruined your clothing, and your fingernails are cracked and bleeding from pulling yourself along the stony bed.

But now there's hope. There's light up ahead. Could it be the glorious light of the sun?

You crawl with new energy, in a near panic to flee this death trap before the mountain settles once more.

A few more bloody feet.

The light flickers. It is a fire—not the sun. You listen, but hear nothing. You crawl on and begin to see a cavern lit by a small camp fire. Piles of straw and rags lie about, as does the carcass of a butchered horse.

2) COMMONS

Whatever lives here, there are lots of them. There are well over a dozen natty beds in this room alone.

You also see scattered flatware of various types, buckets of water, old blankets, and plates of small bones and other scraps.

A camp fire has just about burned down in the center of the chamber, giving the place a smoky red glow. Near it is a withered old horse with several large chunks messily carved out of its flanks. One entire leg has been removed—pulled off by something with great strength.

Nearly twenty orcs live and sleep here. Their beds are made of straw, weeds, leaves, or rags, and most have a fur hide for a blanket. A few old and rotting human blankets can also be found. Numerous small bones whittled into tools, crude clay cups, and buckets of fresh water litter the floor. A few items of loot lay about as well—decorative plates, silver forks, and the like. These aren't really valuable to civilized folk, but are marks of the raider's culture.

A camp fire burns in the middle of the common area. It is small enough that its smoke eventually dissipates or wafts out the main entrance.

Beside the fire is a dead horse. The creature is emaciated and looks to have been a captive of this clan for some time. Large chunks have been removed from its back, and one of its legs has been pulled from its socket by the ogre.

3) CHIEF'S CHAMBER

There's an actual bed here, though it is covered in meat scraps and other waste. The crude headboard is also decorated with cheap trinkets and other junk. Beside the bed is a large silver mirror, a small chest, several weapons, a stein full of some dark liquid, and a reeking chamber pot.

The tribe's chief and his concubines sleep here. He has an actual mattress (though grotesquely stained) and a head board he's decorated with bones and odd trinkets taken in his various raids.

Around the bed is one large silver mirror (tarnished but usable), a broken spear, two

long swords, a plate of meat of some sort (horse), an elaborate stein full of water, a chest, and a "chamber pot," the contents of which are best left to the imagination.

The chest is locked, and requires a Lockpicking roll to open quietly. It can be broken open with little effort. Inside are two potions of healing wrapped in a red scarf.

There is a fair amount of stolen booty stuffed under the mattress. A character who searches there finds 1d6 x 10 suns, a silver dagger (not magical but actually made of silver), and a blood stone! There is also a small gold ring with the inscription "To Tannith Eiselon, Giant Slayer."

Giant Slayer's Ring: Anyone wearing this magical ring adds +4 to their damage when fighting creatures at least twice the wearer's size. The ring's bonuses *do* stack with the Giant Slayer Edge.

Potions of Health: When consumed, each potion removes one wound.

4) SHAMAN'S TUNNEL

The entrance to this chamber is hidden by a "curtain" of small bones and other trinkets dangling from catgut and frayed strands of rope. A weird, pungent smell comes from somewhere within.



The tribe's shaman makes her home in this cul-de-sac. A number of crude fetishes decorate her tunnel, though most are simply collections of bones, buttons, and other odd bits. She has a straw bed, a chamber pot, and a plate with two eyeballs on it (the horse's).

On a crude nightstand is an ornate incense burner worth 50 suns. The shaman claimed this "treasure" from one of their raids and burns the stolen incense in it when she must meditate on matters of great importance. It is not currently lit, however.

Above the shaman's straw bed on a natural shelf is also a silver dagger worth 50 suns (but nonmagical).

5) OGRE'S BED

A large pile of dirty furs lies on the floor in this room, as does the missing haunch of the dead horse. There are several large spears here as well, and a massive club made from a tree trunk with iron nails driven throughout. This is surely the cave of an ogre or other large creature.

A single ogre lives with the clan. It sleeps here on a pile of matted furs. The missing horse haunch lies on the floor nearby. Several large bites prove something big lives with this clan.

6) STORES

It seems that whatever lives here is fond of raiding, for the boxes and barrels stacked in this room have obviously come from different places and different times.

A wide assortment of stolen foods, dried meats, and other stores are kept here. Five people could easily live off it for up to a month. Of particular interest is a barrel that contains 10 pints of oil. There is also a single lantern and four prepared torches.

When the heroes get this close to the entrance, they begin to hear growling from around the corner in area #7. The dire wolves can't help but catch the party's scent from the breeze that wafts out of the cave. If the wolves are allowed to bark for too long, the orcs outside eventually come to investigate. If they are fed—perhaps with some horse meat—they quieten down for at least 15 minutes.

7) WOLF PEN

You glance quickly around the corner at the sound of the barking. There's a crude but sturdy pen a few feet down the passage. A number of dire wolves snarl at you from behind it.

The orcs keep a pen of five dire wolves chained to the wall in here. A crude but sturdy wooden gate is wedged across the entry and held in place by iron spikes.

If the heroes want to sneak by, they must beat the wolves in an opposed Stealth versus Notice roll. If failed, the wolves begin to bark and eventually draw the attention of the orcs outside.

ROCK AND A HARD PLACE

The heroes can see that it's daylight outside when they reach the far northern edge of the common room. It should be some time in the early morning barring any major changes to the storyline presented here. A Common Knowledge roll notes that it must be very overcast outside as the light is much more dim than it should be.

The orcs are outside at the edge of a high cliff nearly 20 yards from the cave entrance. They're sitting on rocks and watching the strange sights below. There are 19 warriors (males and females) and a handful of children who scatter should a fight break out.

What the heroes do here is completely up to them. If the group attempts to slip by the orcs, let them make Stealth rolls. As long as everyone succeeds, they can slip behind the distracted greenskins and over into an outcropping of rocks further beyond.

If they decide to fight, the battle takes place on the small plain outside the orc's lair. It's not really a good idea for the heroes to tangle with the clan—they're very likely to lose or at least suffer a few casualties unless they're a large party tailored for combat.

ORC, CHIEFTAIN

The tribe's chieftain is crafty and cruel. He heads straight for the weakest fighters first, such as mages or Sun Priests.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d12, Guts d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Throwing d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 11

Gear: Plate chestplate (+3), great axe (Str+4; AP 1; -1 Parry); throwing axe (Range: 3/6/12; Str+2)

Special Abilities

- **Brawny:** Orc chieftains are always the largest of their clans. +1 Toughness.
- **Sweep:** May attack all adjacent foes at -2 penalty.
- **War Cry:** The chieftain may Intimidate all foes within an adjacent Medium Burst Template.

ORC SHAMAN

The shaman's first target is anyone who demonstrates magical abilities. After that, she goes for the strongest-looking warrior.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Spellcasting d8, Stealth d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Gear: Leather armor (+1), spear (Str+2; Parry +1; Reach 1)

Special Abilities

- **Spells:** The shaman has 15 Power Points, and knows *bolt*, *fear*, and *smite*.

DIRE WOLVES (5)

As soon as the heroes are spotted, two of the orcs try to break into the cave and let the dire wolves loose. The ravenous animals head straight for the nearest foes.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Guts d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities

- **Bite:** Str+2.
- **Go for the Throat:** Wolves instinctively go for an opponent's soft spots. With a raise on its attack roll, it hits the target's most weakly-armored location.
- **Fleet-Footed:** Dire wolves roll d10s instead of d6s when running.

OGRE

This ogre is a brooding creature. He watches his opponents for a round before throwing himself into the fight against the largest, most powerful-looking foe.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d12+3, Vigor d12

Skills: Guts d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d4, Throwing d6

Pace: 7; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 12

Gear: Thick hides (+1), massive club (Str+3)

Special Abilities

- **Size +3:** Ogres are over 8' tall with potbellies and massive arms and legs.
- **Improved Sweep:** May attack all adjacent foes.

ORCS (15 WARRIORS)

The orcs are defending their home. They run only if their chieftain is dead and their numbers are reduced to five or less. The tribe's noncombatants scatter at the first sign of real trouble. At least one of the orcs runs to free the dire wolves should a fight break out.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 9

Gear: Leather armor (+2), short sword (Str+2)

Special Abilities

- **Size +1:** Most orcs are slightly larger and fatter than humans.

THE VIEW

When the orcs have been evaded, defeated, or otherwise dealt with, the heroes can get finally get a look out into the Valusian plain.

You look out into the valley and see what you first believe to be a giant plume of smoke. You squint—for it is quite dark out—and realize the "plume" is something else entirely. It looks like some sort of giant "spike" driven straight into the heart of Valusia. The thing is black or rust brown and must be hundreds of feet high.

It's covered in some sort of massive coils—like writhing intestines—and vanishes into the unnaturally dark clouds high above.

The rest of the valley is a ruin of burning villages. Tiny plumes of black smoke and pinpricks of dancing flames are visible throughout the Valusian plain.

Yesterday, you could clearly see the white walls of Kings Port, but today it is obscured in the gloom.

You feel nauseous. What could have wreaked such havoc in such a short amount of time?

ACT II

THE FALL

Our heroes begin this act in the Dread Mountains, where they have either just fled the orc clan or defeated it. Afterwards, they must make a decision as to what to do next.

Eventually, they will descend from the Dread Mountains and head for a destination of their choice—whether it's Aragon, Kings Port, or their own home towns.

Along the way, the heroes are slowly exposed to the devastation the Masters have wrought. They begin by finding a little girl named Tam near the ruins of her family's cottage. They must take care of the young girl for quite a while thereafter, and protect her from the horrors they discover.

Next they discover a ruined village and gather clues as to the type of horrors they must soon deal with.

Further along the way, the heroes are ambushed by a group of highwaymen and learn that not all the people of Tarth are of good will. Some have taken advantage of the situation for personal profit.

Next comes their first encounter with the invaders. A wither beast spots the party and tracks them from afar. The creature eventually reports the group's movements to its Master and seals the heroes' fate.

The end of the act concludes as the heroes dodge and evade the Sa Karans and their horrific minions. The Masters vigorously pursue all who escaped their initial onslaught and seek to turn them into slaves.

SCENE ONE

DECISIONS

If the group decides to stay in the mountains for a while, they must first find food and shelter. If they defeated the orcs and found the stolen wares in their lair, they have enough food, shelter, and water for several weeks.

If they fled the orc's lair, they must find food and shelter each day they spend in the mountains. Use the Survival skill as usual. A separate roll must also be made to find adequate shelter, though a single success finds a spot for the entire group.

The group may also decide to circle up the mountain to find their horses. Unfortunately, both their animals and the Scarlet Riders' were swept away in a massive rock slide when the mountain shifted. They are dead and any possessions left upon them are lost forever.

The benefit to staying in the mountains is that the party is relatively safe. There are many wild creatures still lurking in the peaks, but they are far less dangerous than the horrors currently roaming the Valusian plains.

Each day the group spends in the mountains, roll on the Dread Mountains Encounter Table (see sidebar) to see if any of these fell beasts cross the heroes' path. The statistics for all of these creatures can be found in the Bestiary.

Eventually, the group must descend and find out what has happened to the rest of Valusia. This must happen to move the game along, but don't rush it. It's perfectly acceptable for them to spend several days or even weeks in the mountains if they choose. The drastic changes to Valusia, such as the Masters' slave camps and the new society in the Warrens, is much more believable if they've had a little time to happen.

If the heroes decide not to leave the mountains at all, you'll have to run the rest of the scenes in this act in the mountains instead of in the plains—perhaps as the group scouts about for food, water, or shelter.

THE DESCENT

It took six hours for the heroes to get from Aragon to the Sa Karan ruin, but half that was by horse. On foot, with several precarious rockslides now in place and the perpetual gloom, it takes nearly twice as long. Be sure to emphasize that though it is daytime, the dark clouds above make it look like dusk.

Have each hero make an Agility Fatigue roll to avoid bumps and bruises on the way down. Should a character roll a 1 on his Agility roll, he trips and sprains his ankle for the next 1d4 days, reducing his Pace by 1. Fatigue lost to this trek can be recovered by two hours rest and a bite to eat.

Once the heroes reach the bottom of the mountain, ask them if they want to travel via the main roads or take the more secluded back trails. Their decision has no real impact on the series of events to follow, but don't tell them that. If they take the main roads, raise your eyebrows, pretend to roll some dice, and act as if they got lucky. If they take the back roads, nod approvingly and simply tell them that seems a wise choice, though it takes longer. It's important to stretch the trip out whenever possible to give the situation in Valusia more time to develop and thus be more believable.

DREAD MOUNTAINS ENCOUNTERS

2d6

2

Encounter

Avalanche!: While scouting for food, the heroes accidentally trigger a deadly avalanche. They must make three successive Agility rolls at -2 (for the deep snow) to get out of the way. Characters who miss the first roll suffer 5d6 damage (and do not roll again). Those who miss the second suffer 4d6, and those who miss the third suffer 3d6. Those who make all three rolls find a safe spot and evade the landslide.

2-5

Chinook: A massive chinook has been displaced from its lair elsewhere in the mountains. It wanders into the heroes' hideout looking for a new home. The creature does not attack to the death—it's just looking for a new home.

6-9

No major encounter.

10-11

Orcs: A band of 3d6 orcs, a chieftain, and their "pet" ogre crosses the heroes' path. They want the group's goods, and attack until their chieftain or half their number are slain.

12

Frost Lords: A pair of gigantic frost lords descend from the high peaks to find out why the sky has grown dark. All that walking makes them hungry, and the party looks especially tasty.

SCENE TWO INNOCENCE LOST

The heroes are moving through the foothills of the Dread Mountains to their eventual destination when they come upon their first ruined home. Allow the characters to make Common Knowledge rolls at -2 when they smell smoke to realize there are no villages near here, but there are many isolated homes. Further up the road, just a few dozen yards from the rutted path, read the following:

Just off the road is a half-burned cottage. From what's left it looks like a typical home. You guess it's been smoldering through the night.

You're about to move on when you hear the slightest noise from somewhere behind the blackened frame—as if something moved.

Have the group make Notice rolls. The highest success detects quiet movement from somewhere around the back of the ruined building.

If the heroes call out threateningly, there's no response. The young girl hiding behind the house in the bushes remains frightened and does not answer. If someone says something that might alleviate her fears, the character may make a Persuasion roll at -4. If successful, a small girl slowly picks her way out of the woods from behind the home.

This is Tam. She's been hiding in her tree house a few dozen yards out back since her family was killed. She saw the whole tragic thing, and the trauma has made her permanently mute. The party can discover her name from embroidery on her hand-sewn dress—dirty and frazzled but otherwise serviceable.

If Tam isn't convinced to come out verbally, the group might spot her hiding in the bushes out back, or follow her small tracks into the treeline.

Tam is nine years old with the typical features of Valusian humans—brown hair and green eyes. She can't talk anymore and doesn't know how to write, but if she becomes comfortable with the group later on, she draws disturbing pictures of spider-like men dragging away her family. She knows very little more than that.

Taking care of Tam is an important task for the heroes. She's a smart girl, though uneducated, and stays out of trouble for the most part. She clings to strong female types if at all possible, followed by Sun Priests and Red Knights if not. She also has a little girl's vision of elves. She thinks the fair folk are as beautiful as the fairy tales portray—unless someone gives her a reason to think otherwise.

TAM

Tam is at first reclusive, but may become outgoing and even useful if well-treated.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

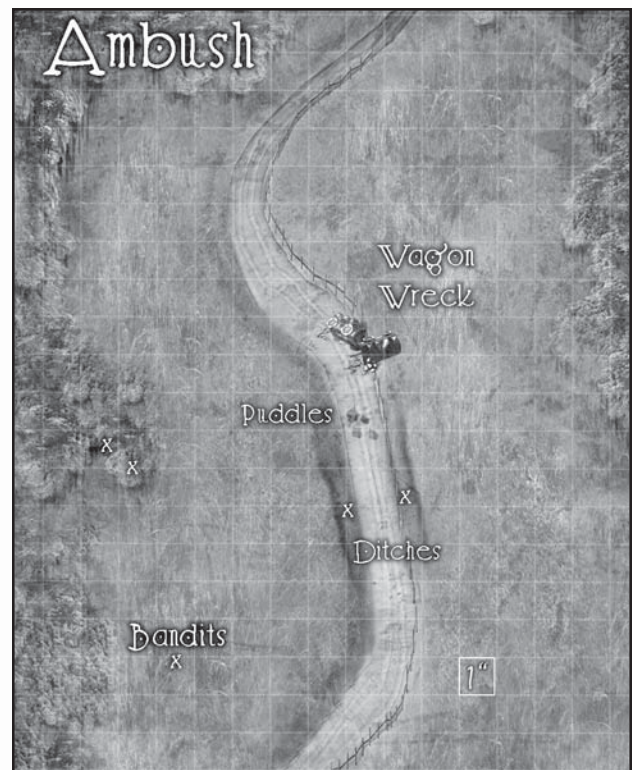
Skills: Climb d6, Guts d6, Notice d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 4

Hindrances: Small, Young

Edges: Alertness

Gear: None.



SCENE THREE THE WORST IN MEN

In any conflict, there are those who will use the chaos and confusion to take advantage of their fellow man. The heroes are about to meet such a group.

Sometime while walking through a wooded lane, the heroes spot a wrecked cart lying across the muddy road. It is raining, and it appears the cart slid off into a ditch, crushing its owner and entangling one broken down old horse.

Read the following to begin this scene:

It started raining about an hour ago. It's cold and slimy, as if the droplets were laden with the soot now clouding Tarth's skies.

You're following a little-used road, trying to stay off the beaten path, when you come upon an unfortunate scene. A few dozen yards ahead is a wrecked cart. A dead horse lies at the head of the mess. It appears the cart slid in the mud—perhaps in great haste—and toppled into the ditch. Perhaps there are survivors beneath the wreckage.

The cart and its rider were indeed attempting to escape the invaders and wrecked in this ditch. The driver was taken by the spiders and devoured.

Since then, a band of highwaymen have set up an ambush around the cart to waylay anyone who investigates it. They've been here for a day or two (depending on your timeline), and find the deep woods as safe a place as any right now.

When the party approaches the cart, they do indeed see a person lying in a deep puddle. This is Reg, the bandits' de facto leader. He has two overcharged pistols covered by his robe, and turns to reveal them when someone comes to give him aid. This gives him the drop on his "rescuer," meaning he's on hold and has +4 to hit and damage

should he fire. On the plus side, because Reg has been lying in water, there's a 1 in 6 chance his pistols won't fire (they may be reloaded normally, however).

The bandits in the woods around the wreck are armed with crossbows, and reveal themselves once Reg has sprung the trap.

The bandits' demands are simple—the heroes must turn over all their weapons, armor, and loot. If they do, they're allowed to go unharmed. If they fight, the bandits start with the drop on them (on hold with +4 to hit and damage).

Note that the heroes will likely be on hold as well before attempting to fight. Use the standard rules for a "standoff" as usual (*Savage Worlds*, page 63) to resolve who acts first. The bandits still have the drop when they attack, even if they go last (unless a given attacker is Shaken).

HIGHWAYMEN (6)

Reg's highwaymen were cutthroats and thieves before the invasion. The fear and horror of the aliens has brought out the worst in them. Once they've fired their crossbows, the bandits draw their swords and charge in to the attack. They retreat if Reg is killed or if down to the last two men.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6 (d8 for Reg), Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Mean

Edges: Combat Reflexes (Reg only)

Gear: Leather armor (+1), short sword (Str+2), crossbow (Range: 15/30/60; Damage: 2d6; AP: 2; One action to reload), knife, 2d10 gold suns each. Reg also has two overcharged flintlock pistols and three additional shots for each.

If the bandits are fought and any survive, they tell only what they know—that they were simply trying to take advantage of the confusion to make a few quick coins. They know something has devastated Valusia, but haven't actually seen the attackers yet. They found this cart just a day or two ago and have ambushed a number of people fleeing toward Kings Port.

If someone wins an opposed Intimidation roll with a raise, a survivor also reveals that the gang has a small camp nearby. Pilfered jewelry is kept in a bag in the hollow of an old tree to sell later. The collected treasure is worth 215 golden suns.

SCENE FOUR FALLEN HERO

The next scene occurs as the heroes cross a small bridge along their path. If they are heading east (perhaps toward Aragon, this might be the river that led them to the Sa Karan ruins. Read the following aloud when you're ready to begin:

Ahead of you is a small but fast-moving stream. The bridge across it has collapsed under some tremendous weight—as if a frost lord had stomped across it. It's no great task to cross the white water and rounded gray stones below, but what you see in the rushing wreckage of the bridge below gives you pause.

Smashed beneath the timbers lies a dead white horse and its rider. Both have been savaged by some voracious predator. Slowly drying streams of blood still dribble into the watering hole.

Getting to the corpse requires no special roll—a hero need merely climb down the embankment. Once there, it's obvious the rider was attempting to cross the bridge when it collapsed.

The rider is a dwarf. Both he and his mount were smashed by a stomper and then eaten by spiders. A Common Knowledge roll recognizes the dwarf as Ragulon, the leader of the Golem Smashers, who the party passed on their way to Aragon in Act One.

Most of Ragulon's personal effects have washed away, but he does have a magical stone ring on his finger among some other random jewelry. His armor is ruined, but a Notice roll at -2 finds his hammer a few yards downstream.

Anyone who looks for prints nearby finds plenty with a Tracking roll. Most have one small pod at the rear and two long claws at the front. Very large indentations are also

present. These are the massive prints of the stomper (see page 137).

Several other horse prints show that at least a few other riders continued riding west towards Kings Port.

Ragulon's Hammer: The dwarf's magical hammer ignores 2 points of rigid armor, such as plate mail or carapace (rather than the usual 1).

Ring of Protection: Ragulon made this ring from the golem that gave the group its name.

The wearer adds +1 to his Toughness.

ONWARD

Crossing the stream by jumping across the stones is mildly tricky and requires an Agility roll. Failure means the character slips in the stream and suffers minor bumps and bruises from the stones. He gains a Fatigue level.

WATCHER IN THE WOODS

As the heroes cross the stream, allow them to make Notice rolls. The highest rolling character sees a strange sight far off in the nearby woods. This works best at night, but can take place in the day since the gloom makes shadowy areas such as the forest nearly black anyway. Read the following to this player only:

Off in the distance you think you saw the strangest thing. The gloom makes the forest dark as night, and for a moment you saw tiny yellow pinpricks of light—like a cat's eyes reflecting light. Strangely though, there were three of them.

The adventurers have spotted the gaze of a wither beast hiding in the woods. The creature is patrolling and tries to stay with the party as long as possible. It tries to stay far out of sight, though the group might occasionally see its eyes staring at them from the darkness, or hear its large shape moving through distant woods.

The moment anyone starts approaching, the thing runs away and then doubles back to find its prey several hours later.

The beast's Master psionically scans its thoughts about once a day (wither beasts can't *send* telepathic messages). Once it does, the Master organizes a hunting party to track down these errant savages (see **Capture** in Scene Six).

SCENE FIVE VALUSIA RAZED

If the heroes headed to Aragon first, that's where this scene takes place. If they headed elsewhere and Aragon is not on their path, this is some other village along the way. The text below assumes this is Aragon, so be sure to change the details as needed if they headed elsewhere.

Ahead of you is Aragon, where you first set out for the Sa Karan ruins. Its walls are intact, though the main gates are ominously open. Several plumes of thick, black smoke rise from inside.

The village is in ruins and corpses lie everywhere. The deceased's wounds are mostly claws and odd two inch diameter puncture wounds. A Healing roll notes that the wounds have been cauterized, as if they were caused by a fiery bolt of some sort. The corpses are shriveled, and further examination (and another Healing roll reveals their innards have been drawn out!).

Several splotches of greenish goo (spider blood) can also be found, suggesting the attackers suffered wounds if not actual casualties. None of the attackers' corpses remain, however (they are taken away by the Masters for recycling).

Physical evidence of the attack is also plentiful, but raises more questions than answers. The wall is smashed in only one place—the Sa Karans simply climbed the walls. Only the wither beasts and stompers used the breach.

The houses are mostly intact, though doors and windows are shattered, as are a few walls. Some of the homes have burnt down, likely due to a struggle knocking over a lantern or some such. Most valuables, weapons, armor, foodstuffs, and even livestock have been taken. (The Sa Karans force their captives to carry as much food as they can manage.)

CRISIS OF FAITH

The sun, and therefore Solace, is gradually being shunted out of the world by the Sa Karans terraforming.

The spike's thick black smoke makes it harder for Solace to shine down radiant energy on his most faithful. This causes Sun Priests and Red Knights' Power Points to recharge more slowly.

The base time for regaining a Power Point is now two hours (instead of one). Rapid Recharge recovers a point every hour (instead of every hour), and Improved Rapid Recharge has a 30 minute interval.

A Tracking roll reveals a number of odd three-clawed prints (spiders) as well as larger yet still unidentifiable prints (wither beasts and stompers). A raise also reveals something else of interest. Several carts laden with stolen valuables and a small number of survivors were gathered up and marched out of town in the general direction of Kings Port. The Masters kept the strongest survivors as slaves. Their valuables—weapons, armor, art, tools, metal objects, and so on—were loaded on carts and taken for reclamation and recycling. What the Masters aren't interested in is destined to become fuel for the spike's incinerators.

THE AXEMAN'S REST

If this is Aragon, the *Axeman's Rest* was the scene of a doomed last stand. (If this is another town, substitute a similar tavern.) The building has been blasted from above, as if by a massive powder bomb. Sarrel Falon and Keswraith both are present, their charred corpses still holding their ruined weapons.

Mother Harkness is gone, though it's possible her remains simply can't be located (she was actually taken as a slave).

SCENE SIX DESTINATIONS

Your heroes likely have one of three different destinations in mind after discovering the fate of the first village: their own home towns, Kings Port, or the spike. The sections below detail what your heroes find. Along the way, they should occasionally get the feeling they're being followed. Let them take actions to avoid being detected, but they are eventually spotted—by flying brains if nothing else. When this occurs, a Sa Karan and his minions attack and attempt to capture the heroes. See **Capture** for more details.

HOME TOWNS

Some players may have written up a few details about their characters' families. Good roleplayers may decide to risk life and limb to check on their loved ones. This makes for great roleplaying and shows that your players care about Tarth and what has happened to it. Unfortunately, they are destined to be disappointed. The towns of Valusia are ravaged and the heroes' families slain or captured. Award good roleplayers with a benny should they make it to their hometowns.

For those with family in Kings Port, see below.

OTHER LANDS

It's possible some of the group wants to cross the Dread Mountains into the White Towns, head northwest to distant Kos, or even sail to the Dragon Isles. The group should be allowed to begin traveling in that direction, but somewhere along the way, they must be spotted (see **Capture**).

So that you know, Valusia's neighbors have been invaded and have their own spikes as well. See page 127 for more information on their fate.

THE SPIKE

It's a really bad idea to approach the spike at this point. The creatures that were released from it still prowl the surrounding countryside and attack anything that moves.

If the group insists, they're detected by flying brains about halfway to the spike. If they should somehow escape from their first encounter with the Sa Karans, they can venture on to the spike. There's no way inside and no way to hurt it at this point, but the group can at least verify that it's responsible for the dark cloud enveloping the land. Read the following if they get close enough to see it:

The thing looks like a giant spike driven straight into the heart of your beautiful valley. The impact has opened up dark fissures all around it and caused the earth itself to ripple and crack. There is no doubt this is what caused the cave-in at the Sa Karan ruin that nearly buried you alive.

The spike must be over 200 feet high. It seems to be made of steel, perhaps scorched black by the fires of Hell itself. Vents dot the surface and spew steam and noxious green gas. Odd rippled tubes hundreds of feet long run in and out of its surface like the guts of some monstrous beast turned inside out.

From the very top of the spike, nearly hidden in the choking clouds, great plumes spew black smoke into the air, darkening the sky and blotting out the precious sun. There is little doubt this blasphemous creation is responsible for the gloom that has already settled over Valusia.

Some might think to scale the tower and climb in through the tubes or the vents. Neither are possible—the concentrated fumes kill living creatures in seconds.

When the group leaves, they are attacked again as outlined under **Captured**.

KINGS PORT

The heroes will almost certainly decide to head for the City of Heroes at some point. Read the following as they approach:

Kings Port still stands! You can see its tall walls have resisted whatever pathetic attack these invaders must have—no, wait. Thick plumes of black

smoke rise from within the City of Heroes. Kings Port has either fallen or is under attack from within.

The walls of Kings Port are intact since the spiders merely climbed them. The Masters flew in via their flying barges, and other minions were let in through the main gate.

Entering the City is tricky if the group doesn't want to be seen. The sea tunnels below Kings Port eventually connect with the sewers, and are an obvious thought. Everyone knows they exist, but they are unmapped, stretch for miles, and are filled with trolls and other horrors. The party would also have to detour days out of their way to the north or south to find a boat out of sight of the city walls. If the group insists on this course, you'll have to be a bit heavy-handed and have them spotted, chased, and captured before they reach the tunnels (see **Capture**).

The party can simply walk up to Kings Port's single gate on foot, but they are sure to be spotted by whatever forces wait within. The land in front of the City is dotted with ruined farms, but in between are little more than open fields.

Climbing the walls isn't very likely either—they're sheer and over 100' high.

All this means the heroes are most likely to simply walk up to the front gates. If this proves true, have everyone make Stealth rolls. If anyone fails the roll, the group is about 300 yards from the front gate when they see a horde of spiders climb down the white walls and race toward them. A single Master and his two wither beasts also emerge in a flying barge, but they remain unseen in the gloom high above. The heroes cannot outrun the spiders, so their only real option at this point is to find a ruined farmhouse or some other location to make a stand in. (If the spiders attack in a farmhouse, remember that they can climb up and drop down through the thatch roofs!) See **Capture** for the composition of the force.

HALL OF MURDER

Should the group make it to Kings Port's gates, they find the smaller doors within the great gate unlocked and partially open. Unfortunately, many refugees have been wandering in, so the Sa Karans have created a trap here in the formal entry hall.

The long, 40' hall seems empty except for a few corpses, arrows, and other signs of battle. As soon as the entire party is within, a dozen spiders scale down the outside wall and move in behind them. Another dozen move in from the front and corner the heroes in this deadly trap. A Master watches from a distance, and heals any foes who do not immediately die in combat to use as slaves. Should this happen and the party be defeated, move on to Act III.

In the unlikely event the heroes make it into the City, the heroes can play cat and mouse in the ruins for a bit, spying a few slaves, stumbling into spider hives, and so on. In the end however, they are attacked by the pursuing Master and his reinforcements. Eventually, the heroes must fall. When this occurs, move on to Act III.

CAPTURE

As the heroes travel about Valusia, they are eventually spotted by the Masters. The Sa Karans use their spotters to keep tabs on the party, then send out a group of minions to capture their prey.

The Master eventually tasked with finding the heroes is able to gather new minions and attack about once every 12 hours should it have to try more than once to bring the party down. His initial force consists of himself, 15 spiders, and three wither beasts. These creatures attack normally during the fight, but the Master heals any heroes who don't perish outright to use as slaves.

Should the Master's attack fail, he tracks the party with flying brains and returns with whatever minions he feels is necessary to bring the fugitives in.

Those who are conscious when they are captured are shackled with Sa Karan manacles and marched to the City.

Act III begins when the party is finally captured and delivered to the ruins of Kings Port.

TAM

When the heroes are finally defeated, Tam runs away as fast as she can. The Masters aren't interested in children—they make terrible slaves. She escapes, but will return later in the tale.

ACT III

BONDAGE

The heroes are now captives of the Masters. Fortunately, their time in the slave pens is destined to be short—though they won't know this, of course.

During this episode, the heroes are forced to do hard, dangerous labor for several weeks. They must quietly attempt to bond with the other slaves and most importantly, survive long enough for their eventual escape. This part of the tale shows our heroes just how vile the Masters and their minions truly are, and reminds them just what stakes they're playing for.

The act begins as the party awakens in the cold, damp ruins of someone's former home. Their first grueling task is the recovery of the workers they're replacing. One of the slaves isn't quite dead, however, and imparts an important clue to the group before he finally passes on.

Later, the team is assigned to collect the treasures of a familiar home—Galstaff Manor. Inside they discover another important clue that reveals where the invasion truly began.

As the days drag on and hope fades, the group must contend with a lack of adequate food and water, and are eventually helped by yet another slave who shows them the meaning of true heroism.

The act ends with a climactic battle in the dark between swarms of rats, their overseer and his minions, and a band of rescuers from the resistance living beneath the City.

SCENE ONE

SLAVERY

Regardless of where or how they were captured, the group ends up shackled together in the shell of a modest home in the center of Kings Port. The party's mundane and magical items have been taken, and they wear nothing but their underclothes and footwear.

The heroes also wear Sa Karan manacles, and are chained together by a 12-foot length of looped chain ending in a sturdy padlock of human origin. The padlock can certainly be picked, but as soon as someone tries, he's stunned and paralyzed through his manacles.

Your senses slowly return. You are alive, but it is hardly a cause for celebration. You're cold and damp, your wounds ache, and you realize you're in a dark room wearing nothing but your underclothes and shoes.

SA KARAN MANACLES

Sa Karan manacles look like black bracers connected by a short length of chain. Between the manacles, also on the chain is an iron loop. A longer chain runs through the loop of all the slaves in a work group (typically 6).

The manacles are made of spider excretions, and are psychically charged to broadcast each slave's thoughts. This doesn't mean the Master in charge "hears" everything the slave thinks. In fact it ignores most of the constant chatter of the "primitive's" mind. Strong emotions catch the thing's attention however, so plans for attack, escape, and other plots are quickly detected and put down. The moment such a thought is detected, the Master sends a psionic charge to the manacles that instantly paralyzes the wearer for 1d10 minutes. The Master uses this to condition his slaves, so he is particularly attentive to new servants.

The manacles also drain arcane energy. Users cannot cast any sort of spells, miracles, powers or even use magical items while bound.

The GM must also use this plot device to condition the heroes and move the act along. They can't escape or the rest of the story won't work, so it's best not to let them try very much. Otherwise they'll just become more frustrated than they already will be at their predicament.



THE WHOLE "CAPTURE YOU AND TAKE YOUR SOLID GOLD GOODIES" BIT ISN'T MUCH FUN FOR THOSE PLAYERS WITH DELUSIONS OF GRANDEUR. THIS ACT IS IMPORTANT THOUGH, 'CAUSE IT'S THE ONLY WAY THEY'RE GOING TO LEARN ENOUGH ABOUT THE MASTERS TO DEFEAT 'EM LATER ON, AND THE ONLY WAY THEY'RE GOING TO FIND THE RESISTANCE. SO BE A LITTLE HEAVY-HANDED AND CUT SHORT ANY PLANS OF ESCAPE. OTHERWISE YOUR LOSER FRIENDS WILL KEEP TRYING AND JUST GET MORE FRUSTRATED WHEN IT BECOMES OBVIOUS "IT'S JUST WRITTEN THAT WAY."

Worse, you are bound. On your wrists are black manacles connected by a short chain. In the center of the chain is an iron ring, through which a heavier chain runs and connects you to your companions.

Your eyes slowly adjust to the darkness, but a crack in the wall lets in a small sliver of dull light. You begin to pick out odd details of your room. Besides your fellow captives, there are paintings on the walls, a simple bed, a nightstand, and a single wooden door. One of the paintings shows the unmistakable white form of a unicorn. A bright rainbow is barely visible in another. The bed is covered in a patchwork blanket of many colors. You're in a child's room!

You hear very little besides your companions. No, wait. Something shuffles outside. A guard, perhaps?

The heroes have as long as you care to give them to explore their surroundings. The bed is intact, though small, and the nightstand is filled with pieces of paper and colored sticks of wax (like crayons).

The slaves in this section of the city ruins have been assigned to Master Na'Theratix (NAH-ther-AH-tix). The Sa Karan has been tasked with combing the ruins nearest the cliff for interesting art or artifacts. Na'Theratix has been assigned two dozen slaves. Some of his last batch were killed in a cave-in just half a day earlier, and our heroes are their replacements.

Na'Theratix's slaves live in a small block of homes near the center of the city. Tools, weapons, valuables, food, and other useful objects have been removed by Collectors, but some materials remain, such as beds, furniture, a few plates and dishes, and so on. Like most homes in the City, these belonged to the relatively prosperous middle class.

Directly to the east is a large building with hundreds of smaller apartments for Kings Port's less affluent. A great number of spiders have turned this towering ruin into their hive. Scores of the creatures prowl the rest of the devastated city looking for prey, but Na'Theratix keeps them away from his slaves.

At least until they are needed.

CHAIN GANG

Hours go by with no contact from the heroes' captors. The group occasionally hears sounds from outside their quarters—the clinking of chains, shuffling feet, and odd grunts—but nothing intelligible.

If the heroes call out, there is no answer—the other slaves nearby can hear, but they know better than to answer. Should the party cause too much trouble, make too much noise, or try to contact the other slaves, Na'Theratix eventually hears the commotion and teaches his new minions how Sa Karan manacles work (see page 81).

After a few hours in the dark, they hear dull plodding footsteps coming toward them. Read the following aloud when you're ready to start this section.

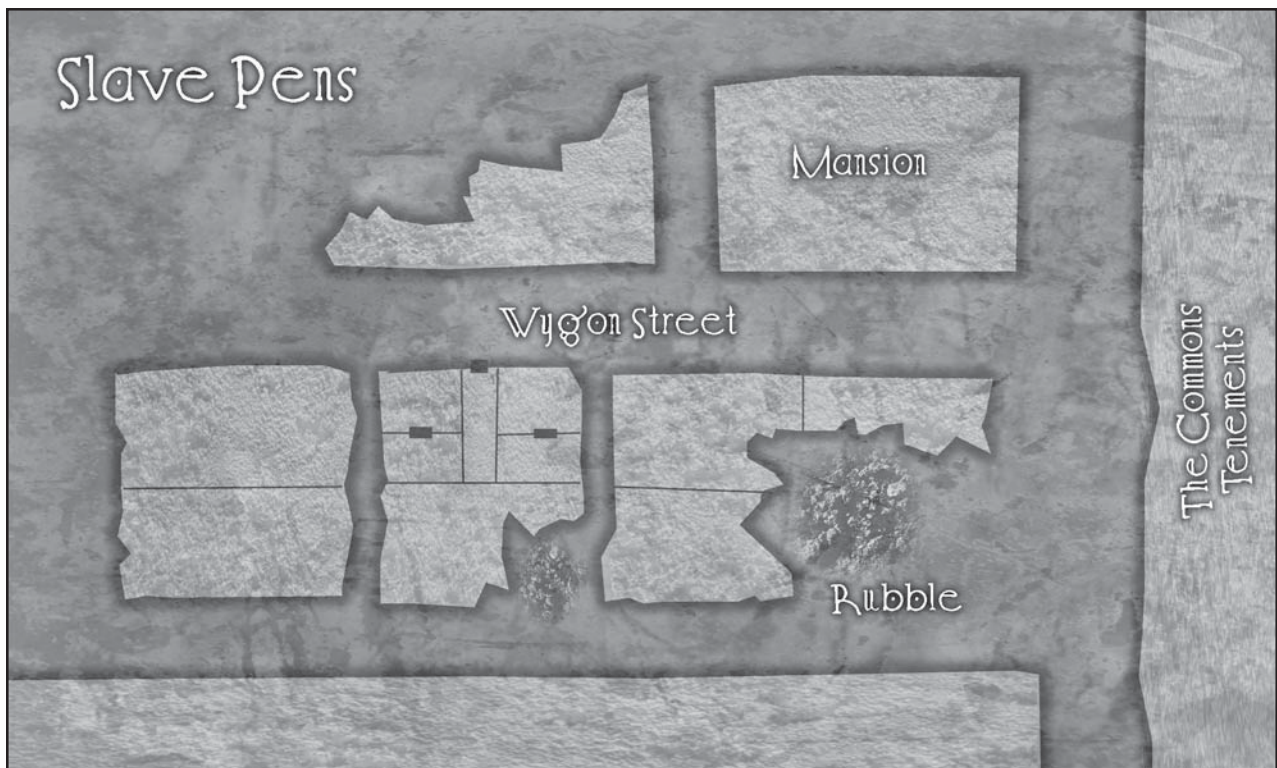
You hear dull thumping footsteps outside. They stop, and then something bumps against the door. It swings open slowly, and standing in the opening is a massive creature. It has no discernible head but three amber, unblinking eyes peer from its chest. Its left arm is oddly shriveled, while its more normally proportioned right holds a single iron key. The creature tosses the key at your feet, then points to the lock at the end of the chain.

As you ponder what to do, something very strange happens. An image forms in your mind—crystal clear, like a waking dream. You can see that the same thing has happened to your companions. In this image, you see yourself opening the lock at the end of the chain.

When the heroes unlock the chain, the wither beast grabs the other end and drags them out onto Wygon Street.

There they are gathered with the other slaves (24 total counting the heroes), who look at the new arrivals with a mixture of hope and despair. Read the following when the party first meets their fellow slaves.

The creature drags you out of the home and into the street outside. Three other creatures are also there, each with a half-dozen slaves chained and manacled as you. Most seem to be relatively strong men and women—there are no children and few adults with small frames. They look you over quickly, then glance nervously about, as if they are afraid of being punished should they attempt to speak to you. They seem to be waiting for something.



After a few minutes, Na'Theratix appears and silently communicates with his wither beasts. The creatures turn and drag their chained work crews down Wygon Street to the King's Road work sites. Any heroes who try to resist are stunned through their manacles and roughly dragged along anyway, automatically suffering Fatigue.

Eventually, all of the slaves reach the King's Road. The rest of the slaves are sent south to other manors, but the player characters are ironically taken directly to Galstaff Manor, where their journey began in Act I. Na'Theratix wants all of the precious objects he believes must be inside. When they have been carted away, the very manor itself will be torn down and sent to the landfill around the spike.

GRISLY PORTENTS

The wither beast leads the player characters to the front gates of the manor and then silently shuffles away. If the heroes attempt to leave, Na'Theratix shocks them again. If they are completely uncooperative, he shocks them all and has them dragged back to their quarters. They are brought back again a few hours later, and the drama repeats itself until the heroes complete the task at hand. It's important to note that the heroes only receive food and water if they complete their daily tasks (see 85).

Read the following as the slaves begin their chore.

Galstaff Manor lies in ruins. The outer façade seems intact, but you can tell the interior has collapsed. The entrance has been blockaded from the inside, but a rotting hand protruding through the charred doors tells you the defense did not hold.

As you stare dumbfounded at what was once a grand home, another image forms in your mind. You see your own two hands digging through the rubble of the manor. You sense you are looking for precious metals, gems and jewelry, objects of art, and other valuables.

The invaders are looting the dead.

The easiest way into the manor is through the main door. The group must push aside the bodies of the Galstaff defenders to do so and slip through the once-ornate doors. When they finally move inside, read the following description.

It's obvious how the defenders fell. There is a huge hole in the roof above, and a charred circle of destruction hints that a powerful charge of gunpowder or some strange magic exploded in the parlor. The defenders before you are burnt horribly. They still hold their weapons, and even their armor is mostly intact.

Now another bizarre mental image forms in your mind—a door and a shattered bust. The image fades quickly, and you see the real thing ahead of you and to the right, down a long hall.

Assuming the heroes move towards their assignment, continue with the following.

The door leads to a room that looks like it was once a gallery of some sort by the portraits on the wall. The center of the floor has collapsed, however, and amid a tangle of smashed paintings are six pitiful slaves, chained together just as you are.

The slaves appear to be dead, but their blood is still somewhat wet. They are emaciated souls, thin and gaunt. Rats have been at some of the corpses, but fortunately something seems to have kept the worst of the vermin away.

As your stomach curls in revulsion, you suddenly see yourself dragging the bodies out of the crater and piling them before the gates of Galstaff Manor.

The heroes' first assignment is indeed to remove the corpses of their predecessors. It is difficult work, for they must first lower themselves into the 8' deep crater while still manacled together. Then they must strain to drag the bodies out. The corpses are similarly chained together, so this should prove an exercise in problem solving. Let your group debate how to handle this unique task for a while. At worst, call for Strength checks and Fatigue those who fail. If they come up with a fairly clever plan, simply describe the laborious process and skip the check.

In any event, when the first character slides into the pit, she discovers why the rats have been slow to devour the carrion. One of the slaves is still alive!

ARWICK'S LAST WORDS

The survivor is an elf named Arwick. He just happens to be one of King Kaden's advisors and court wizard. He was a powerful

mage and fought well during the invasion, but afterward became yet another slave, robbed of his powers by the Sa Karan manacles.

Arwick lies in the middle of the bodies. He rouses when someone steps down into the crater and rolls over just enough to whisper the following:

"Arwick...look for...Valador."

That cryptic clue is all the party gets before the elf fades into unconsciousness and cannot be revived. He's Incapacitated and at death's door. (An explanation of Arwick's clue is found in Act IV.)

Arwick's ability to cling to life is a tricky dilemma for the heroes. Let them debate what to do with the unfortunate elf for a bit. When the debate slows, or if it goes on too long, they hear something clambering toward them—their guardian wither beast. It is waiting for them to bring the corpses to the Galstaff courtyard.

The thing cannot communicate, so pleas and protests do no good. There's really no way to hide Arwick either as he's firmly chained to the other six corpses. If the group resists, they can fight the wither beast for 1d6 rounds before Na'Theratix realizes what's going on and shocks the unruly slaves.

Assuming the bodies are eventually brought outside, the heroes are directed to pile them into a cart. Another wither beast then hauls the cart off toward Wygon Street. The heroes won't realize it at this point, but the bodies are being taken to feed the spiders. Poor Arwick's fate is to be eaten alive, though mercifully he is too far gone to realize it.

If it seems dramatically appropriate, the party can hear excited hissing from the tenements south of Wygon Street a few minutes after the cart creaks out of sight.

BACK TO WORK

After this grisly task, the party is put back to work. Read the following when you're ready to move on.

Those damnable images creep into your mind again. This time you see the Galstaff defenders lying just beyond the front door. Images of their rings, their

weapons, and other personal items fill your head. You try to clear your thoughts, but doing so brings a sharp pain like a nail being driven through your brain. Now you see the items piled in front of the manor—where your overseer waits for the loot like a common thief.

The slaves must now recover more mundane treasures. The bodies of Jacob Galstaff's servants still have their weapons and armor, and Na'Theratix wants to examine them. The slaves are expected to begin clearing away the rubble, picking out any valuables, and piling them up outside. This goes on for 12 long hours.

It is likely the heroes will try and pocket small items or weapons. Their overseer won't pick up on it yet, but the Collector will later (see below).

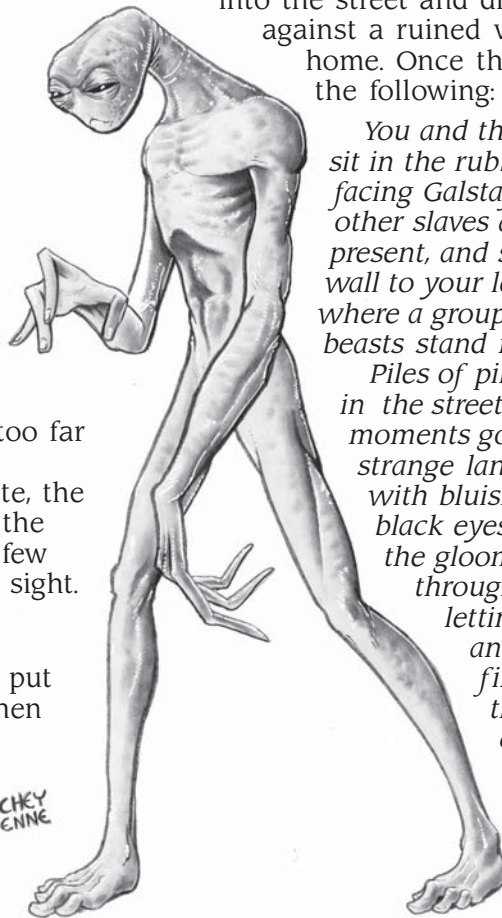
THE COLLECTOR

When the shift is over, the slaves' wither beast stumbles into the manor and grabs the end of their chain. It drags them outward into the street and directs them to sit against a ruined wall opposite the home. Once they are seated, read the following:

You and the other slaves sit in the rubble King's Road facing Galstaff Manor. The other slaves are already present, and sit along the wall to your left, close to where a group of three wither beasts stand motionless.

Piles of pillaged goods lie in the street. Several long moments go by before a strange lanky creature with bluish skin and wide black eyes appears from the gloom. It walks through the piles, letting its long arms and rope-like fingers drag through the collected

treasures. One of the other slaves, an older man with gray hair and



black eyes, hastily whispers to you: "A Collector. If you took anything, throw it into the street now!"

Your overseer stands beside the Collector impatiently, waiting for it to finish whatever task it is performing. Finally, the lanky creature points to several items—swords, rings, and other artifacts gleaned from the Galstaff's wreckage and wherever the other slaves were sent to salvage.

The overseer gathers the objects up in a large leather bag of some sort and places them aside. He then points toward the slaves and the Collector glides forth.

Let the group react if they wish—the Collector is checking for stolen objects.

The creature walks down the line of slaves, letting its disgusting blue fingers drag across their faces.

If anyone pocketed any loot from the house, the Collector stops, turns, and opens its wide black eyes. Na'Theratix uses the manacles to stun the unruly slave, then mentally directs his fellow slaves to search

the paralyzed character and remove the offending items. This continues until all "contraband" has been confiscated. Anyone who took something is now punished with the crippling touch of a wither beast!

When this process is complete, the heroes are given one last image for the day.

Another picture comes unbidden to your mind. The items left lying in the street are in one of the handcarts, and the handcarts are manhandled back to Wygon Street. The other slaves rise and begin shuffling toward the piles.

Once the objects are loaded, the prisoners drag the carts back to Wygon Street. The carts are left in front of the slave quarters and the slaves ordered to shuffle inside. Anyone who watches sees a fresh cadre of wither beasts drag the carts off somewhere to the east. Na'Theratix claims what he wants and sends the rest on to trade with other Masters, or to the landfill surrounding the spike.

An hour after the carts are taken away, the heroes' guardian beast sets down a bucket of rancid water and a trio of smashed rats. See the sidebar below.

FOOD AND WATER

The slaves must make a Fatigue roll at the end of every day due to the lack of sufficient food and water.

Every six slaves are given a bucket of rancid water (about one gallon). The slaves must share about four pounds of food per day. The Sa Karans bring their servants whatever they happen to come across. Most foodstuffs have long since spoiled, so the only sustenance easily found now are rats and carrion.

Unfortunately, the people of Tarth have not experienced such hardships in a long while. Eating the "meal" and holding it down is quite difficult and requires a Vigor roll at -4. Those who fail suffer a -1 penalty to their nightly Fatigue roll. The penalty is reduced by 1 every week spent in captivity as the character gets used to the rank meat. Those who fail suffer a -1 penalty to their daily Fatigue roll.

A HOST OF MALADIES

Eating the unclean, uncooked meat causes a host of health conditions. Any time a character rolls a 1 on his Vigor roll to eat his food (whatever it happens to be), he must make a second Vigor roll. If this is failed, he has contracted a disease of some sort (dysentery, worms, and other maladies). His Vigor stat is temporarily reduced a step until he receives proper food and rest. If Vigor falls below 0, the hero becomes Incapacitated for 1d4 days, then perishes.

SCENE TWO AN ACT OF KINDNESS

The next few days go by without particular incident. Read the following aloud.

The next few days go by like the dreams of the walking dead. You continue clearing out the massive Galstaff Manor, looting the bodies that were too charred or blasted for the invaders and removing statues, furniture, and objects of art. The lousy food, putrid water, and little sleep in the cold gloom will eventually kill you, but you've so far seen no way to escape.

After you read this bleak summation, have each character make their daily Fatigue roll. When that's resolved, simply say "Another dreary, exhausting day goes by," and have them roll again. Do this until one of the players is Exhausted, then move on to the next event.

THE GIFT

The day after a character succumbs to Exhaustion, the following event occurs.

You finished clearing items from the Galstaff estate several days ago. Now the invaders have you and the other slaves chipping away at the rubble and leveling this once-magnificent house. You've been given picks and shovels, but you know what will happen should you try and use them as weapons.

Another of the slave groups has been moved in to help you tear the manor down. You spot the gray-haired man who warned you about the Collector on your first day. As you drearily chip away at the parlor walls, the man clears his throat—as if to get your attention. You turn and see him pointing to a bundle on the floor wrapped in a handkerchief.

The gray-haired slave is Gralen, a former

sergeant in the City Watch. He's noticed that one of the player characters is Exhausted and knows that means certain death. "Take it. For him," he whispers, and points to the Exhausted player character.

Inside the bundle is a small flask of clean water and a hand full of dried fruits and nuts—most likely scavenged from other parts of the manor in the last few days and hidden somewhere within. Consuming the gift restores one Fatigue level, but there's only enough for three people. If one person consumes the entire bundle, he may remove two Fatigue levels. Go ahead and tell the players how this works so that they can decide this moral dilemma. In the game of course, their characters don't know about Fatigue levels and the precise quantities that can be restored. The group's decision is simply a reflection of what the characters do.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

The heroes now have a chance to ask a few questions. Here are their most likely questions along with Gralen's answers—all whispered quietly and patiently throughout the long day. His answers are short and terse. Slaves who talk too much catch the overseer's attention and are paralyzed via the Sa Karan manacles for a time.

Q: Who are you?

A: Gralen. Sergeant. City Watch.

Q: What are these things?

A: (Shrugs.) They came from the spike.

Q: Is there any way out of these manacles?

A: (Shrugs. Shakes his head "no.")

Q: Can the overseer read our thoughts.

A: (Nods.) Like a bar. Lots of noise. It hears everything, but only pays attention when we plot to escape or attack.

Q: Are we all that's left?

A: (Shakes his head.) Some escaped. Underground somewhere.

Q: Who was Arwick?

A: King's mage. He knew where the king went.

Q: Have you found any way to escape?

A: I'm no hero.

Q: Where did you find this food?

A: A few days ago. Eat it when you find it or hide it in the rubble for later.

Q: What is the creature in the robe?

A: They call themselves "The Masters."

Q: What are the big creatures called?

A: We call them wither beasts. Avoid the right arm.

Q: What are the spiders?

A: (Shrugs.) Spiders.

Q: Are these the spiders of old?

A: (Shrugs.)

Q: Why are the things darkening the sky.

A: (Shrugs.) Don't like the sun? Don't seem to like light.

Q: What happened at Kings Port?

A: Thousands attacked. Swarmed over the walls. We fought. Lost. Dropped bombs from flying barges. (Long pause.) We scattered. Hid. Were found. Weak were eaten by spiders. Strong used as slaves.

Q: What are the Masters doing here?

A: (Shrugs.) Taking over the world, I guess. Don't know about Kos, White Towns, or Dragon Isles.

Q: What's in the spike?

A: (Shrugs.) Landed the day before they attacked the City. Some say spiders were inside.

That's about all Gralen knows. He knows nothing about the fate of any important people, such as Lord Herrek the Wolf or King Kaden. He assumes they either died in the fighting, or were perhaps taken by the Masters as captives.

GRALEN'S TALE

Gralen himself fought within the City, commanding a company of the City Watch. His men didn't last more than 10 minutes against the spiders. The sergeant was left for dead, then crawled away after the things moved on to other prey.

GOOD KARMA

This little bit of human contact is enough to help the heroes forego their Fatigue rolls for the day.

SCENE THREE WAR OF THE RATS

The final event of the act happens the night after the heroes spoke with Gralen. Several hours after they've gone to their prison cell, a wave of rats surges up from some hidden subterranean passage and washes over the slave pens. Read the following as the attack begins.

You're awakened by yelling and screaming. It's late and dark as pitch so you can't see anything. There's another sound too—almost like—rain—and something else. Chittering...rats! Thousands of them! You can feel them swarming through your pen now! They're racing over you, caught by the walls in their own stampede. They begin to bite...

The party certainly won't know this, but the rats are actually a good omen. A rescue team has tunneled its way up through the sewers. In doing so the rescuers released thousands of rats trapped below since the invasion. Their numbers swelled immediately after the invasion when meat was plentiful, but now the vermin are starving.

The problem, of course, is that the heroes are manacled and chained together, so they each suffer -2 to their Fighting rolls, and cannot move outside their small home. In addition, it's pitch dark—inflicting another -6 penalty to humans and those with Low Light Vision. (Half-orcs with infravision suffer a -2 penalty due to darkness instead.)

Fortunately, this is *Savage Worlds*, so your heroes have a surprise asset. Though their own characters suffer a grueling -6 penalty (plus whatever Fatigue or wounds they're suffering), they have allies to fight in their stead! The wither beasts are tasked with protecting the slaves, and so become allies of the heroes for this fight! As long as the slaves don't attack the creatures, they are

allied NPCs under the control of the heroes. The creatures' withering ability has no effect on the rat swarms, but they're still strong enough to stomp and smash like mad. The wither beasts protect the slaves only by killing the rats—they won't attempt to break the captives loose.

The heroes also get each of the other three slave groups for this massive fight. They won't be much help, but it may be very interesting to see if the group sends the wither beasts to help themselves or the other unfortunates.

It's best if you go ahead and write up these troops on a *Savage Worlds* ally sheet for quick reference.

RAT SWARMS (6)

The swarms are ravenous for fresh meat. The bloody nicks and cuts on the slaves drive them into a frenzy. One swarm attacks each of the slave pens. The rest head straight for the wither beasts.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d12, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d6

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities

- **Bite:** Every target within the swarm suffers 2d4 damage.
- **Swarm:** The swarm is the size of a Medium Burst Template. Characters can attack each round by stomping, causing his damage in Strength with a successful hit. Cutting and piercing weapons cause no damage to the overall swarm.

AFTERMATH

Na'Theratix remains out of sight during the battle with the rats but emerges afterward to survey the damage to his "property." Any surviving wither beasts drag the slaves out of their hovels and into the street.

The Master walks about a bit, then moves toward one of the wounded nonplayer characters where it reveals its true face at last—and makes a fatal mistake. Read the following aloud once you've determined how many slaves have lived and how many have passed on.

The wither beasts drag you and your companions out into the street. There you see thousands of smashed rats. The other slaves are dragged out too—most suffering from scores of ragged bites. You shiver as you notice the hooded

creature is present as well. He seems to be looking to find out how many of you were lost in the attack. The thing walks up and down the line, looking over his damaged goods. He carries a simple black staff and uses it to occasionally prod a wounded slave to see if he or she still breathes. The Master stops at one of the most grievously wounded and does something you've never seen it do before—it drops its hood and removes its mask!

A horrid face—like that of the spiders you saw earlier but with far more sinister intelligence—seethes at the slave. Now the thing unfurls a long, snake-like snout, then takes in a deep breath of air, filling its bloated belly like a bellows. Then it exhales, snaking its snout out like a striking cobra into the slave's chest. Next the creature retracts its belly, sucking out the poor man's blood and innards with a long wet slurp!

The Master stands and glares at you with its yellow, hate-filled eyes. It seems to be relishing the moment, basking in the glory of its superiority over you.

What you'd give to be rid of these damnable manacles and grasp cold steel against this thing...

Go ahead and have everyone make Guts checks. A good phobia for this event, should someone get that result on the Fear Table, is a fear of the Masters themselves. This goes against the usual rule of not using the particular trigger as a literal phobia, but it makes sense in this case because the heroes must confront the same foes again and again.

REBELLION!

Moments after the rat attack, read the following aloud.

The Master hisses and you feel a sharp pain shoot through your skull. The tremor passes quickly, but you're left with an unnatural sense of inferiority. It is clear this creature is the Master and you are nothing but a lowly slave barely fit to be its fodder.

Strange. As you sift through your sudden emotions, you notice there's a long stick pointing out of the Master's forehead. It almost looks like the shaft

of a crossbow bolt. The Master reels back and raises its staff—firing off a blast of violet energy into the darkness.

The rescuers are here! A group of heroes under Lord Herrek the Wolf have been sent to retrieve Magister Arwick. That goal is doomed, of course, but the rescuers don't know that, and would insist on rescuing the rest of the slaves in this small camp anyway.

The heroes now get some additional allies—Sarah the Sun Priest and six Resistance fighters. The wither beasts are back on the enemy side and Na'Theratix has already suffered two wounds.

The rescuers head straight into battle against Na'Theratix and the wither beasts. One of the fighters heads for the prisoners. He shouts "Which of you is Arwick?" and begins cutting the manacles apart with a bolt cutter. Assuming the heroes tell the man that Arwick is dead, he echoes the information to Sarah, the Sun Priest leading this attack, and grimaces. Sarah answers with "Finish it. No one gets left behind!"



SARAH THE SUN PRIEST

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8
Skills: Faith d10, Guts d8, Intimidate d8, Fighting d10, Notice d8, Riding d8, Stealth d8
Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 7
Hindrances: Heroic, Loyal
Edges: Command, Champion, Quick, Sun Priest
Miracles: Fireburst, healing, greater healing, light, solar storm; Power Points 15
Gear: Mantle of Solace (+1), Sun Mace (Str+3)

RESISTANCE FIGHTERS (6)

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8
Skills: Climb d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d4, Fighting d8, Shooting d6, Notice d6, Riding d6, Stealth d6
Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7
Hindrances: Heroic, Loyal
Edges: Command, Champion, Quick, Sun Priest
Gear: Leather armor (+1), small shield, long sword (Str+3)



NA'THERATIX

The Master starts the battle Shaken and with two wounds. As long as he remains Shaken, he cannot activate the manacles and paralyze the slaves.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Climb d8, Guts d8, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Psionics d10, Shooting d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7 (with staff); **Toughness:** 8

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Level Headed

Gear: Master's Armor (+2), Ebon Staff (Range 10/20/40; Damage: 3d6; RoF: 1; uses no Power Points).

Special Abilities

- **Great Leap:** Masters can leap 2d6" in a straight line with their incredibly strong legs.
- **Psionics:** Masters have 25 Power Points and typically know *bolt*, *deflection*, *puppet*, and *telekinesis*. They rely on their ebon staves for the *bolt* power.
- **Wall Crawling:** Masters crawl on walls using minor telekinetic powers at their normal Pace. This requires no casting roll or Power Points.

WITHER BEASTS

The number of wither beasts remaining are whatever survived the previous fight. They fight against the slaves this time.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Climb d6, Guts d10, Fighting d10, Notice d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10

Edges: Ambidextrous, Frenzy

Special Abilities

- **Claw:** Str+4 with right arm; Wither with left (see below).
- **Size +2:** Wither beasts are over 8' tall.
- **Ultravision:** Each of the beast's eyes sees in a different spectrum, giving it both Low Light and Infravision. It suffers a -2 penalty only in pitch darkness.
- **Wither:** The creature makes only touch attacks with its left arm (+2 to hit). Extras who are touched are wounded. Heroes suffer an automatic roll on the Crippling Injury Table. The Vigor roll to see if the effect is permanent is made at -2.

AFTERMATH

The rescuers have no additional arms with them, but their spies scouted the camp and know where Na'Theratix lairs. They need the loot he's gathered there and spend no more than five minutes raiding the place to get it. Fortunately, the heroes' gear is still stored here as well. Sarah tells them to gather their things, then leads them off into the sewers and the next scene.

ACT IV

THE WARRENS

The next act is the most critical one of all, for here the heroes must not only continue to improve their own skills for the battle that is to come, but must build the morale and strength of the resistance as well.

You'll have to "break character" here a bit and reveal a bit of what's going on behind the scenes, but it's worth it to get the group as involved in aiding the Resistance as they should be.

Let your players read Chapter Two now. This explains exactly what their characters must do during this next Act, and provides some game mechanics to track their progress.

Specifically, the group is looking to gain "Resistance Points." This represents not only alliances made with other factions, but also the morale of those survivors already present. The latter is affected by keeping food stores high, retrieving relics to aid in the fight against the Masters, and generally inspiring the masses.

After the group is introduced to the current leaders of King's Landing, they're offered a number of tasks to complete for Lord Herrek. During the course of the act, they'll explore a haunted asylum, find ancient and powerful treasures, battle savage sea trolls, encounter numerous minions of the Sa Karans, and eventually learn the fate of King Kaden and the origins of their very species!

SCENE THREE

THE WOLF

The heroes are taken through a maze of tunnels to the Upper King's Tunnels. Read the following to describe their long trip.

Your rescuers lead you down through a sewer tunnel a few dozen yards from your former prison and down into the darkness. At the bottom of the ladder you see a barrel of powder, and a long fuse leading away into the darkness. The Sun Priest says "Blow it!", and one of the others lights the fuse. "Let's run!" she barks, and the survivors start running down the tunnels and into the darkness.

You keep running through the sewers, the only light provided by a few torches your rescuers provided. The group runs for what feels like hours, down the main sewer tunnel, to the left,

down a ladder, through an empty spill tank, and finally through a grill cleverly disguised to look welded in place.

The journey continues through natural caverns. You are in the legendary King's Tunnels beneath the City. You travel through winding passageways, crawl through tight squeezes, climb over cliffs, and even wade through freshwater streams. Fortunately, your rescuers seem to know their way. They guide you through the labyrinthine tunnels as if they'd lived here all their lives instead of only a few weeks.

Finally, hours later, the Sun Priest glances back at you and says "Almost there, friends." You walk through a large, rounded chamber dotted with thousands of stalagmites. You stick to the right-hand wall and see dozens of exits vanishing into the gloom. The rescuers stay within the chamber until they eventually get to one particular passage that looks just like all the others to you. After a few dozen more twists and turns, the passage opens onto a cold, underground river.

The stream runs along the southern border of a massive cavern. Thousands of luminescent shapes swim within

and provide shifting, dappled light to the cave. They are called firefish, you think.

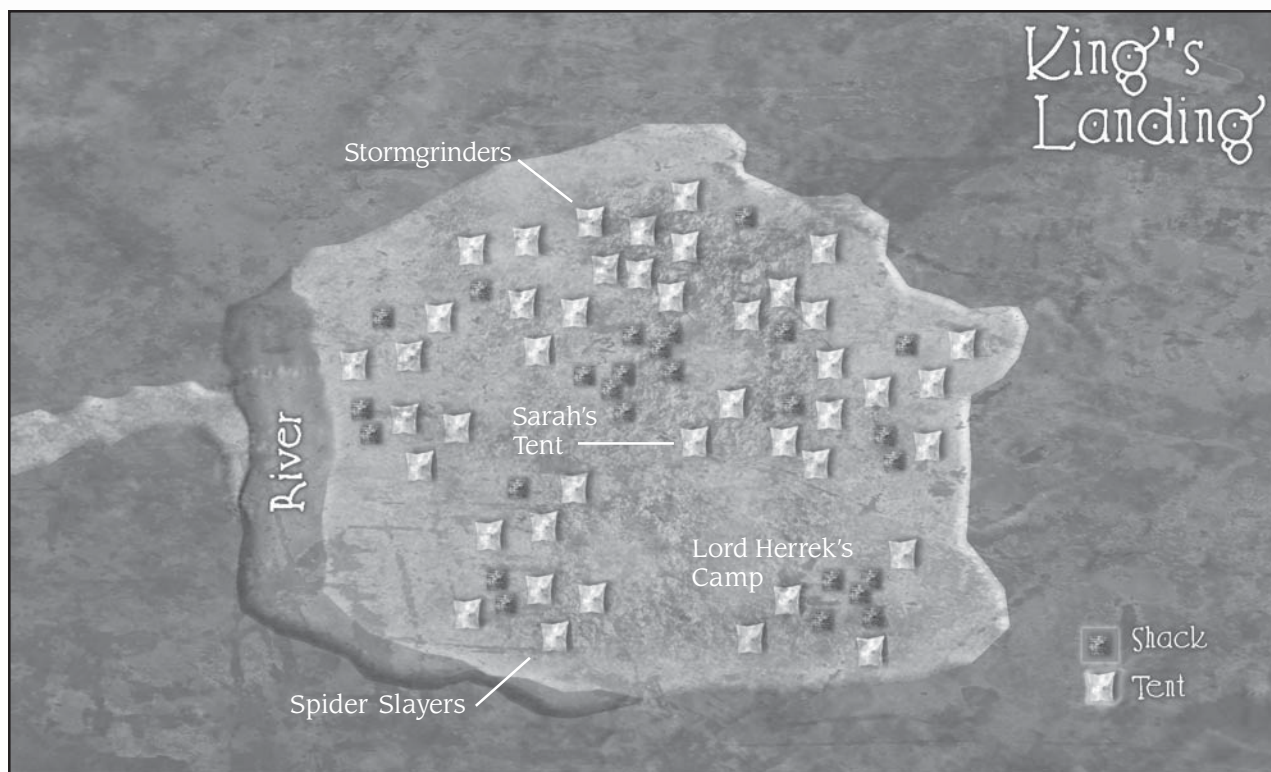
Across the river, you can just make out dozens—perhaps hundreds—of people. The light from the river does not extend far, but you can just make out makeshift shelters crafted from blankets, curtains, and odd pieces of wood.

Your rescuers plunge right into the river and wade across it quickly. Its water chills you to the bone, but feels almost refreshing after the long trip to this place. "It's called the Druskan," one of the rescuers says.

The heroes are now in King's Landing, home of Lord Herrek the Wolf and two thousand odd refugees loyal to old Valusia and King Kaden.

The former slaves are taken into the heart of the shanty town where they stop at a tent with a yellow banner sporting a freshly painted red sun upon it. This is Sarah the Sun Priest's spot. Read the following as she cares for the new members of her flock.

The Sun Priestess motions for you to sit by a yellow tent with a red sun emblazoned upon it. She goes inside while the rest of your rescuers vanish



into the darkness. You collapse on the ground, exhausted and relieved to be out of the slave pens and the grip of those horrible creatures.

Scores of people gather to take a look at you. Most smile and nod, perhaps in sympathy with your recent plight. A few stare accusingly as well.

The priestess steps out of her tent a few moments later, wearing a dry robe. "Let's go, people," she barks to the crowd. "I need clean clothes and some food for each of our new guests."

The people vanish quickly. The Sun Priestess begins to inspect each of you, uttering words of comfort and magical healing to the most grievously injured.

Sarah heals the most seriously injured characters first. She has only six Power Points remaining since the attack on the slave pen, so she only gets two attempts. When she is done, move on with the rest of the narration.

As the Sun Priestess finishes with your wounds, a few of the people return. Some have dry clothes, a few others have scraps of meat and baskets of some sort of green weed.

"This will keep you alive. We'll provide you with a fish and a mushroom every day. Sometimes more, depending on what we find."

Food, water, and clothes are now provided for all the surviving slaves. They are given a blanket (unless they have their own), a knife, a dried, cooked fish, and an edible mushroom the size of a fist. This meal relieves all Fatigue they may have accumulated in the previous act.

After the group has eaten, Sarah invites them to rest for a few hours. Then she takes them to the rear of the chamber and introduces them to Lord Herrek the Wolf, who is in charge of the village.

Sarah leads you to the back of the cavern where a makeshift barricade of crates, barrels, and stones has been thrown up around four large tents. You are escorted through the barricade, which is guarded by two knights in yellow and black—the King's Champions! Has the king survived?

You are taken to the largest of the tents where a tall thin man in full plate mail stands above a table. On the table

is a map of what look like tunnels. Several other men and women stand about, obviously discussing some sort of war plans. The tall man turns at your approach.

Sarah speaks first. "These are the prisoners we rescued, Lord Herrek. It seems Arwick did not survive. These folks saw him before he died, however. His last words were something about a 'Valador.'"

Lord Herrek. You know that name. He is the King's Champion. The Wolf. The man looks you over, then speaks in a gravelly voice.

"Greetings, friends. I'm glad you survived your ordeal. I can't imagine what you've been through. Life has been hard for us all lately, but we will persevere.

I am Lord Herrek. The King's Champion. We've taken to calling our town King's Landing, for we anticipate our liege's return most any day. I see by your faces you had hoped the King was here. I'm afraid not, but we believe he is alive and working to free us of these invaders. Reports claim he and Princess Rayna were escorted to safety just before the City fell.

King Kaden's last contact was with his mage, Arwick. We had hoped Arwick knew the King's plans. I don't know who "Valador" is, but we'll figure it out. Eventually.

For now, I bid you to join our resistance. There are other groups hiding down here in the tunnels, but they seem to care more for their own well-being than for that of the common folk.

When you have rested, I would ask those of you who consider yourselves heroes to come to my camp here and seek out Aden the Scribe. There are many tasks we must complete to survive, gathering food and the like, and we need every able-bodied soul who can swing a sword to help.

May the sun return to you."

HELP WANTED

Lord Herrek returns to his war plans. As he does so, a young elf with mopy black hair and pale skin appears. Aden the Scribe has a mousy voice, but listens intently and is very respectful of all the survivors here.

A young elf clutching sheaves of paper, ink, and pens, emerges as Lord Herrek retires. "A moment, if you please" he says. "I am Aden. One of my many duties is to gather knowledge on our foes. I would like to speak to each of you about what you saw."

Aden begins chatting with each character in turn. Allow the heroes to tell Aden what they know about the Sa Karans. This not only provides a good opportunity to roleplay, but also helps the players sort through what they've learned so far in their own minds.

When he's done, Aden adds the following:

"Lord Herrek controls and rations all the food we gather from this area. Everyone gets at least one fish and one mushroom a day. The Wolf splits everything else we come into depending on need.

The common folk gather enough fish and fungus for us to survive—for now anyway. Everything else we need has to come from further afield. If you're willing to help by adventuring out for forage, the rewards are substantial.

We pay in suns because that's what everyone is used to. You can use those suns to buy extra rations or any other goods we have that you might want.

Get a good rest, heal your wounds, then come see me when you're ready for another adventure.

May the Sun return to you."

MORE ON KING'S LANDING

While the party rests, they may interact with the people of King's Landing and learn a bit more about what's going on here. Here's the information for you, the Game Master. You'll have to disperse it to the player characters through Sarah or other contacts here as you see fit.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Tam: The girl who escaped capture earlier found her way into the Warrens. She's now training to be a Sun Priest with Sarah. Her progress is miraculously fast—she can already cast the *healing* miracle, and has 10 Power Points. She's always willing to help the heroes (assuming they treated her well).

Tawny Downs: A troublemaker who seems to resent Lord Herrek's rule. Some think he's a spy for Garon. (He's not.)

The Golem Smashers: What's left of Ragulon's band is here. Sarah was one of them but has decided to operate alone and serve Lord Herrek directly. The three remaining survivors are Rafe, a sly thief; Bromwyn, a female fighter; and Dara, Ragulon's dwarven mate and sorceress.

The Spider Slayers: This band ventured up into the City to rescue some slaves and wound up killing nearly two-dozen spiders! Their members are Parapus, a mage of Mizridoor; Kara, an elven ranger; Grak, a half-orc musketeer; and Callop, a halfling scout.

Red Knights and Sun Priests: Three Red Knights have found their way into the Warrens. They are Tolvek Killingsford, Irona Donin, and Trevor Galstaff (Trabian's uncle). Two Sun Priests (besides Sarah) also escaped, Rada Hillsman and Jillian Ravenswood.

Lord Herrek rarely sends these heroes on missions—he needs to save their strength for the final battle.

The knights and priests are willing to heal wounds for the common folk, Red Knights, and Sun Priests, for free. Those who can pay (such as adventurers) must tithe the church 200 suns for magical healing. (Faith d10, 10 Power Points each for the knights and 20 for the priests).

RUMORS

Lord Herrek was taken by the Masters in the fight for the City. Word is he tried to kill King Kaden himself! (True)

Lord Herrek is *still* controlled by the Masters! (False)

Lord Herrek sends out heroes to gather loot and treasure and keeps the best of it for himself. (False—spread by Tawney Downs)

Some of us think maybe we should just surrender. It's better to be a slave than to starve to death. (An opinion, but false)

A creature called the Red Ravager lurks in the Lower Tunnels. It is said it is the blood-spattered ghost of an ancient pirate king! (The Red Ravager exists, but is no ghost. See page 107.)

It seems the rats in the Catacombs have their very own protector, a shape-changing wererat called the Vermin Lord. (The Vermin Lord exists but is no wererat. See page 116.)

DEATH

When a hero dies, he's eulogized and then his corpse is sent down the Druskan. See page III for more information.

SCENE TWO THE LOWER TUNNELS

When the group is ready, they can approach Aden and see about performing a mission for King's Landing. Aden happily accepts their offer of service, scans through his book, and says the following:

"It seems we're most in need of fresh vegetables right now. We've got mushrooms, but the people cannot live on fungus forever.

There are large supplies of red kelp in the Lower Tunnels that add tremendously to our diet. If you will go there and gather it, we will pay you 50 suns per basket.

You'll find a trail to the lower tunnels is marked by blue spots. Look carefully, we don't make them too obvious. At the

end of the trail you'll find yourself in the Lower Tunnels. You'll have to navigate from there as you see fit until you find a shallow pool of red kelp. Fortunately for us, it grows in darkness.

Beware of the sea trolls when you are in the Lower Tunnels. The area has many deep pools and channels to the open sea, and these creatures often lurk within them. They use weapons made of black coral that can paralyze a man, so beware of that."

Following the trail takes about three hours. The tunnels are a dark maze and the trail isn't too overt—Herrek's people don't want to guide the invaders back to King's Landing.

KELP BEDS

On reaching the Lower Tunnels, the heroes explore for about an hour before coming to a spot where they must wade a bit. The water is salty and open to the sea.

This pond has only small fronds of red kelp in it—it's obviously been picked clean by a prior expedition.

Halfway across the "pond," the lead character feels something pull at his leg, as if he's stepped into a tangle of kelp. Should he investigate, he finds he's actually entangled in old fishing wire (catgut). The tangle is easy enough to step out of, though the characters may think they've triggered a trap and should be allowed to take whatever precautions they feel are necessary.

In truth, the old line isn't a trap—it's an alarm. The wire leads out into the depths for a few hundred feet. At the far end of the line are strung a number of hollow seashells and other noisemakers. When the line is tripped, the shells make noise which can be heard by the sea trolls below. The trolls then move up to an ambush point a few hundred yards ahead of the alarm, giving them plenty of time to prepare.

THE AMBUSH

Further down the corridor, the heroes come to a shallow tidal pool full of red kelp. The water looks to be about 3' deep in most spots, and the thick seaweed wafts lazily upon the surface.

This is where the sea trolls have set their ambush. There are three of these creatures per hero, one for any allied Extras who have tagged along, and a leader.



The sea trolls wait in ambush beneath the kelp until a few of the heroes are half way across the pond. Adventurers who fail Notice rolls at -2 are surprised and do not get cards in the first round.

As the sea trolls attack, two more swim into the shallow pool marked B, most likely behind the adventurers. These two have their "pet" crocodiles with them. The "salties" slither up onto the solid portion of the tunnel and attack anything that doesn't smell like troll.

SEA TROLLS

Roughly half of this bunch move to Medium Range to hurl their throwing sticks. The rest attack in melee. They retreat when over half their number are slain and their leader is dead.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Toughness d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Swimming d10

Pace: 5; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 7

Gear: Coral Spear (Str+2; +1 Parry; Poison); Throwing Sticks (Range: 4/8/12; Damage: Str+1; Poison (see page 136)).

Special Abilities

- **Armor:** Leathery hide (+1).
- **Claws:** Str+2.
- **Kelp Suit:** +2 Stealth when hiding.
- **Regeneration (Fast):** Downed trolls make Vigor rolls to regenerate each round. Fire stops their regeneration, as does cutting off their heads.



SEA TROLL LEADER

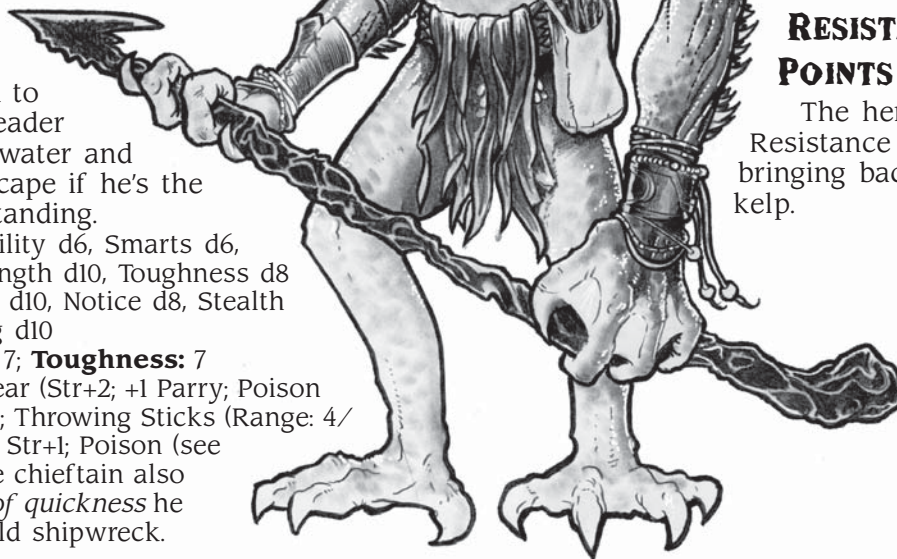
This creature leads from the front, attacking the largest hero to prove its worth to the rest. The leader dives into the water and attempts to escape if he's the last troll left standing.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Toughness d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d8, Stealth d6, Swimming d10

Pace: 5; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 7

Gear: Coral Spear (Str+2; +1 Parry; Poison (see page 136)); Throwing Sticks (Range: 4/8/12; Damage: Str+1; Poison (see page 136)). The chieftain also wears a *ring of quickness* he found in an old shipwreck.



Special Abilities

- **Armor:** Leathery hide (+1).
- **Claws:** Str+2.
- **Relic (Ring of Quickness):** The sea troll found this magical ring in the wreck of an old ship off the coast of Kings Port. The wear may keep drawing initiative cards until he has at least an 8 or higher!
- **Regeneration (Fast):** The troll rolls to regenerate any wounds each round, even after being put down. Fire stops his regeneration, as does cutting off his head.

MARINE CROCODILE

These voracious predators head straight for the nearest targets.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Notice d6, Swim d8

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9

Special Abilities

- **Armor +2:** Salties have thick skins.
- **Aquatic:** Pace 5
- **Bite:** Str+2
- **Rollover:** (The crocs can only use this ability in water 3' deep or more.) If a croc hits with a raise, it rolls with its victim and causes an extra 2d4 damage to its prey in addition to its regular Strength damage.

LOOT

The Kelp Bed: It takes about one hour to fill each character's basket.

Troll Livers: The livers from each troll are worth 100 suns.

RESISTANCE POINTS

The heroes gain a Resistance Point for bringing back the red kelp.

SCENE THREE THE UPPER TUNNELS

Aden's second task is a trip into the Upper Tunnels, home of Tarth's Catacombs. He comes to the party about a day after the heroes complete Scene Two.

"Lord Herrek sends his thanks in feeding our people. If you are ready, we have need of additional help."

If the group agrees, continue with the following:

"As I'm sure you know, the Upper Tunnels are where the wealthiest merchants, nobles, and even royalty were buried. The trail to this area is marked with yellow paint."

"Those areas were once off-limits, both to keep out grave-robbers and to prevent the dead from rising—which I'm told happened on several occasions before the invasion."

"Since the aliens came, the dead rise there much more often. These are powerful creatures, not mere zombies as some expect."

"The Catacombs are filled with false and empty tombs, and their doors are spiked shut to the stone walls. That makes it extremely tiring to just go poking around hoping to find an occupied crypt. It's quite dangerous as well. It's said the dead rise when they hear the sounds of 'grave robbers.'"

"We know of one true crypt, however, that of Tragor the Wild, a barbarian of the White Towns who is said to be buried with his own magical sword. If you can recover the weapon, and any other relics he might have on his person, you may keep them with the official blessing of Lord Herrek. We require only that you continue to pledge your skills to our fight against the Masters."

If the heroes agree, Aden lends them crowbars, picks, and hammers, and gives them a map to the tomb of Tragor.

PORTENTS

The first time the group enters the Catacombs, they stumble upon a gruesome scene. Bloody, gnawed bones lie about a chamber, scattered among blankets, clothing, and other bundles of personal possessions. It's obvious the bones are not from the piles lining the Catacombs. In truth, they were refugees who did not find King's Landing, but were found by the Vermin Lord and his rat hordes (see page 116).

A casual glance notes there are more than 20 corpses here. A more careful count takes about 10 minutes and places the total at near 30. Careful examination of the bones reveals they have been picked clean. Tiny marks indicate they were gnawed on by rats. Whether this caused their death or happened post-mortem is unclear.

THE CATACOMBS

The Catacombs are only a few hundred feet below the City—in a region called the "Upper Tunnels." When Tarrian and her band first fought the Masters in the ancient Birthing Chambers, they left many of their dead behind in these labyrinthine tunnels just below the City. The few survivors left their dead in the tunnels where they had fallen. Later generations continued to bury their dead here as well.

Common dead are placed behind iron bars along the corridors. Former kings, great heroes, and wealthy merchants are interred in private crypts.

The Undertakers Guild protected the crypts by creating hundreds of facades. When a crypt was purchased, the door was removed and a chamber carved out behind it. The door was then replaced but left unmarked, making it indistinguishable from all the other "false" doors. Of course, the Undertaker's Guild was destroyed, and its valuable maps along with it.

The crypts were further protected by the dead themselves. The common dead occasionally rise when they hear the sounds of tombs being opened. Valusia's finest also rise on occasion, most often when their tombs are disturbed. These are much more powerful entities, complete with the weapons and armor they were buried with.

THE HEROES OF KINGS PORT

At the center of the Catacombs is an ancient monument to the battle that once took place here. Four 12' high statues stand around a rounded chamber at the very heart of the Catacombs. One is a human woman who most accept as Tarrian. The identities of the rest, an elf, a dwarf, and a halfling, are lost to the mists of time. A fifth statue is missing, obviously shattered hundreds of years before. Though no one living remembers it, the fifth statue was that of an orc, torn down by an angry king hundreds of years ago.

The statues are collectively known as "The Heroes of Kings Port."

THE CRYPTS

As the heroes explore the crypts, they come upon rows upon rows of massive stone doors. Nine in ten of these are false, but the map directs them to the tomb of Tragor.

Opening the tomb is still a difficult task. The door has a lock set well over head-height, and is extremely complicated. Picking the lock requires a Lockpick roll at -6, and at least one hour per attempt.

The lock is not the only protection, however. A long iron band has been bolted to both the door and the wall, requiring a crow bar and 1d6 man-hours to remove from the stone wall (the doors open outward).

Eventually, the door does give however, and the heroes see a stone room with a simple sarcophagus in the center.

The moment the sarcophagus is opened, the creature inside awakens. Tragor is now a horrid wight. He rises in his stone coffin swinging his magical sword and screaming like death itself. 1d6 of these creatures per hero shamle down the hall. Half arrive the round after Tragor awakens, the other half arrive the round after that.

TRAGOR

Tragor is a mindless wight intent on slaying those who violated his tomb. He returns to his rest only when he or the "thieves" are slain.

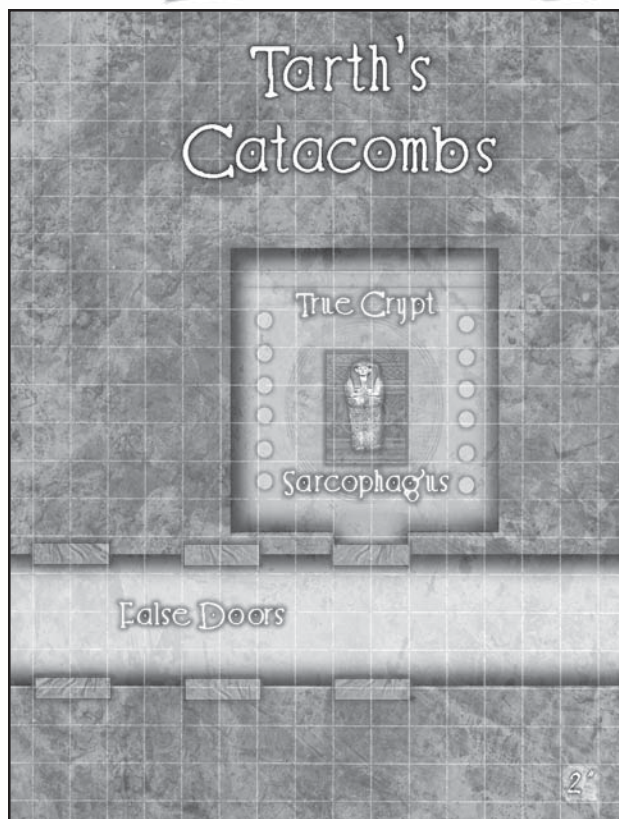
Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d8, Strength d12+4, Vigor d12

Skills: Climb d6, Fighting d12, Notice d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 12

Edges: Improved Block, Improved Sweep

Gear: , Tragor's Mantle (+1 Strength), Tragor's Sword (Str+4; see below)



Special Abilities

- **Berserk:** Tragor rises berserk. He adds +2 to his Fighting and Strength rolls, as well as his Toughness. His Parry is reduced by 2.
- **Fear (-2):** Tragor is a fright to behold.
- **Fearless:** Tragor has no human emotions.
- **Relic (Tragor's Mantle):** Tragor's armor increases the user's Strength by one die type, or to Str+2 if it's already a d12.
- **Relic (Tragor's Sword):** If the user hits his foe with this weapon, the target is always at least Shaken regardless of the damage roll.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; No additional damage from called shots; Arrows and other piercing attacks do half-damage; Ignores Wound Modifiers; Immune to disease and poison.
- **Wail of the Dead:** At the beginning of each of Tragor's actions, the wight lets loose a bloodcurdling scream. Every character within the wight's tomb must make a Guts check at -2. Those who fail are automatically Shaken.

SKELETONS

These lost souls are the bones of Valusia's commoners, brought to unlife by Tragor.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Shooting d6

Pace: 7; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

Gear: Varies

Special Abilities

- **Bony Claws:** Str+1.
- **Fearless:** Immune to fear and Intimidation.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness. +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage to such creatures. Arrows, bullets, and other piercing attacks do half-damage.

LOOT

Tragor's Mantle: Tragor's first quest of manhood was to kill a rabid chinook preying on his tribe in the White Towns. After a horrible struggle, he killed the thing and made this cloak from its hide. The wearer's Strength rises by one die type, or by +2 if his Strength is already d12 or higher. (Use the character's actual Strength when advancing Strength-related skills, however.)

Tragor's Sword: This massive bastard sword requires a minimum d8 Strength to wield. Any foe struck by it is at least Shaken, regardless of the actual damage roll.

RESISTANCE POINTS

The heroes gain 2 Resistance Points if they return with Tragor's Mantle and Sword.

THE HUNTERS

Just a few minutes after leaving Tragor's crypt, the heroes stumble upon six well-armed men with a dead spider.

The six men are Hunters, treacherous humans who have agreed to hunt down their fellow Valusians in exchange for special treatment from the Masters. They are led by a crafty warrior named Jack. He greets the heroes cautiously when he first spots them, then says the following when he's able to spin his lie.

"It's good to see you. We're the Iron Men. We were mercs before all this happened. We were up hunting orcs for bounty in the Dreads when these things attacked. We heard there were others gathering down here somewhere. Ready to fight back. We want in. We brought this thing for study if you've got anyone smart enough to do it."

Jack is lying through his teeth, of course. The Masters knows the frequent raids on their slave camps are coming from beneath Kings Port somewhere, so they've sent the Hunters to infiltrate and find it.

Jack is a clever fellow, so feel free to play him anyway necessary to get him back to King's Landing. If the heroes are more clever, they can defeat the Hunters or lose them somewhere in the caverns.

If the Hunters manage to get to King's Port, they play it calm for a while, but are later taken to Lord Herrek's tent. There they are found out and a fight ensues. Sarah intervenes for Lord Herrek however, catching a double-charged musket ball in the gut. She dies heroically, and then the rest of the Hunters are brought down.

If the Hunters are exposed and captured, Lord Herrek spends a few hours questioning them, then gathers the people of King's Landing. Read the following once the crowd has assembled:

Lord Herrek's face looks as if it's about to burst. His skin is red, his veins bulge, and his eyes twitch maniacally.

"These...things...are the Masters' dogs. They've turned on their own kind to lick the boots of the aliens."

Herrek draws his sword and snarls at the prisoners. He nods and his men put them on their knees. The Old Wolf shakes with rage and raises his sword. "Let all those who would join the darkness see their fate!" With that he hacks off the prisoners' heads one at a time. The last blow he strikes is not clean—the unfortunate man twitches and shakes. Herrek raises his sword to finish him, but then decides otherwise. He kicks the shuddering prisoner over and storms off to his tent.

HUNTERS (6)

The Hunters shoot the most dangerous foe first. They're smart enough to retreat into cover and use their bombs and muskets.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Climb d6, Guts d6, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Mean, Sa Karan Manacles.

Edges: Musketeers

Gear: Chain shirt (+2), musket (Range: 10/20/40; Damage: 2d8); two pistols (Range: 5/10/20; Damage: 2d6+1); bayonets (Str+2); 10 total shots; 1 powder bomb, knives (Str+1).

RESISTANCE POINTS

Lose 1 Resistance Point if Sarah is killed.

SCENE FOUR THE WILDERNESS

The next step in the story takes place in King's Landing. Read the following sometime after the party has completed Scene Two:

You're napping when you're awakened by the sound of a boy's voice. "It's the Spider Slayers! They're back with the apples!"

"Apples for everyone," Lord Herrek promised a few days ago. The people are hungry. What else could the Old Wolf say? Firefish are getting old and another case of moon skin is breaking out every day. Aden sent the Spider Slayers out to an apple orchard and Herrek optimistically promised to share whatever the Slayers found with everyone. Now they've returned, but the packs on their backs look discouragingly small.

Allow the heroes to take whatever actions they want, if any. The Spider Slayers head straight for Herrek's camp, but are mobbed by hungry people along the way. Let anyone who pays attention overhear people saying things like "That's not enough!", "Those apples are rotten!", and "Lord Herrek promised!"

This is a crucial crossroads for King's Landing. Lord Herrek is a fine tactician, but isn't as skilled in handling the common folk.

Sarah and others who might have taken control of the situation are out on a mission. The Spider Slayers are skilled fighters, but short on diplomacy. This means the heroes must stand up and quell the growing mob or King's Landing will suffer a serious blow.

Lord Herrek emerges from his camp with several men, each carrying the sacks the Spider Slayers brought in.

The Old Wolf quiets the crowd with his hands, then says "Line up, people. We'll give you what we got."

The first few line up and are given half an apple each. The fourth man in line, a troublemaker with severe moon skin by the name of Tawny Downs, holds up his apple and says "Look 'ere! I got a bonus! 'Alf a worm, as well!" Tawny then throws the apple at the soldiers and turns to the crowd.

"The Old Wolf promised us apples. These rotten things ain't fit for an orc! The Wolf told us we'd have food if we stayed together! He told us we'd be safe! I ain't got food, and I ain't feelin' safe, neither! An' I wonder why our good Lord Protector ain't got moon skin yet? Maybe it's 'cause he gets the pick o' the loot what comes in, eh?"

Maybe we oughtta just offer ourselves up to the spiders. Maybe we can make peace with 'em! Hell—Lord Herrek already did once!"

The Old Wolf's eyes grow wide at this. His skin turns red and his lips quiver. He reaches for his sword—then turns and storms off for his tent. Four of his soldiers remain—obviously unsure how to handle what could easily become a riot.

Tawny is unrelenting. He turns to the soldiers and screams "We want fruit!" he says. "We want fruit!" Some in the crowd begin to join him.

There's no particular course this encounter must follow, but if the heroes don't stop Downs, he eventually gets quite a riot going. At some point, he and his men rush the soldiers, take the apples, and smash them in protest (after pocketing a few for themselves). The heroes lose 1 Resistance Point.

If one of the player characters takes charge of the situation and make a few key Persuasion rolls, Tawny and his men are shunned and no Resistance Points are lost.

ADEN'S REQUEST

A short while after this near-disastrous incident, Lord Herrek demands Aden fulfill his promise quickly. The elven scribe tracks down the heroes and asks them to help. Assuming they do, he asks them to travel to a former estate in the foothills north of Kings Port—Oldham Farms. The farm once had a well-known citrus orchard, and the fruit would go a long way toward staving off moon skin and placating the dissenters of King's Landing.

Oldham Farms may be familiar to some. Anyone who makes a Common Knowledge roll at -4 knows it was an asylum before the war. Those with money were treated there in relative comfort. The criminally insane from Kings Port's jails were also sent there, but stayed in much less "civilized" conditions.

The estate sits midway up the eastern Dread Mountains in relative isolation in case any of the more deranged inmates ever broke free. It was self-supporting, and had a somewhat famous citrus grove in the manor's interior courtyard. It's very likely many of the oranges, lemons, and other fruits there are still good.

THE TREK

The trek through the tunnels to the wilderness is marked with green splotches, and takes nearly six hours. Eventually, the party emerges in a natural cave in the foothills north of town. From there they have been given a map that directs them north for another 10 miles into the western reaches of the Dread Mountains.

Their journey starts in the early morning unless the group alters this schedule of their own accord. This should put them at the asylum around 10PM at night.

Roll three times on the Wilderness Encounter Table (right) during this trip, or insert an encounter of your devising.

WILDERNESS ENCOUNTERS

2d6 Encounter

2 Master: The heroes are spotted by a Master. He gathers an appropriate-sized force to deal with the party within 1d4 hours.

3-5 Flying Brain: A flying brain detects the heroes. It trails the group and directs a Master and a suitable party of spiders to their spot within 1d10 hours.

6-8 No encounter.

9-10 Spiders/Chinook: A band of 3d6 spiders happens upon the heroes. If this is the last encounter chance of the day (meaning the heroes are near the mountains), the attack comes from a massive chinook instead.

12 Stomper: The heroes chance upon a massive stomper looking for things to step on. You can find their description on page 137.

OLDHAM FARMS

Oldham Farms rests on a clearing at the top of a long, winding trail about midway up the Dread Mountains. It's a large mansion surrounded by a tall wrought stone wall, most likely to keep roving bands of orcs away. The wall is intact in all but one spot where a stomper most likely smashed through.

The party won't see any activity from the outside, but there are quite a few residents within. Master Illithax has chosen the asylum as his lair. He has two dozen spiders and a single wither beast to serve him.

If the heroes enter through the mansion's front or back door, a Tracking roll detects numerous spider tracks in the grass. A raise on the roll reveals the tracks of a wither beast as well.

Dr. Oldham and his closest companions ran when they heard about the invasion, leaving the rest of the staff on their own. They died in these halls and bloodstains are evident everywhere. Master Illithax has had their withered husks (sucked dry by spiders) taken to the copse out back however, so no corpses are immediately apparent.

The Coach House: There were once two carriages here, but both were tethered up and raced away shortly after the invasion.

The Copse: Nearly thirty dried husks rot here, untouched by beasts. Some are staff and some are patients.

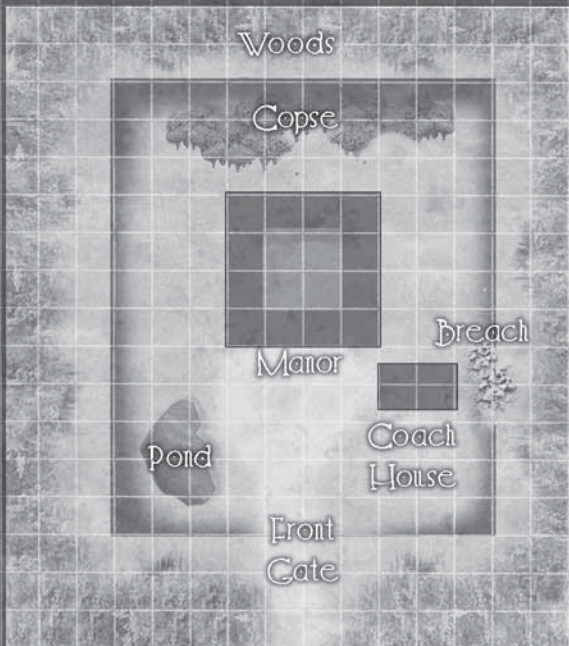
THE GHOSTS OF OLDHAM FARMS

The staff freed the asylum's "paying" guests, but the psychotic inmates below were too dangerous to release and left in their cells. A Master named Illithax attacked the asylum, wiped out the staff, and then finished off the unfortunates below with cruel experiments.

The ghosts of these homicidal maniacs now reside in the manor, but they are still "afraid" of the invaders and so leave Illithax and his dim-witted minions alone. The player characters are fair game, however.

When the heroes first set foot in the house, the ghosts watch them, occasionally leaving signs of their passing—bloody footprints, cold spots, fog on the glass on the inner arboretum, or whatever your own devious mind can come up with. If you really want to creep the heroes out, they might occasionally catch quick glimpses of the maniacs' reflections in the glass. A few of

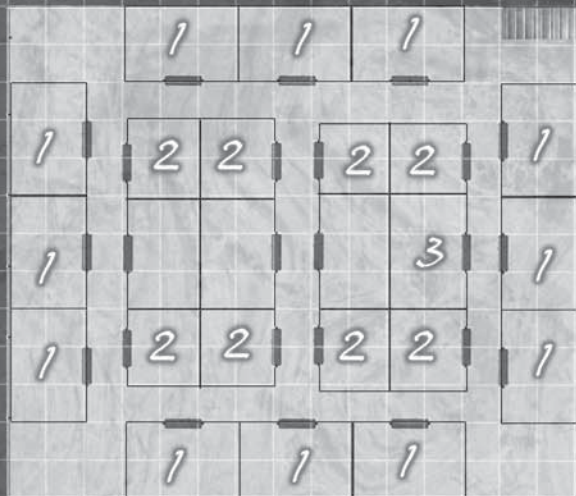
Grounds



30'

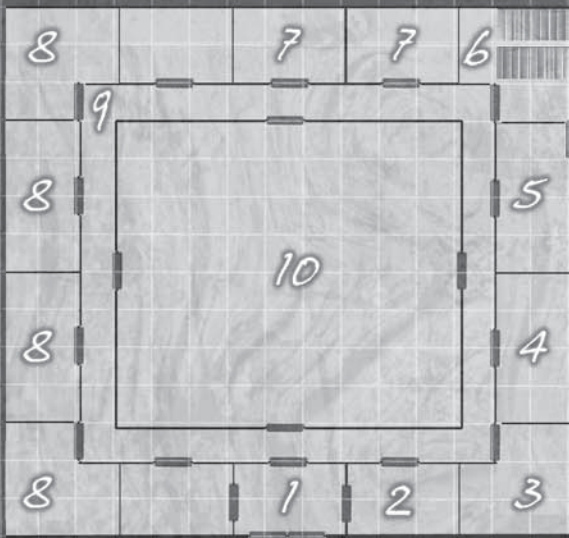
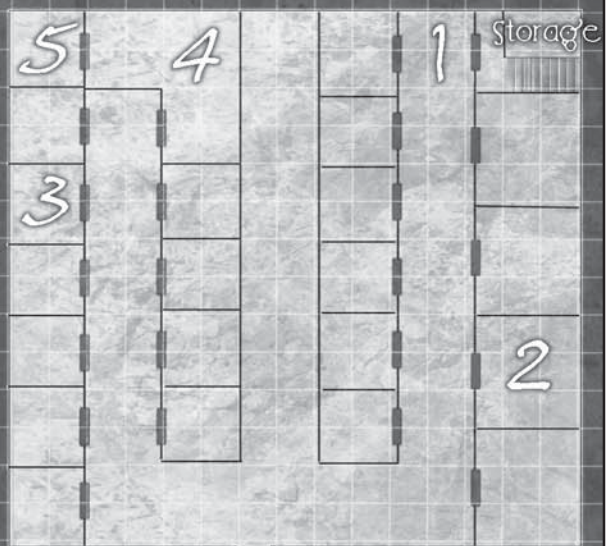
Oldham Farms

Second Floor



Basement

2"



First Floor

2"



2"

these sights are listed in the encounters, but you should insert a few of your own where appropriate. The ghosts have no real power other than minor illusions for now. When Illithax is defeated, however, the release of his massive psychic energy turns the ghosts to semisolid phantoms. The madmen attack and must be "slain" to be laid to rest. Their attack comes on page 105, but foreshadow the madmen's coming with a few creepy encounters until then.

GROUND FLOOR

1) Reception Area: The staff used to receive visitors here. The chairs are intact, though a few have been knocked over. A large pool of black blood has dried onto the white tiles. Oddly, several potted plants have been removed from their containers and tossed on the floor here. Their pots can be found in the Asylum level at area 2.

2) Dr. Oldham's Office: The director of the asylum treated his paying patients quite well. More psychotic inmates taken from Kings Port's jails were not so fortunate.

His office contains numerous texts on psychology, anatomy, and general medicine. He also has a large chinook skin, a fireplace, and a large map of Tarth. The chinook's eyes seem to follow the party wherever they move in the room. Files on the right-hand wall contain hundreds of notes and studies of his patients through the years.

It's obvious someone has carefully searched the room, but seems to have ignored the books. (Illithax cannot read the common language of Tarth).

3) Staff Offices: Dr. Oldham's interns, nurses, accountants, and other administrators worked in these rooms. Illithax has searched this area as well. A large blood stain beneath one of the desks hints that someone tried to hide here, but was detected. Just before the party enters, they hear a chair slide across the tiled floor, leaving marks in a sticky blood stain.

4) Mess: The staff took their meals at these long tables. The windows along the wall were broken in by the spiders during their attack. Some of the food looks edible, but bursts with maggots if touched (this is real, not a ghostly illusion).

5) Kitchen: Everything edible has been eaten by the spiders or rationed to the inmates below. A Notice roll detects lots of hooks for large pots and pans, but there is no sign of the utensils themselves.

6) Asylum Entrance: These doors are kept locked by Illithax. They are heavy doors meant to keep inmates in and troublemakers out. A Lockpick roll at -2 is required to pick the lock. Once inside, the party sees a couple of overturned guard's chairs, a few broken crossbow bolts, and huge bloodstains leading from the chairs down the dark stairwell.

7) Staff Quarters: Dr. Oldham's gardeners, cleaning staff, and other servants shared these rooms. They're quite nice, and have not been much disturbed. Blankets, a few suns, combs, clothes, and the like are all plentiful.

8) Guest Rooms: Family members were sometimes allowed to stay over at Oldham Farms to visit their relatives. These deluxe rooms feature elaborate beds, dressers, wash basins, and so on. Illithax has taken most of the more valuable or decorative accessories—silver candelabras and the like.

Only one room seems to have been occupied when the invaders struck. A trunk with a week's worth of clothes for a man and a woman are present, along with their personal items and a hidden stash of 334 suns (Notice roll at -2 to find). A human imprint remains in the bed sheets.

The trunk has a mirror in it as well. Anyone who looks in the mirror has a brief image of a maniac in an iron mask shivering with rage behind him, blood dripping from his pointed teeth. Those who see it must make a Guts check at -2.

9) Sunwalk: Dr. Oldham called this the "sunwalk." The interior wall of the manor is lined with windows from the waist to the ceiling, and allows one to look out on the courtyard. From within, one can see the arboretum is immensely overgrown with strange flora (see area 10).

As the heroes walk along its length, they see a spot of "fog" appear on the glass, as if someone on the other side were breathing on it. Moments later, a dozen more patches appear. This requires a Guts check.

10) Courtyard: Illithax specializes in manipulating flora. He brought quite a few specimens from the Sa Karan's adopted planet with him, and has successfully transplanted them here. The courtyard is his testing and seeding ground for his bizarre creations. Many of his fastest-growing inventions have already been seeded in the surrounding countryside to kill any wandering refugees who have somehow managed to escape detection.

A Common Knowledge roll instantly realizes the bizarre plants in the courtyard aren't quite right. A Notice roll also detects several citrus trees still struggling within.

As soon as the heroes begin to pick fruit, a tall, thick tree with no limbs shambles out of the growth. It shudders for a moment, then launches harpoons at its prey. The harpoon tree is intelligent, and hides in the thick vines and other growth until as many "prey items" as possible have entered the room. The corpses of several inmates are impaled about its base, the first "meals" the tree was fed by its creator.

HARPOON TREE

This tree is a very aggressive specimen. Illithax keeps it ravenous so that it stays hungry for rewards and creates seed pods as rapidly as possible. He uses the pods to seed the surrounding wilderness with more of the deadly flora.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d10(A), Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Climb d10, Fighting d10, Notice d8

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 15

Special Abilities

- **Armor (+4):** The harpoon tree has a 6" thick layer of wood and bark surrounding a core of viscous red blood. The armor can be bypassed by targeting an empty harpoon hole (-4).
- **Harpoons:** Though the harpoons seem like ranged attacks, the tree actually uses its Fighting with a Reach of 5. It can attack with 1d6+2 spears each round. A victim hit by a harpoon suffers Str+2 damage. If the attack hits with a raise, the victim is impaled as well. The vine can be cut with a damage roll of 6 (Parry of 2), but the barb itself is thick and jagged, so the only way to get free once impaled is to cut it off and pull it through the "exit" side. This causes an automatic wound, so a healer should be standing ready.
- **Size +3:** The harpoon tree is nearly 24' feet tall.

LOOT

There's a full backpack per hero of reasonably fresh fruit here. Each load takes about 30 minutes to pick.

UPPER FLOOR

The spiders have completely taken over this level. Nearly every room is coated in their excretions, forming brittle black walls dotted with green glowing veins of dried

slime. Spiders lair in each room, the exact number are noted on the map. If the party fails a single Stealth roll while moving about up here, the spiders in the nearest room attack. Assuming there are loud sounds of battle, the rest of the spiders spill out into the hallways (and ceilings!) over the next two rounds.

If the sleeping spiders can be killed in one shot in each room, they die without a sound and don't alert their neighbors.

1) Personal Quarters: These rooms were used by the staff. A few lived in a town a few miles south and commuted daily, but most lived right here on the farm.

Peeling away the chitin in every room reveals the obvious—blankets, pillows, grooming utensils, and so on, plus 1d10 x 10 suns in each room.

2) Patient's Quarters: Dr. Oldham kept his paying patients in this area, though their doors were locked tight at night.

The walls blocking off this portion of the floor were obviously added after the original building's construction for this very purpose.

3) "Master" Bedroom: This was Dr. Oldham's room, and it offers a grand view of the Valusian plain below.

Illithax has taken over, and the corpse of a recently-demised halfling lies chained at the foot of his bed. Masters do not create



homes of chitinous goo like their degenerate brothers, so the room seems strangely normal.

Many of Dr. Oldham's things have been sent to the recyclers in Kings Port, but quite a few remain carefully piled in a corner for Illithax's own study. A Smarts roll reveals the collected texts are heavy with pictures (because Illithax cannot read the common language). Some of Dr. Oldham's illustrated diaries are among them. They're interesting and grotesque, but not particularly important to this adventure. A few expensive niceties can also be recovered (1d6x50 suns at current market values).

THE ASYLUM

The lowest level of Oldham Manor once housed the criminally insane. Illithax scanned their minds after the manor fell and found them amusing but useless as slaves. He performed grotesque experiments on the unfortunate maniacs, turning their already psychotic minds even more mad.

Most of the patients lie in their rooms in various poses of their final insanity. Some lie in fetal positions, some have hanged themselves with bedsheets, one scratched his own eyes out, another tried to claw open the door with his fingernails, and so on.

Their rooms are made of stone and feature a single cot (missing in some), pillow and blankets, iron loops (for shackles), and a waste bucket. The doors are made of iron and feature a single barred window to let in some small light.

Torch sconces line the walls, but none are lit. A single torch (near the entrance to area 4) provides plenty of light for Master Illithax.

1) Entry: The door at the bottom of the stairwell is made of iron, but it has been smashed open.

2) Laboratory: Illithax prefers to do his work here. The walls between these cells have been knocked down to allow more room, but the doors remain intact.

Tables from upstairs have been placed along the eastern wall, and odd collections of pots, pans, and other containers house bizarre plants the heroes have never seen before.

The plants are of all shapes and sizes. Curious heroes see harpoon tree seedlings shiver and convulse as they sense prey, spiny round puffer plants spew choking gas if touched (Fatigue check at -2), and weird fungus sing and shriek if exposed to light.

A corpse has also been shackled to the wall here. It's covered in odd green buds, a host for some sort of parasitic plant.

3) Therapy Room: Dr. Oldham conducted his "conditioning" here. A table with a rack, pliers, and other torture implements rest on rolling trays. A pitiful victim is still bound to a chair where he was left in the staff's haste to leave. His fingers are smashed flat in cruel vices. The poor man died with his eyes wide open and his teeth gritted in pain.

4) Fear Chamber: Dr. Oldham tried to cure phobias by placing his patients in this large, glass tank in total darkness. There the patients' overactive imaginations could experience the terrors in their minds over and over until they became jaded to them.

That was the theory anyway.

Tragically, a patient was left in here when the staff was slaughtered. Illithax found the poor man but merely watched him tire and slip beneath the water, eventually drowning.

If the heroes open this door, they see a glass tank with a long-haired, male corpse chained within. Its bare skin is wrinkled and white. The chains are just above the tank on the left and right so that the patient could use them to help keep his head above water.

6) The Holes: Dr. Oldham used these horrid holes both as punishment and as "therapy" for those with claustrophobia. The holes are little more than a foot tall, two feet wide, and seven feet deep. "Patients" were placed in the holes for days at a time when they misbehaved.

One of them still bears a corpse, an unfortunate victim left to rot in darkness.

Illithax has heard the party and waits here in ambush. His wither beast stands against the far wall as a distraction, while he uses his telekinetic powers to "stand" above the doorway and quietly summons reinforcements from upstairs. He lets the first couple of heroes in, then shuts the door with telekinesis and attacks. The spiders attack from the rear the round after Illithax is discovered. Use the stats for Na'Theratix for Illithax (page 89). When Illithax is finally defeated, read the following to your players:

The Master hisses as he falls to the floor. You feel incredible waves of psychic energy wash over you as the angry thing dies.

Give the group a few moments, and then slip one of them a private note that reads "You hear the rattle of chains." Give the heroes about 10 seconds to react.

INMATES (8)

Illithax's death sparks the ghost of the inmates to unlife. They materialize as quasi-corporeal phantoms and attack every living thing they see.

The inmates are bloodthirsty maniacs who hate everything still drawing breath. Some wear straightjackets and attack with their teeth, others have meat cleavers and other improvised weapons.

When an inmate is "slain," its spirit is finally laid to rest and fades to the nether realms.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Climb d6, Guts d10, Fighting d8, Notice d4, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 8

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty

Gear: The phantoms have a variety of improvised weapons, meat cleavers, knives, clubs, chains, teeth, or claws. All cause Str+1 damage.

Special Abilities

- **Berserk:** The inmates are murderously insane. They add +2 to their Fighting and Strength rolls, as well as their Toughness, though their Parry is reduced by 2.
- **Ethereal:** Ghosts are immaterial and can only be harmed by magical weapons and attacks. These particular phantoms can certainly effect the physical world, however.
- **Fear -2:** Ghosts cause Guts checks at -2 when they let themselves be seen.
- **Fearless:** The inmates do not know fear when attacking, but suffer from it constantly between these episodes.



OUT OF THE FRYING PAN

Though finding the fruit is extremely important, an even greater opportunity awaits the heroes as they make their way home. Read the following as the heroes walk out of the manor (whether through the front gates or the hole in the wall).

You're tired and beaten, but also a bit exhilarated. You've not only defeated a Master, but a horde of restless spirits as well. Even better, you've got a fresh load of fruit for the good people of King's Landing.

You limp out of the manor with your treasure, quietly congratulating each other on a battle well-fought, and reminding each other that it's still a long way home through spider-infested lands.

You reach the hole in the manor wall and grimace. Your trip may be shorter than you thought. Over a hundred orcs stand around the exit, crossbows ready and swords drawn.

Your group needs to go with the orcs to unlock a crucial part of the plot, but you don't have to beat them over the head with the inevitable. There are actually three ways you can get the result you want without forcing the issue.

THE HARD WAY

The first way is to let the fools fight it out. If they do, the orcs are destined to win—there are 125 orc warriors, five chiefs, eighteen dire wolves, six ogres, and seven shamans. Even if the group tries to run back toward the mansion and hole up there, there's just no way they'll stop a horde this size.

Fortunately, the orcs aren't interested in killing the heroes. Those who outright die in battle can't be saved, but the shamans heal up anyone who goes down but doesn't die right away (after binding them, of course).

THE EASY WAY

The second way is to let the heroes try to talk their way out of it. The leader of this large band is Grokk, the son of the orc "king," Kargan the Red.

Grokk is looking for the "pinkskin army." Many of his peers violently disagreed, but Grokk persuaded his father, Kargan, to look for "pinkskin" survivors and forge an alliance to defeat the spiders.

Just like in the old days. In Tarrian's time.

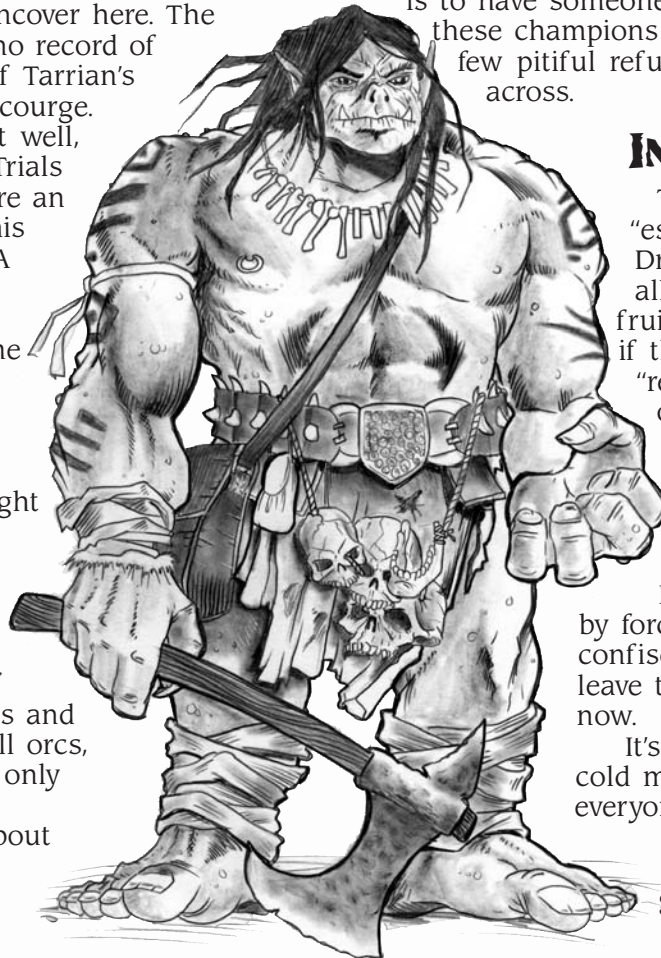
Kargan agreed, but only if the pinkskins' champions could repeat the amazing trial that took place two thousand years ago.

"Me Grokk. Me speak pinkskin. Grokk looking for pinkskin army. Maybe pinkskins hiding from spiders like orcses.

Grokk father am Kargan. King of all orcses. Kargan said pinkskins can join orcses' attack on spiders if pinkskin champions pass Three Trials of Red Woman.

There's an important but subtle piece of history to uncover here. The sages of Tarth have no record of the orcs being part of Tarrian's alliance during the Scourge. The orcs remember it well, however. The Three Trials of the Red Woman are an important ritual to this day in their culture. A warrior must pass these tests himself before he may become the clan's new king (which happens only when the old king dies).

This revelation might go right past your heroes unless you prod them a bit. You might simply mention that none of them are aware of any link between orcs and Tarrian. Grokk, like all orcs, believes humans not only know about the old alliance, but know about the Trials of the Red Woman as well. If asked, here's his reply:



"You not know about Red Woman? What they teach you in pinkskin tribes?

Red Woman was brave pinkskin warrior. Long time ago, she and orcs fight spiders. Red Woman say weak human minds taken over by spider wizards, but not orcses. Orcses too strong for spider wizards. So we help fight.

Orcses and pinkskins find spider's nest. Kill them all. Many orcses die. Many pinkskins die. All spiders die.

But now spiders and spider wizards back. How this happen?

The heroes don't know at this point, of course. When they say so, Grokk merely shrugs.

Either way, he finishes the "conversation" with "Pinkskins must come with Grokk now." If they purport to speak for the pinkskin army, they're taken as guests. If they aren't willing to accompany Grokk, the orcs will submit them to the trials by force. Grokk knows his only chance to form an alliance is to have someone survive the trials, and these champions look more fit than the few pitiful refugees they've come across.

INTO THE HILLS

The heroes are now "escorted" high into the Dread Mountains. They're allowed to keep their fruit, armor, and weapons if they came as "representatives." The orcs don't want Master Illithax's corpse brought along though, if the heroes happen to be lugging it around as well.

If the group was taken by force, their weapons are confiscated, but the orcs leave their armor on them for now.

It's a long walk into the cold mountains. Have everyone make Fatigue rolls, and subtract 2 of they aren't wearing winter gear.

SCENE FIVE TRIALS OF THE RED WOMAN

The orcs have gathered in a massive cavern in the Dreads. Thousands of the green-skinned creatures are there, along with hundreds of ogres and even a couple of frost lords.

Read the following as the heroes enter the cave.

Before you is a massive cavern, well-lit by a dozen or so fires. You see literally thousands of orcs, as well as ogres and even a couple of frost lords!

The smell is somewhat overwhelming, but there's real hope here as well. If the orcs are truly immune to the Masters' ability to control minds, they would make powerful allies for the eventual counterattack.

If you can survive these mysterious trials.

Grokk escorts his guests/captives through the smelly throng to the tent of Kargan the Red, a massive orc with more battle scars than one could count. Kargan doesn't speak the common tongue, but Grokk communicates for him, and "volunteers" the heroes for the trials.

Kargan looks over the heroes carefully, inspecting their muscles and looking deep into their eyes. Finally, he nods his approval and addresses the crowds.

Most heroes can't make out the crude grunts of the orcs, but Kargan basically tells the crowd that the pinkskins are here to attempt the Three Trials of Red Woman. He doesn't necessarily believe they'll survive them, but it will at least provide the assembled clans some decent entertainment.

PREPARATION

The heroes cannot wear any armor during the fight, nor may they use their own weapons. They are given three healing

potions beforehand though, and can use these as they see fit. The orcs leave the heroes in nothing but their underclothes. They even take rings and the like. Personal magic—such as that of wizards and Sun Priests—is allowed, however. You might want to remind them that they have three trials to survive however, so it would be wise to save some Power Points for the later tests.

The combats that are about to take place occur within a flat circle of the cave, ringed by orcs, ogres, and the like, so no map is provided. If any of the heroes attempt to leave the circle, they are disqualified.

There's a small loophole here that weaker characters might exploit, though the orcs don't think to point it out because such an act does not occur to them. Only one hero needs to survive the trials. It doesn't matter if the others quit or die—they're simply seen as "servants" to those who happen to survive all three tests.

TRIAL THE FIRST

The first test is fairly simple, and designed more to soften the heroes up for the later test rather than kill them. A number of dire wolves equal to the heroes are released into the circle and must be defeated.

DIRE WOLVES (1 PER HERO)

The wolves don't play fair—they fight in pairs instead of spreading out as expected.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Guts d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities

- **Bite:** Str+2.
- **Go for the Throat:** Wolves instinctively go for an opponent's soft spots. With a raise on its attack roll, it hits the target's most weakly-armored location.
- **Fleet-Footed:** Dire wolves roll d10s instead of d6s when running.

TRIAL THE SECOND

The next trial is much more difficult, but the heroes are given a spiked club (Str+2) each this time. The clubs are quite large and unwieldy, however. They cause Str+2 damage, but have a minimum Strength of d8.

Their foe this time are a pair of very large, very surly chinooks. (Add a third chinook if your party has more than six members.)

CHINOOK (2)

The chinooks attack the closest foe.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d8, Strength d12+4, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d10, Notice d8, Swim d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 12

Special Abilities

- **Bear Hug:** Chinooks don't actually "hug" their victims, but they do attempt to use their weight to pin their prey and rend it with their claws and teeth. A chinook that hits with a raise has pinned his foe. The opponent may only attempt to escape the "hug" on his action, which requires a raise on an opposed Strength roll.
- **Claws:** Str+3.
- **Size +4:** These creatures can stand up to 15 tall and weigh over 10,000 pounds.

TRIAL THE THIRD

The final trial is to prove the heroes are able to fight the spiders in their native element—the dark. Grokk gives them all their gear, then douses all light in the cavern. He then instructs the combatants not to make light or they will automatically lose the final trial.

The orcs can see with infravision, so they can watch the fight just fine. So can the ogres, which they release on the heroes. Don't tell the heroes what they're fighting, just tell them they hear heavy footsteps stomping toward them in the darkness.

OGRE (1 PER 2 HEROES)

The ogres attack the closest foes.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d12+3, Vigor d12

Skills: Guts d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d4, Throwing d6

Pace: 7; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 12

Gear: Thick hides (+1), massive club (Str+3)

Special Abilities

- **Infravision:** Ogres halve penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets.
- **Size +3:** Most ogres are over 8' tall with potbellies and massive arms and legs.
- **Improved Sweep:** May attack all adjacent foes.

VICTORIOUS!

Assuming at least one of the heroes finishes the three tests, Kargan himself leads a rousing cheer! Orcs have no love of pinkskins, but they admire such courage and skill when they see it.

When the cheering is over, Kargan instructs his shamans to come forward and heal the warriors. They rid the champions of all wounds, but can do nothing about crippling injuries or death (they don't know *greater healing*). Kargan then brings the group a most valuable prize—one white blood stone each! The things don't work on the orcs, but Kargan knows their power, and grants them as prizes to these brave warriors.



Kargan then takes an old amulet from one of many about his neck and gives it to the hero who seemed to fight the best. Grokk explains its purpose for his father.

Kargan's amulet is an old, red stone carved into a radiant sun. It is chipped and worn, but intact. Grokk places it on your neck.

"Long ago, pinkskins and orcses fight spiders. Red Woman gave this to Kargan's father's father. She said this make orcses and pinkskins friends for great battle.

Another orc approaches with a large raven in a cage. Grokk hands it to you.

"Put stone on bird, let bird fly. Not in cave though. Bird fly back to Grokk with stone and orcs attack human city. One you call Kings Port. It take us 10 hours to get from mountains to city. If we have red stone, orcs not attack pinkskins. Only spiders."

Grokk pauses for a moment. "One more thing. Attack must come before five sunrises or orcses attack anyway."

Grokk smiles. "Kargan not patient."

Kargan is insistent on attacking the city. His mind cannot be changed on this point regardless of the heroes' plans. The orcs won't attack the spike either—they've tried and the frost lord's couldn't make a dent in it.

In case we haven't been clear, the orcs are going to attack the spiders in King's Port in five days, or sooner if the heroes send them Tarrian's amulet.

HOME

With that, Kargan sets the heroes free, and even returns their fruit. Grokk guides them out of the mountains, and from there they are able to work their way back toward the Warrens. Don't hit them with any more encounters on the way home—they've earned a break.

RESISTANCE POINTS

This is the big payoff. The heroes gain one Resistance Points just for surviving the three trials. They gain an additional point if and when they send Tarrian's amulet to the orcs, and two if they manage to get Lord Herrek's attack to coincide with the orc's assault (see Act V for just how that all comes together).

SCENE SIX

THE RED RAVAGER

A day after the heroes return with fresh fruit from Oldham Farms, Aden comes to them with another request.

"Lord Herrek once again sends his thanks. We've begun to formulate a plan, but we have need of a few special items. Are you ready for another assignment?"

Excellent. Have you ever heard of a fish called a 'gulper?' It's a large creature, with four tentacles. They live in the open ocean, but often come into the Lower Tunnels to feed on mating firefish. The flesh of the fish itself is poisonous, but the eyes can be mixed into powerful potions that allow one to see in the dark just like elves and dwarves! We'll need that for our human allies when we attack the Masters, for the world above has grown quite dark.

If you feel capable of completing this task, you'll need a small amount of firefish musk. I have some here in this vial. Pour it in one of the deep pools that open to the sea. Gulpers look for schools of mating firefish, and should be attracted to the musk within a few hours.

Beware, for they have tentacles they use to grasp their prey, which they then stuff into their massive mouths. If one of you should happen to get swallowed, it will begin to crush you with its stomach muscles. You'll also begin to drown. I'm told that if your mates can kill it and cut you out, the survival rate is quite good. Nearly one in four.

If you manage to slay the fish, cut out its eyes, pack them in brine, and bring them back here to me. We'll pay you 300 suns per eye. Or you can keep them for yourself if you need them for the counterattack when it comes. Either way, it helps the community."

RETURN TO THE LOWER SEA TUNNELS

As before, the party can follow the blue marks into the Lower Sea Tunnels. The journey takes about three hours, and then the group must make three total Notice rolls to find a pool appropriate for catching a gulper. Each attempt takes about an hour of exploration.

During their wandering, the heroes happen upon a gruesome scene. A party of adventurers, two dwarves, an elf, and a female warrior—the Grimfang Band—lie dead in the passageway. A long bloody trail leads to a nearby pool. A Tracking roll finds the still-wet footprints of two sea trolls leading to the hole. It should be obvious from the tracks that only two trolls were present, and they would not have been powerful enough to take down the Grimfangs.

Investigation of the bodies reveals they've been dead a few hours. They've been slashed to pieces—not stabbed, clawed, or bitten as might be expected if they'd been killed by trolls. The wet sea troll tracks must be less than 15 minutes old, however, or they would have dried by now.

The truth is that a pair of sea trolls happened upon the latest victims of the Red Ravager and have already dragged two of them away to share with their tribe.

The sea trolls have already looted the bodies of weapons, jewelry, and trinkets—in fact one of the heroes' fingers has been bitten off to take a ring. The elf still wears leather armor, and the two dwarves wear chain mail. The lady warrior's plate has been taken as well. The fallen heroes' money is still there however—sea trolls have no use for currency. A careful search of their pouches reveals 2d6 x 10 suns per corpse. One of the dwarves also has a pistol and 6 shots in his dead hands (another item of little use to the sea trolls).

If the group waits for at least 10 minutes, the two trolls who found the bodies return. There's no way to communicate with the brutes, however, and no information to be gained as they just happened on the scene.

THE RAVAGER APPROACHES

This works best if it happens just as the party surprises the returning sea trolls. Just as the pair realize they've been discovered, a strange sound, like metal on stone, echoes

down the corridor. The trolls panic and do everything in their power to escape. They know the Red Ravager approaches.

THE RED RAVAGER

The Red Ravager was once the hero known as Spyke, one of the famous Seven. He has been driven mad by the Masters, implanted with a cerapede, and set loose in the tunnels to kill any sentient beings who cross his deadly path.

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d8+2 (for Berserk), Vigor d8

Skills: Climb d10, Fighting d12+2 (for Berserk), Notice d10, Shooting d8, Taunt d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8

Hindrances: – (he's an insane killing machine)

Edges: Ambidextrous, Combat Reflexes, Improved Block, Whirlwind

Gear: Spyke's Claws (see below); Armor of the Red Ravager (see below)

Special Abilities

- **Berserk:** Spyke is in a permanent state of berserker rage due to his mental illness. He adds +2 to his Fighting and Strength rolls, as well as his Toughness, but subtracts 2 from his Parry.
- **Relic (Armor of the Red Ravager):** This red suit of leather grants its wearer +3 Toughness. It's coated in sticky blood, however, and must be washed before it can be worn.
- **Relic (Spyke's Claws):** These claws cause Str+1d10 damage.

When Spyke is slain, the cerapede burrows out of his neck and dies. If the thief is merely rendered unconscious, the thing remains—forcing him to attack again when he regains consciousness (there's no way to talk to Spyke).

If he is unmasked, anyone who makes a Common Knowledge roll at -2 recognizes the handsome half-elf as Spyke—one of the famous Seven.

THE RAVAGER'S LAIR

Clever players may realize the Red Ravager's lair must be close for him to have returned so quickly. They are correct. Anyone who makes a Tracking roll at -2 is able to follow a trail of blood through a few hundred yards of twisting caverns to a tall, vertical chute. Getting up the five-foot wide, 70-foot tall chute requires three Climbing rolls. At the top is a small ledge covered in dried blood

where he (rarely) sleeps. Anyone with a light source can make out mad scrawls all over the walls here. The number "7" is everywhere. Crude drawings of thousands of spiders surround them.

THE GULPER

Fortunately, the pool near where the Grimfang's perished is perfect for a gulper. Assuming they use the vial given to them by Aden, a gulper comes along in 1d4 hours. There's also a 1 in 6 chance a party of 2d6 sea trolls and one leader happens by each hour!

When the gulper finally shows up, read the following.

You wait for hours, watching the pond rock rhythmically with the tides. Eventually, a wave washes into the pond and splashes quietly on the bank. Another follows, then another, then another. Now the quiet ripples are high enough that they lap out of the pool and lick at your feet.

You snap out of your malaise instantly. Something big has entered the pool.

If any of the heroes are visible, the fish notices the prey and attacks. Those on Hold can attempt to interrupt its action and attack, retreat, cast spells, and so on.

GULPER

This creature is hungry and won't retreat until it has prey in its gaping maw.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d12+3, Vigor d12

Skills: Guts d8, Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d6

Pace: —; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 12

Special Abilities

- **Aquatic:** Pace 6
- **Bite:** Once inside its massive gut, a victim is helpless and suffers 2d4 damage per round.
- **Size +6:** Gulpers are the size of whales.
- **Tentacles:** Four sticky, 8" long tentacles extend from the gulper's mouth. A character who is hit is tangled in the tentacle. With a raise, his arms are trapped as well (meaning he cannot free himself—someone must help him). The creature stuffs entangled prey in its mouth on its following action. Each tentacle has a Parry of 4, and can be severed with a damage roll of 8 or higher by a cutting weapon.

RESISTANCE POINTS

If the heroes tell the people they have defeated the Red Ravager, they gain a Resistance Point. If they reveal his true identity as one of the famous Seven, the people are demoralized and the group loses a Resistance Point.

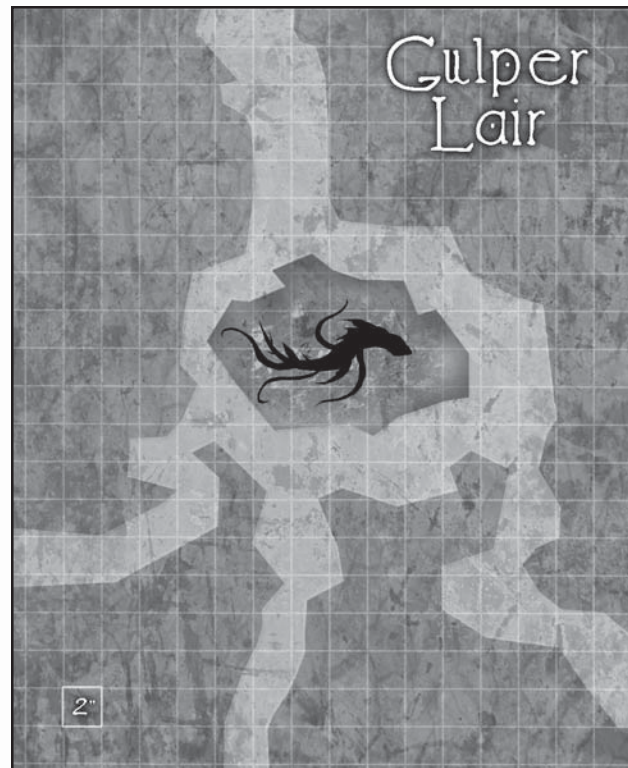
The heroes gain another point if they return with the gulper's eyes.

THE DEATH OF HEROES

When Herrek hears about the Grimfangs, he gets the player characters to lead a group of his soldiers back to their bodies. The fallen champions are then brought back to King's Landing and given a proper send-off.

The funeral starts with a recounting of their deeds by those who knew them. After that, their bodies are set on makeshift rafts (made of wood—quite valuable given the current state of the world) and set alight. The rafts are then sent down the Druskan until the light of their fire passes into darkness.

Use this to set the mood, but repeat it should any of the player characters fall. The other players should then step up and eulogize their fallen comrade for the crowd. This is a great way to help ease a player's pain when he's lost his favorite character.



**SCENE SEVEN
THE INFERNO**

Lord Herrek, fearful that King's Landing might be discovered, has moved up his attack schedule. To do so he requires more gunpowder. Aden the Scribe is tasked with making the arrangements.

"Greetings again, friends. I know you haven't had much rest lately, but things are moving faster than we'd hoped. We need gunpowder from the dwarves. They won't sell to Lord Herrek or any large caravans they think are allied with the Old Wolf—only to small groups like yourselves. The King's Men had a sort of—falling out—with the dwarves a while back about when and how to attack the invaders.

If you will undertake this mission, we will give you golden suns with which to buy black powder and bring it back here. If you can negotiate a cheaper rate, you may keep whatever sum is left over. Try to bring back a full bag of shot and powder each. That's 100 shots. It should cost you 500 suns."

If the party agrees, Eden vanishes for a bit then returns with a pouch of 500 golden suns for each. This amount normally buys 100 shots with powder at Drugall's (where a character may purchase as many shots as he can afford).

When this is settled, Aden gives the heroes directions to the Inferno, the home of Drugall's dwarves.

"The trail to the Inferno is marked in red. It should take you about six hours to reach the Inferno. This is one of the more traveled corridors, so you'll likely meet some of the other smaller clans along the way. Beware though, for Garon's Raiders frequent this trail as well."

THE WORMLEY FAMILY

An hour after the heroes set off for the Inferno, have everyone make Notice rolls. The highest-rolling character hears a distant rumbling. It could be a cave-in, or possibly even gunshots (the latter is true). If they continue onward, they hear odd sizzling sounds. Mages in the group instantly recognize the sound of *bolt* and *blast* spells. As they press on, another Notice roll detects the sounds coming from a small side-passage off the main trail. If the group decides to take this detour, they arrive just as a small skirmish ends between a number of Hunters and two-dozen unarmored humans. Read the following as the group happens upon the scene:

You quietly turn the corner and gasp at the scene before you. A number of men in chainmail lie blasted to pieces in the middle of a wide passage covered with stalagmites. All around them are a dozen or so people with jet black hair, pale skin, and purple pants, shirts, dresses, or robes with yellow stars.

Somewhere in the rear, you see a mad woman with a meat cleaver finishing off the wounded. The rest of the purple-clad people eagerly pull boots and other possessions from the dead.

"Hurry up, boys," says a tall, blood-spattered boy with long, greasy hair. We got dozens o' grown mouths to feed. Get ta cuttin'."

Anyone who makes a Common Knowledge (automatic for mages of Mizridoor) recognizes these individuals as the enigmatic Wormley Family. For some strange reason, every member of their bloodline is a naturally gifted wizard.

The sane ones study at Mizridoor, but most are "home schooled." Rumor is the family maintains its magely might by inbreeding, but few have the guts to question the ill-tempered clan.

Jacob Wormley is the first to speak to the heroes if they let themselves be spotted. He's the eldest brother of the clan, and it was his turn to pull guard duty in their "ambush" chamber. He's surrounded by five brothers and two sisters, all powerful mages.

Jacob issues a "Who are y'all?" to the expedition, then starts moving both hands in small circles to hit them with a *blast* if he doesn't like their answer.

Jacob knows the Hunters are working for the Masters. If he thinks the heroes are in league with the invaders as well, he orders an attack. This isn't what you want, however, so try to walk a fine line between keeping things tense and starting a real fight.

A HIGH PRICE

The heroes know they're looking for allies, so it's likely they'll try and convince the Wormleys to join their cause. Jacob is skeptical, and talks openly about Herrek already being controlled by the spiders once.

The trick to getting the Wormleys to join the cause is to question the family's magical powers. Anyone who hints the Wormleys might not be so powerful after all gets a single chance to make a Persuasion roll. If successful, he offers the following deal.

"Okay. I reckon them things'll just come down here after they're through with y'all anyway. But here's what I want. When this is all over, I wanna be the Headmaster of Mizridoor."

If the heroes consent (perhaps later after they've consulted with Lord Herrek, who hesitantly agrees), the Wormleys are in and add +1 to the group's Resistance total.

THE WORMLEYS

The Wormleys are quite a bit alike in their statistics and spell-casting abilities, but quite different in their various lunacies. Feel free to make up different creepy and fantastic traits or habits for each of the dozen or so family members present here. Another dozen relatives can be found deeper in the caves beyond this entrance.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Guts d12, Intimidation d10, Knowledge (Arcana) d10, Notice d8, Spellcasting d10, Stealth d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Delusions (various), Ugly, Vengeful
Edges: Arcane Background (Wizard), New Powers, Power Points, Wizard

Spells: Bolt, any four other spells, a few know Pawn of Mizridoor as well; **Power Points:** 20

Gear: Hand weapons (Str+1)

Special Abilities

- **Wormley Blood:** The Wormleys are somewhat insane, but their pure bloodline adds +2 to all their Spellcasting rolls.

THE INFERNO

Read the following when the heroes eventually reach the Inferno.

You've felt the heat grow for the last few minutes. Now your sensitive eyes can just make out shifting patterns of light ahead.

You venture forward, turn a corner, and find yourself standing in a chamber dotted with pools of glowing, bubbling magma!

Across the chamber, on a natural ledge before a much larger cavern, is a low barrier of hewn stone. Behind it are a number of steel helmets and protruding muskets. Surely, this must be the Inferno.

The entrance to Drugall's domain lies up a carved staircase to the right. Ten gunners (mostly dwarves, but at least one is a half-orc) cover the party's approach. They don't ask for weapons—they simply let their guests know they're being watched.

The dwarf in command of the guard is a former City Watchman named Strongem Throak. "Greetings," he says gruffly. "State your business." As long as the characters let Strongem know they're here to spend money,



he asks to see their gold (or wares if they're selling) and lets them in. Most any other reason is declined. They've no need for gossip, proposed alliances, or other excuses.

Atop the stairs, Strongem looks the group over one last time, grunts, then passes them on to a dwarven trader named Esom Perth. The dwarf is a natural salesman with a cheerful personality, though he's a bit troubled right because a recent disaster has befallen their community (see below).

"What can I help you with? We've got powder, of course, and a few guns for sale. We also purchase goods if you're looking to part with some of what you're carrying."

If any sort of transaction is proposed, Perth states the company line—powder and shot are now 50 suns for 5 shots, and no one may buy more than 50 shots at a time. When Perth is asked why the sudden increase, he scowls:

"Sorry. The boss is in a bad mood. I can't do nothin' without Drugall's say-so, and he ain't here right now."

If Perth is pressed and someone makes a Persuasion roll, he says:

"Sorry friends. Things are a little tense right now. Drugall's niece, Darla, has been kidnapped. Only one of his family left. Twelve hours or so ago. No one knows exactly how long. Looks like it was one of Garon's men. A dwarf." Perth spits.

"Smuggled her out in a bag of powder. I'm tellin' you this 'cause you look like honest folks, and word's likely to get out anyway. Maybe you can find her. I'm sure the boss'd make it worth your while if you did."

Unfortunately, no one has any idea where Garon's Raiders hole up. The few who have been caught live in their own lairs and are gathered by messengers when they're needed.

If the heroes don't get this information from Esom Perth, you need to stage an encounter in the tunnels on their way back home. A party of six heavily-armed dwarves are out looking for Darla and question the heroes to make sure they're not part of Garon's thieves. They are satisfied quickly if there is a Sun Priest or Red Knight in the

bunch. Otherwise, they make take some convincing (at least a successful Persuasion roll). They impart the information, and add that a number of Drugall's friends are out here risking their lives for him. It's quite obvious Drugall is well-respected by his followers.

CATCHING THE RAIDERS

It's up to the heroes to figure out a plan and save the day. There's no set way for them to find Garon's Raiders, so they'll have to come up with something on their own.

Perhaps the best way to catch Garon's Raiders is to simply travel back and forth between King's Landing and the Inferno with valuables. It won't take long—maybe 1d4 trips—before the bandits attack.

The bandits usually attack from dark spots overlooking the main paths. The first few throw powder bombs while the rest wait with crossbows to see if anyone continues to resist. The bandits travel in packs of about 10.

BANDITS

The bandits work for themselves, and are far more interested in easy loot than getting themselves killed.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6 (d8 for Reg), Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Greedy, Mean

Edges: —

Gear: Leather armor (+1), short sword (Str+2), crossbow (Range: 15/30/60; Damage: 2d6; AP: 2; One action to reload), knife, 2d10 gold suns.

Unfortunately, Garon's henchman don't actually know where the big boss lairs. If successfully threatened (a raise on an Intimidation roll), one of the thief's reveals the following:

"Look 'ere, mate. We don't 'ave no contact with Garon. He jus' sends his man around. Don't even know his name. We call him Gray Coat. He comes and takes 'alf of anything we..find. Sometimes he comes to fetch us and we get together with others to take on really big targets."

"None of us know where Garon hissself stays though. He knows one of us'd rat him out for the reward if we did."

One likely way to proceed is to accompany the thieves back to their own small lair and wait for "Gray Coat." The thieves have a set of code words worked out to see if it's safe though, so the group must play this very carefully.

If this is the plan, the bandit's lair is a simple small cave just a few hundred yards off the main route between King's Landing and the Inferno. When Gray Coat approaches (actually a half-elf named Ferak), he first calls out "Are there spiders about?" The correct reply is "More than a few, friend." If this reply is given, the gray coat approaches. Otherwise he retreats, then sends another group of raiders to come check on (and punish) the bandits a few hours later.

Ferak can be caught by giving the proper reply or simply chasing him down as he tries to retreat. The latter is quite difficult as Ferak knows the nooks and crannies of this area much better than his pursuers. For dramatic purposes, however, let him get caught but have the pursuers make a few Agility rolls first to run him down.

FINDING GARON

Cracking Ferak is a little tougher than the other thieves. He knows goody two-shoes (like Red Knights and Sun Priests) won't torture him, and appeals to them if they're present even if someone else does the actual "questioning." Rougher types might have a little more success with this rough customer. Exactly what happens is up to the temperament of your group, but the interrogator must present a real threat or appeal and get at least a raise on an opposed Intimidation roll.

When Ferak finally cracks, he says:

"Aw'right, aw'right! Stop! You want Garon, you got 'im. Bastard ain't paid me my due anyhow. They's an ol' ship down in the Lower Tunnels. The Gray Coarser. Garon's in there. Good luck fishin' 'im out."

Of course the heroes need Ferak or someone to lead them to the ship. Smart heroes probably realize there are codes and alarms to approach the ship. If they force these procedures from Ferak, and threaten him bodily should he leave anything out, he tells them everything. If he thinks he can warn Garon and save his own skin, he "forgets" a few details and leads the party into danger.



GARON'S RAIDERS

Garon keeps only a small contingent of his most trusted lieutenants in his lair, the wreck of the *Gray Coarser*. The wreck looks uninhabitable—and it is—but the wreck hides a perfectly dry and safe cave behind it.

Approaching the *Gray Coarser* is easier than it looks thanks to a sandbar sitting a few feet beneath the dark water. Anyone who knows the way—or takes their time feeling it out—can cross to the ship in only about two feet of water.

A fragile tripwire runs under the water in front of the entrance. The string runs under the water and into Garon's cave, where it's attached to a small pile of cans. When tripped, the cans make only enough noise to alert Garon—not those who tripped the alarm.

1) The *Gray Coarser*: The ship is on its side and against the wall, the victim of a strong wave that once swept into this former pirate's cave. There's little inside except a few skeletons (placed there to scare away intruders) and creaky, rotten floorboards.

Anyone moving through the hulk must make two Stealth rolls at -2 to avoid alerting Garon and his band within.

The entrance to the cave is hidden by a large piece of tattered sail hanging down through the smashed deck above.

2) Spikes: Garon is a paranoid thief. He keeps sharpened coral sticks buried in the sand here. Anyone who moves through the area and doesn't know to keep to the right-hand wall has a 50% chance of stepping on a stick. Those who do must make a Vigor roll or fall to the floor paralyzed for 2d10 minutes.

3) Stores: Most of Garon's ill-gotten gains are kept here. This includes perishables, fresh water, clothing, and so on. The really good stuff is in the back (area 5).

4) Lieutenant's Barracks: This is where Garon's mates sleep. There are four beds here of comfortable furs and blankets. Each also has a locked chest with the bandit's personal treasure inside (2d6x100 suns worth of jewelry and other items).

5) Garon's Cave: This is where the master thief himself lairs—and currently Delilah as well. He has an actual bed covered with fine quilts, a tall mirror, and three chests of various loot worth 3d6x100 suns each. His magic items are on his person except for a suit of full plate mail which none of the bandits cares to wear.

Drugall also has a hand-drawn map of the tombs nailed to his wall. One of the tombs is labeled "Valador." If asked, the bandits say they had been exploring the catacombs for plunder when they came across this strange vault. The door was open, though designed to look as if it were sealed. No treasure was found within.

Darla Helsingold, Drugall's young niece, is usually shackled to the bed here, though she's likely unchained for use as a hostage if the thieves are alerted.

A large dresser and hutch on the back wall can also be used to block Drugall's room off for a last stand as well.

Armor +2: Anyone wearing this magical plate mail adds +5 to his Toughness.

DEALING WITH THE PIRATES

Most likely, the heroes alert the bandits one way or another. If so, Garon tasks his lieutenants with defending him while he brings Darla forward as a hostage.

SAM BONES

Sam is a dwarven musketeer. He's the one who snuck into the Inferno and made off with Darla—in a sack full of gunpowder! He stands back and fires his musket. If the group moves back to Drugall's room, he fires through the back of the dresser.

Sam prides himself on his marksmanship and always shoots for the head.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d6

Charisma: -4; **Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9

Hindrances: Greedy, Mean, Slow

Edges: Low Light Vision, Improved Arcane Resistance, Marksman, Musketeer

Gear: Chain shirt (+3), musket (Range: 10/20/40; Damage: 2d8), bayonet (Str+2).

Special Abilities

- **Relic (Chain mail +1):** Sam's chain mail is enchanted and offers a total of +3 protection instead of the usual +2.
- **Relic (Musket of Speed):** Sam's musket is magically enchanted for quick reloading. It can be reloaded in one round, or can be fired every round if the user has the Musketeer Edge.

DELILAH

Lilah is a black-hearted witch if there ever was one. She's a tall, beautiful half-elf with raven-black hair and pale skin. She's Garon's frequent paramour, though the two are lovers more to keep tabs on each other than for love.

Delilah's tactic is to use *barrier* to constantly seal characters in as they push forward, exposing them to Tuck's axe and Sam's shots.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d12, Shooting d10, Spellcasting d12, Stealth d6

Charisma: +3; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Greedy, Mean, Vengeful

Edges: Arcane Background (Wizard), Attractive, Low Light Vision, New Powers, Power Points

Spells: *Barrier (stone), blast, detect/conceal arcana, fear, wave runner, zombie;* **Power**

Points: 25 (counting her Power Stone)

Gear: Bracelets of Defense (Toughness +2), 75 suns, dagger (Str+1)

Special Abilities

- **Relic (Power Stone):** Lilah wears a necklace with a small ruby. It contains 10 Power Points which she can draw from as if they were her own. It recharges 1 point every 8 hours.
- **Relic (Ring of Beauty):** Delilah is already beautiful, but this ring enhances her beauty even more, and adds +2 to her Charisma (already figured in above).

TUCK THE RED

This massive half-orc is Garon's brutal enforcer. He's the one who brings lesser thieves in line and ensures Garon rules all the lesser gangs that hide in the Warrens.

Tuck moves forward to block the narrow chokepoints in the passageway (such as between areas 2 and 3). This should make it impossible for attackers to gang up on him.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d12, Guts d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d10

Charisma: -5; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 11

Hindrances: Greedy, Infravision, Mean, Loyal, Outsider, Ugly

Edges: Block, Brawny, Combat Reflexes, First Strike, Improved Sweep, Mighty Blow, Nerves of Steel

Gear: Chain shirt (+2), great axe (Str+4; AP: 1; Parry -1), 4x throwing axes (Range: 3/6/12; Damage: Str+2)

FERAK

Ferak won't likely take part in the battle, but if he does, his stats are below. He's more of a negotiator than a warrior, but he's still more than capable of sticking a knife in a careless guard's back if given half a chance.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d10, Persuasion d10, Shooting d6, Stealth d10, Taunt d10

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Greedy

Edges: Alertness, Charismatic, Danger Sense, Investigator

Gear: Ferak normally wears only an old gray cloak (magical), and carries a dagger and a pistol with 6 shots.

Special Abilities

- **Relic (Cloak of Skullduggery):** The cloak adds +2 to the wearer's Stealth rolls. In addition, ranged attacks against the hero suffer a -2 penalty.

GARON

Garon was once a member of a secret thieves' guild in Kings Port. He wasn't the leader—that fellow actually offered his services to the king in the City's last hours. Garon thought this was ridiculous, and

stabbed the fool in the back before he could make off with some of the guild's best treasures—which Garon now wears.

In a fight, Garon first fires his pistols, then moves out of sight to reload. The cowardly thief moves to use Darlon as a shield if the heroes get past Lilah's *barrier* and into the cave. While held in front of Garon as cover, attacks against him suffer a -4 modifier. Attacks that miss by 4 points or less automatically hit Darla (as do any natural rolls of 1 on the attack die as usual).

Garon saves his ring of invisibility as a last resort should he have to flee.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Streetwise d12, Taunt d10

Charisma: -1; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Greedy, Mean

Edges: Alertness, Thief

Gear: Sword of Parrying (Str+3), two pistols (Range: 5/10/20; Damage: 2d8), knife (Str+1).

Special Abilities

- **Relic (Coward's Blade):** +4 to hit and damage when attacking with surprise.
- **Relic (Leather Armor):** Garon's light armor weighs 10 pounds and adds +2 to Toughness.
- **Relic (Ring of Invisibility):** The ring acts as the *invisibility* power. It is automatically "cast" with a raise (-6 to hit the wearer), and has 10 integral Power Points (the wearer may only use the ring's Power Points—not his own).
- **Relic (Ring of Protection):** +1 to Toughness.
- **Relic (Sword of Parrying):** This short sword adds +1 to its user's Parry, and causes Str+3 damage.

AFTERMATH

If Drugall's niece is saved and returned to the Inferno, the dwarf's help in the coming fight is guaranteed.

If she was slain, the heroes must convince Drugall they did their best and didn't needlessly endanger the girl's life just to win his favor. This requires a retelling of the tale and Persuasion roll at -4.

Drugall doesn't promise anything specific right now, but he appears again later (see page 122) and fulfills an important part of the story to come.

RESISTANCE POINTS

The heroes gain 2 Resistance Points if Garon's band is defeated. Herrek pays a 5000 sun bounty as well.

SCENE EIGHT

THE VERMIN LORD

Garon's map points to a location in the Catacombs. The heroes have been to the Upper Tunnels before, so navigation to the crypt isn't a problem.

When the heroes finally arrive, they find the crypt's heavy door is mysteriously open! Close inspection reveals the bolts on the cave-side of the metal strip have been sheered away (long ago—by Sa Karan spies). The lock is also permanently jammed.

Inside, the tomb of Valador contains a single stone sarcophagus. The seal has been broken so the lid can easily be slid aside. When it is, a rush of a dozen or so rats swarm out!

RATS IN THE WALLS

At least one of the rats is killed in the rush—let a player do it if he wants, otherwise it just happens as someone jumps aside and accidentally lands on one of the rodents.

As the pest lies twitching, a few more rats begin to gather in the corners of the room from holes along the walls. They chitter excitedly, stand up on two legs, and sniff the air. More come. A few minutes after the first rat is slain, hundreds of rats have gathered.

There is no doubt something strange is happening. First a few rats showed up—perhaps just hungry for the meat of the first one you killed. But then more came. Dozens, then hundreds. Now there may well be a thousand of the chittering vermin. But they do not approach.

Something is happening. The rats directly across from you part, as if something were moving through them, yet you see nothing. The rats shriek suddenly and surge forth, just as a gout of brilliant orange flame streaks from somewhere behind them!

The Vermin Lord entered the room invisibly and watched those who killed his precious companions with hate-filled eyes. When his swarms are in place, he opens the attack with a *cone of flame*.

Use the map of Tragor's tomb from page 97 for this fight.

DARK SECRETS

The Vermin Lord is none other than Tyvek the Mage, one of the famous Seven. He and his companions fell in battle with the Masters before the invasion. Most were killed, but a few were captured and put to use by the cruel Sa Karans.

Tyvek's mind revealed a fear of rats, an explosive and irrational temper, and a fascination with fire. The Masters performed unspeakable acts on the wounded mage, placed a cerepede on his neck, and turned him loose. Ironically, Tyvek became the master of that which he detests most—rats.

Now Tyvek prowls the crypts and slays anyone he comes across. He has a psychic link to any rat within a hundred yards. When one is slain, he and his swarms quickly rush forward to punish the "murderers."



THE VERMIN LORD

The Vermin Lord wears ragged bandages around his face and hands, and wears a swarming coat of rats.

He has an odd relationship with the rats. The cerepede in his brain tells him he is the lord of all vermin, but what's left of his atrophied human mind still fears and reviles them. He sends his swarms to attack his foes, but simultaneously blasts away with his powerful fire spells—"accidentally" killing his own subjects in the process.

Tyvek begins the attack invisible (spending 3 of his Power Points to do so). He then casts *obscure* to cast the area into total darkness.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d12, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climb d12, Fighting d6, Notice d12, Spellcasting d12+2

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7
Hindrances: Bad Eyes (one eye), Phobia (Rats), Pyromaniac

Edges: Expert (Spellcasting), Master (Spellcasting—Wild Die is a d10), New Powers, Power Points, Soul Drain

Gear: Robe of rats (Tyvek wears a robe of swarming vermin that offer +2 protection).

Anyone in close combat with the Vermin Lord suffers 2d4 damage every round as the rats strike out at everyone around them.

Special Abilities

- **Ultravision:** Tyvek can see in total darkness.
- **Spells:** Tyvek can still cast *blast* (a fireball), *cone of flame*, *invisibility*, *obscure*, *shape change* (rat only—Cost 3), and *telekinesis*. He has 50 Power Points. He knew many more before his brain was cut on by the Masters.

RAT SWARMS (1 PER 2 HEROES)

The Vermin Lord's swarms cause 2d6 damage when their lord is present.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d12, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d6

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities

- **Bite:** Every target within the swarm suffers 2d4 damage each round.
- **Swarm:** The swarm is the size of a Medium Burst Template. Characters can attack each round by stomping, causing his damage in Strength with a successful hit. Cutting and piercing weapons cause no damage to the overall swarm.

LOOT

If the Vermin Lord is slain, he collapses in a heap and his cerapede eats a bloody hole out of his neck. His coat of rats disperses on his death, revealing a natty purple robe of Mizridoor beneath. An inspection of his face reveals that his right eye is missing. It is an old wound, and cleanly healed.

If the bandages on his head are peeled away, the heroes may make Common Knowledge rolls at -2 to recognize him as Tyvek the Mage. Mages of Mizridoor may add +2 to their rolls.

Tyvek's many magical items have been taken by the Masters, but his addled mind caused him to wander to the ruins of Mizridoor. There he found a relic he recognized instantly—a knight from the great chess board of Mizridoor.

If the spell *Pawn of Mizridoor* is cast upon it, the knight becomes a guardian with the following statistics:

KNIGHT OF MIZRIDOOR

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6

Pace: 5; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11

Gear: Long sword (Str+3), stone skin (+4)

Special Abilities

- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; no additional damage from called shots; piercing attacks do half-damage; constructs do not suffer from disease or poison.
- **Fearless:** The pawns are immune to fear.

RESISTANCE POINTS

If the heroes tell the people they have defeated the Vermin Lord, they gain a Resistance Points. As with the Red Ravager, if they reveal his true identity, they lose one. The people of King's Landing are not thrilled to learn that their world's greatest heroes have been turned into monsters.



SCENE NINE REVELATIONS

Once the Vermin Lord is defeated, the party can return to searching Valador's sarcophagus. A Notice roll reveals scuff marks on the floor below. Pushing the heavy block aside requires at least a few heroes (combined Strength of 15), but no roll is required. Once aside, a dark hole drops down into darkness. There are no stairs or other methods of climbing—this hole was made by the Sa Karans, and they can climb walls.

The drop to the ground below is over 100 feet (33" or 2d6+15 damage), and ends in a pile of jagged stones. From there, the tunnel leads on into the very past of TARTH itself.

1) ENTRANCE

You slide down the rope into darkness. Gradually, you see you are in a large cavern covered in rubble and stone from an ancient cave-in. As you descend, you can just make out a massive statue at the far end of the chamber. From the debris along either side, it looks like there were once eight of these gargantuan sculptures—four along each wall. The others have fallen and crumbled to large chunks of black stone now, but the last seems mostly intact.

Something glows at the feet of the statue—a blood stone! These are Sa Karan ruins!

When the group gets closer to the last remaining statue, they can make out its features in the pale red light.

The statue is a grotesque figure with a long snout, bloated belly, and cloven hoofs. There can be no doubt that this is one of the Masters. But the statue is obviously ancient, and is fitted with a Sa Karan glow stone. But that would mean...

Let the players figure this one out for themselves. This is their proof that the Masters were the Sa Karans, and were here long before the invasion. Hopefully, this comes as a shocking revelation. The first player who says this out loud gets a benny.

In addition to the statues, there are ancient pieces of carapace (spiders), and numerous bones scattered amid the rubble. These are the ancient skeletons of Tarrian warriors.

2) THE KING IS DEAD. LONG LIVE THE KING.

As the heroes move about the chamber, they see a startling sight. There's a fairly fresh body here. It is untouched by spiders, but a single, small hole in the chest marks the work of a Master. The figure wears tailored clothes—the kind one normally wears under armor. Anyone who inspects the body notices a few other important things as well.

The corpse is that of a handsome and powerful man with golden hair. His eyes are open, and stare maddeningly at the ceiling above.

You move closer and note pieces of leather and two buckles beside him—it seems his armor was removed by someone or something with more strength than patience.

The remains of a torch lie beside him, as does a ripped satchel of red velvet—now empty. Several documents lie about, many bearing the royal seal of Valusia. Written on the back in blood—are the words: "Save my daughter and the kingdom is yours."

This is the corpse of King Crassus Kaden of Valusia. The satchel has been ripped open and looted, but many royal documents (unimportant now) and a map showing the route to the tomb of Valador lies nearby.

The king and his daughter came here with several other heroes hoping to find the Seven. They ran into a group of Sa Karan warriors guarding the portal instead. The king was slain, but Princess Rayna was taken as a captive by a perceptive guard who realized the pair's importance. The King could not know where they would take her, of course, but he watched them drag her away as he lay dying. (The party discovers Princess Rayna's fate in Area 5.)



The offer is legitimate. Whoever rescues Princess Rayna will become the rightful ruler of Valusia—assuming there's anything left to save.

3) LAST STAND

There was once a four-way junction here, but the paths left and right are blocked by old cave-ins. As you move ahead, you see a gruesome sight. An elf, a dwarf, and a half-orc lie dead in the passageway. They wear only undergarments, and their skin is withered and wrinkled—obvious victims of the Masters.

This is where the Masters sprang their ambush on the Seven several months ago. Five of the creatures attacked from here, while five more—who had hidden on the ceiling of area 1—attacked from the rear.

The Masters riddled their trapped prey with psychic blasts, mortally wounding these three. They were devoured a short time later when the rest of the Seven had been defeated.

The three heroes are Wygand the half-orc, Urich the dwarf, and Sarrian the elf. Their corpses are shriveled and hard to recognize, but anyone who looks carefully finds a

mundane necklace around the neck of the half-orc. Scraping off the dried blood reveals the words “To Wygand, my noble savage. Katrina.”

Hopefully, the players will remember the ballad of the Seven and realize who this is. If not, allow them Common Knowledge rolls to recognize Wygand's name.

4) ANOTHER TRUTH REVEALED

Ahead of you is a strange purple glow. It seems to come from an alcove to your left.

You edge around the corner and see an iron portcullis blocking a medium-sized room. Not a speck of debris has fallen in this room, but more amazing than that is the massive violet disc at the rear of the chamber.

The disc is upright and pulses with odd energy.

This is the portal the Masters use to travel from this world to their planet of exile. They have used it since their banishment nearly two thousand years ago, creeping up into the hollow spaces of the world above to read minds, scout out the land for their imminent invasion, and even to quash the memory of their very existence.

Only the Masters themselves can use the portal—not even their minions have the proper psionic abilities to transport themselves.

The portcullis is locked firmly in place—the catches are beneath the floor itself where they can only be released with telekinesis, making it impossible to open for all but Sa Karans. The bars themselves can be forcibly removed by determined adventurers with proper tools and 2d20 man-hours of work, however.

Once through, the portal can be destroyed. It has a Toughness of 20, so it is likely only an explosive can destroy it. Characters can usually break anything given time, but the portal is a magical relic and requires a bit more effort. It uses the rules for breaking things—meaning whatever is used against it must be capable of doing more than 20 points of damage without acing on the damage roll. A large amount of gunpowder might do the trick.

5) THE BIRTHING CHAMBER

The old ruins have one last startling revelation.

The room before you was obviously once vast, but it has suffered greatly from whatever cave-in rocked this place long ago. Huge piles of rubble cover jumbled masses of old machinery and scattered bones. Here and there you can also make out what look like scores of man-sized black eggs.

In the center of the room, jutting up from the chaos below, is a black pillar capped with a brilliant white glow stone.

You gaze upon it when...

This is the big “reveal.” The stone atop the pillar is the Teaching Stone. It collects the racial memories of Sa Karans and, before this place was destroyed, broadcast them to the developing seed pods below. True Sa Karans were born with complete and total knowledge of their racial history—spiders retain only the selfishness and hatred of their fathers.

The problem is that the heroes’ minds are not capable of properly decoding the signals the Teaching Stone gives out. Instead, they’re hit with a jumble of images that make little sense. Each character is able to grasp a few memories, however, and collectively, these offer a complete picture of Tarth’s past.

Mix up all of the props labeled “The Learning Stone” and hand them out to your players. The players may only read their props to themselves—not aloud. If they want to share their memories they must retell them in their own words. The point here is to simulate a bunch of scattered memories and allow your players to piece them together. Give them plenty of time to do so. The more they figure out, the more involved in the story they’ll be.

Be strict about the no-reading bit though. Make the players retell their memories in character—in their heroes’ own words. You might even take away each prop after it’s been read.

GUARDIANS

The Sa Karans have not left their ancient lair unguarded. Five assassins and three spinners hide in the dark shadows of the Birthing Chamber. The assassins watch the heroes for a bit, then creep into attack positions while the party experiences the memories of the Teaching Stone. Make sure to let the heroes finish discussing their memories first so that the full extent of the plot is revealed. When it seems they’re finally settled, the Sa Karans attack.

One of the assassins descends from the high pillar, the rest close in on the party from the wall behind them. The Sa Karans simultaneously awaken three spinners they’ve brought down to guard the ruins.

If the Sa Karans seem to be losing, one of them might attempt to escape via the portal. It takes the creature one round to open the portcullis, and another to slip in and activate the device. Both efforts count as actions, so the assassin can’t use his attack powers while so engaged, making him quite vulnerable.

If a Sa Karan escapes, the heroes lose two Resistance Points as the forces in the City are alerted that something is going on. More importantly, the assassin returns with 10 more of its brothers in 2d10 minutes, so the heroes had best make their escape quickly.



SA KARAN ASSASSIN

Sa Karan assassins are stealthy killers. They make use of their telekinetic wall-crawling abilities to sneak up behind their foes and strike with surprise (usually with “the drop”).

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8
Skills: Climb d8, Guts d8, Fighting d10, Notice d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d12

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 10 (with staff);
Toughness: 10

Edges: Improved Block, Combat Reflexes, Improved Frenzy, Quick

Gear: Assassin's Armor (+2), Ebon blade (Str+6; Parry +1; or Range 5/10/20; Damage: 2d6; RoF: 1; uses no Power Points)

Special Abilities

- **Great Leap:** Assassins can leap 2d10" in a straight line with their incredibly strong legs. They gain +2 damage with a successful strike if they leap more than 10" to attack. Characters who take free attacks on them as they exit melee do so at -2.
- **Wall Crawling:** Assassins can scale any surface using minor telekinetic powers at their full Pace. This requires no casting roll or Power Points.

SPINNERS

The spinners drop from above then move to make best use of their Sweep ability.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12
Skills: Climb d4, Fighting d10, Notice d8
Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 12

Special Abilities

- **Armor +4:** Carapace.
- **Claws:** Str+4, AP 2.
- **Empathic:** Spinners "see" by projecting mind waves (for inanimate objects) and reading minds (for prey). This lets them "see" their foes even in pitch darkness.
- **Improved Sweep:** Spinners may attack all adjacent foes at no penalty by spinning in place. This makes a loud "clack-clack-clack" sound as their legs strike the stony ground in disturbing rhythm.
- **Level-Headed:** Spinners draw two cards and act on the highest.

A WORTHY PRIZE

When the last spinner is put down, it reels back and crashes against the central pillar holding up the teaching stone. The entire structure shudders then falls backward into the rubble pile. A Notice roll sees the glint of metal lying beneath amid the newly disturbed stones. Whoever investigates finds



an amazing discovery. An ancient breastplate with the image of the sun painted on it lies amid the debris. Within are ancient bones, now mostly dust. A little more digging reveals an old blade as well. This the breastplate and sword of none other than Tarrian, the first Red Knight.

Tarrian's Breastplate: This ancient armor provides +4 protection, or +6 to a Red Knight or Sun Priest. It also adds +2 to attempts to resist mental attacks, such as the Masters' *puppet* power.

Tarrian's Sword: The weapon grants Str+6 damage. In the hands of a Red Knight or Sun Priest, a single Power Point and a successful Shooting roll also projects a brilliant bolt of sunlight that causes 2d10 damage. Its range for this powerful attack is 24/48/96.

RESISTANCE POINTS

If a Sa Karan escapes, the heroes lose two Resistance Points as the forces in the City are alerted that something is going on.

Returning with Tarrian's sword and armor grants 2 Resistance Points.

ACT V

RAGE

The heroes are taken straight to Lord Herrek's tent upon their return to King's Landing. The Old Wolf, Aden the scribe, and Sarah the Sun Priest are all present, and gasp in awe at the sword and breastplate of Tarrian. That and the discovery of King Kaden's fate are taken as a sign that it's time to act.

Lord Herrek tells his men to ready themselves. "It's time," he says. "We'd best send your bird on to the orcs."

The heroes can let one of Herrek's runners do this for them, or they can do it themselves. The shortest route to the surface is about two hours, so it's best to let someone else do it, but in the end it's not really important as long as it's done.

Once that's settled, Herrek goes out to inform the common folk that it's time to fight. Unfortunately, the Old Wolf is not particularly diplomatic, and the party's aid is once again required.

Lord Herrek exits his tent and calls for the people of King's Landing to gather round.

"Now is the time to strike, good people. We move at the morrow's first light. Gather your weapons and make yourselves ready!" Lord Herrek moves back to his tent, but the common folk simply stare dumbfounded at the news.

A minute later, one of the people (Tawney Downs if he's still around) steps forward and says "We ain't no heroes. We can barely gather fish and fungus without gettin' ourselves killed."

The crowd agrees. They never thought *they'd* be attacking the spiders. They thought they'd just be working for the "heroes" who would make the final assault.

This is a critical moment, for without the common folk, the attack is almost certainly doomed. The people of Tarth have relied for too long on the sacrifices of the few. It's time for everyone to do their duty and realize the high price that must sometimes be paid for freedom.

It's time for one of the player characters to step up and make a grand speech, one that inspires the people to gather up whatever arms they have and fight back.

Make the player roleplay this one out. Inflict a 1 to 2 point penalty to his eventual Persuasion roll (see below) if his moment on the soapbox is less than enthusiastic. Give him a one or two point bonus for a really rousing speech that emphasizes the fact that *every* man and woman must be a hero.

Add +2 to the roll if the hero shows the sword and breastplate of Tarrian to the dubious crowd.

In the end, the character must make a single Persuasion roll at -4. With a success, about half the people will fight and the group gets one Resistance Point. With a raise, the entire population vows to do what they can and adds two Resistance Points.

Failure is fairly disastrous—the heroes actually *lose* four Resistance Points, both for the lack of actual bodies and the terrible effect it has on the morale of Lord Herrek's warriors.

A SURPRISE VISITOR

A few hours after the scene above, read the following:

You're sharpening your sword, adjusting your armor, or simply resting when you hear excited noises coming from the river-end of camp. You rise and see a bright light approaching—torches by the look of them. Someone in the crowd says "It's the dwarves!"

You move forward and indeed see Drugall himself leading a group of fifty or more dwarven warriors into King's Landing. Drugall sees you and motions you over. "Take me to the Old Wolf," he says. "We've got a plan."

DRUGALL'S PLAN

Read this next section carefully, because you may need to alter some details to make it fit the history of your particular campaign.

Herrek summons the Red Knights and Sun Priests, your group, the Golem Smashers, and the Spider Slayers to his tent to hear Drugall's proposal. The dwarf nods to the assembled crowd and cuts right to the chase.

"I know you're probably surprised to see he here, but my friends in your camp said you're about to attack. We're all for it, but we're afraid any gains you make in the city ruins will be lost when the spike belches out a wave of new spiders, stompers, and other horrors.

So we've been working on a little surprise. We've tunneled all the way to the spike."

Drugall smiles. Evidently, he expects you to be impressed at this great feat of engineering.

"We're ready to blast a hole in the side of the thing, enter it, and then detonate enough powder to destroy it. That'll keep the monsters from reinforcing the city when we attack, and maybe take out their leaders—if they have such things.

There's one major problem. It'll take my men a while to find the spike's weak spots and place the explosive. That means someone has to keep the spiders off their backs while they do their work. I've got ten volunteers who'll carry the powder, but we want an escort from King's Landing. Someone we can trust."

Drugall looks directly at you, then continues.

"The rest of my dwarves will serve under me in the assault on the city. We're armed to the teeth and ready to fight, but our guns are better where we've got room to shoot and reload instead of cramped up in the spike."

Lord Herrek swallows his pride and nods grimly. It's a good plan. Then he looks to you.

Drugall insists on having the player characters escort his dwarven demolitionists, and Herrek is in full agreement. They know the spike is going to be a tough nut to crack and they want their best fighters inside to make sure the mission is accomplished.

The heroes must leave immediately to get to the spike in time. The assault on the City will be waiting just below the earth until they feel the tremor from the spike's destruction. When they do, they'll attack—hopefully about the time the orcs arrive.

DWARVEN DEMOLITIONISTS

The dwarf in charge of the demolitionists is Esom Perth, who they met when they first approached the Inferno.

Each one has a hand axe, chainmail, and a keg of powder strapped to his back. The latter makes them heavily encumbered, reducing their Pace to 4 and inflicting a -1 penalty to all their actions.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Knowledge (Demolitions) d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 5; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

Gear: Chainmail armor (+2), axe (Str+2), powder keg (2d6+18 damage in a 15" radius).

Special Abilities

- **Low Light Vision:** Dwarves ignore penalties for all but pitch dark conditions.

THE TUNNEL

Esom leads them to the tunnel and off into the darkness. It takes nearly two hours to reach the spike, leaving the heroes just about an hour to get the spike destroyed before the orcs are set to arrive at the walls of King's Port. This isn't a strict timetable, of course, but every additional 15 minutes the group delays lowers their Resistance Points by one as the waiting orcs are attacked by the Sa Karan minions in the field.

DEFENDING THE DWARVES

Esom and the rest of the dwarves accompanying the heroes defend themselves if necessary, but try not to get involved. One stray spark or wrong move and not only will the entire group die, but Tarth itself might be doomed.

The heroes' real goal for the first few fights isn't just to kill the invaders, it's to keep them away from the dwarves and their powder kegs.

Anytime a dwarf must fight for himself, roll a d20 and shake your head ominously. The powder won't explode—we don't want the story to end with a random die roll—but don't let your players know this. Keep them nervous so that they'll protect the dwarves.

BREECH

The tunnel eventually ends at a "raw" spot in the left-hand side where a wall of black metal peers through.

Perth pulls out a weird "chain" of powder bags, forms a circle about 3' wide in diameter, then patches over the bags with clay and metal plates. This creates a shaped charge he hopes will blow a "door" into the spike. The rest of the dwarves scurry back about twenty yards while he gets this ready. Perth tells the heroes to do the same, but be ready to charge through if it works.

Fortunately, Perth's skills are without flaw. The charges go off as designed and the "door" requires only a push from a determined hero to get it open.

TERRACE

The door opens into the side of a massive nesting chamber. The first thing the heroes notice is the thick, heavy soot. Every 10 minutes they spend inside, the heroes must make a Fatigue roll. Anyone who thinks to put a wet cloth across his face can add +1 to this roll.

1) Birthing Chamber: From the bottom of the terrace to the very top are black,

chitinous seed pods. Several are cracked open and empty, and a few malformed spiders droop from a few more.

About 100 of these are new Sa Karans, their genes protected by a "secret ingredient" (see area 1 in the Upper Reaches). The heroes aren't likely to know this however, as there is no obvious difference from the outside of the seed pods except for a number of thin, dark tubes leading into them.

As soon as the hole in the side of the chamber is blown, a host of almost-hatched spiders burst from their seedpods and race to attack.

Above the floor, nesting in the pipes and cables, are a dozen more spiders with odd blue shells. This is an experimental new "batch" created by one of the scientists. They come racing down the walls and attack from the rear the round after the fight with the regular spiders begins.

SPIDERS (5 PER HERO)

The spiders attack the closest prey. They are newly hatched and a bit disoriented, and so start the fight Fatigued.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climb d12, Guts d8, Fighting d6, Notice d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Improved Frenzy

Gear: None

Special Abilities

- **Armor (+2):** Spiders are encased in hard carapace.
- **Four Arms:** The spiders' four arms give them the Improved Frenzy Edge, and add +1 to their Parry.
- **Great Leap:** Spiders can leap 2d10" in a straight line with their incredibly strong legs. They gain +2 damage with a successful strike if they leap more than 10" to attack. Characters who take free attacks on them as they exit melee do so at -2.
- **Wall Crawling:** Spiders can scale any surface using minor telekinetic powers at their full Pace. This requires no casting roll or Power Points.

SA KARAN SPIDERS, BLUE (12)

These creatures remain hidden until the fight starts in the control room, then attack from behind.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Climb d12, Guts d8, Fighting d8, Notice d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9

Edges: Combat Reflexes

Gear: None

Special Abilities

- **Armor (+3):** Spiders are encased in hard carapace.
- **Four Arms:** The Spiders four arms give them the Improved Frenzy Edge, and add +1 to their Parry.
- **Great Leap:** Spiders can leap 2d10" in a straight line with their incredibly strong legs. They gain +2 damage with a successful strike if they leap more than 10" to attack. Characters who take free attacks on them as they exit melee do so at -2.
- **Wall Crawling:** Spiders can scale any surface using minor telekinetic powers at their full Pace. This requires no casting roll or Power Points.

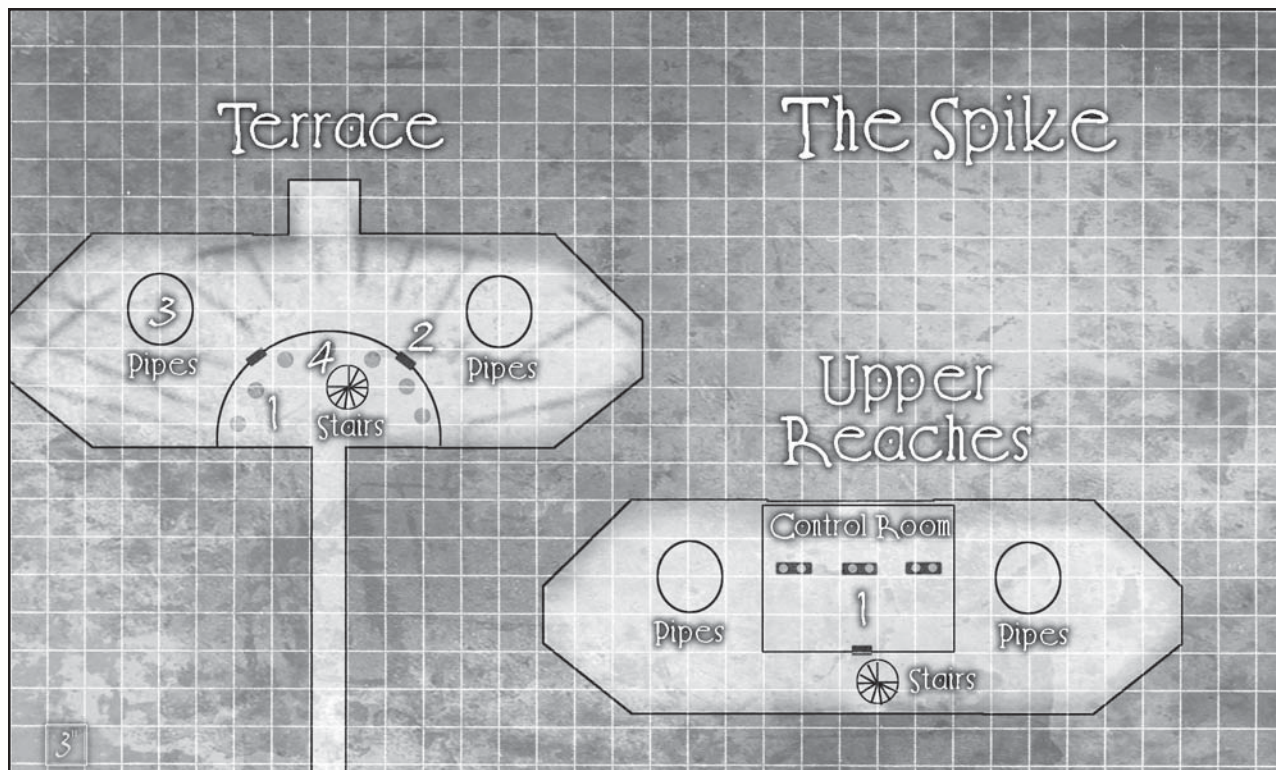
2) Breeding Chambers: Two large doors lead into the space beneath the terrace. The doors have crystal keypads and can't be opened without the proper codes. Behind the doors is a large space where wither beasts, stompers, and other creatures were "frozen" in thick goo for the landing. After the spike hit, the goo melted (some can be seen dripping out from under the doors) and freed the Masters' minions. The Sa Karans now breed more of these creatures in this space, and use super-serums to hurry their growth

along in just a few weeks. The first crop of replacements have already moved on. Should the heroes somehow get inside, they find two Sa Karan breeders (Masters) and hundreds of seed pods of various sizes growing everything from half-formed wither beasts to stompers.

3) Smokestacks: Left and right are massive pipes that lead to the landfill outside. The incinerators pipe smoke and fumes up through the spike and into the atmosphere, blocking Solace from the sky and gradually killing the God of Light and Life.

As the heroes survey the scene, the dwarves frown. If asked, they say that even their massive load of powder won't make a dent in this place. Allow any dwarves or characters with a mechanical background to make a Common Knowledge roll at -2. If the roll is made, the character recognizes the purpose of the long pipes leading up into the ceiling. (If the heroes fail this roll, Esom Perth suggests it instead.) If these could be closed at the top somehow, they'd build up with steam and smoke and explode—leveling the spike. Whoever thinks of this must go higher to know for sure.

4) Staircase: A spiral staircase with a pole in the center leads into the upper reaches of the spike. Looking up, the heroes



can see crisscrossed gantries, tubes spewing steam and soot, and various machineries of alien origin.

The staircase ascends nearly 150 feet up (15 stories!), so climbing it takes some time and at least one Fatigue roll.

UPPER REACHES

The left and right wings of the upper reaches of the spike are filled with strange machinery beyond the ken of Tarth's current generation. Lurking within the darkest shadows of these smog-belching devices are a squad of assassins, assigned to protect the scientists within the spike's control room.

SA KARAN ASSASSINS (5)

The assassins attack the most powerful-looking heroes. They might eventually focus on the dwarves and their powder kegs if it feels dramatically appropriate. Don't let them kill more than five, however.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Climb d8, Guts d8, Fighting d10, Notice d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d12

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 10 (with staff);

Toughness: 10

Edges: Improved Block, Combat Reflexes, Improved Frenzy, Quick

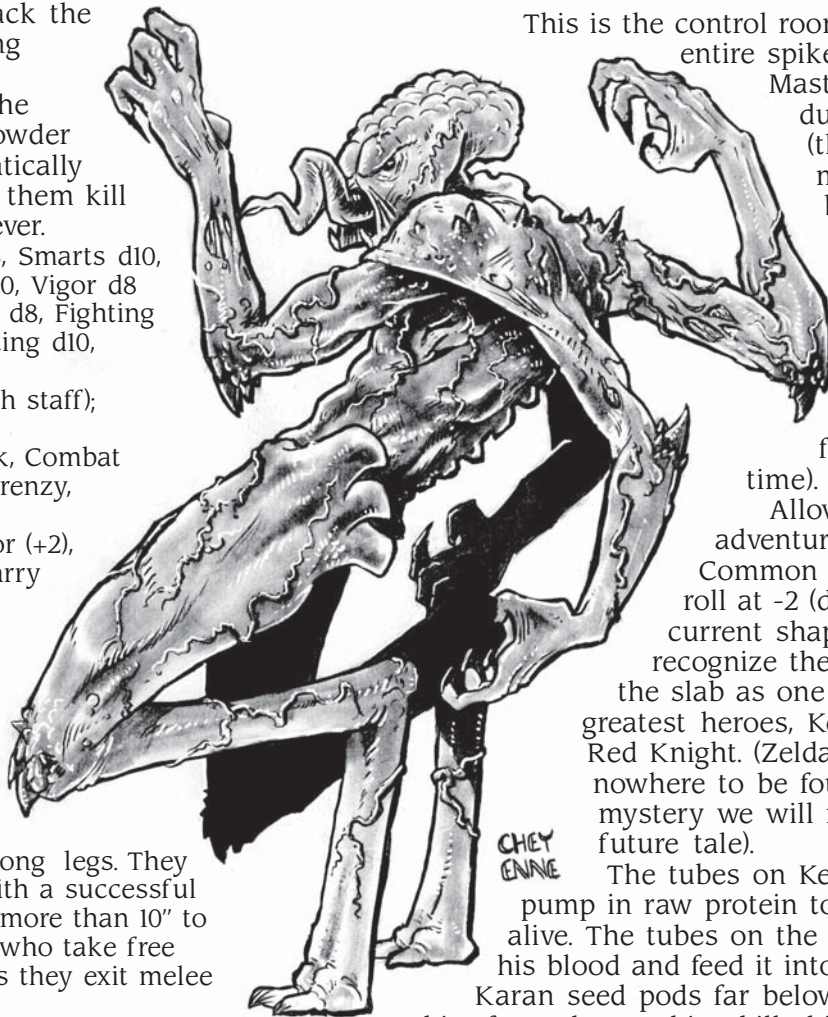
Gear: Assassin's Armor (+2), Ebon blade (Str+6; Parry +1; or Range 5/10/20; Damage: 2d6; RoF: 1; uses no Power Points)

Special Abilities

• Great Leap:

Assassins can leap 2d10" in a straight line with their incredibly strong legs. They gain +2 damage with a successful strike if they leap more than 10" to attack. Characters who take free attacks on them as they exit melee do so at -2.

- **Wall Crawling:** Assassins can scale any surface using minor telekinetic powers at their full Pace. This requires no casting roll or Power Points.



1) Control Room: Read the following as the heroes top the spiral staircase:

At the top of the staircase is a black chamber. Fortunately, its door is open. Inside are a variety of odd metal panels inset with glow stones, levers, and other odd glass panels. To either side are dark windows looking out over Valusia.

In the left-hand corner, shackled and lying in a broken heap, is a beautiful young woman with long blonde hair. It can only be Princess Rayna.

But what really catches your attention is a large metal slab at the front of the room. Shackled to the slab is a frail, shriveled man. He wears only dirty undergarments and has scores of dark tubes inserted into his pale flesh.

This is the control room for the entire spike. Only two Masters are on duty here (there are more in the breeding chamber on level one, but they won't make it to the fight in time).

Allow the adventurers a Common Knowledge roll at -2 (due to his current shape) to recognize the form on the slab as one of Tarth's greatest heroes, Kerreth the Red Knight. (Zelda is nowhere to be found—a mystery we will resolve in a future tale).

The tubes on Kerreth's left pump in raw protein to keep him alive. The tubes on the right drain his blood and feed it into the Sa Karan seed pods far below. Removing him from the machine kills him, but Kerreth nods gratefully at whoever pulls him down, thankful for the eternal rest.

SA KARAN SCIENTISTS (2)

The two Sa Karan scientists are trapped and angry that these "primitives" somehow got into the spike. They move behind the control panels and try to *puppet* minds or fire their ebon staves while waiting for the assassins to attack from behind.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Climb d8, Guts d8, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Psionics d10, Shooting d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7 (with staff); **Toughness:** 8

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Level Headed

Gear: Master's Armor (+2), Ebon Staff (Range 10/20/40; Damage: 3d6; RoF: 1; uses no Power Points).

Special Abilities

- **Great Leap:** Masters can leap 2d6" in a straight line with their incredibly strong legs.
- **Psionics:** Masters have 25 Power Points and typically know *bolt*, *deflection*, *puppet*, and *telekinesis*. They rely on their ebon staves for the *bolt* power.
- **Wall Crawling:** Masters crawl on walls using minor telekinetic powers at their normal Pace. This requires no casting roll or Power Points.

PRINCESS RAYNA

The Masters haven't quite figured out what to do with the unfortunate Princess Rayna yet. They know she is important, and realize she might be useful in drawing out the refugees below the City, but haven't taken action on it yet.

She's alive, though malnourished and mentally exhausted from her long, torturous imprisonment among these horrible creatures. Consider her Incapacitated from Fatigue should it matter, and won't recover until the final scene of this act. She can whisper a bit, but that's about all.

Princess Rayna mutters "thank you" as her rescuers give her aid but can say nothing else at this time. She's too weak to walk on her own, so someone must carry the 100-pound young woman on his or her back.

THE DWARVES

The dwarves must stay out of the fight again, though the attack of the assassins from behind puts them in instant danger.

A few rounds into the fight—when it seems dramatically appropriate and there are only a few left, the dwarves huddle up for a moment, then split into two groups (of however many remain) and run off into the left and right wings.

The first few plant their packs in the best places possible and detonate them. The stack on the right fills with rubble and begins to rattle. The stack on the left is blocked somewhere below, however. One of the dwarves (Perth if he's alive) grimaces and dives into the hole. He barely manages to land on the debris blocking the collapse, drags the pack off his back, and lights it. The hero salutes his mates, then allows himself to fall into the abyss. Moments later, his pack explodes and blocks the left-hand smokestack.

The heroes must get out of the spike fast. The exact amount of time depends on how long it takes the party to get clear—we don't want to kill them in the big finale's pyrotechnics, after all. The heroes know the tunnel isn't safe (the blast will channel into it), but a Common Knowledge roll realizes they can slip through one of the many exhaust vents to the outside.

As soon as the heroes are a few hundred yards away, read the following aloud:

You can feel the very ground rumbling. The pressure is building up in the spike. The plan is working!

There's a mass of rocks just ahead. You run, diving behind them just as a massive, ear-splitting, bone-jarring roar seems to shake all of Tarth. A shower of steel rushes past you, knocking huge chunks out of the stones that barely manage to protect you. Now a great wave of black smoke washes over you, stinging your eyes and casting everything into blackness.

You hear a rain of debris falling all around you. It lasts for minutes. Finally, the smoke clears a bit. You open your eyes, stand, and look behind you. Where once stood the spike is a massive tangle of metal wreckage in a crater nearly as wide as Kings Port itself.

You have destroyed the monster's spike. Now it's time to take your city back.

A KINGDOM FOR A HORSE

The heroes should start moving toward King's Port as fast as possible. About 15 minutes after they've left, they see a small group of commoners led by Tam driving a team of horses! Tam smiles, then her eyes grow wide as she spots Princess Rayna.

The girl hands the reins of the lead horse—a beautiful white stallion—over to the

player character who holds Rayna in his arms. Then she bows her head and *speaks* (remember that she was mute before). "F-for m-my King," she stutters.

The other villagers gasp, then hand the reins of the other horses to the rest of the group "For heroes!" one says.

The posse can now do whatever they want. Tam and the others are more than happy to take care of the beloved Princess Rayna while the adventurers run off to join the battle for Valusia—their kingdom.

THE BATTLE OF KINGS PORT

It's time for the grand finale using the rules for mass battles presented on page 106 of the *Savage Worlds* rulebook. Reread that section before running the final battle so that you are clear what the various terms below mean.

The Masters start with 10 tokens. This represents the Sa Karans themselves, spiders, wither beasts, stompers, spinners, and other minions.

The heroes start with 2 tokens, plus one more for every Resistance Point they earned throughout Act IV.

The heroes cannot take part in the first round of the fight as they're making their way back from the spike. They can join the fight in the second round if they want, though the danger of the Masters inflicts a cruel -4 to their attack rolls each round.

Assuming the heroes win, read the section below. If they lose, the Masters still retreat due to the loss of the spike. See **A Bitter Defeat**, below, in that event.

The last Sa group of Sa Karans rally in the Great Hive. The resistance fighters lead a final charge into their midst, slaughtering scores of spiders. You and your companions battle a trio of spinners while Lord Herrek and his men take down a massive stomper.

To your left you see Grokk and a band of savage orcs circling a wounded Master. Beyond them, the Golem Smashers scream Ragulon's name as they tear apart a stunned wither beast.

Finally, a thundering salvo of dwarven musketry drops the last defender. There's a long moment of silence. Only now do you taste the blood

in your mouth and feel the burning scent of gunpowder in your nose.

Suddenly, without provocation, a tremendous cheer surges through the ranks. Hundreds of beaten humans, elves, and dwarves cheer! You look and see Tam leading Princess Rayna toward you. The two young women ride somberly toward you. Lord Herrek shrugs a spider off his sword and ambles over quickly. "My queen," he says, and falls to a knee.

Princess Rayna draws close and whispers to you quietly. "We have one a great battle here today. But I have witnessed the invaders' machines. There are other spikes. One in Kos, the White Towns, and the Dragon Isles. We must destroy them all or they will one day return to Tarth. Are you ready to accept that responsibility?"

Rayna waits for one of her rescuers to accept the responsibility and claim the throne of Tarth. If given a choice, she picks the male adventurer who seems best-suited to rule her father's nation (most likely a Red Knight). It is possible for a woman to ascend the throne of Valusia, however. In that case, Princess Rayna abdicates to honor the dying wish of her father, and the female rescuer becomes the nation's new queen.

Assuming one of the heroes eventually accepts Valusia's throne, Rayna turns about on her horse and yells to the masses:

"Do not bow to your Queen. Bow to your King!"

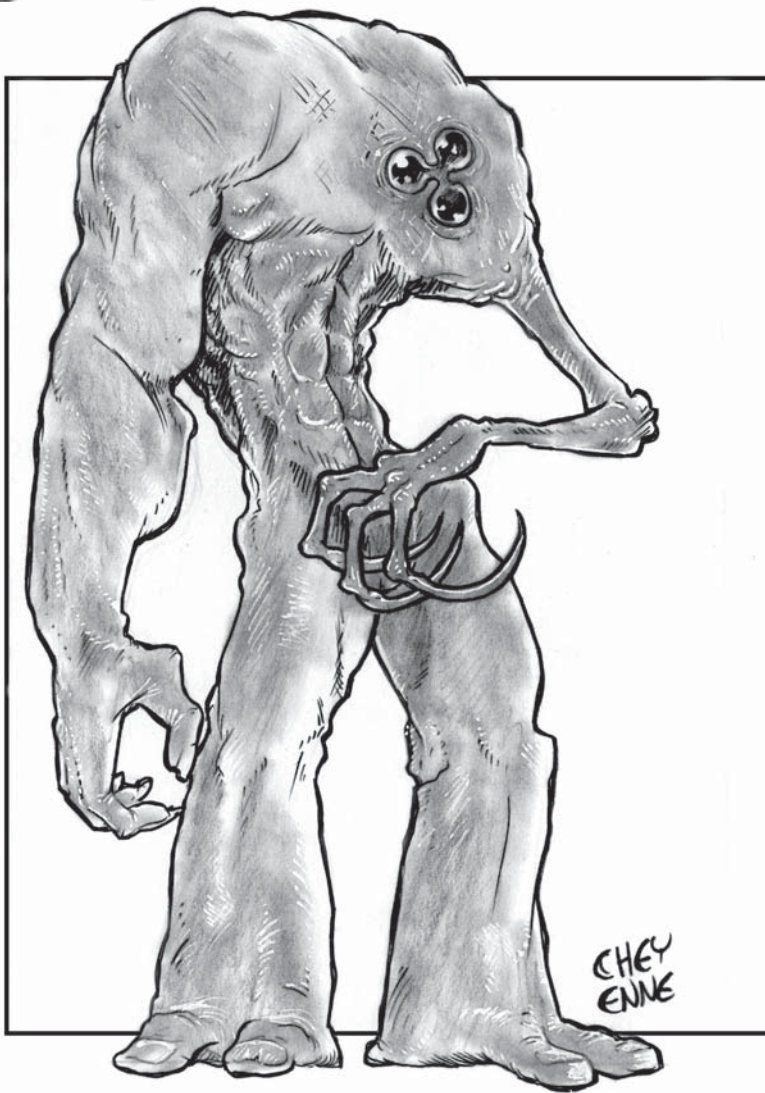
Queen Rayna and her new King are betrothed in a short but impressive ceremony a few days later. This part of the tale is now over. See the Epilogue on the following page to find out exactly what happens next.

A BITTER DEFEAT

If the refugees should happen to lose the Battle of King's Port, the remaining Sa Karans kill as many as they can, then flee in their flying boxes to the White Towns to warn their fellow conquerors.

The scene above still takes place as described, and someone still becomes King or Queen of Valusia. The major difference in losing the battle is that the Masters aren't destroyed—just chased off for a while.

They'll be back, however. And this time they won't play so nice. See the Epilogue for more.



EPILOGUE

The Masters have been defeated in Valusia and their spike destroyed.

The battle is won, but the war isn't over.

There are three more spikes—one in the White Towns, another in Kos, and the last in the Dragon Isles.

The Sa Karans in these regions learn of the fall of Valusia within days of the battle, and start taking precautions against similar rebellions. They breed new creatures, create new weapons, and work harder to capture and interrogate members of the resistance.

The elves are the main threat in Kos. They hide in the thick trees of the Great Forest and ambush the horrors sent against them. A few buccaneers from the Golden Kingdom survive as well, for the Masters seem little concerned with the sea as yet.

The dwarves also present a threat in the White Towns. As in the Warrens, they live in deep tunnels and dare the invaders to enter their domain. They defend their homes with muskets, cannons, and cave-ins.

The people of the Dragon Isles are finding ways to control the drakes and use them against their overlords. The great lizards are not easily trained, however, so the resistance there goes slowly.

THE OVERLORD

The Masters are an autonomous group for the most part, but there is a central leader whose will must be followed. This is the Master of Masters, the Overlord of the Dark, and the Ruler Who Sleeps. The Overlord is an ancient being kept alive by strange magic, incredible psychic abilities, and perhaps raw hatred. This creature above all other Sa Karans despises the races, for it was here two thousand years ago when the "savages" overthrew its

age-old empire.

The Overlord sleeps because its body lies dormant in a secret location known only to a select few Sa Karans. Its mind is awake though, and seethes with hatred toward the primitive monkeys it helped create.

The Overlord is now a shriveled thing, plotting and scheming from its hidden lair. Only by defeating this creature and destroying the remaining spikes can Tarth truly be free of the Sa Karans' reign of terror.

BESTIARY

CHINOOK

These massive bears are extremely aggressive meat-eaters with long claws—even longer than those of grizzlies and other large bears. They are fairly common in the many caves of the Dread Mountains, though they rarely venture very deep. A few orc clans have managed to train chinooks for war.



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d8, Strength d12+4, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d10, Notice d8, Swim d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 12

Special Abilities

- **Bear Hug:** Chinooks don't actually "hug" their victims, but they do attempt to use their weight to pin their prey and rend it with their claws and teeth. A chinook that hits with a raise has pinned his foe. The opponent may only attempt to escape the "hug" on his action, which requires a raise on an opposed Strength roll.
- **Claws:** Str+3.
- **Size +4:** These creatures can stand up to 15 tall and weigh over 10,000 pounds.

FROST LORDS

The giants that live in the Dread Mountains are known as "Frost Lords" by the local orcs. While they are by no means deities, the brutal creatures realize the orcs respect them as such and use the tiny green men as their footsoldiers.

Frost lords are cruel, stupid giants who enjoy eating their followers or any other sentient beings—particularly once roasted on sticks.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d12+3, Vigor d10

Skills: Climb d8, Guts d8, Fighting d8, Notice d6, Throwing d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11

Gear: Spiked club Str+5, thrown boulder (Range 5/10/50/75; RoF 1; Damage 3d6).

Special Abilities

- **Clueless:** -2 to Common Knowledge rolls.
- **Size +4:** Frost lords are over 15' tall.
- **Improved Sweep:** Frost lords can attack all adjacent foes with no attack penalty.

DIRE WOLF

Dire wolves are large, feral wolves used by orcs as attack dogs. They may also be found roaming in packs in the deepest, darkest woods.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Guts d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities

- **Bite:** Str+2.
- **Go for the Throat:** Wolves instinctively go for an opponent's soft spots. With a raise on its attack roll, it hits the target's most weakly-armored location.
- **Fleet-Footed:** Dire wolves roll d10s instead of d6s when running.



FLYING BRAIN

The so-called flying brains have a single purpose—to patrol the skies of Tarth and detect living thoughts for the Masters.

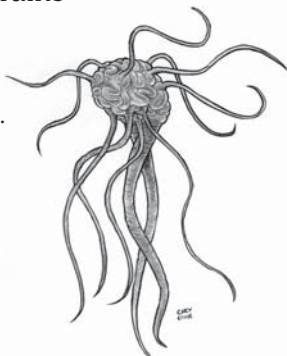
Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d6, Fly d6, Notice d12+2

Pace: —; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 4

Special Abilities

- **Fly:** Pace 6. The brains tend to hover about 300' up in the air and just sort of waft about until they detect prey.
- **Mind Sense:** Flying brains can detect sentient brainwaves up to a half-mile away. Once they've found it, they stalk their prey until they're contacted by a Master.



GNASHERS

These squat frog-creatures have pale skin, pink eyes, and large gnashing jaws—hence the name. They have a very rudimentary language of clicks and chirps, and use a few simple tools such as sharpened sticks for spears.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climb d6, Fighting d6, Notice d4, Swim d10

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Gear: Crude spears (Str+2)

Special Abilities

- **Aquatic:** Pace 6. Gnashers aren't truly Aquatic since they are amphibians, but can stay under water for over 20 minutes at a time. They have
- **Armor +1:** Warty skin.
- **Bite:** Str+1.
- **Bound:** A gnasher can leap 1d6+2" in a straight line to attack with +2 to its Fighting roll and +2 to damage.

GULPER

Gulpers are massive creatures from the deep seas west of Tarth. They occasionally slip into the Lower Sea Tunnels to feast on mating firefish.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d12+3, Vigor d12

Skills: Guts d8, Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d6

Pace: —; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 12

Special Abilities

- **Aquatic:** Pace 6
- **Bite:** Str+6. The creature swallows a victim whole with a raise. Inside its massive gut, the victim suffers 2d4 damage per round. He may cut himself by killing the creature.
- **Size +6:** Gulpers are the size of whales.
- **Improved Sweep:** May attack up to 6 foes with a Reach of 5.

HARPOON TREE

Harpoon trees are intelligent, ambulatory trees with numerous barbed thorns set within their trunks. The thorns are the size of spears, and are attached to the interior of the tree by strong vines. The tree tries to kill its victims with its "harpoons," then drains the nutrients from the corpse.

This tree is a very aggressive specimen. Illithax keeps it ravenous so that it stays hungry for rewards and creates seed pods as rapidly as possible.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d10(A), Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Climb d10, Fighting d10, Notice d8

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 15

Special Abilities

- **Armor (+4):** The harpoon tree has a 6" thick layer of wood and bark surrounding a core of viscous red blood.
- **Harpoons:** Though the harpoons seem like ranged attacks, the tree actually uses its Fighting with a Reach of 5. It can attack with 1d6 different spears each round. Subtract one from this roll for each victim it currently has speared.

A victim hit by a harpoon suffers Str+2 damage (a total of Str+4 given the creature's high Strength). If the attack hits with a raise, the victim is impaled as well. He's instantly pulled toward the tree and smacked against it for an additional 2d4 damage. The barb is thick and jagged, so the only way to get free without ripping out one's internal organs is to cut it off and pull it through the pointed end. This causes an automatic wound, so a healer should be standing ready.

- **Size +3:** The harpoon tree is nearly 24' feet tall.

HUNTERS

The most treacherous minion of the Masters are the Hunters. At first it was believed these men and women were puppets of the aliens—much the way Lord Herrek and others were controlled during the invasion. It didn't take more than a few encounters to learn otherwise.

These despicable traitors sold their souls to the Masters in exchange for life and a lifestyle far above that of the slaves.

Hunters have their pick of "useless" loot scavenged from the City, and so wrap themselves in chainmail, which they stain black in an effort to please their new overlords.

Hunters arm themselves with hand weapons and arquebuses—technology it seems the Masters do not fear. That's where their trust ends, however, for every Hunter is fitted with a black collar that can constrict with but a thought from any of the aliens.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Climb d6, Guts d6, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Mean, Sa Karan Manacles.

Edges: Musketeers

Gear: Chain shirt (+2), musket (Range: 10/20/40; Damage: 2d8); two pistols (Range: 5/10/20; Damage: 2d6+1); bayonets (Str+2); 10 total shots; 1 powder bomb, knives (Str+1).

OGRE

Ogres are some kin to orcs and lesser giants. They are often taken in by orc clans as champions against their rivals.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d12+3, Vigor d12

Skills: Guts d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d4, Throwing d6

Pace: 7; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 12

Gear: Thick hides (+1), massive club (Str+3)

Special Abilities

- **Infra-vision:** Ogres halve penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets.
- **Size +3:** Most ogres are over 8' tall with potbellies and massive arms and legs.
- **Improved Sweep:** May attack all adjacent foes.

ORC

Orcs are savage, green-skinned humanoids with pig-like features, including snouts and sometimes even tusks. They have foul temperaments, and rarely take prisoners.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9

Gear: Leather armor (+1), short sword (Str+2)

Special Abilities

- **Infra-vision:** Orcs halve penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets.
- **Size +1:** Orcs are slightly larger and fatter than humans.

ORC SHAMAN

Orcs worship Kargak, the god of Slaughter. Their shamans personify this image, and while they are usually the smallest members of a clan, are often the most savage.

Orc shamans drape themselves in crude fetishes, bones, and other occult trappings to appear more menacing to their foes.

Their power is simple hedge magic, however, and is not divinely inspired despite several millennia believing otherwise.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Spellcasting d8, Stealth d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Gear: Leather armor (+1), spear (Str+2; Parry +1; Reach 1)

Special Abilities

- **Infra-vision:** Orcs halve penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets.
- **Spells:** Shamans have 15 Power Points, and typically know *bolt*, *fear*, and *smite* (which she usually uses on the chieftain first)



ORC, CHIEFTAIN

The leader of small orc clans is always the most deadly brute in the bunch.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d12, Guts d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Throwing d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 11

Gear: Plate chestplate (+3), great axe (Str+4; AP 1; -1 Parry); throwing axe (Range: 3/6/12; Str+2)

Special Abilities

- **Brawny:** Orc chieftains are always the largest of their clans. +1 Toughness.
- **Infra-vision:** Orcs halve penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets.
- **Sweep:** May attack all adjacent foes at -2 penalty.

- **War Cry:** The chieftain may Intimidate all foes within an adjacent Medium Burst Template.

RAT SWARMS

The swarms are ravenous for fresh meat. The bloody nicks and cuts on the slaves drive them into a frenzy. One swarm attacks each of the slave pens. The rest head straight for the wither beasts.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d12, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Notice d6

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities

- **Bite:** Every target within the swarm suffers 2d4 damage.
- **Swarm:** The swarm is the size of a Medium Burst Template. Characters can attack each round by stomping, causing his damage in Strength with a successful hit. Cutting and piercing weapons cause no damage to the overall swarm.



SA KARAN ASSASSINS

Sa Karan assassins are stealthy killers. They make use of their telekinetic wall-crawling abilities to sneak up behind their foes and strike with surprise (usually with "the drop").

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Climb d8, Guts d8, Fighting d10, Notice d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d12

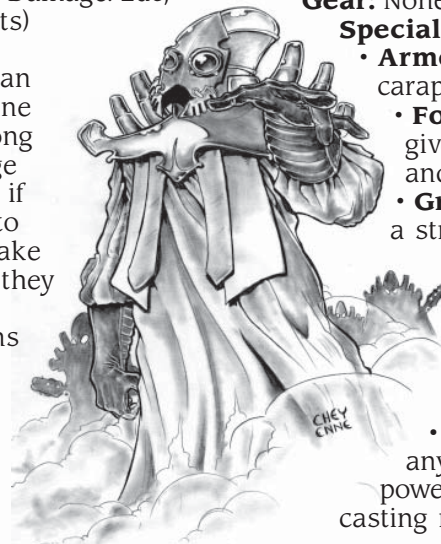
Pace: 8; **Parry:** 10 (with staff); **Toughness:** 10

Edges: Improved Block, Combat Reflexes, Improved Frenzy, Quick

Gear: Assassin's Armor (+2), Ebon blade (Str+6; Parry +1; or Range 5/10/20; Damage: 2d6; RoF: 1; uses no Power Points)

Special Abilities

- **Great Leap:** Assassins can leap 2d10" in a straight line with their incredibly strong legs. They gain +2 damage with a successful strike if they leap more than 10" to attack. Characters who take free attacks on them as they exit melee do so at -2.
- **Wall Crawling:** Assassins can scale any surface using minor telekinetic powers at their full Pace. This requires no casting roll or Power Points.



SA KARAN MASTERS

The upper echelon of Sa Karan society are their scientists. They are typically older and wiser than assassins, and rely on their more developed mental powers in combat rather than their physical prowess.

Like all Masters, they wear black armor and masks to keep the clean air of Tarth off their skin. They carry ebon staves that lets them cast the *bolt* power for free.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Climb d8, Guts d8, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Psionics d10, Shooting d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7 (with staff); **Toughness:** 8

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Level Headed

Gear: Master's Armor (+2), Ebon Staff (Range 10/20/40; Damage: 3d6; RoF: 1; uses no Power Points).

Special Abilities

- **Great Leap:** Masters can leap 2d6" in a straight line with their incredibly strong legs.
- **Psionics:** Masters have 25 Power Points and typically know *bolt*, *deflection*, *puppet*, and *telekinesis*. They rely on their ebon staves for the *bolt* power.
- **Wall Crawling:** Masters crawl on walls using minor telekinetic powers at their normal Pace. This requires no casting roll or Power Points.

SA KARAN SPIDER

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climb d12, Guts d8, Fighting d6, Notice d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Improved Frenzy

Gear: None

Special Abilities

- **Armor (+2):** Spiders are encased in hard carapace.
- **Four Arms:** The spiders' four arms give them the Improved Frenzy Edge, and add +1 to their Parry.
- **Great Leap:** Spiders can leap 2d10" in a straight line with their incredibly strong legs. They gain +2 damage with a successful strike if they leap more than 10" to attack. Characters who take free attacks on them as they exit melee do so at -2.
- **Wall Crawling:** Spiders can scale any surface using minor telekinetic powers at their full Pace. This requires no casting roll or Power Points.

SA KARAN SPIDER, BLUE

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Climb d12, Guts d8, Fighting d8, Notice d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9

Edges: Combat Reflexes

Gear: None

Special Abilities

- **Armor (+3):** Spiders are encased in hard carapace.
- **Four Arms:** The Spiders four arms give them the Improved Frenzy Edge, and add +1 to their Parry.
- **Great Leap:** Spiders can leap 2d10" in a straight line with their incredibly strong legs. They gain +2 damage with a successful strike if they leap more than 10" to attack. Characters who take free attacks on them as they exit melee do so at -2.
- **Wall Crawling:** Spiders can scale any surface using minor telekinetic powers at their full Pace. This requires no casting roll or Power Points.

SEA TROLLS

Beneath the King's Tunnels live fearsome creatures called sea trolls by some, skrags and manes by others. They are flesh-eating horrors as at home in the sea as they are in the moist tunnels beneath the City.

They dress in numerous soft kelps, seashells, and other natural materials that add +2 to their Stealth when they sit quietly in small pools or piles of detritus from the sea.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Toughness d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Swimming d10

Pace: 5; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 7

Gear: Coral Spear (Str+2; +1 Parry; Poison ((see below); Throwing Sticks (Range: 4/8/12; Damage: Str+1; Poison (see below))).

Special Abilities

- **Armor:** Leathery hide (+1)
- **Claws:** Str+2.
- **Infravision:** Orcs halve penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets.
- **Regeneration (Fast):** The troll's roll to regenerate each round. Fire stops their regeneration, as does cutting off their heads.
- **Sea Suit:** +2 Stealth when hiding.



SEA TROLL LEADER

The sea trolls leaders are the most mean-spirited, cruel creatures.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Toughness d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d8, Stealth d6, Swimming d10

Pace: 5; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 7

Gear: Coral Spear (Str+2; +1 Parry; Poison ((see below); Throwing Sticks (Range: 4/8/12; Damage: Str+1; Poison (see below))).

Special Abilities

- **Armor:** Leathery hide (+1)
- **Claws:** Str+2.
- **Infravision:** Orcs halve penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets.
- **Regeneration (Fast):** The troll's roll to regenerate each round. Fire stops their regeneration, as does cutting off their heads.
- **Sea Suit:** The trolls wear strands of kelp adorned with seashells and other detritus that adds +2 to their Stealth rolls when hiding. They typically use these to attack from ambush, rising up and ditching the suits as they make their first strikes.

SEA TROLL CORAL SPEARS

The sea trolls make their weapons, armor, and other gear from natural materials found beneath the waves. Their spears and throwing sticks are made from black corals they harvest from the ocean depths.

A foe who receives a Shaken result or worse from one of these weapons must make a Vigor roll. Those who fail suffer great pain all along their central nervous system which inflicts a kind of palsy. These victims suffer a -1 penalty to all actions, cumulative to a total penalty of -3. If another hit is scored, the victim collapses and suffers an epileptic-like fit that lasts for 1d6 minutes.

Once harvested, the natural poison in the coral lasts for 1d6 days. After that, the weapon "dies" and becomes too brittle to use as a weapon. Sea trolls actually "replant" their spears, rotating the weapons out so that they replenish and regrow.

SKELETON

The skin has already rotted from these risen dead, leaving them slightly quicker than their flesh-laden zombie counterparts, and making them particularly resistant to certain kinds of weapons.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Shooting d6

Pace: 7; **Parry:** 5

Gear: Claws (Str) or by weapon

- **Fearless:** Skeletons are immune to fear and Intimidation.

- **Undead:** Undead add +2 to all Vigor rolls made to resist damage. Called shots do no extra damage to such creatures. Piercing attacks do half-damage.

SPINNERS

These horrors look something like gigantic, three-legged crabs encased in a stony carapace that usually blends with the rocks they hide in. They sit completely dormant except for a dull psionic sense of the environment around them.

Spinners have no eyes, but sense with their minds much like Sa Karans. Their three legs end in massive, scythe-like points that can penetrate plate mail. The spinner's disk-like middle holds a voracious circular maw of teeth surrounded by three pointed mandibles.

The creatures kill their prey with their deadly legs, then tear away pieces of flesh for consumption with their mandibles. In their dormant state—with only minute brain functions to detect prey—the meat they consume can last for centuries.

When attacking, the creature “spins” on its three legs, allowing it to attack all adjacent foes if it does not otherwise move.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Climb d4, Fighting d10, Notice d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 12

Special Abilities

- **Armor +4:** Carapace.
- **Claws:** Str+4, AP 2.
- **Empathic:** Spinners “see” by projecting mind waves (for inanimate objects) and reading minds (for prey). This lets them “see” their foes even in pitch darkness.
- **Improved Sweep:** Spinners may attack all adjacent foes at no penalty by spinning in place. This makes a loud “clack-clack-clack” sound as their legs strike the stony ground in disturbing rhythm.
- **Level-Headed:** Spinners draw two cards and act on the highest.

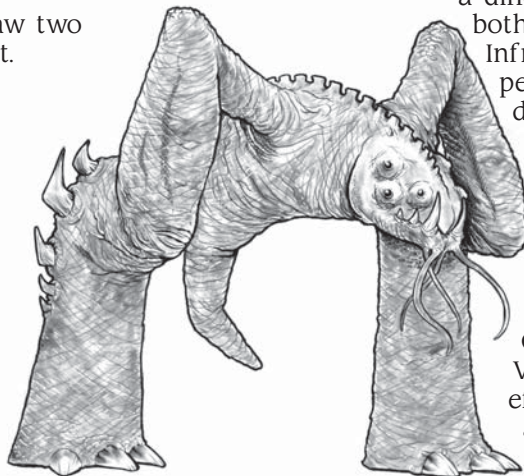
STOMPER

These massive creatures serve one purpose for the Masters—to stomp and crush their foes.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d12+5, Vigor d10

Skills: Climb d4, Fighting d10, Notice d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 15



Special Abilities

- **Armor +4:** Carapace.
- **Size +4:** Stompers are nearly 20 feet tall with feet the size of large tree trunks.
- **Stomp:** Strength +4. The creature is naturally adept at using its full weight to smash its foes. Non-rigid armor (leather, chain mail) offers no protection against the stomp.

WITHER BEAST

The Masters created these horrid monsters on Wrastaloth, their adopted planet for the last two millennia. They have the bodies of giants, three eyes that can see in darkness as well as thermal vision, and one scrawny arm that cripples anyone it wounds.

A number of these creatures have been released into the wilds of Valusia. They are allowed to roam freely to chase down any refugees they come across. Wither beasts won't attack spiders or Masters, but all other creatures—including other Sa Karan creations—are fair game.

The monsters get their names from the horrid power of their gnarled left hands. A hit with this nasty appendage causes the victim's affected area to wither and atrophy. Their immense size and power means most victims die from the attack anyway, but even the strongest heroes can be broken by their insidious attacks.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Climb d6, Guts d10, Fighting d10, Notice d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10

Edges: Ambidextrous, Frenzy

Special Abilities

- **Claw:** Str+4 with right arm; Wither with left (see below).
- **Size +2:** Wither beasts are over 8' tall.
- **Ultravision:** Each of the beast's eyes sees in a different spectrum, giving it both Low Light and Infravision. It suffers a -2 penalty only in pitch darkness.
- **Wither:** The creature makes only touch attacks with its left arm (+2 to hit). Extras who are touched are wounded. Heroes suffer an automatic roll on the Crippling Injury Table. The Vigor roll to see if the effect is permanent is made at -2.

Our good friend, Citizen Jacob Galstaff,

Please send your son and his companions to the King immediately. We have a very delicate situation that requires the help of the city's most prestigious adventurers.

We ask that you not reveal this to anyone save the Scarlet Riders themselves, but the Seven have gone missing. I know that you are close friends with these great heroes, so I do not mean to alarm you, but it seems they have stumbled into some grave danger deep beneath the City. I am sure of their safe return, but we must take no chances with their well-being. I'm certain I don't have to tell you that should something happen to the Seven, the good people of Valusia would most certainly lose heart.

Please instruct your son to come ready for immediate battle. There is no time for them to dress for the court. We expect them no later than the dinner bell tomorrow, at which time our expedition shall venture forth to find the Seven.

You would be well-advised to arm your son and his companions with the full weight of your stores, both magical and mundane. I'm sure I do not need to note that any fiend that can challenge the Seven may prove a very terrible adversary indeed.

If you can provide men-at-arms as well, the King will happily reimburse you for their service at the usual rate as well.

May the Sun shine upon you,

Arwick Erodale,

Court Magister of King Crassus Kaden

PROPS

The mock scroll on page 137 is the message given to the heroes in Act One, Scene One (page 55). It should be sealed with wax or tape if possible so that the *players* must actually break the bond whenever their characters do the same in the game.

The scrolls on page 138-141 represent fragments of memories revealed to the heroes by the Teaching Stone (page 122). Shuffle them up and hand them out randomly (and as evenly as possible) to the group.

Note that they are not supposed to read the text aloud, but should repeat their tales in their own words.

Permission is granted to photocopy pages 138-144 for personal use.

You are a child.

You see the face of a Master—somehow your father but not your parent. You sense he is laughing—no, smiling—at you. He welcomes you, but challenges you as well.

He fills you with pride, for you are a superior being. He shows you the savages you will one day rule as slaves—stunted dwarves and feral elves.

You see other Sa Karans performing great accomplishments—mapping the stars, manipulating the genetic makeup of organisms, even crafting odd red gems from raw minerals by infusing them with psychic energy.

You will rise to be the greatest of them. You will rule over thousands of slaves, and perhaps create new ones as well. You will be a Master. A Sa Karan.

You are a spy.

You stand on a dark, alien world filled with dim gray fog. You step through a portal of energy, using your psychic powers to propel your atoms through the stars to the world your race left behind thousands of years ago.

You creep through forgotten tunnels into a city filled with clueless savages. You take a few here and there, feast on their tasty innards, and chew on their memories.

Now you see them building a great white castle where the Great Hive once stood. You hide in the shadows and watch them for years, manipulating the builders to create secret passages for you. You return as the years roll by, skittering through the walls like a rat and reading the minds of their greatest leaders.

You are a hunter.

You walk over Tarth's gray fields, enveloped in her cold mists. Your ebon staff fills your claws. Now you smell dirt and filth and ignorance—a dwarf! You bound through the mists, homing in on its feral thoughts. The wretch is feasting on one of its own kind. You snatch it from its hole before it can scramble away, holding it up by the legs and laughing as it struggles.

The chase was too short. You let the pitiful thing go—away from its hole—and then track it through the mists.

For fun.

You are an overseer.

You peer through the tinted glass of a Master's mask—its lenses darker now than just a few years ago. Before you is a great pyramid made of black stone. Thousands of humans, elves, and dwarves drag massive stones upon it.

The pyramid stands on a cliff. Another part of you recognizes the location—this is where Kings Port will one day be built.

The world is less comfortable than it was. Brighter. Warmer. The sun is cutting through the dim fog of Tarth, making it almost painful to remain outside.

The slaves are restless. Insolent even. You'd best teach them a lesson. You send for a wave of spiders to devour a few.

You are a great engineer, and this is a great day.

The last of the "gendered" ones have died. Now there are only brothers. The Birthing Chamber has not only ensured the survival of the race, but your engineering has made new Sa Karans stronger and brighter than ever.

Now you see Sa Karans gathered about the Birthing Chamber. Lying in a pool of yellow ichor is a Sa Karan, yet it is not. Something is wrong.

You fill with overwhelming dread. Their seed is poisoned.

You have damned your entire race.

You are a great scientist.

In your pens are dozens of primitive animals—elves and dwarves. You force them to couple, churning out litters of malformed creatures to prove your theories true.

Finally you create an entirely new creature from an elf and a dwarf. You wait a generation, then travel to the Great Hive to show your new servant to your peers. They laugh and scorn your work. They pile stones into your slaves' arms, threatening to kill the creature if he drops a single one. The creature tries with all its might, but its frame is too small. Its bones crack and it falls whimpering to the floor.

Hate fills your mind. You scoop up the remains and return to your lair far, far away. Generations later, your skin is old and cracked. But you have done it.

You return to the Great Hive. Your peers gather, ready to scorn your work once again. You reveal your cage. Inside it stands your greatest creation, your life's work.

A man.

As before, the others pile weight upon your slave, but he stands strong. He struggles, but does not give in. He resists, but does not fight. He is the perfect slave. The other Sa Karans buy the secret from you. You give each a unique formula so that you can track their creation. White-haired, pale-skinned slaves are raised in the north, bronze-skin and red hair from the east, and brown skin with black hair in the south.

Years later, you watch with pride as your creations continue work on the Great Hive. Now you are on your deathbed. There is a commotion in the hall. You hear the hissing of the spiders. The sounds of battle. A human slips into your room—murder in its primitive eyes. You take its mind with a thought, but more follow. The memory ends.

You are a great general.

The attacks started with the orcs. The scientists turned loose the spiders—mutated versions of your own race—to destroy them. You warned them, but no one would listen. The spiders bled into the forests and the tunnels, where the elves and dwarves hid. They over-hunted, and now the savages have no choice but to fight back. Now even the slaves are revolting. Your brothers have even found half-folk among the rabble—a mistake thought to have been long destroyed.

Time passes. The impudent rebels now attack Sa Karans in their very lairs! Scouts tell of red warriors turning their slaves' tools to flaming swords and striking down spiders by the score. The very world itself is different. You must now wear a mask to filter out the sickening air, and goggles to protect your eyes from the growing power of the hated sun.

You call in your isolated brothers. They must abandon their reclusive ways and gather at the Great Hive until the revolt is put down.

More time passes. You stand before a legion of spiders and Sa Karan warriors. On the plains to the east come the dust clouds of the rebels.

It sickens you, but the Great Hive cannot stand.

You are a great astrologer.

The rebels are at the gates of the Great Hive. The general says the hive cannot hold. For generations, you have been working on a secret project, one that might save your race from destruction.

You gather the elders in your dark chamber. There you unveil a large violet disc coursing with energy. You concentrate, gather your psychic energy, and step through!

Moments later, you return with a wiggling worm-like creature—an animal from another world! You suck the thing up through your long snout and feel its juices run down your gullet. There is a world on the other side of this portal, you tell the elders with a thought. A world of dim light, plentiful food, and fantastic new species to discover and enhance!

The elders grimace, but nod.

You are a spy.

Your brother has captured a human from the streets above and is about to feast upon him. You are scouting ahead when you hear a noise behind you. Seven savages have discovered your companion! You are about to teach these animals a lesson when you spy one of Tarrian's brood.

Your brother strikes first, spilling the sun-man's blood in a radiant sparkle. A one-eyed human strikes next, using primitive sorcery to char your companion to cinders!

You remain hidden and watch. There is no danger of discovery now—the savages have no way of extracting secrets from the dead.

They leave, dragging the dying sun-man with them. You move to retrieve the body of your fellow spy and sense something odd. The sun-man's blood. It glows with psychic energy. You gather as much as you can and take it home with you. To the scientists.

You are an assassin.

The elders have lured a group of soft-skins into the ruins of the Great Hive back on the home world.

Now you wait for them to arrive. You and your companions cling to the ceiling of a dark chamber.

You hear the stone above slide away. Cursed light shines through, but you are too far away to be seen. Now seven savages descend through the hole to the floor. They regroup and head down the only tunnel left open—drawn by the violet light of the portal.

You and your fellow assassins descend the walls behind them—like the spiders they believe you to be.

Sounds of battle echo down the hallway. The trap is sprung. You repeat the elder's orders to yourself: *Capture the sun-man, kill the rest. Hide below ground until we arrive.*

You are a psychologist.

You stand beside your elders, listening to the report of a wounded assassin. The trap worked perfectly, he reports. Two brothers were lost in the ambush, but four of the primitives were slain. The rest still live, and are bound in the darkness waiting for liberation.

The elders have plans for the sun-man and woman, but perhaps you might try a little “conditioning” on the other two? The elders nod and you eagerly make your way to the portal.

You find your victims in the darkness—a wiry half-elf mutt and a one-eyed human. You tear into their minds for hours, telekinetically tearing away bits of their brains until you release their bloodlust. When you are done, you place a small worm on the back of their necks, and turn them loose. This should prove an interesting distraction.

You are a warrior.

The glorious liberation of your home has begun! Yet you seethe with hatred—trapped here beneath the savages' city guarding the portal.

But wait. Softskins descend from above. There are a dozen of them—hardly even a challenge. You use your telekinesis to climb the wall and watch them from the shadows.

You instantly think your plans to your mates, seeing the battle's outcome before it even begins. Some blast away with ebon staves, others dominate the primitive slaves and make them fight each other. You leap into the fray with your bare claws, eager to take out your anger on the impudent beasts' soft flesh.

The battle is won in seconds. You stand over the defeated animals and claim your prize—the gold-gilded armor of their leader. The slave resists, but you feast on his innards and leave him to die. He grasps at your cloak as you drag away the remaining captives as slaves—you sense he is especially concerned with the female. She wears golden armor as well.

Ah! They are rulers of some sort! The male cannot live, but the female might. You will take her to the spike. Perhaps then you will be allowed to join the glorious battle above.

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