

THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN

A "Savage Worlds" setting

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THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN

"Know, O prince, that between the years when the oceans drank Atlantis and the gleaming cities, and in the years of the rise of the sons of Aryas, there was an Age undreamed of, when shining kingdoms lay spread across the world like blue mantles beneath the stars - Nemedias, Ophir, Brythunia, Hyperborea, Zamora with its dark-haired women and towers of spider-haunted mystery, Zingara with its chivalry, Koth that bordered on the pastoral lands of Shem, Stygia with its shadow-guarded tombs, Hyrkania whose riders wore steel and silk and gold. But the proudest kingdom was Aquilonia, reigning supreme in the dreaming west. Hither came Conan, the Cimmerian, black-haired, sullen-eyed, sword in hand, a thief, a slayer, with gigantic melancholies and gigantic mirth, to tread the jeweled thrones of the Earth under his sandaled feet"

- **The Nemedian Chronicles**

I have been a Conan fan since I was 13. Up until then, the only fantasy I knew was J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle Earth. But for Christmas that year, I got the *Dungeonmaster's Guide*. At the back was a list of recommended reading. On it was this guy named Robert E. Howard. Luckily, my small town library had some of his stories. The first one I read was *The People of the Black Circle*. I was hooked. Hungry for everything Conan, I devoured this 12-book series I got for my birthday. I scrimped and saved for the buck-fifty the *Savage Sword of Conan* magazine cost me every month. And I even managed to, at age 14, convince my Dad to take me to the R-rated Conan movie. I didn't care that the acting sucked; only that my hero had come to life, in 50-foot glory.

Fast-forward to today. Still love Conan. I am still a roleplayer (albeit very infrequently), but had never found a marriage of an RPG system and the Hyborian Age that I really liked. A couple of years ago I walked into my local game store and told the clerk I was looking for something simple that I could easily teach my kids. He tells me about *Savage Worlds*.

As soon as I saw the cover (of the first edition), it was like it was meant to be. Someone who looked like Conan was on the front, in the background. I opened the book, started reading, then got stopped in my tracks on page 16. It was Conan. It was then I decided I wanted to do this.

So here is my Savaging of Howard's Hyborian Age. I hope you like it.

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PLAYER'S SECTION

THE AGE OF HIGH ADVENTURE

The Hyborian Age is a time of earth-shattering battles, daring escapes, treacherous double-crosses, seductive sirens, foppish nobles, and twisted sorcerers. Heroes are grim but valiant, women intoxicating, and villains dark as Hades blackest pits. Choose a race, then follow the character creation process outlined in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook.

HYBORIAN RACES

Since all Hyborians are human, **all** races get a bonus edge. Each also has various strengths and weaknesses. The name of the race is followed by a brief description, then any inherent attributes, skills, hindrances, or edges.

AESIR

Golden-haired, blue-eyed, bearded barbarians clad in chain hauberks wielding axes and wooden shields. Vigor d8; +1 to Intimidation and Tracking rolls.

AFGHULI

Tall and powerful, with broad shoulders, curly hair and long beards, their brown skin wrinkled by harsh wind and sun. Agility d8; +1 to Climbing and Stealth rolls (but only outdoors).

AQUILONIAN

A tawny-haired, grey-eyed, fair-skinned people. Str d6, +1 Charisma; +1 to Ride and Diplomacy rolls.

ARGOSSEAN

These dark-skinned people have thick, curly, dark hair and short, stocky bodies. Agility d6, +1 Charisma; +1 to Boating and Piloting rolls.

BRYTHUNIAN

Stocky, with fair skin and blond hair. Agility d6, Spirit d6; +1 to Survival rolls; receive the **Beast Bond** Edge for free.

CIMMERIAN

Dark-haired, bronze-skinned hillsmen, bare-chested with steel shields and battle-axes. Agility d6, Vigor d6; +1 to Climbing (outdoor only) and Tracking rolls.

CORINTHIAN

Dark-skinned as Hyborians go, due to intermixing with the Zamorans, with a stout build and tawny hair. Vigor d6, Spirit d6; +1 to Streetwise rolls.

HYPERBOREAN

Tall, unnaturally thin, fair-skinned folk with light brown-blond hair and blue-green eyes. Smarts d6; +1 to Intimidation rolls; get the Arcane Background (Magic) edge for free.

HYRKANIAN

Horsemen with hooked noses, black hair and eyes, and deeply tanned skin; riders wear steel and silk and gold. Agility d8; +1 to Riding; ignores **Unstable Platform** penalty of -2 when firing bow from horseback.

IRANISTANI

Short, stout, broad-shouldered people with light brown skin, blue or brown eyes, and steely-blue hair (much like the Shemites, to whom they are distantly related). Strength d6, Spirit d6; +1 to Intimidation (Bluff) and Knowledge (Religion) rolls.

KHITANI

Black-haired and yellow-skinned with slanted dark eyes, dressed in silk robes and oriental armor. Agility d6, Smarts d6; +1 to Notice and Acrobat rolls.

KOTHIAN

Dark-haired, bronze-skinned folk with light to dark brown eyes. Vigor d8; begin play with a free Edge (must meet requirements).

KUSHITE

Light brown to deep black skin and savage eyes. Strength d6, Agility d6; +1 to Stealth (outdoor only) and Survival rolls.

NEMEDIAN

Tall, fair-skinned people with blue or grey eyes and light or blonde hair. Smarts d6, Spirit d6; +1 to **any** Knowledge roll (the Nemedians being the scholars and historians of the Hyborian Age).

OPHIRIAN

Tan, with dark hair and lean bodies. Smarts d6, +1 Charisma; begin play with 50% more starting money.

PICTISH

Short, stocky, dark skinned people with wild black hair confined by copper bands, decorated with feathers. Agility d6, Vigor d6; +1 to Stealth (outdoor only) and Survival rolls.

SHEMITISH

Generally of medium height, though sometimes, when mixed with Stygian blood, gigantic, broadly and strongly built, with hook noses, dark eyes, and blue-black hair. Vigor d6, Spirit d6; +1 to Persuasion and Streetwise rolls.

STYGIAN

The ruling class is tall, hawk-faced, bronze-skinned with dark hair and black eyes; the lower classes are a down-trodden, mongrel horde: a mixture of Kushite, Stygian, Shemitish, even Hyborian bloods. Smarts d6; +2 to Knowledge (occult) rolls; gets Arcane Background (magic) Edge for free.

TURANIAN

Turbaned men with hooked noses; veiled women with black hair. Agility d6, Smarts d6; +1 to Persuasion and Streetwise rolls.

VANIR

Red-haired ravagers and raiders in longships, with ring mail, horsehide shields, spears and swords. Strength d6; +1 to Riding and Swimming rolls.

VENDHYAN

Black-haired, light brown skin; shaven-headed priests, turbaned warriors. Spirit d6; +1 to Knowledge (Religion) and Notice rolls. The Vendyhan's Notice skill is special though in that he or she can use it to sense what a person's motive is (think old-school D&D, and the "Know Alignment" spell).

ZAMORAN

Deeply tanned with dark eyes, wearing loose-fitting robes. Smarts d6, +1 Charisma; +1 to Stealth (city only) and Streetwise rolls.

ZINGARAN

Tanned, curly-haired sailors and princelings, an admixture of Zingg Valley folk (possibly of Shemite origin), invading Picts, and Hyborian tribes. +2 Charisma; +1 to Notice and Swimming rolls.

**"YOU CANNOT ESCAPE ME!" HE
ROARED. "LEAD ME INTO A
TRAP AND I'LL PILE THE HEADS
OF YOUR KINSMEN AT YOUR
FEET! HIDE FROM ME AND I'LL
TEAR APART THE MOUNTAINS
TO FIND YOU! I'LL FOLLOW YOU
TO HELL!"**

-from The Frost Giant's Daughter

NAME YOUR CHARACTER (guidelines based on place of birth)

Country Name	Flavor	Examples
Aquilonia	Latin	Attalus, Banthus, Baraccus, Dexitheus, Dion, Emilius, Epeus, Flavius, Hadrathus, Junia, Lucian, Publius, Tuscelan, Servius, Vilerius
Argos	Greek	Arete, Dienikes, Doreion, Polynikes, Xeones
Asgard	Norse	Bragi, Egil, Gorm Heimdul, Horsa, Niord, Njal, Rann, Sigurd, Wulphere
Brythunia	Celtic	Aelric, Boudanecea, Eldran, Ellandune, Fyrdan, Godtan, Haral
Cimmeria	Celtic	Anga, Bodhrann, Bronwith, Chamta, Chulainn, Conan, Dietra, Milach, Rorik, Twyl
Corinthia	Latin	Dalius, Djuluva, Eldia, Hogistum, Kinna, Lemparius, Loganaro, Sovartus, Vitarius
Darfar	African	(see Kush)
Ghulistan	Afghan	Yar Afzal, Ashraf, Babur, Nader, Tahmasp
Hyperborea	Finnish	Kamoinen, Ilga, Louhi, Vammatar
Hyrkania	Mongol	Bartatua, Boria, Guyak, Kuchlug, Mazdak, Torgut
Iranistan	Arabic, Persian	Balash, Hakhmanni, Kobad, Nanaia, Sassan
Keshan	African	Bakumbe, Gorluga, Owarunga, Yelaya
Khitai	Chinese	Yah Chieng, Kang Hsiu, Kang Lou-dze, Leng Chi, Pra-Eun, Yo La-gu
Kosala	?	?
Koth	Latin	Amalric, Constantius, Ivga, Ivor, Salome, Strabonus, Taramis, Taurus, Thespides, Valerius, Vateesa, Yasmela
Kush	African	Aja, Ajonga, Bajujh, Bombaata, Bwatu, Gobir, Juma, Laranga, Saidu, Sakumbe, Yasala
Meru	Tibetan	Jalung, Thongpa, Tanzong Tengri
Nemedia	Latin	Alcimedes, Altaro, Amalric, Arideus, Astreas, Bragoras, Caranthes, Demetrio, Diana, Dionus, Enaros, Octavia, Ostorio, Posthumo, Promero
Ophir	Latin	Barras, Chelkus, Fronto, Garus, Marala
Pictland	?	Sagyetha, Zogar Sag
Shem	Assyrian, Babylonic, Semitic	Afrit, Aramas, Bêlit, Dathan, Eblis, Ebunezeb, Elohar, Enosh, Gilzan, Gomer, Isaiab, Mattenbaal, Mena, Nahor, Nitokar, Uriaz, Yin Allal, Zebah, Zillah
Stygia	Egyptian	Amnun, Bahotep, Ctesphon, Hakketh, Heterka, Hotep, Khafra, Khaza, Kutamun, Menemhet, Menkara, Nehekba, Ramwas, Shuat, Siptah, Thoth-Amon, Thothmekri, Thutmekri, Thutothmes, Tothapis, Tuthamon, Zeriti
Turan	Arabic, Turkish	Abdul, Aram Baksh, Atalis, Bakra, Banaric, Ghurran, Hamar Kur, Hormaz, Jamal, Jelal, Khalid, Mulai, Munthassen, Murad, Shapur, Tavik, Tureg, Vardan, Yezdigerd, Yildiz, Zosara
Vanaheim	Norse	(see Asgard)
Vendhya	Indian	Alyna, Bhunda Chand, Chunder Shan, Gitara, Jharim, Kandar, Karim, Naipal, Orissa, Patil, Punjar, Shahal, Vyndra, Yasmina
Zamora,	Middle- Eastern, Greek	Abuletes, Artanes, Atossa, Bartakes, Dinak, Eriakes, Feridun, Harpagus, Hattusas, Hissar, Kagul, Kilya, Lar, Mandana, Mithridates, Nyssa, Pariskas, Roxana, Rudabeh, Semiramas, Stahir, Tigranes, Tosya, Vardanes, Yara, Yazdates
Zembabwei	African	Lumbeba, Mbega, Mkwana, Nenaunir
Zingara	Spanish	Avvinti, Carico, Chabela, Cratos, Destandasi, Ferdrugo, Galbro, Gebellez, Godrigo, Gonzalvio, Julio, Kapellez, Korst, Marco, Mordermi, Murzio, Rimanendo, Rinnova, , Sancha, Sandokazi, Santiddio, Shevatas, Valbroso, Valenso, Valerio, Vancho, Velio, Zapayo

LANGUAGES

Each Wild Card gets his/her native tongue (**Knowledge (Language)**) for free at d8. After that, languages have to be purchased as **Knowledge (Language)** skill (1 point per die for a language **within** WC's root family group; 2 points per die for one outside). For fluency and literacy, see the following table:

<u>Die type</u>	<u>Level of fluency/literacy</u>
d4	Communication is possible, but only by supplementing the few words you know with hand gestures and strange noises.
d6	3 to 5 word sentences
d8	Relatively fluent, but your accent clearly identifies you as an outsider.
d10	Your accent is gone; people think you are a native.
d12	Literacy; you can both read and write this particular language.

There isn't a "common" tongue, per se, in the Hyborian Age. There are languages that are more regional in nature: in the north and west many people speak Aquilonian; in the south, Stygian can be heard on many tongues; eastward, Hyrkanian fills the air of the marketplace.

Now, if two people don't speak the same language, all is not necessarily lost. If their languages come from the same root family, each makes a Language skill check. If successful, they can understand the other person. This could lead to some funny role-playing opportunities: what if one person makes a successful skill check?

The main Hyborian languages, grouped by root family, are:

HYBORIAN

Aquilonian
Argossean
the argot of the Border Kingdom
Stygian
Corinthian
Nemedian
Ophirian

SHEMITISH

Kothic
Shemitish

VILAYET

Ghulistani
Iranistani

KHARI

Hyporborean
Khitan
Stygian

ATLANTEAN

Cimmerian
Nordheimr
Pictish

HYRKANIAN

Hyrkanian
Turanian

BLACK KINGDOMS

Amazonian
Darfari
Keshani
Kushite
Puntian
Zembabwan

VENDHYAN

Kosalan
Meruvian
Vendhyan

The remaining 3 main languages, Brythunian, Zamoran and Zingaran, are unrelated to any other tongues. There are also several ancient languages, which, while no longer spoken, are used in many arcane and diabolical writings. They include: Ancient Stygian, Acheronian, Atlantean, Lemurian and Valusian.

EDGES & HINDRANCES

There are no new Hindrances. There is one new Edge.

EDGES

Do not use *Professional Edges*. Replace them instead with *Character Archetypes* (see below).

Nothing But A Loincloth (Combat)

Novice, Wild Card, Agility d8+

This is for the warrior who wears “nothing but a loincloth” into battle. It grants the equivalent of Armor +2.

Improved Nothing But A Loincloth (Combat)

Heroic, Nothing But A Loincloth

Armor +4.

CHARACTER ARCHETYPES

What follows is a list of the common professions during the Hyborian Age. Use it as a guideline when choosing Hindrances, Edges and Skills

ADVENTURER

A wanderer who never knows where his next meal is coming from, or where he will lay his head.

ASSASSIN

Killers of men, these shadowy figures are often employed by the powerful in the more “civilized” parts of the world.

BANDIT

Always staying one step ahead of the law, the Bandit prowls the country-side.

ENTERTAINER

Actor or acrobat, juggler or bard, the entertainer lives and dies at the whim of the audience.

GRAVE ROBBER

As grim as the graves they plunder, these professional treasure hunters occasionally work for sorcerers.

KNIGHT

The Knights of Aquilonia and Poitain are valiant and true.

MERCENARY

His loyalty is tied to the fatness of his purse.

MERCHANT

Whether he shouts at passers-by from a stall in a bustling Hyborian town, or plies his wares on the Kings Road, the Merchant lives and dies at the whim of his customers.

PIRATE

Also referred to as a corsair, buccaneer or member of the Black Brotherhood, these bloodthirsty scoundrels sail the waters off the Black Coast.

PRIEST

Faith, for good or ill, is the source of the Priest's power.

SCHOLAR

For the Scholar, knowledge is more valuable than gold.

SCOUT

Said to have eyes like an eagle, the stars form the ceiling of the Scout's bedchambers.

SHAMAN

The priests of primitive cultures, Shamans are most often found in Pictland, across the frigid north, and in the Black Kingdoms.

SOLDIER

The Soldier's loyalty lies not with his country, but with his brothers-in-arms.

SORCERER

Steeped in mystery, this crafter of spells wields a power beyond the ken of mortal men.

SPY

A seller of information, the Spy calls no country home.

THIEF

The bandit's urban counterpart.

MAGIC

There two types of magic in the Hyborian Age: Sorcery (**Arcane Background (Magic)**) and Shamanism (**Arcane Background (Miracles)**). Most sorcerers are evil; most are priests (evil gods for most sorcerers, good for some). Shamans are the religious leaders for tribal communities in places like the Pictish Wilderness or the Black Kingdoms. Use the standard Powers in the SW rulebook. Trappings are up to the player, with setting guidance from the GM.

New Powers

DANCE OF THE CHANGING SERPENT (Shaman ONLY)

Rank	Cost	Rng	Duration	Effects
H	20	T	Permanent	Target's mind is placed within the body of a giant snake. Target is allowed a Spirits roll at -4 to resist. Available only to Pictish shamans.

TIMELINE-ATMOSPHERE

The Hyborian Age is **our** world, lost in the mists of pre- history. Howard based his stories in a pre-Cataclysmic (read: prior to the formation of the Mediterranean Sea), about 12-thousand years ago. Think Iron Age. There are no knights prancing around in ornately-detailed plate armour. Think more along the lines of a Roman cuirass and greaves. Ring, scale, and chain-mail armours are more common. Even more common are leathers and furs. Many Hyborian nations are known for a particular type of weaponry: the Aquilonian broadsword, Cimmerian greatsword, Turanian tulwar and Hykanian recurve bow, to name a few. Many of the lands to the east and south are arid and windswept. There the climate is unsuited to armour; swordsman prefer instead flowing robes and kaftas. As to when your game happens, that's up to you; perhaps Conan is sitting astride the throne of Aquilonia; mayhap he's a rogue prowling the streets of Arenjun.

**"...FREE MY HANDS
AND I'LL VARNISH THIS FLOOR
WITH YOUR BRAINS!"**

-from The Scarlet Citadel

MONEY

The closest thing to a common currency during the Hyborian age is the **Aquilonian luna**. There are gold, silver and bronze lunas. One gold luna is worth 10 silver lunas, each of which is worth a 100 bronze lunas. It is important to note though that each "civilized" country will have its own currency. Others trade in far darker commodities...such as human flesh.

EQUIPMENT

Wild Cards begin the game, in most cases, with nothing more than the clothes on their back and a simple weapon (but this can be altered depending upon your character's backstory, in consultation with the GM). When it comes to buying stuff, you can stick pretty close to the standard price lists contained in the SW rulebook: **Armor -Medieval Armor, Hand Weapons – Medieval**, substituting the *Tulwar* for *Saber (Cavalry)*; **Detailed Range Weapons – Medieval**, substituting Bossonian Bow for English Longbow. The **Mundane Items** list translates straight across. There is one **major** difference though: the listed prices are **not** in pieces of gold but instead in **silver Aquilonian lunas** in the case of Armor and Weapons; on the Mundane Items list they are in **bronze Aquilonian lunas**. Savage Hyboria isn't just low fantasy; it's also low cash. The following is a sampling of gear specific to the Thurian continent.

Name	Armor	Wt.	Cost	Covers	Notes
Turanian Mail	+3	15	100	T/A	
Aquilonian Plate Mail	+4	20	500	T/A	
Poitainian Full Plate	+6	45	1000	T/A/L	
Zamoran Shadow Leather	+2	10	100	T/A/L	Stealth +3
Northron Furs (a combination of fur and leather popular among the Vanir, Aesir, and Nordheimr; unsuitable for southron climes)	+2	15	25	T/A/L	
Hyperborean Mail	+2	15	150	T/A	+3 Power Points
Lemurian Banded Mail	+3	10	200	T/A	No Agility Penalty
Horned Helm (popular among the northron barbarians)	+1	5	50	H	Gore Attack (Str+1 dmg), but must then make Agility-1 check to keep the helm on.
Hand/Range Weapons	Dmg	Wt.	Cost	MinStr	Notes
Turanian Tulwar	Str+3	5	300	d6/d10	With min Str, 2-handed; if d10 or greater, can wield 1-handed
Aquilonian Broadsword	Str+3	5	400	d6	
Cimmerian Great Sword	Str+4	10	500	d10	2-handed weapon
Gunderland Pike	Str+4	30	60	d8	As per SW rulebook
Hyrcanian Double-Recurve Bow	3d6	10	400	d8	ROF 2/Requires Agility & Shooting d8/Range 20/40/80
Turanian Bow	5d4	12	500	d10	Requires Agility & Shooting d10/Range 30/50/100

A QUICK HISTORY LESSON

Before mankind, the empires of the serpent people spanned the jungles of the Thurian continent. It was a cruel world of dinosaurs, demons and sorcery, where pre-humans and other sentient races served as slaves to their reptilian masters. It passed (as all things do), giving rise to the first great human empire, the Khari, said to be as cruel as the serpent men before them. Others followed, spreading out across the Thurian continent: the empires and city-states of Atlantis, Lemuria, Kamelia, Valusia, Verulia, Grondar, Thule and Commoria. Then, 4,000 years before the time of Conan, came the Cataclysm. Seismic upheavals sank Atlantis beneath the Western Ocean. The Lemurian Isles also disappeared beneath the waters. The Lemurians though fled to the Thurian continent, only to be enslaved by the Khari. That evil empire survived the Cataclysm unscathed. For 1,500 years, the Lemurians toiled for the Khari in brutish slavery. Approximately 2,500 years before the present day, the Lemurians (the modern-day Hyrkansians) rose up and destroyed the Khari. The survivors fled west, founding the kingdom of Stygia. As a matter of fact, the scattered Khari founded three nations whose names still frighten children: Stygia, Hyperborea, and long-dead Acheron. For another 1,500 years, the Khari kingdoms ruled supreme. But, like the Romans millennia later, simple barbarians ended their rule. The Hybori tribes, forced out of the north by fierce competition with other tribes in the region, came south as a howling horde. Within a generation, they had wiped out Acheron, reduced Hyperborea to but a shadow of its former glory, and pushed Stygia deep into the south. For 1,500 years, the Hyborians have ruled the West.

NATIONS OF THE THURIAN CONTINENT

AQUILONIA

Symbol of might in the Hyborian Age, Aquilonia with her legendary armies of Bossonian archers, Gunderland pikemen and Poitanian knights, rules indisputably as the supreme military power of the Western world. More than any other kingdom, however, Aquilonia lies surrounded by grim and unrelenting enemies.

ARGOS

The major sea power of the Hyborian Age, proud Argos sweeps the western sea from Vanaheim to the Black Kingdoms. Wealthy beyond its size, Argos seldom lacks for funds either to war or to weave far reaching webs of intrigue as the situation dictates. Natural enemy of Zingara.

ASGARÐ

Blonde reavers of the icy north, the mailed warriors of the Aesir are held in check only by their equally ferocious kin the Vanir to the west, the grim Cimmerians southward, and by arcane Hyperborea to the east. Loosely organized, the clans await their forging to a cause, or a great captain of men, to spur them over the ice towards bright and bloody conquest!

BLACK KINGDOMS

The peoples of the Black Kingdoms are savages, who live in loosely organized tribes in crude villages hidden away in the jungles of the south. They are dotted with huge pre-Cataclysmic cities. Some are abandoned, empty ruins buried in impenetrable jungle; others retain small remnants of their original populations, sometimes horribly changed over the millennia; yet others are occupied by small groups of modern people who fled from the "civilized" lands and took refuge in the ancient citadels.

BORDER KINGDOMS

Serving as a buffer state between Nemedra and Brythunia and the more savage people of the north, the Border Kingdom was probably the last Hyborian nation to be founded. The country also

served as a trade route for merchants trying to avoid the strict taxes of Nemedra. A sad wilderness with deserted, disconsolate marshlands.

BRYTHUNIA

The land of plains and horse, the Brythunians have become a culture of hunters and farmers, ranging their wide, flat lands ahorse and unfettered. The Brythunian army carries forward this heritage with a large contingent of disciplined cavalry regiments. Still, Bruthunia is split and scattered into small, widely dispersed fiefdoms.

CIMMERIA

Grim. Moody. Grey-skied. The land of Crom amid hills and mountains. A warrior race, the Cimmerians are descendants of ancient Atlantis and only slowly coming again into the ways of civilization after contact with the Hyborian kingdoms. In battle the Cimmerians are unmatched in the darkly wooded hills of their homeland and few are the invading Aquilonian, Pictish, or Nordheim warriors who return from that grey land. A legacy of hatred runs strong amongst Cimmerians for their long time enemies, the Picts.

CORINTHIA

Secure behind high mountain passes lie the city states of Corinthia. Notable for their highly disciplined battle phalanxes and fearsome weaponry, including halberd and pike. However, the fractured city-states all pay tribute to mighty Koth.

DARFAR

The sharply-filed teeth of the Darfar savages haunt the dreams of even the boldest warriors who have faced them in screaming battle. Actually composed of a mix of various tribes, the Ghanata slave lords and the masked Tibu tribes foremost amongst them. Darfar gains its name from the scattered cannibalistic grassland tribes which most often provide the drive and leadership for empire. They worship the evil vampire-bat god, Yog; black-stained are his altars.

GHULISTAN

The fierce hillmen of Ghulistan are organized into loose clans. Life is cheap in the rugged hills north of Iranistan. Many bandits, and worse things, make their homes here.

HYPERBOREA

Cold and heartless, Hyperborea is ruled by grim, gaunt, albino nobles and by the sorcerously powerful witch-women. Safe within their high stone keeps on the snowy Hyperborean plain, the Hyperboreans wield power far beyond their meager resources and small army. Fortress of arcane power in the north, Hyperborea is a spiteful foe to Aquilonia and quite possibly the most dangerous kingdom of the Hyborian Age.

HYRKANIA

Savage horse tribes of the interior steppes, uncivilized in all but the arts of war at which they excel, the Hyrkanians move upon a shifting sea of unrest as turbulent as the fiery ponies upon which they ride. The Hyrkanian tribes war constantly amongst themselves, but when united under a great chief, they destroy armies as swiftly as their horse-archers can race across the endless flatlands which encompass them. Trained from childhood in horse and bow, the Hyrkanian cavalry has been called with good reason the finest horse-archers in the world.

IRANISTAN

The golden land south of the Ilbars mountains is widely, albeit sparsely inhabited. Ancient and rich, Iranistan uses the Afghuli and the Ilbars hillmen as border defenses to turn back the swift horse-archers of their long standing foes in Turan and Hyrkania.

KAMBUJA

Ruled by the god-king of the Scarlet Circle, deep in the jungle-girdled city of Angkhor crouches the hungry kingdom of Kambuja. The Kambujans are forever locked in war with neighbouring Khitai, whose great wizards, the dragon-sons, also contest on an arcane level. The Kambujan host fields huge war elephants, relied upon to smash the formations of Khitai in battle.

KESHAN

A kingdom of barbaric splendor, the Keshans are well led by nobles and religious leaders who claim descent from the great people of Alkmeenon. Keshan also has a well drilled army patterned after the Stygian military organization. While Stygian troops often raid into northern Keshan, Punt is Keshan's long standing and hereditary enemy.

KHAURAN

Rich in fertile meadowlands and at the center of trade in the Hyborian world, Khauran is a petty kingdom of abundant wealth. Khauran is well ruled by nobles of Kothic descent. The Khauranian nobles disdain the use of horse but hire mercenary cavalry troops as needed. Khauran is vassal to Koth.

KHITAI

An ancient empire, stronghold of the world's greatest wizards and masters of the eastern world, Khitai has a powerful army and a sound leadership based in Paikang, Shu-Chen and Ruo-Chen. Khitai is forever at war with Kambuja to the south, whose god-kings vie with them for supremacy in the arcane mysteries of the Scarlet Circle.

KHORAJA

Blessed with excellent leadership, a highly diverse and well trained army, a fertile land, and a location central to the rich southern and eastern trade routes, Khoraja is powerful beyond its tiny size. Khoraja is vassal to Koth.

KOSALA

The Kosalans are an ancient race, decadent but not grown soft. They are devoted to the worship of the god Yajur and their armies are an arm of their religious organization. The Kosalans are aided by ancient magics and a fanatical if untrained populace ever willing to fight and die in battle. Kosala from of old is tied with Vendhya through intermarriage and treaty and can expect no invasions from that quarter.

KOTH

Once the mainland of the forgotten empire of Acheron, Koth is now ruled by the mad Emperor Strabonus. While Khauran and Khoraja are historical vassals of Koth, Strabonus has also forced Ophir and Corinthia to pay tribute. It is whispered that the Emperor dabbles in forbidden magicks to fulfill his ambition: to restore the fallen empire of Acheron.

KUSAN

The westernmost Khitan kingdom, culturally advanced Kusan relies upon her excellent ambassadors and diplomats (easily the most adept politicians of the age) at least as much as upon her armies.

KUSH

The semi-civilized Black Kingdom of most common knowledge among people of the Hyborian nations is Kush. Proud Kush is seldom raided, the Stygians usually preferring to take their slaves from weaker Darfar or Keshan.

LEMURIA

Little is known of this mystic land far to the east, save its warriors would rather fall on their swords than face dishonour and their women do not speak.

MERU

Meru is an isolated land in the heart of the Himelian Mountains, its origins known only through legend. The people are ruled by red-robed, slant-eyed priests of the demon-king Yama.

MU

Home to the remnants of an Atlantean-era empire, little is known of this mysterious continent to the southeast of Hyboria.

NEMEDIA

Nemedia, the central pillar of Hyborian culture and civilization, stands ever in defiance to their habitual foes, mighty Aquilonia. The gleaming Nemedian knights are rightly proud for their army which is as diverse as it is deadly.

OPHIR

A Kingdom of great beauty with gilded knights and high towered cities, Ophir is protected by natural boundaries of mountain and river on all sides but to the south, which the Ophirians have well fortified. But the kingdom lacks the will to fight dominant Koth and has been forced to pay tribute to its mad Emperor.

PATHENIA

A frigid region north of Hyrkania, where the dreaded man-apes live. Home to the mountain stronghold of the priests of Erlik.

THE PICTISH WILDERNESS (PICTLAND)

Savage, warlike, brutish, persistently resistant to civilizing influences, the Picts inhabit the primal forest of the Pictish Wilderness. The tribes are constantly warring amongst themselves.

PUNT

The barbaric splendor of the kingdom which is Punt is based upon the bright yellow gold washed down off the central hills. Hereditary enemies of Keshan, Punt also mistrusts the growing power of Zembabwei. If these two foes can be kept at bay, and if a trade route can be established to the gold-hungry markets of the Hyborian world, then Punt may well emerge as supreme among the Black Kingdoms.

SHEM

The city states of Shem lie between the mad ambitions of Koth and the malignant arcane power of Stygia. The western Shemish states form a loose knit nation with Asgalun dominating its politics. The eastern Shemish states stand in alliance with each other and also with western Shem, creating a friendly eastern border. The Shemish Asshuri and the famous Shemish archers make Shem's armies very strong. Through mercenary service in over a dozen kingdoms of the western world, the Shemish generals have learned well the art of war.

STYGIA

Slumbering in her desert retreats, protected behind the mighty and brooding Styx river, lies Stygia. The ancient culture of Stygia is in decline, revolving in malignance about itself, but it is also the source of a great and evil sorcerous knowledge which may yet gain mastery over the Western world.

TURAN

Gleaming mailed and silken-clad riders, masters of the Vilayet Sea, Turan revels in sweeping the barely contested wastelands to the west and south. Turan, however, must bear the plague of a thousand frustrations arising from the seemingly indomitable and ever resurgent Kossaks, Zuagirs, and Vilayet pirates. Perpetually battling raiders and quelling revolts from a hundred pinpricking sources, the rulers of Turan pass their reign in unceasing watchfulness. Turan is a natural enemy to Iranistan and Vendhya, but stands in loose alliance with Hyrkania.

UTTARA KURU

Dismissed as a myth in most regions of the world, Uttara Kuru is a land of ancient magics, misty mountains, dense coastal forest, and the strange, haunting architecture of the city of Uttara Kuru. The people of this kingdom are fanatically loyal in defense of their homeland. Ancient enemy of great Vendhya.

VANAHEIM

The red-haired Vanir are isolated in the northwest and their mailed swordsmen therefore vent their warlike natures on their Asgardian kin to the east, the savage Picts to the south, or less often upon grim Cimmeria to the southeast. Many a hero of the Hyborian Age was of the Vanir and warriors of Vanaheim are known to be utterly fearless in combat.

VENDHYA

Vendhya is an ancient and proud kingdom, ruled by the Kashatriyan warrior caste and has mystics adept with their own peculiar range of magicks. Vendhya is pent up in the north by the savage and virtually unconquerable Ghulistan tribesmen. To the west lies Kosala, made unassailable by the well forged intermarriages between the two kingdoms. To the east broods Uttara Kuru whose silver-tongued diplomats and arrogant wizards have long held the weight of Vendhya at bay. As the huge Vendhyan host continues to swell in size, like a bubble it must burst forth into empire and the day of Vendhyan glory.

ZAMORA

Zamora is a land of spider-haunted towers and master thieves. The Zamoran army is adequate, but it is their spies and long-lived wizards upon which Zamora relies. What king not departed from his sanity will risk the intrigues of Zamora, or worse yet, her assassins? Zamora may indeed follow a shadowy path to world mastery with the aid of spells long forgotten and knives which strike swiftly in the dark.

ZEMBABWEI

A growing power in the southlands, vital Zembabwei is well led and armed. The Zembabwei command great flying reptiles found only in Zembabwei heartland. These soaring winged mounts strike terror into the hearts of all who behold them.

ZINGARA

The most powerful sea raiders next to their Argossean rivals, the Zingarans are active supporters of the Zingaran buccaneers (pirates by any other name). Zingara is a proud and rich land, though often torn by civil strife and bitter feuds between powerful members of its nobility.

**"DID YOU DEEM YOURSELF
STRONG, BECAUSE YOU WERE
ABLE TO TWIST THE HEADS OFF
CIVILIZED FOLK, POOR WEAKLINGS
WITH MUSCLES LIKE ROTTEN
STRING? HELL! BREAK THE NECK
OF A WILD CIMMERIAN BULL
BEFORE YOU CALL YOURSELF
STRONG. I DID THAT, BEFORE I
WAS A FULL-GROWN MAN...!"**

*-from *Shadows in Zamboula**

OF GODS AND MEN...

What follows are 2 selections dealing with the various deities of the Hyborian Age. The first is from *"The Official Handbook of the Conan Universe"* by Marvel Comics, and is more of an essay. The second is semi-complete list of the gods and goddesses worshiped across the Thurian continent. Please note there are no clerics, per se. Many sorcerers, though, align themselves with one god or another. You use whichever you feel most comfortable with, or a combination of the two, if that's what suits you.

The Hyborian world knew as many cults and religions as it knew tribesfolk and peoples, and religious practices and beliefs were as often the result of superstitious dread and sorcerous practices as of exalted spiritual yearnings and theological understanding.

In any case, the age bred few atheists, and even the most cynical of philosophers accepted the existence of greater beings, both good and evil, as a fundamental tenet of reality. Though the various individual gods were often worshipped within strict geographical boundaries, the age was thoroughly polytheistic, and it was a matter of course for nations to acknowledge the existence of rival deities to their own. The major exception to this rule was to be found among certain priests and adherents to the god Mitra who declared their deity to be the one true god, deserving of unwavering, monotheistic devotion.

Among the barbarian Aesir and Vanir of Nordheim, **Ymir the Frost Giant**, lord of storm and war, was chief of all gods, while individual tribes might have their own local deities as well. Ymir's domain was Valhalla, a snowy, shadowy place that was home to warriors fallen in battle; Ymir's daughter, **Atali**, was said to have appeared to dying warriors as harbinger of their journey to her father's realm.

The Cimmerians worshipped a grim and savage god, **Crom**, Lord of the Great Mountain, who cared little for mankind save to breathe into men's souls the power to strive and slay. The Cimmerians believed in a shadowy afterlife in which the souls of the dead would wander Crom's grey realm aimlessly for all eternity.

The Hyperboreans to the east worshipped ancient **Bori**, while west of Cimmeria, the Picts served **Jhebbal Sag**, the "ancient god of darkness and fear", as well as the **Ghost Snake** and **Gullah** the gorilla-god. Unlike the Cimmerians, the Picts had no aversion to human sacrifice, and their black altars were permanently stained with the gore of men, women and children.

In the kingdoms of Aquilonia, Argos, Ophir, Nemedra and Zingara, south of Nordheim and Cimmeria, **Mitra** worship was almost universal, rivaled here and there only by cults of small numbers such as that of **Asura**, **Ibis**, **Ishtar**, and even, to some degree, the Stygian serpent-god, Set. Unlike the battle-minded gods of the north, Mitra was a gentle god. Blood sacrifice was expressly forbidden in the Mitran religion, the rituals of which were marked by simplicity, dignity, and beauty. Unlike pagan idols, the statues of Mitra were mere emblems meant to represent the god in idealized form and *not* to be worshipped themselves.

Koth, which at one time knelt to Mitra, afterwards fell under the influence of Shem and Stygia and abandoned the gentle god for the more sensual rites of Ishtar, as did Khoraja and Khauran.

The city-states of Corinthia may each have had patron gods, though Mitra-worship was known there, as was the cult of **Anu** the bull-god.

Zamora, on the other hand, never accepted Mitra but played host rather to any number of weird and mysterious cults and divinities. Most notorious of them was **Bel**, the god of thieves, borrowed from the Shemites of Shumir, and most horrible was the nameless **spider-god of Yezud**, worshipped in the form of a giant tarantula sculpted in black stone.

The land of Shem also worshipped a plethora of divine beings, most of them fertility gods and goddesses as befitting an agricultural people. Each city-state owned its own patron deity such as Bel, noted earlier, and **Pteor**, the male sky-god, mate to the Earth-Mother; the latter appeared in several guises as **Ashtoreth**, **Derketo** and **Ishtar**. Ishtar, in particular, was worshipped in rich temples and at lavish shrines with rituals of blood sacrifice and orgiastic frenzy performed before sensuously carved idols of ivory.

To the Zuagir tribesmen of the Eastern Desert, **Yog**, the ancient demon Lord of the Empty Abodes, was considered most sacred.

South of Shem, in Stygia, **Set the Old Serpent** reigned paramount, a reminder of the Elder Gods worshipped everywhere in the pre-human period of history and later feared in the Hyborian kingdoms as the most abhorrent and foul of demons. Indeed, the gruesome rituals of Set worship, carried out in temple, tomb and pyramid, and including live human sacrifice and sorcerous obscenities, only underscored the reason why Set's very name evoked disgust and terror among civilized and barbarian peoples alike.

Among the Black Kingdoms Set held some sway, but native gods such as **Jullah**, **Jhil** and **Gwahlur** had large followings of their own, as did countless local demons and spirits.

Turan in the east held **Erlík** and the **Living Tarim** as holiest of gods, while Zamboula bowed to **Hanuman** the horrible man-ape god.

Farther east in Kosala, the cult of **Yajur** offered their bloodthirsty god strangled humans, while in Khitai **Yun** seems to have been worshipped less violently with incense and prayer.

A LISTING OF SOME OF THE KNOWN HYBORIAN GODS

Adonis: A Shemite God.

Aiuio: Also called "The Dark One." He is a god of southern Stygia and the Black Coast.

Anu: A god or goddess worshipped in Zamora.

Ashtoreth: A Shemite god or goddess. Handmaiden of Ishtar.

Asura: The god or goddess worshipped by the king of Vendhya. In the northern lands, this religion was persecuted by others. There, the temples were hidden and the rituals kept secret. Common belief had them as human sacrificers to some snake-god. They were particularly hated by the followers of Mitra. The dead followers of Asura were carried on specially-painted pilgrim ships to some place far to the south. No one interfered with these boats.

Atali: A daughter of the god Ymir, she mocked those dying on battlefields of the north, luring them to be slain by her brothers as sacrifices to their father.

Bel: The god of thieves. He is a Shemite god, born in ancient Shumir.

Bori: The god of the Gundermen before their conversion to Mitra. Most likely this god was the great chief of the Hybori, altered by time.

Bragi: A northern god of the Vanir or Aesir, associated with wolves.

Crom: The main god of the Cimmerians, he is a harsh and unhelpful god. He lives in a great mountain, and breaths spirit into men at birth. He cares nothing for his followers, being likely to send doom and death to any who call on him. His afterlife is a land of ice, cloud and mist. Crom is the only identified Cimmerian god, although warriors of that grim land have been heard to call on others such as **Babd, Macha, Mannigan, Morrigan,** and **Nemain.**

Dagon: A god worshipped by the Zembabweians.

Derketo: Goddess of Shem, Kush, Stygia, servant of Set, she is called the “Queen of the Dead.” Derketo is goddess of lust, and her worship revolves around carnal rituals.

Erlík: A Turanian god with an evil reputation, he is known by many names, including “the Flame-Lord” and “Yellow God of Death.” His priests shave their heads, and worshippers file their teeth.

Four Brothers of the Night: Some type of wood spirit of Pictland.

Gullah: The gorilla god of the Picts. He is also called “the Hairy One who lives on the moon.”

Jhebbal Sag: Ancient god of darkness and fear of the Picts. Beast-master.

Hanuman: An ape-god who may have been a god of the people of Grondar. His temples have a black altar holding his image, where he receives human sacrifices.

Ishtar: The “Earth-Mother.” Goddess of Shem.

Louhi: The evil god of the Hyperboreans. Fond of human sacrifice, Louhi rules through the Wizards of the White Hand.

Living Tarim: Prophet of Erlík. Responsible for bringing the faith of Erlík, the Flame-Lord down from Pathenia, founding the Turanian Empire.

Mitra: A benevolent god who demands much of his worshippers. Worshipped widely in Aquilonia. According to Mitraic belief, each person is called to a virtuous life, and expected to follow the tenets of the faith of Mitra, including truthfulness, honor, and trustworthiness. Telling a lie or betraying a friend are mortal sins. His priests must remain celibate and abstain from all alcohol, as they wage war on their most ancient foe, the serpent-god Set.

Set: God of Stygia and the Black Kingdoms (where he is known as Damballah), Old Father Set the Serpent controls the faithful through fear and manipulation. His priests deny themselves all material pleasures (including wine, women and song) in return for power. Mortal enemy of Mitra.

Ymir: The Frost Giant. A huge man with snow-white skin and a flaming red beard, clad in frost-rimed chain mail, a horned helm and wielding a huge axe. God of the Vanir, Aesir, and Nordheimr. The Lord of Storm and War’s castle is said to be located in the far north of Vanaheim.

Yog: Yoggites, as Yog’s faithful are called, are exclusively carnivorous. Worse still, unless they consume human flesh at least once a month, they are considered unclean. Worshipped primarily in Darfar, the vampire-bat god’s minions are widely feared.

Yama: God of the Meruvians. Called the King of the Devils of Vendhya, Yuma is a six-limbed demonic being with a beast's head.

Zath: The best known of the Zamoran deities, the spider god of Yezud is said by his priests to walk the earth. It is rumoured many giant spiders live in tunnels beneath the temple of Zath in Yezud.

"CROM, I HAVE NEVER PRAYED TO YOU BEFORE. I HAVE NO TONGUE FOR IT. NO ONE, NOT EVEN YOU, WILL REMEMBER IF WE WERE GOOD MEN, OR BAD. WHY WE FOUGHT, OR HOW WE DIED. NO, ALL THAT MATTERS IS, THAT TWO STOOD AGAINST MANY. THAT'S WHAT'S IMPORTANT. VALOUR PLEASES YOU CROM, SO GRANT ME ONE REQUEST, GRANT ME REVENGE! AND IF YOU DO NOT LISTEN, THEN TO HELL WITH YOU!"

-from Conan the Barbarian



THE ADVENTURING LIFE

The following adventure tables allow a GM to run a game without a pre-planned scenario. Each day, players choose from one of four activities: *Wenching*, *Thieving*, *Enlisting*, or *Exploring*. The GM then rolls on the appropriate table.

WENCHING

Typically done in the larger towns and cities of Hyboria, Wild Cards prowl the taverns, inns and other local houses of ill-repute in search of merriment. For each day spent *Wenching*, roll 1d6 to determine the *type* of luna frittered (1-3=bronze; 4-5=silver; 6=gold), then roll 1d4 to determine the *number* of luna spent. If that should exceed the number of luna the WC has, 1d6 city guard/town militia show up to throw him/her into debtor's prison. Each day the party spends *Wenching*, draw a card. If it's a face card, roll 3d10 and consult the following table:

3d10 what

- 3 You are accused of thievery, but are innocent.
- 4 You are accused of thievery, and you are guilty
- 5 You kill someone.
- 6 Someone tries to kill you.
- 7 Nothing of consequence happens.
- 8 The locals take a liking to you (+1 Charisma, stackable, for the rest of your stay).
- 9 The locals take a disliking to you (-1 Charisma for the rest of your stay).
- 10 You seduce a local nobleman's offspring.
- 11 You get seduced by a local nobleman's offspring.
- 12 Find a treasure map (real).
- 13 Find a treasure map (fake).
- 14 You tick off a local merchant.
- 15 Local merchant takes a liking to you.
- 16 You hear of a plot to overthrow the local ruler.
- 17 You start a bar brawl.
- 18 You finish a bar brawl.
- 19 You tick off a local nobleman.
- 20 A local nobleman takes a liking to you.
- 21 Domestic animals seem to like you. 1d4x2 start following you around. Only some body with the Beastmaster Edge can make them stop.
- 22 You tick off a local priest.
- 23 A local priest takes a liking to you.
- 24 Local children (d6x2) start dogging your every step. Only by doing something really scary can you make them stop (make them fail a d6 Guts check).
- 25 Nothing of consequence happens.
- 26 You tick off a sorcerer.
- 27 A sorcerer takes a liking to you.
- 28 A squad of city guards/militiamen burst down the door of the drinking establishment you're currently in; they're there to arrest a complete stranger, who, as they grab him, shouts out and points at you, saying "It was he that supplied the poison I used!" The spearmen close in on you...
- 29 You feel evil eyes upon you (FALSE).
- 30 You feel evil eyes upon you (TRUE).

THIEVING

If done in a civilized area, we're talking classic rogues-in-the-night, knife-in-the-back, rope-and-grapnel-over-the-garden-wall skullduggery. If out in the countryside, it's banditry at it's most primeval. Roll on the following tables:

URBAN

d20 what

- 1 A rich merchant is walking the streets of the rough side of town unescorted (TRUE)
- 2 A rich merchant is walking the streets of the rough side of town unescorted (FALSE – it's a trap laid by the local thieves' guild)
- 3 You hear of a tower in which a fabulous gem is kept. In the gardens at its base prowl creatures of nightmare. And it's home to a sorcerer, to boot.
- 4 A note is pinned to the door of your room at the inn. Scrawled on it in blood is the following: Meet me tonight at the fountain to discuss an endeavour that will be mutually beneficial. (TRUE).
- 5 A note is pinned to the door of your room at the inn. Scrawled on it is the following: Meet me tonight at the fountain to discuss an endeavour that will be mutually beneficial. (FALSE – it's an ambush)
- 6 A gem-studded statue is on public display at a local museum. It belongs to the wife of a local noble. It's a fake (detectable by someone with Knowledge (Jewellery)).
- 7 A golden idol belonging to a fat merchant has gone missing; he offers a sizable reward for its safe return (TRUE)
- 8 A golden idol belonging to a fat merchant has gone missing; he offers a sizable reward for its safe return (FALSE – he had it stolen himself, and will plant it on the Wild Cards at his earliest opportunity, before calling in the city guards)
- 9 Oops! While relieving him or herself, a noble drops a gemstone the size of a small child's fist down a latrine. To collect the sizable reward all you have to do is take a trip to the sewers...
- 10 The local lord's crown has been stolen! The reward for its return is 100 gold lunas! (It's actually worth much more than that...)
- 11 A shipment of black lotus is arriving tonight (TRUE).
- 12 A shipment of black lotus is arriving tonight (FALSE).
- 13 A nobleman's representative approaches you in a shady tavern asking that you rescue his daughter from kidnappers (TRUE)
- 14 A nobleman's representative approaches you in a shady tavern asking that you rescue his daughter from kidnappers (FALSE – it's a trap; when the Wild Cards find her, they discover her already dead, and the city guard waiting)
- 15 What started as a simple mugging goes sideways! After knocking your mark senseless, and relieving her of 1d4 silver lunas, the local thieves guild shows up (d6), and they're **not** happy!
- 16 You hear a rumour, a fat merchant has left the side gate to his compound open this evening, to allow entry to his favourite courtesan (TRUE – the compound itself though is heavily guarded, and there are many traps).
- 17 You hear a rumour, a fat merchant has left the side gate to his compound open this evening, to allow entry to his favourite courtesan (FALSE – it's a trap to catch the greedy; heavily-armed guards lay in ambush).
- 18 The priests at the local temple are away on a great pilgrimage, leaving only a few old men and boys between you and untold riches (TRUE)
- 19 The priests at the local temple are away on a great pilgrimage, leaving only a few old men and boys between you and untold riches (FALSE)
- 20 Kidnap the daughter of a rich merchant for the local thieves' guild, earning 50 gold lunas (or keep her and collect the 500 luna ransom yourself)

RURAL

d20 what

- 1 d4 Farmers on their way to market, driving their oxen afore them. Their carts are piled high with the fruit of their labours. The farmers will have 1d12 bronze luna amongst them. But they may (50% chance each) have their wives or children (25% chance each; 1d4 kids, 50% chance male or female) with them. Their wares, be it melons or wheat, are worth 1d4 gold lunas **per** farmer on the black market. Their children or wives? Who would dare traffic in such wares?
- 2 A rich nobleman (d6)
 - 1 Alone
 - 2-6 With guards
- 3 Wealthy land-owner (d6)
 - 1 Alone
 - 2-6 With guards
- 4 Encampment (d6)
 - 1-2 Soldiers
 - 3-5 Merchants
 - 6 Bandits

(if merchants – d6)

 - 1d4 Merchant(s)
 - 1-2 Alone
 - 3-6 With Guards
- 5 1d20 Soldiers (if more than 10, there will be **one** officer)
- 6 1d12 Elite Soldiers (e.g. in Aquilonia, the King's personal guard, the Black Dragons)
- 7 1d4 harmless women (each carrying 1d6 bronze lunas, wearing 1d4 worth of cheap jewelry)
- 8 1d4 "harmless" women (actually she-wolf bandits who will make the players pay dearly)
- 9 An old man wandering aimlessly down a dusty track (TRUE)
- 10 An old man wandering aimlessly down a dusty track (FALSE – he's actually a powerful sorcerer just waiting for a mark)
- 11 Farm (sneak in, steal some stuff...**try** not to kill anyone)
- 12 Estate (d6) **SEE FARM**
 - 1-4 Wealthy landowner
 - 5-6 Nobility

Roll a further d6 to determine if the owner is home; 1-5 home, 6 not home
- 13 d4 Priest(s) (d6)
 - 1-2 Alone
 - 3-6 With acolytes, etc.

(30% chance they're transporting a precious relic worth 1d100 gold lunas)
- 14 A quaint country inn...a quiet game of cards. Use the Gambling Rules, except cheating **isn't** optional (the Wild Cards **have** to cheat).
- 15 You intercept a shipment of black lotus (TRUE – go ahead, try to move it)
- 16 You intercept a shipment of black lotus (FALSE – it's not the real stuff, and, once you make the delivery, the s__t hits the fan ☺)
- 17 A rural temple; who knows what riches lay within?
- 18 The tower of a reclusive sorcerer
- 19 You decide to spend the day at a crossroads trying to make a few luna as a mountebank. Your game of choice? 3 shells and a pea. Use the Gambling rules in the SW rulebook (as per 14, cheating **isn't** optional).
- 20 A tax collector with d4 guards spends the night in a rustic inn at a scenic crossroads. Relieve him of the chest filled with d100 gold lunas he's transporting.

Following each act of larceny, draw a card. A face card means the local constabulary has been alerted (what that means exactly depends on the circumstances of the encounter, e.g. if its urban or rural, is it a robbery, is it a kidnapping, etc.). A successful Streetwise roll evades the run-in with the law; a successful -2 Persuasion roll allows the WC's to talk their way out of bad stuff. So what happens if the WC's do too much bad stuff in a given town, city or country? That is up to the GM and players.

ENLISTING (only in countries where there's an actual "standing" army or navy)

Can only happen in town or city big enough to have a recruitment center. It's as simple as "taking the king's luna" (or whatever the local form of currency is). It's a ceremony whereby the enlistee actually takes a coin, bites it, leaving an impression, then gives it back to the recruiting officer, who throws it into a locked strongbox. There's also the signing of a document of transcript (on which the wanna-be soldier makes his or her mark; but it's far less binding than the actual coin-biting ceremony is). Each tour of duty is 30 days, for which the new recruit receives 2 gold lunas. On each day, shuffle and draw a card from your Action Deck. If it's a face card, our recruit sees action. How big the combat is determined by two things: the discretion of the GM, and what rank the soldier is. It can range all the way from a minor skirmish (1d20 participants aside) between Picts and settlers in the Westermarck all the way to the defense of a Stygian outpost on the Darfarian border or siege of a castle in the Aquilonian province of Poitain (both using the *Mass Battle* rules from the SW rulebook). After each month of service, roll on the following table:

d20 what

- 1-6 Dishonourably discharged (may **not** re-enlist)
- 7-19 Summarily discharged (may re-enlist)
- 20 Promoted

Wild Cards with **any** Leadership Edge get a +1 to their roll. If promoted, the WC gains command of a certain number of soldiers:

1st promotion=8 soldiers (squad)

RANK: Sergeant/Umbashi (pay=3 lunas/mo)

2nd promotion=30 soldiers (platoon)

RANK: Lieutenant/Arban (pay=4 lunas/mo)

3rd promotion=100 soldiers (company)

RANK: Captain/Cagun (pay=5 lunas/mo) *at this rank, a WC enlisted in a navy gains command of a ship*

4th promotion=500 soldiers (battalion)

RANK: Major/Minghan (pay=6 lunas/mo)

5th promotion=2000 soldiers (brigade)

RANK: Colonel/Tumen (pay=7 lunas/mo)

6th promotion=8000 soldiers (division)

RANK: Major General/Amir Alai (pay=8 lunas/mo)

7th promotion=33000 soldiers (corps)

RANK: Lieutenant General/Tarkhan (pay=9 lunas/mo)

8th promotion=50000 soldiers (army)

RANK: General/Khan (pay=103 lunas/mo)

Following the word RANK above is the name, both Western and Eastern, of the associated rank, including the rate of pay, in Aquilonian lunas.

EXPLORATION

The fourth, and final, way to randomly enjoy Hyboria is through exploration. It's done using the following location-dependent *Random Encounter* system.

RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLES

Each day the party spends outside a town or city, drawn a card from your action deck. If it's a face card, an encounter occurs. Roll on the appropriate encounter card for that area. If a Joker comes up, roll twice – the adventurer(s) run into two things at once. Yes, there are some areas on the map I also included **not** covered off. You figure it out.

VANAHEIM, ASGARÐ, NORÐHEIM

<u>d20</u>	<u>encounter</u>
1-2	Hazard: Blizzard
3-8	1d12 Raiders (if more than 6, there will be one d8 leader)
9-10	Hazard: Avalanche
11-14	Wolves (roll a d6) 1-4 d8 normal wolves 5-6 d4 giant white wolves
12-16	Bears (roll a d6) 1-5 d4 polar bears 6 cave bear
17-18	Hazard: Ice Crevasse
19	Remoraz (1)
20	Frost Giant (1d4)

HYPERBOREA

<u>d10</u>	<u>encounter</u>
1	Ice Witch
2	White Hand Wizard
3	Hazard: Blizzard
4	1d4 White Hand Assassins
5	Ruins
6	Hazard: Ice Crevasse
7	Event: Ambush (d12 Raiders)
8	Wild Animals (d6) 1-4 Wolves (d12) 5-6 Polar Bears (d4)
9	Remora
10	Ice Demon

PICTISH WILDERNESS

d20	encounter
1-3	1d20 Picts (warband; if more than 12, there will also be a shaman)
4	Hazard: Quicksand
5	1d4 Chaken (if more than 1, roll a 6-sided die; on a 6, these chaken are being used by the Picts as assassins)
6	1d12 Settlers
7	1d4 Foresters (Stealth d12, Survival d10)
8	1d6 Bossonian Archers (Shooting d12)
9-10	Hazard: Storm
11-12	Event: Battle (d6) 1-4 Grisly aftermath 5-6 Still in progress
13-14	Wild Animals (d10) 1-3 Boars (d4) 4-6 Wolves (d8) 7-8 Bear (roll a d6; on a 6 it's a cave bear) 9-10 Mastodon
15-16	Pictish Village (This is a BAD thing)
17	Ambush (1d8 Picts; Stealth d12)
18	Hazard: Poison Water
19	Ghost Snake
20	Grey Devil

CIMMERIA

d8	encounter
1	d8 Raiders (d8) 1-2 Vanir 3-4 Asgard 5-6 Gundermen 7-8 Border Kingdom
2	d4 Cimmerian Hunters
3	Shaman of Crom
4	Wild Animals (d10) 1-4 Wolves 5-8 Wild Boar 9-10 Bear (d6) 1-5 Normal 6-Cave
5	d12 Picts (raiding party; if more than 5 there's a warleader; if more than 10, 60% chance there's shaman of Jhebbal Sag)
6	d12 Cimmerian Warriors
7	Event: Battle (d6) 1-4 Grisly aftermath 5-6 Still in progress
8	Hazard: Storm

AQUILONIA

d20 encounter

- 1 d10 Bandits
 - 2 Hazard: Storm
 - 3 d12 Soldiers
 - 4 d8 Elite Soldiers (e.g. *the Black Dragons*)
 - 5-6 Merchant(s) (d6)
 - 1-2 Solo
 - 3-4 Traveling with small retinue
 - 5-6 Caravan
 - 7 Event: Ambush (d6)
 - 1-2 On you!
 - 3-4 In progress
 - 5-6 Grisly aftermath
 - 8 Press Gang
 - 9 d12 Bossonian Archers (Bossonian Marches **only**; re-roll elsewhere)
 - 10 d12 Pilgrims
 - 1-5 Mitra
 - 6 Ishtar
 - 11 Priest of Mitra
 - 12 Entertainers (d8)
 - 1-2 Travelling faire
 - 3-4 Musicians
 - 5-6 Acrobats/jugglers
 - 7-8 Actors
 - 13 Nobleman (d6)
 - 1-2 Travelling alone
 - 2-6 With entourage and guards
 - 14 d6 Escapees
 - 15 Free Company (d20 Mercenaries)
 - 16 d6 Farmers
 - 17 d12 Gunderland Pikemen (Gunderland **only**; re-roll elsewhere)
 - 18 d4 Deserters
 - 19 Tax Collector (w/d6 guards)
 - 20 d6 Poitainian knights
-

BORDER KINGDOM, NEMEDIA, BRYTHUNIA

2d8 encounter

- 2 d20 Cimmerian Raiders
- 3 Hazard: Marsh
- 4 Warlock
- 5 Event: Battle (d6)
 - 1-4 Grisly aftermath
 - 5-6 Still in progress
- 6 Free Company (d20 Mercenaries)
- 7 d4 Deserters
- 8 Priest of Mitra
- 9 Nobleman (d6) (Nemedia & Brythunia **only**; re-roll if Border Kingdom)
 - 1-2 Travelling alone
 - 3-6 With entourage and guards
- 10 d10 Bandits
- 11 Press Gang
- 12 Event: Ambush
 - 1-2 On you!

- 3-4 In progress
 - 5-6 Grisly aftermath
 - 13 d12 soldiers
 - 14 d8 Nemedian Knights (Nemedias **only**; if elsewhere, warriors of quality)
 - 15 d12 Pilgrims
 - 1-5 Mitra
 - 6 Ishtar
 - 16 Local militia
-

OPHIR, CORINTHIA, KOTH, KHORAJA, KHAURAN, SHEM

- | <u>d20</u> | <u>encounter</u> |
|------------|--|
| 1 | d8 Slavers |
| 2 | d12 Shemitish archers |
| 3 | Gypsies (d6) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-2 Single wagon 3-4 2d4 wagons 5-6 1d10 wagons |
| 4 | Hazard: Sandstorm (Shem only; re-roll if anywhere else) |
| 5 | Free Company (d20 Mercenaries) |
| 6 | Hazard: Avalanche (Khoraja only; re-roll if anywhere else) |
| 7-9 | Merchant(s) (d6) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-2 Solo 3-4 Traveling with small retinue 5-6 Caravan |
| 10 | Ruins |
| 11 | Hazard: Active Volcano |
| 12-13 | Tax Collector (w/d6 guards) |
| 14 | d8 elite soldiers (Shemish <i>Asshuri</i> , Ophirian knights; elsewhere, warriors of quality) |
| 15 | Priest (<i>If in Shem, of Derketo; elsewhere, Ishtar</i>) |
| 16 | Pilgrims (d6) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-5 Ishtar 6 Mitra |
| 17 | d12 Zuagir Raiders |
| 18-19 | Red Crescent Witch |
| 20 | d10 Bandits |
-

ZINGARA, ARGOS

- | <u>d12</u> | <u>encounter</u> |
|------------|--|
| 1 | d8 Slavers |
| 2 | Hazard: Storm |
| 3 | d4 Fishermen |
| 4 | d8 Ghouls |
| 5 | d10 Pirates (in Zingara, they are called <i>Zingaran buccaneers</i> , and sanctioned by the state) |
| 6 | Hazard: Marsh |
| 7 | d6 Knights (Zingara only ; re-roll if in Argos) |
| 8 | Giant Slug |
| 9 | Event: Ambush <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-2 On you! 3-4 In progress |

- 5-6 Grisly aftermath
 - 10 Free Company (d20 Mercenaries)
 - 11 Giant Spider
 - 12 Ruins
-

ZAMORA

d12 encounter

- 1 Bounty Hunter
 - 2 Assassin
 - 3 Slavers (d6)
 - 1-3 Raiders (d8)
 - 4-6 Caravan
 - 4 Event: Ambush (d6)
 - 1-2 On you!
 - 3-4 In progress
 - 5-6 Grisly aftermath
 - 5 d4 Giant Spiders
 - 6 Priest of Zath
 - 7 d4 Ghouls
 - 8 Press Gang (but in Zamora, it's not for the army; it's for the Arenjun Thieves' Guild)
 - 9 d10 Bandits
 - 10 d12 Soldiers (who will try to extort "protection" money from the players, this being Zamora and all)
 - 11 Ruins
 - 12 Cave(s) (d8)
 - 1-5 Bear
 - 6-7 Thieves' Hideout
 - 8 Ancient Tomb (d6)
 - 1-5 1d8 gold luna worth of loot
 - 6 Some horrible undead creepy-crawly (GM's discretion)
-

TURAN, HYRKANIA, KUSAN

d12 encounter

- 1 d20 Kozaki (if more than 10, there will be 1 *hetman*)
- 2 d10 Horse Warriors
- 3 d12 Zuagir Raiders
- 4 Priest of Erlik (Hyrkania **only**; re-roll if anywhere else)
- 5 Hazard: Sand Storm
- 6 Merchant Caravan
- 7 d4 Grey Ape
- 8 Hazard: Dust Storm
- 9 Event: Crucifixion
- 10 Ruins
- 11 Hazard: Tornado
- 12 Event: Ambush (d6)
 - 1-2 On you!
 - 3-4 In progress
 - 5-6 Grisly aftermath

VILAYET SEA

d10 encounter

- 1 d4 Fishermen
 - 2 Hazard: Storm
 - 3 d12 Red Brotherhood
 - 4 Deserted island with strange monoliths
 - 5 Hazard: Whirlpool
 - 6 Sea Serpent
 - 7 Island populated by cannibal pygmies
 - 8 Man clinging to both life and a scrap of wood; just as he breathes his last breath, he gives the players a treasure map (50% chance it's legit)
 - 9 Underwater ruins (the towers of an ancient city protrude from the water)
 - 10 A deserted island where bleached, white bones are more numerous than grains of sand on the beach. That's because a now (very) hungry giant slug calls it home.
-

STYGIA

d12 encounter

- 1 Sorcerer of the Black Circle
 - 2 1-2 (d4, 1-2=1; 3-4=2) Children of Set
 - 3 Priest of Set
 - 4 d6 Black Scorpion(s) of Stygia
 - 5 Hazard: Deep Jungle
 - 6 Hazard: Quicksand
 - 7 Giant Snake (d6)
 - 1-3 Constrictor
 - 4-6 Venomous
 - 8 Golden Serpent
 - 9 d12 soldiers
 - 10 Lotus (d6)
 - 1-2 Black
 - 3-4 Yellow
 - 5-6 Purple
 - 11 d10 bandits
 - 12 Ollam Onga
-

KUSH, DARFAR, KESHAN, PUNT, ZEMBABWEI, AND THE BLACK KINGDOMS

d20 encounter

- 1 Yothga
- 2-4 Hazard: Thick Jungle
- 5 d4 Lion(s)
- 6 Priest

If in Kush, a priest of Derketo; if in Zembabwei, Dagon; elsewhere it is Damballah, the name Old Father Set is known by in the Black Countries.
- 7 Ruins
- 8 The Crawler
- 9 Hazard: Quicksand
- 10 d4 Crocodile(s)
- 11 Giant Crocodile
- 12 d4 Wyvern(s) of Zembabwei (d6)
 - 1-4 With riders

- 5-6 Wild; WC with Beastmaster edge can attempt to tame them, making them rideable, at -1
- 13 Hazard: Swarm (tiny biting insects; **can** cause infection, GM's discretion)
- 14-15 d12 Tribesman (d6)
 1-5 Zulu-types
 6 Darfarian cannibals
- 16 Lotus (d6)
 1 Purple
 2-4 Black
 5-6 Yellow
- 17 Servant of Bit-Yakin (Keshan **only**; re-roll elsewhere)
- 18 Golden Serpent
- 19 Mysterious cave complex (d8)
 1-4 Wild animal's lair
 5-6 Slavers' hideout
 7 "Dragon" 's lair
 8 Cult of Ollam Onga
- 20 "Dragon"

IRANISTAN (incl. Drujistan)

d12 encounter

- 1 Pilgrims
- 2 d12 Pikemen
- 3 d10 Hillmen
- 4 Event: Ambush (d6)
 1-2 On you!
 3-4 In progress
 5-6 Grisly Aftermath
- 5 Free Company (d20 mercenaries)
- 6 Nobleman (d6)
 1 Traveling solo
 2-3 Small entourage
 4-6 With all the fixin's (opulent tents, harem, slaves, etc.)
- 7 Merchant(s)
 1 Traveling solo
 2-3 d4 companions
 4-6 Camel caravan
- 8 Hazard: Storm (d6)
 1-5 Forces heroes to seek shelter for d4 hours
 6 Causes deadly flash flooding
- 9 Priest of Erlik
- 10 Hazard: Badlands (slows travel to a crawl; mounts have to be walked)
- 11 Event: A bedraggled group of women claiming to be the former harem of a cruel lord. They beg your help!
- 12 Black Seer of Yimsha

GHULISTAN, MERU

d10 encounter

- 1 Hazard: Avalanche
 - 2 d10 Hillmen
 - 3 Thog (Meru **only**; re-roll elsewhere)
 - 4 Hazard: Swarm (tiny biting insects; **can** cause infection, GM's discretion)
 - 5 Merchant(s)
 - 1 Traveling solo
 - 2-3 d4 companions
 - 4-6 Camel caravan
 - 6 Hazard: Crevasse
 - 7 Priest of Yama (Meru **only**; re-roll elsewhere)
 - 8 Black Seer of Yimsha (Ghulistan **only**; re-roll elsewhere)
 - 9 Event: Ambush (d6)
 - 1-2 On you!
 - 3-4 In progress
 - 5-6 Grisly Aftermath
 - 10 Ruins
-

KOSALA, VENDHYA, UTTARA KURU

d12 encounter

- 1 Hazard: Thick Jungle
 - 2 Lotus (d6)
 - 1-3 Black
 - 4-5 Yellow
 - 6 Gray
 - 3 Hazard: Quick Sand
 - 4 Yothga
 - 5 Hazard: Swarm (tiny biting insects; **can** cause infection, GM's discretion)
 - 6 Wild Animal(s) (d6)
 - 1-4 Monkeys (more of an annoyance)
 - 5-6 d4 Elephant(s)
 - 6 Tiger
 - 7 Hazard: Quick Sand
 - 8 Giant crocodile
 - 9 Merchant(s)
 - 1 Traveling solo
 - 2-3 d4 companions
 - 4-6 Camel caravan
 - 10 Priest of Asura (Vendhya **only**; re-roll elsewhere)
 - 11 Golden Serpent
 - 12 Hazard: Swamp
-

KHITAI, KAMBUJA, LEMURIA

d12 encounter

- 1 Wizard of the Scarlet Circle
- 2 Hazard: Swamp
- 3 Event: Ambush
 - 1-2 On you!
 - 3-4 In progress
 - 5-6 Grisly Aftermath
- 4 d12 Pilgrims
- 5 Yothga

- 6 Golden Serpent
 - 7 d12 Soldiers
 - 8 Hazard: Quicksand
 - 9 d4 Bryluka
 - 10 Lotus (d6)
 - 1-3 Black
 - 4-5 Yellow
 - 6 Gray
 - 11 d6 Monks (d6)
 - 1-5 holy men devoted to a life of simplicity
 - 6 fierce warriors capable of killing with their hands and feet
 - 12 Ruins
-

WESTERN OCEAN, BLACK COAST, SOUTHERN SEA, AND THE EASTERN OCEAN

d12 sea encounters

- 1 Sea Serpent
- 2 d12 Pirates
- 3 d20 Black Corsairs (Black Coast **only**; re-roll elsewhere)
- 4 Hazard: Storm
- 5 d4 Fishermen
- 6 Hazard: Whirlpool
- 7 Becalmed! (for d6 days; draw one card each day; if it's a face card, the wind returns)
- 8 Mutiny! The crew has had it up to here with the current captain...are you with 'em or agin 'em?
- 9 Giant Squid
- 10 Your ship springs a leak; find a port with 1d4 days or sink.
- 11 A pox breaks out on board the ship; get back to port for medical treatment within 1d6 days of lose half the crew.
- 12 A ghost ship manned by d12 zombies and captained by an intelligent (d6 Smarts) zombie attacks you.

d12 island encounters

- 1 Iron Statue (30% chance it's alive!)
- 2 Ruins
- 3 Hazard: Quicksand
- 4 Hazard: Swarm
- 5 d10 Black Men (Western Ocean and Black Coast **only**; re-roll elsewhere)
- 6 Strange monolith(s)
- 7 d12 Cannibals
- 8 d20 Pygmies
- 9 d12 Pirates
- 10 The Crawler
- 11 Yothga
- 12 Stranded (d8)
 - 1-6 d4Fishermen who lost their boats.
 - 7-8 d6Pirates who lost their ship who will try to slit the throats of their rescuers at the earliest opportunity.

HYBORIAN BESTIARY

Because Hyboria is a low-fantasy setting, most of the Wild Cards foes will be human (more or less). There is a wide variety of “giant” creatures, ranging from snakes, to spiders, to bears (the cave bear), all the way to cats (for example, the saber tooth tiger-like *Grey Devil* of the Pictlands), lizards (the *Dragon* of the Black Kingdoms) and apes. There are Undead, but they should be the exception, not the norm. When a zombie claws its way out of a freshly turned grave, a mummy stumbles from its sarcophagi, or a horde of skeletons clatter their way into combat, these should be **terrifying** moments, and **always** subject to a Guts check (at -2 if the Wild Card and/or Extras are from a primitive culture). As a matter of fact, I can’t stress **enough** how important the Guts check is in this Savage Setting. These were savage, primitive times, when man was scared of everything; make it so much a part of your game that the Wild Cards feel like they’re running from one terrifying encounter to the next.

BLACK MEN

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Arcane Background (Magic) d8 (see below)

Pace: 6”; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Gear/Special Abilities

The Black Men get two attacks per round at no penalty. Their talons do Str+2 damage. They also have the *Bloodthirsty* Hindrance.

Description

Found on an distant island in the Western Ocean, these creatures stand head and shoulders taller than a man. Their skin is black and their hands end in taloned claws. They are well-formed and stronger than a man. They also know a type of magic (Arcane Background (Magic) d8) which allows them to reduce a man to a little statue. This can only be done once per day, and is only reversible through the use of the *Dispel* Power.

**"WHAT IS BEST IN LIFE,
CONAN?"
"TO CRUSH YOUR
ENEMIES, TO SEE THEM
DRIVEN BEFORE YOU,
AND TO HEAR THE
LAMENTATIONS OF
THEIR WOMEN."**

-from *Conan the Barbarian*

BLACK SCORPION OF STYGIA

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

Skills: Fighting d8

Pace: 8”; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Gear/Special Abilities

Gets three attacks (Claw x2 [Str]/Stinger [Str], but with a Raise, poison is injected). The poison is Vigor-2, or become Incapacitated **immediately**, then dead within 1d6 minutes.

Description

The venom of the black Stygian scorpion is able to kill a man within minutes. It is a deep, lustrous, jet-black in colour, and its up to a foot long.

BRYLUKAS

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

Skills/Edges: Fighting d8, Guts d10

Pace: 6”; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Gear/Special Abilities

Arcane Resistance Edge; they can attack without penalty with either the Claws on **both** hands or **both** feet (at Strength dmg), but each attack beyond 2 (that being 3 or 4) incurs the standard -2 penalty. Their mouth attack is separate (i.e. the bryluka must choose which attack, limbs or mouth, it is using that turn). The mouth is Str+3 damage.

Description

Vaguely human in form, the Bryluka is white, hairless, and lean. They have claws on their toes and fingers. Their faces are more animal than human: the eyes large and staring, the nose and

ears like those of a bat. Their mouths are filled with small, sharp fangs. They are partially intelligent – more than a beast, but less than a man, with supernatural powers that keep them alive for centuries. They live in beehive-like colonies, where they slumber for centuries, waiting to be awakened. Because they're part-demon, they can be summoned by skillful sorcerers.

CHAKEN

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Stealth d10 (outdoors only)

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

Gear/Special Abilities

Acrobat Edge. They use primitive weapons for attack.

Description

An ape-like creature that lives in the Pictish forests. It looks like a gnarled and misshapen man, covered with matted and foul black hair. Somewhat intelligent, the chaken can be commanded by those who know the language of animals. They are good trackers. Pict shamans often use these creatures as assassins in the night.

CHILDREN OF JIHL

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6,

Pace: 6" (12" while flying); **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Gear/Special Abilities

Dodge Edge (while flying). They attack with a Str+1 bite.

Description

A demon summoned by a wizard used mainly as a flying steed capable of carrying a person a great distance. They move very quickly while flying. The Children of Jhil look like great bat-like buzzards.

CHILDREN OF SET

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8

Pace: 6"; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Gear/Special Abilities

Arcane Background (Magic) Edge

Powers (20 PP)

Blast (Darkness)

Deflection (Invisible Shield)

Fear (Goes out in a wave of terror; Guts -2)

Puppet (Victim has glowing eyes)

Constriction Attack

Make a Fighting roll. A successful attack means the Child of Set wraps around its pray, and does Str+1 in Constriction Damage. They will continue to do Constriction damage each round thereafter, unless the hold is broken by making a successful Agility check at -2.

Description

Little is know of these ancient creatures of great evil, aside from the fact they slumber in vaults beneath Stygia, awakened by some diabolical call. A combination of man and snake, they can speak and have much knowledge of ancient lore. It is said they have, from time to time at an unknown cost, taught the human followers of Set some of their secrets. They kill by constriction.

CRAWLER, THE

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8

Pace: 10"; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

Gear/Special Abilities

Fleet-Footed Edge; victims make Notice rolls at +2 due to its clumsy nature. Bite attack (Str).

Description

The Crawler is a giant lizard-snake creature of disgusting aspect and ferocity. It lurks in the darkness and shadows of ruins and abandoned cities in the jungles of the south. A clumsy creature, its approach is easily detected by the slithering noise it makes. It normally preys on lone travelers and helpless victims.

DRAGON

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d10

Pace: 8"; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 13

Gear/Special Abilities

Huge (+4 to be hit). It has 3 attacks, but can only use one/round: Bite (Str), Stomp (a successful attack plus a Raise means all WCs and Extras are shaken), and a Sweeping Tail Attack (use a Medium Burst Template off the Dragon's ass-end. Make an attack roll; anyone caught within it suffers Str DMG; on a Raise, they are also Shaken).

Description

Not a true dragon in the "fantastical" sense of the word, this prehistoric behemoth native to the southern jungles is something of a cross between a lizard and a stegosaurus. It is scaled, and has a ridge of bony spikes down its back, ending in a spiked tail. It is huge (Toughness 8), and its sheer stupidity makes it tenacious and virtually impossible to kill. The scales (Armor +5) are proof against most weapons.

GHOST SNAKE

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Stealth d8

Pace: 8"; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Gear/Special Abilities

Poison (Vigor -2; failure means death in 2d6 minutes). Here's how the Constriction Attack works: make a Fighting roll. A successful attack means the Child of Set wraps around its pray, and does Str+1 in Constriction Damage. They will continue to do Constriction damage each round thereafter, unless the hold is broken by making a successful Agility check at -2.

Description

A constrictor that is also deadly venomous. This albino giant snake makes its home in the Pictish wilderness, living deep in the swamp. The Ghost Snake is a nocturnal creature.

GHOULS

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6,

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

Gear/Special Abilities

3 attacks (Claw (Str)/Claw (Str)/Bite (Str+1). Infection (Failed Vigor roll after a Shaken or Wound result results in an infection of some sort) comes from the bite attack.

Description

It is believed these creatures are the product of some sorcerous combination of human and a long-lost race of demon. Found throughout Hyboria, they are especially common in the forests of the Argossean/Zingaran border. They are humanoid in appearance, with dog-like jaws, gray corpse-like skin, unblinking eyes, and clawed hands. Their tough, rubbery skin (Armor +2) is particularly resistant to sword, axe or spear. Though unaffected by daylight, they seem to prefer the dark of night. More sly and cunning than an animal, they don't seem to have any real degree of intelligence.

GOLDEN SERPENT

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Stealth d8, Persuasion d8

Pace: 8"; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Gear/Special Abilities

Its bite does Str+1 damage. A raise mean it injects its poison (Vigor -2, failure means Incapacitation, death within 1d4 days without treatment)

Description

A giant snake whose eyes glow with a golden light. Their eyes have a hypnotic quality (d8 Persuasion vs a opposed Spirit roll, or target is Paralyzed for d8 turns), which they use to lull their prey into submission.

GRAY APE

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10

Pace: 8"; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 7

Gear/Special Abilities

Fearless Edge; Claw/Claw (Strength)/Bite (Strength +2, mainly due to the pair of oversized incisors extending out- and upward from the ape's underslung lower jaw); Large (+2 to be hit)

Description

A giant (10'), man-eating ape covered in coarse gray fur. It is found in the forests on the eastern coast of the Vilayet Sea. Voiceless and normally lurking in the deepest woods, this cunning carnivore is often captured and trained for use as guards for wizards and the like.

GRAY DEVIL

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

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d8,

Pace: 10"; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 6

Gear/Special Abilities

Make a Fear check at -2 when encountering this fearsome beast. It attacks using Claw/Claw (Str), Bite (Str +2).

Large (+2 to hit)

Description

A saber-tooth tiger on steroids. From *Beyond The Black River*.

The beast that glided toward the men on the stakes was longer and heavier than a common striped tiger, almost as bulky as a bear. Its shoulders and forelegs were so massive and mightily-muscled as to give it a curiously top-heavy look, though its hindquarters were more powerful than that of a lion. Its jaws were massive but its head was brutishly-shaped. Its brain capacity was small. It had room for no instincts except those of destruction. It was a freak of carnivorous development, evolution run amok in a horror of fangs and talons.

In addition, the Grey Devil of the Pictlands is strangely luminescent, and gives off an eerie, silvery glow as it prowls the night (+1 to hit when battling at night).

OLLAM-ONGA

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidation d8

Pace: 7"; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 4

Gear/Special Abilities

Large (+2 to be hit)

Arcane Background (Magic) 20PP

Blast (Darkness)

Bolt (Cockroaches [1 PP per]; victim makes Vigor roll at -2, per cockroach, or becomes Shaken)

Fear (A bone-numbing chill fills the air)

Shape Change (Its body becomes as liquid, flowing into its new form; quite nauseating [Vigor -1 or become Shaken] to watch)

Puppet (Victim has glowing eyes)

Description

A giant, demonic shape-changer. In its natural form, it is white with eyes that glow with an unnatural fire. It can assume whatever shape it wishes, although it always retains an unwholesome aspect and those glowing eyes. It is by this that it can always be identified, giving its foes means to defeat it. There are rumours of a spell that can lock the ollam-onga into whatever shape it is currently in. The beast can be slain by normal weapons. The ollam-onga is worshipped as a god in parts of Kush and Stygia.

REMORA (YAKHMAR, ICE WORM)

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

Skills: Fighting d12, Guts d12

Pace: 12"; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 7

Gear/Special Abilities

Huge (+4 to hit); Puppet Power (the hypnotically music sound it uses to lure victims in); Intensely Cold (if the remora gets a Raise during combat, its victims must make a Vigor roll because of the intense cold it radiates or fall unconscious for 2d6 rounds). The remora's mouth does Str+2 damage.

Description

A creature of the glaciers, the remora lives in the highest and coldest parts of the mountains, but must slither down the slopes to feed. Long and worm-like, it lacks any bones in its body. The body is covered in white fur and the eyes are green, flashing orbs. The mouth is a sphincter lined with sharp teeth. It also has two unique powers: it can make a hypnotically musical sound that lures its victims in; and it can radiate an intense cold in a 10-foot radius around itself strong enough to numb a man into unconsciousness within a short time.

SERVANTS OF BIT-YAKIN

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6

Pace: 6"; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Gear/Special Abilities

It is quite possible the Servants of Bit-Yakin are the last remnants of Neanderthal man. They fight with primitive weapons (stone-tipped spears, stone knives and stone axes), and show no mercy (having the Fearless Edge).

Description

Gray man-like creatures of great strength and evil nature. Possessing of a rudimentary intelligence, they can be trained or controlled. They come from the jungles far to the south where there are no men, and may be throwbacks to an ancient race.

SLUG, GIANT

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d12+4, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts 12

Pace: 4"; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8

Gear/Special Abilities

Acid Attack (use Flame Template). Anyone caught within it makes an Agility -2 check. Failure and you suffer d10 Acid Damage.

Description

50-feet long and more than 6-feet wide, this overgrown version of your common garden-variety slug spits an extremely potent acid up to 30 feet.

STRANGLING DEMON

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d10, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Stealth d12

Pace: 6"; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 4

Gear/Special Abilities

Just prior to the Strangling Demon launching its terrifying attack, it employs the Fear Monstrous Edge. Then the attack begins. At the time of this writing, how to break the demon's grip remains unknown.

Description

A powerful guardian demon summoned by sorcerers from another dimension. Its summoner tells it to either guard a specific place or item, or hunt someone down. It will then do that to the exclusion of all other activity. The strangling demon has two forms. The first is a shapeless mist that swirls about a place, but does not attack. Those with the Danger Sense edge can tell the mist is evil. When it does attack, it gradually assumes its other form -- a tall, black humanoid creature with long arms and a demonic horned face. This is formed out of the solidifying mist, beginning with the hands and arms (which are usually at the victim's neck). Extremely difficult to get rid of, certain ancient writings suggest the only way to do so is through a combination of silver and fire.

SWAMP BEAST

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Tracking d10, Stealth d8

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

Gear/Special Abilities

Talons (Str+1). *Obscure* Power once per day. For every Wound the Beast takes, so does its master.

Description

Summoned by a shaman of the Pictish god, Jhebbal Sag, this creature normally lives in another dimension called the Misty Lands. Once in our world, it remains until it is either slain, is released by its summoner, or the shaman dies. It is a hideous creature: it glows in the dark with a shimmering, oily green light, a fire that gives off no heat. It always borrows some of the facial features of its master, but distorts them into a demonic caricature. The body is scaled, but man-like, though the legs taper into something resembling those of an ostrich. The arms end in huge curved talons. It speaks any language almost perfectly, with a voice sounding almost a human. An excellent tracker and mimic, it is intimately connected with its master. If the Beast suffers, so does the Master; if the summoner bleeds, so too does the Beast.

THOG

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d10

Pace: 3"; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Gear/Special Abilities

6 attacks/rnd (no penalties – Str)

Description

Thog is the name of a tentacled and slimy shadow creature that preyed on the dreamers of Xuthol (an ancient and long-dead empire). It was a huge formless beast, covered with slime. Sprouting from its body were a mass of tentacles it attacked with. Up to six could strike at a target at a given time. Extremely strong, it can lash out at great speed. But it does not move very quickly, only being able to crawl along slowly.

WYVERN OF ZEMBABWEI

Attributes: Agility d6 (on ground)/d12 (in sky), Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8

Pace: 4" (on ground)/12" (in sky); **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Gear/Special Abilities

Riders must make an either an Agility check at -2 or, if applicable, a Riding check at -1, each round to maintain control of these unruly beasts.

Description

More like a giant pterodactyl than the classic beast of European myth, it is bred and used as a flying steed by Zembabwans. Stupid and difficult to handle, it will often forget its duty and attempt to land and/or attack prey.

YOTHGA

Attributes: Agility N/A, Smarts d12, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d10, Stealth d8

Pace: N/A; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Gear/Special Abilities

Anyone coming within 10 feet of the plant makes a Spirit-2 roll. If they fail, they are drawn in. The plant then makes a Fighting roll. Success subtracts one from the WC or Extras Spirit (temporarily). A Raise and they're "sucked" in. If they manage to avoid being "sucked in," and stay within 10 feet the following round, they make another Spirit roll at -2, using the new temporarily reduced Attribute value. Each round they're "sucked in" they lose a further Spirit point. Each round, make a Spirit check to try and break free (although once at zero, our intrepid heroes can basically put their heads between their knees and kiss their asses goodbye).

Description

An intelligent plant that came from another planet in eons past, the Yothga is also intra-dimensional: it's roots are in Hell, the rest of it in Hyboria. And it hates all other living things, existing only to devour their souls. In appearance, it looks like a very lush, orchid-type vine, with a thick trunk and stems, and full, fleshy leaves. Its ever-present blossoms look like large, blood-red lips. It hypnotically lures in its prey, then "kisses" them with its flowers, stripping their mind of identity and memories. Once this initial contact is made, the vines gently coil around that person, keeping them alive by unknown means, feeding off their life-force, causing the victim unbelievable pain and agony. The way to free someone is to sever the root stem. The plant dies quickly, immediately releasing its prey. That person's mind and memories returns within minutes.

LOCALES, GROUPS, ITEMS, LEGENDS AND MYTHS

ACHERON

An ancient, evil empire of the northern kingdoms pre-dating the Hyborian Age by 3,000 years. Almost no evidence of it remains. According to the Chronicles of Nemedra, remnants of the race, degenerate beyond belief, were found in the hills of Nemedra. Acheron apparently ruled all of Nemedra, Aquilonia and beyond.

ANDARRA

A land mentioned only once, and then in connection with the dreamers of Xuthol. It is quite possible it is only a myth.

APPLES OF DERKETO

A deadly, poisonous fruit (-4 Vigor roll; failure means death within 3d6+10 seconds) found in the jungles of the south. Its blackish juice causes death within seconds, and the poison works by both contact and ingestion. The fruit was given this name by the Kushites.

BLACK RING OF STYGIA, THE

Many Stygian sorcerers are loosely organized in a brotherhood known as the Black Ring, whose seat of power is Kheshatta, the City of Magicians. In ancient days, Pteion, located in eastern Stygia, not far from the Taian border, was the former seat of the black magicians, but it was abandoned when the desert encroached upon it. High-ranking members of the Black Ring are said to be able to kill with a touch, leaving a black handprint on the dead body. The master of the Black Ring is Thoth-Amon, Prince of Magicians and High Priest of Set.

BLACK SEERS OF YIMSHA, THE

A group of necromancers that live on Mount Yimsha in the Himelian Mountain region of Ghulistan. Their magic is governed by the stars. Important actions (such as assassinations) had to wait until the Stars were in proper alignment. The Seers also required some personal item of the victim (hair, fingernails, etc.). The five most powerful Seers were members of the Black Circle. Four of these were called Lords of the Black Circle (acolytes) and one was the Master. The Master ruled the Lords of the Black Circle. It is rumoured the Lords themselves may have been demons from another realm. The Black Seers also had priests secretly placed in the temples of Tarim in Turan. The Black Seers were particularly skilled in hypnotism and mind control. The Lords and the Master could also perform transmutations. It is unclear what the goals of the Black Seers are, but it is safe to assume they are evil, and involve magical conquest and power.

BLINDING DUST

A magical dust obtained from Stygian tombs. When thrown on a victim it creates temporary blindness (as *Pitch Darkness* in the SW rulebook) for 1d10 hours. The victim is allowed a Spirit check to resist its effects.

BOOKS OF SKELOS

These ancients books are one of the greatest sources of mystical lore. Iron-bound, emanating great age, and written by the blind seer Vanathelos, they tell or hint at many things, including:

- An island far in the Western Ocean where monsters guarded crypts filled with gold.
- A description of the Black Seers of Yimsha, and the type of magic they used.
- The Hand of Nergal, how it was used, and what it would do.
- The prehistoric marsh monsters that once lived along the Vilayet Sea.
- The Heart of Ahriman and incantations that were said when using it to restore life.

Undoubtedly, many other secrets could be learned from these volumes. However, using the books can exact a horrible toll (see the **Obsession** and **Madness** Hindrances).

DANCE OF THE CHANGING SERPENT

A Pict magical ritual that traded the souls of a man and a giant snake. It was a horrible punishment inflicted on prisoners. The end results was the minds of the man and snake traded bodies.

EPEMITREUS THE SAGE

Epemitreus was an ancient sage of Aquilonia, dead 1,500 years by the time of the Hyborian Age. His body was hidden in the black heart of Mount Golamira in a chamber decorated with a phoenix. Even after his death, he appeared from time to time to direct the course of Aquilonia

through times of great peril. These appearances came in the form of dreams where he gave advice to the king or priest of Mitra. Epemitreus was a hated enemy of the followers of Set. Only the highest priests of Mitra know the location of the tomb.

FIRE DUST

A magical dust that produces a blinding flash of blue fire. It was a common trick of Stygian priests and was also called flame dust. When thrown in the air, it blazes in a flash of blue-white light. Make a Vigor check or be blinded for 1d10 turns.

FREE COMPANIES

The general name for mercenaries in the Hyborian Age, although many were little more than outlaw bands.

GLOBE OF YEZUÐ

A black, marble-sized sphere that changed into a deadly spider (Agi d6, Str d6, Vig d4, Fight d4, Parry 4, Toughness 4, Pace 6", Bite: Str+4, Small -2 [to be hit]) at the command of the user. It was no more than an ordinary spider, but its venom is **extremely** potent. If the spider gets a raise on its fighting roll, its poison is injected. The victim then makes a Vigor roll at -2. Success and the target is Incapacitated; failure and the victim dies within 3d20 seconds. These globes were not manufactured, but summoned from elsewhere by a mystic diagram drawn on a surface (like the ground).

GOLAMIRA

This mountain, the tomb of Epemitreus the Sage, is said to be in Aquilonia. The tomb is cut into the heart of the mountain and reached by a black stone stair, each step carved with an image of Set. The entrance is sealed and its location held as a secret trust of the high priests of Mitra.

GOLDEN ELIXIR

A golden wine-like drink that magically restores strength and vitality, even to one horribly wounded (eliminates 1d4 Wounds). It was made by the dreamers of Xuthol.

GRONDAR

A pre-Cataclysmic land whose remnants can be found in present-day Zamora. It was apparently quite evil.

HAND OF NERGAL

A gemstone carved in the shape of a claw, that possessed the power of great evil. It is described in the Book of Skelos. It gives two things – great power and hideous death. It is unclear exactly what powers the hand possesses, but it apparently increases the magical abilities (+2 to **Arcane Background (Magic)**) of a sorcerer, at the cost of his or her sanity (Vigor check at -1 or gain the **Madness (Major)** Hindrance).

HEART OF AHRIMAN

A magical gemstone that blazes with unholy fire. Probably not of this world, but a piece of a fallen star. With the incantations in the Book of Skelos, it can restore life. It may have other unknown powers.

HEART OF TAMMUZ

A golden bauble, in the shape of a heart, that possesses the force of the Power of Light. It is the only magical artifact capable of defeating the Hand of Nergal (an opposing Vigor roll at +2 against the sorcerer wielding the Hand).

KOZAK

Loosely-organized roving bands of bandits that roam the shores of the Vilayet Sea. They are led by a *hetman*, who rules via combination of respect, fear and intimidation. Thousands of years later, they would become the fierce *Cossacks* of the Russian steppes.

KUTH

Named "of the Star Girdle," this land, like Andarra, may only have been a dream of the sleepers of Xuthol.

KUTCHEMES

An ancient ruin from the time of Acheron. Accounts place it southeast of Shem.

LARSHA

Called "the Accursed," these ancient ruins are said to be haunted. One story has them inhabited by a giant slug. The ruins are supposedly located close to Shadizar of Zamora, a day's march or less.

LOTUS

There are several types of this potent plant, each with different properties.

Black

A powerful (-1 Vigor roll; immediate Incapacitation for 1d4 days) poison that can augment a sorcerer's power (+2 to Arcane Background (Magic) Rolls and d4 Extra Power Points for the remainder of that particular battle). Found in far Khitai.

Golden

The juice of this lotus immediately cures **Madness** (removing the Madness Hindrance, if the Wild Card should so suffer).

Gray

This one comes from the Swamps of the Dead, somewhere beyond Khitai. The pollen (-4 Vigor roll) induces homicidal madness (a failed roll means the WC automatically gets the **Madness (Major)** Hindrance), and, in the 3d6 minutes remaining in the victim's life, they try to kill not only themselves but everyone around them.

Purple

Found in the swamps of southern Stygia, the juice of this lotus (depends on the amount) induces slumber (-1 Vigor roll or victim falls asleep for 1d4 hours) or temporary paralysis (-3 Vigor Roll of victim is paralyzed for 5d4 minutes).

MIRROR OF THOUGHT

A magical device that can be made by a sorcerer (taken as a Power at Seasoned; cost: 5 Power Points, accompanied by a Smarts check), given he or she has the right materials (sand, a forge, and silver). By concentrating on it, he can form an image of his thoughts on the glass.

PIPES OF MADNESS

A set of magical pipes that induce hypnotic madness (Spirit check at -1) in all listeners. They attack each other (but not the piper, who is immune to the effects) as if though they had the **Berserk** Edge. Lasts until the piper stops playing.

SERPENT RING OF SET

A magical ring that gave great power to the Priest of Set that understood its use (make all Arcane Background (Magic) checks at the next highest die level; gain d10 Power Points) But its use could drive the priest mad. For each use, make a Spirit check at -1. If it fails, the sorcerer gains the **Madness (Major)** Hindrance.

SHOKI

A plant whose leaves could be crushed to make ink.

STAR OF KORALA

A magical ring or gemstone which gave power over the opposite sex to those who understood (Smarts-1 check) its use (+2 Charisma).

TOTHRA

Like Andarra and Kuth, this land may only have existed in the dreams of the sleepers of Xuthol.

TREE OF DEATH

A tree found in Khitai, from which staves could be cut that would deliver poisonous death to any victim touched (-2 Vigor roll; failure means death in 2d6 minutes).

TULWAR OF AMIR KURUM

A magical weapon of great power, now lost in legend. Nothing is known of its powers, but it was obviously something of great power and importance, valued by swordsmen throughout Hyboria.

SCARLET CIRCLE OF KHITAI, THE

Khitai is the stronghold of the world's greatest wizards and masters of the eastern world. Its god-kings master the arcane mysteries of the Scarlet Circle, with its five elements: fire, bone, jade, blood and metal. The supreme master of the Scarlet Circle is Yah Chieng of purple-towered Paikang, whose demons and sorceries are feared by all in the East. His greatest rival is Pra-Eun, the god-king of Kambuja.

WELL OF SKELOS

A location in Hyboria, this place long had a reputation for evil and diabolic powers. Some accounts place it in the passages beneath the Scarlet Citadel of Khorshemish. It is not known what its powers or importance are, but it may be a natural site that leads to other dimensions. Here sorcerers come to converse with the demons and creatures of the Outer Void.

WHITE HAND OF HYPERBOREA, THE

Hyperborea is ruled by the White Hand, a coven of sorcerers not unlike the Black Ring of Stygia or the Scarlet Circle of Khitai. The White Hand "Witchmen" are the priests and priestesses of Louhi as well as accomplished sorcerers. Their magic focuses around the cold of their land and control of the dead. Hyperborean sorcerers are highly prized in the northern wilds, but they are little respected in Hyborian lands. In addition to their sorcerous powers, the White Hand supports teams of assassins who travel for the Hand. These assassins wear black robes, capes and cowls and a white, flat mask which is transparent only to the wearer, giving them the appearance of having no face at all. They use a wooden baton tipped with two egg-sized metal spheres with which they strike nerve centers to immobilize, torment or kill their victims. These assassins are said to be extremely swift and skilled.

XAPUR

Also known as "Xapur the Fortified." It is an island of ruins at the southern end of the Vilayet Sea, only 2,000 yards from the marshy shore. Once the city of the Dagonians, an empire from before the Hyborian Age. The Yuetshi were its slaves, until they finally rebelled and destroyed their masters. The Yuetshi regressed after that.

XUCHOTL

A jade city on the edge of the southern desert below Stygia. The city is laid out in a giant oval and entirely enclosed by an unbroken wall. It was built by the Tlazitlans, an ancient race of people who migrated from Kosala to Lake Zuad and then to the site of Xuchotl. Once a powerful people, they have long since degenerated and forgotten their heritage. The city is divided into quarters, three of which are known: the Tecuhltli, on the west; the Tolkemec, in the south; and the Xotalanc, to the east. Each is named for a tribal faction. By the Hyborian Age, these factions are in a state of continual warfare. In the centre of the city is a no-man's land – the Halls of Silence. Running north and south through the centre of the city is the Great Hall, a broad, covered street. Each faction has fortified itself into its corner, sealing most of the doors on each level. Raiding parties are sent out from time to time. Little else is known of once-majestic Xuchotl.

ZARKHEBA

This river of the south runs to the Western Ocean. The waters are deadly poisonous and filled with many venomous creatures. For obvious reasons, the river is also called "Death." It winds its way through a thick, tropical forest, ocean-going ships can navigate a great distance upstream without hazard. Somewhere in its upper reaches is an unnamed, ruined city of fabulous wealth.

ZUAGIR

A numerous and aggressive Shemitic nomad tribe of the Eastern Desert. They raid the caravans moving from Hyborian lands to the south and east, and have even penetrated into Khauran. The known bands include Dniri, Duali, Kharoya, and Qirlata.

ZUGITE

A degraded cult that worshipped a long-dead sorcerer. It came from the ancient race that built Acheron, but had long since sunk back into savagery. The remains of this cult were located in the rugged hills of Nemedica.

HYBORIAN CALENDAR

The Hyborian calendar is cyclic. Each year is named, and, every eight years, the year names repeat. Years are named as follows:

- 1) Year of the Lion
- 2) Year of the Sun
- 3) Year of the Wolf
- 4) Year of the Spider
- 5) Year of the Serpent
- 6) Year of the Eagle
- 7) Year of the Dragon
- 8) Year of the Horse

Three of the eight years have 13 lunar months; the other five years have 12 lunar months. Each year begins on the first full moon after the summer solstice. Days within each month are numbered. The months are named as follows:

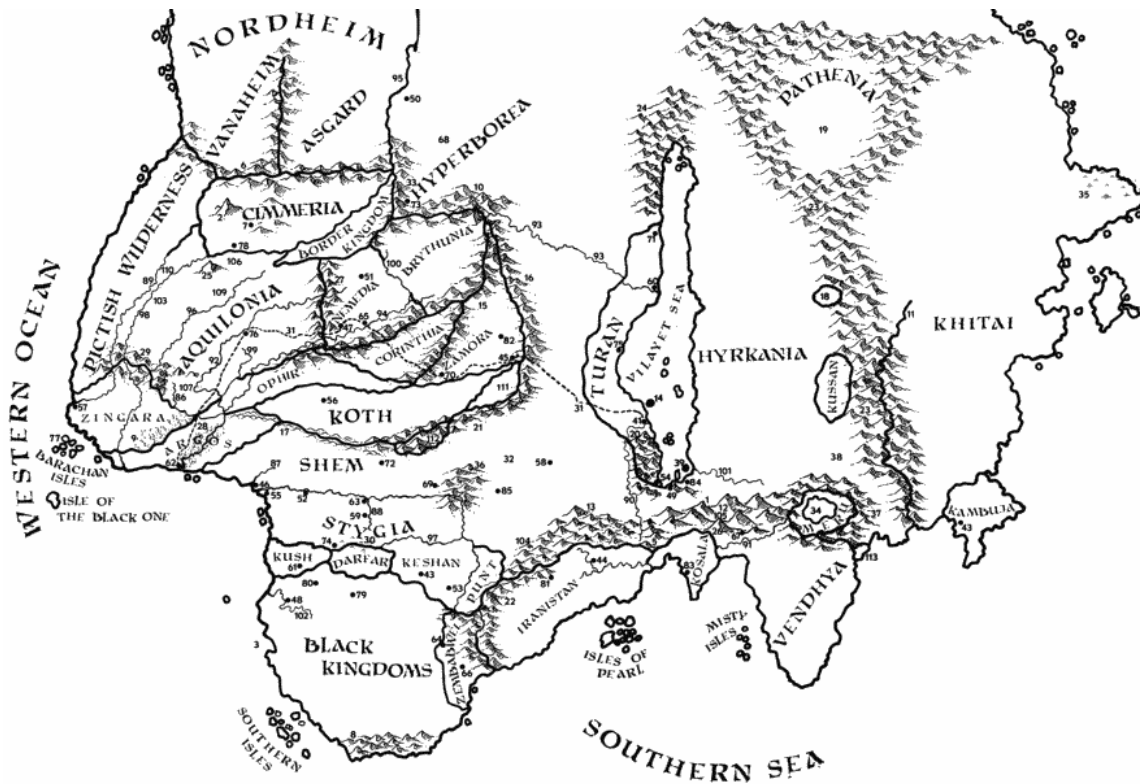
- 1) Month of the Griffin
- 2) Month of Fire
- 3) The Golden Month
- 4) Month of the Maiden
- 5) Month of the Scorpion
- 6) Month of the Bear
- 7) Month of the Snow Ape
- 8) Month of the Fish
- 9) Month of the Rat
- 10) Month of the Sparrow
- 11) Month of the Hawk
- 12) Month of the Ram
- 13) Month of the Dragon *

* This month occurs only in the years of the Lion, the Spider, and the Dragon. For easier dating purposes, you could always use the A.A. designation (meaning Aquilonian Age). For example, Conan was born in 1248 A.A. (The Year of the Lion).

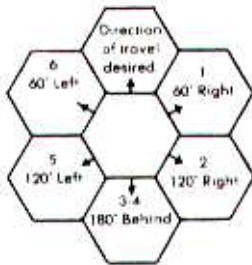
**"CIVILIZED MEN ARE MORE
DISCOURTEOUS THAN
SAVAGES BECAUSE THEY
KNOW THEY CAN BE
IMPOLITE WITHOUT HAVING
THEIR SKULLS SPLIT, AS A
GENERAL THING."**

-from *The Tower of the Elephant*

TRAVEL ACROSS THE THURIAN CONTINENT



A Wild Card on foot can travel 25 miles a day; riding 50 (x2 if on a road). Each hex on my campaign map equals 50 miles. To attempt a forced march (x2 distance traveled) make a Vigor roll (for either the WC or mount). Failure and the Wild Card and or his/her mount is *Fatigued* until they spend one **full** day resting. They may always continue in that *Fatigued* state, but another failed roll and they are *Exhausted*, one more, and they're *Incapacitated*. If the Wild Cards aren't traveling on a road or well-marked trail (say, for instance, in the jungles of the Black Kingdom) they can become lost. For each day spent traveling make a **Survival** roll (or unskilled, if none of the characters have it). Success and everything's OK (each Raise means a day when no Survival roll is necessary); failure means rolling a d6 and consulting diagram to the left. If a successful Survival roll is made the following day, the Wild Cards continue on their new course (a Raise, and they realize their error, and may correct the previous day's misdirection); another failure, another d6 roll on the above diagram. The GM can also, at his/her discretion, factor in Survival roll modifiers for terrain (for example, -2 for thick jungle, -1 for forest, +1 for plains, etc.).



AN ADVENTURE

THE TOWER OF THE ELEPHANT

(adapted from REH's story of the same name)

Set in the City of Thieves, Arenjun, in the spider-haunted land of Zamora. The Wild Cards try to steal a great jewel hidden in the mysterious Tower of the Elephant, home of Yara the Priest, a great and evil sorcerer. Text in gray is to be read to the players.

It is not long after your arrival in Arenjun you begin to hear the rumours. Tales of a tower guarded by sorcery and black magic within which lies a fabulous gem of inestimable wealth. You follow the rumours to the black heart of the City of Thieves, The Maul, a place where, for a few coins, the city watch will turn a blind eye to murder and worse. As dusk falls, you negotiate narrow streets littered with human refuse, and head for the open door of the Zyrotas, an inn known as a notorious meeting place for thieves, assassins and other scoundrels. As you enter, a smoky haze of grilled meat, incense, and sweat assails your senses. There's a buzz in the air tonight. Zamoran thieves finger daggers, a giant, blonde Hyperborean leans on his broad sword, a Brythunian serving wench slaps an overly-bold Gunderman mercenary, and a Shemite counterfeiter slobbers drunkenly in his cup.



It is then the Wild Cards hear a voice above the din, a boastful voice, coming from over near the smoky fire place. A fat Kothian slaver is boasting loudly, slopping wine everywhere, and drawing angry glares from other patrons. If the WCs get close enough, this is what they hear:

By Bel, god of all thieves, I'll show them how to steal wenches. I'll have her over the Zamorian border before dawn, and there'll be a caravan waiting to receive her. Three hundred pieces of silver, a count of Ophir promised me for a sleek Brythunian of the better class. It took me weeks, wandering among the border cities as a beggar, to find one I knew would suit. And she is a pretty baggage!

He then blows a slobbery kiss in the air.

I know lords in Shem who would trade the secret of the Elephant Tower for her.

If asked what the secret of the Elephant's tower is, the fat Kothian drains his tankard, and tells the Wild Cards it'll take more wine to jog his memory. They can just buy him more wine, attempt to *Intimidate* him, use the *Persuasion* skill (which would then be followed by a roll on the *Reaction* table, further modified by Charisma – a result of **Hostile** prompting a fight, one of **Neutral** ranging to **Helpful** gets the following information:

The secret of the Elephant Tower? Why any fool knows that Yara the priest dwells there with the great jewel men call the Elephant's Heart, that is the secret of his magic.

That's all the Kothian slaver knows (though he will try to solicit further drinks by promising more, but never delivering). Further queries around the common room (using either *Streetwise* or *Persuasion*) prompt further rolls on the *Reaction* table. Results of **Neutral** to **Friendly** necessitate rolls on the following table:

d8	Result
1	The wizard of the Elephant's tower is over 300 years old (True).
2	The Elephant's Tower was built in a single night using magic. (True)
3	Undead guardians stalk the gardens of the Tower. (False)
4	Yara came to Zamora from Khitai, where he lived in a great jade palace with a hundred servants. (Partly true)
5	Even the king of Zamora fears Yara's power. The king drinks heavily to dampen his fears. (True)
6	The wizard has one known weakness: He can only die if he is slain with a silver dagger blessed by a priest of Ishtar. (False)
7	Yara once killed a foreign prince by turning him into a spider, and then crushing the spider under his heel. (True)
8	Automatic Hostile Reaction.

How the players actually get together is entirely up to them; maybe they recognize one another as kindred souls as they gather round the fat Kothian and hear his tale, then hatch their scheme over ale at the *Zyrotés*. Or maybe they come across one another under the moonlight outside the walls of Yara's tower.

THE TOWER, OUTER GARDENS

Read the following when the players arrive at the tower.

The shimmering shaft of the tower rises frostily in the stars. In the sunlight it shines so dazzlingly that few can bear its glare, and men say it is built of silver. It is round, a slim perfect cylinder, a hundred and fifty feet in height, and its rim glitters in the starlight with the great jewels crusting it. The tower stands among the waving exotic trees of a garden raised high above the general level of the city.

There are two walls, approximately 10' high (make **one** *Climbing* check at midway point), at the base of the tower (see map). Between the outer and inner walls is a ten foot path with thick bushes at the base of the inner wall. It is patrolled by one guard, but on this night, he has been slain. Make a *Notice* check to see if the Wild Cards find the body; make a second *Notice* check at -2 to see if they spot Taurus of Nemedía, the self-proclaimed Prince of Thieves who has also come to steal the gem this night. If they succeed they may attempt to sneak up on Taurus (opposed *Stealth/Notice* roll – success impresses the vain thief, +1 on Reaction Table roll), If they fail, Taurus notices them, and attempts to sneak up on them (see previous, **no** Reaction Table roll modifier). Either way, the two sides meet.

Taurus is a fat man, but moves with a grace belying his girth. He does not immediately trust the players, but may accompany them on their quest. Taurus also carries a potent magical weapon.

TAURUS OF NEMEDIA

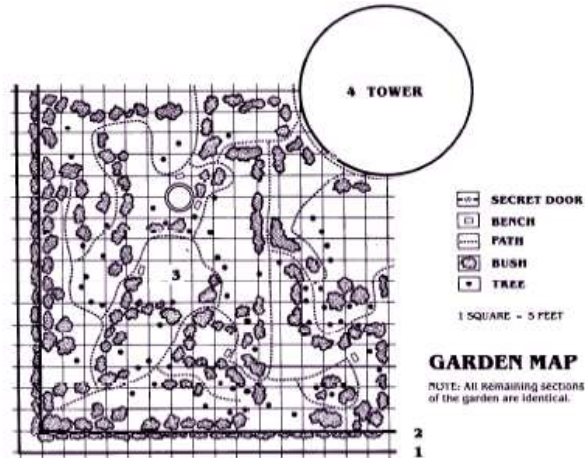
Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Climb d10, Fighting d8, Guts d8, Lockpicking d12, Notice d12, Streetwise d10, Stealth d12, Taunt d10

Pace: 6"; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Gear/Special Abilities

- **Thief Edge:** +2 to Climb, Lockpick, and Stealth rolls made to trick or deceive, detecting or disarming traps.
- **Long Sword:** Str+3
- **Powder of the Black Lotus:** Contained in a small silken pouch. Delivered using a bamboo blow-gun. Target makes a Vigor -4 roll or dies within 2d6 seconds. Only has one dose, but it's capable of taking out up to 6 lions.
- **200' of rope and a grappling hook:** Useful for scaling towers with no obvious entrances



THE TOWER, INNER GARDENS

Between the second wall and the tower is beautiful garden, replete with white-pebbled walking paths, gurgling brooks, and redwood bridges. During the day, the Inner Gardens are also patrolled by d6 human guards. There are a total 24 guards in the Tower of the Elephant, so keep a running total if any are slain.

Human Guards

Attributes: all d6

Skills: Fighting 6

Pace: 6"; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Gear/Special Abilities

Leather armour, Spears (Str+2; Parry +1; Reach 1; 2-H)

But by night, it's d8 lions.

Lions

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d10, Strength d12, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d10, Notice d10

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

Special Abilities

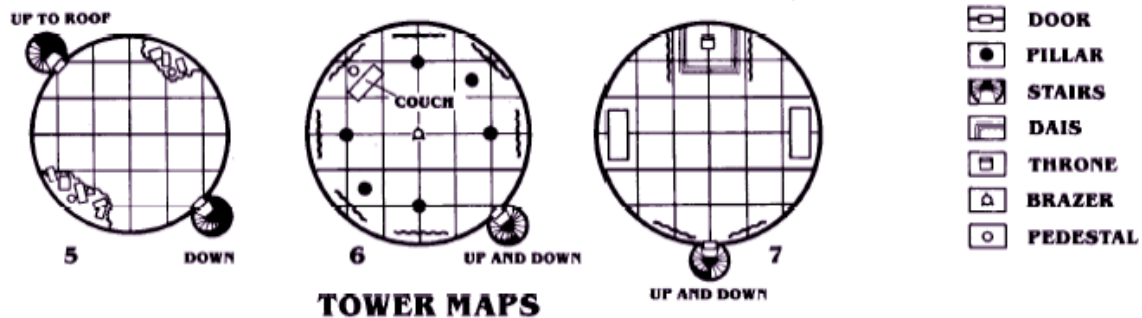
- **Bite or Claw:** Str +2
- **Improved Frenzy:** Lions may make two Fighting attacks each action at no penalty.
- **Pounce:** Lions often pounce on their prey to best bring their mass and claws to bear. They can leap 1d6" to gain +4 to its attack and damage. Parry is reduced by -2 until the next action when performing the maneuver.
- **Size +2:** Male lions can weigh more than 500 pounds.
- **Silenced:** Yara has ensorcelled these lions. They **always** get the *Drop* (+4 to attack and damage rolls), unless the victim makes a successful Notice-4 roll.

THE TOWER

The tower does have a ground-level entrance, but it's cleverly concealed (Notice -6), as are the windows all the way up. It is 150' high. According to the SW rules, that means a *Climbing* roll every 60 feet, for a total of 2. Once the top is gained, read the following:

It now becomes clear why the top of Yara's tower shone so. Great frosty jewels – diamonds, rubies, emeralds, sapphires, turquoises, moonstones – set thick as stars, dazzle your eyes. They are set thick as stars in the stone of the tower's roof, shimmering silver. They shimmer with a million rainbow tints and lights, hypnotizing.

Any attempt to pry the gems loose will be in vain; they are magically set. But you can make a big deal of Strength checks, the tips of daggers breaking off, etc. Just basically have some fun with the WCs. Any adventurer **not** busy trying to strip the roof of its wealth will automatically notice the a plain, wooden trap-door with a brass-pulling in the north-west corner. For the others, a *Notice* roll is necessary. It opens easily, revealing a set of stone stairs that lead downward into darkness.



5 – YARA'S TREASURE ROOM

The topmost room of the Tower of Elephant is Yara's treasure room.

A glittering chamber, the walls, ceiling and floor of which are crusted with great, white jewels, which are the only source of illumination. The floor is made of crystal. The only furniture is three or four silken couches, embroidered with gold and worked in strange serpentine designs. There are also several silver-bound mahogany chests, some sealed with heavy golden locks; others lay open, their carven lids thrown back, revealing heaps of jewels in a careless riot of splendor. It seems devoid of life.

If a character declares they look at the ceiling (or one makes a *Notice* roll), they will see a black, eight-sided pattern, in the center of which four gems glitter with a red flame unlike the white blaze of the other jewels. A WC that makes a *Knowledge (General)* roll at -2, or a *Knowledge (Religion)* roll will be able to identify that as the symbol of Zath, the Zamoran spider-god (of which Yara is a priest). As soon as the first character enters the room, Yara's pet, a spider the size of a small pig, leaps down from the ceiling and attacks the nearest that person (*Notice* -2 or it gets *The Drop*, not only gaining the +4 attack and damage, but also knocking that person to the ground, unless he/she makes an *Agility* -2 check).

A giant black spider, the size of a small pig, hurtles down from its hiding place in the shadows of the ceiling. It attacks, then hits the ground, and scuttles toward you with amazing speed!

Despite the fact it seems the beast is trying to attack the players, it has a different tactic in mind. It will rush past them (Fighting -2), leaving behind a trail of webbing (which the WCs can avoid with a simple Agility check. But as soon as it hits the opposite wall, the creature will scuttle up ten feet, then launch itself through space for the far wall, once again leaving a trail of webbing (now at Agility -1 to avoid). It plans to just keep avoiding the players (given there are so many of them), fill the room with webbing (which they will eventually become ensnared in), then devour them at its leisure. Every second trip across the room is on the floor, allowing Wild Cards **without** missile weapons a chance to strike; the opposing ones though will be through the air (facilitating an attack as if though the character were on an *Unstable Platform*, incurring a -2 penalty). Once a character fails an Agility check against the webbing, they are Shaken; following that it's a Wound, then a possible trip to the Knockout Table (upon which they can only go as far as Incapacitated).

Giant Black Spider

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climb d12, Fighting d8, Guts d6

Pace: 8"; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Gear/Special Abilities

- **Bite/Poison:** Bite Str+1; a raise means Poison is injected (Vigor-1 or death in 1d20 seconds)
- **Webbing:** Strands of webbing avoidable only by making an Agility-1 check; each subsequent strand in a confined area requires a further incremental (as in, tack on another minus) Agility check. Failure means a Shaken result; a second Failure equals a Wound; if it goes to the Knockout Table, the worst possible result is Incapacitated.

One note: the treasure here, like that on the roof, is magically protected by Yara, and therefore, immovable. There is another exit, a door that opens to another downward staircase. The stairway is silver and illumined by an eerie light. The exit is opposite from where the players entered.

6 – THE THING FROM YAG

At the bottom of the staircase from the treasure room is a huge door.

You come presently to an ivory door, set with bloodstones. Thin wisps of smoke drift lazily from beneath the door, bearing a curious exotic odor. The silver stair continues to wind down, vanishing in the dimness.

It is extremely heavy, requiring a Cooperative Strength Roll against a value of 12 to get it to open. Once the door is opened, read the following:

You are looking into a large chamber with a domed golden ceiling; the walls are of green jade, the floor of ivory, partly covered with thick rugs. Smoke and the exotic scent of incense float up from a brazier on a golden tripod, and behind it sits an idol on a sort of marble couch. The image has the body of a man, naked, and green in color; but the head is one of nightmare and madness. Too large for the human body, it has no attributes of humanity. With wide flaring eyes, curling proboscis, on either side of which stand white tusks tipped with round golden balls. The eyes are closed, as if in sleep. This then, is the reason for the name, the Tower of the Elephant, for the head is much like that of the beasts said to live in the Black Kingdoms and in Vendhya. This is Yara's god; where then should the gem be, but concealed in the idol, since the stone is called the Elephant's Heart?

As the adventurers approach the idol, it's eyes open (Guts check). If it gets as far as a roll on the Fear table, a Panicked result means that character actually attacks the Thing from Yag.

The trunk of the horror lifts, and quests about, the topaz eyes stare unseeingly. It is obvious the creature is blind.

What happens now is entirely up to the players. If they hesitate it will attempt to communicate to them, speaking in a strange, stammering voice that never changes key or timbre.

With jaws obviously never built or intended for human speech, the creature speaks. "Who is here? Have you come to torture me again, Yara? Will you never be done? Oh, Yag-kosha, is there no end to the agony?" Tears roll from the sightless eyes. Your eyes stray to the limbs stretched on the marble couch. And you know instantly the monster will never rise to attack you. The marks of the rack, and the searing brand of the flame have ruined them. Suddenly, your fear and revulsion is replaced by a great pity. A strange, aching sadness comes over you. "Come near that I may touch you," the creature falters.

If the players don't, they won't gain the creature's trust. Do everything in your power to make that happen.

As you approach, the sensitive trunk comes out and gropes over your face and shoulders, as a blind man would. Its touch is as light as a girl's hands. "You are not of Yara's race of devils," sighs the creature. "I know your people from of old, who I knew by another name in the long, long ago, when another world lifted its jeweled spires to the stars. There is blood on your fingers."

By that, the creature is referring to violence in the Treasure Room, and, possibly in the gardens below. By being truthful with the creature, the adventurers gain the next bit of knowledge:

"Listen," says the strange being. "I am fool and monstrous to you, am I not? Nay, do not answer; I know. But you would seem as strange to me, could I see you. There are many words besides this earth, and life takes many shapes. I am neither god nor demon, but flesh and blood like yourself, though the substance differ in part, and the form be cast in a different mold. I am very old. Long and long ago I came to this planet with others of my world, from the green planet Yag, which circles for ever in the outer fringe of this universe. We swept through space on mighty wings that drove us through the cosmos quicker than light, because we had warred with the kings of Yag and were defeated and outcast. But we could never return, for on earth our wings withered from our shoulders. Here we abode apart from earthly life. We fought the strange and terrible forms of life which then walked the earth, so that we became feared and were not molested in the dim jungles of the East where we had our abode. We saw men grow from the ape and build the shining cities of Valusia, Kamelia, Commoria, and their sisters. We saw them reel before the thrusts of the heathen Atlanteans and Picts and Lemurians. We saw the oceans rise, and engulf Atlantis and Lemuria and the isles of the Picts, and the shining cities of civilization. We saw the survivors of Pictdom and Atlantis build their stone-age empire and go down to ruin, locked in bloody wars. We saw the Picts sink into abysmal savagery, the Atlanteans into apedom again. We saw new savages drift southward in conquering waves from the Arctic Circle to build a new civilization, with new kingdoms called Nemedias and Koth, and Aquilonia, and their sisters. We saw your people rise. We saw the descendants of the Lemurians, who had survived cataclysm, rise again through savagery and ride westward, as Hyrkanians. And we saw this race of devils, survivors of the ancient civilization that was before Atlantis sank, come once more into culture and power – this accursed Kingdom of Zamora. All this we saw, neither aiding nor hindering the immutable cosmic law, and one by one we died: for we of Yag are not immortal, though our lives are as the lives of planets and constellations. At last I alone was left, dreaming of old times among the ruined temples of jungle-lost Khitai, worshipped as a god by an ancient yellow-skinned race. Then came Yara, versed in dark knowledge handed down through the days of barbarism, since before Atlantis sank. First he sat at my feet, and learned wisdom. But he was not satisfied with what I taught him, for it was white magic, and he wished evil lore, to enslave kings and glut a fiendish ambition. I would teach him none of the black secrets I had gained, through no wish of mine, through the eons."

“But his wisdom was deeper than I had guessed: with guile gotten among the dusky tombs of dark Stygia, he trapped me into divulging a secret I had not intended to bare; and turning my own power upon me, he enslaved me. Ah, gods of Yag, my cup has been bitter since that hour. He brought me up from the lost jungles of Khitai where the gray apes danced to the pipes of the yellow priests, and offerings of fruit and wine heaped on broken altars. No more was I a god to kindly junglefolk – I was slave to a devil in human form.” Again, tears stole from the unseeing eyes. *“He pent me in this tower, which at his command I built for him in a single night. By fire and rack he mastered me, and by strange unearthly tortures you would not understand. In agony I would long ago have taken my own life, if I could. But he kept me alive – mangled, blinded, and broken – to do his foul bidding. And for three hundred years I have done his bidding, from this marble couch, blackening my soul with cosmic sins, and staining my wisdom with crimes, because I had no other choice. Yet not all my ancient secrets has he wrested from me, and my last gift shall be the sorcery of the Blood and the Jewel. For I feel the end of time draw near. You are the hand of Fate. I beg of you, take the gem you will find on yonder altar”.*

The gold and ivory altar lies behind the couch Yag-Kosha is on. Upon it lies a great round jewel, clear as crimson crystal. It is the Heart of the Elephant.

Once the adventurers pick it up, Yag-Kosha speaks again:

“Now for the great magic, the mighty magic, such as the earth has not seen before, and shall not see again, though a million million of millenniums. By my life-blood I conjure it, by blood born on the green breast of Yag, dreaming far poised in the great, blue vastness of Space. Take your sword, and cut out my heart, then squeeze it so that the blood will flow over the stone. Then you go down these stairs and enter the ebony chamber where Yara sits wrapped in lotus dreams of evil. Speak his name and he will awaken. Then lay this gem before him and say: Yag-kosha gives you a last gift and a last enchantment. Then get from the tower quickly; fear not, your way shall be made clear. The life of man is not the life of Yag, not is human death, the death of Yag. Let me be free of this cage of broken, blind flesh, and I will once more be Yogah of Yag, morning-crowned and shining, with wings to fly, and feet to dance, and eyes to see, and hands to break.”

If the players display any uncertainty, Yag-Kosha will motion them closer, take their blades gently in his hands, and show them where to strike. Once he's dead, they must remove his heart (a grisly, but necessary, piece of work). The heart must then be squeezed over the great jewel. Not a drop will run off; the gemstone will absorb the precious fluid like a sponge. They must then take the Heart of the Elephant to Yara's chamber, for the final showdown!

7- YARA'S CHAMBER

After descending further down the silver staircase, the adventurers come across another door, this one ebony, inset with a grinning silver skull at its center. It pushes open easily.

Beyond this door lies a chamber of ebony and jet. On a black silken couch reclines a tall, spare form. Yara the priest and wizard lies before you, his eyes opened and dilated with the fumes of the yellow lotus, far-staring as if fixed on gulfs and knighted abysses beyond human ken.

Now if the players deviate **one iota** from Yag-Kosha's instructions (awaken Yara by saying his name, then repeating **exactly**: **“Yag-Kosha gives you a last gift and a last enchantment,”** they are in for a world of hurt (and quite likely death), because Yara is one kick-ass sorcerer.

YARA, PRIEST OF ZATH

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d12, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Arcane Background (Magic) d12+2

Pace: 6"; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Gear/Special Abilities

Power Points: 30

Powers: Blast (as a swarm of locusts)

Bolt (as a shard of ice)

Dispel (wave of his hand)

Fear (evil laugh; eyes glow red)

Fly (verbal component: utters the word for fly in Ancient Stygian; WC with Knowledge (Ancient Languages) can identify with successful TN; Raise can even translate the word)

Obscure (throws a glittering powder into the air)

Puppet (utters the words for "Come to me" in Ancient Stygian [see above]; gestures target toward him)

Stun (makes a punching motion with his hand)

Zombie (utters the word "Rise" in Ancient Stygian; makes a rising motion with his hand)

Yara's basic M.O. is to cast Fly right away to get above the din, then reign death down on his enemies. The Wild Cards **don't** want this to happen! If they say Yara's name, read the following:

Upon utterance of his name, Yara's eyes clear instantly and become cold and cruel as a vulture's. The tall, silken-clad form lifts erect and towers gauntly above you. "Dogs!" His hiss was like the voice of a cobra. "What do you do here?"

If the next words out of the Wild Card's mouths are **anything but** what Yag-Kotha instructed them to say (down to the last syllable), Yara attacks. If the words are said, read the following:

Yara recoils, his dark face ashy. The jewel is no longer crystal-clear; its murky depths pulse and throb, and curious smoky waves of changing color passed over its smooth surface. As if drawn hypnotically, Yara bends over and grips the gem in his hands, staring into its shadowed depths, as if it were a magnet to draw the shuddering soul from his body. As you look on, you feel as if though your eyes must be playing tricks. For when Yara had risen up from his couch, the priest had seemed gigantically tall; yet now Yara's head would scarcely come to your shoulder. You blink, puzzled, doubting your own senses. Then, with a shock, you realize the priest is shrinking in stature – growing smaller before your very gaze. With a detached feeling you watch, as you might watch a play, immersed in a feeling of overpowering unreality, no longer sure of your own identity; knowing only you look upon the external evidences of the unseen play of vast Outer forces, beyond your understanding. Now Yara is no bigger than a child, now like an infant, sprawled on the table, still grasping the jewel. And now the sorcerer suddenly realizes his fate, and springs up, releasing the gem. But still he dwindles, and you see a tiny, pygmy figure rushing wildly about the ebony tabletop, waving tiny arms and shrieking in a voice like the squeak of an insect. Now he had shrunk until the great jewel towered above him like a hill, and you see him cover his eyes, as if to shield them from the glare, as he staggers about like a madman. Some unseen force seems to be pulling Yara to the gem. Thrice, he races wildly about it in a narrowing circle, thrice he strives to turn and run out across the table; then, with a scream that echoes faintly in the ears of the watcher, the priest throws up his arms and runs straight toward the blazing globe. You bend close, to see Yara clamber up the smooth, curving surface, impossibly, like a man climbing a glass mountain. Now the priest stands on the top, still with tossing arms, invoking what grisly names only the gods know. And suddenly he sinks into the very heart of the jewel, as a man sinks into a sea. You see the smoky waves close over his head. Now you see him in the crimson heart of the jewel, once more crystal-clear, as a man sees a scene far away, tiny with great distance.

And into the heart comes a green, shining winged figure with the body of a man and the head of an elephant – no longer blind or crippled. Yara throws up his arms and flees as a madman would, and on his heels comes the avenger. Then, like the bursting of a bubble, the great jewel vanishes in a rainbow burst of iridescent gleams, and the ebony table-top lies bare and deserted...as somehow you know the marble couch in the chamber above does also.

Let the above passage sink in dramatically for a few moments. Then inform the players they can feel the ground vibrating below their feet. A few seconds later, dust starts to fall from the ceiling above. Within minutes chunks of plaster and masonry are coming off. The tower Yag-Kotha erected for Yara is coming down, and our intrepid adventurers must flee. They can try to go back up, but the stairway in that direction has already collapsed. So it's down. The three floors below house Yara's human guards. Directly below Yara's chambers (the third floor) is the kitchen; the second floor the armory; the main floor, the barracks. Yara's guards seem to be sleeping; but they are, in fact, dead, slain for the part they played in their evil master's nefarious schemes. Just as the players leave the tower, and enter the gardens, the tower (in dramatic fashion) collapses behind them in a cloud of dust. Dawn is breaking over the City of Thieves. Afore this day is over, the names of those who brought Yara low will be on the lips of every cutpurse, courtesan and noble in Arejun...for better or for worse!