

# THRESHOLD

The Mystara Magazine

## ADVENTURES & Campaigns



The twenty-second issue of the Mystara Magazine brings you straight into adventure, from Karamaikos to Corunglain, from the Great Waste to Returned Blackmoor!

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# THRESHOLD

## Issue #22

<a href="#">Editorial</a> .....	<a href="#">3</a>
<a href="#">This Issue's Contributors</a> .....	<a href="#">4</a>
<a href="#">Call for Contributors</a> .....	<a href="#">6</a>
<a href="#">A Mystara Glossary</a> .....	<a href="#">8</a>
<a href="#">Icons for Mystara</a> .....	<a href="#">9</a>
<a href="#">"So, You All Meet in a Tavern...."</a> .....	<a href="#">21</a>
<a href="#">Campaigning in Karameikos</a> .....	<a href="#">24</a>
<a href="#">Thoughts About Civil War</a> .....	<a href="#">78</a>
<a href="#">Threshold Black Market</a> .....	<a href="#">86</a>
<a href="#">Adapting Classic AD&amp;D Modules to a Mystara Campaign</a> .....	<a href="#">92</a>
<a href="#">Escape from Hule</a> .....	<a href="#">106</a>
<a href="#">The Egg Be Dammed!</a> .....	<a href="#">136</a>
<a href="#">Deep Cover</a> .....	<a href="#">155</a>
<a href="#">Artwork Sources and Credits</a> .....	<a href="#">177</a>
<a href="#">Next Issue</a> .....	<a href="#">183</a>

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Thanks To: The Mystara Community, for your support, hard work, and dedication to Mystara.

The aims of *Threshold* magazine:

- to provide a venue for community members to present material
- to promote the Vaults of Pandius and the material there
- to increase the exposure of existing and new articles
- to encourage authors to revisit and revitalise existing articles
- to motivate interest in Mystara in general

# ONWARD TO ADVENTURE!

This issue is fully dedicated to the life blood of role playing, adventures and campaigns! We start with an article by Giampaolo Agosta (Agathokles) which will guide Mystara and 13th Age fans in adapting the *13th Age Icon Relationships* to a Mystara campaigns. Then we move to the first and foremost place for adventures in Mystara, the nation of Karameikos, with an article by Robert Nuttman (RobJN) on how to use rumors in your campaign. Then there is my own article, *Campaigning in Karameikos*, a guide to connect and use all the published canon adventures and several fan ones in several Campaign Paths or in one unique massive Path against the machinations of Orcus! Hausman Santos and Giampaolo then give us some *Thoughts About the Karameikos Civil War*, a possible development for the planned Mystara Fan Almanac for the year 1,020 AC. Irving Galvez instead leads us to discover the most secret place in Threshold, the Thieves Guild Black Market.

After that we leave our beloved Karameikos to other adventures. Demos Sachlas guides us in adapting several very famous AD&D modules to Mystara: Against the Giants in the Northern Reaches, against the Slave Lords of the Gulf of Hule, then inside the Forbidden City of the Yuan-Ti in the Serpent Peninsula or the Hidden Shrine of Risilvar in the lands of the Wallara.

Dave Keyser creates in his article, *Escape from Hule*, a detailed sequel to X5 and ideal third act of the *Master of the Desert Nomads* series, presenting several possible routes for the PCs who have to return back home to the Known World. In this issue Dave leads us through the *Escape by Air* and *by Land*, while the next issue of *Threshold* will contain the *Escape by Sea*.

In the *Egg be Damned* adventure, Brian Rubinfeld brings us back to *Returned Blackmoor*, previously detailed in issue #20 of *Threshold* magazine, to explore an abandoned dam full of dangers and mutated horrors.

Finally in his *Deep Cover* adventure, set in Corunglain, Darokin, Geoff Gander presents a cloak and dagger scenario with zhochal PCs, the Lovecraftian alien race he developed and detailed in *Threshold* issue #20.

The *Threshold* Editorial Team and the authors hope you will enjoy this new issue as much as we enjoyed putting it together, and stay tuned for the next issue, again dedicated to *Adventures and Campaigns* and featuring a voyage to the *Land of the Red Sun*!

*Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)*  
 Editor-in-Chief, *Threshold* Issue #22

## This Issue's Contributors

**David Keyser** has run four long-term campaigns set in Mystara since the 1980s, using published adventure and support materials as much as possible. He denies having any creative talent himself. It's just that if you put him with a group of friends who are willing to work with him to provide an evening of entertainment, there's a momentary spark like the scratch of flint on steel...and then something magical happens.

**Demos Sachlas** is back to running campaigns in Mystara for the next generation. His group is presently toiling across Merle Rasmussen's Wild Lands and their foray into David Cook's Forbidden City won't soon be forgotten. He's eager to try out some of his ideas involving the Slave Lords in the Gulf of Hule on the survivors.

**Giampaolo Agosta (a.k.a. Agathokles)** agrees with Schiller that "man is only completely a man when he plays". Therefore, he makes a point of taking gaming seriously, and real life casually. Besides Mystara, his gaming interests include (among others) Dark Sun, Planescape, Ravenloft, Birthright, Call of Cthulhu, Star Wars and Witchcraft RPG.

**Geoff Gander** has been heavily involved in the Mystaran community for longer than he cares to remember. He has since been published by Solstice Publishing, Metahuman Press, AE SciFi, and Expeditious Retreat Press. He primarily writes horror and dark fantasy, but is willing to give anything a whirl. When he isn't writing or toiling on a cube farm, Geoff spends his time reading, entertaining his two boys, watching British comedies, playing roleplaying games, and travelling. Not at the same time.

**Hausman Santos** is an art educator and drawing professor. An enthusiast in Mystara since 1995 when he met in Brazil the AD&D boxed set of Karameikos.

He has narrated campaigns for game groups in Thyatis, Alphatia, Rockhome and Glantri and keeps some of these groups since 2002. He manages a page for Mystara Brazilian fans on the internet. Currently he has gathered much of the material that he developed into game sessions with his group from projects like the Mystaran Almanac and discussed with the members of the Old Almanac Team about the old and unfinished plotlines (around AC 1016-1017) in order to resume them.

**Irving Galvez (a.k.a. Oleck)** Mexican player since the early 80s, amateur Mystara writer since 1996. The time passes and when the days of fantasy flew away with the age and you reach the stage of responsibilities, work, family and everyday problems, you look back and take those dusty books of D&D, and escape a moment to your childhood. Keep on playing!!!

**Justin Pfeil** draws comics, is a historical fencer in the Italian tradition, makes armor for his friends, and has played D&D since the Red Box was first published. His current project is a webcomic about characters attempting to survive The Keep on the Borderlands module from the players perspective.

**Brian Rubinfeld:** despite never being as intense of a fan as much of the fandom, Brian has had a fondness for Mystara stretching back as many eons as the stars! Whether coming up with zany ideas or diving into the earthiness of the setting's

lore, he always finds something to love about the Known World and beyond. When not writing for *Threshold*, Brian is an amateur writer and game creator looking into freelance options, as well as currently working in a pharmacy.

I'm **Toni Roads** - I'm a concept artist and illustrator based in Barcelona, Spain. I always liked fantasy as a way to get away from reality so I can learn to face problems with a new perspective. I'm a big fan of RPGs, and fantasy universes like Harry Potter and the Lord of the Rings. Currently, I'm a Half-Elf Ranger raised by Halflings. You can follow me on instagram: @toniroadsart Artstation: www.artstation/toniroadsart Facebook: Toni Roads Art

**Robert Nuttman (aka RobJN)** has been a Mystaraphile since before that world even had a name. When he is not busy untangling the skeins of [a certain Traladaran druid](#) or making sense of the cribbed handwriting in the diary of a teenaged wererat, he tries to write [honest-to-goodness adventures](#). This has only met with limited success. He also co-admins at The Comeback Inn, where he hosts

a science-fantasy magi-tech play by postset in Blackmoor just before the Great Rain of Fire.

Even though ***Sturm (a.k.a. Francesco Defferrari)*** loves any alternate world, he believes Mystara is incomparably the best for its vibrant community endlessly delving into ethnography, linguistics and history just to make a little sense of it. Something like the real world, but with dragons.

**Thorfinn Tait** hails from the Orkney Islands in northern Scotland, though he has lived in Japan for many years now. Growing up with BECFI and the Known World, he learnt to type by compiling a database of Mystara's timeline. He joined the Mystara online community in 1997, but his true contributions began with the Atlas of Mystara project starting in 2005. Recently he has made the jump to become a published fantasy cartographer, working on Bruce Heard's Calidar series. You can follow his work on his cartography site ([www.thorfmmaps.com](http://www.thorfmmaps.com)) and the Atlas site ([mystara.thorfmmaps.com](http://mystara.thorfmmaps.com)).



**FROM  
THE VAULTS  
OF PANDIUS**

Some features in issues of *Threshold* carry a “From the Vaults of Pandius” tagline. As one of our stated aims is “to promote the Vaults of Pandius and the material there”, we hope you will enjoy these revised or extended treasures from that [website](#).



## CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The Threshold editorial team invites all fans of the Mystara setting to submit contributions to the magazine's next issue. We are especially looking for contributions fitting the following themes:

### Issue 23 - Adventures and Campaigns II

A second issue focused on adventures, campaigns, and other materials directly useful for your Mystaran games.

**Proposal Deadline:** March 15th, 2019

**Manuscript Deadline:** April 21st, 2019

**Issue Published:** by June 21st, 2019

Call for proposals for main themes of forthcoming issues (2019):

### Issue 24 - Strongholds

This issue will delve into the myriad of strongholds that dot the Mystaran landscape. Cities, castles, towers, and secret lairs. These strongholds may serve as anything from bastions of refuge, to adventure obstacles waiting to be overcome by Mystaran PCs.

**Proposal Deadline:** July 15th, 2019

**Manuscript Deadline:** August 21st, 2019

**Issue Published:** by October 21st, 2019

*Threshold* accepts and invites submissions of extended or revised versions of works having appeared on *The Piazza* or *Vaults of Pandius*.

Contributions may include, but are not limited to: Articles: short stories, short adventure modules, NPCs, historical treatises and timelines, geographical entries, new monsters and monster ecologies, etc.; and Illustrations: portraits, maps, heraldry, illustrations, etc.

The *Threshold* editorial team strives for edition neutrality, but edition specific articles (e.g., conversions) are also accepted. statistics for new monsters and NPCs may be included in articles (e.g., adventure modules, new monsters or NPCs) in any version of Dungeons & Dragons. The editorial team also offers help in providing conversions to some specific rules set. including BECFI/RC, 2nd Edition, 3rd edition/Pathfinder. However, this material should be limited to a minimum. For most NPCs, it is sufficient to mention class, level, and alignment. For important NPCs, a one or two line stat block may be included.

FROM the  
Mystara  
FORUM at



Some features in issues of *Threshold* carry a "From the Mystara Forum at The Piazza" tagline. These Discussion Boards are an active and dynamic home of creativity for the Mystara community and many other game worlds. We hope you will enjoy the articles that have arisen from that [website](http://www.thepiazza.org.uk/bb/index.php).





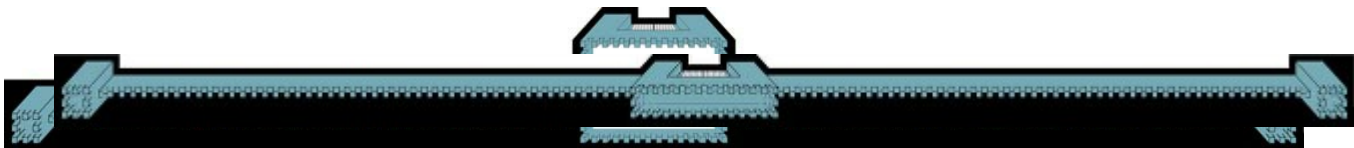
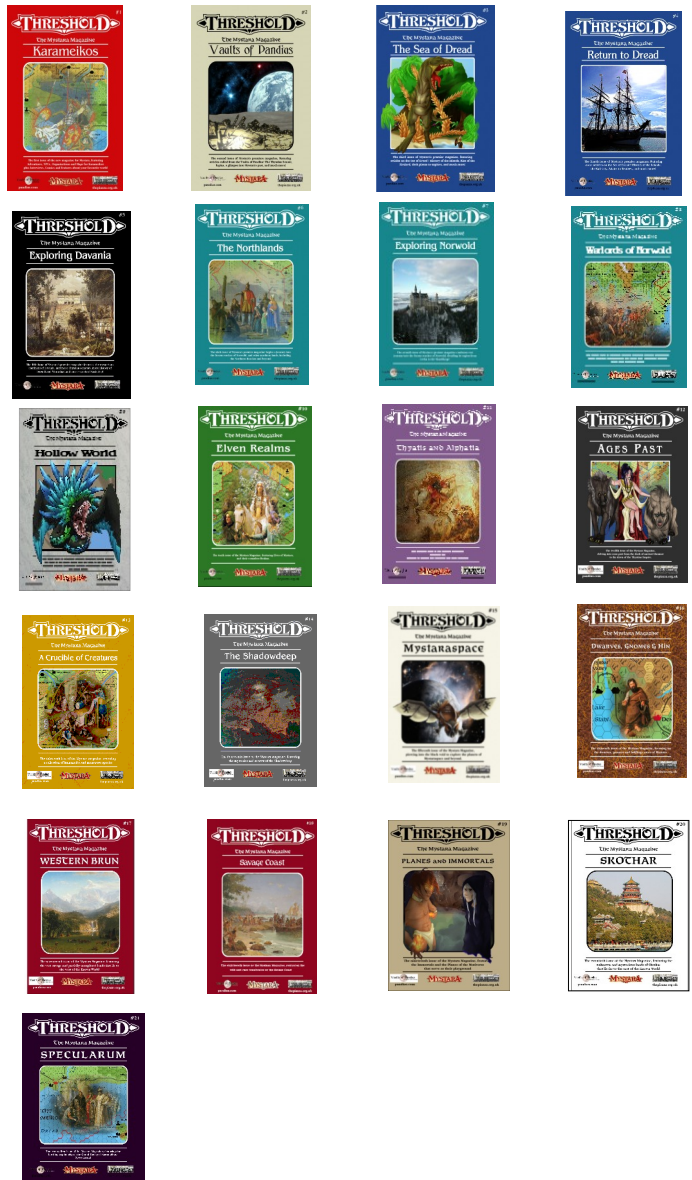


# Previous Issues

Previous issues of **THRESHOLD** - the Mystara Magazine, are available for download from the [Vaults of Pandius website](#).

Also available at the same location are higher resolution versions of the maps that were included in the issue's PDF, allowing greater detail to be viewed.

- [# 1 - "Karamaikos"](#)
- [# 2 - "Vaults of Pandius"](#)
- [# 3 - "The Sea of Dread"](#)
- [# 4 - "Return to Dread"](#)
- [# 5 - "Exploring Davania"](#)
- [# 6 - "The Northlands"](#)
- [# 7 - "Exploring Norwold"](#)
- [# 8 - "Warlords of Norwold"](#)
- [# 9 - "Hollow World"](#)
- [# 10 - "Elven Realms"](#)
- [# 11 - "Thyatis & Alphatia"](#)
- [# 12 - "Ages Past"](#)
- [# 13 - "A Crucible of Creatures"](#)
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- [# 15 - "Mystara space"](#)
- [# 16 - "Dwarves, Gnomes & Hin"](#)
- [# 17 - "Western Brun"](#)
- [# 18 - "Savage Coast"](#)
- [# 19 - "Planes and Immortals"](#)
- [# 20 - "Skothar"](#)
- [# 21 - "Specularum"](#)



## A Mystara Glossary

The Editors present a list of common abbreviations that authors may use to refer to various Mystara-related game products and events:

- AC#** - Accessory series product (rules supplements, campaign sources, etc)
- BECMI** - Basic, Expert, Companion, Master, Immortals rules (by FrankMezter, 1983-6)
- BX** - Basic/Expert rules (by Tom Moldvay/David Cook, 1981)
- B#, X#, CM#, M#, IM#** - Basic, Expert, Companion, Immortal level adventure modules
- CoM** - [“Champions of Mystara” boxed set](#)
- DA#** - Blackmoor setting adventure modules
- DDA#** - Challenger series adventure modules
- DMR#** - Challenger series rules supplements
- DMSK** - “Dungeon Madter's Survival Kit”
- DotE** - [“Dawn of the Emperors” campaign boxed set](#)
- GAZ#** - Gazetteer series campaign sources
- GAZF#** - Fan-produced campaign sources [viewforum.php?f=33](#)
- GRoF** - the Great Rain of Fire, a cataclysmic event in Mysata's past that destroyed the ancient Blackmoor civilization
- G:KoM** - “Glantri: Kingdom of Magic” campaign boxed set
- HW** - [the Hollow World campaign setting](#)
- HWA#, HWO#** - Hollow World adventure modules
- HWR#** - Hollow World rules supplements
- JA** - [“Joshuan’s Almanac & Book of Facts” campaign source](#)
- KW** - the Known World campaign setting
- K:KoA** - [“Karameikos: Kingdom of Adventure” campaign boxed set](#)
- MA** - [Mystara Almanac](#) (fan-produced)
- MCMA** - “Monstrous Compendium, Mystara Appendix” rules supplement
- PC#** - Creature Catalog campaign sources
- PWA** - “Poor Wizard's Almanac & Book of Facts” I, II & III( AC1010, AC101 & ,AC1012)
- PSK** - “Player's Survival Kit” campaign source
- RC** - [“Rules Cyclopedia”](#)
- RS** - Red Steel campaign setting
- SC** - Savage Coast campaign setting
- TM#** - Trail Maps
- VotPA** - [“Voyage of the Princess Ark”](#)
- VoP or Vaults** - [The Vaults of Pandius](#) website
- WotI** - [“Wrath of the Immortals” campaign boxed set](#)

Readers may also find Dave Keyser’s [“An Index to Mystara Products”](#) and Andrew Theisens’s [“Mystara acronyms”](#) (both available at the Vaults of Pandius website) of assistance

# ÍCONS FOR MYSTARA

Adapting the 13th Age Icon Relationships to Mystara campaigns

by Giampaolo Agosta (Agathokles)

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The 13th Age is a fantasy roleplaying game authored by Rob Heinsoo and Jonathan Tweet, and produced by Pelgrane Press. Its underlying game engine, the Archmage Engine, is based on the Open Source license, as many other d20-derived games. What makes 13th Age interesting is the presence of several modular subsystems, which can be repurposed for completely different rules sets. The goal of this article is to outline possible uses of one such subsystems, the *Icons*, within a Mystara campaign (regardless of the rules set used). The full discussion of Icons and Icon relationship can be found in the corebook as well as in the 13th Age SRD<sup>1</sup>, and their main aspects as reported here for the sake of convenience.

In 13th Age, Icons<sup>2</sup> are powerful NPCs, the movers and shakers of the campaign world. They provide a mix of ideology, power structure, and guidance around which lesser NPCs cluster, and with which the PCs can interact -- by opposing or supporting the

Icon and its goals. The 13th Age implied setting, the Dragon Empire, provides 13 Icons, which, in accordance with a general principle of 13th Age of limiting setting information to a skeleton which can easily be coloured with specific details, are essentially archetypal figures that can be easily mapped to actual NPCs in most campaigns. Even the “alignment” of Icons is not actually set -- while each Icon in play acts as heroic, ambiguous, or villainous (which replace the typical Good, Neutral and Evil alignments of D&D), most Icons can be interpreted in different ways. For instance, the Archmage is usually an heroic defender of humanity, but may in some campaigns be a less benevolent force, focusing more on magical knowledge for its own sake.

Beyond their archetypal nature, Icons are characterised by relations among them -- for instance, the Archmage supports the Emperor, whereas the Lich King opposes him. Each PC may have a supportive, opposed or conflicted relationship with one or more Icons, providing him with reasons to operate in or against the interests of some of these powerful NPCs<sup>3</sup>. In the simplest case,

<sup>1</sup> [13th Age SRD](#) at Open Gaming Network

<sup>2</sup> [13th Age icons](#) at 13th Age SRD

<sup>3</sup> [Icon Relationships Master Chart](#) at 13th Age SRD

positive relationships may be construed as the Icon (or one of its representatives) acting as the PC's patron, and opposed relationships as the Icon acting as a foe of the PCs. For instance, a warrior loyal to the Empire may find himself opposed by the forces of the Lich King. This provides motivation for adventure, as the Emperor may offer missions and rewards, while the Lich King provides opponents to face, plots to uncover, and treasures to steal. However, conflicted relationships can also be had, where the PC has both friends and enemies among the follower of the Icon. Furthermore, a negative relationship is still a relationship, meaning there PC has some contact or link -- maybe an undesired one -- with the Icon.

Icon relationship is handled through a simple mechanic: each PC has 3 points to assign to one or more Icons. When the PC wants to leverage his connection to the Icon, he rolls as many d6 as points invested in that Icon. One or more 6s means the PC gets the desired help (the more 6s, the more advantageous is the support offered), whereas a 5 means the PC gets help, but also a complication of some kind.



## The 13th Age Icons

In introducing the Icons, I'm removing as much as possible the implied setting of 13th Age, so as to further highlight their archetypal natures.

The **Archmage** is the archetypal court mage -- he defends the PCs' homeland, and drives forward magical research. He's generally an heroic icon, but could be interpreted as ambiguous if more relevance is assigned to his reality-threatening magical experiments. He is supported by a magical bureaucracy of some kind -- it may be a guild, a ministry of magic, and so on.

The **Crusader** is a follower of "dark gods". He and his army fight monstrous opponents that would destroy the world, but with the aim of conquering and ruling it themselves. This Icon is a typical example of conflicted relationships -- he helps humanity to some extent, but at a high price. His followers are an army of crusaders.

The **Diabolist** summons and controls forces of destruction (the demons in the 13th Age setting). Much like the Crusader, she is an evil force that might be a lesser evil than the monsters she controls -- i.e., she's evil and unpredictable, but not entirely inhuman as they are. Her followers are generally secretive cultists who would wield the same forbidden powers as she does.

The **Dwarf King** is the typical representative of the dwarves -- he rules under the mountains, he would like to reclaim lost dwarven treasures and lands taken over by monsters. He is allied to the Emperor, but has a serious greed issue. His followers are, unsurprisingly, dwarves.

The **Elf Queen** rules over all elves, good and evil. She is the archetypal fey queen. Her followers are elves, of course, both light and dark. Depending on which faction is stronger, the behaviour of this Icon can change quite a bit.

The **Emperor** rules a land defended by dragon riders, a very ancient human kingdom. He is supported by legions of soldiers and bureaucrats. He is the law of the PCs' homeland, but also a force for the preservation of the status quo.

The **Great Gold Wyrn** is the patron of Paladins. He is defined by his self-sacrificing nature, as he closes a gigantic portal to the Abyss with his body. Gold dragons, paladins and good-aligned beings are his followers.

The **High Druid** leads magical creatures of the woods in a struggle against civilisation, represented by both the Emperor (and more in general the humans who would exploit the wilderness) and the Archmage (who would channel and exploit the magical aspects of nature). His followers are druids, woodland beings, and spirits of nature.

The **Lich King** is a past ruler of the Emperor's kingdom, returned as an undead liege. He wants to restore his rule, and operates with the support of undead and necromancers alike. While he is a generally villainous Icon, he actually aims at ruling the land, not destroying it.

The **Orc Lord** is the archetypal barbarian leader. A past Orc Lord invasion ended the Lich King's reign. He leads a marauding army from outside the boundaries of the civilised lands. He can be the main opponent

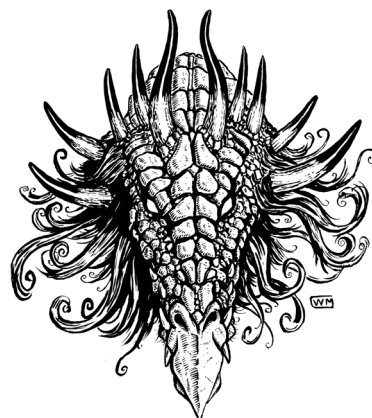
of the Emperor, or a force to use against his enemies.

The **Priestess** represents the "good gods". She is a sort of high priest for all the good-aligned faiths of the land. Thus, her followers are clerics and good planeborns.

The **Prince of Shadows** is the king of thieves -- a trickster figure, but also a villain. His followers are, obviously, a thieves' guild (as well as an assassin's guild). The Dwarf King and other law-oriented Icons are obviously enemies of the Prince of Shadows.

The **Three** are extremely powerful chromatic dragons who have learned to cooperate, among themselves and even with other species. Their followers are dragons, but also other monsters and even humans.

When identifying Icons for a setting different from the Dragon Empire, the key choice is whether to design new Icons or to map the existing ones to NPCs of the target setting. In this article, we focus on the latter option -- while the former can produce more accurate results, mapping the existing Icons allows to easily adapt the adventure modules produced for 13th Age.



## ICONS FOR MYSTARA

The key issues with identifying Icons appropriate to with Mystara are the breadth of the setting, and its inherent ability to support adventures at very different scopes. A Basic/low-Expert level campaign in Karameikos needs a very different set of Icons with respect to a Master-level campaign in Norwold. For example, in Karameikos the Great Gold Wyrm could be Azem, the hidden gold dragon in the Five Shires, whereas in Norwold it would definitely be King Eruuptar of Wyrksteeth. The Emperor would be Duke Stefan in Karameikos, but King Ericall in Norwold, and so on.

A further issue is that PCs rarely interact directly with Icons. Generally, they will deal with lower-level NPCs who are representatives, allies, or agents of the Icons. This is typically not a major issue in Mystara, since most key NPCs are rulers or otherwise have followers and henchmen.

At the other end of the scale, there is the matter of Immortals. Whereas in 13th Age “gods” are left purposefully vague, and not directly involved in the campaign -- the Priestess represents all “gods of light” and their cults, and the Crusader represents all “dark gods”, but no individual cults are significant enough to act as Icons on their own - in Mystara, Immortals are much less distant, and take active roles as patrons of very high level characters. Typical Master-level adventures

involve directly the Immortals’ plots, and any epic scale campaign must take them into account. As a result, when designing the Icons, Immortals should be considered as Icons for Companion and Master-level campaigns.

We present in Table 1 a sample assignment of Icons to particularly active Immortals. This table is suitable for globe-spanning, high-level adventures where Immortals are the drivers of the plot. For lower level or geographically localised campaigns, it is more appropriate to design a specialised allocation. Three such examples are described in the rest of this section.

*Table 1: Immortal Icons*

13th Age Icon	Immortals
The Archmage	Rad & Rathanos
The Crusader	Vanya & Alphaks
The Diabolist	Orcus & Demogorgon
The Dwarf King	Kagyar & Garal
The Elf Queen	Ilkundal & Ordana
The Emperor	Tarastia & Ixion
The Great Gold Wyrm	The Great One & The Star Dragon
The High Druid	Ka & Terra
The Lich King	Nyx & Thanatos
The Orc Lord	Kaarash & Yagrai
The Priestess	Korys & Alphatia
The Prince of Shadows	Korotiku & Loki
The Three	The Sun Dragon & The Moon Dragon

## ICONS OF KARAMEIKOS

Karameikos is designed for a low-level campaign, culminating in the PCs becoming nobles (Knights, Landed Lords or even Barons). Still, one can see the influence of Immortals, and accordingly design a set of Icons that include both Immortals and mortal NPCs, usually aligned to the same goals.

The **Emperor** and **Archmage** are easily mapped to Duke Stefan and to Guildmaster Teldon, and the **Dwarf King** maps to the Gnome King, Dorfus Hilltopper<sup>4</sup>. The **Orc Lord** can be King Vlack<sup>5</sup> of the Vlack-kag hobgoblin tribe. Other Icons are more difficult, but correspondences can be found.



*Dorfus Hilltopper*



*The Black Eagle Baron*

Either Alfric Oderbry or Ludwig von Hendricks can be the **Crusader**, possibly sharing the role. In the same way, either or both Flameflicker and Anton Radu reflect the **Prince of Shadows**, and Olliver Jowett and Aleksyev Nikelnevitch are the setting's **Priestess**.

<sup>4</sup> See Gazetteer supplement GAZ1: "The Grand Duchy of Karameikos" for these and most other NPCs in Karameikos.

<sup>5</sup> See module B10: "Night's Dark Terror" for these two NPCs.

The **Great Gold Wyrn** can only be Azem<sup>6</sup>, the gold dragon king of Azemur, holder of the Ivory Plume of Maat. She is served, albeit indirectly, by the Hin of Wereskalot. Argos the Worrier<sup>7</sup> then takes the place of the **Three**, maintaining the rivalry with the gold dragon. There are also other notable dragons in Karameikos, particularly a Red in the Wufwolde Hills and a Black in the western swamps, but they are not as powerful.

The Seer of the Lake of Lost Dreams replaces the **Elf Queen**. Appropriately, he "rules" over both elves and fey. Loshad the Chevall<sup>8</sup> takes the place of the **High Druid**.

Bargle is most definitely a candidate to the role of Icon, and will work well as the **Diabolist** -- willing to court evil powers for his own amusement. Finally, the last Icon is the **Lich King**. There is but one lich in Karameikos, "Saint" Oirtulev<sup>9</sup>. An interesting twist is to make its agents the misguided Cult of Halav, at the behest of Oirtulev's patron, the lord of the undead, Orcus.



*Bargle*

<sup>6</sup> See Bruce Heard, "Who's Who Among Dragons", in *Dragon Magazine* 171.

<sup>7</sup> See Bruce Heard, "Who's Who Among Dragons", in *Dragon Magazine* #171.

<sup>8</sup> See module B10: "Night's Dark Terror".

<sup>9</sup> See accessory "AD&D Mystara DM's Kit".

Table: Icons of Karameikos

13th Age Icon	Immortal	NPC	Organization
The Archmage		Master Teldon	Magicians' Guild
The Crusader	Vanya	Alfric Oderbry Ludwig Hendricks	/The Church of Karameikos von (Oderbry faction, including the Knights of the Griffon) / The Black Eagle Barony
The Diabolist	Hel	Bargle	The Iron Ring
The Dwarf King	Kagyar / Garl	King Hilltopper	Dorfus The Kingdom of Highforge
The Elf Queen	Ilsundal	The Seer of the Lake of Lost Souls	The Vyalia elves and the Pixies of the Lake of Lost Souls
The Emperor	Halav	Duke Karameikos III	Stefan The Grand Duchy (Lord Zogrev Yarol, the ministers and the army)
The Great Gold Wyrn	Maat	Azem	The Halflings of Werescalot
The High Druid	Zirchev	Loshad the Chevall	The Centaurs of the Moor
The Lich King	Orcus	Saint Oirtulev	The Cult of Halav
The Orc Lord	Leptar	King Vlack	The Altan Tepes Goblinoids
The Priestess	Valerias / Petra	Oliver Jowett	/The Church of Karameikos Aleksyev Nikelnevitch (Halaran faction) / The Church of Traladara
The Prince of Shadows	Asterius	Flameflicker / Radu	Anton The Kingdom of Thieves / The Veiled Society
The Three	Orcus/Demogogon	Argos the Worrier	The Dark Triad cult

## ICONS OF NORWOLD

Norwold is a typical high-level setting, designed for play at Companion and Master level. Here, many NPCs suitable as Icons are very high level.

The Dragon Empire here identifies with the Kingdom of Norwold and its parent, the Empire of Alphatia. As such, the **Emperor** is King Ericall and Madiera the Counsellor<sup>10</sup> is the **Archmage**. Although there is not ministry of magic or guild to support her,

<sup>10</sup> See module CM1: "Test of the Warlords" for most Norwold NPCs.

we can easily imagine her to have several apprentices.

In Norwold, the **Priestess** finds an interesting match in the Cronas of Crystykk. These servants/personifications of the Norns represents three different alignments and spheres of powers, making them suitable to match the Priestess' role.



King Ericall



Table: 3 Icons of Norwold

13th Age Icon	Immortal	NPC	Organization
The Archmage	Razud	Madiera the Counsellor	Her apprentices
The Crusader	Vanya	Wulf von Klagendorf	The Heldannic Knights
The Diabolist	Thanatos	The Seer of River Sabre / The Witch Queen of Pojaara	Sabreclaws / Kingdom of Pojaara
The Dwarf King	Kagyar	Gard Rocktooth	Stonehaven
The Elf Queen	Ilkundal	Nirwen the Weeping Queen	The Foresthomes
The Emperor	Alphatia	King Ericall	Kingdom of Norwold
The Great Gold Wurm	Diamond	King Eruuptar	Kingdom of Wurmsteeth
The High Druid	Terra	Tarn Oakleaf	The Druidic Circle of Norwold
The Lich King	Alphaks	The Black King	The Black Avengers
The Orc Lord	Thor / Surtr	Barkal the Red / The Jarl of Frosthaven	The barbarian hosts / Frosthaven Giants
The Priestess	The Norns	The Cronos of Crystykk	None; the Cronos operate through omens and dreams
The Prince of Shadows	Asterius	President Prospero	The Landfall Thieves' Guild
The Three		Dominagon / Pyre	

Goblinoids are not terribly important in Norwold. The **Orc Lord** therefore leaves its place to the human barbarian leader, Barkal the Red, although the Frost Giant Jarl of Frosthaven is another interesting option.

The dragon Icons are particularly relevant. King Eruuptar of Wurmsteeth is a reasonable match for the **Great Gold Wurm**, whereas Dominagon or Pyre can be the **Three**. Even though Pyre is not originally from Norwold, he appears there in a plot against Eruuptar, part of the “World in Flames” timeline<sup>11</sup>.

The **Crusader** is certainly Wulf von Klagendorf<sup>12</sup>, Hochmeister of the Heldannic

Order, whereas the **Lich King** can be mapped to the Black King and the Black Queen of Alphaks' Volcano.

Tarn Oakleaf represents the **High Druid**, even if he might not be the Icon himself. President Prospero of the Landfall Thieves' Guild takes the place of the **Prince of Shadows**.

The **Dwarf King** and **Elf Queen** are Gard Rocktooth, clanholder of Stonehaven, and Nirwen<sup>13</sup>, the Weeping Queen of the elves of the Rhien Forest.

[NPCs](#) at the Vaults of Panndius.

<sup>13</sup> See Giampaolo Agosta, [“The Skaufskogr and Beyond”](#), in *Threshold Magazine* Issue #7.

<sup>11</sup> See Bruce Heard, “World in Flames”.

<sup>12</sup> See Bruce Heard, [“Heldannic Knights](#)

Finally, the **Diabolist** can be the Seer of River Sabre<sup>14</sup> or the Witch Queen of Pojaara.

## ICONS OF Thyatis

Thyatis may work as an excellent stand-in for the Dragon Empire. Several parallels can indeed be found -- starting from the dragon riders of the Retebius Air Force and the Knights of Air. Zendrolion, the first Emperor of Thyatis killed the previous Wizard King, Lucinius, and the Empire was founded after the defeat of the oppressor Empire of Alphatia, which is a magocracy. Either the current Empress of Alphatia or, more likely, an undead Lucinius can work as the Lich King. Specifically, Lucinius has already been proposed as a Lich working behind the scenes in Thyatis<sup>15</sup>.

The **Emperor** and the **Archmage** find easy mappings in Emperor Thincol the Brave and his court mage, Demetron Karagenteropoulos<sup>16</sup>.

The Storm Soldiers are an order of fighters ranging from the mere nationalist to the Nazi-grade villains. From them, the Heldannic Order, a nation of monastic Knights was founded. Their leader, Wulf von Klagendorf, would make an excellent **Crusader**. While not devoted to "dark gods" -- which would likely correspond to the Sphere of Entropy in Mystara -- the Heldannic Order fills a similar niche as the Crusader's army, and the Thanatos

connection through the Storm Soldiers may be played upon for the Crusader's darker side.

There are dwarven and elven enclaves in Thyatis, as well as two neighbouring nations, Alfheim and Rockhome, which can easily qualify as the **Dwarf King** and **Elf Queen**. Whether to use the Count Vyalia and Baroness Buhrohur or the Kings of Rockhome and Alfheim is a matter of campaign scope -- Count Vyalia works well as a patron of the Foresters, for example.

Druids are uncommon in the Known World, but Thyatis has overseas colonies, such as the Thyatian Hinterlands or the Isle of Dawn, where a **High Druid** could easily arise. In the isle of Dawn, the Archdruid Kalmyshiye is the best known NPC who could fit the role.

The Shadow King is the hereditary leader of the Shadow Hand, a pirate crew that struck a deal with and later took over the previous Thieves' Guild. They now control a large number of illegal activities in Thyatis City and beyond. He is a perfect match for the **Prince of Shadows**.

The Diabolist and the Priestess are more difficult, since Demons in Mystara are Immortal level monsters/NPCs, and the Immortals are much more proactive than the 13th Age gods. The head of the Church of Thyatis could serve as the **Priestess** -- Thyatis is known as an empire where the combination of fighters, wizards and clerics keeps the state going, and where the state religion tends to include multiple cults and Immortals. Either the Rex Sacrorum or the Flaminia Tarastiana<sup>17</sup> could fit the bill.

<sup>14</sup> See module CM3: I.

<sup>15</sup> See "[Timeline of Thyatian History - the Alphatian Era](#)" at the Vaults of Pandius.

<sup>16</sup> See "Dawn of the Emperors" campaign boxed set..

<sup>17</sup> See G. Caroletti and G. Agosta, "Patres et Coscripti", in [Threshold](#)



Table: 4 Icons of Thyatis

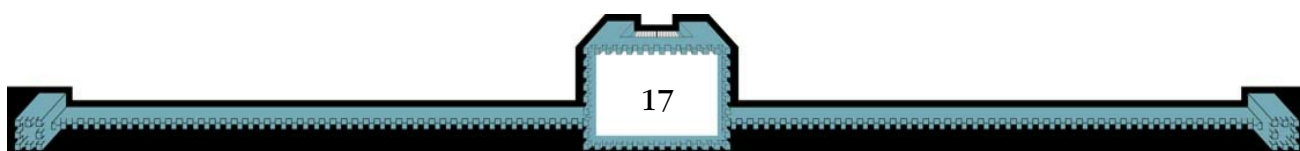
13th Age Icon	Immortal	NPC	Organization
The Archmage	Khoronus	Demetrion Karagenteropulos	Ministry of Magic / Collegium Arcanum
The Crusader	Vanya	Wulf von Klagendorf	The Heldannic Order
The Diabolist	Arik	The First	Zhochal Collective
The Dwarf King	Kagyar	King Everast / Baroness Buhrohur	Kingdom of Rockhome / Barony of Buhrohur
The Elf Queen	Ilsundal	King Doriath / Count Vyalia	Alfheim / County of Vyalia
The Emperor	Tarastia	Thincol Torion	The Legions of Thyatis
The Great Gold Wyrn	Diamond	Hytiliaph	The Draconic Kingdom of Ancepes Trigeminus
The High Druid	Diulanna	Kalmyshiye	Druids of the Isle of Dawn
The Lich King	Nyx	Lucinius Trezantenbium	The Ordo Magna
The Orc Lord	Kaarash / Ixion	King Thar / The Great Khan of Ethengar	The Legion of Thar / The Hordes of Ethengar
The Priestess	Tarasta / Valerias	Gaia Ephore, the Flaminia Tarastiana, or the Rex Sacrorum	The Church of Thyatis
The Prince of Shadows	Asterius	Valinor Acindelyrovius, the Shadow King	The Shadow Hand
The Three	Mrikitat	Leo Variantia	The Order of the Sands

There are also demon-worshippers, of course, and the cult of Alphaks, one of the Immortal Fiends, is formally outlawed but somewhat more tolerated than others, since Alphaks' primary interest is the destruction of Alphatia. However, a better option for the **Diabolist** could be Arik of the Hundred Eyes, the imprisoned Immortal who might be in league with the Outer Beings. As for NPCs, one interesting option builds on the Precepts of Akh'All, an Outer Beings treatise published in Thyatis. This points to the presence of Outer Beings cults, at least, in [Magazine](#) issues #2-6.

Thyatis, as also mentioned in other Thyatian pseudobiblia, such as “Dark Worship in Thyatis”<sup>18</sup>. Leveraging the recent addition of the Zhochal (Minions of Akh'All) to the array of playable races<sup>19</sup>, I'd make the Diabolist the First of a Zhochal collective.

<sup>18</sup> See G. Caroletti and J. Ruhland, “[A Short Reference to Thyatian Literature](#)”, at the Vaults of Pandius (originally from *Tome of Mystara* issue #3).

<sup>19</sup> See G. Gander, “[Playing Zhochal](#)” in *Mystara, Threshold Magazine* issue #20.



As mentioned before, Thyatis has a corps of dragon riders mounted on white, blue, and gold dragons. While canonically these are subdued dragons, it has been speculated that the presence of such a large amount of dragons must be related to some alliance between the Empire and a mysterious dragon ruler (it is noteworthy that, while the other nations overlap with draconic kingdoms, there is no such dragon ruler known to live in Thyatis). Still, Hytiliaph, Demetrion Karagenteropoulos' mount, would qualify as the **Great Gold Wyrm**.

The Three are not too much about being a "dragon icon", as much as they are about being "monsters that fit (partly) into civilization". In this sense, perhaps the wererat undercity in Thyatis, or even the multi-racial Order of the Sands, which includes Orcish gladiators and perhaps even intelligent monsters, would fit. Leo Variantia<sup>20</sup>, an Immortal candidate afflicted with multiple lycanthropic diseases, is my favourite option as an individual NPC.

Finally, the **Orc Lord** may be Thar, King of the Broken Lands, or the Great Khan of Ethengar. Both are distant (as is the Orc Lord in the Dragon Empire), but may prove a major problem if the Empire is weakened.

## ICONS IN ACTION

The Icons can be used for multiple purposes. As per the 13th Age rules, they can be used to provide benefits or complications for the PCs. This works well for improvisational adventures. However, the Icons are useful also as tools to support the definition of campaign plots.

For example, let us consider a Thyatian campaign. We need to first define the heroic Icons -- here the Archmage, the Priestess, the Dwarf King, and the Great Gold Wyrm. The Crusader, the Diabolist and the Orc Lord are villainous Icons. Everyone else is ambiguous -- as befits a Mystaran campaign, most Icons are actually ambiguous and even our definition is mostly relative to the specific party. We choose, however, the Lich King as the opponent in this campaign. His motivation is to preserve the Empire. In 13th Age, the Lich King is the main opponent of the Emperor -- here we can choose to make this opposition indirect, and choose a different enemy. Let's use the Crusader.

The main plot is, at this point, easy to plan: the Emperor is receiving financial support from the Heldannic Knights, Lucinius wants to remove their influence, therefore sends a minion to hijack a shipment of gold. Now, the PCs' alignment to the Icons defines the nature of their involvement. A PC aligned with the Prince of Shadows would steal from the thieves, whereas a PC aligned with the Emperor would attempt to retrieve the stolen gold. We can add a complication, probably another ambiguous Icon attempting to gain an advantage from the situation. This could be the aforementioned

<sup>20</sup> See PC4 The Night Howlers.

Prince of Shadows, if the PCs are not aligned with him. Finally, we can have an unlikely ally to show up. For this role, we can select the Three or the Diabolist. In the first case, it is a group of wererats who offer help to the PCs (e.g., information on the thieves or help in navigating a city's underground), in the latter, it is one of the alien Zhochal who happens to be a witness.

Thus, we have our adventure plot -- a typical robbery investigation with a couple of twists, and a possible follow-up in the investigation of the money's origins and the state debt problem that is building up in Thyatis. Everything else can be built up with the standard encounter building rules from the BECMI Master Set, or whatever equivalent rules are used in the specific rules set.

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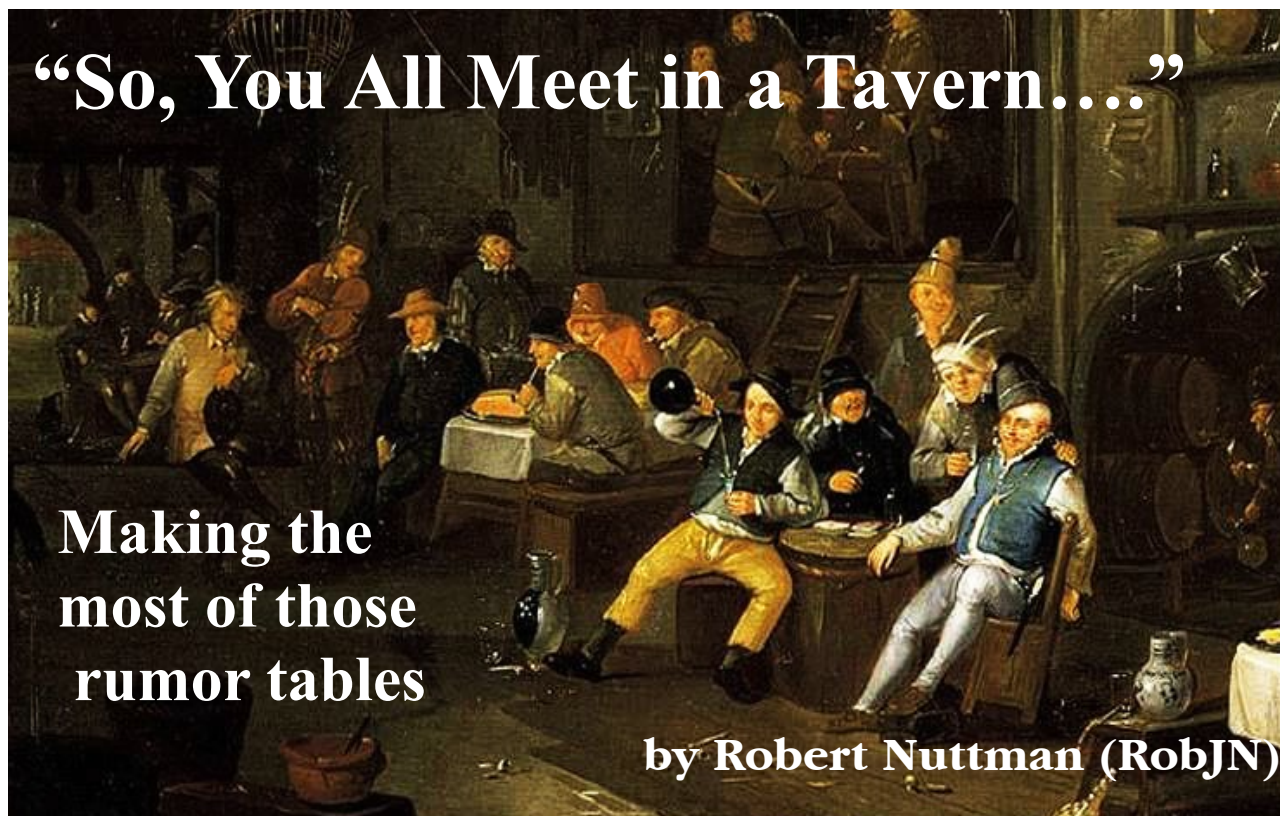
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“So, You All Meet in a Tavern...”

Making the most of those rumor tables

by Robert Nuttman (RobJN)

Show of hands, if you players out there ever heard that one?

*“So, you all meet in a tavern...”*

How about if you’ve ever used it as a DM?

There’s nothing wrong with using that line for a cold opening...

.... of a convention game, perhaps. But who would ever use something so clichéd to kick off a campaign?

I would.

*“So, you all meet in a tavern...”*

The key lies not so much in the tavern itself, but in what can sometimes be the most amusing part of any of the early adventure modules (for the DM, at least): the rumor table. Who doesn’t remember the look on the players’ faces when -- rather than throwing down their weapons -- the goblins smirked as reinforcements arrived after their cries of “Bree Yark!” went up?

The only shortcoming is that those rumor tables are keyed to each adventure itself. The PCs must reach the Keep, or Guido’s Fort, or somewhere outside of Gulluvia to hear those rumors, and from there be steered on one direction or the other over the course of any of the given adventures.

But what is it that drew the PCs to any of those places to begin with? Surely, more

rumors. Move that tavern outside of the adventure proper, and rather than the PCs deciding whether or not to explore Cave A, or Cave F, let them decide whether or not to even make that journey to the Keep in the first place.

Granted, this approach means the DM will have to do a bit of reading, at least several module’s worth. Having at least a bit of overall land in which to plant the various adventures is also helpful. Fortunately, the *Gazetteer* series gives the DM just such a leg up. While the examples in this article focus on Karameikos, there is no stopping an enterprising DM from transplanting them to, say, Darokin, or Rockhome, or the Northern Reaches with a few tweaks and re-skinning.

The first thing to do is determine the scope of the campaign’s opening. Just as there are a plethora of buildings to explore within the Keep on the Borderlands, or many openings into the various Caves of Chaos beckoning adventurers, so too should players have at least a handful of paths from which to choose.

As an example, let’s start small, with three rumors. The broader, more generic, the better:

- Lord Kelvin’s master-at-arms is recruiting.
- Children/townfolk/homesteads have been disappearing to the south.
- The hills are said to be littered with ancient tombs and lairs, bound to hold treasures....

Now here is where the DM’s reading ahead comes into play. Each of those broad-brush themes can tie in to just about any of the entry level modules. The Barony of Kelvin is fairly central to the Grand Duchy, and being at the confluence of two major rivers, means the town sees regular traffic in trade goods. And merchants bring more than just goods to town: they are also prime sources of news and gossip.

So the PCs might learn that **Lord Kelvin is recruiting** because...

- Goblins in the Dymrak have grown bold; the Dread has promised his clanlings riches and spoils. (DDA4)
- Ogres have been spotted in greater numbers in the hills. One hill, in particular... (B5)
- His Grace is expecting a visit from a neighboring baroness, and wants the tour to go without a hitch. He is increasing patrols between Kelvin and Penhaligon.(B11)
- Raiders have struck several homesteads, and there is a need of manpower, as another attack is surely imminent.... (B11 or B10)
- Lord Kelvin has placed a bounty on goblinoid ears. Their attacks lulled for a short while, but they struck harder with their last raid, acting in a much more organized fashion... (B10, B11, or B12)

Likewise, with the disappearances:

- A tribe of orcs has made off with at least a few children in the past weeks. (B11)
- Ogres just up and carried everyone from the homestead off to their lair somewhere on the Hill (B5)
- Hobgoblins are known to take prisoners, rather than leave bodies. But there has been no word of any sort of ransom demand being sent to the baron... (B5)
- People in Fort Doom who speak ill of the Black Eagle just... disappear. (B10, DDA3)

#### Gold! In the hills!

- The Dread has grown bold because he's come across a vast treasure. (DDA3, DDA4, B10)
- Hobgoblin raiders have to stash their spoils and ransom somewhere on that Hill where they're said to lair... (B5)
- With the scarcity of kobolds, it seems the orcs have taken to using human children to do their mining (B11)

Some of the modules are a bit broader in scope than others, which lends them to fitting more than one rumor. Other rumors don't ring quite true to their corresponding module. Much like shouting “Bree Yark!” and expecting a warm welcome, the PCs will surely find things to be otherwise once they start exploring.

#### Leveling up those Hooks

Once the PCs decide on which of the initial hooks to bite on, and the adventure ensues, there's no need to scrap the rest of those hard-thought-out rumors. Like a good villain, rumors never die, they just level up and come after the PCs again after a while.

Much like Basic adventures tend to focus on the dungeon itself, the second tier of hooks, after the PCs bite on one, could open up the scope to the wilderness at large:

Module B11's Stallanford leads to B12's Penhalligon. Clues sprinkled into B12 might either lead the PCs southwest, where the Queen has made overtures to try to gain the attention and favor of the Hobgoblin King on the B5's Hill (Indeed, the PCs may think to disguise themselves as emissaries of the self-styled queen).

Or, maybe the PCs follow up on missives that the Queen sent (or intends to send) to the DDA4 The Dymrak Dread, enlisting his aid in building her army to conquer northern Karameikos.

The Hill and the Dread could play off each other as well, either intending to band together to overthrow this queen... but more likely, to double-cross the other and make off with the Queen's war chest.

The Dread could have been ousted or joined forces with the Wolfskull tribe, intent on raiding one of the many homesteads sprinkled along the length of the Windrush.

And that “great treasure” that the Dymrak Dread found? If the PCs don't follow up on



the hobgoblin king or the would-be Queen’s attempts to secure it for themselves, the PCs might find themselves in possession of a garishly colored tapestry that, from a certain distance and angle, looks like it could be an abstract scene depicting a village at the base of mountainous peaks.... and speaking of it in a crowded inn or taproom could very well draw the attention of hounds of the Iron Ring.

Or, perhaps the treasure was a large, precious stone in a gold setting. Reversing the “sequel,” as-written, DDA4 could lead the PCs on the hunt for the figure that stole the stone from Kosivikh, all the way down the Westron Road, to the Fort Doom of DDA3’s “*Eye of Traldar*”.

Changing some of the opposition in DDA3 to Iron Ring slavers could lead to entangling the PCs in the events of B10: “*Night’s Dark Terror*”, and from there, propel them into Expert level adventures.

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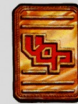
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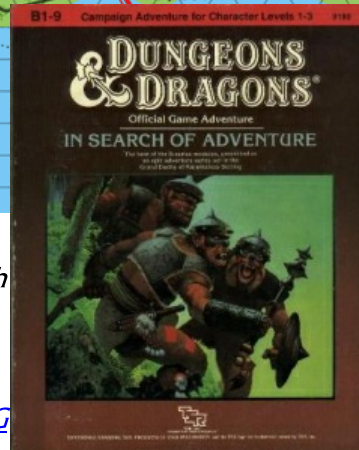


When I started my first campaign in Karameikos back in 1991, I only had the Basic and Expert Sets as sources of information and adventures. Then gradually I acquired much more canon material, GAZ1, B3, B4, B10 and so on. However, as I lived in Italy, which is far away from TSR's main market, I missed many adventures and products which never arrived, or rapidly disappeared, in the stores I could visit. It was only after the great development of the Internet and the availability of used or digital products that I was able to read many other old modules and supplements.

So when I started my Play by Post campaign on The Piazza set in Karameikos<sup>1</sup> more

<sup>1</sup> See the [“The Karameikos Experiment Pbp”](#) thread and the other current threads in the same forum at *The Piazza*.

Cover of “*In Search of Adventure*”. © Wizards of the Coast, available from [DriveThruRPG](#)



recently, I decided I would use all the canon and fan material now available which I did not have at my disposal in the past. The amount of material now available for Karameikos is huge, and more than enough to develop several different campaigns, or adventure paths in the style of more recent role playing games. In fact the original “B series” of canon adventures were not set in Karameikos and had no interconnection between them. It was only later that a connection was created with the B1-9 super module, “*In Search of Adventure*”. Now, however, the amount of fan creations

available in the Vaults of Pandius makes it much easier to connect the different adventures set in Karameikos.

In this article I will explore a series of possible adventure paths and the way they could be connected together in one unique, huge story arc for hours of fun and play. NPCs and Characters listed below are humans unless stated otherwise in the text. The treasure listed only include permanent magical objects, not coins, gems, potions and scrolls unless they are the only treasures, and only objects of likely enemies, not of allies or NPCs.

Please note that the article contain heavy spoilers on the content and the end of all the canon and fan adventures set in Karameikos!

The different adventures have been listed roughly by level, but if a DM chooses to play them all, it is probable that several will have to be adjusted for higher levels. If many adventures are for PCs of similar level, they have been listed to form a coherent Path.

The Adventure Paths described in this article are:

- ♦ “The Black Eagle and Iron Ring”
- ♦ “The Dark Triad”
- ♦ “Humanoids and Argos”
- ♦ “Skarda”
- ♦ “The Church of Nyx and Koskatep”
- ♦ “Lost Cities and Relics”
- ♦ “Other Lands, People and Creatures”
- ♦ “The Veiled Society and Specularum”
- ♦ “The Complete Adventure Path”

## THE BLACK EAGLE AND IRON RING ADVENTURE PATH

This is obviously the most classic story arc to be set in Karameikos, more or less explicit in GAZ1: “*The Grand Duchy of Karameikos*” and module B1-9 “*In Search of Adventure*”. In canon products the fight of the PCs against the Iron Ring it is supposed to start from the town of Threshold, but other options are possible. In my current Play by Post campaign, for example I had an Iron Ring cell operating in Specularum from 989 AC. In canon products the adventures and ideas set in Specularum are more centered on the Veiled Society, so I imagined the Society was eventually able to eradicate or at least limit the activities of the Iron Ring in the capital.

Another possible different starting point for a PC party’s involvement against the Iron Ring is the one presented in the videogame “*Order of the Griffon*”, where Lord Korrigan sends the PCs to explore Koriszegy Keep, but the Iron Ring is allied with the Vampire lord of the Keep. But this Path could start anywhere in the Grand Duchy, assuming that the Ring has cells in many places. The connection between the Iron Ring and the Black Eagle should be discovered late in the Path or, if discovered earlier, PCs should still have quite some trouble in finding proof to persuade the Karameikan authorities. After all in canon products Stefan Karameikos is finally convinced only in 1,010 AC!

This Path could very easily be merged with others, notably the Dark Triad Path, the Humanoid and Argos Path and the Lost Cities and Relics Path, but others too as explained

in the text below, under each Path and in the final chapter about creating a Complete Path.

### “Your First Adventure”

by Frank Mentzer, *D&D Basic set* (1983),  
Players manual page 3

**Location:** Near the town of Threshold

**PCs level:** 1 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Bargle the Wizard and his goblin.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Aleena the Cleric, Unnamed warrior, Fighter 1.

**Main Treasures:** Potion of growth.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A lone warrior goes searching for the bandit Bargle and meets a young female cleric named Aleena.

**Connections:** This adventure has an immediate sequel in the Basic set. PCs could play it or just hear the news of what happened. Aleena is killed by Bargle in the adventure, but as she is alive in GAZ1, it is likely she was resurrected by her uncle Baron Sherlane.

### “Into the Caves”

by Frank Mentzer, *D&D Basic set* (1983),  
Players manual page 15

**Location:** Near the town of Threshold

**PCs level:** 1 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Goblins, skeletons, rats, rust monster.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Unnamed warrior, Fighter 1.

**Main Treasures:** Gems, coins.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** The lone warrior returns to the caves where Bargle

was hiding to face the goblins.

**Connections:** Connected to the following adventure. PCs could participate or just hear the warrior is hunting Bargle. He could become a member of the party, or fail and be killed. See also [“Find Bargle”](#) by Trevor Holman from *Threshold Magazine* issue #8

### “Gygar’s Castle”

#### Or “Castle Mistamere”

by Frank Mentzer, *D&D Basic set* (1983),  
Dungeon Master manual page 4

**Location:** Near the town of Threshold

**PCs level:** 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Carrion crawler, kobolds, harpies, zombies, Bargle, ogres, living statues, doppelgangers, small dragon.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** A party of PCs, later developed and named by Roger LV Girtman II in [“Mystara’s Iconic Party”](#) at the Vaults of Pandius. .

**Main Treasures:** Coins, random.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A group of adventurers explore the abandoned Gygar’s castle, while searching for traces of Bargle and possibly finding him on level three.

**Connections:** If Bargle escapes again, he will continue his plot to bring down Threshold. See also [“To Save Aleena”](#) by David Tauriainen and [“TC1: The Baron’s Favor”](#), First in the *Thorn’s Chronicle Adventure Path* by Robert J. Nuttman, Jr. for an alternative adventure against Bargle in Castle Mistamere.

## “Kill Bargle”

by Jason Bulmahn, *Dungeon Magazine* issue #150, 2007

**Location:** Near the town of Threshold.

**PCs level:** 1-5 (D&D 3.5)

**Main Antagonists:** Carrion crawler, kobolds, zombies, ghouls, oil beetles, gelatinous cube, spiders, ogres, living crystal statues, shadows, doppelgangers, Bargle Wizard 7.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** None.

**Main Treasures:** Coins, gems, longsword +1, chain shirt +1, potions, scrolls, bracers of armor +2, dagger +1, ring of protection +1, gauntlets of ogre power, rope of climbing, wand of hold person, reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A conversion and expansion of the original 1983 adventure above.

**Connections:** As above.



## “Trouble in Threshold”

by Thomas M. Reid, “*Karameikos: Kingdom of Adventure*” boxed set, (1994)

**Location:** Threshold.

**PCs level:** 1 (AD&D 2ed)

**Main Antagonists:** Iron Ring thugs, Peltro Brastus of the Iron Ring, skeletons, Key-Hamintep mummy, Falana Wizard 2, Brenna Warrior 1, Rocko Warrior 1, The Silent One Thief 2.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Dargar Thunderhammer dwarf Fighter, Jocasta Demandria human Fighter, Kalroth human Wizard, Melissa Moonstar elf Wizard, Chad Alonius human Thief, Emily Rogueshot halfling Thief, Par Thanar human Cleric, Maxalla Trigostas human Cleric, Juster Dainworth the merchant and his wife Seledina, Skritch Thief 4, Sherlane and Aleena Halaran.

**Main Treasures:** Reward, treasure of Key-Hamintep, leather armour +1.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** The Iron Ring is establishing a new cell in Threshold, starting with a smuggling operation, and some thugs have just kidnapped a local merchant unwilling to cooperate. PCs go search for him deep down below the town, where they also find an ancient Nithian tomb.

**Connections:** With Bargle apparently dead or disappeared the PCs discover a cell of the Iron Ring operating in Threshold. They will find clues about other agents operating in the area, leading them to face doppelgangers, werewolves and a devil swine. The connection between Bargle, the Iron Ring and Von Hendriks should probably be discovered only later in the Path.

### Possible connection with the Lost Cities and Relics Path

The Iron Ring and Bargle may be interested in ancient Nithian relics and ruins, and the tomb may contain clue on how to reach them, possibly leading to B8, B10 or other adventures.

### “Damsel in Distress”

by Frank Mentzer, *D&D Expert set* (1983), page 39

**Location:** Near the town of Threshold

**PCs level:** 2-5 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Doppelgangers.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** None.

**Main Treasures:** Coins, random.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A young lady asks for the PCs’ help as her boyfriend changed abruptly and broke off their engagement.

**Connections:** The doppelgangers could be related to the ones working for Bargle in Castle Mistamere and to Iron Ring agents.

### “The Gardener”

by Frank Mentzer, *D&D Expert set* (1983), page 39

**Location:** Threshold

**PCs level:** Any (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** None.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** 5th level halfling.

**Main Treasures:** Ally.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** PCs discover that the only supplier of wolfsbane in Threshold is a 5th level halfling gardener

looking for adventures.

**Connections:** Directly connected to the following two adventures which have a confrontation with werereatures; could be connected to the “Order of the Griffon” Turbografx/PC Engine video game adventure, see later.

### “Scavengers”

by Frank Mentzer, *D&D Expert set* (1983), page 40

**Location:** Threshold and near it.

**PCs level:** Any (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Werereatures.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** See above.

**Main Treasures:** Payment.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Cattle are missing during full moon; PCs have to capture the werereatures responsible. Some are local people, others are agents of the Black Eagle.

**Connections:** As in the previous adventure, this too could be connected to the “Order of the Griffon” video game adventure. Werewolves appears also as minions of the Black Eagle later.

### “The Gambler”

By Frank Mentzer, *D&D Expert set* (1983), page 40

**Location:** Threshold

**PCs level:** Any (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** A devil swine.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** None.

**Main Treasures:** Money, ring of telekinesis.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A devil swine

wins a lot by charming his victims and using a ring of telekinesis.

**Connections:** The Gambler may be an agent of Orcus or connected to the Black Eagle Path as a member of the Iron Ring and/or agent of Bargle. He should be connected to the new Guildmistress of the Thieves Guild, leading to the adventure “*Extortion*”, below.

### Possible connection to the Dark Triad Path

As the Immortal Orcus supposedly created devil swine, or appears as one, this could be a connection with the Dark Triad Path with the churches of Orcus, Leptar and Demogorg on present as allies of the Iron Ring.

### “Extortion”

by Frank Mentzer, *D&D Expert set* (1983), page 40

**Location:** Threshold.

**PCs level:** 4-14 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** New Guildmistress of the Thieves’ Guild.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** None

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A new Guildmistress is harassing local businessmen and trying to take over the local Thieves’ Guild.

**Connections:** The Guildmistress could be an agent of the Veiled Society or the Iron Ring.

### Possible connection to the Veiled Society and Specularum Path

If the Guildmistress is an agent of the Veiled Society this could lead the PCs to a different

Path. Is it possible that the Veiled Society and the Iron Ring work together? It seems unlikely, as the Veiled Society is controlled by the Radu and composed mainly of Traladaran extremists, while the Iron Ring is allied with Von Hendriks and mainly composed of Thyatian extremists. Yet both factions have and also use people of the other ethnicity, and both may have the ultimate goal of ousting Duke Stefan, so an unholy alliance between the two organisations may not be so unlikely after all.

”**The Kidnapping of Princess Arelina**”  
by Garry Spiegle, AC3: “*3-D Dragon Tiles*,” (1984)

**Location:** Anywhere.

**PCs level:** 3-4 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** ghouls, wererats, skeletons, shadows, rust monster, Jahat Fighter 3, Jelek Fighter 4, Rusak Wizard 4.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Princess Arelina, Berklai Fighter 4, Awas Wizard 4, Triak Cleric 5, Penchuri Thief 4, Kuat Ranger 3, Saudara Wizard 3, Teman Cleric 4, Ambil Thief 3.

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A young princess has been kidnapped, but the kidnappers have been tracked to an isolated house; now the PCs have to break in to rescue her.

**Connections:** Generic but easily adaptable to Karameikos with any important young female or noble figure as the object of the kidnapping, and the kidnappers would fit well as members of the Iron Ring. Indeed, if the PCs have already foiled the plans of Bargle and the Iron Ring cell in Threshold,

with their doppelganger and werecreatures allied, supported by Aleena, then the enemy could try to kidnap Aleena to blackmail Sherlane Halaran. Rusak could be in this case a minion of Bargle, or an identity of Bargle himself.

## “RANSOM”

by David Howery, *Dungeon Magazine* issue #42, 1993

**Location:** North of Threshold, Utica in Darokin.

**PCs level:** 3-5 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Antar Wizard 2, Althling Fighter 5, Kerak Fighter 4, Thoros Fighter 7, Ademar Fighter 4, Hattin Fighter 4, Balian Thief 5.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Lord Reynald Fighter 7, Baldwin his son.

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Bandits kidnap the son of Sir Reynald, but Reynald is unwilling to pay a king’s ransom for his son’s return. His wizard Antar, secretly an agent of the Black Eagle, plots for his removal to weaken Threshold.

**Connections:** Reynald gives the PCs fake coins, but frames Antar for the act, so he could remain on good terms with the PCs and the Duke, exposing a plot by the Black Eagle. Even if tailored for higher level this adventure, being located near Threshold, could work best as following the other plots of the Black Eagle in the region.

## “The Black Woods”

by Frank Mentzer, *D&D Expert set* (1983), page 40

**Location:** Five miles west of Threshold

**PCs level:** 5-14 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Bargle.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** None.

**Main Treasures:** None.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Bargle has hidden 100 fighters and their mounts near Threshold, magically asleep and mass morphed into part of the woods.

**Connections:** Meant for higher levels, but could work best as the conclusion of the attempts by the Black Eagle to weaken Threshold. It could, however, also be played later if the PCs return to Threshold from time to time. See also [“Bargle’s Forces Attack”](#) by Sean Meaney.



*Soldiers hidden in the woods*

## Fan adventures and resources about Threshold and Bargle

[“Mystara Cities Project: Thresbold”](#) by Brian Caraway

[“A Guide To The Barony Of Thresbold”](#) by Jimmy Rowe

[“Detail of the Threshold Region”](#) by Simone Neri

[“The Siege of Threshold”](#) by Sean Meaney

[“Kill Bargle!”](#) by John Calvin



[“Limited collectors’ editions of the works of Bargle the Infamous”](#) by Steven Miller, from *Dragon Magazine* #216

### “Toys of the Madman”

by Aaron Allston, GAZ1: *“The Grand Duchy of Karameikos”* page 62, (1987)

**Location:** Fort Doom or vicinity.

**PCs level:** 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** monsters, Von Hendriks and minions.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Other people kidnapped and placed in the dungeon.

**Main Treasures:** Return to freedom.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** PCs are kidnapped by Von Hendriks’ men and placed in a dungeon from which they have to escape.

**Connections:** If the PCs have defeated the Black Eagle’s plans in Threshold, this could be his revenge. However, this adventure could be played at any time. Probably the PCs should not yet discover the connection between the Black Eagle and the Iron Ring. Maybe the dungeon contains a magical object that the Black Eagle wants, and all this is a ploy to have some adventurers retrieve it. Once they have done the job, they are imprisoned again, leading to the next adventure. See also [“Toys of a Mad Man”](#), adventure set in Karameikos AC 1000 by Irving Galvez.

### Possible connection to the Lost Cities and Relics Path

The PCs could learn in the previous adventure that Bargle and the Iron Ring are after ancient relics of Traladara, leading them

to a race against their agents to find such items before them, leading to B10 and more adventures.

### “The Great Escape” [B9]

by Harry Nuckols, Adventure B9: “Castle Caldwell and Beyond”, 1985

**Location:** Black Eagle Barony.

**PCs level:** 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** gnoll jailer, human warriors Fighter 1 and 2, Visiting Officer Fighter 3, Commander Fighter 4.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** male servants, female servants.

**Main Treasures:** reward, coins, potions, short sword + 1, shield + 1, ring of fire resistance, rod of cancellation.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** PCs have been captured while spying on the enemy and must now escape from the enemy dungeon.

**Connections:** Originally generic, but later placed in the Black Eagle Barony in B1-9. PCs meet Anton Turino, a Black Eagle spy who pretend to be a Duke’s spy charged to investigate the Black Eagle. He wants to lead the PCs to Lone Tree Hill, a day’s ride east of Luln, claiming he can obtain proof that the Black Eagle is sponsoring goblin raids. A goblin raid is indeed planned against Luln, but in Lone Tree Hill Anton plans to deliver the PCs to the goblins as a threat to the Baron, just to gain some points in the eyes of his master. If the PCs do not believe him and defeat him, they will find in his pockets clues leading to Lone Tree Hill and Quasqueton (B1) where they could be captured anyway. When the PCs escape, they are supposed to reach Luln and speak to Mistress Sascia, who will send them to deliver a report to Franz Dubloi at the military garrison in

Specularum. Before that however she could send them to meet a representative of the Five Shires, leading to the next adventure.

### Fan resources about Fort Doom (Halag), Luln and Radlebb

[“Traladaran Sword Maiden”](#) by Christopher Bishop

[“Fort Doom”](#) by Niels Just Rasmussen from *Threshold Magazine* issue #1

[“The Curse of Halag”](#) by André Martins

[“The Pit of Blood Gold”](#) by Sean Meaney

[“Luln: map and description”](#) by Irving Galvez

[“Luln”](#) and [“Plan of Luln”](#) by religion

[“Mystara Cities Project: Luln”](#) by Brian Caraway

[“Description of Village of Radlebb”](#) and [“Description of Radlebb Keep”](#) by Eric Stoneburner

### “The Trouble with Mylvin Wimbly”

by Andrew McCray, *Dungeon Magazine* issue #5, 1987

**Location:** Western Karameikos.

**PCs level:** 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Orcs, Lazambar Wizard 4.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Mylvin Wimbly Halfling 1.

**Main Treasures:** Money, potion of healing, dagger +1.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A halfling fugitive needs the heroes’ help to elude an evil magic-user and his orcish thugs.

**Connections:** Lazambar could easily be in the service of the Black Eagle or the Iron Ring, and the halfling could be a Five Shires’ agent spying around the Black Eagle territory. Once the PCs rescue him, Mylvin or

Sascia of Luln could ask them to help Alexei Schlepin, leading to the next adventure.

### “Eye of Traldar” [DDA3]

by Carl Sargent, Adventure DDA3: *“Eye of Traldar”*, (1991)

**Location:** Western Karameikos and the Black Eagle Barony.

**PCs level:** 1-2 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Torstar Malenkov Fighter 3, Iron Ring thugs, chaotic Elf 1, undead, gnoll, bugbear, Black Eagle soldiers, Gebhard the Torturer Fighter 3, orcs, Lieutenant Galleret Fighter 3, Paurillian Cleric 3, Menelaus slaver Thief 3, Lieutenant Aenolas Fighter 3, Aurelian Wizard 3, Captain Tiberian Fighter 4, Todosz slaver Thief 3.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Five unnamed pre-gens with backgrounds, Alexei Schlepin Fighter 2, Morander, Leraith, Warreck and Zemeter in Luln, Lemnos and Petronius in Fort Doom, Taiurus prisoner, Tibor, Imren, Tadeus and Maraden soldiers of Luln prisoners, Paurus Specularum merchant prisoner, other prisoners, hostages, ogre, Nikolai Monescu Wizard 2.

**Main Treasures:** Reward, coins, gems, jewelry, chain mail +1, staff of healing, potions, leather armor +1, short sword +1, ring of protection +1, ring of fire resistance, Eye of Traldar.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** PCs rescue a fighter from Iron Ring assassins and end up helping him retrieving the Eye of Traldar from the Black Eagle Barony.

**Connections:** If PCs succeed, they will be able to find a list of Black Eagle agents in Luln and the Baron’s plan to attack the city. PCs could then continue to DDA4, B10 or

deliver the Eye of Traldar themselves to the Lake of Lost Dreams in Eastern Karameikos. See also [“Traldar and the Legend of the Eyes”](#) by Steven B Wilson



*Looking into the Eye of Traldar*

### Another possible connection to the Lost Cities and Relics Path, Dark Triad Path, Humanoids and Argos Path

The PCs could learn in the previous adventure that Bargle and the Iron Ring and/or the Dark Triad and/or the dragon Argos are after ancient relics of Traladara, leading them to a race against their agents to find such items before them, see also links under B7 in the Humanoids and Argos Path. See also [“Karameikan Entropic Cults & the Eye of Traldar”](#) by Giampaolo Agosta

### “The Dymrak Dread” [DDA4]

by John Nephew, Adventure DDA4: “*The Dymrak Dread*”, (1991)

**Location:** Eastern Karameikos and the Black Eagle Barony.

PCs level: 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** goblins, hobgoblins, lizard men, undead, Vylgrykk, goblin Wokan 2, Kosivikh the Dymrak Dread Goblin 3, wight.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Six unnamed pre-gens, Alexei Schlepkin Fighter 2, Leraith, of Luln, Roderick Lord Forester of Dymrak, Rokhaag, orc prisoner, Jalven, elf prisoner.

**Main Treasures:** Reward, coins, gems, jewelry, chain mail +1, potions, battle axe +1.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Roderick, the Lord Forester of Dymrak, hires the PCs to kill a goblin war chieftain of the Dymrak forest.

**Connections:** If following DDA3, PCs are sent by Leirath of Luln, who is the cousin of Roderick. Alexei Schelepin can be with them too, to return to his hometown of Rynia in the Vyalia forest.

### Possible connection to the Humanoid and Argos Path

The PCs could learn that the Dymrak goblins are not simply minions of the Iron Ring or the Black Eagle, but have another even more mysterious Master. The discovery of the existence of the dragon Argos should not be easy, even less so the reason why he is apparently supporting the Black Eagle or the Iron Ring.

## “The Haunted Keep”

by Tom Moldvay, *D&D Basic set* [Moldvay edition, 1981], page 55

**Location:** Anywhere

**PCs level:** 1 (Basic D&D)

**Main Antagonists:** Goblins, wererats.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** None.

**Main Treasures:** Coins, jewelry, potion of healing.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** PCs follow goblin raiders, who captured a dozen prisoners. to the ruins of a keep once owned by the Rodemus family, who mysteriously disappeared years ago. The Rodemus are wererats, and secretly control the goblins.

**Connections:** The *Dragonsfoot* website and forum created (in 2008) [an expanded version of this dungeon](#) with many more details, monsters and treasures.

This expanded version includes:

**Main Antagonists:** goblins, bandits, bandit leader Roenald Fighter 3, hobgoblins, Kalakia Rodemus wererat Fighter 3, zombies, Eldwin Rodemus wererat Fighter 3, Jurakka Goblin 1, troglodytes, thouls, wererats, haunt, Lucretia Rodemus wererat Fighter 3, bugbears, Yena Trew Fighter 3, Bugbear King 3, Ssarvack the black dragon

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** 49 Pregens and as NPCs Lemunda the lovely Fighter 2 and her servant Relda, other random captives, Derrigan Dwarf 1, Miranda Ironwolf Fighter 1

**Main Treasures:** coins, gems, potions, scrolls, sword +1, ring of protection +2, mace +1, chainmail +1, staff of healing, wand of magic detection, leather armor +1, shield +1, short sword +1, dagger +1, ring of protection +1, boots of running, elven cloak.

The Rodemus could easily be casted as Iron Ring slavers or/and allies of the Black Eagle, or agents of Argos temporarily aiding the Iron Ring.

## “Tower of Zenopus”

by J. Eric Holmes, *D&D Basic set* [Holmes edition, 1978], page 40

**Location:** Porttown

**PCs level:** Any (Basic D&D)

**Main Antagonists:** Evil wizard W4, goblins, pirates .

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** None.

**Main Treasures:** Sword +1, Wand of Petrification.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** PCs explore the destroyed tower of the long dead wizard Zenopus, now occupied by others.

**Connections:** This dungeon precedes canon Karameikos, but Religion in [“Port Gorod”](#) has proposed a placement near Halag. This adventure could easily be connected to pirates and/or humanoids employed by the Black Eagle, inside the Barony’s territory or just outside it. The PCs could reach this location if they find a list of Iron Ring or Black Eagle agents in the previous adventures.

## “Night’s Dark Terror” [B10]

by Jim Bamra, Graeme Morris and Phil Gallagher, Adventure B10: “Night’s Dark Terror”, (1986)

**Location:** Kelvin, Sukiskyn, eastern Karameikos, ruins of Xitaqa, Rifflian, Threshold and the Black Peaks.

**PCs level:** 2-4 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Wolfskull and Red-blade goblins, Vlack Hobgoblin King, Bors, Hermann, Aksel, Jolenta, Gactis and other reavers and hounds of the Iron Ring, Viper goblins, Fyordoll bandit leader Elf 4, Ilya pixies, gargoyles, Black web orcs, living statues, undead, Kloss goblin king, Bailakask and Kalkask werewolves, rock baboons, Yellow fang goblin, Plak goblin king, Bloodhead hobgoblins, minotaur, Rucker reaver of the Iron Ring Cleric 5, Sydnor reaver Fighter 4, Sgagast bugbear reaver, Hrothgar Fighter 3 and the Scange brigands, Sligh reaver Fighter 4, Mafka reaver Thief 5, wererats, thugs, troll, thieves, Golthar Iron Ring Wizard 6, Karllag Iron Ring Wizard 6, Krasgat gnoll shaman, Gragzt gnoll chieftain and Death's Head gnolls, ogres, steel statues, griffons, undead, Kartoeba, the thing in the pit.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Stephan and Pyotr Sukiskyn, Pyotr's clan of Sukiskyn, Kalanos boatman Fighter 5, Loshad the chevall, Goriidel of the Vyalia Elf 3, Ilya pixies, Vissaryon and Tekaryon gnome miners and dwarven miners of the Zargash mountains, gnomes of the ferry, Ahiktos the merchant, Stubbs Platterman halfling of Rifflian, Captain Scylla of the Mudlark, Sergeant Arthol of Threshold, Hutaakans and Traldars of the Lost Valley, Kforedz hutaakan priestess 8, Guri-Ben-Kaal Traldar chief 7.

**Main Treasures:** rewards, coins, potions, gems and jewelry, ring of weakness, bag of devouring, rod of cancellation, scarab of protection.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** The Iron Ring wizard Golthar has found clues about the existence of Hutaaka, and he is now raising goblin hordes of the Dymrak forest against local homesteads, in search of a lost Hutaakan relic. PCs are hired in Kelvin by

Stephan Sukiskyn to come to his brother's homestead, east of the city, to bring a pack of horses to Rifflian, but arrive in Sukiskyn to find the place attacked by goblins. The trail of Golthar will eventually lead the PCs in the depths of the Dymrak forest to the Lake of Lost Dreams, the ruins of Xytaqa, Rifflian, Threshold and the Lost Valley of Hutaaka in the Black Peaks.

**Connections:** Further adventures are suggested against the Death's Head Gnolls, the goblins of the Dymrak forest and the Iron Ring. See also "[Rifflian](#)" by Brian Caraway.

### **Another possible connection to the Lost Cities and Relics Path and the Humanoids and Argos Path**

The PCs could learn in the previous adventure that Bargle and the Iron Ring are after ancient relics of Traladara, leading them to a race against their agents to find such items before them. If not already, the PCs could become aware of an alliance between the Black Eagle and the mysterious power which controls the Dymrak goblins (the dragon Argos).

### **"Koriszegy Keep"**

by Aaron Allston, GAZ1: "The Grand Duchy of Karameikos" page 63, (1987)

**Location:** Koriszegy Keep.

**PCs level:** 4-9 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Lord Koriszegy vampire, ghouls and undead.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** None.

**Main Treasures:** Reward, treasure.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Lord Koriszegy tried 200 years ago to forge a pact with evil

forces and was changed into a vampire, but cursed so that he could never leave his own castle for more than a day.

**Connections:** Even if the Koriszegy could be also played on his own or as part of other Paths, the 1992 TurbografX/PC Engine videogame *“Order of the Griffon”* could easily be used to flesh out this adventure and connect it to the Iron Ring and Black Eagle Path.

In the videogame the PCs are tasked to explore Koriszegy Keep by Lord Korrigan, who does not believe the rumours of a vampire living there are truthful. The PCs are hired in Radlebb Keep and sent first by the local Order of the Griffon member to fight Collum, a werewolf who stole a magic staff of life. There are rumors and hints about Koriszegy having a dark plan, and members of the Iron Ring appear too.

Undead, evil clerics, a devil swine and humanoids are also among the opponents, making it easier to connect this adventure to any Path. The werewolf leader Collum near Radlebb Keep is in competition with another pack led by Dosmo, and has allied with the Iron Ring to eliminate the competitor.

After defeating the werereatures, PCs become members of the Order of the Griffon and are tasked to find four magical gems Koriszegy is using to create undead, guarded by undead and a white dragon in a Koriszegy crypt.

Then they have to travel to a Koriszegy cellar, where there is a nosferatu, servant of the main vampire. Then the Duke’s daughter is kidnapped and the requested ransom is the staff of King Halav. PCs report to a halfling named Master Higgings, counselor of the Duke in Specularum, and meet the Duke, who has been poisoned. The party rescues the Duke’s daughter from an Iron Ring



*Ancient portrait of Lord Koriszegy*

hideout in Radlebb Woods, then retrieves the chalice and the shield from Halav’s tomb by the docks, guarded by minions of the Iron Ring and a green dragon.

The Duke is healed by the chalice, then the party also receive the Staff of Halav from the Order of the Griffon Master in Specularum. The three items can destroy the vampire. In Koriszegy Keep the PCs fight several dragons, nosferatu and other minor minions, until another vampire tells them how to enter the room where Koriszegy is trapped by his curse, in the hope of replacing him. The PCs weaken him, then stake him in his coffin.

Several parts of this adventure, (as is usual with old computer games or RPG adventures), make very little sense (and contradict Mystara canon; the major issue being the fact that the chalice and the shield of Halav are needed to enter Lord Koriszegy’s room, thus freeing him and destroying two important historical items. Also another shield of Halav re-appears in the canon adventure *“Hail the Heroes”*, see below. Still, parts of the plot of this

adventure could be used in play, with Koriszegy as an ally of any evil party in Karameikos. The vampire aiding the PCs could be Lord Sulescu, as a nosferatu follower of Nyx, see also the Church of Nyx and Koskatap Path.

A full walkthrough by *Captain Rufus* of the videogame is available in [“Order of the Griffon”](#).

See also [“Korizegy Keep”](#) by Victor Caminha and [“Order of the Griffon part I”](#) by Eric Stoneburner.

**Another possible connection to the Lost Cities and Relics Path, the Dark Triad Path, the Humanoids and Argos Path and the Church of Nyx and Koskatap Path**

Koriszegy could be linked to many other paths depending on his possible allies. The entropic power which turned him into a vampire could be Orcus, connecting him to the Dark Triad. The dragon Argos also supposedly serves Orcus, so Koriszegy could be connected to him as well. He could be an enemy of the Church of Nyx, or a possible ally if he wishes to free himself from the curse that bounds him to the castle, possibly making him a less villainously figure.

**“Escape from the Black Eagle”**

by Aaron Allston, GAZ1: *“The Grand Duchy of Karameikos”* page 63, (1987)

**Location:** Specularum and Black Eagle Barony.

**PCs level:** 4-9 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Black Eagle minions, werewolf.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Yolanda of Luln and her family.

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Yolanda of Luln hires the PCs to rescue her family imprisoned in Fort Doom. The escape is discovered and the PCs are pursued by minions of the Black Eagle, including a werewolf.

**Connections:** The status, nature and location of Yolanda and Sascia’s parents are not consistent in different canon sources, see also Threshold Magazine issue #21. The family Yolanda wants to help could, however, be any living relatives rather than her and Sascia’s parents, or simply captured agents who were working against the Iron Ring, or Valen Karameikos himself if the DM wants a direct connection to the next adventure.

**“Valen’s Flight”**

by Aaron Allston, GAZ1: *“The Grand Duchy of Karameikos”* page 63, (1987)

**Location:** Specularum and elsewhere.

**PCs level:** 4-9 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Iron Ring.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Valen Karameikos.

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** During his Shearing, members of the Iron Ring try to kidnap Valen Karameikos, and the PCs have to bring him to the safety of a city while pursued by Iron Ring thugs.

**Connections:** This could be a good occasion to prove to Duke Stefan a connection between the Iron Ring and his cousin the Black Eagle.

## “The Dragon’s Den”

by Ken Rolston, (1992)

**Location:** Gulf of Halland (Gulf of Halag).

**PCs level:** 1-5 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** lizard men, Hakra the black dragon and her two hatchlings, troglodytes, Nefastus the green dragon, Gutrug Orc 4 and his bugbears, orcs and troll, Ready Rats wererats, Lord Gonzaga envoy of the Black Prince, Luzgar the orc lord Orc 5, Mort the hill giant, Haurarra the harpy, Anandark the red dragon.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Grochek Hammerfist Dwarf 1, Jared O’loria Fighter 1, Elin Cleric 1, Ren Wardo Wizard 1, Talina Thief 1, Cara Windwright Elf 1, Sam Barleyman Halfling 1, Agent Sascia, Bailiff Wortley, Sharel elf child, Otterkin, Gorol polymorphed bugbear agent, Blain and Nithi Dwarves 1, Vilbert Wizard 1.

**Main Treasures:** Reward, potions, scrolls, coins, gems, many magical items and weapons in the dragons’ hoards.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Bailiff Wortley of Knacker Knob is about to be proclaimed Lord, but the King requires he see to the slaying of three local powerful dragons, and so he is recruiting adventurers. In the end the PCs could also manage to prove that the nearby Black Prince, Lord Draven, is in

league with humanoids and dragons.

**Connections:** This boxed set, meant as an introduction to D&D is generic but the land presented on the map look suspiciously similar to the Gulf of Halag and the plot recalls in several point the threat of the Black Eagle against Luln, suggesting it was originally a product meant for Mystara and re-made as generic later. Either way, it could fit perfectly in this Path, with the Black Eagle and the Iron Ring gaining the allegiance of humanoids and dragons! This adventure could trigger the knighting of Lady Sascia. Probably is best to use it at slightly higher PCs levels than those suggested in the set.

## “Knight of Luln”

by Aaron Allston, GAZ1: *“The Grand Duchy of Karameikos”* page 63, (1987)

**Location:** Luln.

**PCs level:** 4-9 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Von Hendriks’ soldiers and bugbear allies.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Lord Alexius Korrigan, Lady Sascia, people of Luln, officers of Radlebb and Riverfork Keeps.

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** PCs escort Lord Korrigan to Luln where he will knight Lady Sascia, but on the night of the ceremony Von Hendrik’s forces and bugbear allies assault Luln.

**Connections:** Von Hendriks’ rebellious intents could be proven, leading to a drastic decision by the Duke, or at least escalating tension with the Black Eagle.



### “The Revenge of Rusak”

by David “Zeb” Cook, AC8: “3-D Dragon Tiles”, (1984)

**Location:** Anywhere.

**PCs level:** 7-9 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Thoref, Philip of Marabone, Petrof, fungoid, Rusak Wizard 4.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Princess Arelina, Turef the guide, Berklai Fighter 9, Awas Wizard 8, Penchuri Thief 7, Kuat Fighter 10, Saudara Wizard 9, Teman Cleric 8..

**Main Treasures:** coins, gems, potion, scrolls, staff of healing, staff of recording, amulet of emotions, medallion of the mirror.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Years later the adventure featured in AC3, The Kidnapping of Princess Arelina, see above, Rusak has been brought back to life by the evil tyrant that has replaced Princess Arelina’s father, and has now been tasked with kidnapping her again, since the Princess is now the leader of the rebellion.

**Connections:** Generic but adaptable to Karameikos with Rusak as an agent of the Iron Ring or any hostile power, and the Princess as Princess Adriana or any other important figure who is for some reason out in the wild.

### “Inheritance Contested”

by Aaron Allston, GAZ1: “The Grand Duchy of Karameikos” page 63, (1987)

**Location:** Anywhere.

**PCs level:** 10-14 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Cousin or relative of a PC.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** None.

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A PC who is the heir of a landed lord inherits a dominion, but the lands are held illegally by his hated cousin, equal in combat but superior in nastiness.

**Connections:** This adventure is just tailored to have a PC earn a dominion, but could be cast in a new light if the hated cousin is a minion of the Black Eagle with some dark plan. The adventure could obviously happen much before the suggested levels.

### “The Pirates of Halag”

by Aaron Allston, GAZ1: “The Grand Duchy of Karameikos” page 64, (1987)



*Battle with Pirates in the Gulf of Halag*

**Location:** Gulf of Halag.

**PCs level:** 10-14 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Pirates, Black Eagle minions.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Admiral Hyraksos.

**Main Treasures:** Reward, plunder.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** PCs are hired by Lord Hyraksos to hunt the pirates in the Gulf of Halag who are working for the Black Eagle and plundering Karameikan vessels.

**Connections:** Despite the suggested levels, this adventure could be played with almost any PC levels, suggesting however an escalation of tension between the Black Eagle barony and the central government of the Duke. See also [“Twin Soul Rocks”](#) by Irving Galvez from *Threshold Magazine* issue #16.

### Red Arrow, Black Shield [X10]

by Michael S. Dobson, Adventure X10: *“Red Arrow, Black Shield”*, (1985)

**Location:** Specularum.

**PCs level:** 10-14 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:**

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Duke Stefan Karameikos.

**Main Treasures:** Reward,.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Part of this module concerns Karameikos as the PCs arrive in the nation as ambassadors of Darokin to find help against the Master, but the Master’s emissaries are present too and have already gained the alliance of Baron Ludwig Von Hendriks. Depending on the PCs’ advocacy, the Duke may choose neutrality or side with Darokin, and in this case the Black Eagle openly threatens war. The Duke sends the PCs with the Elvenguard and two divisions against the Black Eagle, his division and two divisions of nomad allies. If the Duke wins, Karameikos allies with Darokin, otherwise the Black Eagle becomes Duke and allies with the Desert Nomads of the Master.

**Connections:** In GAZ1, the setting of this adventure is indicated as the future unless the DM wants to use the radical changes to Karameikos that will likely occur. The

adventure, however, could also occur during the Master’s invasion in the “Wrath of the Immortals” boxed set adventure. This could be the first part of a long military campaign continuing in the next two adventures.

### “The Fall of the Black Eagle”

by Frank Mentzer, *D&D Companion set*, (1983) *Dungeon Master Guide* page 61

**Location:** Kelvin

**PCs level:** 15-25 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Ludwig Von Hendriks.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** None.

**Main Treasures:** None.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** The Black Eagle tries to occupy Kelvin with his troops and humanoid allies, to force Duke Stefan to fight in the field.

**Connections:** This adventure could be used as a continuation to the preceding one if the Black Eagle is not immediately defeated or has other troops ready to move against Kelvin.

### Possible connection to the Specularum and Veiled Society Path or to the Lost Cities and Relics Path

The Anti-Traladaran party in the Church of Karameikos headed by Oderbry, other groups of Thyatian extremists, the Veiled Society or another party interested in undermining the Duke’s rule could be an opportunistic ally of the Black Eagle in Kelvin. Or the Iron Ring activities could trigger the Discovery of Lavv (see below) with its undead inhabitants.

## "The Black Eagle Banner"

by Aaron Allston, GAZ1: *"The Grand Duchy of Karameikos"* page 64, (1987)

**Location:** All Karameikos.

**PCs level:** 15-25 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Black Eagle and supporters, Humanoid tribes.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Duke Stefan and other Karameikan nobles and rulers.

**Main Treasures:** Reward, plunder.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** The Black Eagle attacks, or Duke Stefan has decided enough is enough; a full scale war erupts between the Black Eagle with bugbear and orcs allies and the forces of the Duke.

**Connections:** Final chapter of the war, probably ending with only one winning party, and the other dead or in exile.

## "The Iron Ring"

Vapurware product listed as TSR 2516, never published, (1995)

**Location:** Unknown.

**PCs level:** ? (AD&D)

**Main Antagonists:** The Iron Ring.

**Connections:** Probably meant to be set in 1,012 AC, but never published. As a module titled "The Mighty Argos" was also planned as TSR 2515 it possible a connection was planned between Argos and the Iron Ring, maybe with Argos becoming the new leader/sponsor of the Ring after the fall of the Black Eagle. The adventure "Trouble in Threshold" (in the "Karameikos: Kingdom of Adventure" boxed set) which I placed earlier in the Path was meant to be set in 1,012 AC, showing the Iron Ring was supposed to

survive the fall of the Black Eagle, and thus suggesting that its leadership could be elsewhere, maybe outside Karameikos.

## Fan resources and adventures about the Iron Ring and the Black Eagle

["Cry Wolf!"](#) adventure and ["Guilds, Orders and Secret Societies in Karameikos"](#) by Giampaolo Agosta

["Scourge of the Iron Ring"](#) by Steven B. Wilson

["The Iron Ring"](#) by George Hrabovsky

["Mystara Declassified Archives Present: MD01 The Iron Ring Society Files"](#) compiled by Irving Galvez

["Black Eagle"](#) by Marc-Antoine Guidault

["Black Eagle Barony Demon Arc"](#) by Joaquin Menchaca

["Midwood Hamlet"](#) by Beau Yarbrough

["A Karameikan Chronology"](#) by Francesco Defferrari from *Threshold Magazine* issue #21



## THE DARK TRIAD ADVENTURE PATH

This Path is primarily an original invention of Giampaolo Agosta (Agathokles), who gave a “personality” to the Temple of Chaos and cults of Chaos often found in earlier Mystara canon products. It assumes that Karameikos is menaced by an alliance of three evil Immortals, The Dark Triad, formed by Orcus, Leptar and Demogorgon. This path could be easily joined with the Iron Ring and the Black Eagle path if it assumed Bargle and the leaders of the Iron Ring are followers or at least allies of the Black Triad. Considering the Iron Ring has evil clerics and humanoid allies, this is a very likely hypothesis. See also [“Religions of Karameikos”](#) by Giampaolo Agosta in the Vaults .

### “HOMECOMING”

by Frank Mentzer, *D&D Expert set*, (1983) page 40

**Location:** Threshold.

**PCs level:** 4-14 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Chaotic cleric, undead.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** None

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A chaotic cleric is operating a logging business using the local deceased reanimated as zombies and skeletons.

**Connections:** This could be a first meeting of the PCs with a cleric of the Dark Triad, and could be used in any town or village of Karameikos. See also [“The Returned Corpse”](#) by Hayley Hummerston.

“The Clearing of Castle Caldwell” AND “DUNGEON OF TERROR” [B9]  
by Harry Nuckols, Adventure B9: “*Castle Caldwell and Beyond*”, 1985

**Location:** East of Threshold.

**PCs level:** 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** goblins, Acolyte Cleric 1, bandits, bandit leader, kobold, doppleganger, human Wizard 1, berserkers, thouls, wight.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Clifton Caldwell, traders.

**Main Treasures:** reward, coins, gems, sword +1 +2 vs undead, scroll.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Clifton Caldwell, a local merchant, has purchased a small castle a few miles out of town, but he found it overrun by monsters! He has hired a party of adventurers to rid the castle of its monstrous inhabitants so that he can move in..

**Connections:** Generic, later placed east of Threshold in B1-9, see also [“Detail of the Threshold Region”](#) by Simone Neri in the Vaults. In B1-9 the castle is also named the Old Antilles Castle. This adventure has an evil cleric, but could be used in any Path, or lead to the Caves of Chaos (module B2).

### Possible connection to the Iron Ring and Black Eagle Path, to the Church of Nyx and Koskatep Path or to the Lost Cities and Relics Path

The evil acolyte could be a member or an ally of the Iron Ring, or a member of the Church of Nyx who is investigating the ancient dungeon below the castle.

## “The Keep on the Borderlands” AND

## ”The Caves of Chaos” [B2]

by Gary Gygax, Adventure B2: “*The Keep on the Borderlands*”, 1981

**Location:** Karameikos.

**PCs level:** 1-3 (Basic D&D)

**Main Antagonists:** Clerics of Chaos, lizard men, raiders, mad hermit, kobolds, orcs, goblins, ogre, hobgoblins, owlbear, bugbears, minotaur, gnolls, zombies, skeletons, acolytes and adepts of Chaos, Priest of Chaos Cleric 3, Torturer Fighter 3.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Inhabitants of the Keep, Curate, Castellan Fighter 6, scribe, elf advisor, merchant prisoner, his wife, his 2 men at arms, 2 humans, 1 dwarf, 2 elves slaves, Fighter 4 (evil), bugbear rebel. NPC personalities and stats generator.

**Main Treasures:** coins, gems, jewels, shield +1, potions, scrolls, hand axe+1, rope of climbing, arrows+1, dagger+1, wand of paralyzation, spear+1, staff of healing, elven boots, wand of enemy detection.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Near the Keep on the Borderlands there are the dangerous and monster infested Caves of Chaos, whose inhabitants have kidnapped travellers.

**Connections:** Generic but later placed in Karameikos in B1-9 (only the Caves without the Keep) and GAZ1. PCs are supposed to arrive here after defeating Elwyn (B9) and discovering her connection to the Temple of Chaos in the Caves, but the local commander is not concerned with the Caves, as he is more worried about the local frost giants. After defeating the Temple of Chaos, or even if in danger of death, the PCs will be contacted by a Protector of Haven and teleported there (B3). I think it may be better

to use this adventure before Elwyn, as she seems a more powerful and important cleric.

### Fan resources

[“Populating Castellan Keep”](#) by Kilr Kowalski  
[“People and Places from the Keep on the Borderlands”](#) by Demos Sachlas

## “The Caves of Chaos”<sup>2</sup>

by Chris Sims and Matt Sernett, 2012

**Location:** Keep on the Borderlands

**PCs level:** 1-3 (D&D Next Playtest)

**Main Antagonists:** Kobolds, orcs, goblins, ogre, hobgoblins, owlbear, bugbears, Ragnar human berserker, minotaur, gnolls, undead, acolytes and High Priest of Chaos, medusa.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Anara, Eddard, Liam, Sonja human commoners, Macarn dwarf, Shara, Vindil elves, Shadrag rebel bugbear.

**Main Treasures:** coins, gems, weapons, arrows +1, wand of binding, shield +1 spear +1, banded armor +1, longsword +1, boots of elvenkind, relics of Evil, staff of striking, mace +1.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** The Cult of Chaos has unified or enslaved the humanoids of the caves, supplanting the previous leader, a medusa, and is now directing them to raid nearby settlements.

**Connections:** Playtest adventure for D&D Next between 4th and 5th edition, not

<sup>2</sup> Partially in [“Return to the Caves of Chaos”](#) by Robert J. Schwalb, but the complete adventure was available only for the *D&D Next Playtest*.

explicitly set in Mystara, includes only the Caves of Chaos and not the Keep. It is more or less a conversion of the previous adventure but could be used as a sequel if the PCs did not cleared the caves completely the first time

### “The Sanctuary of Elwyn the Ardent”

by Harry Nuckols, Adventure B9: “*Castle Caldwell and Beyond*”, 1985

**Location:** East of Threshold, Wufwolde Hills.

**PCs level:** 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** troglodyte, orcs, Orc leader, wood golem, living statue, shadow, gargoyle, black dragon, Elwyn Cleric 6.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** None.

**Main Treasures:** reward, coins, gems, jewels, wand of paralyzation, sword +1, scrolls, ring of spell storing, mace of draining + 1, shield +1, staff of healing, Bell of Namyats/Chardastes.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Five years ago the cleric of the Church of the Holy Sanctuary Elwyn stole the sacred bell of Namyats and disappeared. Two years ago, someone built a monstrous fortress in a distant corner of the country and as rumors grow that Elwyn is behind it, PCs are sent to capture her and retrieve the bell. Elwyn has become a follower of the evil god Leptar.

**Connections:** Originally generic, but later placed in Karameikos in B1-9 and connected to the Church of Chardastes as enemy of Leptar. Chardastes is described as an Immortal healer who appeared in Marilenev 300 years ago, leaving a magical bell of platinum which rings without a clapper. Chardastes is said to have been incorporated in the Church of Karameikos. Elwyn

disappeared with the bell, and the church’s followers dwindled. In B1-9 there is a rumor that Elwyn is organizing a large raiding party of orcs three days east of Threshold, and Patriarch Sherlane sends the PCs with a guide to investigate the fortress where she is rumored to be hiding. If the PCs succeed and defeat Elwyn, they will discover she was in touch with other evil clerics, and be sent to investigate the Caves of Chaos (B2). In truth this adventure could work better after B2, but the 1999 B2 sequel below could be used to continue the Path.

### Possible connection to the Humanoids and Argos Path and to the Iron Ring and Black Eagle Path

Elwyn could well be a minion of Argos or his witches, or allied with the Black Eagle and the Iron Ring.

### “Return to the Keep on the Borderlands”

by John D. Rateliff, “*Return to the Keep on the Borderlands*”, 1999

**Location:** Keep on the Borderlands

**PCs level:** 1-3 (AD&D 2ed)

**Main Antagonists:** Mendel the slaver Wizard 4, Thomas Thief 7, Holga Wizard 6, bandits, gnolls, harpies, lizard men, bhut, kobolds, Hesselwhite & Co halfling brigands, Catbird Thief 4, Nore Thief 3, Orm Thief 3, Hurkul goblin king, undead, bugbears, minotaurs, medusa, Tarlech Wizard 5, Wer Cleric 4, Nisir Cleric 3, Black Knight Fighter 5, Kira Fighter 5, Shamhat Cleric 6 Nabu-Nisir Cleric 5.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Inhabitants of the Keep, Sabine the Gatekeeper F3, Tella the stablegirl T1, Abercrombie Cleric 3,

Jadale lieutenant Fighter 3, Devereau the Castellan Fighter 5, Cob Fighter 1, Third of Cyinidicea Fighter 2, Martin Cleric 1, Opal Cleric 1, Dubricus D'Ambreville Wizard 1, Mouse halfling Thief 2, Jess Thief 1, Robin Bard 3, The Bee Man Druid 7.

**Main Treasures:** coins, gems, copper dragon egg, chainmail +2, platemail +2, bracers of defense, platemail of fear, other magical weapons.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Other PCs return to the Keep on the Borderlands some years after it was cleared by adventurers.

**Connections:** Not meant for Karameikos; the Keep background has been changed - it is set in Greyhawk, but still explicitly connected to modules B1, B2 and B4. The new evil clerics have Middle Eastern sounding names, so they could also be connected to Taymora and the Church of Nyx Path. See also ["Return to the Keep on the Borderlands: Karameikos"](#)

by Håvard

### Possible connection to the Church of Nyx and Koskatop Path

The Church of Nyx could be an opponent of the Dark Triad, as Nyx promotes intelligent, non evil undead, differently from Orcus. Still the Church of Nyx could be a problematic ally, with the ultimate goal of installing one of their own, probably an undead ruler, over Karameikos.

### "Palace of the Silver Princess" [B3]

by Tom Moldvay and Jean Wells, Adventure B3: *"Palace of the Silver Princess"*, 1981

**Location:** Eastern Karameikos.

PCs level: 1-3 (Basic D&D)

**Main Antagonists:** skeletons, bandits, orcs, kobolds, goblins, hobgoblins, zombies, Travis Fighter 3, orcs, white apes, troglodytes, ghouls, harpies, medusa, living iron statue, doppelganger, bugbears, decapus, ogre, Catharandamus Cleric 3, orcs, Alha the werewolf, wight.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** 13 unnamed PCs with stats, white ape, Rowena the minstrel, Mirabilis the wizard, Candella and Duchess Thief 2, Branaur cleric, Princess Argenta, Ellis the Strong.

**Main Treasures:** coins, gems, reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** The Valley of Haven, hidden in the Thunder Mountains and inhabited by elves, dwarves, halfling and humans is guarded by the Protectors, a magical race from Faerie. When a beautiful red ruby is found, however, the palace is surrounded by a ruby glow and humanoids invade the valley. The ruby is really an Eye of Arik, a banished Immortal, who has now teleported the evil cleric Catharandamus into the palace, to be freed.

**Connections:** Generic but later placed in Karameikos in B1-9 where a Protector appears to teleport the PCs to Haven, suggesting a possible connection between Elwyn (B9), the Temple of Chaos (B2) and Arik in B3. In B1-9 there is a single Protector named Thendara, an alias of Ordana in "Wrath of the Immortals". In GAZ1, Haven is briefly mentioned as a place kept isolated by the will of the Traladaran Immortals. After the defeat of Arik, the ruler of Haven Princess Argenta and the knight Ellis wed, but

Thendara soon reappears to teleport the PCs onto a boat near Guido's Fort (B5) and leaving them a map (leading to X1: "The Isle of Dread"). Arik is not connected to the Dark Triad in canon or fan sources, but the three evil Immortals could be interested in freeing him to gain an ally in their goal of plunging Karameikos in chaos.

See also ["The Lost Land of Haven"](#) by James Mishler and ["Yuri Molotov - Death Knight"](#) by John Calvin from *Threshold Magazine* issue #1, about the Order of the White Drake to which Ellis belongs.



**Possible connection to the Lost Cities and Relics Path, to the Iron Ring and Black Eagle Path and to the Humanoids and Argos Path**

Haven, as an ancient magical town could contain clues and maps to lead the PCs to lost cities and ruins (B4, B8, B10 and more). Such information would obviously be of great interest to evil parties too, such as the Iron Ring. Argos, having a lair quite near to Haven, could also be the mastermind behind the attempt to free Arik, with or without the support of the Dark Triad.

**"King's Festival" [B11]**

by Carl Sargent Adventure B11: *"King's Festival"*, 1989

**Location:** Stallanford north of Penhaligon.

PCs level: 1 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** orcs, giant ferrets, bugbear, orc spellcaster, orc chief, red worms, undead, thoul, Petrides Cleric 3.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Seven unnamed pre-gens, inhabitants of Stallanford, Janner the hunter, Aralic the priest Cleric 3, kobold.

**Main Treasures:** Reward, coins, gems, jewelry, potions, ring of protection +1, sword +1, dagger +1, gem of continual light, staff of healing, shield +1, mace +1, chain mail +1.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** In Stallanford on the Duke's road the King's Festival, dedicated to King Halav, is about to begin, but orcs kidnap the local priest, Aralic, and the PCs are sent to rescue him in the orc caves about 9 miles northeast of the town. After saving him and bringing him back, the PCs are asked to explore the second level of the dungeon, which contains ancient tombs and an evil cleric who controls undead and is looting the place.

**Connections:** Contains an introduction to D&D and to Karameikos. If Petrides is killed, a note addressed to Kavorquian Penhaligon is found on him about a mysterious evil queen assembling a force "not far from here", leading to B12. Petrides could be a quite obvious connection to the Dark Triad. See also ["Stallanford"](#) by Brian Caraway, ["The Town of Stallanford"](#) by katana\_one and ["B11 and B12 as campaign start"](#) by Stefan Beate.



## “Queen’s Harvest” [B12]

by Carl Sargent Adventure B12: “Queen’s Harvest”, 1989

**Location:** North of Penhaligon.

PCs level: 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** wood golem, shadows, Erren and Sarah Thieves 3 and 2, caldron magen, phase stinger, zombies, gargoyle, rust monster, Gurdrot Dwarf 1, Hargrinn Coogan Fighter 2, Katzani Cleric 3, Mordrain Wizard 3, goblins, hobgoblins, orcs, human mercenaries, Dyar-Dakk orc leader 2, Klossarck goblin chieftain 3, Ratgrob goblin shaman 2, Skrakkbak hobgoblin leader 3, gnolls, Hastrissek gnoll leader 3, Merkul swordmaster Fighter 3, Tarrayo Wizard 3, Sergreb the ogre 4, owlbear, Blackmaer Fighter 3, zombies, war dogs, Ilyana Penhaligon Fighter 4, Bernal Cleric 4.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Seven unnamed pre-gens, Aralic the priest Cleric 3, Kaerin Penhaligon Fighter 4, Baron Sherlane Halaran, Sarala weretigress 5, Alerena Kelvin, Arteris Penhaligon.

**Main Treasures:** Reward, coins, gems, jewelry, scrolls, elven boots, wand of magic detection, sling +1, sword +1, shield +1, chain mail +1, ring of protection +1, two handed sword +1 +2 vs lycanthropes, bag of holding, potions, dagger +2, crystal ball, sword +2, short sword +2, chaotic sword +2 with power of absolute command over 40 HD each of goblins and hobgoblins.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Aralic of Stallanford (see B11) asks the PCs to meet the wizard Kavorquian about a mile north-east of Penhaligon, but they find him dead, and has been for several weeks. The PCs meet his adopted son Kaerin Penhaligon who recently arrived from Specularum. Kaerin sends the PCs to search for a sword and a

tiara in Kavorquian’s basement and to bring them back within 48 hours. If they succeed they also meet Sherlane Halaran, who explains that Ilyana Penhaligon, illegitimate daughter of the late Arturus Penhaligon, is planning to attack the estate to oust her sister Arteris.

Ilyana’s keep is in the mountains about 25 miles northwest of Stallanford. Ilyana was already a bandit, but became insane when she found the magical sword of the warrior queen Elendorath, who ruled hundreds of years ago. The sword allows her to control goblins and hobgoblins. PCs have to enter her keep and kill her.

**Connections:** Officially set in 1000 AC, as it is written Arturus Penhaligon died four years ago, as mentioned in GAZ1. In the module, Kaerin wants the Tiara to donate it to Desmond Kelvin II to win the hand of his daughter, Alerena. As Desmond is not married in GAZ1, fans have commonly assumed Alerena is his sister, not his daughter. Returning PCs are greeted by Lady Arteris and Lord Sherlane and may become guests of honour at a public celebration in Penhaligon. This adventure could also be played before the encounter with Elwyn, as she is a higher ranking leader of the Dark Triad. See also [“Penbaligon”](#) by Brian Caraway.

### Possible connection to the Humanoids and Argos Path and to the Iron Ring and Black Eagle Path

Ilyana could also be an ally of the Black Eagle or the Iron Ring, or a minion of Argos and his humanoids.

## “Tarfil’s Tomb”

by Charles J. Neverdowski, *Dungeon Magazine* issue #27, 1991

**Location:** Kelvin, Nameless Moor.

**PCs level:** 10-14 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Werewolves, bugbears, trolls, ogres, hill giants, banshee, undead, beholder, devil swine, Cargilon Wizard 11, Lodigris Cleric 8, Annakarr Cleric 13.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Ivan Sumanov Cleric 2, Sergei Mishev Fighter 7, Caer Wedgewood Druid 9.

**Main Treasures:** dagger +2, crystal ball, ring of protection +3, plate mail +2, mace +3, plate mail of gaseous form +3, mace of slowing +3, ring of spell turning, Tome of Binding Souls.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Heroes must thwart an evil cleric’s attempt to raise the ghost of a powerful spirit warrior.

**Connections:** Annakarr could be one of or the highest ranking<sup>3</sup> Dark Triad priests in Karameikos. His plan could also occur almost at the same time as those of Elwyn and Ilyana, to start a full scale war of the Dark Triad and humanoid minions against Karameikos. This could also easily connect to the Iron Ring, the Black Eagle and/or Argos, see below.

### Fan resources

[“Entropic Cults & the Eye of Traldar”](#)

[“Traladaran Timeline”](#)

[“Goblinoid Tribes of Karameikos”](#)

[“Religions of Karameikos”](#)

[“River of Blood” adventure](#)

by Giampaolo Agosta

[“The Beast of Radlebb Woods”](#) by Jesper

Andersen and [“The Beast of Radlebb Woods”](#)

by Giampaolo Agosta.

<sup>3</sup> See [“Re: B11 and B12 as campaign start”](#) by NPCDave on The Piazza

## THE HUMANOIDS & ARGOS ADVENTURE PATH

Several modules and adventures have simply humanoid tribes and clans as opponents. The article [“Who’s Who Among Dragons”](#) by Bruce Heard in *Dragon Magazine* #171 introduces Argon the Worrier, a powerful green dragon who rules over the goblins of the Dymrak woods and has a lair near the Lake of Lost Dreams. In later fan works, it is supposed that Argos has forged a pact with the Immortal Orcus, thus making him easily connected to the Dark Triad Path and to the Iron Ring and Black Eagle Path.

The plot of the Penhaligon trilogy of novels, which features a green dragon as antagonist, could be easily used with this path, see also [“Integrating the Penhaligon Trilogy into your campaign”](#) by Larry Davis in the Vaults of Pandius

## “HORROR ON THE HILL” [B5]

by Douglas Niles, Adventure B5: *“Horror on the Hill”*, 1983

**Location:** Central Karameikos.

**PCs level:** 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** hobgoblins, goblins, ogres, thoul, ghouls, rock baboons, zombies, bugbears, Moray Vaco Cleric 3, Hobgoblin King, berserkers, owlbear, kobolds, Kobold Chief, Red Dragon.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Inhabitants of Guido’s Fort, Rosabella Cleric 5 and Rosalinda Wizard 6, neanderthals, Cullen Thief 2, Gareth Dwarf 2.

**Main Treasures:** reward, coins, gems, spear +1, ring of fire resistance, leather armor +1,

sword +1, plate mail +1, shield +2, shortsword +2, sword +1 +3 vs dragons, ring of protection +1, wand of magic detection, rod of cancellation, bag of devouring.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** The old monastery on the Hill near Guido's Fort is inhabited by a Hobgoblin King and a red dragon.

**Connections:** Generic but later placed in Karameikos in B1-9, where there is a rumor about a hamlet a day's ride east of Threshold "overrun by hobgoblins several days ago". The PCs, however, are teleported near Guido's Fort by the Immortal Thendara (Ordana) after freeing Haven from Arik (B3). After defeating the Hobgoblin King and the dragon, the PCs are supposed to continue to Specularum (B6). Rosalinda and Rosabella could easily be connected to the Witches of Dymrak imagined by Havard in *"The Dangers of the Dymrak Wilds"* as two of them or powerful fairy beings opposing them.

### Possible connection to the Dark Triad Path

Moray Vaco could easily be a cleric of the Dark Triad.

### "Carcass Fracas!"

by Stephen J. Smith, *"Carcass Fracas!"* *Dungeon Magazine* issue #57, 1996

**Location:** Western Karameikos.

**PCs level:** 1 (AD&D)

**Main Antagonists:** Thouls, giant centipedes.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Travelling merchant.

**Main Treasures:** Dirk +1, coins, jewelry.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Two thouls set an ambush on the road.

**Connections:** Suggested in Karameikos after the fall of the Black Eagle, but could be played at any time.

### "Crypt of the Smoke Dragon"<sup>4</sup>

by Jeff Grubb, *"Crypt of the Smoke Dragon"* Free Fast-Play Game, 1999

**Location:** Mountain pass

**PCs level:** 1 (Fast Play Game)

**Main Antagonists:** Zombies, skeletal warrior, smoke dragon.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Graywulf human Fighter, Stardancer elf Rogue, Delavan dwarf Priest, Zanthar Rex human Wizard, Maxie the dog.

**Main Treasures:** Coins, scrolls, magical elf slippers, magical armor.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** To stop an undead infestation, the PCs enter the Crypt of the Smoke Dragon.

**Connections:** Fast Play games are meant to be an introduction to D&D, but the smoke dragon could easily be used as an entropic being allied to Argos or other evil parties. The location of this and the three following adventures could well be set in the underdeveloped Eastern Karameikos, maybe in the mountains north east of the Dymrak woods.



<sup>4</sup> [Available free online](#) on the Wizards of the Coast website

## “The Ruined Tower”<sup>5</sup>

by Jeff Grubb, “*The Ruined Tower*” Free Fast-Play Game. 1999

**Location:** The Vale

**PCs level:** 2 (Fast Play Game)

**Main Antagonists:** rats, skeletons, ghouls, zombies.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Patriarch of the Vale, Darkblade Fighter 2, Elanna Fighter 2, Niles halfling Rogue 2, Thaddeus Wizard 2.

**Main Treasures:** Reward, pearls, dagger +1, scrolls, bag of holding.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** An old tower has been found, and now something is raiding local farms, taking sheeps away. The tower is infested by undead.

**Connections:** Fast Play games are meant to be an introduction to D&D, but the adventure could easily be connected to the Dark Triad or Humanoid Path, see above.

## “Wrath of the Minotaur”

by Jeff Grubb, “*Wrath of the Minotaur*” Fast-Play Game. 1999

**Location:** The Vale

**PCs level:** 2 (Fast Play Game)

**Main Antagonists:** minotaur skeleton, minotaur zombies, gelatinous cube, kobolds, centipedes, kobold lord, giant weasels, Alaxus undead minotaur wizard.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Patriarch of the Vale, Macques the herdsman, Darkblade Fighter 2, Elanna Fighter 2, Niles halfling Rogue 2, Thaddeus Wizard 2, Mitchifer Priest 2, Sunblayze elf Fighter Wizard 1, Thordar

<sup>5</sup> [Available free online](#) on the Wizards of the Coast website

dwarf Fighter 2, Peregrine Paladin 2.

**Main Treasures:** Reward, coins and gems, ring of fire resistance, sword +1 +2 vs enchanted creatures.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Books recovered from the ruined tower lead to the tomb of Alaxus, the minotaur mage.

**Connections:** Local minotaurs could be in service of Argos or other evil parties, see above.

## “Eye of the Wyvern”

by Jeff Grubb, “*Eye of the Wyvern*” Fast-Play Game, 1999

**Location:** The Vale

**PCs level:** 2 (Fast Play Game)

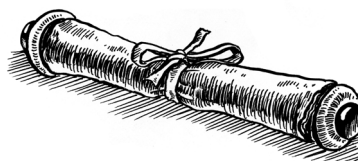
**Main Antagonists:** wyvernlings, goblins, goblin shaman, wyvern.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Patriarch of the Vale, Lydarr merchant, Murri the halfling, local farmers, Darkblade Fighter 2, Elanna Fighter 2, Niles halfling Rogue 2, Thaddeus Wizard 2, Mitchifer Priest 2, Sunblayze elf Fighter Wizard 1, Thordar dwarf Fighter 2, Peregrine Paladin 2.

**Main Treasures:** magical weapons +1, eye of the wyvern.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** The PCs face some wyverns summoned by a magical object and a goblin shaman.

**Connections:** The presence of wyverns and goblins makes it particularly easy to connect this adventure to the Humanoids and Argos Path.



## “Rahasia” [B7]

by Tracy and Laura Hickman, Adventure B7:  
“*Rahasia*”, 1984

**Location:** Karameikos.

PCs level: 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Siswa elves (not to be killed) magically controlled by the Rahib, gargoyles, bandits, bone golem, Rahib Cleric 5, black panthers, orcs, goblins, minotaurs, ogres, zombies, Karelena, Sorelena, Trilena Wizards 4.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Benar Fighter 3, Jujur Thief 3, Kepala Fighter 2, Sunggu Thief 2, Bechak Fighter 2, Mati Wizard 2, Sinar Wizard 3, Suchi Cleric 3. Inhabitants of Kota Hutan, Siswa elves, Rahasia, Alki Elf 2, Ular-Taman magical guardian serpent, Baik Telor Fighter 4, Hasan Elf 2, Miryala Elf 1, Merdiz Wizard 4, Sylva Elf 1, Merisa Elf 1.

**Main Treasures:** reward, coins, gems, jewels, sword + 1, snake staff, ring of animal control, a potion of gaseous form, scrolls, Rahasia’s pendant, Black Opal Eye.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** The Temple of the Gray Mountain, where the Siswa elves protect the heritage of the wizard Elyas, has been taken by a mysterious evil figure, the Rahib, who is truly the pawn of three powerful witches, Karelena, Sorelena and Trilena. The witches were magically imprisoned by Elyas in the past with the Opal Eye, and now need to possess the bodies of three elven maidens to return. The PCs are called to the elven village of Kota Hutan by Rahasia, one of the three maidens the Rahib has tried to kidnap.

**Connections:** Generic, later placed in Karameikos in B1-9 where an elvish merchant named Sindar, father of Merisa, searches for PCs in Threshold. He requires them to deliver a package in Selenica in Darokin, to a

trading partner, Arnulf, and another in Kota Hutan (a wedding gift for Rahasia). When the PCs arrive, Rahasia asks for their help. After the PCs succeed, Rahasia and Hasan wed, then the PCs go on to deliver their other package to Selenica, but discover the



recipient has left for Ylaruam. Tracking and reaching him lead the party to the Lost City (B4). After that, Arnulf will bring the PCs back to Specularum (B6) with a magic carpet. The easiest way to connect this adventure to the Argos path is to assume the three witches are connected to the Witches of Dymrak imagined by Havard (see previous adventure). A connection was also imagined by fans between the various magical globes appearing in DDA3, AC2 and here in B7, see also [“Rahasia - a D&D 5E Adaptation”](#) by Giuliano Michelin from *Threshold Magazine* issue #9, [“The History of Karameikos”](#) by Simone Neri from *Threshold Magazine* issue #1 and [“The Witches of Radlebb”](#) by Håvard at the Vaults.

### Possible connection to the Iron Ring and Black Eagle Path and Dark Triad Path

The Rahib could be an agent of Argos or/and of Orcus. The Black Opal Eye is easily connected to the Eye of Traldar and thus the Iron Ring Path.

## “THE SOUND OF MADNESS”

by Thomas M. Reid, *“Karameikos: Kingdom of Adventure” boxed set, 1994*

**Location:** Eltan’s Spring north of Threshold.

**PCs level:** 1-3 (AD&D 2ed)

**Main Antagonists:** Guido and Vito Warriors 2 of the Iron Ring, goblins, charmed Bertrak, Hag.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Dargar Thunderhammer dwarf Fighter, Jocasta Demandria human Fighter, Kalroth human Wizard, Melissa Moonstar elf Wizard, Chad Alonius human Thief, Emily Rogueshot halfling Thief, Par Thanar human Cleric, Maxalla Trigostas human Cleric, Aleena Halaran, Gernon in Eltan’s Spring and other locals, Bertrak Druid 8, Ilsa and Dunkel, Aleena’s aides.

**Main Treasures:** Reward, wand of polymorphing, horn of blasting.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Aleena Halaran sends the PCs to Eltan’s Spring where she has no news from a friend/lover, the local druid Bertrak. The PCs discover the druid has fallen under the sway of an evil hag, and must destroy her to free him.

**Connections:** The hag of this adventure could be connected to the Witches of Dymrak mentioned above.

## “ON THE ROAD TO YLARUAM”

by Aaron Allston, GAZ1: *“The Grand Duchy of Karameikos”* page 63, 1987

**Location:** Castellan Keep and route to Ylaruam.

**PCs level:** 4-9 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Orcs, goblins and hobgoblins.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Abdallah ibn Hamid, Castellan Keep personnel.

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** PCs are hired to participate in a joint Karameikan/Ylari operation against the humanoid tribes which prey on the Altan Tepes route.

**Connections:** This adventure is not necessarily connected to any Path, but if Argos is trying to control the local humanoids it could lead to him. See also [“Central Altan Tepes Mini Gazetteer”](#) by Simone Neri and [“Return to the Ice Wall”](#) by Shawn Stanley from *Threshold Magazine* issue #1

## Possible connection to the Iron Ring and Black Eagle Path and Dark Triad Path

Either with or without Argos’ help, the Iron Ring, the Black Eagle and/or the Dark Triad could be involved as well.

## “ELEXA’S ENDEAVOR”

by Christopher Perkins, *Dungeon Magazine* issue #53, 1995

**Location:** Any wilderness.

**PCs level:** 4-7 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Werewolves, Gluindil shargugh, feywing, magens, Malvira Thief 7, Emistil/Feyram Elf 4 Wizard 9, Octario Fighter 5, Yarik Thief 4, Bolarny Fighter 3, Mandrake Fighter 8, Vackra Dwarf 5, Elubith Gnoll wotan 2, Parast Cleric 3.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Elexa Justheart Cleric 3, Koomdawr chevall, Harkon Justheart Fighter 3.

**Main Treasures:** Ring of memory, slate of identification, rod of cancellation, crystal ball,

Text of the magenmaker, ring of seeing, dagger +2, chain mail +1, light crossbow +1.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Bandits seize Justheart Castle and erect an impenetrable shield around the structure.

**Connections:** Generic but Karameikos is suggested and the map would fit quite well with the Dymrak woods. Occupation of the castle could easily be a plot by Argos or the Witches who serve him.

### “STRONGHOLD”

by Aaron Allston, GAZ1: *“The Grand Duchy of Karameikos”* page 63, 1987

**Location:** Southern part of the Altan Tepes.  
PCs level: 10-14 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Humanoid tribes.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** None.

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A PC receives a fiefdom in a forest area near the southern part of the Altan Tepes, rich in gold. The PC has to build his stronghold, lure settlers and protect them from humanoid tribes.

**Connections:** This could be played in this Path and/or connected to the Iron Ring and the Dark Triad Path depending on the specific menace to the PC’s new Stronghold.

### “THE MIGHTY ARGOS”

Vaporware product listed as TSR 2515 *“The Mighty Argos”*, never published, 1995

**Location:** Eastern Karameikos, probably.

PCs level: ? (AD&D)

**Main Antagonists:** Argos the dragon.

**Connections:** Probably meant to be set in

1,012 AC, but never published. As a module called “The Iron Ring” was also planned as TSR 2516, it is possible a connection was planned between Argos and the Iron Ring, maybe with Argos becoming the new leader/sponsor of the Ring after the fall of the Black Eagle.

### Fan resources and adventures

[\*“The Dangers of the Dymrak Wilds”\*](#) from *Threshold Magazine* issue #1

[\*“Mighty Argos”\*](#) and [\*“Dymrak Post WotI”\*](#) by Håvard

[\*“A Goblin Kingdom: The Rise of Dbrom Dhum”\*](#) (including *“Dbrom Dhum speaks”*) by Francesco Defferrari from *Threshold Magazine* issue #1

[\*“A campaign plot for south-western Karameikos”\*](#)

[\*“Religions of Karameikos”\*](#)

[\*“Goblinoid Tribes of Karameikos”\*](#)

[\*“Map of the Tribes of Karameikos”\*](#) and [\*“The Dymrak Dread”\*](#) by Giampaolo Agosta

[\*“Crests of the Goblinoid Tribes of Karameikos”\*](#) by John Calvin

[\*“Rahasia - a D&D 5E Adaptation”\*](#) by Giuliano Michelon from *Threshold Magazine* issue #9

[\*“Sielo's Fort campaign”\*](#) by Steven B Wilson

[\*“The Unknown World Trail map - part 1”\*](#) by Francesco Defferrari from *Threshold Magazine* issue #13

## THE SKARDA ADVENTURE PATH

Even if Skarda, the antagonist of module X12, appears only briefly in later canon products (he is mentioned in *Joshuan's Almanac* on page 162 as something which happened years before), the fact that he has an army, a very powerful artefact and eventually tries to murder Duke Stefan to conquer Karameikos, is quite enough to give him his own Path. This whole Path could easily be unified with the Iron Ring or Dark Triad Path. Skarda has his own agenda of world domination, but he could find it useful to ally with other parties who are trying to undermine Karameikos.

### "Abduction of Princess Sylvia" [B9]

by Harry Nuckols, Adventure B9: *Castle Caldwell and Beyond*, 1985

**Location:** Anywhere.

**PCs level:** 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** goblins, lizard men, Goblin King, Lizard Man Leader, owlbear, Oliver of Horn Wizard 4.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Princess Sylvia and her parents, Prince Frederick, Gerard peasant boy.

**Main Treasures:** reward, coins, gems, jewelry, dagger +1, potions.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Princess Sylvia has been abducted by the evil wizard Oliver of Horn and his minions, and the PCs have to rescue her.

**Connections:** Generic, but could be easily used in Karameikos with the abductee as any important person. As Skarda kidnaps people, Oliver could easily be one of his minions.

### "Skarda's Mirror" [X12]

by Aaron Allston Adventure X12: *Skarda's Mirror*, 1987

**Location:** North of Penhaligon.

**PCs level:** 5-8 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** rock baboon, mirror fiend, about 500 Skarda's soldiers, Kogrin the Jailer Fighter 6, Skarda's Elite Guard Fighters 4, Skarda Wizard 11.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Pre-gens: Delson Cleric 6, Kerole Fighter 8, Trylia Thief 7, Lindoran Elf 7, Nesmis Halfling 5, Kindel Wizard 7, Teranon Antonic Fighter 5, Andrya and Sera Halia's apprentices Wizard 1, Marica headmistress, Kraigg and Norrin Retameron's squires Fighters 1, Lieutenant Gerard, Sergeant Alkin Fighter 2, about 3,000 slaves in the Mirror world, Ashgarth of Lumm Fighter 1, Retameron Fighter 9 and Halia Wizard 7, Zira Fighter 4, Duke Stefan Karameikos Fighter 15.

**Main Treasures:** Reward, sword +2, coins, crystal ball, ring of protection +1, wand of fear.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Teranon Antonic seeks the PCs' aid after his son Retameron and his wife Halia disappeared into the Mirror they took after defeating an evil wizard known as Skarda. The Mirror was one of seven portals to an Immortal of Thought's pocket dimension, found by a wizard named Mallek 20 years ago. The wizard became insane, took the name Skarda and planned to conquer the world. Retameron and Halia blocked him in the Mirror for two years by keeping it covered, but now he is free again. Skarda has imprisoned Retameron and Halia in his pocket dimension, and now is eager to continue with his original plan of attacking the Duke's court from the inside. The PCs





*Halia and Retameron Antonic*

travel to Retameron's fortress in Verge to investigate and have to kill the Mirror Fiend inside it, but Skarda has already left with the mirror. Later, he appears to bring the PCs to his Mirror world, and they are imprisoned. In captivity they meet Ashgarth, a man who is planning a rebellion and knows a means to escape. With him and rebellious officer Zira, they can escape the Mirror just in time to stop Skarda from assassinating Duke Stefan Karameikos at his hunting lodge. At the end, the Mirror is destroyed by the modifications Skarda did inside, and all the people inside are freed. The PCs are granted a great reward by Duke Stefan himself.

**Connections:** Skarda is mentioned again only in "Joshuan's Almanac" as a madmen who terrified Karameikos years before. In GAZ1, Duke Stefan's hunting lodge is located west of Sulescu, so some of the minor nobles listed in the adventure "Night of the Vampire", located in the same area, may be present in the lodge when Skarda attacks. See also ["Verge"](#) by mister c at The Vaults.

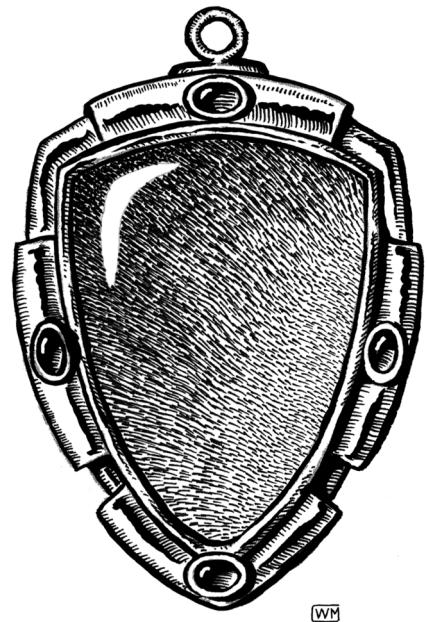
### Possible connection to the Lost Cities and Relics Path.

Beyond a possible alliance, at least temporary, with the Black Eagle, the Iron Ring and/or the Dark Triad, Skarda could also easily be connected to the Lost Cities and Relics Path, as he could be interested in finding other powerful magic. Its mirror could also be connected to another mirror which appears in the Lake of Lost Dreams in B10 and to the Eye of Traldar and the others magical globes of AC2 and B7, see also links under B7 above.

### Fan resources

["Some interesting Karameikos NPC's \(and the Iron Ring\)"](#) by Francesco Defferrari

["Wanted Poster for Skarda issued by Stephan Karameikos"](#) by Robin



## THE CHURCH OF NYX AND KOSKATEP (OR VAMPIRE AND NOSFERATU) ADVENTURE PATH

This Path is based mainly on my work on Koskatep and Agathokles' *"Lord of Cruth Lowlands"* sandbox campaign, with original inspiration from a canon adventure which is part of this Path, In *"The Dread of Night"* described below, and other canon information. This Path could also be described as a Vampire Path or a Vampire against Nosferatu Path, and should also involve Koriszegy keep and Lord Sulescu, see below.

In PC3: *"The Sea People"* and in the *Hollow World* boxed set, Taymora is briefly described, a civilization once flourishing in the lands of modern Karameikos, Ierendi and Minrothad and the sea around them between the Great Rain of Fire of 3,000 BC and the Second Cataclysm of 1,700 BC, which destroyed it. Fans later greatly expanded the canon information about Taymora, imagining it as dominated by Nosferatu followers of Nyx. This and the fact the non-evil vampires called Nosferatu still live in Karameikos, such as the canonical Lord Sulescu, has led Mystara fans to assume the Church of Nyx should still be powerful in Karameikos, even if hidden. As the purpose of Nyx is to spread intelligent undead as the Nosferatu, it is fair to assume the final goal of the church would be to replace the current Karameikos government with an undead ruler, or turn an existing ruler into an undead follower of Nyx.

### "In The Dread of Night"

by Ann Dupuis, *"In The Dread of Night"*  
*Dungeon Magazine* issue #24, 1990

**Location:** Village of Sisak, Westron road.

**PCs level:** 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Thaddigren Dentiata Wizard 6 and the Sons of Night, orcs.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Inhabitants of Sisak, Claudius Valerian Fighter 1.

**Main Treasures:** Reward, dagger +1, wand of paralyzation, amulet of protection from charm, ring of arachnid control, glowglobes.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Dentiata belongs to an organization called the Sons of Night or Darkers and has orc minions. He is from the Black Eagle Barony and is currently employed by the Black Eagle, but he and the Sons of Night seem to have their own agenda.

**Connections:** Agathokles and I used this adventure as inspiration to use the Sons of Night as less villainously followers of Nyx in Agathokles' *"Lord of the Cruth Lowlands"* and in my Koskatep series<sup>6</sup>. The adventure could start its own path or be used easily in the Black Eagle path.

### Possible connection to the Iron Ring and Black Eagle Path

In the original adventure Dentiata comes from the Black Eagle and has agreed to serve the Baron until it suits him. However if he belongs to the Church of Nyx he could be an opposer of the Black Eagle, but still not exactly an ally of the Duke and his men.

<sup>6</sup> ["The Lords of the Cruth Lowlands"](#) campaign by Agathokles is available on the Vaults . The Koskatep series by the author was published in [Threshold Magazine issues #1-15](#) available at The Vaults of Pandius.

## “The Ghost of Harrow Hill”

by Bruce Nesmith, AD&D 2ed “*First Quest*”  
Boxed set, Adventure book page 28, TSR  
1105, 1994

**Location:** Near the town of Krondsfield, placed by fans between Kelvin and Penhaligon  
PCs level: 1-3 (AD&D 2ed)

**Main Antagonists:** Gunter Weiss, ghost wizard

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Klaus Cleric 3; High Wizard Nethril, Morganth Wizard 1-3, Slinker Thief 1-3, Delvar dwarf Fighter 1-3, Silverleaf elf Fighter Wizard 1-3, Lordan Cleric 1-3, Beldar Fighter 1-3.

**Main Treasure:** Gunter’s Silver Heart, Long sword +2, mace +1, ring of invisibility

**Plot/main accomplishment:** A wizard who failed a necromantic ritual a hundred years before imprisons the PCs in his haunted house and they have limited time to find his magical silver heart and destroy his remains.

**Connections:** Gunter’s library could contain any clue, leading to Glantri necromancy, the Church of Nyx, the secret of Skarda or anything else (Other Lands, Nyx and Skarda Paths).

## “Night of the Vampire”

by L. Richard Baker III, “*Night of the Vampire*” CD Adventure, 1994

**Location:** Vandevicsny Manor, west of Sulescu.

**PCs level:** 1-3 (AD&D 2ed)

**Main Antagonists:** Ourosco’s assassins and thugs, Janjevo stablemaster warrior 3, Laina if turned into a minion vampire, wolves, Andru Vandevic vampire.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Lord Gustav and Selena Vandevic, Laina Vandevic,

Moustan butler of the manor, Constantina Brezovo, Tonja and Bani Constantina’s maids, Lord Moubotka, Iajo Moubotka, Lord Vasil Ourosco, Krinac Lord Moubotka’s Wizard 2, Hosk Lord Ourosco’s Warrior 3, Lord Hugo Strolojca.

**Main Treasures:** Reward in gems.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Andru Vandevic has returned to his family house, claiming to be a lost relative, but he is really an ancestor of a hundred years before, now a vampire, who wishes to take back his manor and all its occupants, in particular the innocent Laina. The PCs are shipwrecked near the manor on the eve of the betrothal of Laina Vandevic and Iajo Moubotka.

**Connections:** Both Sulescu and Koriszegy could be somehow involved in this, eventually leading to the Order of the Griffon video game story, see above. PCs could have been sent by Sulescu and/or the Church of Nyx to investigate a rumor about Andru Vandevic, rather than appear in the area after a shipwreck as in the adventure.

## Fan resources and adventures

“[Lords of the Cruth Lowlands](#)” by Giampaolo Agosta (a sandbox campaign in Western Karameikos) at The Vaults, and also “[The Dwarven Mine of Kurest Hurgon](#)” by Giampaolo Agosta from *Threshold Magazine* issue #16

“[The Achelos Adventure](#)” by Patrick Sullivan (first original development of Western Karameikos)

“[Koskatep](#)” series (a megadungeon in Western Karameikos) by Francesco Defferrari (author) and others from *Threshold Magazine* issues #1 to #15 and “[Riverfork Area](#)” by Francesco Defferrari (author)

“[Riverfork Keep](#)” by John Walter Biles

[“Vampire Queens of Taymora”](#) by John Calvin from *Threshold Magazine* issue #12 and more [2300 BC material](#) at The Vaults of Pandius by John Calvin and others  
[“Taymora Land of the Dead”](#) by Giampaolo Agosta from *Threshold Magazine* issue #12  
[“The Darkness Beneath: Ancient buried secrets in the Sea of Dread”](#) by Francesco Defferrari from *Threshold Magazine* issue #3  
[“Religions of Karameikos”](#) by Giampaolo Agosta  
[“The Vampiric Bloodlines of Mystara”](#) by Giampaolo Agosta  
[“Sisak, Night Tower, Abbey Isle and Knights of Halav”](#) by religion  
[“Welcome to our village”](#) by Niels Just Rasmussen



*Followers of Nyx*

## LOST CITIES AND RELICS ADVENTURE PATH

A number of Basic modules end up with the PCs discovering a lost city or, in the case of B3, saving a city from becoming lost. This obviously could have quite a lasting impact on Karameikos and its society as well as finding some ancient and important relic, as happens in some adventures. Some are instead just places to explore, obviously infested with some kind of monsters.

Also relevant to a Karameikos campaign could be module XS2: “*Thunderdelve Mountain*”, possibly set just north west of Karameikos, in the Five Shires or Darokin territory, see also [“The Dwarves of Thunderdelve”](#) by Demos Sachlas in *Threshold Magazine* issue #2 ([original](#) at The Vaults of Pandius), and XS2’s sequel “*Dragon’s Delve*” in *Dungeon Magazine* issue #62, and B4: “*The Lost City*”, set in Ylaruam near the Karameikan border( see also [“The Dungeon Master’s Guide to Cynidicea”](#) by multiple authors in the Vaults of Pandius ). Obviously all parties interested in controlling Karameikos would be much interested in discovering and controlling such locations.

### “The Attic”

by Frank Mentzer, *D&D Expert set* (1983), page 39

**Location:** Threshold

**PCs level:** 1-5 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Stirges.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** None.

**Main Treasures:** Coins in the body of a dead thief.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A widow’s attic is infested by stirges.

**Connections:** This is just an introductory adventure which could lead PCs to specialize in to the exploration of lost places.

### "The Old Mill"

by Frank Mentzer, *D&D Expert set* (1983), page 39

**Location:** Threshold

PCs level: Any (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Giant insects and spiders.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** None.

**Main Treasures:** Coins, random.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Bugs come out of the ruins of the Old Mill on the tip of Fogor Island in Threshold.

**Connections:** An old dungeon below the Mill could lead to Traladaran, Hutaakan, Taymoran or Blackmoorian ruins. See also ["The Old Abandoned Mill"](#) by Anthony Bird and ["The Old Mill"](#) by Hayley Hummerston

### "The Museum"

by Frank Mentzer, *D&D Expert set* (1983), page 40

**Location:** Threshold.

PCs level: 4-14 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** None.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Ian, the Smith's son.

**Main Treasures:** Clues, information.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Ian, the Smith's son, is a taxidermist and opens a museum to show monster heads and parts he has acquired, including a very strange one.

**Connections:** The strange monster could lead to the location of strange creatures, or new monsters connected to the past of Karameikos, or maybe to an Hutaakan tomb.

### "Into the Wilderness"

by Aaron Allston, GAZ1: *"The Grand Duchy of Karameikos"* page 62, 1987

**Location:** Any wilderness area.

PCs level: 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Monsters, lost races, hostile humanoid tribes.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Lord Alexius Korrigan.

**Main Treasures:** Payment, treasures.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Lord Alexius Korrigan hires the PCs to map the unknown region of Karameikos for the ducal cartographers.

**Connections:** This could happen after the PCs have already reached some fame as explorers of lost ruins, maybe a recommendation from Sherlane Halaran. See also ["Wilderness Mapping Expedition For Lord Alexius Korrigan"](#) by Jimmy Rowe

### "In Search of the UNKNOWN" [B1]

by Mike Carr, Module B1: "In Search of the Unknown", 1981

**Location:** Western Karameikos.

PCs level: 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Orcs, kobolds, troglodytes, berserkers, zombies, goblins, monsters determined randomly.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** 48 names of potential characters, 48 named potential hirelings with statistics.

**Main Treasures:** Treasures are determined randomly and include mace, shield, chainmail +1, spear+2, ring of protection +1, potions, scrolls, coins, gems.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Famous

warrior Rogahn the Fearless and famous wizard Zelligar the Unknown built a stronghold many years ago in a remote area, the Caverns of Quasqueton. They left years ago, and the caverns are now unclaimed.

**Connections:** Originally set in Greyhawk, but later placed in B1-9 in Western Karameikos and as a possible side quest with a map found in the pocket of a Black Eagle spy, Anton Turino, (see B9: "The Great Escape"). In B1-9 there is also a rumor about Rogahn being now employed by the Black Eagle.

### Possible connection to the Iron Ring and Black Eagle Path

If Rogahn is really still alive and employed by the Black Eagle, he should be interested in taking back his old complex, but maybe Zelligar is alive too and has an opposite allegiance now.

### "UNDER MOUNT DREAD"

by Bruce Nesmith, AD&D 2ed *First Quest* Boxed set, Adventure book page 54, TSR 1105, 1994

**Location:** Mount Dread, in Western Karameikos.

PCs level: 2-3 (AD&D 2ed)

**Main Antagonists:** Hatchling Red Dragon, Kordak W2, undead, kobolds, lizardmen.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Tinker and other gnomes; a Lammasu; Axerock Dwarf Cleric 3, Shadowelves<sup>7</sup>; Morganth Wizard 1-3,

<sup>7</sup> The adventures has drow elves and Axerock as a duergar, but as such races are unrelated to Mystara they could be appropriately substituted with the Modrigswerg dwarves of GAZ7 and the

Slinker Thief 1-3, Delvar dwarf Fighter 1-3, Silverleaf elf Wizard 1-3, Lordan Cleric 1-3, Beldar Fighter 1-3.

**Main Treasure:** Battle axe +1, ioun stone, longsword +1 flame tongue, longsword of wounding, portable hole.

**Plot/main accomplishment:** Evil sorcerer Azazabus built his home under Mount Dread over a hundred years ago, then disappeared, and monsters occupied the place.

**Connections:** This adventure could easily be connected to B1, as the Quasqueton dungeon is canonically placed in the area, or to the Nyx Path, also taking place in this area.

### "JOURNEY TO THE ROCK" [Bs]

by Michael Malone, Adventure B8: *Journey to the Rock*, 1984

**Location:** North of Threshold.

PCs level: 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** goblins, ogres, harpies, winged warriors of Tuma (without password), ghostly horsemen, rock baboons, Gorbash and Grullkk bugbears, sand spiders, water weirds, goblin leader, Crone of Chaos, living statues.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Hargath Stonehand Dwarf 2, Katanya Fighter 1, Medriev Elf 2, Peldor Homeheart Halfling 1, Viviel Thief 3, Volshalla Cleric 2, Wolkenz Fighter 2, Yilil-Aylen Wizard 2, Hakeem the merchant, Lirdrium Arkayz, Jenlar Temlin Fighter 7, elves of Sylvanhome, sprites, gnomes of the Barkel mountains, chameleon men Kanreon and Thronik and the Omnerubesk, Lord of Shade and Hue, Dunnak Ironhammer Dwarf 3 and dwarves of Krayzen moutnains, Stiv Jentir the old hermit Fighter 3, Rahg El-Mahr seeker of Truth,

Shadow Elves of GAZ13.

Robern Sternslate and other gnomes of the Motherlode Rover ship, Krag and other rockmen.

**Main Treasures:** reward, coins, gems, potions, ring of protection +1, potions, rope of climbing, daggers +1, Talisman of Tuma.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** The wizard Lirdrium Arkayz offers a reward to PCs willing to discover the mysterious secret of the Rock. In truth, Arkayz was once a member of the ruling Council of the lost city of Tuma, trapped in another dimension, and he needs a magical talisman to free his people. Contains suggestions for further adventures with the possible exploration of the city of Tuma.

**Connections:** Generic, suggested in Darokin or Western Karameikos, later placed north of Threshold in B1-9, see also [“Detail of the Threshold Region”](#) by Simone Neri in the Vaults.

### **Possible connection to the Iron Ring and Black Eagle Path, Dark Triad Path and Humanoids and Argos Path**

If connected to any of the adventures against the Iron Ring in the Threshold area, the secrets of Tuma could well become an objective of the Iron Ring or other parties (and Lirdrium and his city an ally against them).

## **“Hail the Heroes”**

by Tim Beach, *“Hail the Heroes”* CD Adventure, 1994

**Location:** Mirros, Threshold, then Zadreth.

**PCs level:** 1-4 (AD&D 2ed)

**Main Antagonists:** Agents of the Cult of Halav, the Order of the Griffon and the Church of Karameikos, depending on circumstances, goblin bandits, ogre, wight, skeletons, guardian statues.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Oldrinn Sacnissen dwaren explorer, Desmik and Jenna Cleric 3 and Barris Cleric 5 of the Church of Traladara, Brefrick of the Order of the Griffon Fighter 5, Klas Jorga Cleric 5 and Andros Levinik Cleric 2 of the Cult of Halav, Ozata Bard 3, Cryss werewolf Warrior, Frinius of the Mirros Magician’s Guild library.

**Main Treasures:** Reward, Shield of Halav, coins, dagger +1, scrolls, books, jewelry.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Hundreds of years ago the famous female warrior Solveig White Gold found the lost Shield of King Halav, and her friend, the wizard Perrantin, built the Temple of the Shield for it. The temple was eventually abandoned and lost, but recently a map describing its possible location surfaced, and the Church of Traladara hires the PCs to find the temple and the Shield. The other churches, however, have agents too with different plans. In the temple, the PCs may also find details about the story of the Dragonlord (see also [“Dragonlord Chronicles - Detailed](#)

[Summaries”](#) by David Keyser in the Vaults of Pandius).

**Connections:** Finding the Shield should have long term repercussions on Karameikos and on the Thyatian/Traladaran relationship, see also below.

### Possible connection with the Iron Ring and Black Eagle Path and the Veiled Society and Specularum Path

The Iron Ring and the Black Eagle could be involved in this adventure if it is set before the fall of the Baron, or if the Iron Ring learns about it. In the Order of the Griffon video game described above under Koriszegy Keep, another Shield appears, in Specularum. The Veiled Society and/or Lady Magda Marilenev could have their own plans to use the Shield to awaken Traladaran nationalism, especially if the Order of the Griffon takes it.

### “The Tomb of Demara”

by Bruce Nesmith, AD&D 2ed *First Quest* Boxed set, Adventure book page 6, TSR 1105, 1994

**Location:** Near the town of Krondsfeld, placed by fans between Kelvin and Penhaligon  
**PCs level:** 1-3 (AD&D 2ed)

**Main Antagonists:** Bonegnasher the Ogre and his humanoids

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Taran of the Elvenguard, Elf 2 Wizard 1, High Wizard Nethril. Pre-generated PCs: Morganth Wizard 1-3, Slinker Thief 1-3, Delvar Dwarf Fighter 1-3, Silverleaf Elf Fighter Wizard 1-3, Lordan Cleric 1-3, Beldar Fighter 1-3.

**Main Treasures:** Orb of Dragonkind, Shield of Demara, Ring of Demara

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** PCs can discover the tomb of a mythical King of Central Karameikos, becoming quite famous in the region, and avoid that the ogre villain take control of an orb which can control

dragons!

**Connections:** This adventure could be easily connected to the following one if clues in Demara’s tomb lead to the discovery of Lavv.

### “The Discovery of Lavv”

by Aaron Allston, GAZ1: *“The Grand Duchy of Karameikos”* page 63, 1987

**Location:** Kelvin.

**PCs level:** 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** undead gnolls.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Desmond Kelvin II.

**Main Treasures:** Reward, ancient treasures.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** While digging a dungeon beneath his fortress, Baron Kelvin discovers the ruins of Lavv, city of King Halav. Many faithful Traladarans flock to the place, wishing to see it, but an ancient magic reanimates the mass grave of a gnoll army. The PCs are present to deal with all this.

**Connections:** This adventure could be easily connected to the one above if the Temple of the Shield contains clues about the location of Lavv. The video game “Order of the Griffon” could also be connected as described above. See also [“Kelvin”](#) by Brian Caraway

### Possible connection with the Iron Ring and Black Eagle Path and the Veiled Society and Specularum Path

The Iron Ring and the Black Eagle could use this event to take control of Kelvin. The Veiled Society and/or Magda Marilenev could instead use the event to fuel the fire of



Traladaran nationalism, particularly if the Baron stops pilgrim from visiting the place and/or prevent the Traladaran Church from accessing it.

### “The Treasure of the Hideous One”

by David Cook, AC2: “*Combat Shield and Mini Adventure*”, 1984

**Location:** Luln and the Blight Swamp.

PCs level: 4-7 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Hydra, giant serpentweed, Elven bandit chieftain Elf 7, bandits, Slough of Despair, ghouls, Rosentos vampire and his slaves.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Grisbaldos’ ghost, Korat and villagers, cay men.

**Main Treasures:** Four possible: Normal treasure, 10,000 gp, Jewel of Achmed, giant sapphire worth 2,000 gp, Magical treasure, Armory of Morphos sword +3 Int 10 find traps detect magic extra damage 20, stone of controlling earth elementals, Combined treasure, coins, gems, ring of regeneration, Special treasure, Essence Orb of Trinkla the Black Sage. Ring of fire resistance, ring of protection +1, flaming sword +1

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A hundred years ago Colonel Rosentos guided an expedition to the swamp with 200 men and disappeared, only five men returned alive. Now he has become a vampire, and rules over the local villagers.

**Connections:** Due to the similarity between the Black Opal Eye of B7 and the Essence Orb of this adventure, it would be easy to connect the two adventures. The Eye of Traldar of DDA3 may be connected too. See also “[Rabasia - a D&D 5E Adaptation](#)” by Giuliano Michelin from *Threshold Magazine* issue #9 and “[The History of Karameikos](#)” by Simone Neri from *Threshold Magazine* issue

#1. Some fans have suggested the B7 orb and Trinkla’s orb may be the same orb, but nothing in canon actually suggest it, so the total number of magical orb with divination powers, including the Eye of Traldar, may well be 3.

### About the Blight Swamp:

see also “[Blight Swamp Compilation](#)” by Irving Galvez

**Possible connection with the Iron Ring and Black Eagle Path, the Dark Triad Path, the Church of Nyx and Koskatep Path, the Skarda Path, the Humanoids and Argos Path and the Veiled Society and Specularum Path**

The Iron Ring and the Black Eagle, as any villainous party the PCs may face in Karameikos, could well have an interest in taking possession of the Orb(s), as its/their divination powers will clearly give a great advantage to any cause.

### “Hrothgar’s Resting Place”

by Stephen J. Smith, *Dungeon Magazine* issue #25, 1990

**Location:** north east of Kelvin.

PCs level: 4-7 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Trolls, harpies, spiders, worms.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Inhabitants of Relfren.

**Main Treasures:** Seeker, neutral intelligent sword +2 with detect gems, metals and invisible objects, precious statuette.

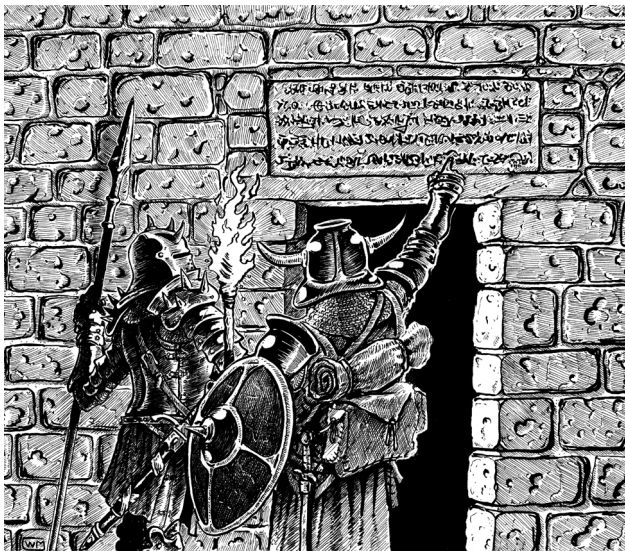
**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Guided by a

wizard's treasure map, the heroes search for an intelligent sword in a remote cave.

**Connections:** This adventure could be played at any time, with any possible competing party involved in taking possession of an intelligent sword.

**Possible connection with the Other Lands, People and Creatures Path**

As Hrothgar and his companions were from the Northern Reaches, this could also be an occasion for the PCs to travel there.



**THE VEILED SOCIETY AND SPECULARUM PATH (OR TRALADARAN REBELLION) ADVENTURE PATH**

This Path is often focused on city adventures and the actions of the Veiled Society, which could easily become the main antagonist of the PCs in the environment of Specularum. As shown in the previous issue of *Threshold Magazine* (#21), dedicated to the city, there are, however, many more intrigues and possibilities in the capital of Karameikos.

This Path is also connected with another main theme of Karameikos - the possibility of a Traladaran rebellion against Duke Stefan. The Veiled Society and the Radu, rather than sincere Traladaran nationalists, seem to be just opportunists who want to exploit Traladaran grievances for personal gains. The main party willing to overthrow Duke Stefan is Magda Marilenev. She could find allies in the Veiled Society, Boris Torenescu and other parties, and eventually act against the government. If the PCs are Traladaran they could be with her rather than against her.

**“The Veiled Society” [B6]**

by David Cook, Adventure B6: “*The Veiled Society*”, 1984

**Location:** Specularum.

PCs level: 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Veiled Society thugs, hobgoblins, kobolds, zombies, soldiers, Akarios and Zacharias murderers, Cartha Radu Fighter 6, Antonito Radu Wizard 3.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Lucia and

Fortunato Vorloi, Philip Vorloi, Aleksander Torenescu, Mikel Commander of Guard Phorsis, Estaish Elf 1, Zweiss Radu Fighter 3.

**Main Treasures:** reward, gems, jewels, sword +2, sword +1.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** The Radu create unrest in the city during the Festival of Lucor to cast a bad light on their rivals, the Torenescu. Later the Veiled Society, a criminal organization they control, tries to assassinate Lucia Vorloi, daughter of Fortunato, and spark a rebellion against the Duke. Later they try to assassinate Simion Torenescu. The adventure could lead to the death of Anton Radu and the defeat and removal of Cartha and Antonito Radu.

**Connections:** The original module contains a version of the Specularum city map that is different from the one in GAZ1, but as per GAZ1 timeline it is set in 999 or 1,000 AC after the death of Christoph Torenescu. At the end of B1-9, all the paths of the super module lead to Specularum. The adventure needs some work by the DM, but could introduce PCs to the great noble families of Karameikos. The Iron Ring, the Black Eagle and the Dark Triad could also be involved in this great struggle. See The Complete Path Chapter below for more about this. See also [“Unveiling the Radu Clan”](#) by Andrew Theisen, from *Threshold Magazine* issue #1.

### “Millenium in the Streets”

by Aaron Allston, GAZ1: *“The Grand Duchy of Karameikos”* page 62, 1987

**Location:** Specularum.

PCs level: 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Gambler, people he cheated.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** People the

gambler cheated.

**Main Treasures:** Possible payment.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A PC looks very much like a gambler who, during the New Year’s Millenium celebrations, has cheated a lot of people in Specularum, and so has to prove his innocence and find the real culprit.

**Connections:** Officially set during the Millenium celebrations, but could be set at other times easily. The Veiled Society could be involved if the gambler owns money to them.

### “The Sins of Valdo Tisza”

by Aaron Allston, Gazetteer 1: *“The Grand Duchy of Karameikos”* page 62, 1987

**Location:** Specularum.

PCs level: 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Torenescu agents, Tisza’s men, ministers agents, others.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** None.

**Main Treasures:** Payment, reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** PCs help a mugging victim in the street, but the man has been killed and he had a document addressed to Alek and signed V. The document contains secret trade agreements negotiated with Ierendi, and is a leak that Valdo Tisza is providing to Aleksander Torenescu. The PCs could find themselves at the centre of a big intrigue with different parties wishing to cover or expose Tisza.

**Connections:** This could all be a big plot by Boris Torenescu to discredit Aleksander and take control of the family with the help of the Veiled Society.

## “POISONERS IN THE NIGHT”

by Aaron Allston, GAZ1: *“The Grand Duchy of Karameikos”* page 62, 1987

**Location:** Specularum.

PCs level: 1-3 (BECMI)

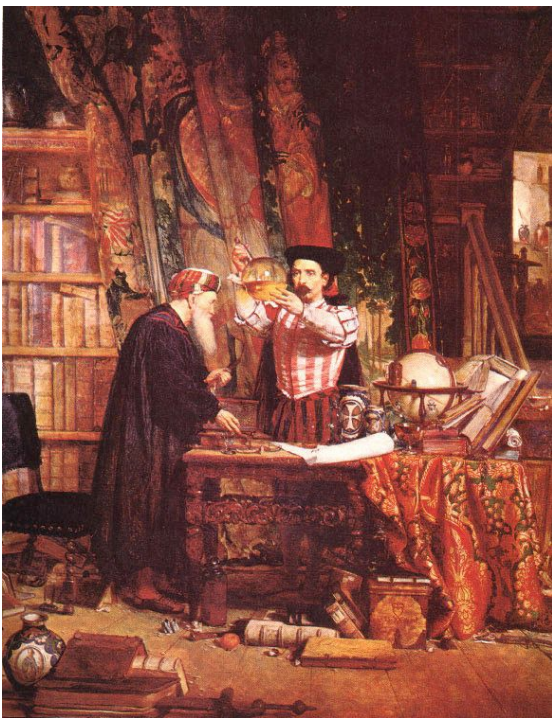
**Main Antagonists:** Boris Torenescu’s thugs, alchemist.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Aleksander Torenescu.

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** PCs stumble on Boris Torenescu receiving a mysterious package, and then sending assassins against them. A local alchemist is providing Boris with a nigh-undetectable poison to kill Aleksander Torenescu, who indeed has fallen sick.

**Connections:** Following the adventure above, Boris could gain control of the Torenescu family and work toward a Traladaran rebellion with the Veiled Society and Magda Marilenev.



## “THE MENACING MALADY”

by Christopher Perkins, *Dungeon Magazine* issue #58, 1996

**Location:** Specularum.

PCs level: 2-4 (AD&D)

**Main Antagonists:** Cultists of death Immortal, possibly Leptar or Orcus, mold men (transformed patients), Skargle the doppelganger,

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Crescent Street Hospital and Herbalist staff, Dr Edwin Alastair and Allenna, clerics, nurses.

**Main Treasures:** Reward, potions.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Cultists of a dark Immortal infect the patients of an hospital with a dread malady which turns them into mold men.

**Connections:** Suggested for Mirros in 1,012 AC but could be played at any time.

### Possible connection with other Paths

The Dark Triad, possibly in league with the Iron Ring, is the ideal evil party of this adventure, but the Veiled Society too could exploit the situation for its own purposes.

## “THE MISSING ROSE”

by Aaron Allston, GAZ1: *“The Grand Duchy of Karameikos”* page 62, 1987

**Location:** Vorloi and/or Specularum.

PCs level: 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Veiled Society, Grygori Vorloi.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Philip Vorloi, Marianna Vorloi, Kingdom of Thieves.

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** PCs are hired

to find Marianna Vorloi, kidnapped by the Veiled Society with inside information, and expose the plot. Grygori Vorloi is one of the conspirators. Marianna has been hidden in the Nest, and the Kingdom of Thieves is willing to sell information about the exact location.

**Connections:** The weakening of Philip Vorloi should be a major requirement to work toward a successful Traladaran rebellion against the Duke. See also [“The Kingdom of Thieves”](#) by George Hrabovsky.

### “Davinos’ Complaint”

by Aaron Allston, GAZ1: *“The Grand Duchy of Karameikos”* page 63, 1987

**Location:** Specularum.

PCs level: 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Anton Radu and the Veiled Society, Thyatian thugs hired by the Society, false Thyatian merchant paid by the Society, Veiled Society thugs.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Emilio the Great, possibly Magdel, Yolanda of Luln, Lord Dmitros, the Duke and Duchess.

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Davinos, a young Traladaran from Kelvin presents a complaint to the Duke about the economic damage suffered by several Traladarans 30 years before. He is attacked by some Thyatian thugs and later assassinated by Thyatian assassins. In truth, Anton Radu and the Veiled Society have arranged the assassination to foment racial hatred in the city. While the city is rioting, PCs are hired by Emilio the Great to find the true culprits and prevent a full scale Traladaran revolt.

**Connections:** The purpose of the Veiled Society here could be a failed revolt, forcing the Duke’s troops to resort to violence to fan

the fires of Traladaran resentment against the Thyatians.

### “The Capture of Flameflicker”

by Aaron Allston, GAZ1: *“The Grand Duchy of Karameikos”* page 63, 1987

**Location:** Specularum.

PCs level: 10-14 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Kingdom of Thieves or Specularum guards.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Alya aka Flameflicker, captain of Guard Phorsis.

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A PC falls in love with Alya of the Street of Dreams. The PC is later tasked by the captain of the Guard Phorsis to capture Flameflicker, which leads to the discovery of her real identity and being faced with a moral choice.

**Connections:** As the Kingdom of Thieves is a rival of the Veiled Society, the capture of Flameflicker could be a major victory for the Society, which is probably trying to achieve exactly this goal. In this case if the PCs follow the law they may end strengthening the Society and endangering Karameikos.

### “Holy War”

by Aaron Allston, GAZ1: *“The Grand Duchy of Karameikos”* page 64, 1987

**Location:** Specularum or other cities.

PCs level: 15-25 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Oderbry and his allies.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Sherlane Halaran and his allies, Desmond Kelvin, Duke Stefan.

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Oliver Jowett

dies and the Church of Karameikos is split between followers of Oderbry and followers of the official successor, Sherlane Halaran. From a hidden location, Oderbry and parts of the Order of the Griffon attack the Church of Traladara. PCs are asked by the Duke to help uncover Oderbry's hiding place.

**Connections:** This could also be a plan by the Veiled Society or any other evil party, interested in weakening the Duchy with more ethnic divisions and strife.

### Possible connection with other Paths

Any evil party or group wishing to ultimately remove Duke Stefan may have an interest in sponsoring Oderbry and strike after his failure.

### “The Marilenev Uprising”

by Aaron Allston, GAZ1: *“The Grand Duchy of Karameikos”* page 63, 1987

**Location:** Specularum.

PCs level: 4-14 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Magda Marilenev and her subordinates, Traladaran extremists.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated** **PCs:** Karameikan forces, city guards.

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Magda Marilenev gives a speech in the Grand Market and her men starts a rebellion in the city. After all is over she will probably be dead or in prison and a PC could obtain her Estate.

**Connections:** This should be the end of this Path, and if the Veiled Society is squarely behind it, their purpose may be more to

profit from Magda's failure than the actual removal of the Karameikan rule. See also [“Marilenev Rebellion”](#) by Glim Garrick, [“AC1022, Lady Magda Snaps”](#) by Sean Meaney and [“Andros Marilenev”](#) by Jennifer Guerra.

### Possible connection with other Paths

Any evil party or group wishing to ultimately remove Duke Stefan may have an interest in sponsoring Magda and strike after her failure.

### Fan adventures and resources

The whole content of [Threshold Magazine issue #21](#) contains background, details and links to Specularum and Karameikos noble families and guilds.

[“St. Kruskiev's Gold: a Specularum adventure”](#) and [“Guild Wars”](#) adventure from *Threshold Magazine* issue #1 by Giampaolo Agosta

[“Traladara Mini-Gazetteer”](#) by Jennifer Guerra

[“King Stefan Karameikos - Dark Ruler of Traladara”](#) by Giulio Caroletti

[“Mass Hysteria”](#) by Niels Just Rasmussen

*Specularum Scenario Series* by Ville Lähde, Part I: [“Coloured was the Bay, bloody were the streets”](#)

Part II: [“Omens and Portents”](#)

Part III: [“Stuffed beads and lethal weddings”](#),

Part IV: [“Davinos' Complaint”](#)

## OTHER LANDS, PEOPLES AND CREATURES ADVENTURE PATH

Several important canon and fan adventures start in Karameikos in order to bring the PCs elsewhere or allow them to meet the non human inhabitants of the Duchy or strange, new creatures.

Modules XSolo: *“Lathan’s Gold”*, and X1: *“The Isle of Dread”*, which both start in Karameikos, could also fit well in this Path. However, they are not listed here because most of those modules take place in the southern seas.

The adventures in this Path can normally be connected easily to any Path detailed above, so the connections are indicated in the corresponding paragraphs rather than in special paragraphs as above.

### “Night of Fear”

by Mark Lucas, *Dungeon Magazine* issue #28, 1991

**Location:** Any place on the edge of the wilderness.

PCs level: 1 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Rudvarien the doppelganger.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Crellar Fighter 1 and his family: Gertrude, Kellogg, Kelsey and Mary, all Fighter 1, Krac Dwarf 1, Brent Fighter 1, Galen Cleric 1, Goddle Halfling 1, Mirapesh Thief 1, Lyons Wizard 1, Lif Elf 1.

**Main Treasures:** Coins, long sword +1 +3 vs dragons.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A mysterious

killer, Rudvarien the doppelganger, threatens the inhabitants of Crellar's Trading Post.

**Connections:** This adventure is not necessarily set in Karameikos but could be easily connected to any path or used with the doppelgangers working for Bargle in Threshold. Rudvarien could also become a recurring enemy in the Dark Triad Path or others.

### “The Elven Home”

by Anne Gray McReady, *Dungeon Magazine* issue #1, 1986

**Location:** Elven lands.

PCs level: 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Treant, stirges.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Derrim Elf 2, Atlee Elf 3, Yanna Elf 1, Repo Elf 3.

**Main Treasures:** Money, gems, magical “calendar” vase.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** While traveling off-road through the wilderness, the PCs happen upon a group of reclusive elves, a troublesome treant, and irksome stirges<sup>8</sup>.

**Connections:** Can be used anywhere near elven lands and connected to the following ones as they also contains fairy creatures. The elves could also be connected to the community featured in B7.

<sup>8</sup> Descriptions of the *Dungeon Magazine* adventures come from this article [“D&D/ Mystaran Articles in Dungeon Magazines”](#) by David Keyser at The Vaults of Pandius.

### “The Witch of Windcrag”

by Stephen J. Smith, *Dungeon Magazine* issue #51, 1995

**Location:** Any wilderness.

**PCs level:** 2-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Kyrrak harpy Wokan 3.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** None.

**Main Treasures:** Coins, gems, ring of animal control, amulet of protection from sleep.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Adventurers hear rumors of a mysterious old spellcaster who dwells in a cliffside cave on Windcrag Mountain and decide to investigate the legend.

**Connections:** Not specifically set in Karameikos, but appropriate as harpies appear in several canon modules. Could be easily connected to the Dymrak path or used as side trek.

### “Redcap’s Rampage”

by Christopher Perkins, *Dungeon Magazine* issue #54, 1995

**Location:** Any forested region.

**PCs level:** 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Dyrk the redcap, Anton and Kristof wererats.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Luskwald inhabitants, Coryston Dwarf 3, Skaldar Fighter 2, Vaxalt Wizard 2, Hazel Wizard 5.

**Main Treasures:** Reward, wand of trap detection.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** An invisible menace threatens the village of Luskwald; it’s a redcap former slave of a shadow elf wizard, who killed his master and now resents the intruders of the castle he has chosen as home.

**Connections:** Not specifically set in

Karameikos, but could be easily set in any region and connected to other adventures featuring fairies. The shadow elf corpse could lead the PCs to the Shadowdeep.

### “Riverside Tragedy”

by Frank Mentzer, *D&D Expert set* (1983), page 39

**Location:** Near Threshold

**PCs level:** 4-14 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Snakes and leeches.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** None.

**Main Treasures:** None, random.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A local lad disappears near the river, in the marshy riverbank south of town.

**Connections:** This adventure could also include old ruins, hidden bandits, troglodytes or lizardmen, possible connection to the following one.

### “The Man Who Sings to Fish”

by Frank Mentzer, *D&D Expert set* (1983), page 40

**Location:** Lake and rivers north of Threshold.

**PCs level:** 4-14 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Water creatures.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Nixies.

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A former adventurer, now fisherman, has learned from the nixies to talk to fish, and knows where they live.

**Connections:** The PCs could become allies of the nixies if they perform some service from them, possibly leading to the fairy folks



detailed in PC1: *"Tall Tales of the Wee Folk"*, and the Adventure Booklet contained in it. Evil parties could seek the alliance of evil fairies, and friends in the fairy courts could be of great help to the PCs.



*Nixie watching a sleeping boy*

### "Gentle Giants"

by Frank Mentzer, *D&D Expert set* (1983), page 40

**Location:** Threshold.

**PCs level:** 4-14 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Hill giants.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Stone giants

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Stone giants, who regularly visit Threshold and live near it, need help against hill giants.

**Connections:** Could be connected with other two adventures featuring giants below. The Iron Ring or another evil party could try to recruit hill giants or other giants for their purposes.

### "The Questing Barbarian"

by James Ward, AC10: *"Bestiary of Dragons and Giants"*, 1987, page 9.

**Location:** Any mountain.

**PCs level:** 1-4 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** bandits, Scut bandit leader, living statue, giant hawks, shrieker, saber-toothed tigers.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Jarl young mountain giant, Shadar the metamorph, Mountain giant dad.

**Main Treasures:** Random coins, jewels, scrolls, weapons, armor, rings.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A mountain giant young boy in search of adventure tries to pass for a human adventurer and lead the PCs to his dad's castle.

**Connections:** Generic but adaptable to Karameikos.

### "Trouble in Tall Stone Pass"

by Steve Perrin, AC10: *"Bestiary of Dragons and Giants"*, 1987, page 18.

**Location:** Any mountain pass.

**PCs level:** 5-7 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Duncan Thief 6, cave bears, Rockheart, Stonebrow and Gem stone giants.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Local traders or Duncan and the giants, depending on the outcome of the adventure.

**Main Treasures:** Coins, scarab of protection, square wheel, scroll and, if giant are killed, also wand of polymorphing and three stone giants eggs.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** PCs are hired to take care of some stone giants who are raiding caravans passing through Tall Stone Pass. The giants say they are only exacting a

toll from traders passing through their territory.

**Connections:** Generic but adaptable to Karameikos. The giants could easily be allied with Traladaran rebels or other parties.

### “The Beggar”

by Frank Mentzer, *D&D Expert set* (1983), page 40

**Location:** Threshold.

**PCs level:** 4-14 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Dragons or else.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Gold dragon

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A gold dragon living in town disguised as a blind beggar reveals to the PCs he needs their help in a far place.

**Connections:** Could be linked to the adventure below or to other featuring dragons in AC10. The allegiance of dragons could be of the utmost importance for any party wishing to remove Duke Stefan and control Karameikos. The beggar could also be an agent of Azem tasked of hindering Argos’ plans, see also [“Who’s Who Among Dragons”](#) by Bruce Heard

### “The Haunted Helm”

by James Ward, AC10: *“Bestiary of Dragons and Giants”*, 1987, page 6.

**Location:** Altan Tepes.

**PCs level:** 1-4 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** mountain lions, large white dragon.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Caeric

small white dragon, Renn Fighter 4, Bearkiller Fighter 2.

**Main Treasures:** coins, gems, Crystal ball, long sword +1 +3 vs white dragons.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A helmet is haunted by a barbarian whom has been killed by a white dragon. The helmet has to be brought back to the dragon’s hoard to free the ghost.

**Connections:** Generic but adaptable to Karameikos, see also above. Argos may try to win the alliance of the white dragons inhabiting the Altan Tepes mountains.

### “The Wizard in the Woods”

by John Nephew, AC10: *“Bestiary of Dragons and Giants”*, 1987, page 21.

**Location:** Radlebb or Dymrak woods.

**PCs level:** 8-11 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Harpies, trolls, orcs, ogre, devil swine, bugbears, Viridis green dragon, Parindes Wizard 9.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Fairleaf elf female 5.

**Main Treasures:** Coins, gems, reward, dagger +2, ring of spell turning, wand of fear.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Viridis the green dragon is marauding through the forest and the elves need help. The truth is an evil wizard named Parindes has enslaved the dragon and is now using him to occupy the forest.

**Connections:** Generic but adaptable to Karameikos. Parindes could be a Iron Ring agent, a Black Eagle agent or an ally of Argos or the Dark Triad.

### “WORMS”

by Frank Mentzer, *D&D Expert set* (1983), page 40

**Location:** Threshold.

**PCs level:** 4-14 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Purple worms, caeciliae and others.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** None

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A purple worm comes out of the ground and a maze of worm tunnels is discovered under the town.

**Connections:** This adventure could lead the PCs to the underground lands of Karameikos and its mysterious inhabitants, see also [“The Shadowdeep”](#) as detailed in *Threshold Magazine* issue #14, .

### “Blackstone Heath”

by Frank Mentzer, *D&D Expert set* (1983), page 40,

**Location:** Near Threshold.

**PCs level:** 4-14 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Black pudding or else.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Threshold’s Wizards Guildmaster.

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** The Magic User’s Guildmaster has created a garbage dump with a charmed black pudding found in a nearby dungeon.

**Connections:** Possibly connectable to the previous one or to any ancient Traladaran ruins.

### “Whirlwind”

by Frank Mentzer, *D&D Expert set* (1983), page 40

**Location:** Threshold.

**PCs level:** 4-14 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** A renegade Efreeti.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Djinni, Treant, Water Elemental.

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A djinni arrives in town to greet his old friends, a treant living in the park and a water elemental in the fountain, then he asks help against a renegade efreeti.

**Connections:** This adventure could lead to Elemental planes or locations inhabited by elementals, and to the parties interested in exploiting such connections.

### “Of Nests and Nations”

by Randy Maxwell, *Dungeon Magazine* issue #13, 1988

**Location:** Specularum.

**PCs level:** 8-12 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Hivebrood.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** People and shopkeepers in Specularum.

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** The city of Specularum is in an uproar, and the heroes must track down the sinister source of the evil and mayhem.

**Connections:** This adventure could be easily connected to the Veiled Society and Specularum Path. The Hivebrood are probably enemy of all humans, but maybe an evil party has find a way to direct them against specific targets.

### “The Wererats of Relfren”

by Grant Boucher and William Kurt Wenz, *Dungeon Magazine* issue #14, 1988

**Location:** Mountain pass.

PCs level: 3-6 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Wererats.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Inhabitants of Relfren.

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** Relfren hasn't been the same ever since that mysterious sideshow came to town. Now the town is overrun with wererats, and heroes are hired to put things right.

**Connections:** This adventure is not necessarily set in Karameikos but could be easily connected to the Rodemus family and the Iron Ring path.

### “In Pursuit of the Slayer”

by Carl Sargent, *Dungeon Magazine* issue #15, 1989

**Location:** Anywhere.

PCs level: 6-9 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Gakarak, Grey philosopher, Wolfram.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Kaldarek village, Dwarves, Dapleth elves, Steinmeyer Cleric 10, Wolfram (if saved).

**Main Treasures:** Reward.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** A family is slaughtered by a man called the Slayer. The heroes track this brutal killer, unaware that he's been possessed by an evil sword spirit.

**Connections:** This adventure is not necessarily set in Karameikos but could be easily connected to any path or used to flesh out a small region. Any evil party may be after the magical sword.

### “Across Wildspace!”

by Bruce Nesmith, AD&D 2ed *First Quest* Boxed set, Adventure book page 45, 1994

**Location:** Krondsfield, placed by fans between Kelvin and Penhaligon, or any other town/city  
PCs level: 3 (AD&D 2ed)

**Main Antagonists:** Raver the neogi Wizard 3 and hobgoblins.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Captain Blotomus, Giff, and crew; Morganth Wizard 1-3, Slinker Thief 1-3, Delvar dwarf Fighter 1-3, Silverleaf elf Fighter Wizard 1-3, Lordan Cleric 1-3, Beldar Fighter 1-3.

**Main Treasure:** Cloak of elvenkind, Wand of magic missiles

**Plot/main accomplishment:** A space pirate has captured the crew of a space travelling flying ship near three asteroids of Mystara's solar system, and the captain needs help.

**Connections:** This adventure is a perfect gate to the Spelljammer setting, or to travels to the moons of Mystara, Patera and Matera, and Mystara's Solar System (see also [“Mystaraspace”](#) - *Threshold Magazine* issue #15).

### “Rafting”

by Frank Mentzer, D&D Expert set (1983), page 39

**Location:** The Volaga river.

PCs level: 1-5 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** River pirates and monsters.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** None.

**Main Treasures:** Payment.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** PCs are hired to drive rafts of lumber from Threshold to Specularum.

**Connections:** Easy way to move the PCs from Threshold to Specularum.



*The bank of the Volaga*

### “THE GNOME CARAVAN”

by Aaron Allston, GAZ1: “*The Grand Duchy of Karameikos*” page 62, 1987

**Location:** Highforge to Specularum.

PCs level: 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** bandits, monsters.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** None.

**Main Treasures:** Payment.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** PCs are hired to protect the annual Gnome Caravan which in Thaumont goes from Highforge to Specularum.

**Connections:** A poster asking for caravan guards also appear in the “Karameikos: Kingdom of Adventure” boxed set. See also my article [“The Kingdom of Highforge”](#) in *Threshold Magazine* issue #16, dedicated to dwarves, gnomes and hin.

### “VOYAGE OF THE CRIMPSHRINE”

by Tony Ross, *Dungeon Magazine* issue #59, 1996

**Location:** From Kelvin to Seragrad.

PCs level: 3-5 (AD&D 2ed)

**Main Antagonists:** Werewolf, Kristos Thief 6, Merrows (AD&D water ogres).

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Fiona Wizard 6, Lucretius, Marsallus Bard 3 (conner), Yuri, Oleaginous Gnome 0, Promenthus Gnome captain.

**Main Treasures:** Reward, coins, bag of holding, flask of essence of darkness.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** The characters book passage on the grand riverboat Crimpshrine, built by gnomes, which runs from the city of Kelvin to Seragrad, but the boat sinks.

**Connections:** Explicitly set in the time of “Karameikos: Kingdom of Adventure”, about 1,012 AC.



## THE COMPLETE ADVENTURE PATH

It is also possible to combine all these Paths in one unique very big Campaign

**“In Search of Adventure” [B1-9]**  
by Jeff Grubb and previous authors,  
Adventure B1-9: “In Search of Adventure”,  
1987

**Location:** Karameikos.

PCs level: 1-3 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** As individual adventures.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** As individual adventures.

**Main Treasures:** As individual adventures.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** From Threshold PCs can choose different paths as explained in a flow chart on page 6.

**Connections:** This super module connects all the B series of adventure in an explicit Karameikos setting. Rumors which are available in Threshold lead to specific adventures, while others may lead to more adventures to be developed by the DM.

Other possible Paths are:

- B9 (Caldwell’s Castle) to B8 to B1 to B9 (Great Escape).
- B9 (Elwyn’s Sanctuary) to B2 to B3 to B5.
- B7 and to B4 (“*The Lost City*”, not included in this article as it is officially set in Ylaruam).

B6 is the end of all three paths.

The B series’ adventures are not complete in this super module, see also [“B1-9 In Search of Adventure abridgments”](#) by Andrew Theisen in the Vaults .

Additional relevant rumors that might be heard in Threshold are:

- A foreign nobleman who owned a whole fleet of ships was assassinated by the Iron Ring a week ago in Specularum.
- Gnomes are smuggling gems down the river in hollowed logs.

### Creating a Complete Path

With some work by the DM, B1-9 could be molded in a more coherent story:

Starting from Caldwell’s Castle in Threshold, the PCs discover a Iron Ring cell exploring the place, hunting for treasures. The cleric of the cell, probably a follower of Leptar, leads them to Elwyn’s Sanctuary, and, following Elwyn’s correspondence, to the Caves of Chaos and local followers of Orcus.

There the PCs can discover the plot to awaken Arik in Haven, leading to B3. Moving to B5, PCs could continue opposing the plans of the Black Triad (and clues about Argos could be present too). B1, B7, B8 and eventually B4 could then be played in any order as places where the Dark Triad or its allies (Argos and/or The Iron Ring) are seeking artefacts and knowledge. The path could end with the PCs captured in B9 (The Great Escape), to follow with B10, DDA3, DDA4 or B6 if they move to Specularum. But to create a more complete Path, this framework needs some expansion.

## Expanding the Path

The Black Eagle, The Iron Ring, The Veiled Society, Argos, Koriszegy, Skarda, The Dark Triad, The Church of Nyx, The Veiled Society, Magda Marilenev and Traladaran rebels: the villains of many Karameikos campaigns can also work well without any connection between them. They could just be a series of threats the PCs may face at different times.

The DM could choose to connect only some of them. The Black Eagle and The Iron Ring are actually connected in canon, but The Iron Ring somehow survives the fall of the Black Eagle in *K:KoA*. Some of these villains could also be enemies, allowing the PCs to temporarily ally with some to defeat others, with all the practical and moral risks of such alliances.

Still, it could also be interesting to connect all these villains in one unique, complex Path. The PCs will obviously discover this only later, maybe at the very end of the Campaign.

Orcus, as leader of the Dark Triad and powerful Immortal interested in Mystara, is the most likely candidate to be a master puppeteer in such a huge Path. His Church could be involved in the Iron Ring, the Black Eagle and/or Bargle could be secretly his followers and Skarda could have received the Mirror from him. Orcus could plot to have all the above villains entangled in temporary cooperations and some competition too, with the ultimate purpose of having just one, probably the worst one, defeat the others and plunge Karameikos into complete chaos. The PCs may succeed in eliminating many of these villains, helped by some mysterious

figure that is always some proxy for Orcus. This campaign could last for years in-game (and maybe of real time) and also use adventures not originally meant for Mystara, as several fans have done during the years, see below. Even if all the villains are defeated, Orcus will not be and will probably plan his vengeance, allowing the DM to take the campaign to the Master and Immortal level.

## Non-Mystaran adventures and stories adapted by fans for Karameikos

["Moonlight Madness in Karameikos"](#) by Ripvanwormer

["Original Lost Caverns of Tsojconth - found in Karameikos?"](#) by Demos Sachlas

["Lost Mine of Phandelver on Mystara"](#) by Krimson

["Red Hand of Doom and Karameikos"](#) and ["Scourge of the Iron Ring"](#) by Steven B Wilson.

["Adapting Keep on the Shadowfell to Mystara"](#) by John Walter Biles

Real world history could serve as inspiration as well, see for example ["The Karameikan Civil Wars"](#) by Steven B. Wilson.

[Continued on page 85](#)



by Hausman Santos,  
with contributions from Giampaolo Agosta

## AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

This article provides an update to the Karameikos setting, primarily a plotline collecting the exchange of information that was discussed between myself (Hausman) and Giampaolo, as part of the work for a follow-up to the Mystaran Almanac. It provides a guideline for the events that will take place in the civil war in Karameikos according to the course of the Almanac 1020AC - in view of the events of the Orcwars devastating Darokin.

The article will serve as the driver for a future release of Mystaran Almanac 1020. It attempts to cover that vacuum, and provide a possible completion to the plotline itself.

## The Mystara Almanac Team are:

*Wendar/Denagoth* (Marco Dalmonte and Simone Neri contribution); *Ylaruam* (Suggested from Andrew Theisen - ideas to Wastoure & Barimoor); *Yazak Steppes/Hool Great Migration* (Originally from Andrew Theisen, Opinions from Giampaolo, developed by Hausman and Atila Pires); *Karameikos* (Giampaolo Agosta); *Davania/Heldannics on Davania* (Thibault Sarlat); *Davania/Schweidnitz* ("Sturm" - Francesco Defferrari); *Heldannic Territories/Heldannic War* (Geoff Gander); *Thyatis* (Giulio Caroletti); *Savage Coast /Orc's Head Peninsula/Yalu Bay* (Atila Pires, contribution from Giampaolo); *Aengmor/Alfheim* (Hausman Santos); *Glantri/Darokin* (Micky); *Rockhome/Ethengar/Norwold* (Hausman Santos); *Nayce* (Hervé Musseau/additional entry by Hausman); *Nimmur* (Hausman Santos); *Hollow World* (Atila Pires, Hausman Santos, Alexandre de Luna).



## BACKGROUND: the legacy of Aaron Allston and the Poor Wizard's Almanacs

Allston's contribution to Mystara is undeniable. GAZ1: *"The Grand Duchy of Karameikos"* is its strong point and was followed with more great products like *"Rules Cyclopedica"*, and *"Wrath of the Immortals"*, which shaped the Known World and beyond.

The setting updates started with the *"Poor Wizard's Almanac I"* (1992), where a full year on Mystara can be enjoyed by fans and played in a world-wide campaign (all events and information of the year were there) immediately following the events after the Great War.

The brilliant contribution of Ann Dupuis (and Paul) is undeniable in the creative way of guiding the sequence of the Almanacs (AC1011-AC1013) assembled in a structure that naturally flowed through the unfolding of the phases of the scenarios, and this has been the same basis that the "fanon" Mystaran Almanac has followed in style to follow the events and changes in the scene (initially by Herve, Geoff and the Old Almanac Team<sup>1</sup>). Even today, when we think of the future editions for the Almanacs, we still have in mind Allston's premise, following the standards of how he establishes his style to develop his plots.

<sup>1</sup> Initially created by Herve Musseau and later led by Geoff Gander and continued by Hausman Santos in the current MA 1020AC development (jointly with the Old and New Almanac Team). Hausman is heading up production and editing for new almanacs. See the project thread - ["Mystaran Almanac 1020 AC?"](#) at The Piazza Forums .

## AC 1019 : Karameikos in Review

- Alphatians living in Karameikos are suspected and accused of working against the interests of the Kingdom of Karameikos.
- A spy from Queen Olivia is caught in the Karameikan School of Magecrafts by the teachers there; the spy was investigating the Alphatians.
- Teachers leave the school and return to Alphatia (Nayce) via a teleport spell (taking equipment, books and school materials).
- Claransa the Seer is named the new Minister of Magic in Karameikos .
- Other Alphatians leaving Mirros are held in custody and investigated before they can leave.
- Trial of Ludwig von Hendriks in Mirros. The Black Eagle is declared guilty of treason by a jury of his peers. He is stripped of his nobility, with all his lands and properties confiscated by the crown, and exiled from Karameikos. He will be escorted to the border nearest to the former Black Eagle Barony with no belongings but his clothes, food and water for one day, and a knife.

## DESIGNING MYSTARAN ALMANAC 1020 AC

A Civil War in Karameikos was always suggested both in the original Gazetteer and in its follow-up, *"Karameikos: Kingdom of Adventure"*. However, it never took place in the Almanacs timeline. It is interesting to recall here the previous work on the Civil War conflict in Karameikos. The *"World in Flames"* timeline by Bruce Heard describes events as the friction between Traladarans and Thyatians increases and the internal conflicts arise across the nation. Steven Wilson proposed the adaption of the D&D 3e adventure module *"Red Hand of Doom"* to a [Mystaran Civil War](#) (see the discussion thread at The Piazza), including events that could lead to the death of King Stefan, such as the battle of Kelvin. A further revision of Steven's work is Giampaolo's version of *"The Dymrak Dread"*, which rewrites the *"Red Hand of Doom"* sections in a way that is more compatible with Karameikos.

The Mystaran Almanac 1020 AC follows a more gradual and less radical approach, following in the footsteps of the previous almanacs, but does not ignore the devastating effects that a Civil War can have, leading to major changes in Karameikos. The main events for AC 1019 in Karameikos, as well as those in other regions need to be taken into account, of course, such as the Orcwars, which can lead to the isolation of Karameikos and therefore facilitate a Civil War scenario.



*Scene of a siege*

## THE CIVIL WAR

The civil war is, essentially, along the ethnic divide of Traladarans vs Thyatians -- but really explodes as a political conflict between the various factions of nobles. While Boris Torenescu may try his own rebellion, he is unlikely to succeed, as few Traladaran nobles will rally to his banner -- those who are far from Specularum do not even have time to take sides, as Boris' forces are likely easily defeated by the Guard and the Knights of the Griffon. Obviously this gives Desmond Kelvin (and, behind the scenes, Alfric Oderbry) a lot of leverage against the elderly Sherlane Halaran, who can be easily presented as a weak patriarch, who would have left the King without support against the rebellious Traladarans. Even Sherlane's friendship with Patriarch Nikelnevitch of the Church of Traladara can be easily played against him by Oderbry. At this point Sherlane is quite old, and Alfric might have an easier time, especially if now he is in league with Desmond Kelvin.

## The role of the Church of Karameikos

Jowett is already out of the patriarchy (after all, he should already be 90 years old!) in 1020 AC. According to the *Mystaran Almanac*, on Vattermont 16, AC 1017 the old patriarch retires:

### City of Mirros, Kingdom of Karameikos. OW<sup>2</sup>

“A special congregation of the Church of Karameikos is called. In a surprising move, Oliver Jowett, patriarch of the church, announces his retirement. He names his successor as Sherlane Halaran, Baron of Threshold. The ceremony is solemn and respectful. When it is over, however, a suspiciously quiet Alfric Oderbry is the first to leave, followed by a file of members of the Order of the Griffon.”

“Jowett sees trouble on the horizon, for his church and for Karameikos. The aging patriarch knew that his failing health would not be strong enough to help weather the church, so he has passed the reins on to someone else. He had Halaran travel secretly from Threshold for this occasion, so as not to tip off Oderbry, whom he suspected might react badly.”

“Sherlane Halaran will step down from his baronial duties; his niece, Aleena Yurevich, will be confirmed as the new baroness in his stead by King Stefan.”

<sup>2</sup> [“Mystaran Almanac AC 1017”](#) at *The Vaults*

In AC1020, as suggested in the *Gazetteer Companion*-level adventure “*Holy War*”<sup>3</sup>, Olliver Jowett dies. Even though he is no longer the Patriarch, his influence is still felt and his death may weaken Sherlane’s position. The “*Holy War*” adventure does not take place until the time of “*Karameikos: Kingdom of Adventure*”, but Oderbry remains a looming threat there<sup>4</sup>. In the *Mystaran Almanac* timeline, however, Alfric is ousted before he can actually rebel. Indeed, Oderbry is ousted from his post at the church in Yarthmont 26, AC 1017:

### City of Mirros, Kingdom of Karameikos. OW<sup>5</sup>

“A crowd gathers in the court of the king to watch as the sentencing of Alfric Oderbry and his lieutenants begins. They are brought before King Stefan and Patriarch Halaran. In a solemn display, Halaran officially excommunicates Oderbry and his men from the Church of Karameikos. The crowd watches in stunned silence. King Stefan then sentences the men to make reparations for the damages they've done - their properties will be seized - and imprisonment. An outraged Oderbry supporter boo loudly, and soon the crowd sets to catcalls and shouting imprecations at one another. The city guard and King Stefan silence the crowd long enough to usher Oderbry and his men out of the room.”

<sup>3</sup> Aaron Allston, “*The Grand Duchy of Karameikos*”, GAZ1, TSR

<sup>4</sup> You can read more thoughts about Oderbry in “*Karameikos: Kingdom of Adventure*”, page 70 - TSR

<sup>5</sup> [“Mystaran Almanac AC 1017”](#) at *The Vaults*

However, Oderbry may still plot behind the scenes, seeking allies such as Desmond Kelvin, the old Thyatian families and even the Thyatian ambassador Cornel Osteric to support his reinstatement to the position of patriarch. Kelvin is loyal to the king, but also out for himself, and his resentment towards the royal family grows daily, so he may be interested in supporting Alfric.

If the friction develops to the point where Stefan's position favoured the Traladarans, the King could gain the open support of the Church of Traladara (even though the traditional Traladaran families would not approve of it) as well as the Halaran faction in the Church of Karameikos. As to the Cult of Halav, they must have at this point lost a lot of steam. It is not terribly reasonable to have them worship Stefan for 20 years as a reincarnated Halav.

### The role of Desmond Kelvin

Count Desmond Kelvin II is basically the next Ludwig. In AC 1020, he is over 50, with no heir except his sister and her husband, and plenty of grudges against Adriana and the King.

#### Topic of the Month: Verdict for the Black Eagle<sup>6</sup>

“Desmond Kelvin II, Count of Kelvin, juror. Count Kelvin is an angry man who believes that he is disliked by a royal family that systematically relegated him to second roles, whereas he feels he deserved a more prominent place among the powers of

<sup>6</sup> See [“Mystaran Almanac 1019 AC”](#) at *The Vaults*

Karameikos: he was kept at bay in the city of Kelvin, away from Mirros; Adriana would not marry him; his advice to the king was largely ignored; he was elevated to count an outrageously long time after Vorloi and Halaran. Thus, while he does not much care about the king's cousin's fate although he thought his arguments made sense and even caught himself wondering if he would have been appreciated to his true value had Ludwig von Hendricks been on his cousin's throne he took great pleasure at the barbs the Black Eagle directed at the king. He thinks the king should hand over more power to the nobility, and so he voted against the king in order to weaken him, a step to hopefully bring much-needed change to the kingdom.”

### The role of foreign powers: Nayce<sup>7</sup> and Thyatis

After the disastrous events involving the Alphatians in Mirros and Krakatos (1019), Nayce diplomats question King Stefan for the acts committed, as Karameikos has previously very good relations with the other nations of the Nayce. The Nayce is relatively distant, and Cornel Osteric may be effective

<sup>7</sup> Nayce is the New Alphatian Empire founded in 1,013 AC after the sinking of Alphatia according to the Joshuan Almanac and later renamed NACE, New Alphatian Confederated Empire in 1,014 AC or Nayce, as spelled Nayce by Minrothaddans, (see also [“To Call an Alphatian by His/Her Name or How to Avoid Feeblemind When Addressing an Alphatian”](#) ) in the fan almanacs timeline, see a complete description of [“Ionace \(a.k.a. the Isle of the NACE\)”](#) at the *Vaults*

in offering support from the much nearer Empire of Thyatis -- not to mention that Thyatian nobles must resent the Alphatian interference. Osteric is fully intent on supporting Karameikan elements hostile to the Nayce (and will try to persuade Stefan to return to his original alliance with Thyatis, offering political support against Nayce), as he fell out of favor in Thyatis for losing Karameikos to the Alphatians, and this crisis is his opportunity to reverse his fortunes<sup>8</sup>.

A foreign power might have staged an assassination attempt against Stefan - which would further increase the tension during a period of civil, military, religious and diplomatic conflict.

## The role of the Traladarans

This part of the plot is supported mostly by the intrigues within the three Traladaran families -- Torenescu, Marilenev and Radu. The Torenescu are divided among themselves, with the legitimate heir,

<sup>8</sup> About Osteric in *K: KoA* Page 92: “His duty is to maintain pressure on the king to grant Thyatis superior trade terms over Ierendi and Minrothad, and to keep an eye on events in the kingdom and regularly report them to the emperor of Thyatis. (...) Stefan declared independence for Karameikos, and Osteric was ordered to arrange an assassination of the new king. This he did, grudgingly, but the plan came to naught due to the interference of some adventurers. Osteric sufficiently covered his tracks, but he was held responsible for “losing Karameikos” back in Thyatis City.”

Aleksander, chafing under the tutelage of his uncle Boris, whom he hates as much as he hates the Thyatians. At some point, Boris finally manages to murder Aleksander, and aligns the family more closely to the positions of Magda Marilenev, according to the plotlines in “*Karameikos: Kingdom of Adventure*”. This will lead at some point to a new rebellion, which will be crushed by the Thyatian establishment<sup>9</sup>.

## The Orcwars

The last element to take into account is the Orcwars. The Orcwars timeline should be aligned with that of the war in Karameikos. At that point, the “*Dymrak Dread*” becomes just one arm of a larger goblinoid threat, possibly masterminded by a nation interested in weakening the Known World, such as Hule<sup>10</sup>. Accordingly to the *Darokin Orcwars* plotline, Tlatepetl allied with the Shadow Hand and some Thyatian merchants (enemies of House Mauntea). Together, they

<sup>9</sup> (*K: KoA*- Page 75) - “Aleksander has two enemies: his uncle and Thyatians in general. He is aware of the lessons of the Marilenev Rebellion, which nearly destroyed the power of that once-great family. He is also aware that Uncle Boris keeps the fires of anti-Thyatian feeling burning hot in Torenescu hearts.” Boris seeks support with Magda Marilenev (*K: KoA*- Page 76: - “Boris is set up as a bad guy, a plotter who wants to grab his share of power within the family – namely, all of it. Boris’s agents tend to be old, hard-line Traladarans, and if Boris were to succeed in supplanting Aleksander, another Marilenev Rebellion would be inevitable -with similar results.”)

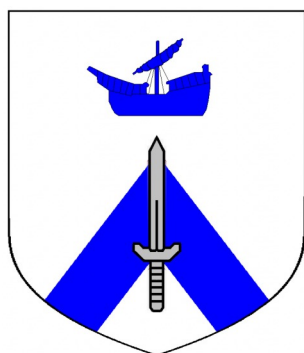
<sup>10</sup> See “[Orc Wars](#)” by micky

are arranging and training the goblinoids for a campaign against Darokin - particularly Selenica (the Cruth Mountains goblinoids were also invited to join). Further parties that may be involved include the Iron Ring and Hulean agents willing to sow chaos in the Known World.

Concerning the Almanac Orcwars, the following plotline is proposed:

- Invasion and seizure of Selenica by the goblinoids sponsored by Tlatepetl and the Shadow Hand;
- The elves are plagued by problems at the magic points in Canolbarth;
- Goblinoid attacks take place in the Altan Tepes and Cruth mountains;
- Karameikos will be unavailable for the any help to the Western Defense League.

The Orcwars plotline will likely extend into AC 1021, but by AC 1020, Karameikos will probably be cut off from its foreign allies by goblinoid attacks, which will magnify the impact of the Civil War. Goblinoids attack and loot communities north of Threshold and south of Reedle along the King's Road. Mountain units of the Karameikos Army are dispatched to the northern border. At the same time, open confrontations take place



between goblins of the Dymrak forest and Callari and Vyalia elves.

The goblinoid attack plays into the Civil War as an independent thread. It just happens at a time

when the government is divided and the army is tied down following up on Boris' plot. The goblinoid incursions threaten Kelvin. So, Count Kelvin will appear as the saviour of Karameikos, especially if one or more members of the royal family die in battle.

## ALTERNATIVE PLOTLINES

Beyond the plotline of the Mystaran Almanac AC 1020, some alternative lines may be followed.

If you want a larger civil conflict, then Adriana and her family die in the war, and soon after Stefan dies of old age. Justin should be the heir, but the Queen favors Valen. Desmond plays the two brothers against each other, hoping to weaken the winner and take over soon after. Killing off Adriana in battle and have her children disappeared or dead makes it easier to explain a conflict. Otherwise, she is just too popular and capable compared to her brothers.

Of course, for a more dramatic change in the campaign, Steven Wilson's "[Red Hand of Doom](#)" and "[Mystaran Civil War](#)" and/or Bruce Heard's "[World in Flames](#)" plotlines can be followed in stead of the Mystaran Almanac one.

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Aaron Allston and Jeff Grubb, *“Karameikos: Kingdom of Adventure”* Boxed Set (TSR publishing), 1994.

Steven Wilson, [“Red Hand of Doom”](#) and [“Mystaran Civil War”](#) from the Vaults of Pandius.

Bruce Heard, [“World in Flames”](#), from the Vaults of Pandius.

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## Campaigning in Karameikos

[Continued from page 77](#)

### Master and Immortal Level Adventures

by Aaron Allston, GAZ1: *“The Grand Duchy of Karameikos”* page 64, 1987

**Location:** All Karameikos.

PCs level: 26-36 (BECMI)

**Main Antagonists:** Entropic Immortals and their cults, Foreign powers.

**Allies/NPCs/Pre-generated PCs:** Halav, Petra, Zirchev and their churches.

**Main Treasures:** Immortality.

**Plot/Main accomplishment:** PCs who remain in Karameikos could be sponsored to Immortality by the Traladaran Three, in the paths of Epic Hero, Dynast or Paragon.

**Connections:** If Orcus and the Dark Triad are a major threat in Karameikos as

explained above, the PCs or some of them could be sponsored to the Path of Immortality by one of the Traladaran Three or by Chardastes or other appropriate Immortals, with the Tasks to stop the activities of Orcus and the Black Triad in Karameikos.

# Threshold Black Market

by Irving Galvez



*Part of Thorfinn Tait replica Karameikos Map*

## From the diary of Titius Ciceron.

I decided to travel from the town of Verge to Threshold. Traveling on rainy days made my trip longer than normal. When I finally arrived, it was already night. The guards at the entrance asked me to hand over my dagger, as no weapons were permitted at the town and they advised me to be careful because the night could bring problems to people who were not used to it. I walked into the town in search of an inn where I could spend the night. I was hungry, and in dire need of a hot meal and a good beer. I approached two gentlemen who were at a corner and asked if they could recommend an inn. They told me I could go to the old quarter at the Silver Dragon Inn. As I walked

away from them, I felt a blow to my head and fell to the ground.

The next day I woke up with the town guards, they told me they had found me unconscious lying in the street. I noticed immediately that I was missing my gold coins and my spellbook. Luckily, I always kept some money in my boots, but I needed to find my spellbook. Worried I asked the guards if anyone had given notice what had happened to me and told me that Boris Dubnov had found me on the ground. Boris was the owner of a Flower Shop "The Tulip" that was near the corner where I had been assaulted. I went to the store and asked for Boris. He immediately recognized me and asked me if I was well. I thanked him for helping and told him that they had stolen





*View of Old town from Fogor isle*

something of great value to me. I further explained the object that was stolen from me was something that couldn't be sold easily. I ask for his help to find a place where they could sell uncommon or semi-legal things. Boris quietly asked me to look for him in the afternoon, and that he would ask people about such a place. I left the store and went to the inn that was recommended by the people who assaulted me.

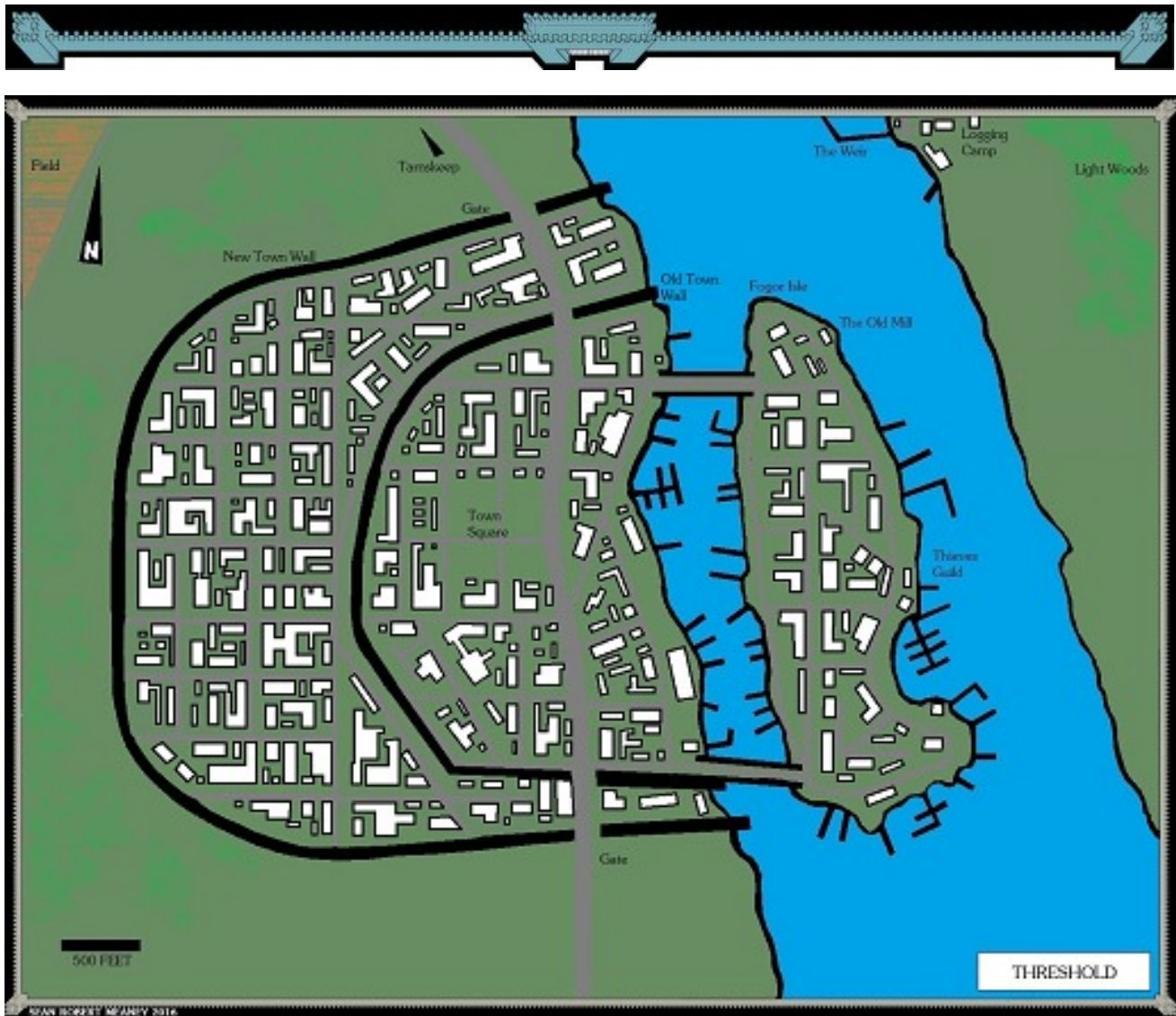
In the afternoon I returned to Boris and he invited me to take a meal with him in the Silver Dragon Inn. He then told me that there was a place on Fogor Isle where it was very likely that I could find what I was looking but was not a very safe place. He told me to go to the first bridge to Fogor Isle, and that before fully crossing the bridge, there should be a guy name Camillus the Beggar sitting on the ground against the railing. Boris added that I had to give him 20 gold coins, without saying anything. I thanked Boris, left the inn, and walked by the Main Road toward the bridge. When I saw the beggar, as explained I took out 20 gold coins and put them in Camillus' hand. He didn't look at either the money nor at me. I waited nearby until there was no movement in the

street and he approached and told me to cross the bridge and walk two blocks and turn right, at the end of the alley was the Dark Alley Tavern. He instructed me to enter and walk directly to Julianus Status the tavern keeper. When in front of him, I had to ask for a blue beer.

Julianus stared at me, he told me the beer cost 20 gold coins and he served me an empty beer mug. At the bottom of the jar was a key, and with his eyes, he directed me to some curtains. He told me that after entering I had to leave the jar outside the door. I walked through the curtains, and I saw a long corridor with a door at the end. I took out the key, opened the door and left the beer mug with the key outside. I entered the room and closed the door behind me. The room had many mirrors on the walls and there was a written phrase that said, "*The answer you are looking is not in the reflection of your mind.*" One by one I observed the mirrors in detail until finally, I saw that one did not show my reflection. I touched it with some trepidation and noticed that it was a door which was painted as if it were a mirror. I open the fake door and saw there were stairs that going down. Immediately as I entered the stairs i noticed a fetid stench, as these stairs led to the town sewers.

Entering the sewers, I saw that there were people walking towards the end of that duct, from another entrance. There was what looked like the entrance to a cave where people went in and out. I walked up there, and a hooded guard searched me for any kind of weapon. I entered the cave and I was amazed to see that there was a small market. They sold all sorts of things as strange

## Threshold Black Market



*Map of Threshold by Sean Robert Meane*

creatures, parts of monsters and humanoids, spells and difficult to find potion components, different types of poisons, weapons, and armor evidently stolen. They also offered services for robbery, hired assassins, spies, extortionists, and sabotage. I asked a random person where I could find books, and he told me to go and see Mikhail Sarev in the corner next to the armor dealer. It took a while, yet when I found Mr. Sarev, the first thing I saw at his table was my spellbook. I asked him the price, but he told me I couldn't afford that. A little mad I told him that the book was mine, that yesterday it

was stolen from my possession. He repeated that I could not afford it and that he needed to recover some money. The only thing I had was an old family ring, that I knew it had some value. I removed it from my finger and offered the ring to him. He took a close look to it, nodded grumpily handing my spellbook back. Afraid of all the bad looking guys there, I rushed my way back out and almost sprinted all the way back to the inn.

## The Dark Alley Tavern

This is one of the most infamous taverns in Threshold, if you aren't known on Fogor Isle then it's likely that you will disappear after entering the tavern never to be heard from again. This tavern is one of many hideouts for the Kingdom of Thieves. Many things stolen all over Karameikos end up here to be sold underneath the tavern.

The tavern has a particular memorable scent of old humid wood. It is a medium tavern with a bar and 6 big wooden tables. It has a restroom and an red curtain on one of the walls. Passing through the curtain leads to a short corridor with a single locked door at the end. This door opens to the Mirror Room which is the entrance to the Black Market.

Mikhail Sarev is the tavern keeper but also the keyholder to the mirror room. During daytime it isn't that dangerous to enter and have some drinks, as it functions only as a tavern. Cheap meals and even cheaper beer are sold here. By night the Black Market is open to people that want to do business. Members of the Kingdom of Thieves patrol nearby streets and alleys near the tavern. Inside the tavern, they normally occupy one table to watch for incoming people. Asking Mikhail for the blue beer and giving the exact amount of coins means that person has already talked to Julianus. The number of coins changes every day, so giving the wrong amount of coins this spells doom, and it is not uncommon that someone will find your body by the sewers or at some part of the Fogor Isle waters.



Map of the Dark Alley Tavern made by Irving Galvez with *The Calamus*  
[\(http://www.trapstreetstudios.com/theCalamus/about/\)](http://www.trapstreetstudios.com/theCalamus/about/)

## Threshold Black Market

The Mirror Room is the enigmatic entrance to the black market. The room is filled completely with mirrors from roof to floor. There is a single space on the walls where a fake mirror is painted, this is the door down to the sewers.

Upon entering the sewers the corridor leads you to a passage north or south. Taking the south corridor takes you to the river between Fogor Isle and Main Threshold. Going north is the entrance to a stone carved cavern where the black market is. To enter the market guards search you and take all your weapons. When you finish your business on the market they return them to you.



Map of the Threshold Black Market made by Irving Galvez with The Calamus (<http://www.trapstreetstudios.com/theCalamus/about>)

### Rules inside the Black Market.

1. No weapon allowed.
2. No thievery.
3. Respect merchants.
4. Only cash, gems or jewelry (no item exchange).
5. No refunds, check what you are buying.
6. No fighting inside the market.
7. Obey the guards.

Punishment ranges from escorting people out of the market, being beaten by the guards or even killed depending on the rule broken and how it was broken.

### What can be found in the black market?

- Stolen Items
- Magic Items
- Spellbooks
- Exotic weapons and armor
- Unique jewelry
- Rare gems
- Exotic alchemist components
- Fake official documents

### Services available :

- Mercenaries
- Hitman
- Extortionists
- Burglary
- Kidnapping
- Smuggler illegal goods

## Personalities of the Black Market

### Julianus the beggar Thief level 5 Chaotic

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He is a man of very short stature and about 40 years old. He has brown hair and a beard. He usually wears dirty torn clothes and smells bad. He doesn't speak a lot and usually answers very sharply. He only has a dagger with him which he usually coats with poison (SV Poison or suffer 20 damage at 2/round, successful save only gives 8 damage at 1/round). In a conflict situation, he seeks to hide in the shadows and surprise attacking in the back. Every day he will be sitting on the first bridge towards Fogor Isle and he knows the exact amount of coins that must be delivered to Sarev in the tavern.

### Mikhail Sarev Fighter level 6 Chaotic

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Sarev is a former town guard. After working for 20 years, he was fired for being found guilty of collaborating with criminals. They gave him the opportunity to work directly for them. Now retired, he works as a tavern keeper. He is a man of medium height and fat. He is 50 years old and is bald but wears a goatee and mustache. With his always grumpy face and bad attitude he attends to the people in the tavern. He is in charge of the key to the mirror room. If you don't give him the exact number of coins, after order a blue mug of beer, he sends a signal to the guards who normally are nearby at a table. He is an expert in the bastard sword and will help the guards if he is needed.

[Continued on page 154](#)

# Adapting Classic AD&D Modules to a Mystara Campaign

by Demos Sachlas

The idea of using AD&D modules for a Mystara-based campaign was originally suggested in GAZ2: *"The Emirates of Ylaruam"*. In a section titled "AD&D game system supplements easily adapted to a Ylari campaign" author Ken Rolston lists:

I3: *"Pharaoh"* by Tracy & Laura Hickman (1982), for character levels 5–7

I4: *"Oasis of the White Palm"* by Philip Meyers, Tracy Hickman (1983), for levels 6–8

I5: *"Lost Tomb of Martek"* by Tracy Hickman (1983), for levels 7–9.

These were released together as I3-5: *"Desert of Desolation"* (1987). Rolston states "These first class-adventures are easily adapted to a Nithian setting." He includes I9: *"Day of Al'Akbar"* by Allen Hammack (1986), adding "This adventure has a fine atmosphere and an especially nifty full-color fold-out map of an Emirates-like desert town."

## G1-2-3: "AGAINST THE GIANTS"

The G series debuted as tournament scenarios at Origins IV in Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1978, where the modules were available for purchase:

G1: *"Steading of the Hill Giant Chief"* by Gary Gygax (1978)

G2: *"Glacial Rift of the Frost Giant Jarl"* by Gary Gygax (1978)

G3: *"Hall of the Fire Giant King"* by Gary Gygax (1978)

These were re-published as G1-2-3: *"Against the Giants"* (1981), for character levels 8-12. Subsequent modules included D1: *"Descent into the Depths of the Earth"*, D2: *"Shrine of the Kuo-Toa"*, D3: *"Vault of the Drow"*, and Q1: *"Queen of the Demonweb Pits"*. The GDQ series was voted the single greatest adventure of all time by *Dungeon* magazine in 2004.



Map 1: Map of the Northern Reaches, showing possible locations for modules G1, G2, and G3

The original setting for the G modules is unspecified, but later established to be Greyhawk when the *“World of Greyhawk”* Folio was published in 1980. The series in general, and G1 in particular, was inspired by the Harold Shea story *“The Roaring Trumpet”* by Fletcher Pratt and L. Sprague de Camp, recommended reading for anyone running these adventures.

With its strong Nordic connection, GAZ7: *“The Northern Reaches”*, also by Ken Rolston, is a natural setting for these classic modules in a Mystara-based campaign.

For the *“Steading of the Hill Giant Chief”* and the *“Glacial Rift of the Frost Giant Jarl”*, there are two areas in the Northern Reaches where giants are known to dwell (see Map 1). The northern area, which is nestled in hill terrain in Vestland, is a fitting location for the *“Steading of the Hill Giant Chief”*. The southern area, near the Jotunvalk pass in the Soderfjord Jarldoms, is perfect for the *“Glacial Rift of the Frost Giant Jarl”*. The summit of nearby Odharjokull reaches 15,750 feet, high enough to support a glacier.

The volcanic plain in the middle of the Makkres mountains, represented as broken territory with three volcanoes on the map, is ideal for situating the *“Hall of the Fire Giant King”*. Here is the description of the location of the Hall from G3:

“The plain about is most evil and drab appearing. The sky is gray and filled with sooty clouds. A distant volcano can be seen, and far to the south a glowing river of molten lava moves sluggishly down a slope and out of sight. It is hot, and the air smells of heated rock and metal. The ground is full of cinders and sharp rocks. The place is lit

by night with dim red light from flaming gases shooting forth from the earth and from molten rock.”



*A giant raids a farm*

The prominence of gnolls and trolls in G3 fits well with additional material on these races in GAZ7. Enterprising DMs may wish to substitute Mystara’s Modrigswerg (Moulder Dwarves) or Shadow Elves for Greyhawk’s Drow, continuing the adventure into the subterranean City of Stars and beyond.

As an exciting alternative, high-level PCs could travel between the Nine Worlds (detailed as outer planes on pgs 62-63 of GAZ7). For example, the Steading could be in Jotunheim, the Glacial Rift in Niflheim (using the Marvel Cinematic Universe first *“Thor”* movie as inspiration), and the Hall of the Fire Giant King in Muspelheim. The elvish prisoners in G3 could be from Alfheim, and the Vault in D3 in Svartalfheim. Q1 and its villainess could be replaced with Hel.



## IDEAS FOR A NORTHERN REACHES CAMPAIGN

I have previously written about using module B9: *“Castle Caldwell and Beyond”* (levels 1-3) to launch a campaign in the Northern Reaches (from the Vaults of Pandius).

### Part One: The Clearing of Castle Caldwell

Castle Caldwell could be on the outskirts of Landersfjord, a frontier and trade town on the Overland Trade Route in Vestland.

### Part Two: Dungeons of Terror

Arnulf Burison, the mayor of Landersfjord, is described as modern in his views on sorcery (which explains why Clifton Caldwell was able to hire an enchantress so easily).

### Part Three: The Abduction of Princess Sylvia

The PCs travel to Haverfjord, an important trading centre on the Overland Trade Route, where the town is in an uproar over the recent abduction of the clanhead's daughter.

According to GAZ7, Leif the Lean, clanhead of Haverhold, admires the Ostlanders, and seeks closer ties with the Ostman clan. He has offered his daughter (Sylvia) in marriage to a young scion of that clan (Frederick).

Oliver of Hom has been hired by Asgrim the Bowed, High Priest of Odin of the Court of Cnute, who wishes to prevent the development of ties between the Ostmans and a powerful clan in Vestland. Sylvia is kidnapped by Oliver and his forces while traveling through the forests northwest of Haverfjord. Oliver's fortress is in the hills between Haverfjord and the Uplands.

### Part Four: The Great Escape

The PCs travel to Vanger, where they are accepted into the service of Rotolf Kalfson of the Bornbank clan in his petty war against Guthorm Brittle-Bone of neighbouring Soderfjord's Boddergard clan. They are captured during a reconnaissance mission and must escape.

### Part Five: The Sanctuary of Elwyn the Ardent

The Church of the Holy Sanctuary is in Norrvik. Elwyn's fortress is in the wilderness south of Trollheim.

There is also an adventure published in *Dungeon Magazine* #23 called *“The Vineyard Vales”* (levels 2-4) set in the Soderfjord Jarldoms. Finally, there are three complete adventure scenarios presented in GAZ7, *“Falun Caverns”* (pgs 37-47), *“The Defence of Otkel's Stead”* (pgs 47-51), and *“The Jarl's Hall”* (pgs 51-59).

Module X3: *“Curse of Xanathon”* (levels 5-7) and X13: *“Crown of Ancient Glory”* (levels 7-10) are both set in Vestland, and could also serve as adventures leading up to G1-2-3

(levels 8-12). However, while X3 is fully compatible with GAZ7, X13 doesn't mesh well, and was pushed 150 years into the future.

Rolston also worked on the "Vikings" supplement for RuneQuest, together with Sandy Petersen and Greg Stafford (1985), which could be used to further enrich a Northern Reaches campaign. The boxed set includes a 40-page Players Book, a 32-page Gamemaster Book, a 48-page Scenarios Book, a 20-page Vikings Digest, and maps.

## SLAGOVICH: CITY OF ADVENTURE

Like the G series, many of the AD&D modules published between 1978 and 1981 were based on tournament scenarios and not originally written with the Greyhawk setting in mind. Some lend themselves particularly well to a Mystara campaign, using the exotic port city of Slagovich as a home base. They are:

I1: "Dwellers of the Forbidden City" by David Cook (1981) for character levels 4-7 – on the Serpent Peninsula in the Wild Lands, originally described in X6: "Quagmire!" and further detailed in the "Champions of Mystara" boxed set (1993).

A1-4: "Aerie of the Slave Lords" (originally published between 1980-1 for character levels 4-7 and revised as "Scourge of the Slave Lords" in 1986) – on the Gulf of Hule, first depicted on the map in X5: "Temple of Death" and further described in the "Red Steel" boxed set (1994).

C1: "Hidden Shrine of Tamoachan" by Harold Johnson and Jeff R. Leason (1980) – in the lost city of Risilvar, originally described in X9: "The Savage Coast" and further detailed as the city of the Wallara in the "Savage Baronies" accessory (1995).\*

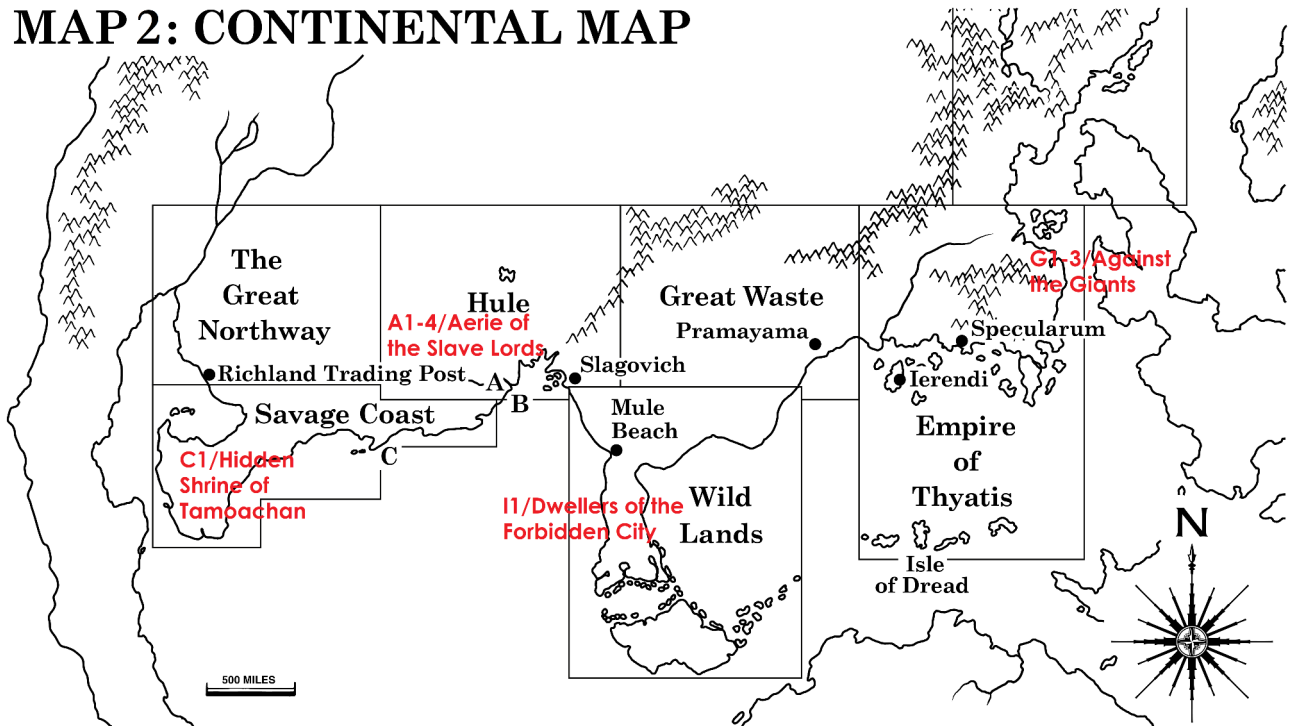
\*The *Savage Coast Campaign Book* (1996) combines the earlier Red Steel and Savage Baronies material into a unified campaign setting.

The PCs can begin their adventuring careers in the frontier city of Akesoli (the area north of there is a good location for the Indonesian-flavored B7: "Rabasia") and then join a caravan across the Sind to Slagovich (the caravan encounters in X4: "Master of the Desert Nomads", such as the Buried Temple, could be used to spice up the trip).

## GATEWAY TO THE SAVAGE COAST

The party is provided with four adventure hooks at the beginning of X9: "The Savage Coast". The first involves rumours of gold along the coast of Orc's Head Peninsula. The second involves payment of a princely sum (50,000 gp each) for a detailed map of the coastline, at the request of the local Cartographer's Guild. The third (and most intriguing) involves a clerical order known as the Brotherhood of Light buying out the PCs with magic items to spy on their rivals, the Lawful Brotherhood. The fourth and final hook is an offer by the Pure Gold Merchant Company to refine any gold the PCs obtain, in exchange for half of it.

## MAP 2: CONTINENTAL MAP



Hints are later dropped that the Brotherhood of Light is actually chaotic, so the PCs are effectively duped into spying on a lawful order by a chaotic one. In my home campaign, I modeled the Lawful Brotherhood after the Spanish missions in Texas, linking them to the Church of Thyatis, based out of Kerendas. Conversely, the Brotherhood of Light is a cult devoted to Atzanteotl, based out of Slagovich. This permits the DM to further exploit Thyatian/Traladaran rivalries, as in GAZ1: *“The Grand Duchy of Karamaikos”*.

Having the Lawful Brotherhood represent the early/frontier church of the later Savage Baronies works extremely well, particularly with respect to the religion of Narvaez (inspired by Spain during the Inquisition). Here is what the Savage Coast campaign book has to say about religion in the Savage

Baronies circa 1000 AC (a few hundred years after the events of X9):

“Five Immortals are venerated throughout the baronies: the Ambassador (Masauwu), the General (Thor), the Judge (Tarastia), Milan (Mealiden Starwatcher), and Valerias. Some baronies have local patrons as well.”

“Narvaez also reveres two Immortals: Ixion and the Inquisitor (Vanya). Ixion is the centre of the Church of Narvaez. He is the sun, fire, life, power, and wisdom; citizens of Narvaez see him as the one Immortal worthy of true veneration. Much religious persecution has been carried out in his name. The Inquisitor acts as Ixion's avenging servant. She represents pride and the correctness of beliefs, seeking vengeance against those who do not follow the way of Ixion and punishing those who stray.”

The standard map of the Lawful Brotherhood's temples in X9 conveniently includes seven altar areas (one for each of these seven immortals). It is especially fitting to use Ixion, since he and Atzanteotl are bitter enemies.

Once in Slagovich, in addition to the four standard adventure hooks, the party might investigate rumors of missing caravans in the jungles of the Serpent Peninsula, become embroiled in the A series on the Gulf of Hule, or seek out the hidden shrine of Tamoachan within the lost city of Risilvar.

## THE YUAN-TI OF SERPENT PENINSULA

David Cook became instrumental in defining the B/X version of D&D, co-authoring the *Expert Rulebook* and writing X1: *"The Isle of Dread"* (with Tom Moldvay), X4, X5, AC2, and B6.

Module I1: *"Dwellers of the Forbidden City"*, published in 1981, was originally run as the tournament scenario for *Origins VI* in 1980. The adventure could easily be regarded as a precursor to the X-series. All of the atmosphere in X1 is present here, in spades.

The background presented in the module describes reports of banditry in the jungles of the south. Merchant caravans are being waylaid, and the survivors relate strange tales of phantasmagoric horrors. As no trade goods have been recovered, it is believed that a hoard of treasure is being accumulated at some hidden location.

The party either sets out to discover the source of the raids for themselves or on behalf of a group of merchants. They arrive at a native village, and are told of the snake-like yuan ti, or demon-men, and their minions, the simian tasloi. They learn that the chief's son has been kidnapped, and the party's aid is requested.

Cook provides a list of additional reasons for adventuring:

A secret group called the Black Brotherhood seeks to weaken the power of the surrounding lands by kidnapping important people and giving them to the yuan ti. The PCs must discover the group and trace them to the Forbidden City in order to rescue the prisoners. The Black Brotherhood could be operating in Slagovich, Ierendi, Minrothad, and/or Akesoli.

Alternatively, a local ruler claims that his ancestors were lords of the Forbidden City and hires the PCs to enter the city, reconnoiter, and clear it of monsters. This could be the ruler of Slagovich, or perhaps one of the other city states in the Gulf of Hule, seeking to gain pre-eminence over the region.

Finally, a courier carrying papers vital to the security of a nearby kingdom is ambushed while crossing the jungle. A reward is offered for the return of the documents, which are also sought after by rulers of other lands. This could involve Ierendi, and possibly Hule, any of the city states, or even the Minrothad Guilds.

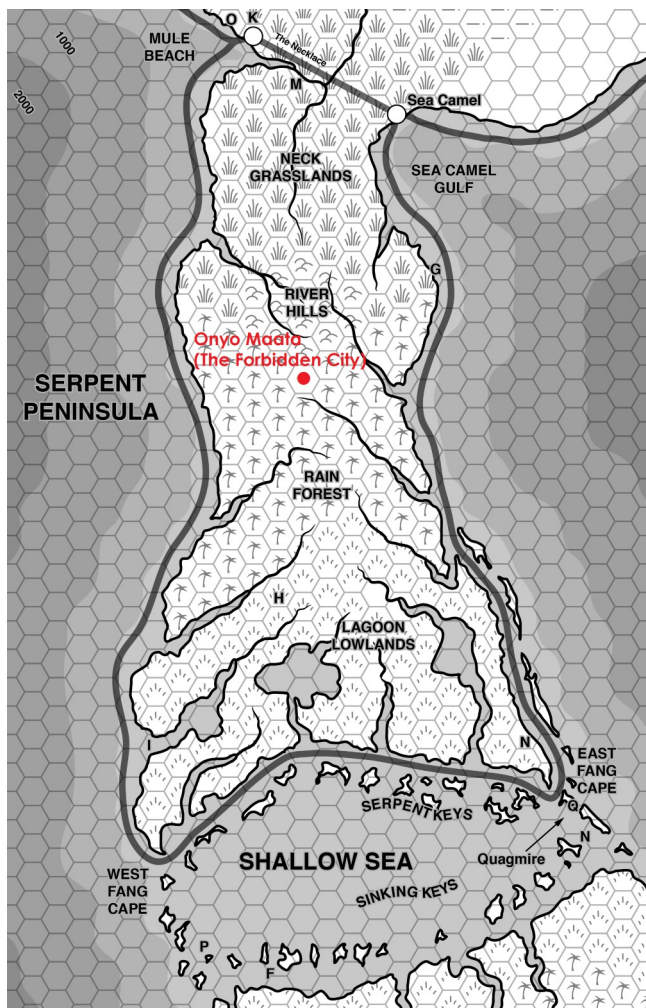
The yuan-ti are great villains, and as serpent folk, could be the reason behind the name

for the Serpent Peninsula. Together with other new monsters, including tasloi for the rainforest, bullywugs in the swampy lowlands, and mongrelmen within the ruins of Gwondoya, the Serpent Peninsula becomes a much more exotic locale.

Intriguingly, the *Explorer's Manual* from the "Champions of Mystara" boxed set includes a description for a mysterious ruined city:

"The Karimari have named many spots in Ulimwengu that they consider beautiful or

worth seeing - waterfalls, curious rock formations, stately and ancient trees, and the like - but only one place is likely to hold much interest to outsiders. This is Onyo Maata, the ruins of a Karimari city more ancient than Shani Kijiji. The Karimari believe evil dwells in Onyo Maata, and take care not to go within five miles of the site. Their oldest tales tell of a great disaster that befell the city and its inhabitants - supposedly as punishment for their straying far from the natural ways of the world. Evil things sometimes venture forth from the



Map 3: Map of the Serpent Peninsula, from X6 (left) indicating the location of Onyo Maata, recommended site of the Forbidden City, and from *Champions of Mystara* in 1000 AC (right)

ruins to plague Ulimwengu, including trolls, dragons, and undead creatures.”

This would be a perfect location for I1. Cook hints that the original inhabitants of the Forbidden City were human ancestors of the yuan-ti. The mixing of bloodlines with serpents could therefore be the affront to nature for which the city was punished.

The central location and proximity to trade routes depicted in X6 would explain the caravan raids by the Dwellers of the Forbidden City. The mastermind behind the raids is a high level magic-user, Horan, who in Mystara could be an exile from Ochalea.

Once in the Forbidden City, further adventures suggested include:

1. Jungle-ghouls wage guerilla warfare against the last human descendants of the ancestors of the yuan ti. Both groups inhabit the ancient primitive sewer system beneath the city. The ghouls use demonic magic to transform human prisoners into twisted slime beasts. The humans have adapted to their underground existence.
2. The yuan-ti have revived the worship of an extraplanar creature, succeeding in opening a small interdimensional gate in one of the larger temples of the city. The temple is guarded by the orchonos – vampiric orchid-like plantmen. The PCs must interrupt a ceremony summoning this creature and close the gate.
3. The inhabitants of the city have established an extensive wererat spy network throughout the surrounding lands.

Information on the network is discovered, but once the PCs attempt to track them down they are framed for a crime by the wererats and must prove their innocence by finding the real murderers.

4. While rescuing prisoners held by the yuan-ti, the PCs discover a long forgotten passage. After encountering many strange monsters, the party enters a misty tunnel and travels back in time to the city in its heyday. They must befriend an intelligent bat-like race and assist in warning the inhabitants of the coming of a great evil.



*Aerial view of the Serpent Peninsula*

## Tasloi

Armor Class: 6 (5)

Hit Dice: 1

Move: 90' (30')

Climbing: 150' (50')

Attacks: 2 or weapon

Damage: 1-3/1-3 or weapon

No. Appearing: 3-30 (10-100)

Save As: Fighter: 1

Morale: 8

Treasure Type: L (x5)

Alignment: Chaotic

XP Value: 10

These stealthy, arboreal, simian creatures possess a ghoulish liking for human and elven flesh. They can successfully hide in shadows 75% of the time, and surprise on a roll of 1-4 (d6), attempting to capture prisoners alive. Tasloi have golden, cat-like eyes and can be heard in the jungle at night, speaking in their high and whispery voices.

## Bullywug

Armor Class: 6 (5)  
 Hit Dice: 1  
 Move: 30' (10')  
 Swimming: 150' (50')  
 Attacks: 3 or weapon  
 Damage: 1-2/1-2/2-5 or weapon  
 No. Appearing: 1-8/2-16 (10-80)  
 Save As: Fighter: 1  
 Morale: 7 (8)  
 Treasure Type: P, Q, S, L (x5) & C (magic only) in lair  
 Alignment: Chaotic  
 XP Value: 10

Bullywugs are frog-like humanoids inhabiting rainy, wet places. They can hop forward 30' or upwards 15', adding +1 "to hit" as well as double damage when using an impaling weapon. They have a chameleon-like power, successfully camouflaging themselves 75% of the time, and gaining a 3 in 6 chance of surprising their victims (5 in 6 if hopping to the attack).

## Yuan-Ti

Armor Class: 4/0  
 Hit Dice: 6-9  
 Move: 120' (40')/90' (30')

Attacks: 2  
 Damage: see below  
 No. Appearing: 1-4 (1-4)  
 Save As: Magic-User: 6-9  
 Morale: 10 (11)  
 Treasure Type: C  
 Alignment: Chaotic  
 XP Value: variable

The yuan-ti are a degenerate race of snake-like demon-worshippers who were once human. There are three types of yuan ti: purebloods, halfbreeds, and abominations.

Purebloods are the weakest of the yuan ti (HD 6). They are human-like, except for slight differences - scaly hands, a forked tongue, etc. They can pass as humans 80% of the time.

Halfbreeds are part-snake and part-human (HD 7-8). Their appearance is determined by rolling once or twice on the following table:

d6	Appearance
1	Snake head
2	Torso can bend and move like a snake's
3	No legs, ends in a snake's tail
4	Has snakes instead of arms
5	Body is covered by scales
6	Snake tail is growing from backside

Snake-headed halfbreeds bite for 1-10 points of damage, snake arms will bite for 1-6 points, and a snake tail will constrict for 1-4 points. Snake parts have an armor class of 0.

Abominations are the strongest of the yuan ti (HD 9). They are often confused with lamaras (see AC9 Creature Catalogue, pg 72) and other snake creatures. Abominations are

either totally snake-like or only have some human feature (such as a head or arms).

Human headed yuan-ti are able to cast the following spells once per day:

- Cause fear
- Darkness
- Snake charm
- Neutralize poison
- Sticks to snakes
- Polymorph others

Human headed yuan ti also possess the ability to hypnotize other creatures once per day (unless the victim makes a save vs. Spells).

## MONGRELMEN

Armor Class: 5  
 Hit Dice: 1-4  
 Move: 90' (30')  
 Attacks: 1  
 Damage: 1-4, 1-6, 1-8, 1-10 or weapon  
 No. Appearing: 1-8 (1-100)  
 Save As: Fighter: 1-4  
 Morale: 8  
 Treasure Type: C  
 Alignment: Neutral  
 XP Value: variable

Mongrelmen are a mixture of different creatures, combining the blood of humans, orcs, gnolls, ogres, dwarves, hobgoblins, bugbears, elves, bullywugs, etc. They are shunned by lawful societies and enslaved by chaotic groups. They possess the abilities of camouflage and mimicry.

When using their camouflage ability, the chance of remaining unnoticed is 60% plus

1% for every turn spent preparing the camouflage after the first, up to a maximum of 95%. Camouflaged mongrelmen will be unnoticed unless the person or item moves or is touched. Mimicry permits mongrelmen to imitate the sound of any animal or monster.

Mongrelmen are accomplished pickpockets (70% chance of success).

5% of mongrelmen use blowguns and poison or paralyzing darts.

## SCOURGE OF THE SLAVE LORDS

Modules A1-4: "*Aerie of the Slave Lords*" were likewise first run as tournament scenarios, in this case for Gen Con XIII in 1980. The individual adventures were later published as:

A1: "*Slave Pits of the Undercity*" by David Cook (1980), for character levels 4-7

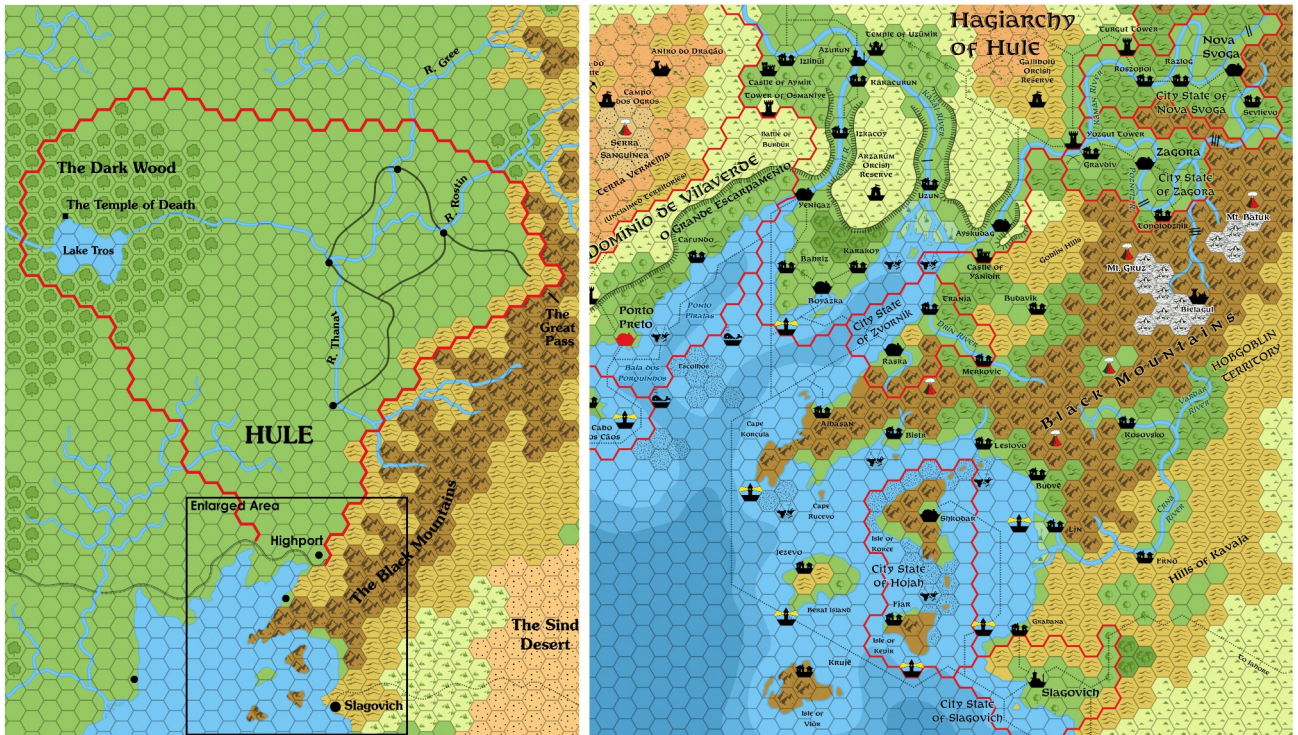
A2: "*Secret of the Slavers Stockade*" by Harold Johnson and Tom Moldvay (1981), for levels 4-7

A3: "*Assault of the Aerie of the Slave Lords*" by Allen Hammack (1981), for levels 4-7

A4: "*In the Dungeons of the Slave Lords*" by Lawrence Schick (1981), for levels 4-7

These were reworked as A1-4: "*Scourge of the Slave Lords*" in 1986, for character levels 7-11.





Map 4: The Gulf of Hule - Map of Hule from X5 (left) with recommended location for Highport in A1, and the Gulf of Hule in 1000 AC (right) based on multiple sources

As already mentioned, David Cook played a key role in defining the B/X version of D&D. Tom Moldvay authored the *Basic Rulebook*, revised Jean Wells' B3, co-wrote X1 (with David Cook), and also wrote B4 and X2. Moreover, he and Lawrence Schick were co-creators of the original "Known World" setting.

In Greyhawk, these adventures are set in the orc-infested territory of the Pomarj. Highport is a city teeming with humanoids.

Module X5: *"The Temple of Death"* first described the land of Hule, but provided few geographical details. The wilderness map included areas the DM was expected to detail further, including several unnamed towns. One of these, in southern Hule (see Map 4) is an ideal candidate for Highport.

The population of Hule is described to be a mixture of humans and non-humans, mainly orcs, gnolls, bugbears, kobolds, and ogres. The rulers are chaotic and serve chaotic gods, and most of the human populace are either chaotic or neutral in alignment. The various humanoid tribes consider themselves independent, but are allied with the human rulers.

Placing Highport in the Gulf of Hule allows PCs adventuring along the Savage Coast to get embroiled with the Slave Lords, whose activities could be encroaching upon the civilized lands to the East, including Darokin, Karameikos, Ierendi, and Minrothad.

The proximity to Hule itself would serve well as a market for slaves from the Known World, given that slavery is likely a



*Landing of prisoners in Ayskudag*

foundation of Hulean society. In fact, the Iron Ring in Karameikos could be allied with the Slave Lords.

Ayskudag works best in Mystara circa 1000 AC, since Highport in the Pomarj is directly north of the Drachensgrab Hills. There are even some choice nearby volcanoes for the City of Suderham.

Gwondoya, to the south of Kladanovic (Mule Beach in X6) might have been razed to the ground years ago by the Slave Lords, providing an impetus for the party to be recruited in order to investigate and destroy those behind the raids, to avoid the same fate.

## THE HIDDEN SHRINE OF RISILVAR

C1: *“The Hidden Shrine of Tamoachan”* (1980) by Harold Johnson and Jeff Leason, (with the “able assistance” of X1’s David Cook, and “Known World” co-creator, Lawrence Schick) started out as the tournament adventure for Origins V in 1979 and was originally titled *“Lost Tamoachan: The Hidden Shrine of Lubaatum”*.

C1 was not originally written with the World of Greyhawk in mind. Tamoachan was later described as the capital of the Olman empire, which centuries earlier covered much of the continent south of Greyhawk.



*The Hidden Shrine*

Incidentally, the Hidden Shrine of Tamoachan was incorporated into the *Savage Tide* adventure path, although only a part of the adventure was used. Given that C1 is notable for its Mayan and Aztec/Toltec trappings, it would fit almost seamlessly into module X9. The Mesoamerican references are easily translated into Mystaran equivalents.

The description for the lost city of Risilvar takes up less than 2 pages in X9, and there is practically nothing about the temple. Risilvar was later retconned as the capital of the Wallara civilization, but details remain slim. The culture of the chameleon men is based on the aborigines of the Australian outback, and so wouldn't fit as the original builders of the city.

## SPECIAL ADVENTURES

The "Special" series is notable in that three of the first four modules were run as tournament adventures using the original D&D rules.

Module S1: "*Tomb of Horrors*" by Gary Gygax (1978), for character levels 10-14, was used as the tournament adventure for Origins I in Baltimore, Maryland, 1975.

The 1978 AD&D version suggests a number of possible locations in Greyhawk for the deadly tomb. Mystaran equivalents on the continental map in module X1 might include:

- 1) The highest hill in the Broken Lands
- 2) An island (unmapped) in Lake Amsorak
- 3) In the Alasiyan Desert
- 4) At the western border of the Republic of Darokin
- 5) Somewhere in the vast Malpheggi Swamp
- 6) On an island in the Thanegioth Archipelago

Module S2: "*White Plume Mountain*" by Lawrence Schick (1979), for character levels 5-10 is the ultimate funhouse dungeon. The stronghold of the wizard Keraptis could be

situated anywhere in the vicinity of the Principalities of Glantri. Interestingly, Keraptis was the name of a Thyatian city in the original Known World setting developed by Lawrence Schick and Tom Moldvay, representing a tenuous link to Mystara.

Module S3: "*Expedition to the Barrier Peaks*" by Gary Gygax (1980), for character levels 8-12 was first run as the tournament adventure for Origins II in 1976. The idea of using a crashed spaceship was probably influenced by an adventure in the City of the Gods run by Dave Arneson for Gary Gygax and Rob Kuntz, and the ship could therefore be linked to the spacefaring race that first made contact with Mystara in ancient Blackmoor.

Module S4: "*The Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth*" by Gary Gygax (1982), for character levels 6-10 originally appeared as "*The Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth*" at WinterCon V in Detroit, Michigan, late 1976. The earlier incarnation is not as deadly as the 1982 version, and requires little conversion, as it has fewer new monsters. The caverns can be located anywhere, although since it is by Gygax, I like using the Lost Caverns for the Cave of the Unknown in module B2.

Conversion is fairly straightforward for 1st edition AD&D adventures, although copies of the AD&D first edition Monster Manual and Fiend Folio (for creatures), Player's Handbook (for spell descriptions), and Dungeon Master's Guide (for magic items) are necessary.

*Master of the Desert Nomad Series*

# Escape from Hule

by David Keyser

## PART I: INTRODUCTION

“Escape from Hule” is intended for use with the 1981 D&D Basic and Expert rules (commonly referred to as the B/X ruleset) authored by gaming legends Tom Moldvay and David Cook. It is also compatible with the 1983 D&D Mentzer rule set and the 1991 *Rules Cyclopedia*. In a pinch, a DM may convert this adventure to one of the many other editions of D&D as needed. Note that when referring to specific B/X rules, the Basic rulebook used B for its page numbers (such as page B24) and the Expert rulebook used X for its page numbers (such as page X63).

If you intend to play in this module, stop reading now. The following information is for the Dungeon Master only, who will use this information to guide the players through the adventure. Knowing what will happen will ruin the excitement and surprise for the players as they face new and unknown situations.

This module is designed for a party of 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> level characters, there should be six to eight players in the group. Each character should have from three to four magical items, including weapons, armor and miscellaneous items. It is strongly recommended that there be at least one 8<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> level cleric, magic-user and fighter. All the characters should be prepared for a wilderness adventure.

This module is the third in what was originally a two-part series. The first and second parts, X4: “*Master of the Desert Nomads*” and X5: “*Temple of Death*”, written by the legend David “Zeb” Cook, describe the encounters players overcome as they navigate their way across Sind, the Plain of Fire, the Black Mountains and the nation of Hule on a mission for the army of the Republic of Darokin. The adventures conclude with the PCs infiltrating the Master’s temple in Hule’s capital deep within the Dark Wood.

The second adventure provides players two different methods to teleport the entire adventuring party back to Darokin. The first is a small closet in location C6 of the temple.<sup>1</sup> The second is the **House of Zebulon**, a magical cube in the possession of the Master.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, a magic-user or elf in the party may also be capable of casting the **teleport** spell if they are 9<sup>th</sup> level or higher, although they can only transport one PC at a time with each casting.

For players not fortunate enough to possess or uncover a magical method of teleportation, this adventure provides three possible methods for the PCs to make their way home. Two methods are detailed in this issue, while the third, Escape by Sea, will appear in the next issue of *Threshold Magazine*.

<sup>1</sup> See X5: “*Temple of Death*”, p24

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p25

## Part 2: The Fate of Narellus

The PCs may have rescued the Darokinian spy Narellus.<sup>3</sup> While Narellus is loyal to Darokin, the Master had two **geas** spells placed on him. These **geas** spells were cast by Alrethus, who is an 11th level magic-user.<sup>4</sup> The first is to never leave the nation of Hule and the second is to never speak of anything the Master and his subordinates said or did to him, which conveniently prevents Narellus from warning the PCs. The PCs may notice this behavior in conversation. Unless the PCs cast **remove geas**, Narellus will, if forced to leave Hule, be affected by losses to his intelligence and wisdom scores by one point each day after leaving. Once again, the PCs have a chance to notice that Narellus seems to be having mental difficulties. After d3+3 days, Narellus will no longer be able to withstand the geas, and he will turn on his allies and attempt to sabotage the PCs so that he can return to Hule. The methods by which he does this depend on the avenue of escape chosen by the PCs, which are detailed in each section below. If the PCs remove the **geas**, or if he returns to Hule, Narellus will begin healing his mental ability scores at the same rate he lost them.

### Narellus, fighter

(AC variable F7; hp 45; #AT 1; D by weapon; MV 40'; Save F7; ML 8; AL L; S 12; I 10; W 11; D 13; C 15; Ch 12)

<sup>3</sup> See X5: "Temple of Death", p24

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p24

## Part 3: Escape by Air

The Master may have his magical flying airboat docked above the roof of his personal chambers.<sup>5</sup> If the avatar of the Master is slain and the PCs possess at least one **potion of undead control**<sup>6</sup>, they may board the ship and take control. No one, including Hosadus in his original body, will be able to take back control of the airboat remotely once the PCs have control of it.

### Gaining permanent control of the airboat

The PCs only have 1-2 hours before the potion effect wears off. The PCs realize after the first turn that the skeletons do not interact with the PCs other than to respond to commands. The PCs must make an imprint on the skeletons to force them to permanently accept the PCs as the new authorized captains of the ship. This airboat is identical to the other airboats in the Master's army which always have an authorized captain to command.

The PCs, but not accompanying henchmen or NPCs, pool their efforts to force their imprint on the airboat and skeleton crew. Each PC rolls a d6 and adds (or subtracts) their ability score adjustment for the ability score they use, which depends on their character class. Magic-users and elves use their Intelligence score, clerics use their Wisdom score, and all other classes use their Charisma score. Total up the result scored by all the PCs. If the duration for the **potion**

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p16,26

<sup>6</sup> See page X48

of **undead control** lasted at least 9 turns, add +1 to the total. If the duration for the potion of control undead lasted the maximum 12 turns, add another +1 to the total. The final Target Number which the PCs must equal or exceed is determined by the following equation<sup>7</sup>:

# of PCs in the party multiplied by 4.5, round fractions down

If the PCs fail to achieve this, the skeleton crew begin dropping the ship's altitude in preparation for landing it on the ground. The PCs may make one more attempt as before, but this time add half the number of PCs (rounding down) to further increase the final Target Number, and the potion modifiers can no longer be used. If they succeed on either check, the PCs gain control of the airboat for the rest of the adventure. If they fail, the skeletons land the airboat safely in a clearing in the Dark Wood seven miles east of Greatrealm and remain inactive. Only if the PCs have a second potion of undead control can they try to get the ship airborne again and start this process all over. If they do not, the PCs will need to escape some other way.



<sup>7</sup> The target number is an equation because a flat number makes it too easy for a large party and too hard for a small party.

## Airboat Statistics Profile

The Master's airboat resembles a sea-going longship.<sup>8</sup> It has the following statistics:

Miles/Day: 72; Speed: 360' (120'); Crew: up to 60 (10 skeleton minimum); Hull Points: 60; AC: 8; Cargo(cn): 25,000

The skeleton crew primarily work as rowers and never tire. The skeleton crew aboard the airboat currently number twenty, they have the following statistics:

### 20 skeletons

(AC7; HD 1; hp 4; #AT 1; D 1-6; MV 60' (20'); Save F1; ML 12; AL C)

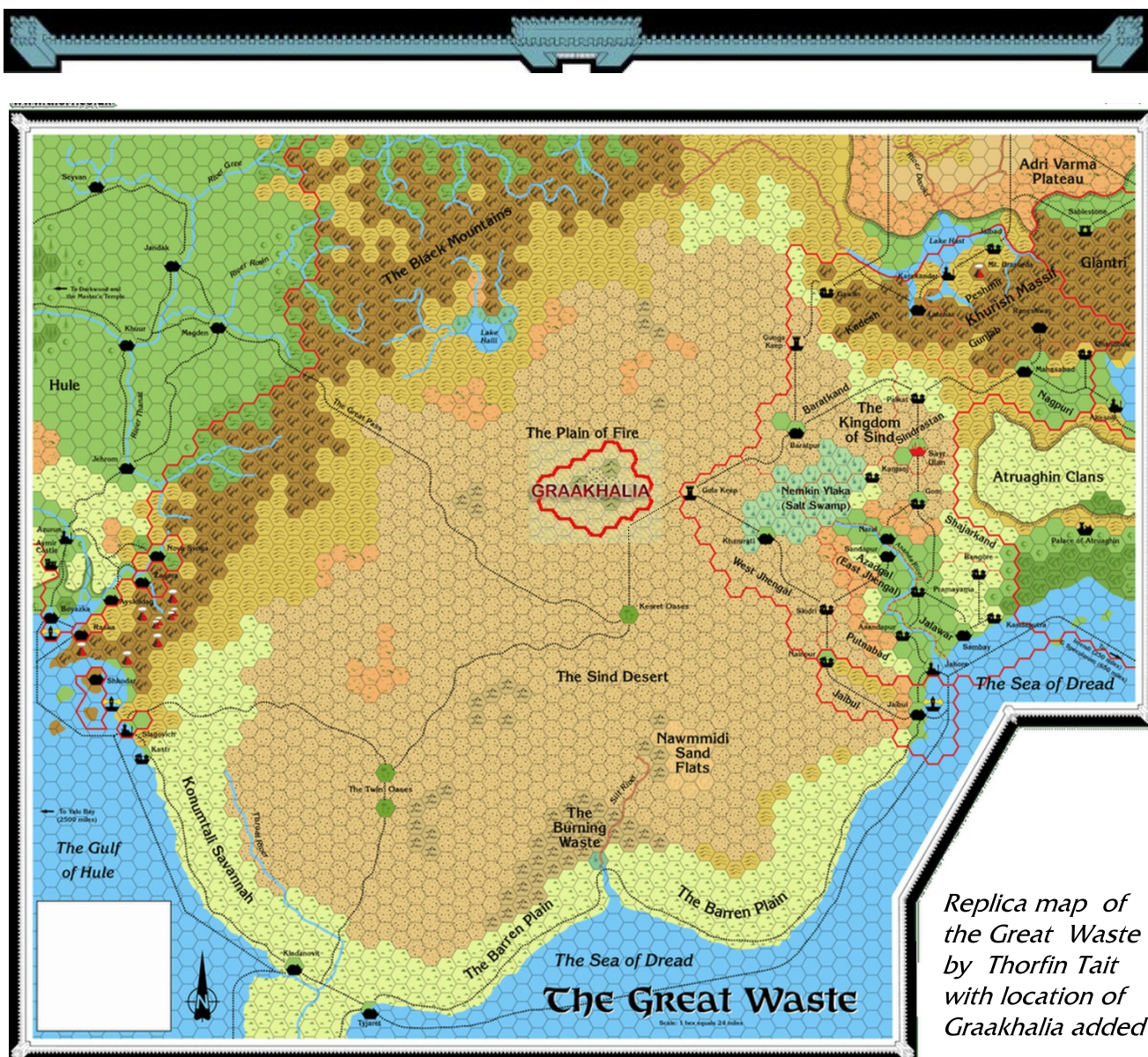
If the number of skeleton crew drops below ten, the airboat begins to descend rapidly and will crash. Skeletons that are "killed" in battles may be restored with an animate dead spell, unless the body was annihilated, such as, for example, an enemy cleric of 4<sup>th</sup> level or higher getting a **Dispel** result using the **Turn Undead** ability.

Any PC still on the airboat when it crashes takes 2d10 hp of damage and the ship takes 2d6 hull points of damage for every ten feet fallen.

For attacks against the airboat itself, use the ship combat rules found in the Expert set.<sup>9</sup> If the airboat's hull points reach zero, the ship will begin to descend rapidly but will also break apart in 1-10 rounds. If the airboat breaks apart while still in the air, PCs take normal falling damage.

<sup>8</sup> See X10: "Red Arrow, Black Shield!", p4

<sup>9</sup> See pages X63-64



*Replica map of the Great Waste by Thorfin Tait with location of Graakhalia added*

### The Journey

The PCs presumably take a direct route east across Hule and over the Black Mountains and Plain of Fire until they reach Sind and begin navigating by landmarks. This will take them on a slightly southeastern course skirting the southwestern edge of the Kurish Massif mountains until they arrive at Akesoli. This route is about eighty-one 24 mile hexes or 1944 miles, and the airboat can complete

the trip in just under a month assuming no delays and minimal damage to the airboat. The airboat follows normal rules<sup>10</sup> for ship damage and repairs, except that the PCs can land on any dry, level ground to repair all hull damage. The airboat contains enough lumber onboard to repair 40 hull points.

<sup>10</sup> See page X64

**Dragon Attack above Hule**

Hule counts among its allies a few dragons which live within its borders and occasionally agree to perform mercenary work. The Master or his subordinates have offered them a substantial reward for bringing down the PCs, dead or alive.

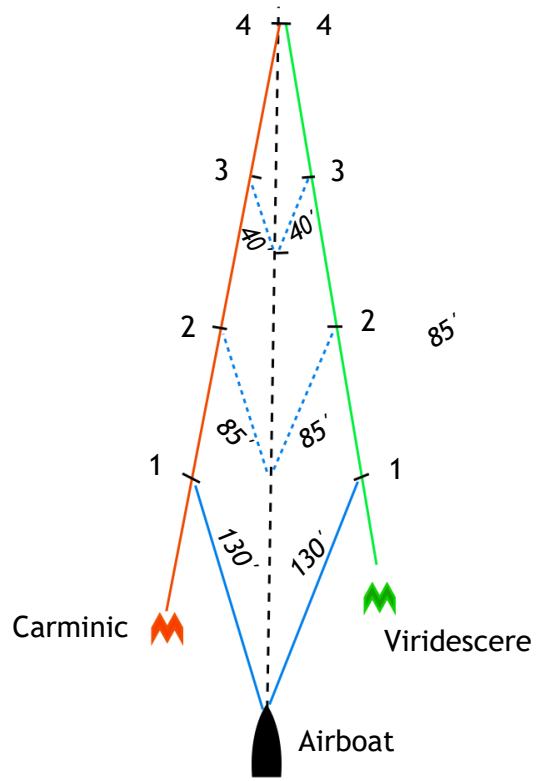
Two dragons, the green dragon, Viridescere, and the red dragon, Carminic, have agreed to work together and are patrolling the skies above settled lands in eastern Hule. They spot the airboat as it approaches their heading and they prepare to attack from opposite directions as they fly close to it. Neither dragon is a spellcaster.

If the PCs have set a lookout, they cry out and point to starboard...a dragon is approaching!

**Viridescere**, female green dragon  
(AC 1; HD 8\*\*; hp 58; #AT 2 claws, 1 bite; D1-6/1-6/3d8; MV 240'(80'); Save F8; ML 9; AL C)

**Carminic**, male red dragon  
(AC -1; HD 10\*\*; hp 73; #AT 2 claws, 1 bite; D1-8/1-8/4d8; MV 240'(80'); Save F10; ML 10; AL C)

As the airboat moves forty yards faster per round, the dragons align their flight path so that they are travelling full speed in the same direction and closing to intersect as the PCs attempt to speed past them. Carminic will make an underside approach to target the hull with his breath weapon, while Viridescere is at an angle above the air boat to target her breath weapon on the deck. The skeleton crew are unaffected by the chlorine gas.



*Diagram of Dragon Attack*

The diagram outlines the respective locations of the airboat and the two dragons in the four combat rounds leading up to where the dragons intersect with the airboat. On round two, Carminic will breath fire to maximize the cone and setting three 10'x10' hull sections of the airboat on fire. On round three, Viridescere will use her breath weapon to position her gas cloud slightly in front of the airboat so that the airboat passes through the cloud and emerges from it just before both dragons attempt to grapple the ship on round four.

If the PCs alter course, they will likely steer away from Viridiscere but bring themselves closer to Carminic. Use the diagram as a guide for tracking if and where the dragons can intersect with the airboat.



Each dragon will attempt to grapple the ship as it passes them, which requires he or she to hit the airboat with both claw attacks. If both claws hit, the dragon holds on as the airboat plows forward, and it may use its bite attack or breath weapon each round on any individuals in range on the deck. A dragon grappling the ship will let go if it loses more than half of its hit points. A dragon that has lost more than three quarters of its hit points will break off any attack and flee.

### Cloud Giant Attack over the Black Mountains

The PCs will need to be at a high altitude to go over the Black Mountains. Unknown to the PCs, they venture too close to a cloud giant fortress that resides permanently on a mass of clouds in this region of the mountain range. The cloud giants have attacked the Master's airboats before, so his air forces normally give this area a wide berth. A band of cloud giants returning to the fortress from a successful raid elsewhere in the Black Mountains spot the airboat and elect to pursue in their fast-moving cloud ship with the goal of looting the airboat and killing its occupants. The cloud giants each have a giant hawk companion.

You are admiring the view on this fine crisp, cold day, gazing over the Black Mountains below. Something catches the corner of your eye, and you look up. You realize one of the clouds is moving toward you at high speed, much faster than the wind could possibly carry it.

### 3 cloud giant raiders

(AC 4; HD 12+3; hp 80, 75, 72; #AT 1 weapon or 1 thrown rock; D 6d6 or 3d6; MV 120'(40'); Save F12; ML 10; AL N)

Each cloud giant raider carries a **potion of levitation**.

### 4 giant hawks

(AC 6; HD 3+3; hp 24, 23, 21, 19; #AT 1; D 1-6; MV 450'(150'); Save F2; ML 8; AL N)

### 1 cloud giant pilot

(AC 4; HD 12+3; hp 64; #AT 1 weapon or 1 thrown rock; D 6d6 or 3d6; MV 120'(40'); Save F12; ML 10; AL N)

The cloud giant pilot has a **ring of spell storing** that contains the following spells: **mirror image**, **hold person**, **lightning bolt** (D 6d6), **polymorph others**, and **feblemind**. He also carries a **potion of levitation**.

The cloud giant ship closes with the airboat from behind and uses the sun or cloud cover so that it cannot be spotted until it is within close range. At a range of 80 feet, the cloud giant pilot fires two harpoons at the airboat which drag a silver mesh material behind them that forms a bridge or boarding platform. Make one attack roll and if the harpoons hit they inflict 2d6 hull damage. It takes a full combat round to reload the harpoons and fire again, the cloud giants can keep firing until they score a hit.

On the next round after the harpoons successfully anchor the two vessels together, the cloud giants begin proceeding across the eighty-foot bridge one at a time, with the giant having the highest hit point total going first. Movement during this encounter is measured in feet. The giant hawks follow the cloud giants in and make supporting attacks. The bridge is only wide enough for one cloud giant to fight, but up to three PCs can

fight on the bridge side by side. If the PCs intercept the giants on the bridge, any cloud giant not in melee will remain on the cloud giant ship and throw rocks at the airboat until there is an opening to proceed across the bridge and engage foes. On any round a cloud giant boards the airboat, they suffer a -2 to attack rolls and a +2 penalty to AC.<sup>11</sup>

Any PC on the bridge that is struck by a cloud giant must roll a d20, if the roll is higher than their Dexterity score, they must save vs Dragon Breath or fall off the bridge. A cloud giant on the bridge is only in danger of falling if a PC scores a natural 20 on a hit roll, at which point the giant must test against their Dexterity of 13 and make a saving throw if they fail the ability score check.

Whether fighting on the bridge or on the airboat, a cloud giant may optionally forfeit its normal attack and instead make a hit roll to grab a PC. If the attack hits, the PC is grabbed and held in the giant's hand until the next round. On the next round, the giant throws the PC out into the air to fall to the ground far below, there is no saving throw. If a PC while grasped can act in initiative before the giant's next action, the PC may attempt an attack, cast a spell, or grab the giant's potion bottle, which rests prominently tied to his belt and bears a cloud symbol as well as the word **levitate** written in the Giant language. A thief PC must make a successful **Pick Pockets** roll, while all other characters must roll a 1 on a d6, to successfully grab the potion bottle. These potions are geometrically designed to allow an individual to drink them while in free fall.

The cloud giant pilot sends his giant hawk companion into the fight but remains on the cloud giant ship, using his spells to support his fellow giants. If successfully targeted at range, he will cast **mirror image** on the following round. If all three cloud giant raiders are slain or sent falling to the earth, or if they retreat back to their own ship, the cloud giant pilot will cut the bridge on his end, causing anyone currently on the bridge to make a saving throw vs Paralysis to grab hold of the bridge and hold on as it is left dangling from the edge of the airboat. The pilot will then break off and depart, bringing an end to the encounter.

In addition to the possessions noted above, each cloud giant carries a large belt pouch the size of a massive sack. For the contents of each sack, roll for Treasure Type E<sup>12</sup> and add a few thousand gold pieces.

#### **Narellus Driven Mad**

Should Narellus be on the airboat when he is driven mad by his **geas** (see Part 2), he will suddenly begin attacking the skeletons and destroying them as quickly as he can. He will turn on the PCs if they block him from attacking the undead, but if he has an opportunity to attack either a PC or a skeleton, he will attack the skeleton.

#### **Airboat Attack over the Plain of Fire**

The Master's air force is limited and his airboats were not deployed in the initial battles with Darokinian forces. But once the PCs escape Hule, some of the Master's elite agents are assembled in Sind and granted use of an airboat to intercept the PCs. The commander of the military squadron onboard is an agent of the Master who has

<sup>11</sup> See page X64

<sup>12</sup> See page X43



*Aerial view of the Sind desert*

crossed paths with the PCs before, his name is Ahmed Khel.<sup>13</sup>

The Master's forces on the ship include:

**20 skeletons**

(AC 7; HD 1; hp 4; #AT 1; D 1-6; MV 60' (20'); Save F1; ML 12; AL C)

**40 human archers, fighters**

(AC 6; HD 2; hp 12; #AT 1 ranged bow attack at +1 to hit; D 1-6; MV 120' (40'); Save F2; ML 8; AL C)

**Captain of the Airboat, magic-user**

(AC 7 M6; hp 22; #AT 1; D 1-4; MV 120' (40'); Save M6; ML 10; AL C)

The captain wields a dagger and possesses a **ring of protection +1**. He has the following spells memorized:

**First Level: magic missile, shield**

**Second Level: mirror image, web**

**Third Level: dispel magic, fireball**

<sup>13</sup> See X4: "Master of the Desert Nomads", p10

**Diviner, cleric**

(AC 1; C9; hp 57; #AT 1; D 1d6+2; MV 60' (20'); Save C9; ML 10; AL C)

The Diviner wields a **mace +1**, wears plate mail armor, and carries a **shield +1**. He has the following spells memorized:

**First Level: cure light wounds(x2), cause fear**

**Second Level: bless, hold person, silence 15' radius**

**Third Level: cause disease, locate object (already cast), striking**

**Fourth Level: create water, protection from good 10' radius**

**Fifth Level: insect plague, finger of death (raise dead reversed)**

**Assassin, thief**

(AC 3; T8; hp 38; #AT 1; D 1d6+3; MV 120' (40'); Save T8; ML 9; AL C)

The assassin wields a **short sword +1**, wears **leather armor +1**, carries a short bow, and possesses two potions, both **fly** and **invisibility**.

**Ahmed Khel, fighter**

(AC 0; F9; hp 75; #AT 1; D 1d8+2; MV 90' (30'); Save F9; ML 9; AL C)

Ahmed wields a **sword +2, extra damage (x4 for 1-10 rounds)**, **AL N, Will 17**, wears **+2 chain mail armor**, an **amulet of finding**<sup>14</sup>, and carries a **shield +2**.

[In the unlikely event Ahmed Khel was slain previously by the PCs, he has been brought back to life with a **raise dead** spell and carries a grudge against the PC who slew him. ]

The PCs encounter the enemy airboat for the first time over the Plain of Fire. Use the rules under the Encounters at Sea<sup>15</sup> section should

<sup>14</sup> See X5: "Temple of Death", p3

<sup>15</sup> See page X64

the PCs attempt to evade. Any successful evasion buys the PCs a respite of d3 days before they encounter the airboat again. If the PCs can successfully evade the enemy airboat four times, Ahmed and his forces will have exhausted their magical resources in tracking them and be unable to continue pursuit. Optionally, the DM may have Ahmed, the assassin and the Diviner make their way to Akesoli from Sind to set up an ambush in the city as a way to redeem themselves for their failure.

Should the enemy airboat successfully close to engage, Ahmed's initial tactics are to have the archers cover the PC's airboat with volley fire and close until the Diviner is in range to begin using **Turn Undead** to disintegrate the skeleton crew of the PCs ship. The Diviner will use **bleed** and **protection from good 10' radius** to benefit allies. If the PCs are forced to crash, Ahmed will have the airboat hover above and direct his men to unleash spells and missile fire without mercy.

If these initial tactics fail, Ahmed directs his forces to target the PCs. The captain will emerge from full cover after casting **mirror image** and **shield**, starting his offensive spellcasting with **fireball**. The assassin will be disguised in uniform as one of the archers and will be content to use his bow unless Ahmed is forced to order the retreat. If this happens, the assassin will attempt to sneak aboard the PC's ship using magic if possible to make a backstab attempt on a lightly armored PC, preferably a magic-user.

If the PCs attempt to board the enemy ship, Ahmed will lead the defense engaging in melee with the most heavily armored PC or, optionally, a PC which he carries a grudge

against from the time they spent traveling together with the caravan. The assassin will use his abilities as described above. The Diviner will cast **striking** on his mace and target PCs from range until an enemy engages in melee with him, at which point he will cast **cause serious wounds** and then fight with his **mace +1**. Should the PCs capture the enemy airboat, they can use it provided they have a few living prisoners to give orders to the skeleton crew. Otherwise they must attune this new skeleton crew to their commands as they did with the previous skeleton crew, provided they have the required magic to do so.

### Rescue the Darokinian Army Remnant

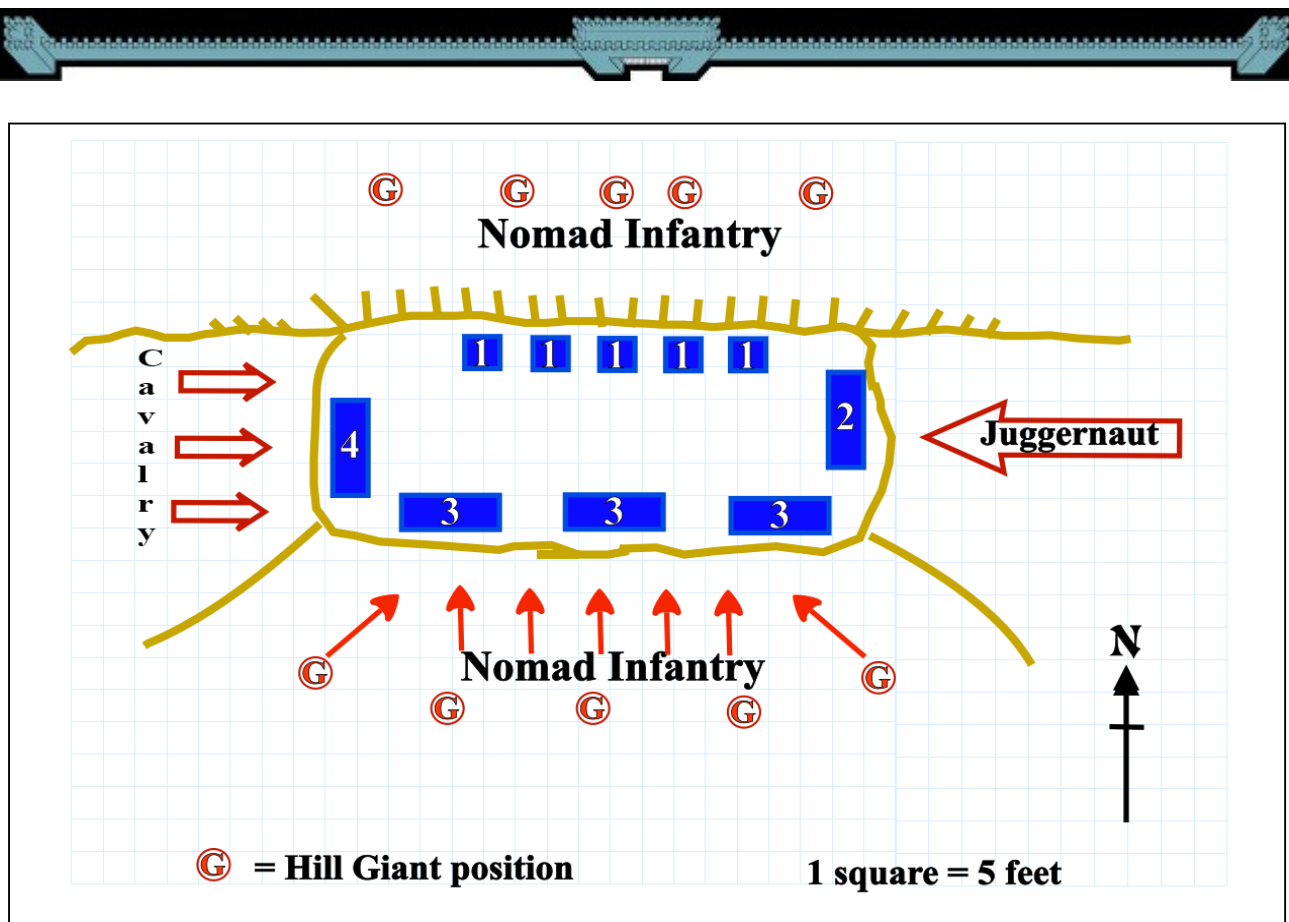
This encounter takes place close to the Sunken City and Gunga Keep, in the desert and close to the Sind border. The PCs are flying a bit lower in elevation to navigate by landmarks when they spot what appears to be a military engagement on the ground. As they fly closer, they identify a Darokin Republic Army standard on a hill amongst a small force with several enemy army standards amidst a larger force surrounding the hill.

The Darokinian force on the hill was a scouting patrol attached to the main Darokin Republic army that was wiped out by the Desert Nomads in the desert outside of Sind. The current commander of the force is Colonel Leonidas.<sup>16</sup>

#### Colonel Leonidas, fighter

(AC 2; F8; hp 61; #AT 1; D 1d8+1; MV 60'(20'); Save F8; ML 9; AL L)

<sup>16</sup> See inside cover of X10: "Red Arrow, Black Shield", Allied Expeditionary Force



*Rescuing the Darokinian Army*

**1 human sergeant, fighter**

(AC 5; F3; hp 20; #AT 1; D 1-8; MV 90'(30'); Save F2; ML 8; AL L)

**15 human infantry, fighter**

(AC 5; F2; hp 13; #AT 1; D 1-8; MV 90'(30'); Save F2; ML 8; AL L)

**15 human archers, fighter**

(AC 6; F2; hp 12; #AT by weapon; D 1-6 or 1-4; MV 90'(30'); Save F2; ML 8; AL L)

Note that all the infantry and archers wear a modified leather armor with breastplate which grants AC 6, the infantry also carry a small buckler shield.

Elements of an elite Desert Nomad army have taken up positions to engage the Darokinian soldiers and capture or kill them.

**10 hill giants**

(AC 4; HD 8; hp 48; #AT 1 club or 1 thrown spear; D 2d8 or 2d6; MV 120'(40'); Save F8; ML 8; AL C)

**80 human infantry, fighter**

(AC 6; HD 2; hp 12; #AT 1 bow or sword; D 1-6 or 1-8; MV 90'(30'); Save F2; ML 8; AL C)

**30 elite human cavalry, fighter**

(AC 4; HD 3; hp 21; #AT 1 bow or sword; D 1-6 or 1d8+1; MV 120'(40'); Save F3; ML 9; AL C)

**30 warhorses**

(AC 7; HD 3; hp 1; #AT 0(while ridden) or 2

hooves; D 0 or 1-6/1-6; MV 120'(40'); Save F2; ML 9; AL N)

**1 stone juggernaut<sup>17</sup>**

(AC 0; HD 30\*\*; hp 180; #AT 1 crush; D 10d10; MV 90' (30'); Save special; ML 12; AL N)

**1 human captain F6**

(AC 2; HD 6; hp 42; #AT 1 sword; D 1d8+2; MV 60'(20'); Save F6; ML 10; AL C)

The top of the hill is eighty feet wide on the north and south facings and thirty feet wide on the east and west facings. The hill has a steep, rocky northern face that is difficult to climb and impassible for the cavalry and juggernaut. The other three compass facings, however, are more gentle slopes of packed sand.

If the PCs choose to assist, they can either pilot the airboat in close so that they can evacuate the Darokin force as the airboat glides slowly over the hilltop, or they can attack the Desert Nomad army directly. If they make a direct attack on one of the sides of the hill, Colonel Leonidas will order his forces to move toward the airboat and reinforce the attack if he can, but he will not send his men down the steep north face nor will he send his men toward the juggernaut.

The troops on both sides are dispersed as follows:

On the north side, five hill giants and twenty-five human infantry are in position and directing missile fire at any target they see at the top of the hill. Five Darokinian archers are scattered about attempting to

return fire but are mostly pinned down in cover.

On the east side, the stone juggernaut is building up momentum to ascend the hill. Five Darokinian infantry are guarding this side near the hill crest but they will break and flee as the juggernaut closes.

On the south side, five hill giants and fifty-five human infantry are spread out and slowly advancing up the hill, firing at the top of the hill as they advance. They expect to be the anvil in this engagement and the captain of the Nomad army is here commanding them directly. At the top of the hill, the Darokinian force is spread thin with just five infantry and ten archers attempting to cover the approach and return fire.

On the west side, thirty elite cavalry are grouped and preparing to charge in ranks of 6 wide. The last five Darokinian infantry are waiting at the hillcrest along with Colonel Leonidas.

If the PCs approach the hilltop, they can drop ten ropes on each side and slow the airboat down to as little as 10' per round to give the Darokinian force an opportunity to climb aboard. The PCs have time to set up their approach from any direction they choose, as the Desert Nomads temporarily halt their assault when they see the airboat approaching. The Desert Nomads will first assume that the airboat has come to drive the Darokinian soldiers off the hilltop, but once they realize their error, the cavalry and juggernaut will charge the hilltop. If the PCs don't give away what they are doing, this will be on the first round when the airboat

<sup>17</sup> See X4: "Master of the Desert Nomads", p30

reaches the edge of the hilltop and begins slowly passing over.

The elite cavalry will reach the crest of the hill on round 3 and, if noone is there to engage them, charge any target in range on the hilltop in round 4.

The juggernaut will reach the crest of the hill on round 4 and continue straight across the hilltop before plunging down the west side of the hill on round 7.

The cavalry will sweep down the south side of the hill on round 5 to avoid the juggernaut and run down any Darokinian soldiers on the slope before pulling their horses to a stop as they meet their own infantry advancing up the south slope.

Any Darokinian soldier will grab an available rope within five feet and begin pulling themselves up. It will take them five combat rounds to safely climb into the airboat, and they need at least two rounds of climbing before someone underneath can grab the same rope and also try to pull themselves up.

Unaided, a Darokinian soldier has a 75% chance of climbing up on their own, although this drops to a 70% chance if two soldiers attempt to climb the same rope.

A PC in the airboat who wishes to assist can pull on the rope, for each attempt to assist the player makes an ability score check against their Strength by rolling a d20.

If they roll their strength score or less, they reduce the time it takes the soldier to climb the rope by two rounds, and they increase the percentage of success by double their

Strength score up to a maximum of 99%. If the PC fails the roll, they only reduce the climbing time by one round and increase the percentage of success by their Strength score.

As an example, a PC, with a Strength of 12, attempts to help two soldiers climbing the same rope. A successful ability score roll increases both soldiers chance of success from 70% to 94%, and the second soldier completes the climb in three combat rounds.

Note that if the airboat crosses paths with the juggernaut it must have more than fifty feet of altitude to safely avoid a collision.

The PCs gain the XP value for all the Darokinian forces they rescue.

Once this encounter is over and the airboat departs safely, Leonidas recommends they make full speed for Akesoli. See Part 5 for the conclusion.



## Part 4: Escape by LAND

This route makes certain assumptions about the House of Zebulon. The rules for this magic item are clarified below, but this escape route will open to the PCs if they use the **House of Zebulon** to return to the Evil Abbey of the bhuts.

### House of Zebulon rule clarifications

The **House of Zebulon** does not lead to an extra-dimensional space, instead the apartment of six rooms occupies space in the Evil Abbey, specifically the Abbot's House.<sup>18</sup> Anyone entering the Abbot's House from the Evil Abbey will exit back into the abbey when they leave. But if the owner of the **House of Zebulon** uses it to open a doorway to the abbey, they **teleport** to location N1, leaving the **House of Zebulon** behind. As a result, walking out of the door at N1 will bring the users of the **House of Zebulon** back to where the magic item is located, they will not walk into the courtyard of the abbey. To bypass this magic and escape Hule by returning to the abbey, the PCs must go upstairs to the terrace found at location N7. There they can see the other buildings of the abbey and jump down or lower themselves into the courtyard. Once they do so, they have left Hule and the House of Zebulon behind and their adventure returns to the Evil Abbey.

In addition to transporting the PCs to the Evil Abbey, the **House of Zebulon** can open the doorway once a week to any location the owner is familiar with. This functionality is

<sup>18</sup> See X4: "Master of the Desert Nomads", p27-28

equivalent to a **teleport** spell. As with traveling to the abbey, using this ability requires the owner to leave the **House of Zebulon** behind, so the owner will need to return to the location of the magic item by other means.

Lastly, disregard all references in X4: "*Master of the Desert Nomads*" to locations N1-N6 being within the Master's temple. The rooms exist within the Evil Abbey and the Abbot's House is part of the magical item which is the **House of Zebulon**. The viewpoints from the windows of locations N3, N5 and N6 as described in X4 are due to the Master situating the **House of Zebulon** in his personal chamber<sup>19</sup> so that two windows can be viewed from within the cube.

### The Evil Abbey Revisited

If the PCs somehow avoided the Evil Abbey the first time and did not engage with the bhuts before reaching the Black Pass, then you can run this encounter as described in X4: "*Master of the Desert Nomads*".

But if the PCs are returning to the abbey, they will find that every bhut they have slain now walks the abbey again as one of the walking dead. The Master laid a **curse** on the bhuts and the abbey for failing to stop the PCs. The first part of the **curse** transformed any bhut slain into an undead bhut (see Part 6 for details). The second part of the **curse** imprisons both the living and undead in the abbey, or that enter the abbey, within the walls of the abbey, which now includes the PCs. No means of escape, not even magical means, is possible for as long as the **curse** holds. Spells like **dimension door** and **fly** do not function in the abbey, and even

<sup>19</sup> See X5: "Temple of Death", p25-26



attempting to lower a rope from the top of the wall or a window just causes the rope and any grappling hook or other anchor to fall away before anyone can use it.

To break the **curse**, the PCs must slay eight of the undead bhuts, destroying not only their bodies but also their incorporeal forms. Bhuts will generally be found where they were located at night in the adventure X4. Note that if the chamber of the Abbot's Shrine<sup>20</sup> plunged over the cliff in the original adventure, any bhut's corpses in that room were lost and are not present among the undead bhuts.

As explained in the New Monster section (Part 6), each bhut when first encountered is occupying their own corpse. Once the corpse is slain, the undead bhut manifests as an incorporeal spirit and continues the battle. Use the statistics provided in X4 for the bhuts in their corporeal form, and the following statistics for bhuts in their incorporeal form. The incorporeal form will generally have 8 hp more than its corporeal form.

#### Undead bhut

(AC 1; HD 8+4\*\*); hp 40-68; #AT 1 bite; D 1-10 + special; MV 150'(50'); Save F14; ML 10; AL C)

Due to the **curse** on the Evil Abbey, all the undead bhuts are **turned** as if they were undead two columns to the right of the **Turn Undead** table.<sup>21</sup> This means that when animating a body, undead bhuts are turned as if they are vampires. The undead bhut in

its incorporeal form is turned as if one column greater than a vampire, which is shown below.

Cleric Level	Incorporeal bhut in Evil Abbey
7	11
8	9
9	7
10	T
11+	T

The PCs gain XP for each physical body possessed by the undead bhuts that they destroy, in addition to destroying the incorporeal undead bhuts.

Note that the buildings in the Evil Abbey are made of stone, and incorporeal undead bhuts forced to flee from a cleric's **Turn Undead** ability may be forced to flee through stone walls exposing them to their unique vulnerability (see Part 6).

Narellus, if present, will fight bravely alongside the PCs as they attempt to clear and escape the Evil Abbey. Each battle, however, the PCs may notice Narellus becoming more morose and despondent, particularly if he suffers Wisdom damage in combat against the undead bhuts.

Once the PCs break the **curse** and escape the Evil Abbey, they can retrace their original path using now familiar landmarks to navigate through the Desert Hills as they make their way to the Plain of Fire.

<sup>20</sup> See X4: "Master of the Desert Nomads", p26

<sup>21</sup> See pages X5 and X7.



*Caravan in the desert*

### Narellus Driven to Despair

If Narellus is with the party, he will turn on the PCs earlier, while they are still in the Desert Hills. The sights he sees at the Evil Abbey fill him with despair and shortens the incubation time for his betrayal to just 1d3 days. The shorter duration results in less of a drop in his ability scores, which means he comes up with a better plan.

Narellus will wait until he takes a night watch while the other PCs sleep and then slips away. If this is not possible, he will volunteer to scout for food while the party is resting. Once the PCs realize he is gone, they must decide if they wish to follow his tracks and recapture him. If they do not or if they fail to find him, then in twenty-four hours Narellus returns accompanied by one of the enemy patrols<sup>22</sup> which serve the Master and wander the Desert Hills. Select one of the enemy patrols that the PCs did not encounter while playing X4 or, if they have already encountered all three patrols previously, have Narellus return accompanied by five hill giants. Narellus and his new companions will attempt to ambush and slay the PCs before they can reach the Plain of Fire.

<sup>22</sup> See X4: “Master of the Desert Nomads”, p15

### 5 hill giants

(AC 4; HD 8; hp 48; #AT 1 club or 1 thrown spear; D 2d8 or 2d6; MV 120’(40’); Save F8; ML 8; AL C)

If the PCs capture Narellus at any time, they will need to both break the **geas** and engage in persuasion to fully extract him from the grasp of the Master. The PCs can use their Charisma ability score adjustment while persuading and use the Reaction table<sup>23</sup> to see if they succeed.

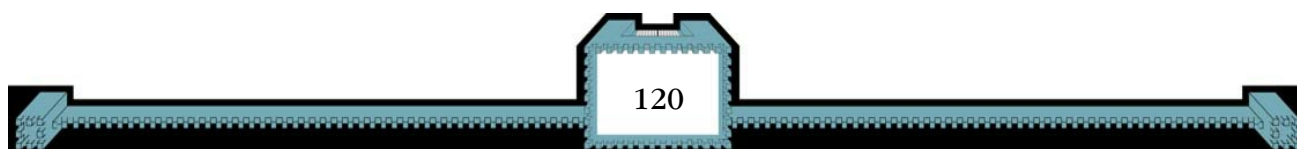
### The Unknown Benefactor<sup>24</sup> Returns

As the PCs reach the end of the Desert Hills, they spot a shiny golden flash in a gully before a steep hill that rests on the border with the Plain of Fire. If they approach to investigate, they see another golden flash, and a crack in the earth begins to crumble away until a tunnel is revealed.

The PCs here a voice quietly say, “Enter. This aid will be my last. When you stand before enemies who have become friends, there you may seek a friend and guide.”

<sup>23</sup> See page B24.

<sup>24</sup> See X4: “Master of the Desert Nomads”, p3



This tunnel takes the PCs under the Plain of Fire for many miles before reaching the land of Graakhalia.<sup>25</sup> They will travel along smooth tunnels bored of packed earth by a purple worm or some other great creature for about 288 miles (twelve 24 mile hexes) before reaching the western edge of Graakhalia. They occasionally see cracks high above that let some sunlight penetrate from the surface, and clean water in crevices which they can drink. While occasional side tunnels are found, they quickly dead end and the PCs have no chance of getting lost.

### Deserted Elven Outpost

The PCs arrive at the western edge of Graakhalia where a powerful Sheyallia elf wizard once established a private outpost where he could perform magical research and store magical lore. He chose this site based on its remote location and proximity to yellow mold colonies which discouraged intrusion. Only one safe avenue of approach to the outpost from the east was established, existing to this day.

The elven wizard passed away within the outpost before designating a successor, leaving the Sheyallia elves and Gruugrakh gnolls unable to pass beyond the guard chamber wherein lies the “Guardian of Nihility”. A presence is maintained by Graakhalian at the entrance foyer of the outpost, but so far no one has been able to get past the guardian.

All the doors of the elven outpost are made of a strange metallic alloy which does not rust, the doors are stuck but not locked unless otherwise noted and require the standard roll to open.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> See “Champions of Mystara” box set, Explorer’s Guide p25-32

### A: Yellow Mold Cavern

Here the tunnel passes through a natural cavern where yellow mold lines the floor, walls and ceiling. The PCs notice forty feet ahead the side of the tunnel has collapsed leaving a large aperture where no yellow mold grows.

The PCs must pass through forty feet of yellow mold, either by not touching the mold, or by carefully making their way through causing as little disturbance as possible, or by running as fast as possible to try and stay ahead of the cloud of spores. Attempting to destroy the yellow mold with fire is also possible, though it will require several hours for the resulting spores to clear.

#### Yellow Mold

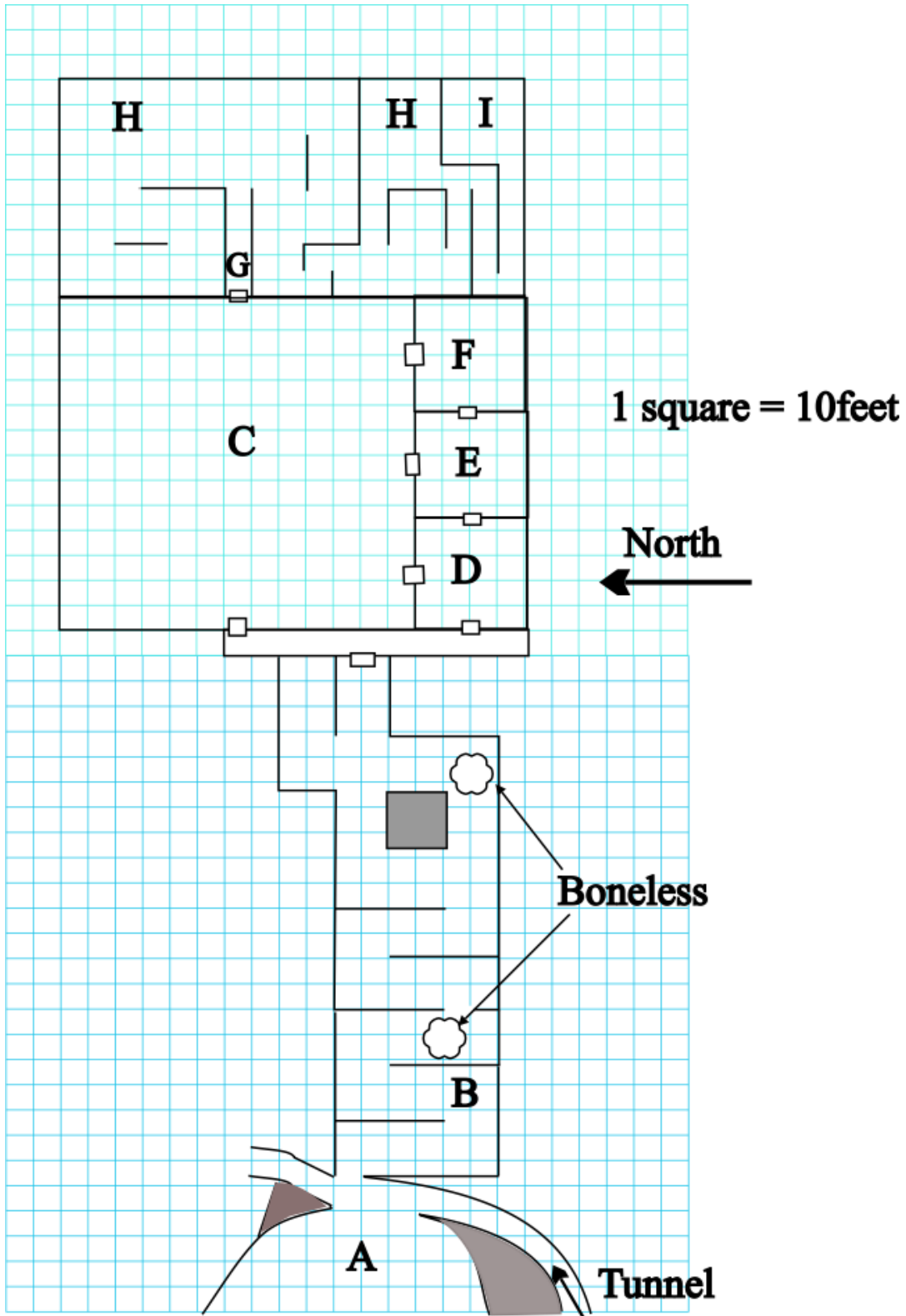
(AC nil; HD 16 (minimum to clear a 2’ path to the aperture) or more; hp 80 (5hp per HD); #AT Spores; D 1-6 + special; MV 0; Save F2; ML 12; AL N)

### B: Passages of the Boneless

These are unfinished passages which were originally planned to be developed into a maze and tomb for the elven wizard. This area, as well as the rest of the outpost, is magically warded against yellow mold spores, which is why the yellow mold colonies have not migrated into these passages.

What does occupy these passages are two Boneless (see Part 6 for details) as shown on the map. They lie in wait and attack the PCs as soon as they can draw a line of sight, or more specifically a line of thermal sensing, to a target. They first attack by spitting a thick glob of acid and then closing to melee.

<sup>26</sup> See page B21



These two Boneless are descended from one Boneless which was captured and studied by the elven wizard long ago. The second Boneless will not come to the aid of the first.

### 2 Boneless

(AC 0; HD 10\*; hp 70, 65; #AT 1 bite + special; D 1-10/4d6 or 6d6; MV 60'(20'); Save F10; ML 10; AL C)

### C: The Pleasant Garden

You are momentarily dazzled by sunlight shining in half of this immense chamber. You are surprised to find what appears to be a surface outdoor garden in half of the chamber and adjacent to what is unmistakably a second garden shrouded in darkness growing a variety of underground plants and fungi. A pleasant waterfall pours out from the ceiling in one corner and you see irrigation channels distribute the water evenly throughout.

This immense chamber was the wizard's garden where he grew both underground and above ground plants for both food and magical spell components. The northern half of the garden receives light through a crevice in the ceiling and contains many beautiful trees, flowers and shrubs that normally grow on the surface. If the PCs attempt to investigate the crevice they find it does not directly lead to the surface but follows a zigzag course with installed mirrors reflecting the light to this chamber. The southern half of the garden grows various benign fungi and strange plants which thrive underground.

Hidden in the garden in shallow burrows are five caecilia, which move to attack soon after the PCs begin exploring this chamber. If the PCs enter the garden from the door on the

west wall or the central door on the south wall, they will be attacked from three directions. But if they enter from either of the other two doors on the south wall they will be in a more defensible position and will only be attacked from two directions.

### 5 Caecilia<sup>27</sup>

(AC 6; HD 6\*; hp 42,41,38,37,36; #AT 1 bite; D 1-8; MV 60'(20'); Save F3; ML 9; AL N)

### D: Experimentation Chamber

A large table holding glass vials and beakers occupies one corner of this chamber, with the center dominated by what appears to be a summoning circle engraved on the stone floor. A wall hanging across the room has a dagger sticking out of it. There are numerous scorch marks and wear on the far wall. Four large and masterfully carved stone statues stand at the four corners of the room. Two of the statues depict elven warriors, while the other two depict larger gnoll warriors with groomed close-cropped mohawks instead of the wild manes you normally see on their heads and necks. You pause as you realize both elves and gnolls are dressed in similar armor and carry similar weapons.

This chamber was used for magical experimentation and spell research. The table is covered with glass vials and beakers but all substances have dried up except for a **potion of control plant** which rests in a sealed unmarked vial.

The south wall bears numerous scorch marks and wear. On the west wall hangs a dart board that is annotated with elven script and has a **dagger +1** lodged in the bullseye.

<sup>27</sup> See page X28

The statues standing at the corners of the room are four living rock statues. They will remain motionless until the PCs move well into the room or until they are attacked. Once they activate they will attack until destroyed or they fail a morale check. If the statues do fail a morale check, they will attempt to play dead rather than flee.

#### 4 Living Rock Statues<sup>28</sup>

(AC 4; HD 5\*\*; hp 35, 33, 32, 31; #AT 2; D 2-12/2-12; MV 60' (20'); Save F5; ML 11; AL C)

### E: Personal Quarters

This is the bedroom, with a large elaborate bed covered in fine sheets and a large desk nearby. A curtain against the far wall doesn't extend to the floor and appears to cover what could be a window. A large chest rests on the floor close to the bed.

This is the wizard's personal bedroom and study. The bed is covered in rich silks, most of which can be salvaged and are worth 325 gp. The PCs find the elven wizard's mummified corpse under the covers. There are no signs of violence on the body.

The southern wall has curtains which are closed, opening the curtains reveals a **mirror of life trapping**. The desk contains various parchments and notes in elven on various topics of magical research and alchemy. Also found in a drawer is the wizard's spell book. The spells in the spell book are to be selected by the DM, and include up through the 5<sup>th</sup> level of Magic-user and Elf spells.

The chest is trapped and has both a complex mechanical lock as well as a **wizard lock** spell. A thief who attempts to unlock the mechanical lock faces a -5% penalty to their **Open Locks** roll. The trap is set off if the mechanical lock is broken or if the chest is opened without first finding and disarming the trap. The key was lost long before and the wizard used a **knock** spell as needed to unlock it. The wizard lock is cast by a 9<sup>th</sup> level caster.

If the trap is triggered a magical sonic blast inflicts 2d6 points of damage on everyone within the chamber unless blocked by a **silence** spell. This sonic blast will shatter any potion bottles the PCs are carrying along with the mirror of life trapping. Destroying the mirror releases ten aranea that have been trapped for centuries. They have been driven insane by their imprisonment and this is reflected in their Morale score, they fight to the death.

#### 10 aranea<sup>29</sup>

(AC 7; HD 3\*\*; hp 20 each; #AT 1; D 1-6 + poison; MV 60' (20'), In web: 120' (40'); Save M3; ML 12; AL C)

On the first round of combat, the first three aranea cast **mirror image**, while the next two aranea cast **web** and attempt to ensnare as many opponents as possible. Two aranea cast **charm person** while the last three cast **magic missile**. On the second round of combat, the first three aranea attack in melee, the next two cast **magic missile**, the next two cast **shield** spells, and the last three cast **light** spells at individual opponents who are still up and fighting. On the third round of combat, the first three aranea remain in

<sup>28</sup> See page B37

<sup>29</sup> See X1: "The Isle of Dread", p28

melee, the next two cast **magic missile**, the next two enter melee, and of the remaining three, two cast **mirror image** and the last casts **web**. All remaining aranea engage in melee by the fourth round of combat.

The contents of the chest include 1153 gp, five pieces of jewelry individually boxed in small boxes of finely crafted teak wood for a combined worth of 6500 gp, a **wand of negation**, a **potion of control giant**, and a **potion of growth**. If the sonic blast is triggered, the potions are destroyed.

#### F: Library

This chamber has several bookshelves stacked with books and scrolls. One bookshelf is only half full and another is completely empty, indicating possible plans for future expansion.

Most of the books and scrolls are written in Elvish. If the PCs spend a few hours reading they learn the basic history of the Sheyallia elves and the nation of Graakhalia.<sup>30</sup> The historical perspective of these books portray a chauvinistic narrative, emphasizing how the Sheyallia elves discovered habitable caverns beneath the Plain of Fire and settled while reluctantly allying with the Gruugrakh gnolls for protection and slowly elevating the gnolls' culture until a true nation could be formed.

For every two hours the PCs, as a group, spend reading material in the library, there is a cumulative 1 in 10 chance of discovering a collection of forgotten notes wedged into a tome. The title for the notes reads "The

<sup>30</sup> See "Champions of Mystara" box set, *Explorer's Guide* p25-32

Nihility Effect" and detail experiments for depriving a subject of all five senses. There is mention that "the effect is only temporary so long as the subject perseveres".

#### G: Security Door

This was what the elven wizard considered to be the front door to his home. The door has a **wizard lock** spell on the eastern side of the door, but on the side the PCs first approach there is only a latch which the PCs can easily open. The **wizard lock** is cast by a 9<sup>th</sup> level caster.

#### H: Guardian of Nihility

This cavern is filled with magical plants specially cultivated by the elven wizard that together generate a powerful magical field which completely negates the senses of both living and undead creatures. For humans and demi-humans, this means the standard five senses as well as the ability to sense pressure, temperature, and pain along with any demi-human's innate sensing abilities, infravision and magical detection abilities.

While the PCs are still approaching the cavern, just before they can start to view the inside of the cavern, the magical field takes effect.

You are making your way down the passage when suddenly your light source vanishes and you are in utter darkness...as well as in complete silence...your body is numb and without feeling...you can't even taste the inside of your mouth.

At this point inform the players they cannot communicate with each other but must pass

written notes to you detailing what actions they take. No communication between the PCs is possible until they overcome the magical field or retreat. If they retreat, their senses return in a few minutes, but they are subject to the effects of the magical field each time they enter it.

While within the effects of the magical field, the PCs actions can help them overcome the field and regain their senses. Each of the five senses are tied to a different ability score of the character, actions should be adjudicated as to which ability score is relied upon for the action taken. A fighter attempting a melee attack relies on Strength. A magic-user casting a spell relies on Intelligence. A cleric casting a spell or **Turning Undead** relies on Wisdom. A thief using thief skills or firing a missile weapon relies on Dexterity. Certain saving throws, such as a save against Poison, rely on Constitution.

For each action taken, the PC must make an ability score check, rolling at or under their ability score. One and two successes do not have any discernible effect, but a third success for the same ability score is rewarded with a brief sensation for the corresponding sense. A brief flash of light, the momentary sound of a voice, or the feeling of clothing and armor against the skin, are examples of what the PC briefly experiences. Upon achieving a fourth success for that ability score, the corresponding sense is restored to the character.

Strength checks can restore the sense of touch. Intelligence checks can restore the sense of smell. Wisdom checks can restore the sense of hearing. Dexterity checks can restore the sense of sight. Constitution

checks can restore the sense of taste. Charisma checks can be used to restore any special senses available to a PC. As PCs begin to regain their senses, they can begin to communicate with each other as well as begin to perceive their location in the cavern.

Certain magic items and spells can provide a faster means of overcoming the magical effect. A **potion of control plant** allows the imbiber of the potion to restore all senses at the rate of one sense per round, but only for the potion user. The spell **speak with plants** immediately restores the sense of hearing to the caster, and the caster can converse with the plants to learn the nature of the magical effect and that the plants generate this effect. **Anti-magic shell** blocks the magical effect of the plants making the caster immune to the plants. **Commune** and **contact higher plane** function normally as the character interacts with the entity in question through telepathic means.

Once at least some of the PCs regain their sight, or regain both their hearing and sense of touch, they can navigate their way through the chamber. Each PC must regain at least the sense of touch to receive communication from the other PCs and be guided through the room. The plant network which forms the guardian of nihilism are a mix of large ferns and thicket bushes which impede and slow movement. Sunlight filters down from thin crevices in the ceiling.

Award the PCs 4000 XP each for successfully navigating past the Guardian of Nihilism.



**I: Entrance Foyer**

Any PC senses still nullified are regained after a few minutes in the entrance foyer. Returning to the Guardian of Nihilicity starts the process all over again.

You emerge into a bare chamber across from a band of armed gnolls and elves who are staring at you in astonishment.

For those who can hear but cannot see:

A collective gasp of what sounds like astonishment greets your ears. The silent pause afterward makes it seem as if those who see you are now waiting for your next move.

The PCs encounter a band of five Sheyallia elves and nine Gruugrakh gnolls, all Graakhalian natives. The band can see the PCs are outsiders from the surface, but they are in awe that the characters have emerged from the wizard outpost. They wait to see what the PCs do, and tentatively open a discussion in Elvish if possible. The PCs get a +2 bonus on their reaction roll<sup>31</sup> at the beginning of the encounter, and if they offer the secret of passing beyond the Guardian of Nihilicity, they get a further +2 bonus later in the negotiation.

**Sheyallia elves**

(AC 5; HD 1+1; hp 6; #AT 1; D 1-8; MV 120' (40'); Save E1; ML 8; AL N)

**Gruugrakh gnolls**

(AC 6; HD 2; hp 10; #AT 1; D 1d8+1; MV 90' (30'); Save F2; ML 8; AL N)

<sup>31</sup> See page B24.

What the PCs need first and foremost is a guide. Provided the Graakhalians have a favorable reaction to the PCs they are willing to offer a guide that will lead them through Graakhalia safely and into Sind. The PCs in exchange must offer details on everything they have learned about both the elven outpost and the armies of the Desert Nomads and swear an oath of secrecy to never speak of Graakhalia.

The Graakhalians select one of their number to escort the PCs. If there is at least one elf among the PC party, a Sheyallia elf named Eruantion will volunteer to guide them. If not, a Gruugrakh gnoll named Aagnih Moletalon volunteers.

**Eruantion**

(AC 5; HD 3; hp 15; #AT 1 sword or 1 longbow; D 1-8 or 1-6; MV 120' (40'); Save E3; ML 8; AL N)

Eruantion can cast the following spells per day: mirror image, shield(x2)

**Aagnih Moletalon**

(AC 6; HD 3; hp 16; #AT 1 sword or 1 longbow; D 1d8+1 or 1-6; MV 90' (30'); Save F3; ML 8; AL N)

Aagnih gains a +1 bonus to hit when firing his longbow due to his Dexterity bonus.

The PCs journey through Graakhalia is largely uneventful as they are not allowed to travel through communities. Their guide keeps them in the outer passages that form the borders of Graakhalia, and they only occasionally encounter other Graakhalians who keep interactions brief. The PCs do see that Graakhalians use giant lizards as beasts

of burden and blue-furred giant weasels as animal companions.

### Ambush by the Master's Elite

By journeying under the Plain of Fire, the PCs avoid the armies of the Master. But a team of the Master's elite agents are assembled in Sind and joined by a soul eater<sup>32</sup> summoned by the Master. The commander of the team is an agent of the Master who has crossed paths with the PCs before, his name is Ahmed Khel.<sup>33</sup>

In the unlikely event Ahmed Khel was slain previously by the PCs, he has been brought back to life with a **raise dead** spell and carries a grudge against the PC who slew him.

#### Ahmed Khel, fighter

(AC 0; F9; hp 75; #AT 1; D 1d8+2; MV 90' (30'); Save F9; ML 9; AL C)

Ahmed wields a **sword +2, extra damage (x4 for 1-10 rounds)**, AL N, **Will 17**, wears **+2 chain mail armor**, an **amulet of finding**<sup>34</sup>, and carries a **shield +2**.

#### Assassin, thief

(AC 3; T8; hp 38; #AT 1; D 1d6+3; MV 120' (40'); Save T8; ML 9; AL C)

The assassin wields a **short sword +1**, wears **leather armor +1**, carries a short bow, and possesses two potions, both **fly** and **invisibility**.

<sup>32</sup> See X4: "Master of the Desert Nomads", p31

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, p10

<sup>34</sup> See X5: "Temple of Death", p3

#### Diviner, cleric

(AC 1; C9; hp 57; #AT 1; D 1d6+2; MV 60' (20'); Save C9; ML 10; AL C)

The Diviner wields a **mace +1**, wears plate mail armor and carries a **shield +1**. He has the following spells memorized:

**First Level: cure light wounds(x2), cause fear**

**Second Level: bless, hold person, silence 15' radius**

**Third Level: cause disease, growth of animals, striking**

**Fourth Level: cause serious wounds, protection from good 10' radius**

**Fifth Level: finger of death(x2) (raise dead reversed)**

#### Giant Bats

(AC 6 HD 2; hp 11; #AT 1; D 1-4; MV 30' (10'), Fly: 180' (60'); Save F1; ML 8; AL N)

#### Soul Eater

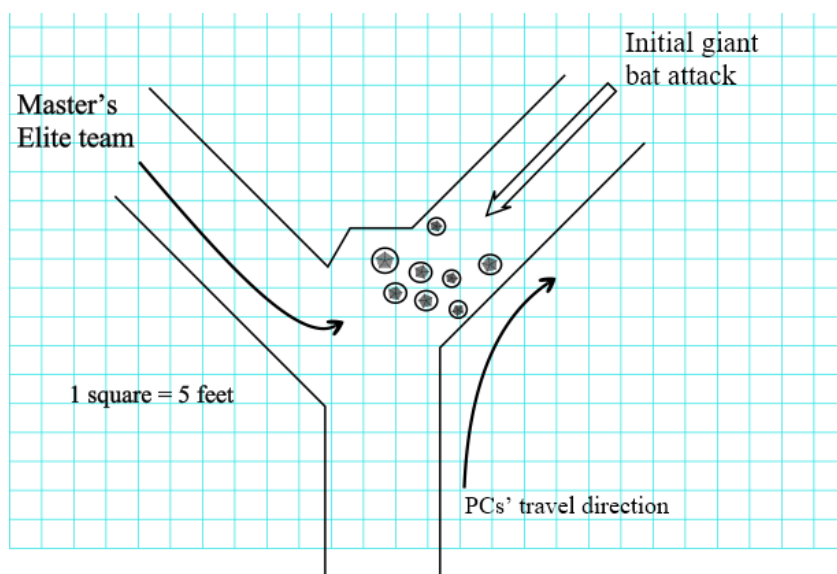
(AC 0; HD 10\*; hp 60; #AT 2; D 1-10/1-10; MV 180' (60'); Save C10; ML 12; AL C)

#### Vampire

(AC 2; HD 9\*\*; hp 60; #AT 1 touch + special; D 1-10 + energy drain; MV 120' (40') Fly: 180' (60'); Save F9; ML 11; AL C)

The team will ambush the party in a Y-shaped cavern with three exits as the PCs approach the center of the three prongs. This cavern lies east of Graakhalia but west of Sind, and the PCs Graakhalian guide will still be with them.

The vampire will summon 3-18 giant bats from a nearby cavern. Two-thirds of the giant bats will attack from one direction, as the



*Ambush by the Master's Elite*

PCs come upon a row of stalagmites which limit forward movement on foot in the direction from which the giant bats approach. A round or two after battle is joined with the giant bats, the team will attack from the other direction with the remaining giant bats, where no stalagmites impede movement.

Before the battle, the Diviner will cast **bleed** and **protection from good 10' radius** to benefit allies, also casting **growth of animals** on one giant bat and **striking** on his mace. The assassin will start the battle **invisible** using his potion.

When the team charges in, the remaining giant bats will lead with Ahmed Khel and the rest right behind them. Khel will engage in melee with the most heavily armored PC or, optionally, a PC which he carries a grudge against from the time they spent traveling together with the caravan. The soul eater has as its target whichever PC struck the killing blow or cast the spell that brought down the Master. It will attack only that PC and any others who attempt to prevent it from

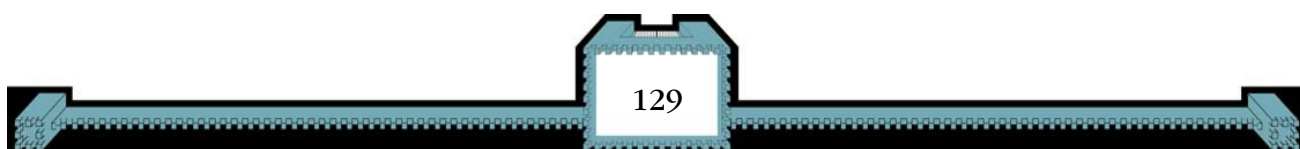
reaching that PC. If the soul eater succeeds in slaying that PC it will immediately depart the battle.

The assassin will use stealth to try and backstab a vulnerable spellcaster. The Diviner will begin by casting spells at range, starting with **finger of death**. He will use **silence** on any troublesome spellcaster and **cause serious wounds** on anyone that closes to melee with him before switching to his mace. The vampire will attempt to target enemy clerics first.

The Graakhalian guide with the PCs will fight alongside them as long as his morale holds.

### Rescue the Darokin Army Remnant

Review the matching title section in Part 3 where the PCs rescue a Darokinian force from a larger force of Desert Nomads using an airboat. Here the PCs have arrived too late to intervene in that battle, and most of the Darokinian soldiers were killed with the rest captured. But here the PCs have an



opportunity to rescue the prisoners who have been brought south.

Their guide leads them to an exit on the surface near the Sindhi town of Baratpur. It is nightfall when they emerge. The guide recommends they seek out a trusted local contact who can provide news and a map in exchange for a few coins. If the PCs follow the guide's direction, they come to a small hovel on the outskirts of Baratpur wherein lives a middle-aged Sindhi man named Mohan.

Mohan agrees to sketch out a map of Sind for 5gp, but also offers to volunteer information on some Darokinian army prisoners for an additional 20gp. Assuming the PCs pay, Mohan will guide them to the army camp which lies on the other side of Baratpur.

This is the same army found in Part 3, losses from the battle have already been replaced. Of the Darokinian remnant only Colonel Leonidas, two infantrymen, and three archers remain. When the PCs arrive, Leonidas is being interrogated in a tent with his men bound and gagged just outside it.

You watch the camp carefully from a nearby copse. As the soldiers drop off to sleep and the camp grows still, you note that there is one area of activity near a lone tent where a torch burns outside. A few more minutes of watching and you hear faint cries of pain from the tent. The prisoners Mohan spoke of must be there.

The PCs will need to deal with two human infantry posted as sentries at the perimeter of the camp. If they succeed in doing so quietly, they can make their way to the tent unimpeded where they must deal with ten more human infantry as well as the interrogator. Eight of the infantrymen are outside the tent watching the prisoners, while the other two are inside the tent watching Leonidas be interrogated.

**Interrogator, magic-user**

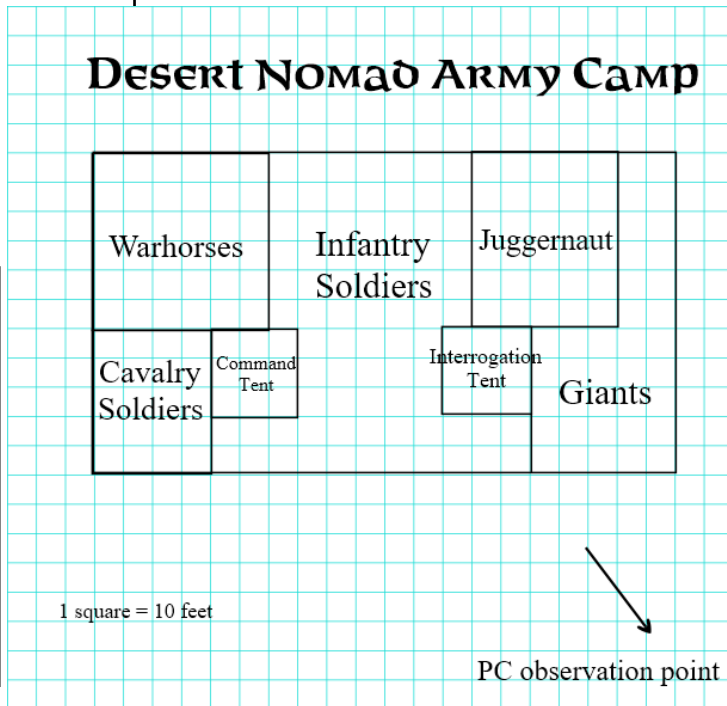
(AC 6; HD 5; hp 18; AT 1 dagger; D 1d4+1; MV 120' (40'); Save M5; ML 7; AL C)

The interrogator wears a **ring of protection +1** and carries a dagger. He has the following spells memorized:

**First Level: magic missile(x2)**

**Second Level: ESP(x2) (one ESP spell is currently active)**

**Third Level: hold person**



**12 human infantry, fighter**

(AC 6; HD 2; hp 12; #AT 1 bow or sword; D 1-6 or 1-8; MV 90'(30'); Save F2; ML 8; AL C)

Provided the PCs are able to take out the interrogator and infantry guards quietly, they can rescue the Darokinian soldiers and escape back the way they came. If not, the entire army encampment will be alerted by the alarm and the PCs will likely have to flee. Should a pitched battle ensue, once the soldiers realize the PCs are too dangerous, they attempt to withdraw and encircle the PCs so that the giants and stone juggernaut finish the fight.

Colonel Leonidas had been wounded and tortured, he is currently at 31 hp. His men have all suffered some wounds or rough treatment, each has taken 2-12 hp of damage. Leonidas will first suggest stealing some horses from the army camp. If the PCs agree, they will need to deal with five of the elite cavalry soldiers who are guarding the perimeter where the horses are resting.

**5 elite human cavalry, fighter**

(AC 4; HD 3; hp 21; #AT 1 bow or sword; D 1-6 or 1d8+1; MV 90'(30'); Save F3; ML 9; AL C)

Once safely away from the camp, Colonel Leonidas will quickly trade stories with the PCs and conclude they all must return to Darokin with the treasure trove of information that has been collected. Leonidas and his men will accompany the PCs as best they can and fight alongside them.

At this point, allow the PCs to use the map of Sind and Darokin to plan whatever route they choose across land. Leonidas recommends avoiding settled areas and to

eventually make their way to Akesoli, as much of Sind is now controlled by the armies of the Desert Nomads and the sea ports are likely to be heavily watched. Leonidas also warns the PCs against traveling through Atruaghin lands as the plateau is not passable on the west side and crossing the lowlands means passing through the lands of the Children of the Tiger.<sup>35</sup>

Whether the PCs were successful in their rescue or not, the enemy captain commanding the army camp begins tracking and pursuing the PCs in the morning. Magical assistance from the Master and the logical conclusion that they must head for Akesoli helps in his pursuit. Spies among the Sindhi and scouts from other Desert Nomad army units will also help him track the PCs. If necessary, he will split his forces so that the faster contingents of his troops can try to get ahead and cut off escape. He won't have any of his forces enter the Salt Swamp but will instead have his men circle past it and wait for the PCs to emerge. At the DM's option, at major settlements such as Sayr Ulan, the captain can replace lost troops and possibly pick up supplemental forces including additional soldiers, trolls, stone giants, or NPC clerics or magic-users.<sup>36</sup>

The PCs will need to move quickly and take advantage of terrain to try and stay ahead of the army. They may also try and bait the enemy into splitting their forces so that they can ambush and defeat a fraction of the captain's forces. The captain will be

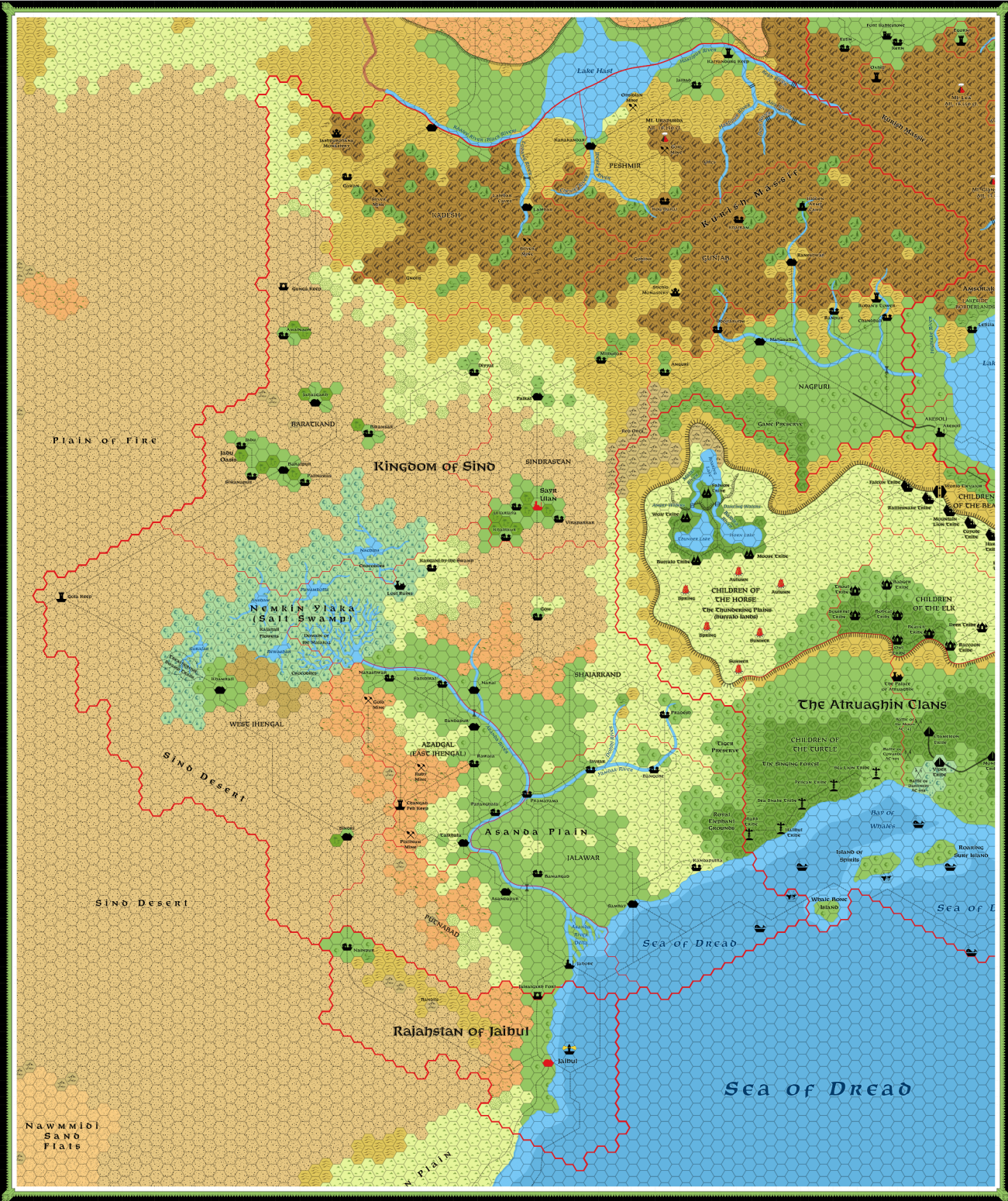
<sup>35</sup> See GAZ14: "The Atruaghin Clans", *Player's Guide*, p49-55

<sup>36</sup> See inside cover of X10: "Red Arrow, Black Shield", Army of the Desert Nomads

# Escape from Hule

## The Kingdom of Sind, 1000 AC

Based on X4, GAZ3, GAZ11, GAZ14, TM1, Dragon 169, Wrath of the Immortals and Champions of Mystara  
Includes conversions and adaptations of 24 mile per hex maps, Ramellin Mystara maps, and contributions from the Mystara community  
Cartography by Thorfinn Tait, February 2006/February 2013/January 2016/February 2018; last revised March 2018  
www.thorf.co.uk



mounted and riding with his elite cavalry during the pursuit, accompanied by either the hill giants or the stone juggernaut (or both).

As long as the captain is alive he will continue pursuit, but if he is slain a reserve officer soon takes his place and resumes pursuit. Once this happens however, the reserve officer (use the human captain's statistics) must make a morale check each time one of the following conditions occur...

1. The force of hill giants is wiped out.
2. The stone juggernaut is destroyed.
3. The overall force has taken 50% casualties.

Should a morale check be failed, pursuit is abandoned and the PCs are able to slip past the Master's remaining forces in Sind and reach the Darokin border.

The PCs gain the XP value for all the Darokinian soldiers they rescue.

## Part 5: Back in Darokin

Once the PCs have reached Darokin, this adventure is over. The PCs will be questioned and debriefed over the course of several days by both General Balcares<sup>37</sup>, as well as the commanders of Fort Anselbury and Fort Lakeside.<sup>38</sup>

The PCs will receive a substantial monetary reward for their efforts (to be decided by the DM) and the offer of high-ranking commissions in the Darokinian military. If the PCs brought one of the Master's airboats, they receive an offer from the Darokinian military if they are willing to sell it.

If you wish to begin the adventure X10: "*Red Arrow, Black Shield*" immediately, then after the debriefing the PCs are given a week to relax and unwind in Akesoli... and their new adventure begins a few days later.

If not, the Master realizes that Darokin now has a very accurate understanding of his forces and nation and what his strategy would be in attacking western Darokin. The Master elects to withdraw his forces near the Darokin border and focus on consolidating his hold on Sind. The PCs have spared Darokin from war for at least a year or two while the Master plots new strategies and carries a grudge against those who bested him.

<sup>37</sup> See inside cover of X10: "*Red Arrow, Black Shield*", Allied Expeditionary Force

<sup>38</sup> See GAZ11: "*The Republic of Darokin*", *Dungeon Master's Guide*, p38-41

## Part 6: New MONSTERS

### The Boneless<sup>39</sup>

Armor Class: 0	No. Appearing: 1
Hit Dice: 10**	Save As: Fighter: 10
Move: 60' (20')	Morale: 10
Attacks: 1 bite + special	Treasure Type: Nil
Damage: 1d10/4d6 or 6d6	Alignment: Chaotic

The Boneless is a horrific monster, far more dangerous than its appearance might suggest from a distance. The Boneless looks like nothing more than a sickly, yellow-cream maggot of vast size, up to fifteen feet long. Its movement is a peristaltic writhing in the acidic slime it so freely secretes. At the front end is a small mouth ringed with wickedly sharp teeth and, while the creature has no visual sense, it has two dark patches where eyes should be, which it uses for thermal sensing.

It has a bite attack, and as a second attack can also spew out a thick glob of very corrosive acid slime once per turn. This glob has a 10-foot radius and a range of 60 feet, with all in the area of effect taking 4d6 damage. A saving throw vs Dragon Breath halves this damage. Also, any creature or character in melee with the Boneless may be affected by acid. Any successful melee hit by a character requires a saving throw vs Wands or the character is splattered by acid from the Boneless, suffering 1d8 points of damage.

Boneless are immune to all magical cold-based attacks. Hits from edged weapons only inflict half damage on the Boneless due to its thick and slippery skin. Boneless also radiate magical **fear**. Anyone within twenty feet of

<sup>39</sup> See GAZ13: "The Shadow Elves", *Dungeon Master's Guide* p40

the Boneless must make a saving throw vs Spells or be forced to flee for 1d6 rounds. Such an affected character can return to try again, making a new saving throw. However, once a successful saving throw has been made, the character will not need to make another against that particular Boneless.

Lastly, the Boneless has a final attack upon its death. When slain by any attack other than a disintegrate spell or something similar, the horror's head arches back, the monster writhes frantically and utters a screaming gurgle, then its body literally explodes. Its disgusting internal organs and acidic slime explode in a 20-foot radius, inflicting 6-36 points of acid damage on all in the area of effect. A saving throw vs Dragon Breath will halve this damage.

At the DM's option, magical items carried by PCs can be vulnerable to this acid. Saving throws vs Dragon Breath can be made for such items, use the PCs saving throw with a +1 bonus per +1 of enchantment. A failed saving throw destroys the item.

### Undead Bhut<sup>40</sup>

Armor Class: 1	No. Appearing: 2-8 (2-8)
Hit Dice: 8+4***	Save As: Fighter: 14
Move: Fly 150' (50')	Morale: 10
Attacks: 1 bite	Treasure Type: A
Damage: 1d10 + special	Alignment: Chaotic

If a bhut rises as one of the undead, it manifests as an incorporeal spirit similar to a spectre. In this form it is a terrifying sight that consists of a distorted humanoid head

<sup>40</sup> The undead bhut draws upon both the original bhut from X4 as well as the bhut found on pages 20-21 of the 3.0 D&D edition of the "Fiend Folio".



with red, feral eyes, a mouth full of dagger-like teeth and a roiling, half-formed body of sickening black smoke and dank red mist. It harbors a festering hatred of the living, especially the ones who slew it in life.

An undead bhut can occupy a dead humanoid body of any size in one round. The body animates immediately and is under the bhut's full control. An undead bhut animating its own body looks and moves like a zombie bhut, it regains its original statistics except that it loses its vulnerability to blessed weapons and its aura which obscures detect evil and know alignment. It always loses initiative as a zombie, except against opponents which have succumbed to its numbing bite, and is **turned** as a mummy.

Animating its own corpse, the undead bhut has two claw attacks and one bite attack, doing 1-4/1-4/1-6 damage. The bite is freezing to the touch and anyone bitten must save vs Paralysis or be numbed. Numbed creatures always lose initiative (roll for initiative as normal against undead bhuts) and are -2 on all to hit rolls. The numbness lasts for 1-4 rounds.

When the animated corpse is destroyed by reducing it to 0 hit points or a **Dispel** result from **Turn Undead**, the undead bhut exits the body and continues to attack in its incorporeal form. It can even attack in the same combat round its physical body is destroyed provided it has not yet attacked this round. If an undead bhut inhabits a human or demi-human corpse, it looks like a zombie, has 4 HD and loses its numbing special ability from its bite attack which now only does 1-4 damage. In this 4 HD form, they are **turned** as if they are a ghoul.

In its incorporeal form, an undead bhut has several special abilities and weaknesses. Anyone within 30' must make a save vs. Paralysis or lose 1d3 points of Strength, due to its dreadful appearance. Each victim must only save once for each undead bhut, but the effects are cumulative for multiple undead. Anyone whose Strength is reduced to 0 or less collapses and cannot move or attack until the effect wears off, which takes two hours. An undead bhut rolling a natural 20 on a bite attack does 2d10 hit points of damage. Anyone bitten by the undead bhut must make a save vs. Poison or lose 1d3 points of Wisdom. Anyone whose Wisdom is reduced to 0 or less lapses into a coma and dies in 1d4 hours unless the poison is neutralized. A humanoid creature slain in this manner rises as a ghoul with the next sunset. A bhut slain in this manner rises as an undead bhut. Wisdom loss is regained at the rate of 1 point per day.

Like spectres, undead bhuts in incorporeal form can only be hit by magic weapons (with one exception, see below), and are immune to sleep, charm, and hold spells. An undead bhut is **turned** as a spectre.

Undead bhuts in incorporeal form cannot abide contact with earth or stone and take 3d6 points of damage per round passing through such matter. Any magical weapons made of stone or earth that strike the incorporeal undead bhut deal an additional 1d6 points of damage, non-magical earth or stone weapons do 1d6 points of damage.

An undead bhut speaks all languages it knew in life.



by Brian Rubinfeld

I've returned once more to inject some gonzo, yet dark, science fantasy into Mystara. As seen in my article for Issue 20, Blackmoor has returned as a foreboding and twisted land. Gone are the days of noble kings and a fair (albeit imperial) nation, Blackmoor has been replaced by a totalitarian regime overseen by a madman. As the faults of the dystopian society become apparent, none are as damaging as the Cootsbane Dam. While other delves into mad science have been well maintained, avoiding disaster, this case is quite the opposite. In fact, multiple underground factions have caught wind of this and seek to exploit it.

This adventure acts as a dungeon crawl through a facility overtaken by lethally trained soldiers and fanatical revolutionaries, leading to the twist of a laboratory overridden with disgusting mutants and undead. Also, it's an unabashed homage to (among other things) the first mission from

the 2002 video game, TimeSplitters 2. Some other inspirations include Original D&D Blackmoor/DA2 *"Temple of the Frog"*, John Carpenter's *The Thing*, *Game of Thrones*, *Goldeneye* and *Wolfenstein*.

Disclaimer. Many of the monsters are placeholders, as this acts as more of a gaming sandbox than anything tied to any one edition. The original game was made with a hybrid of *Dungeon Crawl Classics* and *Mutant Crawl Classics* in mind. However, the mechanics have intentionally been rendered neutral. Monster usage is intentionally vague and left to the DM, who is free to substitute ideas out for something more appropriate for their games in *Returned Blackmoor*. While there is no exact level for this module, I would recommend a somewhat-low-to-mid-range level party, based on the descriptions of monsters, as well as the dangerous effects and technologies described further down.

## ADVENTURE INFORMATION.

The Cootsbane Dam remains one of the aging facilities from Blackmoor's past, atop mountainous peaks, built up from years of artificial turf modifications. Factoring time from pre and post time jump, this facility was in operation for 210 years before ceasing operation just 3 years after the time jump. The compile was multipurpose, especially during Blackmoor's late monarchical years. Its initial use was to generate elemental water power, creating energy to help charge the various districts and wards throughout the region. Another was to drain out and excavate a historic dig site, turned quarry. After this dig was concluded and no more artifacts could be found, the site was converted into a military training site. Even before the quarry was converted, much of the dam was occupied by the royal armed forces of Blackmoor, as an outpost for surveying nearby areas as well as maintaining various federal conservation efforts.

However, that wasn't to say all scientific pursuits inside the dam were "for the greater good". Even before Allogost's takeover, several experimental laboratories were built on the side and into the caves beyond. All sorts of powerful and dark alloys were uncovered deep within the earthy crust, likely related to the very Egg of Coot that was banished so long ago. Experiments were done carefully, but ultimately discarded once Blackmoorian scientists reported the potential danger of using this unknown substance. However, order to shut down the project didn't occur until two scientists died suffering radiation burns and various

disfigurements. The cave systems were sealed off, requiring high level clearance and significant protection to get through.

After the time jump, the lake beside the dam froze over and rendered its main function useless. Various personnel were slowly funneled and placed in other locations as the dam was put on hiatus. Following the coup by Allogost's forces, the dam has remained vacant for nearly a decade. As the lakeside thawed out enough, the new government of Blackmoor became intrigued by the abandoned dam. Upon sending forces to investigate the derelict structure, very little turned up at first.

Besides water damaged technologies, there were a few hold out soldiers doing all they could to keep anyone from adventuring into the caves. Allogost's regime was more interested in eliminating traitors than combing the entire base. Following their removal, the dam was restored to some working order, at least as a temporary base while other projects moved forward. And in time, the experiments in the caves beyond were unearthed.

While the previous regime had the wisdom to stop, the new one saw the unholy ore below as a potential power source to harness. However, strange things began to occur from those experiments. And even stranger, the winter-like conditions of the outside world began to creep back into the dam, freezing chunks of the artificial river beyond, as well as coat the nearby area in a snowy frost. Some theorize that the chaotic experiments tampered with Blackmoor's weather devices.

The ore was utilized in various projects such as creation of super-soldiers, alternative power sources and new weaponry types. Like before, on a grander scale, various stationed forces fell to a strange sickness. Those who didn't die outright were pushed to a makeshift quarantine zone. Initially, reports were given back to their superiors and headquarters. Overtime, reports either became less informative or padded in order to hide the grotesque results of the experiments.

Communications ceased two weeks prior to the adventure's current timeline. A task force was sent to investigate, but they failed to return. News of this was caught by a rebel group cell, who became interested in harnessing against the government whatever was in the dam. One week ago, a scouting team was sent out, only to be ambushed by the rebel group. While most of the survivors fled back to the capital, some were pushed further into the facility, where their death screams as well as the sounds of unspeakable horrors were overheard by their fleeing compatriots.

As of the current timeline, a "cleaner crew" has been sent to exterminate all life around the dam, while collecting any information they can. So far, the crew has been combing the parameter looking for any hostiles. They have killed a couple of the rebels. However, attempts to recruit more agents to flush out the rebels has failed, as conditions around the dam have gradually gotten worse.

## ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS.

Whether they're outsiders who have proven themselves, trusted natives or curious trespassers; the party has stumbled upon a conspiracy in the decommissioned Cootsbane Dam. Originally, rumors or reports detailed a radical anarchist group holding up in the derelict. However, the truth requires the party to delve deeper. Within the actual compound is a series of caves attached to the facility, containing all sorts of vile experiments and dark secrets dating back to the original age of Blackmoor; the works of unhinged scientists who remained in the facility, long after it was closed down. These horrid things need to be eradicated, at risk of them escaping into the world. If worst comes to worst, destroy the dam and either trap or eliminate the mutant threat. To make matters worse, a team of exterminators is sweeping the compound for information and they're just as itching to kill something as well. Plus, the escalating winter weather makes traveling too far away from the installation quite dangerous.

## For the DUNGEON Master.

This adventure expects a relatively lower level party, as the initial adventure deals with grunts and thugs, before switching up to mutants and abominations; something many low level parties might be ill equipped for. The initial conflict should focus on infiltration and covert assassination, as the enemies will mob against players if enough attention is brought up. After players discover the quarantine zone towards the end of the actual facility and into the caves, the game switches up into a brutal escape

through survival and horror. Instead of avoiding militias/cleaners and radicals, players are pitted against disgusting mutants and magically crafted horrors, many of which could take out the party with ease. Even if players are from Blackmoor's military or part of a rebellion group, they will still be attacked by their respective equivalent. The soldiers and special operatives have a simple order, exterminate all life on the dam. Players loyal to Allogost's cause would have been made aware of "investigators" already present and to keep out. Meanwhile, the rebels have become paranoid from their assailants. As for other rebels and anarchists? Seclusion and traumatic horror has left the current group paranoid and violent. Anyone outside of their cell isn't to be trusted and will be attacked, at risk of the outsider group being part of the sweeper teams.



*Adventurer finds Blackmoorian tech, original drawing by Justin Pfeil, aka warriorneedsfood on The Piazza, check his [Keep on the Borderland comic](#)*

## A Treatise on Technology.

Much of the technology here should be treated as a magical item or a variant item (such as a weapon dealing a different kind of damage). On top of that, players from outside of Blackmoor should not be familiar with most of this technology. Unlike technologies for modules like Expedition to Barrier Peaks, much of the technology here isn't ancient. However, exposure to the elements still might have caused some damage. Like with most charts to deciphering technology, players should roll Intelligence rolls. Should enough successes occur, the player is able to understand and adequately explain the technology... in their own terms.

One method of both balancing Blackmoorian tech and allowing for minimal conversion is to make them function like common items and magic items of D&D. When a Blackmoorian weapon clashes against Blackmoorian armor, it functions as normal, except its damage might be similar to a magical spell (such as fire damage for a laser beam). However, these items might be more effective against primitive technology, effectively increasing attack rolls or damage against primitive armor or increasing AC against primitive weapons. Rather than upscaling damage or AC, this alternative proposal requires minimal extra math, adding simple bonuses for dealing with non-technological opponents.

An emphasis on higher technology weapons will likely put an outsider team at a disadvantage, as it will take time for them to properly understand any equipment that they might take from patrols. Should they come to understand what they wield, they'll

quickly be put on more even ground. Otherwise, the adventure will turn quite deadly quite fast, by design. However, a lot of technology has similarities to classical Blackmoor, in part from the land's obsessive drives to preserve its culture. As such, the armored soldiers are just as likely to have a tradition inspired weapon (similar to an axe, sword or bow) as a power tool (such as a chainsaw) or firearm.

It is recommended that at least one party member be from Blackmoor. Barring that, characters from Serraine could have enough of an advantage in studying Blackmoorian tech. Should that fail, the module will likely become significantly harder outside of purely violent havoc on the equipment.

## Cootsbane Dam Outside/Training Grounds

### 1. Semi-Frozen River

A frigid river stands between you and the other side. Parts of it MIGHT be thawed enough to cross, but jagged terrain would prove treacherous. Crossing it is probably a bad idea. Also, a massive mutated fish horror dwells in the secluded space and will try to eat players. (Said massive sea creature is likely to be well out of the players' capabilities. Should they want to cross the dangerous river, they will have to fight the monster. Should the players avoid this combat and later unleash the mutant hordes, they'll witness soldiers from the top of the dam using a variety of energy weapons and magic to fry it.) The river itself stretches past

between a canyon pass for a long way, the terrain on each side of the river is treacherous from the jutting ice and rock alongside an unstable layer of ice over the river itself.

### 1A. Caved Tunnel

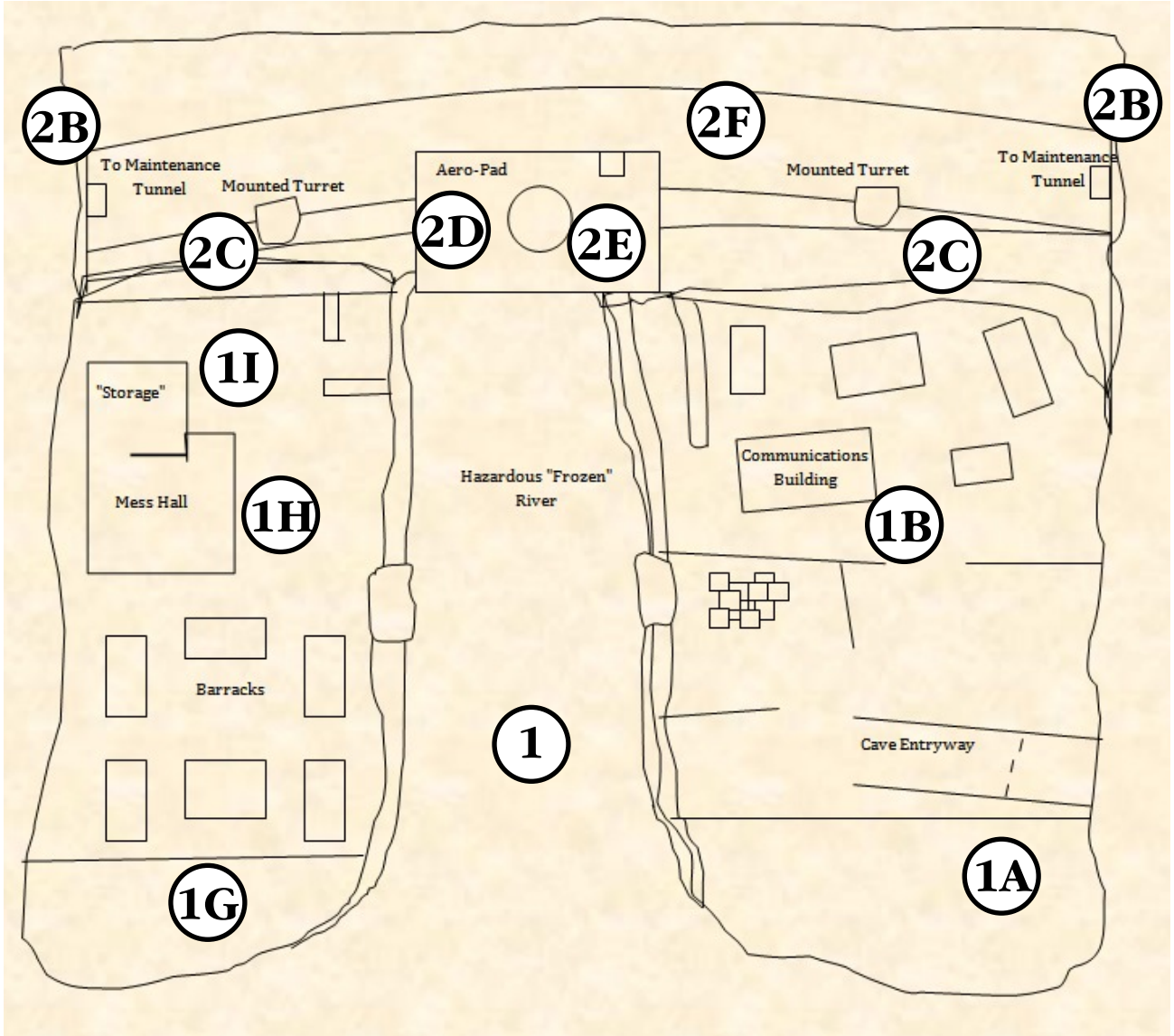
The rebel group that's squatting inside the dam have intentionally destroyed tunnel access without traversing a very dangerous mountain side. Luckily, the team can navigate through caved in rock and jutting pipes, albeit needing a relatively long amount of time of squeezing and twisting through hazardous terrain.

### 1B. Communication and Storage Buildings

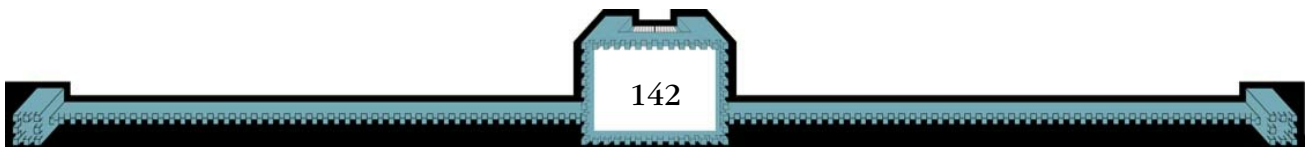
Build on top of a flap carved rock, this space was meant to oversee the water flow as it made its way to the controlled river ahead. Since the dam has remained idle and much of the lake above frozen, not even a trickle escapes the dam. Mesh fencing keeps intruders out and authorized people from falling into the river, as it wraps around both sides of the lower outdoor area. A variety of signaling equipment carries a strong arcane presence. Beyond trying to reach out to allied groups of the PCs, they can decide to destroy the devices to prevent tampering from rival/enemy factions. Also, many of the storing buildings contain important documents relevant to the dam itself, as well as vague hints of strange experimentation with the dam's resources. It's best to destroy this evidence, lest it falls into other hands.

- Outside - 1 - 3 patrollers will roam around, usually at different points of each side.

- Building 1 contains various cabinets containing research notes, training schedules and files on the dam's operation amidst various office style furnishings.
- Building 2 is some sort of lounge, for officers and employees not currently on duty. The lounge has seen better days. Some sort of entertainment machine in the back right corner is broken, there are rips on the couches, a refrigerating device is heavily stained with alcoholic beverages and sauce, some parts of the walls haven't been adequately cleaned. Several cleaners (at least 7), including 2 elite ex-corps members, are residing here lazily. If they've eavesdropped upon, they will scoff at the assignment, as they've fought both "monsters" and "terrorists" before. While either taking down or avoiding the outside guards is encouraged, fighting this whole troop at once would be dangerous.
- Building 3 contains a communication console, with a variety of strange radio-like devices, atop a second floor. A large dish resides on the roof. The window overlooking the radio devices has a patched bullet hole in it and the radio console has some faint blood stains. To an outsider to Blackmoor, none of these contraptions make sense. Even to a native, this experimental technology hardly looks like anything seen before. However, a native might have a chance of deciphering the machine to send out a signal. However, the console is protected by the password. Thankfully, the password creator is smug and left a riddle jotted on a parchment. A security toggle opens the doorways to 1C and 1E, but it also requires the override password.
  - The riddle is as follows: "This being is ancient, older than the kingdoms of foreign lands. However, the village elders of the land are much older. Their ambitions toppled kings, but they fail to stomp a few rats. For such an incredible power, fear is their master. Who are they?" (It's Allogost.)
- Building 3 (Ground) - Contains surveillance devices to help keep a look at the station. A key card is needed to grant access here. High ranking officers have one, there's another one on the upper floor by the radios.
- Building 4 houses oil drum reserves. While much of the station is powered by arcane sources and hydraulics, a generator beside building 2 requires fuel to keep going. Igniting the barrels would cause an explosion that would take out at least this building. However, two cameras are stationed at opposite walls of this building.
- Building 5 has a raided weapons locker. If a character looks hard enough, there are "countdown mines". While too obvious to be an effective weapon, they can be used to destroy evidence or create a distraction.
- Cameras line the perimeter. Characters will either have to sneak through by luck, skill check or other means to evade them; especially if they're within range.



Cootsbane Dam Exterior





### 1C. Connecting Tunnels A

Areas dipping down and leading into the dam complex proper through Staircase A. Because of emergency lockdown, the door must be opened from the communication tower.

### 1D. Staircase A.

Winding steel stairs that lead to the crossway, as well the top of the dam. Beware of bursts of hot steam. The staircase connects to areas 2A and 1C. There are three floors, broken up by a security camera floor on the first, a hall with food storage on the second and one with a broken steam pipe on the third. The steam from the broken pipe can damage characters who don't try to avoid it or fail to turn it off, as relevant later. Each floor has one cleaner guard on it. Should the security camera be triggered on the first floor, up to 3 more guards will show up in that section!

### 1E. Connecting Tunnels B.

Same as 1C, but the other side. It connects to Staircase B.

### 1F. Staircase B.

This staircase functions much like Staircase A, but it leads from the opposite side of the dam. The staircase connects to areas 2A and 1E. The top floor hall has one camera, that will also send forth some guards. Otherwise, the second floor hall has 2 cleaner guards standing by.

- After destroying the cave, the remainder of a rebel squad (2 - 4) will be (poorly) facing off against several (3 - 6) zombified soldiers on the bottom floor, facing 1E.

More than likely, morale breaks as they retreat upstairs.

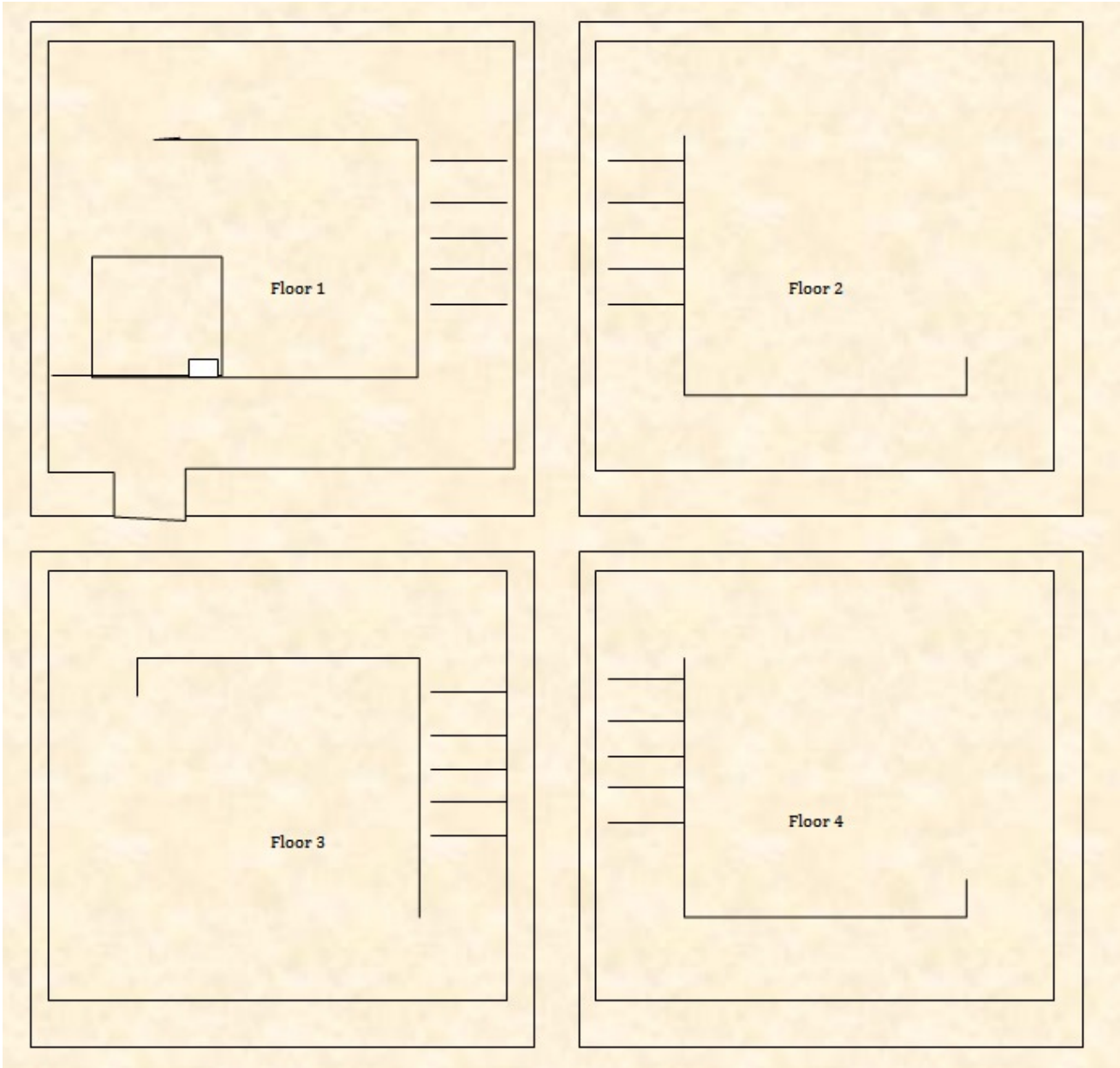
### 1G. Barracks.

Thoroughly ransacked and devoid of anything useful, it's still likely to harbor various soldiers here though. Alternatively, rebels could be hiding in a barracks building.

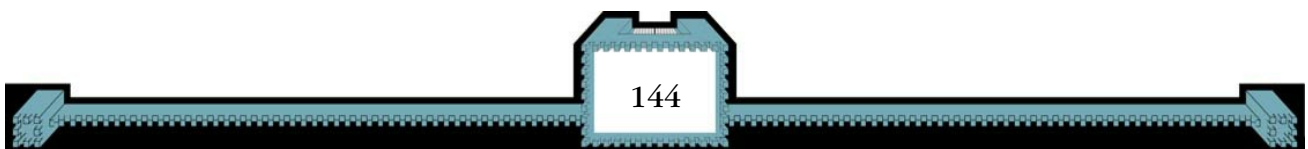
- Other Barracks random encounters:
  - A chest full of personal clothing, none of which are military related.
  - Random keepsakes and trinkets, all of which have some relevance to Blackmoor City.
  - A secret holdout weapon, either under the bed or in a special lockbox.
  - Lewd and inappropriate periodicals and books
  - An oversleeping soldier in night garb. His face has been drawn upon heavily.
  - A low-ranking key card (similar to one found later).
  - Hoarded rations, likely from storage.
  - A journal detailing either satisfaction with being stationed out here or feelings of contempt.
  - Numerous dead soldiers, murdered in their own beds.
  - State-approved books on various subjects, such as science/arcana, politics and hobbies.



1D & 1F



*Staircases A and B internal floors*



**1H. Mess Hall**

A shoot-out between the terrorist cell (3 - 8) and the cleaners (4 - 6) is breaking out here. Tables are flipped on their side and various bits of scrap reinforce makeshift walls to duck behind. However, the two sides are more engaged with each other than the party at the moment. Plus, tables in the middle of the mess hall are still facing normally. One could either play the two groups against each other or attempt to sneak past the carnage through moving around the forces or crawling underneath the middle tables.

**1I. Cold Storage**

Various stored goods are kept safe here. It's possible a wounded soldier is ducking in here to avoid fire, ducking out of the fight in a craven manner. His weapons are depleted, save for a combat knife, and can be forced to give information if threatened or persuaded.

**The Top of the Dam.**

**2A. Maintenance Tunnel**

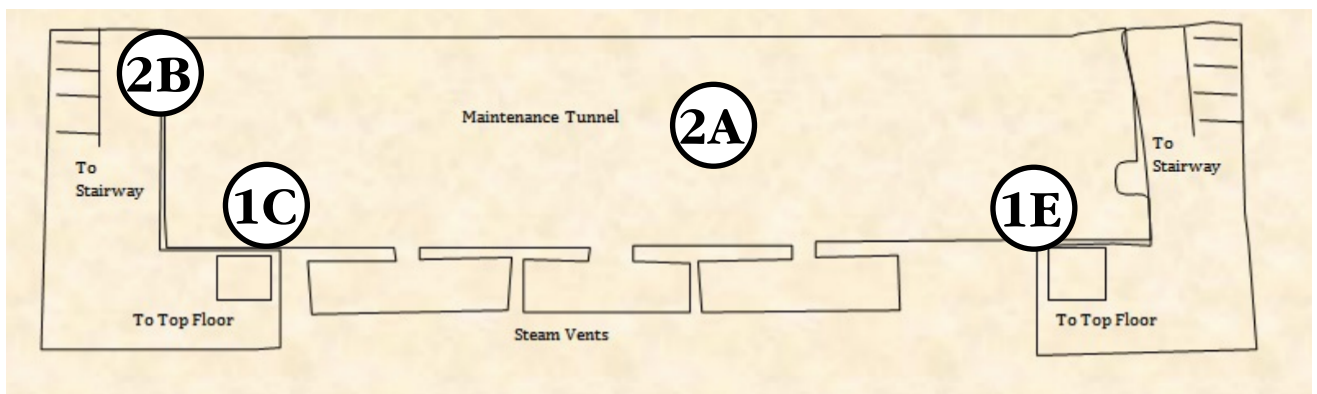
Blasting steam (as seen on staircase a) prevent going further, as a rebel team cornered in this chamber take down a few soldiers before focusing on you. Turning off the three steam pressure valves will allow you to continue. Each valve is in a small alcove hall on the left of the passageway. Without doing this, there is dangerous steam pouring out of broken pipes around the area. In fact, the two most dangerous valves block the doorway to Staircase B. Beware, two soldiers guard the area, as well as one mage of mid-level ability.

**2B. Dam Staircases**

On either side, a separate set of stairs leading to the top of the dam. However, until the emergency lockdown is lifted, access is denied. They are right across from either of the main staircase doorways.

**2C. Turrets**

Immobile machine gun turrets, fully stocked for defense... ironically against their own



*Cootsbane Dam Top of the Dam*

vessel. These heavy artillery weapons have enough bullets each to take down the enemy helicopter. Manning a turret requires the user to stand within the immediate circle of the gun. Training in ranged weapons applies to the turrets, which also grant a circumstantial bonus due to being docked on a platform.

## 2D. Aero-Pad Building

Within the center of the dam roadway, this building has a garage for taking in vehicles as well as a loading dock. Beyond the docking point is a small elevator as well as two ascending staircases that lead to the roof port. Approaching the garage door will trigger the troops to open fire and release an army truck with a couple of readied soldiers to spring on the party. One truck can fit between 2 and 10 soldiers. This could stack with the aero-copter, should the DM wish to do so.

## 2E. Aero-Pad

A small landing dock for a small flying craft. A launch pad is lit up with a circle of small green lights, while some sort of pole has a signal light. Besides granting slight cover from elevation, this location offers little in defense for any aircrafts. The helicopter-like vessel that was here has lifted off well before the players make it to this point, armed and ready to attack.

## 2F. Roadway

A large path capable of handling military vehicles, particularly all terrain. The short roadway connects to storage facilities within the dam, as well as tunnels that lead out into the mountain itself. 4 - 6 rebels are more interested in escape, as they have all the evidence needed to expose the regime.

However, if provoked, they'll fight the team. The roadway cuts between the Aero-Pad building, connecting the dam staircases to snowed over paths within the mountain. Exploring beyond the dam is possible, but very treacherous.

## The Labs Below

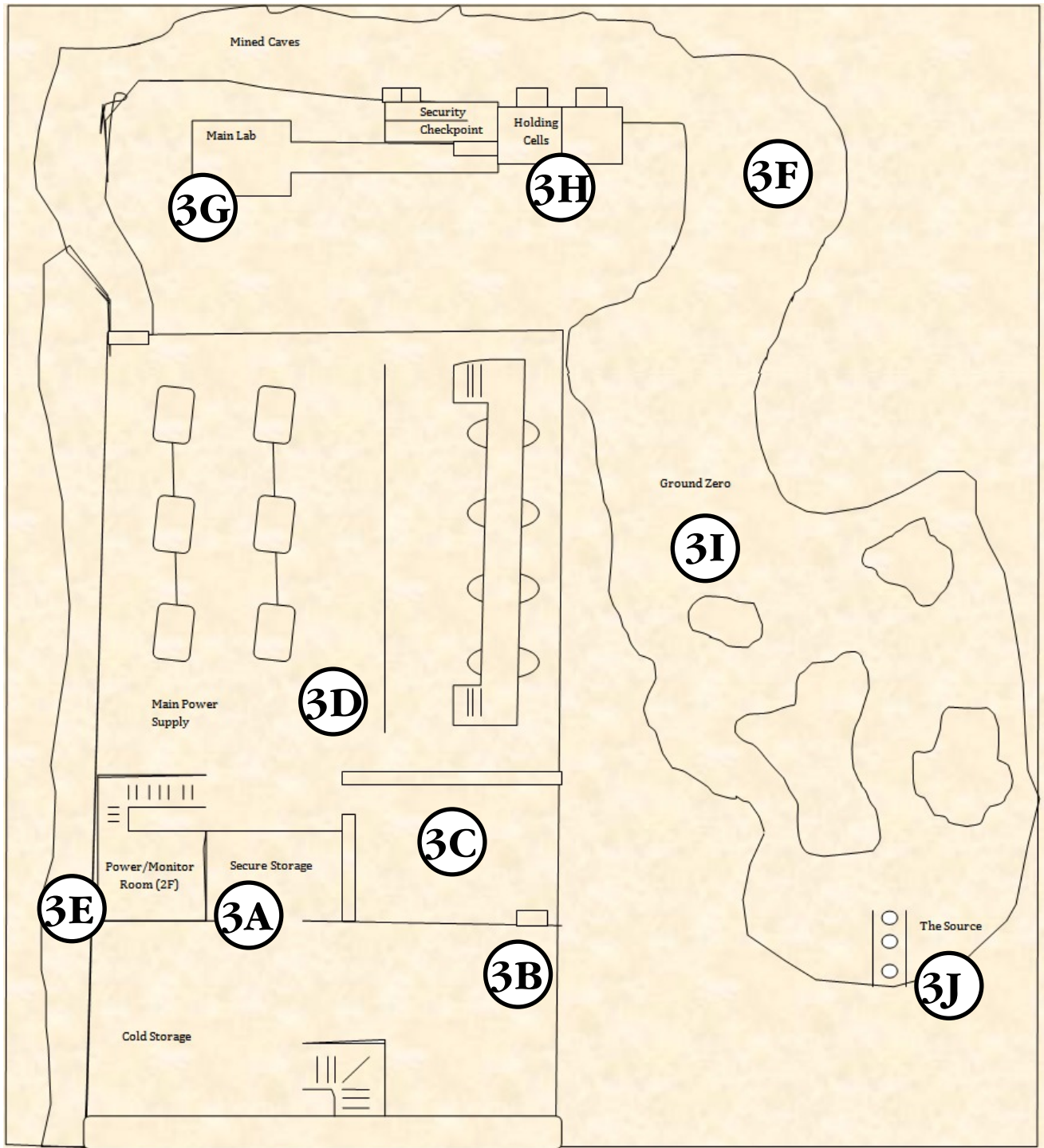
### 3A. Core Storage

Safety equipment, hazmat suits and more are stored with a room full of rectangular lockers. Most of them are secured through locks, but these can easily be picked or bashed off. Tools for cutting, measuring the power and others could be repurposed for weapons in worst case scenarios; making crushing, piercing, slashing or even fire or electrical weapons. In addition, basic weapons are kept in secured lockers. These include (1-10) combat knives, (1-4) small firearms and ammunition (clips included with small arms), as well as (1-3) flares.

- If all lockers are searched, there's a chance players will find a combination for the generator. The paper recommends: 2-4-2-1
- A secure storage unit has a variety of explosives, with a note saying that they were seized from various points of the dam. You'll need an authorized access card to reach it.

### 3B. Access Point

The security door that leads down into the main power station and the laboratories is locked off. Accessing requires a coded key card. The office beside it has a computer



Cootsbane Dam Labs

that requires a puzzle to upgrade the card gradually to master access. The puzzle used to power the device is detailed below.

- A card device must be powered up by a makeshift generator. The generator has 4 switches. Each switch has a set of four lights above the switch.
- A monitor is on the top, detailing how much power is charging the device, it goes from a 1 - 10 scale. If power goes beyond 10, there's a malfunction. There is a "power" button which attempts to power what it's connected to.
- Each switch controls a certain amount of power. Should there be too little power, the card device won't boot up. Should there be too much, both the device and the generator will go haywire (and sometimes emit electrical shocks, causing damage).
- To successfully power the card device, power must get to 10 monitor counts in total.
- The first switch is the most powerful, giving 3 monitor counts per switch notch.
- The second switch is somewhat broken and its number won't be added to the monitor. In reality, it only gives 1 count no matter what it's set to.
- The third is the second least powerful, giving 1 count every switch notch.
- The fourth is the second most powerful, giving 2 counts per switch notch.

- All notches start at 0. Each switch must be used in order to complete the sequence.
- Once a switch has been turned to a notch, the number on the monitor doesn't go down until "power" is pressed.

### 3C. Makeshift Barriers.

Wooden slabs block access to parts of the lab set-up. They are crude and only make the maintenance areas look like they are under repair themselves. When the team first enters the areas, an ominous mist begins to filter into the area from the air vents. Vision is slightly blurred as two soldiers are killed by SOMETHING. It sounds unnatural and monstrous. It climbs up the wall, leaving large claw marks. It then slashes at an air vent and crawls inside. The remaining soldiers (2 - 3) are on high alert and will actively seek out the party (or more monsters). These soldiers are significantly stronger than ones faced prior, likely having Exe-Corps or Blackmoorian Knights among their ranks.

Note: After destroying the glowing ore and destroying much of the cave, the barriers will be destroyed as mutants run amok!

### 3D. Backup Water Systems/Power Control Chamber.

A series of water vats line one part of the station, as fuel tanks like the others. Three better armored and armed soldiers act as securing down here, clearly protecting something big. As the party reaches arrives, they notice that the power stations begin to go haywire and shut down. However, backup generator systems activate, putting

the station in an emergency power lockdown mode. Many functions of the dam will not be operational until systems are restored. Detonating enough fuel tanks and generators at once could destroy much of the dam, should things get desperate enough.

On the way back to the control room, after the quarantine zone has been breached, a mob of zombies has pushed their way into the upstairs control room. One soldier has already lost the fight, while another rapidly fires into the crowd telling them to “hoke on it.”



### 3E. Control Console

Along a few turns of grated stairs leads up to a sliding door containing an elaborate computer room, complete with large tape deck looking machines. All sorts of techno doodads line the area. Among them is a panel with large buttons. The large red one deactivates any security mechanisms that lock down the caves beneath the mountain. However, the area is put on high alert as alarms ring.

As the party leaves first leaves the console room and back into the main power control, a “ross visceral mush” is pushed out of another vent grate, making a sick plopping sound as it smacks the ground. Two lower level mages, alongside two soldiers and one elite soldier (choice of exe-corp or knight) file from the upstairs mess hall away to stop the team.

### 3F. Mining Caves

Dug through earthy magics and digging tools, these caves were originally used to study the minerals around Blackmoor. About 1/2 a mile from a rundown gold mine that’s long since been picked clean, the staff wanted to see what anything near a riverside would wield. It gives a faint purple glow from crystals that have mostly been harvested. (They are worthless.) Curiously, much of the work was done thanks to erosion over time, revealing something ancient and sinister.

Warning and quarantine zone tape hastily seals off continuing further, but provides no real barrier. Warning signs detailing the corrupted minerals lines doorways to other rooms.

### 3G. Contamination Labs

To access, players must first go into a security room with two guards. One is in front of the blast doors, another is in the computer room. In any case, the panels must be released to access the labs ahead. The blast door opens to a hall containing different labs and an emergency door back to the cave. The first is a lab study containing several corpses of infected personnel. More disconcerting is the trail of viscera on various tables and the ground, but no other bodies are in sight... Even more disconcerting are disgusting trails of foot prints. The second lab details an equally morbid and grisly scene. A range of dismembered body parts to strapped down humanoids alongside a variety of testing tools, liquids and the accursed ore. Unhinged scientists are well armed with not only the experiment tools, but a variety of weapons. They were readied

for the terrorists and the extermination team, but not your team.

### 3H. Quarantine Laser Fence Rooms

Housing various experimental creatures as well as reanimated lab techs and soldiers. The sickly monsters try to escape from their containment. Should you make it to the ore capsules, an explosion will damage the main controls in the generator room and they will succeed in their escape.

### 3I. Ground Zero

Sludgy, green and sickly ooze covers the walls leading to remnants of the strange ore with an eldritch power all its own. It's a miracle that the rivers are still frozen and the dam is shut off, lest the contaminants be taken to nearby civilization. Horrible monsters line the area, all playing dead or waiting in the shadows. They all want to protect the ore, as if they revere it. The strange purple tint of the caverns gives way to a bile-like green glow.

### 3J. Biohazard Container Capsules

This is where the most potent ores are stored. Outright contact with it is deadly. Other fainter ores are still within the walls, but this is the crux of it (in addition to what has already been harvested). The ore itself counts as a monster. It unleashes a damaging radiation attack, unleashing energy damage upon foes when they start their round in a 20ft. zone of influence. Creatures that die from the aura come back as zombies under its control.

*Campaign Option:* To further tie in the lore used for Returned Blackmoor, the ore could

be a mummified serpentine<sup>1</sup> corpse drenched in dark magic and radiation. Perhaps an Oard<sup>2</sup> killed from the Great Rain of Fire is still tainted by remainder of chaos magic from the ensuing event. The end reveal can easily be swapped out or altered.

## What Happens Next?

Unless you have your own viable means of escape, the team is still stuck on the dam. The cave with the Coot-corrupted minerals may be crushed and the faculty either scattered or defeated, but it's a harsh and probably deadly trek back to safety. However, a couple of spare horse-like automatons might prove useful enough, if the snow isn't too deep. Also, there are digging tools in the dam that could be used to carefully excavate the collapsed tunnels out to the dam's transport hub at the other end. Should a message be sent, help could arrive either at the top of the dam or at the other end of the tunnel.

As the word of this horrible scandal gets out, Allogost is thrown into a panic. Depending on who the party aligned with prior to the module, this could be a boon for them or an issue all its own. Investigations double down within the prime hub of Blackmoor City, expanding slowly beyond. Less extreme rebels aid civilians in countering the investigations and subverting them. The

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<sup>1</sup> Serpentes were ancient enemies of Blackmoor, created by James Mishler in his "[Age of Blackmoor](#)" article in the Vaults of Pandius

<sup>2</sup> The Oard are a time-traveling cybernetic enemy relevant to the "[Returned Blackmoor](#)" backstory that appeared in *Threshold Magazine* issue #20



maniacal cyber warlord begins to show weakness.

As for the dam itself, it could be seized by the team if they wanted. Should they abandon it, someone will no doubt stumble upon it, especially as the original lake thaws out and slowly floods the nearby region more. Whether or not it will be brought back to working order is uncertain. The rebellion from before would be foolish to try to make it a base, as it's widely known about thanks to their actions. Should they really want to make their mark, the team could try to further the rebels' own goals by blowing up the dam, using a variety of explosive devices.

## Beyond Cootsbane Dam.

### Blackmoor Royal Airfield

Despite being a decommissioned dam that became a top secret base, there exists other sites not far from the area. The Blackmoor Airfield is on its way to being restored to its former glory. Sustained damage from the frigid weather, alongside years of neglect have left much of the area in awful condition. However, efforts have slowly been made to bring the facility back to working order.

### Temple of the Coot

Long since collapsed, it's a cursed ground that radiates powerful evil. It is likely that its influence corrupted the grounds that Cootsbane dam was built on, at least so much as creating the evil ore that was used for deranged super-soldier experiments.

## Technology Descriptions.

### Aero-Copter

This drone-like transport craft has four arms with rotating blades on top of each "hand". Should a set of blades go out, each hand has a backup pair ready to take over for operation. The pilot and up to 3 passengers sit in two rows of two seats within the craft, entering from either side of doors that lift up from latches on top of each side. Two bars and a variety of switches, dials and knobs help the pilot to fly to great altitudes. In more advanced models, they are equipped with either automatic weaponry or explosive missiles. In some cases, both. While not equipped for combat, miniature versions exist for a quick getaway. And while not a supreme military war machine, the advanced aero-copter can sustain relatively heavy damage while dishing out lethal attacks. A flaw of the missiles is that they are oddly somewhat "slow" from long distances, giving a ranged character a small window of time to try to stop them from afar. Of course, too much damage at once risks it blowing out a major component or two, crashing or exploding in air.

### Mechani-Mover

Or Mover for short, these are the cars of the Blackmoor universe. Ranging from bulky and industrial to sleek and cutting edge, these technologies hardly caught on outside of the elite and the influential. This is in part from effective public transport long since eliminating the need for pushing these creations to a mass market. Popular models for the military resemble heavily plated trucks, resembling the very suits of armor worn by Blackmoorian soldiers and higher

ranking knights. Some are given motifs of animals, such as horses.

### **Eque-ndroid**

Or known to some as the Horse-Bot. Blackmoor can never remove itself from its roots. As such, horse-like androids were created to simulate the great age of equestrianism. While horses still exist in Blackmoor, they are quite rare and considered national treasures.

### **Energy Blade**

The evolution of the mighty sword. A small road unleashes a powerful laser-like light that allows the duelist to cut through surfaces far easier than with steel. However, it also cauterizes wounds on contact, due to the intense heat it emits. The limits are pushed with such weapons, as axes, polearms and even blunt weapons have been replicated through energy weapon technology.

### **Blast Gun**

The staple laser and plasma gun lines. As smokepowder was being phased out, a deadlier weapon was born. Capable of shooting beams of magical light at the push of a trigger, they quickly replaced more traditional firearms. Deadly blasts shot holes into victims at a greater ease than the lead pellets and caps that were widely used beforehand.

### **Timer Mine**

A timed explosive that deals enough damage to create a short but effective blast. It is the equivalent of a standard explosive device, but

has the added benefit of latching to almost any surface before exploding.

### **Blam Bomb**

Fragmentation Grenades, creating a 5ft. burst explosion from its point of attack.

### **Detonator Mine**

Similar to the timer mine, but much deadlier and more effective. Its timer is set off by a device with a button on top.

### **Data Scrambler**

A metallic spider-like trinket that hooks onto a port used for data devices. The construct proceeds to sample information and rapidly corrupt it, turning it into a garbled and ruined mess.

## **MONSTER/NPC Description.**

### **Blackmoorian Knight**

The proud soldiers in service to the great regime of Returned Blackmoor. Despite the nobility collapsing in favor of the new government, they remain loyal. Well trained, they're ready for almost any situation. Their gear is reminiscent of the knights of old (see illustration by Toni Roads, Threshold Issue 20), fortified and enhanced through heavily developed techno-magic. While much of their arsenal favors ranged firearms of various varieties, ranged and melee inspired by classical weapons remain just as popular. Swords, axes, clubs, staves, pikes, polearms and more have been reinvented thanks to high-technology against a society that still favors heavier armor.

### Patroller

Weaker with less impressive equipment. They'll have some standard issue arms and armory that's a step above civilian grade. Their main purpose is to act as security for the grounds, ensuring the perimeter stays safe.

### Soldiers



*Intruder captured by Blackmoor border guards, original drawing by Toni Roads, [www.artstation.com/toniroadsart.com](http://www.artstation.com/toniroadsart)*

A true knight of Blackmoor. Harkening back to the days of old, the soldier class are the equivalent of the land's stalwart warriors in service to Blackmoor. The soldiers are not only trained through both classical and modern tactics, their ascension to their

current rank is a mix of classical caste system meets modern military training.

### The Exe-Corps

Special Operatives in service to tackle exceptionally dangerous scenarios, such as this one. They are distinguished by darker armor, intimidating face plates and better weaponry on the average. Their tactics are relentless and ruthless, as per better training than the standard knights. Beyond improved stats and improved equipment, these soldiers are statically similar to the knights. However, they should be played smarter than the knights.

### Rogues' Gallery

Ragtag spies, anarchists, terrorists, criminals, outsiders and more. Many are just desperate people doing anything to revolt against the regime, while others are far more extreme. While they're familiar with their own groups that traveled to the dam, they're overtly hostile towards anyone else. Some want to cause destruction, while others want to expose a dark conspiracy. They often rely on stealth. Barring that, the cells have done all they can to research the dam and harness that information for acts of guerrilla warfare. However, the pushback from the knights, as well as discovering mind shattering secrets below, has left many on edge and they are unlikely to trust anyone outside of their cells.

### Mutants

All manner of unsightly and corrupted abominations. Originally, these were created by accident. The purpose of the experiments below the dam was to create super-soldiers using a strange new material found in a cave

underground. The experiments went wrong, but they were secretly continued as bio-weapons none the less.

### Zombies

Lowly mutants made from the corpses of subjects killed by the evil ore. They shamble slowly, but try to rush the party.

### Hybrid Creature

Part humanoid, part something else. Despite its malformed features, it's quite durable, even against fire. It uses the tactics of the zombie, without bad speed and bad fortitude.

### Ultra Mutant

Large and menacing. Its features are inflamed and muscular, but it is aggressive and stupid. This titanic creature is extremely deadly, capable of taking out multiple targets before any hope of dropping. This was the closest success to the desired super-soldier result.

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## Threshold Black Market

[\*Continued from page 91\*](#)

### Lubomir Uvarov Thief level 10 Chaotic

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He is in charge of the black market overseeing all the operations inside and outside the market. He commands the guards of the area and monitors the operations within the market. He is a tall but thin man. He is very charismatic and is very skilled at persuading people. He has long black hair, and he is always armed with a sword (Master), and wears black leather armor +2. Although he is very polite he tends to finish any argument with bloodshed. He is very orderly and does not allow mistakes. If someone makes a mistake, or breaks a rule, they do not live to have another chance.



# DEEP COVER

A rather unusual cloak-and-dagger scenario  
for 6 players

by Geoff Gander

*Special thanks to my gaming group  
for being such awesome play-testers.*

## ABOUT THIS ADVENTURE

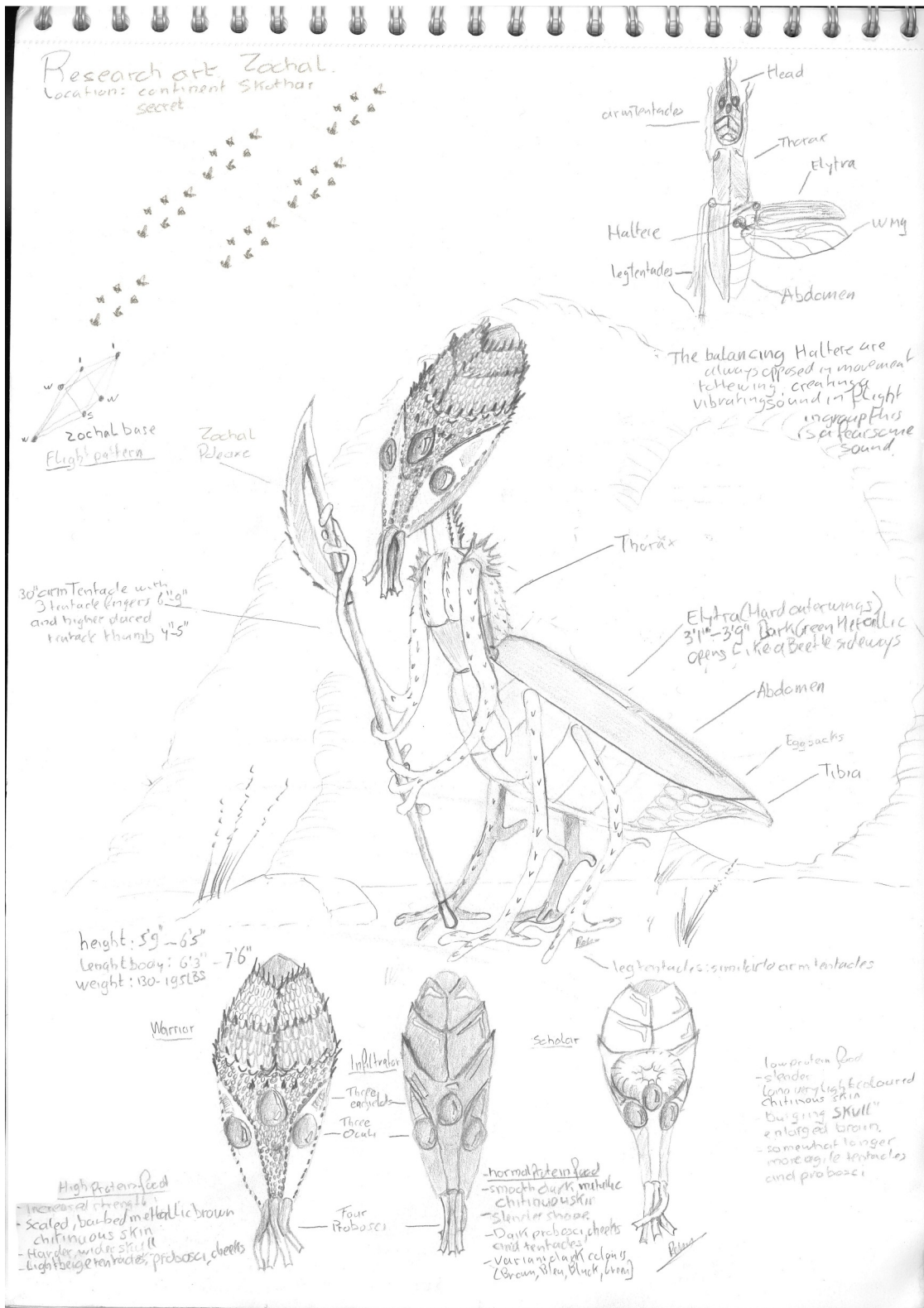
This adventure introduces the zhochal as a player character (PC) race, presenting the world of Mystara in a very different light in the process... It is highly recommended that players be thoroughly familiar with the campaign setting. The DM and his or her players should also ensure that they understand [my previous article on the zhochal race/character class](#) (in *Threshold Magazine* #20) which contains notes on that race's society and values, before playing. For ease of play, pre-generated PCs (complete with backgrounds appropriate for the storyline) have been included at the end of this adventure. This adventure is designed as a one-shot to showcase the playability of the zhochal and to provide a roleplaying challenge<sup>1</sup> to your players, but if you enjoyed the scenario you are welcome to take the storyline in new directions!

<sup>1</sup> This point cannot be emphasised enough. The zhochal are utterly alien to Mystara and have a very different cultural mindset, which I have tried to present in my previous article. Players who enjoy getting deep into their characters, as my own players do, found them an interesting change. I would not recommend them for novice players.

## BACKGROUND

The zhochal collective to which the PCs belong is located north of the Darokinian city of Corunglain, just over the border with the Broken Lands. The collective established a stronghold in a narrow, steep-sided valley roughly 100 years ago, and has finally convinced the local goblin tribes to leave it alone. However, a rival collective that follows the Outer Beings has also established itself in the region. This rival collective mounted an attack on the PCs' stronghold and inflicted enough damage that it is no longer able to produce any decent weaponry. A subsequent attack could be devastating.

The leader of the PCs' collective, the First, has learned, through field operatives, that a powerful zhochal weapon—a shocklance—was recently acquired by an adventuring party and sold it to the city of Corunglain. The PCs must go to Corunglain and retrieve the shocklance, ensure that the humans do not figure out how to produce them on their own, and obtain enough genetic material to help the collective produce more weapons.



Zochal, drawing by Robin

**Author's Note:**

Although this adventure is set in the Republic of Darokin, it is my interpretation of the country. The main difference is that I decided that Corunglain, being a frontier city with ties to the Principalities of Glantri and subject to frequent humanoid raids, probably relies on magic to bolster local defences. As a result, the ruler (whom I call the Lord Mayor) has established a Ministry of Thaumaturgical Affairs to foster magical learning, and regulate its use. Whatever the Chancellor of Darokin might think of this move, he is a practical man and officially turns a blind eye—whatever keeps Corunglain strong and free is good for the Republic, after all.

**BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE**

Give your players a chance to read the character sheets, review the zhochal character rules, and ask any final questions. Once they are ready, read or paraphrase the following:

Your people are few, huddled in scattered citadels and strongholds on the fringes of indigenous civilisations, dimly remembering where you came from generations ago. When your people first came to this world they were united in the worship of beings of cosmic power, whose aims were unknowable yet tied to your own destiny. Yet there were some among you who turned away from that faith, who remembered an earlier, more rational time. Your ancestors were among those, but not everyone wished to abandon their faith. Your people were sundered, and bitter rivalries grew.

Some of those rivals live near your collective, in a ruined city known by humans as Ardelphia. They began expanding their reach and your First deemed it necessary to counter them. Their attack was repulsed, but the destruction was nearly absolute and you are among the few who survived. And now, your First summons you...

Assuming the PCs respond to the summons, continue:

You make haste to the First's chamber, located deep within your citadel. Here, you could almost think no attack had occurred. Two Guardians, each bearing wounds from the battle, step aside to let you enter. The First looks up from a record disk it had been examining. "The collective need has been articulated," it says. "Our Surveyors have reported increased activity in the enemy collective's citadel. Another assault is likely and, as long as our defenses remain critically damaged and we continue to lack the resources to fashion new weaponry, the probable outcome is our destruction.

"An outpost of the rival collective has been located near our position; however, a sub-collective of humans from the nearby city of Corunglain attacked the facility and eradicated its occupants. It was observed that a number of artifacts of our people—including one possibly functional shocklance—were transported to the city.

"After reviewing our remaining records, including those of human battle tactics, and conscious of the circumstances, the most viable option is to do that which is most illogical...and most human. The enemy collective will not expect a reprisal. All remaining Guardians have been instructed

to act accordingly. While the enemy is engaged by what remains of our forces, you will form a sub-collective to enter the city of Corunglain to locate and retrieve the shocklance. Once successful, return immediately.

“Should this mission prove successful two strategic aims will be satisfied. First, the local human population will be deprived of a shocklance which, even if not working, could theoretically be reverse-engineered to the detriment of our race. Second, successful retrieval will provide our Artificers with viable material to fabricate additional shocklances and other materials currently beyond our capabilities since the attack.”

The First will allow the PCs to ask for additional details if they wish, but it knows little more. If asked about details concerning the people of Corunglain, the First will say that most of the inhabitants seem to be more combative than the human norm. Zhochal psychologists have been unable to determine the reason, but have advised that the local populace can be expected to react in an extreme fashion if confronted by one of the PCs in its true form. As a result, each PC will be issued a *ring of shapeshifting* for the duration of the mission.

In departing, the First will express a hope for success on the mission, and reminds the PCs that while they are away from the protection of the collective, none of them will hear the Voice of All, and it will warn them of strange thoughts and feelings while they are away. Should this occur, the PCs are advised to ignore these sensations and refocus on the mission objectives and achieve them in as expeditious a manner as possible, in order to re-integrate with the collective more easily.

## ENTERING CORUNGLAIN

The party can either approach the gates in their guises, or they can await a suitable time at night and fly over the wall. If the former option is chosen, the guards will question the party closely as to its business in the city. Any checks against social skills will have a -2 penalty, due to the suspiciousness of the guards. If such a check is failed, the guards will search the PCs. Should any zhochal items be discovered the guards will insist that the PCs accompany them to their guard post, where they will be interrogated even more. There is also a 20% chance that one of the guards present will be familiar with zhochal items, and alert the guard captain on duty. The PCs will have to explain what the items are (another social skill check should be made—this time at -4). If the check fails the guards do not buy the story, and alert their captain (see below).

The captain (F9) arrives in one turn and oversees the transfer of the PCs to holding cells under the Department of Thaumaturgical Affairs (which happens to be where the shocklance is being kept). All of the PCs' equipment is confiscated for further study. Go to *Inside the Ministry of Thaumaturgical Affairs*, below. Although this is a huge setback initially, the PCs could turn it to their advantage later.

If the party decides to fly in during the night, there is only a 10% chance that a guard sees them. There is a good chance they will be able to find a safe place to land undetected, but must then try to locate a contact to learn what is going on in the city, and where the shocklance is being held.





*Walls of Corunglain*

## Making Contact

Although the party is in a foreign city, they are not without resources. There are ten members of the PCs' collective in the city, all of whom are disguised and occupying positions of varying degrees of influence. Each of them has been tasked by the First to infiltrate one section of Corunglain society in order to acquire as much information as possible about how the local human population acts. They operate in this capacity for years at a time, masquerading as locals and gaining the confidence of as many people as possible.

Using their psy sense, the party can locate other zhochal in the city if they are within 120 feet. However, they will only have a general direction, and if the other zhochal is in a guise (highly likely) and in a location where humans are present the PC must use other clues to locate them (since they will not willingly give themselves away). At any given time, there is a 15% chance that one or more members of the party will detect a member of their collective 1d12x10 feet away.

Because infiltrators always live with the threat of discovery, and are practiced in the

art of pretending to be human, they will at first pretend not to understand the party's attempts to contact them discreetly (even though their own psy sense would tell them who the PCs really are - enemies are everywhere), or dismiss the idea as being something completely outlandish. A successful Intelligence check by any PC will allow them to realise the extent to which infiltrators hide themselves, and that sending out consistent signals (e.g., make references to items or events in the stronghold that only a member of the collective would understand) will gain the infiltrators' confidence.

Once the party does make contact with an infiltrator, they will recommend meeting the group as soon as possible in a safe place. Each infiltrator has their own network of unsuspecting human informants, as well as a small number of locations where they can hide, should their cover be blown, and they need time to plan their escape from the city. There is a 75% chance that the infiltrator will want to meet right away, but otherwise will suggest the following day. The meeting is handled the same way regardless, but if it is delayed until the next day the DM should have the party decide how it will seek shelter for the night (see *A Night at the Inn*, below). The infiltrator reveals the following information:

A party of adventurers was observed bringing a wrapped package into the city that was the same approximate size as a shocklance.

The party was followed to an inn in the city, and was placed under observation. The item was held there for a little over a day before two of the party members took it to the Lord

Mayor's palace. The party members later left the palace empty-handed.

A wagon was later observed leaving the Lord Mayor's palace bearing a long crate. Several men rode in the wagon with the cargo until it reached a building known to house Corunglain's Ministry of Thaumaturgical Affairs. The men unloaded the crate and carried it inside.

The infiltrator does not know anything else, and to his or her knowledge there are no zhochal working in the building. A rough description of the building can be given (see *Breaking In*, below). The PCs will also be warned that a hostile collective has infiltrators in the city as well, but it is not known how many are active, or whether they are aware of the shocklance.

## A Night at the INN

If the party has to wait to meet an infiltrator, they will need to find a place to lay low for a while. Although zhochal have little need for sleep, the PCs should realise that failing to appear to need rest will make them look very suspicious to the local population. There are many inns in Corunglain, and the party has been issued enough local currency (120 daros) to rent modest lodgings for a couple of nights. Provided no one in the party behaves too oddly, they will have no trouble finding accommodations.

If the party sleeps in a common room, other guests will try to engage them in conversation. This would be an ideal opportunity for some potentially difficult roleplaying, as what (to the other guests) is

an innocuous question may receive a very strange answer. If this is how the DM chooses to handle the scene, then he or she should pay close attention to what the players say and exploit opportunities for misinterpretation. Depending on how such a conversation goes, the PCs could have a fight on their hands.

The party may decide to do some investigating, and ask if anyone has seen an item resembling the shocklance. They should make a reaction roll at -2, and if the result is positive there is a 20% chance that the person asked saw something long and thin be loaded into a crate and taken somewhere in the richer part of town. If the reaction roll fails, the person will refuse to answer and will keep their distance while looking strangely at the party.

## Ambush

The PCs are not the only zhochal active in the city. In fact, the collective from which the shocklance was originally stolen also has infiltrators in Corunglain, and they suspect that their lost weapon is in the city. Once per hour, there is a 5% chance that an enemy infiltrator is within 1d12 x 10 feet of the party. The DM should gauge how discrete the PCs are pursuing their tasks—if they are too obvious they could receive a great deal of unwanted attention. Enemy infiltrators will not attack the party if there are witnesses, but they will memorise the appearance of their disguises<sup>2</sup> to help

<sup>2</sup> It is important to remember that a zhochal's guise never changes once it is created, and it will remain as it is even if the zhochal in question uses a different ring of

identify them for future attacks. The actual ambush will take place either at whatever inn the PCs are staying, or at a time when the ambushers are confident that they can eliminate the party before any locals can run to the scene. During the ambush itself, four zhochal will fly down and seek to encircle the party. Once they have done so, they will attack in full force, with the aim of killing or incapacitating as many PCs as possible in a short amount of time.

**Zhochal Ambushers (4):**

AC 4; hp 18 each; MV 60'(20')/210'(70') flying; #AT 2 (sword) or 1 (needler); D 1d8x2 or 1d6 + poison; ML 9; SV F4; AL C.

Three zhochal carry two swords each, while a fourth carries a needler (see New Weapons at the end of the adventure). If the ambush fails, the surviving attackers will flee and not be heard from again. They will seek to avoid capture at all costs, and have sworn never to reveal their instructions.

**BREAKING IN**

Eventually, it should be clear that the PCs must go to the Ministry of Thaumaturgical Affairs offices in order to find the shocklance. The party should be allowed enough time to develop a plan, since they will not have any information about how the building is laid out, and they will certainly not know where their treasure is located.

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*shapeshifting*. Guises, and how they work, are explained in more detail in my [article on zhochal player characters](#) on *Threshold Magazine* issue #20.

A successful Intelligence roll will result in a sudden insight that not only is the building guarded, but those guards regularly patrol the building. There are always six guards in and around the building: Two guards always stand watch at the main entrance, while another two make their patrol, and a third pair rest. When the patrolling guards return to the entrance, they go to the guard room to rest, while the guards at the door go on patrol and the formerly resting guards take their posts at the door. Each patrol takes one hour to complete, and covers all the floors of the building (three above ground, two below).

Although the guards are on alert, they have not been told about the shocklance, and therefore are not being especially watchful—unless the PCs were captured as outlined above (see *Entering Corunglain*), in which case they will be on high alert because they will know that the party is being held inside.

The party will be challenged should they draw near (the guards' instructions are to forbid anyone entry unless they have an appointment with someone working inside, or they have a special permit to enter). As the party will not know anyone inside, and will not have any documentation, they will be told politely (but firmly) to go away. If the party attacks the guards, they will have one round to silence them before they can shout an alarm (two guards will arrive in 1d4 rounds, and the other two in another 1d6 rounds). If the attack happens during the day, passers-by will witness the altercation (no roll required) and call for the constabulary, which will arrive in 1d6 rounds (the building is located in a well-to-do neighbourhood). If the PCs attack the guards at night, there is only a 20% chance that any witnesses will be around (if so, there is a 50%



*Outside the Ministry*

chance that 1d2 constables happen to be passing by, who will attack immediately).

The DM should decide when the next shift change will take place. Should this happen while the party is dealing with the first guards they encounter, the second group will be able to raise an alarm and summon their resting companions, who will arrive in 1d4 rounds.

The guards do not know what the shocklance is, let alone where it is located. They do know that classified work goes on in the underground levels of the building, but they do not have authorisation to go down there. They also know that a separate corps of guards works on the lower levels, but there is very little fraternisation between the groups.

**Ministry of Thaumaturgical Affairs Guards (6):**

AC 5; hp 14 each; MV 90'(30'); #AT 1; D 1d8; ML 9; SV F2; AL N. Each guard carries a normal

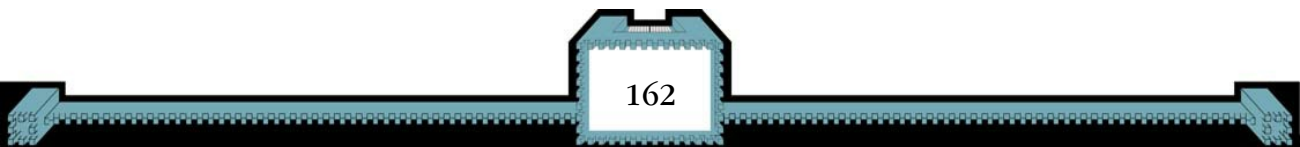
sword and wears chain mail armour under a green cloak.

**City Constables (1d2+):**

AC 5; hp 10 each; MV 90'(30'); #AT 1; D 1d8; ML 8; SV F1; AL N. Each constable carries a normal sword and wears chain mail armour under a dark blue cloak.

**Inside the Ministry of Thaumaturgical Affairs**

The building that houses the Ministry is rectangular with a single corridor running along its length, broken by an atrium in the middle that rises all three storeys to a skylight. A circular staircase winds up through the atrium and down into the basement, but there are additional ones at each end of the building. A detailed room key is not provided with this adventure, but a general description of what can be found on each floor has been provided. Should the party explore the above-ground floors, it



should quickly become apparent that there is nothing relevant to their mission to be found there.

It should be noted that if the PCs travel unescorted through the building during the day, they will be challenged by employees (most of whom are 1<sup>st</sup>- and 2<sup>nd</sup>-level magic users). The DM should determine beforehand what sort of spells they would have available. Once the party shows that it means business, however, most employees will flee, and panic will likely ensue.

### First Floor:

This floor contains a series of offices along the corridor to either side of the atrium. The offices to the right contain numerous small desks, loaded with stacks of parchment. This area is where low-level officials work—mostly filling out paperwork to register the sale of magical items, documenting the payment of magical license fees, and recording the use of magic in the service of the city, such as lighting magical lamps. If the party comes here during the day, dozens of low-level officials (1<sup>st</sup>-level magic users) will be hunched over their desks.

Much of the area to the left of the atrium on this level is taken up by a dining hall for Ministry officials. Although employees are welcome to bring their own food, a kitchen on-site prepares inexpensive (if not exactly tasty) meals. At any given time during the day, a dozen or so employees will be here. Four people work in the kitchen area. The PCs may find the bland chicken soup almost palatable, since it is similar to the greyish porridge that they normally eat.

### Second Floor:

To the right of the atrium are a handful of offices where archivists (2<sup>nd</sup>- to 3<sup>rd</sup>-level magic users) work to record all magic-related events that have happened in Corunglain, as well as details on all of the known spellcasters living in the city. These offices are connected to a large record room, filled with rows of wooden filing cabinets, that takes up most of this floor. Here, files on every magic user ever known to have lived and worked in the city are kept). This side of the floor also contains a water closet<sup>3</sup>, located next to the atrium.

The corridor to the left of the atrium contains offices that are better-appointed, and contain only one desk per room. This is where senior officials (3<sup>rd</sup>- to 5<sup>th</sup>-level magic users) work, and where members of the public can meet Ministry officials to request the casting of a spell. Only a handful of these offices will be occupied during the day—most of the people who work here are usually out and about on city business. If confronted, however, they will defend themselves. Should one of them be interrogated, there is a 50% chance that they will know that a strange object was recently taken to the laboratories on the lower level.

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<sup>3</sup> My version of Mystara is more technologically advanced than the default setting, with urban centres in the Known World having technology from the late 17th or early 18th centuries, whereas wilderness and fringe regions are more medieval. If your setting is more traditional, you may wish to change this feature into a Thyatian (Roman) toilet, or a garderobe.

**Third Floor:**

The corridor to the left of the atrium (blocked by an imposing set of unlocked double doors) contains the offices of the Inspectorate, a group within the Ministry charged with overseeing how the Ministry itself operates, and with ferreting out unregistered spellcasters operating within the city. Few of the ten inspectors (3<sup>rd</sup>- to 5<sup>th</sup>-level magic users) are ever in their well-appointed offices during the day, but there is a 30% chance that 1d2 inspectors will be present at night, catching up on their paperwork. The Inspectorate holds itself apart from the rest of the Ministry, so unless an alarm is raised by the guards or the party barges in here, anyone working up here will probably not get involved. No one here knows about the shocklance. There is also a water closet here, just off the atrium.

The corridor to the right leads to the luxuriously-appointed offices of the Chancellor to the Lord Mayor on Magical Affairs (a 12<sup>th</sup>-level magic user)—the head of the Ministry. There is a 50% chance that the Chancellor is away during the day, but his private secretary (a 5<sup>th</sup>-level magic user) is always present. The secretary has instructions to not let any uninvited guests in, and he will not let the party get close enough to do any damage. He (and the Chancellor) are fully aware of the shocklance, and will deduce the PCs' true natures very quickly. Their priority will be to neutralise the party in order to have them taken down to the lab for further study, rather than kill them. The chancellor enjoys a private water closet of exquisite quality.

**Basement:**

The structure of this level mirrors the floors above. There is a large, open landing beneath the atrium, lit by enchanted spheres embedded in the walls. The corridor to the right of the landing leads to a series of dry storage rooms containing crates of ink, sheets of tanned leather to make book covers, boxes of pens and nibs, spare furniture, and the like. Few people come here—day or night—except for the odd employee sneaking away for an unauthorised break. A second, much narrower, staircase leads down from the landing to the sub-basement.

The corridor to the left is taken up by a large room containing a mass of copper pipes running down from the ceiling to a massive metal cylinder that rumbles ominously, or alternatively into the stone floor. This is the boiler room for the building, which has recently been refitted with indoor plumbing (courtesy of the dwarven community in Corungrain).

This room is the private domain of Glorin Makkrast, a dwarven boiler technician/plumber. He rarely leaves his noisy, damp empire, and resents intruders (he is afraid they will steal his trade secrets—he has only recently moved to the city and has not yet grown accustomed to humans (who are not, generally speaking, passionate about the trades to the level that dwarves are). He does not know anything about the shocklance (or much of anything not plumbing-related). Nestled in the far corner of this chamber is a dwarf-sized cot (for those days when he really gets into his work).

**Glorin Makkrast, the Plumber King:**

AC 8; hp 15; MV 60'(20'); #AT 1; D 1d6+1 (heavy wrench); ML 8; SV D3; AL N.

Glorin is armed with a heavy wrench and wears a leather apron to protect his clothes while he works. He will refuse to let the PCs touch anything in the room, and will defend the boiler if need be.

The boiler itself is AC 2 and has 150 hit points. Should it be reduced to less than 50% of its hit points, the rumbling will become more ominous and Glorin (if he is still alive) will flee the room. The boiler will explode in 1d4 rounds, inflicting 10d6 damage to everyone in the room (save vs. Dragon Breath for half damage). The sound will be audible everywhere inside the building, as well as within 300 feet of it. If the PCs survive the explosion, they will have to contend with

the remaining staff, plus a good number of constabulary.

If the DM is feeling especially perverse, there is a chance that the explosion did enough structural damage that the ceiling could collapse, bringing everything from the dining hall onto their heads. The DM should roll percentile dice, with the following results as shown in Table 1.

**Sub-Basement:**

The staircase ends at a very narrow landing (also illuminated by softly-glowing spheres embedded in the walls) and a set of reinforced double doors (which are locked - normal chance to unlock them, otherwise the doors are AC 2 and have 100 hit points). Beyond the doors is a single hallway that veers to the right and leads to another set of

*Table 1: Explosion results*

d100 Roll	Result
01-25	Bricks and small rocks rain down intermittently. No damage.
26-50	Larger pieces of ceiling rain down, inflicting 1d6 damage on each occupant.
51-70	As above, but there is now also a 50% chance per subsequent round that rubble continues to fall, inflicting an additional 1d6 damage to each occupant. Roll every round the party remains in this room.
71-85	Steady rain of rubble. Each occupant takes 1d8 damage per round as long as they are in the room.
86-99	As above, but there is now also a 50% chance per round that each occupant will be struck by an especially large piece of debris that pins them to the ground for an additional 2d6 damage. Pinned characters can escape with a successful halved Strength check, or if they are freed by companions with a combined Strength of 30.
00	Complete collapse. All occupants take 5d6 damage from falling debris (save vs. Death Ray for half damage) and are pinned by debris. Unless rescued, suffocation and death occurs in a number of rounds equal to the victim's Constitution.

reinforced doors (unlocked), which are guarded by three guards. The guards will challenge the party immediately, and will demand to see some form of authorisation. They are aware of zhochal and will soon figure out what the PCs really are, and attack. If the PCs break through the first doors, the guards will be waiting.

**Elite Guards (3):**

AC 5; hp 20 each;  
MV 90'(30'); #AT 1;  
D 1d12+1; ML 10;  
SV F3; AL N.



Each guard carries a normal sword (Skilled Weapon Mastery + Strength bonus<sup>4</sup>) and wears chain mail armour under a dark red cloak.

If the battle goes against the guards, one of them will yank a cord hanging from the ceiling next to the doors, which will sound an alarm in the laboratory. The three guards on duty in that room (use the same stats) will arrive in two rounds to aid their companions. All of these guards are aware of the shocklance.

<sup>4</sup> As per the *Rules Cyclopedica*, Skilled Weapon Mastery in the normal sword also confers a -2 bonus to Armour Class, each round, against the first held-held or thrown attack made against the wielder. The wielder also has an opportunity, once per combat round, to deflect an incoming attack with a successful Save vs. Death Ray. The wielder may also, in lieu of an attack, try to disarm an opponent. The wielder rolls an attack as normal and, if successful, the target must make a Dexterity check in order to avoid dropping their weapon.

Beyond the doors is a large, rectangular, brightly-lit chamber, staffed by three guards (same stats as above) and four researchers (stats are below). Four six-foot-long metal wheeled tables, as well as a handful of trays holding surgical implements of various kinds, are in the centre of the room. The researchers are clustered around one of the tables, on which the shocklance rests. Six stone vats with metal covers line the far wall, and an imposing metal door is embedded in the wall to the party's right. A hand crank is mounted on the wall next to the door.

If the alarm has been raised, the researchers will wheel the shocklance to the metal door, which they will open using the crank (this takes three rounds). The storage room beyond the door is kept cold (the temperature inside is 2 degrees Celsius/35.6 Fahrenheit) with the aid of magic. The shocklance will be kept here until the intruders have been dealt with. Once the door is cranked shut (this takes another three rounds), an internal mechanism will keep it shut for 24 hours. If the party tries to break through the door, they will have their work cut out for them (the door has an AC of 0 and 175 hit points). One researcher will watch over the others while they work, and will be prepared to cast spells at any attackers.

Once the shocklance has been stashed, the researchers will use their spells to aid the guards (assuming any are still left). If interrogated, the researchers will say that they were instructed to dissect the shocklance to determine its inner workings, and to test its various components. They are unwilling to sacrifice themselves for their jobs, and will hand the shocklance over if asked. They will not mention the notes they have taken so far (which are not located in



the building), which contain enough information about zhochal bio-technology to allow them to begin reverse-engineering in a few years' time, provided they acquire a few more samples.

The shocklance itself is still alive, and has not been fully dissected. It can still be wielded by a zhochal (but not by any other race), and there is enough energy inside it to fire four more shots of 3d6 damage each, or two shots of 6d6 damage. It is also a viable sample that the party's collective can use to resume creating devices.

Only one of the vats at the other end of the room contains anything of interest—half of a zhochal corpse suspended in vinegar. The party will immediately recognise it as having belonged to the enemy collective (it was found near the site of the first tower that the adventuring party destroyed). The researchers have already examined it extensively (this will be apparent), and copious notes have already been made—these notes are also kept elsewhere.

**Researchers (4):**

AC 7; hp 13 each; MV 90'(30'); #AT 1; D special (see appendix) or by spell; ML 7; SV MU 3; AL N.

Each researcher carries a scalpel or a bone saw. They have nothing of value.

**Getting Away**

Assuming the PCs acquired the shocklance and it is reasonably intact, they should be able to make their way out of the building with few problems—especially if they have already handled the guards. Due to the

soundproofing effects of the surrounding bedrock, anyone working on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor will not have heard the sounds of battle, and thus if no alarm has been raised no one will come down from that floor. This is especially true if the party staged their raid during the night. Once out, it would be a fairly simple matter of taking wing, flying over the city wall, and returning to the stronghold.

If the PCs conducted their operation during the day, then full-blown panic has likely ensued. Regular staff will have fled the building, and several squads of city constables will have arrived on the scene (use the stats provided above). They will have been apprised of the situation, and will not be in the mood to ask questions. Provided that at least some of the party manages to escape the building, they will have to flee an increasingly agitated city. Constables are being mobilised, and messengers would be dispatched to the border fortresses to the north to warn them that someone is fleeing the city and must be stopped. Although the safest means of escape is by flying, the party will be highly visible, , and if one or more are injured may not be able to fly away quickly as a group.

The party will be pursued as long as they are visible; although the city constabulary will not follow them beyond the walls. It is not outside the realm of possibility that adventuring parties might be offered a sum of money to chase the PCs. Pursuit will slacken once Corunglain is no longer in sight. If the PCs manage to bring the shocklance back to the stronghold safely, the First will acknowledge their collective success, and order the cloning of the weapon.

## APPENDIX A : NEW WEAPONS:

### Bone Saw:

Bone saws are too flexible to stab an opponent; however, they can inflict nasty slashes (1d4 damage). Due to their shape and balance, bone saws are awkward to wield effectively (-2 to hit), and the blade is not heavy enough to cut through metal or hard armour. If a natural 20 is rolled on the attack, the saw inflicts a ragged gash on exposed skin that bleeds profusely (1d4+2 damage). At the DM's discretion, the victim's head or face may have been hit in such an attack, in which case Charisma is reduced by 2. If using Weapon Mastery rules, a bone saw can be treated as being equivalent to a hand axe.<sup>5</sup>

### Hand Flamer:

This weapon resembles a palm-sized, brownish-green, iridescent milkweed seed pod (weighing 20 cn). The wielder can fire the flamer by squeezing it, which produces a small jet of yellow, sulphurous flame up to 15 feet long (range is 5/10/15). Roll normally to hit. There are enough chemicals inside for six shots (which inflict 1d6 damage each), or three longer bursts (which inflict 2d8 damage each). Once spent, the hand flamer turns dull brown. As a living zhochal weapon, hand flamers must be immersed in a nutrient bath for at least 12 hours once per week (they will be recharged during this time). If this is not done, the weapon will "die" after another week has passed.

<sup>5</sup> See page 79 of the *Rules Cyclopedia*.

Furthermore, if a hand flamer is not immersed in a nutrient bath within 24 hours of being exhausted, it will "die".

When a hand flamer is found, the DM should roll 1d6 to determine how many single shots remain. Halve the result (rounding down) to determine how many longer bursts may be fired.

### Needler:

This weapon resembles an iridescent green snail shell about the size of a boxing glove (weighing 40 cn), from which rows of two-inch-long purple spines protrude in clusters along its leading curve. The wielder inserts their hand inside the "shell" and grasps a handle, which is squeezed to fire the spines (venomous needles) in a cone-shaped burst measuring 20 feet long and 10 feet wide at the end. Anyone in the area of effect must save vs. Dragon's Breath or be struck.

The venom affects native Mystarans differently from zhochal. If a native Mystaran of any race is hit, they take 1 point of damage and must save vs. Poison. If this save fails the victim takes 1d4 points of damage for three rounds, and all physical attributes (Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution) are reduced by 4 for 12 hours. If a zhochal is hit, they take no damage and must save vs. Poison at -8. If the save fails they are paralysed (as per the hold person spell) for 12 turns (2 hours).

When found, a needler has enough needles growing from it to fire 1d6 bursts. When a needler has fired all of its needles, it turns a dull grey colour while it grows new needles (this process takes six hours), at the end of

which time it will be capable of firing another six bursts. As a living zhochal weapon, a needler must be immersed in a nutrient bath for at least 12 hours once per week. If this is not done, the weapon will “die” after another week has passed.

### Scalpel:

Scalpels can stab for 1d2 damage, or they can be used to slash an opponent for 1d4-1. Due to the small size of the blade, a scalpel is completely ineffective against metal or hard armour, and its damage is reduced by 1 if used against the hide or an animal, or against an opponent wearing leather armour. A scalpel, due to its high concealability, could be quite effective in a sneak attack (the DM may wish to give an attacker a bonus to surprise or their attack). If using Weapon Mastery rules, a scalpel can be treated as being equivalent to a dagger for the purposes of determining critical strikes and the like.

### Shocklance:

Shocklances are roughly seven feet long and weigh eight pounds (80 cn), and are roughly twice the thickness of a staff. The “front” end flares outwards at its tip, ending in four barbed protuberances curving inwards once more, while the “rear” portion is rather bulbous and covered with slots and grooves of varying width, as well as a handful of chitinous protrusions. Their colouring ranges from light green to a dark grey, and have an uneven—and occasionally thorny—texture. Being composed of living tissue like other zhochal devices, shocklances are warm

to the touch, and, if one observes them for a prolonged period, pulsate slowly.

Each shocklance contains enough stored energy to fire up to 16 normal blasts of concentrated electricity (each inflicting 3d6 damage to the target), with a range of 200 feet. Zhochal wielders can adjust the settings by manipulating the various protrusions—this action which takes one round to perform.<sup>6</sup> If they do so, the shocklance can also fire more powerful blasts (which inflict 6d6 damage and consume two charges per shot), or one tremendous burst that inflicts 12d6 damage and consumes all of the energy within the weapon, which must be fully-charged beforehand. The effective ranges of the shocklance vary with the setting, with greater energy expenditures reducing it due to the wildness of the energy burst. In all cases, a successful save vs. Death Ray halves the damage inflicted on a target. Shocklances can also be set to a “stun” mode, which consumes no charges and stuns victims for 2d4 rounds each time they are jabbed with the weapon (save vs. Death Ray to avoid the effect). Table 2 provides a summary.

<sup>6</sup> Shocklances were designed for zhochal physiology (i.e. having four tentacled appendages serving as arms), and learning to operate one requires three successful halved Intelligence checks. This only needs to be done once, since all shocklances are identical, and consumes 1d4 charges. The slots and grooves located at the rear end of the weapon are the grips into which tentacles are inserted, and the protrusions are the controls that change the weapon settings, and fire it. A two-armed humanoid will not be able to hold the weapon, change its settings, and fire it in nearly as coordinated a manner. For non-zhochal to change settings and fire in one combat round, two people must use it simultaneously — one person to fire it, the other to help hold it and change the settings as needed.

Table 2: Shocklance damage

Shocklance Setting	Charges Used per Shot	Damage	Range (feet)
Stun	0	Stun for 2d4 rounds	0
Low	1	3d6	200
Medium	2	6d6	120
High	16 <sup>1</sup>	12d6	70

Once a shocklance's charges have been spent, it will be useless until it is placed within a nutrient bath, which will restore its charges at a rate of one every three hours. As with other living zhochal devices, shocklances will “die” if they are not immersed in their nutrient baths at least once per week, for a period of 24 hours.<sup>7</sup> Even dead, a shocklance is a valuable commodity. Its components can be used in magical and mundane experiments, and as such the average specimen can fetch 2d4 x 100 gp, depending on its condition. A “live” shocklance could easily command three times this price.

**Web ARMOUR:**

Zhochal web armour is a net, measuring approximately four feet on a side, made out of a green, slightly sticky, rubbery organic material that constantly ripples—even when there is no breeze. Several two-foot-long strands, each ending with a sucker, trail from each corner. To use web armour, the wearer

must drape it over their body (the holes are large enough for a head) and attach the suckers to their flesh. At the point, the suckers will start draining bodily fluids. If worn by a zhochal no damage is sustained, but a native Mystaran will take one point of damage per hour. The web will then vibrate roughly half an inch to three inches from the wearer's body, breaking up their silhouette slightly and causing the wearer to flicker intermittently. This effect is disorienting to observers, and as long as the web is worn it will confer an AC bonus of -2. However, non-zhochal will find web armour cumbersome—attacks made with any weapon except firearms are penalised by -1—unless a Weapon Mastery slot is spent on it. Spellcasting is not affected.

As long as web armour is able to feed from a host, it does not need to be immersed in a nutrient bath. If it is disconnected it must be immersed within a week (and stay immersed until used once more), or it will “die”.



<sup>7</sup> This problem can be prevented by obtaining a sample of the nutrient solution (likely a dangerous feat), and hiring an alchemist to duplicate it (at the very least a halved alchemy check, possibly a quartered check might be more appropriate). Needless to say, this would also be an expensive undertaking.

## APPENDIX B: PREGENERATED PLAYER CHARACTERS

**Guardian I** (3rd Level Zhochal Guardian) Experience: 4800

Armour Class: 3 (1) Hit Points: 19

Alignment: Neutral

<i>Strength</i>	16	<i>Skills:</i> Acting (18)	<i>Equipment:</i> Sword (1d12+2)
<i>Intelligence</i>	17	Disguise (18)	Hand Flamer (special)
<i>Wisdom</i>	8	Knowledge-Darokin (18)	
<i>Dexterity</i>	13	Survival-Mountains (18)	<i>Languages:</i> Zhochal
<i>Constitution</i>	10	Kinetics (14)	Thyatian
<i>Charisma</i>	8	Military Tactics (18)	Goblin

*Weapon Mastery:* Sword (skilled), Crossbow (basic)

**Equipment:** Web Armour, Sword, Hand Flamer, Human clothing.

**Background:** The First determined that you would be a guardian 20 cycles ago, and you have fulfilled that responsibility without question since then. During the first few cycles you defended the collective against hostile indigenous life—most often of the variety called “goblins” by the local human population. On an individual basis the goblins posed no real threat to you, but you learned very quickly that they were capable of mustering large numbers of warriors. Fortunately for the collective the goblins appear to be a very chaotic species, and relatively little effort is required to disrupt a large force of them. Within ten years of your maturation, the goblins ceased to pose a major problem.

Matters deteriorated during the current cycle. A numerically superior hostile collective has made inroads into the territory occupied by your own collective, and has inflicted considerable damage. You were present at the battle and tried your utmost to

defend your comrades and all they had built, but you were unsuccessful. Many voices in the Common Song were silenced. The First has determined, based on reports from surveyors and infiltrators, that a functioning shocklance is currently being held by the local human population. Since the probability of another attack being mounted in the short term is low, the First has selected you to accompany the sub-collective, in order to ensure its safety.

**Your Objective:** Keep the designated leader of the sub-collective safe at all times. Address all potential threats. If necessary, sacrifice yourself to ensure the successful seizure of the shocklance.

**Notes:** You have never left the valley of your collective before. The prospect of entering a city full of humans arouses sensations of unease. Due to the urgency of the mission, there was insufficient time to train you in the ways of humans, so if you do interact with anyone you will probably come across as being very literal-minded and blunt.



**Guardian 2** (3rd Level Zhochal Guardian) Experience: 4800

Armour Class: 4 (2) Hit Points: 16

Alignment: Neutral

<i>Strength</i>	9	<i>Skills:</i> Acting (12)	<i>Equipment:</i> Sword (1d12)
<i>Intelligence</i>	11	Disguise (12)	Hand Flamer (special)
<i>Wisdom</i>	9	Knowledge-Darokin (12)	
<i>Dexterity</i>	12	Survival-Mountains (12)	<i>Languages:</i> Zhochal
<i>Constitution</i>	14		Thyatian
<i>Charisma</i>	10		

*Weapon Mastery:* Sword (skilled), Dagger (basic)

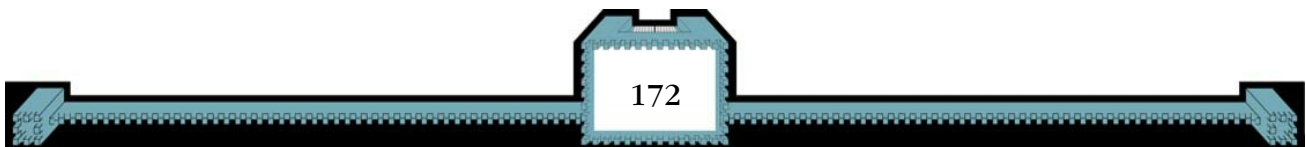
**Equipment:** Web Armour, Sword, Hand Flamer, Human clothing.

**Background:** You completed your maturation just prior to the recent attack made by a hostile collective. You defended the stronghold to the best of your ability, but the enemy was numerically superior. In the aftermath, the First determined that you had performed adequately.

You have now been selected to participate in a mission to retrieve a shocklance from the nearest human settlement. This is your first time out of the valley, and you suspect no amount of study will prepare you for what you are about to experience.

**Your Objective:** See to the general safety and security of the sub-collective, and assist the senior Guardian (Guardian 1) as needed. If necessary, sacrifice yourself to ensure the successful seizure of the shocklance.

**Notes:** Your first experience in your assigned function involved a great deal of destruction, in which many members of your collective were destroyed. Their absence is deeply felt. You are keenly aware of the importance of this mission, and of the fact that failure could result in the final destruction of your collective.



**Guardian 3** (3rd Level Zhochal Guardian) Experience: 4800

Armour Class: 4 (2) Hit Points: 17

Alignment: Neutral

<i>Strength</i>	16	<i>Skills:</i> Acting (14)	<i>Equipment:</i> Sword (1d8+2)
<i>Intelligence</i>	13	Disguise (14)	Hand Flamer (special)
<i>Wisdom</i>	12	Knowledge-Darokin (14)	
<i>Dexterity</i>	12	Lifeshaping (14)	<i>Languages:</i> Zhochal
<i>Constitution</i>	11	Survival-Mountains (14)	Thyatian
<i>Charisma</i>	5		+1 blank slot

*Weapon Mastery:* Sword (basic), Longbow (skilled)

**Equipment:** Web Armour, Sword, Hand Flamer, Human clothing.

**Background:** You served diligently as an Artificer for 20 cycles—starting with tending the proto-culture vats, and after you mastered that skill, coaxing the living matter into growing into the tools, weapons, and occasionally buildings your kind required. You performed your duties competently, but noted that your works always appeared to last a little longer than those of your colleagues. You felt a certain measure of...satisfaction that this was so. But you never said a word of it.

All that ended when a hostile collective attacked your stronghold. Much of what you had built had been destroyed—including your workshop. All of your tools that you grew yourself, all of your designs, and all of your prototypes were destroyed. In the aftermath of the attack, the First re-designated you as a Guardian for a special mission of utmost importance to your collective: To reclaim a shocklance that had somehow been acquired by the humans, and use it to rebuild the collective's manufacturing capacity. This was logical, as

you could not perform your duties adequately without a workshop and, while you lack the seniority to be entrusted with crafting a shocklance, you are familiar with the procedures required to sustain it. You have never left the valley before, and certainly have never seen, or interacted with, real humans. This mission is therefore unsettling on one level, and intriguing on another.

**Your Objective:** See to the general safety and security of the sub-collective, and assist the senior Guardian (Guardian 1) as needed. If necessary, sacrifice yourself to ensure the successful seizure of the shocklance. If you are still alive when the shocklance is recovered, take all precautions to ensure that it will survive the return journey.

**Notes:** You feel a certain amount of professional curiosity about the shocklance, which is one of the items that only senior Artificers are allowed to make. You are certain you would experience an unknown level of satisfaction were you to have an opportunity to hold it, and better yet to study it.

**Infiltrator** (3rd Level Zhochal Infiltrator) Experience: 3000

Armour Class: 1 (-1) Hit Points: 14 Alignment: Neutral

Strength	13	Skills: Acting (17)	Equipment: Sword (1d12+1)
Intelligence	16	Disguise (17)	Dagger (1d4+1)
Wisdom	13	Human Psych. (17)	
Dexterity	18	Kinetics (19)	Languages: Zhochal
Constitution	9	Knowledge-Darokin (17)	Thyatian
Charisma	9	Survival-Mountains (17)	Dwarven (Rockhome)

Weapon Mastery: Sword (skilled), Dagger (basic)

Thief Skills: OL 25%; F/RT 20%; CW 89%; MS 30%; HS 20%; PP 30%; HN 40%.

**Equipment:** Web Armour, Sword, Dagger, Human clothing.

**Background:** You began training as an Infiltrator ten cycles ago; although your collective had several in the field, incidents occur with enough regularity to require replacements. You would have been formally activated soon even if the hostile collective had not attacked, as several of your own collective's infiltrators have gone missing during the past cycle. Fortunately for this mission, as part of your training you were sent to Corunglain to practice your social interaction skills. You have a basic level of familiarity with the city, and are quite confident that you will be able to locate the shocklance.

Because of your field experience, the First has designated you as secondary leader, should the primary be killed.

**Your Objective:** Use your social skills to blend in with the local populace as much as possible in order to allay suspicion and acquire information. Be alert for any signs that the humans are beginning to suspect that the other members of your sub-collective are anything more than they appear to be. If necessary, support the Guardians in combat, but otherwise devise an optimum plan to return to the stronghold once the shocklance is acquired.

**Notes:** You are the only member of the group who has ever visited a human settlement before. Your knowledge of human behaviour is derived from many hours of interaction with them in their native habitats, and thus you realise that the chance of failure increases rapidly the longer your sub-collective is in the city. Humans, by their very nature, are very suspicious creatures.





**Leader** (3rd Level Zhochal Guardian) Experience: 7000

Armour Class: 2 (0) Hit Points: 15

Alignment: Neutral

<i>Strength</i>	13	<i>Skills:</i> Acting (18)	<i>Equipment:</i> Sword (1d12+1)
<i>Intelligence</i>	17	Disguise (18)	
<i>Wisdom</i>	12	Human Psych. (18)	
<i>Dexterity</i>	16	Kinetics (17)	<i>Languages:</i> Zhochal
<i>Constitution</i>	10	Knowledge-Darokin (18)	Thyatian
<i>Charisma</i>	9	Survival-Mountains (18)	Goblin

*Weapon Mastery:* Sword (skilled), Dagger (basic)

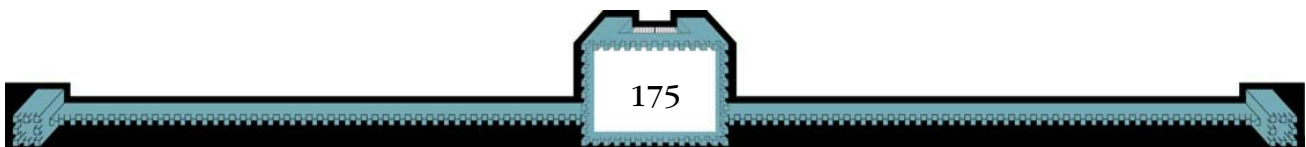
**Equipment:** Web Armour, Sword, Human clothing.

**Background:** You were trained as a Guardian 40 cycles ago, and performed that function for 25 cycles. The First then reassigned you to be an Infiltrator following a series of sudden disappearances, but instead of being assigned to Corunglain you were directed to cover the sparsely-inhabited lands to the east of the city. You were recalled during a period of heightened conflict with the goblins, and have remained in the valley until now. You are acutely aware of the vulnerable position your collective is in, and are gratified that the First has selected you to lead a sub-collective into Corunglain to acquire a shocklance that is currently being held by the humans.

**Your Objective:** Oversee the activities of all members of the sub-collective, and direct them to utilise their skills to maximum effect. Be alert for signs of distress due to

prolonged separation from the collective, and where required reinforce the importance of the mission. In the likely event of combat, ensure that the Scholar avoids direct involvement—especially if the shocklance is in the sub-collective's possession. As a fallback measure, escort the Scholar out of the city, sacrificing yourself if necessary.

**Notes:** You have performed a variety of tasks over the course of your lifetime, which made you the natural choice as Leader. Although you have never interacted with humans in one of their cities, you have encountered many while travelling. You are reasonably confident that you will be able to handle them socially if necessary; although the more delicate matters will be left to the Infiltrator.



**Scholar** (3rd Level Zhochal Scholar) Experience: 6500

Armour Class: 4 (2) Hit Points: 11

Alignment: Neutral

<i>Strength</i>	11	<i>Skills:</i> Acting (20)	<i>Equipment:</i> Needler (special)
<i>Intelligence</i>	19	Arcane Lore (20)	Dagger (1d6)
<i>Wisdom</i>	8	Disguise (20)	
<i>Dexterity</i>	12	Elven Psych. (20)	<i>Languages:</i> Zhochal
<i>Constitution</i>	12	Human Psych. (20)	Thyatian
<i>Charisma</i>	9	Knowledge-Darokin (20)	Elvish (Alfheim)
		Survial-Mountain (20)	Goblin
			+1 blank slot

*Weapon Mastery:* Sword (basic), Dagger (skilled)

*Spells:* 1st Level - *light, magic missile, sleep*

**Equipment:** Web Armour, Dagger, Needler, Human clothing.

**Background:** The First designated you as a Scholar for the collective 31 cycles ago. The Senior Scholar then assigned you to the Human Psychology Grouping, where you acquired specialised training. Learning about human culture has been intellectually stimulating, yet the incongruities inherent in human behavioural patterns continue to perplex you. Were it not for the attack by the enemy collective, you could easily have spent another 30 cycles or more in deep contemplation of the almost manic individualism inherent in human beings, which somehow does not result in societal breakdown.

However, despite the heavy losses suffered by your collective, this mission promises unheard-of potential for intellectual development. If you can capitalise on this opportunity, you could be of more than adequate service to the surviving members of your community.

**Your Objective:** Apply your knowledge of human history to maximum benefit. Assess the structure and overall health of the shocklance, and bear it back to the collective. If possible, acquire human technology or magical resources with which the collective is unfamiliar. Because your survival is mission-critical, the First has specifically requested that you avoid direct conflict as much as possible.

**Notes:** You have spent much of your life studying human artifacts and reading reports from Infiltrators, but have not actually encountered humans in their natural habitat. The living specimens you handled were acquired by others, and behaved in a manner consistent with cases of acute psychological trauma. They did not survive long enough for sustained study. This mission, however, presents an undreamed-of opportunity for deep research. You are confident that you can gain key insights into human psychology.

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Page 98:	<b>[Map: Serpent Peninsula]</b> Map of the Serpent Peninsula, from X6 (left) indicating the location of Onyo Maata, recommended site of the Forbidden City, and from <i>"Champions of Mystara"</i> in 1000 AC (right). Replica maps by Thorfinn Tait, April 2018, used by permission.	
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Page 102:	<b>[Map 4: Gulf of Hule]</b> Map of Hule from X5 (left) with recommended location for Highport in A1, and the Gulf of Hule in 1000 AC (right) based on multiple sources. Maps by Thorfinn Tait, 2018, used by permission.	
Page 103:	<b>[Image: Slaves brought to the Gulf of Hule]</b> Landing of prisoners in Algiers, 1706, Amsterdam Historic Museum, engraving by Jan Goeree (1670-1731) & Casper Luyken (1672-1708), via Wikimedia commons	<a href="#">Source</a>
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Page 108: **[Map: From Hule to Darokin]** [Source](#)  
Replica map by Thorfin Tait with location of Graakhalia added

Page 109: **[Diagram: Dragon Attack]**  
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Sind and the Rajahstan of Jaibul, 8 miles per hex
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- Page 144: **[Map: Cootsbane Dam Top level]**  
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A second issue focused on adventures, campaigns, and other materials directly useful for your Mystaran games.



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Anticipated contents include:

- “*Warriors of the Eternal Sun*” - the old video game becomes an adventure
- Escape from Hule, by Sea
- The many Mystaran sub-settings
- “Oeraphon’s War” - an expansion of “*Wrath of the Immortals*”
- The Barrel, a location

...and much much more!

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Please begin the subject line with the tag “[LETTER]”

Or by email to the Editorial address:  
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All proposal submissions can be sent by mail to the editors at the following address [Threshold.Mystara@gmail.com](mailto:Threshold.Mystara@gmail.com), and must be received by the proposal deadline<sup>†</sup>. The Threshold editorial team will contact you within 7 days of the proposal deadline regarding the status of your proposal.

Submission proposals should be sent inline in the mail, using the following subject format: [ISSUE#][Proposal]<title of your article>

The mail content should include the following:

- Proposed article title
- The type of article being proposed (short story, adventure, geographical location, organization, etc...)
- A one paragraph description of what the article is about.
- An estimated word count of the article (articles should range anywhere from 1000 to 7000 words, depending on the type of article submitted).

### Manuscripts

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*Illustrations:* please submit art and maps in lossless format (e.g., PNG).

*Articles:* manuscript submissions can be sent by mail as plain text, doc(x) or odt, or shared as Google Doc. The issue editor will create a shared document (for each article) to allow the author and editorial team to work on it. Articles can be as short as a single page, or as long as 6 pages, depending on the specific content. The editorial team will do its best to accommodate the contributions, but especially long works may be split over several issues.

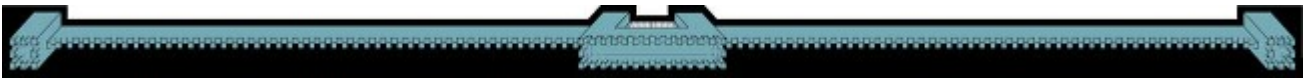
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