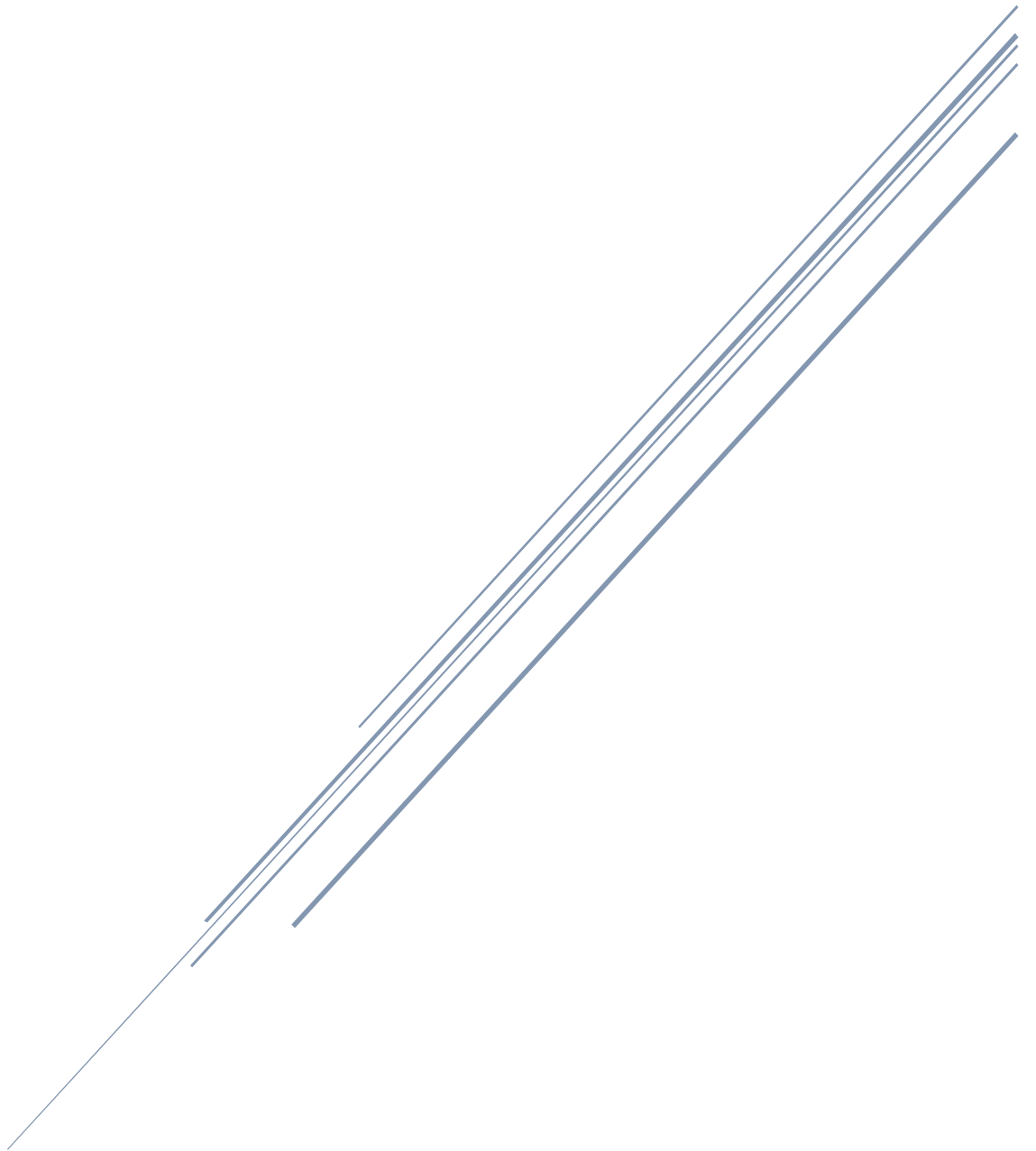


ARU-KAMIS

Ziggurat of the Lich King



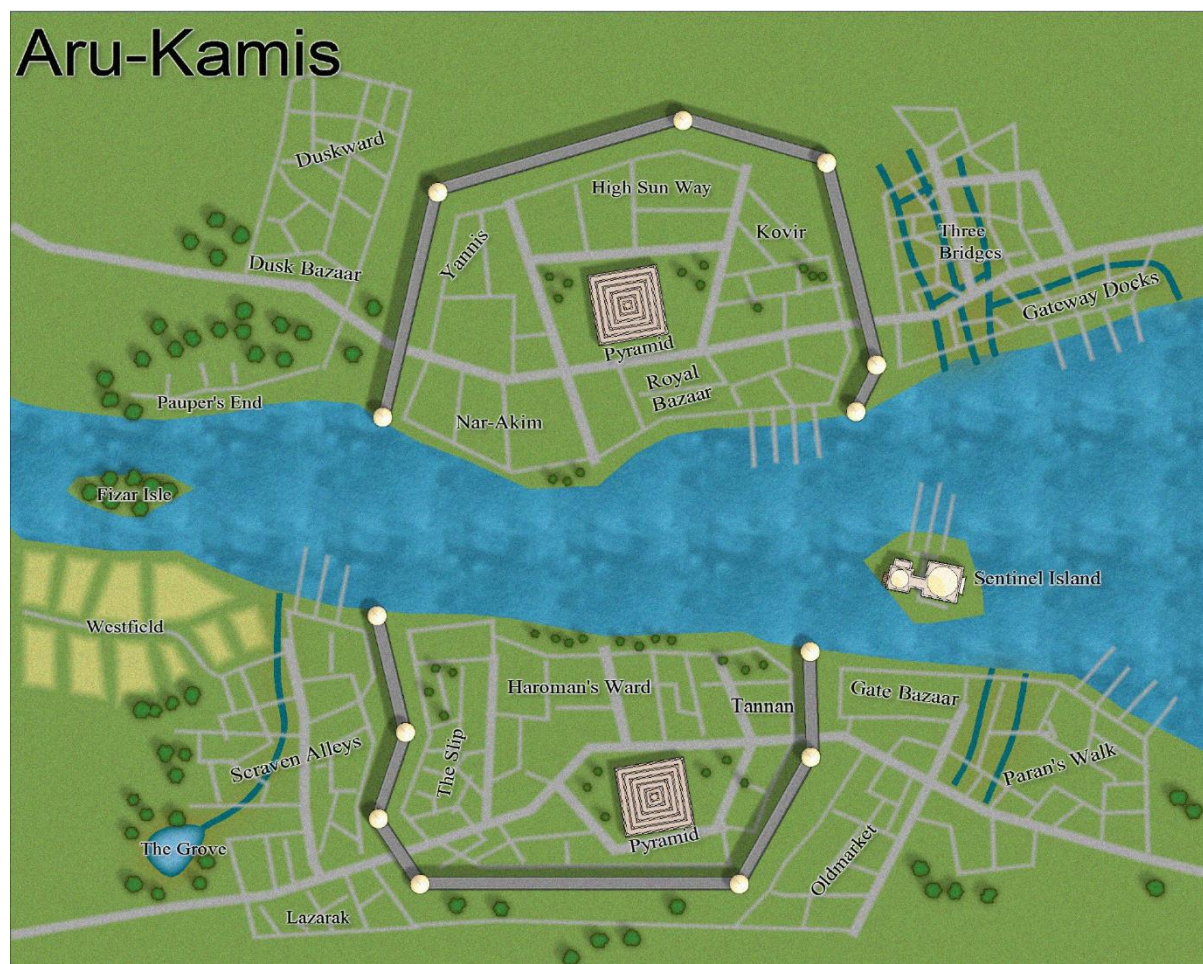
A City Setting for Barbarians of Lemuria
By Finn Cullen

INTRODUCTION

This is a write up of a particular city in a particular setting being used in a particular Barbarians of Lemuria game. It's not set in Lemuria, not because I have anything against any of the worlds that carry that name but simply because long habit and preference as a GM makes me feel more comfortable with worlds of my own devising, and indeed the creation of such worlds is a key element of the fun that I get from gaming.

The city of Aru-Kamis is one that I've found a useful locus for adventurers, a place in which a variety of plot ideas come together (and burst apart again) and from where one-shot adventures can be set or launched while longer term campaigns can find plenty of material for foreshadowing and filling out background details to see where players want to take their characters. It's a place where your heroes can deal with low-life cut-throats who want to make a few coins or kill trying and with immortal undead mages who are the rulers of all their minions survey – and everything in between.

It should go without saying that everything here is but a suggestion, a single way plucked out of many, of how this could be done. If you do decide to use anything from this material to any degree I hope that you will make it entirely your own and that it can provide a glimmer of inspiration that may prove to be fun for you and your players



ARAKHEM - LAND OF THE RIVER GODS

Arakhem exists along the banks and flood plains of a great river, the Aru, which flows eastward to the coast and the ocean beyond. Away from the fertile plains surrounding the Aru the land is rocky and arid and home to little except the usual dangers of inhospitable wastelands and bleak rocky mountains to the south (which are much quarried for the dark stone prized by the city builders of Arakhem).

Most of the inhabitable areas of Arakhem are taken up with small settlements of farming communities making the absolute most of the fertile plains. There are temple complexes and watchtowers created and maintained by whichever of the three cities of Arakhem is nearest to them and it is to those cities that the produce and output of the settlements flow.

The three cities are (from west to east) Aru-Tekel, Aru-Kala and Aru-Kamis (the latter being the subject of this document).

Each of the cities is ruled by an Undying King or Queen, an immortal being (or so they claim) who is revered as divine by the inhabitants of Arakhem. Though the outward form of the Undying Rulers may change from time to time it is held as an article of faith that there is an unbroken line of continuity of the same being dating back to the foundation of the nation ten centuries before. Sceptics suggest (usually from a great distance and under a pseudonym) that perhaps the rulers are not so Undying as they claim to be but certainly it is a matter of record that each has an unusually protracted lifespan attained through a variety of means.

Aru-Tekel's ruler is *Queen Koharis* who is rarely seen outside the complex of towers and temples that forms her palace. Aru-Tekel is a hard to reach city and is largely self sufficient from the great farms and plantations that surround it, and a certain amount of trade with the jungle lords beyond the great mountains to the west. Queen Koharis is said to be celestially beautiful, appearing as a woman in her prime, and a paragon of every virtue of rulership – she is just, equitable, compassionate and stern by measure. She is also said to have been gifted with her immortality by a benevolent god who grew enamoured of her and set an eternally burning pillar of light within her chamber in which she is renewed each year. Other tales of Koharis say that she is a dreadful witch, a spiteful hag who grew jealous of the world around her and made pacts with infernal beings. She was granted a consecrated chamber in the depths of her palace wherein she bathes each year in a shower of blood from innocent victims in order to renew her beauty. Her city is a place of tyranny and fear where everyone fears spies and the magical scrutiny of their insane ruler. You and your players can discover which, if either, is the truth of the matter.

Aru-Kala is a city on the south side of the Aru and its wealth comes from its quarries. Beyond the city are vast deposits of the highly prized black stone that is valued as a building material for all the grand buildings of the nation. Aru-Kala's economy is based around its monopoly on this *petrinox* and the quarries are manned by armies of labourers and unfortunate slaves. The city itself looks like a fortress from the outside and makes much of its own natural resources in the form of towers and bulwarks, spires and citadels. The ruler is *King Adhammu* whose immortality has granted him the unflattering nickname of the Patchwork King. He is made up of spare parts from many donors over many centuries. As a limb, or an organ, or a sense begins to fail he has his priestly *Carnifex* alchemists select a suitable donor and blasphemous surgery takes place, grafting the healthy new contribution onto the Patchwork King's grotesque frame. He long since stopped caring about cosmetic matters, being a practical man. Seeing Adhammu unprepared can blast the sanity of the strongest viewer. He is large and scarred, with mismatched features and limbs, and if anything the soul inside the body is even more deformed.

ARU KAMIS

Aru-Kamis, the largest of the three cities of Arakhem is built across the wide estuary of the river and is also the most cosmopolitan of the cities being a locus for trade from nations near and far and having grown beyond its original bounds to accommodate the extra population this has brought in.

The city is extensive and crowded on both sides of the river and no bridge exists that crosses the Aru at this point. Travel between the north and south areas of the city is accomplished by ferry. Ferries are available along each bank and range from simple and cheap little flat bottomed rafts to expensive luxurious craft with obsequious staff. Other than their relative comfort it is worth noting that trading ships do *not* simply ram aside any of the expensive ferries bearing the banner of one of the noble houses, but the cheaper ferries are not guaranteed any such consideration.

The oldest parts of the city are within great walls of the black *petrinox* stone that is the trademark building material of all important structures in this land. The areas within the walls also house the family holdings of the main noble houses of the city as well as the palace (or palaces...) of the undying ruler of Aru Kamis, the Wise and Eternal *Tem-Karis*.

Tem-Karis – The Lich King

Tem-Karis has ruled this city for centuries although his form has changed once or twice in that time. Accounts of his previous forms have been suppressed and records expunged. It is dangerous blasphemy to suggest that he may in fact have simply been replaced or supplanted. No, despite appearances to the contrary, and coincidental changes of policy over the centuries, the Tem-Karis of today is definitely the Tem-Karis that founded the city a thousand years ago after receiving the vision of a spirit of fire and air burning in the sky above a particular rock on the river bank.

In his current form Tem-Karis fits the description of a classical lich. He appears ancient, almost mummified, with dry pale skin stretched thin and tight over the skeleton beneath. He is tall and disturbing to look upon and not the least of the horrors of that walking corpse is that his eyes are the eyes of a young and hearty man, dark and piercing and full of keen intelligence. He wears opulent robes and jewels and although he moves slowly and painfully as though every moment is an eternity of agony and weariness, his mind is keen and his instinct for rulership is as sharp as ever it was.

He delights in petty cruelty however, knowing his power secures him on the throne. He began a tradition when he took on this hideous form of choosing a bride from one of the three noble families of the city, each in turn. The family in question is granted extra favour by the monarch for so long as the queen lives. That none of the queens have survived more than a decade without either taking their own life or vanishing without explanation after displeasing their royal husband is a matter rarely discussed. Tem-Karis merely asks another of the noble houses to offer up a maiden of their bloodline to be his consort in exchange for a place of preferment and the whole dreadful cycle begins again. Tem-Karis plays the game like a master, dangling rewards and threats of punishment with a puppeteer's touch and keeps the three families at each other's' throats so they never actually stop to think how they could align against him.

The Three Noble Families are the Yannis ("The Perfected" – their founders were of priestly stock although all holiness soon left the halls of the Yannis, driven out by greed and lust for power), the Kovir ("The Ravens"- whose reputation is for subtlety and intrigue) and the Namiin ("The Lions" – founded by the finest general of the city who subdued the barbarian tribes who once dwelt here). The Namiin's holdings are on the south side of the river, while the Yannis and the Kovir share the northern city between them in an uneasy relationship that occasionally makes the Montague-Capulet feud seem like a light hearted buddy movie.

The current unfortunate Queen of Aru-Kamis, bride of the Lich King, is *Temir Namiin* who ascended to her privileged position at the age of sixteen ten years ago. The Namiin family have been well favoured by the monarch ever since but the clock is ticking. Temir is now in her mid twenties and while the foul king still enjoys showing her off in her royal jewels and very little else she is keenly aware that Tem-Karis's calculated politics of division will lead to her being replaced. A true daughter of the Lions she has no intention of taking her own life – or having it seem that she did. She is already working on an escape plan with the assistance of a senior member of the Palace Guard who she believes she can trust. She plans to leave the palace disguised as a departing concubine and then take passage on a ship eastward. Needless to say the King will seek to put a stop to this ambition in a very direct way. Player character heroes may fall into this plot in a number of ways if desired – Palace based nobles and intriguers may be approached by Temir to assist in her flight, or by the King's loyal priests who want to engage their discreet services as spies. The more typical roguish adventurers may be called on to help the fleeing woman (either knowing who she is or not) on to her ship, and perhaps further as she flees across the ocean pursued by the war-galleys of the Lich King. More cynical heroes (heroes indeed!) may take the coin of the Lich and serve as bounty hunters to track her down wherever she flees.

The Palace of Tem-Karis.

It's worth mentioning the singular nature of the palace of Tem-Karis. It was built during the original founding of the city ten centuries ago and takes the form of a huge black ziggurat, thirteen enormous steps high. Wide stairs lead up one face of it to the massive pylon gates on the fourth step that lead inside. *And it appears on both sides of the city at once.* An observer would assume that there were two identical black pyramids, one on the north side of the river, one on the south. Each is surrounded by a temple complex of shrines and pillars attended by the white-kilted priesthood who will accept the sacrifices of a devoted (devotion = trained obedience + time) population and offer burned offerings on the many small altars of the complex. But once someone enters the black pyramid, either black pyramid, they find themselves in the same interior.

Inside is grand in a sepulchral way, appearing as a combination tomb and palace. Passageways are lit by lamps for there are no windows, the flickering flames make the carved and painted frescoes dance in their depictions of ancient glories and prophecies yet to be fulfilled. Opulent chambers are set aside for receiving visitors, for granting audiences, for feasting and council meetings. Grandest of all is the throne room of the Lich King himself, large enough to hold a small army of dignitaries plus all the spear-carrying bronzed guards and decorative oiled slaves holding fans and carrying sweetmeats that any ancient tyrant could hope for. The King's throne is atop a dais that recalls the form of the ziggurat itself and he is typically carried into the room and placed on the throne before visitors arrive so as not to give an impression of weakness.

Honoured visitors will be heard, granted refreshments, given a palatial guest room if they need to stay, offered their choice of beautiful or handsome companion and then subject to ruthless negotiation until Tem-Karis has wrung every last advantage out of their presence.

Less honoured visitors will find themselves contending with highly trained palace guards, and the feared *Shadow Priests* who form Tem-Karis' private bodyguard, are rarely seen, and who know every one of the ten thousand secret ways in the palace.

THREE BRIDGES

This is an area of the city that provides entertainment, refreshment and leisure activities for the discerning visitor. In other words it is a money-trap where visitors will find taverns, gambling houses, feasting halls and brothels. All sizes of purse are catered for with prices and services to suit. The locals won't turn away a paying customer so long as they can still pay. Once the last coin is spent though, well I'm sorry sir but the table (etc) is needed and would you kindly move to the door? Three Bridges is a place where dock workers can come to spend their meagre wages, and high-born decadents can visit to drop a small fortune on the roll of a dice... though the dock worker and the nobleman will rarely be within smelling distance of each other, each preferring their own appropriate choice of venue.

Geographically Three Bridges is located on the north side of the river and at the eastern end of the city, just a short walk inland from the docks. Canals for the transport of goods by barge still run in this area and Three Bridges takes its name from the three bridges that cross the canals that bound this particular neighbourhood. The northern end of Three Bridges houses the more upmarket establishments, the southern end caters for the poorer clientele. The heart of the neighbourhood is a maze of streets and alleyways with obscure businesses that are much in demand by those who know of them ("Meneth always has the very latest in Ochre Poppy, tell him I sent you and he'll give you a fair price").

Visiting Three Bridges guarantees a good time in terms of entertainment, refreshment and relaxation assuming you are able to pay and don't cause trouble. The whole area is remarkably free of crime and danger, and that's mainly down to Mother Black-Sash.

Mother Black-Sash is the de facto leader of the area, and it's because of her the streets of Three Bridges are safe enough to encourage people to come and spend their money. She started out as the keeper of a bordello in this area and soon realised the usefulness of having a few sturdy and unsympathetic fellows to keep order in her disorderly house. The principle worked well enough to build on the model and soon she had a group of black-sash wearing bravos patrolling the area and making sure that things kept running efficiently. Anyone causing trouble for the patrons would find themselves facing retribution usually ending with being dumped into one of the nearby canals. Whether the culprit's throat was cut first depended on the sort of trouble they'd been causing and the mood of the Black-Sash responsible.

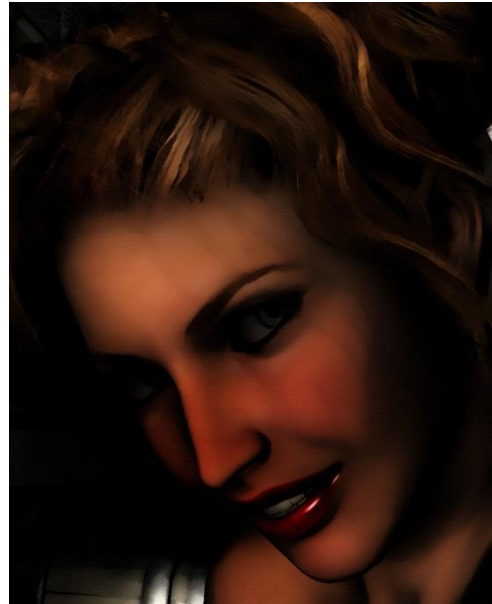
Other business owners in the area decided it was a good idea to stay on the right side of Mother Black-Sash, after all they all profited from the presence of her protective influence and in addition to that they saw what happened to businesses that didn't voluntarily contribute to the daily expenses of the Black-Sash patrols. In short Mother Black-Sash quickly became the owner and operator of a lucrative protection racket. The price of doing business in Three Bridges includes a cut of the profits going to her, but in exchange businesses can flourish and the customers that everyone relies on feel a lot safer paying their visits to the area.

That's not to say that she's a public benefactor however. When all is said and done Mother Black-Sash is and always has been a ruthless pursuer of her own wealth and status. While some of her employees – those that are particularly beloved of certain wealthy patrons – are well cared for and pampered, the majority of them are worked hard and treated as commodities. There are dark rumours of some well concealed specialist houses where the right price will bring you whatever experience is desired no matter how unspeakable. Darker rumours suggest that some of Mother's vanished enemies are put to short but eventful work in such places.

Personally, Mother Black-Sash is a statuesque woman in her forties with luxurious golden hair and a figure that is still impressive enough to make a temple eunuch regret his life choices. She dresses in

the finery of a lady of quality and alters her manner depending on her audience. To wealthy patrons and potential marks she is a purring hostess, courteous and flirtatious. To anyone else she is curt, appraising and direct. She has a habit of framing requests as statements of fact assuming agreement. She never makes threats. The most terrifying thing anyone in Three Bridges can see or hear is Mother Black-Sash simply nodding at the end of a heated discussion and saying “that’s that then”. It means someone is going to end up ... well, ended.

Mother Black-Sash is not the sort of person that is likely to engage in combat. She’s not particularly strong or robust but what she does have is an organisation of people who rely on her for employment and know she looks after the people who look after her, whereas she simply takes care of her enemies. She usually has someone on hand to deal with any unpleasantness should it arise. On the rare occasion that she might be called upon to defend herself any potential foe should be aware that she is rumoured to be well equipped with concealed blades, pins and a range of debilitating and deadly venoms to coat them with.



The Infernal Odds-Man: At the very heart of Three Bridges and hard to find without a guide is a gambling den called *Lalthar’s Repose* a small and luxurious venue where scented smoke fills the air and the gamblers are treated like visiting kings. The table stakes are always high and the games are intense. Food and drink is provided without charge to encourage visitors to stay longer. Lalthar, the owner, is an exquisite bald man no more than four feet in height who comports himself like a generous and welcoming potentate and is generally seen reclining on gold coloured cushions in the company of half-dressed youths and maidens who feed him fruit and bear goblets of wine to his lips.

So far so normal but Lalthar’s Repose is also somewhere where it is possible, occasionally, rarely possible to encounter *Altharam-Ka*. Who he is and where he comes from is the subject of much whispered debate. He is a tall and slender man with lustrous black hair and he always dresses in the clothing of a nobleman of the city, with the additional of a veil of yellow silk concealing his lower face. His eyes are mismatched brown and green and filled with mirth. When Altharam-Ka visits he will always play a single game of chance with a single opponent. Before the game begins the opponent can name anything – anything- that they want to win. In return Altharam-Ka will name the stakes that the opponent must risk. Most opponents back down when they hear the stakes, which will vary in accordance with the prize they desire. Some press on to play the game. If they lose they must pay the price that Altharam-Ka has named either immediately or at a time of Altharam-Ka’s choosing. If they win, then they will find that their desired prize will be theirs. Altharam-Ka has never reneged on a wager and it is whispered that kingdoms have changed hands due to his machinations, that gods have been cast down, that worlds have risen and fallen. It is rare that a gambler for such stakes will risk the named price however, and perhaps Altharam-Ka only loses such games when it suits his ineffable purpose to do so.

THE SLIP

One hundred and ten years ago a highly localised seismic event struck an area of the city then known as *Keldovan's Height*. Sinkholes opened swallowing streets and houses, spurs of rock thrust upward from the ground and shattered roads and plazas and dwelling places. Noxious black vapours oozed upward from the ground and choked the fleeing inhabitants as they sought to escape. Survivors told incoherent tales that the vapours moved with malign purpose, pursuing the desperate refugees from the catastrophe. Attempts to reclaim the area over the next few months proved fruitless with disasters striking any group who sought to excavate or rebuild, and the deadly vapourous wraiths seemed to seep through the ground anew. Eventually the efforts were abandoned and Keldovan's Height was left to its ruined destiny.

The most potent upheaval was centred upon the manse of a notorious sorcerer *Voivo the Grim* and that dreadful figure was not seen again after that day. Whether he was being subject to divine punishment for his crimes (unlikely given the things that the gods round here let slide) or fell prey to some magical experiment of his own has never been settled.

Now this whole neighbourhood is a no go zone. The streets are buckled and debris-strewn even now, sometimes leading down into craters and sink-holes, or rising as though trying to form a pathway to the sky. Buildings are toppled or half buried, walls are shattered things and empty windows gape like the eyes of baffled souls in a pointless hell. The only living beings that dwell in the area now known as The Slip are outcasts who can find no other refuge. They cluster together in small groups in exposed cellars or subterranean vaults. By day many of them slouch and limp out into the city to beg and lurk furtively in the hope of a chance windfall, and at night they return like a grey procession of the hopeless to the shattered world that is their home.

In the deep dark places of this bric-a-brac neighbourhood, well away from the regularly used routes there are spirits lurking. These are spirits once bound by Voivo the Grim and who are now free from that magician's binding but unwilling to return to their infernal home for fear of their brethren's mockery and cruel treatment. These minor demons are seeking power through worshippers and have approached certain of the more promising outcasts offering power in return for belief. A small cult of beggars has formed that style themselves as **the Brotherhood of the Broken**. Their leader is *Harik* a one-eyed, one armed man in the twilight of his years but with a burning ambition to protect "his people". Each day he sends his people out into the city to seek for something to sacrifice to "Those Below". What Those Below have demanded is something that is voluntarily discarded but of great value. The Brotherhood scour the city for something that fits the bill - unfashionable works of art, petulantly discarded wedding jewels and the like. Each evening Harik and the others destroy the cast-off treasures and Those Below give Harik power in proportion to the value of the sacrifice. With the power he weaves new strengths and abilities into his followers, changing them, in strange and twisted but powerful ways. Of course this new potency means that the Brotherhood become more devoted to Those Below and when Those Below demand more bitter sacrifices they will be willing to obey.

In the outside world too things are stirring. The descendants of those families who lost property and lives in the catastrophe are turning their thoughts back to what was lost. There were houses there, furnishings, precious family belongings. Surely, they think, not all of them can have been plundered? From time to time a young nobleman or noblewoman will decide to finance an expedition into the Slip, providing details as best they can of where their familial holdings were and in the hope of recovering some of what was snatched away. These expeditions rarely end well. The Slip has a way of leading astray those who do not belong there and there are many labyrinthine alleyways and tunnels, and the remnants of dwellings that are now crunched together at odd angles and submerged beneath the streets. The outcasts who dwell in the Slip see it as their territory and will prey eagerly on any intruders, who they see as rightful prey.



THE SENTINELS

The Sentinels arrived in the city about ten years ago, found a niche and filled it. Aru-Kamis has always been prone to criminal elements making the most of the amount of trade that flows through the city and the number of transient visitors. Everyone seems to be paying protection or obligation to someone else and the territorial warfare (over actual geographical territory, or commodity monopoly) has always been brutal and ruthless.

The Sentinels were founded by a sea-going Free Company who arrived from some northern land and began to wreak havoc among the pirates of the area with great efficiency. They took their straightforward approach to law and order inland and began to drive away some of the local crime lords who were preying on the merchant houses. For “drive away” substitute images of flaying and

impalation and terrorising. The grateful merchants rewarded the Sentinels with gifts of money and the Sentinels invested those gifts in land.

Now the Sentinels own an island in the estuary and have built a small fort and garrison there, with jetties for their small sleek fighting ships. Their banner (a mailed fist) flying over a business or a merchant ship promises dire retribution for any who dare do violence to that business or vessel. They keep order. They make sure business works. Nobody has really concluded that they’re running the same old protection racket as the criminals do, they’re just doing it better.

The Sentinels themselves are a bunch of hard bitten former soldiers and sailors. They’re all veterans of some war or another and while they are open to new recruits they’re looking for people who will fit into a disciplined group rather than just being another loudmouth with a sword. In the main they’re not the bad guys but they’re not really good guys either. In short they’re just guys, doing a job and making a profit, and with enough backing to make life difficult for people who cross them.

The leader of the Sentinels is the grizzled old warhorse **Commander Bowman** a bald and fair skinned man who gives the rock steady impression of being a lifetime company sergeant despite his talent at command. He’s practical, hard to faze and as open to bribery and intimidation as a mountain of petrinox – which is to say not at all.

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF ARU-KARIM

The river is wide and busy with boats and ships displaying the banners and flags of many nations

The wharves are filled with labourers loading and unloading cargoes, and wagons pulled by beasts of burden or by slaves to take the cargoes to and from the long storehouses that line the river banks.

Outside of the city walls the streets are narrow and the buildings smaller and made of cheaper local materials. The people are a mix of different nationalities (many having lived here for generations) and the language spoken incorporates both the local Arakhem tongue and trader-slang from different lands. It's become its own patois.

Inside the walls are fewer non-natives, and those that there are tend to be the long established and wealthy merchants who have settled here. Most of the inhabitants inside the wall are of Arakhem stock, dark and tall, and wearing the local styles of linen and cotton robes and gilded finery. The buildings are more likely to be grander with the oldest and most important buildings being of the matt black stone petrinox, often highlighted with metallic overlays.

Inside the walls you may encounter the Temple Guards, tall men with white linen kilts and head-dresses, carrying round shield and long spear, marching in small groups. They keep order well enough but inside the walls there is no real criminal presence anyway (except for the habits of the noble and wealthy which naturally don't count as criminal on account of who it is that decides on the laws).

There are no temples in Aru-Karim except the large temple complexes around the Black Pyramid(s). These temple complexes are filled with small shrines and altars all dedicated to Tem-Karis the king of the city. No other god may be worshipped openly within the walls. In the more cosmopolitan areas outside the walls the non-natives may worship their own gods as long as they do so discreetly and don't mind keeping their shrines hidden away from view. Tem-Karis will tolerate the odd superstitions of people who bring money to his city as long as he doesn't have to be seen tolerating them.

The priesthood of Tem-Karis includes both men and women, who wear plain white linen robes and no jewellery whatsoever, and their heads are completely shaved. Since the priesthood makes up the de facto civil service of the palace, helping to decide and administer policy, serving ones time in the lower ranks of the priestly class can prove to be the gateway to great influence later on.

There are many bazaars in the city, huge open air markets with a variety of permanent and temporary stalls. Things on sale in them include all the usual daily necessities plus more exotic commodities like foreign spices, cloth, weaponry and slaves. The bazaars are the social hub for the non-noble classes of the city and its possible to spend a day in a bazaar, eating at the food-stalls, watching shows from the local entertainers, buying everything you need, getting happily drunk on a variety of imported or domestic wines and spirits and then topping it off with a nice relaxing rooftop chase after dinner.

The Gate Bazaar to the east of the city is infamous as a slave market, having pits and pens to secure the unfortunates traded into Arakhem. Most of them end up in the quarries of Aru-Kala or the plantations of Aru-Tekel. Many end up as domestic servants in any of the cities. Every now and then though a party of traders arrives from the west, silent and imposing dignitaries from the jungle kingdom of *Gahash* beyond the mountains. They will pay without negotiation for any specimens they deem to be physically perfect (or as near perfect as they specify) and then lead them away never to be heard of again. Some speculate that the wise rulers of Gahash free the unfortunate slaves out of a philosophically inspired compassion for humanity. Others, travellers from the west, talk reluctantly about horrors they have seen in the hidden stone cities in the jungle valleys, of hybrid creatures and experiments that the gods have turned away from in dismay.

To the west of the city, north of the river, the Dusk Bazaar is a small market area but it is known for a local attraction. *Chanadar's Pit* (Chanadar having died ten years ago after founding the business that still carries his name) is a fighting pit in a sturdy stockade. It maintains its own small group of trained fighters who will take part in bouts against all comers, usually for money, and with many people wagering on the outcome. The management don't waste their own trained combatants in fights to the death but will happily hire out their pits for people who want to bring their own fighters to pit against each other. If any heroes fancy a job as a gladiator this is a good place to make a name for themselves. Occasionally the management will pay good money for the delivery of some exotic and dangerous beast that can be included in a match-up, so if any of your heroic player characters fancy a trip west beyond the mountains in the search of dinosaurs this could be their chance to make a few coins in exchange for their almost certain deaths.

AFTERWORD

I hope some of the ideas in this have proven of interest. Feel free to use them in your campaigns as they are, change them up, or pilfer them piecemeal and drop in the bits that appeal to you as you see fit.

I haven't included statistics for the characters I've mentioned because I find that NPCs should be custom built to provide the right amount of fun and challenge for your specific group of players rather than pre-determined by someone who doesn't know your group. One suggestion though – don't bother with statistics for Tem-Karis himself. If he was easily killable there would be plenty of people in the queue before your heroes. The Lich King should be regarded as more like a minor god on earth and is more a plot element than a monster. Or not, of course. As ever do what you will.

If you've liked what you've seen I'd love to hear what works for you (and reluctantly what doesn't, bah) and whether there would be any interest in hearing about the other areas of the world – the Heights of the Border Lords, the Unborn Lands, the Serpent Scar, the fallen Kingdom of Ain and the dreadful jungle realm of Gahash and the nameless horrors that lurk there.

-Finn Cullen

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My blog full of Roleplaying stuff, bits of writing and other random musings is at finncullen.co.uk

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Of course my thanks to Simon Washbourne for designing Barbarians of Lemuria without which this would be a pretty pointless document.

Map of Aru-Kamis by me, using Profantasy Software's tremendous Campaign Cartographer software which this sketchy example does not do justice.

Internal illustrations of Mother Black-Sash and Commander Bowman by me, using DAZ Studio software.

SHAMELESS PLUG

I've written a novel!

It's called "[A Step Beyond Context](#)" and is a reality-hopping thriller combining Regency sensibilities with Cyberpunk dystopian adventure and it's available now from your local [Amazon](#) in Kindle and Paperback format. You should be able to read the first chapter or so using the Look Inside feature on Amazon and if you like what you read then why not make me day and invest in a copy. I'll be pleased. And if it's the sort of thing you like, you'll like it!

