

A STORMBRINGER ADVENTURE

2113

# PERILS OF THE YOUNG KINGDOMS

**SUPERNATURAL  
BATTLES ACROSS  
THE WORLD OF ELRIC**

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TRENGOVE



GASSNER 01



# PERILS OF THE YOUNG KINGDOMS

A thousand years ago a great war between the Dharzi and Melniboné eliminated the ancient race of sorcerers from the Young Kingdoms, and established the Dragon Lords as masters of the world. Far to the north of Melniboné, the family of a lesser lord took the caverns of a tall, black island as their home, transforming the former laboratory of a Dharzi sorcerer into a magnificent abode.

Then, the Bright Empire began its inexorable decline, and the caverns were abandoned. Four hundred and fifty years have past, and something dark and vile now inhabits this isle, warping the natural order of living things and twisting their very beings into hideous monsters.

Lord Straasha summons the adventurers to the coast of Tarkesh, bordering the frigid Pale Sea and the unholy domain of forbidden Pan Tang. Visions of bloody waves ceaselessly haunt their dreams, presaging a doom to come should the heroes fail to heed Straasha's urgent call.

## WHAT IS STORMBRINGER?

STORMBRINGER is a roleplaying game in which the players join together to tell a heroic adventure. Under the supervision of one player, who takes the role of gamemaster, you and your friends verbally act out the roles of characters in a story. You will face the same kinds of situations and dangers that Eric, Moonglum, and Dorian Hawkmoon encountered, but this time you are in control and the results depend on what you decide your characters should do!

PERILS OF THE YOUNG KINGDOMS provides five independent adventures for the STORMBRINGER roleplaying game. Each of these adventures explores places scattered across the world of the Young Kingdoms, revealing marvelous, mysterious, and treacherous locales such as the Floating Realm, a sargasso sea of ruined ships; the Link Machine, an engine of law which slowly mutates the winged Myrrhyn race; and a Chaos Storm, carrying the chaos pack of Queen Xiombarg, which hastens the appearance of the Infinite Cathedral of Gormweller the God Seller.



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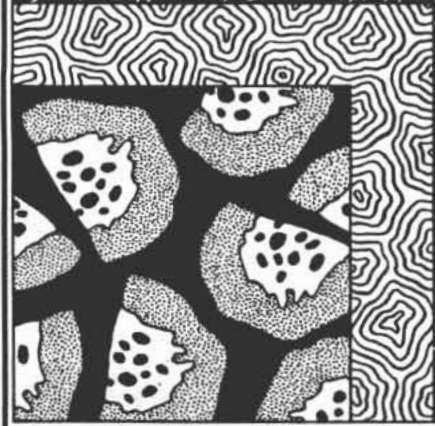
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# Perils of the Young Kingdoms

Supernatural Battles Across the World of Elric





**" ...Just as Elric would fight to preserve the Balance, all unknowing, so too did others wield their might to preserve the plane of the Young Kingdoms, equally blind to their part in the scheme of Fate...."**

**— The Chronicle of the Black Sword**





**PERILS OF THE**  
**YOUNG**  
**KINGDOMS**

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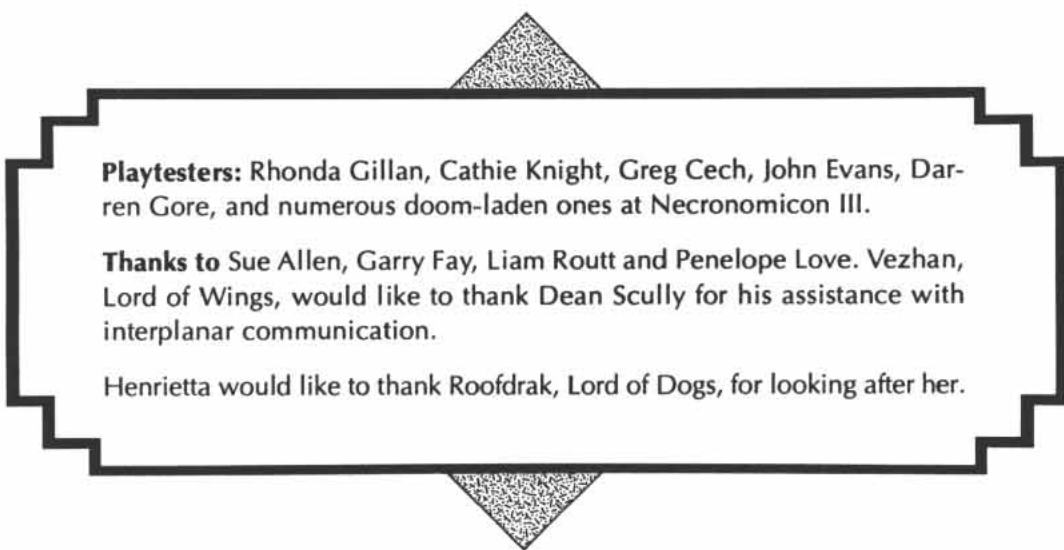
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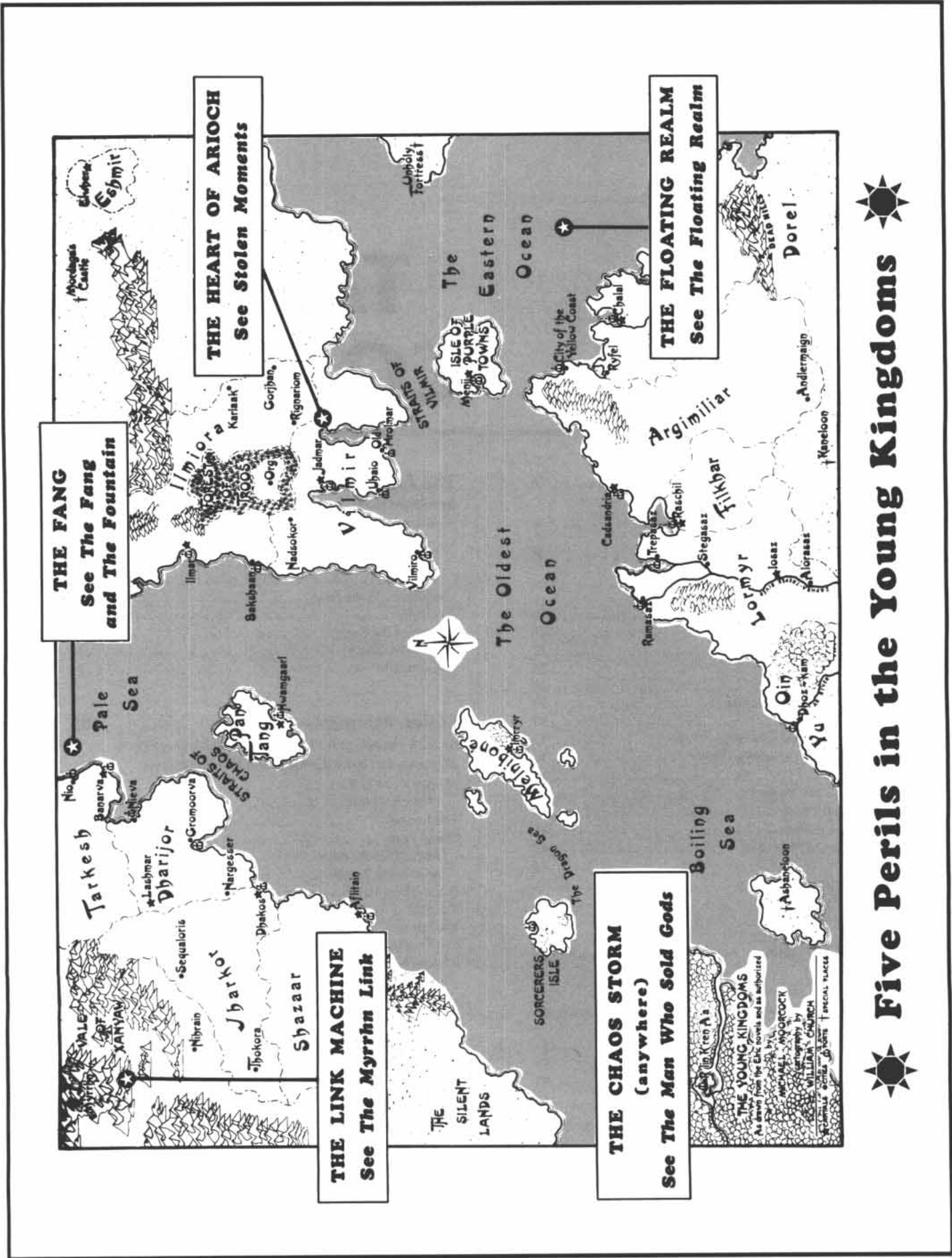
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**THE HEART OF ARIOCH**  
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**THE LINK MACHINE**  
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**THE CHAOS STORM**  
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**THE FLOATING REALM**  
See *The Floating Realm*

**THE YOUNG KINGDOMS**  
As drawn from the Epic novels and as authorized by MICHAEL CROCKETT  
Cartography by WILLIAM CHURCH  
SPECIAL PLACES

**Five Perils in the Young Kingdoms**





# INTRODUCTION

**T**he Young Kingdoms is a place of constant strife. Armies stand ready for war, merchants and kings grasp as much power as they can hold, opposing religions trade ideological insults, and sorcerers peer between the veils of reality for new and hideous demons to summon forth. It is the world which Elric inherits, and which he eventually destroys.

This book introduces five particular perils of the Young Kingdoms. Two are places, desolate spots of misery and despair. Two are objects, of spectacular power and terrible portent. The last is a magical phenomenon of Primal Chaos which brings new dangers from beyond the Young Kingdoms. All of them offer danger and reward for any band of adventurers.

## THE FLOATING REALM

*The Floating Realm* is an isolated community trapped in a sargasso sea of weeds. Ships are brought to the Realm by the Krakyn, a massive Chaos beast. There they are stranded, hopeless subjects of the Realm's cruel dictatorship. But there are those who plan liberation, and the adventurers join them in freeing the castaway society.

## THE LINK MACHINE

*The Myrrhn Link* is a gigantic device of Law, hidden in the mountains of the Vale of Xanyaw. Its great gears grind and churn, weaving magic which alters the genetic structure of the Myrrhn race. The theft of a small part throws the machine's operation into disorder, resulting in widespread mutations. The adventurers help recover that part, setting true the destiny of the winged folk.

## THE FANG

In *The Fang and the Fountain* the adventurers encounter a forbidding spire of rock in the Pale Sea, north of Banarva. It is the home of a Pan Tangian sorcerer, whose hideous experiments threaten villages along the Tarkesh

## When is this set?

The events of this scenario book are nominally placed prior to the fall of Imrryr. Elric may or may not yet be on the Ruby Throne, at the gamesmaster's preference. For the time being, all **Stormbringer** releases will share this setting; the perils of the Young Kingdoms are much more perilous before Elric visits them, bearing his shrieking hellblade and strewing death in his wake.

coast. The adventurers travel to the Fang, explore its horrors, and put an end to the insane vivisectionist.

## THE HEART OF ARIOCH

*Stolen Moments* presents a gem beloved of Chaos, and fit for a Melnibonéan Emperor. The jewel weaves a curse of endless repetition, and the adventurers are drawn into mad dreams of a thief who tried to steal it a thousand years ago. In those times the Melnibonéan and Dharzi empires were at war, and humans were but wretches lapping at the feet of both sides. The adventurers cannot win the war, but they can save themselves from the thief's mad dream cycle.

## THE CHAOS STORM

*The Man Who Sold Gods* involves a sorcerous tumult which sweeps from the world of the Fifteen Planes, the world of Corum. It scours the land with multi-colored rain, and thunders with the rolling of the Storm howling back to its own dimension. To do this they summon the Infinite Cathedral, and strike a bargain with the man who sells Gods.

These challenges take the adventurers to all corners of the Young Kingdoms, and show them power and horror beyond comprehension. Those with a stout heart and a firm hand will win through. Peril brings risk, but risk breeds heroes, and heroes are what the Young Kingdoms need in these last dark years in the age of Elric.

# THE FLOATING REALM

**S**HIPS ARE DISAPPEARING in the Oldest Ocean. The Krakyn, a huge beast of Chaos, has over the years been attacking and seizing lone trading vessels under cover of night and storm, and spiriting them off to its lair to the east. These ships were presumed to have foundered, sinking with the total loss of passengers and crew.

But the ships survived, as did many of the souls aboard them. Trapped forever within a morass of sea vines that is the kingdom of the Krakyn, these castaways built for themselves a place in which to live out the remainder of their days — The Floating Realm.

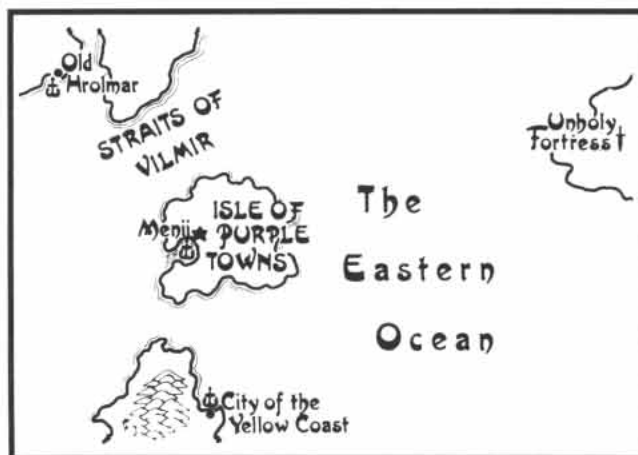
The adventurers are traveling to Argimiliar onboard a ship in the Oldest Ocean, when they are netted by the Krakyn and dragged into this water-locked society. The time is ripe for revolution in the Realm; with the adventurer's leadership, the winds of change can blow on this evil and stagnant spot.

## Running This Scenario

*The Floating Realm* presents a functioning but unjust society, cut off from the rest of the Young Kingdoms. The scenario provides background for the gamemaster on who lives there, and what their plans are. How the tale unfolds, and what happens when the adventurers arrive, is for the gamemaster and players to explore.

There are three goals for the adventurers. The first is to break the Realm's tyrannical dictatorship. The second is to slay the Krakyn, the foul creature of Chaos that has set itself up as the local deity. The third is to engineer an escape from this desolate uncharted place.

The following sections detail the many occupants and lifestyle of those within the Floating Realm. The



adventurers enter, and the scenario begins, in the section *Setting Sail*, on page 22.

## About the Realm

The Krakyn has never been an active beast. It wishes to stir and slumber in its watery home, dreaming of Pyaray. When its hunger grew, it hunted as it must. It would ensnare a ship, bring it home, and slowly consume the crew. After it had fed, it could slumber again. The needs of the Krakyn are simple.

The survivors of one ship saw that the monster returned for them one by one. In the manner of humans, they fought amongst themselves, until a pecking order was established in which the weakest were thrown to the Krakyn first. Food now came to the monster easily. The simple needs of the Krakyn were thus satisfied, and



the practice of sacrifice had begun. Worship soon followed.

The Krakyn gathered more ships, until it had a collection. A floating source of food, readily available. The Krakyn could sleep, and eat when it chose. It sank into the mud, dreaming Krakyn dreams, rising when it felt hungry.

Up above, the humans had perfected the art of sacrifice. A gong was struck. The Krakyn now knew when food was available, and need no longer concern itself with looking for it. Sometimes food was offered when the Krakyn did not hunger. It would accept the offering, and place the food in its cave for future consumption. Sometimes the victims would die of starvation before the Krakyn got to them.

The population dwindled. Sacrifices became fewer. Food was no longer delivered. The Krakyn began once more pulling humans off deck, punishing them for not supplying its need. As this dragged on, it fetched a new ship into the Realm, and the food flowed again.

The humans addressed the problem. Great drums now tell the Krakyn when to hunt. When it hears this, it swims out, and returns with another ship.

The Krakyn and the humans both understand the situation. It is a symbiotic relationship, in which both believe that they are in control.

### The Birth of the Realm

As new derelicts were pulled in, the action of the sluggish currents caused them to collect into two clusters. One was composed of merchant-class vessels, the other of smaller schooners. In time, the former came to be known as The Royal Flotilla, and became home for the privileged elite. The latter was christened The Craftsmen's Flotilla, and became the home and workshop of the Realm's workers.

Ships that were too badly damaged by storm or Krakyn to be incorporated into either Flotilla were cannibalized for use in repairs, or in the construction of wide, sturdy connecting decks which have transformed the two clusters into a pair of wooden islands.

In later years, when tyrants came to power in the Realm, all scrap wood went into the construction of the Slave Barge, to which all those who seemed weak or had no skills were exiled. Those who seemed unusually strong-willed were closely-watched, and often quickly sacrificed. It is the job of the slaves to gather food for the other two flotillas. As long as they perform this task, they are allowed to live, unless the supply of sacrifice victims becomes low.

While it is possible for a ship under full sail to break free of the clutches of the sea vines, every scrap of canvas which enters the Realm is swiftly and thoroughly destroyed.

### Daily Life

The day-to-day life of the Realm resembles a small fiefdom. The people of the Royal Flotilla do little. The craftsmen lend their talents as needed, with a work force taken from the population of the Slave Barge. The slaves must face the dangers of the Garden daily to provide the Realm with the major portion of its food supply.

The most opulent furnishings are aboard the Royal Flotilla. The Craftsmen's Flotilla is furnished in the more common manner, after the fashion of an average merchant vessel. The Slave Barge receives the hand-me-downs from both Flotillas, and it is not uncommon to see an old barrel serving as a tabletop or chair, or cots, doors, and other such items pieced crudely together from pieces of scrap wood.

The Garden is an area of cultivated and well-tended sea vine. In the spring, these vines sprout hundreds of foot-long pods containing thousands of seeds



Walking on Weeds

## THE FLOATING REALM

which are ground into an acceptable substitute for flour. For most of the year, the sea vine also produces large blue-green melons, which are not only edible but quite delicious.

When thoroughly dried, the rinds of these melons are used to maintain three small cookfires located on each of the wooden isles. The vine itself can be made into rope or thread. With some effort, it can be fashioned into rough cloth.

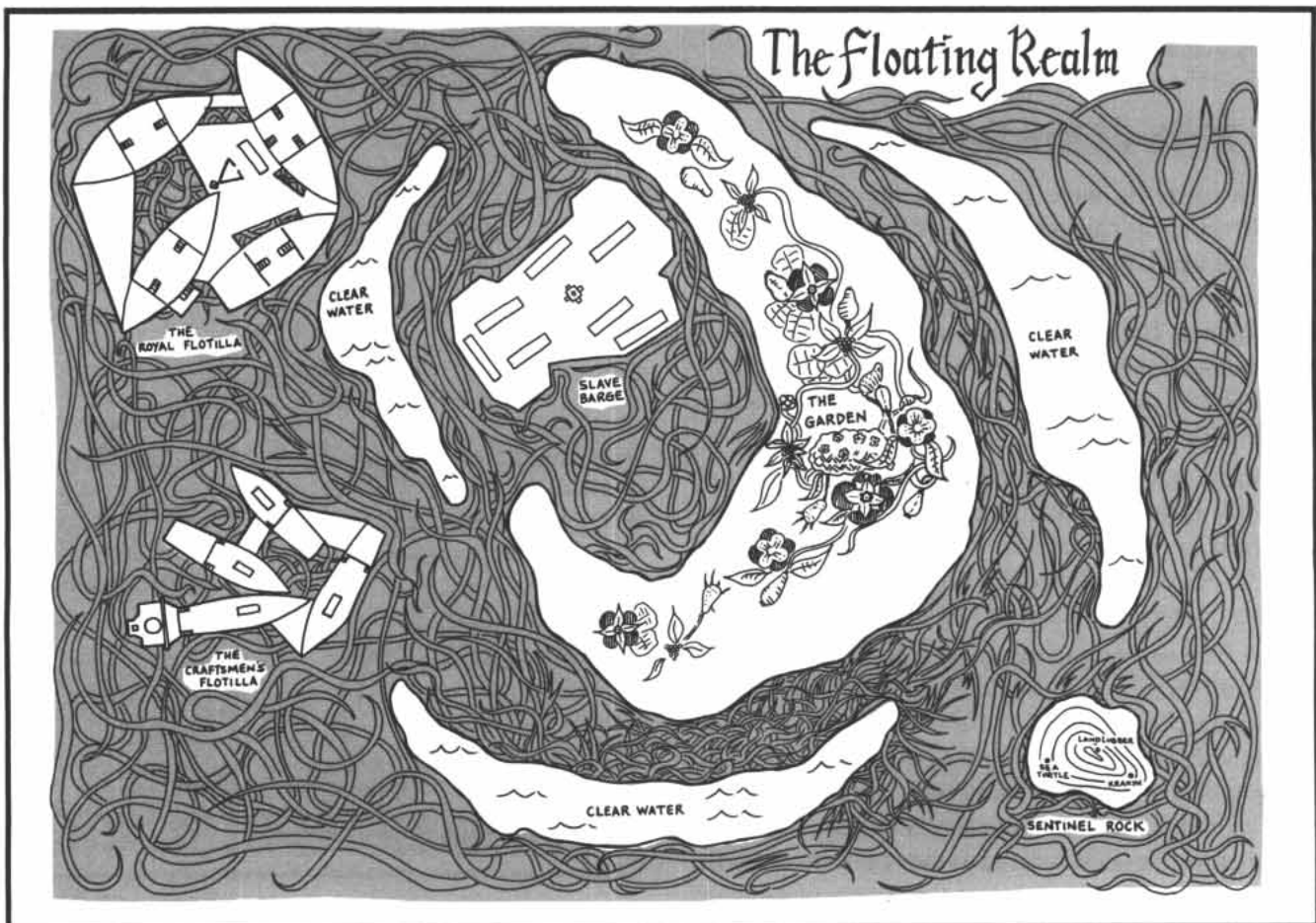
At a slightly greater risk, fish are harvested in the areas known as Clearwater, where a fluke of the currents has left a patch of the ocean free of the tenacious sea vine. Dangerous creatures prowl these waters in search of food, and some expeditions to Clearwater return with one less member than set out. Still, the population of the Realm must eat - and they must also be able to get around.

The common mode of movement — employed by all the slaves and most of the Craftsmen — are pontoon boots. If the sea vine melons are left to rot, they produce a foul smelling but extremely buoyant gas. Koot discovered that by filling two large, airtight bags with this gas and strapping them to his feet, he could walk — awk-

wardly — across the sea of plantlife without sinking into it. The finest pontoons are fashioned from bladders removed from the giant sea creatures that are occasionally slain by the fishing parties.

The Safe Sea is the area immediately around the three clusters, where sea creatures are rarely encountered, due mainly to the luxuriant thickness of the sea vine. The inhabitants of both the Craftsmen's and Royal Flotillas occasionally wander about here to pick a particularly succulent melon for lunch, or merely for the exercise. There is enough growth in here to hide in, and it is the site of occasional clandestine meetings.

Death Sea is the area where the vine is thinnest. Walking here is extremely dangerous, even for someone wearing pontoons, for the vegetation is so sparse it can barely support even a lightened traveler. Those traversing it must roll under 21 - SIZ x3 (so, a person with SIZ 17 has a 12% chance of crossing safely). No-one has ventured here for many years, for this is an area well-populated with carnivorous predators, and since there is nothing of any value to be found here, the risk hardly seems worthwhile.





Beyond the Death Sea lies the forbidding loom of Sentinel Rock. This is a craggy finger of rock barely a hundred yards in length. This is a shunned place, and has three caves. In the first there dwells a group of insane cannibal outcasts, the Landlubbers. The second is the lair of a sea turtle. The third leads to a natural tunnel system, which twists down through the rock to the Krakyn's lair. There is also an underwater entrance to the chaos god monster's den.

## People of the Realm

This is the most important section of this scenario. Here are presented the major figures of the Realm. Several readings are advised before play begins, so that the gamemaster is clear on who is doing what to whom.

Each entry introduces the character, and states their position, appearance, and personality. Further notes detail their current plots, and finally describe their reaction to the arrival of the adventurers.

## The Royal Flotilla

The ships of the Royal Flotilla are the Flagship, which houses the Realm's rulers; the Provider, which contains the stores and oversees the care of the flotillas; the Sanctum, which is where the sorcerers gather; and the Temple, which is dedicated to worship of the Krakyn.

## The Flagship

### ADMIRAL VERANKA

Admiral Veranka is the ruler of the Floating Realm, and the captain of the Flagship. She is Melnibonéan, attractive and arrogant. She is tall, with long platinum hair, and cold eyes the color of granite. She is hard and merciless, and those who earn her wrath are quickly sacrificed to the Krakyn.

She holds total power over the Realm, both through her use of the Krakyn, and through her elite force of loyal troops. The Realm is her world, and she will destroy anyone who attempts to leave it, or to wrest power from her. She senses that such change is in the air, and now does not leave the Royal Flotilla for any reason. Whenever she is off the Flagship, she takes Berel or half-a-dozen guards as an escort.

Veranka's husband and First Mate is Berel. Her children are Arlis and Natasia, and they are already old

## Royal Flotilla

|                 | Captain | 1st Mate | Boson   | Others         | Crew     |
|-----------------|---------|----------|---------|----------------|----------|
| <b>Flagship</b> | Veranka | Berel    | Jyrym   | Arlis, Natasia | Nobles   |
| <b>Provider</b> | Serge   | M'lara   | Finayl  | Torhal         | Packers  |
| <b>Sanctum</b>  | Inyz    | Therus   | Ashtide | Atrima         | Adepts   |
| <b>Temple</b>   | Delphon | Hetre    | Liot    | —              | Servants |

enough to plot against their mother. A Rite of Succession is to be held soon to determine which of the two is the acknowledged heir to the Admiral's Chair. This is a battle to the death. It is Veranka's secret intent to deem the survivor unworthy and sacrifice them, thus ridding herself of both of her scheming offspring.

Veranka has no particular plans for the adventurers, and if they do nothing remarkable, she will probably forget them. If they seem a threat, she will remove them.

### ADMIRAL VERANKA

STR 17 CON 18 SIZ 16 INT 17 POW 16 DEX 17 CHA 14

HIT POINTS: 22 ARMOR: 40 points of demon armor

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6+1D4

| Weapon   | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|----------|--------|-------|--------|
| Falchion | 96%    | 91%   | 1D6+2  |
| Dagger   | 87%    | 84%   | 1D4+2  |

SKILLS: Balance 67%, Conceal 68%, Dodge 86%, Hide 63%, Jump 47%, Listen 93%, Move Quietly 82%, Search 47%, See 75%, Set Trap 74%, Swim 72%.

LANGUAGES: Common 76%/80%, Low Melnibonéan 85%/85%.

### F'V'RR

DEMON FALCHION Breed Kalgath CV: 35

The blade of Veranka's falchion is a coral pink. The hilt is fashioned like a shell.

CON 20 SIZ 2 INT 4 POW 12

POWERS: +2D6 Damage.

### I'LDORR

DEMON ARMOR Breed Zamia CV: 200

This armor is gleaming black plate mail. It is cold to the touch, and a nimbus of cold blue light plays across it. This light can form tendrils which paralyze flesh.

CON 50 SIZ 16 INT 6 POW 18

| Weapon          | Attack | Parry | Damage              |
|-----------------|--------|-------|---------------------|
| Paralyze Attack | 48%    | —     | 5D6 potency vs. CON |

POWERS: Armor (50 points), Paralyze Attack (10m range, 5D6 potency).

Inyz created this Armor. Inyz can withdraw the protection at any time, and can activate the Paralyze Attack against Veranka whenever she chooses. Veranka is unaware of this.

**FIRST MATE BEREL**

Berel is Veranka's husband. He is the First Mate of the Flagship. He is stern and middle-aged, with a firm voice and a keen gaze. He keeps himself fit, and walks around the decks of both flotillas. He studies, observes, and takes notes. He believes in fate, and the futility of action.

Berel takes no part in his wife's struggle for power and dominance, except as an observer. He sees the Realm as a controlled experiment, and is writing a dissertation on the subject, entitled *A Melnibonéan among the Mabden*. Using his wife as a case study, he argues that a Melnibonéan isolated amongst humans will take on their characteristics. Veranka would be outraged by this, but takes so little interest in her husband or his affairs that she is unlikely to ever read it.

Berel has the best understanding of the Realm society, and has devised dozens of different systems for governing it. No-one ever involves him in their plotting, because all see him as completely disinterested. In fact, Berel is aware of practically every single plot, and watches their interweaving with vague interest. He knows of the Free Realm movement among the craftsmen, and is curious to see how long it would last in power before sliding once more into dictatorship and tyranny. This speculation may even lead him to assist the movement, in his own obtuse fashion.

Assisting the movement however would hasten his own doom. Berel knows his role in the life of the Realm, as First Mate to the Admiral. If called upon, he will defend his wife as best he can, even if it means his own death. He does this without energy or enthusiasm, but with a sense of duty and inescapable fate, trapped in his own microcosmic world.

Berel treats the adventurers as another piece in his complex model of society. If they seem especially intelligent, he might share some of his theories with them. Like them, he sees himself as an outsider to the Realm, and is a useful ally and informant.

**BEREL**

STR 13 CON 16 SIZ 17 INT 23 POW 14 DEX 13 CHA 16

HIT POINTS: 21 ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Sea Ax | 83%    | 77%   | 2D6+2  |
| Dagger | 61%    | 55%   | 1D4+2  |

SKILLS: Dodge 53%, Swim 72%, Memorize 85%, Navigate 67%, Balance 42%, Listen 84%, Search 83%, See 97%,

LANGUAGES: Common 90%/90%, Low Melnibonéan 99%/99%, High Melnibonéan 70%/70%.

SUMMONING SKILL: 56%.

SUMMONINGS: All elementals.

**ARLIS**

Arlis is Veranka's son, and one of the two heirs to the Admiral's Chair. He is a lanky, shifty-eyed Melnibonéan youth. He has greasy hair cut ragged, red-rimmed eyes, and a slack mouth which curls in a perpetual sneer. He is cruel and devious - truly his mother's son!

Arlis anxiously awaits the Rite of Succession, when he is to battle his sister for the Admiral's Chair. He has announced, with characteristic bravado and overconfidence, that when he becomes Admiral he will take the Roqel to be his First Mate (wife). He is infatuated with her, but she has always spurned his advances. He reasons that, once he is the ruler of the Realm, she will have no choice.

Arlis has formed a secret alliance with Atrima, one of Captain Inyz's guards, to spy on Inyz and her dealings with Natasia. He has promised the young woman a position of power in his new regime, but in fact intends to assassinate her once he has assumed control and her usefulness is ended.

Arlis is plotting the premature demise of his dear sister. To this deadly end, he attempts to strike a deal with the most disreputable-looking adventurer for a quick and quiet assassination. Once the deed is done, he will in turn slay the killer and thus appear to all as the hero of the day, a bereaved brother who has taken just vengeance.

**ARLIS**

STR 12 CON 14 SIZ 15 INT 14 POW 15 DEX 13 CHA 11

HIT POINTS: 17 ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon   | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|----------|--------|-------|--------|
| Scimitar | 78%    | 66%   | 1D8+1  |
| Dagger   | 54%    | 37%   | 1D4+2  |
| Butt     | 35%    | —     | 1D4    |
| Kick     | 49%    | —     | 1D6    |
| Punch    | 54%    | —     | 1D3    |

SKILLS: Ambush 49%, Balance 54%, Climb 62%, Conceal 32%, Dodge 54%, Hide 48%, Jump 53%, Listen 43%, Move Quietly 50%, Search 52%, See 45%, Set Trap 46%, Swim 71%.

LANGUAGES: Common 13%/55%, Low Melnibonéan 26%/70%.

**NATASIA**

Natasia is Veranka's daughter, and the other contender for the Admiral's Chair. She has silver hair, an amused smile, and gentle eyes. She is petite and charming, and presents herself as a sweet and innocent lass beset by an evil murderous brother. In truth, she is as sly and scheming as he is.

Natasia attempted to recruit Captain Inyz into her service. Inyz used the opportunity to manipulate the girl with emotion-controlling demons. Natasia is now to-



Natasia, Berel, Veranka, and Arlis on the Reviewing Stand

tally loyal to Inyz, and is unaware that her judgement has been magically affected. Her strong devotion has deepened into love, a side-effect Inyz had not bargained for, and does not yet know quite how to deal with. Natasia keeps both her love for Inyz and her alliance with her a secret.

Natasia has been flirting with Torhal, one of Captain Serge's young guardsmen. She knows that Serge is plotting something, and is sure that soon Torhal will break down and tell her what it is. Then she plans to inspire Torhal to kill Arlis. Whatever the outcome, she will be rid of at least one inconvenient male.

Natasia once had genuine affection for her mother Veranka. However, she sees the Rite of Succession as a betrayal of this love, and has become bitter towards her. She will soon begin to plan her mother's downfall.

Natasia sees the adventurers as useful allies, both against her brother and her mother. She will use wiles and deceit to get them on side.

**NATASIA**

STR 11 CON 13 SIZ 12 INT 13 POW 15 DEX 10 CHA 15

HIT POINTS: 13 ARMOR: 20 Points of demon armor

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

| Weapon  | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|---------|--------|-------|--------|
| Cutlass | 42%    | 50%   | 1D6+2  |
| Dagger  | 51%    | 36%   | 1D4+2  |
| Bite    | 23%    | —     | 1D3    |
| Kick    | 47%    | —     | 1D6    |
| Punch   | 44%    | —     | 1D3    |

SKILLS: Balance 32%, Climb 37%, Conceal 31%, Dodge 48%, Hide 55%, Jump 34%, Listen 56%, Move Quietly 51%, Persuade 70%, Search 50%, See 42%, Set Trap 27%, Sleight of Hand 45%, Swim 76%.

LANGUAGES: Common 00%/50%, Low Melnibonéan 40%/65%.

**V'SS'PLL**

DEMON ARMOR Breed Amisra CV: 124

This appears to be normal leather armor, with a chaos sign painted on the back of it. Natasia wears it at all times.

CON 20 SIZ 12 INT 24 POW 15

POWERS: Armor (20 points), Emotion Control (Loyalty to Inyz, range 10m, 10D6 potency).

Inyz created this armor, and she can withdraw the protection at any time. The Emotion Control operates continuously on Natasia, ensuring her ongoing loyalty to Inyz. Natasia is unaware of this.



## BOSON JYRYM

Jyrym is the Boson aboard the Flagship. He is from Argimiliar. He is oily and obsequious, and toadies up to anyone and everyone. Jyrym is a plotter without power, pathetically eager to spill whatever knowledge he has in the hope of impressing someone. Veranka tolerates him because he has a perverse usefulness. He can't keep a secret, and is a handy source of other people's secrets.

Jyrym is loyal to Veranka, but his spare time is devoted to worming his way into the good graces of Natasia and Arlis - after all, one of them will one day be Admiral. He secretly favors Natasia, for in her he sees an opportunity to advance himself in the hierarchy of the Realm. Should Natasia emerge victorious from the Rite of Succession, she will one day require a First Mate, and why shouldn't that be himself?

Jyrym will sleaze up to the adventurers, trying to be their friend and confidante. The man is inherently repulsive, and unlikely to succeed in winning them over.

### JYRYM

STR 16 CON 12 SIZ 15 INT 11 POW 8 DEX 9 CHA 10

HIT POINTS: 15 ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon   | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|----------|--------|-------|--------|
| Scimitar | 66%    | 58%   | 1D8+1  |
| Dagger   | 47%    | 44%   | 1D4+2  |

SKILLS: Balance 74%, Dodge 41%, Listen 58%, Move Quietly 37%, Pick Lock 39%, See 23%, Tie Knot 87%.

LANGUAGES: Common 00%/55%.

## THE NOBLES

The guards of the Flagship are collectively referred to as the Nobles. They gained their position by pleasing Veranka, and are generally loyal to her in order to maintain it. They enjoy the best rations and conditions in the Realm. They are arrogant and puffed-up, with an inflated sense of their own importance. They are accustomed to giving orders and seeing them carried out. They are universally hated.

### TYPICAL NOBLE OF THE FLAGSHIP

STR 14 CON 13 SIZ 14 INT 12 POW 12 DEX 11 CHA 13

HIT POINTS: 15 ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon          | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|-----------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Falchion        | 55%    | 50%   | 1D6+2  |
| Filkharian Pike | 60%    | 57%   | 2D6+1  |

SKILLS: Dodge 53%, Listen 50%, Search 40%, See 50%.

LANGUAGES: Common 00%/60%.

## The Provider

### CAPTAIN SERGE

Serge is the supply master of the Royal Flotilla, and captain of the Provider. He is from Tarkesh, and is a bare-chested, hard-muscled and bearded seven-foot tall viking. He has a deep voice, and is wary and respectful of strangers.

On the Provider is stored large quantities of food and all other useable goods salvaged from ensnared ships, and Serge is in charge of their division and distribution. He is also in charge of all traffic between the Royal Flotilla and the Craftsmen's Flotilla, and no one gets by him officially without permission from Veranka.

Serge's position has ingrained him with a deep concern for all the people of the Realm. This has led him to realize that Veranka is an evil and destructive influence, and that only when the post of Admiral is abolished can the Realm truly flourish.

Serge now works towards the overthrow of Veranka and the establishment of a fair, just government in the Realm. He and his cohorts call themselves the Free Realm movement. Most of their support comes from the craftsmen.

Serge perceives the adventurers as potential allies, but will not make his intentions known to them until they have proven by their deeds that they are on the side of right - or at least not on the side of Veranka.

### SERGE

STR 18 CON 17 SIZ 17 INT 15 POW 13 DEX 14 CHA 16

HIT POINTS: 22 ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon     | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Broadsword | 76%    | 71%   | 1D8+1  |
| Shield     | 34%    | 75%   | 1D6    |
| Hand Ax    | 53%    | 49%   | 1D6+1  |

SKILLS: Credit 92%, Dodge 32%, First Aid 57%, Listen 60%, Memorize 61%, Orate 63%, Persuade 52%, Search 50%, See 75%.

LANGUAGES: Common 55%/75%.

### FIRST MATE M'LARA

M'lara is the First Mate of the Provider, and is Serge's wife. She is from Filkhar, and has a solemn beauty. She has short brown hair and dark eyes. Her gaze is direct, and she has a practical "get on with it" attitude. She admires effort, and has no time for fools or slackers.

M'lara's primary duty is to maintain the Provider's supply records. She is also active in the Free Realm movement, and argues for more direct and immediate action to overthrow the Admiralty.

M'lara is a sorceress of some skill, and this has been kept secret from the other inhabitants of the Realm. She has been binding water elementals to the hull of the Provider, and hopes eventually to have enough elemental power to tear the ship loose of the weed and sail it to freedom. Currently there are seven bound.

M'lara is a bit more impulsive than her husband, and approaches the adventurers on her own once she has convinced herself of their trustworthiness.

**M'LARA**

STR 14 CON 11 SIZ 12 INT 18 POW 17 DEX 17 CHA 13

HIT POINTS: 11 ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6+1D4

| Weapon     | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Shortsword | 51%    | 53%   | 1D6+1  |
| Dagger     | 62%    | 38%   | 1D4+2  |

SKILLS: Climb 43%, Dodge 44%, Listen 37%, Memorize 78%, Persuade 54%, Pick Lock 42%, Search 56%, See 33%, Sleight of Hand 35%, Swim 61%, Tie Knot 59%.

LANGUAGES: Common 75%/90%, High Melnibonéan 25%/35%.

SUMMONING SKILL: 53%.

SUMMONINGS: Water and Air elementals.

**BOSON FINAYL**

Finayl is the Boson on board the Provider. He is Ilmioran. He has blond hair, keeps himself clean-shaven, and is youthfully handsome. He is young and honest, although rash at times. He often speaks his mind before considering the consequences of his words.

Finayl is devoted to Serge and M'lara, seeing them as surrogate parents. He is a member of the Free Realm movement, although the other members try to avoid telling him every plan in case he spills them.

Finayl is madly in love with Roqel. He tries to keep these feelings to himself, but anyone who observes Finayl when Roqel is present (Search roll) can see his admiration writ plainly on his features. Arlis would literally have his head if he even suspected the youthful Boson of competing with him for Roqel's hand. Finayl nurtures a burning hatred for Arlis, and should Veranka's son push his suit too strongly, fireworks will surely result.

**FINAYL**

STR 13 CON 14 SIZ 13 INT 12 POW 17 DEX 14 CHA 16

HIT POINTS: 15 ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6+1D4

| Weapon     | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Broadsword | 65%    | 61%   | 1D8+1  |
| Shortsword | 47%    | 42%   | 1D6+1  |
| Punch      | 64%    | --    | 1D3    |

SKILLS: Balance 83%, Climb 74%, Dodge 67%, Jump 62%, Listen 48%, Navigate 35%, Orate 24%, See 35%, Swim 81%, Tie Knot 71%, Tumble 42%.

LANGUAGES: Common 00%/60%.

**TORHAL**

Torhal is a packer aboard the Provider. He is young and naive. He is neither handsome nor ugly, but has plain features, and scruffy brown hair. He is always smiling.

The reason for the smile is that Natasia has professed her love to him. Torhal is unconcerned that she may one day rule the Realm, he is just thrilled that a pretty girl has made him feel special. Torhal views the anti-Admiralty mutterings on board the Provider with alarm, and faithfully reports every word to his secret belle.

Torhal does not notice the adventurers, but is friendly enough if approached.

**TORHAL**

STR 14 CON 12 SIZ 11 INT 10 POW 9 DEX 12 CHA 11

HIT POINTS: 12 ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1).

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6+1D4

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Spear  | 24%    | 19%   | 1D6+1  |

SKILLS: Sing 16%, Search 7%, See 8%.

LANGUAGES: Common 00%/50%, Low Melnibonéan 00%/11%.

**THE PACKERS**

The guards of the Provider are collectively known as the packers, as they spend much of their day shifting boxes around. They are fit, but often tired. They know that they receive better treatment from Serge than under any other captain, and are more loyal to him than to Veranka. Although few of them are in the know, all support the principle of the Free Realm movement.

**TYPICAL PACKER OF THE PROVIDER**

STR 15 CON 15 SIZ 15 INT 11 POW 13 DEX 12 CHA 11

HIT POINTS: 18 ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6+1D4

| Weapon     | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Broadsword | 56%    | 47%   | 1D8+1  |
| Dagger     | 40%    | 33%   | 1D4+2  |

SKILLS: Dodge 36%, Tie Knot 67%, Listen 35%, Search 65%, See 41%.

**The Sanctum**

**CAPTAIN INYZ**

Inyz is the captain of the Sanctum, and the principal sorceress of the Realm. She is a sultry woman of Dharijor with long braided dark hair, and an amused smile.

Veranka raised Inyz to a position of prominence and authority, and gave her command of one of the ships of the Royal Flotilla. Here she is sanctioned to pursue her magical studies, to the good of the Realm. The two

rely on each other for their continued power, and are thus firm allies. If either could do without the other, they would, but until then, they remain united.

The coming Rite of Succession threatens to change the power structure of the Realm. Inyz has ensured her political survival by enslaving Natasia. This was accomplished by a gift of demon armor to the girl. The demon's hidden property is Emotion Control, which constantly works to inspire feelings of warmth and loyalty towards Inyz. This has been too effective, and Natasia has fallen in love with Inyz.

Inyz is married to Therus, who was amusing once upon a time. In the closed environs of the Realm he quickly became tiring, and Inyz is increasingly irritated by him. Her Boson, Ashtide, provides a more intellectual diversion; Therus' days may be numbered.

Inyz does not have much interest in the adventurers, although she seeks out any sorcerers to exchange magical knowledge with them.

### INYZ

STR 11 CON 10 SIZ 11 INT 18 POW 22 DEX 17 CHA 14

HIT POINTS: 10 ARMOR: 20 points of demon armor

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6+1D4

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Dagger | 66%    | 63%   | 1D4+2  |

SKILLS: Conceal 54%, Dodge 76%, Listen 32%, Memorize 78%, Persuade 63%, Plant Lore 48%, Poison Lore 29%, Scent 44%, See 61%, Taste 35%.

LANGUAGES: Common 90%/90%, High Melnibonéan 64%/70%.

SUMMONING SKILL: 78%

SUMMONINGS: All elementals, the Krakyn, demon breeds Amisra, Bangongi, Siserro, Zamis.

DEMONS: Dr'ff (demon dagger), B'v'xx (demon armor), Sr'v'rll (demon healing amulet).

### DR'FF

DEMON DAGGER Breed Bangongi CV: 75

This dagger has a delicate leaf blade. When held, it emits a constant high-pitched hum, like a mosquito.

CON 22 SIZ 1 INT 3 POW 11

POWERS: +5D6 damage.

### B'V'XX

DEMON ARMOR Breed Amisra CV: 124

This is worn-looking leather armor with a chaos sign painted on the back. It feels soft to the touch, but is harder than iron against incoming blows. It smells of perfume. When the demon activates its Emotion Control, the scent becomes sharper, and eventually overpowering.

CON 20 SIZ 11 INT 19 POW 13

POWERS: Armor (20 points), Emotion Control (Confusion, range 10m, 10D6 potency).

### SR'V'RLL

DEMON AMULET

Breed Siserro

CV: 98

This is a silver amulet which Inyz wears around her neck at all times. It is shaped like a laughing sun, with eight rays. A small pin on the back pierces her throat and holds it in place. In return for healing her, the demon is able to sup on her blood whenever it likes. A successful Search roll notes a trickle of blood on Inyz's neck.

CON 18 SIZ 1 INT 14 POW 17

POWERS: Healing (4D6 points).

### FIRST MATE THERUS

Therus is the First Mate of the Sanctum, and is Inyz' husband. He is an Argimillian party animal. He is lean and blond, and impossibly handsome. He is always the first to discover the alcohol on a newly-captured ship, and is forever bragging to the men and winking lewdly at the women. He is monumentally stupid, and has no idea of his wife's plots and plans.

Therus has been lazy since his arrival in the Realm. He aims for minimum effort in everything he does. This sloth is starting to show in his figure. Where he was previously fit and well-toned, he is now going soft around the edges.

Therus is a practical joker, and the new arrivals provide him with a fresh supply of victims. Adventurers are apt to find fish in their helms, or discover a sign stuck to their backs which reads "Fish Brains," or "Official Court Buffoon." Therus' favorite drunken pastime is to conceal himself and pelt passersby with slimy globs of decayed sea vine sludge.

### THERUS

STR 17 CON 18 SIZ 16 INT 8 POW 17 DEX 15 CHA 18

HIT POINTS: 22 ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6+1D4

| Weapon        | Attack | Parry | Damage                     |
|---------------|--------|-------|----------------------------|
| Broadsword    | 80%    | 73%   | 1D8+1                      |
| Dagger        | 52%    | 49%   | 1D4+2                      |
| Punch         | 71%    | --    | 1D3                        |
| Thrown Sludge | 75%    | --    | -1D6 CHA until cleaned off |

SKILLS: Ambush 57%, Climb 52%, Conceal 63%, Dodge 60%, Hide 55%, Jump 46%, Move Quietly 64%, Set Trap 85%, Swim 33%.

LANGUAGES: Common 23%/40%.

### BOSON ASHTIDE

Ashtide is the Boson on board the Sanctum. He is agile and confident, and has curly red hair. He is from Eshmir, and is a mercenary.

Ashtide did not plan on being stranded in the Realm, but has made the most of the situation. Diligence and tact rewarded him with the position of Boson. Now he is aiming higher. He is currently courting Inyz, hoping to win her away from Therus. He is doing this not with words of love, but by engaging her in conversation, listening to her theories, and being attentive and intelli-



gent. It is working. Inyz is considering it, for her present First Mate is obviously an unfit husband. If Therus ever discovers this secret courtship, Ashtide will find himself the victim of a fatal practical joke - such as a stiff dose of salts of alum in his ale.

Ashtide is always interested in new arrivals, in the hope that one day a band of castaways will offer some hope of escape from the Realm. He watches the adventurers and gauges their mettle. If they seem useful, he will approach them.

**ASHTIDE**

STR 11 CON 15 SIZ 13 INT 16 POW 13 DEX 18 CHA 14

HIT POINTS: 16 ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon           | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|------------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Long Spear       | 91%    | 93%   | 1D10+1 |
| Javelin (melee)  | 36%    | 52%   | 1D6    |
| Javelin (thrown) | 80%    | --    | 1D8+2  |

SKILLS: Dodge 62%, Listen 81%, Search 75%, See 90%, Track 76%.

LANGUAGES: Common 00%/70%, 'pande 35%/80%.

**ATRIMA**

Atrima is one of the guards aboard the Sanctum. She is from Dharijor, and has short dark hair except for one long single braid. She is a student of the arcane arts, and is extremely jealous of Inyz and her abilities.

Atrima has formed an alliance with Arlis. She is aware of the plottings of Inyz and Natasia, and Arlis was the obvious choice to sell that information to. The contact has been more lucrative than she imagined, and Arlis has promised her great riches when he takes control of the Realm.

Atrima's particular specialty is drugs and poisons. In secret she has manufactured the drug used by the Melnibonéans to keep their slaves docile. She has recently begun feeding this to Arlis in small doses in order to gain total control over the boy.

Atrima is not interested in the adventurers, unless Arlis brings them to her attention.

**ATRIMA**

STR 15 CON 13 SIZ 15 INT 16 POW 16 DEX 10 CHA 12

HIT POINTS: 16 ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon   | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|----------|--------|-------|--------|
| Falchion | 65%    | 53%   | 1D6+2  |
| Dagger   | 51%    | 47%   | 1D4+2  |

SKILLS: Climb 54%, Dodge 63%, Hide 65%, Listen 58%, Move Quietly 48%, Persuade 41%, Pick Lock 50%, Plant Lore 84%, Poison Lore 77%.

SUMMONING SKILL: 38%.

SUMMONINGS: Fire elementals.

LANGUAGES: Common 55%/80%, High Melnibonéan 35%/40%.

**VRR'LL**

DEMON AMULET Breed Ifahnzar CV: 99

This is a tarnished brass amulet depicting a crossed sword and dagger. Atrima did not bind the demon herself, but found it in the loot from a stranded vessel.

CON 10 INT 2 POW 13

POWERS: Wardpacts (Swords and Daggers).

**THE ADEPTS**

The guards aboard the Sanctum are known as the adepts. They have each been chosen by Inyz for displaying sorcerous knowledge, or natural aptitude. Together they study the black arts. They consider themselves superior to the other crews, and are widely unpopular, mainly due to their habit of kidnapping slaves for midnight demonic summonings.

**TYPICAL ADEPT OF THE SANCTUM**

STR 13 CON 11 SIZ 12 INT 16 POW 16 DEX 13 CHA 12

HIT POINTS: 20 ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon   | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|----------|--------|-------|--------|
| Falchion | 54%    | 51%   | 1D6+2  |
| Dagger   | 67%    | 63%   | 1D4+2  |

SKILLS: Hide 52%, Listen 47%, Move Quietly 56%, Persuade 35%, Plant Lore 31%, See 50%.

LANGUAGES: Common 60%/80%, High Melnibonéan 40%/40%.

SUMMONING SKILL: 35%.

SUMMONINGS: Water elementals, one lesser demon breed.

**CAPTAIN DELPHON**

Delphon is the captain of the Temple, and the Krakyn's only priest. He is from Dharijor, and is short and hairy. He has ritually scarred himself by carving sucker-marks into his flesh.

Delphon claims that the Krakyn once took him as a sacrifice, but freed him so that he could spread its worship. This is partly true. He did survive the sacrifice, but the religious mission was the product of his own saltwater delusions. Since his "rebirth" he has not shaved or cut his hair. His hair and beard fall in long greasy strands, knotted together like the tentacles of his lord.

Delphon is a true zealot. He cannot understand that weekly sacrifices to the Lord of the Deep would depopulate the Realm in short order. He officiates over all ceremonies of worship to the Lord of the Deep, including sacrifices. He erupts with religious indignation at the very thought of anyone of the Realm worshiping any other deity. Any plot against the Krakyn is a heretical crime, and deserving of extended torture.

Veranka finds that the fear wielded by Delphon is useful in keeping the people of the Realm in line, and so tolerates any of his excesses. The Krakyn is com-

pletely unaware of Delphon's existence and the worship accorded to it.

Delphon informs the adventurers that they must forsake all other gods and worship only the Krakyn. Failure to do this is blasphemy, and the punishment is to become one with the Krakyn - that is, to be fed to it.

**DELPHON**

STR 15 CON 12 SIZ 10 INT 11 POW 13 DEX 9 CHA 6

HIT POINTS: 12 ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| <i>Weapon</i> | <i>Attack</i> | <i>Parry</i> | <i>Damage</i> |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| Flail         | 62%           | 47%          | 2D6+2         |

SKILLS: Krakyn Lore 90%, Orate 93%, See 28%, Sing 17%.

LANGUAGES: Common 00%/55%.

**FIRST MATE HETRE**

Hetre is the First Mate of the Temple, and is Delphon's wife. She is from Jharkor, and is grey-haired and severe. She has dull blue eyes, shot through with red and yellow.

Delphon is consumed by his worship, but Hetre sees the power that such worship can bring. She persuaded Veranka to put aside a whole ship for religious use (the Temple). She is often able to claim the choicest booty for the order. Delphon leads the prayers, but Hetre runs the church.

Hetre sees the Admiralty as a redundant position. The Realm belongs to the Krakyn, so the church of the Krakyn should be in direct control. She plots a religious revolt, in which the Krakyn will attack the Flagship and kill all on board. If possible, Delphon would die as well, becoming a handy martyr. Hetre would then seize power, demanding absolute fealty from the survivors, lest the wrath of the Krakyn descend upon them.

Hetre has embarked upon the first step of this campaign, by preaching that the Krakyn is displeased with the lack of reverence accorded to it. Delphon has unwittingly seized upon this sermon with enthusiasm, little suspecting it bears the seeds of his own downfall.

Hetre pays the adventurers no more attention than any of the rest of the congregation.

**HETRE**

STR 7 CON 14 SIZ 10 INT 16 POW 16 DEX 12 CHA 9

HIT POINTS: 18 ARMOR: None.

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

| <i>Weapon</i> | <i>Attack</i> | <i>Parry</i> | <i>Damage</i> |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| Light Mace    | 41%           | 32%          | 1D6+2         |

SKILLS: Conceal 80%, Credit 86%, Evaluate 58%, Persuade 77%.

LANGUAGES: Common 55%/80%.

SUMMONING SKILL: 52%.

SUMMONINGS: Water elementals.

**BOSON LIOT**

Liot is the Boson on board the Temple. He is tall and withdrawn. He speaks rarely, and in a harsh whisper. His hands rarely settle by his side - his arms constantly move and weave, like slowly undulating tentacles.

Liot is insane. He believes that he is the human manifestation of the Krakyn, sent to walk among men. He believes that he has divine powers, can breathe water, and can approach the Krakyn without harm (it is, after all, another facet of himself).

Liot has not shared his self-awareness with Hetre and Delphon. He listens to their prayers, and swells with fulfilment, believing that every praise is spoken for him alone. He watches them, and serves them as faithfully as they serve the Krakyn - himself. Sacrifices are usually locked in the brig overnight before they are given to the Lord of the Deep. Liot stealthily visits them alone, in the dead of night. To them he tells his secret - "I am the Krakyn!" - and cuts away a small part of their flesh. He consumes this raw, as a symbolic linkage with the coming feast for his other self.

Unless the adventurers are slated for sacrifice, Liot probably won't even notice their arrival in the Realm.

**LIOT**

STR 14 CON 17 SIZ 11 INT 7 POW 6 DEX 16 CHA 9

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

HIT POINTS: 17 ARMOR: None.

| <i>Weapon</i> | <i>Attack</i> | <i>Parry</i> | <i>Damage</i> |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| Heavy Mace    | 60%           | 51%          | 1D8+2         |
| Dagger        | 74%           | 66%          | 1D4+2         |

SKILLS: Hide 95%, Listen 77%, Move Quietly 83%, Orate 31%, Swim 82%, Tie Knot 64%.

LANGUAGES: Common 00%/35%.

**THE SERVANTS**

The Servants of the Krakyn dwell aboard the Temple, and indulge in active worship of the underwater monster. Some are insane, some are sadistic, and some see it as a way of guaranteeing that they won't be sacrificed. In general, they are the craziest people in the Realm, and carry themselves with inflated importance. Few of them are physically fit, and some never leave the ship except for sacrifices.

**TYPICAL SERVANT OF THE KRAKYN**

STR 11 CON 11 SIZ 12 INT 10 POW 11 DEX 10 CHA 9

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

HIT POINTS: 11 ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1)

| <i>Weapon</i> | <i>Attack</i> | <i>Parry</i> | <i>Damage</i> |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| Flail         | 40%           | 37%          | 2D6+2         |
| Cudgel        | 26%           | 21%          | 1D6           |

SKILLS: Ambush 50%, Listen 67%, Orate 27%, Search 58%, See 62%, Swim 34%.

## The Craftsmen's Flotilla

The ships of the Craftsmen's Flotilla are the *Guardian*, which is the home and barracks for Veranka's goons; the *Wonderworks*, which is the workshop of the sage inventor Koot the Crazy; the *Windtamer*, on which is constructed the Realm's mill; and the *Anvil*, which is a floating smithy.

### BULL THE TASKMASTER

Bull is the captain of the *Guardian*, and overseer of the Craftsmen's Flotilla. He is a huge and shaggy brute from Oin. He is the law aboard the Craftsmen's Flotilla, and rules with an iron hand, a nasty-looking flail, and a crew of underlings who would feel at home in the worst prisons of the world.

Bull is his own man. He cares nothing for the trappings of wealth, for there is no use for it in the Realm. Rather, he enjoys his power over his charges, and cares only that he retain his position no matter who is Admiral. The hulking bully crushes the least resistance, knowing full well his fate should his repressed victims ever get the upper hand.

Bull is good at ensuring that the craftsmen are working, but not good at managing their labor. He has long since given up trying to understand what Koot invents. In this respect, he is terrible at his job. If the craftsmen built a catapult to lob burning pitch at the Royal Flotilla, Bull would probably think it was a new kind of weathervane.

Bull views the adventurers with suspicion, until they learn their place. Once they seem to be giving him and the Admiralty the proper respect, he worries about them less.

#### BULL

STR 18 CON 24 SIZ 15 INT 10 POW 5 DEX 9 CHA 7

HIT POINTS: 27 ARMOR: Half-plate (1D8-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6+1D4

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Flail  | 84%    | 73%   | 2D6+2  |
| Cudgel | 70%    | 67%   | 1D6    |
| Kick   | 68%    | —     | 1D6    |
| Punch  | 87%    | —     | 1D3    |

SKILLS: Dodge 21%, Listen 55%, Search 14%, See 67%, Scent 46%.

LANGUAGES: Common 00%/35%, Yuric 00%/50%.

### THE BULLIES

The bullies are the watchmen and guards aboard the *Guardian*, and Veranka's police in the Craftsmen's flotilla. They are a rough assortment of villains, who swagger about the decks and irritate the apprentices.

## Craftsmen's Flotilla

|                    | Craftsman | 1st Mate | Journeyman | Crew        |
|--------------------|-----------|----------|------------|-------------|
| <i>Guardian</i>    | Bull      | —        | —          | Bullies     |
| <i>Wonderworks</i> | Koot      | —        | Roqel      | Apprentices |
| <i>Windtamer</i>   | Millet    | Whey     | Griff      | Apprentices |
| <i>Anvil</i>       | Hammer    | Asma     | Bolt       | Apprentices |

### TYPICAL BULLY

STR 16 CON 16 SIZ 16 INT 9 POW 11 DEX 11 CHA 9

HIT POINTS: 20 ARMOR: Half-plate (1D8-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6+1D4

| Weapon     | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Cudgel     | 60%    | 55%   | 1D6    |
| Dagger     | 52%    | 47%   | 1D4+2  |
| Broadsword | 47%    | 43%   | 1D8+1  |
| Punch      | 71%    | —     | 1D3    |

SKILLS: Listen 38%, Search 29%, See 44%, Scent 40%.

LANGUAGES: Common 00%/45%.

## The Wonderworks

### KOOT

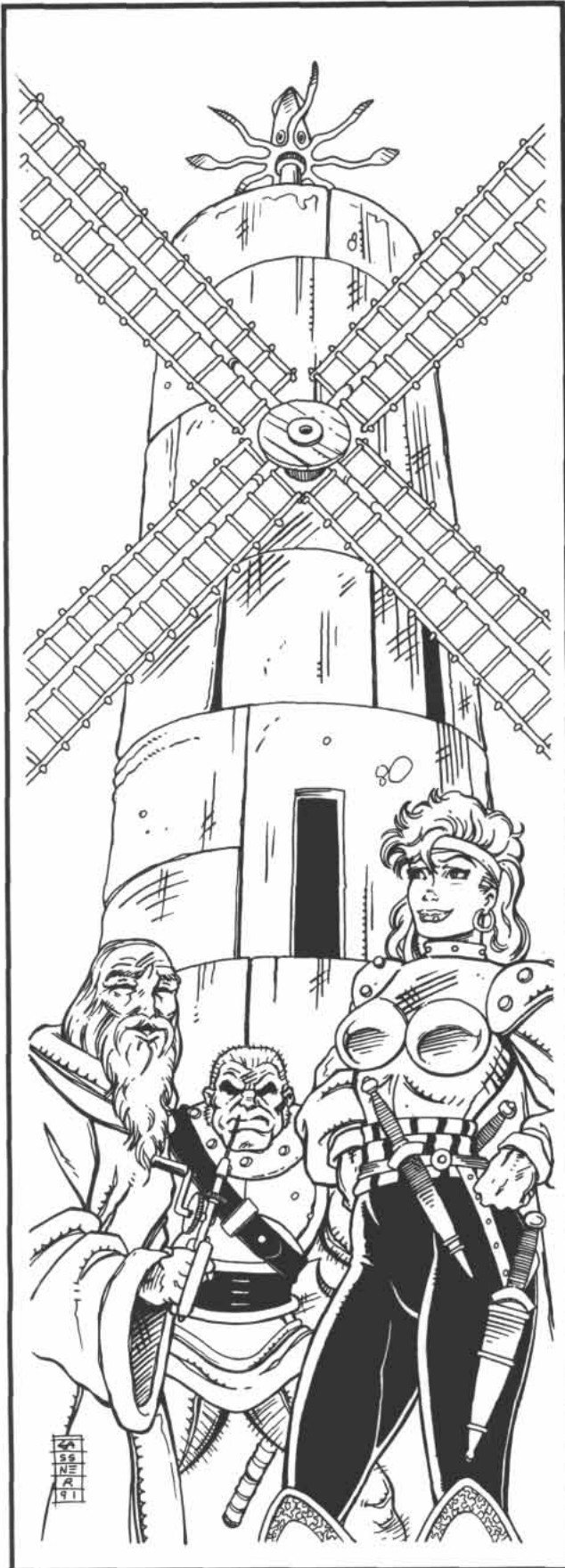
Koot is the Realm's inventor and resident sage. He works aboard the *Wonderworks*. He is an elderly, white-haired Shazaaran gentleman, and is the father of Roqel. He is a pacifist, and possesses no skill as a fighter. He is an excellent source of information, but is prone to bouts of forgetfulness. "There is something you should know," he will begin, then promptly forget what he was about to say. Roqel is usually able to refresh his memory with a polite hint.

Koot has made many of the discoveries which has made life in the Realm possible, and tolerable. He designed the windmill, and discovered pontoon boots. For this reason, he has been allowed an entire ship in the Craftsmen's Flotilla, and the privacy in which to tinker with his inventions.

Most people respect his talents, but think that he has gone senile. He is widely known as Koot the Crazy. Veranka considers Koot to be a useful old fool, so useful that she has forbidden her son Arlis to menace Roqel, in case that should affect Koot's output. If Koot was out of the way, Veranka would have Roqel sacrificed anyway.

One invention would sour his privileges if Veranka learned of it. It is a large balloon craft, made of the bladders of many giant fish and filled with the same gas which gives the pontoons their buoyancy. With such





Koot, Bull, and Roqel aboard the Windtamer

craft as these, it would be possible to escape the Floating Realm at long last. The impetus of the Free Realm movement centers around giving Koot the opportunity to construct such a craft and put it to the test.

Koot greets the adventurers politely, but is probably unaware that they are new faces. Sometimes he calls them by the wrong names, names of those long since sacrificed to the Krakyn.

### KOOT

STR 10 CON 11 SIZ 11 INT 18 POW 14 DEX 13 CHA 14

HIT POINTS: 11 ARMOR: None.

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

#### Weapon

None.

SKILLS: Craft Wood 88%, Devise 94%, Make Map 63%, Memorize 6%, Plant Lore 64%, Search 86%, See 13%.

LANGUAGES: Common 90%/90%.

### ROQEL

Roqel is the daughter of Koot, and lives with him on the Wonderworks. She is the leader of the Craftsmen, and reports their projects and progress to the Admiralty. She is straight-speaking and fair dealing. She is red-headed, green-eyed, and beautiful.

She is also tough and assertive. Her temper is as fiery as her hair. Her stubbornness has earned her the enmity of Veranka. The only thing protecting Roqel from the tentacles of the Krakyn is Veranka's fear of upsetting Koot, who is more important to her than revenge on Roqel. Roqel knows this, and is becoming reckless about it. She may soon push Veranka too far.

Roqel is the organizer of the Free Realm movement aboard the Craftsmen's Flotilla. She takes great pains to keep this secret, and sometimes makes the dangerous crossing between Flotillas in the dead of night to attend a meeting on the Provider. She is the most radical of the leaders, insisting that Veranka and all who follow her should be tossed to the Krakyn, before it too is dealt with once and for all. She recognizes Serge as the true leader of the movement, and will not undermine him - but that doesn't stop her from advocating for instant action.

Arlis plans to be Admiral, and desires to make Roqel his First Mate. She finds the notion to be utterly revolting. For her own sake, she advocates that the Free Realm movement should strike soon.

Roqel's best-kept secret is her affection for Boson Finayl; even the love-struck young Boson is unaware of it. Roqel makes a show of indifference towards Finayl to protect him from the wrath of Arlis.

Roqel sees the adventurers as fascinating people with news of the outside world, and potential recruits to

the cause. She approaches them honestly, as soon as it seems safe for her to do so.

**ROOEL**

STR 12 CON 12 SIZ 13 INT 13 POW 16 DEX 17 CHA 18

HIT POINTS: 13 ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon     | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Shortsword | 78%    | 71%   | 1D6+1  |
| Dagger     | 65%    | 63%   | 1D4+2  |

SKILLS: Ambush 61%, Balance 80%, Climb 60%, Conceal 72%, Cut Purse 59%, Dodge 73%, Hide 80%, Jump 52%, Listen 62%, Move Quietly 86%, See 43%, Set Trap 45%, Swim 81%.

LANGUAGES: Common 65%/65%.

**THE APPRENTICES**

These men and women have been trained in those trades that are vital to the survival of the Realm. They have long suffered under the thumb of Bull and his gang of ruffians, and look forward to the overthrow of Veranka and those who serve her.

**TYPICAL APPRENTICE**

STR 12 CON 11 SIZ 11 INT 14 POW 12 DEX 13 CHA 11

HIT POINTS: 11 ARMOR: None.

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Cudgel | 43%    | 40%   | 1D6    |
| Dart   | 37%    | —     | 1D6    |

*These darts have been made secretly, and are hidden in Millet and Whey's cabin.*

SKILLS: Balance 40%, Craft 62%, Search 43%, Tie Knot 42%.

LANGUAGES: Common 30%/65%.

**The Windtamer**

**MILLET**

Millet is the miller. He is a muscular gray-bearded man. He takes everything slowly and carefully. He wants to see an end to tyranny, but not until victory seems certain.

Millet is cordial to the adventurers. He warms to any who are interested in the workings of the mill.

**MILLET**

STR 15 CON 13 SIZ 13 INT 12 POW 10 DEX 7 CHA 11

HIT POINTS: 14 ARMOR: None.

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Cudgel | 62%    | 57%   | 1D6    |
| Dart   | 12%    | —     | 1D6    |

SKILLS: Milling 90%, Plant Lore 61%, Search 36%.

LANGUAGES: Common 00%/60%.

**WHEY**

Whey is Millet's wife. She is an intelligent, busy woman. She has a twinkle in her eye, and the soul of a free spirit. She bustles around Millet, cursing him fondly for being a slow old man. She has been secretly manufacturing darts for the craftsmen to arm themselves with, and is eager to overthrow Veranka and her lackeys.

Whey is curious about the adventurers, but waits for Serge or Rooel to contact them first.

**WHEV**

STR 13 CON 14 SIZ 11 INT 14 POW 15 DEX 16 CHA 13

HIT POINTS: 14 ARMOR: None.

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Dart   | 53%    | —     | 1D6    |

SKILLS: Dodge 61%, Milling 54%, Plant Lore 45%, Sew 75%.

LANGUAGES: Common 45%/70%.

**GRIFF**

Griff is the Journeyman aboard the Windtamer. He is a neat, quiet lad, and deeply worried about his situation. He knows that the Craftsmen are plotting a revolt, and is almost terrified enough to go to Veranka and tell him everything he knows, in the hope that he will be spared.

Griff is uninterested in the adventurers. He has enough problems of his own.

**GRIFF**

STR 11 CON 14 SIZ 13 INT 8 POW 7 DEX 10 CHA 7

HIT POINTS: 15 ARMOR: None.

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Cudgel | 21%    | 36%   | 1D6    |

SKILLS: Balance 35%, Dodge 44%, Hide 51%, Listen 40%.

LANGUAGES: Common 00%/40%.

**THE APPRENTICES**

See above.

**The Anvil**

**HAMMER**

Hammer is the blacksmith of the Realm. He is a big man, and simmers with suppressed fury at the imprisonment and injustice around him. He vents his anger at the forge, smashing implements into shape with great blows of his hammer. Anyone who sees Hammer at work knows instinctively that it is not the metal that he rains blows upon, but his oppressors. One day his work was so wild that he accidentally maimed Bolt, one of the apprentices. Hammer still feels great guilt about this.

Hammer is withdrawn and grumpy. He ignores the adventurers, and does not accept them as friends until he sees them perform some action to benefit the Free Realm ideal.

**HAMMER**

STR 18 CON 17 SIZ 16 INT 11 POW 13 DEX 15 CHA 11  
**HIT POINTS:** 21 **ARMOR:** Leather (1D6-1)  
**DAMAGE BONUS:** +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon       | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Great Hammer | 94%    | 56%   | 2D6+2  |
| Punch        | 92%    | —     | 1D3    |

**SKILLS:** Evaluate 41%, First Aid 26%, Smithing 92%.  
**LANGUAGES:** Common 35%/55%.

**ASMA**

Asma is Hammer’s wife. She is small and worried, perplexed at the changes in her husband since they came to the Realm. Only freedom will restore the contented man she once knew, and she works actively towards that.

Asma approaches the adventurers by herself, and begs them to help the Realm. She then immediately worries that she has said too much, and backs away.

**ASMA**

STR 10 CON 9 SIZ 8 INT 11 POW 10 DEX 13 CHA 10  
**HIT POINTS:** 8 **ARMOR:** None  
**DAMAGE BONUS:** None.

**Weapon**  
None.

**SKILLS:** First Aid 47%.  
**LANGUAGES:** Common 35%/55%.

**BOLT**

Bolt is the chief journeyman on board the Anvil. He is stout, but ugly. A particularly wild blow from Hammer one day sent a chunk of hot metal spinning through the air. It struck Bolt, smashing his jaw and mangling his lips and tongue. He lived, but is terribly scarred. His speech is halting and slow, and he is easily frustrated.

Since then Hammer has devoted hours to Bolt, treating him like a son, showing him everything he knows about his craft. Bolt does not blame Hammer for the accident. Instead, he blames the Admiralty for putting him here.

Bolt may approach the adventurers, but anything he says takes him a while and is barely intelligible.

**BOLT**

STR 17 CON 15 SIZ 14 INT 15 POW 8 DEX 13 CHA 4  
**HIT POINTS:** 17 **ARMOR:** Leather (1D6-1)  
**DAMAGE BONUS:** +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Hammer | 72%    | 26%   | 1D6+2  |

**SKILLS:** Smithing 54%.  
**LANGUAGES:** Read Common 00%, Speak Common 7%, Understand Common 75%.

**THE APPRENTICES**

See above.

**The Slave Barge**

The Slave Barge is constructed from crude timber. There are seven huts. There are no leaders here. Everyone is downtrodden and weary. The gamemaster may devise individual personalities as needed.

**The Slaves**

These are men and women who possess no skills useful to the Realm. They perform all the menial, dangerous tasks, reaping small reward for their efforts. They are held in contempt by most of the royalty of the Realm. Fear of the Krakyn keeps them from open revolt.

Any adventurer who cannot prove his or her usefulness, or who irritates Veranka, is immediately sentenced to the Slave Barge.

**TYPICAL SLAVE**

STR 11 CON 12 SIZ 12 INT 11 POW 9 DEX 12 CHA 9  
**HIT POINTS:** 12 **ARMOR:** None.  
**DAMAGE BONUS:** None.

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Cudgel | 31%    | 25%   | 1D6    |
| Knife  | 27%    | 20%   | 1D3    |

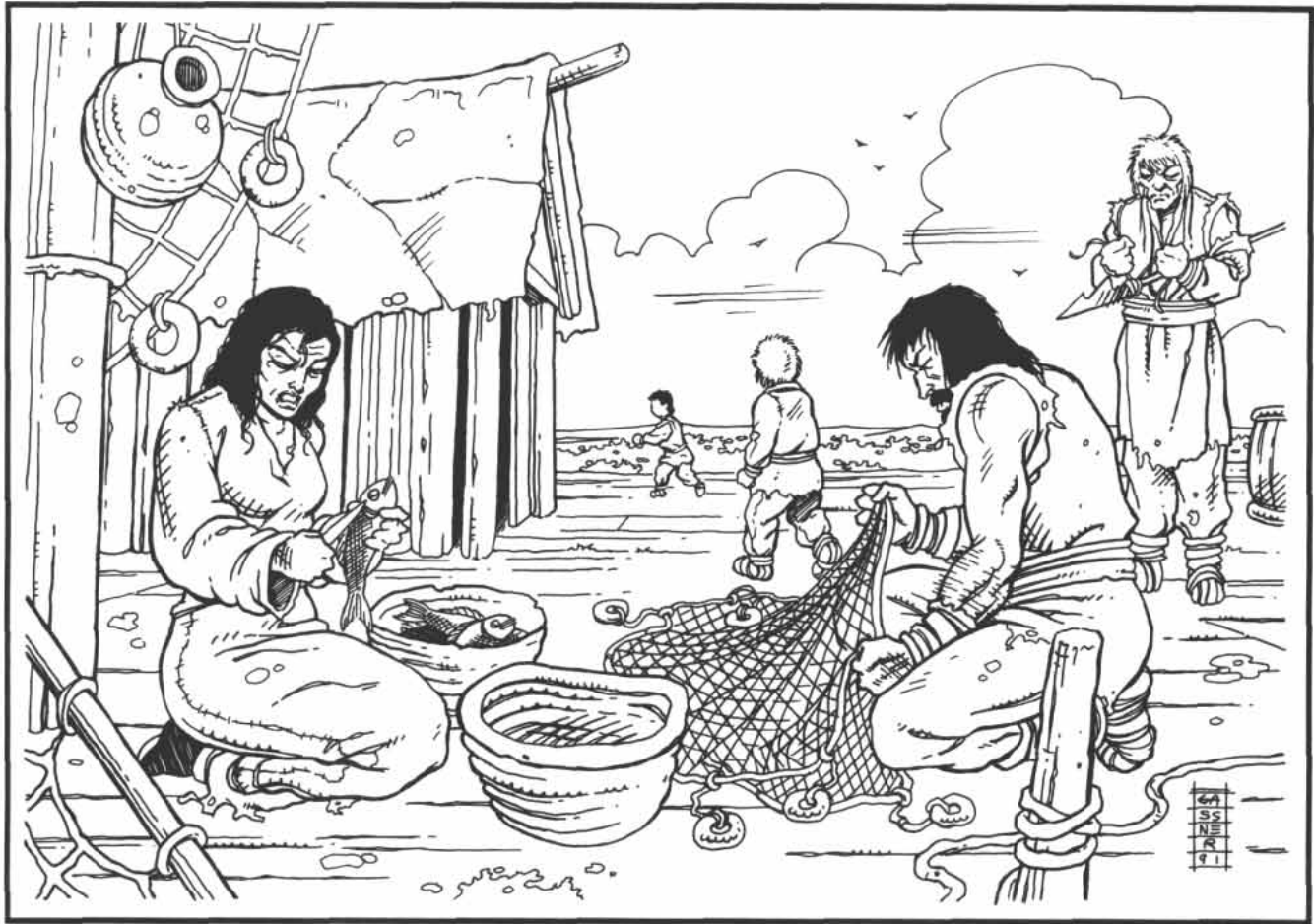
**SKILLS:** Balance 75%, First Aid 34%, Fish 63%, Make Net 60%, Swim 52%.  
**LANGUAGES:** Common 00%/55%.

**SETTING SAIL**

This scenario cannot begin until the adventurers board a ship bound to or from Argimiliar. The gamemaster may derive some reason for a voyage from his or her ongoing campaign; failing that, the following opening is offered.

The adventurers are in any coastal city. They are offered employment by a merchant of the Purple Towns, Oxley Parallon, of the Parallon Cartel. Oxley is a plump





Work never ceases aboard the Slave Barge

talks rapidly, and is easily distracted. He is conducting some delicate negotiations in town, of an unspecified nature, and cannot dare to leave until they are complete. However, he needs someone to carry a trade agreement for him to the City of the Yellow Coast, in Argimiliar. This is to be delivered to Ghannon Plenty, a certain influential noble. Oxley offers 750 LB for the task, and offers half up front. If the adventurers successfully Persuade him, they can bargain their way up to 1,000 LB.

The gamemaster may supply further details as required. It is an honest job, a simple device to put the adventurers in a boat bound for Argimiliar.

Oxley calls in some favours and arranges free passage for the adventurers. The ship is the *Gambit*, captained by Jarko the Certain. He is an unassuming but competent sailor, with gray hair tied back. He gained his name from his unerring ability to tell which direction north lies. The *Gambit* is a Vilmirian vessel. It is a small cog, with a single mast and a high stern. It has a crew of fifteen. Perhaps the adventurers have their own ship. The text assumes they are sailing in *The Gambit*, but any ship could be substituted, save perhaps for a Melni-bonéan Battle Barge.

## The Wreck of the Gambit

All goes well on the journey, until the evening of the final day, as *The Gambit* rounds the coast of Argimiliar. The skies darken, and a storm of respectable size and ferocity buffets the ship. There seems no current danger of capsizing, but Captain Jarko orders that everything be tied down, and that all passengers and most of the crew go below decks. The storm rages and blows, and seems set to last all night. After satisfying himself that the ship will ride it through, Jarko descends to his cabin.

In the deep water below, the Krakyn glides. It undulates its long dark tentacular form, and rises towards the *Gambit*. Exploratory tentacles pluck the night-watch from the deck. A Listen roll for the adventurers hears brief screams from above.

The Krakyn heaves itself up alongside the ship. The vessel tilts, spilling everyone from their bunks. The great tentacles grip the mast, and snap it off at the base. The splintering is loud and unmistakable. Everyone is woken. It spends two rounds doing this, and adventurers on deck may strike at it as it does so. It retaliates only if any blows penetrate. See the Krakyn's Stats on page 46.



The Krakyn hunts.

The Krakyn slips beneath the waves again, and grasps the hull with its tentacles. It stays below the waterline, and is impervious to attack from above. It begins to swim eastwards, with strong and steady strokes.

If any adventurer enters the water to fight it, it turns against them with full fury. If assaulted by demons or elementals, it reacts similarly. After each attack launched on it, it squeezes the boat in a meaningful fashion. Timbers crack and groan. These demonstrations increase in severity, and an INT x5 roll determines that they are a warning against further assaults. If the attacks persist, the Krakyn smashes in the hull. Water floods into the bilges, yet the marine beast holds the vessel afloat. Without such support, the Gambit would quickly sink.

The basic intent of this scene is to kidnap the adventurer's ship. If they refuse to be captured, their boat is wrecked, but their honour remains intact. If they manage to kill the Krakyn outright, they are indeed warriors of awesome skill. In either of these cases, the gamemaster must create another introduction for this scenario.

Assuming that the adventurers and their ship are captured, the unseen menace propels them further east-

wards. They are never in sight of land. The journey lasts for a week. Captain Jarko sees that the boat is being preserved for something. He does not like the implication, but given the lack of choice, he orders that no action be taken against the creature until the destination and purpose is determined. He is a brave man, but he is not a fool.

### Arriving in the Realm

Further east, the waters become calm and quiet. The sun beats down, and little moves on the sea or in the sky. Captain Jarko orders water rationing.

On the eighth day, the weed is sighted. It covers the ocean in thick banks. It is a peculiar growth, composed of thick, ropy vines sprouting large, melon-like fruit. Those first few clumps of weed grow more numerous as the Gambit is pulled steadily on, until at last the sea becomes an unbroken carpet of verdant green.

The weed closes around the vessel, and only by tremendous effort does the unseen creature drag the ship forwards. The hull creaks and growls. A successful See roll notes the odd large clump of weed which is disturbingly boat-shaped. It becomes clear that the Gambit will be trapped, held forever in this forsaken wasteland of the sea.

In the choked seascape ahead, a successful See roll observes a small island. A second look reveals that is made of good, sturdy timber. Looking closer, they can see the lines of several hulls. A fluke of the currents has thrust these wrecks into a tight cluster, and as the Gambit draws near, it can be observed that the ships have been joined together by a series of wide decks that have transformed four stranded craft into a floating island of wood upon a sea of plantlife.

This is the Royal Flotilla. Soon the Craftsmen's Flotilla and the Slave Barge can be seen, and the looming spire of Sentinel Rock beyond them.

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## Welcome to the Realm

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The decks of the Royal Flotilla swarm with the guards of all four vessels. When the Gambit is close enough, crews from the Temple and Provider cast grappling hooks, snaring the ship and jockeying it into position. Beneath, the Krakyn releases the hull, and dives below to await its offering.

Serge and Delphon stand ready to greet the new arrivals. The cold behavior of these two towards one another indicates that they do not care for one another's company.

On the deck, Veranka sits in the central chair on the Reviewing Stand. Her children sit to either side of her, and her First Mate stands behind. Veranka is calm and coldly attentive. Arlis is grinning, and playing with a dagger. Natasia looks bored. Berel is gazing beyond the *Gambit* and out to sea, lost in his own thoughts.

Delphon steps forward and speaks. "Praise be to the Krakyn. Praise be to the Lord of the Deep, who has brought us this bounty from the sea. Praise be to the Dweller Below, for blessing these fortunate sailors by bringing them here to the Floating Realm to join us in his worship forever more. Praise be to the Slumbering Sentinel, for whom these new arrivals shall at once forsake all other gods. Praise be to the Krakyn." All of those on deck echo "Praise be to the Krakyn", and look to those on the *Gambit* to repeat this. If the adventurers do, they gain a favourable first impression with Veranka.

Now Serge steps forward and asks the name of the vessel, and her captain. Learning this, he makes a speech. "Veranka, Admiral of the Floating Realm, extends her welcome to Captain Jarko and the crew of the *Gambit*. Admiral Veranka rules with the divine power invested in her by the Krakyn, and by the popular power invested in her by the subjects of the Floating Realm. Every person aboard the *Gambit* is now a subject of the Floating Realm, and is therefore governed by Admiral Veranka. The *Gambit* and its cargo is now the common property of the Floating Realm, to be redistributed by the Admiral as she sees fit. Would all aboard the *Gambit* now please vacate the vessel. The Admiral grants Captain Jarko and crew a special and immediate audience, so that she can determine their new positions within the society of the Floating Realm. Praise be to the Krakyn."

Captain Jarko immediately protests, even if the adventurers don't. Serge holds up a tired hand. "The Admiral understands that Captain Jarko and the crew of the *Gambit* are accustomed to a different system of government and ownership of property, but reminds them that they are now subjects of the Floating Realm. The Admiral invites them to witness the privileged fate of those who decline to join the Realm. Praise be to the Krakyn."

His duty done, Serge steps back and drops his eyes. He does not take any joy in these ritual welcomes.

## The Sacrifice

Hetre leads a small procession of the Servants of the Krakyn, from the Temple to the Public Deck. Two servants carry a silver gong, three feet in diameter. A second pair of servants march an old sailor between them. He starts shouting to Veranka for mercy. Liot brings up the rear.

Hetre stops at the triangular hatch in the center of the deck. The servants set up the gong, and Hetre begins to beat it with a small hammer. The crashing vibrations resonate through the bodies of everyone on deck. The sound creates ripples in the water visible through the open hatch.

The old sailor is dragged to the break in the rail around the triangular opening. Delphon recites the praises of the Krakyn, such as "Praise be to the sacrifice who will shortly be one with the King of the Weeds." When he is done, the screaming sacrifice is cast through the hatch into the dark waters below. The deck shudders as the Krakyn passes underneath, and the flailing man is dragged under. "Praise be to the Krakyn!" comments the assembled company.

Emotions run high during the sacrifice, even though they should be held carefully in check. An observant adventurer (See roll) might notice the obvious disgust blazing in the eyes of Roqel or M'lara. Liot has a dreamy smile on his face, and licks his lips. Veranka looks sternly directly at the adventurers, reading their reactions. Others in the crowd look grim, interested, eager, or at their feet.

## The Audience

After the sacrifice, the adventurers and their crewmates are brought before Veranka. This first meeting is crucial, for it determines where the individual adventurers will be quartered during the course of this scenario. She questions each in turn about their skills and experience, and decides on their future tasks. She does not answer any questions. If the adventurers persist, Berel says mildly "The Admiral talks. She does not listen."

Adventurers who have practical skills are assigned to the Craftsmen's Flotilla. Those who have sorcerous training are assigned to the Sanctum. Those who have mercantile skills are assigned to the Provider. Those who especially flatter Veranka (with an Orate roll) are assigned to the Flagship. Anyone who expresses admiration for the Krakyn is sent to the Temple.

The rest are permitted to remain aboard the *Gambit*, and Captain Jarko is appointed temporary Boson.



Veranka declares that the vessel will become the private craft of the winner of the upcoming Rite of Succession. Those aboard will then serve that person. As she announces this, Arlis and Natasia turn to glare at each other.

Adventurers who fail to demonstrate any useful skill, protest too vigorously, or who annoy Veranka in any way, are sent to the Slave Barge. They are stripped of all belongings, save for a single set of clothing.

Adventurers who outrage Veranka, attack anyone, or attempt escape, are sentenced to be sacrificed. Their weapons are removed, and they are taken down to the brig in the Temple and chained up.

The audience finishes when Veranka has given everyone their new stations. Adventurers joining the Royal Flotilla are collected by the Bosen of their new vessel. Those joining the Craftsmen's Flotilla are taken across to it by Roqel. Those staying on the Gambit are temporarily seconded by Serge to help unload it.

The adventurers are now officially subjects of the Floating Realm. Praise be to the Krakyn.

## The Royal Flotilla

The four ships of the Royal Flotilla are bound together by a series of wide walkways and platforms, built with masts and unnecessary planking from these and other stranded vessels. The three sets of stairs on the Public Deck and the two on each ship's Open Deck afford access to these connecting platforms.

In the middle of the central Public Deck there is a large, triangular opening surrounded by an intricately carved rail bearing the likenesses of squid, octopus, and other tentacled sea creatures. This is the Sacrificial Hatch, where the Krakyn's victims are sent to their fate.

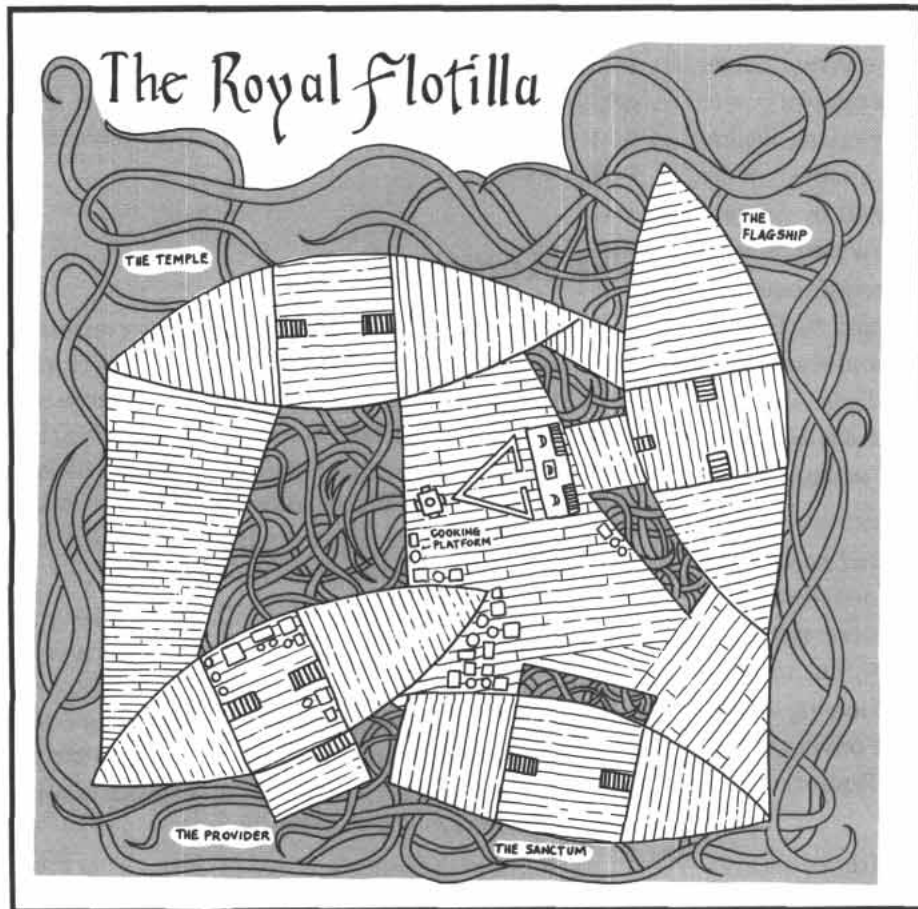
Rising up behind the Hatch is the ten foot high Reviewing Stand, atop which sit three ornate and richly decorated chairs. The center seat, raised slightly above the other two, is the Admiral's Chair.

Crates and barrels are stacked neatly around the perimeter of the Public Deck, but they are more concentrated and orderly in the vicinity of the Provider.

These provide ample cover for those who wish to skulk about in the hours of darkness. In fact, Serge and his crew have arranged these stacks of provisions in such a way that the Free Realm activists are afforded considerable freedom of movement without fear of discovery. Any adventurer making a successful See roll observes this potentially useful circumstance.

The Dock is merely a convenient access to the sea. All goods brought from the Craftsmen's Flotilla or the Slave Barge are stacked here by the slaves, who are never allowed beyond this point. The goods are carried up to the Public Deck only after M'lara has completely inventoried them and decided exactly where they should be placed.

Moored at the dock is the only boat in the Realm. It is a rowboat, has been specially



## The Ships of the Royal Flotilla

The layout of these ships is identical, and one set of deck plans is provided to cover all four. The contents of certain cabins varies from ship to ship.

### 1. GUARD ROOM

This contains a long table and six chairs, behind which a flight of stairs descends to the deck below. The door from the Open Deck stands very near the starboard hull. The crew of the ship gather here during foul weather and long evenings. More often they are up on deck.

### 2. BOSON'S CABIN

This contains a bunk, small night table, and a weapons rack arranged along the starboard wall. At the foot of the bunk stands a locked sea chest. This usually contains spare clothing. To the right of the door stands a modest oak desk and chair. The door is kept locked.

### 3. SPECIAL ROOM

This large cabin takes up the ship's entire aftersection. It is set aside for the ship's most important function. See individual ships for details.

### 4. STORE ROOM

This contains foodstuffs, wines, and delectables reserved for the privileged palate of the Captain.

### 5. PRIVATE CABIN

This cabin contains a bunk, chair, desk, and sea-chest. Other details vary by occupant; see individual ships. It is usually locked.

### 6. PRIVATE CABIN

See above.

### 7. MESS

This is a long and narrow cabin. It contains a ponderous table surrounded by eight chairs. The forward wall is taken up by a massive cabinet containing table settings. The sternward wall is occupied by a much smaller cabinet holding silverware. Against the portside wall is a deep trunk for tablecloths.

### 8. PRIVATE CABIN

This is the cabin of the Captain and First Mate. It takes up the entire stern. It is usually kept locked. See individual ships for details.

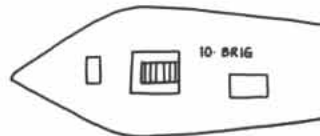
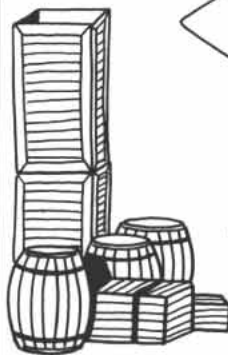
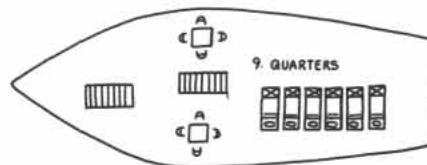
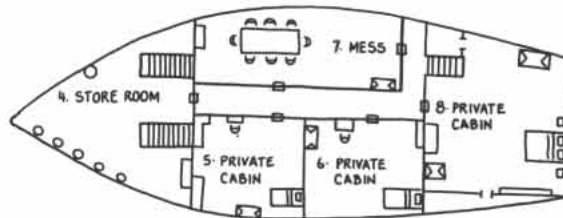
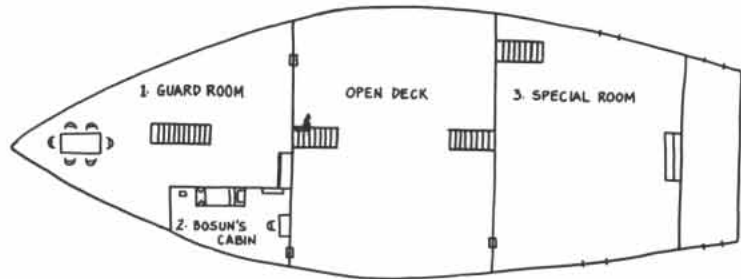
### 9. QUARTERS

This is a low-ceilinged cabin, taking up the whole deck. The stairs from the storeroom above are crammed into the bow, and directly in front of them is another flight of stairs descending to the brig below.

Flanking this stairway are two square tables with chairs. Bunks are arranged along the portside hull; at the foot of each is a small, age-worn sea chest containing spare clothing, sword and armor polish, and various small items of jewelry of no real value. There is a wine barrel in the corner of the starboard hull and the stern.

### 10. BRIG

The bottom of the boat, a low, cramped area, dank, damp, and foul-smelling. See individual ships for details of what use it is put to.



modified by Koot to allow it to negotiate the weed. A superstructure has been added, making the craft look like a wooden box. Extra planks have been nailed to the keel fore and aft at an angle of thirty degrees, to stop it from plowing into the weed. The oarlocks are high in the side of the boat, to stop them from being caught in the weed. The craft rides low in the morass, so that only the superstructure is visible. It can carry up to eight people, and is used to transport goods between the flotillas. People also move between the two using pontoon boots.

### The Flagship

The Flagship is Veranka's personal vessel, and its crew style themselves as the elite of the Realm. No-one else is allowed on board without Veranka's express permission. A Noble sentry is positioned on the Open Deck 24 hours a day to guard against intruders.

The residents of the Flagship are Veranka, Berel, Arlis, Natasia, and Jyrym. There are twenty Nobles. Adventurers chosen to join the Flagship are given a bunk in the Quarters (9.), and taught the rudiments of lording it over the other subjects of the Realm.

Intruders found wandering aboard the Flagship are challenged, accosted, and taken before Veranka to explain themselves. She sentences them to the Slave Barge, where they have ample time to contemplate the sin of trespass.

#### 1. GUARD ROOM

#### 2. BOSON JYRYM'S CABIN

#### 3. AUDIENCE CABIN

This cabin is largely empty. At the very stern, two steps ascend to a raised platform upon which rest two ornately carved chairs with a low, delicately-carved table set between them. On either side of the steps stands another, similar chair. Rich tapestries hang from both hulls and, spaced evenly apart two to a wall, round portholes allow ample daylight to enter. A flight of stairs along the starboard hull descends to the deck below, and the cabin's single door offer access to the Open Deck.

This is where Veranka conducts the day to day business of the Realm and holds private meetings with her Nobles. During the most important meetings, Berel sits in the portside chair on the platform, while on the deck, Arlis and Natasia occupy the port and starboard chairs respectively.

In the middle of the floor is a wooden barrel with metal reinforcements. It continuously sloshes and bub-

bles, and there are a number of wooden buckets around it. In this barrel are bound three water elementals, which are commanded to produce three gallons of fresh water each per hour. This water is transferred by bucket to larger barrels on the Open Deck, and from there it is distributed among the ships of both flotillas. By controlling the water, Veranka effectively cements her control of the Realm.

There is a Noble sentry present here at all times. No one is allowed to enter without Veranka's permission. Three times an hour the Noble hefts the freshly-filled buckets out to the Open Deck.

#### 4. STORAGE

#### 5. NATASIA'S CABIN

This cabin holds an oversized bunk in the center of the aft wall, at the foot of which rests a locked metal chest decorated with finely executed carvings. A locked mahogany trunk sits against the portside hull.

The metal chest contains three silk gowns and a jewelry case, also locked. This contains various items of jewelry.

The mahogany trunk contains several sets of fancy clothing. A successful Search roll on the trunk discovers a false bottom. In the cavity beneath are two daggers and a phial of poison (Class 1 for 1D6 points of damage per dose). The daggers are hollow, and designed to inject a dose of poison each time a wound is inflicted. Each dagger holds three doses. Natasia intends to use these against Arlis in the Rite of Succession.

There is a doorway in the forward wall, leading into a closet which holds Natasia's everyday clothing. In the alcove to the right are shelves holding several Melni-bonéan books on war and amazon cultures, and a variety of statuettes, bracelets, and other such items that strike the fancy of a greedy young girl.

A dressing table is set against the starboard wall, and on it are arranged combs, brushes, and hairpins of silver and gold, some decorated with small gems. Two fine tapestries hang on the hull, and another hangs beside the bed.

#### 6. ARLIS'S CABIN

This lavishly-furnished cabin sports a luxurious bunk on the sternward wall, at the foot of which sits a stout-looking sea chest. The chest is locked. Inside are two ornate scimitars, and four daggers.

The portside hull is covered by a bright tapestry depicting a fleet of ships under full sail, and half of the forward wall is taken up by a closet which holds Arlis' everyday wear.



Next to this on the same wall is a black trunk held shut by a heavy padlock. The lock is guarded by a poison needle trap (poison of Class 1). The first needle is triggered by anyone attempting to pick the lock on the trunk, while the second is triggered by anyone attempting to remove the first one. A potential thief must make two Search rolls to find both needles.

The trunk contains a dress uniform and a jeweled scimitar and matching dagger. Beneath the clothing is a small chest. Inside are three phials of different colored liquids. These are labeled with a person's name, and they contain: an Elixir of Passion (Roqel), an addictive, will-sapping drug used on slaves (Veranka), and poison of Class 5 (Natasia). A successful Plant Lore roll will be required to identify the first two, while a Poison Lore is needed to name the last.

To the right of the door is a finely made oak desk and chair. On top of the desk lies a map of Sentinel Rock. Three cave entrances are marked on the map, and are labeled "Lubbers", "Turtles", and "Empty". Stuffed in a drawer are plans for a wooden fortress which Arlis intends to build on the Rock when he is Admiral.

To the left is a shelf displaying an assortment of books held in place by a pair of jade bookends, and a pair of vellum scrolls. The books on the shelves are works of dubious fiction and have no value; of even less value are the two scrolls, which bear some very bad poetry written by Arlis for Roqel, most of which is naively pornographic.

## 7. MESS

### 8. VERANKA AND BEREL'S CABIN

This cabin is dominated by a double bed whose frame and carved posts are wrought of solid gold. On either side of the bed is a nightstand on which rests what seems to be a large, glowing pearl. These are minor Demons of Light, Zabin and Nibaz, and the onyx hemispheres beside each are used to cover the pearls when darkness is desired.

#### **ZABIN & NIBAZ**

|                        |                    |                    |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Demons Of Light</b> | <b>Breed Falar</b> | <b>CV: 26 each</b> |
| CON 10 INT 3           | SIZ 1 POW 10       |                    |

**POWERS:** Membrane Shape (over pearls, 2 hit points), Self-Illumination (5 meter area).

A small area near the portside wall has been partitioned off to form a closet for Berel's clothes, and on the partition facing the bed are shelves cluttered with Mel-nibonéan books on philosophy, government, power, and civilization.

In the portside corner of the room squats a massive bound trunk protected by two substantial-looking locks. Inside is a treasure of gold, gems and fine jewelry all valued at 100,000 LB.

To the right of the door is a rolltop desk, top down. In one of the desk drawers is a plan of the Realm, but on this there are twice as many ships present.

To the left of the door is a short wall, and just around the corner of it is a small trunk containing two splendid robes of very rare material. Beside the trunk is an opening into another closet for Veranka's clothing.

The starboard hull is taken up by another trunk, containing two finely made cloaks, and two sets of what are obviously ceremonial costumes, which Veranka and Berel wear during sacrifices to the Krakyn.

### 9. NOBLES' QUARTERS

There are ten double-bunks in here for the twenty Nobles. They may enjoy position and privilege, but their living conditions are crowded.

### 10. BRIG

The Brig is lined with shackles dangling from both hulls. In front of the stairs is a plank table, also equipped with irons. There are rough plank shelves on either side of the stairway, on which rest a variety of instruments of torture.

At the moment there is a slave named Adolphus imprisoned here.

He has been tortured, and when Veranka is finished with him he will be transferred to the Temple to await sacrifice to the Krakyn. Adolphus is weak and delirious. If he hears a female voice, he calls out "Is that you Roqel? I didn't talk. Tell them I didn't talk." Adolphus was a Free Realm organizer aboard the Slave Barge.

#### **ADOLPHUS**

Use the Typical Slave statistics.

## The Temple

The Temple is the shrine and church of the Krakyn, and its crew call themselves the Servants of the Krakyn. Their gurgled hymns drift across the Open Deck at all hours. The ship is kept open for those who want to worship here.

The residents of the Temple are Delphon, Hetre, and Liot. There are eleven Servants. Adventurers joining the crew are instructed in the Krakyn's worship and glory. They are given bunks in the Quarters (9.). If they show exceptional promise, they are moved into one of the Vacant Cabins (5. and 6.).

Intruders stealing aboard the Temple are not challenged unless they are obviously seen to be acting in contravention of the Krakyn's wishes, such as desecrating the shrine or freeing the sacrifice. In this case the Servants attack with religious fervor, aiming to kill the heretics, and capture any wounded survivors for the Lord of the Deep.

### **1. GUARD ROOM**

### **2. BOSON LIOT'S CABIN**

### **3. CHAPEL**

The door to this cabin has a grilled window set into it. Depictions of tentacles have been crudely carved into the wood.

Inside is an upraised platform against the stern, atop which lurks a grotesque effigy of the Krakyn, fashioned from clumps of dried weed. The cabin stinks with the heavy smell of the salty vegetation. Behind the idol stands the silver gong used to summon the Krakyn during sacrificial ceremonies. Two portholes in each hull provide light, and between them hang heavy blue-green draperies, woven from the omnipresent weed.

Servants of the Krakyn can be found in here at all hours, thoughtfully contemplating the many splendors of the Lord of the Deep.

### **4. STORAGE**

### **5. VACANT CABIN**

This cabin is reserved for Delphon and Hetre's protege, but as yet none of the Servants have proven themselves worthy of the honor.

### **6. VACANT CABIN**

### **7. MESS**

Dinner in the Temple is a solemn affair. Delphon has ordered that all remain silent during mealtime, saving their thoughts for the glory of the Krakyn.

### **8. DELPHON AND HETRE'S CABIN**

This cabin takes up the entire aftersection. To the right of the door is a simple desk and chair, with a sea chart pinned to the wall above it. The desk holds nothing of value, but the sea chart is actually a scroll, on the back of which has been set down the rites required for the summoning of Brysmahl, a Demon of Knowledge. The demon manifests itself by rearranging the lettering on the map, and answers five questions per summoning, one for each sphere of knowledge it holds.

## **BRYSM AHL**

**DEMON OF KNOWLEDGE** Breed Getrek  
INT 18 POW 16

CV: 109

**POWERS:** Knowledge (Secrets of the Deep, Tides of the Oldest Ocean, Tides of the Eastern Ocean, Tides of the Pale Sea, The Edge of the World).

A portion of the port hull has been partitioned off to make a closet filled with Hetre's robes. On one of these partitions is a shelf loaded with books on gods and worship, flanked by two golden bookends in the shape of an octopus. Against the stern are two comfortable beds, each with an ornately carved nightstand. By the starboard hull stands a locked trunk, containing the robes used by Delphon and Hetre during the ceremonies of sacrifice to the Krakyn. Left of the door on entering is a bare wall extending 10 feet into the cabin. Lastly, a small locked chest by Delphon's closet is packed with gems and jewelry worth 40,000 LB.

### **9. QUARTERS**

The eleven Servants sleep here.

### **10. THE INQUISITIONAL**

Along one hull of the brig are heavy iron shackles. Along the other hang torture devices, designed by Delphon and Hetre. These include the Kiss of the Krakyn, a brand which burns sucker marks into the flesh; the Grasp of the Krakyn, terrible tongs fashioned as iron tentacles; and the Breath of the Krakyn, a full helm which is slowly filled with water. Here the zealots of the Temple extract "confessions" from those deemed unworthy in the eyes of the Krakyn. Sacrifice victims are held here overnight before they are offered to the chaos monster.

## **The Sanctum**

The Sanctum is the sorcerer's enclave in the Realm, a place where magic is researched and practiced. Demons are summoned here, screams ring out at odd intervals, and curious lights shine balefully through the portholes at all hours. The crew are the Adepts, and they study underneath Inyz to increase their sorcerous skill.

Residents on board the Sanctum are Inyz, Therus, and Ashtide. There are nine Adepts, one of whom is the ambitious Atrima. Adventurers who become Adepts are questioned closely by Inyz, and she asks them to show her such summonings and rituals as they know. While they enjoy Inyz's favor, they sleep in one of the Vacant Cabins (5. or 6.).

Trespassers found at large in the Sanctum are assumed to be thieves and spies. The Adepts aim to capture such interlopers. Inyz then imprisons them for use in demonic ritual, and does not tell Veranka.

**1. GUARD ROOM**

**2. BOSON ASHTIDE'S CABIN**

**3. CEREMONIAL CABIN**

The iron door from the Open Deck has a narrow slit in the center, placed at eye level. It is too dark inside to discern much detail, although a Scent roll detects the odor of incense.

Against the stern is a platform upon which rests an altar draped in black silk. The deck has been painted black, and a series of arcane blood-red designs have been painted in a small circle in the center of the cabin. A Summoning roll reveals that these symbols are protective sigils against a demon named Daloch. In the port and starboard hulls are two stained glass portholes. Elsewhere the hulls are concealed by black curtains.

As soon as anyone enters this room, the floorboards in one corner begin to weep black goo. This foul stuff bubbles and swells until it coalesces into Daloch, a scabrous spherical demon. This takes one round. Once Daloch is formed, it attacks anyone in the room.

Daloch can be commanded by anyone standing in the sigil circle who makes either a Summoning roll or a CHA x3 roll. It can be commanded not to attack, or to dissolve again. It cannot be ordered out of the cabin, as Inyz has bound it to the room.

**DALOCH**

**DEMON GUARDIAN** Breed Zyx1 CV: 184

Daloch is a warty sphere possessed of a large, gaping mouth flanked by its eyestalks. It has three clawed appendages, one each on its left, right, and underside.

STR 25 CON 20 SIZ 16 INT 5 POW 18 DEX 15

| Weapon    | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|-----------|--------|-------|--------|
| Claw (x3) | 25%    | —     | 3D6    |
| Bite      | 25%    | —     | 2D10   |

**POWERS:** Claws x3, Eyestalks x2, Mouth (2D10 Damage), Move Stuff (up to SIZ 16), Skills (see below).

**Skills:** See 40%, Search 40%.

**4. STORAGE**

**5. VACANT CABIN**

**6. VACANT CABIN**

**7. MESS**

**8. INYZ AND THERUS' CABIN**

This is a plush cabin, tastefully decorated. To the left of the door is an ebony desk and chair trimmed with silver. Beside it, in the corner of the forward wall and portside hull, is a small lacquered trunk trimmed with brass. It is trapped to release a noxious mist of poison class 3 if the

Pick Lock roll is missed. Inside are Inyz's robes and two silver daggers. A successful Search roll reveals a false bottom, beneath which is Inyz's Grimoire.

A closet has been built along the portside to hold Inyz's clothing, and on one of its partitions have been mounted three shelves packed with ancient tomes. These are on arcane lore, but contain no summonings.

Against the stern is a massive wrought iron bed with silver-colored silk sheets, flanked by twin night stands. Against the starboard hull sits a rosewood trunk trimmed in silver, containing an assortment of weapons.

**9. QUARTERS**

The nine Adepts are quartered here. Atrima's footlocker contains a wine flask, which is laced with the will-sapping drug she is feeding to Arlis.

**10. THE SUMMONING PIT**

This is a vast dark cabin. All surfaces of the area have been painted black. It is musty, and a Scent roll detects a lingering odor of charred flesh and boiled blood. The floor has an eight-arrowed octagram painted in red, and a triangle painted in white. Any sorcerer instantly recognizes these as the Octagon of Chaos and the Triangle of Law, magical wards for summoning demons. Between them are a set of shackles, chained to a great iron ring bolted to the floor.

A Search roll in here finds a number of rat carcasses. The dead rats have loose fur on their bones, and an inspection reveals that flesh has been sucked off, leaving bones, skin and viscera intact.

Hiding in the darkness underneath the stairs is a demon which one of the Adepts summoned but failed to bind. It has eaten all the rats in the hold, and is about ready for more substantial fare.

**ZV'RRIL'T**

**ROGUE DEMON** Breed Vakarl CV: 220

This demon is composed of layers of muscle, and nothing else. It can expand and contract at will, and exerts powerful force. It smells like rancid fat. It feeds by ripping open a person, and devouring their muscle tissue, leaving everything else.

STR 39 CON 22 SIZ 12 INT 13 POW 23 DEX 19

**HIT POINTS:** 22 **ARMOR:** None.

**DAMAGE BONUS:** +3D6/+3D4

| Weapon         | Attack | Parry | Damage         |
|----------------|--------|-------|----------------|
| Grab and Tear* | 38%    | —     | 2D3+3D6        |
| Devour**       | 76%    | —     | 1D10 + 1D6 STR |

\* The demon seizes the victim and attempts to tear them apart.

\*\* This attack can be used against a held person. The demon punches a hole in the skin and draws out muscle tissue. The STR loss is permanent.

**POWERS:** Muscle Drain (Vampire), Proto-Hands x2, Proto-Mouth, Skills (see below).

**SKILLS:** Dodge 57%, Hide 70%, Move Quietly 88%.



## The Provider

The Provider is the storeroom and larder of the Realm. Here the contents of new ships are unpacked, inventoried, and stored away for future use. The crew are the Packers, hardy souls who are not averse to an honest day's work.

The main task facing the Provider crew is to unpack and strip the Gambit. The canvas is torn down and destroyed, and the many goods are transferred to the Open Deck. From there M'lara redistributes the bulk of them, and stores the rest. The pick of the booty goes to the Flagship.

One of the crates on the Open Deck of the Provider is hollow, and is a covering for Serge's secret weapon: a ballista. This was taken off a wreck, and restored by Koot's apprentices. It has a supply of ten bolts. Serge plans to use it to kill the Krakyn.

Residents of the Provider are Serge, Hetre, and Finayl. There are twelve Packers, including the beguiled Torhal. Adventurers who join the Provider join in the task of shifting and labelling crates and barrels, beginning with their own cargo from the Gambit. Any adventurer who is a merchant by trade is given the Vacant Cabin (6.). Others simply join the rest of the Packers in the Barracks (9.).

Intruders caught sneaking about on the Provider are taken before Serge, who questions them closely. Are they merely thieves, or is this some covert action against the Realm? If it is the former, he regretfully hands them over to Veranka. If it is the latter, he enlists them for the Free Realm movement.

### 1. WATCHROOM

### 2. BOSON FINAYL'S CABIN

### 3. QUARTERMASTER'S CABIN

This cabin is an organized mess, and the busiest on the ship. On the raised section at the rear of the cabin is a table and chair. There are ledgers and quills scattered on the table. This is where M'lara sits and decides what should go where, and where she processes requests from the other captains for goods. Two portholes in the port and starboard hulls provide illumination, and the bare hulls between are covered with plans of the ships of the Realm.

M'lara and several Packers occupy this cabin during the day, while Serge moves around the ship direction operations. At night this cabin is empty.

## The Ballista

A ballista requires a crew of three people, an aimer, loader, and gunner. It shoots large bolts, and can be fired once every five minutes. The chance to hit an individual man-sized target is equal to the aimer's Attack Bonus. The chance to hit a sizable target, such as a ship or the Krakyn, is equal to the aimer's DEX x3.

A ballista causes 10D6 damage on a successful hit.

### 4. STORAGE

### 5. VACANT CABIN

Roquel sometimes is a guest in here when it is deemed too dangerous for her to be seen returning to the Craftsmen's Flotilla.

### 6. VACANT CABIN

### 7. MESS

### 8. SERGE AND M'LARA'S CABIN

This is a plain but homey cabin. To the right of the door is an oak desk and a chair with bronze fittings. The desk is packed with M'lara's inventory records and Serge's log books.

There are two closets. The smaller one, against the starboard hull, contains M'lara and Serge's everyday clothing. The longer one, against the portside hull, is kept locked. It contains barrels and kegs of rum and brandy, emergency supplies rationed by Serge.

Against the stern is a plush double bed flanked by twin oak night stands. Against the starboard hull rests a large trunk, containing several sets of men's and women's formal wear and assorted jewelry. There is a small trunk by the starboard closet, filled with assorted treasure worth 10,000 LB, with which Serge and M'lara hope to start a new life once they are rescued.

### 9. BARRACKS

The twelve Packers sleep here. In Torhal's footlocker is a delicate silk scarf, obviously that of a woman of finery. Natasia recently gave this to him as a token of her feigned affection.

### 10. STOCKROOM

This low-ceilinged cabin is jammed full of crates, bales, sacks, barrels, and kegs. Coils of rope are draped over every available surface, providing for only a single narrow walkway along the keel.

One massive crate by the stern is actually hollow. It has a rough half-door cut in it, which is concealed

behind an empty barrel. Inside the large crate is a rough bed, a small keg of water, and some hard biscuits. This is a special hideaway for people on the run from Veranka.

A Search roll notes a space on the floor where seven symbols have been carved. A Summoning roll identifies these as bindings for water elementals. They have been bound to the underside of the hull by M'lara.

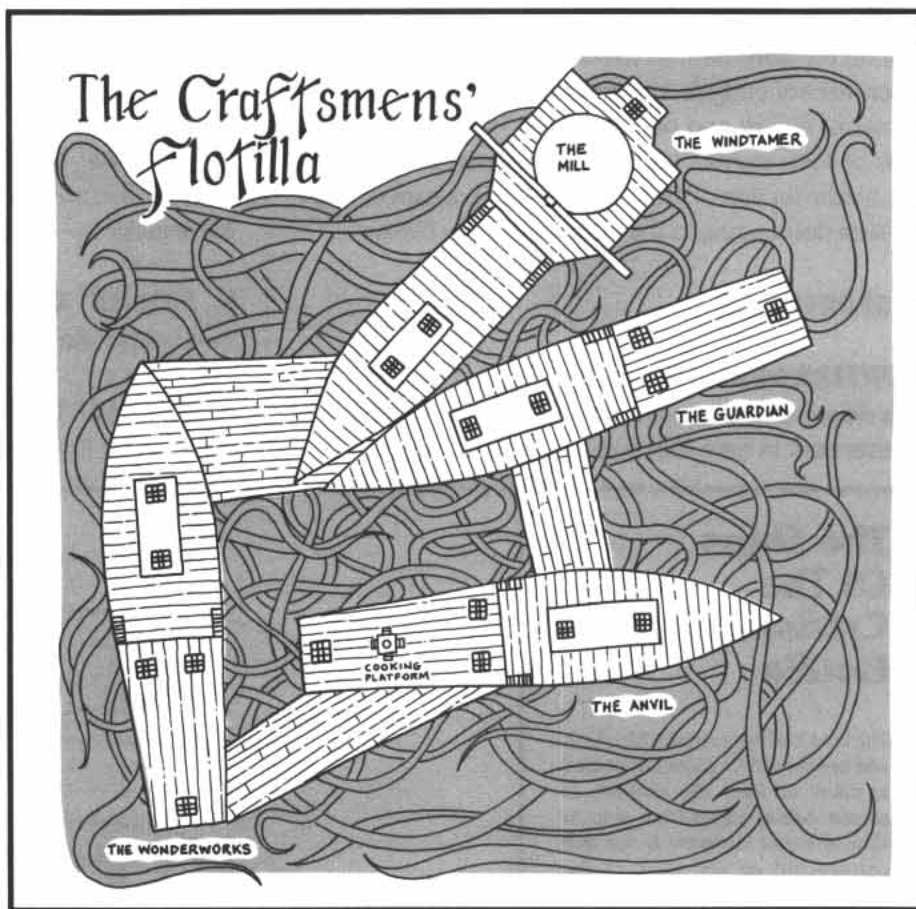
The leaders of the Free Realm movement often meet down here to discuss strategies. On these occasions, Finayl is posted to watch the stairs.

This area is constantly patrolled by three rough and battle-hardened ship's cats, who are in a state of constant war with the Provider's small but determined population of rats. This ongoing war produces a certain amount of scuffling and scraping from time to time, and occasionally some ear-piercing squeaks and yowls.

## THE CRAFTSMEN'S FLOTILLA

A smaller class of merchant vessel make up this Flotilla. All but one of them are home to the best minds and the finest artisans in the Realm. The exception is The Guardian, a den of cutthroats, thieves, and assassins under the command of the worst of the lot, Bull the Taskmaster.

The Craftsmen's Flotilla is quite different from its royal counterpart for, where Veranka maintains some semblance of justice, the craftsmen are completely at the far-from-tender mercies of Bull and his gang of thugs. The Bullies patrol the entire Flotilla, and anyone caught out after the eight bells' curfew is usually beaten and sentenced to several day's hard labor aboard the Slave Barge. This does not apply to Koot, who wanders absentmindedly about at all hours.



The Bullies are loyal to Bull only because none dares to challenge him, and because doing so might incur Veranka's wrath. The craftsmen appear to be timid and beaten, but they dream of freedom. They have many secrets which they keep from Bull and his thugs, and they are naturally wary of newcomers, lest those secrets be endangered.

### The Guardian

The Guardian is the most ill-kept ship in the fleet. It is grimy and scuffed, and in places the weed is starting to take hold. Its tenants could not care less. They are the Bullies, and this ship is their barracks.

Residents on board the Guardian are Bull the Taskmaster, and ten Bullies. Adventurers are unlikely to be recruited to serve here immediately, but if they have a bad enough attitude then Bull might eventually invite them in.

Intruders apprehended creeping about on the Guardian are soundly thrashed by the belligerent occupants. If they survive this, they are hauled off and taken to Veranka for sentencing.

**1. WATCH CABIN**

Against the portside wall stands a weapons rack with an assortment of cudgels, daggers and broadswords. In the corner of the aft and portside walls is a battered chest with no lock, containing half-plate armor, and hugging the middle section of the starboard wall is a narrow flight of stairs descending to the companionway below.

**2. STOREROOM**

**3. INTERROGATION CABIN**

This sloppy chamber takes up the remainder of the ship's aftersection. In here Bull and his cronies beat up any of

the craftsmen who transgress their rule, prior to dragging them across to Veranka. There is a set of wooden stocks in one corner, stained with sea-melon pulp.

**4. BULLIES' CABIN**

Four bullies are quartered here. They sleep in double hammocks.

**5. BULLIES' CABIN**

Two bullies share this room.

**6. BULLIES' CABIN**

Four bullies live here.

**The Ships Of The Craftsmen's Flotilla**

The layout of these ships is identical, and one set of deck plans is provided to cover all four. The contents of certain cabins varies from ship to ship. A major variation is the mill constructed on the back of the Windtamer.

**1. SPECIAL CABIN:**

There usually at least two apprentices in here during the day, involved in their normal duties. At night, it is empty.

**2. STORE ROOM**

This contains a variety and clutter of salvage, either thrown into trunks or simply tossed into an available corner. The small closet off this cabin contains merely food and water stores. During the day, some of the apprentices are usually present in this Cabin. It is empty at night.

**3. CABIN**

This is the journeyman's cabin, the chief apprentice. The exception is the Guardian, where it is a makeshift prison. See individual ships for details.

**4. CABIN**

Each of the living cabins is furnished with servicable cots and footlockers, and one

table with two or three chairs. They contain only the individual personal items of their occupants.

**5. CABIN**

See 4. above.

**6. CABIN**

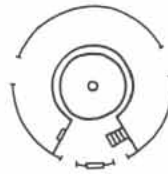
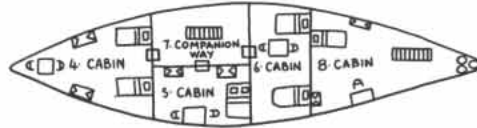
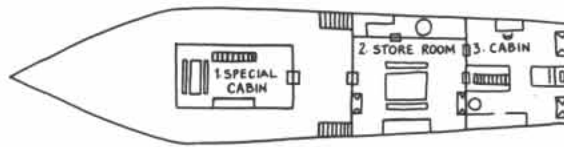
See 4. above.

**7. COMPANIONWAY**

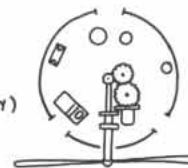
This is a cramped little corridor, littered with a wide assortment of junk. The junk has been kicked aside to form narrow paths from these doors to the stairway, which ascends to the special cabin above.

**8. CABIN**

This is the chief craftsman's cabin. It is roughly triangular, and there are narrow stairs from above crammed into the stern. See the individual ships for details.



THE MILL (ABOARD WINDTAMER ONLY)





7. COMPANIONWAY

8. BULL'S CABIN

This is a squalid cabin. In the middle of the forward wall is an extremely large bed. Scattered about it are empty wine-skins, overturned flagons, and several plates of half-eaten food.

On the right of the bed is a weapons rack holding an assortment of weapons. Amongst them is a desert bow, and eight arrows with glass tips. The tips are filled with acid, causing an extra 1D8 points of damage to the target. Armor protects against this damage, but is rendered useless.

To left of the bed is a deep, topless barrel containing sea water, which has stained the wooden staves nearly black. A few multicolored sparkles can be glimpsed on the bottom. This is Bull's horde of gems (3,000 LB), guarded by a sea-snake, which is black, and thus cannot be seen by anyone looking into the barrel. This nasty little creature strikes at any hand that is thrust into the water.

SEA-SNAKE

|               |               |              |  |       |        |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|--|-------|--------|
| STR 5         | CON 9         | SIZ 2        | INT 4                                  | POW 5 | DEX 12 |
| HIT POINTS: 2 |               | ARMOR: None. |  |       |        |
| <b>Weapon</b> | <b>Attack</b> | <b>Parry</b> | <b>Damage</b>                          |       |        |
| Bite          | 90%           | —            | 1 point + Class 1 poison (1D10 points) |       |        |

Hanging on a stand is a full set of plate armor and helm. The armor will fit those of SIZ 15. Bull only wears this armor in emergencies, for fear of falling overboard and being dragged down by the weight.

In the middle of the starboard hull is a battered trunk with which contains only Bull's spare clothing, none of which seems to have been washed for some time. Behind the stairs are two kegs of brandy and a massive barrel of wine.

The Windtamer

On the stern section of the Windtamer's upper deck is a 30 foot high windmill. The four great vanes are a framework of wood over which has been stretched the sturdy canvas of sails taken from stranded vessels. The mill housing is slightly cone-shaped, and atop its peak is a weathervane fashioned in the likeness of a squid.

The mill produces flour for the Realm, and all on board the Windtamer are engaged in the process.

The residents of the Windtamer are Millet, Whey, and Griff. There are four apprentices. Adventurers who are apprenticed to serve here are shown the rudiments of milling, and soon find themselves sewing sacks,

filling them with flour, and toting them. They are quartered with the other apprentices (5. and 6.).

Intruders spotted sneaking about the Windtamer are challenged. Millet is loathe to call the Bullies down on anyone, but does so if the mill or its workers seem under threat.

1. REPAIR SHED

To the left of the door is a small metal chest, open to reveal a collection of metal gears and wooden pulleys of various sizes. Against the portside hull stands a tall cabinet, also open and displaying a neat, orderly arrangement of well-kept tools.

A narrow flight of stairs protected by a rail of chain links descends to the companionway below. The forward section is taken up by a large, heavy plank table and two narrow benches.

2. STORES AND MESS HALL

This is a clean and tidy cabin. In the middle of the cabin is a square plank table and two benches. On the table is a pile of rough sackcloth, and some needles and thread. A metal chest sits against the forward wall, just inside the door. This holds an assortment of precision tools, which would be nearly impossible to replace. Against the aft wall are two battered wooden trunks, both of which are slightly open because they are overfull with spare gears and pulleys.

Against the portside hull stands a massive cabinet made of thick planks, with crude double doors. Inside are several coils of rope, a number of bulky spare parts for the mill, and a shelf holding 10 large flasks of lubricating oil.

A door in the starboard wall, held shut by a simple wooden latch, opens onto a small storeroom in which are stacked several dozen sacks of seapod flour, and a barrel half-filled with drinking water.

3. APPRENTICE GRIFF'S CABIN

The walls of this cabin are decorated with sketches and diagrams of various mills. To the right of the door is a barrel filled to the brim with assorted metal parts. Most of the portside hull is taken up by a walk-in closet, while against the stern stands a comfortable-looking bed flanked by locked twin oak trunks.

The trunk on the right holds a collection of trinkets fashioned from spare pieces of metal, while the trunk on the left holds twelve flour sacks, a bolt of sack cloth and a sewing kit.

A desk and chair occupy the middle of the starboard hull. A number of thick tomes are neatly arranged

on the desktop. They are basic primers for reading, writing, and math.

A Track roll on the floor reveals that the occupant has worn a path around the room with his pacing; something on his mind, perhaps.

#### 4. APPRENTICES' CABIN

Two apprentices live here.

#### 5. APPRENTICE'S CABIN

One apprentice is quartered here.

#### 6. APPRENTICE'S CABIN

One apprentice lives here.

#### 7. COMPANIONWAY

#### 8. MILLET AND WHEY'S CABIN

This is a pleasant, homey cabin. Against the port hull stands an old, much-used desk and chair. The desk holds Millet's logbooks and ledgers recording flour production for the past nine seasons. The drawers of the desk hold blank ledgers and scrolls, plus quills and bottles of ink.

Against the forward wall rests a double bed. On the left is a small trunk containing bolts of cloth, a sewing kit, and a half-completed dress. On the right is a high oak cabinet. This holds Millet's old logbooks, special tools, several whetstones, and a number of sketches of mills. A successful Search roll uncovers a concealed compartment in which have been stashed 24 crude darts (damage 1D3), which have been fashioned out of old sewing needles and bits of wood. With them are two phials of extremely potent sea-snake venom (Class 5 - death in 1D6 melee rounds). This is intended to be applied to the darts.

In the center of the starboard hull stands an old oak trunk trimmed with iron, which holds Millet and Whey's spare clothing. Out of sight behind the staircase is a keg of rum and a barrel of water.

#### 9. THE MILL

The single door into this dry, noisome circular cabin faces the bow, and is located just under the mill's slowly rotating vanes. Numerous portholes illuminate the cabin, which is a maze of beams, gears, and pulleys. The wedge-shaped area just inside the door affords access to the 12 foot grinding wheel which takes up the center of the cabin.

To the right of the door is a narrow flight of stairs ascending to the upraised platform that occupies the remainder of the cabin. To the left of the door, a wooden ladder ascends from the platform through a hole in the

ceiling some 10 feet above; this leads into the gear cabin.

This is the chamber in which dried seapods are ground into flour, from which the Realm's bread is made. Most of the floorspace is taken up with sacks filled with such flour, or empty sacks waiting to be filled.

During the day, both Millet and Whey work here, along with two apprentices. After seven bells (one hour before dusk), the mill is vacant and not operating.

#### 10. GEAR CABIN

The ladder from below ascends through a square opening in the deck. Up here is the massive gear mechanism of the mill. The air up here is hot, stifling, and heavy with the odor of fish. Three small portholes spaced around the cabin allow little air to enter, and make this a gloomy place at best.

Arranged around the aft section of the wall are a pine crate, open to reveal a collection of tools and metal gears, two piles of metal gears and wooden pulleys, and a tall open barrel filled with fish oil (used to lubricate the mill's gears).

Roquel holds occasional meetings with the captains of the flotilla here. The Bullies rarely enter the mill, and never climb the ladder.

### The Anvil

The Anvil is a floating forge, where tools and weapons are smelted and recast at Veranka's instruction.

The residents are Hammer, Asma, and Bolt. There are five apprentices, who assist in the forge, and also do on-the-spot repairs throughout both Flotillas. Adventurers who are sent here join the roving work crews, unless they have smithing skills. They sleep with the apprentices (5.).

Hammer reacts violently to any adventurers found lurking on board. He assumes that they are spies sent by Veranka or Bull, and sends them off with a beating.

#### 1. THE FORGE

The door to this sweltering cabin is in the middle of the aft wall. In the corner to the left is a stout metal rack, on which hangs a variety of metalworking tools. In the middle of the portside wall stands a modest forge. The firepit has been chiseled from a solid block of stone, and above it an awning of sheet metal channels most of the smoke up the flue. Resting on the stone slab beside the firepit is a huge, battered anvil.

Across from the forge near the starboard wall, a narrow flight of stairs descends below.

## 2. STOREROOM

### 3. APPRENTICE BOLT'S CABIN

This is a functional room, bare of any decoration. To the right of the door is a barrel with a wooden lid, containing pieces of ship's hardware in need of repair. A closet takes up most of the portside hull, and against the stern, two small trunks have been set on either side of a spartan bed. The lefthand one contains Bolt's clothing, while the righthand one holds Bolt's metalworking tools and a collection of finely wrought trinkets which he has made in his spare time.

A roughly made desk and chair occupy the center of the starboard hull, and its three drawers are filled with excellent sketches of intricately decorated weapons.

### 4. APPRENTICES' CABIN

Two apprentices are quartered here.

### 5. APPRENTICE'S CABIN

One apprentice is quartered here.

### 6. APPRENTICES' CABIN

Two apprentices are quartered here.

## 7. COMPANIONWAY

### 8. HAMMER AND ASMA'S CABIN

This is a clean but austere cabin. To the left of the stairs is a battered desk with chair. The desk drawers hold sketches of weapons and sculptures. In the center of the starboard hull is a trunk trimmed with tooled iron, containing spare clothing.

Against the forward wall is a massive double bed. To the left is a small trunk containing a few personal items and Hammer's set of small metalworking tools, and on the right is a chest containing a number of finely executed metal sculptures.

Behind the stairs are three kegs of nails and a barrel of drinking water. Amidst the nails are concealed twelve well-balanced and cleverly-designed Throwing Stars (treat as Thrown Dagger, damage 1D4+3). The tops of the kegs and barrel are metal, and could be used effectively as shields. The keg tops are the equivalent of bucklers, and the barrel top serves as a target shield.

## The Wonderworks

The Wonderworks is a floating laboratory and workshop. Under the brilliant but erratic leadership of Koot, the apprentices here work on designs and devices for improving Realm life. These include the extra decks and docks, and the apprentices are the Realm's carpenters

as well as architects. Their current task is to build a connecting deck to the Gambit, and to firmly anchor the new ship in place.

Residents of the Wonderworks are Koot and Roqel. There are six apprentices. Adventurers who join the crew are sent to help the apprentices working on the Gambit. Extra hammocks are slung for them in one of the Apprentice's Cabins (4., 5. or 6.).

Intruders found wandering aboard the Wonderworks do not meet violent opposition. Koot does not realize they do not belong, and accepts them without question. The apprentices see any intrusion as sponsored by Bull, and treat their unwelcome guests accordingly. Roqel is curious, thinking they are working against the Realm in some way.

## 1. THE LABORATORY

The door into this malodorous cabin is in the center of the aft wall. In the corner to the right is a small trunk. It is locked, and Koot has lost the key. Inside are a number of his inventions, such as an adjustable two-sided blade-sharpening device, a hand-operated shaving tool, and other such useful but mundane creations.

Against the portside wall is an open-faced cabinet filled with flasks, jars, and retorts, some of which contain a variety of colorful fluids. Mixed in with all these are several stoppered and labelled phials. They are:

- \* *Glow Liquid*: When shaken vigorously, this gives off a light equal to that of a single torch for 10 rounds, after which it must be reshaken.
- \* *Fire Extinguisher*: When tossed into an open fire, this snuffs out a blaze the size of a bonfire.
- \* *Shark Repellant*: This clears any sea area of sharks.

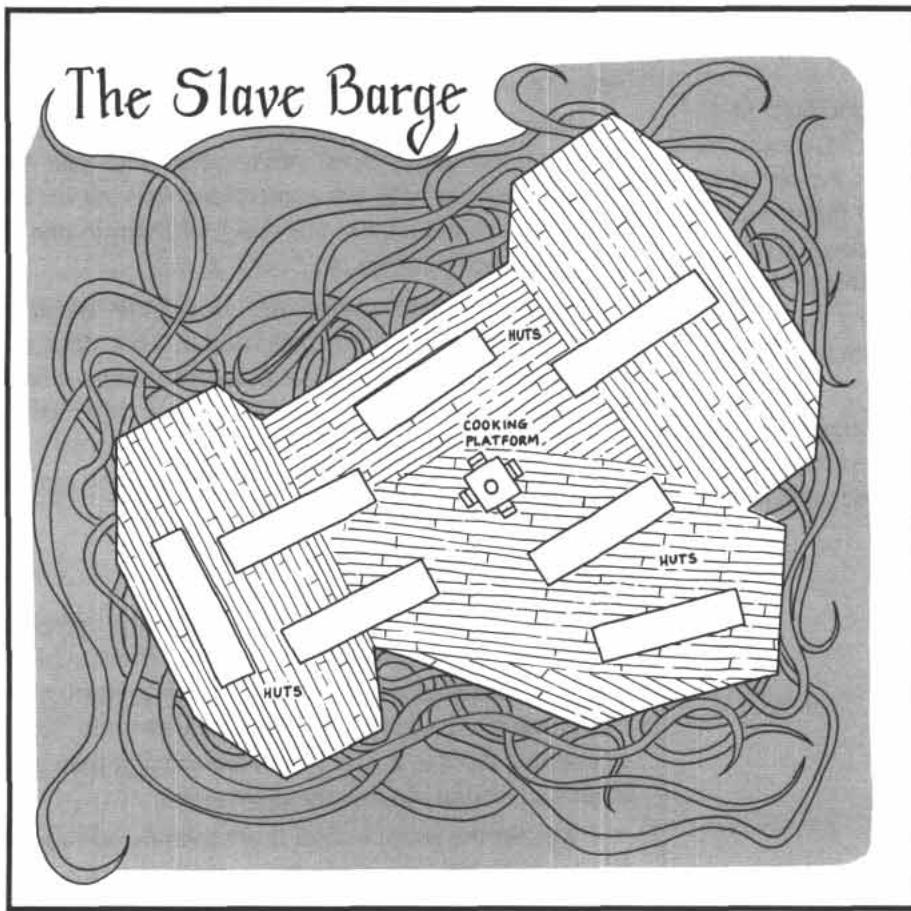
Across from the cabinet near the starboard wall, a flight of stairs descends below. Near the forward wall is a long table and two benches, the table is crowded to capacity with jars, phials, beakers, and an intricate distillation apparatus.

## 2. WORKSHOP AND MESS

This cabin is packed with odd pieces of lumber and other ship parts which Koot thinks may come in useful one day. A large cabinet by the portside wall is stuffed with books raided from various ships. Topics include navigation, sailing, and trade, and many log books are included.

In a secret compartment beneath the bottom shelf is hidden the model of Koot's most dangerous invention — a hot air balloon. Only he and Roqel know of the balloon, but they have kept the secret even from their allies, knowing full well its potential for rescue from the





Floating Realm and Veranka's iron rule. Revelation of this invention would mean death for Koot, and slavery for Roqel.

### 3. KOOT'S CABIN

This room is a complete mess. A barrel to the right of the door is filled to overflowing with rolled-up parchments of various sizes, all crammed in at random. These are sketches of new inventions, such as a machine that will wash clothing, and a wind-powered fan.

Most of the portside hull is taken up by a walk-in closet, which seems a bit pointless in the face of the many items of clothing scattered about the cabin.

Against the stern is a simple rumpled bed, which stands between a matched pair of ebony trunks upon which have been piled several stacks of books, mostly scientific texts. The trunk to the right is not locked, but pressing the push button on its front is required to open it. This is actually a Jack-in-the-box. When the release button is pressed, a garish clown's head on a large spring leaps up.

The trunk on the left looks exactly the same, but contains Koot's tool kit and diaries. Beneath the false

bottom of this trunk (Search roll) is the final sketch of that balloon, drawn on the back of an old sea chart.

In the middle of the starboard wall is an oak desk and chair, each drowned in a sea of scrolls, books, and loose papers - and one maroon-colored hat with a feather stuck into the band. The desk holds only more of Koot's seemingly endless supply of designs, the topmost being a bridge connecting the Royal and Craftsmen's Flotillas.

### 4, 5 AND 6. APPRENTICES' CABINS

Two apprentices reside here.

### 5. APPRENTICES' CABIN

Two apprentices reside here.

### 6. APPRENTICES' CABIN

Another two apprentices reside in here.

### 7. COMPANIONWAY

### 8. ROQEL'S CABIN

This cabin is neat and orderly, quite out of keeping with the rest of the ship. To the left of the stairs is a simple desk and chair. On the desk are three heavy tomes which described the many wonders of the world, held in place by a pair of jade bookends. In the drawers of the desk are a collection of textbooks on a wide variety of subjects, with Roqel's handwritten notes in each. The knowledge contained in these books is relatively harmless, but serves to point out the fact that Roqel is obviously not satisfied with her life aboard the Realm.

Against the starboard hull stands a large teakwood trunk. This contains Roqel's everyday clothing, mostly breeches and tunics. However, a Search roll will reveal that both inner sides of the trunk are false. Behind the lefthand panel are six finely crafted, well-balanced daggers. Behind the right are a dozen Throwing Stars fashioned by Hammer (damage 1D4+3).

Against the forward wall is a brass bed. To the left of it is a small teakwood chest containing an attractive dress uniform and cloak. To the right of the bed is a bookcase filled with books covering all manner of sub-



jects. The front of the bookcase swings forward (Search roll to spot the release mechanism) to reveal a weapons rack stocked with six falchions and twelve spears, all manufactured by Hammer.

Behind the stairway are stored a barrel of water and three kegs. The first keg is half-filled with brandy. The second keg is full of oil, a secret store for setting fire to the Royal Flotilla if things get desperate. The third keg is stuffed with jewelry and odd coinage valued at 6,000 LG, plus twelve sealed scrolls. These are gifts from Arlis to Roqel in an attempt to win her favor. The unopened scrolls contain further examples of Arlis' bad poetry, of which Roqel has had her fill.

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## The Slave Barge

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This dingy, forlorn island of wood is a haphazard construction of timbers and planks which were deemed unacceptable for use aboard either the Royal or Craftsmen's Flotillas. It resembles most closely an amorphous-shaped raft, upon which have been raised seven cabins. There are a hundred slaves on board the barge, over a dozen per hut.

The roofs of these long, rectangular shanties are used for the drying of seamelon seeds. These are then shipped to the Windtamer and ground into flour. This process is overseen by a score of children, who are the only source of laughter aboard the barge.

The walls of the hovels are festooned with seamelon vines hung out to dry as part of the process of making rope. In the center of the Barge is a 10 foot high platform on which stands an open-sided cabin where smolders a single small cook fire. Around this platform sit a score of weathered and work-weary women participating in the never-ending task of cleaning fish.

Those men not out harvesting in the Garden or fishing at the Clear Waters are hard at work repairing nets and sharpening spears. All are sullen and weary-eyed. They treat outsiders with quiet hostility.

Inside the hovels are cramped and lightless. The slaves sleep on makeshift mattresses of dried and shredded sea melon vine. Other furnishings are crude, and constructed from old crates and ship fittings. Each hut contains a water barrel, which is replenished from the Royal Flotilla. None of the barrels are ever more than half-full.

Adventurers who are sentenced here are instructed by the slaves in the tasks of fishing and fish-cleaning.

They are accepted as fellow unfortunates, and given a space to sleep in one of the huts.

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## The Weed

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Whenever the adventurers move from flotilla to flotilla, or fish with the slaves, or head for Sentinel Rock, they must cross the omnipresent weed. The weed surrounds everything, in a thick and dank carpet. It extends tendrils onto every boat, and must be cleared off regularly. It is infested with small crabs, and the occasional rat from one of the weed-bound hulks. Fish, sea-snakes, octopi and cuttlefish swim beneath the floating foliage. Occasionally an ocean predator, such as a shark or a large crab, hunts below.

The most widely-used method of crossing the weed is on pontoon boots. These require a DEX x5 roll to master. Once the adventurer has the hang of using them, only unexpected situations cause them to fall over. In such cases they should roll Balance to remain upright.

The boat moored at the Royal Flotilla is an easier method of passage, but Veranka strictly regulates its use. The Noble sentry on the Open Deck keeps an eye on it.

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## Incidents and Innuendo

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The information up until now has given the gamemaster background on who lives in the Realm and where they live. The actual action of the scenario is determined primarily by the conduct of the adventurers. Allow them time to explore the Realm, and to develop a few impressions about the inhabitants. A number of people approach them, openly or secretly, to try to involve them in their private plots and schemes.

To give Realm life some flavor, the gamemaster is provided with rumors, random events for day and night, and set events. There are two pivotal events in the course of the scenario, and these are discussed last. They can be played in any order. One is the Rite of Succession, which resolves a number of the power-mongering subplots, and potentially ends in a full and bloody riot. The other is the exploration of Sentinel Rock, in which the adventurers probably wound the Krakyn, provoking it in turn to take revenge and smash the Realm.

## Important Events

The following is a list of events which should definitely occur. The gamemaster should look this over carefully, and decide on the best time to use them. Each is a manifestation of a personal plot drawn from the backgrounds of the people of the Realm, or serves to provide information about the Realm to the adventurers.

- \* *Natasia tries to enlist the adventurer's aid against her brother.*
- \* *The adventurers are invited to supper aboard the Provider, where Serge and M'lara attempt to judge their character.*
- \* *Arlis tries to hire an adventurer to kill Natasia.*
- \* *Veranka summons the adventurers to a meeting aboard the Flagship. She offers them wine, and with false civility she asks them questions about how they find life on the Realm.*
- \* *Arlis professes his love to Roqel, and is rebuffed. He storms away.*
- \* *Berel engages the most intelligent of the adventurers in a conversation about the Realm. Berel is detached and accurate in his observations.*
- \* *Delphon lectures the adventurer's about the Krakyn's glory. He speaks of his own rebirth from the sea, and from the jaws of the Krakyn. As he says this, his eyes gaze at Sentinel Rock.*
- \* *Torhal tries to kill Arlis for Natasia.*
- \* *Serge shows trusted adventurers where the ballista is hidden.*
- \* *The slaves petition Veranka to move against the Landlubber menace. Veranka refuses.*

## Day Events

The following is a list of random events which can occur at any time during the day. The gamemaster may either roll twice per day with a 50% chance of something occurring, or simply insert an event when there is a lull.

### 1D20 Result

- 1 A sacrifice to the Krakyn is made.
- 2 Koot unveils a new invention, a flying fox which is strung between the two

flotillas. It can carry messages and light goods, and could lift a person of SIZ 9 or smaller.

3 A storm strikes. Part of the deck of the Royal Flotilla is damaged, and slaves and apprentices spend the next few days repairing it.

4 A Sea Serpent attacks the Craftsmen's Flotilla.

5 The Krakyn tows in a completely deserted ship.

6 Therus plays a practical joke on an adventurer.

7 A group of foraging slaves is attacked by sharks.

8 There is an explosion in the hull of the Sanctum. Inyz and the Adepts refuse to reveal what happened, but no-one seems to have been injured.

9 A scuffle breaks out between Packers and Adepts. The Nobles break it up.

10 A band of slaves revolts.

11 A huge crab is sighted in the weed. It is larger than a horse.

12 One of the Nobles dies after eating a poisonous fish. Ten people from the Slave Barge are flogged, and one woman is sentenced for sacrifice.

13 Bull accuses one of Hammer's apprentices of plotting against the Realm, and making weapons in secret. The apprentice is taken to the Flagship and locked in the brig.

14 A Bully is knocked unconscious by one of the vanes of the Mill. Bull claims the Mill is unsafe; Millet says the idiot just stood too close.

15 A small fire breaks out on the Anvil after Hammer knocks a piece of glowing metal into the roof. It is put out quickly. A false rumor sweeps around that it was sabotage.

16 Arlis sets off for Sentinel Roc on pontoon boots. He walks around it, and comes back a few hours later looking satisfied. He goes to his cabin and makes some adjustments to his fortress plan.

17 Boson Jyrym almost drowns while walking on pontoons from the Royal Flotilla to the Craftsmen's Flotilla. He claims that someone must have tampered with his pontoon boots.

18 Koot disappears. A search is mounted. He is discovered in the gear-house of the Mill, fast asleep.

19 Roqel stabs one of the Bullies after he gets too close to her. It is a minor wound. He claims he is innocent, and Bull backs him up. While everyone is still arguing, Arlis pulls out a weapon and kills the man.

20 Boson Liot sidles up to an adventurer, and asks "Do you know who I am?" Regardless of the answer, Liot looks satisfied, and walks away.

## Night Events

The following is a list of random events which can occur at any time during the night. The gamemaster may either roll once per night with a 50% chance of something occurring, or simply insert an event when the Realm's nightlife needs some excitement.

### 1D10 Result

1 Veranka makes a surprise night inspection of one of the other ships, accompanied by her guards.

2 A great stirring is heard in the weeds. In the moonlight, the tentacles of the Krakyn can be seen breaking the water around Sentinel Rock. After a time they submerge.

3 The Bullies get stinking drunk, and go on a rampage through the Craftsmen's Flotilla, tipping people out of their beds.

4 Roqel dons pontoon boots and sneaks across to the Provider for a midnight meeting in the hold.

5 A giant crab pulls someone off the Slave Barge.

6 The Servants of the Krakyn hold a night-time vigil. Their singing drifts across the waves.

7 The Adepts seize a slave for a demon sacrifice. Horrible sounds are heard from the hull of the Sanctum.

8 Berel paces the deck of the Royal Flotilla all night, lost in thought.

9 Natasia and Torhal have a secret rendezvous among the stacked crates on the deck of the Provider.

10 Natasia sneaks aboard the Sanctum for an evening meeting with Inyz.

## The Rite of Succession

The Rite of Succession is scheduled to take place 1D6+3 days after the adventurers arrive. The lead-up to the event is the busiest political activity and double-dealing the Realm has ever seen, as both children try to increase their base of supporters.

The Rite takes place just after dusk. Torches are set to illuminate the Open Deck area around the sacrificial hatch, and all subjects of the Realm are commanded to attend. Slaves are of course excluded.

Each Captain and First Mate stands before their respective ships, their crews gathered around them. When all is ready Veranka, dressed in her Demon Armor, emerges from the Flagship and ascends to the Admiral's Chair. Berel takes his usual place in front of the Reviewing Platform.

Emerging from opposite ends of the Flagship, Natasia and Arlis make their way to the base of the Reviewing Platform. They do not ascend, but instead face the Admiral's Chair and salute their mother.

Veranka gives a short speech, saying that in any generation, only one is fit to rule, and that this Rite will determine the future of the next generation. The victor will receive glory and honor, and will be acknowledged as the Heir Apparent to the Admiral's Chair. The unworthy loser will be given to the Krakyn.

Having said as much, Veranka calls for the Rite to begin. Her children salute her once more, then square off against one another in front of the Reviewing Platform.

Natasia fights with her poison daggers, and wears demon armor. Arlis trusts to his own skill, somewhat foolishly. The battle rages all across the Open Deck, and the gamemaster may either pre-determine the winner, or play it out with the rolls of the dice.

Meanwhile, Inyz uses her Demon Armor to send a blast of Confusion against Arlis (potency 10D6), seriously reducing his chances for a victory. Any adventurer making a successful See roll observes Inyz acting very suspiciously.

### IF ARLIS WINS

If Arlis wins, he swaggers up to bow to his mother, and announces his intention to take Roqel as his First Mate. Finayl stiffens, and Serge puts a hand on him to hold him back. Roqel spits on the deck, and turns her back on

Arlis. He shouts that her father's days are numbered, if she does not accept him. Koot looks confused. Veranka remarks mildly that Arlis' words are not appropriate for a future Admiral, and observes that he has failed to give due thanks to the Krakyn for his victory. She deems him unfit to rule, and places him under arrest pending sacrifice. Arlis is too astonished to respond. The adventurers may speak in his favor, and can change Veranka's mind with a successful Orate.

### IF NATASIA WINS

If Natasia wins, she bows low to her mother and promises to serve her faithfully until the time comes for her to become Admiral. Atrima gives a cry of "Treachery!", and pushes her way to the front. She accuses Natasia and Inyz of plotting against Arlis, and using secret sorcery against him. The adventurers may like to add their observations at this point. Veranka orders the pair's immediate arrest, and appoints Atrima to the post of captain of the Sanctum. The Adepts shout their outrage, and Inyz asks Veranka if she would like to reconsider this rash accusation.

The gamemaster can decide on the outcome. Allow the adventurers to speak up if they feel the urge, and if they can make a successful Orate roll, they can sway Veranka's decision.

### GAMEMASTER'S OPTION: ANARCHY IN THE FLOATING REALM

This may be the signal for all-out war in the Floating Realm. If Veranka pushes for Inyz' arrest, the Adepts may revolt. Inyz uses Veranka's own demon armor to paralyze her, and the Nobles are split by loyalty to Natasia or Veranka. The Bullies side with Veranka. Serge and the Free Realmers stand back, and wait their chance to attack the victors.

A conclusive battle is unlikely at this point. Each side falls back to their ship to take up a more defensive position. The Servants of the Krakyn take no sides, but retreat to pray. The craftsmen unite against the Bullies, but probably need adventurer assistance to defeat them. The slaves watch the tumult from their barge, declare themselves free from all oppressors, and promptly claim independence.

As Veranka holds the only fresh water supply in the Realm, the situation cannot go unresolved for more than a week. Use the actions of the adventurers to guide the course of the war. There should be bitter cabin-to-cabin fighting, and at least one ship burning, before one side emerges victorious.

## Rumours of the Realm

The following rumors are currently abroad in the Realm. Some hint at the plots and affairs of the inhabitants, and some are pure fiction. These can be dispensed in conversation with the inhabitants. Everybody knows a few of these.

- 1 Veranka plans to decrease the water ration. (F)
- 2 Veranka has announced the Rite of Succession early because she believes her children are plotting against her. (T)
- 3 Delphon wants to build a new temple to the Krakyn on Sentinel Rock. (T)
- 4 Sentinel Rock is solely inhabited by loathesome degenerate Realmers who eat human flesh. (T)
- 5 Arlis wants to build a fortress on Sentinel Rock when he is Admiral. (T)
- 6 Arlis has asked Roqel to marry him. (T)
- 7 Inyz has a secret lover. Some people say it's a woman. (F)
- 8 There is a Free Realm movement that plots against the Admiralty. (T)
- 9 Koot is planning a bridge between the flotillas. (T)
- 10 Koot is completely crazy. His inventions always break down sooner or later. (F)
- 11 Koot is the only thing which is saving Roqel from Arlis. Veranka has told the boy to leave Roqel alone, in case he upsets Koot. (T)
- 12 Veranka is going to return to the mainland when she has made enough money from looting ships. (F)
- 13 No-one really controls the Krakyn. It's just a big monster. (T)
- 14 Therus and Natasia are having an affair behind Inyz' back. She spends a lot of time on the Sanctum. (F)
- 15 Stores are dangerously low. M'lara is hiding this from Veranka. (F)
- 16 The slaves are planning a massive secret revolt. (F)
- 17 The talk of revolutions is nonsense. Everyone understands the need for strong and fair rule. Life in the Realm is better than being shipwrecked. (F)
- 18 The Krakyn can fly. (F)
- 19 Inyz is secretly planning to bind the Krakyn and force it to do her bidding. (F)
- 20 Arlis is secretly seeing a female Adept on board the Sanctum. (T)
- 21 Bull has a secret love for Roqel. (F)
- 22 The Adepts of the Sanctum summon up demons they can't control. (T)
- 23 The Adepts of the Sanctum occasionally kidnap people and sacrifice them in demonic summonings. (T)
- 24 Hammer tried to kill his own journeyman, Bolt. Bolt was seeing Asma behind Hammer's back. (F)
- 25 The Krakyn is displeased with the lack of reverence accorded to it. If the Subjects of the Realm don't become more devout, it will extract divine vengeance. (F)
- 26 Arlis is plotting with the cannibals of Sentinel Rock to overthrow his mother. (F)
- 27 Berel knows more than he says. He has a better idea of what goes on than Veranka does. (T)
- 28 One of the women on the Slave Barge is carrying Boson Ashtide's child. (F)
- 29 Some nights the tentacles of the Krakyn are seen draped over Sentinel Rock. (T)
- 30 Veranka has sent for a Melnibonéan battle barge to rescue her and her family. Everyone else on the Realm will be taken to Imrry as slaves. (F)
- 31 The Nobles hate the Adepts. (T)
- 32 Veranka's demon armor was a gift from Inyz. (T)
- 33 Delphon is insane. (T)
- 34 The Vilmirian Navy has recently sent three ships to liberate the Realm and arrest Veranka. (F)
- 35 M'lara is a sorceress, but she has kept it secret. (T)
- 36 Roqel is a sorceress, but she has kept it secret. (F)
- 37 The Slave Barge was very badly constructed, and is slowly sinking into the weed. (F)
- 38 The Packers hate the Nobles. (T)
- 39 The Nobles think that the Bullies are a bunch of buffoons. (T)
- 40 Koot has invented a way of boiling seawater so that it is drinkable, but Veranka has forbidden him to introduce the process. (F)
- 41 Inyz is in league with the Theocrat of Pan Tang. (F)
- 42 Count Smiorgan Baldhead of the Purple Towns is sending a fleet to smash the Realm. (F)
- 43 Therus has been sawing holes in the Open Deck. (F)
- 44 Koot has invented a way of cooking the weed so that it is edible. (F)
- 45 The rest of the world has been destroyed by Chaos. Only the Floating Realm remains. (F)
- 46 There is a secret weapon somewhere on the Realm which could kill even the Krakyn. (T)
- 47 The cannibalistic savages on Sentinel Rock have been stealing babies from the the Slave Barge. (F)
- 48 The slaves have a powerful sorcerer amongst them. (F)
- 49 The Mill is driven by a demon. (F)
- 50 No-one has ever escaped from the Floating Realm. (T)



## Sentinel Rock

This is the only bit of solid ground within sight of the Floating Realm. It is little more than a mound of black and forbidding rock, jutting out of the sea to a height of 50 feet. It is harsh, bleak, and inhospitable. The stone island has jagged facets of granite that twist and turn in drastic angles. One flat outcropping of rock is the only safe place to land, and forms a kind of beach.

There are a number of small caves around the base of the rock, and three larger caves a little distance in from the encircling weed. The smaller caves are home to sea snakes. They pose no threat unless accidentally stepped on, or otherwise disturbed. Certain people aboard the Floating Realm prize them for their venom.

### SEA SNAKES

STR 7 CON 11 SIZ 5 INT 3 POW 4 DEX 16

HIT POINTS: 7 each ARMOR: None

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage                                 |
|--------|--------|-------|--|
| Bite   | 85%    | —     | 1 point + poison Class 1 (1D10 points) |

The three large caves are also occupied. One is the nest of a group of Sea Turtles. One is the lair of the Landlubbers, a group of primitive cannibals who hunt any intruders on Sentinel Rock. The third is a tunnel which leads to the lair of the Krakyn below.

## The Sea Turtles

The sea turtles come to Sentinel Rock to breed. They are harmless creatures normally, but react with determination against any who threaten their eggs.

### SEA TURTLES

STR 15 CON 16 SIZ 9 INT 4 POW 7 DEX 10

HIT POINTS: 16 each ARMOR: 10 point shell

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Bite   | 45%    | —     | 1D8    |

## The Landlubbers

The first generation of castaways in the Realm colonized Sentinel Rock. When the move was made back to the floating hulks, a few die-hard colonists remained behind. The passing of generations transforming the 'landlubbers' into a tribe of savage cannibalistic primitives who fear and despise the sea and all who dwell there.

The entrance to their tribal cave can only be seen from the flat slab of rock which serves as the island's beach. Anyone approaching the island is observed by

the Landlubbers. They follow and harass the invaders throughout their exploration of Sentinel Rock.

Their cave dwelling is a very basic affair, a roughly circular chamber 50 feet in diameter, half choked with clouds of smoke from a smoldering cookfire fed by sea melon vines, driftwood, and dried dung. Sea melon vines also provide sleeping straw, and the only possessions to be found here are the Landlubbers' crude weapons and various tools, all fashioned of stone and bone. Here the women and children spend most of their lives, and all are of the same wild, blood-thirsty nature as the men; they too attack like a pack of animals, using clubs and bits of sharpened rocks which serve as daggers.

The Landlubbers are unsophisticated and superstitious. If the adventurers display any magical powers, the attacking tribesmen retreat in abject fear.

### LANDLUBBER MEN

There are twelve men in the tribe.

STR 17 CON 15 SIZ 16 INT 8 POW 6 DEX 13 CHA 5

HIT POINTS: 19 each ARMOR: None.

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon      | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|-------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Club        | 46%    | 21%   | 1D6    |
| Thrown Rock | 29%    | —     | 2D4    |

SKILLS: Ambush 47%, Climb 76%, Dodge 38%, Hide 61%, Jump 55%, Move Quietly 52%, Swim 00%.

LANGUAGES: Common 5%, Landlubber 40%.

### LANDLUBBER WOMEN

There are eleven women in the tribe.

STR 15 CON 13 SIZ 14 INT 8 POW 6 DEX 11 CHA 5

HIT POINTS: 15 each ARMOR: None.

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon      | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|-------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Club        | 25%    | 10%   | 1D6    |
| Thrown Rock | 23%    | —     | 2D4    |

SKILLS: Dodge 26%, Hide 42%, Swim 00%.

LANGUAGES: Common 5%, Landlubber 40%.

### LANDLUBBER CHILDREN

There are eight children in the tribe.

STR 8 CON 11 SIZ 7 INT 5 POW 6 DEX 12 CHA 7

HIT POINTS: 9 each ARMOR: None.

DAMAGE BONUS: -1D6/-1D4

| Weapon         | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|----------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Sharpened Rock | 15%    | —     | 1D4    |
| Thrown Rock    | 31%    | —     | 1D4    |

SKILLS: Dodge 37%, Hide 25%, Swim 00%.

LANGUAGES: Common 3%, Landlubber 25%.



In the Lair of the Landlubbers

## The Krakyn's Tunnels

On the far side of the Rock is a fissure opening into a narrow crevice. The almost sheer face of the island's peak is broken here by a 20 foot high cleft in the black granite extending 40 feet before being swallowed by the gaping mouth of the cave. The floor of the cleft is littered with bones of various creatures. Three human skulls grin up at visitors with hollow cheer.

The cave mouth opens into a tunnel, which slopes gradually downwards. The air is warm, and dripping can be heard from below.

### THE HOT SPRINGS

A foul, sulfuric mist fills the air of this uncomfortably warm chamber. Moisture glistens on the smooth walls, trickling down into the bubbling pool which takes up most of the cavern floor. Steam rises from the pool, and its waters hover near boiling point. A tiny stream flows out of it and down the tunnel at the opposite end of the cave.

There is just enough of a ledge around the pool to allow a person to work their way around it, provided a

successful Climb roll is made. Due to the high concentration of sulphur in the air, the heat, and the humidity, all adventurers must make a CON x5 roll, failure causing a 10% penalty to their Climb rolls. Anyone falling into the scalding waters sustains 1D6 points of damage.

The runoff from the pool flows down the steep slope of the descending tunnel, cooling as it goes and eventually feeding into a second pool in the next chamber.

### THE KRAKYN'S DOORSTEP

The tunnel emerges here into a large, crescent-shaped chamber from which another tunnel mouth opens up to the right. The swiftly cooling stream which follows the tunnel empties into another pool, this filling a large portion of the cave opposite the entrance. The walls, floor, and ceiling glisten with moisture caused by a thin mist of steam rising from the still warm waters

of the pool, which is no longer harmful to the touch.

The waters fill a narrow channel leading from this chamber directly into the Krakyn's lair. A Search roll is needed on the pool to detect the outlines of the underwater passage. A Swim roll is needed to negotiate the passage. A failed roll results in the loss of 1D6 points of drowning damage. Adventurers who fail their roll and get into difficulty have a 50% chance of emerging at either end of the underwater tunnel.

### DEAD END CHAMBER

This roughly oval cave houses a deep pit, circled by a narrow ledge. The chamber is hot and filled with a low rumble, like the growling of some great beast. This is the remnant of the volcanic shaft which created Sentinel Rock. The pit plunges into the world's molten mantle, ensuring death to anyone who falls in.

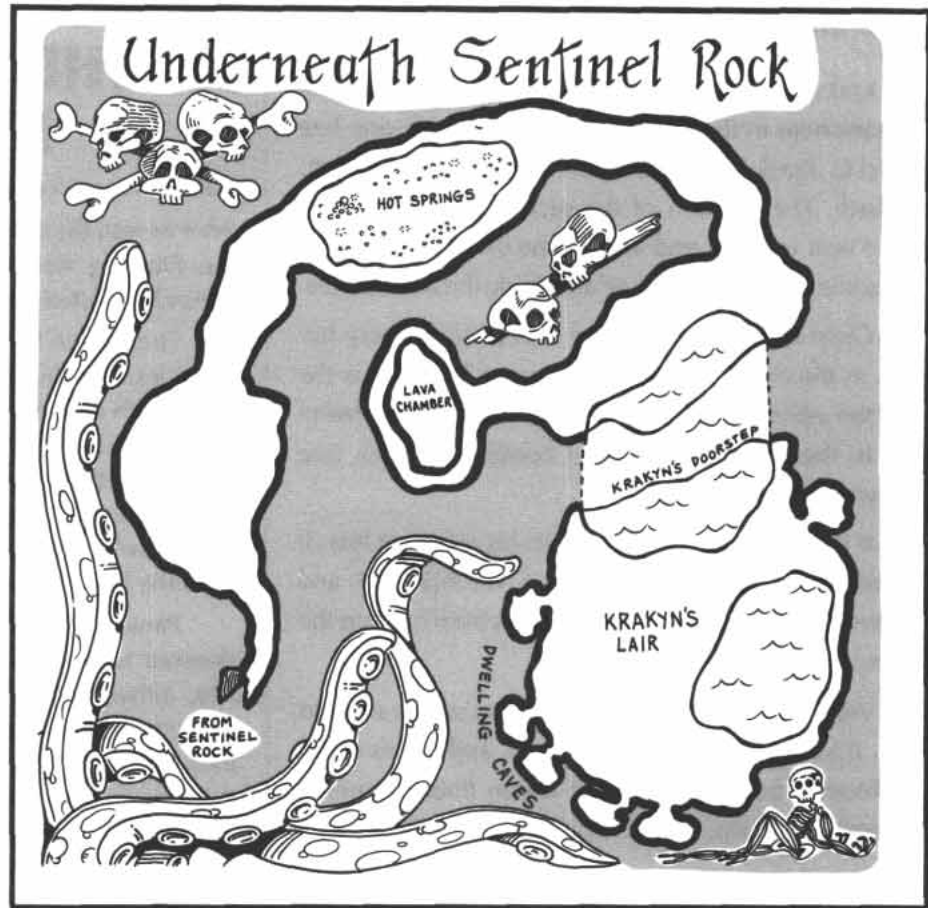
### THE KRAKYN'S LAIR

Here the Krakyn sleeps, and dreams. Here it stirs in its slumber, and occasionally reaches out for a human morsel to satiate its hunger.

This is a vast, roughly oval chamber. It is illuminated by a ghostly blue light, by a phosphorescent moss which covers the cavern's rocky walls and ceiling. The cavern contains a drinking pool, which is connected to the pool in the Krakyn's Doorstep area, and a sea pool, which is the Krakyn's ocean entrance.

The Krakyn dominates the chamber. It slumbers, one great eye visible and rolled back. Its tentacles splay across the floor, forming rubbery barriers. As the adventurers move about the chamber, the eye opens, and it regards them without interest. It cannot distinguish between them and its stock of victims.

A man dressed in rags, one of the Krakyn's fodder, is at the pool drinking when the first adventurer breaks the surface. Upon sight of a stranger in the lair, he faints dead away.



**THE DWELLING CAVES**

There are ragged openings in the wall of the Krakyn's Lair. These are dwelling caves, and they are occupied by the Krakyn's sacrificial victims. There are eight men and women living here. They were sacrificed by Veranka, and the Krakyn brought them here for future consumption. Any adventurer sacrificed to the Krakyn has survived in this fashion.

The victims are unaware of an exit from the lair save by the sea, and their spirits are totally broken by the seemingly hopeless nature of their situation. Occasionally they dare to catch fish from the pool, and some of them eat the moss. But for the most part they slowly starve to death, while waiting for the Krakyn to eat them.

They are kept in line by a mad little wretch named Sharkule. This odious little worm has set himself up as slavelord, whipping his already dispirited fellow-captives into submission through the use of threats of the Krakyn's wrath should he be disobeyed in any way. The Krakyn's actual awareness of Sharkule is almost non-existent. Sharkule is skilled in being the furthest away when the monster grows hungry. He has been down here for months, and survives by gnawing on human remains left over by the Krakyn. In his Dwelling Cave is

a small pile of jewelry and coins extorted from fellow prisoners, worth 2,670 LB.

When Sharkule sights the adventurers, he warns them away. If this fails, he tries to wake the Krakyn. The Krakyn glares at him briefly, and swats him away with a languid tentacle.

**SHARKULE**

STR 9 CON 15 SIZ 8 INT 15 POW 16 DEX 14 CHA 7

HIT POINTS: 14 ARMOR: None.

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

Weapon  
None.

SKILLS: Dodge 77%, Hide 68%, Orate 31%, Persuade 74%.

LANGUAGES: Common 00%/75%.

**TYPICAL SACRIFICE VICTIM**

STR 11 CON 10 SIZ 12 INT 11 POW 9 DEX 10 CHA 10

HIT POINTS: 10 ARMOR: None.

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

| Weapon      | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|-------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Fist        | 25%    | --    | 1D3    |
| Thrown Rock | 20%    | --    | 2D4    |

SKILLS: Dodge 26%, Hide 31%.

LANGUAGES: Common 00%/55%.

## The Krakyn Attacked

The Krakyn simply cannot conceive of any threat from humans here in its lair. The adventurers have one free round to attack before the astonished monster thinks to retaliate. The reaction of the sacrifice victims varies. Some wail in terror and hide, some dive into the pool, and some attack the creature alongside the adventurers.

Once roused, the enraged Krakyn slays every human in the chamber. The only escape from this is the way the adventurers came in. After slaughtering everyone in the cavern, the Krakyn heads out to sea (see below).

If Krakyn is reduced to half its hit points or less, it slides into the sea-pool, flooding it with black ink and its own ichorous blood. It then propels itself out into the open sea.

Wounded and angered, the Krakyn swims away to heal. It travels miles under the weed, and settles down to brood. It buries itself in the ocean floor, dreaming Krakyn nightmares, and nursing hatred for all humans.

The Krakyn returns to the Floating Realm 1D10 days later, to smash it into driftwood. See The Krakyn's Revenge for details.

### THE KRAKYN

The Krakyn was once a natural creature, many centuries ago, but it fell under the notice of the Lords of Chaos, who thought to amuse themselves with a bit of experimentation. They gave the beast intelligence and cunning, and invested it with the taint of Chaos to give it the power of regeneration, in the process making it into a nearly immortal creature.

STR 60 CON 50 SIZ 75 INT 10 POW 18 DEX 12

HIT POINTS: 113 ARMOR: 15 points of tough hide

| Weapon       | Attack | Parry | Damage  |
|--------------|--------|-------|---------|
| Tentacles x8 | 60%    | 30%   | 1D8+3D6 |
| Beak         | 75%    | —     | 2D10+3  |

The Krakyn may attack with up to six tentacles per round. A successful Tentacle attack may either cause damage or grasp the target, pulling them in for a Beak attack that, if successful, ignores armor and automatically inflicts damage.

A blow of 15 points of damage to a tentacle will sever it, freeing a held adventurer.

**POWERS:** Regeneration: 1 D8 points per round. Any severed tentacles regrow after 1D8 days.

**ABILITIES:** The Krakyn may squirt a vast cloud of ink into the water. This affects a circular area 75 feet in diameter for 3D6 rounds, completely obscuring vision. Combat rolls by affected creatures are made at half normal.

**SKILLS:** Ambush 90%, Swim 100%, Swim Quietly 76%.

## THE KRAKYN'S REVENGE

After its rest, the Krakyn launches an all-out attack upon the Floating Realm, punishing all humans for the wounds inflicted on it by the adventurers.

The Krakyn first seizes the Flagship in its powerful tentacles, smashing the hull in and dragging it under - along with anyone unfortunate enough to be aboard at the time. The beast continues its destructive spree at random, with the intention of rendering the entire Royal Flotilla into driftwood. It next vents its anger upon the Craftsmen's Flotilla, starting with the Guardian. Last to go is the Slave Barge.

Panic rages across the flotillas. Some people endeavour to fight the rampaging sea creature, but most flee, either to the furthest point away from it, or on pontoon boots across the weed to Sentinel Rock, where they are attacked by the Landlubbers. The Servants of the Krakyn fall into an ecstasy of worship, and attack anyone who dares assault their god. Their faith proves to be of no worth to them, as the Krakyn devours worshiper and heathen alike.

The best weapon in the Realm against the Krakyn is the secret ballista, which the adventurers may remember if Serge does not. It is concealed beneath an up-turned crate on the deck of the Provider, and is ready to fire.

If the Krakyn is not stopped, the remaining population is stranded on Sentinel Rock, where they are constantly harassed by the Landlubbers. The adventurers must survive on the Rock until they can engineer their own rescue from this treacherous seaborne morass.

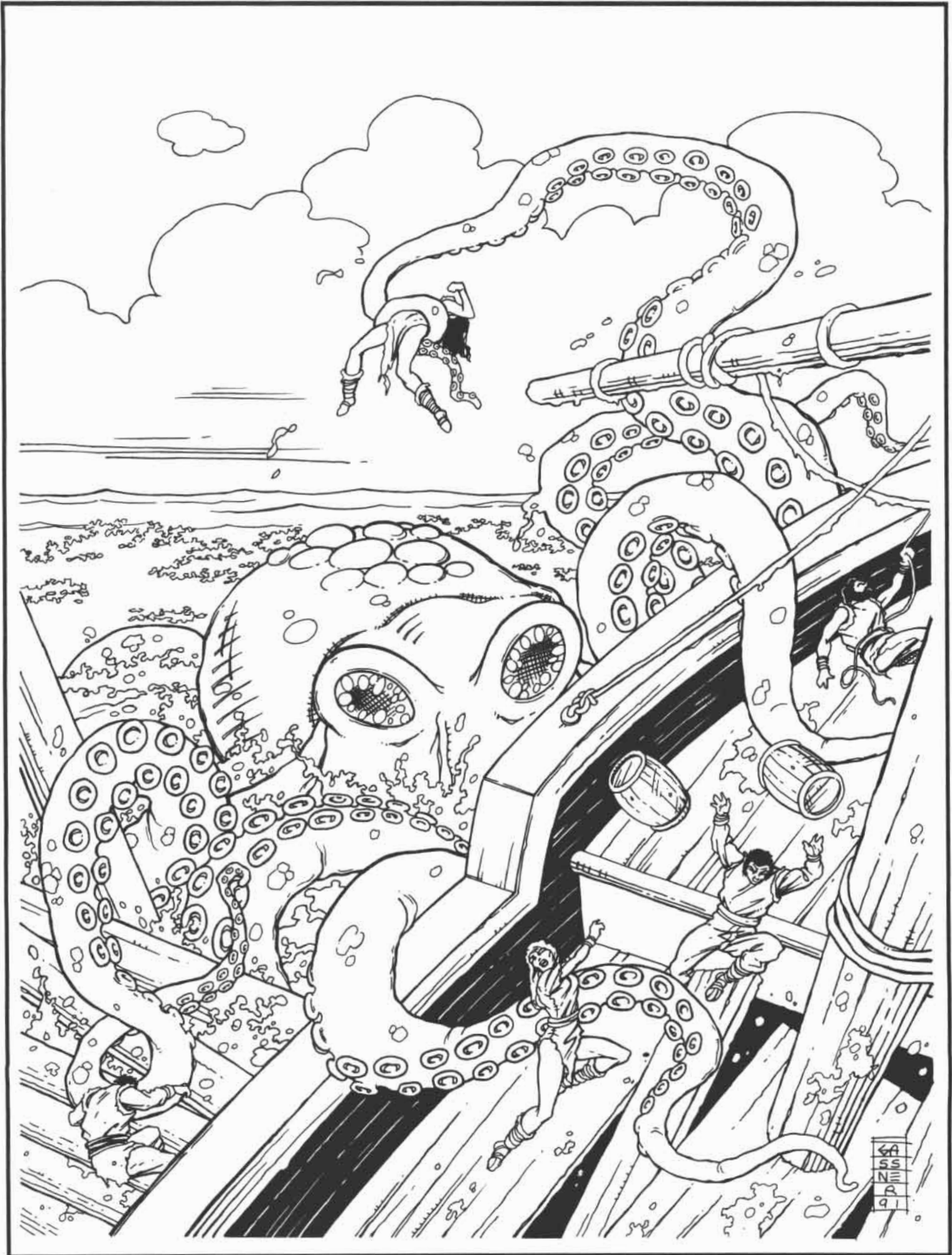
### DESTROYING SHIPS

The Krakyn attacks ships with its tentacles only, striking to damage. In effect it is grasping the ship and pulling it apart.

- \* Each ship of the Royal Flotilla has a Hull Quality of 11, Seaworthiness of 28, and 80 Structure Points.
- \* Each ship of the Craftsmen's Flotilla has a Hull Quality of 8, Seaworthiness of 22, and 45 Structure Points.
- \* The Slave Barge has a Hull Quality of 20, Seaworthiness of 10, and 100 Structure Points.

Any successful attack by the Krakyn automatically reduces Seaworthiness points by the full amount of damage done. If the damage done exceeds the Hull Quality,





The Rage of the Krakyn

## Recommended Reading

Gamemasters who are intrigued by the sargasso sea setting are recommended to read the sea-going horror stories of William Hope Hodgson. Hodgson sets many stories in settings similar to *The Floating Realm*, and some of the information and inspiration in the scenario has been drawn from his work.

the excess points are also taken off Structure Points, and the Hull Quality is also reduced by 1 point. A vessel with zero Seaworthiness takes on water, and is either swamped or sunk. The Windtamer, the Anvil and the Provider will slowly sink; the other ships will become swamped. Any vessel with zero Hull Quality or zero Structure Points breaks apart and sinks rapidly.

These rules are extracted from Chaosium's *White Wolf* supplement.

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## The End of the Realm

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The adventurers cannot leave this place until they have deposed Veranka, and slain the Krakyn. Even then peace is not guaranteed. Remember that each of the nobles aboard the Royal Flotilla are hungry for power, and the removal of any existing power base causes more plotting and double dealing as each faction attempts to seize control. This occurs even if the Realm is reduced to Sentinel Rock. These folk are obsessed with power. The best hope for the Realm is a new and open government led by Serge, Roqel, or the adventurers.

## Escape

Once tyrants no longer rule the Realm, the people start to plan escape. They ask the adventurers to set out for the mainland, and send back ships to rescue them.

Several transport options are available. In the meantime, the gamemaster must decide, what happens in the Realm while the adventurers are absent? Does some new threat engulf the Free Realmers before help can come?

## BALLOON

Koot can now work openly on his hot air balloon. Construction and testing takes several months. The gamemaster may wish to play this time out, with the teething troubles of the new democratic Realm.

Finally the balloon is ready for launch. Serge asks the adventurers to be the first passengers. They are to strike out for the mainland, and get help back to the Realm as soon as they can.

The balloon voyage is as eventful as the gamemaster desires. How much control do the adventurers have? Do they land safely in Argimiliar, or in Pikarayd, where strangers are not welcome?

## SHIP

The adventurers may prefer to restore one of the ships to sailing capacity, probably the Gambit. New sails must be fashioned from blankets and clothing. M'lara's water elementals (bound to the keel of the Provider) can be transferred across.

The ship voyage can also be a further adventure. How difficult is it to get out of the weed? Is the Krakyn the only huge monster to lurk here?

## RAFT

If the Realm was smashed, the best the adventurers can hope for is a raft made out of driftwood. This would be a long, hard journey out into the shipping lanes.

## Rescue and Rewards

If the adventurers are able to direct a rescue operation for the castaways left behind, they are amply compensated. After the captains and crew of any rescue ships have been paid off, the adventurers are permitted to keep anything that was found in the Flagship, the Sanctum, the Temple, and the Guardian. Generous adventurers may wish to redistribute some of this wealth, but for now it is theirs for the taking.

One exception is the barrel of freshwater elementals, which M'lara insists on smashing. It is looked upon as a symbol of Veranka's power over the Realm, and a constant reminder to the survivors of the terrible abuses of power that are the legacy of the Floating Realm.

# THE MYRRH LINK

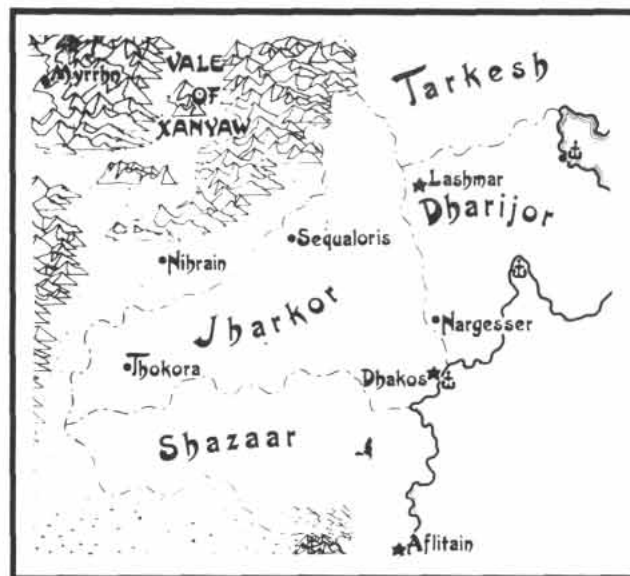
**T**HE LINK MACHINE thunders and grinds in its hiding place in the mountains of the Vale of Xanyaw. Its polished gears work and turn, weaving magic. Once it changed the brutal and chaotic clakars into the winged men of Myrrhn. Now it works to change those folk into a more human people, as suits the purposes of Law.

Anazzar and Shareel, two of the Myrrhn, wished to stop this unnatural process. They took a small piece from the Link Machine, an insignificant helix called the loop. Tragically, this did not stop the Link from working, but altered its course. The proud winged race are affected anew, as the fearful device now alters their body structure into mutations of horror and suffering.

In this adventure, the adventurers are forced by a sorcerer to obtain an unusual drug for him. Along the way they become entangled with the story of the loop, and play a major role in the future of the Myrrhn race.

## The Shining Coins of Chaos

The scenario begins in any large town in the Young Kingdoms. Wherever they are, the adventurers are contacted one night by a small round-faced man with bleary, sky blue eyes. "My master has a need of you," he says, "He offers you these." The man draws a small, soft leather pouch from inside his tunic, and throws it on the table. Any adventurer who makes a successful See roll notices that the wax seal which once held the two drawstrings of the bag together has been broken. The broken seal bears a small impression depicting a variation of the eight-armed Sign of Chaos. Inside the pouch are 100 small silver coins. Each coin bears the same chaotic impression as the broken wax seal. The



bag seems to be about half-full. The gamemaster should note which adventurers handle the coins.

The round-faced man waits for the adventurers to follow him. He knows little, save that there are more coins to be had, and that his master is waiting.

He leads them through the city until they enter a street of stone and brick buildings. He walks directly to the stoop of a narrow townhouse sandwiched between two wider and taller structures. A wooden door, bound in polished steel, opens as he sets foot on the bottom step. "Ahem," he says, "The master seems to have been watching. . ." He finishes with a weak, frightened sound in his throat.

At the top of the steps, a tall man with a great cloud of wiry curls wreathing his head fades forward into the light.

"Good afternoon," the curly headed man says, "My name is Jessup Clag. Please enter my home. I wish to offer you a job."



Jessup Clag and his collection of chairs

The round-faced man attempts to slink away in the direction of the street, but Clag gestures sharply in his direction. "Don't go just yet, Inno. I think I may need you again, soon." Clag accents the word "soon" ominously.

Clag leads them along a hallway lit by a single candle hanging in a wrought-iron chandelier. Inno walks beside his master in the semi-darkness, hunched over obsequiously. They pass through an open portal inlaid with odd variations of the Sign. The symbols briefly flare with pale, ghostly fire, as they pass through.

In the room beyond the portal is a single large chair of carved stone. It is surrounded by a forest of lesser wooden chairs, each of a differing design. Inno tries to fade into the back of the room, but Clag grabs him by the elbow and sits him near the center of the circle. Clag sits down in the large stone chair, and gestures to the adventurers to sit.

"I need you to find a substance for me. It is a drug called *opolis* and is rare in this part of the world. Opolis has special properties that I may need in the future. It is impossible for me to go and find the drug myself. My

man, Inno, has never proven himself to be trustworthy enough to perform even the simplest tasks. I am surprised he was able to bring you here as quickly as he did.

"Opolis is most common in the city called Sequalaris, located in the northern reaches of Jharkor. I need you to go there and acquire at least five pounds of the drug. I know I can trust you to do this work for me, in a way I could never trust Inno."

The sorcerer now asks Inno for the gold coins impressed with the Sign. Inno looks startled, and sheepishly hands over 50 small gold coins, also impressed with the sign. He stole these from the pouch before delivering it.

"I was certain Inno would break the seal and examine my gift for you. That was part of my plan. I do not have time to waste in finding willing tools in my quest to obtain opolis. You will do this for me, or look forward

to a fate like Inno's."

Clag gestures and mutters a word. Inno screams, and his back arches reflexively. His eyes burn with an inner golden fire, rays of fiery light extend from his pupils in an eight armed pattern. His sky blue eyes burst as the rays solidify into glowing pins of cherry-red steel, piercing his brow, cheeks and nose. The man's lower jaw creaks downward, distending into a dark hole. His tongue pops free bloodily to land twisting at his feet. Teeth shatter and spring free of his stretching jaws as a stream of golden and silvery coins clink musically to the floor.

Clag studies the growing pile of coins dispassionately, "I see that your payment will be larger than I expected." The bloodied money on the floor is in various currencies, to a total of 1D1000 LB.

Any adventurers who handled Clag's coins feel a soreness in their jaw hinges, and a burning sensation in their eyes. Points of violet fire burst and fade in their sight. Anyone looking into their eyes sees points of golden light in the center of each pupil.



The sorcerer looks up at the adventurers abruptly. "If I am harmed or, Chaos forbid, should I suddenly die, this fate will overtake you as surely as if you fail to bring me the opolis I desire."

Clag takes on a business-like tone. He provides a map to Sequaloris and asks if the adventurers need additional supplies or equipment to help them on their trip. Once the arrangements have been made to get them on their way, the sorcerer shows them the door.

"Regretfully, there is no way to remove your curse. You must spend the rest of your days on my good side, it seems." Clag pauses a moment, "I have heard, however, that certain powerful devices of Law can cancel the effect; but I cannot attest to this. I am not sure how this information can help you, though, since I do not think there are any such devices anywhere in this plane of existence. Good luck to you, and return to me with the opolis within three months, or I will activate the curse. I do not know if the effect has a range; but it would probably be unwise of you to try and find out the hard way. Goodbye."

Clag turns from them, enters his tower and shuts the door.

**JESSUP CLAG**

STR 11 CON 12 SIZ 13 INT 19 POW 22 DEX 13 CHA 9

HIT POINTS: 13 ARMOR: None.

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Dagger | 77%    | 56%   | 1D4+2  |

SKILLS: Chair Lore 64%, Persuade 67%, Smug Satisfaction 88%.

LANGUAGES: Common 95%/95%, Low Melnibonéan 60%/60%, High Melnibonéan 70%/70%.

SUMMONING SKILL: 74%.

SUMMONINGS: Doom Coins of Chaos. All elementals. Assorted lesser breeds of Demon.

**The Curse**

Unknown to Clag, the Curse has a side-effect which may give a few advantages during the following adventure. The Curse occasionally allows them to detect the presence of strange demons. The gamemaster rolls secretly against POW x3 for any affected adventurers. If the roll succeeds, the adventurer is struck by a faint ache in the eye balls, and a tingling premonition of danger. Until the adventurers realize that the sensation always presages the arrival of creature of Chaos, they won't realize they possess this new detection ability.

**Opolis**

This drug is created from a red, ruby-like substance alien to the Young Kingdoms called Bloodstone, or Demon's Tears. Bloodstone can be found in barren, rocky places where the grip of Law has weakened. The deposits (often as large as a pumpkin) are ground up and mixed with a mundane opiate to form a tan powder, which is then smoked in a pipe. Opolis is a dangerous drug, and its use almost always results in a slow, lingering death. The user is wasted away by planar forces beyond normal understanding.

The potency of the drug is normally 1D10+10. Half an ounce will cost upwards of 50 LB.

**THE BENEFITS**

The user of opolis experiences a rush of rapture and ecstasy, mingled with a psychic perception of the future.

To determine the effect, roll D100, and subtract the user's CON.

71-00: The user gets the rush, then slips into a dreamy restful state. All skills are reduced to zero for 1D4+2 hours.

41-70: The user experiences a distorted but truthful vision of the past. This can reveal additional truths about stories or events the user has heard, read about, or experienced, but might not have direct bearing on present events. All skills are reduced to zero for 1D3+3 hours.

21-40: The user experiences a truthful but distorted vision of events occurring in the present that may or may not have a bearing on the character's circumstances. All skills are reduced to zero for 1D6+2 hours.

01-20: The user has a distorted but truthful vision of the future. This vision always has a bearing on the user's current circumstances. All skills are reduced to zero for 1D6+4 hours.

All visions are selected and presented by the gamemaster. The content of the vision cannot be affected or guided by the will of the user.

**THE HARM**

Each time opolis is smoked, CON is permanently reduced by one, unless the

character can make a roll of CON x3. If CON is lost, the character must resist the potency of the drug.

If the resistance attempt fails, every characteristic is permanently reduced by one. After any characteristic reduction, the user notices a fading of the world, the edges of his or her body become less distinct and shadowy. If any characteristic drops to zero, the user is torn from reality to exist as a thin, wispy wraith floating forever between the planes of the multiverse, enthralled by the compassionless Lords of Chaos.

Once opolis is taken, the user then craves it obsessively, and is locked in a strong physical addiction to the drug. To retain sanity the character must use the drug once within each 24 hour period. If the drug is not used every day, all skills and abilities are reduced to half, and the user is shaky and desultory in all actions. To break the addiction the user must roll POW x1. This roll may be attempted only once per day.

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## Entanglements in Sequaloris

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Sequaloris lies among the craggy foothills east and south of the Vale of Xanyaw. Portions of the town have been built around bare outcroppings typical of the area. Several neighborhoods and districts employ the jagged rocks architecturally, carving and hollowing the rock to form rooms and chambers at the rear of buildings. Because the town is built around these natural features the street layout resembles a map of a river delta.

The economy of Sequaloris relies heavily on trade from caravans passing through the region to trade with the mysterious Myrrhn. Pilgrims seeking the mysterious Seers of Nihrain provide another, albeit small, source of income to the grim inhabitants. Because the movement and trade of goods is so vigorous, it is easier to dispose of unwanted items of dubious origin than one might expect in such an obvious backwater.

The people of this city are long enured to scrounging out a living on the bare rock. Those most successful have come to the city from the outside world, ascertained the situation and made the most of a largely complacent population. Most here are humans, predominantly Jharkorian. There is a small but surprisingly visible group of Myrrhn. These are unsavory examples of their race, banished from their homeland because of criminal activity.

### Wandering in Sequaloris

Once in town, the adventurers can start asking about opolis. If they ask at the gate, the official becomes vaguely angry, saying it is lucky he doesn't deny them entry to the town if all they're interested in is buying such drugs.

Inside the town, they meet a more reasoned response. Respectable citizens direct them to the apothecary's guild. Less respectable citizens direct them to an inn, the Oskreth Muskatoon, where they say just about anything can be bought.

### The Apothecary's Guild House

The guild is a single story building, sprawled across most of a city block. A single gold-leaf chased dome rises from its center, glinting palely in the sunlight. Its windows are

ornate panes of leaded glass, each enclosed behind a grill of filigreed iron.

Inside the reception chamber, a tall, thin man stands behind a counter with his back turned to the door. He fussily shuffles papers between cubbyholes in the wall. He wears a felt skullcap. The man introduces himself as Zonas Pertuut, Associate Guildmaster.

If the adventurers ask Zonas about buying opolis without any preamble, they get a sneering rebuff -- Opolis is not handled by "aboveground" apothecaries. On the other hand, if they somehow display knowledge of Plant Lore, and flatter Zonas with the politeness of their enquiry (a subtle use of persuade would help), he tells them he cannot help them acquire the drug. The guild does not manufacture or deal in narcotics as dangerous as opolis. He does, however, tell them of a man named Anazzar.

"Anazzar's a Myrrhn fellow. He suffers from a terrible injury. I've come to know him quite well, as he comes to us often seeking painkillers. He told me once in a rambling fit that he had used the narcotic you seek in his pursuit of release. He can usually be found at an inn called the Oskreth Muskatoon. Give him my regards."

### The Oskreth Muskatoon

The interior of the Muskatoon inn is choked with the smoke of burning incense and tobacco. Caravan hirelings, low-paid mercenaries, and penniless travellers all stay at the Muskatoon on their way through Sequaloris. Few linger more than a day, and the charms of the Muskatoon do little to entice a traveller to stay in the city any longer than necessary. Hallways are narrow and dark. Years of smoke begrime the walls, and the empty laughter of harlots occasionally rings out from behind a door smudged with handprints.

The public room is lit by ill-spaced torches hung on rough timbers protruding from the walls. The ceiling of the room is black with soot. At one table two wizened Myrrhn with withered wings dodder over goblets of wine. Several dissipated-looking humans sit with their backs pressed to the wall, their wandering eyes not focusing on anyone or anything.

Most everyone turns around to look the adventurers over as they enter. If they ask at the bar about opolis, the bartender raises an eyebrow, and tells them to talk to Asim Terrel, a man who is usually here in the evening. If they ask about Anazzar, they are pointed towards a hooded figure hunched over the bar.

A See roll catches a glimpse of a woman in a black blouse and baggy khaki jodhpurs, she is studying the adventurers and looks away if any of them look at her.

If the adventurers don't approach Anazzar, he soon approaches them. His hooded head perks up at the sound of new voices, and he starts to pester them about buying him a drink. His voice is breathy, tired, and oddly slurred, as if he is speaking around a deformity of the lips or palette. He wants Arveed, the only drink able to dull his pain. When he says "pain" he grasps his stiff-looking right arm, compulsively rubbing it. He never exposes his face. His wings stir occasionally, unevenly perched in the heavy folds of his cloak.

## Arveed

The "Yellow Wine of Madness" is renowned and reviled throughout the Young Kingdoms for its ability to drive thoughts from the mind, leaving nothing behind but unthinking flesh. Few drink it long without suffering. Despite this, for some reason, the wine is craved. Different vintages have varying potency. A bottle of Arveed sells for around 100 LB.

It's potency is 1D10+5. The drinker should match this against their CON. If they resist, Arveed affects them only as a strong intoxicant. If they do not resist, the wine takes hold, and they enjoy the benefits and dangers of the wine of madness.

### The Benefit

The drinker's perceptions are temporarily sharpened. See, Listen, Scent and Taste skills are increased by 1D5+5 percentiles for 1D3 hours. Other Perception skills require too much reasoning to benefit from the effects of Arveed.

### The Harm

One point is temporarily subtracted from INT. This is recovered sometime within the next 24 hours, unless the drinker fails a POW x5 roll, in which case the INT loss is permanent. When INT is reduced to half its original amount, the drinker becomes insane, no longer able to distinguish between reality and Arveed-fueled illusion.

If it will get him a drink, Anazzar is willing enough to talk about the drug trade. He mentions Asim Terrel as the best source for opolis. If the adventurers are willing to be patient, Terrel is likely to show up in the Muskattoon, as the inn is one of his regular stops.

As they talk to Anazzar, one of them feels a movement near their wallet region. A slim hand is slowly drawing it away. "Ah," says Anazzar, "I'd like to introduce my niece. This is Shareel." It is the woman who has been watching the adventurers from across the room. She hands the purse back without embarrassment

and sits down, arms folded. "These are not marks, niece," says Anazzar, "These are friends."

## ANAZZAR

Anazzar was once persuasive minor noble in Myrrhn, one of the foremost spokesman for a never-quite-organized "Old Party". His injuries and deformities, however, have broken his confidence. He is no longer at ease with people.

STR 9 CON 8 (14) SIZ 7 INT 6 (15) POW 11 DEX 7 (16) CHA 3 (13)

HIT POINTS: 6 ARMOR: None.

DAMAGE BONUS: -1D6-1D4

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Dagger | 44%    | 44%   | 1D4+2  |

SKILLS: Hide 33%, Make Map 105%, Orate 32%, Persuade 27%, See 48%, Taste 26%.

If Anazzar can roll less than POW x2, he remembers his old eloquence, and his Communication Skills are temporarily doubled.

LANGUAGES: Common 75% / 75%.

## SHAREEL

Shareel is a wingless woman of the Myrrhn. She is slight and delicate by human standards. Her features are marked with the subtle beauty which characterizes Myrrhn women.

She wears a padded khaki-colored vest over a black silk hooded blouse. Her grimoire of elemental summonings and rune castings is slipped into a pocket securely buttoned on the inside of the vest. She wears a worn and dusty pair of baggy muslin trousers and calf-high leather boots.

She is independent, and rarely listens to any counsel except her own. She was never in love before meeting Kiss, and probably never will be again.

STR 11 CON 13 SIZ 8 INT 16 POW 18 DEX 12 CHA 15

HIT POINTS: 11 ARMOR: Padded Cloth (1D4-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

| Weapon     | Attack | Parry | Damage                 |
|------------|--------|-------|------------------------|
| Fire Knife | 65%    | 50%   | 1D4+2 + Special Powers |

SKILLS: Climb 68%, Conceal 56%, Craft Weapon (Knives and Daggers) 67%, Credit 23%, Cut Purse 69%, Dodge 52%, Evaluate Treasure 51%, First Aid 49%, Hide 73%, Jump 65%, Listen 29%, Move Quietly 60%, Persuade 54%, Pick Lock 45%, Search 66%, See 32%, Tumble 30%.

LANGUAGES: Common 33%/80%, High Melnibonéan 48%/50%.

SUMMONING SKILL: 53%.

SUMMONINGS: Fire elementals, and the Fire Rune.

## FIRE KNIFE

The blade of a specially prepared dagger is invested with a point of permanent POW, and inscribed with the elemental Rune of Fire. It has four special powers.

**Fire Rune:** The tip of the blade can be used to trace the glowing outline of the Fire Rune in the air. Tracing the rune temporarily costs 1D4+2 points POW. All those facing the Rune must resist the caster's POW, or see and feel themselves burning in the most horrible way imaginable. The victim looks down to see his or her torso is a rack of smoking ribs, flakes of charred flesh adhere to the blackened bones here and there, crackling flesh peels away from the knuckle bones of an outstretched hand, and worse. They scream helplessly and roll around for 2D6 rounds. No actual damage is sustained.

Victims of the Rune who are able to resist its power are still blinded for 1D8 rounds.

**Heat Strike:** This is used in conjunction with an Attack. Vectors of pure elemental heat radiate through the target, inflicting 2D10 additional damage points. This power of the knife costs 1 point of temporary POW.

**Flash:** This costs 3 points of temporary POW and has a potency of 3D6. The effect has a range of 10 meters. Anyone unable to resist the potency of the flash with their CON is blinded and dazzled for 1D8+1 rounds.

**Light:** The knife sheds a dull, reddish light with a 10 meter radius. This is enough light to see by, but not suitable for reading. This power costs nothing, and operates indefinitely.

## The Opolis Seller

Late that night, Asim Terrel arrives with two bodyguards. He is small and dark, sporting a finely manicured moustache and goatee. He looks harried, and keeps glancing at the exits. Anazzar invites him over, and introduces him. If asked about opolis, Terrel shakes his head. "I'm sorry, but things are too hot in town for me right now. I moved all my stock to a customer up north, a sorcerer. Made a nice sum out of it, too." At mention of this, Anazzar and Shareel exchange a knowing glance.

There is a sudden cry of "Seize them!". Five men have entered the bar, dressed in black uniforms and chain mail. Their weapons are drawn. They make straight for Terrel's table. The bodyguards jump up and draw their swords, moving to create a screen for their employer, who heads for the kitchen door. Three of the guardsmen engage, while the remaining two race to intercept the dealer. If the adventurers do not interfere, the guards catch Terrel before he reaches the door.

In the alley another two guardsmen are waiting. If any help Terrel escape, he is appreciative. He throws them a pouch of 200 LB and darts away into the night.

### ASIM TERREL

STR 13 CON 14 SIZ 11 INT 14 POW 10 DEX 16 CHA 9  
**HIT POINTS:** 13 **ARMOR:** None  
**DAMAGE BONUS:** None.  
**Weapon**                      **Attack**      **Parry**      **Damage**  
 Dagger                              55%          51%          1D4+2  
**SKILLS:** Dodge 45%, Hide 74%.

### TERREL'S TWO BODYGUARDS

STR 15 CON 11 SIZ 14 INT 8 POW 9 DEX 10 CHA 8  
**HIT POINTS:** 11 each **ARMOR:** Leather (1D6-1)  
**Damage Bonus:** +1D6+1D4  
**Weapon**                      **Attack**      **Parry**      **Damage**  
 Broadsword                      50%          50%          1D8+1

### SEQUALORIAN GUARDSMEN

There are five of these uniformed men inside, two out the back.)  
 STR 16 CON 14 SIZ 13 INT 11 POW 10 DEX 12 CHA 11  
**HIT POINTS:** 15 each **ARMOR:** Leather (1D6-1)  
**DAMAGE BONUS:** +1D6+1D4  
**Weapon**                      **Attack**      **Parry**      **Damage**  
 Broadsword                      40%          40%          1D8+1  
**SKILLS:** Listen 35%, Search 30%, See 40%, Track 20%.



Anazzar and Shareel

## Shareel's Offer

Anazzar and Shareel join the adventurers soon after Terrel departs (or is arrested). They know a quieter inn nearby. Would the adventurers care to join them for another sip?

Shareel makes a proposal as the group walks through the Sequalorian darkness (they move slowly, as Anazzar has a limp): "We need help to cross the Ridge of Trials, north and east of here. On the other side is a shunned valley, the Vale of Dismay. It is the home of L'nakar Ostorex, a sorcerer from the island kingdom of Pan Tang. I'm pretty sure he's the one that Asim Terrel sold his stash of opolis to. Ostorex has something that belongs to us, a loop of precious metal. Let us just say that we once owned the loop, and now a third party wants it too. It's all very complicated and you don't



need to understand everything involved. However, if you help us, I'm sure you'll find all the opolis you'll ever need. Are you interested?"

Shareel tells the adventurers that the proposed journey will take at least a week, and requires them to be fully provisioned and equipped for rock climbing. Any horses brought along must be abandoned after the third day, because the pathway becomes impassable without climbing. Shareel knows a place where provisions and equipment can be bought day or night — a gambling establishment called Diskripper's Feltbox. This is, in fact, where they have just arrived.

## Diskripper's Feltbox

Diskripper's Feltbox is a ramshackle building built onto the side of a craggy outcropping. It is shuttered-over, and light and music attempt to escape from every window and doorway.

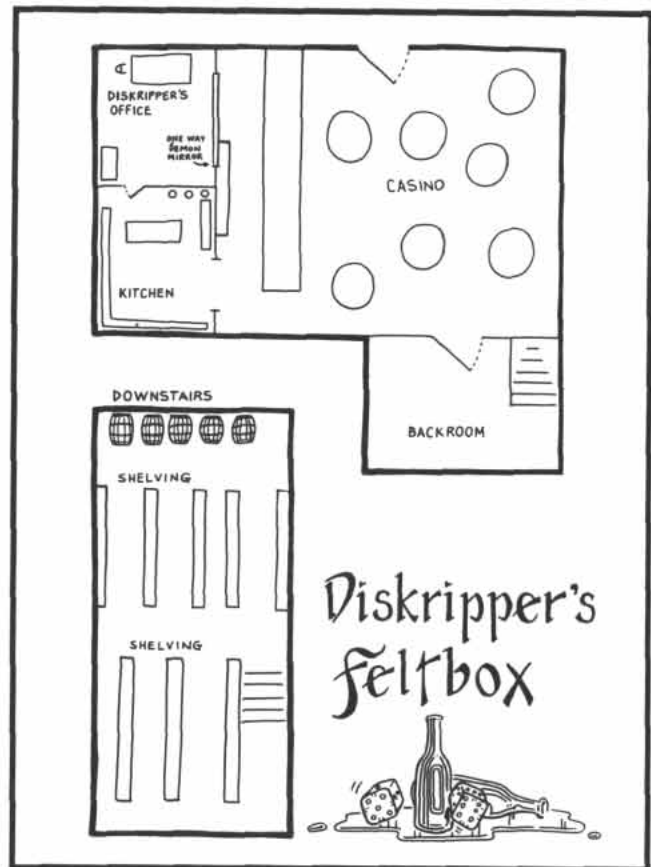
Diskripper is a one-armed human of dubious background. He is of medium height, thin and wiry. His face is creased with a countless number of wrinkles that fold away when he smiles to reveal a set of long, discolored teeth. His hair is black, and always slick with animal grease.

Diskripper runs an endless craps game in the ground-level front room of his old casino. A bar at one end of the casino serves wine and distilled liquors. A bowl of pipes is visible on a shelf behind the bar. If the adventurers are feverishly seeking opolis at this point, Diskripper could probably provide 1D8 ounces of the drug.

Several hardened-looking men lounge around the casino. They do not drink (at least not while Diskripper is present) and keep a casual but attentive eye on events. Kanz, the bartender, is also ready to provide muscle if needed.

Once they get inside Shareel buys drinks. Anazzar seems exhausted. Shareel buys him a full bottle of Arveed wine. Once he starts, he seems eager enough, and goes to work on the bottle with energy. After a time Diskripper comes from his game and approaches the table. "What can I do for you? And make it fast. Trouble follows you two like thunder follows lightning." Despite these words, he is obviously pleased to see them.

Shareel mentions that they are looking for equipment and supplies for crossing the Ridge of Trials. He takes them downstairs. The lower floor of the Feltbox is



a large storeroom full of equipment, including weapons, tools, climbing gear, rope, saddle tack and cartographer's instruments. Diskripper acquired this in house wins in the dice pit. All of it is for sale, at standard prices. He can also provide a sketchy map with enough details to get them over the ridge and headed toward Ostorex's ruined keep. Once the price is decided, Diskripper takes everyone up to his office for a cup of wine to conclude the deal.

Anazzar offers to get the wine. Diskripper starts sharpening his quill. As Anazzar leaves the room Diskripper absently mutters a single word in High Melnibonéan, and one of the walls of his office softens, grows smoky, then becomes transparent. The casino becomes visible through the rectangular aperture in the wall. Voices and other sounds from the casino are eerily and tinnily amplified by the One Way Demon. No one on the other side of the seems aware of the magical window.

## The Death of Anazzar

Anazzar comes into view at the bar. He begins talking to Kanz, when the door flies open, and a short bald-headed man bursts in, leading a dozen armed men. It is

Drindle, a Myrrhn reactionary, on the trail of Shareel and Anazzar.

Two of his men are short, hairy and squat. They each bear heavy axes and wear leather and wood harnesses fixed with long curved spikes. Rotting heads and hands are impaled on the spikes. They grab Anazzar, spin him around and press him against the bar.

Drindle steps up to Anazzar and demands "Where is the loop, you crippled fool?!" Anazzar replies "Wha'?" but Drindle, face crinkled in fury and impatience, cuts his throat with a dagger. One of Drindle's own human soldiers gasps in shock. The hairy thugs leer and grunt.

Diskripper tackles Shareel before she can move toward the casino bar. "No more killing!" he implores the adventurers, and tries to stop them from going out into the casion.

Anazzar is clearly dead. Blood seeps in a widening pool across the floorboards. The adventurers are able to see the old man's face clearly for the first time. It is riddled with deep, open pockholes. Thick coarse hairs, apparently rooted in the Myrrhn's skull sprout from each pock. Teeth, bone and muscle are visible through the perforated flesh.

Drindle and his dozen men face off against the adventurers, but Kanz the bartender says "Drindle, the city watch won't be impressed by this. Why don't you just get out of here while you still can?" The Myrrhn and his bodyguards, obviously displeased with things as they stand, leave.

### DRINDLE'S GOONS

If the adventurers force a fight with Drindle here, statistics for he and his force can be found on page 60.

### DISKRIPPER'S STORY

When Drindle is dealt with or gone, Shareel breaks free and rushes to her fallen uncle. She gives a coughing sob, and snatches a flagon of Arveed from the bar top, drinking it all in several long swallows. She tumbles to the floor, unconscious.

Diskripper takes the comatose Shareel and the adventurers back into his office. If the adventurers ask him about Shareel and Anazzar he tells them about the last time the two fugitives were in Sequaloris.

"They hid out with me here a few months ago. They had this loop of metal with them. It was one of the most beautiful things I ever saw. I said I'd try to fence it for them. There's this guy up in the hills, next valley over, deep in the mountains. L'nakar Ostorex is his name. He's always looking for things that are different. So, I get word to him and one night while Shareel and her late

uncle are hiding here in my back room he shows up and asks to see the thing. He had this tall woman with him -- now she was really something to see..." Diskripper's mind drifts, his features assuming a rapt, lascivious expression. "Anyway, Anazzar's under the table snoring, and Shareel doesn't look like she trusts Ostorex much. But next thing I know, she's off with the woman Ostorex had in tow. They were gone about an hour. Meanwhile Ostorex just sits here looking at me with a smug grin on his face. Anyway, Shareel comes back alone and says Ostorex can have the metal thing cheap -- as long as he takes it far away. Ostorex is out of here before dawn. He meets this tall dark-haired guy at the door and just goes.

"Shareel has a couple hundred silver tigers in her money belt. She gives me a handful, wakes up old Anazzar and the two of them were gone, heading south. Slortar's whiskers! I was glad to get rid of the two of them. That little creep Drindle came in with a handful of mercenaries and ransacked my place, looking for the two of them. Fortunately, by that time there was nothing to find."

Diskripper knows little about L'nakar Ostorex. "His money is good, even if it is minted in Pan Tang. There's a rumor says he left there after a debacle involving the blood sacrifice of some important person's cousin. All to do with the summoning of some special demon, I think."

Diskripper's suggests the adventurers take Shareel and their gear and get on their way before Drindle and his men return. "If that bald guy comes back here, and you're still around, I won't be able to put this place back together with paste."

Drindle and his orgjen goons return in 1D3 hours, reinforced with twenty mercenaries. Athain, another wingless Myrrhn, is with them. Once inside the door, Drindle bee-lines for the secret room in the back of the casino. He's been here before, and knows where the room is located. If the adventurers have not taken Diskripper's advice, combat follows.

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## The Ridge of Trials

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If the adventurers leave the Feltbox before Drindle returns, they gain a half day head-start on Drindle and his men. Drindle learns of their direction by bribing one of Diskripper's bouncers.

The journey across the Ridge takes a week. Three days out of Sequaloris the going is steep enough for Climb rolls to be necessary. The adventurer leading the



Sgt. Kosusk, Athain, Drindle, Ozzix, Kroll, Pendell looks on

way must make a successful Climb roll each day. Climbing equipment (e.g., rope, pitons, hammers) adds 15% to their skill. If the roll fails, each climber suffers 1D4 damage as they slide partway down the rocky slope. Armor provides no protection.

The journey is hard work, through cold and lonely terrain. The adventurers have only wind and rocks for company. Occasionally a large group of men can be glimpsed in a pass below (See roll). These are Drindle's men in pursuit.

## Shareel Wakes

While Shareel is asleep, the investigators may investigate her belongings. Her possessions are simple, and she has only 1D10 LB remaining. The most interesting item is a map of the Vale of Xanyaw, which has a point marked "Link" inscribed upon it.

It takes Shareel 1D20+15 hours to wake from the stupor induced by the yellow wine. After awakening she is incoherent for 1D10 hours. The wine has permanently affected her mind.

From this point forward in the story, any time Shareel is subjected to a stressful situation she must roll under her CON x5 or suffer a relapse into the irrational state created by the wine's lingering after-effects. Roll 1D10 on the table below to determine how she behaves. The gamemaster is free to invent other similar reactions.

## Shareel Under Stress

### 1D10 Shareel's Reaction

1-2 Shareel passes out! She recovers in 1D6 rounds.

3 Shareel loses her ability to concentrate. All skill rolls are reduced by half, and conversations with her tend to be one-sided. She straightens out after rolling less than her INT x5, checking once per half-hour.

4-5 Depression. Shareel collapses in tears, and cannot see the point of continuing. A Persuade roll can motivate her, otherwise she can roll INT x5 every ten minutes to snap out of it.

6 Hysterical Anxiety. Shareel flees scene of stress for 2D6 rounds.

7-9 Hysterical Laughter. She giggles for 1D6 minutes. At this time all Skills are reduced by 20%. Stealth skills are reduced to 00%.

10 Rage. Shareel attacks source of stress without concern for safety. She can attempt to roll INT x5 each round to get a grip.



## Drindle's Man

Drindle leaves Sequaloris ill-prepared for the trip over the mountains, failing to outfit his men with enough gear and provisions. He is hell-bent on catching Shareel. He catches up to within a few miles by marching his men without rest.

On the third night of the journey, while the adventurers are getting their dinner ready, a Listen roll hears a single rock dislodged, bouncing and clattering off downhill. Someone climbing toward them from below. Eventually a lone, youthful man in the livery of the city guard enters the camp.

This is Pendell, one of Drindle's mercenaries, and the one who looked shocked at the murder of Anazzar. He says that Drindle is driving the men without mercy. Once out of town, the Myrrhn started using the two orgjen bodyguards to instill fear in the rest of the troops. Pendell decided to desert, and warn the adventurers about the small army following them.

Pendell can provide some information about Drindle. He's after Shareel because she has something he wants. Whatever it is, it will give him a lot of power when he gets it. "He's always saying that once he had whatever it is, he'd be calling all the shots back home. Me, I don't think most people would listen to that guy unless he had a dagger pressed against their throats."

Pendell is willing to join up. He will be reasonably loyal, even risking his life to save other adventurers (if treated well). He'll want about 50 LB a week in pay, although right now he'll be happy for a meal.

## Shareel's Story

As the adventurers travel over the mountains, Shareel finally has time to tell them her full story:

*My uncle and I are Myrrhn, and we are proud. But our race has been changing, becoming more human-like. As you can see, I have no wings. My uncle learned that this was caused by a great Device of Law, a thing called the Link Machine. He consulted my grandfather's books, and eventually learned where this machine was.*

*We found it in a cave deep in the mountains. It was an awesome thing, a great shining tower of steel. I was afraid of it, but my uncle flew up alongside it. He selected a small part to remove, to stop it from doing its terrible work. It was a shining metal loop. It came away, but a flash of light came from the machine and struck him. He and the loop fell to the floor. He had been horribly wounded by the light, and carried those deformities to his death.*

*"But we had the loop. We could hear the note of the machine change. Our work was done. I took my uncle home, and nursed him. But in his fever, he told everyone what we had done, and even boasted about it.*

*There are those whom this did not please, who want our race to lose their wings. They call themselves the New Party. Drindle the Examiner came to our house and demanded we return the loop. We refused. I had already tried to destroy it, but I could not. The strongest hammer would not dent it, the hottest fire would not melt it. Drindle went away, but we had warning that he was coming back, with warriors. We were forced to flee from our home.*

*We traveled through Sequaloris, where we befriended Diskripper. He contacted a sorcerer, who promised me he could destroy the loop. We sold it to him, and went south, skirting Nihrain and Thokora before looping through the edges of the Marshes of the Mist on our way to Aflitain.*

*But still the forces of the New Party pursued us. And as I got further from the sorcerer, I realized that perhaps I had been tricked. We decided to return to Sequaloris, and get the loop back. I now believe that my people will protect us. I should have appealed to them before running away.*

*We found you in Sequaloris. You know the rest.*

If asked about her meeting with the tall woman who accompanied the sorcerer, she becomes suddenly reticent, admitting nothing further. If pressed on the matter Shareel becomes enraged, and refuses to speak about anything for the rest of the day.

## A Grisly Discovery

As they travel through in the hills, a sound comes to the adventurers' ears (Listen roll). It is the high-pitched, ragged wail of a newborn baby. The sound comes from the top of a high rocky ridge off the right of the trail. The crying is insistent, filled with a rising note of panic. The crying peaks to its loudest, then cuts off abruptly.

It takes a few minutes to climb up into the rocks. A tiny winged baby boy lies on a rocky shelf under an overhang of rock. His face, arm, and a wing are horribly deformed, the face riddled with deep pocks exposing distorted and mottled bone beneath, deformities in miniature identical to those suffered by Anazzar. A leather cord has been twisted around the child's neck. It has been throttled to death.

There is a ragged groan and the clatter of metal on stone nearby. An arm lolls from a crevice low in the



rock, the hand holding a dagger. Inside the crevice is a young Myrrhn woman, with wings. She lays in a wide slick of her own blood. Both wrists are slashed open, severing gristle and veins. Blue-white knobs of wrist bones are visible through the torn flesh. A bowl of warm, bloody water clatters noisily as an adventurer's foot kicks it away. The woman is in her last few moments of life.

Her eyes crack open dully, taking in the faces leaning over her.

"They have all been like him," She whispers. For a moment the light of madness shines in her eyes. "Everywhere!" she screams, "Everywhere they are born like him!" Then, with a rattling sigh, she dies.

"What have my uncle and I done?" wails Shareel. She passes away into a dead faint, and must be caught before she tumbles out of the crevice.

The Myrrhn woman is far beyond the help of First Aid when the adventurers first reach her. It is easy to learn she has just given birth. If the area is searched, a small cache of rations and water can be found nearby. A purse containing a few coins is stuffed in with the food. There is no evidence of anyone else in the area.

When Shareel awakens, the adventurers are probably going to point out the similarity in the two sets of deformities. Shareel reveals at this time that recovering the loop may have something to do with the awful revelation hinted at in the pregnant woman's death. But this is the first she has known of it. She says that she had only wanted to keep her people from being born wingless. She urges the adventurers to continue with the journey so that they can reach Ostorex's keep all the sooner.

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## The Vale of Dismay

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### The Moorhills

As the adventurers descend from the rocky faces of the Ridge of Despair, the walls of the vale soften into grass-covered hills, covered with dark green grass growing in a thick spongy layer. This growth makes travel easier, but there are no trees and no cover.

Drindle spots them soon after they step out onto the moorhills. He immediately steps up the pace, and makes straight for their position. The tingle of those eyes in the hills boring into the backs of their necks should speed the adventurers.

The other sides of the Vale are steep cliffs. At the far end of the Vale, in the shadow of the tallest cliffs, is a ruined keep. The area immediately around the keep seems oddly formed, and flashes with many points of light. This is the Grayplain, and the adventurers must pass through it to reach Ostorex.

### The Grayplain

The area immediately around the sorcerer's keep is a blasted and empty place. This is where he experiments with elemental summonings. He rarely succeeds in binding what he calls up. These unbound forces then range out over the plain, randomly stripping and blasting the vegetation.

Pure Chaos has also been "awakened" on the plain, and the effect of this, although subtle, is more disturbing. All the grass is gone. Instead the plain is covered with a bed of spiky crystalline fibers several inches thick. Trees, among other things, are flattened, growing in thin membranous sheets of cellulose, stretching over the spiky crystals in a web-like film. Huge pale outcroppings have erupted from the crystal fibers, semi-transparent and smoky in appearance. Glittering cores of light can be glimpsed in their depths. A low cover of gray clouds hangs over the plain, swirling and roiling in chaotic patterns. As the adventurers move further from the hills the silence grows, until all they hear is the dry crunch of crystals shattering into dust beneath their feet.

### THE ATTACK

Drindle gets within striking distance on the Grayplain. The mercenaries are reluctant to enter. Once Drindle reestablishes his authority, he splits his group – the Orgjens creating a diversion leading a flanking attack of mercenaries, while Drindle strikes at Shareel personally. Athain, the Myrrhn lieutenant, and any remaining human mercenaries are held in reserve, providing cover fire if the adventurers counterattack. With this plan Drindle hopes to kill or incapacitate the woman, and then search her and take possession of the metal loop.

Fighting on the grayplain terrain is dangerous. Crystal dust raises from the combatant's feet, obscuring the vision of all involved, reducing Attack rolls by 15%.

Altered terrain features may be hit by stray missiles. If a tree is hit, the flat membranous cellulose rolls up into a compact ball, like a spider huddling to protect itself from further damage. Anyone located on one of these plants at the time must roll DEX x3 or be entangled (Dodging, Attacking and Parrying at half) for 1D4 rounds. If a pale outcropping is hit, a fountain of sparks rises, mounting into the sky like a pume of fire licking

at the cloud cover. The light produced is intense beyond the capacity for human (or Melnibonéan or Myrrhn, etc.) to behold, and all must avert their eyes. Those failing to roll POW x3 are unable to look away soon enough and are blinded for 1D4 rounds. Blinded combatants Attack, Dodge and Parry at -75%.

The adventurers are caught between a pursuing force thirty strong, and an unknown ruin. They may choose to hide, or move forwards. Drindle hunts them mercilessly across the grayplain, but does not pursue them into the keep.

**DRINDLE**

Drindle is small and bald. His delicate features are framed by a network of fine wrinkles, creasing into furrows around his eyes and across his brow. The effect is to create an expression of crazed, continual rage. Rage bleeds into the air around Drindle like oil beading on water.

Drindle's darkest secret is hidden under his padded jerkin. He has a pair of vestigial wings, each less than a foot long. At moments of agitation, his wings squirm uncontrollably. Drindle is a ruthless, narrow-minded opportunist whose anger over his own deformity has energized him with enough hatred to claw his way to the rank of Examiner in the New Party.

STR 8 CON 12 SIZ 7 INT 15 POW 11 DEX 15 CHA 9

HIT POINTS: 10 ARMOR: Padded Cloth (1D4-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: -1D6/-1D4

| Weapon       | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Demon Dagger | 80%    | 94%   | 1D4+2  |
| Short Sword  | 58%    | 44%   | 1D6+1  |
| Self Bow     | 65%    | —     | 1D8+1  |

SKILLS: Credit 48%, Dodge 59%, Jump 62%, Listen 40%, Memorize 52%, Move Quietly 37%, Orate 67%, Persuade 62%, Pick Lock 49%, Search 54%, See 53%, Track 78%.

LANGUAGES: Common 80%/80%.

**AKA**

DEMON DAGGER Breed Ratchangett CV: 60

CON 12 SIZ 1 INT 4 POW 9

POWERS: +3D6 Damage.

**The New Party**

Drindle is an Examiner in the New Party, a group of "advanced" (i.e., wingless) Myrrhn. An Examiner is not unlike an inquisitor. Heresy in the minds and eyes of the New Party is *genetic normality*. Examiners travel through Myrrhn, trying to expunge their people of the "old". The new Party's aim is not only to persecute winged Myrrhn, but also try to convince these "old" Myrrhn that short, slightly-built men with no hair and no wings represent a new and enviable fashion statement. The New Party has pursued this self-defined new order with thoughtless zeal.

Now that the force causing the Myrrhn to be born wingless has been disabled, the New Party has become meaningless. The existence of the Link has been rumored for years, and after hearing the tales coming

down the mountain from Anazzar's sickbed, Drindle and his New Party cronies wanted to ensure that if indeed the rumors were true, they acquired control of this new factor. What better way to ensure control over Myrrhn than if the New Party controls the Link?

**ATHAIN**

Athain is slight and hairless, as befits the model of the new Myrrhn. He is fully wingless. He was attracted to the New Party philosophy because of the position of power and authority it gives him. Athain commands the human mercenaries (since the men have no respect for Drindle).

STR 9 CON 14 SIZ 9 INT 15 POW 7 DEX 17 CHA 10

HIT POINTS: 14 ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

| Weapon      | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|-------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Short Sword | 80%    | 70%   | 1D6+1  |
| Self Bow    | 85%    | —     | 1D8+1  |

SKILLS: Dodge 65%, Listen 50%, Orate 56%, Persuade 45%, Ride 70%, Search 45%, See 60%.

LANGUAGES: Common 45%/75%.

**Orgjen Mercenaries**

Each orgjen is about four feet tall. Their foreheads are low, shelved ridges of bone. For the most part, their blunt, impatient personalities are interchangeable. Ozzix has an open scar in one corner of his mouth exposing five or six of his teeth in a continuous, ghastly grin. The natural rictus of concentration stretching across Kroll's face is almost more ghastly than Ozzix's marred face.

Each orgjen mercenary fights with an axe made from a thick, crudely wrought triangle of hammered iron strapped with stinking black gut to a knotted and slightly crooked haft.

Probably the most gruesome thing about this pair is their habit of showing-off trophies from previous battles. Each wears a harness of wood and leather fixed with sharp, tapering spikes on which they display the heads or other body parts of deceased opponents. The parts show ragged battered edges where they were hacked away from the carcass with a dull-edged axe.

**OZZIX**

STR 18 CON 20 SIZ 10 INT 6 POW 8 DEX 8 CHA 7

HIT POINTS: 20 ARMOR:Leather (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS:+1D6+1D4

| Weapon        | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|---------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Battle Axe    | 87%    | 53%   | 1D8    |
| Target Shield | 59%    | 81%   | 1D6    |
| Javelin       | 74%    | —     | 1D8+2  |

SKILLS: Ambush 66%, Climb 92%, Dodge 38%, Hide 43%, Listen 77%, Move Quietly 41%, Plant Lore 38%, Scent 80%, See 64%, Set Trap 51%, Taste 69%, Track 98%.

LANGUAGES: Common 00%/10%, Orgjen 00%/30%.

**KROLL**

STR 17 CON 18 SIZ 11 INT 9 POW 6 DEX 9 CHA 5

HIT POINTS: 18 ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon         | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|----------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Battle Axe     | 73%    | 48%   | 1D8+2  |
| Target Shield  | 62%    | 74%   | 1D6    |
| Spear (Thrown) | 82%    | —     | 2D6    |

SKILLS: Ambush 53%, Climb 64%, Dodge 42%, Hide 36%, Listen 62%, Move Quietly 35%, Plant Lore 37%, Scent 75%, See 54%, Set Trap 51%, Taste 57%, Track 74%.

LANGUAGES: Common 00%/10%, Orgjen 00%/45%.

**PENDELL**

Pendell is of average build, and is almost handsome. He was recruited by Athain at the beginning of Drindle's quest because many of the other men clearly liked him. Pendell is capable of compassion, and finds little of that under Drindle. He seeks to join the adventurers. If this happens, Athain is likely to attempt vengeance for the betrayal.

STR 11 CON 11 SIZ 13 INT 16 POW 10 DEX 13 CHA 12

HIT POINTS: 12 ARMOR: Half-Plate (1D8-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

| Weapon       | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Quarterstaff | 65%    | 56%   | 1D8    |
| Falchion     | 45%    | 42%   | 1D6+2  |
| Self Bow     | 48%    | —     | 1D8+1  |

SKILLS: Climb 70%, Dodge 53%, Listen 45%, Persuade 20%, See 56%, Track 42%.

**SERGEANT KOSUSK**

Kosusk is a wide, bluff man. He bullied and swaggered through the streets of Sequaloris as a member of the city guard for five years until he was dismissed for taking graft. Drindle spotted him as a kindred soul immediately, and hired him.

STR 13 CON 11 SIZ 16 INT 14 POW 9 DEX 16 CHA 11

HIT POINTS: 15 ARMOR: Plate (1D10-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon     | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Broadsword | 70%    | 66%   | 1D8+1  |
| Shield     | 21%    | 64%   | 1D6    |
| Dagger     | 57%    | 58%   | 1D4+2  |
| Self Bow   | 44%    | —     | 1D8+1  |
| Fist       | 72%    | —     | 1D3    |

SKILLS: Climb 60%, Dodge 46%, Listen 38%, Orate 37%, See 76%.

**HUMAN MERCENARIES**

Drindle has 30 human mercenaries all told. They are full-time soldiers of mediocre martial skill. Most of them are Sequalorian militia looking for a few extra silver coins.

The size of the band should gradually diminish through the scenario, as Drindle loses men through desertion or attrition.

STR 12 CON 13 SIZ 12 INT 10 POW 9 DEX 11 CHA 10

HIT POINTS: 13 each ARMOR: Half-Plate (1D8-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

| Weapon   | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|----------|--------|-------|--------|
| Spear    | 50%    | 45%   | 1D6+1  |
| Dagger   | 30%    | 25%   | 1D4+2  |
| Self Bow | 40%    | —     | 1D8+1  |

SKILLS: Climb 30%, Dodge 25%, Tie Knot 56%, Listen 25%, See 25%.

LANGUAGES: Common 00%/50%.

**Ostorex's Keep**

The ruined keep is composed of eroded basalt once polished smooth as glass. Most of the rubble is weathered, and roughened, but in parts an original stone can be seen, shining like black gems.

The remains of the curtain wall stand around the keep, varying in height from three to thirty feet. The keep itself is mostly ruined, and only a central structure remains intact. It is thirty feet high.

The explosions echoing across the Grayplain have alerted the keep's human and demon occupants to the presence of intruders. They lie in wait.

**THE CURTAIN WALL**

The curtain wall is a sagging and uneven pile of loose stone. In places it is low enough for the adventurers to step over. Climbing elsewhere is dangerous and difficult. A Climb roll is needed, and if failed the adventurer falls 3D10 feet.

Three spatchwhell demons are stationed inside the wall, one along each alternating face. One of these demons wheels to the attack along the crest of the ruined wall as soon as any adventurer steps through a breach. The other two speed out across the grayplain to attack the approaching mercenaries.

**SPATCHWHELL DEMONS**

GUARDIAN DEMONS Greater Breed CV: 203

This breed of demon is fast and ugly. It possess six long, whip-like legs each ending in flat, spatulate blades of callused flesh and bone. The edge of each claw is keen as a razor, and the flat face is speckled with protruding nodules of hard, abrasive cartilage. It moves by wheeling on its legs, like a spoked tire. The legs radiate from a central body equipped with a single lidless eye. The eye is white, without a pupil and occasionally disappears within a sphincter-like aperture that seals over without a trace; the eye can then appear again in another part of the demon's central body.

|              | #1   | #2   | #3   | #4   | #5   | #6   | #7   | #8   |
|--------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| STR 6D8      | 27   | 21   | 39   | 22   | 26   | 32   | 27   | 25   |
| CON 5D8      | 26   | 18   | 20   | 30   | 21   | 29   | 23   | 21   |
| SIZ 2D8      | 8    | 14   | 12   | 13   | 15   | 10   | 13   | 9    |
| INT 2D8      | 7    | 8    | 14   | 6    | 8    | 8    | 9    | 10   |
| POW 3D8      | 15   | 16   | 4    | 4    | 11   | 13   | 15   | 10   |
| DEX 6D8      | 26   | 28   | 29   | 31   | 35   | 21   | 29   | 32   |
| HP           | 17   | 16   | 16   | 22   | 18   | 20   | 18   | 15   |
| DAMAGE BONUS | +1D8 | +1D8 | +3D8 | +1D8 | +2D8 | +2D8 | +1D8 | +1D8 |

ARMOR: 4 points of tough bone

| Weapon    | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|-----------|--------|-------|--------|
| Claw x1D4 | 30%    | —     | 1D6    |

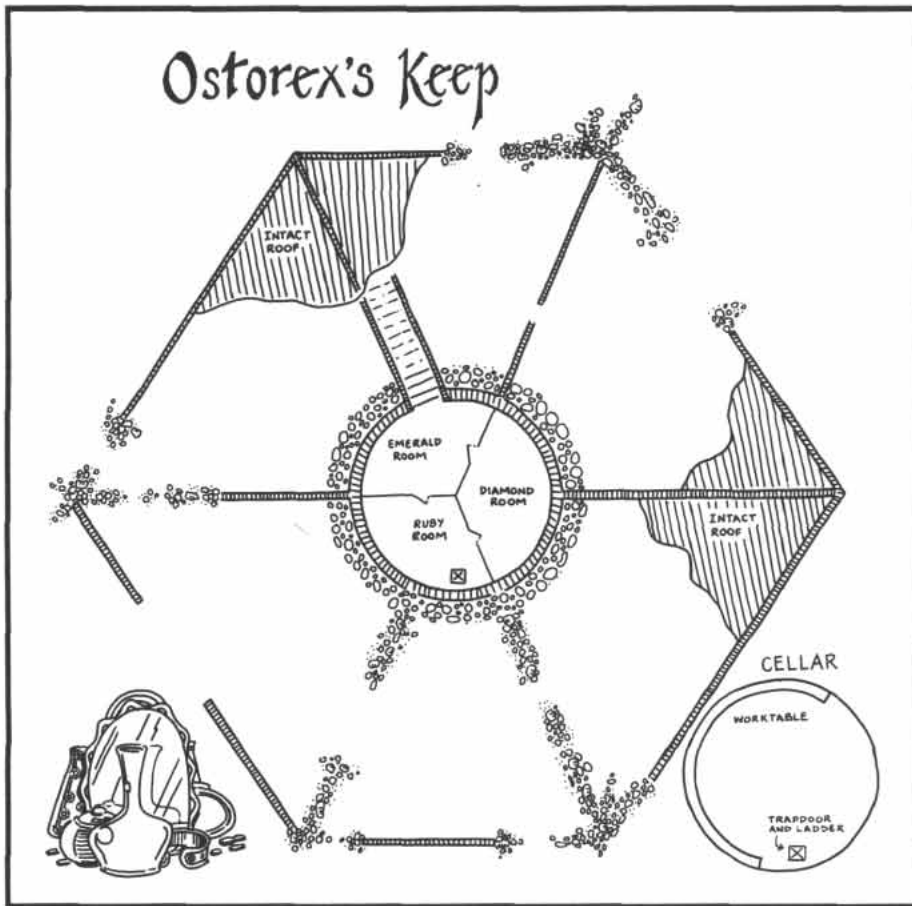
POWERS: Moving Eye, Legs (60m per round), Spatulate Claws x6.

SKILLS: Search 20%, See 20%.

Any Attack launched on a spatchwhell which scores 05 or less pierces the demon's eye, killing it instantly.

**THE COURTYARD**

Kiss is observing this area, out of a sense of curiosity if nothing else. It is standing underneath the still intact roof



the demon before, and is hopelessly in thrall to its power. She takes the demon's side in any combat.

Kiss is an intelligent, charismatic and powerful demon, and it would dearly love to escape from Ostorex's binding. If the adventurers offer any amusing diversion, Kiss may be persuaded to arrange a meeting for them with Ostorex. In this case, the demon escorts them into the Emerald Room, and bids them to wait patiently while it speaks with the sorcerer.

If Kiss is attacked, it uses Emotion Control Rage (Potency 4D6) to turn what it has determined to be the most warlike adventurer against the rest of the party. In the ensuing confusion and panic the demon sends in the spatchwhell, withdraws, and then flees rapidly into the keep to join Ostorex.

section opposite the door to the keep. It is wearing a dark, mottled cloak, with a hood drawn all the way up over its head. It has one spatchwhell demon in reserve, for protection.

Adventurers can only see Kiss if they look in the right corner, and make a successful See roll. Those who are affected by Clag's curse might just sense its presence, but not in which location, if the gamemaster rolls less than POW x3.

As the adventurers cross over the courtyard, Kiss projects Fear (Pot 4D6) at some random target. If successful, the adventurer so affected will freeze, then absolutely refuse to advance any farther beyond the present point, and will not even stay within the walls of the keep unless a POW x3 roll is made. Kiss continues these random attacks until spotted, or until all the adventurers have fallen back to a position well outside the inner walls.

Once it is noticed, Kiss folds back its cloak and strides forwards, a half-smile on its lips. The spatchwhell trundles along behind. Kiss has assumed the same gender as most of the adventurers. Shareel has encountered

### KISS

**DEMON OF LOVE** Breed unique CV: 300

Normally, Kiss appears as a stunningly beautiful woman about seven feet tall with long, inky black hair, and pale flesh. The eyes in its heart-shaped face are pupil-less, glowing with a faint violet light. Kiss is surrounded by an aura of lethal sensuousness that most characters (male or female) find impossible to ignore.

Kiss is able to "gender-change" at will. Kiss prefers to assume the gender of the character it is seducing. The transformation takes about one round. Kiss loves to give the impression there are actually two fabulously beautiful demons. In male form Kiss has the same general appearance as when female, but with shorter hair, and other appropriate fixtures.

This demon is unique in the Million Spheres. During creation it was imbued with a tremendous amount of pure, primal chaos. As a result, even when bound it is not the most manageable of creatures. It is, incidentally, the only creature in the multiverse able to fulfill certain of L'nakar Ostorex's unwholesome desires.

STR 19 CON 25 SIZ 16 INT 20 POW 21 DEX 15 CHA 30

HIT POINTS: 21 ARMOR: None.

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6+1D4

#### Weapon

None.

**POWERS:** Emotion Control (range 30 meters), with the following categories: Lust (Potency 5D6), Rage (Potency 4D6), Fear (Potency 3D6), Vanity (Potency 4D6). Telepathy (range 30 meters).

**SKILLS:** Speak Common 80%, Hide 47%, Move Quietly 37%.

**ABILITIES:** Kiss can initiate a CHA vs. POW contest at no cost. The target of a failed struggle is drawn to the demon in some way, the nature of this attraction is up to the gamemaster.



## Inside the Keep

Every room inside the central keep has been arranged to achieve a definite aesthetic effect. If caught unawares, Ostorex may be standing in one of these rooms fussily arranging and rearranging objects. He moves (or at least touches) everything in the room, stares at their placement empty for a few moments, and then rearranges everything again. He'll keep this up indefinitely, so the adventurers should feel free to interrupt at any time.

Each room is draped with fine tapestries of arresting beauty (and great value: 1000 + D100 x10 LB). Beautiful objects have been positioned on display pedestals, or on functional pieces of furniture. Somewhere in this aesthetic clutter, the metal loop from the Link machine is also displayed.

### THE LOOP

The loop is an ellipse of silvery metal. The hub-like center of the object is occupied by a shimmering, slightly fluid crystalline substance. The loop is intractable. It always seems squirm out of the hand. Until it is stowed in a sack, an adventurer must roll DEX x3 to hold onto the thing.

The loop is hidden (i.e. arranged) in one of the three rooms on the top floor of the keep. Finding the loop within the room requires a Search roll.

### The Loop's Location

#### 1D4 Result

- 1 In the Emerald Room
- 2 In the Diamond Room
- 3 In the Ruby Room
- 4 In Ostorex's pocket

### EMERALD ROOM

This is Ostorex's main sitting room and where, if he ever desired any, visitors would be welcomed. Not everything in this room is actually emerald, but everything is that unmistakable shade of green, including a crystal pane set into the room's arrow slit which enhances the green cast to everything else in the room. There is a massive jade chair carved with the entire history of the Vilmirian people. A tall vessel of green-stained blown glass contains some kind of vitreous liquid within which float green eyes plucked from various animals and

people. A large, green tarnished brass bowl contains 2D100 emeralds, each worth 1D100 LB.

If the loop is in here, it stands across a lime green glass pedestal.

### RUBY ROOM

This is where Ostorex sleeps and entertains himself with Kiss. The walls have been lined with expensive deep red fabrics. The bed is a sunken pit filled with soft, crimson-colored pillows.

A small crimson mirror set in one wall appears to be a highly polished ruby. It is in fact a bloodstone (Evaluate Treasure to identify, a missed roll leads the adventurer to believe it is a ruby). Reflected images seen in this mirror are smoky and indistinct. Anyone standing in front of this mirror must make a POW x1 roll or a cast an image into Kiss's mind (or into the mind of any opolis addicts within 25 miles). As the adventurer looks into the mirror, Kiss projects Vanity (POT 24) into their mind. A adventurer so affected cannot look away from the mirror as long as Kiss holds the person with its power. Once someone looks into the mirror, however, Kiss knows someone is in the keep (if this was not already known) and can use Telepathy (assuming the demon is in range) to locate other adventurers in the room. As long as it can pinpoint someone using its telepathic powers, Kiss can use its Emotion Control power.

If the loop is in here, it is nestled among the pillows on the bed.

### DIAMOND ROOM

This is a room of brilliant whiteness. Bright, light-collecting crystals are arranged everywhere. Some of these are actually diamonds. Necklaces and bracelets are draped over a lattice attached to the full wall opposite the arrow slit. A refractive crystal has been set into the opening of the slit to focus the sunlight onto the lattice of hanging crystals. This creates a Dazzling effect (potency of 2D6, lasting 1D4 rounds).

If the loop is in here, it dangles in a net of fine silvery wire on a silky cord among the other interesting objects on the lattice.

### CELLAR

This is Ostorex's magical laboratory. It is reached by a trap door hidden among the pillows in the Ruby Room of the floor above. A ladder of hardwood leads down, with magical sigils carved into the rungs and side rails. The room has a bad odor. The body of a Myrrhn child, used in a past summoning, lies in the center of the floor. Ostorex obviously hasn't cleaned up yet.

## The Bloodscream Grimoire

This is a slim volume bound in human hide, tattooed with various eight-arrowed symbols of chaos. The cover and pages are brittle, delicate. The grimoire was transcribed long ago by an emperor of Melniboné, following direct instructions from Arioch. Ostorex stole it from the Grimorium in the Night Spire of the Palace Temple of Chaos in Hwamgaarl.

The *Bloodscream Grimoire* is laden with infernal passages on the unnecessary distinction between pleasure and pain. The apex of the discussion is the summoning of a demon, Kiss, an infernal creature that can inflame the desires of any mortal, male or female.

A low desk runs around the wall of the room. The desk is covered with a litter of notes, tools, and the depraved images usually associated with the practice of the dark arts. A spatchwhell demon is curled up asleep under the desk. When folded up, one of these demons resembles a large cantaloupe melon, and is hard to spot. A See roll will notice it.

The *Bloodscream Grimoire* is in a locked drawer of the desk. The lock is fairly complicated and made of forged steel, reducing Pick Lock skills by 10%. The prized book is kept inside a box chased with lead. In the same drawer is a loosely bound series of notes in High Melnibonéan detailing his largely unsuccessful attempts to summon and bind elemental forces. Any sorcerer studying this for two weeks can add 1D5% to their Summoning skill.

On a separate area of the work bench are a wide range of dried herbs and leaves, used with various applications of Plant Lore. A rack of stoppered bottles is bolted to the wall above the bench. These are various potions concocted by the sorcerer. Included here are 1D6 bottles labeled in Mabden as healing potions (these cure 2D6 hit points in as many hours). Resting on one shelf near the top of the rack is a bulky packet of opolis wrapped in filmy paper. There is ten pounds of the drug, more than enough to satisfy Clag's requirements.

## L'nakar Ostorex

L'nakar Ostorex is tall and thin. He wears a simple shift-like garment he can slip out of easily (an act he often does without provocation). He wears nothing underneath. His body is emaciated and pale. His skin is shrunken over thin, cord-like muscles and sharply angled bones. His dark hair is cropped short, and is shaved down to his gleaming scalp in areas.

The shaved areas form protective magical sigils. These sigils are part of the binding for the spatchwhell

demons. If these sigils are altered or removed (say by shaving Ostorex's head) the demons immediately attack and kill the sorcerer, then flee the Young Kingdoms. Another sorcerer realizes this about Ostorex's haircut if a Summoning roll is made.

Ostorex fled Pan Tang to take up residence on the mainland after stealing the *Bloodscream Grimoire* and abducting the Theocrat's nephew. The nephew was sacrificed to effect the summoning of Kiss. After committing his deeds Ostorex did not wait for the Theocracy to uncover his crimes, but rather, fled in the night. Actually, Ostorex has no idea if he was ever found out (he was), or if the Theocrat ever dispatched anyone to seek vengeance (he did not, the nephew was a minor one, selected by Ostorex for this reason). These facts, combined with the conditions of his long solitary exile in the mountains, have made Ostorex insanelly paranoid.

### L'NAKAR OSTOREX

STR 10 CON 12 SIZ 9 INT 18 POW 36 DEX 12 CHA 15

HIT POINTS: 11 ARMOR: None.

SKILLS: Arrange Pleasing Objects 99%, Conceal 67%, Evaluate Treasure 93%, First Aid 88%, Listen 75%, Memorize 71%, Move Quietly 74%, Persuade 78%, Plant Lore 59%, Search 67%, See 89%, Taste 93%.

LANGUAGES: Common 90%/90%, High Melnibonéan 81%/79%, Mabden 72%/65%.

SUMMONING SKILL: 81%.

SUMMONINGS: Air, fire and earth elementals, various lesser demon breeds, Spatchwhell breed, Kiss.

## Bargaining with Ostorex

If the adventurers impressed Kiss, Ostorex meets with them in the Emerald Room. He sits on the jade throne, and Kiss stands at his elbow. Three spatchwhells repose around the room, draped bonelessly across furniture and objects d'art, coiled around chair legs, or stuffed into open vessels. In this state the demons resemble partially deflated balloons, with ribbon-like arms.

Ostorex is distrustful, and does not believe that they have only come after the metal loop. ("Yes, I remember the bauble. Quite beautiful. I was just fondling it the other day.") If asked why he never destroyed the item, as he promised Shareel, Ostorex assumes a shocked expression, telling the adventurers he could never commit so beautiful an object to the fires of Chaos.

Ostorex probably thinks they seek to abduct Kiss, or to steal the *Bloodscream Grimoire*, or to remove him to Pan Tang. These thoughts scurry about in his mind with the determination of red-eyed, starving rats. He determines to watch them closely, and get rid of them as soon as possible.

Ostorex will not sell the loop. He is willing to trade it for any object of equal beauty, especially something that will look good in one of his three showcase rooms.

The adventurers also need opolis. Ostorex is similarly willing to trade five pounds of the stuff to them, if they can offer him something of beauty in return.

The adventurers may wish to tell Ostorex about the mercenaries outside. Kiss can confirm this. If the adventurers make a Persuade roll, Ostorex fears that Drindle's forces have come from Pan Tang, and sends his three spatchwhells out after them. He thanks the adventurers for warning him about the threat.

### THE LURE OF KISS

Kiss hovers near Ostorex, brushing him lightly with interesting areas of its body as he conducts his interview. If the demon has somehow been won over to the adventurers' side, Kiss may use the nearness of its fiery body and soft flesh to distract the sorcerer.

Shareel still has an Emotion Control-driven passion for Kiss, and could very likely create a scene when she, the demon, and Ostorex are all present. Kiss fosters this

situation by choosing to ignore the presence of the Myrrhn exile. Shareel has been harboring an obsession for the demon ever since the night she let herself be convinced to let the sorcerer take the loop.

If the demon takes an interest in any of the adventurers, Shareel loses her cool altogether, going wild, using her fireknife to flash the offending adventurer and attack the demon (who is unaffected by the fire rune's capabilities). As the blinded adventurers grope around the room trying to intercept both demon and the spurned Myrrhn, Shareel shouts hysterically about betrayal. Kiss punctuates the episode with laughter by turns feminine and masculine. Ostorex screams at everyone to stop. If the adventurers cannot restrain Shareel, they may be forced to flee, or to attack Ostorex and his demons.

### DEPARTURE

Hopefully the adventurers leave the keep with the loop, either by fair transaction, theft or murder. Drindle and his forces have suffered a beating from the Spatchwhell demons, and have withdrawn.



Ostorex admires the loop, and Kiss admires the Adventurers



They now have the loop, and the means to save the Myrrhn race. Shareel urges them to travel directly to the Link Machine.

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## **The Mountains of Myrrhn**

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If Shareel survives the encounter in Ostorex's keep, she can lead the adventurers directly to the tunnel containing the Link. She knows a short route over the mountains that only takes several days. The slopes are higher and steeper, but Shareel's knowledge makes the journey easier. If Shareel is dead, the adventurers find notes in her belongings that pinpoint the Link's location.

Drindle and his remaining mercenaries have withdrawn to lick their wounds. When the adventurers move away from the keep, they pick up their trail once more.

### **The Grove**

A grove of slender trees clings to the cliff-side a dozen yards below the opening of the cave which leads to the Link Machine. Forward-thinking adventurers can use trees cut from this grove to construct a ladder for scaling up the side of the link. This is essential if none of the adventurers are able to fly.

### **The Cave**

The cave mouth is set in a moss-covered cliff. The moss is cool and green, but if touched a throbbing can be felt through the rock. The entrance is perfectly circular, and the walls of the tunnel are smooth and featureless.

The tunnel drops far into the mountain, and takes an hour to walk down. Sound wells from below, clicking and whirring. The adventurers begin to feel an unpleasant tingling, like a thousand insects crawling on their bodies. Their hair rises and stands on end. At last the tunnel ends, opening into a cavernous space brash with light and noise.

### **The Link Machine**

The Link Machine is a shining tower of metal, with a thousand moving parts. It dominates the cavern, dwarfs the humans standing before it, and pounds ceaselessly in the heart of the mountain.

A haze of bluish plasma wreaths the machine. Its lower portion is a pillar with a flaring conical base. A slender, silvery cylinder extends a dozen yards into the chamber's upper darkness. A number of oblong ports, framed with bezels of burnished bronze, dot the length of the cylinder. Above this are uncountable sluggishly turning wheels, interlocking gears, and rotating crystal arms. Faint trails of white and crimson plasma flow and wheel about these components. Harsh waves of pressure radiate from the device in punishing gusts.

Adventurers entering the chamber must roll CON x4 or they are afflicted with a weakness that reduces all Agility, Manipulation and Combat skills by 20%.

#### **ELECTRICAL PROTECTION**

The machine is surrounded with an envelope of static electricity that makes it unsafe to touch. Anyone actually touching the machine must roll less than CON x2 or take 3D4 points of electrical damage (leather or wooden armor absorbs this damage normally, metal armor does not). An adventurer damaged by this shock is also thrown back 1D10 yards from the machine, and stunned for 1D8 rounds. On the plus side, once touched and discharged the machine now requires 3D4 rounds to regenerate its protective envelope.

The protective envelope can be grounded off the machine. Any long metal object, such as a sword, can be used for this purpose. A DEX x3 roll is required to perform this operation, or the person attempting it is shocked with the same effects described above. As long as the machine remains grounded it is unable to regenerate its protective envelope.

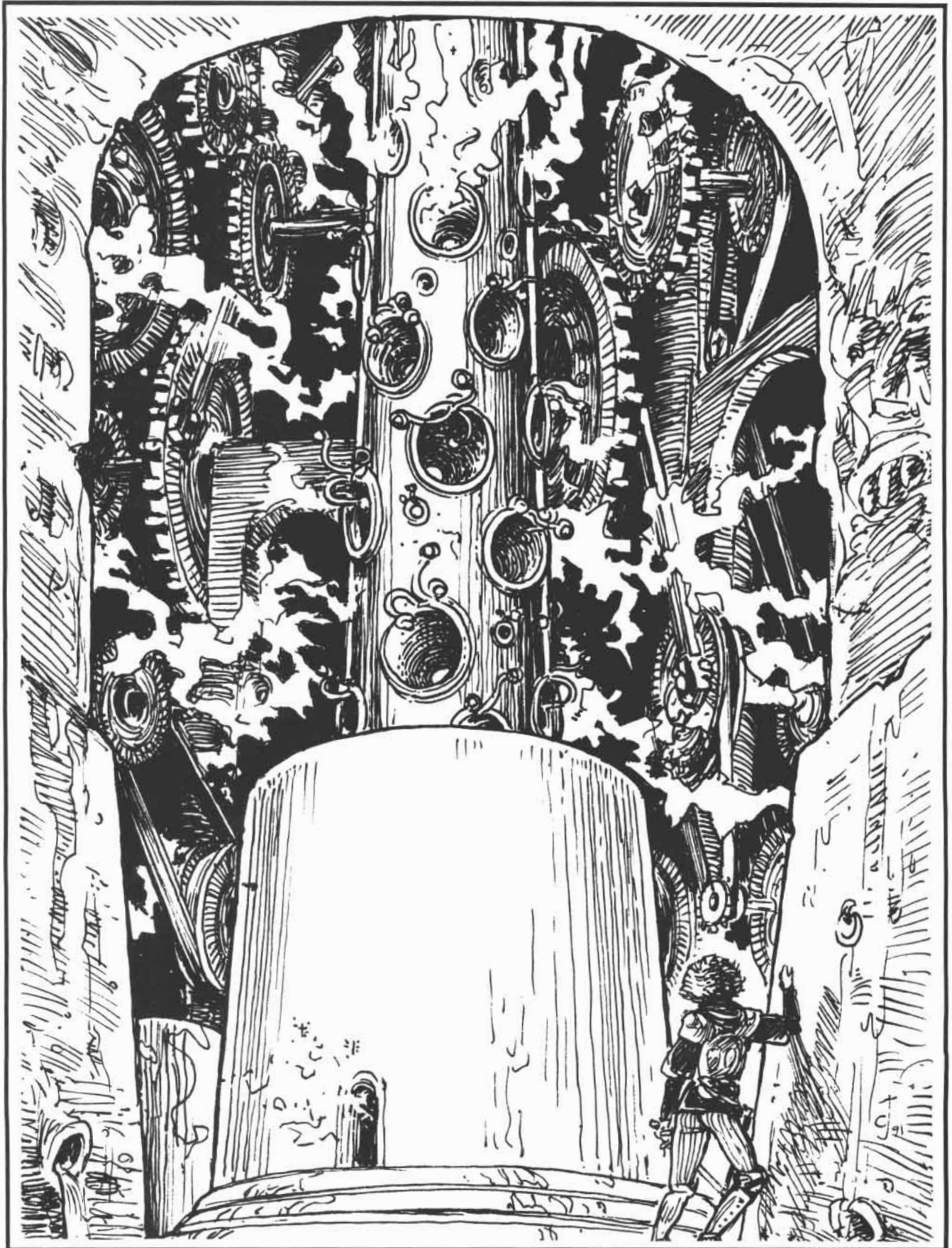
#### **THE LIGHT SENSORS**

The loop can be inserted into any port on the middle, cylindrical section of the link. The lowest port is 8 yards from the chamber floor. A See roll observes a likely looking set of conductors that it would nestle into neatly.

An array of optical sensors is mounted around the aperture of each port. These project pencil rays of coherent light. The sensor rays can be reflected back to their source, but this requires a steady hand (DEX x2) and at least two mirrored surfaces.

If the sensors are not nullified, they trigger a defensive weapon mounted near the top of the machine. This is the lancing ray that twisted and deformed Anazzar. The ray has a 90% chance to hit, always targeting the person closest to one of the access ports. All armor types protect this ray as per normal, but the ray hits with a 4D6 potency instead of damage. After the armor has absorbed this, match the remaining force against the target's POW. If their POW is overcome, the affected





The Link Machine

## The Ray's Effect

### 1D5 Effect

- 1 1D6 from CON
- 2 1D6 from DEX
- 3 1D6 from SIZ
- 4 1D8 from CHA
- 5 1D3 each from CON, DEX, SIZ and CHA

adventurer is afflicted with a horrible, distorting deformity. The exact nature of this deformity is up to the gamemaster (use Anazzar's wounds as a guideline).

### INSERTING THE LOOP

The defensive ray is not the only hazard to shoving a hand inside the machine. The loop is a multi-planar device that normally winks in and out of various relay cradles throughout the machine. The danger here is that when the pipeline used to shunt the loop around the machine is opened up, it creates a negative energy field (or shunt valve) that instantly vaporizes any positive matter (such as an adventurer's hand) upon contact. Although there is probably a pattern to these shunt valves, it is indiscernible to any but the Lords of Law. Assume a 25% chance that any port into which an adventurer reaches is valving open. Touching an open shunt valve cleanly sheers off a hand (or other appendage), and inflicts 2D6 hit points damage. The victim also permanently loses four points of DEX.

An adventurer can avoid this fate by rolling against DEX x2. The roll also allows the adventurers to drop the loop into place in its relay cradle. If the roll fails, not only does the adventurer lose a hand, the loop squirms out of the port and bounces across the floor.

### Drindle Arrives

Not long after the adventurers enter the Link chamber, Drindle and his surviving men show up. They are dirty and hungry, and many have hastily-tended wounds. His voice cracked, Drindle demands that they put the loop back into the machine at once. He is willing to let the adventurers put the loop back, or he may wish to have the honor himself. Adventurers who have learned of the various defenses around and inside the machine would probably prefer to let Drindle install the loop.

## The Loop Restored

Once the loop is successfully put back, several things happen. The constitution-sapping effects cease. Each of the Myrrhn immediately sprouts a set of wings, and any hit point damage is also healed. Any adventurers blasted by the Link's defensive ray roll against POW x5. If they succeed, they are restored to their previous condition (but are not healed for any hit point losses). Any adventurer suffering from lingering lust or rage from Kiss's Emotion Control power are freed (including Shareel).

Finally, adventurers suffering from Clag's curse are struck to the floor, twisting for a few moments in horrible pain, their eyes burning. These adventurers lose one hit point and are stunned for 1D6 rounds. When they recover, however, the points of light lurking in their eyes are gone. The curse has been lifted, and any of Clag's remaining coins have been transmuted to lead.

Once the machine is working, Drindle collects his men (if any survive) and leaves the chamber, his hateful new wings fluttering around him. He does not give the adventurers any further notice. If the adventurers wonder why the Link is now restoring wings to the Myrrhn, and otherwise setting things right, Shareel speculates that the loop has somehow been damaged. Perhaps this has altered its operation, accomplishing Anazzar's desires after all. It would be a good idea not to tell Drindle.

## Conclusion

Shareel takes the adventurers to her home in the valley. There she digs into her grandfather's and her uncle's modest fortunes and rewards the adventurers each the equivalent of 1000 LB in cash or valuable items. She may wish to give an adventurer a grimoire from her grandfather's collection of magical texts. Shareel can teach how to bind a Fire Rune. To learn this requires a combined INT and POW of at least 32 (minimum INT of 16), and at least 65% in Low and High Melnibonéan. The procedure is the same as summoning and binding an elemental, and one point of POW is sacrificed. It must be bound to an object worth at least 500 LB.

If Shareel has died, there is no clue to the location of her grandfather's home in her belongings. She has the equivalent of a couple of hundred LBs in her belt pouch. The adventurers can split these up between survivors.

The adventurers are now free to return to Clag's townhouse and enact their revenge. Expect them to.

# THE FANG AND THE FOUNTAIN

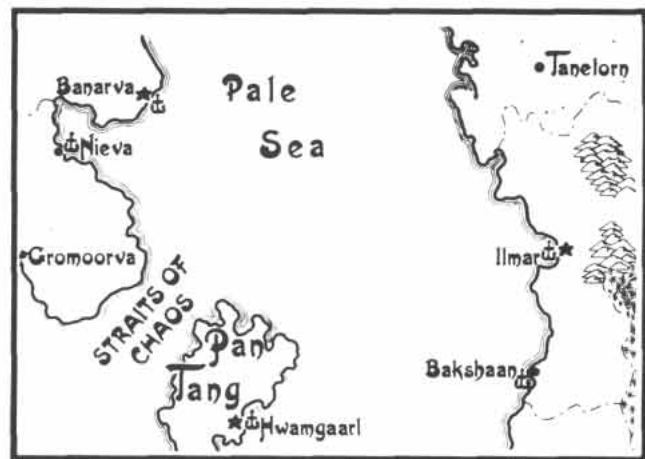
**U**NHOLY AND EVIL blasphemies are being bred upon The Fang, a storm-wracked spur of rock in the chill waters of the Pale Sea. The Fang was once home to a Dharzi wizard, and later to a Melnibonéan dynasty. Now Kerag Teel, a sorcerer of Pan Tang, lives in the ancient rooms carved within the black basalt spire. He is not content with animals as they naturally appear, but warps and perverts them into newer, more original forms. Some of his sorceries are his own invention, others partial recreations of long-forgotten Dharzi magicks. Teel is a devout worshiper of the Chaos Lord Pyaray, and so concentrates his studies on the creatures of the sea.

The sea, and the people who depend upon it for their survival, are part of Straasha's domain. Kerag Teel, with his savage beasts and dark wizardries, has despoiled it. The suffering inflicted upon his seafaring worshippers compels Straasha to act, through mortal pawns. When Straasha learns the full extent of the Pan Tangian's villainy, his anger strikes with far greater fury.

At the request of a Priest of Straasha, the adventurers travel to Vornskold, a small village on the Tarkesh coast. There they witness the attack of the Sheal, one of Keel's marine monstrosities. At the insistence of a bereaved father, they undertake an ocean voyage to The Fang, and into the lair of the Pan Tangian vivisector.

## The Dream

This scenario can be particularly rewarding for Priests, Agents, or lay worshipers of Straasha. Such adventurers receive a disturbing prophetic dream, startling in intensity and clarity.



In the dream there is a panorama of endless waves rolling in from the far horizon under a gray sky. Rather than inspiring a sense of peace, this scene seems laden with dolorous portent. A voice speaks like surf whispering over the sand: "Vornskold," and then comes the dreadful sound of terrified and screaming children. A bloody foam washes across the waves, and far out to sea a black rock is visible, jutting from the ocean. Blood wells from the rock, and the dreamer wakes, breathless and sweating.

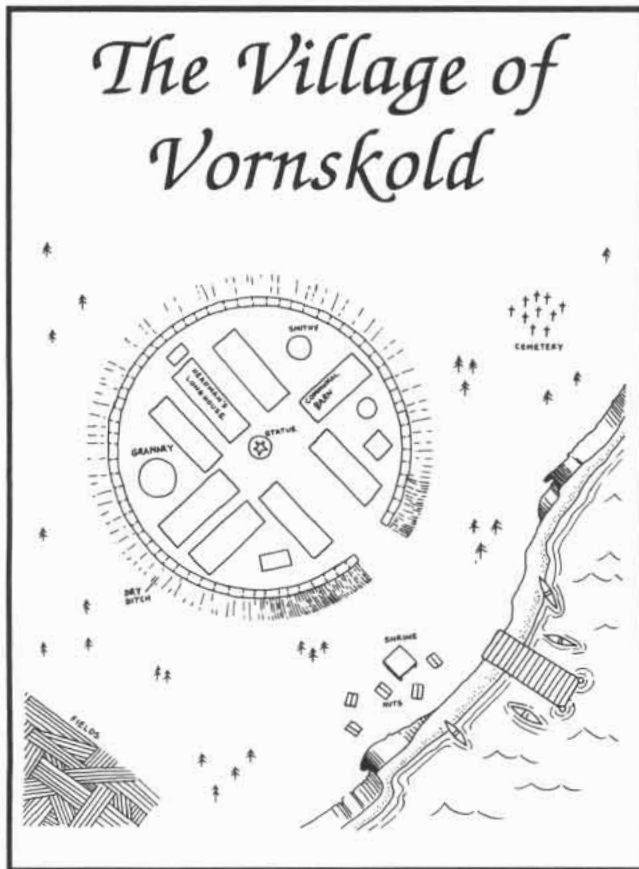
Priests and Agents of the Elemental Church of Water can intuitively interpret the dream on a successful roll of INT x5. It speaks of some danger coming to a place called Vornskold. Northerners can identify this as a village in Tarkesh. The clarity of the dream suggests that it could only have come from Straasha himself. It seems that the Lord of Water desires someone to travel there to avert the peril that Vornskold faces.

## ONOGAR THE BEREFT

If none of the adventurers are worshipers of Straasha, instead they receive a visit from their local Water Priest, Onogar the Bereft. He is a slim man in his mid-thirties, dressed in flowing robes of mottled blue-green. His tanned and weathered face is deeply lined by grief. When he was young his entire family was murdered by Pan Tangian pirates.

Onogar narrates to the adventurers the dream he has just had, and asks them to travel to Vornskold in his place. He compels sailors and other seafaring types to comply. To others he offers 250 LB each as an incentive. If they desire a larger reward, he can arrange for up to 500 LB each. They must trust his word that the money will await their successful return.

Onogar provides the adventurers with a map which shows the coast of Tarkesh, and the location of Vornskold. It lies ninety miles north of Nio. The easiest route to Tarkesh is to board a ship bound for Shazaar, and there board another one for Banarva. Few ships sail north of Banarva, and the adventurers must spend 1D6 days in port before passage is available. If they wish, they can sign on as sailors; many of the men of Tarkesh are off raiding presently, and there is a labor shortage.



## Vornskold

Vornskold is built at the head of a fjord. It is hemmed in its valley by steep hills. The pine and birch tree covered ridges rise towards the distant snow-capped mountains.

There is a small shingle beach, and a pier. A number of fishing boats of various sizes are moored. Boats under repair are upturned on the shingle. There are a few huts above the pier, and drying nets are strung between them. There is a shrine to Straasha — a stone slab set upon four pillars — decorated with shells and coral.

Beyond the beach is the village, encircled by a protective earth wall, ten feet high. A dry ditch runs along outside the wall, ten feet deep. Both the wall and the turf roofs of many of the houses within are grown over with grass and scattered daisies.

There are one hundred and twenty inhabitants, and most of the houses are longhouse-style. These buildings average forty yards by ten yards, with turf roofs and thick stone walls. Two rows of pillars hold up the roof, running each side of the main room inside. A smokehole in the roof is the chimney for the central open fireplace.

There is a communal barn, into which the animals grazing around the village are driven into at night. There is a sunken granary covered by a domed roof of hides stretched over a birch frame. Here is kept the grain produced by the several farms ringing the village.

The smithy, built next to the village spring, is also a shrine to Kakatal, Lord of Fire; a bound fire elemental burns within the blacksmith's forge. A busy blacksmith can usually be found here, producing the many metal implements needed by the villagers.

There are several smaller cottages and huts, some outside the walls, made of wood with slate roof tiles. A granite statue of Pozz-Mann-Llyr stands in the center of the village, its carved lines worn smooth by weather and adorned with moss and lichen.

Fields of wheat and flax grow to the south of the village. While some villagers toil in the fields by day, others fish, or carry out repairs upon their boats. Fifty of the villagers, all of the strong men, are away raiding at the moment, in the village longship *The Skald's Tongue*. The elder children are set to mind the small flocks of sheep and shaggy, stocky cattle. Youngsters have many chores to do around the village, but when freed from this are often to be found playing on the beach.



## Arrivals

The adventurers arrive on a cold clear day, the sunlight glinting off the chill waters of the fjord. At the same time as the adventurers arrive in Vornskold, one of Kerag Teel's sorcerous creations swims towards the beach. This is the sheal, a hybrid of shark and seal, and it hungers for child flesh.

### BY LAND

The adventurers crest over the ridge to see the village laid out in panorama before them. A See roll from here notices a dark streamlined shape, at least twenty feet long, gliding beneath the waters of the fjord.

### BY SEA

As the adventurer's ship cruises in, so does the sheal. Reflections on the water prevent them from seeing it as it swims beneath them. On the shore, the villagers note the foreign craft putting in to port. Some of the adults walk slowly towards the pier from their fields or boats. A See roll notes that there are few strong adult men around. Children line the beach only inches from the waves, some waving in excitement, others staring silently at the strangers.

### THE SHEAL ATTACKS

With a bellowing roar and hiss of spray, the creature born of vile sorcery and vivisection explodes out of the surf and up onto the wide pebbled beach. The crowd of children scatters screaming before it. One unlucky young boy, Val-Mai-Mac, is killed by the sheal in this first strike. The spray hangs in the air, a sorcerous sea-mist which obscures all sight.

The adventurers are the best warriors in the village currently, and the closest to hand with weapons ready. Unless they act quickly, more children will be doomed. The sheal never moves more than five yards from the sea, herding the children towards the low cliff that marks the end of the beach. If at any time it is seriously wounded, it seizes Val-Mai-Mac's small body in its great jaws and slides back into the water.



The Sheal Attacks

### THE SHEAL

This creature is a large blubbery horror, an unnatural cross between a shark and a seal. Its rubbery grey skin is criss-crossed with scars and patches of fur. It is capable of limited clumsy movement on land, but must return to the water every fifteen minutes to wet its gills. In the water it is a streamlined marvel, capable of great speed.

STR 24 CON 20 SIZ 25 INT 5 POW 4 DEX 8 (24 in water)

HIT POINTS: 33 ARMOR: 5 points of skin and blubber

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage   |
|--------|--------|-------|----------|
| Bite   | 50%    | —     | 2D8+2    |
| Crush  | 20%    | —     | 4D6      |
| Ram    | 80%    | —     | 1D10+2D6 |

The sheal uses its Ram attack on boats, and its Bite attack on people. It uses its Crush attack on opponents on land, rearing up and slamming down on them. This attack cannot be parried, only Dodged.

POWERS: Teel has cast Awaken Chaos on the creature, giving it the power Mist (10 meter radius, 10 rounds duration).

## A Hero's Welcome

If the adventurers succeed in killing or driving off the sheal, they are treated as heroes by the people of Vornskold. While some parents comfort sobbing children, others swarm about the adventurers, slapping

them on the back and thanking them. Led and pushed by the crowd, they are ushered into the village. Behind them, a lone man kneels in shocked silence by the water's edge. Tears flow down his weathered cheeks.

At the statue of Pozz-Mann-Llyr the elderly village priest, Dagmar-Vorn-Kasan, blesses the adventurers. He sprinkles them with dew collected in a chalice carved of mother-of-pearl. The headman, Sparn-Math-Degorny, makes a subdued but heartfelt speech thanking the newcomers, and tells them they will always be welcome in Vornskold. He expresses the hope that all will extend condolences to Mac-Ghyll-Dosal for the death of his son, and then orders that a feast be held that night to honor the strangers.

Two cows and a sheep are slaughtered and roasted on the open fire. This takes some hours, and the adventurers are free to wander the village. A small crowd of awe-struck children follows them about. An hour before sunset the village is awash with dust, hides and hooves, as the flocks and herds are driven through the gate and into the barn. As night falls the gates are shut and barred.

## Villagers

A sample of the inhabitants of Vornskold are portrayed below. Most villagers do not have full statistics provided. Instead, a summary of their major skills is given.

### SPARN-MARTH-DEGORNY

Sparn is the Headman of Vornskold. He is almost sixty, although his black hair and beard show only a few streaks of grey. His bright eyes are set within a network of laughter-lines, and his weathered face is often creased with a bright smile. He is wise, and the village has flourished under his rule. His rule lately has been somewhat challenged by the blacksmith. Sparn is not a man of action, and fears that some of the villagers may soon follow the blustery smith rather than listen to his more cautious advice.

**SKILLS:** First Aid 66%, Oratory 73%, Persuade 51%, Plant Lore 49%.

### SEM-LISS-SPARN

Sem is the Headman's daughter, and will become Headwoman when he dies. Her wit and soothing smile have calmed away many an argument. To many of the villagers, old and young, she is the person to turn to when a shoulder is needed to cry on. Her laughing smile and hazel eyes are framed by chestnut hair. She was betrothed to Basram-Sheth-Vadam, the blacksmith's son, but he broke it off without explanation last season. Sem has noticed that he spends all of his time with his friend Fawl-Elsay-Marig, and suspects that perhaps a woman's

company is not what Basram truly desires. She bears him no ill will, but it has caused some strain between their fathers.

**SKILLS:** Listen 65%, Persuade 72%.

### DAGMAR-VORN-KASAN

Dagmar is a Priest of Pozz-Mann-Llyr. He is thin and aesthetic, and sees himself as a beacon of purity in a world of sin. Keeping himself and Vornskold free of corruption is a heavy burden to carry alone, as Dagmar is always ready to explain to anyone who will listen. Despite his dry nature and self-righteousness, he is a wise man, and one of Sparn's advisors. He dresses in robes of white wool, and wears sandals. His long grey hair and beard flow impressively over his chest and shoulders.

**SKILLS:** Orate 81%, Sea Lore 82%.

### MOG-VORN-KASAN

Mog is a Priestess of Straasha. She is referred to respectfully as "Sea-Mother" by most of the village. She lives outside the village near the shrine of Straasha. Her hut is full of large colorful shells and drying seaweed, and the sounds and smells of the sea. She is the sister of Dagmar, but they have not spoken for years. Both have long forgotten the initial cause of the feud. Mog is old and grey, her hair hanging in braids to her waist. Her warm robe of blue-dyed wool is embroidered around the collar, cuffs and hem. The interwoven pattern depicts creatures of the ocean swimming amongst mystic runes.

**SKILLS:** Sea Lore 96%.

**SUMMONING SKILL:** 76%.

**SUMMONINGS:** Water elementals.

### VADAM-THOM-PATAN

Vadam is a giant of a man, even by Tarkesh standards. He has bristly black eyebrows and beard, and a bellowing voice to match his size. He is the village blacksmith, and a priest of Kakatal. Like his god, he has a fiery temper, and is somewhat rash. He always favors action rather than talking, and lately has come to regard many of the Headman's decisions as weak ones. Until recently his son Basram was betrothed to Sem, the Headman's daughter, but the young man refused to go through with the marriage. Many believe that Vadam was the cause, but in fact he had nothing to do with it. Basram is presently away raiding.

**SKILLS:** Craft: Smithing 81%.

**SUMMONING SKILL:** 32%.

**SUMMONINGS:** Fire elementals.

**MAC-GHYLL-DOSAL**

Mac is a fisherman, thin and dark. When he smiles, which is not often, his teeth gleam white in his tanned and lined face. Once he had a wife, Mai-Vil-Hathar, and two sons, Odd-Mai-Mac and Val-Mai-Mac. Mai died ten years ago, giving birth to Val. Odd, his eldest son, was swept overboard six months ago in rough seas. And now, today, Val was killed by the sheal.

**MAC-GHYLL-DOSAL**

STR 13 CON 15 SIZ 11 INT 10 POW 7 DEX 15 CHA 9

HIT POINTS: 15 ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

| Weapon  | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|---------|--------|-------|--------|
| Harpoon | 41%    | 13%   | 2D6    |
| Knife   | 47%    | 26%   | 1D3    |

SKILLS: Balance 82%, Fishing 72%, Navigate 93%, Tie Knot 65%.

LANGUAGES: Common -/50%.

**A Hero's Feast**

The feast is held in the longhouse of the Headman and his family, and the entire village attends. There is room for more; benches which would be occupied by the warriors of the village are empty. Inside it is dim and smoky. Dogs lie in a twitching hairy pile by the open fire, while the villagers crowd the benches which line the walls. The feast is a wild and noisy affair. Much mead and ale is drunk, and as much again is spilt.

**THE BEAST FROM THE SEA**

The sea-monster is the topic of much of the conversation. If it was killed, its severed head is displayed at the front of the hall. What was it? No one knows. The raw raised scars around the creature imply that it is man-made, rather than natural. No songs or sagas speak of such a beast, although a Music Lore roll might remember a scrap of an ancient lay concerning the Dharzi science of creature creation. If this were the case, the sheal must be over a thousand years old, as the Dharzi are long extinct.

Everyone thinks that the creature was born from Chaos. Dagmar-Vorn-Kasan maintains that the sea-thing came from Hell. Others claim from Pan Tang, and shudder. Another voices the opinions that the two are one and the same, and all agree. The majority of the fishermen say that the creature must have come from the north, from the unknown depths of the Pale Sea. Perhaps something worse drove it out of its usual territory. Some villagers present second-hand and third-hand reports of similar creatures being seen near other villages up the coast.

**THE DANCING BEAR**

One of the men, Valk-Sif-Gairan, found a bear-cub last spring, and is training it to dance. When Valk strikes up a lively tune on his flute, the small bear rears up on its hind paws and does a clumsy jig, much to the villagers' amazement and amusement.

**ARM WRESTLING**

Vadam-Thom-Patan, the blacksmith, is the strongest man in the village. Once he has had a few drinks he feels the need to reaffirm his place. He challenges the adventurers to arm-wrestling bouts, and faces them one-by-one.

Vadam's STR is 18. Match the adventurer's STR against this. Each wrestler has 50% chance of success, plus 5% for each point of STR over their opponent's, or minus 5% for each point under. Both parties make rolls, until one fails and the other succeeds. A critical success inflicts a sprained wrist and 1 point of damage to the opponent. A fumble causes the same damage to oneself.

**A FATHER DRUNK ON GRIEF**

Mac-Ghyll-Dosal spends the night drinking heavily and staring deeply into the fire. His body is rigid, his eyes dry and unfocused. At some point in the night he lurches to his feet and shouts out at the top of his lungs that his son's death will not go unavenged.

If the adventurers killed the sheal, he vows to track down its creators, be they gods or mortals. If the sheal escaped, Mac swears to hunt it to its lair and kill it.

**SIGNS AND PORTENTS**

During the evening the adventurers are under the constant scrutiny of Mog-Vorn-Kasan, the Sea Mother. At some point she approaches them and offers to tell their fortunes. She performs this by casting a handful of rune-carved fragments of corals on the beaten earth floor, and then pressing her ear to a great shell and listening for an answer. When she is done, she peers at the adventurers with new respect, and mutters: "I forecast four things, and only one of them is to the good. I see a second shadow, with blood and madness in its wake. I see a dark tooth of land, surrounded by water, which leaves a foul stain upon the sea. I see reunions, but all fraught with sorrow and broken hopes. And at the last I see a glittering shower of silver, which sparkles with life and renewal. My lord Straasha is with you. You have our blessings and our hopes."

**A TOAST TO ABSENT FRIENDS**

Sparn-Marth-Degorny calls for silence, and holds up his tankard. He proposes a toast to the men of the village

now sailing aboard the Skald's Tongue, wishing them successful raiding, much booty, and a safe voyage home. All present say "Aye," but fall into a moody silence, as their thoughts turn to sea-monsters and the perils of the ocean. A clever Persuade or Orate roll from the adventurers can cheer them up again, but still a shadow hangs over the evening.

### SONGS NEW AND OLD

Towards the end of the night an elderly man, led by a small child, walks into the firelight in the center of the hall. His gray-streaked hair is bound in a single thick plait, his dark beard is oiled, his eyes are white and blind. His name is Nath-Gar-Hornath, and he is a skald (a bard). The child passes him a harp, and he strikes the strings, and begins to chant ancient sagas.

The tale he sings recalls the heroes of Tarkesh: quick-fingered Lodur and the Mead of Immortality, Vlian-Ham-Hodur and the Demon King. Then Nath recites the history and deeds of the people of Vornskold. Tales of love and battle and rare adventure abound, concerning blood-feuds, attacks by Pan Tangian slave galleys, and the cruel northern winters.

Then Nath sings new a new verse he has composed, commemorating the day's events. He says it is unfinished, for he believes the saga has yet to play itself out. He chants:

*The water of the fjord was dark  
And the creature made no ripple there.  
With spray and fury it came.  
Val, the son of Mai and Mac, died.  
But the bright wanderers  
Drove it from these shores.*

To finish off, Nath chants another ancient saga, concerning the daughter of a jarl of olden times. One verse runs:

*Into the Fang, entrance to dark Otherworld,  
crept Sim-Nisa-Malahad; she was not afraid.  
The Dragon Prince slumbered in his den,  
trusting in sorcery for his sanctuary.  
He was the vain one, Sim proved him wrong.*

A successful roll of Music Lore allows the adventurers to understand that the saga likely refers to a Melni-bonéan sorcerer or warrior rather than an actual dragon. The "Fang" referred to would have been the Melni-

bonéan's tower, in the ancient days when their empire ruled the world.

Nath or any of the fishermen can tell the adventurers about The Fang, if asked. It is a small rugged island of jet black basalt, a steep-sided crag in treacherous waters. Everyone knows at least one story about someone who drowned near The Fang, or about a boat which was wrecked.

The black rock is north from Vornskold, a three day trip by sea. If the adventurer's do not remember Mog's prophecy of the "dark tooth of land," she reminds them of it. Mac lifts up his weary head, mutters "Aye," and then falls asleep.

## Departures

The next day dawns crisp and clear. Soon after the sun rises Mac-Ghyll-Dosal goes down to his boat, the Mai Queen, and prepares to sail. He is still determined to seek out his son's killer, or whoever created the beast. If Mac goes out alone, the Mai Queen is found drifting some days later. Mac is never seen again.

If the adventurers ask to accompany him on his quest, Mac agrees. He offers the use of his boat, if they do not have their own. The Mai Queen is a sturdy clinker-built fishing boat, and can hold up to eight people.

Mac has a thorough knowledge of the coast and currents for many miles north and south of Vornskold. He can navigate further afield, using charts and the memories and recollections of fellow fishermen. He is a useful shipmate, but not a cheery one. His dour unsmiling face becomes a disheartening sight in the days to come.

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## The Journey to the Fang

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The winds are constant, and all goes well. It is a three day journey by sail to The Fang, less if the adventurers have supernatural aid. One Navigate roll is needed each day. A failed roll adds another day's travel to their journey. If the roll is fumbled, they drive the boat into the rocks, and lose another day repairing it.

The ship is within sight of the coast at all times. All on board have clear views of the cliffs, pine-covered headlands, and narrow fjords of northern Tarkesh. At most fjords there is a small stead, a farm with up to a



dozen people. Many miles inland the steep-sided hills merge into the snow-capped mountains. North of The Fang, the pine forests give way to tundra. In winter the coast becomes covered in snow, and blizzards whirl across the cold grey sea. Even in the warmest summers, fogbanks are common on the Pale Sea. It is a chill and unpredictable body of water, and storms are a regular occurrence. At night the adventurers should put in somewhere, perhaps berthing at one of the increasingly fewer and more barbaricsteads.

Below are the events which occur during the trip, day by day. Villages which the adventurers pass as they travel up the coast are also described, as are the effects of the greater sheal's attacks on them.

If the adventurers choose to go by land, the journey will take a week and a half, as they negotiate all those fjords. Some of the encounters below will need alteration. When the adventurers arrive at The Fang, they will need to procure a boat to travel out to it.

## Day One

### THE SHEAL

If the adventurers did not kill the sheal, it attacks their boat as they sail out from Vorsnkold. It is still wounded from their last encounter. It aims to wreck the boat, and then devour the tasty humans as they flounder in the water. If the adventurers survive, they can get a new boat from Vorsnkold.

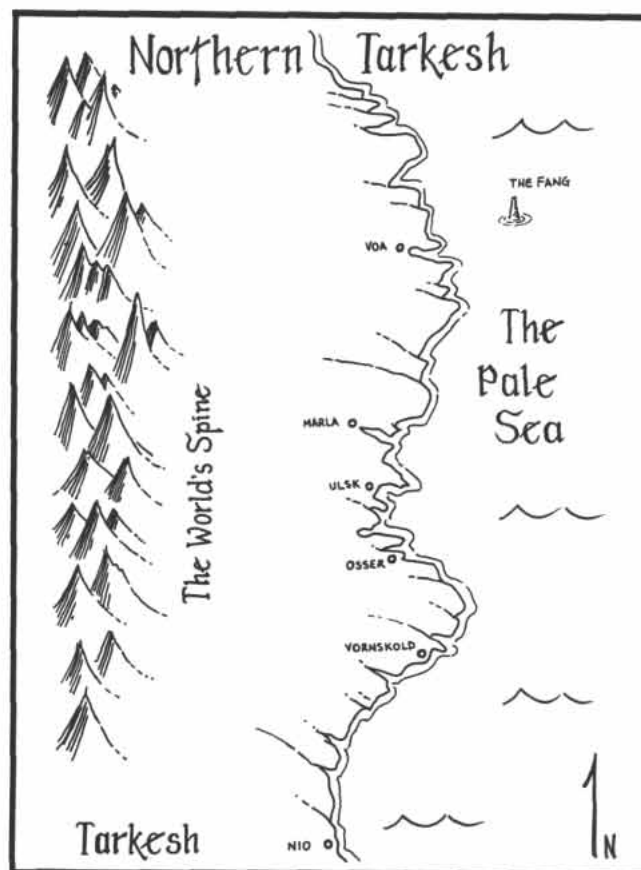
### FLOATING WRECK

After several hours, any adventurer making a See roll on the waves notices a humped dark shape, floating in the water several dozen yards away. It is twenty feet long. It is an overturned fishing boat. Something has taken a huge bite out of one side of the vessel. There is no sign whatsoever of the crew. Anything left on board has long since been spoiled by seawater. The name of the boat is the *Gliding Eagle*.

### THE VILLAGE OF OSSER

Osser is surrounded by a wall and ditch, similar to Vorsnkold. The fishermen ask the adventurers for news of one of their boats. Nad-Flai-Kodun and his three sons Bazz (14), Naph (17) and Gurdan (21) have been missing at sea for a week. The men of Osser have searched for Nad's boat, the *Gliding Eagle*, without success. If the adventurers pass on news of the craft, there is much lamentation from Gliva, mother and wife of the dead.

Questions about the sheal elicits a nervous response from one of the fishermen, who says that he



caught such a creature in his nets six months ago, but it tore free. It was only ten feet long then; perhaps it has grown. Until now, none of the other fisherfolk believed his tale.

Questions about The Fang itself are met only with a bark of dry laughter from one ancient man, who says he saw several mermaids there in his youth, "only they didn't look half as pretty as the ones the skalds sing of in their tales."

### THE VILLAGE OF ULSK

No-one goes fishing in Ulsk anymore; too many people have been lost at sea. Here the frightened people huddle in their huts, only coming out to anxiously tend the fields and graze the cattle. Once the greater sheal came up onto the beach in broad daylight and ate a cow that had wandered down there. Since then, no-one has set foot near the water.

Vilodon-Hath-Felway, the priest of Law, has gone mad, and is praying inside his hut in a cracked and desperate voice. He hasn't come out in three days. He began by shouting, but now is unable to raise his voice above a whisper. Vilodon thinks Pozz-Mann-Llyr has cursed the village for some unknown wrong which he failed to prevent.



The Town That Went Mad

### Day Two

#### THE VILLAGE OF MARLA

A See roll from the boat notices that no fires burn in Marla. It is a ghost village. Not a soul is in sight. Boats are up on the shore. The gates are open. Inside the empty longhouses nothing moves, roasts are cold upon the spit, and there is only ash in the fireplaces. It is as if the people simply deserted the place in some sudden fearful exodus, leaving all their possessions behind. Many objects of value can be found abandoned, including a silver drinking horn (150 LB), a small statue of Pozz-Mann-Llyr with emeralds for eyes (250 LB), a jewelled belt (175 LB), and a chess-set with carved whalebone pieces (100 LB). Those who take these things suffer strange and oppressive dreams until they are returned.

#### FLOATING WHALE

A See roll notices something large and gray rolling in the waves. A tremendous smell rises from it. It is a whale, and it is dead. Its hide is stripped and scarred with long lacerations.

### Day Three

#### CRIPPLED SEAGULLS

During the third day, seagulls are seen flying about the ship. A See roll notes that each bird is missing one leg. Where a leg should be is seen a stump of bone and scar tissue, bitten or torn off.

#### THE VILLAGE OF VOA

A pall of smoke, visible for miles, hangs above Voa. An INT X 3 roll suggests Pan Tangian raiders have been here. However, this is not the case. Voa has been destroyed by the greater sheal, but also by the actions of the occupants, driven insane by fear.

The pier has been burnt down to the waterline. Charcoaled beams jut from the waves at odd angles. A human body, missing from the waist down, has been hung from the end of one such beam. The corpse is that of Mishk-Vara-Tam, once a priest of Straasha. When the creatures of the sea turned against them, the desperate villagers offered him up in sacrifice to appease this

blood-thirsty new god of the waves. Parts of him have already been eaten.

Boats lie broken on the shore, holes smashed in their sides, oars broken, sails torn and flapping.

The village is a smoke-hazed ruin. The moat is filled with blood and broken bodies. The wall has been smashed and buckled in several places. Inside the torn-down gate a shattered statue of Pozz-Mann-Llyr lies face-down in the dirt, the priest crushed beneath the granite weight. Flame has claimed what axe and sword has not. A few wild-eyed survivors cluster squeaking amongst the rubble. They manifest immense fear of anything which comes from the sea, including the adventurers. On the few remaining upright walls in the village are crude representations of a Thing With Teeth, often executed in blood.

As the adventurers move around, the gibbering remnants of the Voa populace start to gather. There are twenty of them. They start to hiss at the strangers, and then to throw stones. If the adventurers do not move back to their boat, the madmen take up clubs and rocks to drive them out.

**MADMEN OF VOA**

Cursed by bad luck and demons, these men and women have lost their grip on reason. The greater sheal's physical and mental attacks sowed seeds of madness and terror, and death and destruction was the fruit. The survivors lurk in the ruins of their shattered town, feeding off scraps and dead dogs. They hate anything of the ocean.

STR 13 CON 12 SIZ 12 INT 8 POW 7 DEZ 10 APP 5

HIT POINTS: 12 each ARMOR: None.

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage  |
|--------|--------|-------|---------|
| Stone  | 25%    | —     | 1+1D4   |
| Rock   | 30%    | —     | 1D3+1D4 |
| Club   | 38%    | 23%   | 1D6     |

SKILLS: Gibber Wildly 76%.

LANGUAGES: Common -40%.

**THE GREATER SHEAL**

Mid-afternoon a See roll detects the twisted rock formation of The Fang on the horizon. Just as this discovery is made, the water parts as a dark shape slides upwards, and the greater sheal attacks.

This is the animal which has been laying waste to this stretch of coast. It was the mate of the sheal the adventurers faced earlier, and it is larger and meaner. Furthermore, the adventurers are in its territory. They ride a fragile wooden craft through water; it swims with bold and strong strokes.

The greater sheal's first attack is from underneath the boat, an Emotion Control on Mac, to drive him insane. This takes little effort, Mac suddenly looks at the

adventurers with fear and hatred. He believes they caused his son's death.

The second attack is to capsize the boat. If the hapless adventurers cannot kill it as it surfaces, it strikes at the vessel. All those not actively holding on must immediately roll Balance or fall overboard. After this the greater sheal strikes at one target per round, to pluck them off the boat or out of the water and devour them. Other options for the greater sheal include ramming the boat again from underneath, sinking as if dead and then suddenly reappearing, and pulling helpless swimmers under from below.

**THE GREATER SHEAL**

This creature is nearly twice the size of its mate. It is a scarred expanse of fins and teeth, capable of snapping a rowboat in half. It has a fringe of tentacles curling from its mid-section, and has the ink-sac of a squid.

STR 40 CON 27 SIZ 48 INT 7 POW 5 DEX 5 (15 in water)

HIT POINTS: 63 ARMOR: 8 points of skin and blubber

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage   |
|--------|--------|-------|----------|
| Bite   | 75%    | —     | 4D8+4    |
| Ram    | 60%    | —     | 2D10+3D6 |
| Crush  | 80%    | —     | 6D6      |

The greater sheal uses its Ram attack on boats, and its Bite attack on people. It uses its Crush attack on opponents on land, rearing up and slamming down on them. This attack cannot be parried, only Dodged.

POWERS: Teel has cast Awaken Chaos on the creature, giving it the power Emotion Control (Insanity POT 5D6, Range 20m).

**The Fang**

Waves crash constantly around the jagged base of The Fang. It is a black and irregular mass of black rock, and rears 200 feet high in a natural spire. See rolls directed at the peak of the ragged crag detect holes in the stone too regularly placed to be natural. These are windows, and at night a pale flickering light shines through them.

Within 300 feet of The Fang a Listen roll can make out soft tuneless music, faintly akin to the sound of a harp. The music seems louder when the wind blows. It can be heard at any time, day or night.

There is no harbor, wharf or pier on the rock, nor anywhere safe to moor a boat. A Navigate roll is required to get the boat close enough in so that an adventurer can Jump off. If the Navigate roll is failed, the boat slams into the rock for 1D6 damage in structure points. Adventurers who fail their Jump fall into the sea, and are smashed against the rocks for 1D6 damage unless a Swim roll can be made. Once everyone has disembarked, someone should anchor the boat far from The Fang so that the waves do not sweep it into the rock.



If an adventurer does not volunteer, Mac does this, and then Swims ashore.

The rest of The Fang is a slippery expanse of weeds, pools and loose rocks. A successful Search roll detects the rough outline of a door at the base of the north face of the spire, but there is no sign of how it opens. A Climb roll is needed to scramble up the rough peak to the lowest window.

### A DRIPPING WELCOME

Within a few minutes of the intruders landing on the rock, Kerag Teel's servants lurch up out of the waves to greet the visitors. They are drowned men, servants of the Chaos Lord Pyaray, and of Kerag Teel in turn. There are ten of them. They are clad in rusted armor and tattered and rotting clothing, and their sodden and swollen bodies squelch as they walk. They clutch chipped and dented weapons. White eyes stare blindly from peeling faces, and their blue lips part around teeth visible where the cheeks used to be.

A Memorize roll observes some family resemblance in the drowned faces to the people of Vornskold. Mac certainly recognizes them, and gasps in horror. These are men from the *Skald's Tongue*, the longship of



The Fang

### The History of The Fang

2,000 years ago, the caverns within the tall black rock were the abode of a Dharzi wizard. He left the caves in their natural state. To the Dharzi, beauty was as nature ordained by chance. His domain was of soft curves of stone fretted and stained by mineral-bearing waters, slowly growing curtains of dripping limestone.

With the end of the battle between the Dharzi and the Bright Empire 1,000 years ago, the rock came to be inhabited by the family of a Melnibonéan lordling. Now the hallways were dug, and windows pierced through living stone. Soon the rooms gleamed with canopies of rainbow silk. Rich tapestries hung upon the walls, caged birds trilled from sliver cages. The Fang echoed with subdued music, a place of beauty amid the isolation of the Pale Sea.

Four hundred fifty years ago, when the Bright Empire had begun to slowly crumble in upon itself, the Melnibonéan family departed The Fang forever, and returned to the Dreaming City. Now the caverns are almost empty, cold and silent, with the occasional Pan Tangian touch just to make it feel like home.

Vornskold. They retain no memories of their previous lives. Basram-Sheth-Vadam, the son of the blacksmith, stands dead next to Fawl-Elsay-Marig, the man he forsook his promised wife for, united for eternity in cold and unfeeling walking death.

The undead corpses bow, bid the visitors welcome in gurgling voices, and offer to lead them to the master. They stagger to the doorway outlined in the rock, and it opens at their touch. The corpses bow and let the adventurers go first, into the stinking darkness beyond. A close look (Search roll) at the crevices and alcoves inside reveals splintered slivers of bone, and water-worn scraps of flesh.

This is a trap. The doorway leads to a dead-end tunnel, and the dripping cadavers swing the door shut behind the cornered adventurers. The last person through may make a Jump roll to get clear before the door closes. Those inside may try to hold the door open. It has a STR of 18.

Once the door is fully closed, it cannot be opened from the inside. Several small conduits pour sea water in at high tide, drowning anyone trapped within. It is likely that Kerag Teel would rather inspect his catches than let them drown.

If the adventurers refuse to enter, the drowned men attack. They fight to clear the adventurers off the rocky island. If half of the drowned warriors are cut down, the remainder step back into the waves. They sink below, to emerge through the sea pool in the lowest chamber of the Fang, and inform Teel of the intruders.



**DROWNED WARRIORS**

|     | #1 | #2 | #3 | #4 | #5 | #6 | #7 | #8 | #9 |
|-----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| STR | 13 | 15 | 12 | 14 | 15 | 15 | 17 | 15 | 16 |
| CON | 23 | 20 | 20 | 22 | 23 | 20 | 18 | 15 | 19 |
| SIZ | 15 | 15 | 16 | 14 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 17 | 15 |
| INT | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  |
| POW | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| DEX | 5  | 6  | 4  | 3  | 6  | 4  | 7  | 8  | 5  |
| HP  | 26 | 23 | 24 | 24 | 23 | 21 | 20 | 22 | 20 |

ARMOR: Rusting Metal (1D4-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6+1D4

| Weapon     | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Sea Axe    | 35%    | 15%   | 2D6+2  |
| Broadsword | 35%    | 20%   | 1D8+1  |

Dead men always strike last in any round, as their bodies are slow to respond to their brain's commands.

**Inside the Fang**

The bare tunnels echo with the sound of the wind and waves, and faint music ripples on the damp sea air. The smell of salt and seaweed is strong, and on many of the upper levels of The Fang puddles of seawater lie in dips and hollows on the rock floor. Light filters in through the narrow windows.

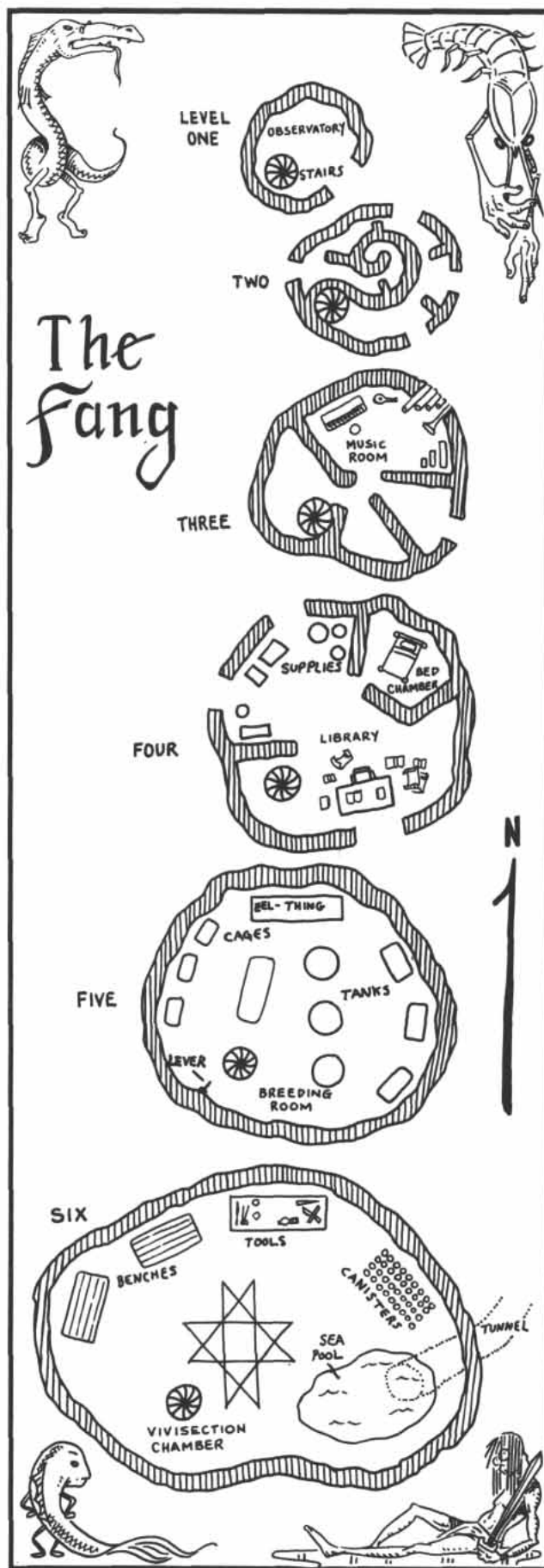
In alcoves here and there stand abstract sculptures of twisted black metal. Evaluate Treasure rolls reveal them to be only of worth in Pan Tang. The Pan Tangians consider them to be objects of art, and worth 500 Gold Tigers (Large Gold) each. Elsewhere in the Young Kingdoms the sculptures are worth 100 LB for the lot, and that only because of their iron content. Apart from these objects, and the few items of furniture Teel has in his personal rooms, the caverns and hallways are bare and unadorned rock.

There are six levels within The Fang, connected by narrow spiral stairs carved from the rock. Level One is the highest, situated within the stone spire. Level Six, the lowest level, is on the waterline. There are no windows in Levels Five and Six. The adventurers will enter somewhere at Levels One through Four.

**LEVEL ONE**

The top-most floor of the tower was used by the Melnibonéans as an observatory. They studied the stars and movements of the Multiverse through strange and complex telescopes. Now the room is bare and dusty, and the marvelous machines are a mass of vast rusted wheels, cogs and gears. Kerag Teel rarely comes up here. The almost-Lawful technology of the devices confounds and unsettles him, and mock's Pan Tang's claim as inheritor of the glories of old Melniboné.

Deposits of salt gleam in white crystals on the walls and broken window frames. The room is 125 feet above



the waves, and is almost dry, and quite peaceful. A narrow winding stairwell at one end of the room provides access to the lower levels.

### LEVEL TWO

The rooms here are damp and bare, curled in upon another in a spiral, like the chambers of a shell. One must pass through each progressively smaller room to gain entrance to the next. The final room is at the center of the tower. It is dark and squalid; once it was a meditation room whose walls throbbed with a soft pink glow in time with the occupant's heartbeat.

Only the walls in the outer spiral have windows, irregular holes gaping in the rock. These were once delicate carvings, made ugly by time and weather. This level is 100 feet above sea level.

### LEVEL THREE

This level is a group of old and empty chambers. From here it is only a 75 foot drop to rocks below. All the walls on this floor are slick and wet, water puddles the floor, and the smell of the sea is overpowering.

From one of the rooms comes the faint music which drifts and swells about The Fang. Stringed instruments of wood and stone are built into the walls and windows, and pluck music from the breeze as it blows over them. The harder the wind blows, the louder the music becomes. In a storm the instruments shriek a wild and incoherent symphony.

### LEVEL FOUR

This level is 50 feet above the waves. The lowest windows are here, and the adventurers are most likely to make their entrance on this level.

The rooms on this floor are Kerag Teel's private apartments. Drowned men act as slaves, puddles forming around them if they stand still for long. There are two of them here at present, awaiting instructions.

Teel's sleeping quarters are dominated by the bed, the most lavish piece of property in the tower. It is a huge four-posted and silken-canopied structure, finely carved with obscene detail, and scattered with cushions and rugs.

His library contains little furniture. There is a desk and chair, and books and scrolls are scattered about and heaped on the floor. Many of them are ruined by damp and mould. Anyone who sorts through them, and makes a Read Mabden roll, learns that the writer believes he has recreated ancient Dharzi sorceries connected with the cross-breeding of animals. Enough charts and diagrams also exist to show that the author is vivisecting

and grafting living tissue to create new monsters. A note refers to the release of two such creatures into the Pale Sea a year ago.

One rocky chamber contains crates of supplies and barrels of fresh water. This supplements Teel's principal diet of seafood.

### LEVEL FIVE

This windowless room holds the breeding stock Teel needs for his experiments, as well as several surviving results. There are no windows in here. It is 25 feet above sea-level. At odd intervals along the walls hang burning torches, coating the ceiling with soot. A green brass lever in one dark niche operates the fake entrance trap outside the tower.

A drowned man shuffles about here, feeding the things in the tanks in endless quiet servitude. He ignores the adventurers, unless they start vandalizing the place.

Water-filled tanks line the walls, and vacant-eyed fish swim back and forth within them. As well as crabs and squid and other sea creatures, some of the tanks hold the results of Kerag Teel's vile spell-surgeries. There is an octopus with the clever paws of an otter sewn onto the tip of each tentacle; a quivering giant jellyfish that overflows its tank in pulpy rolls of transparent flesh and tentacles; two manta rays sewn onto the back of a barracuda as wings, like a huge leathery aquatic butterfly; small fish with the legs of seagulls; a giant crawling sea-urchin; and other insane hybrids. If the adventurers run about smashing tanks, the experiments expire quickly on the rock floor. Some of the poisonous specimens may be dangerous as they thrash about spasmodically.

A huge black eel writhes and coils within one tank; not quite an eel, as a closer look shows. The face of Odd-Mai-Mac, the son who drowned six months ago, has been sewn onto the snakelike body, staring out with blind white eyes and smiling idiotically. There is enough intelligence left for the eel-thing to recognize its father, beating itself against the glass-fronted cage to attract his attention. Mac goes mad when he sees it.

If the adventurers do not restrain him he climbs into the tank to cradle the thing in his arms, and drowns. If held back from the tank, Mac is a listless broken man thereafter.

### THE EEL-THING

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|                  |        |                                     |       |        |        |       |
|------------------|--------|-------------------------------------|-------|--------|--------|-------|
| STR 15           | CON 17 | SIZ 23                              | INT 8 | POW 12 | DEX 14 | CHA 1 |
| HIT POINTS: 28   |        | ARMOR: 3 points of eel skin on body |       |        |        |       |
| SKILLS: Swim 40% |        |                                     |       |        |        |       |

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**LEVEL SIX**

In the deepest chamber of The Fang, Kerag Teel conducts his horrible experiments. Benches line the walls, some covered in surgical tools, jagged-teethed bone-saws with clots of hair and meat between the serrations. Dim light flickers from black candles melted atop horned skulls. This lowest room is built at sea level, and at the far side of the chamber a deep, still pool extends through an underwater tunnel to join with the sea. Through this tunnel Teel releases his creatures, as well as using it as a secret entrance to The Fang.

In the center of the chamber, an eight-sided star is etched into the stone floor. A viscous semi-transparent shape roils and bubbles within this, raging helplessly at its magical bonds. Strange organs are visible at its core, and the thing constantly forms wicked claws and horns before retracting them into its fluid flesh. This is Teel's latest triumph, a demon-elemental.

One bench holds rows of thick glass canisters, with leaden lids. There are over three dozen of them. Each is full of water, save one which is empty. A sigil is etched onto the lid of each canister, recognizable to anyone making a Summoning roll as a binding sigil for elementals. Each jar contains a water elemental. They are fated to be melded with a demon spawn of Chaos. Because of the care Kerag Teel has taken with his bindings, Straasha is currently unaware of the number of elementals held and tortured here. If the jars are shattered, the elementals flow into the sea pool, and escape.

Kerag Teel's defenses are strongest in this room. He waits in here for the adventurers, with the worst of his creations at his side. He might attempt to negotiate with the adventurers, but only in the hope of catching them off-guard. They have seen his laboratory, and spoiled his work. For this they must die.

Teel may have some drowned warriors available, if any survived welcoming the adventurers. If either of the sheals still lives, it might burst up into the bottom chamber from the sea pool.

**Kerag Teel**

Teel is tall and gaunt, his long black hair shot through with streaks of silver, although his long plaited beard remains quite dark. His hair is shaved back at the temples, and an octopus design is tattooed onto his scalp on each side of his head. Deep-set eyes of dark blue look out past a hooked nose from under bushy black eyebrows. Habitually he dresses in sleeveless robes of brocade silk, stiff with embroidery and small jewels, the shoulders padded and spiked. He is cruel,

sadistic and pathologically insane. He is also chronically lazy, and the only work he'll do is that connected with his art. His dead men fetch and carry for him.

Kerag Teel does not disdain elementals as weak and simplistic, as do most Pan Tangians. He has concentrated his studies almost exclusively upon them. As a child it was prophesied that he would be "overcome by water". Determined to defeat his fate, Teel made the element his special study; if he has total power over water, he reasons that it cannot harm him.

**KERAG TEEL**

STR 14    CON 14    SIZ 12    INT 23    POW 21    DEX 10    CHA 5

HIT POINTS: 14      ARMOR: 35 points of Demon Armor

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon        | Attack | Parry | Damage    |
|---------------|--------|-------|-----------|
| Demon Trident | 88%    | 86%   | 1D6+1+3D3 |
| Scimitar      | 71%    | 59%   | 1D8+1     |

SKILLS: Balance 78%, Credit 42%, First Aid 95%, Navigate 100%, Persuade 37%, Plant Lore 73%, Surgery 80%, Swim 94%.

LANGUAGES: Common 100% / 82%, High Melnibonéan 63% / 57%, Low Melnibonéan - / 48%, Mabden 83% / 51%.

SUMMONING SKILL: 64%

SUMMONINGS: Water elementals, demon breeds Hurtines, Daaksur, and numerous others. The spell Awaken Chaos.

**MAGDRA**

DEMON TRIDENT      Breed Daaksur      CV: 78

This weapon is of fleshy metal, with purple veins. It twists and stirs in Teel's grasp. It has three barbs, and on the end of each is a small mouth. These are constantly hungry, and Teel likes to aim for his opponent's face. The bites are poisonous, and acid-infecting. Wounds caused by the trident sting for 1D6 rounds, causing an additional 1 point of damage per round unless a First Aid roll is made.

STR 3    CON 35    SIZ 3    INT 6    POW 16    DEX 11

POWERS: +3D3 damage, +1 point per round for 1D6 rounds.

**ZZ'RROL**

DEMON ARMOR      Breed Hurtines      CV: 104

This armor seems like chainmail. It is actually made of fish scales, with fins on wrists, elbows and shoulders.

CON 35    SIZ 12    INT 2    POW 14

POWERS: Armor (35 points).

**KIBBLE**

This is one of Teel's favorite creations, and he keeps it with him as a pet. It is a lobster wasp, a hovering thing, about a foot long.

STR 15    CON 8    SIZ 2    INT 3    POW 7    DEX 17

HIT POINTS: 8      ARMOR: 1 point carapace

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

| Weapon  | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|---------|--------|-------|--------|
| Pincers | 48%    |       | 2D6    |

SKILLS: Dodge 85%, Fly 100%.

## Awaken Chaos

POW COST: 2 points

Through the means of this spell, a sorcerer enhances the power of chaos in creatures already predisposed towards chaos. For sorcerers of Pan Tang, the spell is useful in 'crafting' a creature to perform certain tasks.

To use this spell, the sorcerer first summons and binds the subject demon. He then creates an especially potent chaos sigil, investing a permanent point of POW in the sigil's creation. Then the sorcerer commands the demon into the sigil and weaves a web of chaos about it, investing the second point of POW. This alters the creature, magnifying the power of Chaos within it. In game terms, the creature gains Chaos Value (C.V.).

The Chaos Value added to a creature by Fourth Rank sorcerers equals their INTx2. For Fifth Rank sorcerers, the Chaos Value added to the creature equals the total of all their statistics.

With this pool of points, the sorcerer 'pays' for the powers he assigns to his demon, according to the values given in the Demon Powers lists.

### THE BOY-THING

This is a naked youth, with the head of a black moray eel. The body is that of Odd-Mai-Mac. The creature lopes and snorts, moving rapidly around the room, twisting its head this way and that. It believes that it is swimming, and has many bruises from bumping into walls. It attacks anyone who is bleeding, Teel included.

STR 10 CON 11 SIZ 10 INT 3 POW 5 DEX 13 CHA 1

HIT POINTS: 11 ARMOR: 3 points of eel skin on head

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Bite   | 32%    | —     | 2D6+3  |

SKILLS: Walk 65%.

### THE WATER DEMON-ELEMENTAL

CROSS-BRED DEMON Breed Kerag CV: Unknown

Kerag Teel has studied, tortured, mutilated, and at last cross-bred a water elemental with a demon. Now he has a creature that is as easily controllable as an undine, but with a demon's strength and stamina. Modestly, he has named the new breed after himself. Teel is yet to bind the creature, and must roll his POW x3 to force it to perform actions. If there is a sorcerer among the adventurers, he or she could also try to gain control of it.

STR 10 CON 20 SIZ 22 INT 7 POW 19 DEX 21

HIT POINTS: 30 ARMOR: None (but see RUST below)

| Weapon        | Attack | Parry | Damage    |
|---------------|--------|-------|-----------|
| Drowning Fist | 63%    | —     | Drowning* |
| Smashing Fist | 63%    | 63%   | 3D6       |

\* The Drowning Fist cannot be Parried, only Dodged (it flows around any parrying object). It engulfs the head of the target and stays there, causing 1D8 damage per round until death. The target may escape with a STR vs. STR roll, or if the demon-elemental is killed.

POWERS: Neutralize Gnome, Rust, and Regenerate.

NEUTRALIZE GNOME: The demon-elemental may destroy any gnome (earth elemental) instantly, taking only 1D6 points of damage in the process.

RUST: Any metal weapon striking the creature rusts instantly, causing half damage thereafter. Any metal armour struck by the demon-elemental also rusts, and is half as effective thereafter. Demon Weapons and Armour may roll CON x5 to avoid this.

REGENERATE: If in contact with water, the demon-elemental may reconstitute itself for 1D8 hit points per round.

SKILLS: Swim 100%.

### DROWNED SLAVES

Teel's drowned slaves use no real weapons, only what they pick up from around them. Teel only orders them in as a last resort.

|     | #1   | #2        | #3   | #4   | #5   | #6        |
|-----|------|-----------|------|------|------|-----------|
| STR | 11   | 15        | 13   | 12   | 12   | 15        |
| CON | 15   | 13        | 17   | 12   | 18   | 13        |
| SIZ | 12   | 10        | 11   | 9    | 12   | 11        |
| INT | 1    | 1         | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1         |
| DEX | 5    | 6         | 8    | 5    | 7    | 8         |
| POW | 0    | 0         | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0         |
| HP  | 15   | 13        | 17   | 12   | 18   | 13        |
| DB  | None | +1D8/+1D4 | None | None | None | +1D8/+1D4 |

ARMOR: None.

| Weapon      | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|-------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Candlestick | 25%    | 25%   | 1D4    |
| Broom       | 25%    | 25%   | 1D6    |
| Poker       | 25%    | 25%   | 1D8    |

Dead men always strike last in any round, as their bodies are slow to respond to their brain's commands.

SKILLS: Fetch 25%, Carry 25%.

### FREING THE ELEMENTALS

When combat begins in this chamber, the jars of water begin to bubble and froth. The elementals inside sense potential rescue, and strain at their bindings. Should any of jars be opened or smashed, the captive water elemental is freed, and flows to the sea pool and away to the Water Realm of Straasha. Once the Sea King discovers that Kerag Teel has been torturing his elemental children, he acts.

First one water elemental returns to the chamber from the sea pool, then another, then still more. The sea pool suddenly transforms from salt water to fresh, bubbling spring water. The water level of the pool begins to rise, the bubbles become splashes, the splashes waves, and in minutes a column of clear cold water is fountaining out of the pool. It arcs towards any remaining jars in high-pressure jets, smashing them and releasing the last of the elementals trapped there.

The chamber is flooded within 10 rounds. Because of the magical nature of the water, direct from Straasha's realm, it destroys any Chaos creature it touches (but not demons bound into objects). This includes the dead men, and all of Kerag Teel's sorcerous misbreeds. The flesh melts off their bones, and is swirled away to become a momentary discoloration of the water.

Still the force of the water continues to grow, until water is exploding out of the pool, and flowing up through The Fang. The adventurers must escape, and have another ten rounds to reach their boat. The stone cannot take such pressure, and shatters. A shining column of water and foam geysers up 100 feet into the air from the broken rock crater.





Kerag Teel and his abominations

## The Fountain

In years to come this spot will be drawn on all the maps that chart these waters. Every sailor wishes to know about a permanent geyser of fresh drinking water. Straasha's Fountain becomes a regular point for ships to replenish their water supplies, and a rock called The Fang slips into obscurity.

Kerag Teel probably dies in this scenario. He has no means of escape, and the wrath of Straasha awaits him.

The people of Vornskold are grateful to the adventurers, but too deep in mourning and sorrow over the loss of the village men on the Skald's Tongue to respond with gifts or more feasting. The insane Mac, if he survived, is cared for by the villagers until his dying day. Mog-Vorn-Kasan, the Sea Mother, thanks them warmly, and says that Straasha will reward them. Nath-Gar-Hornath, the skald, composes an entirely new saga in the adventurers' honor.

Onogar the Bereft rewards the adventurers with 1,000 LB each from the funds of his church. He personally gifts them with a cowrie shell which, when thrown into the ocean, summons 1D10 water elementals, who will obey the caster for one day. It can be used once in each of three great oceans of the Young Kingdoms (the Pale Sea, the Eastern Ocean, and the Oldest Ocean).

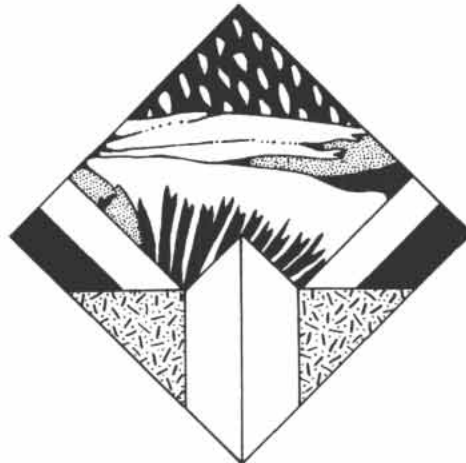
Finally he tells them that Straasha will save each of them from drowning once. This is true. If ever one of the



The Fountain

adventurers is about to die by drowning, a water elemental arrives and bears them to the surface.

Worshippers of Straasha may apply for agenthood if it is desired. Any priest or agent of Straasha undergoing this adventure successfully earns 25 Elan Points.



# STOLEN MOMENTS

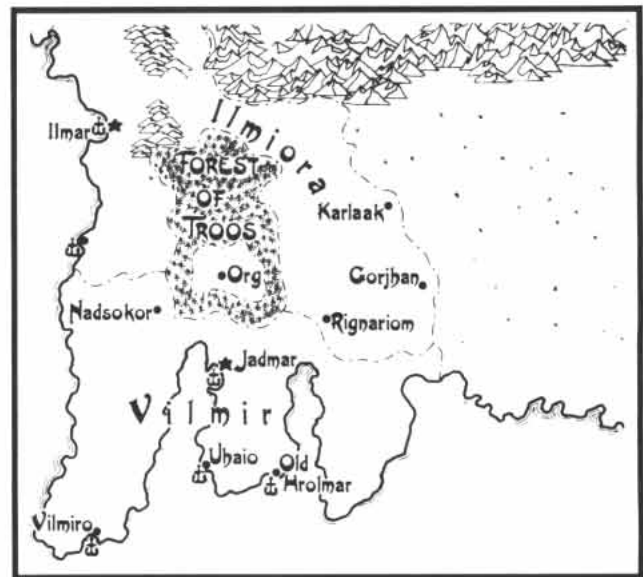
**H**UMANS DID NOT know where to turn during the awful wars between the Melnibonéan and the Dharzi empires, in the years before the Young Kingdoms were born. Some sought to please one or the other of their inhuman overlords, and some sought to lie low. In truth, the greater races cared little for what happened to primitive and brutal humankind.

One human settlement which tried to please the Melnibonéans was Tormesh, in the country which was to become Vilmir. The Melnibonéans rewarded this doglike loyalty by building a pleasure palace inside the barbaric town, a home away from home. Atop the palace they installed a burning gem. If this light was ever to fail, the Dragon Riders would know that Tormesh had either fallen to the Dharzi or forgotten its loyalty, and scour the town with fire. By and by the Melnibonéan holiday-makers became almost fond of the humans, burying their favorites in a special tomb, along with the rest of their pets.

Over a thousand years later, in the adventurers' time, Duke Avan Astran of Old Hrolmar learns about this tomb, and decides to open it. He hires the adventurers, and together they uncover secrets that are best left forgotten; secrets which bring the past to life.

## THE FALL OF ANCIENT TORMESH

The harbinger of Tormesh's downfall was Dolor the Thief. He was half-Melnibonéan, an outcast from both societies, and survived by scavenging on the fringes of the great war. He came to Tormesh, and found a good hiding place in the human crypt. While stealing from the food stores in town he was surprised by a slave. Without thought he stabbed her in the stomach, and was dismayed to see that it was a young woman, Dess, half-Melnibonéan like himself. She was a rejected half-breed like Dolor, and he had wronged her. He vowed to make amends for his actions.



He carried her to the crypt, and there tried to tend her wound. It was too serious. He decided to steal the Heart of Arioch, the burning gem at the apex of the tower, which was reputedly so powerful it could heal the most grievous of wounds. That night he scaled the tower, and took the jewel. At that point the Melnibonéan priest came into the room, and Dolor slew him without thought. As he climbed out with his prize, the priest cursed him with his last breath. Above the tower, dark shapes filled the night sky.

Back at the crypt, he was too late. Dess had died some time during the day. Dolor lay on the slab, crying like a lost child, hoping the gem would ease the pain inside of him. It was then that the curse stole over him, plunging him into a deathless sleep in which he would relive the suffering that night again and again until the end of all nights. Meanwhile, Tormesh burned, incinerated by the fiery venom of the dragons of Melniboné.

## Melnibonéan Gold

Duke Avan Astran of Old Hrolmar has a consuming interest in Melniboné. He often offers the best price for any artifact of the Bright Empire's past, and is always interested in hearing the stories of travelers who have visited Imrryr, spoken with Melnibonéans, or who have things to sell.

The adventurers make the acquaintance of the Duke, and the gamemaster must engineer the meeting. Here are three suggestions:

- \* *The adventurers are in Old Hrolmar, and the Duke hears of their travels and exploits. He is interested in further news of their adventures, and introduces himself.*
- \* *The adventurers acquire a Melnibonéan treasure in a previous scenario. Such a thing might be found in the Tower of Yrkath Florn (in the Stormbringer rulebook), or inside The Fang (in this book). When the adventurers endeavour to sell it, a merchant recommends they travel to Old Hrolmar and present it to Duke Avan Astran. He is known to pay well for such things.*
- \* *The adventurers happen to be in the Scales of Goldar, a tavern, when the Duke is attacked there (see below, under Saving the Duke). They make his acquaintance by rescuing him from demonic assassins.*

## The Young Duke

Old Hrolmar has always been a reserved and conservative Vilmirian city. For three hundred years the noble family of Astran marked the passing of time by periodically producing yet another heir to the ancient Dukedom of Hrolmar.

Duke Culvan Astran was considered by many to have been touched by the hand of Chaos, or perhaps completely mad. He was not a young man when he decided to sire an heir. He was not mad nor was he possessed, merely weary of a life which he considered, as he neared its end, to have been completely pointless. His mother, a simpler and contented soul, died during childbirth, leaving Duke Culvan alone with a household full of attendants to raise his son. Rather than let his son stagnate within the walls of Old Hrolmar, he sent him away when he turned fourteen.

Young Avan journeyed to fabulous Cadsandria where he was to be educated, but where he instead joined a circus troupe. He was surprised shortly thereafter to learn that the circus was composed primarily of a traveling group of thieves. His apprenticeship with the robber's band lasted five years. He did not return to Vilmir alone, however, but brought with him a companion. In his journeys he had saved the life of a woman

from Pan Tang, Nadjana. She repaid his bravery and compassion by becoming his personal bodyguard for life. Their relationship, as far as anyone is concerned, is strictly a professional one.

In his many travels the young Duke Avan encountered the culture of Melniboné, in history, ruins, and living Melnibonéans. It was the first time he had been exposed to them outside the teachings of the Church of Law, which holds that all Melnibonéans are chaotic and evil, and fundamentally to the detriment of humanity. Avan developed a lifelong fascination with the bright folk of Imrryr.

On his return, he found his father much older, but happier upon seeing how much his son had changed by spending time abroad. In time he died, and Avan assumed the mantle of inheritance. He immediately began to introduce sweeping changes to the life and laws of Old Hrolmar. None but the Duke know that the Dreaming City, Imrryr, is his model.

### DUKE AVAN ASTRAN

The Duke has a square, handsome face. He is intelligent and perceptive. He manages to convey a sense of quiet power which impresses most of the people he seeks to impress, and intimidates those he does not.

STR 14 CON 15 SIZ 11 INT 16 POW 13 DEX 17 CHA 16

HIT POINTS: 15\* ARMOR: Half Plate (1D8-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: 1D6 / 1D4

| Weapon        | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|---------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Broadsword    | 82%    | 64%   | 1D8+1  |
| Dagger        | 67%    | 59%   | 1D4+2  |
| Target Shield | 31%    | 84%   | 1D6    |

SKILLS: Climb 91%, Conceal 54%, Cut Purse 71%, Evaluate Treasure 62%, Jump 66%, Listen 76%, Move Quietly 57%, Pick Lock 32%, Search 46%, See 37%.

LANGUAGES: Common 80% / 80%.

\* Duke Avan has a role to play in the future history of Elric and the Young Kingdoms. If this concerns the gamemaster, then the Duke should be permitted to survive this adventure.

### NADJANA

Nadjana is a mysterious Pan Tangian. She is slim and athletic, with long black hair, tied back. She has cool green eyes. She recognizes beauty in Chaos, and found that lacking in Hwamgaarl. Duke Avan strikes her as a man who will work against Law without conscious thought, and she works to support him.

STR 15 CON 17 SIZ 12 INT 17 POW 23 DEX 16 CHA 15

HIT POINTS: 17 ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6 / +1D4

| Weapon       | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Greatsword   | 79%    | 70%   | 2D8    |
| Demon Dagger | 69%    | 60%   | 1D4+2  |
| Desert Bow   | 75%    | —     | 1D10+2 |

SKILLS: Ambush 63%, Credit 40%, Hide 53%, Listen 71%, Move Quietly 63%, Poison Lore 39%, Ride 85%, Search 46%.

SUMMONING SKILL: 57%

SUMMONINGS: Fire and earth elementals, demon breeds Hurtines and Kiyknor.



**SEVERANCE**

**DEMON DAGGER** Breed Klynknor CV: 58

This is a long straight black dagger. It has a simple handle, and no cross-piece, making it hard to distinguish where blade and hilt begin and end.

CON 25 SIZ 2 INT 3 POW 15

POWERS: +4D6 damage

**Old Hrolmar**

Old Hrolmar is over 400 years old, and similar in design to other Vilmirian cities of a similar age. The city proper is contained within a great triangle of masonry. While this three-sided wall of dense gray-brown sandstone protects Old Hrolmar from attack, it also limits outward expansion. As a result Old Hrolmar has become severely overcrowded.

With the coronation of Duke Avan Astran, this problem has been partially overcome. New settlements have been allowed outside the walls. To the south is Quayside, a thriving colony of merchants, fisherfolk and other seafarers. This district has sprung up between the piers and the mouth of the river Hrol where it flows out through the water gate in Old Hrolmar's walls.

On the other side of the city, beyond North Gate and the almost lawless district where merchants will not venture without bodyguards, is New Hrolmar, the foreigners' quarter. It is a district of inns, taverns and brothels, all of the buildings less than ten years old. It is also a departure point for many caravans.

Old Hrolmar's spiritual heart is also its physical center. The glass pyramid of the Temple of Law stands beside Serenity Park and the polluted shores of the Hrol river, downstream from the waterfalls where much of the city's industries are located. The Duke's fort by contrast is found in the south-east corner of the city. Built on a steep headland, it overlooks both Old Hrolmar and the blue waters of the Straits of Vilmir. Like the city walls, it is constructed of sandstone.

Strict regulations have directed that most of Old Hrolmar's buildings are constructed of this grey-brown stone. Since Duke Avan came to power these regulations have been relaxed. The last few years have seen a flurry of renovations, as landlords and property owners became free to individualize their buildings. From a drab city where almost every building was of uniform height and appearance, Old Hrolmar now presents a baroque and fanciful skyline of spires, domes and towers in every stage of construction. Visitors are often amazed by the scaffolds, sawing and constant hammering which accompany Old Hrolmar's existence.



Duke Avan Astran and his shadow

The city is undergoing a rebirth cultural as well as physical. Under Duke Avan's enlightened rule, Old Hrolmar is attracting philosophers and free-thinkers from throughout the Young Kingdoms, artists, astrologers, mercenaries and poets. The streets pulse with life and excitement. While not all citizens appreciate the changes sweeping the city, visitors are sure to find Old Hrolmar a rewarding and stimulating environment.

**Meeting the Duke**

The Duke readily agrees to meet the adventurers, especially if they have something of interest for him. He recommends a tavern, the Scales of Goldar. The Duke does not believe in distancing himself from his people, and walks freely among them. He disdains excessive guards, keeping only Nadjana by his side. Some say that this is foolish, but this relaxed attitude makes him even more popular with the common people.

The Scales of Goldar is an inn popular with merchants and sea captains. It is located in the Quayside district, and the main attraction is a cellar with a glass wall looking out under the docks. This astonishing piece of glass is of Melnibonéan manufacture, and it was

## Historical Note

Duke Avan Astran's particular doom lies some years ahead of this scenario. He is fated to meet Elric, and travel with him to the city of R'lin K'ren A'a in search of the Jade Man, another statue of Arioch. When the Lord of Chaos himself is summoned, the evil sword Stormbringer uses Duke Avan as a sacrifice. Elric provides him with a handsome epitaph.

These events are described in Michael Moorcock's story "Sailing to the Past", in the volume *The Sailor on the Seas of Fate*. That story will provide the gamemaster with more description of Duke Avan's appearance and motivations in his later years.

donated by the Duke. All he asks in return is free drinks for himself and his guests when he visits.

The cellar is cool and green. It is not crowded, and merchants and artists sip drinks and gaze through the clear wall at the shadows of the dock and the darting fish. Sea-lions swim and play among the pylons of the pier. The hulls of ships can be studied, as they sway gently on their moorings. The Duke chooses a table next to the glass. Nadjana sits with her back to the window, watching the people coming down the steps into the bar.

The Duke encourages the adventurers to talk. He openly enjoys their tales of travel in the Young Kingdoms, and listens with interest to descriptions of items they wish to sell him, or requests for employment. He is attentive, and his questions show understanding and intelligence. He is a warm man, and it is not hard to see why he is a favorite of the people.

A See roll from an adventurer notes that the sea-lions are no longer in view. The water seems darker, as if a shadow had been cast over it.

## DEFENDING THE DUKE

A nightmare shape plunges into view outside. There is a brief impression of bulk, fins and teeth, and then it hits the glass directly alongside the Duke's table. The glass shatters, and water cascades into the room. A great webbed and clawed hand thrusts through the gap, pulling the surprised Nadjana out into the water, and reaches for the Duke.

The clientele scream, and race for the stairs. Their shouts of terror become cries of dismay as a second creature lurches through the doorway and squats at the top of the staircase, blocking retreat. It is crouched and low, a shambling thing with teeth and long arms. The cellar fills with water, and all present must choose death by drowning, or death by demon.

The two demons have been summoned by a sorcerer, at the request of a corrupt Priest of Law. He wishes

to see the liberal Duke dead to instill fear of Chaos in the people of Old Hrolmar. The demons are instructed to kill the Duke, and any others they deem necessary.

The adventurers now have their opportunity to save their host. He draws his broadsword and prepares to fight alongside them. The demons attack until destroyed. There are 1D10+10 rounds available before the place fills up with water, and all those fighting must roll STR x5 each round to withstand the water pressure and stay on their feet.

Nadjana has not been killed, merely pulled outside. At the gamemaster's option, she may appear behind the demon in the water and attack it with her dagger, or she may surface dripping from the ocean and run back to the tavern. She may even be unconscious, and in need of rescue herself.

## F'N'GTH

**Breed Beroolt** CV: 187

This is the demon in the water outside. It is frog-like, with long multi-jointed legs and webbed claws. It is covered in glittering green scales, and has bright crimson spines. Its eyes are yellow and hooded.

STR 29 CON 16 SIZ 21 INT 14 POW 16 DEX 16

HIT POINTS: 26 ARMOR: 6 points of glistening scales

| Weapon    | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|-----------|--------|-------|--------|
| Claw (x2) | 48%    | 24%   | 3D6    |

POWERS: Armor (6 points), Claws x2, Eyes x2, Legs (40m per round), Lens x2, Skills (see below).

SKILLS: Swim 95%.

## M'L'EWRR

**Breed Dhruzan** CV: 178

This is the demon at the top of the stairs. It is bulky and squat, with short legs and long powerful arms. It is pink and scabby, like a healing wound. Its head is almost entirely composed of mouth, and it slobbers and whistles incessantly.

STR 26 CON 19 SIZ 22 INT 13 POW 15 DEX 12

HIT POINTS: 30 ARMOR: 3 points of scabrous flesh

| Weapon  | Attack | Parry | Damage  |
|---------|--------|-------|---------|
| Bite    | 64%    | —     | 2D10    |
| Grapple | 56%    | —     | Special |

Each round the demon will both Grapple and Bite. Targets grappled will be either held to the mouth for a bite attack with automatic success, or tossed down the stairs at another target for 2D4 damage each.

POWERS: Armor (3 points), Eyes x2, Hands x2, Legs (20m per round), Mouth, Skills (see below).

SKILLS: Throw 54%.

## SAVING THE DUKE

When he is clear of the building, the Duke thanks the adventurers, shaking their hands with a grip of iron. Then he runs to organize rescue for those trapped inside, warriors to kill any remaining demons, and immediate investigation as to the source of the attack. A wet Nadjana turns up, fuming. She gives the adventurers a

look filled with a mixture of envy and gratitude, and then falls in beside him.

## **A Ducal Invitation**

Some days pass after the excitement of the assassination attempt. Word reaches the adventurers that the Duke would like to see them. This time the meeting is not in a public place, but in his keep.

The Duke's keep is a square fortress, stalwart against any against siege or disaster. It was built by his forefathers, but Avan opens the doors during the day for the citizens to visit. Inside he has installed his collection of art and sculpture, turning the lordly bastion into a museum for the people. Since the demon attack the doors have remained closed. Now the Duke paces the battlements. Nadjana follows behind, peering fiercely over the edge, daring someone to scale the wall and try her skill at arms. Here the Duke meets the adventurers, high above the city, under a cloudy sky. A stiff sea wind whips cloaks and chills bones. He greets them warmly, but is obviously troubled:

*My friends, my thanks to you again for your quick actions. I would certainly not stand here now if it were not for you. We have not discussed a reward, but you are certainly worthy of one. State your needs.*

Allow the adventurers to name any price. The Duke has wealth, and can pay it. If it is an excessive request, his opinion of them drops. Anything over 10,000 LB is excessive. He believes in his heart that their actions were motivated by honor and duty, not greed. When the matter is settled, he continues:

*The attack was launched on me by enemies from within this nation, of this I am sure. They hold power, and fear change. Old Hrolmar represents a breath of fresh air to this land, a new approach for liberty and happiness. This is intolerable to my peers to the north. Should I bow to them? Should fear halt my course? I think not.*

*It is time to take stock, though. I need to travel north, and remind myself of what old Vilmir can be. I need to witness their methods and government, so that I may re-examine my own.*

*As it happens, there is a journey I have been planning within this country. There are some ruins north of here, of probable Melnibonéan origin. You have defended my life once, and show yourself to be interesting companions. I ask you to join me. Come inside, and I'll tell you what I plan.*

Nadjana turns away from the adventurers, her expression unreadable.

The Duke leads them into the keep, and through long echoing corridors to a sitting room. The room is vibrant with many colorful tapestries and exotic woven rugs. There is a decanter of fine brandy, and sparkling glasses. On a polished table sits a plain book, old and worn, its bindings warped. The Duke opens this to a marked page, and hands it to a literate adventurer (if none in the group can read, he reads it aloud for them, without embarrassment).

## **THE DIARY OF HUEGOT THE PARTICULAR**

Duke Avan explains that the book is over a hundred years old. It is the diary of Huegot the Particular, a merchant travelling from Karlaak to Jadmar. It is boring for the most part, and deals with the trivial day-to-day problems of an overland merchant caravan a century ago. One point was remarkable enough to capture the Duke's interest. It describes some ruins on the coast near Doom Point, north of Old Hrolmar:

*...We have now been travelling for twenty three days and, if the weather remains fair, we should just reach Jadmar by the end of the month. We made camp early tonight as one of the horses was becoming lame, and would benefit from some rest. We camped close by the cliffs of Doom Point. I do not know how the spot gained that name.*

*After dinner, I took a walk, and was surprised to find an outcrop of pink marble. A close inspection showed that it was not natural, but in fact the foundation of some ancient building. A few larger blocks of stone were embedded in the earth. A gleam attracted my eye, and I scraped the dirt away from a piece of beaten gold. It was the base of a goblet, and was fashioned as the tail of a dragon. I could find nothing more.*

*The sun was setting, and I walked to the cliff top to look out over the ocean. As the last of the sunset faded, I noticed that a red light still persisted from the cliff wall beneath my feet. Looking down I noticed a cave, from whence the glow came. I could find no tracks on top of the cliff, so I do not think that there were travelers camped below me. Perhaps demons, but if that were so, they were unusually peaceful demons. I rather imagined it to be some forgotten magical treasure. There was something in that glow which attracted me in ways I cannot express. It was the promise of hope, and fulfilled dreams, and power. If it was magic, then I was indeed bewitched; if it was a curse, then it was a welcome curse. But it was too dark for climbing, and I could not reach it.*



*If damned Eddro was not so insistent that this shipment be in by the First of the Season, I would stay here and scale that cliff. Once my business is done in Jadmar, I shall return here.*

*-- From the Diary of Huegot the Particular*

Huegot went on to reach Jadmar, but died there of the plague soon after. The Duke acquired the diary as part of the death taxes of a crafter's estate. He believes he is the first person to read it since it was written, and he wants to investigate the merchant's story. The goblet described seems to be of Melnibonéan design, and thus the ruins must be from the days of the Bright Empire.

The Duke invites the adventurers to accompany him. He plans a low key journey, slipping out of the city before dawn. He arranges to meet the adventures before sunrise outside the Jadmar gate. He provides horses, if the party has none. The journey should take them a little over a week. He asks them to tell no one of their plans, and bids them good day.

That night, female adventurers have dreams of foreboding. The details are unclear when they awaken, but they recall vague images of death, fire, and destruction. The men sleep well.

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## The Journey

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The new day is cold and gray, but this clears as the sun begins to rise. The Duke is in fair spirits and greets everyone cordially. With the prospect of excellent weather for the journey, he suggests that they begin with no delay.

The trip presents few problems. The good weather holds out for the week-long trip, and no one threatens the group along the way. At first the Duke is cheery and talkative. He swaps exotic stories of foreign countries with any of the adventurers, and his curiosity seems to be limitless.

Outside the duchy of Old Hrolmar, the country becomes more severe. The land has been worked much harder, and the fields struggle to support the barest crops. People in the villages are less inclined to talk to strangers, especially well-dressed strangers. Often the reaction of the peasantry is fear of the adventurers, thinking them connected with church and state. The Duke sees this and shakes his head, "My theory is proven, friends. Look around you. Sometimes, there is such a thing as too much Law."

## The People Speak

As the expedition passes through one village, an old man recognizes the Duke. He steps in front of his horse, blocking the way, and begins to loudly declaim his pleasure at seeing the Duke and the general unhappiness of his situation. Other villagers move forwards, and a crowd begins to form. Their reactions differ. Some are obsequious and groveling. Some peer upwards with veiled hatred reserved for all priests and nobles. Some recognize the Duke as a great reformer, and beg him to spread his influence north. Some are simply curious at these capable riders on their splendid horses.

The questions come too fast for the Duke to speak to everyone. The attention of the restless crowd fractures, and each adventurer finds themselves acting as an individual spokesman for the Old Hrolmar way of life. Persuade and Oratory rolls help to impress the crowd. If half of the adventurers succeed in a Communication skill, and back them up with fine words, the meeting becomes an open forum, with the peasants openly speaking of their hatred for the church. If half of the adventurers fail, and leave the beleaguered Duke to field the questions himself, the mood of the crowd changes to belligerence and accusation.

No violence will result from this scene, but it illustrates to the Duke the plight of the people to the north. His resolve is strengthened, but he decides to avoid villages for the rest of the journey. He does not want the other rulers of Vilmir to accuse him of fermenting a popular revolution.

## The Unskilled Bandits

On the fourth day out, the adventurers are ambushed. They are attacked by a group of serfs who have abandoned their lord and his land, preferring the uncertainties of a free life to the guarantees of slavery. They are living in a small wood, through which the road passes. The leader of the band, Dervil, comes out in front of the adventurers and demands a toll of one large silver coin per traveler to pass through his forest. If they refuse, his men surge out of the undergrowth and try to drag the adventurers off their horses. This requires a STR vs. STR roll. Add 5 to the STR of each bandit because of surprise.

Dervil is the only one with any military training; the others have only used their weapons in combat once or twice before. The adventurers and Nadjana are likely to cut through them in a bloody swathe. The Duke stops fighting once it becomes apparent that the men offer little threat. He orders everyone to stop, and then gives a purse of coins to Dervil (if he is still alive).



**DERVIL**

Dervil is handsome and passionate, but not very forward-thinking. He wears leather trousers, and shows off his muscular torso. He has square-cut black hair and brown eyes.

STR 18 CON 12 SIZ 11 INT 9 POW 15 DEX 12 CHA 16

HIT POINTS: 12 ARMOR: Half Leather (1D4-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon     | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Shortsword | 59%    | 54%   | 1D6+1  |

SKILLS: Ambush 43%, Listen 51%, Persuade 32%, See 44%, Track 31%.

**CARON**

Caron is coarse and thick, with large hands and a broad flat face. He is slow to act, but doggedly determined once he gets going.

STR 13 CON 10 SIZ 16 INT 8 POW 12 DEX 10 CHA 13

HIT POINTS: 14 ARMOR: None

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Cudgel | 29%    | 26%   | 1D6    |

**TIMVIT**

Timvit is old, but stout. He has the most appalling luck, demonstrated by his signing on with Dervil's mad venture. This bad luck plagues him in fights, as he often trips over, hits a friend, or drops his weapon.

STR 8 CON 13 SIZ 11 INT 11 POW 5 DEX 8 CHA 14

HIT POINTS: 13 ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: None

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Sickle | 32%    | 30%   | 1D4+1  |

**FARMIL**

Farmil is the most fatalistic of the band. He expects that the venture will fail, but is so sick of scrabbling in the dirt with no prospect of advancement that he honestly couldn't care less. His one hope for the future is that he will be hung rather than killed in combat.

STR 13 CON 8 SIZ 13 INT 14 POW 14 DEX 13 CHA 12

HIT POINTS: 8 ARMOR: None

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon     | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Long Spear | 39%    | 35%   | 1D10+1 |

**RALV**

Ralv is young and nervous. He likes the notion of a bold life, but is more likely to turn tail and run than perform courageous deeds.

STR 11 CON 9 SIZ 11 INT 6 POW 12 DEX 12 CHA 9

HIT POINTS: 9 ARMOR: None

DAMAGE BONUS: None

| Weapon  | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|---------|--------|-------|--------|
| Hatchet | 22%    | 25%   | 1D6+1  |

The bandit ambush sours the Duke's mood for the rest of the journey. He speaks at length about the lack of humanity in these northern provinces, where honest

men must turn to crime to support their families. His mind is made up. Old Hrolmar will stay its course, and damned be the blackguards in the church and government who would rather see him dead. He asks for no further discussion on the subject, and looks forwards to the task at hand: the mystery of the merchant's diary.

**Doom Point**

On the seventh day the expedition arrives at Doom Point. They become aware of the profound stillness hanging over the area. There is a distinct lack of wildlife, and a successful Track roll notes that there are no game tracks, or any of the usual signs that indicate the presence of wild animals. There are no birds, no insects, nothing; this place is dead. The Duke suggests that the group make camp, tether the horses, and then search the area. He is excited by the promise of discovery, and is considerably cheered.

**Making Camp**

This is a windy spot, but a sheltered place can be found in the lee of the slope behind the cliff. There is a stream nearby, a handy source of fresh water. The horses are uncomfortable here, and they stamp and nicker. A Ride roll is needed to calm them. If this roll is fumbled, they break loose, and gallop away.

**The Ruins**

The adventurers must locate the marble ruins referred to in the diary. Allow a See roll once per hour, as the party combs the ground behind the cliffs of Doom Point. Success discovers a scattering of white rocks, the remains of the foundations of an ancient tower. A circle of pink rocks around them defines what was once the outer wall, spanning a diameter of about fifty yards.

A Plant Lore roll notices that the dirt here is dark and coarse. Plants grow in the blackened area, but they are twisted and harsh. Anyone who had dreams the night before leaving Old Hrolmar is momentarily troubled by a disturbing sense of *deja-vu*. A Search or See roll detects that the expanse of black earth is in a rough oval shape, two hundred yards across, with the tower foundations in the center. An INT x3 roll suggests that this may once have been the outline of a town.

## The Archway

A See roll notes a too-regular outcrop of gray stone at the bottom of a grassy hollow. The hollow is almost at the cliff's edge. It is a peaceful place, and overhanging trees place the lower half of it in shadow. The gray stones are actually the tumbled remains of an arch. There was an inscription chiseled on it, in Low Melnibonéan. Time has worn away many of the letters, and stones are missing. A successful roll on Low Melnibonéan can make out two words only: *trusted servants*.

This is the old entrance to the tomb. If the adventurers dig, they can uncover steps leading down to the crypt. These are packed with dirt and rocks, and will take one hundred man-hours to clear, given the proper tools. The entrance via the cliff cave is easier.

## The Cliff Cave

The merchant's diary mentions the existence of the cliff cave. Numerous caves are visible from the tops of the cliffs. All seem uninhabited, but none seem special in any way.

At night however, a See roll detects a dim red glow emanating from one of the cave mouths. This is in a

direct line from the stone archway in the cliff-top hollow. The adventurers must climb down to enter it, a dangerous feat in the dark. The Duke advises they wait until dawn, but will not prevent them if they insist on pressing on. He too is eager for the find.

A Climb roll is needed to reach the cave. A See roll detects an uncannily symmetrical rock ledge. It is in fact a small sarcophagus, protruding through the stone. The image of a cat is carved upon the lid. It is stable enough to bear the weight of any adventurer, and provides a handy platform from which to crawl into the cave.

## THE TOMB OF BEASTS

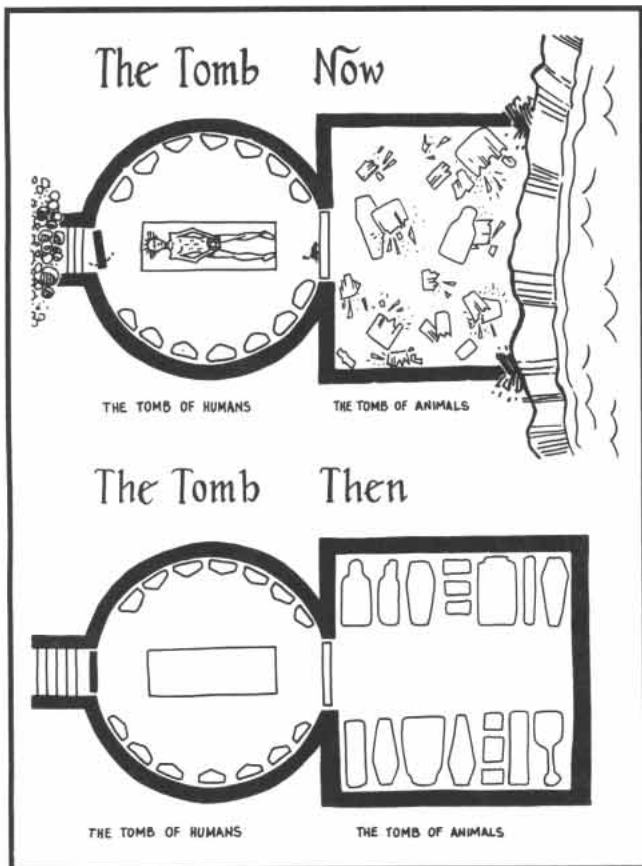
The cave is worn and scoured by the incessant sea breezes, and parts of the wall has collapsed. It was once a rectangular chamber of worked stone. At the opposite end is a stone door.

Small coffins and sarcophagi are scattered across the floor. Some have broken open, revealing small mummified remains. Bones blow and toss across the cracked tiled floor. These are all animals — cats, dogs, birds, reptiles, fish, monkeys, and other pets. Further tiny tombs line the walls. The coffins are of exquisite material, carved from jade, or of the finest exotic woods.

The weather has worn and spoiled most of the work, leaving only a few words in High Melnibonéan still legible such as *Beloved Pet and Faithful Friend and Stalwart Companion Of Renkhan IX*.

Many of the pets' tombs contain items of value, such as jewelled collars and gold food bowls. If the adventurers gather these they amass 25,000 LB in worked jewelry. The Duke looks disdainfully at such activity, but does not prevent it.

One cat collar is a single piece of supple black hide, set with two long diamonds and two fabulous rubies. It is firmly fastened to the wizened feline corpse's neck, and as the adventurer works it free, the animal's dried head snaps off. The collar wriggles and grows, becoming a long snake-demon with flashing ruby eyes and sharp diamond teeth. It hisses, and attacks.



## H'SS'S

**SNAKE DEMON** Breed Saouththff CV: 136

This demon was bound into the cat's collar to keep it safe from dogs. The binding was so clever that the demon has never been released from this task, even though the cat has been dead for centuries. It looks like a tall snake, with a hinged jaw and great shining fangs. If it is killed, it dissolves into mist, leaving two rubies (4,000 LB each) and two diamonds (5,000 LB each).

STR 12 CON 24 SIZ 16 INT 7 POW 16 DEX 26

HIT POINTS: 20 ARMOR: 5 points of supple snakeskin



Inside the Tomb of Humans

*Myapin Char and Slave Of Arioch Sleeps Within.* Every person buried here was a willing slave to their Melnibonéan rulers. The lids of the tombs are not as elaborate as those of the animals in the previous chambers, and an INT x3 roll suggests that humans are less important than a favorite cat in the eyes of a Melnibonéan.

In the center of the crypt is a stone slab. Beside the stone slab lies a skeleton that has almost become dust. It is too far gone to determine cause of death at a glance. A rusted dagger lies beside it, and a clay jug. A First Aid roll determines that the skeleton is female.

On top of the slab rests the body of a young Melnibonéan male. He is either dead, or asleep. Clutched to his chest is a crimson ruby the size of a child's head. He is mostly naked, as the clothes he once wore have long since turned to dust. He is not breathing, but his flesh is soft to

the touch, as if alive. Nothing wakes him. A closer look reveals he is not a full-blood Melnibonéan. If anyone attacks him, a sudden flare of red light from the gem knocks the weapon out of the wielder's hand.

An Evaluate Treasure role on the gem determines its worth to be about the combined value of the nations of Oin and Yu combined, at least half a million Large Gold pieces. Anyone making an INT x3 roll recognizes this as one of the fabled rubies of Imrryr, rumored to be magical as well as valuable.

The Duke's eyes widen as he beholds the fabulous jewel. Here lies the power of empires, the power to lift and cleanse his nation. If no adventurer seems inclined to take it, he does.

As soon as anyone touches the huge gem, there is a flash of blinding colors and a noise like an avalanche. A sudden and fierce vortex of wind surrounds the adventurers, lashing them like a gale. Within moments they are no longer in the tomb. They are somewhere else, and in another time.

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Bite   | 75%    | —     | 3D10   |

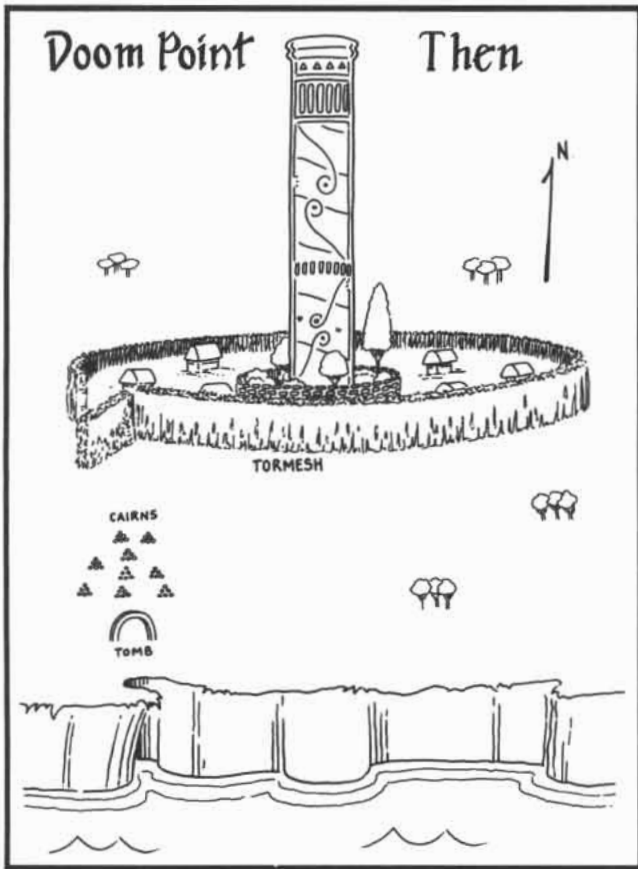
**POWERS:** Armor (5 points), Eyes x2, Mouth, Skills (see below).

**SKILLS:** Dodge 50%.

## THE TOMB OF HUMANS

The door between the chambers has been sealed for years, and buckled when the earth shifted. It is stuck fast, and the adventurers must match its STR of 30 to open it. Nadjana remains in the Tomb of Beasts, guarding the rear against more demon attacks, or anything which may come through the open cliff.

Behind the door is a circular crypt. A channel runs around the base of the walls with deep holes at each of the compass points, to collect any water that runs into the crypt. Set into the walls are the sealed upright tombs of fourteen human vassals of Melniboné, there are still empty ones waiting to be filled. Each tomb bears an inscription, in Low Melnibonéan. Typical ones are *Here Lies The Body Of Tralk, A Loyal Servant Of Cyllass Muhr, The Dragon Rider And Acolyte,* and *Peeg, Page Of*



## Doom Point Then

The adventurers have been drawn into the curse of the gem. They have been transported through time to the last days of Tormesh, when the Melniboné-Dharzi war was at its height. They have traveled a thousand years, and a few hundred yards.

Dolor the Thief, the body on the slab, has caused this. Doomed to relive his terrible crime night after night, his Melnibonéan heritage has allowed him a certain freedom within the confines of the curse. By luring someone else into his undying dream, he hopes to convince them to steal the gem and to thereby place the curse upon an innocent party: the Duke. Dolor has lured him away to the city to show him the tower, and to prepare for the theft of the gem that night.

Fortunately, the soul of the young woman, Dess, has acted to help prevent the tragedy being perpetuated. She has dragged the adventurers into the nightmare so that they can save their friend and put a thousand year old curse to rest.

## In the Mist

The group is now standing in a heavy and chilling mist. It is dark and it is cold. All of the adventurers are present, but there is no sign of the Duke or Nadjana (they recall that Nadjana did not enter the Tomb of Humans). A Listen roll hears the occasional shout in the distance, and the muffled ringing of a bell. A Scent roll detects the stink of a nearby human settlement. A See roll notes, somewhere high above them to the north, a smudged point of red light. The sun begins to rise, and as the sky starts to lighten, the mist starts to lift.

Closer at hand, a Listen roll hears someone nearby. He is humming in an unfamiliar language (Dharzi). Whether they seek him out or he runs into them, the adventurers soon encounter Lieutenant Dun, a Spider soldier in the Dharzi army.

## THE LOST DHARZI

Cut off from the rest of his patrol by a dragon ambush, and now hopelessly lost in the pre-dawn mist, Lt. Dun has now given up all hope of returning to his regiment. Rather than return to base camp and informing his commander that he lost his thirty-strong patrol in the fog, he has decided on a more dramatic course of action. He has slashed his cheeks with his knife and has torn off his regimental colors. He will not return home. He will keep on fighting the enemy until he can no longer fight. He continues in the direction of Tormesh, hoping to leap the rampart on the back of K'krock and wreak havoc upon the fort until he is brought down. Unfortunately, the adventurers come across him first.

### CH'ARAT DUN

Lt. Dun is clad from head to foot in insectile armor. The eyes that burn behind the visor are yellow and full of hate. Physiologically, Dharzi seem similar to humans, but they are in fact pre-human; there is an alien cast to their features. They tend to be broader in the chest, and slightly smaller.

STR 15 CON 14 SIZ 10 INT 18 POW 15 DEX 19 CHA 13

HIT POINTS: 17 ARMOR: Chitin Plate (2D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6 / +1D4

| Weapon        | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|---------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Barbed Spear  | 80%    | 75%   | 1D8+1  |
| Target Shield | 15%    | 88%   | 1D6    |

SKILLS: Ambush 71%, Dodge 52%, Listen 75%, Ride 87%, See 54%.

### K'KROCK, SPIDER MONKEY STEED

The Spider Monkey is an ape/spider hybrid, with the body structure of a spider in the body of a chimpanzee. It can rear up on its four hind legs and fight with its four front legs.

STR 30 CON 21 SIZ 19 INT 5 POW 9 DEX 25

HIT POINTS: 28 ARMOR: 10 points of tough hide

| Weapon     | Attack | Parry | Damage            |
|------------|--------|-------|-------------------|
| Claws (x4) | 45%    | 20%   | 1D6+2D6           |
| Bite       | 85%    | —     | 1D8+POT 11 poison |

SKILLS: Jump 75%, Climb 90%.



## The Mist Lifts

Soon after the fight with the Dharzi officer and his steed, the sun rises sufficiently to burn off the remainder of the mist. The adventurers are standing on a muddy plain, dotted with stands of trees. All around them are graves, marked with small cairns of stones. A See roll observes an ugly furrow in the earth a short distance away, which seems to have a door in the bottom. They can see a village to the north, surrounded by a thorn hedge. A clean white tower rises high above the hedge; no other buildings are visible. A red glow emanates from the top of the tower. To the south the horizon is clear and far - clifftops overlooking the sea lie in that direction.

The adventurers will probably investigate the crypt, or go into the village. If they wander off into the countryside, they risk meeting more Dharzi troops.

## The Crypt

The crypt is situated at the base of man-made hollow. A stone arch surmounts a wooden door. On the arch is inscribed, in Low Melnibonéan:

HERE LIE REMAINS OF TRUSTED SERVANTS  
OF THE DRAGON PRINCES OF MELNIBONÉ

Into the wood panels of the door "Traitor's Crypt" has been crudely scratched, in an archaic form of Common.

The door leads to a long flight of stone steps. A second door at the bottom opens into the crypt. The crypt is in two chambers, the Tomb of Humans and the Tomb of Beasts.

### THE TOMB OF HUMANS

This is the same circular crypt that the adventurers found the gem in. There are still eleven sarcophagi in the niches around the walls (three still stand empty); an INT x3 roll makes the observation that no further burials were made here. Did the civilization end overnight?

There is no one lying on the slab, but a young woman with an appalling wound in her abdomen is sitting with her back to it. She wears a blood-soaked hessian shift. Her features are long and aquiline, and an INT x3 roll detects she has some Melnibonéan blood. She slowly stands up, upsetting a clay jug which tips water across the floor. She is obviously in great pain, but holds a dagger in a shaky defensive pose. She demands to know who the adventurers are.

She seems to be confused at first and talks to herself, muttering of dreams, but then she rallies her strength and looks at the adventurers as if her sense of purpose has become clear:

*"My name is Dess. I know not whether I dream this, or I am a part of your nightmares. No matter what the truth is, he must be stopped. I was attacked by a madman, and he wishes to recant his action. He will destroy Tormesh, so that I may live. But he will fail, and I will surely die. He will live trapped in a curse that traps me, as it will trap your friend, and as it will surely trap you. You must meet him in the tower tonight, and you must destroy the gem. Only then can the curse be broken. Only then can I rest, can he rest."*

She answers any questions to the best of her ability, but as she is never fully lucid for long. Sometimes she is conscious of the fact that she has seen these events played out daily for a thousand years and understands what Dolor is up to, other times she is caught up in the present and the drama which is unfolding about her, as she dies from her wound. Here is the information that she can impart:

- \* *Melniboné is at war with the Dharzi. The nearby settlement is a human village called Tormesh, servants to the Melnibonéans, and under constant Dharzi attack.*
- \* *The area is known to her as Tower Point. Dess has never heard of Doom Point.*
- \* *She received her wound from a thief called Dolor. She surprised him stealing from her master's stores. Her master is a Melnibonéan living in Tormesh, Sardras the Dragon Priest.*
- \* *Dolor is going to steal a jewel called the Heart of Arioch. He believes that it will heal her, and make amends for his action.*
- \* *The jewel is kept in the tower in Tormesh. Its light tells the dragon riders not to attack. Without it the village will die.*
- \* *Dolor will be cursed for stealing the jewel, so he needs someone else to steal the jewel for him.*
- \* *He will do this an hour after sundown. The adventurers must not arrive too late to stop him, but nor should they arrive too early.*

Her wound is too grievous for First Aid to work. She refuses magical healing; "I have endured a thousand years of pain, please let me sleep". She urges them to leave her, and seek Dolor.

### DESS

Dess is slim, and has long dark hair. Her eyes are purple, a trait inherited from her Melnibonéan parent. She is dressed in a simple sackcloth shift. Her abdominal wound is causing her great pain, and she is slowly dying.

STR 12 CON 10 SIZ 13 INT 14 POW 16 DEX 12 CHA 14

HIT POINTS: (11) 1 ARMOR: None

DAMAGE BONUS: None

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Knife  | 36%    | 35%   | 1D4    |

SKILLS: Clean 67%, Polish 58%, See 44%.

## THE TOMB OF BEASTS

The second chamber of the crypt is where the Melnibonéans buried their pets. This is long before the seaward wall falls away, and it is in much better repair. It is immediately obvious that it is more richly appointed than the Tomb of Humans.

## Tormesh

Tormesh is a rough and barbaric town. It is surrounded by a thick thorn hedge with only one break in it. The inhabitants have a rough mobile gate of thorn bushes strapped to a wide frame, which they move in front of this gap as needed. Adventurers wishing to climb the hedge must make three Climb rolls. Each failed roll costs 1D6 damage.

Inside the wall, the town is a muddy sprawl of rough hovels. They are built of mudbricks, with roofs of straw and reeds. Bleating flocks of malnourished livestock wander about. There are a few old horses.

The people of Tormesh are shaggy and dirty. They dress in rough skins and furs, with scraps of leather. The men glower and skulk, with weapons at the ready. They carry spears and hide shields. The women scowl and scream, and keep their hairy children away from the interesting strangers.

The basic culture of these people is Iron Age, yet here and there is an incongruous item or advanced tool. One of the women wears a fine necklace made of interwoven silver dragons; one of the men bears a sword with a hilt carved from a single piece of amber; one of the children has a spinning top made of jade and amethyst. These are Melnibonéan artifacts, and they are guarded jealously.

Fabulous and impossible, in the center of the town is a wall of pink marble. Behind this is a beautiful garden, in the center of which is a tower. The tower rears one hundred feet into the sky, and is of white marble. In here the Melnibonéan overlords lounge and preen, unconcerned by the antics of their servants below. There are many windows in the tower. At the crown are great triangular openings, regularly spaced. Through these shines a steady red light.

## Arriving in Tormesh

When the adventurers present themselves at the gate, the men of Tormesh do not know what to make of them. With their armor and superior weapons, they are like

Dharzi or Melnibonéans, and yet they seem to be humans. The language spoken by the villagers is older and cruder than that common throughout the Young Kingdoms of the adventurers' era, and they must make a Speak Common roll to understand it.

If the adventurers show strength to the men of Tormesh, make Persuade rolls, and do not seem to threaten the town, they are accepted inside. Men, women, and children stare at them, and when it becomes apparent that they are indeed fellow humans, their mood changes to one of respect and reverence. They assume the adventurers are powerful chieftains from another village, here to help them fight.

If the adventurers fail to impress the men, the gate is drawn shut against them. Warriors line up behind it, clutching spears, and prepare to defend their village against these Dharzi-looking spies.

Whether or not the villagers trust the adventurers, they soon have a chance to prove themselves. The real Dharzi launch a dawn raid.

## The Dharzi Attack

As the adventurers are being questioned, Dharzi forces assault Tormesh. A dozen Dharzi riders on weird kangaroo-like steeds launch themselves over the walls at different points. A huge walking behemoth thing lumbers towards the gate. It is a horrifying rhino/gorilla hybrid, and the warriors of Tormesh flee before it in terror. If the adventurers can kill it, they gain instant trust and respect in Tormesh.

### RHINO GORILLA DEATH BEAST

This monstrosity is bipedal. It has a simian outline, but the hide and horns of a rhinoceros. It stands three times as tall as a man.

STR 46 CON 17 SIZ 45 INT 7 POW 11 DEX 9

HIT POINTS: 50 ARMOR: 10 points of tough hide

| Weapon    | Attack | Parry | Damage   |
|-----------|--------|-------|----------|
| Head Butt | 50%    | —     | 1D10+5D6 |
| Hand (x2) | 40%    | —     | 1D6+5D6  |

### TYPICAL DHARZI CAVALRY

These riders are similar to Lt. Dun. They are short and broad, and wear peculiar organic armor.

STR 11 CON 12 SIZ 9 INT 15 POW 17 DEX 18 CHA 12

HIT POINTS: 12 ARMOR: Chitin Plate (2D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

| Weapon        | Attack | Parry | Damage                   |
|---------------|--------|-------|--------------------------|
| Barbed Spear  | 60%    | 30%   | 1D8+1+POT 10 Snake Venom |
| Target Shield | 10%    | 55%   | 1D6                      |

SKILLS: Ride 90%, See 54%, Track 36%.

LANGUAGES: Dharzi 75%/75%.

**KANGAROO WORM STEED**

These ugly creatures have the body of a kangaroo, with a flexible worm head. The worm head has retractable pincers, which dart and snap.

STR 19 CON 15 SIZ 21 INT 4 POW 13 DEX 19

HIT POINTS: 24 ARMOR: 2 points of stiff fur

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Bite   | 50%    | —     | 2D4+2  |
| Kick   | 40%    | —     | 2D6    |

SKILLS: Dodge 50%, Jump 100%.

**TYPICAL WARRIOR OF TORMESH**

The men of Tormesh are compact and powerful. They have bushy dark brown hair, and heavy eyebrows. They frown constantly, and never seem at ease.

STR 15 CON 15 SIZ 12 INT 9 POW 9 DEX 11 CHA 10

HIT POINTS: 15 ARMOR: Leather and furs (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Spear  | 59%    | 31%   | 1D6+1  |
| Shield | 20%    | 56%   | 1D6    |
| Knife  | 43%    | 16%   | 1D3    |

SKILLS: Dodge 45%, Listen 50%, See 61%, Track 46%.

LANGUAGES: Common 00 / 45%.

If the adventurers can stop the Rhino Gorilla Death Beast, the villagers have deal with the riders. Four Dharzi lie dead in the Tormesh mud, two have been captured, and six ride away across the plain. Eight villagers are killed during the raid.

**Heroes In Tormesh**

The adventurers now have the guaranteed respect of the people of Tormesh. The downtrodden locals are impressed by these aggressive humans who walk proud and tall, without concern for their inhuman overlords. Every eye in town now shines with true and heartfelt appreciation, but all keep their distance, as a powerful chieftain should be treated. The many village children are fascinated, and follow the adventurers everywhere, wide-eyed.

The villagers can tell the adventurers only a little of the great war. They point out the obvious tower, where the Melnibonéans lords live. No villager ever goes inside the garden walls without invitation, and all seem to fear it. None seem particularly enamored of the Melnibonéans, but all are united in their vehement hatred of the Dharzi.

The villagers point to the baleful red light at the top of the tower, saying "If that does not feed, the dragons will come." They refer to the sacrifices made to the Heart of Arioch, sometimes drawn from the village population if no prisoners are on hand. A live sacrifice must be delivered to the gate in the garden wall at dusk each day.

Luckily the pair of captured Dharzi in the prisoner cage will provide for two nights' worth.

The aim of the adventurers is to get inside the tower, but as they are the focus of such attention that this is difficult. No villager will allow the them to cross the tower wall, because they fear that everyone in the village will be punished by the Melnibonéans for it. Nightfall is an easier time to slip away. They might volunteer to escort the sacrifice to the tower, to which the villagers agree.

**Death From Above**

Dusk brings a sunset tinged with flaming colors, stirring feelings of dread within female adventurers. As the sun sinks low, the Dharzi spring a daring attack to free the two captives. Diving down from high above come two riders on great flying crocodile/dragonfly mutations. The surprised villagers scatter in abject terror, fleeing into their houses.

The adventurers may choose to slay the Dharzi, or make a break for the tower wall in the confusion. They may even do both.

**DHARZI FLIER ONE**

The Dharzi warrior is a small figure swathed in leather hunched over the back of his steed. He pelts any resistance with javelins from above, then swoops in for the kill.

STR 12 CON 13 SIZ 10 INT 15 POW 19 DEX 17 CHA 11

HIT POINTS: 12 ARMOR: Mastodon Leather: (6 points)

| Weapon      | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|-------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Javelin (3) | 73%    | —     | 1D8+2  |
| Spear       | 67%    | —     | 1D6+1  |
| Shield      | —      | 66%   | —      |

SKILLS: Ride 90%, See 76%.

**CROCOFLY ONE**

The crocofly is another fabulous product of Dharzi science. It is similar to a normal crocodile, with beautiful flickering rainbow wings.

STR 23 CON 18 SIZ 17 INT 5 DEX 15

HIT POINTS: 23 ARMOR: 5 points of scales

| Weapon    | Attack | Parry | Damage     |
|-----------|--------|-------|------------|
| Bite      | 50%    | —     | 2D8        |
| Tail Lash | 50%    | —     | 1D10+2+1D6 |

SKILLS: Fly 70%.

**DHARZI FLIER TWO**

STR 13 CON 11 SIZ 9 INT 17 POW 16 DEX 18 CHA 15

HIT POINTS: 11 ARMOR: Mastodon Leather (6 points)

| Weapon      | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|-------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Javelin (3) | 73%    | —     | 1D8+2  |
| Spear       | 67%    | —     | 1D6+1  |
| Shield      | —      | 66%   | —      |



The Garden of Dubious Delights

**CROCOFLY TWO**

|                  |               |                           |               |        |
|------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|--------|
| STR 22           | CON 21        | SIZ 18                    | INT 7         | DEX 18 |
| HIT POINTS: 30   |               | ARMOR: 5 points of scales |               |        |
| <b>Weapon</b>    | <b>Attack</b> | <b>Parry</b>              | <b>Damage</b> |        |
| Bite             | 50%           | —                         | 2D8           |        |
| Tail Lash        | 50%           | —                         | 1D10+2+1D6    |        |
| SKILLS: Fly 70%. |               |                           |               |        |

**The Tower**

The marble tower is a stronger fortress than the thorn walls of *Tormesh*, but it is more of a holiday retreat than a fortress of war. Melnibonéans have been traveling here from *Imrryr* for centuries, and refuse to allow the war to disrupt their social activities. Most find it a thrill to court danger in such an arbitrary fashion. There are a dozen Melnibonéan visitors at present, and a resident priest.

The tower is a gigantic structure of white stone that rears one hundred feet into the sky, surrounded by a beautiful garden. The walls of pink stone which border the complex are twenty feet high. There is only one gate in the wall, and it has a demon bound into it which will only permit Melnibonéans to enter. Two more terrifying demons prowl the grounds of the complex, making for few disturbances for the Melnibonéans.

**Points of Entry**

To get into the tower, the adventurers may choose to climb over the wall; assault the demon gate; or deliver the sacrifice to the garden gate, and somehow force their way in.

**CLIMBING THE WALL**

A Climb roll is needed each way to get up and over the garden wall. Those who fail will fall, taking 2D6 damage, half if a Jump roll is made. Those who fall on the garden side tumble into a verdant swathe of foliage, and take no damage.

**THE DEMON GATE**

The demon gate is a red iron door in the pink marble wall. It has a brass door knocker, in which is set a lidless eye. It has a voice like whispering gravel, and it is blunt and to the point. It will only open at the request of a Melnibonéan, and will destroy any others who try to pass. It issues only one warning.



**BR'N'LL**

**DEMON GATE** Breed Shtogg CV: 227

CON 87 SIZ 25 INT 8 POW 15 DEX 20

HIT POINTS: 100 ARMOR: 20 points of demonic iron

| Weapon                  | Attack | Parry | Damage       |
|-------------------------|--------|-------|--------------|
| Explosive Decomposition |        | 84%   | — 20 potency |

If the demon succeeds in its attack, it matches its POW vs. the POW of the victim. If successful, the victim takes 20 points of damage. If unsuccessful, the victim takes 10 points of damage.

POWERS: Armor (20 points), Explosive Decomposition (potency 20), Eye x1, Skills.

**DELIVERING THE SACRIFICE**

A sleepy Melnibonéan comes to the demon gate at dusk, and orders it to open. His name is Fylim Nzar. He has just been roused from another drug-induced coma by a friendly demon telling him it is time to collect the sacrifice, and has few of his wits about him. He peers bleary-eyed at the adventurers, sips wine from a golden cup fashioned like a dragon, and asks which one of them is the sacrifice.

He will not permit anyone except the sacrifice to enter the tower complex. The adventurers can attack him and force their way in. He will not think to raise an alarm until the second round of combat, but even then this is a waste of time, as everyone is asleep. If the adventurers have a Dharzi prisoner, he tries to escape when combat breaks out.

During the fight the golden cup is broken, either by a sword blow or somebody steps on it. Nine hundred years from now, Huegot the Particular will discover a fragment of this goblet in the ruins of the tower.

The demon gate must stand open until a Melnibonéan instructs it to close. It fumes helplessly while the adventurers slip through into the garden.

**FYLIM NZAR**

Fylim is thin and distracted. He is groggy, and has not yet fully determined whether the adventurers are reality or a flashback from his drug-laden dreams.

STR 10 CON 9 SIZ 14 INT 21 POW 18 DEX 11 CHA 15

HIT POINTS: 11 ARMOR: None.

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

| Weapon     | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Broadsword | 63%    | 61%   | 1D8+1  |

SKILLS: Balance 16%, Memorize 4%, Plant Lore 92%.

LANGUAGES: Common -17%, Dharzi -11%, High Melnibonéan 26%/42%, Low Melnibonéan 99%/99%.

**QW'KK'NL**

**DEMON BROADSWORD** Breed Bangongi CV: 90

This is a bright silver sword, exquisitely finished. Dark runes on the blade crackle and hum.

CON 20 SIZ 2 INT 5 POW 19

POWERS: +5D6 damage.

**The Garden**

The garden has been planted to remind the Melnibonéans of home, Immyrr the Beautiful. They feature fragrant and gorgeous plants from throughout the Bright Empire. Huge fronds nod and sway, flowers bloom with enticing perfume, and silver fountains burble and chime. The contrast with muddy Tormesh is astounding.

This idyllic beauty is marred with two horrific demons. They are huge skeletal humanoids with skulls for heads, fully ten feet tall. In keeping with the outré aesthetics of the Melnibonéans, they breathe fire which creates a fierce glow in their heads and chests, so that they also double as garden lights for those late evening garden parties in summer. They prowl the complex, and attack non-Melnibonéan intruders. They are fed on the remains of the daily sacrifice to Arioch, supplemented by whatever they can catch.

**XX'NGG**

**GARDEN DEMON ONE** Breed Suklal CV: 192

STR 36 CON 22 SIZ 24 INT 11 POW 16 DEX 10

HIT POINTS: 34 ARMOR: 6 points of hardened bone

| Weapon      | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|-------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Claws (x4)  | 42%    | —     | 4D6    |
| Flame Spout | 48%    | —     | 2D6    |

POWERS: Armor (6 points), Claws x4, Eyes x2, Flame Spout (range 10m), Legs (60m per round), Skills.

SKILLS: See 60%.

**VM'NL'K**

**GARDEN DEMON TWO** Breed Suklal CV: 192

STR 33 CON 24 SIZ 22 INT 14 POW 14 DEX 11

HIT POINTS: 34 ARMOR: 6 points of hardened bone

| Weapon      | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|-------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Claws (x4)  | 47%    | —     | 4D6    |
| Flame Spout | 48%    | —     | 2D6    |

POWERS: Armor (6 points), Claws x4, Eyes x2, Flame Spout (range 10m), Legs (60m per round), Skills.

SKILLS: See 60%.

**Inside the Tower**

The door to the tower is brass, finely etched with patterns and decorations of beauty and Chaos. It is not locked. Inside is cool and dark, and old warm smells of food and luxury linger on the air. The lobby contains one of the mud-brick huts of Tormesh, transported here whole for those visitors who wished to sample the local life. A few drugged sheep stagger around it in a desultory fashion. A carpeted spiral staircase leads up and down.

## DOWNSTAIRS

Below are the kitchens and cellars. Twenty human slaves work down here to make food available whenever the guests desire it. These slaves have been transported from Melniboné, and are more refined than the crude and lively people of Tormesh.

In the lowest part of the tower is the private chamber of Sardras the Dragon Priest. He is the tower's only permanent resident, and his main task is to see to it that due sacrifice is made to Arioch every day at dusk. He then remains awake all night, and sleeps during the day. As the adventurers enter the tower above him, he is bathing and dressing and trying to remember where he put his knife.

## UPSTAIRS

The staircase rises up through the middle of the tower, leading through six levels, each of them a sumptuous private chamber. These rooms are triumphs of taste and decor. Murals adorn the walls, and every piece of furniture is a work of art. They are softly lit by fire elementals of different colors bound into lanterns of silver and gold.

There are ten Melnibonéans distributed among these six rooms. They are relaxing. Asta Sheré and Valir Florn have taken drugs, and together they dream dreams of splendor. Sarall Kor is composing a satiric letter to the emperor's son. Latmir Hain, Invé Ness and Tanric Mehan are making languid and poetic love. Alysia Beltan and Dytmar Krevall are playing a complex geometrical boardgame, now in its 46th day (Dytmar is yet to make his move, after a week's deliberation). Tyril Shar is adding decoration and illumination to her grimoire, with pieces of bone and glass. Hanon Loth is just asleep.

None of them pay much attention to the adventurers, thinking them to be some quaint local entertainment. They pass through unmolested, although perhaps those who seem especially attractive or intelligent are invited to share a cup of wine and to dally.

The tower guests do not expect violence, and are unequipped to put up any resistance if the adventurers choose to kill them. Blood from such slaughter stains priceless carpets and ruins paintings by old masters.

### TYPICAL MELNIBONÉAN VISITOR

STR 11 CON 10 SIZ 14 INT 16 POW 18 DEX 12 CHA 13

HIT POINTS: 12 ARMOR: None.

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

| Weapon     | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Broadsword | 48%    | 45%   | 1D8+1  |

SKILLS: Orate 65%, Persuade 56%, Soent 53%, Sing 44%, Taste 41%.

LANGUAGES: Low Melnibonéan 80%/80%, High Melnibonéan 40%/40%.

SUMMONING SKILL: 50%.

SUMMONINGS: All elementals.

## The Heart of Arioch

At the top of the stairs is the temple. It is a large domed room with a ceiling coated with a substance resembling mother of pearl. In the center of the room is a man-sized statue of green veined marble. Arms are outstretched, and in its claw-like hands it holds the red pulsing gem of dreams and doom, the Heart of Arioch. The statue's face displays a cruel smile, and it stares down upon an altar. The altar gleams with feigned innocence; it is waxed and polished each day after the sacrifice.

Triangular openings are evenly spaced along the walls to allow the awful red radiance to shine outside. A See roll directed out of the tower detects large black shapes flying through the night sky - the dragon riders.

Standing by one of these openings is Dolor the Thief, and Duke Avan. They have just climbed the outside of the tower using Dolor's demon rope. The Duke moves towards the gem, with purpose in his eyes.

## The Trap of History

Dolor's plan is for the Duke to steal the gem and then be cursed. He has told the Duke that by stealing the gem, he will break the curse, and prevent the destruction of the city. The Duke has agreed. Sadly, this is mostly a lie. The curse will not be broken, merely lifted from Dolor. Tormesh will burn either way.

If any try to stop the Duke from taking the gem, he makes an impassioned plea about saving the town. If this fails, he draws his sword. The adventurers must either successfully Persuade him that Dolor has lied, or else grapple him to the ground and knock him out. Instead, if anyone attacks Dolor, he holds up a hand:

*"I wouldn't kill me if I were you. I am the very link to this puzzle. If I die, you will have no introduction to this fable, nor end. You will be lost in the voids of those that never were, and never will be."*

This is bluff. The existence or destruction of the gem is the key to the adventurer's salvation (see Destroying the Gem, below). Dolor's fate is immaterial, and only affects where his body will be found in a thousand years.

**DOLOR THE THIEF**

Dolor has lank brown hair, tied in a ponytail. He is tall and thin, and has a wolfish air about him. He is human, but his features bear the Melnibonéan cast. He dresses in dark furs and leather clothing.

STR 14 CON 13 SIZ 13 INT 21 POW 16 DEX 18 CHA 16

HIT POINTS: 14 ARMOR: Furs and Leather (1D6-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon        | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|---------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Dagger        | 76%    | 69%   | 1D4+2  |
| Thrown Dagger | 81%    | —     | 1D4+2  |

SKILLS: Balance 85%, Climb 84%, Conceal 60%, Dodge 65%, Evaluate Treasure 76%, Hide 97%, Jump 80%, Listen 83%, Move Quietly 74%, Ride 54%, Search 76%, See 84%, Tumble 49%.

**SLITHER**

DEMON ROPE Breed Geebun CV: 161

This demon appears to be thirty feet of rope, ending in a set of crab-like legs. It climbs up sheer walls to the desired height and then clings on as Dolor climbs up. For taller buildings, Dolor merely hangs onto the end of the rope and is hauled up the side. It moves at 2 meters per round when climbing.

STR 58 CON 15 SIZ 2 INT 4 POW 16 DEX 19

HIT POINTS: 8 ARMOR: None

POWERS: Skills (see below), Spider Legs.

SKILLS: Climb 100%.

**The Curse Evoked**

Sardras the Dragon Priest soon enters. He's found his knife, and he's here for the sacrifice. His eyebrows raise when he sees the intruders, and he starts to speak.

The mechanism of the curse comes into play and, as he has every night for a thousand years, Dolor casts a dagger. Sardras is hit in the throat and drops, the dread curse bubbled through dying lips. Dolor, in horror, realizes he's done it again. He cannot help himself now, and leaps for the gem, plucking it from the statue. Whirling his demon rope, he runs for the windows.

Catching Dolor requires DEX vs. DEX or a Grapple role. If Dolor evades, all is not lost. If they can sever the rope before Dolor reaches the ground, the fall might damage the gem. Failing that, they could race down the inside of the tower and head him off at the tomb.

Dolor heads for the Tomb of Humans, finds Dess dead, and lies on the slab. The curse steals over him, trapping the adventurers this time. Everyone replays this chain of events forever. They get no chance to escape until someone in the future enters the Tomb of Humans, and touches the gem. Nadjana is a likely candidate.

**Destroying the Gem**

The Heart of Arioch is harder than iron. The gem cannot be smashed. However, the magical power of the thing lies in its flawless beauty. Any defacement will render it useless. The gem has the equivalent of 25 armor points.



The Heart of Arioch

Any single blow inflicting more than 25 points of damage is enough to mark it, and thus cancel its power.

If the adventurers cannot manage this much damage, they could throw it out the window at the marble garden wall. A DEX x5 roll is needed to hit the wall, not the garden. The gem will take 10D6 damage when it hits the rock, which should do the job.

As soon as the gem is rendered imperfect, the red light within it flickers and dies. Darkness descends on the scene, and the adventurers hear the great wings of dragons, diving low. Gouts of flame tear through the night sky, then that too fades. Everything grows dark and cold and distant.

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## Back to Now

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Once the gem is destroyed, the adventurers return to the present, where they began. They stand in the Tomb of Humans. Any wounds or items they collected are still with them; it was no dream.

\* *If they killed Dolor, there is no sign of him or the Heart of Arioach. His bones are somewhere in the area, scattered hundreds of years ago when the tower fell down. The gem is lost and gone.*

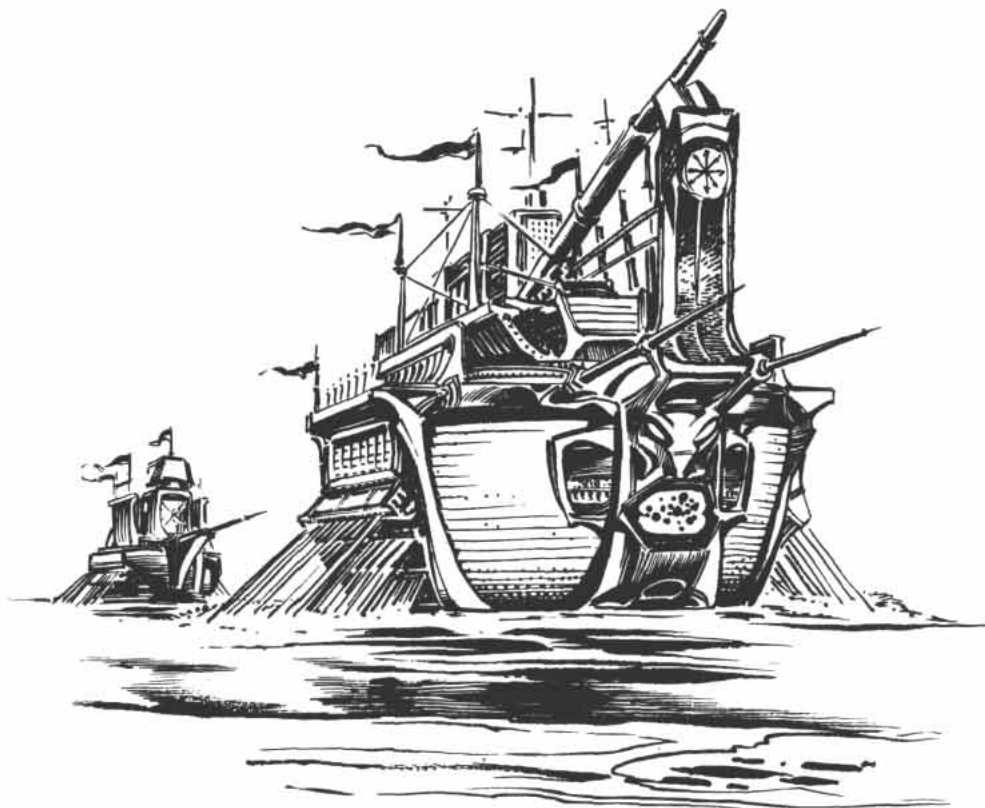
\* *If they did not kill Dolor, he is lying on the slab. This time he is not perfectly preserved, but is a crumbling skeleton. He clutches the gem to his chest, but it is a dull and lifeless weight.*

In either case, the skeleton of Dess is still here. As they watch the last of it crumbles to dust. A fresh breeze moves through the chamber, as the woman trapped by tragedy and nightmare finds release.

The Duke is ashen-faced. He heartily and deeply thanks the adventurers, each in turn. This trip north has shown him quite a bit more than he could have expected. Now more than ever he is intrigued with the cultured life of the Melnibonéans, and appalled at their treatment of humans. Is the cost of aestheticism and leisure always slavery?

The adventurers may loot the Tomb of Humans if they wish. There is approximately 10,000 LB in miscellaneous grave jewelry and crumbling artifacts. Nadjana collects some samples of bone dust, for unknown necromantic purposes.

The Duke claims the gem as his. As he picks it up and peers into its deadened depths, it is obvious that not all of the words of Dolor have been dispelled. He will never forget the thing as it was, and devotes his life and meets his death in trying to find its equal.





# THE MAN WHO SOLD GODS

**R**ORN FELDUN HARAI is a Prince of the Vadagh, a fugitive from the World of the Fifteen Planes. He has come to the Young Kingdoms seeking military aid for his people. Centuries ago they left their native plane in their Sky City. Now they are unable to return, and are besieged by the forces of Xiombarg, Queen of the Swords.

Prince Rorn's quest has been in vain. The Melnibonéans declined to assist him in any way. Now he only wishes to return home, but cannot find a way to.

Xiombarg still wishes Prince Rorn destroyed. She has sent her wild Chaos Pack to the Young Kingdoms, riding the Chaos Storm. The Pack is a howling band of animal-man hybrids corrupted from men who trucked with Chaos.

Into this fracas wander the adventurers, who are caught outdoors in a storm. Not just any storm; the Chaos Storm.

## The Vadagh

Prince Rorn is of the Vadhagh, one of the oldest races of the world of the Fifteen Planes. They are a race of culture and finery, not unlike the Melnibonéans. Once rulers of the world, the Vadhagh fell to warring with its ancient fellow race, the Nadragh. After the war had petered out, the two cultures remained separate and isolated and their influence on the world around them waned. The men of the world, called the Mabden, rose up and began to dominate it.

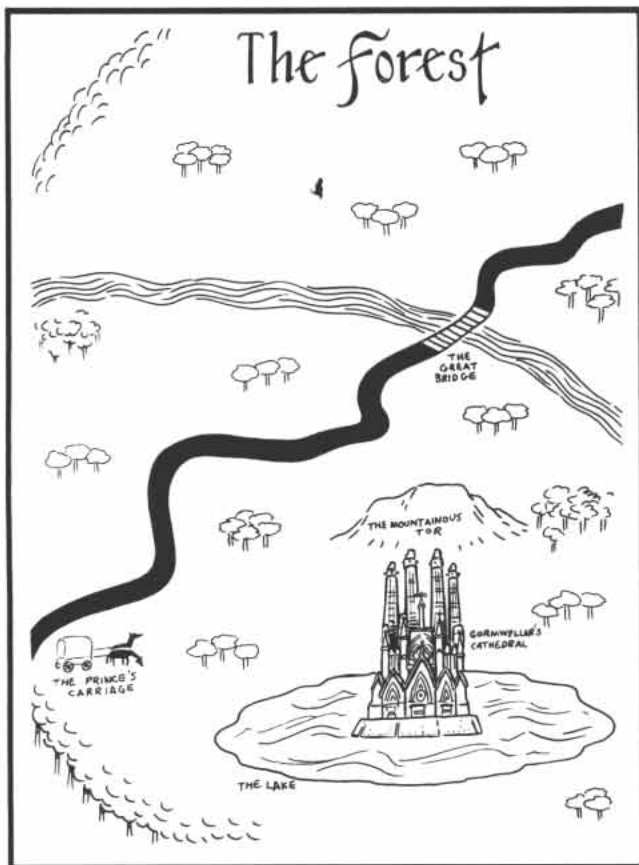
In ages past the Vadhagh built Sky Cities, giant pyramidal structures. These could move within the five Planes of their native world. (There are three such worlds, fifteen planes in all). Some of these cities at-



tempted to go beyond these boundaries, and were never seen again. Prince Rorn's was one of these. It is Gwlas-cor-Gwrys, the City in the Pyramid.

The Vadhagh are a learned, subtle, rational and remote people. They spend their time in abstractions like art and music and create strange works that take many years to complete; years they can afford since they are an almost immortal people, compared to the humans around them. In the City in the Pyramid they are somewhat more martial, but Prince Rorn himself leans toward the passive.

In appearance the Vadhagh have long skulls, long tapered ears flat to the head, full-lipped mouths, skin of gold-flecked rose pink and eyes with yellow centers and purple surrounds. They are tall, slender and graceful and speak a tongue akin to High Melnibonéan, though they can easily adapt to the courser speech of humans, due to their high intellect.



## The Storm Of Disorder

This adventure begins anywhere in the Young Kingdoms, at any time. The adventurers are on the road, travelling for one reason or another between cities. The goal of their journey is unimportant, and should be drawn from the gamemaster's campaign. If needs be, this adventure could be inserted into one of the other scenarios in this book.

The adventurers approach a forest, thick with tall, bountiful trees and studded with hills and mountains. As they draw down towards it, a storm gathers above them. The sky darkens into night, regardless of the hour, and the tumult above them grows.

This is no normal storm. Great wedges of strange colored clouds crowd each other across the sky. Rain begins to fall, icy and heavy. It drives like needles into the skin and cuts visibility down to a few dozen yards.

A See roll reveals a mad rainbow in the cascading downpour, shimmering hues of unidentifiable color bleeding into each other in the sheets of rain. Listeners

can pick out a strange haunting dirge in the howling of the wind, a dark descant of unfathomable despair.

Remaining in the storm becomes dangerous to the mind. Adventurers who fail a POW x3 roll begin to see strange things whipped up in the tempest. Creatures, the shape of which no natural law could create, gallop through the clouds. Visages of great and terrible beings appear, which could only be gods, though none the adventurers can identify. A great spinning wheel rolls across the sky, upon which can be seen designs and depictions of deities and theological symbols. Those witnessing these hallucinations must make a second POW x3 roll, or be stupefied for 2D10 rounds as they stare fixedly at what none other can see. Also, once out of this spell there is a chance they will succumb again to it, if they sight anything resembling the great wheel of gods. This includes turning cartwheels, spinning coins; these must be resisted with a POW x 3 roll or the spell will return.

At last, when the storm appears to be at full fury, the adventurers see a bridge ahead, over a heavy, surging river. The bridge is built of heavy wood, great hewn beams and rugged slats of dark, creased timber. Beneath is room enough on the bank of the river to shelter the horses and people from the worst of the weather.

The adventurers are not the only ones caught in the storm. A man approaches the bridge from the opposite direction. A See roll notices him when he emerges from the trees beyond the bridge. If the adventurers are all sheltering underneath, a Listen roll hears him cross, over the howling of the storm.

## The Prey of the Pack

The man is Prince Rorn of the Vadhagh, and thus is not a man at all. He is tall and slender. His skin is rose-pink

### About Corum

Prince Rorn's culture is drawn from the Books of Corum, by Michael Moorcock. The saga features another incarnation of the Champion Eternal, and is highly recommended. Gamemasters may wish to read the first three books of the series before embarking on the scenario. These are *The Knight of the Swords*, *The Queen of the Swords*, and *The King of the Swords*, respectively. An omnibus edition of these three volumes is available, entitled *The Swords Trilogy* in the U.S., and *Swords of Corum* in the U.K.

Gormweller's Infinite Cathedral is inspired by Moorcock's *Vanishing Tower*, appearing in sagas of Elric and Corum both.

**Chaosium** plans to publish *Corum*, a supplement for *Stormbringer*, with details of the World of the Fifteen Planes.

flecked with gold, and his eyes are purple. He is dressed oddly, with heavy green boots and quilted red breeches and jerkin. Beneath the jerkin is an emerald green silken shirt. A yellow jewelled belt holds a silver dagger and long silver sword, delicate and thin. A sodden red and green cap droops on his head, and his pale, fine hair is plastered to his face.

He is rainlashed and on the point of exhaustion. He staggers from side to side, at first appearing to dance some strange unfathomable steps, then drops from exhaustion upon the bridge.

By the time the adventurers have reached him, a voice calls out for them to stop, and seven black-cloaked figures emerge from the trees. They are from the Chaos Pack, warped horrors from Queen Xiombarg's dimension; now no longer sufficiently men to remember anything of their previous existence. The leader, Dragcloven, shambles forward, the others falling in behind him. His face pokes from his black cowl and reveals the features of man and goat mixed. He gives an ill bow to the party, and attempts civility in his speech.

"Greeting be to thee, scum-masters, but I must take this pewling filth to his rightful home." He stands poised, if the adventurers hesitate or argue, he draws his ugly twisted black dagger. "Please be warned, dung-belchers. We do not look well upon interference." Whether any have elected to assist Prince Rorn or remain impartial, the Prince crawls forwards, then vanishes.

The Vadagh can see into the next plane, and can move themselves there, though Rorn can only keep this up a few rounds. Effectively invisible, he crawls to the edge of the bridge and beneath. If the adventurers have been unhelpful he attempts to steal a horse; otherwise he waits for them, or for his enemies.

Dragcloven levels his weapon, as he edges off the bridge, summoning his men closer. "I would undo your sorcery, bile-gulpers, and quickly." The Chaos horror takes the adventurer's inability to produce Prince Rorn as a declaration of enmity. He orders his six men to



The Howling and Drooling Chaos Pack

attack. They are all animal/man monstrosities, with pig, horse and other beast features. Dragcloven stands back, and if the any are proving themselves too hardy, he melts into the forest.

The bridge is slippery from rain, and combatants must make Balance rolls after any special movement. All who fail slip over, with a fumbled roll resulting in toppling off the bridge. Individually, the Chaos Pack are not as formidable as they are in a group, and the party should have little trouble killing these creatures.

**PRINCE RORN**

STR 11 CON 7 SIZ 16 INT 21 POW 20 DEX 18 CHA 15

HIT POINTS: 11 ARMOR: None.

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6 / +1D4

| Weapon        | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|---------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Vadagh Sword  | 41%    | 56%   | 1D10+1 |
| Silver Dagger | 33%    | 45%   | 1D6+1  |

*The weapons of the Vadagh are of the finest steel. There is only a 25% chance they will break on a fumble.*

SKILLS: Balance 84%, Dance 93%, Dodge 76%, Music Lore 115%, Play Lute 102%.

(continued next page)

**PRINCE RORN, CONTINUED**

LANGUAGES: Common 54% / 75%, Low Melnibonéan 23% / 80%, Vadagh 100% / 100%.

ABILITIES: The Vadagh possess the skill of looking into a neighboring plane, and in extremis, entering that plane at will. Seeing into the plane requires a POW x2 roll. Entering the plane requires a POW x1 roll, 1 point of POW sacrificed, and a CON x5 roll to avoid collapsing on the other side. This skill renders the person invisible, but essentially still on their home plane, which they revert to the moment their concentration fails (roll CON x5 each round).

**DRAGCLOVEN**

Dragcloven is the leader of the Chaos Pack. He is a repulsive swaggering man-goat. He is both a coward and a bully.

STR 24 CON 22 SIZ 13 INT 7 POW 12 DEX 11 CHA 5

HIT POINTS: 23 ARMOR: Leather and Natural Fur (1D6+1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +2D6 / +2D4

| Weapon   | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|----------|--------|-------|--------|
| Scimitar | 85%    | 66%   | 1D8+1  |

SKILLS: Ambush 72%, Dodge 50%, Listen 65%, Orate 21%, Scent 59%, See 52%, Track 78%.

LANGUAGES: Common - / 35%.

**THE CHAOS PACK**

The Chaos Pack are a seething mass of animal-man warriors, without discipline or organization. There are hundreds of them in the forest. Reuse these stats as needed. The gamemaster may wish to change some weapons here and there for more variety.

|     | #1      | #2      | #3      | #4 | #5 | #6      | #7      | #8      | #9      |
|-----|---------|---------|---------|----|----|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| STR | 21      | 17      | 15      | 18 | 7  | 16      | 17      | 20      | 16      |
| CON | 16      | 14      | 16      | 17 | 13 | 12      | 15      | 15      | 7       |
| SIZ | 14      | 18      | 14      | 5  | 11 | 12      | 16      | 10      | 13      |
| INT | 4       | 6       | 5       | 8  | 5  | 2       | 6       | 5       | 2       |
| POW | 8       | 11      | 9       | 3  | 2  | 7       | 4       | 5       | 4       |
| DEX | 13      | 11      | 15      | 24 | 14 | 14      | 19      | 15      | 20      |
| CHA | 2       | 7       | 4       | 5  | 1  | 2       | 3       | 5       | 7       |
| HP  | 18      | 20      | 18      | 13 | 13 | 12      | 19      | 15      | 8       |
| DB  | 1D8/1D4 | 1D8/1D4 | 1D8/1D4 | —  | —  | 1D8/1D4 | 1D8/1D4 | 1D8/1D4 | 1D8/1D4 |

ARMOR: Leather (1D6-1)

| Weapon   | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|----------|--------|-------|--------|
| Axe      | 62%    | 46%   | 2D6+2  |
| Scimitar | 50%    | 16%   | 1D8+1  |
| Bite     | 23%    | —     | 1D4    |

SKILLS: Dodge 25%, Jump 47%, See 44%, Swim 11%, Listen 51%.

LANGUAGES: Common - / 25%.

**The Carriage of the Prince**

With the defeat of the Chaos Pack, or part of it, the severity of the storm lessens. It continues to rain, but not as hard as it did a moment ago.

Rorn reappears and waits quietly for the adventurers. He knows his disappearance put them into great danger, and he heartily apologizes. "There are many more of those creatures abroad this night, and I fear we have all become targets now. I know a place of safety if you can but help me reach it." He insists that they should move on.

Rorn is loathe to say much more. He wants shelter and safety first; there will be time for his tale afterwards. If the adventurers detain him, he explains further (see The Prince's Tale, below), but during this time Dragcloven returns with a further 1D20 Chaos Pack warriors.

As soon as he can, Rorn leads the party back over the bridge and into the very forest he came from. Chaos Pack warriors infest the area, and the adventurers must constantly hide or sneak past them. Their journey takes two hours. Each hour, each of the adventurers should make a Hide roll. Each person who fails the roll yields a 20% cumulative chance of attracting the attention of 1D10 warriors of the Chaos Pack. They do not bother to mount an ambush, but simply dive out of the underbrush, hooting and screeching, weapons ready.

Finally, Rorn brings the adventurers to a covered glade on the edge of the forest. Hidden among the foliage is his place of shelter and mode of transport. It is a big brightly-painted carriage. Two wet and disconsolate horses graze nearby.

The carriage is large, and roofed and constructed of solid honey-brown wood. It is finely decorated with exquisite carvings in rich shades of yellow, red and dark brown. Within is warm and cozy, and Prince Rorn bids his new guests be comfortable and relax.

There is a store of treasures inside the carriage. There are silks and satins of the finest quality and strangest hues. Strange plants grow in carved pots (a Plant Lore roll will show that these are actually Healing Plants of 1D6 potency per leaf). Elegant carvings that resemble sculptured water stand upon shelves. A Search roll spies a large Grimoire sitting on an uppermost shelf, its covers decorated with tassels of leather and bone (Rorn picked it up for its fine workmanship, as he generally considers sorcery to be the preoccupation of inferior minds).

**The Prince's Tale**

Rorn tells his guests his story, after they settle down. "I am a stranger to your lands. I am Prince Rorn Feldun Harai, of the World of the Fifteen Planes. My people are the Vadagh. I come from Gwlas-cor-Gwyr, the City in the Pyramid. We are at war with the Queen Xiombarg, of the Sword Rulers.

"I came to your plane seeking an army to aid us. The Melnibonéans are our distant kin. But my quest was futile; they have become decadent and inward-looking, and would not help me. At the least, I had counted on





The Fugitive Prince

their aid to return me to my own plane; without it, I have been stranded."

Prince Rorn tells them a little of his wanderings in the Young Kingdoms, and how he makes his living as an itinerant entertainer. "For a time I worked in a carnival, until I was replaced by a Rotating Dwarf, a far more popular act." Then he goes onto his current situation.

"You have already met my enemies. They are the Chaos Pack, Xiombarg's foul and bestial minions. The Chaos Storm brought them here, and rages around us still. Xiombarg should not be capable of sending such an army to this plane. It is dangerous magic, harmful to the Million Spheres.

"The man who has made this possible for her is called Gormweller. He is a Theomerchant. He travels among the planes of the vast multiverse in his Infinite Cathedral, offering to his many customers the worship of gods from other planes. His power allows these people a transfer of their sacrifices for the gods' patronage. Such worship threatens the fabric of the multiverse itself, by allowing gods to transfer their power and receive it across dimensional rifts.

"I propose that we summon Gormweller. If we can destroy his Infinite Cathedral, Xiombarg will lose her link between the dimensions, and the Chaos Storm will cease. If we can steal the Cathedral itself, I can use it to get home.

"I need your help with the ritual to summon him. I know of no reason for you to trust me, but I offer you what reward I may. This carriage and its contents shall be yours."

The adventurers should realize they have little chance but to assist Rorn. The Chaos Pack and Chaos Storm will not leave until the fugitive prince has gone, and he cannot go without their help. If they consent, he thanks them, and tells them that he plans to summon the Infinite Cathedral with his knowledge of Music, Song and Dance.

### The Terpsichorean Canticle

Rorn hitches the horses to the carriage, and bids the adventurers to follow. They can ride in the wagon if they wish. He takes them through the forest to a place

suitable for the summoning. There is a 60% chance that their travel will attract the attention of 1D10 warriors of the Chaos Pack. Hide rolls are no use; there is no way to conceal a rolling wagon.

The place Rorn has chosen is a large clearing upon the shores of a wide lake. Next to the clearing towers a great rocky outcrop, tall enough to be called mountain, bleak enough to be called tor. Great spiked trees jut from the rocky surface, hung with ragged strips of dead vine which appear to be their only foliage.

The rain is slight but the scene is quite dark and ominous when the adventurers reach the shores of the lake. Rorn fetches a weird musical instrument from the carriage, an Ulterlute. It is shaped like two lutes, joined by a connecting bar which sits upon the player's hip. "Now I must teach you to dance," he tells the group. There is no set number of dancers needed, but the more Rorn has, the greater the chance of his success in calling the Cathedral.

Rorn pairs the adventurers off and encourages any odd number to stand guard against the Pack. Then he describes a complicated set of steps about the clearing, which both partners must copy. When he is satisfied that they have learned the steps (a successful Memorize roll is needed), he picks up his instrument and begins to play a dark, complicated dirge, and to sing a tortured descant in a powerful but delicate voice.

**PERFORMING THE DANCE**

Performing Rorn's dance requires a successful Music Lore roll, assuming at least one of the partners managed to learn the steps (Memorize). All those who succeed in a Music Lore roll during the dance receive an experience check, even though this skill cannot normally rise in this way. If one partner succeeds in Music Lore and the other fails, then the failed partner may copy the successful one with a DEX x 3. If both partners fail, they merely stumble and shuffle about, not truly picking out the steps as necessary. Rorn needs at least one couple to correctly dance before the summoning can work. His practiced eye is able to judge if the dancers are performing well, or if he needs to continue. Gamemasters may continue the dance and allow dancers who failed to try again, but this risks their discovery by the Chaos Pack.

**The Hunted Muse**

No sooner has the tune been played and Rorn begun to be satisfied, than there is an interruption. In truth, if at

least one pair danced correctly, the summoning is already underway. The Infinite Cathedral is soon to arrive.

The intruders are a team of mercenaries, six in all, in pursuit of Prince Rorn. The lookout may pick these riders up with See or Listen rolls. These men are battle-hardened professionals, hired by Dragcloven to sew the seeds of dissent between Prince Rorn and his new allies. They are dressed in the livery of a great noble, with yellow surcoats emblazoned with black axes.

Their leader Captain Mattin, a scar-faced veteran, halts his men and offers no threatening movement. "I seek this killer" he says, pointing out Rorn, "and no other. Hand him over and all will be well". The Captain explains that he works for a great Count, Count Brithanuis, who took Rorn in during his travels. Rorn then murdered the Count's twelve year old son. He suggests also that the Chaos Pack are merely supernatural agents of the Count, who is a great sorcerer, and that in fact Rorn has lied to the adventurers.

Rorn protests his innocence, of course, but since the Cathedral is not apparent in any way, he cannot prove that the remainder of his story is true. The Captain queries each of Rorn's protestations, with polite requests for truths and evidence. Mattin uses the delay while the group is confused to hem them in with Chaos Pack underlings. If the adventurers side with Rorn, the mercenaries heft their weapons and attack. The adventurers have only 1D6 rounds to subdue them or escape before 1D20 of the Chaos Pack breaks into the clearing.

If they hand Rorn over to the guard, successful Listen rolls identify the men's harsh laughter as they gallop off. The adventurers must pursue them if they wish to rescue the Prince. If the Mercenaries are still on horseback, then a chase in Rorn's carriage and by horse is a likely sequence.

The storm intensifies until all is howling wind and driving rain, except for the odd yellow leaflet thrown about upon the wind.

**CAPTAIN MATTIN**

STR 14 CON 15 SIZ 14 INT 11 POW 12 DEX 15 CHA 18

HIT POINTS: 17 ARMOR: Plate (1D10-1)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6/+1D4

| Weapon     | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Broadsword | 76%    | 44%   | 1D8+1  |
| Shield     | 24%    | 65%   | 1D6    |
| Dagger     | 54%    | 45%   | 1D4+2  |

SKILLS: First Aid 55%, Dodge 50%, Jump 42%, Ride 85%, See 46%, Track 48% .

LANGUAGES: Common - / 55%.

**THE QUEEN'S MERCENARIES**

|     | #1      | #2      | #3      | #4   | #5      |
|-----|---------|---------|---------|------|---------|
| STR | 14      | 15      | 13      | 12   | 18      |
| CON | 12      | 10      | 14      | 15   | 16      |
| SIZ | 13      | 14      | 12      | 11   | 16      |
| INT | 11      | 14      | 10      | 8    | 10      |
| POW | 13      | 8       | 14      | 11   | 12      |
| DEX | 12      | 10      | 11      | 13   | 14      |
| CHA | 11      | 17      | 6       | 12   | 9       |
| HP  | 13      | 12      | 14      | 15   | 20      |
| DB  | 1D6/1D4 | 1D6/1D4 | 1D6/1D4 | None | 1D6/1D4 |

ARMOR: *Plab* (1D10-1)

| Weapon     | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Battle Axe | 63%    | 31%   | 1D8+1  |
| Shield     | 20%    | 52%   | 1D6    |
| Dagger     | 49%    | 40%   | 1D4+2  |

SKILLS: Ride 65%, See 40%, Track 44%.

LANGUAGES: Common - / 50%.

**The Leafleteer**

A great sizzle of yellow lightning rends the clouds and arcs down to earth and splits a forest tree with a resounding crack and a shower of golden sparks. A lone figure now stands beneath the blasted tree. Leaflets from under his arm spiral up one at a time to be tossed into the storm and bucketed across the sky.

This is Nysh the Leafleteer, the servant of Gormweller. He is a mute rodent-like man, who simply stares at all comers and thrusts leaflets at them. Nysh cannot talk, and thus cannot answer questions. If attacked, he vanishes like smoke, a small spray of grey wisp tossed away on the storm.

The leaflet advertises Gormweller's Infinite Cathedral (there is a copy of it in the Player's Handouts section of this book). Rorn, on taking one, simply looks at the adventurers and says, "It's coming."

**The Cathedral Arrives**

Indeed, now Rorn's words are proven true. Despite their actual location within the forest the adventurers see the towering stone edifice of the Infinite Cathedral descend on the gusts of the Chaos Storm and land on the surface of the Lake itself. The magic surrounding the Cathedral keeps it afloat and in no danger of sinking.

From the distance the Cathedral is a massive grey-stone structure, in the classic cross shape of medieval cathedrals. Its stained glass windows are of a multitude of weird shapes in striking black and white glass. A glow surrounds it of a viscous purple, and the black waters of the lake do not reflect its image. The front cover of this

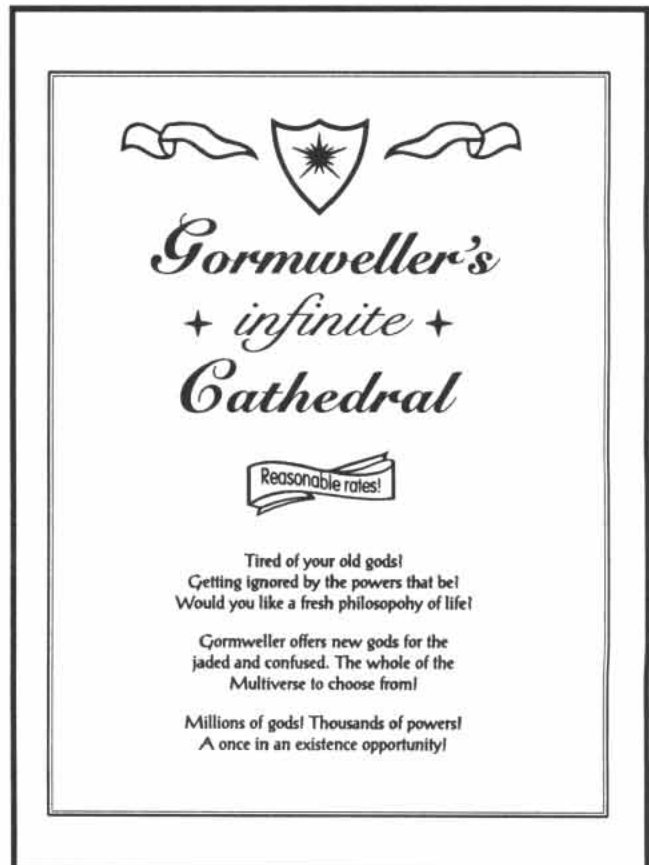
book shows the Infinite Cathedral, in all its splendor, with Nysh out front plying his trade.

From everywhere, the Chaos Pack slinks out of the forest, in their hundreds. They swarm at the shores of the lake, hooting and jeering at Gormweller's home, but unable to cross the expanse of water to get to it.

It seems impossible to reach the Cathedral. It is too far to swim, and there are no boats available. To appear on the shore is to attract the attention of the Chaos Pack. Prince Rorn has a workable, if highly outré solution. He bids the adventurers follow him quickly to the mountain, while the Chaos Pack are distracted.

**The Mud Slopes**

The progress to the mountain is uninterrupted, provided the adventurers are cautious and make no unnecessary noise. Once at the foothills of the mountain, Prince Rorn urges the party to climb. The mountain consists of many great slabs of rock atop one another at strange angles. The slopes are slick with mud, and peppered with great dark trees with wiry clinging vines. Adventurers without climbing gear find it hard going. A Climb roll should be made, and if failed the adventurer slides towards the



The Leaflet

edge of cliff. A DEX x3 roll should be made to avoid slipping off and falling into the lake.

Once Rorn has gained sufficient height to be higher than the Cathedral spire, he works his way fully around the mountain till he is on the face that shows towards the Lake.

The cathedral stands before and below the adventurers. Rorn looks down, his strange eyes blazing with excitement. "Help me cut some trees while others get as many of these vines as they can. The rest, gather leaflets!" Indeed it is the leaflets that have inspired Rorn, as they dance in the storm, hundreds upon hundreds of them on the wind.

Balance rolls are needed to grab leaflets without sliding down the slope. Dagger skills are needed to cut trees or vines (swords and axes are too heavy and splinter the wood too much for Rorn's liking).

As Rorn feverishly works, he asks the adventurers to form a plan for their arrival. "Gormweller and the Chaos Pack hate each other, so we need not fear that they will ally against us. It is possible that Gormweller will recognize me, as he is Xiombarg's servant, as indeed he is the servant of all Chaos Gods. I could disguise myself, or hide in the building. I fear that if I stayed out here the Chaos Pack will get me.

"You must deal with Gormweller. He will think you new customers; flatter him. See if you can learn how the Cathedral operates, and how to destroy it. Attack or seize Gormweller when you are ready, and be sure that I will help. Who knows? Perhaps you can strike a deal without violence."

Once Rorn has sufficient materials, he lashes the staves together with the vines, and creates the frame of an enormous kite. Adventurers can assist with a Tie Knot roll. Once the frame is built, he covers it with leaflets glued on with sticky mud. He now has the means to glide down to the roof of the Cathedral.

While this work is in progress, the Chaos Pack begin to grow bored with gibbering at the cathedral. They cast about for things to do, and notice the adventurers atop the mountain. They begin to climb up, thirsting for blood. Rorn finishes his work just as the first of them arrive.

## **The Leaflet Kite**

Rorn creates a box kite shape, with a long lower frame that the passengers must grasp. They then launch the kite, and hang on. They must retain their grip through the remainder of the flight. Rorn sits atop the kite and controls its directions. The flight is short but perilous.

The wind eventually carries the kite over the Cathedral, but Rorn must then make the craft descend onto the Cathedral roof.

Rorn's skill to control the kite is equal to half his Balance (hereafter called a Kite roll). He must succeed in a total of 1D6 Kite rolls to reach the desired destination. Any failed roll means the kite lurches, pitches far into the air, plummets downwards, swoops back towards the cliffs, or heads on a collision course for a cathedral spire.

Whenever Rorn fails a Kite roll, the adventurers must roll STR x5 to hang on while the kite is at the mercy of the violent winds; those who fail fall into the lake, and must swim to the Cathedral under a hail of Chaos Pack missiles.

If Rorn rails three rolls consecutively, or if any roll is fumbled, the kite will crash.

The adventurers may assist Rorn with Kite rolls of their own (at half their Balance chance) To do this they must be in a position to steer the kite, either on the edges of the bottom frame, or at the rear.

Adventurers who choose not to be led by Rorn must make their way to the cathedral by other means. A raft of some kind is the obvious choice, but this is also dangerous. as the only accessible areas of Lake shore are crawling with Chaos Pack monstrosities.

## **The Kite Lands**

If all the rolls are made, the kite lands on the great sloping roof. Once there, adventurers must quickly disembark as the Kite begins to slide off, helped by the gusting wind. The Kite is light but cumbersome, and may be kept on the roof if enough adventurers hold on to it in concerted effort. It can be fastened to the roof with some spare vine and a Tie Knot roll.

The easiest way into the building is through the Clerestory, since this part is open. Climbing rope or kite vines must be used to descend from the roof. Alternatives include climbing directly over the Vaulting without using a rope and smashing the stained glass in the Tracery, or descending low enough to the Triforium or the Arcade.

Even the ground may be reached given enough rope, but this is dangerous since there is little purchase between the wall and the lapping waters of the lake. Luckily the doors are not locked.



## The Chaos Pack Siege

Meanwhile on the shore and on the mountain, the Chaos Pack see the kite flutter over their heads to the Cathedral. Many leap into the water and begin to swim out. The deep chill waters of the lake defeats them. Some drown, most turn back. Perhaps a couple make it to the Cathedral, and sneak inside to surprise the adventurers at inopportune moments.

The rest of the Pack begin to construct rafts to besiege the Cathedral. They fight amongst each other as they do this, and their initial attempts at raft-making break up soon after launching. It takes them several hours to perfect their design, and to get sufficient rafts constructed and organized. Once prepared, the motley flotilla sets sail. More rafts sink, but over a hundred damp and fuming warriors reach the Cathedral alive. They storm in, howling and looting.

This is an option to keep the adventurers from getting too complacent in their dealings with Gormweller. The distant sounds of lakeside raft-building inject an air of tension and immediacy to the problem. The gamemaster can use the seaborne assault of the Chaos Pack to throw more confusion and disaster into the climax of the scenario.

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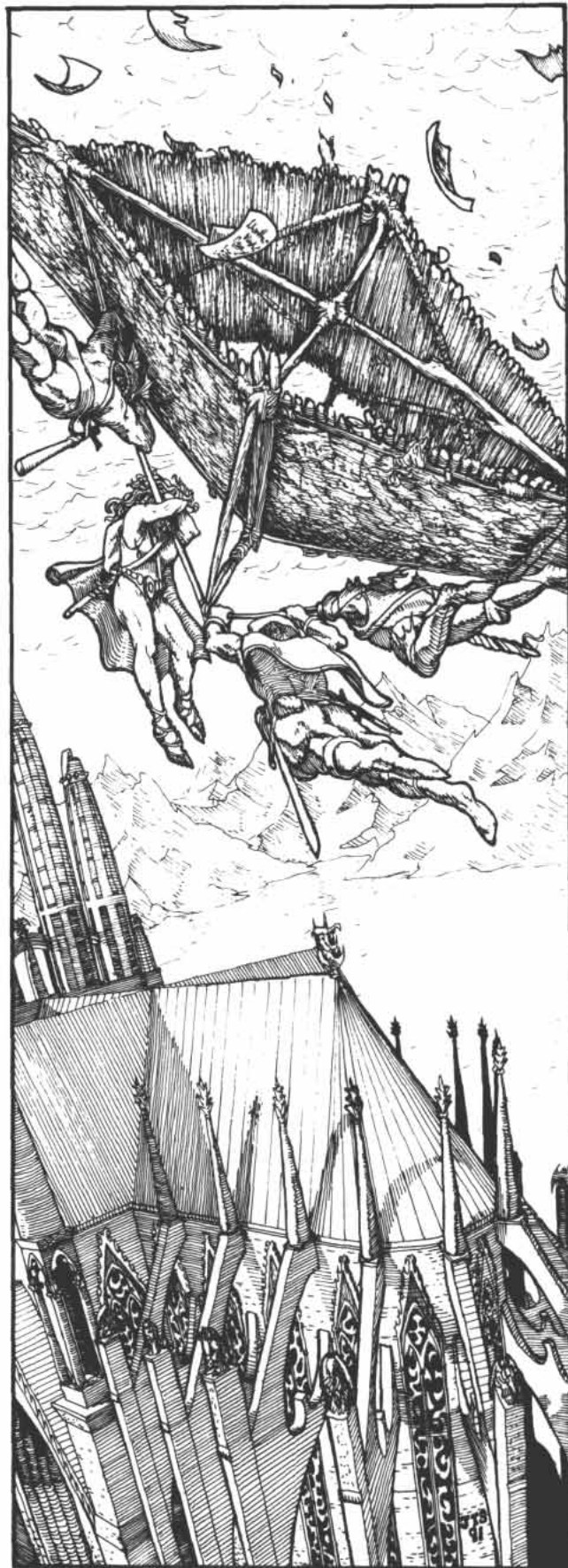
## The Infinite Cathedral

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The Infinite Cathedral, the fabulous interdimensional temple and market for all gods, is now open for business. Millions of gods, reasonable rates.

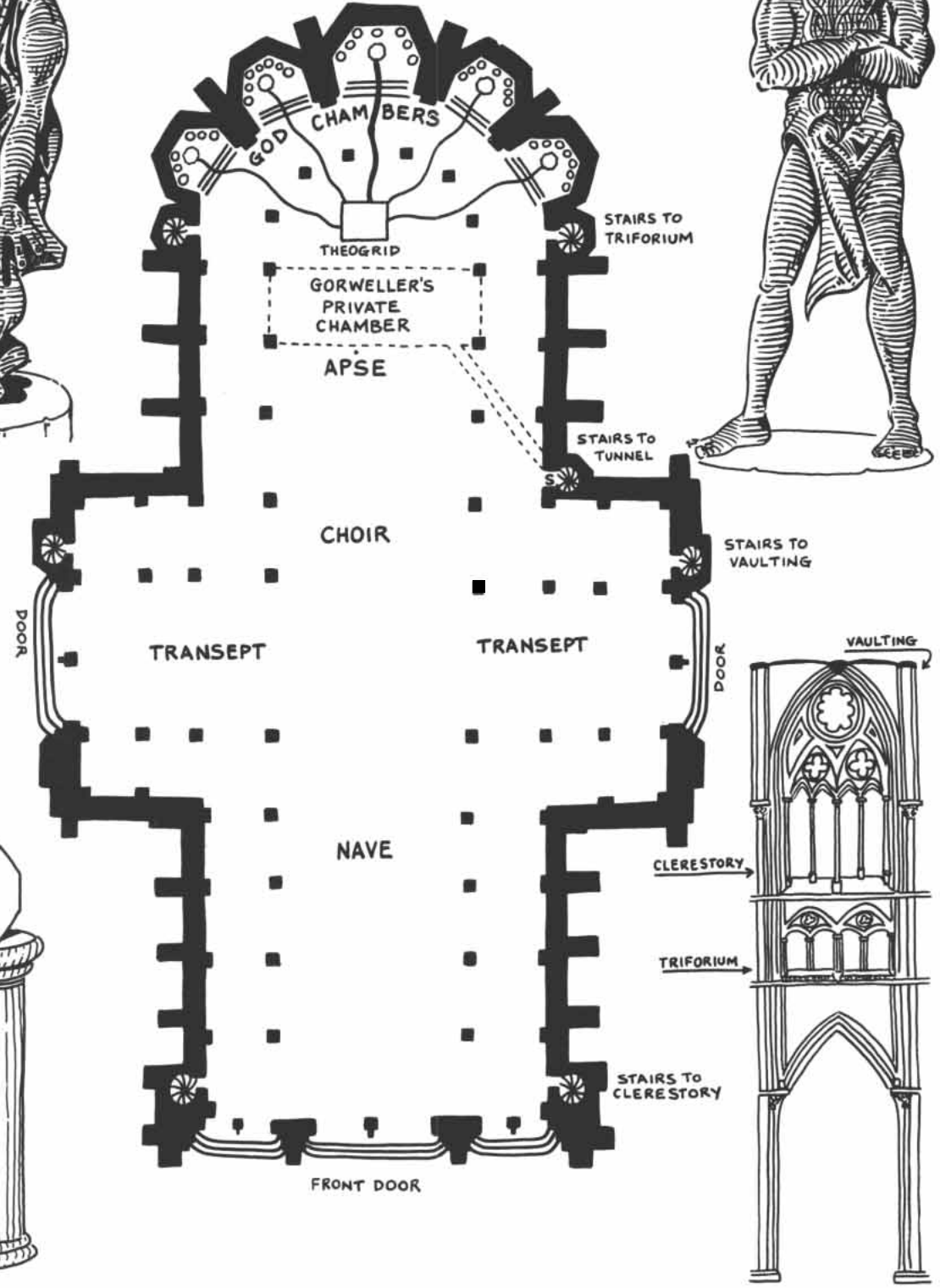
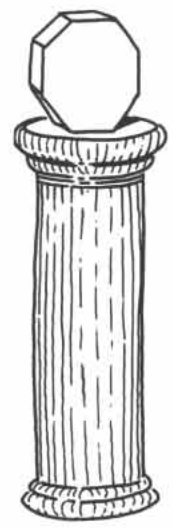
There are only two living people inside, Nysh the Leafleater, and Gormweller. There are also statues of various gods, and these are avatars which can be animated for attack.

In his hubris, Gormweller has created an avatar of himself, and he sends this out to meet and deal with the adventurers while he remains in hiding. It looks identical to him, and he can talk to the adventurers through it. To all intents and purposes, it *is* Gormweller. The gamemaster must remember the distinction between the avatar and the real Gormweller, as the text will not always distinguish between the two.



Perilous Flight

# The Infinite Cathedral



## Inside the Cathedral

Once within, the adventurers must decide what to do with Prince Rorn. Will he hide, disguise himself, or boldly confront Gormweller? He will agree to whatever plan they choose. They have a few moments to catch their breath and take stock before Gormweller approaches them (see *The Man Who Sells Gods*, below).

From above, in the Clerestory or Triforium, the adventurers may look over the railings and down into the body of the Cathedral itself. If they enter from one of the doors at ground level they see much the same, but from a different perspective.

The Apse, Nave and Choir are immediately visible. The Transepts and God Chambers are not, but described here for convenience. Full details of the areas will not be apparent until after proper exploration, either alone or in the company of Gormweller.

### NAVE AND TRANSEPTS

The nave is the gloomiest part of the main floor. Shadowed statues of grotesque gods flank the aisles on both sides of the nave. There are fifty such statues, depicting a small selection of Gormweller's wares. Each of these statues can be activated as an avatar.

### CHOIR

Within the Choir is the grand Musicarium, a monster device for playing hymns and dirges to any god needing supplication. The thing is a mass of keys, strings and pipes, resembling a bizarre mating of organ, piano and giant lyre all grown elephantine. The pipes are so towering they reach almost into the Vaulting.

### APSE AND THEOGRID

The Apse holds the Theogrid, the complex circuit and sorcery matrix that powers the Cathedral in its communion with the gods, and enables to travel between the worlds. All of Gormweller's gods are in some sense chaotic, and this grid focuses their power and reaches beyond the planes to where they lie.

The Theogrid is enclosed behind tall brass shutters and a solid brass roof. Fine multicolored tubes extend from the Theogrid to the God Chambers, and are used to conduct the POW from the supplicant to the god.

The shutters are locked, and Gormweller carries the key. It is almost impossible to break into. The locks are of complex manufacture, and subtract 40% from any Pick Lock attempt. The doors have a STR of 40, and up to two people may pit their strength against them to force them open. The sides and roof have 40 points of armor,

so only a blow causing greater damage than this will buckle them.

Opening the shutters is deadly, as the brass provides protection from the intense power found within. Waves of heat and light radiate through the breach, causing 1D20 points of damage for each round of exposure, without protection from armor. Avatars are immune to this effect. Gormweller and Nysh are not.

Revealed, the Theogrid is a large steaming octagonal matrix, pulsating with color and endlessly turning to show new facets. It is too bright for the eye to look directly at it. It is fragile, and one blow will irretrievably smash it. Adventurers need merely succeed in an Attack roll to accomplish this.

The ramifications of damaging the Theogrid are described below under *Destroying the Cathedral*.

### THE GOD CHAMBERS

There are five God Chambers. These hold booths for candidates to select the god they would like. The booths are lined with comfortable red silk cushions, arranged around a miniature octagon on a pedestal.

Customers relax in these chambers, and use the octagons to view the gods and make their selection. See *Changing Gods* for details of the procedure.

The tubes which run from the Theogrid structure to the center God Chamber are heavy and metallic, whereas the tubes to the other four are bright and colorful. The middle God Chamber is in fact the secret control room of the Cathedral. The octagon in that chamber is in fact an Entropy Configuration, a fabulously rare device which enables a craft to travel between the planes. It has been disguised to appear identical to the other four octagons. Adventurers who have sailed aboard the interplanar vessel *The Rogue Mistress* might still recognize the Entropy Configuration on an INT x3 roll, and realize that this is the control room of the Cathedral.

### TRIFORIUM, VAULTING AND CLERESTORY

These are large decorated aisles in the upper reaches of the cathedral. They stretch all the way around the building, and are replete with many grim and surreal depictions of the various deities available for sale. These are executed in long tapestries, stained glass windows, and paintings.

### STAIRCASES

Large spiral staircases wrought from heavy iron ascend from the floor to the aisles above, the Triforium, Vaulting and Clerestory. One staircase, hidden behind a fake stone wall, descends to Gormweller's Secret Tunnel and

Chamber. A Search roll on the area will note the irregularity in the stone. Once found, the secret door can be easily swung aside.

### THE SECRET TUNNEL

This tunnel leads into Gormweller's secret chamber. The tunnel narrow, six feet high by three feet wide. There are three mechanical traps concealed along its length, set in the floor, wall and ceiling respectively. To notice them, the adventurers must be actively looking, and succeed in Search or Set Trap rolls. The various traps can be turned off from Gormweller's Chamber. Each trap springs a mechanical device upon the intruder (Gormweller's nod to Law). The first trap is of spikes, the second is a razor sharp door, and the third is rotating blades. Each trap does 4D6 damage, but can be successfully Dodged.

### GORMWELLER'S CHAMBER

This secret Chamber is Gormweller's retreat. The real Gormweller hides in here, controlling his avatar from afar, like a puppeteer.

The room is opulently furnished and decorated, in styles and fittings taken from the best of a thousand cultures. Religious furniture abounds. Gormweller sleeps on a massive pew, made soft with layers of eiderdown quilts. He bathes in a delicate crystal font. His wardrobe is a confessional box, gnarled with wooden gargoyles. On a velvet podium sits a large glowing ball, through which Gormweller can observe the entire Cathedral at will. He also uses this device to speak through his avatar.

Two large ornate coffers contain Gormweller's treasury. One contains a solid mass of silver, the other a huge mis-shapen ingot of gold. Gormweller merely sorts new coins, tosses them into the appropriate chest, and exposes them to the rays of the Theogrid to melt them down. The silver clump is worth 20,000 LB, and the gold is worth 50,000 LB. Both are impossibly heavy, and require STR 40 to drag (Nysh, Gormweller and his avatar must pitch in when he wants to shift them). If the adventurers need to quit the Cathedral in a hurry, they could not possibly drag these out in time. If they could, they probably could not prevent them from sinking to the bottom of the lake.

There is a second doorway in plain view. Behind this is a ladder which leads to a brass trapdoor. Above the trapdoor is the interior of the Theogrid. Anyone opening the trapdoor is exposed to the throbbing power of the Theogrid, as detailed above, causing 1D20 points of damage per round.

## The Man Who Sells Gods

Once the adventurers have breached the Cathedral and are inside, Gormweller observes them from his secret chamber. He allows them to explore for a little while, and then sends his avatar to them. Gormweller and his avatar are indistinguishable. If the adventurers are looking in the right direction, and make a See roll, they might see the avatar come out of the Secret Tunnel door.

Gormweller is short and fat, almost twice as wide as he is high. He wears a plain gold robe, slippers, and black pearls around his neck. His hair is blue and teased into a tall spiral on the top of his head, while flourishing blue whiskers impinge on his cheeks and threaten to poke into his mouth. He laughs often and without forcing, and speaks in a mellifluous, humorous tone. He is expansive with his gestures and his adjectives.

Gormweller greets the adventurers with great friendliness and considerable relief. Nysh had told him there were customers in the area, but he had feared that they would be apprehended by the rabble he observed on the lake shore (*The Chaos Pack*). Gormweller offers to show them his establishment, and encourages them to make use of the God Chambers to select a new deity.

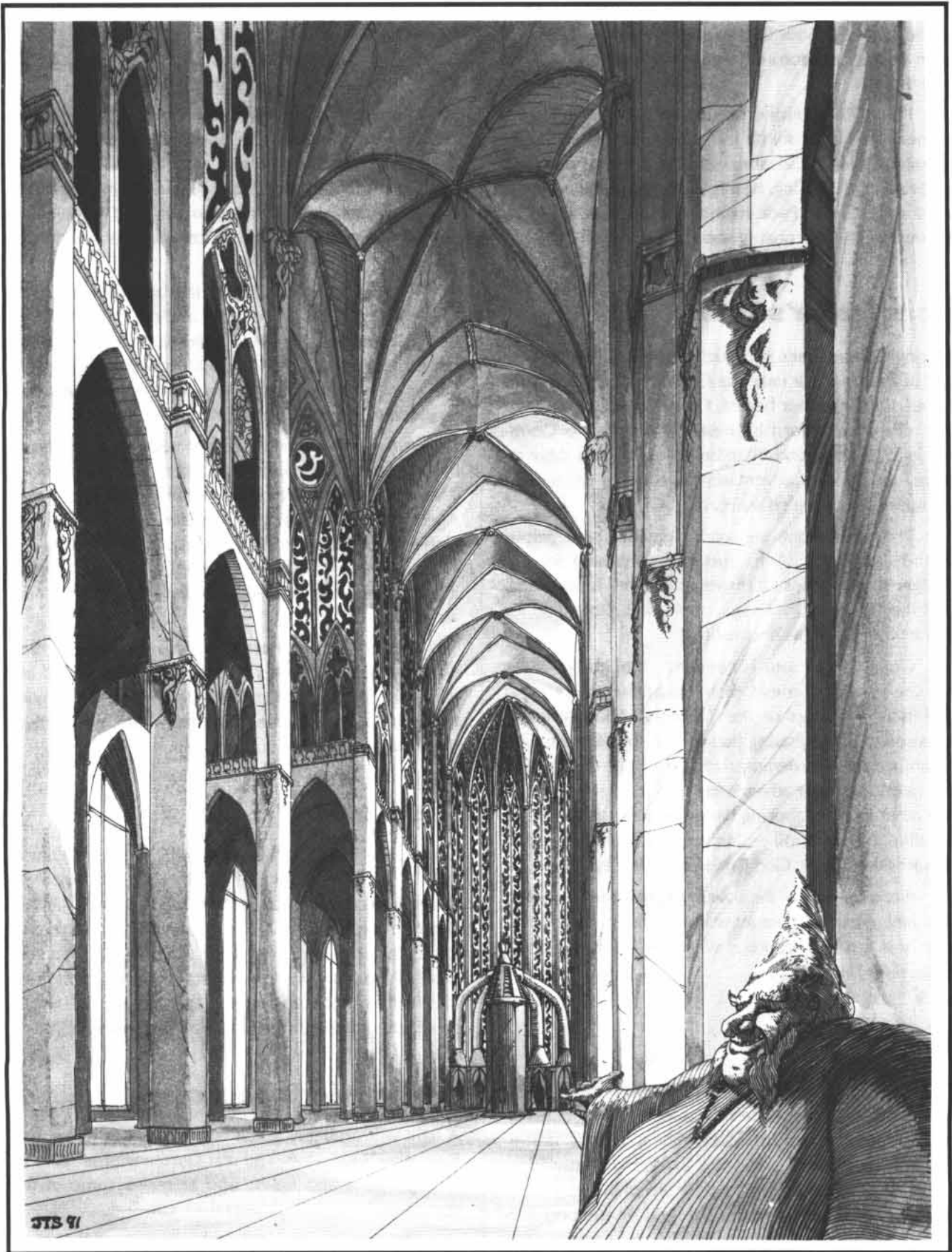
If Gormweller's motives are questioned, he looks injured. "Friends, I am an innocent merchant, come to ply my wares. May I show you what I have to offer? There is not a person in all the Multiverse who does not think they might be better served by another god."

### Gormweller's Plan

In truth, Gormweller is devious. Queen Xiombarg used him as a bridge to channel the Chaos Storm to this area. He knows she did this to hunt for a fugitive Vadagh. Someone nearby has the power and knowledge to summon the Infinite Cathedral to this spot. Gormweller reasons it must have been the Vadagh, and that the adventurers know where he is. If Gormweller can capture him, he would be richly rewarded by Xiombarg.

Thus, Gormweller and the adventurers will embark upon some verbal sparring, playful but deadly serious. The adventurers want to know how the Cathedral works, and what could cause it to be destroyed. Gormweller wants to know who summoned the Cathedral, and where he is. "It's a funny thing, but I had set course for the plane of Uerth, there to sell religion to the godless





Millions of Gods! Reasonable Rates!

Murda. But yet, here I am in the Young Kingdoms. How could this be?" Both Gormweller and the adventurers plan to attack as soon as they have what they want. Who will be first?

Prince Rorn's further use in the scenario is up to the gamemaster. If he is with the adventurers, Gormweller recognizes him, and attacks as soon as he can gain surprise. If he is hiding, he might be discovered by Nysh, or a stray Chaos Pack member. If he is in disguise, Gormweller will probably soon suspect him.

## Gormweller's Tour

During Gormweller's introductory speech, Nysh comes out of the staircase near the God Chambers and lurks about. Once the tour begins, Gormweller sends him to get refreshments for his guests. Nysh goes to Gormweller's underground chamber to do so and then returns, thus giving adventurers two more chances to glimpse the concealed staircase.

The refreshments are sparkling wine and delicious fresh-baked bread. "Ah, host and sacrament for our hungry souls!" quips Gormweller. Neither is poisoned, and the Theomerchant summons a hurt expression for those who refuse his hospitality.

Gormweller's tour is complete, though he leaves out the upper galleries ("Mere decorative effect") and the inner workings of the Theogrid ("Deadly to be exposed to that pulsating power"). In showing the God Chambers, he only demonstrates the one on the far right. He steers away any adventurers who seem interested in the other four. Belaboring the point, he insists they are all alike. A Search roll on him notices that his eyes dart towards the middle God Chamber as he says this.

If one or more of the adventurers expresses interest in a new god, Gormweller warms to them. Xiombarg's quarry is a desirable prize, wherever he is, but, well, business is business.

## Changing Gods

Those wishing to select a new god must enter the God Chamber and stare at the miniature octagon, concentrating on what sphere of divinity it is they desire. Examples are War, Death, Love, Earth, Sea, Knowledge, etc. The octagon begins to glow deeply, and a deep humming resonates from the Theogrid. Power begins to pulse up the conduits running to the God Chamber. After five minutes, images of the myriad gods available appear in the octagon, and also in the applicant's mind.

By concentrating on a particular god, more details can be learned.

There are a million spheres of the Multiverse, and potentially dozens of gods in their respective pantheons. The choice of extra planar gods is immense. The section on Avatars of the Gods gives some examples of the gods Gormweller has available. Gamemasters are encouraged to invent their own, or use pantheons from myth or other roleplaying game systems. All of Gormweller's gods are by nature Chaotic, since what he does violates the very fundament of Law.

If the applicant is satisfied, they must then sacrifice one point of POW to the deity, and one point of POW to the Cathedral. This establishes a link between the deity and worshiper. If the applicant wishes to immediately apply for Agent status, treat them in the same way as potential agents of Young Kingdoms gods.

Worshippers of extra-planar gods receive little in the way of tangible benefits, except perhaps comfort. They lose any bond they have with their current god. Agents of extra-planar gods get elan from the god, but elan exchanges for POW or for favors are doubled. e.g. 100 points of elan per 1 point of POW. If the Cathedral is ever destroyed, all links with deities purchased here are sundered.

Elan gains from these new gods should be agreed upon by the gamemaster and the newly-converted adventurer. These should reflect the nature of the gods themselves. The Elan descriptions in the *Stormbringer* rules are a fair guide.

## The Fee

Gormweller's fee for these services is the equivalent of 100 LB for a new deity, and 500 LB if the customer attempts to qualify for agent status. This must be paid in silver or gold coins only. He accepts no bronze coins, and coins of greater face value (such as Melnibonéan Gold Wheels) are worth no extra, since he smelts them all. He does not accept gems, as their value varies wildly on different planes, depending on local availability.

## Gormweller's Tactics

A fight will probably break out, as soon as either side have what they want. The real Gormweller remains in hiding. His avatar fights, and animates some of the statues of the gods to protect the Cathedral.

The avatars are giant embodiments of the gods. They are brought to life by striking them with the black pearls Gormweller wears. He and his avatar carry ten

**SAMPLE AVATARS**

**DYZZIS** — Whirlwind Chaos Lord of the Air of a great airborne kingdom.

WEAPON: Whirling Fists, damage 2D3.

**FROGMOUTHEN** — Massive hopping Toad God of an amphibious plane.

WEAPON: Bite, damage 1D10.

**LASCIVIA** — Chaos God of Love of a decadent pseudo-Renaissance world.

WEAPON: Bow, damage 1D10+2.

**ENERSEK** — Bestial Death God of a primitive people.

WEAPON: Club, damage 1D6.

**GAGGAGAGAGA** — Idiot God of the insane and mind-blasted.

WEAPON: Head Butt, damage 1D4.

**DEUTERETH** — God of Sorcery from a dark chaos plane.

WEAPON: Staff, damage 1D8.

**MOGAK** — Cat-like Chaos Lord of Devious Machinations.

WEAPON: Claws, damage 2D6.

**FOLLIS** — Dire God of Lost Souls from a sorcerous world.

WEAPON: Scythe, damage 2D6+1.

**HININ** — Gigantic single deity of a world teetering on the brink of collapse.

WEAPON: Grab and Hurl, damage 2D6.

**SCORBID** — Disease God of a geographically chaotic land.

WEAPON: Flail, damage 1D10+1.

**HERYFAR** — Elegant war god of a cultured epoch.

WEAPON: Rapier, damage 1D6+1.

**XIOMBARG** — The Queen of the Swords, foe of Prince Rorn and the Vadagh.

WEAPON: Greatsword, damage 2D8.

**GUTGLOB** — Massive blubbery death god of a starving race.

WEAPON: Crush, damage 4D6 + smother (see drowning rules).

**BILESCUD** — Repulsive chaos entity of a chaos-warped race.

WEAPON: Pincers, damage 2D4.

pearls each. He is sparing, expending only as many as he needs, sending one avatar in at a time. If the adventurers deal with them too easily, he will step up the odds.

Prior to their animation the avatars are merely statues, and can be broken. They are packed so closely that a good push could topple a line of them, like dominos. To push a statue over the adventurers must overcome its SIZ 25 with their combined STR.

Once a statue is shattered, pearls can bring the pieces to life. This could serve as an effective but grotesque replacement for limbs lost for major wounds.

The real Gormweller only comes out of hiding to activate more avatars if his own has been destroyed, or the very Cathedral is imperilled. If he is caught and threatened with violence of any kind, he immediately flings himself to his knees and begs abjectly for mercy.

Rolls of fat quiver gelatinously as he blubbers and shakes. He will agree to anything which does not involve harm to himself or the Cathedral. If he must choose between the two, the Cathedral comes second.

**GORMWELLER'S AVATAR**

STR 20 CON 15 SIZ 17 INT 20 POW (1D10) CHA 9

HIT POINTS: 20 ARMOR: 15 points of magical protection

DAMAGE BONUS: +1D6 / +1D4

| Weapon | Attack | Parry | Damage |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Fist   | 50%    | 50%   | 1D3.   |

SKILLS: See below.

LANGUAGES: See below.

**THE REAL GORMWELLER**

STR 6 CON 13 SIZ 17 INT 20 POW 19 DEX 10 CHA 9

HIT POINTS: 18 ARMOR: None

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

Weapon

None.

SKILLS: Dodge 31%, Evaluate 99%, Hurl Avatar Pearl 85%, Orate 99%, Persuade 99%.

LANGUAGES: Common 99%/99%, many others.

**NYSH**

Nysh is small and ugly, like a diseased middle-aged choir boy. He never takes part in any combat, but scurries for cover. If Gormweller is killed, he begins to follow the adventurers around as their servant. He is mute and subservient, and incapable of surviving on his own.

STR 8 CON 11 SIZ 9 INT 7 POW 5 CHA 5

HIT POINTS: 11 ARMOR: None.

DAMAGE BONUS: None.

Weapon

None.

SKILLS: Get Things 35%, Hide 51%, Listen 56%, Move Quietly 43%.

LANGUAGES: Speak Common 00%, Understand Common 35%.

**AVATARS OF THE GODS**

Dormant, the avatars are giant and finely-rendered statues of gods. Once animated, they develop color and texture. Stone becomes skin or scales or feathers or fur, living eyes open, and the god walks among men. They are the barest manifestation of the god, and have but a fraction of their power.

**TYPICAL AVATAR**

All avatars are of the same size and construction. Even the smaller gods are rendered huge in statue form. The avatars all have the same attack chance, although the nature and damage of the attack varies. Each attacks once per round. Damage bonuses are uniform.

STR 20 CON 15 SIZ 25 INT 10 POW (1D10) DEX 10 CHA 20

HIT POINTS: 28 each ARMOR: 15 points of unearthly radiance

DAMAGE BONUS: +2D6 / +2D4



| Weapon          | Attack | Parry | Damage    |
|-----------------|--------|-------|-----------|
| Weapon (varies) | 50%    | 50%   | See below |

**SKILLS:** Search 50%, See 50%.

*The avatars have a particular vulnerability. Any critical hit against them pierces their sorcerous energies, and drains all their POW. The avatar becomes inert and dead. The POW is transferred directly to the attacker, and is a permanent gain. Match the POW received against the adventurer's CON to see if the exchange renders them unconscious.*

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## THE OUTCOME

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Since the direction of the finale of the scenario depends upon the actions of the adventurers, a selection of options and their ramifications follows.

### GORMWELLER WINS

If Gormweller wins, surviving adventurers and Prince Rorn are delivered to Queen Xiombarg. Rorn is turned into a wriggling minion of the Chaos Pack, half-man, half-slug. The adventurers may plead for their own release. Becoming an agent may facilitate this, otherwise some promise to the Queen of the Swords, or sacrifice of 1D6 points of POW or CHA to her. Failures will be turned into Chaos Pack mutations, or worse.

### GORMWELLER LOSES

If Gormweller is dead, the adventurers may steal the Cathedral or destroy it (see below). If he is alive, they have all the aces. They can force him to take Prince Rorn home, deliver themselves to the location of choice, get his money, and still have the option of destroying the Cathedral.

### STEALING THE CATHEDRAL

Once Gormweller has been subdued or killed, and if the adventurers have found the secret of the center God Chamber, they may take the Cathedral.

The Entropy Configuration on this vessel functions in a similar fashion to the other God Chambers, with the Theogrid supplying visions of the different planes which can be visited. By concentrating on the desired selection, the Cathedral fades from the current plane and reappears at the destination. The Cathedral can also move about within a plane. Wherever it is bound, it always manifests itself at the most spectacular and awe-inspiring landmark available.

Controlling the Cathedral requires an INT X 1 roll for each voyage (INT x 5 for Prince Rorn or Gormweller). Failure means that it is lost somewhere in the multiverse, and rematerialises wherever it suits the gamemaster.

If the adventurers hand over the Cathedral to Rorn, he deposits them wherever they wish to go within the Young Kingdoms or the Multiverse, and returns to his own people. As promised, the adventurers may keep his carriage, which is worth 3,000 LB. The contents are worth 5,000 LB. The horse needs to be reshod.

Especially noble adventurers may wish to accompany Rorn to the City in the Pyramid. The gamemaster must devise a scenario here; this book merely purports to be Perils of the Young Kingdoms, not Perils of the World of the Fifteen Planes. Michael Moorcock's novel *The Queen of the Swords* describes the plight of Prince Rorn's folk.

If the adventurers take the Cathedral for themselves, they will face a band of warriors similar to their own somewhere on the next 1D10 planes, who will try and destroy the Cathedral for the sake of the Multiverse. One of these warriors is possibly an incarnation of the Eternal Champion.

### DESTROYING THE CATHEDRAL

The only way to destroy the Cathedral is to wreck the Theogrid. This process is described in the Apse and Theogrid section above.

Once the Theogrid is damaged, it starts to spin wildly, and a high-pitched shrieking sound emanates from it. The octagons in the God Chambers on the left and righthand sides begin to flash with images of gods, and then they detonate one by one. The sundered cables whip through the air, hissing and sparking. The octagon in the center god chamber shows visions of planes, and glows brighter and brighter, until its radiance is as intense and painful as the Theogrid. Both suddenly implode, sucking into themselves and leaving a puddle of molten glass. The Infinite Cathedral becomes a normal Cathedral, and promptly sinks to the bottom of the lake.

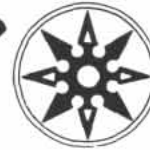
This process takes 1D4+4 rounds. Any adventurer still in the Cathedral drowns. Adventurers who escape are not yet safe. They may reboard the kite and launch it from the roof. They will not make it all the way to the shore, and must swim for it when the kite ditches. They can also board one of the rafts of the Chaos Pack.

Queen Xiombarg has lost her ability to maintain the Chaos Storm on this plane. The Chaos Pack howl, and disappear, drawn up into the heavens. The sky erupts, fragments into a billion shards, and suddenly clears. A bright day breaks over the forest. The water dripping from the trees is the only clue to the storm which raged moments before.



# Stormbringer

Fantasy Roleplaying in the World of Elric



NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SEX \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_ PLAYER \_\_\_\_\_  
 NATIONALITY \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS \_\_\_\_\_ CULT \_\_\_\_\_

STR \_\_\_\_\_  
 CON \_\_\_\_\_  
 SIZ \_\_\_\_\_  
 INT \_\_\_\_\_  
 POW \_\_\_\_\_  
 DEX \_\_\_\_\_  
 CHA \_\_\_\_\_



Portrait or Symbol

DESCRIPTION

ARMOR \_\_\_\_\_ rating \_\_\_\_\_

MAJOR WOUND LEVEL \_\_\_\_\_

HIT POINTS \_\_\_\_\_

CURRENT HIT POINTS

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 01 | 02 | 03 | 04 | 05 | 06 | 07 | 08 | 09 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |

POSSESSIONS

MONEY

AFFLICTIONS

WEAPONS

Attack Damage Parry

Bonuses: \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES

**AGILITY bonus** \_\_\_\_\_

- Climb \_\_\_\_\_
- Dodge \_\_\_\_\_
- Jump \_\_\_\_\_
- Ride \_\_\_\_\_
- Swim \_\_\_\_\_
- Tumble \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMUNICATION bonus** \_\_\_\_\_

- Credit \_\_\_\_\_
- Orate \_\_\_\_\_
- Persuade \_\_\_\_\_
- Sing \_\_\_\_\_

**KNOWLEDGE bonus** \_\_\_\_\_

- Craft \_\_\_\_\_
- Craft \_\_\_\_\_
- Evaluate Treasure \_\_\_\_\_
- First Aid \_\_\_\_\_
- Make Map \_\_\_\_\_
- Memorize \_\_\_\_\_
- Music Lore \_\_\_\_\_
- Navigate \_\_\_\_\_
- Plant Lore \_\_\_\_\_
- Poison Lore \_\_\_\_\_

READ-WRITE/SPEAK LANGUAGES:

- Common \_\_\_\_\_
- High Melnbn. \_\_\_\_\_

Low Melnbn. \_\_\_\_\_

- Mabden \_\_\_\_\_
- Mong \_\_\_\_\_
- Orgjen \_\_\_\_\_
- 'pande \_\_\_\_\_
- Yuric \_\_\_\_\_

**MANIPULATION bonus** \_\_\_\_\_

- Juggle \_\_\_\_\_
- Pick Lock \_\_\_\_\_
- Sleight of Hand \_\_\_\_\_
- Set Trap \_\_\_\_\_
- Tie Knot \_\_\_\_\_

**PERCEPTION bonus** \_\_\_\_\_

- Balance \_\_\_\_\_
- Listen \_\_\_\_\_
- Scent \_\_\_\_\_
- Search \_\_\_\_\_
- See \_\_\_\_\_
- Taste \_\_\_\_\_
- Track \_\_\_\_\_

**STEALTH bonus** \_\_\_\_\_

- Ambush \_\_\_\_\_
- Conceal \_\_\_\_\_
- Cut Purse \_\_\_\_\_
- Hide \_\_\_\_\_

Move Quietly \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**SUMMONING**

- Free INT \_\_\_\_\_
- Summoning \_\_\_\_\_

SUMMONINGS MEMORIZED:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Notes and Personal  
History**