

Demo Only!



For Information on Full Release,
Please Visit <https://www.lettuceheadsdevs.com/swordscapes>

Stygian Swordscapes
Book 1:
The Ruins of Val’Kadoth

Game Book Overview and Mechanics

I. Overview

Welcome to the World of Stygian Swordscapes! In this game book series, you’ll make difficult choices, roll dice, solve inventive puzzles, and defeat powerful enemies in an attempt to complete the presented adventure and reach the end! The primary setting for the series is the World of Yeos, a dangerous and fantastical realm enshrouded in perpetual twilight, with its golden skies and Gothic or medieval-style backdrops providing a somber setting for the eldritch abominations and mysteries contained within. The adventures are anything but melancholy, however, and you’ll be sure to meet an array of colorful characters that may aid or abet you as you seek to conquer the challenges of each quest. Just don’t be surprised if an adventure suddenly takes a turn towards a dark and Stygian route of horrific proportions...

While the “Stygian Swordscapes” series provides a solo adventure for those who enjoy TTRPGs (tabletop role-playing games) to sink their teeth into, the gameplay of these books are also presented in a manner we think anyone can enjoy. Designed to present robust mechanical depth while also simplifying many mechanics of popular TTRPGs, the adventures presented in this series will provide a plethora of tactics to combat, puzzle-solving, and decision-making to make any RPG fan feel right at home. Please be sure to read the following mechanics and rules of play before starting your first adventure in the “Stygian Swordscapes” series. It is also a good idea to re-familiarize yourself with the rule-set in the overview and mechanics sections before each adventure, as needed, although any new features or rules will be listed after the overview section of each book. However, please note; these rules are provided for maximum enjoyment and balance of the adventures, but they should be treated more-so as guidelines and suggestions where appropriate. Please feel free to to play the books in

whichever manner gives you the most enjoyment! We hope you will find your quests in the World of Yeos both daunting and gratifying, and may the dice be ever in your favor!

(The following sections provide a detailed written guide to playing this game book and contain all necessary information to play. However, for more visual aids and comprehensive walkthroughs of character creation and combat, please use the link or QR code on p. 130.)

II. Keywords

RPG – role-playing game	mods – modifiers
TTRPG – tabletop role-playing game	MEL – melee
MC – main character	RAN – ranged
PC – playable or party character	1d3 – results of d6/2
NPC – non-playable character	dmg – damage
Res – resistance	ele – element/elemental
H.P. - health/heart points	P.B. - party banter
M.P. - magic points	permadead – permanently dead
F.P. - focus points	

III. Intro to Decision-Making and Dice-Rolling

In order to play the adventure contained within this game book, decisions must be made that will progress the story in different directions depending on the player’s choice. The book is split into “paragraph sections” that contain a mix of text and gameplay, with a major decision being presented at the end. Depending on what decision is made, you may be asked to “turn to 46” or another such section. This is not referring to page numbers; multiple paragraph sections may be contained on a single page, or a single section may span multiple pages. To continue the adventure upon making a decision, simply turn to the appropriate section.

Much of the gameplay in this series is heavily reliant on dice rolls. This is to introduce an element of randomness to the progression of events and provide variety and unpredictability to enemy actions and

your own attempts at making a successful action. “Stygian Swordscapes” uses a 2d6 system for its dice rolls. A d6 is just another way to say “six-sided die,” and the 2 refers to the number of dice. So, most rolls will require rolling two six-sided dice (though some rolls may only need one). While the dice rolls facilitate important mechanics such as combat, enemy actions, and skill checks, they may also be used for mini-games and other such fun purposes.

IV. Character Stats and Main Character Creation

Before we discuss combat, skill checks, or other mechanics of play in the following sections, let’s first introduce the base four character stats that form most of the foundation of the gameplay of this game book. These will be used to help determine what a character is likely to accomplish and what feats he/she is capable of. Almost everything about a character’s starting attributes are based on these four stats, so it will be important to know how each affect gameplay. They are as follows:

Prowess – PRO - Determines martial strength and skill checks

Erudition – ERU - Determines intelligence/puzzle-solving and magic ability

Vitality – VIT - Determines health, defense, and resistances to magic or status effects

Alacrity – ALA - Determines speed, party recruitment capability, and awareness and luck checks

At the beginning of each adventure, you will either need to roll the starting stats of the main character or choose them from a list of predetermined stat archetypes. These archetypes will be listed for each book in the “Starting Character Attributes” section (starting gear, abilities, and inventory will be provided here as well). These stats should be added to a character’s stat block for use in gameplay (stat block examples are given in section 18, “Stat Block Diagrams and Grid,” and stat sheets are provided on pp. 125-129). If rolling for the starting/main character’s stats, then roll 2d6 + 1 for each stat. While all four stat rolls must typically be kept in the order they were rolled, you may switch the roll for your lowest stat with your highest, if desired. These stat numbers represent the maximum value for each stat; these numbers may be lowered over the course of the adventure, but they can never exceed these initial values (unless the text states otherwise). In order to further balance the stat distributions, add all four

numbers together; if this total is below 24 or exceeds 44, then re-roll all four stats. This means that, for more optimal balance, your stats should average between 6 and 11. Characters with stat averages outside this range may break the balance of the book and should be discarded and re-rolled.

Now that we have rolled the stats for the MC of the adventure, let's next explore what each stat does. Below lies descriptions providing an overview of each stat's role in gameplay. Don't worry if you do not understand what some of the following mechanics are; these will be explained in more detail in subsequent sections. This will simply provide a handy reference for what will be described later. Brief overviews of the stat roles are as follows:

Prowess

- Prowess score + equipment modifiers + additional boosts/modifiers = Attack Bonus
 - Attack bonus may be added to attack rolls to determine ability to hit enemy in combat
 - Prowess doesn't determine damage bonus (modifiers from equipment, etc. only)
- For PRO skill checks, roll 2d6 + modifiers and compare to prowess stat
 - If roll is less than prowess stat, skill check is successful

Erudition

- Erudition stat score = number of starting magic points (M.P.)
 - M.P. determines how many spells may be cast by a character during the course of an adventure
 - For example, an ERU of 11 means that 11 spells may be cast during the course of the book (each spell cast costs 1 M.P.)
 - Ways to replenish M.P. are rare but not impossible to find
 - A character must have an ERU of at least 7 to be able to cast magic
- Erudition score + equipment modifiers + additional boosts/modifiers = Magic Bonus
 - Magic bonus may be added to magic attack rolls to determine magic damage and/or success of status effects in combat
- ERU may be used for skill checks involving intelligence (to determine specific knowledge), puzzle-solving (to gain a hint), or investigation (to gain clues)
 - For each of these, roll 2d6 + mods - if less than character's ERU = success

Vitality

- To determine starting/maximum hit points (H.P.), double VIT + 2
 - Unless stated otherwise, items/equipment that grant mods to VIT do not affect maximum H.P.
- For determining the resistance score (Res), simply use the same score as VIT
- For resistance determination to spells/status effects, roll 2d6 + mods- if less than Res/VIT= successful resistance to effect
- For defense rolls in combat, defense bonus = VIT + equipment bonus + additional modifiers
- VIT may be used in skill checks involving constitution, endurance, or health
 - For each of these, roll 2d6 + mods - if less than character's VIT = success

Alacrity

- ALA + any modifiers = speed score
 - A speed score determines when that character may take a turn during battle
- ALA may be used for checks involving awareness (whether the character notices a trap or ambush), luck (various miscellaneous effects), or party recruitment (to determine whether particularly difficult-to-recruit characters may be added to the party)
 - As usual, roll 2d6 + mods - if less than character's ALA = success

V. Role of Stat Scores in Starting Attributes and Skill Checks

An important use for the four stat scores is found in helping to determine the starting attributes of a character. For example, starting magic points, or M.P., are equal to a character's ERU stat score. Each spell cast uses one of these points, and, if a character's M.P. reaches 0, that character can no longer cast magic until a way to replenish M.P. is found. A character is only capable of learning magic if they have an ERU score of 7 or above; characters with an ERU of 6 or below are unable to cast magic. Another starting attribute determined by a stat score is speed; this attribute is equal to your ALA score. Finally, VIT determines both health and resistance; while a character's resistance (Res) is simply equal to their

VIT score, health points (H.P.) are equal to two times their VIT plus 2. If a character is damaged, they lose H.P. If all H.P. is lost, that character dies. This starting H.P. can't exceed its initial starting value with healing or items that boost VIT; only items or mods that boost max H.P. specifically can do so.

One of the primary uses for a character's stats throughout the adventure is for determining success during skill checks. A skill check is a roll the book may have you perform to determine whether a character is successful at a certain task. At specific points, you may be asked to "roll for PRO" or "roll for ALA." This always involves making a 2d6 roll and comparing to the mentioned stat score. If your roll + modifiers is less than the stat score, you are successful; otherwise, you are not. Sometimes, the text may call for you to "roll for PRO - 1" or "roll for VIT + 2." For these, make the adjustment to your stat score (for this roll only!). For example, if you "roll for PRO - 1" with a PRO of 11, your PRO for this roll will effectively be 10. Thus, you must roll a 9 or below (+ any mods) to be successful at this check. Please note, stat check rolls are typically only resolved by the main character of the party unless stated otherwise in the text. If another character is stated to perform the check, use that character's stat score and modifiers when doing so. A failure on the MC's or selected playable character's (PC's) part equals a failure for the whole party. You can not roll again unless the text states otherwise. A failure on a check that results in the MC's death will end the game outright. However, a skill check or other check that results in a PC's death will typically only result in that character's death and not the death of the whole party.

VI. Character and Party Inventory

Outside of stats and the attributes they influence, inventory of equipment and items also comprise much of the character or party sheet. Items gained or bought can be placed in either the party inventory or a PC's inventory of your choosing. Such items and equipment often grant modifiers or other effects that are explained in the text when acquiring the item. A PC may use/trade items from the party or another PC's inventory, but not during combat (however, in-battle trade between PCs is fine if done as a use-an-item battle action – discussed later). Any PC, including the MC, may carry a **maximum of 6 items in their personal inventory**; party inventory, however, is limitless. **Items do not stack**- for example, a PC cannot carry 7 potions in their personal inventory; each potion would take one of the six slots for the personal inventory. Remember that an MC's starting items and equipment are always noted in the

“Starting Character Attributes” section, so make sure not to skip this important text before the first adventure paragraph section!

Currency in most adventures is represented by the most common form of coin on Yeos – shillings. However, gold or other forms of currency may be used depending on the adventure setting. Currency is always shared by all members of the party. Gemstones may also be tracked as a form of currency and may therefore be counted separate from shillings or gold in the currency section. These, however, will need to be appraised by a jeweler before their value is determined (all gems obtained just count as gemstones on the party sheet). Money may be useful for purchasing powerful items for your adventure, but spending your shillings will reduce your ranking at the end of the adventure. High rankings determine how well you did during the adventure, and especially high rankings may unlock bonus content. So, be sure to do the best you can with as few resources as possible; you never know what kind of special content you may unlock!

Adventures may start the MC off with a number of rations or other foodstuffs. The starting amount will be noted in the “Starting Character Attributes” section. Otherwise, these can also be bought or found throughout the adventure. Food is typically used to heal a PC and rarely grants other effects. Rations always heal 2 H.P., but other food obtained may heal more, as noted by the text (or less if it makes a PC sick!). Food items are always placed in the party inventory and thus cannot be used during combat. They simply provide an out-of-combat-specific source of healing or buffs.

VII. Status Effects

Status effects are negative conditions that affect character performance in battle. These last until the end of the battle in which they were inflicted, unless otherwise noted, or if removed with magic or an item. Status effects do not stack- once afflicted, a character cannot gain a worse effect if another enemy inflicts the same status effect before the previous one is resolved (Exhaustion is an exemption, however!). The list of status effects is as follows:

Poison – POI - Character takes 1 point of damage at the beginning of each turn

Sleep – SLP - Character is unable to act until hit; once hit, take 2x damage

Paralysis – PAR - Character unable to act until remainder of battle; if all party members become paralyzed in battle, then player loses the game

Exhaustion – EXH - Character loses one focus point (explained in next section) immediately; can stack

There is a separate section on each character sheet stat block for noting down any active status effects on a character (the “Status” section). Write what effects are active so as not to forget, and then erase them from this section when they are removed or no longer active.

VIII. The Feature and Focus System

Features are a system that provides additional miscellaneous attributes that gives a character more unique abilities than just those determined by inventory or stats. These are minor abilities/passives that grant additional quirks to characters and enemies and can vary greatly in what abilities are conferred. For example, “immune to poison” or “weak to electricity” or “1/6 chance on 1d6 of inflicting paralysis per hit” indicate the level of variety that can be found with features. Please note, however, that each PC or enemy may possess only one to four features at maximum; these will have their own section on the character sheet stat block.

A focus is a single unique ability a character, class (if a PC is represented by a class), or enemy may possess that grants a strong power or effect at the cost of 1 focus point (F.P.). For example, a character may have such a focus as “damage both an enemy in the front row and an enemy directly behind it in the back row” or “gain 2 magic points.” These are typically stronger and more active abilities than what can be found in the features, and so a focus point system is used to moderate the use of these powerful abilities. A PC or enemy may also only ever have 1 focus, further limiting their use. F.P. may be earned and tracked through the focus meter on a character sheet; 1 F.P. is gained every 3 battles for a PC, as determined by the focus meter (use checks on this meter to keep track of when you will earn an additional F.P. for that character and then erase any checks and start over once you gain an F.P.). Initial F.P. will be listed in a character’s starting stat block, including the MC (listed in “Starting Character Attributes” section). For enemies, F.P. typically can’t be earned- total F.P. will be listed in the enemy stat block; a 1d6 roll will determine the chance of activation. Once a PC or enemy has expended all F.P., their focus can’t be used again until more F.P. is gained.

IX. Combat Grid and Attack Reach

At the end of section XVIII is a diagram of the combat grid, which contains blank sections for PCs and enemies, as well as the organization of the rows of spots a character may be placed (**Note:** any rules for **specific placements** on a row are **optional** and may be ignored as long as rules for rows are followed). Please refer to this as combat is discussed in the following sections for grid-based concept clarification.

Combat is divided into two sides - a PC side on the left page with 3 spots each for a front row and back row and an enemy side on the right page with 5 spots each for a front row and back row. For PCs, a player may place a new party member in whichever spot they wish, but that character's spot may only change at will outside of battle (**front row must always be occupied for both PCs and enemies**- if front row is empty, then back row characters are moved to their front row at end of current turn). Since the book is vertically oriented, a "row" is technically a column in the book when viewed in the reading position. When enemies are described in text, their position on the front or back row will be listed as part of their stat block; their specific position on a row is determined by a d6 roll- if a 6 is rolled or a spot is unavailable, re-roll until a spot is filled. For example, if an enemy's stats list it as a front enemy and a 4 is rolled on a d6, that enemy is placed in the F4 position on the battle grid before battle begins.

One of the purposes of the combat grid is to limit the reach and effectiveness of attacks. This allows for a bit more tactical variety in battle, as placement of characters on a grid can be crucial to how a battle is won. Physical Attacks are divided into two types - Melee (MEL) and Ranged (RAN). MEL attacks may only attack opponents in the closest row (any spot in that row can be hit, however); thus, characters in a back row with only MEL attacks will be unable to attack an opponent due to a lack of reach. Some MEL attacks may be able to attack two rows forward, and this ability will be noted in the proper item, feature, or focus description. RAN attacks always skip one row when attacking; for example, an enemy in the front row using a ranged attack will always roll to hit a PC in the back row (if the enemy is using a RAN attack from the enemy back row, however, it will roll to hit a character in the PC front row). Please note, a RAN attack can not hit rows next to them; thus, a character in the front row can't hit an enemy in the front row with a RAN attack. Enemies will roll 1d3 (roll 1d6 and divide by 2) to determine which spot in a PC row they attack; if that spot is vacant, re-roll until the enemy makes an attack roll on a PC or, instead, choose which PC in the appropriate row the enemy attacks.

X. Battle Progression – Turn Options and Attack Resolution

When initiating combat, unless the text states otherwise, the party always goes first in turn order ties (the player decides who goes first in case of two or more PC ties). To determine the initiative/turn order, the highest speed stat of both PCs and enemies goes first (ALA + mods), then so on as the speed stat decreases (no roll used for turn order, just the modified speed stat). A round of combat is the aggregate of one cycle of turns for all PCs/enemies in battle. When the first character to take a turn is next to take a turn again, a new round of combat begins. **On an individual's turn, first resolve any features/focuses/status effects activated for that turn.** Typically, this occurs in the following order: 1. status effects, 2. features, 3. focus (this can, however, be resolved in any order the player chooses, but status effects should always be resolved before any features/focuses for the intended balance). **Then, as a second step, that character may take one of the following battle actions for their turn before ending the turn: attack, defend, use an item, or run** (if available). If defending, a character can't attack or perform another action for the rest of the round but gains a +2 to defense rolls (VIT + mods) if attacked by any enemies during that round. When using an item, only one item may be used and its effect resolved, and it must be contained within that character's own inventory at the time of use. The run action will be described in section XII as "Escaping Battle."

If attacking, a character must choose an opponent in a row they can hit and make an attack roll. To make an attack roll, roll 1d6 and add PRO + any mods (the attack bonus). Then, roll 1d6 for the opponent and add VIT + mods (the defense bonus) to make the corresponding defense roll (+2 if opponent is defending). Then, compare results- if the attacker result is higher than that of the defender, the attack hits and deals 2 + dmg mods worth of damage to the defender's H.P. Otherwise, the attack misses/is blocked (**if a "6" is rolled on the attacker roll, the attack always hits, unless the defender is actively defending with the "defend" battle action, in which case the attack roll must be higher than the defense roll for the hit to succeed**). If the attacker roll is 2 times or more than the defender roll, the attacker performs a "critical hit" and damage after mods is doubled. Once all effects are resolved and the character has taken a battle action, that character's turn ends and the character with the next highest speed score takes a turn. Turns continue in this fashion each round until one side has eliminated the other side or the MC dies during combat (in which case the game is lost and ends).

XI. Magic Attacks and Elemental Weakness

Magic attacks occur similarly to a normal attack roll. These will be used for offensive magic that calls for a magic attack roll to be performed or for magic that inflicts status effects on enemies. To make a magic attack roll, roll for each target of the spell individually. Roll 1d6 and add ERU + any mods (the magic attack bonus). Then, roll 1d6 for the opponent and add Res + mods to make the corresponding resistance roll (remember that Res is the same value as VIT, although only mods specific to Res may be used to modify a resistance roll). Then, compare results - if the attacker result is higher, the spell does full damage. Otherwise, the defender takes half damage, rounded down. A magic attack never “misses”; any character caught in the spell’s attack range will always take some damage (if, for example, a character has a feature that grants it extra resistance to a certain magic attack and the magic attack roll fails, that character will still take $\frac{1}{4}$ dmg., rounded down, with a minimum dmg. of 1). If the magic attack roll was performed for a status effect instead of magic attack, however, the effect is applied to the noted target if the attacker wins and is not applied at all if the defender (rolling for resistance) wins. Some enemies may be weak to certain spell or item elements (fire, ice, electric, etc.) or status effects. This means that a spell or item of that element (ele)/effect will do 2x damage or have two rolls to see if applied to the enemy, respectively (or normal damage, for ele, if the enemy resisted the spell/effect).

XII. Escaping Battle

If the text states that you may run from this battle, then running is an option per turn only in this battle and only on a party member’s turn. In order to run away, an alacrity check must be made for the battle action of a PC’s turn by rolling 2d6 under the ALA score. If successful, the party escapes and the battle ends immediately; if unsuccessful, the turn is simply forfeit. When an escape is successful, the party loses half its shillings/other relevant currency and each party member takes 2 H.P. of damage.

XIII. Enemy Behavior

Enemy behavior has already been somewhat described in previous text - this info will be summarized here. All enemy behaviors are determined by d6 rolls. For example, an enemy stat block will list the

chances of an attack or ability being performed. If the enemy has a focus or feature that lists the activation resulting from a d6 roll (such as 1-2 or 3-6, which list the results needed for that ability to activate), then roll for that first. Next, roll a d6 to determine which attack or action in the battle action section of the enemy stat block will activate for that turn. This will decide what battle action the enemy will take for the turn. If casting a spell is rolled, then a d6 roll will determine which spell is used. Finally, if necessary, a d3 roll (remember, this is just a d6 roll divided by 2, with the results rounded up) will then determine which target(s) the enemy will attack, and subsequent attack or magic attack rolls will be performed, if needed.

For example, let's say an enemy has no feature involving a roll but has a focus with 1-2 next to it. If, at the beginning of that enemy's turn, a 2 is rolled on a d6, then its focus activates. Next, its battle actions, as noted in the battle action section of its stat block, are as follows: 1-2 = MEL, 3 = defend, 4-6 = cast a spell. If a 5 on a d6 is rolled for this action, then the enemy casts a spell. It must then choose a spell from the following options: 1-2 = Fire Wall, 3 = Heal Ally, 4-6 = Enrage. A 2 is rolled, so the enemy casts fire wall and makes two magic attack rolls, one each to the two party members in the front row, dealing 4 damage to one for a success and 2 damage to the other for a failure (this spell deals 4 fire damage to the front row, according to its spell effect in the "Spell List" section). After this, the enemy's turn is done and combat may move to another enemy or to a PC.

XIV. Party Banter System

In order to provide more character depth for party members obtained and kept alive, a separate section for party member conversations exists as optional reading material throughout the narrative. This section, called the "Party Banter" section, can be found near the end of the book, just before the in-book character/party sheets (pp. 120-124). If a section lists a party banter (P.B.) section and the participating members are alive and present, the player may choose to read the additional material and return to the preceding section afterwards to continue with the game. P.B. sections are entirely optional and provide no aid typically in beating the gamebook. However, some P.B. sections may contain puzzles or mini games and/or provide minor rewards that can nevertheless grant a small boon to beat the adventure. Those who read these sections may be surprised at what info and content they find!

XV. Character Death and Permadeath

When a PC or enemy is reduced to 0 H.P., that character is immediately dead. In most adventures, a dead party member is permanently dead (permadead) and can no longer participate in battles, story sections, or P.B. sections. The player must continue the adventure as if that party member was never present at all. It may be beneficial to keep the character stats present on the party sheet, however. After all, some adventures may provide a means to raise the dead. If the MC of the adventure dies for any reason, the game is over and the player must restart the adventure from the beginning.

XVI. Victory Conditions and Replay Value

The player wins upon reaching “The End” as stated in the text, regardless of how many party members besides the main character remains. Ending with more party members may produce a better ending, so replaying with multiple party choices may provide interesting outcomes. While reaching “The End” alone completes a successful adventure, there may be a true ending or multiple endings one can reach. Upon reaching a true ending of an adventure, a player will be ranked based on the amount of currency obtained and party members remaining. Reaching a true ending often involves taking the “one, true path” through an adventure and may be difficult to find. If the player obtains a high enough ranking, additional bonus content may be unlocked. This may lead to superboss battles (extremely difficult endgame enemies), post-adventure story, or other exciting content, so try to get a high ranking as often as possible!

XVII. Spell List

The available spell list includes all spells a character may choose to learn for the current adventure. Future adventures may contain different spell lists or even different spell mechanics, so be sure to check this section every book. **A party member can only learn up to 4 available spells- if learning less, add 3 additional M.P. per spell slot below this maximum that is left empty.** Remember, only characters with base ERU = 7+ may learn spells. The spell list for this book is as follows:

Fire Wall – A magical wall of fire erupts from the ground at the enemy’s feet, incinerating all who stand in its line of fire - **Target all front line enemies with a magic attack roll; Full hits deal 4 fire damage to each enemy**

Blizzard – A swirling storm of snow and ice engulfs the enemy field, slashing all within it with razor-sharp icicles - **Target all enemies with a magic attack roll; Full hits deal 2 ice damage to each enemy**

Shock Spear – A bolt of lightning shoots forth from the wielder’s hand, piercing a front target that crumples the bolt into a wave of electric energy that zaps those nearby and behind - **Target one front line enemy and up to 3 back row enemies behind and adjacent to it or directly behind it with a magic attack roll; Full hits = 3 electric damage (round up if damage is halved)**

Swamp Gas – A deadly cloud of poison emits from the caster’s hand, poisoning all foes susceptible to its toxic effects - **Target all enemies; poison each enemy; if resisted, no effect**

Heal Ally – The hands of the caster glow with a golden light, permitting a short-acting healing touch to whomever the caster chooses - **Choose 1 ally or self; Heal 3 H.P. of damage**

Cure Ailment – The hands of the caster suddenly emit a protective salve, which may serve as a minor panacea and restore one to normal status by removing an affliction - **Choose 1 ally or self; remove 1 status effect**

Sonnet of Slumber – A mysterious melody suddenly rings out from the aether, lulling all whom the caster chooses into a deep slumber - **Choose up to 4 enemies; each enemy falls asleep with sleep status; if resisted, no effect**

Enrage – The caster imbues a portion of his/her mana with powerful energy, which may be transferred to a nearby ally to elicit a short-term boost in strength - **Target 1 ally or self; for rest of battle, base dmg before mods is increased by 1**

Warp Wire – The caster manipulates the aether in order to create a ripple in the fabric of space-time that may switch two targets’ positions on the battlefield - **Target either 2 allies or 2 enemies; switch the characters’ positions on their respective stat block sheet; can’t be resisted (no magic attack/effect roll performed)**

XVIII. Stat Block Diagrams and Grid

PC In-Text Stat Block

Name **Class** **Stats and their Starting Values** **Starting Focus points**

↓ ↓ ↓ ↓

Thragg; Class - Brute; PRO (11) ERU (6) VIT (10) ALA (8); F.P. - 2

Focus → Brute Force – Next MEL hit also hits an enemy directly behind (Paralysis for 1 turn to back enemy)

Features → Weak to poison; Immune to exhaustion; weapons- hammers, axes; armor- light

Spells → None

Inventory → Warhammer (MEL), Fur Outfit, Health potion (4 H.P.)

Enemy In-Text Stat Block

of Enemies **Starting Row**

Appearing ↓ ↓

Medicine Man; (1); Row = Fr; PRO (4) ERU (8) VIT (4) ALA (8); F.P. = 2; Focus Chance = 1-2

Focus → Clay Coffin – On next “Mud Coffin” attack, add extra ability of a 2-turn paralysis instead of 1-turn paralysis

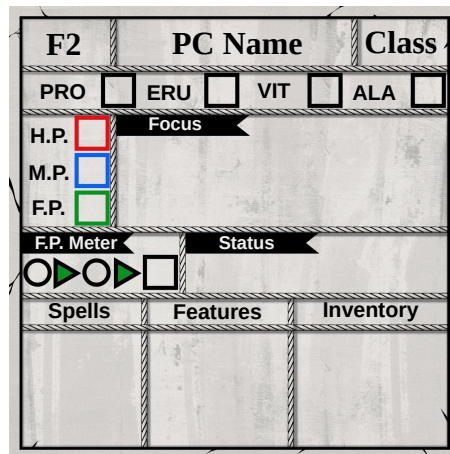
Features → Roll a d6 – On a 1, skip current turn (focus still applies)

Attacks → Strike [1] (MEL); Heal self [2] (3 H.P.); Mud Coffin [3-4] (MEL/RAN) Also inflicts 1- turn Pa; Cast Spell [5-6]

Spells → Swamp Gas [1-3]; Fire Wall [4-6]

The diagrams of the in-text stat blocks above show how PC and enemy stats are represented when they appear within the paragraph sections. Semicolons are used to separate individual features, spells, attacks, etc. In PC in-text stat blocks, weapons and armor features list what weapons and armor types that PC is able to equip throughout the adventure. Thus, in the “Thragg” example provided above, only hammers or axes may be equipped as weapons for that PC. If you obtain a new sword, this character would not be able to equip and use that weapon. The numbers in brackets for the enemy in-text stat block above show the die results needed on the roll of a d6 for that ability to activate. Thus, in the “Medicine Man” example provided above, a roll of 5 or 6 on a d6 to see what attack/battle action that enemy will use will result in the enemy casting a spell. A further d6 roll of a 4 would then mean that the “Medicine Man” casts “Fire Wall” as its attack option for that turn. Also, the numbers next to “focus chance” on the enemy stat block additionally denote the roll on a d6 (at the beginning of that enemy’s turn) needed to activate the enemy’s focus ability for that turn.

These stats and descriptions may be copied into the appropriate stat blocks on the PC/party and enemy character sheets when resolving a battle that takes place in the adventure. These character sheets are optional and you may alternatively create your own or avoid them altogether, if you wish. They are simply provided to make keeping track of various stats and abilities easier when resolving combat. For clarification, the top left space of a character sheet stat block shows what row (represented by an “F” for “front” or “B” for “back”) and spot on that row, from top to bottom, (represented by the number next to “F” or “B”) the character currently is placed on their respective grid (left side for PCs, right side for enemies). An additional diagram of the full combat grid is provided below to aid in this clarification. Examples of the stat blocks represented on character sheets are shown below:



B3		Enemy Name	
PRO	<input type="checkbox"/>	ERU	<input type="checkbox"/>
VIT	<input type="checkbox"/>	ALA	<input type="checkbox"/>
H.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Focus	
M.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
F.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Focus chance		Status	
Spells	Features	Battle Actions	

Party Back Row

B1		F1	
PRO	<input type="checkbox"/>	ERU	<input type="checkbox"/>
VIT	<input type="checkbox"/>	ALA	<input type="checkbox"/>
H.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Focus	
M.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
F.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Focus chance		Status	
Spells	Features	Inventory	

B2		F2	
PRO	<input type="checkbox"/>	ERU	<input type="checkbox"/>
VIT	<input type="checkbox"/>	ALA	<input type="checkbox"/>
H.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Focus	
M.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
F.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Focus chance		Status	
Spells	Features	Inventory	

B3		F3	
PRO	<input type="checkbox"/>	ERU	<input type="checkbox"/>
VIT	<input type="checkbox"/>	ALA	<input type="checkbox"/>
H.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Focus	
M.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
F.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Focus chance		Status	
Spells	Features	Inventory	

Currency		Party Inventory/ Key Items/ Notes	

Party Front Row

Enemy Front Row

F1		B1	
PRO	<input type="checkbox"/>	ERU	<input type="checkbox"/>
VIT	<input type="checkbox"/>	ALA	<input type="checkbox"/>
H.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Focus	
M.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
F.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Focus chance		Status	
Spells	Features	Battle Actions	

F2		B2	
PRO	<input type="checkbox"/>	ERU	<input type="checkbox"/>
VIT	<input type="checkbox"/>	ALA	<input type="checkbox"/>
H.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Focus	
M.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
F.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Focus chance		Status	
Spells	Features	Battle Actions	

F3		B3	
PRO	<input type="checkbox"/>	ERU	<input type="checkbox"/>
VIT	<input type="checkbox"/>	ALA	<input type="checkbox"/>
H.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Focus	
M.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
F.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Focus chance		Status	
Spells	Features	Battle Actions	

F4		B4	
PRO	<input type="checkbox"/>	ERU	<input type="checkbox"/>
VIT	<input type="checkbox"/>	ALA	<input type="checkbox"/>
H.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Focus	
M.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
F.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Focus chance		Status	
Spells	Features	Battle Actions	

F5		B5	
PRO	<input type="checkbox"/>	ERU	<input type="checkbox"/>
VIT	<input type="checkbox"/>	ALA	<input type="checkbox"/>
H.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Focus	
M.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
F.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Focus chance		Status	
Spells	Features	Battle Actions	

Enemy Back Row

18

© 2024, Lettuce Heads Development, LLC. Not for sale/resale. All rights reserved.

Starting Character (MC) Attributes

“Choose name”; Class - MC; PRO (2d6+1) ERU (2d6+1) VIT (2d6+1) ALA (2d6+1); F.P. - 2

Focus → Plot Armor- May re-roll any roll in or out of battle

Features → Weapons- Swords; Armor- Leather, Shields

Spells → Choose up to 4 if ERU > 6

Inventory → Sword (MEL), Leather Armor, Health potion (4 H.P.)

Party Inventory → 7 rations, Aunt’s pendant, Coin pouch

Stat Archetypes

(Pre-generated stat choices for use as an alternative to dice rolls):

“The Warrior”; PRO (12) ERU (5) VIT (11) ALA (8)

“The Wizard”; PRO (6) ERU (12) VIT (8) ALA (10)

“The Cleric”; PRO (8) ERU (10) VIT (12) ALA (6)

“The Thief”; PRO (10) ERU (7) VIT (8) ALA (11)

Town Express Delivery Shop

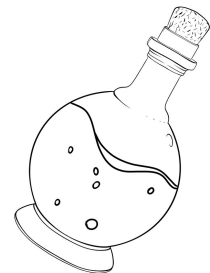
(These goods can be purchased at any time while in town and outside of battle):

Ration (2 H.P.) – 1 shilling – Consume as food for small healing out of battle

Health Potion (4 H.P.) - 3 shillings – Heal in battle by using as an item

Shadow Orb – 7 shillings – Use is unknown...

Potion of Luck – 5 shillings – Re-roll one die/dice result (use as an item if in battle)



The Adventure Begins!

1

Amid the tranquil veil of night, the light of the moons shone through, piercing the shadows of summer serenity through your bedroom window like a distant campfire casting a faint, glowing haze atop the canopy of a woodland forest. As you collect your bearings, you suddenly realize that you are awake. *But why?*, you think to yourself, groggily taking in your surroundings as your eyes adjust to the dark. You do not ponder this question long, for the answer soon reveals itself to you, in song. Just above the chirping of grazing swamp-striders and howls of various canids in town, you begin to hear a sonorous melody ring out across the stale, night air. At first, it flitters in your mind like the whispers of the wings of a thousand cavern-flies scattering into the dark unknown, but you soon perceive a wail of hopelessness in that melody. It appears to call out for a muse that can right the wrong of some past regret. It calls out for a listener to understand the mysteries behind its somber voice. It calls out... for *you*.

It was not the first time you had heard that haunting melody. Years ago, when you were but a child, that same song hypnotized you into seeking its source. As if walking in a dream, you had followed its hidden cries towards the bellowing bogs of Mantuk Swamp. It was at the edge of an infested pond on the outskirts of the swamp that your parents found you, entranced and heading towards the center of the swamp from which that voice emanated, towards the ruins of Val'Kadoth. Although you had never been there, you were no stranger to hearing that name. Unknown to you as to why, your family had been given the title of being the Keepers of Val'Kadoth, ensuring its location remained hidden and its history remained unknown. It was your grandfather who had confronted the source of the song years prior, entering the ruins to his assumed demise. Your family feared that place as a great source of evil, and you knew that they then feared that you had been bewitched by that place into meeting your grandfather's fate.

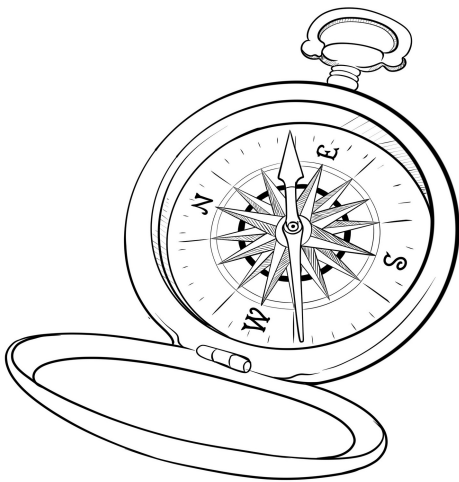
In a daze of fury and fear, your father bade your mother to return you home while he would end the wicked songs of the bog for good. You remember looking up into your mother's eyes as she rushed you back to the safety of home not far from the outskirts of the swamp that now haunted your very soul. You remember how her look of fear slowly transformed into one of stern consternation as you approached the cobbled steps of the house. You remember when she told you to hide in the closet with your hands over your ears while she aids your father and for you to wait until they returned in the morning. You remember how your life changed forever that night when they did not. In the aftermath of that night's events, your loving Aunt Maybel would volunteer to raise you until you came of age and could protect the homestead and those accursed ruins on your own. Not until you came of age would you learn of the true nature of this task.

It was your Aunt Maybel who would spuriously barge into your room in a loud ruckus and jolt you completely awake. Without hesitation, she places a strange charm around your neck that looks like two feral beasts fighting for some sort of pack domination and begins chanting in an unknown tongue. You are unsure as to what she is chanting, but you know that it is not some prayer to Xeri, the Goddess of Love, or any other such Yeotian or Leotian god or goddess. Although you never practiced your ancestral doctrines much yourself, you know that your people revere the spirits above all else, and so it must have been some ancient spirit of peace that she was invoking. As if anticipating some curious response, she then begins to speak.

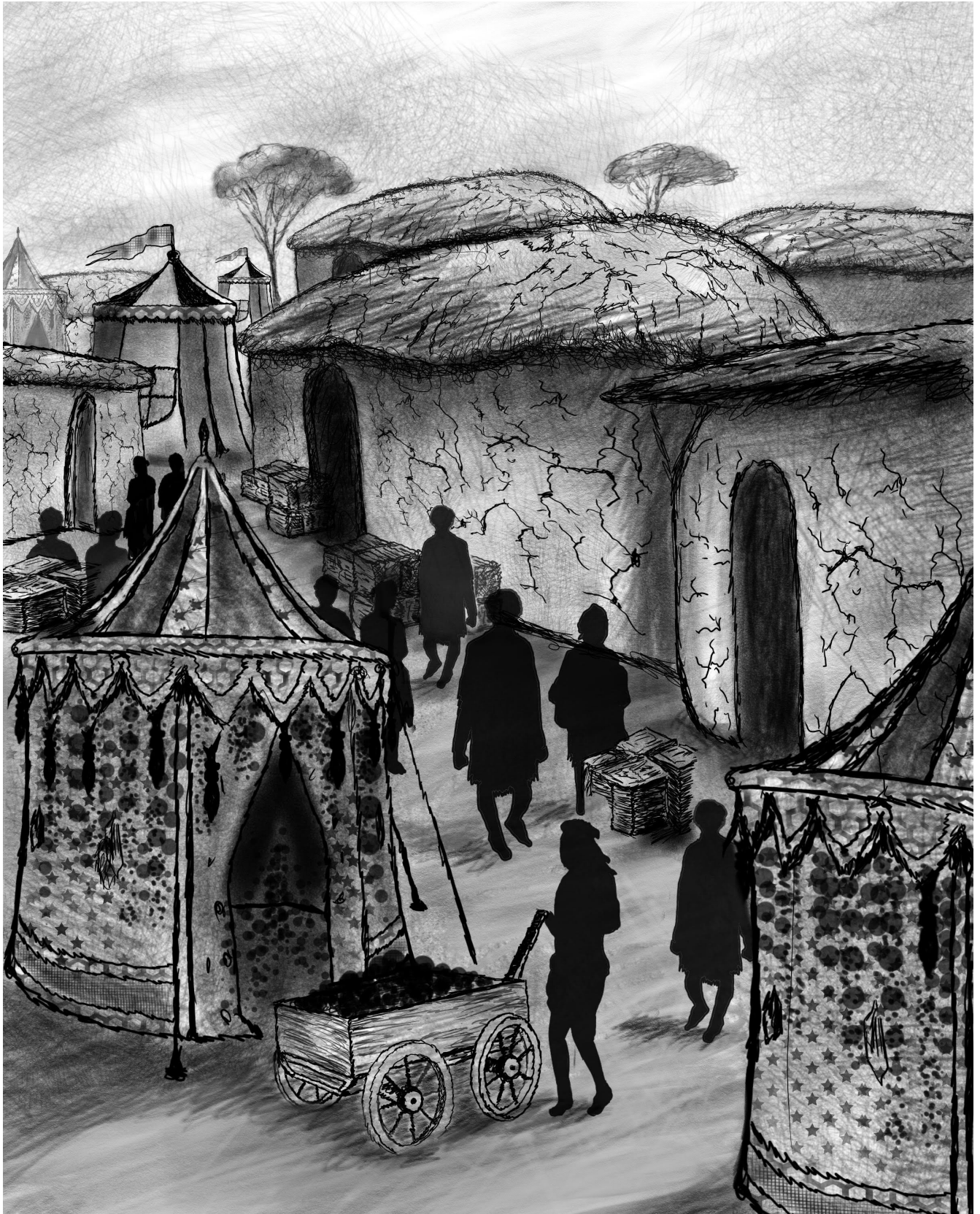
“Don't worry, child. This pendant will protect you from any spoken charms or hypnosis. I had to scour the underground markets in Dir Norei for two days to find an old mystic capable of making one of these. The n'anga know their stuff on charms and poultices and the like, so I know it's gotta work.”

Your aunt had been investigating the connection between the lunar cycles and strange activity from the ruins for the past few months and so had anticipated the return of the sonorous voice for the past few weeks. Although she had never dabbled in research of this kind before, she had a knack for getting information from the right places. You sheepishly beam with pride at her craftiness and thank her for the help, wondering in the back of your mind what specifically had caused the voice to return.

“Think nothing of it,” she says, and she then hands you a piping hot cup of blackthorne tea she had kept on a small, wooden tray since entering the room. The tea is a favorite of yours, and you feel a calming sensation wash over you as the mild and earthy flavors of jasmine and raspwood bark overtake your senses. Then, you notice a sullen expression begin to form over your aunt’s thoughtful yet aging face. “I suppose this means that it’s time for you to learn your duties as a Keeper of Val’Kadoth.” Although you had come of age months ago, your aunt had been delaying the inevitable for as long as she could, leading to her obsession with deciphering the nature of the ruins and predicting when its activity would next peak. You also had no desire to assume your ancestral responsibilities, and you knew your aunt understood that. “Well, it seems it’s quieted for now. Go ahead and get some rest. We’ll discuss your training tomorrow after a quick visit at the town markets in Thu’ul. I wanna follow up with another n’anga there on the matter of the ruins before you start your duties as a keeper.” With that, your aunt pats your shoulder and quickly takes her leave, and the calming effect from the tea floods your mind as you fall back asleep, surrounded by a newfound quiet in the night.



The markets of Thu’ul were as lively as ever. The dusty, brush-swept dirt streets were awash with merchants and traders of all sorts. Shady bankers cooed their rehearsed pleasantries in a bid to offer financial securities for profit as fruit stand vendors shouted over each other as to who had the lowest prices or the freshest foodstuffs. Robe-laden merchants from the distant Silk Lands plied their trade in a corner tent of purple hue and gold tassels, offering strange mechanical horse constructs from the brilliant minds of elven engineers hailing from some faraway land called Illiantra. Atop a makeshift balcony near the central plaza, a jester-looking fellow clearly from the northern Barrens of Silt jeered and peddled his entertainment services for a “nominal fee.” It was so surreal to see such a mercantile menagerie gathered in a relatively small city only half a day’s travel from the swamp, especially on such a small island as the Isle of Ahl’Tien.



Indeed, Thu'ul was something of a marvel for the people of Ahl'Tien, serving as a successful port town and hub of civilization amid dreary swamps and barren grasslands that comprised much of the island's countryside. Although most people of Ahl'Tien were nomadic and somewhat tribalistic, here they could be tradesmen or medicinal mystics or innkeepers and the like, taking cues from foreign seafarers and merchants as to how civilization works in distant lands. The city was adorned with rectangular mud huts decorated in furs and skins obtained from the creatures of the nearby swamps, as well as various trinkets and baubles obtained from other regions. It was as if nature itself had sprung forth a city in open defiance and mockery of the paved and ornate castles and structures of unfamiliar lands, and you muse to yourself at the irony of a city enthralled by foreign cultures and customs to create such a pale imitation of them. You weren't quite sure what drew so many to a place like Thu'ul, especially on a backwater rock like Ahl'Tien, but you were grateful all the same.

After a time scouring the markets and basking in the sights and sounds of a place you visit very infrequently, you meet up with your aunt, who seems fixated on a rack of herbs and spices. "Oh don't mind me," she says, paying for some of the goods in a fairly discrete manner. The balding, gruff proprietor of the goods grunts in a satisfied tone and drops the coins into a side pocket of his work apron without saying a word. "I'm just making a few preparations before we meet the n'anga. Here, why don't you hold these for me while I get just a few more things before we leave the markets. Also, here's a few shillings in case you find something you like. Now, don't lose them. The merchants here only take this currency and don't respond well to bartering." You gratefully pocket the 7 shillings she hands you and place the herbs and spices into your backpack. *Make a note of this in the inventory and currency sections of your character sheet.*

You take your leave of the stall your aunt was shopping at and make your way through the crowds pouring into the market plaza from the nearby riverside district. You eye a pan flute vendor, thinking to yourself that you'd like to try learning an instrument as a hobby, when a familiar-sounding shout rings out just above the hems and haws and bustling of the crowd. You turn frantically just in time to see a shadowy figure, clothed in a two-tone brown and blue cloak, snatch your aunt in an overpowering embrace and drag her from the crowds towards the north side of the plaza, disappearing among the throngs of stall-gazers and street vendors alike. In a panic, you shout for help, but, after realizing the crowd had not taken much notice of the affair, you race towards the spot where your aunt and her

captor were last seen. Looking around for any clues as to their whereabouts, you assess which direction to head in for your pursuit. Realizing they could have exited the scene in a number of directions, as no clear footprints were left amid the footpaths of many passerby, you decide to pick a direction instead based on intuition. Will you:

- | | |
|--|---|
| Head to the outskirts of the plaza towards the west? | Turn to 64 . |
| Head to a dim street towards the north-west? | Turn to 148 . |
| Head to a noisy street towards the north-east? | Turn to 2c – unavailable for demo . |
| Head to the riverside docks towards the east? | Turn to 2d – unavailable for demo . |
| Stay and wait for the authorities to help? | Turn to 2e – unavailable for demo . |

2

Rummaging through your pack, you find that you have nothing strong enough to break through the seam. Eventually, you give up and head back to the lot, using an alley to return to the dimly lit street. *Turn to 124*. If you haven't yet fought the gutter dogs, you must do so now before leaving as they are now free of any previous distractions. The stats for this fight are found below:

Gutter Dog; (2); Row = Fr; PRO (10) ERU (3) VIT (5) ALA (10); F.P. = 2; Focus Chance = 1-2

Focus → Vomit Volley – If in back row and other gutter dog is in front row, move directly behind other gutter dog. If this is possible, enemy leaps off back of other and vomits at party; all PCs take 3 dmg + POI. If conditions not met, focus not activated and F.P. not used; this focus costs a battle action and ends the turn

Features → 1-3 = Switch between back and front row; Immune to poison

Actions → Bite [1-2] (MEL); Defend [3]; Heal self [4] (2 H.P.); Trash spit [5-6] (MEL/RAN)

Spells → None

If successful, the creatures are slain and crumple before you, lifeless. *Turn to 124*.

3

Unsure as to what gutter dogs may eat, you nevertheless take out some soup bones from your pack and toss them in front of the snarling creatures as a distraction. *Remove these from your inventory.* Fortunately, the distraction works, and they turn their attention away from you briefly as they attempt to crack the bones and suck out the marrow. Though their fierce and alert demeanor has not changed, it appears they will not attack so long as they are busy with their new meal. You may either use this opportunity to run from the lot through another alley that leads back to the dimly lit street or you may attempt to interact with the seam of light. If you wish to run, turn to **124**. If you wish to interact with the mysterious seam, turn to **125**.

4

You choose to play a game of cards, which the brutes call “21 Bust,” and the leader bellows across the table as he tells you the rules of the game, the remains of a foul-smelling grog dribbling from the sides of his mouth as he does so. You feel nauseated just listening to him speak. The rules are as follows:

Roll a d6. Set this die result aside as your “hand” and continue to roll the other die. The other die will act as the river, which contains die results that will be added to your hand at the end of a round. The goal is to get to 21 without going over, in which case you bust and lose the round. With each river die roll, write down the result and add that number to the result in your hand. If you wish to add another die roll to pair with your hand, that is a hit. Otherwise, if you are satisfied with your dice result total, you may choose to stay and not add anymore river rolls to your total. The dealer (the brute leader) will continue to roll for the river until the max of 5 rolls are made or the river is bust. At the end of the round, when the river is full, roll a sixth d6 roll for the dealer’s “hand.” If the river goes bust at any time, roll for the dealer’s “hand” and replace this roll for the dealer with the last roll that caused the river to go bust. This will instead become the dealer’s total, giving the dealer an extra chance to win. Finally, compare totals; the higher total that didn’t bust wins the round. Ties result in no wins for either. The first to win three rounds wins the game.

Now knowing how to play the game, you fear how the group of ruffians will respond to you winning or losing. You wonder if it'd be best to play the game straight or attempt to cheat in order to win. If you decide to play fairly, turn to **147**. If instead you wish to cheat, turn to **55**.

5

You look around the area for anything that might be tied to the seam of light. However, you find very little of interest in the back-lot. The lot itself is fairly barren, and it is carpeted by a number of different weeds and sparse patches of grass. Aside from a trash heap on the far side of the lot, the only other notable feature is a thicket of brambles and bones to the right. Edged around the perimeter of the lot is a system of gutters flowing with murky water. Otherwise, there does not appear to be anything of interest. Would you like to search any of these features?

Check out the gutters.

Turn to **94**.

Check out the thicket.

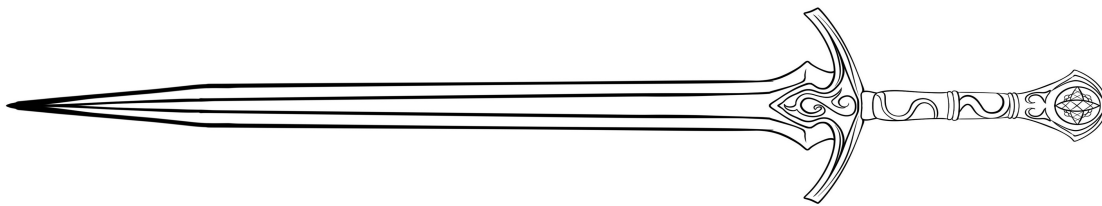
Turn to **108**.

Approach the seam of light.

Turn to **78**.

Leave the lot through an alley back to the dimly lit street.

Turn to **124**.



6

The banker indignantly refuses to succumb to your interrogation attempts. With a wry laugh, he grinds his gums together with a sickening squish and spits in your eye. As you attempt to clean the foul saliva from your face, he quickly scrambles out of the barrel and runs out the tent. With nothing left to search here, you decide to search a different area of the tent, if time permits. Will you:

- Search the simple, rectangular wardrobe in the tent corner? Turn to **121**.
- Search a wooden box engraved with snake figures on a side table at the back. Turn to **128**.
- Search a large writing desk to the far left wall. Turn to **35**.

If you have already searched two areas or would like to end your search, instead turn to **110**.

7

You decide to inquire further about her operation here and ask her how she gets the info for her info booth. “Gahhh... UGAAHH GAAHH!” you hear from the mechanical man’s side of the counter. “SHADDAP!,” a familiar voice claps back. “Of course I know we got a good deal going with those Silk Lands merchants! Blasted peddlers are the reason you’ll be haunting me till my dying breath!” She then turns back to you and speaks in a calmer, uninterested tone. “We bought quite a few rat mechs from ‘em in a trade over... uhhh... property deeds, and they serve their purpose well by gathering info and clues from town and bringing it back to us. Why rats? Well, how else d’ya expect us to rat out the crooks and cronies ‘round the place?” She bellows out a hearty laugh before noticing your unamused look and returns quickly to her familiar, bored expression. “Anything else?” Will you:

- Ask how she makes money from this. Turn to **81**.
- Ask about your aunt’s captor. Turn to **99**.

8

Just northeast of the banker’s tent, you see a very large, rectangular, wattle and daub-style mud building off in the distance, near the edge of the plaza. At first, it appears much the same as all the other buildings beyond the tents and stands of the marketplace; decorated in the occasional fur or hide of local fauna, with sparse, small windows and shutters and a thatched roof. As you draw near, however, the place begins to appear more distinct and lively, with dancers performing just outside the door-less entrance, and with the energizing local music creating a frenetic rhythm that reminds you of fond times

visiting the city occasionally in your youth. As you listen, you can pick out the use of Mbira thumb pianos and Ngoma drums, although most of the other instruments used are unknown to you. As if entranced by the rhythm of the song, your other senses seem to melt away, and you don't notice the alcohol-infused odor emanating from the playful den.

As you approach, a few dancers dressed in colorful cloths and beads with headbands of beautiful feathers (obviously obtained from the marshes) begin to gesture you inside with a welcoming flair. You enter, but you are immediately met with a group of gnarly brutes that grab you and force you to sit at their table once inside. "Fresh meat," you hear one declare, as you look around at the group and note that one in the group appears more hesitant than the others. Before you can truly gain a grasp of your surroundings, the group of some twenty-odd brutes completely encircle the table, and what appears to be their leader calls out to you from the other side of the table. He is as ragged as the others, and one of his eyes appear to swirl around in its socket, as if fixating on nothing and everything at the same time. "How 'bout a game o' dice or cards, lad?," he says, with a rotten grin. " 'Ave not been beat t'day, but ye just may be the first ta take me coin away!" You suspect the gambling games this group partakes in are a ruse meant to swindle money from innocent visitors to the den, but you know these types will not simply let you up and leave. You realize that you'll either need to play along with their game or force your way out. Will you:

Ask about your aunt's captor.

Turn to **65**.

Play a game of dice.

Turn to **179**.

Play a game of cards.

Turn to **4**.

Draw your weapon.

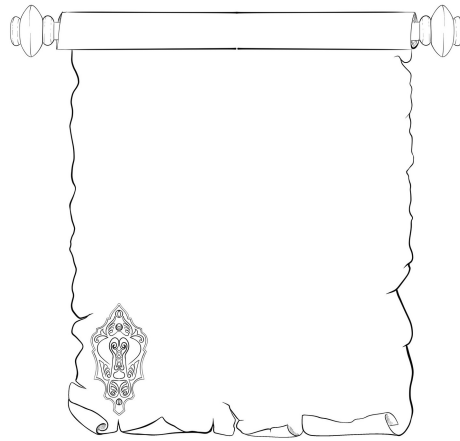
Turn to **141**.

9

You toss 4 shillings into one of the offering plates, which give off a decently loud clack, drawing the elves to you. Though they appear scrawny and malnourished, they dance around the room, pleased with their gift. One of them prances towards you and hands you a couple of old **soup bones**. You are a bit hesitant at first to take them but end up placing them in your pack, hoping they will keep well there.

Make a note of this in your inventory. Though you have satisfied their demands, they seem fine with you staying longer. You feel a sense of satisfaction for having helped them and believe they consider you to be an ally or friend. Will you:

- Investigate a nearby wood carving.
- Investigate a pile of rags and cloth.
- Leave and continue your pursuit.



- Turn to **79**.
- Turn to **178**.
- Turn to **106**.

10

Unfortunately, you are caught in your attempts to cheat. The group of brutes grow rowdy and hostile at your brazen display of foul play. The stench of cheap alcohol and sweat fill the air, and you feel sick from both the smell and the embarrassment of getting caught. Suddenly, the leader shouts over the rest. “Nobody cheats me in my den. Get ‘im, boys!” The brutes start howling at the request, clearly inebriated and losing control. You anticipate that you’ll not be leaving without a fight and so draw your sword in preparation. Turn to **141**.

11

You refuse to pay the man in response to his threat. You move on ahead, but the man, irritated by your remark, draws a concealed blade from within his garments and moves to attack. You see the attack coming, however, and dodge enough that the strike only produces a shallow cut on your right arm. **Take 1 damage**. You draw your sword slightly to intimidate the man. Roll for ALA. If successful, the man backs down and runs towards the marketplace plaza to the south. If unsuccessful, he slashes again lightly before calling your bluff and walking away, spitting in your direction. **Take 2 damage**. You move north, away from the marketplace, hoping to see your aunt’s captor ahead. Turn to **63**.

As you continue north through the plaza, a large, green tent catches your eye. It is emblazoned with gold-painted emblems of various coins and currencies, and you see a frail, old man sitting on his legs atop a counter that completely covers the entrance to the tent. The old man is meekly dressed in animal skins that barely cover the groin and shoulders, and you notice he is beckoning you towards him as you approach. You suspect this tent is a bank and the old man its banker, and so you continue your approach, hoping he will have heard something of your aunt's captor from the various passerby.

Perhaps as a means to gain attention, he begins to loudly slap his thighs and motion others towards him with his hands. A well-decorated caravan pulled by two ground-griffons passes by just in front of the tent but ignores the old man, and he scowls at them and gestures rudely with his hands before returning to slapping his thighs and beckoning others towards him. When you arrive at the counter, you ask him if he is the head banker of the stall. He nods without saying a word as he continues slapping his thighs, only now with a quicker rhythm. You then ask him about your aunt's captor. He smiles wide, revealing a toothless grin, and, smacking his gums as he does so, he quickly grabs a stamp from underneath the counter and marks your left shoulder with it. You inspect the mark and see that he has stamped you with the figure of a headless serpent. The motion was so quick, you just barely make out the stamped figure of a full-bodied viper on his own left shoulder. *Mark the **Banker's stamp** in your inventory.*

The old man then gets off the counter, opening a side door to the interior behind the counter as he does so. He again beckons you towards him without saying a word and disappears behind the tent. Will you:

Follow him into the tent.

Turn to **133**.

Avoid him and head NE towards the edge of the plaza.

Turn to **8**.

You place a rat mech, and it moves forward for a bit on the path before making a sound: "hiss hiss." If you wish to head down this path, turn to **169**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **69**.

14

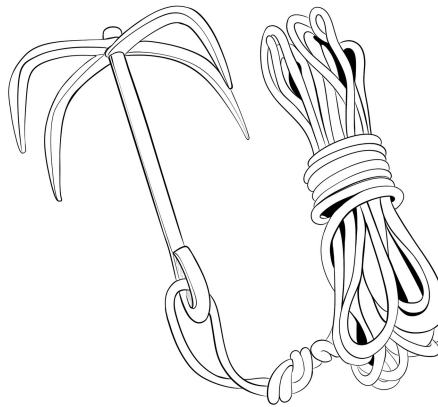
You place a rat mech, and it moves forward for a bit on the path before making a sound: “squeak squeak.” If you wish to head down this path, turn to **174**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **167**.

15

Your curiosity overcoming you, you decide to ask the woman why she named the “booth” after a riverside area of town when it is clearly closer to the swampy side than the narrow stream of water that juts through the Riverside District. She is about to give an answer when Boris interrupts her with “Ugahhh... GAH UGAAAHH!” “SHADDAP!,” she roars back. “Of course I know we couldn’t secure the correct title deed when arriving here!” She then turns back to you and speaks in a calmer, uninterested tone. “We already had the name registered with Thu’ul, so we kept it. ‘Sides, sounds a bit more appealing than ‘Boris and Karlina’s Majestic Mud Pit Info Booth,’ don’t cha think?” With that, she looks expectantly at you for your next question, knowing you have something more important to ask for being here. Will you:

Ask how she gets her info.

Ask about your aunt’s captor.



Turn to **7**.

Turn to **99**.

16

You face right from the third position and decide whether to place a **rat mech** on this path. If you use a **rat mech**, turn to **98**. If you head down this path, turn to **33**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **67**.

You decide to give the jester the money, hoping that you may learn whether he's seen the captor once the trick is performed. He gleefully takes the two coins and tosses them into the air. A moment passes, and you realize the coins will not be returning. He frowns, then, reaching behind your ear, pulls out two shillings. You are amused by the trick, though you realize it is likely just the work of some sort of spatial magic. You decide to offer him two more shillings as a means to learn anything of the captor, but you realize that only three coins remain in your bag. The jester took an extra two coins from you! You indignantly inform the jester of his swindling trick, but he meekly makes a gesture of innocence and points towards a passing bard. You glance away quickly but just as quick realize your foolishness. When you look back, your remaining shillings are gone. You curse under your breath for falling for such a simple ruse, and you demand your shillings back. "If you want them, come and take them," he replies in a hoarse and inhuman growl. You are taken aback by the menacing nature of the jester but are determined to gain back your coin. You draw your sword and ready your stance. Fight!

Jester; (1); Row = Fr; PRO (9) ERU (8) VIT (4) ALA (10); F.P. = 0; Focus chance = 0

Focus → None

Features → Immune to electric; 1/6 chance to attack twice

Actions → Strike [1-4] (MEL); Cast Spell [5-6]

Spells → Shock Spear [1-3]; Sonnet of Slumber [4-6]

If successful,

Turn to **109**.

You decide to search a few precariously placed acacia wood barrels, which appear a bit lopsided and chaotically arranged on an uneven wooden platform. Most appear broken or damaged. You open one and see it filled to the brim with hwahwa, a locally-brewed beer, but you decide not to drink. A second barrel is opened to reveal only a single ration of sorghum and hardtack. *You may add this ration to your inventory if you wish.* You open the final intact barrel, and you are shocked to see the banker hiding in

the barrel! Before the banker has a chance to react, you angrily question him about the captor and Yldaram. Roll for ALA. If successful, you intimidate him and he tells you what you want to know. Turn to **115**. If unsuccessful, he resists your interrogation attempts. Turn to **6**.

19

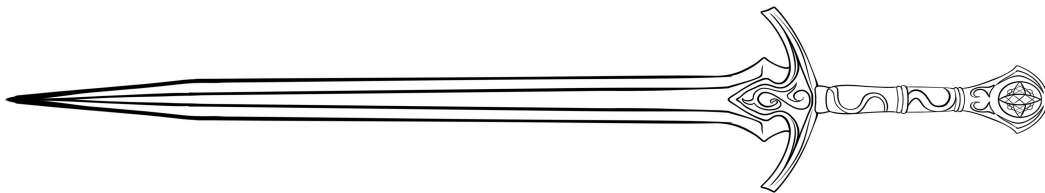
You face left from the second position and decide whether to place a **rat mech** on this path. If you use a **rat mech**, turn to **140**. If you head down this path, turn to **169**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **69**.

20

You place a rat mech, and it moves forward for a bit on the path before making a sound: “chirp.” If you wish to head down this path, turn to **33**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **67**.

21

As the target starts to get further away, you panic and begin to fail your stealthy maneuvers. You begin to step out of rhythm and push through the crowds in order to maintain pace. Then, you clumsily knock a few fruits off a vending cart, which gets the vendor to yell at you in a fury. At this, the cloaked figure begins running, and, once free of the angry vendor, you run as well. Unfortunately, your efforts come too late and you lose sight of the target. You search around in case the figure decided to hide, but to no avail. Giving up on your chance to catch the figure, you continue north in hopes that the captor still lies ahead. Turn to **124**.



22

You place a rat mech, and it moves forward for a bit on the path before making a sound: “squeak squeak.” If you wish to head down this path, turn to **169**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **69**.

23

You place a rat mech, and it moves forward for a bit on the path before making a sound: “hiss.” If you wish to head down this path, turn to **152**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **146**.

24

The mech is slowed down a good bit by your attempt, and a final hit knocks open his chest plate, revealing a glowing soul orb that serves as the core and powers the construct. After a brief pause, the mech continues its rampage, and you realize you’ll need to shut down the core in order to stop him for good. You rummage through your pack, hoping to find something that’ll do the job. If you have a **shadow orb** in your possession and would like to use it, turn to **113**. Otherwise, you find nothing that will help and must fight the still-enraged mech!

Boris Core; (1); Row = Fr; PRO (10) ERU (4) VIT (6) ALA (4); F.P. = 3; Focus Chance = 1-2

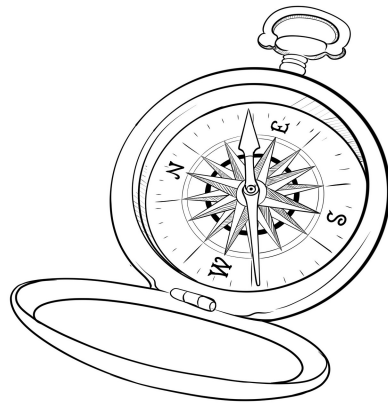
Focus → **Laser Fire** – Target one PC anywhere on the grid; that PC immediately takes 3 dmg and is weak to physical attacks for 1 round (these attacks deal an extra +1 dmg); this does not count as a battle action, and “Boris Core” can still attack, etc. after this action is resolved

Features → 1-2 on d6 – returns to front row if in back row; weak to fire

Actions → **Cleave** [1-3] (MEL); **Power Down** [4-5] (recharges and heals 2 H.P.); **Berserk** [6] (permanent +1 base damage)

Spells → None

If successful, turn to **159**.



25

You search your pack for something that may distract the children from you but are unsuccessful. The children become more aggressive in their attempts to push you elsewhere, and you realize you are now retreating towards the tarp-covered base-board from which they exited. You remember your coin pouch, if you still have one, but it is already too late to distract them with coin. Now at what you presume to be the entrance to their hideout, the children nudge you until you finally crawl inside.

The hideout is surprisingly cluttered with a myriad of knickknacks and trinkets obtained from the city. It is dark here, and you realize that the mud enclosure above you is decrepit and abandoned, except by the elves that dwell underneath. The only light here is the trace amount seeping in from between rickety boards and cracks in the surrounding walls above. There is an old, musky smell that emanates from the boards and trinkets; an odd, unrecognizable smell that prevents you from feeling at ease. From within the darkness of the opposite side of the room, an older, adult elf appears and gestures in a manner that seems to indicate peacefulness, beckoning you as a welcome guest. Unlike most residents of Thu'ul, he is dressed in colorful cloth and old tassels, and he looks at you with an expression of expectancy. One of the children ambles towards him and pats himself as he sits down next to the older elf, drawing a small blade in warning from beneath his rags. It seems that you will need to determine what these elves want without a proper means to communicate with them. Will you:

Investigate a group of metal plates.

Turn to **156**.

Investigate a nearby wood carving.

Turn to **79**.

Investigate a pile of rags and cloth.

Turn to **178**.

Talk to Thragg, if present.

Turn to **PB2**.



26

You face forward from the second position and decide whether to place a **rat mech** on this path. If you use a **rat mech**, turn to **13**. If you head down this path, turn to **169**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **69**.

27

You cut off a leather strip from your armor with the help of a small knife you keep hidden in your belt and wrap it loosely around your hand and right arm. Hoping this will suffice to protect you from the sharp thicket, you quickly reach your hand in and grab the object. You give off a sigh of relief that the wrap worked, but your expression suddenly changes to anguish as the wrap falls off during retrieval and your forearm is slashed by a sharp bone fragment that produces a deep and bloody gash. You yelp in pain as a searing shock sensation rapidly shoots up your arm, but you make sure to hold firm onto the object and take it out. *Take 3 damage.* After bandaging up your arm, you inspect your reward; you gain **Boots of Speed +1**. You're a bit annoyed that there was nothing connected to the seam here, but you pocket your find nonetheless and move forward. What will you do next?

Check out the gutters, if you haven't yet done so.

Turn to **94**.

Approach the seam of light.

Turn to **78**.

Leave the lot through an alley back to the dimly lit street.

Turn to **124**.

28

Fearing the appearance and vicious state of these creatures, you turn and run towards an alley that leads back to the dimly lit street. The gutter dogs are faster than you, however, and spare no time in cutting you off from your escape. With no choice but to defend yourself, you ready your sword for battle. Fight!

Gutter Dog; (2); Row = Fr; PRO (10) ERU (3) VIT (5) ALA (10); F.P. = 2; Focus Chance = 1-2

Focus → Vomit Volley – If in back row and other gutter dog is in front row, move directly behind other gutter dog. If this is possible, enemy leaps off back of other and vomits at party; all PCs take 3 dmg + POI. If conditions not met, focus not activated and F.P. not used; this focus costs a battle action and ends the turn

Features → 1-3 = Switch between back and front row; Immune to poison

Actions → Bite [1-2] (MEL); Defend [3]; Heal self [4] (2 H.P.); Trash spit [5-6] (MEL/RAN)

Spells → None

If successful, the creatures are slain and crumple before you, lifeless. If you wish to continue your escape from the lot, turn to **124**. If instead you wish to return to the seam of light and inspect it, turn to **125**.

29

To your delight, you win the game and may now receive a reward. Unfortunately, everyone else around you appear less than delighted, their suspicious stares a reflection of their leader's. You had hoped their drunken stupor would prevent them from suspecting foul play, but that doesn't appear to be the case. Nevertheless, you ask if you can gain info on your aunt's captor instead of coin as your reward, and the leader responds in kind. "Sure, an' ah guess ye'd also like ta know whether the King o' the Gallantry will soon be arrivin' in port." He slaps the table and laughs a hearty laugh before snorting and spitting onto the floor next to him. "Ah'd rather inform ye of mah next bowel movement." At that, the group erupts in laughter, and you see the hesitant brute slowly back out from the group and beyond your field of vision. "Ah'll be owin' ya nothin', lad," he snarls, and then he points towards the whole group. "Take 'im away, boys. Looks like we'll need ta fill our cup from tha next fool wot walks by 'ere." The brutes then grab you off your chair and throw you out of the gambling den.

You get up from the ground and dust yourself off, feeling dejected but preparing to continue on ahead. You are stopped just beyond the entrance, however, by the hesitant brute you noticed earlier. He is much more pale than the majority of others in Thu'ul, and he is clothed in much hairier and more

muted furs than what the nearby marshes tend to provide. He is intimidating in stature, and the exposed areas of his skin are adorned with the battle scars of many previous fights and hunts. On his back, he carries a large war-hammer, an uncommon weapon in these lands. He grabs your shoulder in a friendly gesture and begins to speak in a deep but surprisingly sophisticated tone. “I saw what you did there, kid, and I must say I’m impressed. Not many would pass up on wealth to help family or friend around these parts. The name’s Thragg, by the way. If you need help in stopping that scoundrel who took your aunt, I’d be happy to help.” You graciously accept his request, and he joins the party! *Thragg is now a member of the party. His stats and equipment are as follows:*

Thragg; Class - Brute; PRO (11) ERU (6) VIT (10) ALA (8); F.P. - 2

Focus → Brute Force – Next MEL hit also hits an enemy directly behind (Paralysis for 1 turn to back enemy)

Features → Weak to poison; Immune to exhaustion; weapons- hammers, axes; armor- light

Spells → None

Inventory → Warhammer (MEL), Fur Outfit, Health potion (4 H.P.)

With Thragg now part of the team, you head east, away from the plaza and onto a dimly lit street, which seems to continue north. Turn to **83**.

30

You can smell his lies from the marketplace, and you tell him as much. You call his bluff and dismiss him, saying he knows nothing and is simply begging for coin. You move on ahead, but the man, irritated by your remark, draws a concealed blade from within his garments and moves to attack. You see the attack coming, however, and dodge enough that the strike only produces a shallow cut on your right arm. **Take 1 damage.** You draw your sword slightly to intimidate the man. Roll for ALA. If successful, the man backs down and runs towards the marketplace plaza to the south. If unsuccessful, he slashes again lightly before calling your bluff and walking away, spitting in your direction. **Take 2 damage.** You move north, away from the marketplace, hoping to see your aunt’s captor ahead. Turn to **63**.

31

Your suspicions of the old man build as you question his motives and “foresight.” You unsheathe and raise your sword with the intent to attack and take both items. The old man shrieks as he prepares a spell. You lunge forward to abruptly end the altercation, but he dodges and quickly casts his spell before running away into the backrooms behind him. The spell severely shocks you and generates enough heat to melt all shillings you currently carry. *Take 6 damage and lose all shillings in your inventory.* Feeling you made a huge mistake by attacking the old man, you nevertheless take both the sword and shield and prepare to leave. The sword is a **Firebrand +1 ATK**. With each successful hit, roll a d6; on a 5 or 6, the sword burns the target and deals 1 damage per turn for 3 turns. The shield is a **Copper Shield +2 DEF**. Each time you use this for extra protection, roll a d6; if a 1 is rolled, the shield is destroyed. Turn to **PB5**.

32

You face left from the first position and decide whether to place a **rat mech** on this path. If you use a **rat mech**, turn to **149**. If you head down this path, turn to **152**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **146**.

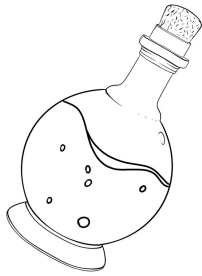
33

If you chose to continue down the right path, turn to **167**. Otherwise, turn to **120**.

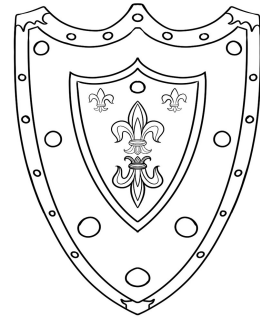
34

You eye the copper shield and choose it, desiring its protection. The old man smiles as he places the sword back under the counter and says that the item is worth 5 shillings if you’d like to purchase it. He describes it as a **Copper Shield +2 DEF**. Each time you use this for extra protection, roll a d6; if a 1 is

rolled, the shield is destroyed. After finishing his description of the shield, he laughs and asks if you will purchase it. If you would like to purchase it, remove the 5 shillings from your inventory and turn to **89**. If you cannot or will not purchase the shield, turn to **143**.



35



You approach a large writing desk at the far left wall of the tent and see that many various documents are splayed across its lacquered surface alongside an inkwell and pen that is surprisingly empty. You briskly leaf through the papers, though most are uninteresting banking ledgers. One document, however, does catch your eye. You read it and learn that the author is claiming to own a very useful section of marshlands near the ruins, which serves as a mystical faerie glade, and that this deed will be the envy of all around. Finding it potentially useful, you add the **Fake Writ of Possession** to your inventory. Nothing else here seems interesting, but you may search another area of the tent, if time permits. Will you:

- Search the simple, rectangular wardrobe in the tent corner? Turn to **121**.
- Search a wooden box engraved with snake figures on a side table at the back. Turn to **128**.
- Search a few precariously placed barrels to your right. Turn to **18**.

If you have already searched two areas or would like to end your search, instead turn to **110**.

36

Thragg brings down the weight of his hammer with such force that the barrier shatters silently into fragments of light that blind for but a moment before revealing a portal of pure white light. He shakes off what appears to be the energy of the seam coursing through his body upon striking it and otherwise appears unfazed. “See, nothing to it, right? Bet you’re glad I tagged along now, huh?” He stares for a

moment at the portal before picking you off your feet and pointing you at the light-filled void. “Well, time to claim our prize!” He then abruptly tosses you into the portal. Your senses are overwhelmed with a multitude of sights and sounds as reality begins to break around you. You feel dizzy and shield your eyes from an ever intensifying bright light. You stumble a bit (on what, you’re not sure) and fall to the ground as you hit something solid. You wait for the excessively bright light to fade a bit before finally opening your eyes to take in the new surroundings. Turn to **127**.

37

You decide to pay him the two shillings and play his game. He explains the rules and you take your stone-throwing stance at the counter. To play:

Make a PRO - 1 check. Each successful check results in a stone hitting a bottle, while a failure is a miss. The game ends when you miss a bottle. The previous record is 4 bottles. Hit 5 or more in a row and you win the prize. If you are able to hit 5 or more bottles, turn to **100**. Otherwise, turn to **38**.

38

Despite your best efforts, you are unable to surpass the previous record of hitting 4 bottles in a row. The proprietor looks disappointed as he wipes his brow and places new bottles on the poles. “Well, there’s always next time, my friend. Would you like to try again for just two more shillings?” If you wish to try the game again, turn to **37**. Otherwise, you cut your losses and continue north in pursuit of your aunt’s captor. Turn to **12**.

39

You attempt to step carefully around the man without disturbing him. Whatever his condition, you feel it’s not your place to investigate further, and he appears unhurt anyways. As you pass him, however,

you hear shuffling behind you. You swing around only to see a blade slash your left arm, leaving behind a deep, bleeding wound. *Take 1 damage.* Grasping your arm in pain, you see that the man has bolted towards you and attacked you for some unknown reason of spite. He mutters something about selfishness or carelessness, and you run further down the street to escape his lunacy. Once you are free of the strange man, you bandage your wound and continue forward, hoping your aunt's captor is just up ahead. Turn to **63**.

40

Believing the elves to be enemies of the ones who took your aunt, you take the robes back and throw them to the ground, stomping on them. The older elf lets his guard down and sighs, and the other elves soon follow suit. The elf children clap and relax, and the older elf takes out a blade of his own and tears up the robes in defiance. With the elves now more relaxed around you, you can leave the hideout whenever you want. However, there may be something else you're interested in inspecting. What will you do?

Investigate a group of metal plates.

Turn to **156**.

Investigate a nearby wood carving.

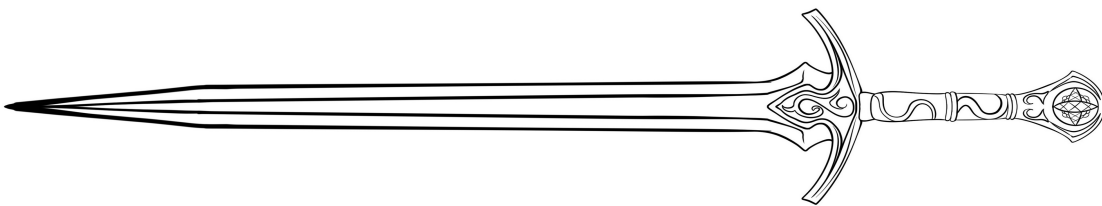
Turn to **79**.

Leave and continue your pursuit.

Turn to **106**.

41

You face forward from the first position and decide whether to place a **rat mech** on this path. If you use a **rat mech**, turn to **23**. If you head down this path, turn to **152**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **146**.



42

Piecing together the number of parts of the garden after using the golden ratio to determine the number of stones used, you arrive at the numerical answer of forty-two. “That... is correct,” the magical mouth states, in an unerringly monotone manner that almost makes you question if you’ve fallen into a sort of trap. You are relieved, however, when the magical construct simply continues to speak in emotionless rhyme, although no reward is explicitly mentioned. “In glades of dew, there lies, subdued, a path to deeper thrills; The ruins quake, but fortunes make, Dezora’s light instills.” You are unsure what the construct is speaking of, but it is apparent your reward lies elsewhere. You jot down the rhyme as a clue. You gain the password **GLADE**. *Add this to the party inventory section of your party/character sheet.* The magic mouth, its task finished, returns to its static form, resembling a motionless painting as graffiti on the alley wall. With nothing left to gain here, you return eastward until you reach a dimly lit street. Turn to **83**.

43

Despite your best efforts, you are simply too much of a novice to decipher the contents of the tablet. The young medicine man is disappointed by your attempt and snatches the tablet back from you. “Do not attempt to query me further. I have no time to aid or abet failures.” With that, he returns to getting lost in his translation, and you return to the central room of the common house in defeat. From here, you pick a path you have not yet chosen. Will you enter:

A blue-painted hallway outlined in crude reflecting pools to the north.

Turn to **87**.

A red-painted hallway adorned with crimson and gold tapestries to the west.

Turn to **155**.

44

You pay him **2 shillings** and he gratefully pockets the coin. He turns to walk off, but you harshly remind him of his end of the bargain. “Oh, right, almost forgot. Yeah, I saw some guy in a brown and

blue cloak walking down this street earlier.” He starts to mutter again and curses under his breath. “Anyways, I saw a guy in a brown and blue cloak. He was, of course, heading north from here. Don’t remember seeing some lady, though. But, uh, who knows, maybe he dumped her in some alley down the way.” He laughs at the statement, and you barely conceal your rage over the irreverent remark. “We done here?” You thank him for the information and move on your way, hoping to see the cloaked figure ahead. Turn to **63**.

45

You attempt to ask the older elf about the robes and the ones who wear them using a mixture of common language and hand gestures. The elf appears distinctly puzzled at the attempt until you make a motion of pulling an imaginary hood over your head and grabbing someone. A light seems to burn in his eyes as he makes a face of disgust. Hoping the elf correctly understood your gesture, this may reveal the elves’ feelings toward the men that wear these cloaks. What will you do next?

Show robes to see the older elf’s response.

Turn to **138**.

Investigate a group of metal plates.

Turn to **156**.

Investigate a nearby wood carving.

Turn to **79**.

46

You look over the humanoid mech named Boris further and notice he has a flimsy-looking chest plate with a glowing blue light shining dimly through the cracks. You get an eerie feeling from the construct, as if it had once been human but is now no longer. “I wouldn’t get too close to him,” the proprietor exclaims from the opposite side of the counter. “He’s been going a bit haywire lately and tends to get surprisingly violent at times. Not sure what’s been triggering it, but it must have something to do with those thugs that showed up a few weeks ago. Call themselves the ‘Serpent Something-or-Another.’ They had been here before many years ago, but now they’re back with what looks like all-new recruits and a new leader. Don’t know what they’re up to, but I don’t really care. Just stay away from ‘em, and

stay away from that mech there. Don't need a mess on my hands. Got enough troubles as it is. Now, again, how can I help ya?" You back away from the mech and assess your next move. Will you:

Ask why the booth name says "Riverside".

Turn to **15**.

Ask about your aunt's captor.

Turn to **99**.

Inspect the rat mechs, if you haven't done so already.

Turn to **165**.

47

You face forward from the third position and decide whether to place a **rat mech** on this path. If you use a **rat mech**, turn to **20**. If you head down this path, turn to **33**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **67**.

48

You are caught entirely by surprise by the act of the ringleader whipping you into motion. You attempt to somersault backwards as you dodge being struck by the whip, but you land brutally on your head, giving you a bump on the back of your head and a sweltering pain as the jesters laugh in dark amusement at the whole affair. You regret having applauded the turncoats earlier and observe the ringleader looking smugly pleased for having embarrassed you as he decides to further punish your ineptitude. He closes in to attack with the whip, to which he has now attached a barbed tip. You draw your sword in preparation to defend yourself and get ready for the strike. Fight!

Ringleader; (1); Row = Fr; PRO (8) ERU (6) VIT (3) ALA (8); F.P. = 3; Focus Chance = 1-3

Focus → Double-Strike – Next attack is performed twice (attack roll needed for both)

Features → None

Actions → Whip strike [1-4] (MEL/RAN); Disarm [5-6] (MEL) Reduce PC base attack to 1

Spells → None

If successful, the ringleader is knocked unconscious. The jesters gasp, at first, and then cheer, clap, and prance around in celebration of the reprieve in the ringleader's harsh training. You begin to understand the ringleader a bit as the performance hall erupts into chaos. You head through a door on the western wall and find yourself near the edge of the marketplace plaza. You decide to head northwards from here. Turn to **8**.

49

You forcefully turn the man over with your foot to further inspect if he's in trouble or asleep. The man reveals which is the case when he jolts awake in a jittery furor and fumes at you for the rude gesture. "So, you think you can just kick a man over when he's sleeping!? You couldn't at least have shouted first or something? If I hadn't..." The man continues on with an angry diatribe, but you lose interest and interrupt him to ask whether he has seen your aunt's captor. "Sure, yeah, I've seen him," he says with a sneer. "In fact, he and your whole @!?!&*%# family just took a stroll down this way while I was asleep on the ground." He spits on the ground in disgust and draws a small blade from beneath his garments. "Now, that'll be **1 shilling** for bothering me, and I'll let you be on your way." If you decide to pay him to calm him down, turn to **74**. If you refuse to pay him, turn to **11**.

50

As you catch your breath after being nearly winded from the fight, you search around for your belongings. Fortunately, they aren't difficult to find, and you quickly procure your backpack and equipment from an open chest near the center of the tent. Unfortunately, you find that your coin pouch is missing and you have no shillings. The bodyguards are unconscious for now, but they will wake and likely attack again soon. You decide to quickly search the tent for your coin pouch before the bodyguards wake back up. *You have multiple options where the pouch is likely to be hidden, but you may only choose to search up to two different areas. After that, the bodyguards will awaken, and you will need to vacate the tent.* Will you:

Search the simple, rectangular wardrobe in the tent corner?

Turn to **121**.

Search a wooden box engraved with snake figures on a side table at the back.

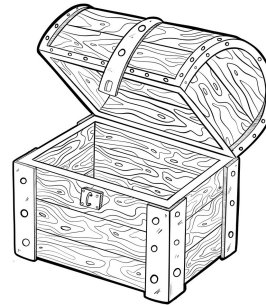
Turn to **128**.

Search a few precariously placed barrels to your right.

Turn to **18**.

Search a large writing desk to the far left wall.

Turn to **35**.



51

You toss 2 shillings into one of the offering plates, which give off a barely audible chime that alerts the elves. They gratefully pocket the coins between two of their members but appear dissatisfied overall. Apparently uninterested in your further presence, they begin nudging you out of the hideout until you are back on the street. Confused as to whether you should have offered more, you nevertheless brush off the affair and continue north. Turn to **106**.

52

Hoping the robes may be recognizable enough and strike fear in some of the people of Thu'ul, you wear the robes as you continue on your path. Your plan works, as the children's faces contort in fear and surprise. Now retreating to what you presume is their hideout beyond the tarp-covered base-board, the shock of the children alerts some passerby of your presence. Not wanting to draw further attention, you remove the robes and continue following in pursuit northward. Turn to **106**.

53

You shout at the man to get his attention, and he jolts awake with an angry stir, as if you had woken a hibernating bear in deep sleep. "What's the meaning of this!? Can't a man get any sleep? It's hard enough to even think around that loud pub. I thought this quiet street would... wait." He looks around groggily and takes in his surroundings before turning back to you to speak. "Huh, must've still been traveling on this street when I dozed off. Or maybe it was that..." He trails his sentence off in a mutter

49

as he thinks about how he got here. You take the opportunity to ask him about your aunt and a figure in a brown and blue cloak, and he perks up to you a bit more. “Sure, I might know something about that. But, uh, good talk doesn't come cheap! How about handing me **2 shillings** and I'll tell you what you wanna know? I'll even forgive ya for disturbing my, uh, rest.” If you pay him the coin, turn to **44**. If you refuse to do so, turn to **30**.

54

You search for an opening through the crowd of plague zombies to no avail. They continue to become more densely packed and surround you ever closer. With nothing in your pack able to help and no time to plan further, you draw your sword and decide to use it to swipe the creatures aside while you run through to safety. It's risky, but you have no other choice. You run ahead past the first of the creatures you met, swinging your sword wildly to fend them off as much as possible. Despite your best efforts, however, you take a few slashes and swipes before breaking through and running like mad away from the horde of plagueis. *Take 4 damage*. Once you have created enough distance, you tend to your wounds and continue onward. Turn to **59**.

55

Despite your fears of what the brutes may do to you if you are caught cheating, you fear their response to you losing more-so and decide to cheat anyway. Roll for PRO. If you succeed, you cheat without getting caught and gain an advantage to win. Turn to **126**. If you fail, you are caught cheating and the game is abruptly halted. Turn to **10**.

56

You show the older elf the stamp imprinted onto you by the banker, and his face goes pale with recognition. He suddenly grows hostile as he gives out a deafening war cry, alerting the other elves to

action. You had guessed the elves may have the robes due to being allies with its wearers, but your assumption now appears wrong. The bladed elf boy lunges at you, but you anticipated the move and narrowly dodge the attack. He immediately goes in for a second strike, however. Roll for PRO. If successful, you dodge again and run away. If unsuccessful, he slashes at the back of your leg, drawing blood. **Take 2 damage.** Before you sustain any further attacks, you find an opening and run out of the hideout. After catching your breath, you briskly head north along the dimly lit street in pursuit of your aunt's captor. Turn to **106**.

57

As you head north through the plaza in search of the banker's tent, you see what appears to be a game proprietor beckon you to his stall. He is dressed with a traditional nhembe attire, and various colorful animal skins and beads lightly cover his athletic frame. You see that his stand is fairly devoid of clutter except for a few stones on the counter and some bottles individually propped up on poles at a fair distance behind the stall. He speaks in a genial and sophisticated manner, and you can't help but feel entranced by his calm and inviting demeanor. "Please test your skill at our stand with a stone's toss, my friends! Only two shillings are required to play, and valuable rewards can be gained for beating the previous record!" After your experience with the jester, you question whether this game is another scam, and you feel the game may distract you from the urgent task of finding your aunt's captor. However, the prize is enticing, and the game will only take a short moment of your time. Will you:

Pay and play the game.

Turn to **37**.

Ignore the proprietor and continue your search.

Turn to **12**.

58

You place a rat mech, and it moves forward for a bit on the path before making a sound: "squeak squeak." If you wish to head down this path, turn to **174**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **167**.

After a few moments, once you've surely created plenty of distance from the plagueis, you see that you are nearing the end of the dim street as it begins to open into a wide area barren of the alleys and close-knit buildings you had become accustomed to. Soon, you arrive at a gathering of tents in the open area and realize you are lost as to where to go. Many people in traditional attire to the region are walking around the area, tanning hides, fetching water, and training with their weapons. You ask about your aunt's captor, but the people do not seem to speak the common language and ignore your polite attempts to gain information. You amble about for what feels like forever, the astringent smells of the tanning booths irritating your senses until you become frustrated by the affair. Finally, you find a dugout near the center of the area with a large, wooden sign above that reads "Boris and Karlina's Riverside Informational Booth." You are a bit confused, as you're quite some distance opposite the Riverside District, but you decide to enter anyways down the dirt steps of the hovel, seeing this as perhaps your last chance to catch up with the captor.

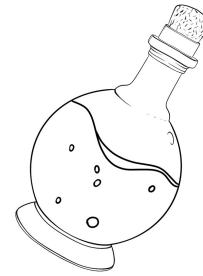
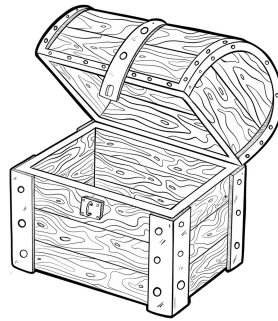
Once inside, you are met with a squalid, dusty dwelling surrounded by shelves of various contraptions and tablets. You sneeze profusely before adjusting to the environment and spot, on the far end, what looks like the booth's proprietor; a husky, muscular woman of fair complexion and fiery hair, dressed in blue overalls and wearing a bored expression across her freckled face. Standing to the far left of her and farther behind the counter is a mechanical-looking man. While the face is clearly organic, the rest of the body is a polished bronze, and both arms grasp an intimidatingly large, bronze battle axe. If you hadn't met the mechanical horse-toting merchants from the Silk Lands earlier, you would be confused as to what this construct is. Now, you know it is some sort of mech, though this is the first you've heard of appearing as human. You realize this construct must be Boris and the woman Karlina. You slowly approach the counter, stepping across rat-like mechs on the floor as you do so, and the mechanical man roars and waves around his axe as you encroach, giving off a loud "Uggh... UGGAAH!" as you do so. "SHADDAP!," the woman bellows from the other side of the counter. "Can never get a moment's peace with you around!" The mechanical man quiets down and becomes eerily still in response, and the woman whirs around and asks you, in a monotone and dry manner "How can I help you?" Will you:

Ask why the booth name says “Riverside”.

Ask about your aunt’s captor.

Inspect Boris further.

Inspect the rat mechs.



Turn to **15**.

Turn to **99**.

Turn to **46**.

Turn to **165**.

60

You face right from the fourth position and decide whether to place a **rat mech** on this path. If you use a **rat mech**, turn to **58**. If you head down this path, turn to **174**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **167**.

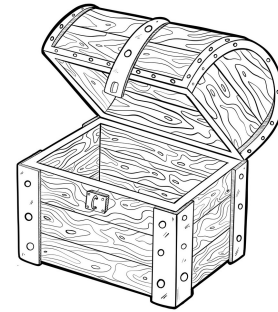
61

Your curiosity over the bell’s purpose overcomes you, and you grab the wooden handle and give the bell three rings before waiting to observe the outcome of having done so. Although the large bell is still fairly hand-sized and compact, the conical construct amplifies the sound by some orders of magnitude, and the result is an almost deafening ringing that scrambles a flock of aeronyth off in the distance, disturbing them from feasting on some airborne carrion. You wait patiently for a moment before observing a few shadows flitting about across the rooftops surrounding you. In an instant, the shadows are upon you, and you recognize what they are as they draw near; mysterious figures cloaked in brown and blue robes! Their numbers quickly grow to roughly two dozen as they surround you; some are completely cloaked, and some loosely drape the robe over their frame, exposing their arms and/or chest, which display the stamped mark of a viper bearing its fangs. Recognizing your foolish mistake, you look to escape via the ladder, only to realize it has been pushed off the building by one or some of them. With nowhere to turn, you brandish your blade and give a deep, guttural roar, vowing to slay as many of them as you can. Your choice to intimidate them appears to unnerve a few of them, and you

53

take a sense of pride for having shown such bravery; best to assert dominance and will in a moment like this. After all, you won't be leaving here alive.

GAME OVER



62

The riveting and unscrupulous nature of this most cut-throat and daring operation has now captivated both your mind and soul, and you feel it most prudent to ask her how she even understands the rat mechs anyway, which communicate in chirps and squeaks. “A-...Are ya serious?,” she blurts out, clearly annoyed at this point. “Gahh ugaahh gahh gahh... GAHH GAHH UGAAAHH UGAAHH GAAHH!,” shouts the familiar mech from the other side of the counter. “SHADDAP!” The woman pauses for a moment, then says “Look, no more stupid questions! Just tell us what you really want to know or scram!” The woman looks furious, and you realize it is time to get down to business over your aunt’s captor. Before you aggravate things further, you prepare, in your mind, how you’d like to address the proprietor of the issue. Turn to **99**.

63

Further down the dimly lit street, the road begins to widen again, and you notice a greater density of townspeople as you pass by a few small craft shops. One in particular catches your attention. It is a narrow, vertical shop with a simple, painted board staked to the front of the building just below the windows of the second floor. On it, reads: “Andoya’s Tanning and Taxidermy.” A friendly-looking man stands at the door and beckons you inside. At least, you are sure he is beckoning *you*, as no one else seems to notice him. After a moment, he enters inside but leaves the door open just enough for you to follow him in. The entire affair feels very suspicious, but it is possible that the man has seen your aunt

54

and her captor. With no other lead, you debate whether to enter inside the shop. If you enter the shop, turn to **139**. If you ignore the man’s motions to follow him, continue on the road ahead instead and turn to **66**.

64

Your intuition tells you that your aunt’s captor may not have traveled far from the plaza, where the chaos of the crowds may provide cover, and so you continue northwest through the upper portion of the plaza. You are daunted by the ample number of distractions here and search for a clever place for the captor to hide. Suddenly, you find yourself in front of one of the raised platforms, where a jester glares and smiles at you in anticipation. You take in the jester’s appearance, noting the familiar, red-toned motley costume adorned with patterned symbols of various hues, which have a runic appearance to them, though you know not what they could possibly mean. He is topped with a matching cap ‘n bells and wears an exaggerated grin that unnerves you. Despite his outwardly friendly demeanor, you can’t shrug off the feeling that this jester isn’t quite human.

“Two shillings for a magic trick,” the clownish figure states with a surprising air of authority. You assess the situation and ponder whether he will be able to help you find the captor. Will you:

Give him the shillings?

Turn to **17**.

Walk away?

Turn to **77**.

65

You ask to learn more of your aunt’s captor, though you’re honestly not sure if any of these brutes would know anything of it. One of the men to the side growls his response in a very irritated tone. “No time for questions now. Play first. We tell you other things later. If you win.” The group then start to clank their mugs in anticipation of the game, chugging the foul-smelling swill before once again pushing you to play their game. It seems you won’t get much done until you play along. Will you:

Play a game of dice.

Turn to **179**.

Play a game of cards.

Turn to **4**.

Draw your weapon.

Turn to **141**.

66

Ahead, the sides of the street are conjoined by what appears to be a strange, tall building with a pyramid-shaped roof. You think it strange that a building would be built in the middle of a road, but your concern is somewhat alleviated when you notice a manned cart carrying decorative pouches and perfumes exit through the wide gates facing you. You assume this building may be used to check vendors before entering and setting up their wares in the marketplace plaza. There are no guards stationed at the gates, so you head inside to continue on your path.

The building is surprisingly massive inside. You enter into a short but wide hallway where a counter of clerks are indeed stationed to check passports for traveling vendors to enter the south street in order to sell their wares. You remember the man you met earlier in the middle of the street and wonder aloud how the carts are properly trafficked through such a narrow passage. The center of the building is a square-shaped common house used to host a variety of bunks and living spaces. The air here is pleasantly infused with the sweet smell of potpourri, and the dwellings, while simple, appear very homely. You can even imagine yourself staying here, if needed. You initially believe they serve the more downtrodden residents of Thu'ul but, upon closer inspection of the well-dressed visitors dwelling here, you realize they are reserved as temporary places of hospitality for the traveling vendors instead. To the north, east, and west of this central room lie more hallways with gates that lead to other rooms. You ask around briefly about your aunt's captor, but none relinquish useful information that may aid you in finding the captor. Cloaked figures of brown and blue have been spotted by various vendors here beyond all directions of the common house, and so picking a direction forward will be a matter of pure luck. Sighing out of frustration, you choose a random direction to head in, hoping it will eventually lead you to your aunt. Which path will you choose?

A green-painted hallway decorated in vines to the east.

Turn to **163**.

A blue-painted hallway outlined in crude reflecting pools to the north.

Turn to **87**.

A red-painted hallway adorned with crimson and gold tapestries to the west.

Turn to **155**.

67

You arrive at the third position on the field and decide which direction to approach next. Will you:

Face left.

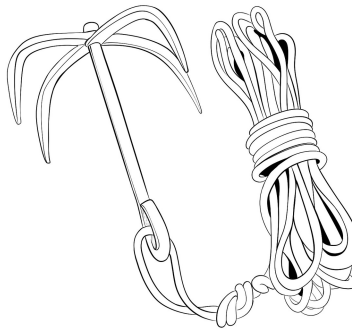
Turn to **173**.

Face forward.

Turn to **47**.

Face right.

Turn to **16**.



68

You enter the tent and are immediately caught off-guard by the overwhelming smell of sage, lavender, hookberries, and a few other fragrances you don't quite recognize emanating from a few carefully-placed incense sticks surrounding a seating circle. The interior betrays your expectations as there is no table or crystal ball, and instead of a frail, older woman, a young woman is seated with crossed legs opposite you on the other side of a small, bronze brazier at the center of the seating circle. She is dressed in a dyed shashiko (a garment of animal hides worn from behind) tied with a leather mhapa apron at the waist, and you can't help but feel her meager attire belies her physical beauty. You begin to wonder if this woman may be a bit more of a svikiro, a local spirit-medium, than an exotic fortune teller of distant lands. The initial presentation of this place seems to include a number of different customs, and you are unsure as to how her service works. The experience is a bit off-putting, and you wonder whether this young woman will be able to help you. You sit down across from her at the seating circle, and she tosses a few herbs into the fire of the brazier. "I see great turmoil in you. An important

piece of you is lost, but it is not too late for it to be found. I can help, but I require a single shilling for my services.” Will you:

Give her the coin as payment.

Turn to **118**.

Refuse to pay and quickly leave the tent.

Turn to **12**.

69

You arrive at the second position on the field and decide which direction to approach next. Will you:

Face left.

Turn to **19**.

Face forward.

Turn to **26**.

Face right.

Turn to **175**.

70

The two shadow guards finally dissipate into a fine, black mist with your final strikes as the cloaked figure makes his escape, heading north. Although you were unsuccessful in catching and conducting an interrogation of the cloaked figure, you find a shiny, black orb left after the defeat of one of the shadow guards as reward for your struggle. You may add this **Shadow Orb** to your inventory, if you wish. The crowd around you returns to their usual routine without a hitch, and you continue north in hopes of again seeing the cloaked figure or your aunt’s captor. Turn to **124**.

71

You face left from the fourth position and decide whether to place a **rat mech** on this path. If you use a **rat mech**, turn to **122**. If you head down this path, turn to **174**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **167**.

72

You successfully beat back a few brutes and quickly move to escape. As you close in on the exit, however, more attempt to flank you from the sides. If you can make a dive jump, you may be able to get past them and through the exit before they can close in on you. Make a PRO check. If successful, you just get through and out the exit, heading east towards a dimly lit street. Turn to **83**. If unsuccessful, the mob of brutes block you from the exit. Turn to **95**.

73

You are fortunate and are able to grab one of the small mechs and pocket it into your pack before the woman notices. You may add a **rat mech** to your party inventory, if you wish. It squeaks a bit before its sounds are finally muffled by the backpack. Karlina then turns her attention back to you and you assess what to do next. Will you:

Ask why the booth name says “Riverside”.

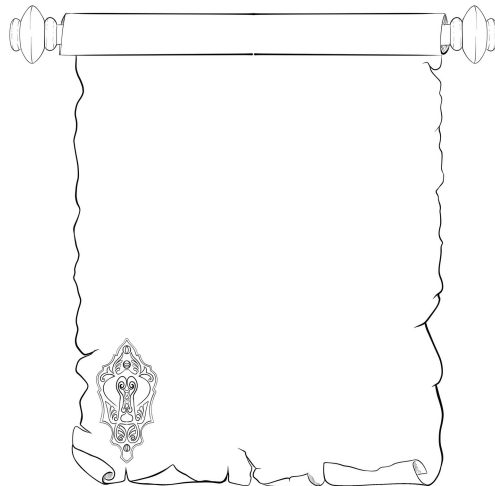
Turn to **15**.

Ask about your aunt’s captor.

Turn to **99**.

Inspect Boris further, if you haven’t done so already.

Turn to **46**.



74

You give the man **1 shilling** to pacify him, and he keeps his word and let’s you continue on your way. You hear him muttering as you leave but ignore him and focus on locating your aunt’s captor ahead. Turn to **63**.

You reach the end of the trap field and sigh in relief as you see the bridge in the distance. You hope you're not too late to save your aunt and you prepare mentally for the encounter ahead. Hoping to catch your aunt's captor, you press forward on the path that remains. Turn to **180**.

You act without any further hesitation and make your move to help the woman. You're not sure how, but you know that if you remove her robes enough to inspect her condition, you'll be able to figure out some way to help her. As you get close enough to do so, however, a clawed hand reaches out from the myriad of cloth wrappings encasing the woman and slashes at you. You are too surprised to dodge and take the full hit, which forms a large and bloody gash on your left arm. You feel a sense of nausea and dizziness overtake you before realizing you have been poisoned from the strike. *Take 3 damage and gain the **poison** status until the end of your next combat encounter.* The creature finally unveils the top half of the robes to reveal a ghastly and gaunt humanoid form. The creature is of a sickly green hue with warty skin covered in a thick layer of mucus and pus. Its only facial features are a sharp row of fangs and two black, soulless voids of nothingness where the eyes should be. No nose or ears are present. Its neck is crooked and broken, and what you can make of its posture is similarly disturbingly contorted and twisted. This must be a Plagueis, an inhuman plague zombie!

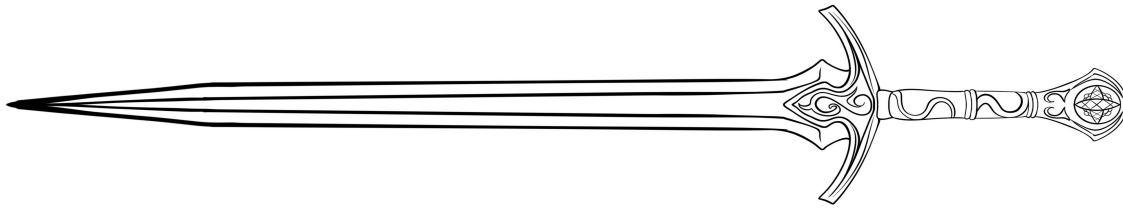
As you gaze at the disturbing features of the creature that seem to encapsulate pestilence itself, more like her approach the center of the street from a number of discreet locations between and below the various residences of the surrounding area. They rapidly surround you as the "woman" before you crawls towards you with mouth agape. You begin to draw your sword but stop when you realize there must be at least ten to twelve of the creatures around you. Despite the difficulty of doing so from side effects of the poison, you must quickly make a decision regarding how best to get through the crowd of monsters. What will you do?

Use a **brute**, if one is available in the party.

Turn to **130**.

Brute force and run through the crowd of Plagueis.

Turn to **54**.



77

You decide to head in a fairly northward direction, thinking that the captor may have fled the plaza in that direction. As you peer intently across the various stalls of the plaza in search of someone in a brown and blue cloak, a magnificent-looking tent catches your eye. It is a narrow, tall tent of a deep

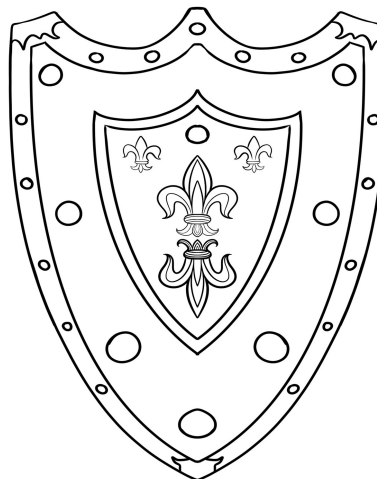
indigo color, with patterned stars painted across it in a bright yellow dye. Attached at the top, a long, yellow flag with blue lettering flutters gently in the wind. It reads “Madame Mystica’s Fortune Emporium.” You suspect that a fortune-teller may have the clairvoyance to know where the captor is headed. On the other hand, her talents may be a ruse. Will you:

Enter the tent.

Turn to **68**.

Continue walking northward.

Turn to **12**.

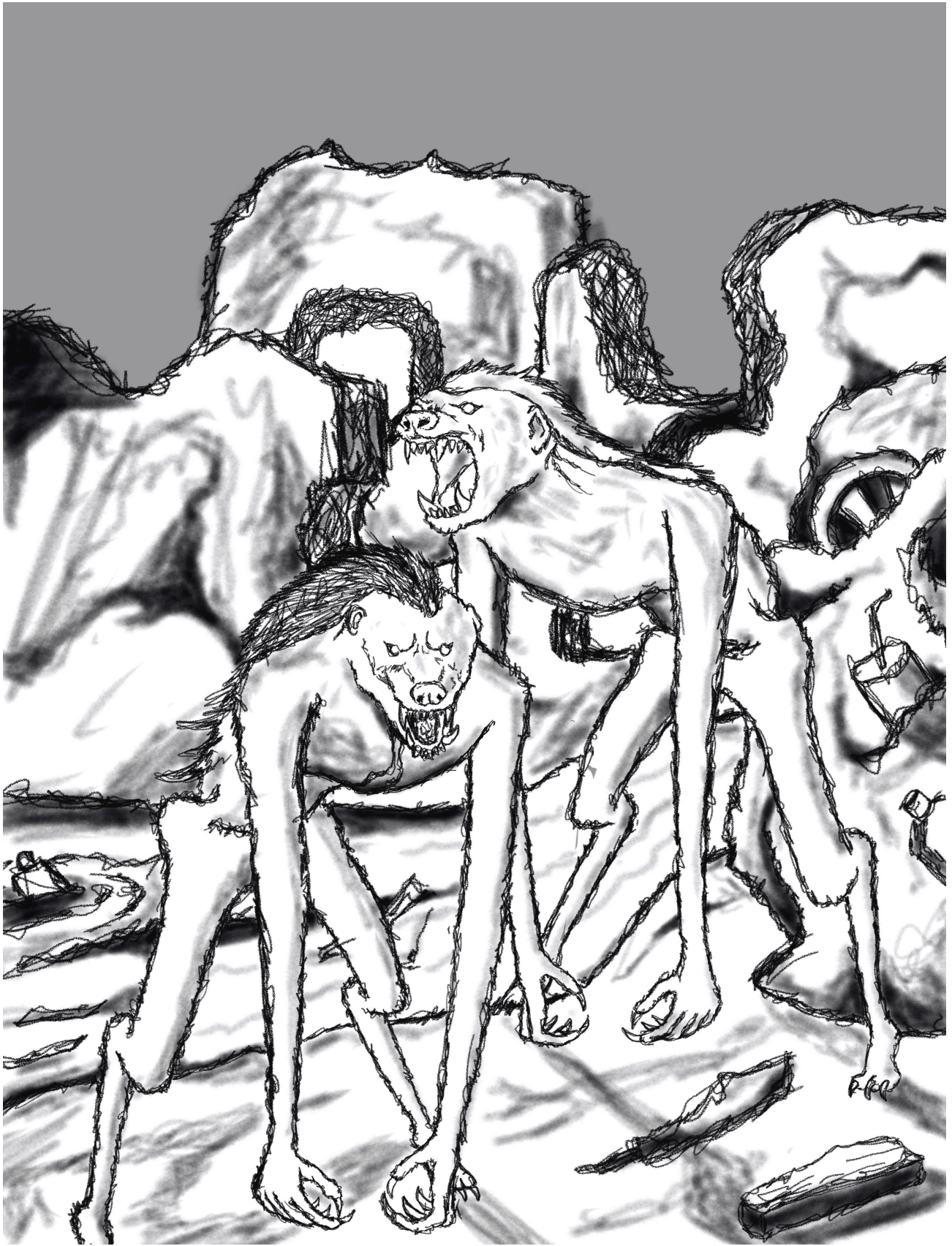


You quickly move forward to approach the seam of light, ignoring all remaining distractions. To the left side, just before you are within reach of the mysterious object, however, two low growls quicken in tempo until one crescendos into a frightful roar. You whirl around to the side to face the threatening noise and quickly realize the mistake of your hasty approach. With a long stream of refuse and blood extending from their drooping jowls all the way to the trash heap they derived from, two vicious creatures stand their ground and then slowly move towards you.

Their appearance is unnerving and horrid; their nearly hairless, pale flesh hangs loosely upon their frame and, though they stand upon four long legs, their front legs are long enough to almost give them the appearance to be standing. Their features are gaunt, and their flesh continually undulates in an almost rhythmic pattern. You eye their fanged jaws and the yellowed “whites” of their eyes. Though they lack any discernible tail or protruding ears, they bear an almost canine appearance. They emit a faint stench of decay, and you realize their bite is likely venomous. You’ve heard of these creatures before; they are the fabled gutter dogs of Thu’ul. They quicken their pace as they approach you, snarling. You have but a moment to respond before they spring their attack. Will you:

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| Yell at them. | Turn to 131 . |
| Toss soup bones at them, if available. | Turn to 3 . |
| Wear mysterious hides , if available. | Turn to 136 . |
| Run away. | Turn to 28 . |

You turn your attention towards an intricate wood carving near the center of the room. It displays a simple diorama depicting spirits that appear to be animal spirits of the marshes. Various crocodiles, swamp-striders, and others are depicted as standing upright with an ethereal aura around them. Opposite them, humanoids with white hair and long ears dressed in simple clothes and wielding bows and staves face them in a neutral stance. Two moons, one much larger than the other, are engraved in



the sky above the standard features of the swamp. As you are about to glance away to see the reactions of the elf-kin, you spot in a small portion of the right side of the background the barely-visible presence of stone blocks arranged into carefully placed lattices and archways. Though you have not seen such features since you were a child, you recognize them immediately; the ruins of Val'Kadoth!

A sudden chill overtakes you. You hear a voice in your head singing its somber notes as it wails in pain. It is the mysterious voice from the other night! Roll for VIT. If you succeed, you block out the song from your mind and are unaffected by the haunting melody. If you fail, you are becoming entranced by the song and violently smash your head against the wooden diorama to snap out of it. *Take 2 dmg.*

After having looked the wooden carving over, you become aware of the gazes of the elf children and decide to provide some sort of offering while you have their attention. You do not see much in your pack that appears relevant, but perhaps you can offer something that will suffice. What will you offer?

Mysterious Hides, if you have them.

A **shilling**, if you have one.

A Prayer to the diorama.



Turn to **135**.

Turn to **88**.

Turn to **137**.

80

As Thragg strikes the seam, his aim appears to be ever so slightly off. He recoils from the blow as a wave of energy is sent coursing through his body, knocking him back and to the ground. *Thragg takes 2 damage.* “Just a minor setback. I’ll get it with the next swing,” he assures you, before getting ready to strike again. Roll for PRO for Thragg. If successful, he finally smashes open the seam. Turn to **36**. If unsuccessful, he is knocked to the ground again and takes two more damage. Repeat this process until either Thragg is successful or loses all remaining hit points. If Thragg dies in this way, turn to **2**.

81

You decide to press further about this fascinating operation and ask her how she makes money by simply relaying information she gathers from the mechs. "...Y-you sure ask a lot 'o questions, d-don't cha?," she stammers, a protruding vein beginning to bulge above her left eye. "Gah ugaahh... GAAHH UGAAHH!," shouts the humanoid mech opposite the woman. "SHADDAP!," she roars back, silencing the mech once more. "Of course I know that news stand merchant pays hefty fer good info! It's what's kept our doors open this long!" She then turns back to you and speaks in a calmer, uninterested tone. "The news stand is run by the son of a nobleman, and it's his passion to supply the town with news of various goings-on. We give him some juicy info from our mechs, and he always pays in kind... Why doesn't he just buy the mechs?" She bellows out a short laugh. "Hah! Not for sale!" With that, she looks expectantly at you yet again for your next question, knowing you have something more important to ask for being here. Will you:

Ask how she understands the mechs.

Turn to **62**.

Ask about your aunt's captor.

Turn to **99**.

82

Although the current slows your progress to cross the gutter immensely, you find that you can easily hold your breath long enough to cross the watery gap to the other side. Your confidence wanes somewhat, however, when a group of water roaches suddenly converge on you and decide to take a few bites from their new-found prey with their formidably sharp jaws. It dawns on you that the dirty water is perfect for water roaches to thrive, and you curse yourself in your head for your arrogance. You now have no choice. You must prepare to attack the water roaches to escape and exit before you drown... or are bitten to death. Fight!

For this battle, physical attacks you perform are much slower and so deal only 1 base damage (the water roaches are adept underwater, however, and so attack as normal). Fire magic deals only half damage, and electric attacks deal damage to all party members and enemies present. You are also on a

*time limit as you are near the end to holding your breath. You must kill at least 3 water roaches within 6 rounds to cross the gutter. For each water roach remaining after 6 rounds, take **1 dmg.**; if more than 2 remain, you must turn back to the common house as the waters are too dangerous – turn to **66**. If all water roaches are defeated when you end the fight, you take no additional damage.*

Water Roach; (5); Row = (3) Fr/ (2) Ba; PRO (5) ERU (2) VIT (1) ALA (8); F.P. = 0; Focus Chance = 0

Focus → None

Features → Weak to electricity; Immune to sleep

Actions → Bite [1-5] (MEL); Chase [6] (RAN) Base damage 1

Spells → None

If successful, you make it to the other side of the gutter and catch your breath. After a moment, you get up and move past the northern gate, noticing the wench operator is asleep at his post. You chastise him for falling asleep on the job, and he apologizes and stands alert for any additional travelers. You continue forward on your path. Turn to **83**.

83

Moving quickly down the dimly lit street, you notice a surprisingly higher congestion of crowds and travelers. They move through Thu’ul as if they urgently need to be somewhere, like ants in a maze of mud and weeds desperately trying to carry sugar and other goods back to the colony. The passerby do not interact here and appear wary of others around them. The tension feels thick and suffocating, and you wonder if you have arrived at a bad part of town. The bases of the buildings here are covered in wooden boards not unlike the overhangs that block out much of the sunlight from above. One of them is covered in a brown, ratty tarp, and from it emerges a number of poor, elven children, their pristine, white hair a stark contrast from their dirty, olive-toned bodies. Dressed in rags and clearly malnourished, they skulk about, seeking attention from the crowds. You feel a sense of worry for them but dash the thought from your mind. You can aid the poor after your aunt has been found.

As you continue forward, you are startled to see a man in brown and blue robes slowly plodding north! Seizing your chance to stop what may be your aunt's captor, you quicken your pace. As you do, however, the elven children you noticed earlier begin to encircle around you. It would seem they have turned their attention to you. You yell at them to leave you alone, but it appears they do not speak the common tongue and only speak instead in an ancient elven language. If you are to continue your pursuit, you will need to quickly provide a distraction. Do you have **mysterious robes** of a brown and blue color? If you do and would like to don them, turn to **52**. If you do not or choose not to wear them, instead turn to **25**.

84

You place a rat mech, and it moves forward for a bit on the path before making a sound: "hiss hiss." If you wish to head down this path, turn to **33**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **67**.

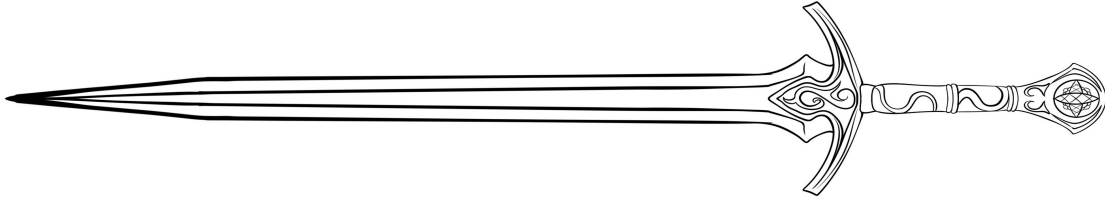
85

You face forward from the fourth position and decide whether to place a **rat mech** on this path. If you use a **rat mech**, turn to **14**. If you head down this path, turn to **174**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **167**.

86

You attempt to piece together the most important parts of the riddle in order to arrive at the answer the construct demands. You think heavily about what words the puzzle stresses the most and realize that much importance is given towards what is called "the law." You've studied mathematical concepts heavily from your aunt's tutelage and realize that a numerical answer may be, oddly enough, what the riddle demands. *A law as golden as the skies*, you think to yourself. *Could this be referencing the*

golden ratio? With newfound perspective, you continue your attempt to solve the puzzle. Turn back to **93**.



87

You enter the gate beyond the hallway to the north and find yourself in a relatively featureless room with a large gutter streaming murky water through its center, horizontal to your position. A small bridge covers the gap where the gutter exists for travel to and from the common house, but it is currently drawn upward in a near-vertical position, exposing the gutter with no convenient way to cross. It is just too wide to vault across by your estimation, and the wench is on the other side. You call for whatever guards or operators are stationed to work the wench, but no one arrives after a few moments of waiting. You realize that you will need to swim across as your only remaining course of action. If, instead, you wish to turn back in fear of the dangers of crossing these unknown, murky waters, return to **66**. Otherwise, determined to exit via this path, you hop into the gutter to swim across the streaming water. Unfortunately, the current is more vigorous than you had anticipated, and you are pulled down below the surface and to the side, where a metal grate prevents you from being carried downstream. You attempt to continue to the other side of the wide gutter, but the current gets stronger the further to the opposite side you move, considerably slowing you down. Roll for VIT. If successful, turn to **82**. If unsuccessful, turn to **154**.

88

Not entirely sure what to offer, you take out a shilling to place at the diorama, as if it were an altar. To your surprise, one of the young elf girls slaps the coin out of your hands, and it rolls across the floor until an unashamed elf boy picks it up in delight. *Lose 1 shilling*. His cheeky smile is met with looks of derision from his peers, but he ignores them and finds a corner of the hideout to admire his new possession. The girl points to the carving and makes a scolding hand gesture. You are not sure what

68

religious significance this carving holds for them, but perhaps material possessions are not proper offerings. A bit confused at the outcome, you decide to turn your attention elsewhere. Will you:

Investigate a group of metal plates.

Turn to **156**.

Investigate a pile of rags and cloth.

Turn to **178**.

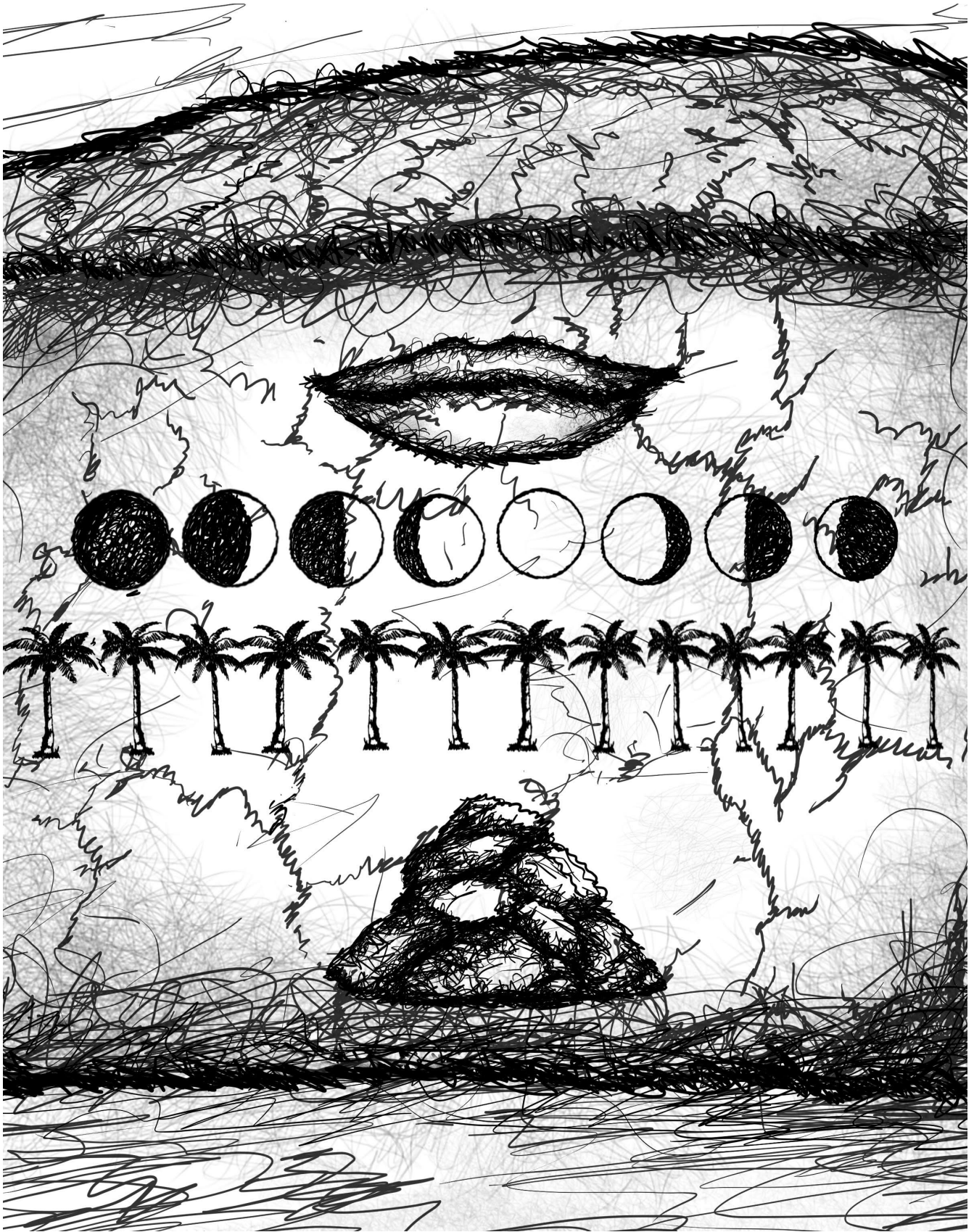
89

You pay the requested amount to the old man and add the item to your inventory. He laughs and thanks you for dropping by. “I just know this will come in handy in the future. In Omnia Paratus!” As you turn to leave, a rush of dizziness overcomes you and you fall to the floor. Suddenly, everything becomes white... Turn to **145**.

90

You reply that you wish to know of the location of your aunt and her captor, and she stares deeply into the smoke until an answer comes to her. “I see... a woman being dragged along a busy street by... someone in a brown and blue cloak. They are heading... north?... she is gagged, and few notice them in favor of a trial at the town crier. Let me see the perpetrator’s face...” Suddenly, the fortune-teller cries out and begins clutching her temple, as if in great pain. “Powerful magic... this captor has somehow blocked my vision magic with great force. My connection with the spirits has been temporarily severed. Whoever this captor is, they are not to be trifled with. I am sorry, but I cannot help further. Please leave. I will need some time to recover.”

You thank her for the information and get up to take your leave. You are grateful for the information but regret not being able to inquire further about the ruins. It is also unclear what the motivations of the captor are, but at least your aunt is largely unhurt. Upon leaving the tent, you glance back and notice the woman in the tent appears much... older. Your sense of urgency overcomes your curiosity, however, and you press on northward. Turn to **12**.



91

You face right from the first position and decide whether to place a **rat mech** on this path. If you use a **rat mech**, turn to **119**. If you head down this path, turn to **152**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **146**.

92

You reply that you seek... her hand in marriage. The woman looks taken aback, as if unsure of what to think. You seize the opportunity to display your affections for her, complimenting her on her appearance and way with words. She was very convincing when asking for that shilling, after all! Roll for ALA. If successful, you have impressed her with your charm. Turn to **176**. If unsuccessful, you have stumbled over your words in your unpreparedness. Turn to **132**.

93

You enter a narrow alleyway to the west as per the brute leader's instructions. The area is relatively featureless and quiet, punctuated only by a few squeaks of a rat as it carries a piece of what looks like hardtack into a nearby hovel. The alleyway then falls eerily silent in an instant. At the dead end of the alley, you see a few crude drawings on the far wall and a strange, grinning mouth painted just above them. At least, you think it was painted. At your approach, the mouth springs to life, smirks for a moment, and speaks of a puzzling tale, in the form of a riddle:

“Secrets to those who can aid my master’s will!;

A man once sought the voice, begging to know everything;

‘Then heed my instructions and the natural order,’ it replied in return;

‘Create a garden of insight by constructing a circle of stones;’

‘Surround this circle with planted marsh-palms and complete in one lunar cycle of Dezora.’

The man heeded the request;
He built the simple garden according to the voice and the law;
a law as golden as the skies;
When finished, he asked what truth the garden held;
‘The answer is here, all around you,’ the voice replied.

‘What answer?’ the man cried out, angrily;
‘There is nothing here but the moon, trees, and stone!’;
‘In the sum of these parts will you find the answer,’ the voice spoke in return;
After reflection in the garden, the man found an answer in his tasks;
What was it?”

If you believe you know the answer, turn to the corresponding section number. If you’d like a hint, roll for ERU. If successful, turn to **86**. If available, you may talk to Thragg. Turn to **PB1**. If you are unable to provide the correct answer or give up, you return in the direction from whence you came and head east towards a dimly lit street. Turn to **83**.

94

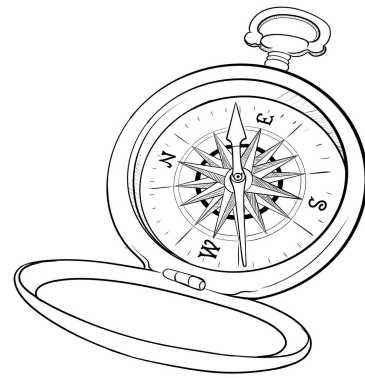
Glancing across the murky water of the gutters, you search for something that catches your eye. Eventually, you stop when you spot something glimmering in the water. You wait for the murky water to become less turbulent before questioning if it would be best to grab whatever the object is. The water smells foul now that it has settled a bit, and you can pick out the presence of refuse throughout. What will you do?

Take the object.	Turn to 150 .
Check out the thicket, if you haven’t yet done so.	Turn to 108 .
Approach the seam of light.	Turn to 78 .
Leave the lot through an alley back to the dimly lit street.	Turn to 124 .

As you dive for the exit of the gambler’s den, you notice the brutes have blocked off your only exit, encircling and encroaching upon you. You get up from the dive but are too late to retaliate or flee elsewhere. Before you know it, one has struck you with a club to the back of the head, and then another to the chest with a chair leg. You try to fend off the attacks, but to no avail. Surrounded and winded from your previous fight, you are no match for the horde. You feel the crunch of bone and hear the ringing of head trauma as, blow after blow, you are overcome by your opponents. Your consciousness fading, you can only wonder what the brutes will do with you as your surroundings blend with an inky blackness of uncertainty and senselessness. You hear your aunt call out and smell the spices and herbs of the marketplace. Your last thought is the regret of not saving your aunt and taking up the mantle as a keeper of the ruins. You can almost hear the voice of your mother in those anguished tones now. Then, everything is black.



GAME OVER



Karlina unfortunately hears you trying to pick up one of the mechs and turns her attention back towards you, scolding you for doing so. “I wouldn’t be touching those if I were you,” she says in an irritated tone. “Don’t need a mess here today and those are too valuable to just up and let you drop and break one or steal one when I’m not looking.” You get the hint and decide to ignore them, thinking about what to do next. Will you:

Ask why the booth name says “Riverside”.

Turn to **15**.

Ask about your aunt’s captor.

Turn to **99**.

Inspect Boris further, if you haven’t done so already.

Turn to **46**.

As you approach the small table and chair, you find a diary resting on the otherwise barren and plain surface of the table. It is a leather-bound tome and bears the mark of a blue viper on its brown surface. Based on this design and its use of colors, you realize that the diary must be connected to the group who kidnapped your aunt. Curious as to whether its contents may give important clues for your pursuit of your aunt's captor, you decide to open it and read some of its more recent contents:

3.12

It's been a fortnight since we arrived to this mud-barren burrow, but the boss has finally found a clue. Looks like the n'angas of this place knew more than they were willing to show; Boss'll burn 'em at the stake for their deceptive treachery once we're done with this place. Hope it's soon; keep hearing voices at night. I'm not a superstitious man, but there's something haunting about the nights here; maybe there's more to those stories of spirits than we thought.

3.19

You've gotta be kidding me! That sword we found in a nearby ruins is cursed. Stupid thing doesn't cut a block o' butter when we wield it, but drop it on our boots and we bleed out till we kick the bucket! Must've been cursed by one of those abhorrent medicine men. If we weren't too busy finding *the* ruins we gotta find, I'd have half the mind to lead a mob against those useless piles o' gutter dog dung. We decided to just stick it in a chest for now; no one's allowed to touch it. Just wish the container we found for it wasn't so old and worn...

4.6

I need to find it. We all do. That horrid wail at night; it just keeps calling to us; *beckoning* us. I haven't slept for a week. All I can think of is finding those cursed ruins so's I can put this feeling to rest. There's something waiting for us there. Something powerful; something ancient. Even the boss can't hide his trances every now and then. We need to answer its cries; what lies there is for *us*.

4.12

It waits for us.

It needs us.

I hear its call.

Always calling.

It sleeps beneath.

It breathes above.

It calls between.

I will leave tonight.

I can find the ruins myself.

I must.

It is calling.

Having read the final contents of the diary, you leave it on the desk and turn your attention elsewhere.

Will you:

Ring the bell.

Turn to **61**.

Investigate the weapons rack.

Turn to **123**.

Leave and head back down the ladder, continuing north.

Turn to **124**.

98

You place a rat mech, and it moves forward for a bit on the path before making a sound: “squeak squeak.” If you wish to head down this path, turn to **33**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction.

Turn to **67**.

99

After much deliberation, you decide to go ahead and ask her about your aunt and her captor and their whereabouts. “Gahh... UGAAHH GAAHH!,” proclaims the mech from the other side of the counter.

“SHADDAP!,” screams back the woman. “I know which one has the info! Just gotta find it in this mess...” After a short moment, the woman returns from searching for a rat-shaped mech that somehow potentially has info about your aunt’s captor, and you look perplexed as she communicates with it through chirps and squeaks before turning back to you with a nervous look. “Looks like you’ve had a nasty run-in with the desert viper,” she proclaims, wiping sweat from her beaded brow before continuing. “Sure, it looks like we found him. He passed by here just a few moments ago. Looks like he was heading to the northern bridge along with some cohorts o’ his and your aunt in tow. The whole lot were dressed in brown and blue robes, and-” As soon as she mentions the cloaked figures, the humanoid mech springs to life and begins to go on a rampage, slashing at and breaking the counter before damaging other parts of the booth. “Oh no!,” the distraught proprietor proclaims. “The darned brute has gone and went mad again! Look, you’ve got weapons and appear to be fit for the job. Can you shut ‘im down fer me? I’m not much at stopping him when he gets like this.” You realize you’ll need to stop Boris before you can learn how to reach the bridge from your current location, so you draw your sword and get ready to attack. Fight!

Boris (1); Row = Fr; PRO (9) ERU (4) VIT (9) ALA (4); F.P. = 3; Focus Chance = 1-2

Focus → Wide Swing – Attacks all PCs on the front row with the next hit, even if Boris is in back row

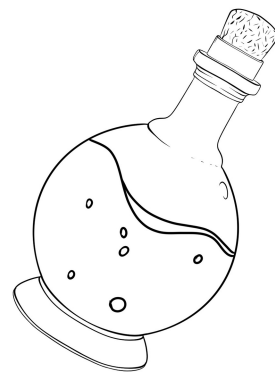
Features → 1-2 on d6 – returns to front row if in back row; weak to fire

Actions → Cleave [1-3] (MEL); Power Up [4-5] (+3 dmg on next hit); Berserk [6] (permanent +1 base damage)

Spells → None

If successful, turn to 24.

100



The proprietor looks ecstatic as you deftly surpass the previous record. “Here you go, my friend. For a job well done.” He hands you a small **gemstone** and you pocket it into your coin satchel. You’re

unsure of how much it's worth, but perhaps you'll find someone who can appraise it. You wave farewell to the proprietor and continue north. Turn to **12**.

101

Throwing caution to the wind, you make a full sprint towards the cloaked figure. You gain ground on him fast, but your loud pursuit alerts him to sprint forward as well. You deftly dodge around carts and jump through crowds as you maintain your pursuit. The figure then begins throwing over food carts and barrels, much to the chagrin of their owners, in order to escape your relentless chase. Roll for PRO. If successful, turn to **172**. If unsuccessful, turn to **151**.

102

Enraged, the psycho throws a handful of furs at you as a distraction and rushes forward, but you pull them off in time and step aside to dodge the assault. You watch as he stumbles forward into the furnace and shrieks as he burns among his victims. You let out a sigh of relief before chanting a few words of peace to the victims of the crazed man. You pick up the **mysterious hides** the man threw at you and decide to place them into your pack, thinking they may be useful in the future. As soon as you do, you bolt out of the shop and down the road and do not slow down until the metallic smell of blood no longer stings your nostrils. Turn to **66**.

103

You maintain your stealth while also keeping a close enough distance to your target. You then quicken your pace and lunge at him, toppling him to the ground. He yells out as he goes down, and the crowd around you gasps as they clear the area. You interrogate him over your aunt's captor, but he says nothing as he pushes you off just enough to free his right hand. With your arms both being used to pin him down, he has just enough time to gesture forth and summon two shadow guards in front of both of

you with a sadistic cackle. These creatures appear somewhat incorporeal, like a smoky haze emanating off the still waters of Mantuk Swamp in the chill morning air. They are armed with curved blades and a round shield, though both their equipment and their own humanoid form are equally featureless. They bear no face, and yet their frightful visage gives off an air of malice all the same, as if they are glaring at you with eyes unseen. The shadow guards immediately advance toward you as the cloaked figure starts to wriggle himself free. You have but a short moment to respond. Will you:

Run while you can (no run penalties applied).

Turn to **166**.

Fight all three opponents (can't run with this option).

Turn to **112**.

104

The two shadow guards finally dissipate into a fine, black mist with your final strikes. You find a shiny, black orb left after the defeat of one of the shadow guards as reward for your struggle. You may add this **Shadow Orb** to your inventory, if you wish. With the two shadow creatures defeated, you turn your attention to the cloaked figure, who is now crawling on his belly and inching towards a ladder on a nearby wall. The figure curses at you under his breath as he bleeds out profusely from his stab wounds and expires shortly before reaching his destination. You search him for anything useful, but, surprisingly, you find nothing of interest on his person. Looking back at the ladder, you now see a thin piece of string connecting all the way to the roof. This piques your curiosity, and so you climb the ladder to see where it leads.

Once you reach the top of the roof, you find yourself in a tiny guard shack comprised of only a small, square foundation shaded by a thatched roof that is held aloft by four stakes at each corner. There are no walls, so you are able to see the tops of the buildings of Thu'ul for quite some distance. Though you cannot spot your aunt's captor from here, you notice multiple similar-looking guard shacks dotted throughout the city. You also take note of a large bridge to the north-east crossing the city mire that caps off the small river to the east, thinking this may be the captor's destination for dropping off a body; *your aunt's body*. You shudder at the morbid thought before wiping it from your mind and turning your attention to your nearby surroundings in the guard shack.

You can now see that the string ends in a fairly large decorative bell of sorts. The bell is loosely attached near the handle to some sort of conical construct, which you can assume amplifies the sound. Pattered across the bell's bronze exterior are the depictions of serpents. You debate whether to ring the bell out of curiosity before first glancing at the rest of the shack's features. A small table and chair sits across from you, surrounded by animalistic masks and glass beads hanging from the farthest two stakes. Opposite the bell, and to your right, a weapons rack is prominently displayed, though it is largely barren of weapons at the moment. Aside from these features, the shack is relatively featureless. Now having taken in your surroundings, you assess what, if anything, to interact with. Will you:

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| Ring the bell. | Turn to 61 . |
| Investigate the weapons rack. | Turn to 123 . |
| Investigate the small table and chair. | Turn to 97 . |
| Leave and head back down the ladder, continuing north. | Turn to 124 . |

105

You get closer to inspect the man's condition and notice he is still breathing. You don't see a source of alcohol near him, and he doesn't reek of cheap booze, so you rule out drunkenness as a possible factor for his being here. It's possible he's hurt, but you see no visible wounds or blood, so that is unlikely as well. Confused as to why the man is lying face-down here of all places, you decide to get his attention and find out. If you wish to yell at him, turn to **53**. If instead you wish to turn him over, turn to **49**.

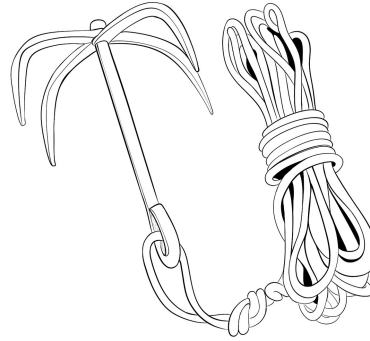
106

Further north, you see the man in the brown and blue cloak again and maintain pursuit. The street begins to narrow and twist and turn a bit as a number of fruit carts and vendor wagons begin to overtake the narrow space. They appear to be heading towards the market plaza, perhaps to restock the stalls already stationed there. The fresh and aromatic smell of the produce seems to confirm this to be

the case. You notice the cloaked man suddenly quickening his pace and begin to give chase. How will you proceed?

Follow stealthily and silently.

Follow quickly and aggressively.



Turn to **129**.

Turn to **101**.

107

Despite your fears of what the brutes may do to you if you are caught cheating, you fear their response to you losing more-so and decide to cheat anyway. Roll for PRO. If you succeed, you cheat without getting caught and gain an advantage to win. Turn to **153**. If you fail, you are caught cheating and the game is abruptly halted. Turn to **10**.

108

You approach a thicket of brambles and bones, curious as to what creature or creatures the bones once belonged to and how they ended up here. The bones do not appear human, but then you cannot honestly determine what creature they might've belonged to, except maybe some medium-sized animal. Perhaps a canine, as the skull appears to end in a snout. What remains of the bones are as sharp as the brambles surrounding them. Deep within those sharp and thorny confines, you notice an object of interest; something that looks to be made of leather. If you steady your hand carefully, you may be able to obtain it without damaging yourself too much. What will you do?

Check out the gutters, if you haven't yet done so.

Take the object.

Approach the seam of light.

Leave the lot through an alley back to the dimly lit street.

Turn to **94**.

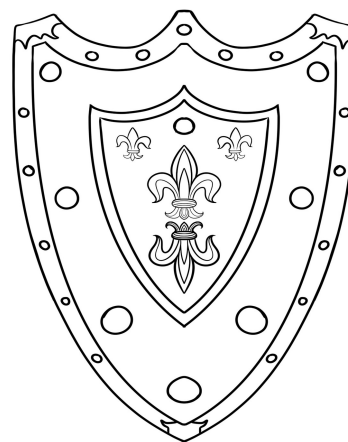
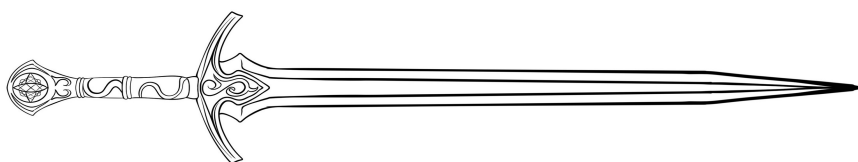
Turn to **27**.

Turn to **78**.

Turn to **124**.

You successfully defeat the jester, and an expression of astonishment appears across his face. Clearly, the jesters of the Barrens of Silt are not accustomed to being overcome by common strangers in battle. “I yield!” he says, picking himself up from the creaky, wooden platform and tossing the swindled coins at your feet. You pick up the coins and quickly count them, noticing that he even returned the two shillings you initially gave him. Around you, a crowd that had gathered to watch the fight begins to disperse. *Just another day in the Thu’ul marketplace, I guess, you think.*

The jester catches his breath for a moment and then begins to speak. “You fight well for a swamp-settler,” he snaps, barely concealing his embarrassment behind his gritted teeth. “Didn’t expect much fight from a street chump in Thu’ul, but I gotta admit that was a fun time,” he continues, cackling like a loon between breaths. You take the opportunity to ask him of the captor, and a glint in his eye tells you he knows *something*. “Tell you what; for beating me, I’ll let you in on a little secret. There’s a green banker’s tent to the north of here. Place is decorated with gold imprints of coinage, and the head banker will be seated on the front counter itself in a kneeling position; can’t miss the place, really.” You make a mental note of what he says and listen in closely. “Guy’s pretty shy and doesn’t speak much, but if you accept his stamp and follow him into the tent, he’ll take care of you and tell you what you wanna know. Just tell him I sent ya.” With that, he tosses a ring to you and returns to his initial spot on the platform. “For the fun fight,” he says, and returns to jeering at the crowd. This is a **Ring of Speed (+1)**. You may add it to your inventory and then proceed north to 57.



After searching a few areas of the tent, you hear the bodyguards start to wake up. Whether you have recovered your coin pouch and shillings or not, you will need to leave the tent to avoid another attack. You do so and head northeast towards the edge of the plaza. Turn to **8**.

Further into the alleyway, the space begins to widen into a small lot between the backsides of multiple buildings. The sides of the buildings here are covered in brambles and weeds, and you get the feeling that this area is severely neglected. You wait a moment near the alley where you entered the hidden back-lot to hear if you are being followed, but you hear only the faint streaming of gutter water and a few creatures rummaging through trash nearby. Eventually, your paranoia subsides and you decide to look around your surroundings before venturing back out to the main path once you're sure the coast is clear. As you do so, a bright seam of light in a building opposite to where you're standing catches your eye. It is a translucent object and projects seemingly a meter from the wall it is attached to. It emits no sound and yet the light flickers and fades in a constant, chaotic flux. You feel trepidation towards the thought of approaching it, and it seems to both appear perfectly tangible and yet completely detached from reality at the same time. Pondering whether you should investigate this strange occurrence, you also realize it may be beneficial to search the surrounding area for anything that may be tied to this seam of light first. What will you do?

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| Approach the oddity. | Turn to 78 . |
| Check the area for anything useful. | Turn to 5 . |
| Ignore the strange occurrence and leave the area back towards the dimly lit street. | Turn to 124 . |
| Talk to Thragg, if available. | Turn to PB3 . |

Instead of running away, you resolve to fight your enemies. You jump off the cloaked man and have just enough time to draw your sword before the two shadow guards are within striking distance. Fight!

Shadow Guard; (2); Row = Fr; PRO (8) ERU (6) VIT (4) ALA (7); F.P. = 2; Focus Chance = 1-2

Focus → Incorporeal – Until your next turn, immune to physical damage

Features → 1-3 = Attacks instead deal 1 base damage to all front row; Immune to poison

Actions → Spectral Slash [1-4] (MEL); Defend [5-6]

Spells → None

Cloaked Figure; (1); Row = Ba; PRO (7) ERU (10) VIT (3) ALA (4); F.P. = 0; Focus Chance = 0

Focus → None

Features → Weak to poison

Actions → Cast Spell [1-4]; Run [5-6]

Spells → Heal Ally [1-2] (3 H.P.); Swamp Gas [3]; Cure Ailment [4]; Enrage [5-6]

If successful, turn to **70**. If successful and you defeat the cloaked figure before it runs away, turn to **104**.

113

You grasp the **shadow orb** in your hand, and, hoping this may drain the core somehow, thrust it into the cavity where the soul orb is contained. Immediately, the core goes dark for a bit before shattering into many pieces on the floor. Grieved by the loss of her companion, Karlina moves the mech into a backroom, thanking you for calming him one last time and explaining that one of the cloaked figures had once taken his life some time ago. She explains that, though the man had always annoyed her, he was her only companion, and it's been hard to let go since. After giving her a moment to grieve, she hands you **3 shillings** for the trouble and asks you to follow her outside, where she'll explain how to reach the bridge. You peer one last time at the broken mech and continue on your way. Turn to **158**.

114

To your surprise, the group of brutes appear to be overjoyed at your winning the game. They toast to you and pat you on the back, while some pluck away on their mbira in celebration. The whole ordeal is so positive that it feels a bit unnerving. You ask the leader for info of your aunt's captor as a reward instead of coin, but he claims that he unfortunately knows nothing of the kidnapping, since his group

has been within the gambling den the whole day. He does reveal, however, that a magic wall exists just to the west in a small alley. He thinks some local mystic must have placed a riddle creature on the wall as a source of public guidance. “No idea why it tells riddles an’ the like before it gives ya’ any useful info, but ah’ guess wot mystic cast it there didn’t want just any ol’ bloke using it. Must know some pretty useful stuff, aye? Figger that could help ya’ learn about yer aunt’s captor more’n some ol’ rusty gambler like me. ‘Ppreciate not asking fer me coin, by the way.” You thank the man for his help, and he responds by snorting and spitting onto the floor as he waves good-bye.

You get up from the table and lightly push your way through the drunken, celebrating crowd. You are stopped near the entrance, however, by the hesitant brute you noticed earlier. He is much more pale than the majority of others in Thu’ul, and he is clothed in much hairier and more muted furs than what the nearby marshes tend to provide. He is intimidating in stature, and the exposed areas of his skin are adorned with the battle scars of many previous fights and hunts. On his back, he carries a large warhammer, an uncommon weapon in these lands. He grabs your shoulder in a friendly gesture and begins to speak in a deep but surprisingly sophisticated tone. “I saw what you did there, kid, and I must say I’m impressed. Not many would pass up on wealth to help family or friend around these parts. The name’s Thragg, by the way. If you need help in stopping that scoundrel who took your aunt, I’d be happy to help.” You graciously accept his request, and he joins the party! *Thragg is now a member of the party. His stats and equipment are as follows:*

Thragg; Class - Brute; PRO (11) ERU (6) VIT (10) ALA (8); F.P. - 2

Focus → Brute Force – Next MEL hit also hits an enemy directly behind (Paralysis for 1 turn to back enemy)

Features → Weak to poison; Immune to exhaustion; weapons- hammers, axes; armor- light

Spells → None

Inventory → Warhammer (MEL), Fur Outfit, Health potion (4 H.P.)

With Thragg now part of the team, you head out of the gambling den. You now have the choice to either check out the mysterious wall to the west (Turn to **93**) or to continue east, away from the plaza and onto a dimly lit street (Turn to **83**). Which will you choose?

115

The banker appears shaken, and he slowly attempts to answer your interrogation request. He speaks with much difficulty, indicating perhaps that he hasn't spoken in some time. His raspy voice is heavily muddled by the incessant smacking of his gums, and you desperately attempt to avoid the spittle he ejects with every word he speaks. "Yldaram... explorer... desert... viper..." he wheezes out. "Yldaram... name... captor..." Now knowing the name of your aunt's captor, you decide to next ask where he is heading. He is clearly tired from his speaking attempts and can only rasp out "bridge" before becoming exhausted and falling silent. You tell him to stay in the barrel until you leave the tent as you place the lid back on top, and you decide to search another area of the tent, if time permits. Will you:

Search the simple, rectangular wardrobe in the tent corner? Turn to **121**.

Search a wooden box engraved with snake figures on a side table at the back. Turn to **128**.

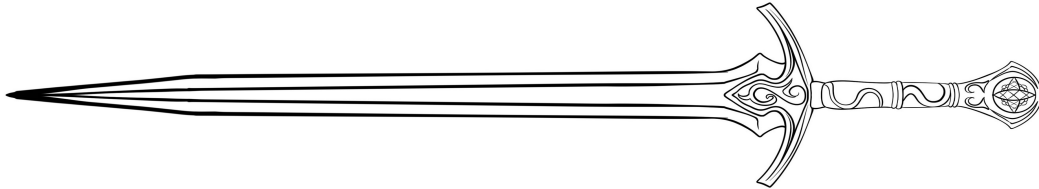
Search a large writing desk to the far left wall. Turn to **35**.

If you have already searched two areas or would like to end your search, instead turn to **110**.

116

Realizing the ordeal is likely a trap, you decide to ignore the woman and move around her to continue forward. You keep to the sides of the road but, once past her, you hear a shuffling behind you. You prepare to dodge, but the attack simply comes too quick. You are slashed in the back leg by a pair of claws, causing you to stumble and bleed profusely from the wound. You feel a sense of nausea and dizziness overtake you before realizing you have been poisoned from the strike. *Take 3 damage and gain the **poison** status until the end of your next combat encounter.* The woman has unveiled the top half of her robes to reveal a ghastly and gaunt humanoid form. The creature is of a sickly green hue with warty skin covered in a thick layer of mucus and pus. Its only facial features are a sharp row of fangs and two black, soulless voids of nothingness where the eyes should be. No nose or ears are present. Its neck is crooked and broken, and what you can make of its posture is similarly disturbingly

contorted and twisted. This must be a Plagueis, an inhuman plague zombie, trying to decay your flesh in order to prepare her next meal. You move through the pain until you gain a fair bit of distance from the abhorrent creature. Thankfully, she is slow and unable to catch you, even with a wounded leg. Once safe, you tend to your wounds and continue onward. Turn to **59**.



117

The details of the shop place a sense of foreboding in you, and you sense something malicious about this man and his taxidermy shop. Without making a sound, you head back out of the shop and continue northward down the street a ways. Feeling compelled to look back, you turn around to find the man again standing at the door. Instead of presenting a friendly smile, however, he glares and sneers in absolute hostility and disgust before retreating back into the shop and closing the door. You exhale with the relief of having dodged a terrible fate and turn back around to continue forward down the dimly lit street. Turn to **66**.

118

You give her the coin as payment, and she grabs and opens your hand as you do so, closing her eyes while she reads your palm. You feel a bit sheepish by the bold, young woman's forwardness and struggle to maintain your composure. She soon opens her eyes again and states that she feels a recent tragedy has befallen you. She tosses a few more herbs into the brazier and begins to stare intently at the smoke. "Now, to test how I may best help you, you must inform me of what you most seek. Only with an admission of need will the spirits guide me to the answer you desire." Will you:

Tell her that you seek the truth of the ruins.

Turn to **144**.

Tell her that you seek to know the location of your aunt's captor.

Turn to **90**.

Tell her you seek her hand in marriage.

Turn to **92**.

119

You place a rat mech, and it moves forward for a bit on the path before making a sound: “squeak.” If you wish to head down this path, turn to **152**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **146**.

120

Although you feel confident you have chosen the right path forward, you feel the ground begin to move under your feet shortly after continuing down the chosen path. You realize your mistake all too late; a springboard trap is activated and you are sent flying towards the start of the trap field. You land with a “thud” and curse under your breath as your frustration grows. *Take 2 dmg.* With no other choice, you start anew at the field’s first position, hoping to have enough **rat mechs** and remembering enough correct paths to make it through. Turn to **146**. If you’d like to re-cap on the rules of the trap field first, turn to **158**.

121

You decide to search the wardrobe and open the thin, creaking wooden doors, which are starting to rot with age. You are hit by an overwhelmingly musky odor, likely resulting from poorly cleaned clothing materials. You search the entirety of the wardrobe but find only a single type of item; two-toned brown and blue robes! You decide to take one of the **mysterious robes** and add it to your inventory. You then close the doors of the wardrobe, kicking up one final, musty smell in the process, and move on to search something else. Will you:

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| Search a wooden box engraved with snake figures on a side table at the back. | Turn to 128 . |
| Search a few precariously placed barrels to your right. | Turn to 18 . |
| Search a large writing desk to the far left wall. | Turn to 35 . |

If you have already searched two areas or would like to end your search, instead turn to **110**.

122

You place a rat mech, and it moves forward for a bit on the path before making a sound: “hiss hiss.” If you wish to head down this path, turn to **174**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **167**.

123

You peer at the weapons rack and take a closer look; there’s a few worn spears and daggers sporadically lain across the horizontal slats, but these do not particularly gain your interest. Instead, you become intrigued by a thin, wooden chest almost inconspicuously hidden beneath the many slats of the weapons rack. You try to open it and find that you are in luck, for the lock is well-worn and breaks easily with little effort. Upon opening it, you are met with a stale smell but a pleasant sight; you obtain a **Viper’s Bane!** This sword deals an extra +1 damage to cloaked figures. In addition, if a shadow orb is consumed, the blade will instantly kill a cloaked figure on the next successful hit. You gratefully add the scale-bound blade to your inventory, satisfied with your find. You then determine what to do next. Will you:

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| Ring the bell. | Turn to 61 . |
| Investigate the small table and chair. | Turn to 97 . |
| Leave and head back down the ladder, continuing north. | Turn to 124 . |

124

You continue your pursuit of the captor as you follow the dim street, heading north. Eventually, the congestion of vendor carts and other passerby fades as you reach a more residential section of the street. The buildings here are even more connected and organized than the ones before, giving you a feeling of being trapped between two walls of mud and thatching, heading towards a never-ending goal beyond the infinite distance of the horizon. You gain a sense of unease from the silence around you, especially since you are now unaware of the location of the cloaked figure and any allies that may be

present nearby. Suddenly, a woman's yell pierces the silence of the dingy street, and what few people remain there scatter, as if seeking shelter from a flash flood. You see a robed figure swaddled from head to toe in some sort of brown linen run to the center of the street and fall to its knees. You hear the voice of a young and desperate woman beg for help within the confines of that cloth tomb, and you can't help but imagine it as like a cocoon encasing a distraught creature caught within a moment of transformative strife. You wonder to yourself irreverently what may emerge...

Snapping back to reality, you recognize the potential gravity of the situation and assess whether to help the robed figure or ignore her, fearing the potential of a trap or falling too far behind your aunt's captor and any accomplices. What will you do?

Approach the robed woman to help her.

Turn to **76**.

Ignore the robed woman and evade her presence.

Turn to **116**.

Talk to Thragg, if available.

Turn to **PB6**.

125

Upon finally reaching the seam of light, you now see that the spot where it hovers from the wall is not as vacant as you had anticipated. The light between the seam and the wall is warped, almost as if the space between is folding in on itself. You get a headache from this realization, but you can guess the seam is still somehow connected to the wall. You touch the oddity, and, as you do so, a shock of energy courses through you. It'll be hard to interact with, but it seems solid enough. The seam is strange, indeed, but you can at least piece together that a strike of sufficient blunt force will knock it open. A simple solution, but there's just one problem; you don't appear to have anything yourself that might do the trick.

If you have a brute in the party, you may use the brute.

Turn to **142**.

If you do not have a brute in the party, you must try something else.

Turn to **2**.

126

As the card game begins, you ask to shuffle the cards. The brute leader obliges, and you pocket a card into your sleeve without anyone noticing, handing the cards back afterwards. You take notice of what the river displays at the end of each roll. If you do not like the result total from the river plus your hand result, or if you are bust, you may quickly and discretely replace a hand card with the card from your sleeve to get a different result. *This is represented by being able to take an optional re-roll for your hand once each round.* If you lose despite your attempts to rig the game in your favor, you will need to face the consequences. Turn to **164**. If you win, turn to **29**.

127

You open your eyes and are surprised by the simplicity of your surroundings. All around you is a void of white. It is dizzying to determine which way is up, but, fortunately, you have a guide. Not far off in the distance, directly in front of you, lies an unassuming cottage door. It is of simple make and appears to be composed of a dark cherry wood. Everywhere else around you is completely featureless and silent, so you jolt a bit when the loud thuds of your fist knocking on the wooden frame breaks the silence. You receive no answer. Determined to leave this eerie void of peaceful nothingness, you open the door uninvited and rush inside, thankful it was unlocked.

To your astonishment, the other side of the door is like nothing you had anticipated. A quaint and homely interior lies within, punctuated with the lovely and familiar smell of thornwhip, lemongrass, and raspwood bark. To the right, a lounge is filled with what you recognize are pillows of many colors and geometric patterns, though you've never actually owned or even seen one. Your aunt has told you of them in her travels to the Silk Lands in her youth, but she doesn't have any left, and the materials of the marsh are unsuitable for making them. In the center of the lounge lies a tall glass receptacle with a long, canted neck and a trail of smoke continually emitting from it. The smoke fills the room with a hint of an unpleasant, grassy smell, but you feel increasingly more at ease just by standing within its presence.

To the left lies a shop interior with a marble counter, and an elegant, red drape covers what you assume to be a workshop or living space in the back. The wall behind the counter is covered with shelves containing various trinkets and baubles, the likes of which you've never seen. Eyeballs and tusks are suspended in jars of liquid, and various metal contraptions on display confuse you as to how they may operate or for what purpose they were created. A grizzled, old man stands behind the counter, bearing an extremely pale complexion and wearing garments that appear to you as stitched-together fine tapestries, with a cylindrical hat atop his head. He smiles warmly as you approach, but you get a strange feeling that he isn't looking *at* you so much as *through* you.

"Hmm, wasn't expecting company today, but it's always good to see a patron of need enter these doors. Welcome!" the man exclaims in a jovial manner. You are perplexed by his statement and ask him what he means. "Why, simply that you need something for the road ahead if you're here. Now, don't tell me you simply stumbled into my workstation on a whim without rhyme or reason; no one ever does." He chuckles to himself as he begins to play a tune on some sort of music box. The instruments are nothing you recognize, but the song is upbeat and rhythmic, and you can't help but tap your feet along to the melody. He shuffles a bit behind the counter and then takes two large pieces of battle equipment from beneath the counter and gently places them on top. You are astonished such pieces could even fit under the modestly sized counter at all. "Don't worry, don't worry. I know exactly what you need. It's written all over... this," he says, pointing to his heart. "Can't say as to why you'd need them, but I always leave that part private. Now, you may only pick one. Choose what you feel you need the most from these, and I'll let you purchase it. So, what'll it be?" What will you choose to do?

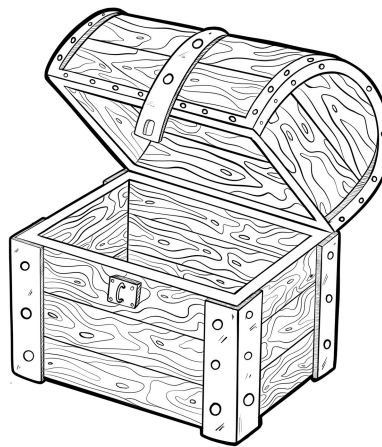
Pick the copper shield.

Pick the velvet sword.

Attack the old man.

Leave through the cottage door.

Talk to Thragg, if available.



Turn to **34**.

Turn to **161**.

Turn to **31**.

Turn to **157**.

Turn to **PB4**.

You approach a small, featureless side table near the back of the tent and open the only object placed on top of it; a rectangular wooden box engraved with icons of various snakes and serpent-like creatures. As soon as you open the box, however, you are bitten by a blue-colored viper! *Take 2 damage and become poisoned.* As you draw your hand back in pain, you see your coin pouch in the box with the viper. You knock the box to the floor to get the viper out and away from the pouch, and you draw your sword as it advances towards you. Fight!

Pit Viper; (1); Row = Fr; PRO (7) ERU (3) VIT (2) ALA (10); F.P. = 0; Focus Chance = 0

Focus → None

Features → Immune to poison; All attacks inflict poison

Actions → Venomous Strike [1-6] (MEL)

Spells → None

If successful, you kill the viper and take your coin pouch, adding your stolen shillings back into your inventory. Although you have retrieved your missing coin pouch, you may continue searching the tent, if time permits. Will you:

Search the simple, rectangular wardrobe in the tent corner? Turn to **121**.

Search a few precariously placed barrels to your right. Turn to **18**.

Search a large writing desk to the far left wall. Turn to **35**.

If you have already searched two areas or would like to end your search, instead turn to **110**.

You follow stealthily behind the cloaked man, using shadows and blending with the noise and chaos of the crowd to evade detection. You creep around carts, hide within groups of passerby, and dampen your footsteps as you maintain the optimal distance to your target. Eventually, however, you notice yourself

start to fall behind in order to maintain your lack of detection. Roll for PRO. If successful, turn to **103**. If unsuccessful, turn to **21**.

130

As the Plagueis close in on you from all directions, Thragg steps forward with his war hammer drawn and readies it for a wide sweep. “Don’t worry, I’ve got this. I’ll knock these things to the side as we move forward so we can make our escape! Just stick close behind and watch for any random swipes.” You nod your head in approval and do as he commands. Roll for PRO. If successful, Thragg knocks any incoming plagueis away but takes a bit of a scratch from one of the plague zombies. *Thragg takes 3 damage and gains the **poison** status until the end of his next combat encounter.* If unsuccessful, you instead are targeted as Thragg is unable to knock all of them away. *Take 3 damage.* After you make your escape, you notice Thragg slow down and give a sigh of relief. “Hope that’s the last time I ever have to see one of those things again.” You agree and tend to all wounds before continuing onward. Turn to **59**.

131

You yell angrily at the two creatures in an attempt to scare them away. Not knowing what may serve as a natural predator for them, you imitate the howls and roars of many swamp-dwellers until you’ve exhausted your options. The gutter dogs appear unfazed from the attempt and continue their advance. Before they can bite, you draw your sword in defense. Fight!

Gutter Dog; (2); Row = Fr; PRO (10) ERU (3) VIT (5) ALA (10); F.P. = 2; Focus Chance = 1-2

Focus → Vomit Volley – If in back row and other gutter dog is in front row, move directly behind other gutter dog. If this is possible, enemy leaps off back of other and vomits at party; all PCs take 3 dmg + POI. If conditions not met, focus not activated and F.P. not used; this focus costs a battle action and ends the turn

Features → 1-3 = Switch between back and front row; Immune to poison

Actions → Bite [1-2] (MEL); Defend [3]; Heal self [4] (2 H.P.); Trash spit [5-6] (MEL/RAN)

Spells → None

If successful, the creatures are slain and crumple before you, lifeless. *Turn to 134.*

132

You fumble your words as you speak, and the woman becomes angry at your attempts to court her. She chastises you for wasting her time and forcefully kicks you out of the tent, poking you with a hot incense to get you out. Take **1 damage**. Embarrassed and aware of wasting your chance to ask for important information, you nevertheless decide to press on northwards. Turn to **12**.

133

Upon entering the tent, you notice the interior is completely dark. You call out for the banker to turn the light on but receive no response. You then hear a faint hissing noise and decide to turn back. The realization that it is too late overtakes you, however, as the room fills with gas. The last image in your mind you see as you slump to the floor is the panicked expression on your aunt's face as the figure in the brown and blue cloak drags her off to oblivion, her screams the only thing you hear as your consciousness fades away.

... You awake in a gasp and jolt quickly off the floor. Still in a haze, you begin to piece together that you're still in the tent based on your green-walled surroundings, which are now lit by three chandeliers that hang loosely apart from two horizontal tent poles. You pat yourself lightly and notice your belongings and equipment are gone; all you currently have are the clothes on your back and the shoes on your feet. You see two men approaching you from the other side of the tent as your head clears. One is carrying a rope, and their shocked expressions tell you that you woke up sooner than expected.

“Well, well. Looks like we get to rough him up a bit before we send him to Yldaram,” says the man on the left, as he drops the rope on the floor and cracks his knuckles. You’re not sure who Yldaram is, but you suspect he might be connected to your aunt’s captor. “Just go easy on him, Jergin,” the other man responds. “If this kid is who we think he is, the boss isn’t gonna want him brought in dead.” “No worries,” the other retorts. “No weapons needed for this chump; got everything I need right here,” he says, cracking his knuckles again as he does so. Suddenly, the two men rush forward. With no time to plan or use the environment to your advantage, you brace for a fight. *As you have no weapon or other equipment, you will be rolling with a -3 to attack rolls. Since all are using untrained fists, all participants will only deal a base damage of 1 instead of 2. Magic rolls and damage are, of course, unaffected.* Fight!

Bodyguard; (2); Row = Fr; PRO (7) ERU (6) VIT (3) ALA (8); F.P. = 3; Focus Chance = 1-2

Focus → Reckless – Roll a d6. On odds, deal 3X damage on next hit. On evens, deal 1 self damage.

Features → Weak to poison

Actions → Jab [1-4] (MEL); Defend [5-6]

Spells → None

If you succeed, the men are knocked out and left unconscious on the floor. Turn to **50**.

134

With the gutter dogs defeated, you inspect the pile of trash they were eating from. You are about to dismiss the heap of garbage as not worth your time when the glint of coin catches your eye. You reach for the object and search a bit deeper, finding a total of **four shillings!** To further add to your luck, you also retrieve two unexpectedly pristine **food rations**. You wonder whether the trash heap was just a valuable source of food for the two felled creatures or was perhaps an intentional hoard for them. Surprisingly, despite their predator-like appearance, they appear to be scavengers. Not wishing to dwell on the ecology of these abominations further, you wash your hands in a nearby gutter and turn your attention back towards the seam of light. *Turn to 125.*

From out of your pack, you take a few mysterious animal hides of unknown origin and place them gently across the wooden carving. You expect the elves to be pleased with this offering but are shocked to see their faces twisted in malice and disgust. The elf boy with the unconcealed blade cries out in some elven tongue and lunges, stabbing you in the thigh. Thankfully, it does not penetrate deep. *Take 2 dmg.* You back up quickly, realizing your offering has deeply offended them, and run out of the hideout before you take another attack. Perhaps animal hides were a poor offering for a religious mural depicting animal spirits of the marsh, even if the humanoids did somewhat resemble hunters. After catching your breath and bandaging up the stab wound with some torn cloth from your clothes, you continue the pursuit of your aunt's captor northwards. Turn to **106**.

Hoping to scare the gutter dogs by using a disguise, you don a couple of mysterious hides and gesture in a threatening manner at them. You kick the dirt around you and yell out in the calls of various swamp creatures, hoping at least one will frighten them. Your plan appears to partially work, as the gutter dogs begin to back down a bit and become less aggressive. You wonder if the hides are derived from a natural predator of these creatures as they back away a bit before standing their ground. Then, one of them builds the courage to move forward for an attack, and you ready your sword in anticipation of the strike. Fight!

Gutter Dog; (2); Row = Fr; PRO (10) ERU (3) VIT (3) ALA (6); F.P. = 2; Focus Chance = 1-2

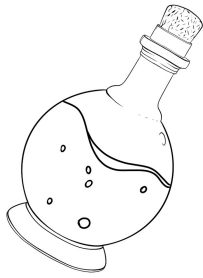
Focus → Vomit Volley – If in back row and other gutter dog is in front row, move directly behind other gutter dog. If this is possible, enemy leaps off back of other and vomits at party; all PCs take 3 dmg + POI. If conditions not met, focus not activated and F.P. not used; this focus costs a battle action and ends the turn

Features → 1-3 = Switch between back and front row; Immune to poison

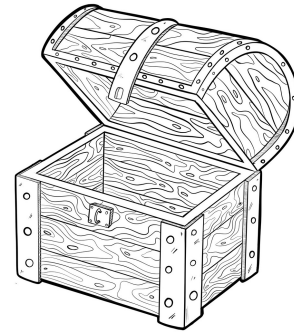
Actions → Bite [1] (MEL); Defend [2-3]; Heal self [4-5] (2 H.P.); Trash spit [6] (MEL/RAN)

Spells → None

If successful, the creatures are slain and crumple before you, lifeless. *Turn to 134.*



137



You feel as if the best response to the diorama would be to offer a few sincere words of respect in reflection of what appears to be a piece of religious significance to the elves here. You are unsure of what to say, but then it hits you; your aunt's chant from the other night! You try your best to remember what she said as you belt out the words like a song. The musical offering seems to work as, to your astonishment, a chorus of voices chime in with you.

Once you finish your chant, the elves continue with a different tune. You gain a feeling of elation as your mind is taken back to pleasant memories of your parents and afternoons by a roaring fire with a cup of blackthorne tea. You can almost smell the jasmine and smoke of wood before returning to reality as they finish their song. *Gain a permanent +1 to VIT.* You feel a sense of camaraderie and bonding with the elves and leave their hideout with spirits high. They cheerfully wave good-bye, satisfied with the peace and respect you have given them. You then head north to continue pursuit of your aunt's captor. *Turn to 106.*

138

You take the robes from the pile and give them to the older elf, awaiting his response. He flinches for but a second before staring at you, and you realize that he is waiting to see what you will do next before committing to any sign of approval or disapproval. To his side, the elf boy with the unsheathed blade sharpens the blade against a flat rock and stares at you, expectantly. An eerie quiet overtakes the area as you make your decision. Will you:

Show the older elf your **Banker's Stamp**, if you have one.

Turn to 56.

Take the robes back and throw them onto the ground.

Turn to **40**.

139

You follow the man and cautiously enter inside. The room within is dark, sparsely decorated, and quite small, with only a large, round, blood-covered table and chairs present to the right as you enter and an empty writing desk and tool-covered workstation covering the wall to the left. Ahead, a short hallway leads to what you assume is the bedroom, and a side passage extends downwards into a basement. The musky air is thick with a metallic smell, and you cough from inhaling a large volume of a dust-ridden breeze. From your position just beyond the door, you can see a faint light emanating from the basement; the only significant source of light inside. It flickers into the hallway, highlighting the heavy presence of dust that dances on the breeze leading from the faintly glowing cellar. You rationalize that the man may have entered the basement and is waiting for you down below. If you enter the basement, turn to **160**. If you instead feel it is best to leave the shop, turn to **117**.

140

You place a rat mech, and it moves forward for a bit on the path before making a sound: “chirp.” If you wish to head down this path, turn to **169**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **69**.

141

You draw your sword in preparation to attack, and the brutes respond by brandishing weapons of their own. They pull out clubs, break off chair legs, and smash their mugs to create makeshift brass knuckles. “So, fink ya can take us on in a fight, do ya?,” the brute leader says with a chuckle. He spits on the ground and rolls his eye around in its socket. “Not a chance.” If you want to leave this den, you will need to fight through a few of them first to make way for your escape. *You may choose to run from this combat, and you are subject to standard penalties if you do so.* Fight!

Brute; (2); Row = Fr; PRO (7) ERU (6) VIT (3) ALA (7); F.P. = 0; Focus Chance = 0

Focus → None

Features → Weak to poison; Base dmg. = 1

Actions → Bash [1-4] (MEL); Clobber [5-6] (MEL) – deals 2 dmg.

Spells → None

Old Gambler; (1); Row = Ba; PRO (7) ERU (6) VIT (2) ALA (9); F.P. = 3; Focus Chance = 1-3

Focus → Shoot Craps – d6/2 = base dmg. on next attack (round up)

Features → Weak to poison; only use bash in front row (card toss only in back row)

Actions → Bash [1-2] (MEL); Card Toss [3-6] (RAN)

Spells → None

If you are successful, you have knocked out a few brutes and can make your escape. Turn to **72**.

142

Realizing Thragg should be able to strike with enough force with his war hammer, you motion him to the wall. “Yeah, yeah. Way ahead of ya,” he says, approaching slowly while twirling his hammer in his hands. “Thragg smash.” He raises his hammer high and to the side and prepares to strike with all his might. Roll for PRO for Thragg. If successful, he smashes open the seam. Turn to **36**. If unsuccessful, he is incapable of getting through. Turn to **80**.

143

Whether you can’t afford the item or do not wish to purchase it, you reject the old man’s offer. “But, I know you need this...” you hear him say as he dejectedly places the merchandise back in its original

spot. He turns around slowly and bids you farewell, refusing to interact with you further. You leave through the cottage door and find yourself stepping back into reality. Turn to **145**.

144

You reply that you wish to know more of the ruins and your role there, and she stares deeply into the smoke until an answer comes to her. “You fear the ruins due to multiple losses in your family, but you should not. There is, however, a powerful ngozi there, and it seeks sacrifice for an injustice of the past. It is protecting... something. I do not know what your family’s role is there, but you should not allow anyone to take what that vengeful spirit is guarding.” She looks up at you from the fire and states “It appears that your purpose there is two-fold. You must answer the spirit’s call for justice and prevent its treasure from falling into the wrong hands. Be careful – I do not sense the spirits of your ancestors there. I do not know what this means, but always take care when dealing with an ngozi.”

You get up and thank her for the information. You are grateful for knowing more of what awaits you at the ruins, but you feel a bit remorseful for not requesting to learn of your aunt and her captor’s location as she hurries you out of the tent to recharge for the next customer. You gain the password **RUINS** and continue north. Turn to **12**.

145

You find yourself back in the back-lot. With nothing else left here worth investigating, you leave via a northern alley that leads back onto the dimly lit street. If you have not fought the gutter dogs already, then you must do so now. Their source of distraction is now gone, and they viciously snarl and advance on you. Use the following stat block for this fight. Then, turn to **124**.

**Gutter Dog; (2); Row = Fr; PRO (10) ERU (3) VIT (5) ALA (10); F.P. = 2; Focus Chance = 1-2
Focus → Vomit Volley – If in back row and other gutter dog is in front row, move directly behind other gutter dog. If this is possible, enemy leaps off back of other and vomits at party;**

**all PCs take 3 dmg + POI. If conditions not met, focus not activated and F.P. not used;
this focus costs a battle action and ends the turn**

Features → 1-3 = Switch between back and front row; Immune to poison

Actions → Bite [1-2] (MEL); Defend [3]; Heal self [4] (2 H.P.); Trash spit [5-6] (MEL/RAN)

Spells → None

146

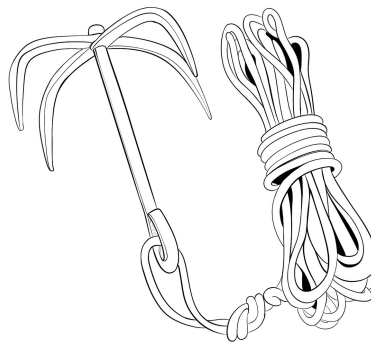
You arrive at the first position on the field and decide which direction to approach first. Will you:

Face left.

Face forward.

Face right.

Talk to Thragg, if available.



Turn to **32**.

Turn to **41**.

Turn to **91**.

Turn to **PB7**.

147

Fearing what the brutes may do to you if they caught you cheating, you decide to play the game fairly. The leader takes out some cards and begins dealing them onto the table to form the hands. He then starts to form the river. You realize your main role in this game will be to call out when to stay as the river is formed. Play then continues normally until a victor is decided. If you win, turn to **114**. If instead you lose, turn to **164**.

148

You begin your pursuit through a dimly lit street. The road ahead is quaint and lacks any significant amount of plant life or other decorations that give the rest of Thu'ul a more distinctive charm. The

101

buildings of this street are partially draped with overhangs extending from the thatched roofs, creating the low level of sunlight that would make this path perfect for your aunt's captor to hide in or escape through. You are therefore confident that the captor may be somewhere nearby. The path ahead is also relatively free of people and obstacles, which should make your search a little easier.

The road narrows significantly after a short amount of time has passed, and you hope there isn't any foot traffic coming from the opposite direction, as there is little room to maneuver and you would be slowed down greatly. You increase your pace to avoid this problem but almost trip over yourself when you are abruptly stopped by the presence of a man that is sprawled entirely across the narrow street. He is dressed in a simple brown robe and appears to be unconscious from a glance at his awkward position on the ground. You debate whether to investigate his status to see if he needs help or to ignore him and focus on finding your aunt's captor. If you wish to investigate, turn to **105**. If you wish to ignore him and continue on your path, turn to **39**.

149

You place a rat mech, and it moves forward for a bit on the path before making a sound: "squeak squeak." If you wish to head down this path, turn to **152**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **146**.

150

Hesitating for a bit to search the detritus-filled water, you quickly stick your hand in and reach for whatever object you observed. Once you feel a solid lump, you grab tight and proceed to yank it out, but not before you gain the attention of a water roach, which provides a powerful bite to the back of your hand with its powerful mandibles before swimming free. *Take 2 damage*. Despite the pain, you manage to pull out the object; you receive **2 shillings** for your troubles. It's not what you were hoping for, but you pocket them nonetheless. What will you do next?

Check out the thicket, if you haven't yet done so.

Turn to **108**.

Approach the seam of light.

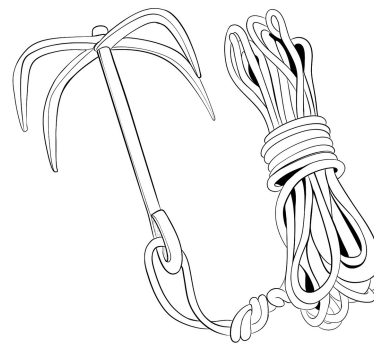
Turn to **78**.

Leave the lot through an alley back to the dimly lit street.

Turn to **124**.

151

Caught by surprise at the obstacles the cloaked figure has left for you, you panic in your attempts to avoid them. You try jumping over one of the overturned carts, but your foot catches on a loose board and you face-plant forward into the dirt road ahead. *Take 2 damage*. By the time you get up and dust yourself off, the target has made its slip. You search around in case the figure decided to hide, but to no avail. Giving up on your chance to catch the figure, you continue north in hopes that the captor still lies ahead. Turn to **124**.



152

If you chose to continue down the left path, turn to **69**. Otherwise, turn to **120**.

153

As the dice game begins, you take notice of what the dice display at the end of each roll. If you do not like the result, you may quickly and discretely nudge the underside of the table with your knee once per throw to get the dice to roll a little further and get a different result. *This is represented by being able to take an optional re-roll on each dice throw when playing the game*. If you lose despite your attempts to rig the game in your favor, you will need to face the consequences. Turn to **164**. If you win, turn to **29**.

154

As you pursue your goal of getting to the other side of the gutter, you realize that you are unable to hold your breath for a considerable length of time. You choke a bit and decide it is best to turn back for fear of drowning. Disappointed in your inability to get through the northern gate, you head back to the central room of the common house and pick another path you have not yet chosen. Will you enter:

A green-painted hallway decorated in vines to the east.

Turn to **163**.

A red-painted hallway adorned with crimson and gold tapestries to the west.

Turn to **155**.

155

You enter the gate beyond the hallway to the west and find yourself in a dark and crowded performance hall populated by a ringleader and a group of jesters. The foul-tempered ringleader angrily scolds the jesters as they perform acrobatic stunts to the beat of a few ngoma drums being played somewhere in the back. You realize the ringleader is training the jesters for some major theatrical performance being held somewhere in town. To brighten the mood of the overworked jesters, you start to clap and cheer at their performances as they vault through fire-lit hoops and balance atop high-wires. Not expecting your arrival and disturbed by your presence, the ringleader halts his chastisement of the performers and turns his attention towards you. Suddenly, the ringleader turns his whip to you to spring you into action, perhaps out of spite for disrupting his training. Roll for ALA. If you succeed, turn to **162**. If you fail, turn to **48**.

156

You investigate a group of metal plates laying on a makeshift table of old, rotting boards. The plates are surprisingly detailed and formed from what you believe to be pewter, based on the pungent, metallic smell they emanate. Etched onto the outer rim of each plate is a panoramic depiction of a procession of

followers offering riches to some unknown, ancient spirit or deity. Realizing these are offering plates, you decide it may be appropriate to offer a few shillings for the elves. How much will you donate?

2 shillings.

Turn to **51**.

4 shillings.

Turn to **9**.

Nothing.

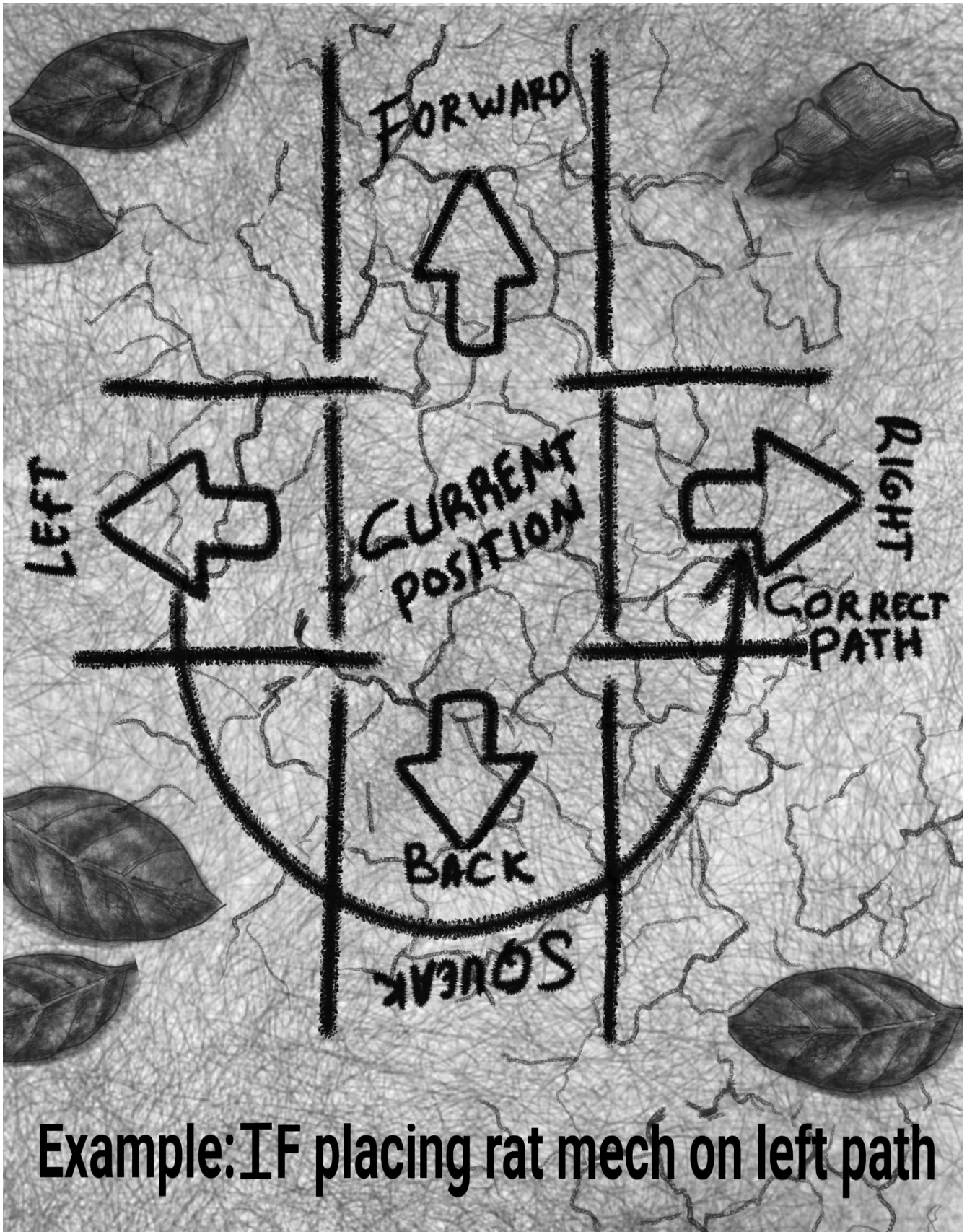
Turn to **168**.

157

Whether satisfied with what you have or unable to make a purchase, you reject the old man's offer. You couldn't quite shut out the feeling that there was something... off about him. He turns around and ceases interacting with you, so you try to leave through the cottage door. Fortunately, the white void appears gone, and so you step back to reality. Turn to **145**.

158

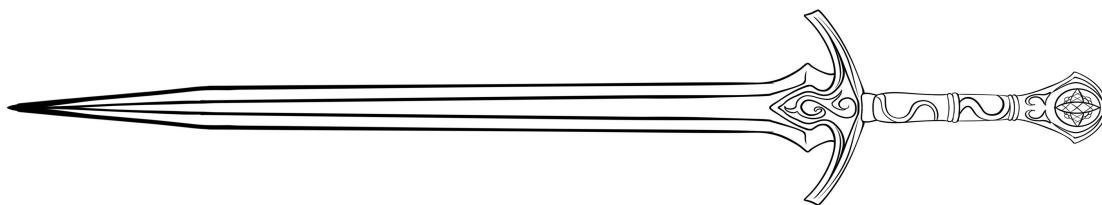
You meet Karlina outside, and she explains how to reach your captor. "Ok, listen up. I know this'll sound strange, but you're going to need to travel through a trap field to get to the bridge from here. The usual path has been blocked by the cohorts of your aunt's captor, and you don't want to mess with a small army of them. There's an indirect route there, but I set up some traps there a while back to keep those thugs away from my property. Guess that doesn't help you much, but there is a path through the field where you won't set off any traps. You'll need these to get through, though." She hands you **7 rat mechs**, and you add them to your party inventory. "These are all I have left that aren't being used for info collection, so use them wisely. These mechs travel in a straight line until they hit an object or sense a sensor nearby. When they approach one of these, they'll make a noise that will alert you to any path sensors nearby. Wrong paths through the field will set off a springboard trap, but correct paths will move you past the sensor spots that don't contain traps. Since you can't see them, the rat mechs will need to let you know where they're at. They're also too light to set off the traps themselves, but they'll still make a noise when passing over a sensor or trap. It works like this: There are four paths at any spot



Example: IF placing rat mech on left path

on the field; left, forward, right, and back. You can think of them like directions on a compass. When a rat mech makes a noise, it'll tell you how many paths clockwise or counter-clockwise from its current path contains a sensor. A **squeak** means the **sensor is two paths counter-clockwise** from the path where you set the rat mech, a **chirp** means the sensor is **one path clockwise OR counter-clockwise** from the path you set the mech, and a **hiss** means the sensor and correct path is **three paths clockwise** from the rat mech's current path. If the rat mech **makes the sound twice**, then that means it is telling you a **path where the sensor/correct path is NOT located**. Also, remember that you'll never need to move backward at any point; so, only left, right, or forward is the correct path. Got all that? I know it's a bit confusing, but you'll need to do this to get across the field safely. Of course, you can also just set off a few traps on your way across instead, if that's easier for you."

You're a bit perplexed by the means to get across the trap field, but you nod in agreement all the same. You thank Karlina for the help, and she nods in agreement, seemingly enthusiastic for the first time since you've seen her. "Just give those creeps what they asked for. I'll be rooting for ya." With the rat mechs in tow, you head for the trap field to begin your journey across. Turn to **146**.



159

After a few more well-placed strikes to the core, Boris shuts down, and the orb goes dark. "Don't worry, he'll be fine," Karlina proclaims after the battle is finished. "He'll be out for a day or two, but the soul orb will power him back up once it regains consciousness. Don't know why it takes so long, but it does." She carries him to the back room before returning and handing you **3 shillings** for the troubles. "I know it's not much, but it's all I got at the moment. As for the rest of your reward..." She walks past you, grabbing a few rat mechs along the way, and heads up the stairs. "Go ahead and follow me outside. I'll let you know how you can reach the bridge from here." You look at the now quieted and still mech for a moment before continuing on your way. Turn to **158**.

107

You descend the basement stairs and feel a twinge of nausea as the metallic smell grows stronger and the presence of dust in the air grows ever heavier. The feeling is hastily overtaken by a new emotion of fear once you reach the bottom of the stairs and open the partially-cracked bottom door; pure and abject terror lies before you. Just ahead, you see a circular room of mud walls that have become as baked clay from the heat emanating from a furnace on the opposite side of the room. A couple of long tables are placed sporadically around the room, and on them lay the flesh-stripped cadavers of various animals, monsters, and... humans. The blood of these corpses drip incessantly onto the crimson-stained floor, and you now recognize the metallic smell as the smell of fresh blood. Along the left side of the room, a couple of tanning racks stretch the hides obtained from the corpses on the tables, and they are left to dry and cure in front of the heat of the furnace. You almost wretch from the horrid sight but quickly become alert when, behind you, the basement door clicks shut. You turn and see the once-friendly man glaring at you with a sadistic smile from where he stood behind the basement floor door. He reveals a meat cleaver from behind his back and rushes forward to swing at you. You have just enough time to respond by drawing your sword and readying to attack. Fight!

Crazed Psycho; (1); Row = Fr; PRO (7) ERU (6) VIT (4) ALA (10); F.P. = 0; Focus Chance = 0

Focus → None

Features → Immune to sleep; +3 on defense rolls to physical attacks

Actions → Cleave [1-2] (MEL); Defend [3-4]; Lick Wounds [5] (heal 3 H.P. to self); Berserk [6] (permanent +1 base damage)

Spells → None

If successful, you strike and place a final, near-fatal blow to his chest. Turn to **102**.

You eye the velvet sword and choose it, desiring its attack strength. The old man smiles as he places the shield back under the counter and says that the item is worth 7 shillings if you'd like to purchase it. He

describes it as a **Firebrand +1 ATK**. With each successful hit, roll a d6; on a 5 or 6, the sword burns the target and deals 1 damage per turn for 3 turns. After finishing his description of the sword, he laughs and asks if you will purchase it. If you would like to purchase it, remove the 7 shillings from your inventory and turn to **89**. If you cannot or will not purchase the sword, turn to **143**.

162

To the surprise of you and everyone else in attendance, you immediately start to perform an acrobatic gesture, cartwheeling and somersaulting around as you finish by successfully vaulting through one of the fire hoops. This time, it is the jesters' turn to applaud your performance, and you see that the ringleader appears pleased by the act. He bows at your mastery and congratulates you. He then turns back to the jesters and begins scolding them again, saying that he wishes they had half the skill that you just displayed in your brief performance. You feel a bit ashamed by having upstaged the professional performance, but the feeling quickly subsides as you are reminded to continue your pursuit of your aunt's captor. You head through a door on the western wall and find yourself near the edge of the marketplace plaza. You decide to head northwards from here. Turn to **8**.

163

You enter the gate beyond the hallway to the east and find yourself in a simple and somewhat primitive library of tablets and scrolls. The walls are concealed in shelves of the written documents, and in the center of the room lies a rectangular slab of stone serving as a table for a studious medicine man in traditional attire of furs tied by mhapa skins. He is as dark-skinned as the majority of the residents of Thu'ul and appears both young and wizened beyond his age. He ponders curiously at a number of tablets and scrolls on the stone table and swirls a purple-colored liquid in a glass flask before quickly imbibing its contents and returning to his work. Beyond him, a door leads to an eastern side of the city. It is impossible to get to this door currently, however, as he has piled all side routes around the table with all sorts of antiquities and slabs of unknown origin and purpose.

You approach the man, but he does not immediately notice your presence. You cough loudly to get his attention, and he glares up at you in an annoyed manner. Ignoring his condescending countenance, you ask if he will provide you access beyond his table to continue on the path ahead. He grunts and states that he will only let you pass if you can help him decipher the contents of a mysterious tablet that lays on the stone table. You agree to try, bluffing that you have had experience in translating ancient scrolls from your time with your aunt, and he turns the tablet towards you in anticipation of your response. Roll for ERU. If successful, turn to **177**. If unsuccessful, turn to **43**.

164

You slam your fist onto the rickety table and curse under your breath, realizing that you've just lost the game. The brute leader laughs at your frustration and says he'll go easy on you, asking for you to hand over your coin bag. *If you have one, he takes just 1 shilling from you before tossing the coin bag back. Lose 1 shilling in your inventory. If you don't have one, he scoffs and waves you off for wasting his time.* The rest of the group start laughing in a drunken stupor. Before you know it, they pick you off your chair and throw you out of the gambling den. With nowhere else to progress northward as the plaza ends in a wall of tightly-packed mud buildings, and with the westward direction only containing an alley to a dead end, you head east towards an alley that leads to a dimly lit street. Turn to **83**.

165

You look closer at the rat mechs and are intrigued by their movements and design. They scurry about almost like real rats but with a curiosity that seems quite unmatched. You notice they only move in straight lines for a long ways before finally making a turn once hitting an obstacle and moving straight in another direction. *How peculiar*, you think to yourself. You realize one of these may come in handy and ponder whether to steal one. You don't usually consider such courses of action, but you believe the proprietor likely wouldn't miss just one being gone. You kick lightly at a metal object on the ground, which sets off Boris, the humanoid mech. As the woman turns her attention to him to yell at him, you attempt to take a rat mech. Roll for PRO. If successful, turn to **73**. If unsuccessful, turn to **96**.

166

Not having accounted for the cloaked man to be able to summon reinforcements, you halt for just a moment, shocked. Then, you seize your brief opportunity to run, and you jump off the man to head to a nearby alley, but not before you throw some dirt in his eyes to buy enough time to escape. You are relieved to see the shadow guards help their master off the ground instead of immediately giving chase. You hide in the alleyway for a moment before continuing further in, hoping your enemies do not know where to find you. Turn to **111**.

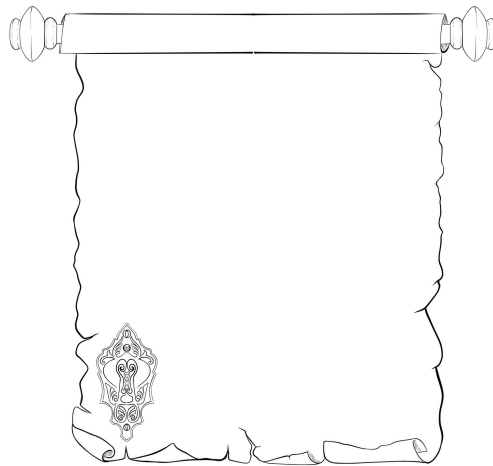
167

You arrive at the fourth position on the field and decide which direction to approach next. Will you:

Face left.

Face forward.

Face right.



Turn to **71**.

Turn to **85**.

Turn to **60**.

168

You pick up an offering plate but drop it back on the table. You realize the folly of this action, however, as you feel the piercing gazes of a number of small eyes upon you. Despite this, you offer nothing and proceed to turn your attention towards something else in the room that may appease the elves for a peaceful exit instead. Their agitation grows after the inconsiderate display, however, and they suddenly turn hostile and beat at you until you have been forcefully exited from the hideout. *Take 2 damage.* Feeling a bit ashamed, you nevertheless continue your pursuit of the captor as you head north. Turn to **106**.

169

If you chose to continue down the forward path, turn to **67**. Otherwise, turn to **120**.

170

Fearing what the brutes may do to you if they caught you cheating, you decide to play the game fairly. The leader takes out two wooden dice and begins rolling them onto the table. You realize your sole role in this game will be to call out the “holds” that you wish to use to gain points with. Play then continues normally until a victor is decided. If you win, turn to **114**. If instead you lose, turn to **164**.

171

You (or a party member) decide to wear the **Ring of Fortune** the fortune-teller had given you, but you notice you can't remove it. The ring is cursed! Though the equipped character gains a +1 to luck checks, that character can't remove this ring and it becomes a permanent addition to that character's inventory. Make a note of this and turn back to the previous paragraph section to continue your adventure.

172

The obstacles the figure places in your path prove no match for you as you roll along with the barrels and jump over the carts. You soon realize, however, that the obstacles were not necessarily meant to stop you but to slow you down. As you soar past the last overturned food cart, you find yourself surrounded by both the cloaked figure and two shadow guards. Unfortunately, the obstacles gave the figure just enough time to summon reinforcements, it seems, and he cackles sadistically without saying a word as the two guards draw closer. These creatures appear somewhat incorporeal, like a smoky haze emanating off the still waters of Mantuk Swamp in the chill morning air. They are armed with curved

blades and a round shield, though both their equipment and their own humanoid form are equally featureless. They bear no face, and yet their frightful visage gives off an air of malice all the same, as if they are glaring at you with eyes unseen. With no other choice left to you, you draw your sword. Fight!

Shadow Guard; (2); Row = Fr; PRO (8) ERU (6) VIT (4) ALA (7); F.P. = 2; Focus Chance = 1-2

Focus → Incorporeal – Until your next turn, immune to physical damage

Features → 1-3 = Attacks instead deal 1 base damage to all front row; Immune to poison

Actions → Spectral Slash [1-4] (MEL); Defend [5-6]

Spells → None

Cloaked Figure; (1); Row = Ba; PRO (7) ERU (10) VIT (3) ALA (4); F.P. = 0; Focus Chance = 0

Focus → None

Features → Weak to poison

Actions → Cast Spell [1-4]; Run [5-6]

Spells → Heal Ally [1-2] (3 H.P.); Swamp Gas [3]; Cure Ailment [4]; Enrage [5-6]

If successful, turn to **70**. If successful and you defeat the cloaked figure before it runs away, turn to **104**.

173

You face left from the third position and decide whether to place a **rat mech** on this path. If you use a **rat mech**, turn to **84**. If you head down this path, turn to **33**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **67**.

174

If you chose to continue down the right path, turn to **75**. Otherwise, turn to **120**.

175

You face right from the second position and decide whether to place a **rat mech** on this path. If you use a **rat mech**, turn to **22**. If you head down this path, turn to **169**. Otherwise, you may try a different direction. Turn to **69**.

176

Your words appear to touch her heart, and she gives out a shy giggle. She hands you a ring for your proposal and asks you to please leave the tent for now, telling you that you may come back to see her when she is no longer working, at the end of the day. You begin to object, but she quickly pushes you out in a gentle manner. The ring she gave you is a **Ring of Fortune**. If you decide to equip this item to a character at any time, turn to **171** (make a note of your current paragraph section before doing so!).

You realize you missed your chance to ask about your aunt's captor or the nature of the ruins, but such are the ways of love that you must now go without. You press on northward. Turn to **12**.

177

Although your confidence is but a farce, you summon up all the skills you have learned from your aunt to attempt translating an ancient text for the first time. Fortunately, you are able to understand the symbols and brief bits of lettering far better than you had anticipated, as the document refers to the ruins and a secret held within, a topic you have studied hieroglyphs for frequently. You study the document until the researcher grunts in impatience, but you gleaned what you need from the text. It speaks of a connection between the ruins and the moon, reflecting how the backwards reciprocal of one (it literally says "reverse-path") is the key to understanding the other. You are unsure exactly what it means, but perhaps these words hold a clue to solving a mystery within the ruins itself. You recite your findings back to the young medicine man, and he leaps in excitement, prepared to enter the ruins himself to solve the mystery surrounding this tablet's words. His expression then changes to malice at a

moment's notice, however, as he states wryly that he won't be letting you past the table; he can't let any potential competition live with this knowledge, after all. He begins chanting a spell in preparation to attack, and you draw your sword in return with no other choice left to you. Fight!

Medicine Man; (1); Row = Fr; PRO (4) ERU (8) VIT (4) ALA (8); F.P. = 2; Focus Chance = 1-2

Focus → Clay Coffin – On next “Mud Coffin” attack, add extra ability of a 2-turn paralysis instead of 1-turn paralysis

Features → Roll a d6 – On a 1, skip current turn (focus still applies)

Actions → Strike [1] (MEL); Heal self [2] (3 H.P.); Mud Coffin [3-4] (MEL/RAN) Also inflicts 1-turn Pa; Cast Spell [5-6]

Spells → Swamp Gas [1-3]; Fire Wall [4-6]

If you succeed, the medicine man is slain and you briskly exit through the opposite door by vaulting over the table before any other residents of the common house discover the remains of the fight. Turn to **4c (unavailable in demo – return to 66)**.

178

Tucked away to the side of the hideout, you inspect a pile of rags, hoping something here may give you a clue as to what the elves want. The deeper you dig through the pile, however, the less confident in this assumption you become. Eventually, you find something you recognize; a two-toned brown and blue cloak! It is tattered and covered in so much grime that it is difficult to even determine the colors of the cloak, and the many stains covered further by grime are hard to recognize. Unsure as to how or why the elves came into possession of this garment, you wonder if it would be possible to ask the older elf about the robes and its wearers. Will you:

Attempt to ask about robes.

Turn to **45**.

Show robes to see the older elf's response.

Turn to **138**.

You choose to play a game of dice, which the brutes call “Straight Craps,” and the leader bellows across the table as he tells you the rules of the game, the remains of a foul-smelling grog dribbling from the sides of his mouth as he does so. You feel nauseated just listening to him speak. The rules are as follows:

Roll 2d6. If a 7 or 11 is rolled, the house (leader of the brutes) gains a point. If a 2,3, or 12 is rolled, the house loses a point, to a minimum of zero. If a 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, or 10 is rolled, you may choose to make that roll a “hold”. If you do, and if that number is rolled again before a 7 or 11 is rolled, you gain a point. You must then choose another 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, or 10 roll as your next “hold” in order to score another point. If three “craps” (2, 3, or 12) are rolled in a row, the house automatically loses the game. Otherwise, continue rolling dice until one side gains three points, at which point that side is the winner.

Now knowing how to play the game, you fear how the group of ruffians will respond to you winning or losing. You wonder if it’d be best to play the game straight or attempt to cheat in order to win. If you decide to play fairly, turn to **170**. If instead you wish to cheat, turn to **107**.

You find yourself at a crossroads between multiple paths that converge shortly before a bridge that crosses the Mantuk River. At the beginning point of the bridge, you finally find what you’ve been searching for; your aunt’s captor stands at the center, with your aunt lying on the ground at his feet. Two accomplices stand at his side, also covered in a brown and blue cloak. At your approach, the leader of the cloaked figures turns towards you and removes his cloak. He is clearly a man of the desert, with an olive-toned complexion and a sharp facial structure. His handsome, bearded face ends at the tip with a well-groomed goatee, and his face is surprisingly free of blemishes or scars. He is clothed, underneath the cloak, by a collection of robes and strands of colorful beads, and at his hip he bears a broad, curved blade. A silk belt on his waist contains a number of smoke bombs and other gadgets to aid his arsenal. His accomplices move towards you at the ready with curved blades drawn to



protect their master, but he motions for them to stand down. He eyes you for a moment to size you up and then begins to speak.

“Ah, I suppose you’re the new young keeper of the ruins I’ve heard so much about. Your aunt has so many good things to say about you, you know.” He glances briefly at your aunt before turning back towards you with a sneer. “Well, did.” At this, you demand to know what he did to your aunt, but he ignores you and continues his introduction. “Well, let’s not rush things, shall we? No, I think we should get to know each other a little better before I take your family’s legacy and gain the power I need to make my name feared and respected throughout all of Yeos. Always good to put a face to the name of the man who ruined your life, right?” He laughs heartily and continues his monologue. “Speaking of, the name is Yldaram, famed explorer of the untamed isles and patron of the desert viper.” He looks at you expectantly but soon realizes your confusion and absence of recognition. “Another who hasn’t heard of me, huh? Well, I guess that’s just another reason to obtain the power of the ruins your family kept secret so well to increase my fame a great deal more. See, those ruins guard a powerful secret and treasure I’ve tracked down for years after hearing rumors across multiple continents. Now, imagine my surprise when I learn that this backwater rock, of all places, is where it’s been hidden all along.” He paces a bit and gestures in a comical manner at you before continuing. “No, no. Go ahead, imagine it. Then, imagine when I successfully track down your humble little aunt as the last keeper of those ruins to obtain the information I need to get inside the inner sanctum. Almost as surprising as when she mentioned... you.” At this, he removes his sword and stabs her in the chest. She cries out one last time before what remains of her already feeble life force is snuffed from her.

Enraged, you are determined to make a move on the desert terror. Instead of preparing for a fight, however, he continues speaking. “And now that secret dies with her.” He laughs again and kicks lightly at her corpse. “Haha! Too bad she divulged that little tidbit that you were never given knowledge of the ruin’s secrets. I guess that was kind of a mistake, huh? Hahaha! Fight me or don’t kid, I don’t care. You have nothing left to offer me, but say ‘Hi!’ to your aunt for me if you’d like to try!” Out of patience and furious over the death of your aunt, you spring forth to attack with blade drawn. Fight!

Yldaram; (1); Row = Ba; PRO (10) ERU (9) VIT (8) ALA (9); F.P. = 2; Focus Chance = 1-2

Focus → **Blood of the Viper** – Take 3 damage; On next MEL hit, unleash a flurry of strikes that deals 5 damage to all front line foes

Features → 1 on d6 – Move to random open position on Yldaram’s field

Actions → Slash [1-2] (MEL); Smoke Grenade [3] DEF +2 for 3 turns (doesn’t stack); Cast spell [4-5]; Sand Grenade [6] Slow all PCs (-1 base damage for 2 turns; doesn’t stack)

Spells → Fire Wall [1-2]; Swamp Gas [3-4]; Heal Ally [5-6] (3 H.P.)

Cloaked Figure; (2); Row = Fr; PRO (7) ERU (10) VIT (3) ALA (4); F.P. = 0; Focus Chance = 0

Focus → None

Features → Weak to poison

Actions → Slash [1-2] (MEL); Defend [3-5]; Cast Spell [6]

Spells → Heal Ally [1] (3 H.P.); Swamp Gas [2]; Cure Ailment [3]; Enrage [4-6]

If successful, you defeat the murderer of your aunt and his accomplices. Congratulations for successfully completing the demo, and thank you for playing! To learn of the aftermath of this fight, try out other playable sections of the Thu’ulian Marketplace, and conquer the dangerous Ruins of Val’Kadoth to stop Yldaram and uncover the mystery of the ruins, please purchase the full final release!

Also, be sure to give the demo a few extra playthroughs. There are plenty of hidden goodies and hard-to-find secret areas that require very specific, successful decisions/actions to reach. Many other surprises remain on other paths, so try to find them all!

END OF DEMO

Party Banter Sections

PB1

Puzzled by what the riddle is trying to convey and what kind of answer it is looking for, you ask Thragg for guidance. He scratches his forehead a bit before looking over the symbols on the wall. “Uh huh... yeah... that’s... hmm... I have no idea.” You look unamused by the brute’s half-hearted attempt to solve the puzzle, and he takes notice. “Look, sorry kid, I’m no good at riddles or whatever this is. I’m just hired muscle, y’know? Hahaha!” He attempts to laugh the situation off, but your confused glare tells him everything he needs to know. “Okay, okay. I suppose I may not be as useless at these as I look. Certainly better than that roughnose you beat back at the gambling den. Haha!” He pauses a moment and then looks back at the mural for a moment before speaking.

“Look here. I know this may look like a bunch of random drawings associated with the riddle, but they look kinda purposefully placed, don’t they? Almost like they represent the design of that garden the mouth thing mentioned. If I didn’t know any better, I’d say that the number of each of these is important and that maybe the answer to everything here is a number, for some reason.” You look at him a bit bewildered, yet you are astonished at his somewhat well-reasoned response all the same. “Crazy, I know. But it’s just what I get from all this. I have to admit, though, the pile of stones is throwing me off. Weren’t those supposed to be arranged in a circle?” You recall the riddle’s words and consider his point. “Personally, I’d say the answer to everything is a tall mug of brew with a few tchotchkes to call my own, but uh, I don’t think that’s what motormouth here had in mind. Anyways, hope that helped. Just don’t ask for anymore advice, okay? My head’s swimming enough after coming up with all that from this nonsense alone.” You thank him for the help and return to piecing together the answer from the clues left behind in the words and drawings. *Return to section 93.*

PB2

You ask Thragg what he knows of the elves. “Never met many elf-kin. Can’t say for sure I know how to speak to them, either, though I know a small bit of their sign language. ‘Hello,’ ‘Good-bye,’ that sorta stuff.” He pauses for a moment and then kicks the dirt around him, watching it drift around the musky room. “I will say this, though. I’ve heard stories around Thu’ul of a mysterious group of elves known as the Anak’Ti since I was a boy. Just a few small stories, y’know. Stuff like them thieving around and hiding and knowing all sorts of secrets about the city and Ahl’Tien.”

Thragg ponders a bit and then sits down on the floor across from the kid with the blade. He looks up at you after a brief moment of eyeing the elves over further and then continues speaking. “These elves here... You think they could be the fabled Anak’Ti?” You nod your head decisively, though you’re honestly unsure yourself. “Well, then. In any case, they appear to be native and friendly enough. You said you’re a keeper of the ruins, right? I’d wager a guess that they would respect a Keeper of Val’Kadoth and loathe anything that disrupts the order around here. Just my two shillings.” You thank him for the advice, and he laughs heartily. “Sure, no problem. Just be careful you don’t do anything to offend them.” *Return to section 25.*

PB3

You see Thragg peer one last time into the alleyway and meet you near the the edge of the lot. “Looks like the shadow guards and that one guy won’t be following us here. Good thing too. I’ve heard they can be pretty hard to hit, what with them being shadow creatures and all. Too bad that cloaked figure got away, though. Would’ve been nice to interr...o...gate...” Thragg chokes out the last word as he follows your gaze to the brightly glowing seam of light on the opposite wall.

He whistles out of astonishment, and a look of excitement starts to slowly creep across his face as he nods at you in recognition. “Y’know, feel free to interrupt at any time when you’ve got something like...” He points at the oddity in an oddly flamboyant display that contrasts his rough and intimidating appearance. “... that to show me.” You ask him if he knows anything about it, but he just scratches his

head and gives a slight sigh. “I know a lot about the weird legends and all surrounding Thu’ul, yeah. You hear some strange things at the pub sometimes, especially when those fishmongers and fruit vendors finish work for the day. Hah! You’d think they got paid to gossip more than hawking their wares to all the visiting merchants and all. And lemme tell ya, those kooks at that newfangled news stand especially unearth some crazy stuff...” He trails off a bit and chuckles to himself as he apparently reminisces about past tales of the city of mud. You eventually grow impatient at his lack of awareness and snap your fingers to get his attention.

“Oh yeah, uh, sorry. Guess I got a bit sidetracked there, huh? Anyways, I do remember one tale that might be relevant to this whole magical crack-in-the-wall thing. See, apparently, when Thu’ul was mostly a small hub for the n’angas of Ahl’Tien to gather and discuss their duties for the various divided tribes of the island, before dispersing after the meetings to serve them, there was a stranger that took up residence here. No one knows where he came from or why. From what I’ve heard, though, he liked the remote location to conduct his work; research into magical artifacts or something like that. Anyways, when Thu’ul became a bit of an up-and-coming port town, he turned into even more of a recluse and hid his work and himself into some pocket dimension or whatever. Some say he finished his work and will be willing to part with some of it for the right price; that is, if you can find him.”

You take a step forward and look around; at a glance, nothing else appears out of the ordinary or in any way connected to the seam of light. It’s just as Thragg described; it’s as if the seam of light is its own pocket dimension. “If this is what I think it is, then I guess the only remaining question is; How do we get inside?” You shrug as you look around and weigh your options. *Return to section 111.*

PB4

You see Thragg sitting listlessly on one of the pillows in the lounge and ask him what he thinks of the old man as you approach. “Honestly, old geezer gives me the creeps. We randomly stumble in on this weird place and, next thing you know, BAM!; we’re being offered tools of war quicker than a banker from the merchant’s plaza would offer you a loan.” You continue to stand at the edge of the lounge as he leans forward and wafts some of the smoke in his direction. “Still, gotta say that this place is pretty

much exactly as the rumors of the strange hermit described, though.” He grabs another pillow and places it behind him as he leans back, staring up at the ceiling. “But, they sure could have mentioned more about the lounge.”

You wait for a moment before impatiently reminding him that you asked about the old man, not his establishment. “Like I said, the guy is a bit creepy and unnerving. But, considering the rest of the rumors have been true about this pocket dimension... magic shop... place, I’d say the guy seems sincere and trustworthy enough. Remember, he’s offering you magic items that he likely created from his research. I’m sure he’s just delighted that one of them will be put to good use. As for the whole being-able-to-predict-what-you-need thing, yeah I’m not sure there. Probably just been around the magic dragons too much.” At that, he relaxes further in his makeshift chair of pillows and you return to the counter. *Return to section 127.*

PB5

Thragg jumps to his feet from a couple of pillows he was relaxing on in the lounge. “Are you crazy?,” he shouts as he rushes towards you. “You almost killed the poor guy! I mean, I know he was a bit strange and eccentric, but you didn’t have to attack him just to make a point! Or did you get too greedy and decided you wanted all of his magic items to yourself? I mean, what even was your goal here? Turns out that you might be the crazy one!” He takes a step back and rubs his temples before continuing.

“Look, when I joined you, I did so thinking you were a good person. I saw what you sacrificed for your aunt and wanted to help you. But maybe I was wrong or misread the situation. I may be a brute, but I’m no thief or wannabe murderer. This better just be an isolated mistake or a brief lapse of good judgment. I wanna help you and your aunt out, but not like this. I... may need some time to think about whether I should continue joining you here. But maybe it’s best we just go ahead and part ways.”

Roll for ALA. If successful, Thragg decides to stay in the party. If unsuccessful, he has lost enough trust in you to leave the party. *Make any appropriate changes and turn to section 145.*

PB6

Thragg walks forward in a manner not unlike a town crier inspecting a crime scene but keeps his distance from the woman. She is entirely covered by her robes aside from a part of her hair, which sticks tightly to the side of the pile of cloth wraps. Thragg comically rubs his chin in thought and reveals his assessment of her. “Hmm, look there. Her black, stringy hair may look normal at first glance, but it’s clearly matted and clumped together. She’s probably been expelling a bunch of mucus and could be diseased.” He stops for a moment and then makes a face of disgust. “Ech, I can only imagine how slimy and sticky it must be in there. Must be like a festering bag of...” You abruptly halt him from continuing further in order to prevent losing your last meal. “Right, sorry. In any case, looks like she’s pretty sick. That, or she had one wild night on the town.” You shake your head at the suggestion, but Thragg just shrugs and laughs.

You take a few steps forward to inspect the woman further, but Thragg stops you abruptly before you can get close. You turn towards him and see he is wearing a deadpan expression all of the sudden. “Then again, this may be one of those.” You ask him what he’s talking about, and he obliges. “When I was a kid, the south side of Thu’ul used to have a lot of trouble with sickly creatures we called Plagueis. They were essentially plague zombies, hence the name, and had a habit of tricking people into getting close enough to be poisoned and eaten alive. No one knows where they came from, but I can tell you they’re not human or ex-human, despite being called zombies. Too intelligent to be zombies, too. I should know, after what one did to my sister...” You see an expression of regret overtake his face as he fights back tears. “Anyways, let’s just say you’re not the only one to have a loved one taken from you unjustly. If this is one of those creatures, then you’d better tread lightly. They’re more capable than they appear.” You take his words to heart as you face the woman again. You’re unsure if she’s just sick or a conniving plague monster, but you use this info to help make your decision of whether to ignore her or approach with the intent of helping her. *Return to 124.*

PB7

NOT PRESENT IN DEMO. PLEASE PLAY THE FULL RELEASE! RETURN TO 146.

Character Stat Sheets

(Simplified versions of stat sheets with less stat blocks also provided for those who need more space for writing info on stat blocks or greater legibility)

PC/Party Character Sheet

<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">PRO</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ERU</td> <td style="text-align: center;">VIT</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ALA</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H.P.</td> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">Focus</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M.P.</td> <td colspan="3"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P.</td> <td colspan="3"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P. Meter</td> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">Status</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4" style="text-align: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> ○▶○▶ □ </div> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Spells</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Features</td> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Inventory</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 40px;"></td> <td></td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> </table>	PRO	ERU	VIT	ALA	H.P.	Focus			M.P.				F.P.				F.P. Meter	Status			<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> ○▶○▶ □ </div>				Spells	Features	Inventory						<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">PRO</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ERU</td> <td style="text-align: center;">VIT</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ALA</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H.P.</td> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">Focus</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M.P.</td> <td colspan="3"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P.</td> <td colspan="3"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P. Meter</td> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">Status</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4" style="text-align: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> ○▶○▶ □ </div> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Spells</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Features</td> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Inventory</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 40px;"></td> <td></td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> </table>	PRO	ERU	VIT	ALA	H.P.	Focus			M.P.				F.P.				F.P. Meter	Status			<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> ○▶○▶ □ </div>				Spells	Features	Inventory					
PRO	ERU	VIT	ALA																																																														
H.P.	Focus																																																																
M.P.																																																																	
F.P.																																																																	
F.P. Meter	Status																																																																
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> ○▶○▶ □ </div>																																																																	
Spells	Features	Inventory																																																															
PRO	ERU	VIT	ALA																																																														
H.P.	Focus																																																																
M.P.																																																																	
F.P.																																																																	
F.P. Meter	Status																																																																
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> ○▶○▶ □ </div>																																																																	
Spells	Features	Inventory																																																															
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">PRO</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ERU</td> <td style="text-align: center;">VIT</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ALA</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H.P.</td> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">Focus</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M.P.</td> <td colspan="3"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P.</td> <td colspan="3"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P. Meter</td> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">Status</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4" style="text-align: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> ○▶○▶ □ </div> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Spells</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Features</td> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Inventory</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 40px;"></td> <td></td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> </table>	PRO	ERU	VIT	ALA	H.P.	Focus			M.P.				F.P.				F.P. Meter	Status			<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> ○▶○▶ □ </div>				Spells	Features	Inventory						<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">PRO</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ERU</td> <td style="text-align: center;">VIT</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ALA</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H.P.</td> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">Focus</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M.P.</td> <td colspan="3"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P.</td> <td colspan="3"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P. Meter</td> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">Status</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4" style="text-align: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> ○▶○▶ □ </div> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Spells</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Features</td> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Inventory</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 40px;"></td> <td></td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> </table>	PRO	ERU	VIT	ALA	H.P.	Focus			M.P.				F.P.				F.P. Meter	Status			<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> ○▶○▶ □ </div>				Spells	Features	Inventory					
PRO	ERU	VIT	ALA																																																														
H.P.	Focus																																																																
M.P.																																																																	
F.P.																																																																	
F.P. Meter	Status																																																																
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> ○▶○▶ □ </div>																																																																	
Spells	Features	Inventory																																																															
PRO	ERU	VIT	ALA																																																														
H.P.	Focus																																																																
M.P.																																																																	
F.P.																																																																	
F.P. Meter	Status																																																																
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> ○▶○▶ □ </div>																																																																	
Spells	Features	Inventory																																																															
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">PRO</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ERU</td> <td style="text-align: center;">VIT</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ALA</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H.P.</td> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">Focus</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M.P.</td> <td colspan="3"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P.</td> <td colspan="3"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P. Meter</td> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">Status</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4" style="text-align: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> ○▶○▶ □ </div> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Spells</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Features</td> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Inventory</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 40px;"></td> <td></td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> </table>	PRO	ERU	VIT	ALA	H.P.	Focus			M.P.				F.P.				F.P. Meter	Status			<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> ○▶○▶ □ </div>				Spells	Features	Inventory						<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">PRO</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ERU</td> <td style="text-align: center;">VIT</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ALA</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H.P.</td> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">Focus</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M.P.</td> <td colspan="3"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P.</td> <td colspan="3"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P. Meter</td> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">Status</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4" style="text-align: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> ○▶○▶ □ </div> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Spells</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Features</td> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Inventory</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 40px;"></td> <td></td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> </table>	PRO	ERU	VIT	ALA	H.P.	Focus			M.P.				F.P.				F.P. Meter	Status			<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> ○▶○▶ □ </div>				Spells	Features	Inventory					
PRO	ERU	VIT	ALA																																																														
H.P.	Focus																																																																
M.P.																																																																	
F.P.																																																																	
F.P. Meter	Status																																																																
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> ○▶○▶ □ </div>																																																																	
Spells	Features	Inventory																																																															
PRO	ERU	VIT	ALA																																																														
H.P.	Focus																																																																
M.P.																																																																	
F.P.																																																																	
F.P. Meter	Status																																																																
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> ○▶○▶ □ </div>																																																																	
Spells	Features	Inventory																																																															
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%; text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Currency</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Party Inventory/ Key Items/ Notes</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 100px;"></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		Currency	Party Inventory/ Key Items/ Notes																																																														
Currency	Party Inventory/ Key Items/ Notes																																																																

Enemy Character Sheet

<p>PRO <input type="checkbox"/> ERU <input type="checkbox"/> VIT <input type="checkbox"/> ALA <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>H.P. <input type="checkbox"/> Focus</p> <p>M.P. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>F.P. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Focus chance Status</p> <p>Spells Features Battle Actions</p>	<p>PRO <input type="checkbox"/> ERU <input type="checkbox"/> VIT <input type="checkbox"/> ALA <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>H.P. <input type="checkbox"/> Focus</p> <p>M.P. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>F.P. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Focus chance Status</p> <p>Spells Features Battle Actions</p>
<p>PRO <input type="checkbox"/> ERU <input type="checkbox"/> VIT <input type="checkbox"/> ALA <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>H.P. <input type="checkbox"/> Focus</p> <p>M.P. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>F.P. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Focus chance Status</p> <p>Spells Features Battle Actions</p>	<p>PRO <input type="checkbox"/> ERU <input type="checkbox"/> VIT <input type="checkbox"/> ALA <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>H.P. <input type="checkbox"/> Focus</p> <p>M.P. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>F.P. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Focus chance Status</p> <p>Spells Features Battle Actions</p>
<p>PRO <input type="checkbox"/> ERU <input type="checkbox"/> VIT <input type="checkbox"/> ALA <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>H.P. <input type="checkbox"/> Focus</p> <p>M.P. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>F.P. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Focus chance Status</p> <p>Spells Features Battle Actions</p>	<p>PRO <input type="checkbox"/> ERU <input type="checkbox"/> VIT <input type="checkbox"/> ALA <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>H.P. <input type="checkbox"/> Focus</p> <p>M.P. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>F.P. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Focus chance Status</p> <p>Spells Features Battle Actions</p>
<p>PRO <input type="checkbox"/> ERU <input type="checkbox"/> VIT <input type="checkbox"/> ALA <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>H.P. <input type="checkbox"/> Focus</p> <p>M.P. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>F.P. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Focus chance Status</p> <p>Spells Features Battle Actions</p>	<p>PRO <input type="checkbox"/> ERU <input type="checkbox"/> VIT <input type="checkbox"/> ALA <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>H.P. <input type="checkbox"/> Focus</p> <p>M.P. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>F.P. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Focus chance Status</p> <p>Spells Features Battle Actions</p>
<p>PRO <input type="checkbox"/> ERU <input type="checkbox"/> VIT <input type="checkbox"/> ALA <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>H.P. <input type="checkbox"/> Focus</p> <p>M.P. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>F.P. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Focus chance Status</p> <p>Spells Features Battle Actions</p>	<p>PRO <input type="checkbox"/> ERU <input type="checkbox"/> VIT <input type="checkbox"/> ALA <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>H.P. <input type="checkbox"/> Focus</p> <p>M.P. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>F.P. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Focus chance Status</p> <p>Spells Features Battle Actions</p>

PC/Party Character Sheet – Simplified
 (Use top left corner to show position on full combat grid)

<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">PRO</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ERU</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">VIT</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ALA</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H.P.</td> <td style="border: 2px solid red; width: 20px; height: 15px;">□</td> <td align="right" colspan="6">Focus ▶</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M.P.</td> <td style="border: 2px solid blue; width: 20px; height: 15px;">□</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P.</td> <td style="border: 2px solid green; width: 20px; height: 15px;">□</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P. Meter</td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 15px;">◯▶</td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 15px;">◯▶</td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 15px;">□</td> <td align="right" colspan="4">Status ▶</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Spells</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Features</td> <td colspan="5" style="text-align: center;">Inventory</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 50px;"></td> <td></td> <td colspan="5"></td> </tr> </table>	PRO	□	ERU	□	VIT	□	ALA	□	H.P.	□	Focus ▶						M.P.	□							F.P.	□							F.P. Meter	◯▶	◯▶	□	Status ▶				Spells	Features	Inventory												<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">PRO</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ERU</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">VIT</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ALA</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H.P.</td> <td style="border: 2px solid red; width: 20px; height: 15px;">□</td> <td align="right" colspan="6">Focus ▶</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M.P.</td> <td style="border: 2px solid blue; width: 20px; height: 15px;">□</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P.</td> <td style="border: 2px solid green; width: 20px; height: 15px;">□</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P. Meter</td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 15px;">◯▶</td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 15px;">◯▶</td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 15px;">□</td> <td align="right" colspan="4">Status ▶</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Spells</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Features</td> <td colspan="5" style="text-align: center;">Inventory</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 50px;"></td> <td></td> <td colspan="5"></td> </tr> </table>	PRO	□	ERU	□	VIT	□	ALA	□	H.P.	□	Focus ▶						M.P.	□							F.P.	□							F.P. Meter	◯▶	◯▶	□	Status ▶				Spells	Features	Inventory											
PRO	□	ERU	□	VIT	□	ALA	□																																																																																																						
H.P.	□	Focus ▶																																																																																																											
M.P.	□																																																																																																												
F.P.	□																																																																																																												
F.P. Meter	◯▶	◯▶	□	Status ▶																																																																																																									
Spells	Features	Inventory																																																																																																											
PRO	□	ERU	□	VIT	□	ALA	□																																																																																																						
H.P.	□	Focus ▶																																																																																																											
M.P.	□																																																																																																												
F.P.	□																																																																																																												
F.P. Meter	◯▶	◯▶	□	Status ▶																																																																																																									
Spells	Features	Inventory																																																																																																											
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">PRO</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ERU</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">VIT</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ALA</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H.P.</td> <td style="border: 2px solid red; width: 20px; height: 15px;">□</td> <td align="right" colspan="6">Focus ▶</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M.P.</td> <td style="border: 2px solid blue; width: 20px; height: 15px;">□</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P.</td> <td style="border: 2px solid green; width: 20px; height: 15px;">□</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P. Meter</td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 15px;">◯▶</td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 15px;">◯▶</td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 15px;">□</td> <td align="right" colspan="4">Status ▶</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Spells</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Features</td> <td colspan="5" style="text-align: center;">Inventory</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 50px;"></td> <td></td> <td colspan="5"></td> </tr> </table>	PRO	□	ERU	□	VIT	□	ALA	□	H.P.	□	Focus ▶						M.P.	□							F.P.	□							F.P. Meter	◯▶	◯▶	□	Status ▶				Spells	Features	Inventory												<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">PRO</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ERU</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">VIT</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ALA</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H.P.</td> <td style="border: 2px solid red; width: 20px; height: 15px;">□</td> <td align="right" colspan="6">Focus ▶</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M.P.</td> <td style="border: 2px solid blue; width: 20px; height: 15px;">□</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P.</td> <td style="border: 2px solid green; width: 20px; height: 15px;">□</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P. Meter</td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 15px;">◯▶</td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 15px;">◯▶</td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 15px;">□</td> <td align="right" colspan="4">Status ▶</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Spells</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Features</td> <td colspan="5" style="text-align: center;">Inventory</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 50px;"></td> <td></td> <td colspan="5"></td> </tr> </table>	PRO	□	ERU	□	VIT	□	ALA	□	H.P.	□	Focus ▶						M.P.	□							F.P.	□							F.P. Meter	◯▶	◯▶	□	Status ▶				Spells	Features	Inventory											
PRO	□	ERU	□	VIT	□	ALA	□																																																																																																						
H.P.	□	Focus ▶																																																																																																											
M.P.	□																																																																																																												
F.P.	□																																																																																																												
F.P. Meter	◯▶	◯▶	□	Status ▶																																																																																																									
Spells	Features	Inventory																																																																																																											
PRO	□	ERU	□	VIT	□	ALA	□																																																																																																						
H.P.	□	Focus ▶																																																																																																											
M.P.	□																																																																																																												
F.P.	□																																																																																																												
F.P. Meter	◯▶	◯▶	□	Status ▶																																																																																																									
Spells	Features	Inventory																																																																																																											
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%; text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Currency</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Party Inventory/ Key Items/ Notes</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 100px;"></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		Currency	Party Inventory/ Key Items/ Notes																																																																																																										
Currency	Party Inventory/ Key Items/ Notes																																																																																																												

Enemy Character Sheet – Simplified
 (Use top left corner to show position on full combat grid)

<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">PRO</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ERU</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">VIT</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ALA</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H.P.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">□</td> <td colspan="6" style="text-align: center;">Focus</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M.P.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">□</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">□</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Focus chance</td> <td colspan="6" style="text-align: center;">Status</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Spells</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Features</td> <td colspan="5" style="text-align: center;">Battle Actions</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 40px;"></td> <td></td> <td colspan="5"></td> </tr> </table>	PRO	□	ERU	□	VIT	□	ALA	□	H.P.	□	Focus						M.P.	□							F.P.	□							Focus chance		Status						Spells	Features	Battle Actions												<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">PRO</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ERU</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">VIT</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ALA</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H.P.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">□</td> <td colspan="6" style="text-align: center;">Focus</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M.P.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">□</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">□</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Focus chance</td> <td colspan="6" style="text-align: center;">Status</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Spells</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Features</td> <td colspan="5" style="text-align: center;">Battle Actions</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 40px;"></td> <td></td> <td colspan="5"></td> </tr> </table>	PRO	□	ERU	□	VIT	□	ALA	□	H.P.	□	Focus						M.P.	□							F.P.	□							Focus chance		Status						Spells	Features	Battle Actions											
PRO	□	ERU	□	VIT	□	ALA	□																																																																																																						
H.P.	□	Focus																																																																																																											
M.P.	□																																																																																																												
F.P.	□																																																																																																												
Focus chance		Status																																																																																																											
Spells	Features	Battle Actions																																																																																																											
PRO	□	ERU	□	VIT	□	ALA	□																																																																																																						
H.P.	□	Focus																																																																																																											
M.P.	□																																																																																																												
F.P.	□																																																																																																												
Focus chance		Status																																																																																																											
Spells	Features	Battle Actions																																																																																																											
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">PRO</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ERU</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">VIT</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ALA</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H.P.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">□</td> <td colspan="6" style="text-align: center;">Focus</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M.P.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">□</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">□</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Focus chance</td> <td colspan="6" style="text-align: center;">Status</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Spells</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Features</td> <td colspan="5" style="text-align: center;">Battle Actions</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 40px;"></td> <td></td> <td colspan="5"></td> </tr> </table>	PRO	□	ERU	□	VIT	□	ALA	□	H.P.	□	Focus						M.P.	□							F.P.	□							Focus chance		Status						Spells	Features	Battle Actions												<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">PRO</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ERU</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">VIT</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ALA</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H.P.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">□</td> <td colspan="6" style="text-align: center;">Focus</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M.P.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">□</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">□</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Focus chance</td> <td colspan="6" style="text-align: center;">Status</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Spells</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Features</td> <td colspan="5" style="text-align: center;">Battle Actions</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 40px;"></td> <td></td> <td colspan="5"></td> </tr> </table>	PRO	□	ERU	□	VIT	□	ALA	□	H.P.	□	Focus						M.P.	□							F.P.	□							Focus chance		Status						Spells	Features	Battle Actions											
PRO	□	ERU	□	VIT	□	ALA	□																																																																																																						
H.P.	□	Focus																																																																																																											
M.P.	□																																																																																																												
F.P.	□																																																																																																												
Focus chance		Status																																																																																																											
Spells	Features	Battle Actions																																																																																																											
PRO	□	ERU	□	VIT	□	ALA	□																																																																																																						
H.P.	□	Focus																																																																																																											
M.P.	□																																																																																																												
F.P.	□																																																																																																												
Focus chance		Status																																																																																																											
Spells	Features	Battle Actions																																																																																																											
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">PRO</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ERU</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">VIT</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ALA</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H.P.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">□</td> <td colspan="6" style="text-align: center;">Focus</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M.P.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">□</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">□</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Focus chance</td> <td colspan="6" style="text-align: center;">Status</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Spells</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Features</td> <td colspan="5" style="text-align: center;">Battle Actions</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 40px;"></td> <td></td> <td colspan="5"></td> </tr> </table>	PRO	□	ERU	□	VIT	□	ALA	□	H.P.	□	Focus						M.P.	□							F.P.	□							Focus chance		Status						Spells	Features	Battle Actions												<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">PRO</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ERU</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">VIT</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> <td style="text-align: center;">ALA</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">□</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H.P.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">□</td> <td colspan="6" style="text-align: center;">Focus</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M.P.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">□</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F.P.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">□</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Focus chance</td> <td colspan="6" style="text-align: center;">Status</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Spells</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Features</td> <td colspan="5" style="text-align: center;">Battle Actions</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 40px;"></td> <td></td> <td colspan="5"></td> </tr> </table>	PRO	□	ERU	□	VIT	□	ALA	□	H.P.	□	Focus						M.P.	□							F.P.	□							Focus chance		Status						Spells	Features	Battle Actions											
PRO	□	ERU	□	VIT	□	ALA	□																																																																																																						
H.P.	□	Focus																																																																																																											
M.P.	□																																																																																																												
F.P.	□																																																																																																												
Focus chance		Status																																																																																																											
Spells	Features	Battle Actions																																																																																																											
PRO	□	ERU	□	VIT	□	ALA	□																																																																																																						
H.P.	□	Focus																																																																																																											
M.P.	□																																																																																																												
F.P.	□																																																																																																												
Focus chance		Status																																																																																																											
Spells	Features	Battle Actions																																																																																																											

Hyperlink/ QR Code
(For additional visual aids and character creation/combat walkthroughs)

<https://www.lettuceheadsdevs.com/swordscapes>

