

CONAN ADVENTURE

THE TREASURE HOUSE OF JAIZIN KAA

BY RICHARD AUGUST

“You swindle the king, beggar the rich, oppress the poor, and sacrifice the whole future of the nation for your ruthless ambition. You are no more than a fat hog with his snout in the trough. You are a greater thief than I am. This Cimmerian is the most honest man of the three of us, because he steals and murders openly.”

— Murilo, “Rogues in the House”

Jaizin Kaa claims to be the wealthiest merchant in Zamora. And, if he isn't quite the wealthiest, he can reliably be called the most ferocious and protective of his wealth. His Treasure House — an enormous fortified mansion, heavily guarded and filled with the collected loot from a lifetime of bartering and trading — is among the most coveted prizes in the whole of the Western kingdoms. This is partially due to the fact that no one has ever managed to successfully steal from Jaizin Kaa. It is said that no thief has ever managed to filch even a single copper coin from the Treasure House's vast stores.

The mangled corpses of more than a dozen unfortunates whose heists failed offer a silent guarantee of the treatment Jaizin Kaa reserves for those who abuse his hospitality. Guards patrol the mansion's walls and the grounds beyond them, concealed lethality lurks behind doors in the form of deadly traps, and, so it is rumored, darker and deadlier things haunt the inner reaches of the Treasure House.

And yet, the riches, which await those bold enough, fast enough, clever enough, to reach them, are said to be beyond even a master thief's wildest imaginings. Getting in and out might not be easy, but the rewards — measured in gold and fame — are enough to seal a young thief's reputation or provide the means by which an older thief might retire. All they have to do is survive.



RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

The Treasure House of Jaizin Kaa is an adventure for thieves, using the material from *Conan the Thief*. While it may work with player characters created as barbarians, warriors, priests, archers, or other archetypes, it works best with a party composed of burglars, bandits, and house-breakers. It consists, predominantly, of a robbery approachable in any way the player characters choose. There is no right way or wrong way — each route is designed to have its own particular difficulties to overcome and, whatever the players and their characters opt to do, the heist is extremely dangerous.

IN GRIM ZAMORA...

This is an adventure for thieves, and as such, it can only be set in the spiritual home of all Hyborian-era thieves: Zamora. Zamora the Accursed is a city replete with pickpockets, burglars, sneak thieves, and footpads... name a type of thief, and you'll find them here. If your player characters are new in the arts of filching, there's no better place to learn the trade. If they are hardened, experienced master thieves, then chances are they have friends and contacts here.

As for why Jaizin Kaa, a canny and ruthless merchant who loathes losing even the smallest coin let alone being comprehensively robbed, might keep his fabled Treasure House in a city thick with men and women desperate to take its contents from him, there are two answers. The first is that he is a Zamorian, by birth and by habit. He won't be hounded from the city of his birth by the threat of degenerate ruffians. The second reason is to score points off his hated rival Kallian Publico.

That hated Numalian collector has, on at least three occasions, come by items which Jaizin Kaa coveted. However, Kallian Publico has also been successfully burgled on a number of occasions; the impenetrability of the Treasure House lends Jaizin Kaa considerable cache — having his Treasure House in the middle of the most notorious city of villains on the continent merely adds to his reputation. The gamemaster should emphasize the atmosphere of Zamora and the reputation of Jaizin Kaa; emphasize his hatred of Kallian Publico and the rivalry they share. This anchors both the Treasure House and its owner firmly in an authentic Howardian milieu and makes the player characters feel as though they are part of Conan's world, without being lost in the Cimmerian's impressive shadow.

However, the player characters are free to choose their own path through the obstacles laid before them — the more creative their solution the better.

When Conan and Taurus of Nemedica attempt rob the Tower of the Elephant, their methods are significantly different from each other. Conan intends to simply stab anyone and anything that gets too close to him. Taurus has come prepared with poisonous tinctures and grappling hooks. Both methods might have worked. The same is true here. The gamemaster should let the players be as imaginative as they want, countenancing the most outrageous means of overcoming every impediment thrown in their way, and attempting to keep the tension high, even if things diverge wildly from the adventure described on these pages.

What Happens Next?

The adventure is broken into a series of different scenes with advice on linking them together into an adventure which flows naturally — allowing the gamemaster to make choices dependent not just on the player character's choices but also based on the cumulative effects of the encounters the player characters endure, the atmosphere the gamemaster wants to create, and other aspects of play which occur organically at the table.

This adventure is designed to be as modular and flexible as possible. If at any stage the player characters balk at one encounter, the gamemaster should swap it out and move them into another scene. There is a rough beginning point and conclusion, but beyond that, the order in which things happen and how they happen is up to the gamemaster and the player characters.

CHAPTER ONE: FOR THE LOVE OF GOLD

THE VIEW FROM THE STREET

Why are the player characters interested in the Treasure House of Jaizin Kaa? Obviously, because they are thieves — or at least, are connected to the underworld and its various larcenous denizens. This isn't like a typical *Conan* set-up, in which the player characters might conceivably be from anywhere and on their way anywhere, doing anything, and accompanied by anyone. Here, they play thieves. Thieves steal. The Treasure House of Jaizin Kaa is the big target: everything a thief could want in a single location.

The player characters might not want to raid the Treasure House as their first job. There are skills to master first, smaller tasks to carry out, favors to curry. That's all sensible. But, eventually, as long as they stay in this one city — Zamora is the default location for Jaizin Kaa's personal



bank, but moving it somewhere else wouldn't be a struggle — whatever city the player characters might be living in, Jaizin Kaa's Treasure House is the biggest thing going. If the player characters want to consider themselves the greatest thieves in the city, they need to rob Jaizin Kaa. If they want to impress the oldest, most seasoned, and most skillful practitioners of the purse-lightener's craft, they need to rob Jaizin Kaa. If they want to convince the local thieves' guild to trust them with a diplomatic message to a guild in Aquilonia, or with the theft of the Great Opal of Zembabwei, they need to prove themselves by robbing Jaizin Kaa.

In a thief campaign, a lucrative target like the Treasure House of Jaizin Kaa can be used in a multitude of ways — the urban nature of thieving, in the main, means that there isn't the same randomness which might afflict other *Conan* games. The terrain is fixed. Stealing past the Treasure House, day after day, should be a barb in even the most placid of thieving player characters' souls. The player characters are also likely to hear about Jaizin Kaa and his incalculable wealth on any drunken evening. It's a target for other thieves, after all. Yes, hundreds have failed. But that won't prevent them from trying again. Aren't the player characters brave enough to try?

“THE GUARDS CHANGE AT SUNSET. EVERYONE KNOWS THAT!”

The player characters aren't alone in their interest in Jaizin Kaa's Treasure House. How could they be? Every thief in the city dreams of emptying those unseen but obsessively imagined vaults. This is an excellent way to sow the seeds of the adventure long before it starts. Or, if this is the first adventure of a proposed campaign, then chances are they've heard of nothing else. Every tavern the player characters enter is rife with discussion over the latest failed attempt to alleviate Jaizin Kaa of his apparently burdensome wealth.

The conversation can be as specific or as vague as desired — certainly, enough to whet the player character's interests. The gamemaster should concentrate on the most evocative of details initially, keeping in mind that at any point in another planned adventure the player characters may choose to detour and make a beeline for the Treasure House. As noted above, if the players chose to play a thief campaign, it's because they want to be thieves. This hook is more about opportunity than giving them a hard and fast reason. Details such as: *“I saw them moving in another chest last night. You could hear the gold in it, clinking away. Reckon you could buy yourself a country with that much,”* or *“I've seen them... guards coming out and none going back in. I reckon*

there's a mutiny or something. He's not paying them enough. I'm thinking I might put together a few lads and see if we can't exploit this little internal affair," are perfect.

If the player characters immediately take the bait and begin to ask questions of those talking about the Treasure House, their interlocutors are initially reticent. However, a Challenging (D2) Intimidate or Reassurance check convinces the fellow thieves to share what they know. If the player characters are already members of the local thieves' guild, then the test is reduced to a Simple (Do), but any Momentum generated can be spent in order to procure extra information. The details that these thieves know are a little scant. What the thieves tell the player characters, however, is that the person they need to speak to is called Bortae (see *Asking Around* on page 5). Beyond this, what they know are rumors: Jaizin Kaa has enough riches to cover the desert of Kush in diamonds. He keeps a team of torturers on hand, specifically to inflict agony upon those who dare to rob him. Jaizin Kaa is more demon than a man, and he earned his riches through blasphemous pacts with dark gods. Most of this is garbled rubbish, as an Average (D1) Lore check can ascertain.

If the player characters prefer to pursue other potential jobs for a little while, always have the lure of Jaizin Kaa's wealth hovering at the edges of their milieu. Perhaps the fence they visit to move illicitly secured goods says that he heard that the plunder at Jaizin Kaa's is especially tempting at the moment — an ivory chest marked with strange sigils was recently brought to the house. Perhaps a non-player character the player characters have grown to like and trust is tempted to join a robbery and is found hideously murdered: *"Jingis got caught...he's hanging from the walls now. Nasty."*

If the player characters are, quite rightly, wary of Jaizin Kaa's Treasure House, then the gamemaster might gradually build a number of reasons for taking the risk. If they are members of the thieves' guild, perhaps there is pressure from those higher up the ladder to avenge their numerous fallen comrades and prove that nothing is beyond the

sticky-fingered grasp of the guild. Perhaps they run into trouble with the authorities after a score, and their ill-gotten goods are taken to the Treasure House for safekeeping.

Alternatively, if the player characters wish to join a guild, a successful robbery might constitute the entrance exam — in a manner of speaking. Whatever happens, the Treasure House of Jaizin Kaa is a fixture in the player characters' world, in the fabric of the city they inhabit, and in which they ply their acquisitive trade.

CASING THE JOINT

Whatever the spur to action is for the player characters, the likelihood is that their first step is planning their robbery. It is perfectly true that Conan's plan to burglarize the Tower of the Elephant extended only as far as hopping over the wall with a sword and taking his chances. It is also true that Taurus of Nemedra had been planning his heist for months. If the player characters do tend towards the Conan approach, then skip this section and proceed to the scene which details the appropriate means of breaking in. If, as is probable, the thieves decide to learn all they can of Jaizin Kaa's Treasure House, then detailed below are a series of ideas for avenues they might pursue.

The gamemaster is of course free to mix and match the information which the player characters discover and the location they discover it in.

The Treasure House itself is a large, impressively fortified building. It is three or four times the size of any other building nearby. The walls are constructed from large stones and are well ordered; a craftsman has clearly erected them with care. There are spaces between the stones where the mortar has worn away somewhat and where a knife might be braced to assist a nimble climber.

While the Treasure House is roofed, there are large, open portals which give way onto stairs leading into the deeper recesses of the edifice. The guards use these to keep an eye on the streets below. Such portals are well

OBSERVATION TABLE

Success	What Can be Observed?	Effect
1	The walls are climbable, even without rope.	One player character may re-roll one failed Athletics test if the player characters attempt to infiltrate the Treasure House by scaling the walls.
2	The mortar used to bind these stones is old and flaking. A knife could be inserted between them, easily.	All Athletics checks are carried out at one step of Difficulty lower.
3+	There is a slight bulge which travels beneath two of the four walls. Does a tunnel or a sewer run beneath the Treasure House?	When interrogating non-player characters about possible ways into the Treasure House, a non-player character offers the possibility of using the old sewer without the player characters having to roll or spend Momentum.

guarded but can be accessed by those determined enough. There are a number of windows cut into the walls. Some these are large enough to fit a person through, although it might be something of a squeeze for any who are less than svelte.

Guards patrol the outside of the Treasure House, as well as its interior. Two guards stand outside each of the doors opening onto the streets. The Treasure House has three large, reinforced doors built in dark, heavy oak. Battering them down is virtually impossible without access to a small army and a particularly effective battering ram. The locks on these doors are, conceivably, pickable but they are also old, ornate, and clearly keep out most thieves — a dedicated lock-picker might be able to coax them into opening without a key but not easily.

The streets around the Treasure House are fairly small and cramped. The location became somewhat squalid in recent times, and there are openings into darkened alleyways in which fairly large numbers of people might conceal themselves. Having said this, however, the immediate area around the Treasure House remains clear — any trader who sets up a stall too close to the walls, or in such a way as it might impede the view of a watching guard, is moved on quickly and none too gently.

Observing the Treasure House

The simplest and most obvious means of picking up valuable information on the Treasure House is through observation. Particularly canny player characters can take careful note of when guards are on duty and when they are not, or the time at which a shift changes. Player characters can also use their hard-earned expertise to analyze the height and strength of the walls and scan the surrounding areas for alternative means of ingress. Anyone stealthy or reckless enough might also be able to examine the enormous, iron-forged locks on the Treasure House's three enormous doors — all of them studded with hunks of blackened metal and pitted with the marks of weapons, employed by the more unimaginative of previous thieves. Information which can be gathered from Observing the Treasure House is below:

- **Watching the Guards Go By:** If the player characters wish to analyze the rotation of the Guards and their relative strength at any particular time of day or night, have them make a Daunting (D3) Observation test. Passing this permanently raises the Difficulty of any Listen tests for a guard by one step during the adventure. Additionally, if the player characters decide to break into the Treasure House by climbing the walls, all climb tests automatically generate 1 point of Momentum. This effect only lasts while the player characters are climbing the walls as part of their initial entry.
- **What About Those Walls?:** Any player characters wishing to study the walls of the Treasure House should make a Challenging (D2) Insight or Craft test. Consult the *Observation* table (below) to determine what information is gained.
- **Just Who Picked Those Locks?:** Examining the locks at close quarters requires stealth, speed, and a little bit of luck. The first thing that needs to be dealt with is the two guards positioned outside every entrance to the Treasure House. The player characters can choose to do this in the form of a full-frontal assault. In which case, four other guards come to their colleagues' aid immediately, and an additional two guards will join the combat as frequently as the gamemaster wishes. In case the player characters think that this is a potential way of proceeding with the heist as a whole, it is worth noting that guards on the other side of the door will close it! A particularly benevolent gamemaster might occasionally allow for the player characters to lure idiot guards out and running past them, but this particular caper requires smarter tactics. Alternatively, distracting the guards using another, subtler, method should be fairly easy — whether staging a fight near to the guards and drawing them away from the door, or through some other means that the players dream up. The gamemaster may wish to make these tactics require Challenging (D2) or Daunting (D3) tests — whether convincing the guards to follow them using a Persuade test or an Animal Handling test to convince a pack of stray dogs to attack the guards.

The above represents what is found out through a quick prowl around the Treasure House. If the player characters think of other angles of entry at this stage, and the gamemaster feels that they might reasonably discover the answers at this point, then improvise as desired.

Asking Around

As thieves, the player characters have plenty of opportunity to solicit news, advice, and information from others experienced in the art of making things that belong to other people their own. This can be relied upon as a matter of course, if the player characters are already members of the city's thieves' guild. If the player characters are recent inductees into the ranks of the guild, they may need to offer a few pints of ale to those who will talk, or perhaps the odd coin, but nothing much. If the player characters are experienced guild members in good standing, then the information is readily available. There are also rumors that a high-ranking member of the guild ponders mounting his own raid on the Treasure House. If the player characters inquire who the guild member is, the answer is a resounding "no one knows."



The rumor is, however, extremely widespread. Even if the player characters have yet to join the guild, there are still hints that a powerful and important thief is considering making a move on the Treasure House. The gamemaster should insinuate this subtly into any conversations the player characters might have with thieves' guild members. Such questions aren't welcome, as someone else plans to make a play for the stash the player characters earmarked for their own. They might just have to pick up the pace.

Alternatively, if the player characters have yet to join the guild, don't wish to join, or are otherwise unable to draw on its resources, they must rely on luck and cunning to get their questions answered. Even if they are members, of course, the answers they get are a little guarded. The player characters get the feeling they aren't being told the whole story — at least not quite.

While there may be a guild tavern or inn, thieves also congregate in other bars, brothels, and dives which might prove fruitful hunting grounds for information. While intimidating members of the guild in their own bar might be a means of committing suicide by proxy, player characters have a much better chance of cornering an experienced, knowledgeable thief, or group of thieves, if they are prepared to be patient. If the player characters know who they are looking for — perhaps someone they have used for information before — then the gamemaster should use that resource. If not, the player characters, on a successful Challenging (D2) Craft, Lore, or Insight test know that the woman they are looking for is called Bortae. This name was mentioned several times already in connection with

the Treasure House in the scraps the player characters have picked up earlier in the adventure. If the player characters ask the thieves they meet earlier in the adventure, they, too, refer them to Bortae.

Getting to Bortae

Bortae is one of the oldest and most successful thieves in the city. Originally from Argos, but having lived most of her life in Zamora, she is as good and as experienced a thief as they come. She has managed to stay alive this long through a combination of tactical ruthlessness, a consummate ability to choose the right bodyguards, and excellence in her craft. Her inability to accept instructions from those in the guild who are, at least nominally, higher than her prevented her becoming a member of the ruling Council. Bodyguards always accompany Bortae. One always walks alongside her, looking menacing. However, at least two others will be hiding within eyeshot, posing as a normal denizen of the city.

The likelihood is that the player characters find Bortae in a tavern. Her fractious relationship with the guild means she rarely frequents their tavern, so the player characters should be able to gain entry fairly easily. If visiting at night, when the inn is busy, the fact that they aren't regulars might require a Challenging (D2) Persuasion test or a Daunting (D3) Intimidation test — the player characters are likely to be trying to intimidate experienced guild doormen, which should be, at the very least, daunting! Once inside, Bortae is easy to find, as she is the only seventy-year-old woman performing knife tricks while swigging cheap ale. Her

bodyguards lurk nearby, but picking them out of the crowd of other large, dangerous looking men with accumulations of stubble on their chins and mandalas of scars on their cheeks requires a Dire (D4) Observation test.

Talking with Bortae is easy enough; getting her to reveal any information considerably less so. Intimidating Bortae requires an Epic (D5) test. She's old, tough, and stubborn, and long ago exceeded the life expectancy she had set for herself. Persuade tests, if carried out with enough passion and brio, should succeed on a Daunting (D3) test — Bortae has half a mind to conclude her career as a thief with a last death-or-glory attempt at one impossible job: Jaizin Kaa's Treasure House. She speaks in a thick dialect native to the district, and may be hard to understand for non-natives, or even those from higher social classes.

A sufficiently convincing, sufficiently flattering appeal to her finely honed survival instinct might convince her to let others into her confidence. A promise of a share in whatever rewards the player characters might obtain also helps — should the player characters offer this inducement, award them a free point of Momentum for this scene. A Dire (D4) Society test might also work, reminding Bortae of the much fabled “honor amongst thieves” and other such nonsense. If the player characters are members of the thieves' guild, the gamemaster should reduce the Difficulty of this test by one step.

Even if the player characters are unable to persuade Bortae to aid them with information, as long as they are civil, she wishes them luck and suggests that they try watching the outside of the Treasure House and do things “the old-fashioned way.” Only naked threats of violence seriously irritate her, and her reaction is swift and brutal. She immediately attacks with her daggers, as will her closest bodyguard. These attacks are followed up by further attacks from the men and women she has stationed in and around the tavern. If the player characters attempt to pursue this course of action, most of the tavern sides with Bortae — she's a damned good customer, after all, and well-liked in the community. Killing Bortae in this manner reduces the player character's Renown by -1 immediately, irrespective of the level it might have been before now.

If the player characters manage to win over Bortae, however, then she proves to be an invaluable source of knowledge. Detailed below is the information which Bortae has on the Treasure House of Jaizin Kaa and its assortment of dangers. Of course, the player characters won't be able to assess its veracity until they are inside the Treasure House's walls. An Average (D2) Insight test is enough to establish that Bortae, at least, believes everything she says to be true. Exactly how it is that she came by the information is also touched on below, if this will help to assuage any doubts the player characters might have.

What Bortae Knows:

Much of what Bortae knows she gleaned through sixty years of experience as a cat-burglar, foot-pad, and cut-purse. She has known everyone in the guild's annals at some point and she has helped plan several of the attempted raids on the Treasure House.

- There is, Bortae can confirm, a sewer which runs directly beneath the Treasure House. It predates most of the city, however, and is difficult to locate. She knows that a few of the bravest and smartest thieves tried that way many years ago: “They didn't come back. But they didn't end up on the walls. Something else did for them.” She doesn't know what might be down there and what it's capable of, but it is at least one way of avoiding the outer defenses of the House.
- The guards are Stygian mercenaries, hired in by Jaizin Kaa or one of his agents, and are thoroughly vetted. Killing one and taking their place would be difficult but not impossible. There are passwords that must be learned, and the player characters would have to be quick and lucky, but it is possible that ingress could be made that way. No one has yet managed it, though she doesn't know many who have had the courage to try it. Attempting such a plan requires a Daunting (D3) Observation test to identify the right guard to try and pick off. Dissembling convincingly enough to pass muster as a new guard requires a Dire (D4) Command test, followed by a Dire (D4) Society test — along with some extremely good roleplaying. These guards are, as Bortae reminds the player characters, tough, well-paid, and highly competent. “They aren't young know-nothings with as little between their legs as they have between their ears, follow?”
- Inside the House, she only knows the merest fragments. There are traps, regular patrols, and somewhere at the center of the Treasure House lies the treasure of Jaizin Kaa himself. She has also heard, herself, the howls of hunting dogs rising clear and savage from the House. The corpses which are hung from the side of the House every few months, are usually studded with teeth marks. “Dirty, great beasts I'll be bound. You'll want to prepare for them. And prepare for those things that no one knows about. That's what you've got to prepare for.”
- As to what Jaizin Kaa keeps in his vault, even Bortae has little idea. Beyond his extraordinary wealth, Jaizin Kaa is a mystery. He is a merchant, he is Zamorian, and his Treasure House has never been robbed. She knows nothing beyond this. She can repeat rumors: dark pacts with ancient gods, magic sigils on arcane items of impossible age, and

terrifying provenance, but nothing which might be construed as a fact. And she knows it. “Whatever he’s got locked up in that there House, if it ain’t fit to crown the king of Aquilonia and decorate his court, then every tale I’ve ever heard is wrong. You don’t protect nothing that ferociously.”

- One of the more powerful members of the Guild plans his own raid on the Treasure House in the next few days. She isn’t entirely sure who it is, but she knows that he has the resources of the Guild behind him. This is one reason she is relatively happy to help the player characters, despite her lingering ambitions. Irritating the Guild is a perennial hobby for Bortae, and she is always happy to have an opportunity to do it again. She hints that an envoy from the Guild was sent to ask for her assistance, but she turned him down. She is helping the player characters because she knows they are doing this without the Guild behind them: she admires that. “Thieves who can think for themselves are rare these days...”
- This is all Bortae can tell the player characters, although the gamemaster should feel free to improvise answers to further questions, wherever she feels appropriate. Once the discussion is concluded, Bortae wishes the player characters the best of luck and offers them drink, food, and merriment. After all, she reasons, either the player characters will be dead within a week, in which case she will be seen as a generous soul, or the player characters will be the first to steal from Jaizin Kaa — and she will seem to have been integral to the plan. Bortae is wily and her plans are highly effective. If the player characters have been polite to her, she may become a useful source of further information and tip-offs should a particularly lucrative job come up. She knows everyone and everything; she is also unlikely to betray the players to the Guild if things were to go poorly. She is a useful contact in every sense of the word.



BORTAE (TOUGHENED)

A thief of vast experience and an inability to concede defeat, Bortae is covered with the scars of her victories and her failures. She is handy in a fight — and has little concept of a so-called “fair” fight — and her unwillingness to compromise with the city’s powerful Thieves’ Guild is the only reason she is not called its Queen of Thieves.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
13	14	12	13
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
12	9	13	



FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	1	Movement	2
Fortitude	1	Senses	1
Knowledge	2	Social	2

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 9, Resolve 13
- **Soak:** Armor 2 (Leather), Courage 5

ATTACKS

- **Shortsword (M):** Reach 1, 4 , Vicious 1
- **Threaten (T):** Range M, 2  mental, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **No Substitute for Experience:** Bortae is a hardened fighter and uses every situation to her best advantage. Whenever engaged in a melee, Bortae automatically generates 1 point of Momentum each time she attacks.

DOOM SPENDS

- **If You Want Something Done...:** When alongside one of her Bodyguards, if the bodyguard misses an attack or fails a test, the gamemaster may spend 1 Doom point to have Bortae attempt the same attack or challenge immediately, without the need to wait for her turn. This supersedes the normal turn order, though Bortae cannot have two turns in one round.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE BIG DAY

Once the player characters assemble all of the above information, or as much of it as they choose to pursue, the next stage is preparing for the heist itself. As noted elsewhere in this adventure, the player characters can eschew such long-winded methods and simply hack their way to the treasure. Indeed, if a gamemaster wishes to repurpose this adventure for use with a non-thief group of player characters, this approach should work well. However, if it is being run as a thief adventure, the details and guesswork they managed to assemble likely forms the basis of their rough plan. Enacting such plans usually requires some

equipment, and the gamemaster should be generous in letting the player characters have whatever equipment they require, within reason.

For instance, acquiring a length of good, strong rope should be easy. Getting hold of a clay pot filled with the poisonous extract of exotic lotus plants should be less so. These preparations are left deliberately vague. A gamemaster wishing to expand this adventure might insert a series of subplots here, involving the pursuit of the more esoteric and difficult requirements for the player characters' plan.

If the player characters want to get hold of some of the appallingly toxic yellow tincture which Taurus of Nemedica makes use of, for instance, then some sort of adventure on the side is clearly called for. Precisely what this consists of is, of course, entirely left to the gamemaster's imagination — as a rough heuristic, however, make sure that anything which might conceivably be found in a marketplace or bazaar can simply be had for free. Anything which strikes the gamemaster as being unusual, esoteric, or hard to find... well, let it be exactly that!

CHAPTER TWO: BREAKING AND ENTERING

All the preceding scenes have led to this moment. Whether the player characters have carefully, studiously gathered every ounce of information they can find about Jaizin Kaa's Treasure House, or whether they have simply shown up with their swords at the ready is immaterial. All that matters now is breaking into the Treasure House and getting out alive again. As noted elsewhere, whatever approach the player characters opt to pursue, let them try it out. A number of the most likely methods of gaining entry are touched on below, but if the player characters come up with something outlandish, give it a go. After all, what do they have to lose except their lives?

HOW ARE WE GETTING IN AGAIN?

No more time for deliberating or procrastinating. It's time for the player characters to put their lunas where their mouths are. Or more appropriately, it is time for them to attempt to put someone else's money in their pockets. If at any point the player characters seem content to simply debate possible strategies over and above implementing them, the gamemaster should remind them that a second group of thieves also plots to redistribute Jaizin Kaa's wealth.

What the player characters have is the element of surprise and the information they were able to secure from Bortae.

IN MEDIA RES...

A particularly cinematic approach to the adventure would be for the gamemaster to even begin at the moment the heist begins, with the player characters on the cusp of actually enacting their plan — one they have not yet devised! From here, the player characters will be set into motion, and can fill in their approach and their preparations as "flashback" scenes to be roleplayed as details become important.

For example, as the player characters approach a particular guard post, one of the players might spend a point of Fortune and explain that the guards are asleep. At this point, the gamemaster flashes back and improvises a scene where the player character clandestinely slips a sleeping draught into the guard's drink after buying him a round in a nearby ale-house. In another sequence, a player character might produce a key for a lock, won through carefully stealing the original and having it copied in dizzying haste while the key-holder was visiting a favorite brothel.

Each of these scenes can be combined and folded into the ongoing narrative, and any Complications that ensued can be introduced at opportune moments, such as the aforementioned guard falling so loudly off their stool that they alert others, or the key-holding guard suddenly noticing that the keys were in the wrong order on the ring.

This sort of entry is excellent for game sessions where the players (and player characters) are quick-moving and not interested in extensive set-up, but is not generally recommended for inexperienced gamemasters, or for games where the players are not very familiar with the Hyborian Age setting

The other thieves have greater resources. Waiting might see the Treasure House emptied and the glory of doing so passing to someone else — someone other than the player characters. The gamemaster should strive to keep things moving, as frantic and urgent as possible.

The default assumption is that the player characters make their attempt to break in to Jaizin Kaa's property once night has fallen. This, of course, makes sense with regards to sneaking past guards and infiltrating a protected mansion. However, the player characters are under no obligation to do so — it is their choice. And there are possible advantages; the gamemaster might wish to suppose that, given it's daylight, there will be fewer guards on duty. Nevertheless, all Stealth tests are made at two steps of Difficulty higher than would typically be the case.

Dealing with these matters is what being a thief is all about — taking challenges as they come and making the best of the situation!

Via the Walls


The most obvious way in is to scale the walls of the Treasure House. This won't be easy, nor should it be. The initial difficulty is the constant guard patrols. If the player characters managed to observe the various shift rotations of Jaizin Kaa's mercenaries, then they earn the appropriate bonuses. If the player characters decided to use a rope — perhaps with a grappling hook or something similar — then the throw requires a Challenging (D2) Ranged Weapons or Athletics test in order to cast it through one of the windows which open on to the street and have it fix in place. Casting a rope so that it reaches one of the open portals at the top of the Treasure House requires a Daunting (D3) test.

Additionally, getting close enough to the walls without being spotted by a guard requires a Challenging (D2) Stealth test. A failure draws two guards to the spot — if the player characters manage to kill the guards, or otherwise render them unconscious within two rounds of combat, then the guards are unable to raise the alarm. If, after two rounds of combat, one or both of the guards is alive, then three more

guards arrive, their attention roused by the distinctive sounds of combat.

The player characters then have three rounds of combat to dispose of these guards before another three guards show up. If they cannot dispose of these three guards within three rounds of combat, then the alarm is raised completely and all further stealth checks are raised by two steps of Difficulty — at all times for the duration of the adventure.


If the player characters decide to climb the walls using hands and feet, this requires a Daunting (D3) Athletics test. However, if a character decides to use a knife or other, similar piece of equipment, then the test remains Daunting (D3), but all tests automatically generate 1 point of Momentum.

Failing an Athletics test when climbing the wall can have one of two effects — the choice of which is left to the gamemaster. A player character can fall from the wall, or rope, in which case they take 3  physical damage and must begin the climb anew. Alternatively, the gamemaster can choose to interpret the failure as a momentary slippage and have a guard make a Challenging (D2) Senses test to notice the player character shinning up a rope. The test is Daunting (D3) if the player character is free-climbing the wall or takes a Doom point.

Remember, while it may be tempting to have the player characters plunge from the walls, the adventure may be best served by delaying such effects and letting the ascent continue — of course, the gamemaster gets to take a Doom point in return; it is less a case of the player characters “getting away with it” than them deferring their comeuppance!



Via the Sewer

Finding the sewer's entrance isn't difficult. It's pretty much a case of “follow your nose” and it's as unpleasant as that sounds. The Treasure House is surrounded by the endless flurries of life and activity which all conurbations abound in; this includes, of course, the inevitable effluvia. The city has extensive sewers but they are hardly miracles of smooth-flowing engineering. Much of the air is stagnant and the aroma is potent. Entering the sewer tunnels requires a Challenging (D2) Resistance test, or else the player characters take 1  in Fatigue as they are assailed by the dreadful stench and empty their stomachs into the rancid filth swimming alongside them.

The sewers are dark and lighting torches, while allowable, is somewhat risky; the mounds of human and animal waste generate a lot of methane and naked flames are liable to explode! If the player characters don't use a torch, then all Difficulty tests are automatically raised by two steps. If a torch is ignited, then one of the player characters should

GAMING HOWARDIAN THIEVES

The Howard stories that inspired this adventure and inform the *Conan the Thief* sourcebook as a whole are extremely dynamic and fast-paced. While the first chapter of this adventure is a slower, more deliberate approach that may not seem in keeping with the Conan stories, this structure has been chosen for a reason.

By having the player characters gather the information before embarking on the heist, they not only have a better chance of succeeding, it also means that the pace of the latter half of the adventure can be dramatically increased. After all, the player characters have had plenty of opportunity to gather details and decide their tactics.

For the gamemaster, is the time to up the tempo, to harry them for decisions. At every stage, the gamemaster should urge them toward taking a decision and sticking to it. Should they stand around in a corridor within the Treasure House, remind them of both how risky such behavior is, and of the fact that they can hear a heavily armed patrol approaching around the corner.

This is the stage of the adventure that matches the frenetic pace of Howard's tales. Leave the players tense and on edge... they're breaking into dangerous places to steal expensive items. Make them work for it!

make a Daunting (D3) Survival test every now and then to see whether or not they detect any build-up of methane or other mephitic gases. If the player characters succeed, the gamemaster should assume that upon encountering a pocket of gas, the torch is quickly extinguished and can be relit in a safer location. If the player character fails, then anyone within Close range suffers 3☹ physical damage as the torch billows outwards in a wave of flame.

Finding the obscured tunnel entrance which leads under the Treasure House requires a Daunting (D3) Observation test if the player characters spoke to Bortae. If they failed to ask her advice and are pursuing the sewer route for some other reason, then the Difficulty for the Observation test is Dire (D4). If the player characters fail to locate the tunnel, then they blunder around in the filth and detritus for some time. The gamemaster should require that each player character attempt a second Resistance test, or take 1☹ of Despair from the horrendous pungency and general awfulness of their situation.

However, as they plunge onwards, the gamemaster should allow them to attempt a second Daunting (D3) Observation test. If they succeed, then they manage to spot, scarcely visible beneath the accumulated filth and mold, a directional sigil. If the player characters are not in the Thieves' Guild, it requires a Challenging (D2) Lore or Craft test to identify and read. Otherwise, the test is Simple (D0), with any Momentum from the test lowering the subsequent Difficulty of the Observation test. Success informs the player characters that this mark is part of the widely used Thieves Cant, and marks the direction that anyone seeking entry should go.

Again, an Observation test — Daunting (D3) or Dire (D4) — is required to find the entrance to the tunnel; if this results in yet another failure, then the stench drives the player characters back to the surface. They can try this route again tomorrow or, more sensibly, they might like to try something easier on the nasal passages.

If the player characters find the tunnel, then they suddenly have a much easier time of things. The tunnel is long, straight, and, beyond the first twenty or so feet, mercifully free of aggregated feces. However, the player characters may attempt a Daunting (D3) Observation test; passing it should make the player characters aware of a new, distinctive scent somewhere up ahead. The tunnel is wide and airy, but there is still an unusual scent: musky and slightly acrid.

The further the player characters head into the tunnel, the more potent the scent becomes, and then the sounds begin. These require only an Average (D1) Observation test to hear the first time they occur. They are strange, slithering sounds, something like a snake's writhing on stone and something like the slap of fish on the deck of the ship that lands it. Torchlight — if the player characters use them — begins to pick out the papyrus yellow of bones in small



neat piles on the fringes of the tunnel. They are coated in a strange slime, the source of the acrid smell.

If the player characters investigate the piles of bone, it is quite clear that they are not placed ritually — there is no obvious order to them. They are, however, all human. If a player character tries to touch the strange slime that coats the bones, a Challenging (D2) Insight test triggers a powerful, almost preternatural reaction. The mind and the body recoil violently, knowing, on some atavistic level that whatever this substance is, it is wrong on a primal level, and does not belong here. Not simply in this tunnel below this Treasure House, but quite possibly anywhere on this Earth.

If the player character fails the test or touches the substance anyway, they must immediately take 3☹ physical damage and 2☹ mental damage. The hand they used to touch the substance is rendered useless until the end of the adventure. Canny player characters might contemplate coating their blades with this ooze. Again, a Challenging (D2) Insight test warns against this. If the player characters again fail or ignore this primordial reaction, as soon as the metal or wood of their weapons comes into contact with the ooze, it begins to steam violently and shudder, the weapon begins to squeal almost as though it were a living thing before shattering into hunks of twisted, blackened matter.

JAIZIN KAA'S FAVORITE PET

A man of Jaizin Kaa's wealth has to spend it on something, even if it is simply more exotic and dangerous ways of protecting that wealth. One of the reasons that thieves who attempted to infiltrate the Treasure House via the sewer are never hung from the walls is that there isn't enough left to hang. Within the tunnel beneath the Treasure House lurks Jaizin Kaa's most prized possession — a creature which is a hideous amalgam of flesh and magic. Jaizin Kaa bought it from a trader in slaves and exotic beasts who had, in turn, bought it from a sorcerer who drew the beast out of the infinite darkness that lies between worlds.

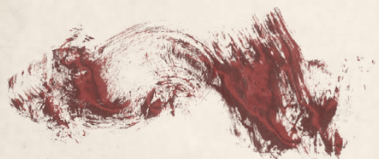
The sorcerer hoped to secure dreadful knowledge from the beast, but whatever he summoned was a mindless, slaving thing which sought only to appease a monstrous hunger. Jaizin Kaa keeps the beast below the Treasure House precisely to prevent any would-be thieves or assassins from entering via these tunnels. The bones which the player characters see in neatly stacked piles all about them are the remains of those who attempted entry by this route, along with slaves, troublemakers, and the odd business rival who Jaizin Kaa was keen to dispose of.

Jaizin Kaa's pet forms the bones into such piles. It consumes its prey whole and digests them before regurgitating the bones in these macabre towers, coated in its noxious stomach juices.

After finding the bones, the player characters stumble on to the creature shortly after. The air in the tunnel becomes suddenly, quite noticeably, warmer; the acrid scent which was evident before has also increased in strength and there is a sound like a barnacle being ripped from a ship's hull only louder. The darkness disgorges the seething mass of Jaizin Kaa's pet.

The creature is large, about eight feet tall and broad. It is roughly anthropoid in shape, though its head is a curved, tongue-like proboscis which writhes and laps at the air. It does not have any limbs precisely, only vestigial stumps which bulge from beneath translucent flesh, the surface of which ripples with putrescent life. The creature's skin forms itself into an endless succession of mouths which gnash at the air in paroxysms of desperate hunger.

It is a loathsome, impossible creature and even a moment's glimpse is enough to warrant a Dire (D4) Discipline test with 2 mental damage inflicted for any failures. Though it does not have anything which might be described as eyes, the creature has clearly detected the player characters and moves implacably toward them.



JAIZIN KAA'S PET (TOUGHENED)

A terrifying mass of corruption and hunger, this creature from the Outer Dark exists only to consume the flesh of those men, women, and animals that fall into its path. Driven solely by hunger and instinct, it is a formidable foe, but a group of thieves, cunning and quick enough, should be able to survive its onslaught intact... more or less.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
7	7	5	13
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
9	14	10	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	Movement	Senses	Social
2	—	1	—
Fortitude	Knowledge		
2	—		

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 16, Resolve 15
- **Soak:** Armor 4 (Horror, Malleable Flesh), Courage 2

ATTACKS

- **Consume (M):** Reach 1, 5, Vicious 1, Stun 1
- **Maddening Form (T):** Range M, 2 mental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Only Forward:** The creature always attacks the player character in front of it. Slipping behind the creature grants any successful attacks made against it +1 damage

DOOM SPENDS

- **Reformation:** After Jaizin Kaa's pet has suffered its first Wound, the gamemaster may spend 1 Doom to immediately restore that wound. This ability may be used once.
- **Gut Juice:** The internal fluids of Jaizin Kaa's pet are highly corrosive. After the creature has been killed, the gamemaster may spend 1 Doom point to have the weapons of the player character that killed the creature suddenly dissolve, worn away instantly by the venom of the creature's insides.

This should be quite a difficult fight but far from impossible. If the player characters try and flee, the gamemaster should have the creature pursue them until they reach

the point where the sewer ends and becomes merely a filthy street.

Then, alarmed by the sounds of the outside world, it slinks back to its lair and awaits the next group of thieves unwise enough to disturb it. Successfully defeating the creature, however, should leave the player characters only a short distance away from a point which is illuminated quite brightly compared to the rest of the tunnel so far. This is the bottom of what used to be an old well.

The tunnel was built here once the water dried up, and Jaizin Kaa has been using this place ever since to keep his monstrous pet. Ascending the well wall shouldn't be too difficult. Casting a rope up the well requires a Challenging (D2) Coordination test or free climbing requires a Daunting (D3) Athletics test. Once the player characters have clambered this short way, they can proceed to the next scene.

Via the Door

It should be quite possible for the player characters to get in by sneaking through one of the main doors to the Treasure House. Obviously, this should not be easy. Distracting the guards from the door is quite tricky, and then picking one of the locks requires a successful Dire (D4) Thievery test, unless the thief already surveyed the lock. In this case, the player character can apply the appropriate bonus mentioned on page 5. The central difference to attempting to break into the Treasure House this way is that there are more guards near to the doors than there are anywhere else. This increases the Difficulty of all Stealth tests conducted in the following scene by one step.

Via Another Path

If the player characters come up with a brilliant plan for breaking into the Treasure House of Jaizin Kaa, the gamemaster should let them run with it, using the rules and Difficulty test increases and decreases referenced above.

CHAPTER THREE: TREASURE HUNTING

If all has gone well, by this point the thieves have — by hook or by crook — managed to gain entry to the Treasure House of Jaizin Kaa, in itself is no mean feat. They won't, however, have much of a chance to congratulate themselves. Sneaking through the corridors of the Treasure House, avoiding the various patrols, and arriving at the treasure vault means the player characters need to utilize every scrap of cunning, dexterity, and courage to reach the vault. These are the thieves of the Hyborian Age, after all; they need to be able to take the odd punch from an irate guard.

THE PATH TO THE VAULT

Jaizin Kaa's Treasure House is a dangerous place. Even though the player characters might have managed to avoid detection — at least by human senses if they ventured through the tunnels — they are still some way from the vault in wherein lies a thief's only heart... gold.

The Treasure House itself is luxuriously appointed with tapestries adorning the walls and ornately patterned rugs across the floors. The place is ostentatiously wealthy; Jaizin Kaa has sufficient money to make even his private bank a testament to his success as a merchant. If the player characters ask, there are a few jeweled trinkets in the hands of statues and used as the eyes of holy icons to earn anyone pocketing them a few Gold back in the markets (see page 302–303 of the *Conan* corebook for advice on awarding gold).




Rather than exhaustively detail the events encountered during their passage through the Treasure House, the gamemaster is encouraged to roll on the *Treasure House Encounter* table at least once, more often as Complications ensue, incorporating the resultant event into the player characters' movement toward their final goal. To ensure a sufficiently tense atmosphere, the gamemaster is encouraged to roll between three and five times during the course of the adventure, and if the player characters are especially clumsy, loud, or brash... more rolls are warranted.

The gamemaster should use discretion at this point. The player characters may have had to fight their way past Jaizin Kaa's pet and, potentially, through dozens of guards. If an encounter is liable to kill off a number of player characters, then scale it back slightly, removing as many opponents as necessary to make things challenging but not too deadly. The same rule should be applied to the Difficulty of any tests. The end of the adventure is near, and the tension and engagement should be high, rather than frustration at impassable obstacles and challenges.

THE VAULT DOOR

The door to the Treasure Vault is a vast, steel construction. It likely cost very nearly as much as the rest of the Treasure House itself, and in terms of resilience and strength, is perhaps unequalled in the Hyborian Age. There is nothing else like it, even in the mountain fastnesses of sorcerers, the citadels of kings, and the lost halls of Valusia. The Treasure Vault is protected in a fashion beyond compare. Breaking through the door is virtually impossible. It would require sorcery of the most powerful variety and, unless this is a group of thieves with a tame sorcerer and a direct line to the Outer Dark, this is unlikely to be an option. Opening the door is an extremely difficult task and require at least three thieves in order to make the attempt. The hinges, also, are inside, and removing the door from its surrounding

TREASURE HOUSE ENCOUNTER TABLE

D20	Event
1-2	Trap! The player characters set off a deadly trap that Jaizin Kaa had carefully installed within the fabric of his Treasure House. In this case, a blade erupts from the ceiling on an enormous pendulum, swinging towards the player characters with terrifying speed. Dodging the blade requires a Daunting (D3) Athletics test which the player characters must succeed or suffer 5  physical damage. If they successfully avoid this trap, they may disable it on a successful Daunting (D3) Thievery test.
3-4	Large Patrol! Six guards emerge from the nearest doorway. They are clearly alert and well armed. Hiding from the guards requires a Daunting (D3) Stealth test. Any failures immediately draw the guards. Fighting the guards is difficult and should use the same rules with regards to summoning reinforcements as detailed above (see page 10).
5-6	Watch Dogs! Three watch dogs with one handler stroll down the corridor (use the statistics for dogs found on page 326 of the <i>Conan</i> corebook). Distracting them requires a good idea and an appropriate Daunting (D3) test. Hiding requires a Dire (D4) test, as the dog's sensitive noses make concealment no guarantee of evasion.
7-8	Watch Out! The rich Shemitish rugs which decorate Jaizin Kaa's floors are suitably luxurious; however, they do have a tendency to slip away from underfoot. The gamemaster should pick the player character with the lowest Agility score (obviously, it is the clumsiest thief who slips) and have him roll to pass a Dire (D4) Athletics test in order to prevent himself from collapsing. If he fails, two guards approach, attracted by the noise. Again, the same rules for attracting reinforcements apply.
9-10	Shiny! Something catches the player characters' eyes, a small statuette apparently made entirely from gold and bronze. It must be worth a great deal. If anyone attempts to take it from its place on a nearby pedestal, he should immediately make a Dire (D4) Thievery test to recognize that the statuette is attached by a silken thread to an alarm located some distance away. Triggering the alarm draws the attention of four guards. The same rules for reinforcements apply.
11-12	Patrol! Four guards emerge from the nearest doorway. They are clearly not as focused as they might be — tiredness creeps in, perhaps — but they are still well armed and likely to provide formidable opposition, especially if they have time to summon additional assistance. Use the same rules for these reinforcements as before.
13-14	Nothing There. A cunningly disguised tripwire stretches across the corridor, painted exactly the color of the floor, and lit well enough that it casts no obvious shadow. Spotting it requires a Daunting (D3) Observation test. Any failing the test are tripped and crash to the floor. Allow each to make a Daunting (D3) Athletics test to see if they can prevent themselves from hitting the floor and taking 2  damage from the fall. If anyone does fall to the floor, two guards are attracted by the noise. Use the same rules for reinforcements as before.
15-16	Tracked! A guard with a watch dog turns the corner ahead. The dog's hackles immediately rise; it has the player characters' scents! Avoiding the dog requires either an Epic (D5) Stealth test to hide, or a Dire (D4) Animal Handling test to convince the beast to turn on its owner. The player characters can also attempt to put the animal and its owner down; if so, they have two rounds of combat to do so before the dog's barking draws six extra guards.
17-18	On the Precipice! One of the stones in the floor suddenly gives way, threatening to plunge the player characters into the dark tunnels beneath the house. Avoiding falling requires a Daunting (D3) Athletics test. If a player character only achieves two successes, then he is suspended over the edge, clutching by his fingernails. Climbing out, once in this position, requires a Challenging (D2) Brawn test. If the player characters fall, he finds himself in the tunnels beneath the Treasure House. If they entered this way, then the threat has been eliminated already, however the fall causes 2  of damage. If they haven't, however, then Jaizin Kaa's pet is only too happy to see him! (See page 12 for more information on this loathsome creature).
19-20	Nowhere to be Found. The player characters are able to sneak through this part of the Treasure House with astonishing ease. The more paranoid amongst them might say it's too quiet... in which case, the gamemaster should probably roll again on the table and prove them player characters right! Perhaps the encounter is stealthier than described.

frame is not an option, as it is embedded deeply into the surrounding marble walls.

The first stage of picking the locks requires each of the three thieves to make a Daunting (D3) Thievery test to attempt to pick the three major locks located at various points on the door. Each thief must pass *at the same time* for this to work. The lock is carefully calibrated and needs the three locks to turn at the same time. If two player characters pass and one fails, the process is not completed and the thieves must attempt it again. However, there are a finite number of times this can be tried before the lock simply ceases to work. After two attempts the lock seizes and can no longer be picked. The player characters simply have to escape and try again another time. Jaizin Kaa will discover that the lock was tampered with and will re-set it, and redouble his guards. This allows another attempt, but the effort to get there will be all-the-more challenging.

If, however, the player characters manage this feat, then the next stage is for one final Dire (D4) Thievery test to unpick the central lock. Once this is done, the player characters can drag the enormous door open with a Daunting (D3) Brawn test.

As the door opens, there is a powdering of dust, the susurration of insect carapaces dislodged and falling to the ground, the flailing threads of severed spider webbing, and... what else?

IN THE BELLY OF THE BEAST

The Treasure Vault is not stuffed with gold and gems. It is an enormous room, however, stuffed with endless reams of paper. Sheaves of paper cover the floor, the tables, and every available surface. The paper is of different color and styles; some is primitive papyrus, already flaking. Some is the paper used by the finest scribes on the continent. All of it is covered in writing, in all the different languages of the world. Some contain images — maps, drawings of exotic creatures, and, sometimes, men and women in the midst of the most extravagant of activities. The only thing which looks remotely like it might belong in a typical treasure vault is an enormous chest — four or five feet tall and made of white wood reinforced with iron rivets.

If the player characters examine the vast number of parchments which adorn the room, they need to pass a Challenging (D2) Lore test to have any chance of reading and understanding it; this test is to see if the player characters pick up a parchment with writing they recognize.

The texts are all accounts of the comings and goings of men and women with a particular focus on the sexual predilections and vices in which these same men and women indulge. Accounts of local luminaries and their tastes for nubile servants, details of a noble woman (the wife of a prince of the city) and her dalliances whenever

her husband is away, the tale of a priest who steals from the poor who come to worship at his temple — these tales, and thousands more like them, are collected here. The images seem to be drawings of other, similar events. What the player characters stumbled upon is Jaizin Kaa's real treasure: the knowledge he uses to blackmail the powerful.

Jaizin Kaa is a broker of knowledge; his wealth is in those he can blackmail and extort, both to keep himself wealthy and alive. The mercenaries he employs and the measures he is prepared to go to in order to preserve his knowledge have made him, in essence, untouchable. What the player characters can hope to gain from the situation is up to them; if they grab handfuls of parchment, the likelihood is they will find little which can benefit them.

However, a more careful scrutiny of the shelves, and a Daunting (D3) Society test, reveals two parchments which concern people in positions of some authority in the city they inhabit. How the player characters choose to use this information is entirely up to them — whether they exploit it for financial gain, political sway, or as a “get out of jail free card” is their choice — however, possessing this information is, in itself, dangerous. There is a reason Jaizin Kaa has had to construct a deadly, trap-filled Treasure House to keep it all secure. He promises his blackmail subjects protection from exposure, and he must back it up with adequate reputation for security.

At this point, the player characters should make a Dire (D4) Observation test. If any of the player characters pass, then they hear the sounds of extremely soft footsteps approaching the vault, the faint murmur of breath, and the readying of weapons. If they all fail the Observation test, then what happens next should come as a complete surprise — if this is the case, the gamemaster is allowed to have his foes attack ahead of the player characters without having to expend any Doom points. This effect, however, lasts only for the first turn of combat. After this, the gamemaster must spend Doom as normal.

THE DOUBLE CROSS

Someone enters the room. Who this is depends upon the player characters' decisions earlier in the adventure. If they visited Bortae, then it is she and her bodyguards who enter the Treasure Vault — weapons drawn. If they did not visit her in search of advice, then the small party of thieves whom the player characters encountered plotting their own raid upon the Treasure House are the ones who swagger in, faces plastered with self-satisfied smirks. The following details presume that Bortae is the leader of the late arrivals, though this can be easily altered where required.

Whomever enters, the result is, in essentials, the same. There is a sudden wash of incomprehension across their faces as they are confronted, not by piles of gold and precious

stones, but by sheaves of parchment, all inscribed with cramped handwriting in a thousand different languages. Bortae attempts to hide her disappointment, feigning that she had long known of the true contents of the vault. She hadn't, of course, and is as shocked by this development as anyone else in the room. She quickly and decorously thanks the player characters for their help in breaking in and explains that she has sent a number of groups into the Treasure House before — she is impressed that this group managed to get so far.

Now, however, she plans to open the chest herself, claiming whatever is inside it and leaving. She adds that, unfortunately, she must leave the player characters here: trapped in the vault. She nods solemnly at this point, acknowledging her regret at having to do so, and, again, saluting the group's skill. However, if Jaizin Kaa doesn't have someone to pin the blame on, he may come after her: this is her retirement fund and she has no intention of having her retirement interrupted by an assassin's knife. If the player characters did not visit Bortae, then the motive is simply greed, though the reason for trapping the player characters remains the same.

If the player characters attempt to attack Bortae now, she gestures to one of her bodyguards who quickly intercepts the attack. The number of bodyguards Bortae has with her is equal to the number of player characters plus two. Any attempt to kill Bortae is blocked by a bodyguard — up to and including an arrow, although the gamemaster needs to spend a Doom point to enable this. Bortae gestures to the player characters that she intends to open the chest and announces that they are welcome to live a little longer and at least see what is inside or, if they prefer, they can fight her bodyguard and die now.

If the player characters choose to fight, Bortae dispatches her men to engage them while she heads toward the chest. One of the bodyguards remains with her at all times in order to protect her; should the player characters break through the other bodyguards, Bortae uses her wits or deception to distract them and give her time to open the chest.

At a dramatically appropriate moment — perhaps just as Bortae is about to open the chest — eight of the guardsmen file into the room and surround the two groups of thieves. Their leader shouts at everyone to drop their weapons. If things have already descended into a brawl, then chances are this order will be ignored. If so, the guards ready themselves for battle. If the player characters waited patiently for Bortae to open the chest, she does so now...

THE UNTETHERED BEAST

The chest is not, as Bortae and perhaps the player characters suspected, a repository for gold or jewels. It was Jaizin Kaa's failsafe. If ever it had been necessary for the information

piled up in this vault to be destroyed, quickly and permanently, Jaizin Kaa had procured a means to do so. The chest contains a djinn — a spirit of flame and anger — which immediately attacks the nearest player character. At this point, things descend into an anarchic mass of violence. The guards attack, Bortae screeches in frustration, and, with her bodyguard, attempts to hack her way clear.

The player characters are stuck in the middle and must extricate themselves, one way or another.

DJINN (TOUGHENED)

In the deserts of Shem and Koth, there are places where the fire leaps from the ground despite there being no kindling, no means of igniting flame whatsoever. Some of the desert peoples have ventured too near to these impossible flames in the past, seeking to find what causes them to explode forth with such desperate energy. Many have died trying to answer to such a sinister mystery. And yet they do not die. For this flame is not the fire of man, but is the fire of the gods; it produces no smoke, no scent. It simply leaps from the earth, an expectoration of heat and light and energy. And those it touches, it consumes, or seems to. It wreathes them in bright flame, scouring flesh and leaving behind a husk — a stumbling, shambling mass of charcoal which soon collapses into nothing. And yet something remains — a pertinacious essence which cannot be so easily eradicated. Whether it is the soul of the person burnt alive by the dancing flames, or the spirit of the fire itself none know — but the remaining specter is strange, powerful, and deadly.

It stalks the desert, appearing as a tall person wreathed in a dark cloak. Only the closest examination will reveal that the dark cloak cannot be removed from the person; it is not a garment, it is the smoke which forms their very being and, when touched, it slips between even the tightest of grips — leaving behind only an ashy residue on grasping fingers. This strange and terrible being is a *djinn*, a living spirit of flame.

The *djinn* is always seeking a means of quenching its thirst, of filling its stomach and becoming warm. Whatever the touch of the flame might bring, in terms of power (and the *djinn* has many) it takes much more. The *djinn* must continue to walk, endlessly, across the empty spaces of the deserts they inhabit. Whatever magic colluded in the creation of such creatures, it seems to prevent them from leaving any place where there the sand stretches, infinitely onward. It can manipulate the sand however, using it as a means of concealing themselves and shielding their ethereal forms from the touch of steel. The *djinn* is impossibly fast, vanishing and reappearing at will, and it can summon fire from the sand which ravages flesh and melts weaponry. This strange entity is feared by all those who have cause to




wander the vast deserts of the continent, for it transforms every foot of sand into a trap, waiting to be triggered.

How Jaizin Kaa's unnamed sorcerer ally managed to successfully bind and trap this *djinn* is not apparent, and if confronted, the old man will volunteer no answers

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10	10	9	12
Agility		Brawn	Coordination
12		13	12


FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	2	Movement	—
Fortitude	2	Senses	1
Knowledge	1	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK	
■ Stress: Vigor 13 Resolve 12	
■ Soak: Armor 4 (Cloak of Sand), Courage 2	

ATTACKS	
■ Mighty Fists (M): Reach 1, 5  , 2H, Stun, Knockdown	
■ Incinerate (R): Range C, 8  , Burning	
■ Roar of the Desert Wind (T): Range M, 5  , mental, Vicious 1, Stun	

SPECIAL ABILITIES	
■ Familiar	
■ Form of Sand: The djinn can clothe itself in sand and use this body to interact with the world. The body still looks like a sand sculpture and must be covered in robes before it is convincing in any way.	
■ Incorporeal 2: The djinn is made of sand and spite.	
■ Sorcerer: All djinn possess the Immortality talent and the Astral Wanderings spell. Even though their bodies are long since atomised they still wander the world. Most djinn can use other spells, including <i>Dismember</i> , <i>Summon a Horror</i> , and <i>Venom on the Wind</i> .	
■ Undead 5: Summoning a djinn is a mighty feat of Sorcery, requiring the spells <i>Summon a Horror</i> , <i>Raise the Dead</i> , and <i>Favor of the Gods</i> . <i>Raise the Dead</i> must be cast together with <i>Favor of the Gods</i> , as <i>Summon a Horror</i> brings forth the <i>Flame That Waits Beyond</i> . The sorcerer must succeed in an Epic (D5) Sorcery test, with success reanimating the transforming sorcerer into an immortal djinn. Player characters that attempt this automatically become non-player characters.	

DOOM SPEDS	
■ Summon Fires from the Sand: By spending 2 Doom, the djinn can use its Incinerate attack.	
■ As Wind Across the Sand: The djinn can spend 1 Doom to gain the Flight special ability and instantly move to Extreme range.	

CURSES	
■ Bound to the Sands: The djinn is unable to leave its home within the sands. Should it wish to travel, it must possess a body of sand equal in size to a person and then have this sand sealed within a large urn. Once this is accomplished the djinn is afforded the ability to travel for the distance of 1 mile from the source of the sand. Unscrupulous sorcerers have been known to scatter these sands as the djinn sleeps leaving it bound to a tiny portion of the sand it would have used to form a body. These small, easily-carried portions of sand can be placed within jewellery, lamps, or weapons where the threat of destruction keeps the djinn tethered to the whim of its master.	
■ Water is Pain: Should the djinn or the sand it inhabits come into contact with water, the djinn automatically suffers 1  of damage for each cup of water. The djinn gets no armor Soak against this damage.	

If the player characters simply decide to run, this is perfectly acceptable. They are thieves, after all, and discretion when it comes to choosing fights is one of a thief's greatest potential attributes. However, while they may flee from the *djinn* and the guards, it is likely that Bortae and at least one of her bodyguards manages to sneak away, as well. If the player characters head out of the Treasure Vault and attempt to shut the door behind them — requiring a Daunting (D3) Brawn test to do so — then the gamemaster should have Bortae and one of her bodyguards squeeze through at the last second.

Recognizing the invidious situation she has plunged herself into by saving her own skin, Bortae attempts to bargain with the player characters. She won't beg, and at no point does she seem despairing. If things descend, a second time, into violence, she fights as energetically and determinedly as any of the player characters.

However, she also realizes when the odds are heavily against her and she isn't suicidal. She offers the player characters three things: firstly, she offers them Gold, of which she has a reasonable supply. Her next offer is of assistance and loyalty in any future shared endeavors — an Average (D1) Insight test suggests she means this but whether because it is true or she is a pathological liar is beyond guessing. Thirdly, she offers the player characters a safe way out. If

they accept this deal, then Bortae is as good as her word; she will indeed lead them quickly and quietly out of the Treasure House — the gamemaster may wish to introduce a little extra drama to this escape by rolling on the *Treasure House Encounter* table on page 14.

What happens once the player characters and Bortae have escaped is up to the gamemaster; does she pay the player characters as she promised, or does she betray them once again? Bortae could well become a recurring non-player character: never trustworthy, but worth tolerating for the information and the connections she is prepared to share. It's a risk, but it might just be worth it.

If the player characters take the more immediate path of attacking Bortae — whether outside of the Treasure Vault, or inside it if they have decided to fight it out — then she and her bodyguard(s) fight to the death. Bortae tries to use any event as a sufficient distraction to escape.

If she manages this, then she may still become a future character of note. Such an incarnation is far more likely to seek vengeance on the player characters, however perverse the reasoning behind this hatred of them might seem. Once this is settled, the player characters can make good their escape. The presence of the *djinn* ensures that any escape takes place through corridors suddenly ablaze with flame. However, this is smokeless flame and so, while the player characters may still suffer burns (see page 121 of the **Conan** corebook for details on damage from fire), there is no commensurate loss of sight or death from inhalation.

THE FINAL ENCOUNTER

As they flee through the Treasure House's corridors, the gamemaster may wish to consider throwing in a few traps to keep the player characters alert and conscious of the fact that, while they might be running towards safety, they aren't there yet. As they near the point of exit — whether out of a window, back into the tunnels, or straight through the front door — have the player characters encounter a small, wiry old man. He is approximately seventy years old, wears a kaftan-like dressing gown, and has shoulder-length white hair. He rubs his hands together a great deal, as though constantly cultivating warmth, and he has a conciliatory, though unnerving, smile. This is Jaizin Kaa.

As they near him, he nods pleasantly to himself and smiles.

"Thieves," he says "And good ones. I remember thieves like you. Clever, resourceful thieves. Don't get many of you nowadays. Did you see the djinn? Is the paper burning? Shame... Still, at least that bastard Kallian Publico didn't get his hands on my treasure, eh?"

He is completely unconcerned by the loss of his "treasure" and by the player characters' presence; indeed, he seems more delighted by the thought of Kallian Publico's irritation than anything else. If the player characters threaten him or demand to know where his gold is, he smiles and laughs:

"Oh no. Don't kill me. Very unwise. I have a dozen assassins that will hunt down the person that murders me and kill them in most unpleasant ways. I tell you what... you leave me alone, I'm an old man after all, and I won't have you killed. How's that? It's a shame to have lost all that information, but none of it was really important. Everything of worth is kept elsewhere. Don't go looking for that, though; then we wouldn't be able to meet on such friendly terms. I have enjoyed meeting you. It's been a long time since I met good thieves — indeed, if you ever feel like robbing a certain museum in Numalia, do let me know. I may see my way to financing you."

And, with that, he ambles off. If the player characters do choose to kill Jaizin Kaa, they can do so easily. He is an old man and will only require one successful blow to kill. However, he is as good as his word and assassins will hound the murderers to the ends of the Earth. If the player characters leave him be, however, he is equally true to his promise. No one will pursue them — at least, no one sent by Jaizin Kaa. He may even offer them work in the future, though such work is of the most disreputable and dangerous kind. Then again, what thief would want anything less?

Once this has been concluded, the player characters can emerge into the fresh air of the outside world, having accomplished the impossible: robbing the Treasure House of Jaizin Kaa.

THE CHAOTIC FRAY

Orchestrating this muddle of conflicting motives and forces might at first seem daunting, but it needn't be. There is no need to keep track of every little combat carried out between guards and Bortae's bodyguard. The gamemaster should focus attention on the player characters and simply make references to the chaos going on around them. To simplify things further, the gamemaster should have the player characters' main problem be the *djinn*.

Jaizin Kaa's guards and Bortae's men avoid the *djinn*, but if it manages to set the room alight, then getting away from the raging fire it starts may prove difficult. Once the *djinn* is dealt with, the gamemaster should engineer a climactic showdown with Bortae, two of her men, and two guards. Perhaps detail the slaughter going on elsewhere in the room, but make this your main scene.

EPILOGUE


There are a number of possible directions a gamemaster might take subsequent adventures after this. Do the player characters engage in a battle of wits with Bortae — if she survived — across the city, enlisting the help of the Thieves' Guild or other forces in order to triumph? Does Jaizin Kaa's threat about what should happen if they go hunting for his other Treasure Houses fail to dissuade them from the promise of an actual payday? Do the player characters decide that things are too hot for them in this city now and head out, to find a new place to ply their criminal trade? And what about the parchments they snatched from the Treasure Vault — how are they to be used, how much are they worth, and how much danger will using them bring down on the player characters' heads? Who knows?

The final rewards the player characters achieve for successfully completing and surviving this adventure are left to the gamemaster, though being betrayed by Bortae and managing to survive is certainly enough to earn considerable respect in the Thieves' Guild, where she is regarded with awe and distaste in equal measure.

Having successfully broken into Jaizin Kaa's Treasure House and survived is also worthy of note — though the lack of anything significant to show for it casts a little doubt on their story. Not enough for active disbelief, perhaps, but just enough to tarnish the achievement slightly. The player characters won't become members of the Thieves' Council... just yet.

EXPERIENCE

Successful completion of the adventure — including the discovery of the true contents of Jaizin Kaa's vault — should be worth roughly 200 experience points for each player character, adjusted by the gamemaster based on roleplaying, problem-solving, and other factors.

There are many items that can be looted aside from that described in the vault, and the gamemaster may choose to award each thief anywhere between 2 and 10  apiece in Gold's worth of items, if they are aggressively looting everything not nailed down.

If word spreads of the player characters' successful break-in to Jaizin Kaa's Treasure House, the gamemaster should award each of them 3 points of Renown, even if the lack of a pile of loot lessens the fame. This is a major accomplishment, and thieves across the whole of the dreaming west will hear of this exploit.

Additionally, if the player characters remain in Zamora for their Upkeep phase, they will find all costs reduced by 1 Gold and any relevant tests reduced by one step of Difficulty, as they are frequently bought drinks, meals, and offered other favors in return for the tale of their epic score.

Choosing to use the information in the vault, should the player characters get hold of it, will likely bring them more trouble than it is worth, though the gamemaster should determine what secrets they are able to exploit, how much the information is worth, and how far the concerned subjects will go to keep their secrets just that... secret.

His keen eyes, even in the dim starlight, showed him a strongly built man in the silvered armor and crested helmet of the Zamorian royal guard. A shield and a spear lay near him, and it took but an instant's examination to show that he had been strangled. The barbarian glanced about uneasily. He knew that this man must be the guard he had heard pass his hiding-place by the wall.

— "The Tower of the Elephant"

PRE-GENERATED CHARACTER



HAZIR, ZAMORIAN CUTPURSE



AGILITY 10		
Skill	TN	Focus
Acrobatics	12	2
Melee	11	1
Stealth	13	3

AWARENESS 10		
Skill	TN	Focus
Insight	10	—
Observation	14	4
Survival	12	2
Thievery	13	3

BRAWN 8		
Skill	TN	Focus
Athletics	10	2
Resistance	10	2

COORDINATION 10		
Skill	TN	Focus
Parry	11	1
Ranged Weapons	13	3
Sailing	10	—

INTELLIGENCE 7		
Skill	TN	Focus
Alchemy	7	—
Craft	7	—
Healing	7	—
Linguistics	7	—
Lore	7	—
Warfare	7	—

PERSONALITY 9		
Skill	TN	Focus
Animal Handling	9	—
Command	9	—
Counsel	9	—
Persuade	10	1
Society	9	—

WILLPOWER 9		
Skill	TN	Focus
Discipline	9	1
Sorcery	8	—

Born in a brothel and turned out when he had reached an age where he was able to fend for himself, Hazir joined the street gangs of Zamora the Accursed, where every day was a test of wits and resourcefulness to survive. Trained in sleight-of-hand and pick-pocketing, Hazir manages to scrape by — if barely — and has joined a group of thieves for one big score.

Like most Zamorians, Hazir is dark of hair and eyes, sleight of build. He has a wide smile and a fringe beard, and wears nondescript clothing to blend in with any crowd.

BACKGROUND	
■ Homeland: Zamora	■ Story: Food and Rough Liquor
■ Caste: Outcast	■ Trait: Fond Regrets
■ Nature: Sneaky	■ War Story: Survived a Massacre
■ Education: Largely Absent	■ Languages: Zamorian, Kothic

SOAK	
Armor	1 (Padded Jerkin; Torso/Arms)
Courage	—

FORTUNE POINTS		

STRESS									
Vigor									
Resolve									

HARMS			
Wounds			
Trauma			

ATTACKS	
■ Shortsword (M): Reach 1, 4 1H, Parrying	
■ Throwing Daggers (x3) (R): Range C, 5 1H, Volley	
■ Steely Glare (T): Range C, 3 mental, Stun	

BONUS DAMAGE (INCL)	
Melee	—
Ranged	+2
Presence	+1

TALENTS	
■ Sharp Senses: Hazir may re-roll 1d20 on Observation tests, but must accept the new result.	
■ Thief: Hazir may use Thievery in place of Society when dealing with criminals. When he generates at least 1 success on a Persuade or Lore test with criminals, he may immediately roll +1d20 and add the result to the test.	
■ Agile: Hazir may re-roll 1d20 on Acrobatics tests, but must accept the new result.	
■ Living Shadow: When attempting to remain unseen or unnoticed, Hazir gains 1 bonus Momentum.	

OTHER BELONGINGS	
Toolkit (3 resources); good luck charm; climbing kit (3 resources).	

PRE-GENERATED CHARACTER



NATARA, ZAMORIAN ROGUE



AGILITY 8		
Skill	TN	Focus
Acrobatics	11	3
Melee	9	1
Stealth	9	1

AWARENESS 8		
Skill	TN	Focus
Insight	9	1
Observation	10	2
Survival	8	—
Thievery	8	—

BRAWN 8		
Skill	TN	Focus
Athletics	9	1
Resistance	8	—

COORDINATION 9		
Skill	TN	Focus
Parry	11	2
Ranged Weapons	10	1
Sailing	9	—

INTELLIGENCE 9		
Skill	TN	Focus
Alchemy	9	—
Craft	9	—
Healing	9	—
Linguistics	9	—
Lore	10	1
Warfare	9	—

PERSONALITY 11		
Skill	TN	Focus
Animal Handling	12	1
Command	12	1
Counsel	12	1
Persuade	15	4
Society	14	3

WILLPOWER 10		
Skill	TN	Focus
Discipline	11	1
Sorcery	10	—

Natara had her life planned by her parents: apprenticeship in the family trade in Shadizar, working for her lecherous uncle, and an arranged marriage with the scion of business partners. Her opinion on this was inconsequential. What her parents didn't expect was that Natara had a mind of her own. She stole her own dowry and made her way to Zamora. Since then, she's become a charming scoundrel, a grifter, and a swindler, using her charm and quick wits to part the unwary from their gold. She's thrown her lot in with this crew to make one big heist that will set her up for years.

Natara is dark-haired and brown-eyed, with a thick mane of hair. She wears fine clothing, best to convince others that she's a person of means and has no need of their money.

BACKGROUND

- **Homeland:** Zamora
- **Caste:** Merchant
- **Nature:** Inspirational
- **Education:** Elder Mentor
- **Story:** The Lash of Taxation
- **Trait:** Witness to Brutality
- **War Story:** Gained the Favor of a Local Noble
- **Languages:** Zamorian, Brythunian

SOAK

Armor	1 (Heavy Clothing; All Locations)
Courage	1

FORTUNE POINTS

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STRESS

Vigor									
Resolve									

HARMS

Wounds				
Trauma				

ATTACKS

- **Dagger (M):** Reach 1, 3 1H, Hidden 1, Parrying, Thrown, Unforgiving 1
- **Crossbow (R):** Range M, 3 Unb, Unforgiving 1, Volley
- **Steely Glare (T):** Range C, 5 mental, Stun

BONUS DAMAGE (INCL)

Melee	—
Ranged	—
Presence	+3

TALENTS

- **Agile:** Natara may re-roll 1d20 on Acrobatics tests, but must accept the new result.
- **Force of Presence:** +1 to Natara's mental attack damage bonus.
- **Courageous:** Natara may re-roll 1d20 on Discipline tests, but must accept the new result. She has Courage Soak 1.
- **Naturally Charming:** A successful Persuade test gains 1 bonus Momentum.

OTHER BELONGINGS

Courtly clothing; ornate symbol of her family line; quiver of crossbow bolts (3 loads).

PRE-GENERATED CHARACTER



LOTHAR, KOTHIAN BRUTE



AGILITY 10		
Skill	TN	Focus
Acrobatics	12	2
Melee	14	4
Stealth	11	1

AWARENESS 7		
Skill	TN	Focus
Insight	7	—
Observation	8	1
Survival	8	1
Thievery	8	1

BRAWN 12		
Skill	TN	Focus
Athletics	14	2
Resistance	14	2

COORDINATION 10		
Skill	TN	Focus
Parry	14	4
Ranged Weapons	11	1
Sailing	10	—

INTELLIGENCE 7		
Skill	TN	Focus
Alchemy	7	—
Craft	8	1
Healing	7	—
Linguistics	7	—
Lore	7	—
Warfare	7	—

PERSONALITY 8		
Skill	TN	Focus
Animal Handling	10	2
Command	8	—
Counsel	8	—
Persuade	8	—
Society	8	—

WILLPOWER 9		
Skill	TN	Focus
Discipline	11	2
Sorcery	9	—

Life in a border village in northern Koth was comfortable, if dull. There was little to do but farm and drink with whatever the king's tax-men left. And drink Lothar did in quantity. One day, when Lothar was deep in his cups, the tax-man said the wrong thing, and after that, Lothar was an exile and an outlaw, forced to survive by banditry. He made his way along the northern mountains, preying on merchant caravans, until he reached Zamora, where his strength and size are assets. He has thrown in with a local band of thieves seeking some muscle for a big score.

Lothar is a strapping son of the countryside, broad of shoulder and arm, with light brown hair and dark green eyes. His garb is rough-spun linen and leather, well-worn and stained from the prior owners.

BACKGROUND

- **Homeland:** Koth
- **Caste:** Outcast
- **Nature:** Wrathful
- **Education:** Traditional
- **Story:** Hunted by the Law
- **Trait:** Hunted!
- **War Story:** Survived a Duel
- **Languages:** Kothian, Zamorian

SOAK

Armor	2 (Brigandine; all locations)
Courage	1

FORTUNE POINTS

--	--	--	--

STRESS

Vigor																				
Resolve																				

HARMS

Wounds																				
Trauma																				

ATTACKS

- **Dagger (M):** Reach 1, 6 1H, Hidden 1, Parrying, Thrown, Unforgiving 1
- **Staff (M):** Reach 2 or 3, 7 2H, Knockdown
- **Broadsword (M):** Reach 2, 8 Unb, Parrying
- **Steely Glare (T):** Range C, 2 mental, Stun

BONUS DAMAGE (INCL)

Melee	+3
Ranged	—
Presence	—

TALENTS

- **No Mercy:** Lothar may re-roll 1 for Melee attacks, but must accept the new result.
- **Deflection:** Lothar can reduce the number of points added to Doom by 1 when making a Defend Reaction using the Parry skill (minimum 0). This stacks with the Parrying quality.
- **Riposte:** Immediately after successfully making a Defend Reaction using the Parry skill, Lothar may add 1 to Doom to make a Melee attack against his attacker. Momentum from the Parry Action may be used in this attack.
- **Courageous:** Lothar may re-roll 1d20 on Discipline tests, but must accept the new result. He has Courage Soak 1.

OTHER BELONGINGS

Ragged clothing; half-eaten apple.

PRE-GENERATED CHARACTER



ZEHRA, TURANIAN BOWMAN



AGILITY 10		
Skill	TN	Focus
Acrobatics	13	3
Melee	12	2
Stealth	12	2

AWARENESS 10		
Skill	TN	Focus
Insight	10	—
Observation	11	1
Survival	12	2
Thievery	10	—

BRAWN 9		
Skill	TN	Focus
Athletics	9	—
Resistance	10	—

COORDINATION 10		
Skill	TN	Focus
Parry	13	3
Ranged Weapons	14	4
Sailing	10	—

INTELLIGENCE 8		
Skill	TN	Focus
Alchemy	8	—
Craft	9	1
Healing	9	1
Linguistics	8	—
Lore	9	1
Warfare	8	—

PERSONALITY 8		
Skill	TN	Focus
Animal Handling	10	2
Command	8	—
Counsel	8	—
Persuade	8	—
Society	8	—

WILLPOWER 8		
Skill	TN	Focus
Discipline	9	1
Sorcery	8	—

Born in Turan, Zehra had little choice in life, conscripted as a child into King Yildiz' great army, hell-bent on expanding Turan's borders across the steppes into Zamora, and eventually the dreaming west. A horse archer, her company was ambushed by Gunderland mercenaries while camped. Zehra escaped and made her way to Zamora, her fate finally her own. She has joined with a crew of thieves seeking to make names for themselves with a daring raid. Perhaps this will be the gate to a better life.

Zehra has dark skin and deep brown eyes, black hair worn coiled and braided. Her cavalry garments are well-cared for and show the distinctive patterning of her homeland.

BACKGROUND

- **Hometown:** Turan
- **Story:** Glorious Battle
- **Caste:** Warrior
- **Trait:** Hunted!
- **Nature:** Stoic
- **War Story:** Survived a Massacre
- **Education:** Traditional
- **Languages:** Turanian, Zamorian

SOAK

Armor	2 (Brigandine; Torso/Arms/Legs)
Courage	1

FORTUNE POINTS

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STRESS

Vigor									
Resolve									

HARMS

Wounds				
Trauma				


ATTACKS

- **Tulwar (M):** Reach 2, Unb, 5 , Cavalry, Parrying
- **Throwing Knives (x3) (R):** Range C, 5 , 1H, Hidden 1, Volley
- **Shemite Bow (R):** Range L, 5 , H, Piercing 1 Volley
- **Steely Glare (T):** Range C, 2 , mental, Stun

BONUS DAMAGE (INCL)

Melee	+1 
Ranged	+2 
Presence	—

TALENTS

- **Accurate:** Zehra may re-roll 3  for Ranged Weapon attacks, but must accept the new results.
- **Courageous:** Zehra may re-roll 1d20 on Discipline tests, but must accept the new result. She has Courage Soak 1.
- **Marksman:** If Zehra spends a Minor Action before a Ranged attack, she gains 1 bonus Momentum.
- **Shoot for the Horizon:** When using Ranged Weapons at other than the weapon's optimal range, Zehra reduces the penalty by one step (minimum 0).

OTHER BELONGINGS

Quiver of arrows (3 reloads); helmet (Armor 3; Head); scroll displaying family heraldry; silken kerchief.

PRE-GENERATED CHARACTER



HAAKON, AESIR OUTLANDER



AGILITY 9		
Skill	TN	Focus
Acrobatics	12	3
Melee	12	3
Stealth	9	—

AWARENESS 8		
Skill	TN	Focus
Insight	8	—
Observation	8	—
Survival	12	4
Thievery	8	—

BRAWN 12		
Skill	TN	Focus
Athletics	14	2
Resistance	14	2

COORDINATION 8		
Skill	TN	Focus
Parry	11	3
Ranged Weapons	9	1
Sailing	8	—

INTELLIGENCE 7		
Skill	TN	Focus
Alchemy	7	—
Craft	7	—
Healing	10	3
Linguistics	7	—
Lore	8	1
Warfare	7	—

PERSONALITY 8		
Skill	TN	Focus
Animal Handling	9	1
Command	8	—
Counsel	8	—
Persuade	8	—
Society	8	—

WILLPOWER 10		
Skill	TN	Focus
Discipline	11	1
Sorcery	10	—

Captured as a child by Hyperborean slavers, Haakon endured a brutal life of servitude and punishment, forced to labor in their quarries. One day his master noticed the breadth of his shoulders and the fire that had not faded from his bright blue eyes, and Haakon was taken to the fighting pits, learning the arts of combat and death, pitted against other slaves and professional fighters. Whether quarry or pit — a cage was a cage — and Haakon escaped, strangling his master and making his way south, the ways of the city to his liking. Newly arrived in Zamora, he has thrown his lot in with a group of thieves, which is enough for now.

Haakon is a son of Asgard, tall and pale-skinned, with bright blue eyes and a blonde beard. His clothes and armor are newly purchased and fine, and he is quite proud of them.

BACKGROUND	
■ Homeland: Asgard	■ Story: One of the multitudes
■ Caste: Escaped Slave	■ Trait: Marked by the Pit
■ Nature: Stoic	■ War Story: Dispossessed
■ Education: Educated on the Battlefield	■ Languages: Nordheimer, Zamorian

SOAK	
Armor	3 (Mail; Torso/Arms)
Courage	1

FORTUNE POINTS		

STRESS									
Vigor									
Resolve									

HARMS			
Wounds			
Trauma			

ATTACKS
■ Broadsword (M): Reach 2, 8 , Unb, Parrying
■ Dagger (x2) (M): Reach 1, 1H, 6 , Hidden 1, Parrying, Thrown, Unforgiving 1
■ Steely Glare (T): Range C, 2 mental, Stun

BONUS DAMAGE (INCL)	
Melee	+3
Ranged	—
Presence	—

TALENTS
■ No Mercy: Haakon may re-roll up to 3 for Melee attacks, but must accept the new results.
■ Courageous: Haakon may re-roll 1d20 on Discipline tests, but must accept the new result. He has Courage Soak 1.
■ Blood on Steel: When rolling for Melee damage Haakon may spend 1 Momentum to add the Vicious 1 quality to the weapon, or increase its Vicious quality by +1.
■ Deft Blade: When Haakon makes a Melee attack, any Momentum or Doom used to add bonus d20s to the Melee test each add +2d20 (instead of 1d20), up to a total of +3d20.

OTHER BELONGINGS
Helmet (Armor 3; Head); fur cloak.

PRE-GENERATED CHARACTER

ATALLUS, NEMEDIAN ADVENTURER

AGILITY 11

Skill	TN	Focus
Acrobatics	13	2
Melee	14	3
Stealth	13	2

AWARENESS 9

Skill	TN	Focus
Insight	9	—
Observation	12	3
Survival	9	—
Thievery	10	1

BRAWN 9

Skill	TN	Focus
Athletics	14	5
Resistance	9	—

COORDINATION 11

Skill	TN	Focus
Parry	14	3
Ranged Weapons	13	2
Sailing	11	—

INTELLIGENCE 7

Skill	TN	Focus
Alchemy	7	—
Craft	7	—
Healing	7	—
Linguistics	7	—
Lore	9	2
Warfare	7	—

PERSONALITY 8

Skill	TN	Focus
Animal Handling	11	3
Command	9	1
Counsel	9	—
Persuade	9	—
Society	9	—

WILLPOWER 8

Skill	TN	Focus
Discipline	9	1
Sorcery	8	—

Born to a noble estate in Nemedi, Veleda was trained in etiquette and courtesy, towards a political marriage. Her twin brother Atallus was the heir. Her joy was swordplay, though, taught by a friendly guard-captain. When plague killed her family, Veleda tried to keep her estate by posing as her dead brother Atalus. The ruse was successful, but she was betrayed, and rivals seized her family's "heirless" estate. Veleda fled and continued the ruse, earning a place among other landless knights and mercenaries in the Nemedian Adventurers. "Atallus" has returned to Zamora, hoping to earn enough to take back was stolen from her.

Slender and handsome, with a mop of short curly hair and green eyes, "Atallus" wears well-made garments and war-gear befitting status as an Adventurer.

BACKGROUND

- **Homeland:** Nemedi
- **Caste:** Petty Noble
- **Nature:** Curious
- **Education:** Elder Mentor
- **Story:** Blood Feud
- **Trait:** Feud
- **War Story:** Defeated a Savage Beast
- **Languages:** Nemedian, Zamorian

SOAK

Armor	3 (Mail; Torso/Arms)
Courage	1

FORTUNE POINTS

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STRESS

Vigor									
Resolve									

HARMS

Wounds				
Trauma				


ATTACKS

- **Broadsword (M):** Reach 2, 6 , Unb, Parrying
- **Polearm (M):** Reach 3, 5 , 2H, Knockdown, Vicious 1
- **Sling (R):** Range M, 4 , 1H, Stun, Volley
- **Steely Glare (T):** Range C, 2 , mental, Stun

BONUS DAMAGE (INCL)

Melee	+1 
Ranged	+1 
Presence	—

TALENTS

- **Strong Back 1:** Veleda gets 1 bonus Momentum on a successful Athletics test.
- **Sharp Senses:** Veleda may re-roll 1d20 on Observation tests, but must accept the new result.
- **Courageous:** Veleda may re-roll 1d20 on Discipline tests, but must accept the new result. She has Courage Soak 1.
- **Accurate:** Veleda may re-roll 1  for a Ranged Weapon attack, but must accept the new result.

OTHER BELONGINGS

Courtly clothing (Atallus and Veleda); father's signet ring; sling stones (3 loads).

PRE-GENERATED CHARACTER



XANTHES, ZAMORIAN PRIEST OF THE SPIDER GOD



AGILITY 10		
Skill	TN	Focus
Acrobatics	12	2
Melee	10	—
Stealth	12	2

AWARENESS 11		
Skill	TN	Focus
Insight	12	1
Observation	12	1
Survival	11	—
Thievery	14	3

BRAWN 8		
Skill	TN	Focus
Athletics	10	2
Resistance	8	—

COORDINATION 8		
Skill	TN	Focus
Parry	8	—
Ranged Weapons	8	—
Sailing	8	—

INTELLIGENCE 8		
Skill	TN	Focus
Alchemy	9	1
Craft	9	1
Healing	8	—
Linguistics	8	—
Lore	10	2
Warfare	7	—

PERSONALITY 8		
Skill	TN	Focus
Animal Handling	8	—
Command	8	—
Counsel	10	2
Persuade	9	1
Society	9	1

WILLPOWER 10		
Skill	TN	Focus
Discipline	14	4
Sorcery	12	2

Xanthes began life as gutter-urchin, sleeping in alleys, abandoned by the world. Every day was a desperate gamble — could he steal enough to survive, and would he wake the next morning? One day, as a parade of the Spider God's disciples distracted the market vendors, Xanthes tried to steal a pomegranate. He was caught, and a market guard made to hack off his hand for thievery. A Spider priest intervened, taking Xanthes to serve in the temple. He eventually became an acolyte. He learned the Spider God's ways, and is now a fervent believer. He has come to Zamora to spread the word of his god, and to show the Bel-worshippers a thing or two about thieving.

Pot-bellied but possessing a surprising quickness, Xanthes is shave-pated and short, clad in a fur-trimmed robe of black and grey. Upon the back of his head is tattooed an eight-lobed arrangement reminiscent of a spider's eyes.

BACKGROUND	
■ Homeland: Zamora	■ Story: The Charity of Priests
■ Caste: Outcast	■ Trait: Thief!
■ Nature: Sneaky	■ War Story: Survived Sorcery
■ Education: On Your Own Terms	■ Languages: Zamorian, Corinthian

SOAK	
Armor	1 (Heavy Clothes; All Locations)
Courage	1

FORTUNE POINTS	

STRESS	
Vigor	
Resolve	

HARMS	
Wounds	
Trauma	

ATTACKS	
■ Dagger (M): Reach 1, 3 1H, Hidden 1, Parrying, Thrown, Unforgiving 1	
■ Throwing Knives (x2) (R): Range C, 5 1H, Hidden 1, Volley	
■ Steely Glare (T): Range C, 2 mental, Stun	

BONUS DAMAGE (INCL)	
Melee	—
Ranged	+2
Presence	—

TALENTS	
■ Quiet Wisdom: Xanthes may re-roll 1d20 on Counsel tests, but must accept the new result.	
■ Agile: Xanthes may re-roll 1d20 on Acrobatics tests, but must accept the new result.	
■ Living Shadow: When attempting to remain unseen, Xanthes gains 1 bonus Momentum.	
■ Courageous: Xanthes may re-roll 1d20 on Discipline tests, but must accept the new result. He has Courage Soak 1	

OTHER BELONGINGS	
Spider God amulet; scroll of Spider God gospel; prayer mat & incense; pet spider (non-poisonous).	