

SPOOKY ROOM PRODUCTIONS
LAIR OF SWORD & SORCERY
ISSUE 1 DEC 2014

PRICE

1

LAIR OF Sword & Sorcery



DEMONBOARD

LAIR OF SWORD & SORCERY

Issue 1 December 2014
The Demonboard Issue

CREDITS

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Send any comments rules questions or submissions to

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By sending anything to these addresses you submit to the rules below.

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Any material sent may be used in the Lair of Sword & Sorcery game or websites in any way in any number of reprintings.

We have an entire game and series of expansions planned and any material you send may already be in the works so if you see something that looks like something you sent in, guess what, we didn't rip you off.

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You may not copy any Lair of Sword and Sorcery in any way for any reason.

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You may not publish or post any of your own Lair of sword and sorcery material either online or in print. You may not publish your own rules, your own adventures, or your own source material.

You may post pictures of yourselves playing the game and may post pictures of your demonboard and game in action. You can post pictures of your character but not your characters stats etc.

If you have something you want the world to see then send it in to the addresses above, or post or comment at the official pages.

PIRACY

If you find another player who is playing with photocopies or scans of the rules, shun them. Refuse to play with them. It is officially against the rules of Lair of Sword and Sorcery to play with photocopies and scans. Pirates are terrible people that will ruin the game.

LAIR OF SWORD & SORCERY

Behold the world of Kartharka! Land of Adventure!

A continent ruled by the Iron Emperor, His lands stretch from the Valleys of Morning in the great desert wastes of the Southlands to vast sprawl of mountain strongholds in the frozen north. The world groans beneath the might of the Iron Emperors rule. None dare stand before him who controls all in the broken land of Kartharka, where the great turning of the seasons itself have been rent asunder.

The mountain Northlands, trapped in endless biting winter, would be doomed without the constant caravans of food from the south, supplied and controlled by the Emperor. For this food the Emperor demands the one thing found only in the Mountainlands.

Iron! More valuable than gold in the world of Kartharka, precious Iron. Found only in the mines of the North the metal is needed for everything and completely controlled by the brutish and Hard Northmen who mine it. The men of the North, said to be descended from the first men, created by the gods to claw the iron from the ground for their own great machines.

The gods have abandoned men but the Iron remains and is lusted for by all. Indeed even the currency of the world is the imperial Longshank, thin strips of iron stamped with the Imperial fist.

The continent of Kartharka is vast, terrible, and dangerous. All swear ultimate fealty to the emperor but as they say "the emperor is in the south" he cares not about the squabbles between the lords of Kartharka as they war amongst each other.

"The caravans pass" is the only true law of Kartharka. Food flows to the north and Iron flows to the south, as long as this law is upheld the Lords may war for what other

resources they wish. The world of Kartharka is a land of city states, each lord commands as far as his army can march and no further. With the tides of time some may claim an entire valley, hundreds of miles of coastline, or a single road through the wastelands.

When the caravans pass North they take the emperors due, Sometimes it is gold, sometimes it is cattle, wood, food, whatever the emperor demands is given without question without fighting. When the Caravans pass south their is only one thing the emperor demands. Slaves.

Some are taken to build the mighty walls of the empire, to till the fields, to break the rocks. Others enter the black citadels of the Emperor and are never seen outside them again. The empire is built and run on the blood of slaves, but none can stand before the Iron emperor.

Every few years a story is heard of another Lordling who refuses the South passing caravan. A lordling who has grown strong, has built a mighty fortress, has filled it with hundreds of brutal fighting men.

None know what truly happens after that but when the caravan passes on south there is not a stone left standing of the fortress and the dead are laid end to end for miles along the great road through what was once the lords land. The roads of a rebels country are paved with the bodies of their dead. So all pay the emperors price whatever it may be, whether it leaves them with nothing but a stone hut and barren fields they all pay, and build again.

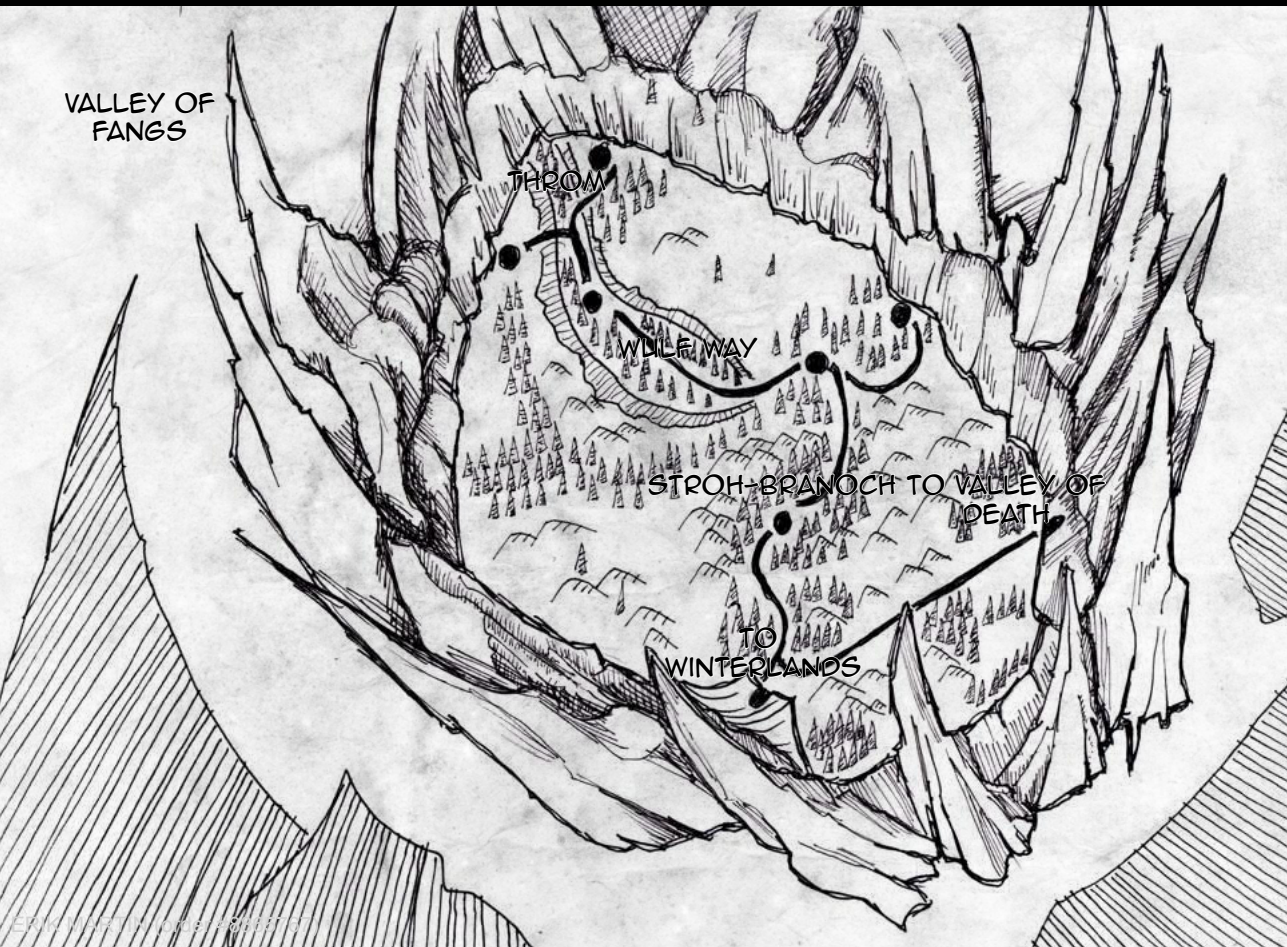
In the wild warring world of Kartharka an adventurer with a strong sword arm may carve out a place for them self. Fighting in an army, plundering a lordling, hunting down rich outlaws, or searching out the lost treasures of the first men.

Become one of these Adventurers in the world of Kartharka.



THE WORLD
OF KARTHARKA







THE WINTERLANDS

Beware the mountains!

All in Kartharka know and fear the Mountains of the great North.

Source of all Iron and Wealth but locked in an endless Ice Storm against which the Men of the Mountains fight to wrest the precious ore from it's frozen prison.

Hot springs dot the land sparsely. Living on top of there are those who keep the roads and passes free for the black caravans of the Emperor. But the springs are far too few to provide food and shelter to the hordes of Mountain men and tribesmen who work the slopes of these nightmare cliffs.

Absolutely necessary is the food of the Empire which flows to the North. The people who work the Mountains cluster in great sprawling shanty towns which surround the Imperial Refineries that dot the landscape.

But the proud people of the mountains are different from those of the steppes and plains of Kartharka. They do not pay the Southern Price. Their children are free from the slavers wagons. For they and they alone know the hiding places or Iron, and the ways of dragging it from the ground. They are the Iron men and they pay no tax. They instead buy food from the caravans with their Iron. A distinction that makes the Iron men a race apart in Kartharka.

The emperors food allow the Mountain men's cities to thrive and prosper, they rule themselves, and withing the mountain lands their rule is law. All the peoples of the mountains bow to Mining law which keeps the food flowing.

The greatest concentration of Mountain men lie within the valley of Fangs, a ledge carved from the mountains and completely surrounded on all sides by great broken peaks. This home of the first men is accessible only by two great highways running underground. One in the valleys east, leading to the foothills, through the treacherous autumn lands and to the

empire. The second highway leads to the west, to the great Deadlands of the Fang Valleys sister, the Valley of Night.

Legend says these two valleys were both majestic city states of the gods, whose warring caused the great cataclysm which split the seasons asunder leaving the world of Kartharka the strange and broken place it is today. None travel to or from the Valley of Night. No legends speak of treasure in the Valley and no traveller ever returns from there to speak of what they have seen.

Rumour and legends of the mountains speak of a terrible past and lingering evil in the hollows and passages of ancient mines and buried cities. Some say that evil sorcery still lingers in places throughout the mountains, atop towering peaks and in blasted hollows, bubbling to the surface to attack, defile and destroy.

Ancient legends say; sorcery and vile magic, once the very lifeblood of the world of Kartharka, was gathered and directed like a toy by the gods in the time before the cataclysm. These powerful magics are now gone from the world, along with the terrible creatures which they conjured up. Sorcerers and gods, demons and witches, goblins, trolls, pixies and stonekin, all lost in the flames and storms of the great cataclysm that pushed the great mountains out of the earth.

Sages and scholars still gather and covet ancient relics said to contain great power in the time before, though they now serve no purpose, lying dormant and useless on their shelves, reminders only of when men could control great power with mystic rituals and powerful words.

It is said creatures still live deep within the earth, where rivers of sorcery still flow, bubbling up with these foul magics at times, out of mines and caves to wipe settlements of men off the map, or drag miners down into the world beneath Kartharka.

PLATINUM

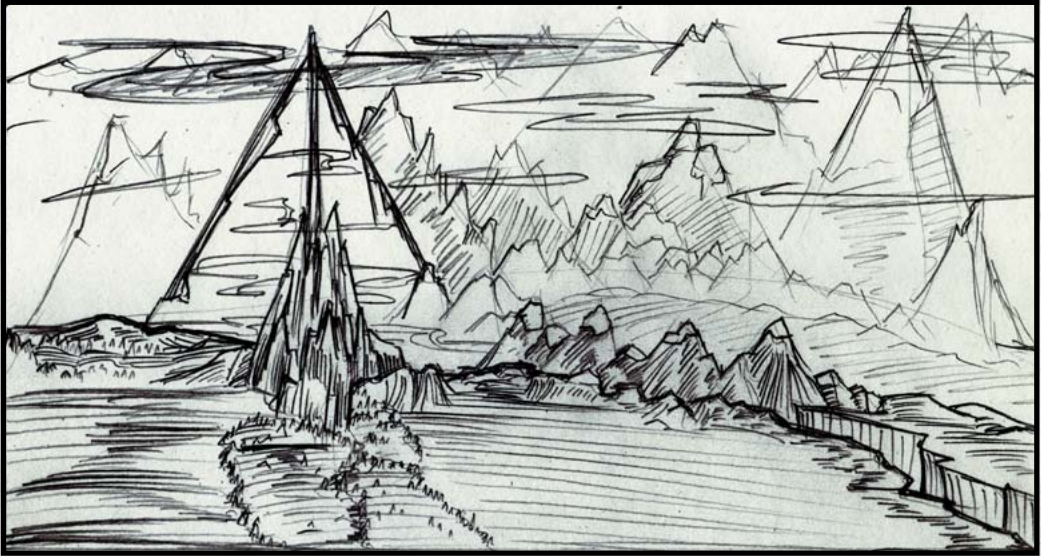
In most of Kartharka the metal known as platinum is only a legend. Most believe it to exist only in ancient stories. In the mountains all know that it is real, and it is taken very seriously. Never found in it's natural state, no platinum ore has ever been found. It is instead found only in the form of ancient coins or in even rarer cases as jewellery, rings, bracelets and even crowns have been found.

The empire lusts for platinum like nothing else however, more valuable even than iron no one in all of Kartharka may posses it other than the emperor.

It is illegal to possess anywhere in

Kartharka and anyone found with it is killed instantly. However in the mountains it is sometimes found by the Miners. Mining law dictates it must be immediately taken to an Imperial refinery where it is exchanged for a great reward equal to 20 times it's weight in gold. Indeed many know of at least one poor miner who has retired after finding a cache of these coins in their travels. Indeed some even find enough to pay for passage on the caravan all the way to the imperial city and a life of excess and luxury.

None no why the emperor demands this tribute but all obey this law.



THE WORLD OF KARTHARKA IS BORN

The game "Lair of Sword and Sorcery" grew from a few key moments from the past year.

I spent the last few years playing Dungeons and Dragons after a long time away from the game. The group was a mix of newcomers, old timers like me those in between.

Us old-timers thought it would be fun to play a very old adventure with the new rules, which we did for a while but it just didn't have the feel we wanted. So I dusted off the old books and ran a group of adventures using first edition rules. Again it just didn't do it for us. So I decided I was going to make up my own rule set.

So I started, and planned out a role playing game that didn't excite me any more than the system I had abandoned.

So the problem wasn't the rules, or the pre-made worlds, or the playing group or specific adventure flavour or style I was looking for. But what was it?

I thought, I'd get right down to the roots, combing through materials from the late 70's and early 80's looking for the thing that role playing once had for me and was now gone.

I was reading anything and everything and just couldn't find it. And suddenly there it was on Ebay:



I saw these little guys online, and I remembered everything.

I remember the day I first got them as a kid. I took those little guys home and pulled out construction paper, tape and pens and made a massive dungeon, but not the way a gamer would now but the way an 8 year old would. It was massive and sprawled about 2 feet by 2 feet. A maze of full 3D walls sprawling about, with working secret passages and traps scattered everywhere. And roaming through it were these little demons, wizards and snake men. 5 minutes of thought towards some rules, pulled from the Fighting Fantasy game books, and I was hacking through these monsters, trying different paths and playing for hours. All on that board. I sort of knew what role playing games were. I had the basic Dungeons and Dragons red box set and thought it was amazing. A lot of rules though for an 8 year old who didn't have an older brother or cousin to follow to a game. But there were a lot of awesome pictures and tables full of weapons.

What I played by myself in those first days wasn't Dungeons and Dragons, but instead my idea of what Dungeons and Dragons was. Based on the Dungeons and Dragons scene from E.T., the dungeons and dragons cartoon, and so many movies, like Hawk the Slayer, Conan the Barbarian, Dragonslayer, and He-man, to an eight year old all these things were from the same world and it all fit together. I had D&D colorforms and toy figures. Whenever I saw something in the world with a dragon or a barbarian I thought it was all D&D.

It was all one glorious world where the only limit was imagination.

Well when I got those figures again on Ebay I broke out my construction paper and scissors again. I had more fun cutting and taping that thing together than I'd had in many a night of gaming in the last couple of years. There were no rules to consider, no game balance in mind, nothing other than having fun and creating something raw from scratch. I had finally found what I was looking for and it all fell into place.



IT'S NOT THE GAME, IT'S HOW YOU CAN BE PART OF IT

Whether through fate or planning, what these games started out like in the 70's what they exactly needed to be. The rules were incredibly basic, with just enough to get you up and going, and you can make the rest up as you go along. Game balance, equal character classes or even fair rewards weren't even a consideration at the time.

In going back and rereading all that old material I found that the most important thing were the magazines. For most of us these were the game.

If people had an idea, they sent it in and people used it or changed it or just made up something of their own based on it. New material came out every single month, use it as is, change it if you want leave it completely out.

And people could send in their own things, could add to the great D&D world themselves. And for the most part if your stuff was cool you could get it in. Little thought was given to parents groups, consumer demographics, marketing or anything else other than is this cool or not.

Especially reading the older White Dwarfs, who seemed to have even more freedom than dragon. Whether it was because they were not TSR and were free to print what they wanted without worrying about it "unbalancing the game" or if it was just their market which was a bit more

forgiving of adult themes of violence, sexuality, and horror.

These magazines were the game, they were the fans, the letters section alone gave each person a chance to talk about how they want the game to grow and progress, and for others to answer them and for the publisher to answer them back. In the days before the internet these magazines were the community.

And back then there was nothing to compare it too. Some material was admittedly crude and rudimentary but with nothing else to compare it to it didn't matter.

But we also didn't feel the need to look wholly to them. Things would be dragged in from anywhere. Your characters could be making their way through a dungeon and suddenly be attacked by a giant robot simply because the dungeon master happened to have found this cool toy and wanted to use it in the game.

There were few "official" materials for the game so people were forced to use what they could find, often with children's toys. It was this lack of "official" material that made everything so open and amazing. Nothing could be called unofficial or unallowed because everything was borrowed from something else.

All that mattered was that it was amazing and fun.

THE GAME IS CALLED "LAIR OF SWORD & SORCERY"

So what does all this mean?

It means here is a new game from scratch.

To be published entirely in Magazine format with back issues being reprinted indefinitely.

With each new issue more of the rules and world of Kartharka will be poured out.

Fan submissions are not only welcome, they are required. For the world of Kartharka to grow just pick a place on the map and build. (see the legal stuff at the beginning of the book for submission info)

Kartharka needs people and places, monsters and treasures to fill it's borders.

Maps, illustrations, stories, races and monsters are all wanted. Don't feel the need to include rules with your submissions but do so if you like, we need plenty of great new rules too.

Don't forget the fun stuff too, pictures, drawings, photos, stories, both fiction and nonfiction, comics and comic strips, It's your game, your world.

And we want letters, fan mail, hate mail, send letters of what you'd like to see, or wouldn't like to see.

Questions and queries, anything that strikes you, or even things you think people would like to know about; great movies and books, comics or toys that we just have to see, we'll put it all in.

Send in

For the next few issues all of the material printed will be suitable for both

game masters and players but in the future we hope to fork the magazine into two separate titles. One for game masters and one for players. One of the biggest problems with role playing games right now is that all of the great stuff produced for them is for game masters only. There is nothing available for the players to enjoy with all materials marked "game master eyes only". What's a player to do if they just want to enjoy their own game?

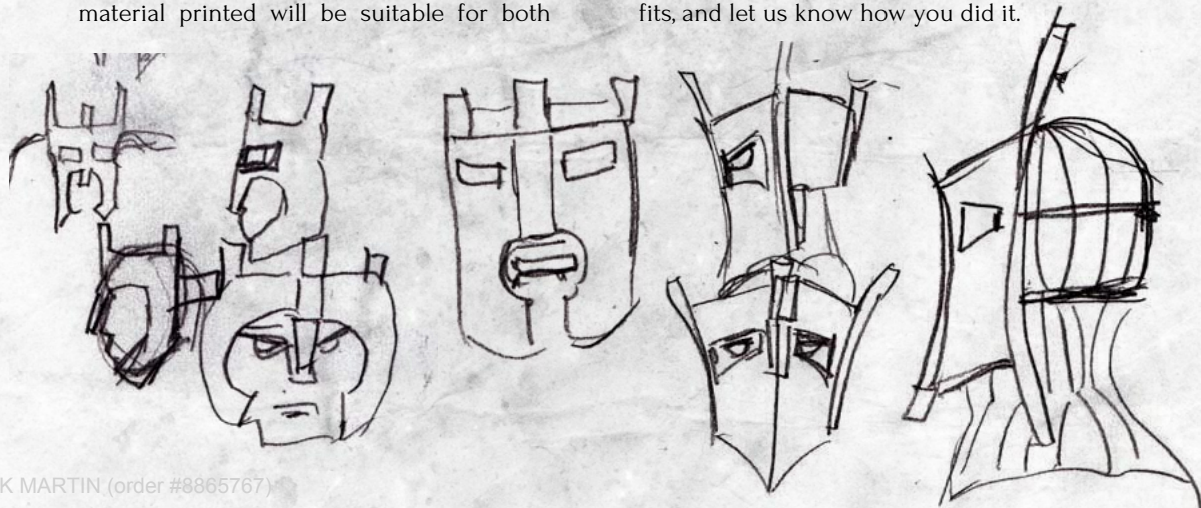
Well there are plenty of things they could be seeing.

For example when a monster is published the game master copy of the issue would have the full information and stats but the players version would contain legends and stories about the beast, there has to be at least a few details which all the common fold would know.

And how about the world. There is no need for players to know nothing of the world until it is presented in the game. Legends and stories of the far off provinces of Kartharka.

Player tactics could also be useful, how to fight in group formations, how to organize your equipment, all of these things are possibilities.

So go out into the rest of the world, search out fantasy, horror and most importantly sword and sorcery and drag it back to Kartharka kicking and screaming and wedge it into your game anywhere it fits, and let us know how you did it.



WHAT IS THE GAME ABOUT?

Kartharka is not generic Fantasy!

Lair of Sword and Sorcery is not a “retroclone”, it is not a throwback game, it is not a reworking of a current system, nor is it made to be “compatible” with any current system. It is its own creation.

As a game master (Demon Lord in the language of Kartharka) you can use anything you want from anywhere. See an adventure you like? Rip out everything you want, make some stats up on the fly and run it is Lair of Sword and Sorcery. You don't need a compatibility chart, or special balancing calculations, just make it all up and throw it at the players.

Slavish worshipping of Game Balance is the death of creativity, as long as there is trust between the Demon Lord and the players all can have fun no matter what the enemies. It is this lack of trust which has lead to so much Rule bloat in other systems endlessly adding rules and reprinting edited rulebooks in the quest for perfect balance.

As for the Demon Lord, be worthy of that trust. Let the players make real choices about what happens, if they want to do something then damn well let them try, if they want to steer the world to bow to their whims then good, that is what heroes are meant to do.

The players and the Demon Lord are both there to create a world, not to heap the characters in treasure and let them always win, or to be so overbearing that they must run from every encounter and are doomed to scrape and save just to make enough to keep their characters fed.

This game is meant to be played with friends, friends who trust each other and who want to have fun together.

But enough rambling, What is Lair of Sword and Sorcery, and it's game world Kartharka all about?

The rules are meant to be just enough of a framework for everyone to have a good time. A lot of the time you'll be making everything up as you go along but there should be just enough of a framework that all can feel that any decisions are at least fair to the spirit of adventure.

Lair is very much a do it yourself system

but fear not, there is nothing out there yet to compare yourself too. Want to make up your own monsters, go ahead, your crudely drawn monster on a piece of construction paper isn't going to look any worse than ours when we're playing. Want to make a miniature for that monster? Or for one from the books? Go ahead.

If you want to cut the head off a tiger and glue to the body of a dinosaur and throw it down on the board don't worry, there are no official Lair of sword and sorcery miniatures so it'll look no worse than the players miniatures raided from lego sets or from play sets grabbed at the dollar store.

What is important is that what you are representing is cool itself. A dinosaur with a tiger head? Awesome can use the stats for a dinosaur or the tiger, or both, or a whole new set. The players will have to figure out how the heck their going to kill that thing and they'll have fun doing it, especially when you try to figure out exactly what it's roar sounds like.

So the main Tenet is, do it yourself, make it awesome.

Try to avoid using “real” gaming materials as much as possible, it can be extremely limiting to what you do in the game if you feel locked in to whatever is available. That being said there is a lot of neat stuff out there and if you like it then use it.

When making your own stuff fight the urge to labour over it for hours, just get it done and on the table. I would way rather play every week with cool new items, rooms, backgrounds and monsters then once a month with perfectly detailed and rendered materials on the board.

But if you want to spend more time on it then go ahead, it's a fun part of Lair.

And if you're a player that doesn't mean you can't have fun too. Your local tavern or temple may need to be visited, and you'll need a map to play on if a fight breaks out while you're there. Go ahead and draw one up, the Demon Lord will thank you (hopefully).

Did your character come from a village outside of town? Make up some maps and

names of important folk there. Is your character descended from some long lost tribe of warriors? Make up their names, their history their background. Create the world together with your Demon Lord, make up some legends of monsters and some miniatures for them, the Demon lord will probably use them, they will likely have powers you never guessed and have a set of stats way different then you had in mind but hey that's the fun.

Or if the Demon Lord has been using

THE SPIRIT OF THE GAME

Lair of Sword and Sorcery is at it's heart a game of Sword and Sorcery (obvious right?)

This means that for the most part your characters will be men, and for the most part you will be fighting other men (or women you get the idea).

Monsters are an important part of the game but you must learn to rethink what you think of as monsters in Role playing games.

Lions, tigers, and bears are all viable monsters and make great enemies for the players. If the big bad guy at the end has two Orc guards then you're playing generic fantasy. If he has two tigers and they're wearing gold masks, and the room is all smoky from the incense burning in that big brazier in the middle, and the bad guy is sitting in a big throne playing a harp that controls the tigers? That's the world of Kartharka.

Other easy monsters are things from our world you can't see at the zoo. Giant insects are great, who's to say there aren't giant foot long wasps somewhere in the amazon? Or dinosaurs, another great addition, a hidden valley full of elephants is dangerous enough but what if they were full of raptors?

Sword and sorcery is very similar to a past age of our own world and can be imagined happening here in some long forgotten age.

But what of Sorcery? Sorcery in Lair very different from Magic in other games. Not everyone is wandering around with magic swords, gulping magic potions and

squares of cardboard for the lizard men you've been warring with then go ahead and make some lizard men figures up. If you want to play on a cool board then make it cool yourself, if you start making up lizard man shamans then likely in some form or another they'll start popping up in the game.

Remember the Dollar store is your friend, their craft section and toy section have more than you will ever need to make a whole world

buying and trading magic rings and carpets on every corner.

Magic is rare and terrible in the world of Kartharka and most that encounter it soon wish they hadn't.

A player is not going to find a "+2" magic sword. They may find a sword that bursts into flames when they touch it burning their arm off, or a terrible amulet lying in a sorcerers tomb that turns them into a flesh less skeleton that wanders the earth stealing children to feed to the crocodile god.

Sorcery is evil, difficult, risky and full of ways to get yourself killed.

But it is powerful, powerful beyond any human understanding, and such is it's lure.

Sorcery involves long tortuous rituals and terrible rites, promises to foul demons and complicated formulas that must be completed exactly or the sorcerer will die. They do not simply point a finger and say a magic word. They can do that too but it comes at an awful price.

What is Lair of Sword and Sorcery? What is the spirit of Kartharka?

If you can imagine it spray painted on the side of a van, its Kartharka.

If you can put it on the front of any Heavy Metal album cover it's Kartharka.

If you cast it in pewter and glued a marble to it and sold it at a flea market it's Kartharka.

If you can draw it proudly on your notebook cover in math class it's Kartharka.

If you'd wear it on a patch on your jacket it's Kartharka.

Kartharka is metal, steel, gold and iron, Kartharka is mystery, doom and high adventure.

WHAT IS THE DEMONBOARD

What is the Demonboard?

When playing Lair of Sword & Sorcery the Demon Lord will either describe the scene, for example when adventuring in town, and combat is unlikely to occur simply describing the scene and the people they are interacting with will suffice.

However when there is the chance of Combat the Demonguard will be used. Usually this will be when the characters have entered an enemies Lair.

The Demon Lord will set up the walls rooms and enemies visible to the players as they appear on the Demonboard.

The players will place their figures on the Demonboard and move them about according to their actions. The rules and the Demonlord will decide whether their actions are successful.

Without the demonboard the placement of the players characters as well as their enemies is difficult to track.

But it's not just about the rules, or figure placement, it's seeing the action unfold, building incredible Lairs and filling them with cool looking contents.

Kartharka isn't just about sitting around a table pretending, it's about moving a handful of figures around the board and happily knocking your enemies over and throwing them to the floor.

Kartharka is about having something to point at when you scream your curses, about looking at the board and knowing what is around your character, so that the Demonlord can have just as much fun in the battles as the players. Once the enemies are on the board the DemonLord is free to use them as fiercely as he likes.

The Demonboard and the basic assumption that all games of Lair of Sword & Sorcery will be played on one is what sets the game apart.



MAKE A DEMONBOARD



Everything in the game of Lair happens on the Demon board, so to play you'll need at least one.

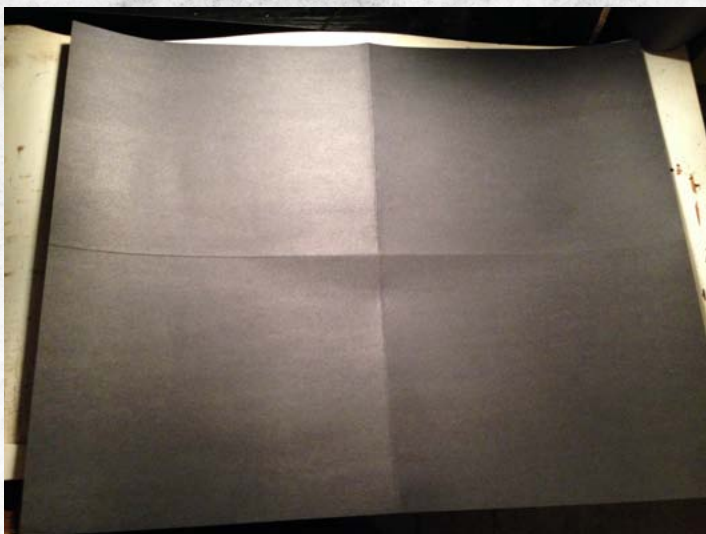
The materials are simple and you're free to make it as elaborate as you need.

You will need:

- Black Bristol board (the usual cheap sheets from the dollar store)
- Ruler
- Pencil
- Cheap brush
- Some pieces of plastic
- Erasers (bigger the better)
- A utility or craft knife
- Some craft paints
- Something to mix paint on (any damn thing)
- Some decent glue, here I'm using some contact cement from the dollar store, sticks to the erasers real good, and most things if you use it right.

Read the instructions carefully on whatever glue you use, each is a little different and most won't work well if you use it wrong.

1: PREP THE BOARD



We've got our black sheet of bristol board.

To make a demon board we need to put a grid of one inch squares on it.

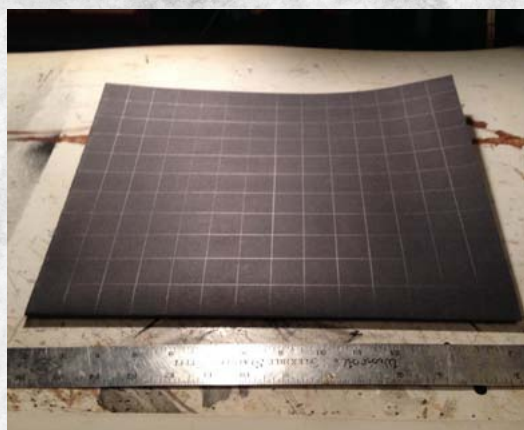
- First thing, fold it in half one way then the other, right down the middle, You'll get a sheet with 4 quarters on it like this.



Fold it in half, then half again so you only have one quarter facing up.



Use the ruler to measure out 1 inch increments along each edge of the board.



Connect the lines. Now you have one quarter of the board done. Do the same for each quarter.



Now you have a full sheet with a 1 inch grid. If you like you can call it done now. A 1 inch grid is all that's absolutely necessary but we can make it look a heck of a lot cooler.

2: PAINTS



We are going to be using some paint so lets discuss colours.

Above I have a tan, orange, brown and a light yellowish green (cashmere, orange, burnt umber, and leaf green to be specific)

This will be for a standard, dirty stone. It's not the specific colours that matter but how you use them that are important.

If you like you can use just one colour, like a light brown, or a grey, or even a yellow, but I like to mix them as I go.

You'll see how later.

These are just plain old craft paints, 1 to 2 bucks a bottle.

What we're going to do is use a few simple tricks to make it look like we spent a heck of a lot of time and a whole lot of effort to paint this thing.

You can just free hand paint it if you want, just fill in the squares with the colour of your choice and then paint in dark lines along the grid.

3: STAMPERS

The quickest way to fill space with a repeating pattern is with a stamper.

By making your own stampers you can make a great looking board which is unique and looks amazing.

What we are looking for is a good repeating stone tile pattern for the floor of our demon board. By making something relatively geometric and square we can make a board which is easy to move our pieces on but still looks like a semi random brick or cobblestone.

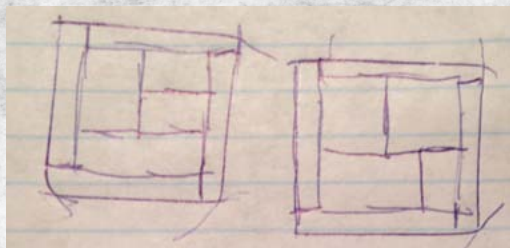
First we will draw our pattern ahead of time on some notebook paper. It sometimes take sa few tries to get one I like.

I start by drawing a square.

Then I draw a thin border of "bricks" on the inside. If find this makes it easier to tell the squares apart when it is painted on the board.

I then break up the middle into irregular rectangle shapes of the actual tiles.

When I'm done I will be left with this:



You can copy this one if you like or make up your own



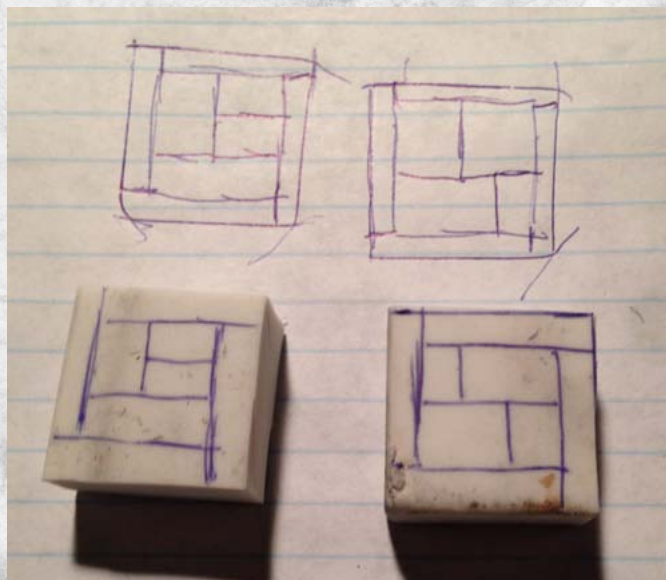
Next we'll get out our erasers which will form the body of the stamper.

To make the stamper we need an eraser that is 1 inch on each side.

These big erasers are about 2.5 inches by 1.25 inches.

I mark out 1" squares. And cut them out.

Next use a regular ball point pen to mark the pattern onto the squares like so:



We want the paint to stick to the squares but not the lines so that the black Bristol board will show through there.

We do that by cutting away the lines in between the bricks, with the sharp knife.



Make the cuts at an angle so that you cut away a V shaped groove between each brick. When you're done it will look like this.

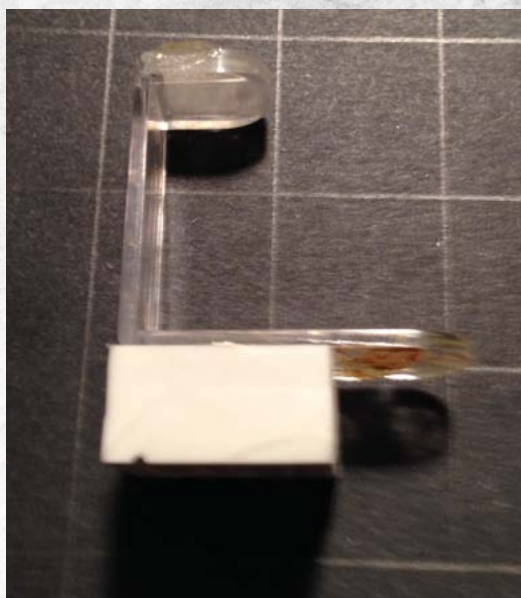
Not bad!



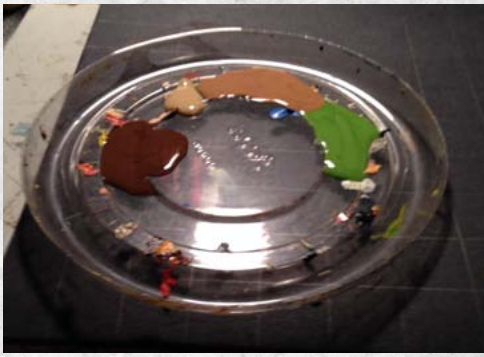
Now we've got a couple of stampers. You can use them just like this but I like to make a handle first. I don't mind the messy hands but I don't like to smear the board with my fingers.



These L shaped pieces of plastic work great. Originally they are for clamping table clothes to outdoor picnic tables. Any flat hunk of plastic will do though.



Some quick work with the contact cement and we've got a stamper. I always like to have two different designs so that I can alternate them as I am working so that the pattern doesn't become too uniform.



Squirt a little bit of each colour of paint onto a tray. Use the ones listed at the beginning of this section.

Pick one colour and use the brush to paint it onto the stamper. Use a nice thick sloppy coat.

Now use the brush to wipe off the excess paint, use it to scoop the paint out of the cracks too.

Now pick a second colour and slap it on there too, they will mix a bit but don't worry about getting a uniform colour you want them to be a little mixed in some places and separate in others, don't get too fussy though you've got a lot of stamping to do.

Your stamper should now look like this.

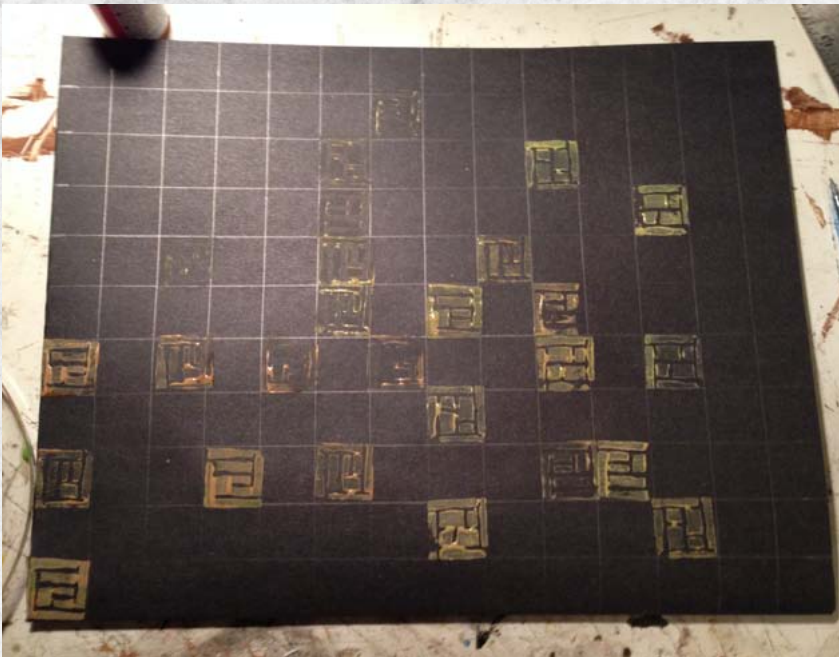
Use the grid to align it and press it firmly onto the board. As you work you will see how much or how little paint you need on the stamper.

Continue adding different colours, paint it on, take off the excess, and press it down. Alternate the colours as you go.

The mixing will make all the colours work together while still being different enough that the board doesn't have a uniform look.

Stamp the board in random areas, working on one quarter a time.

Remember to rotate the stamper so that the designs go in different directions as well as switching from one stamper to the other.





Above is one quarter of the board complete.
I do one quarter at a time so that the job doesn't seem so big.
Unfold the board to show the next quarter and stamp it in the same way.

Below we see the board done and ready to go.
Looks pretty awesome, can't wait to get some stuff on there.



4: CARD WALLS

In *Lair of Sword & Sorcery*, our heroes find themselves in all sorts of places. They may travel to the temple of the spider god to keep their priests from sacrificing the local townspeople.

Or the underground hideout of a local bandit gang. Or the hidden cove of a band of smugglers, or even be defending the local inn from attacking soldiers.

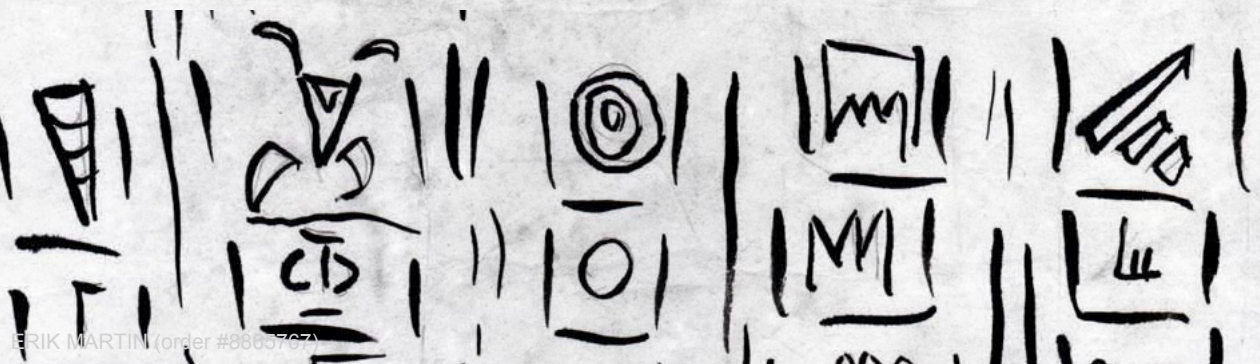
All of this action takes place on the demon board. Now sometimes the action may take place in a large open field where there are no obstacles in place and the heroes and villains can move wherever they like but to keep things more interesting and fun, they will more often take place indoors.

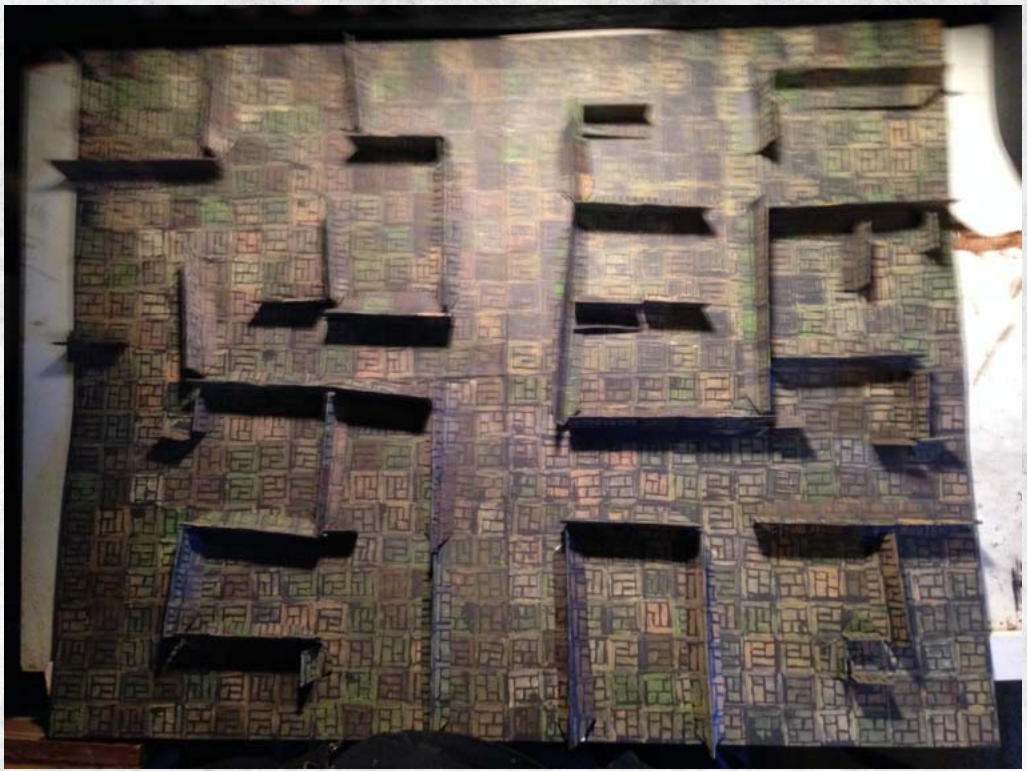
That means walls, doorways, rooms and passages.

You could just whip out a marker and draw them right on the board but then you would need a new board for every adventure, they don't take that long to make but I wouldn't want to make a new one every week.

So we need something to represent walls, and the easiest way is to make them out of the same materials as the rest of the demon board, Bristol board and paint (and a little tape)

Below you can see a section of the *Lair* with card walls, next I'll show you how to make your own.

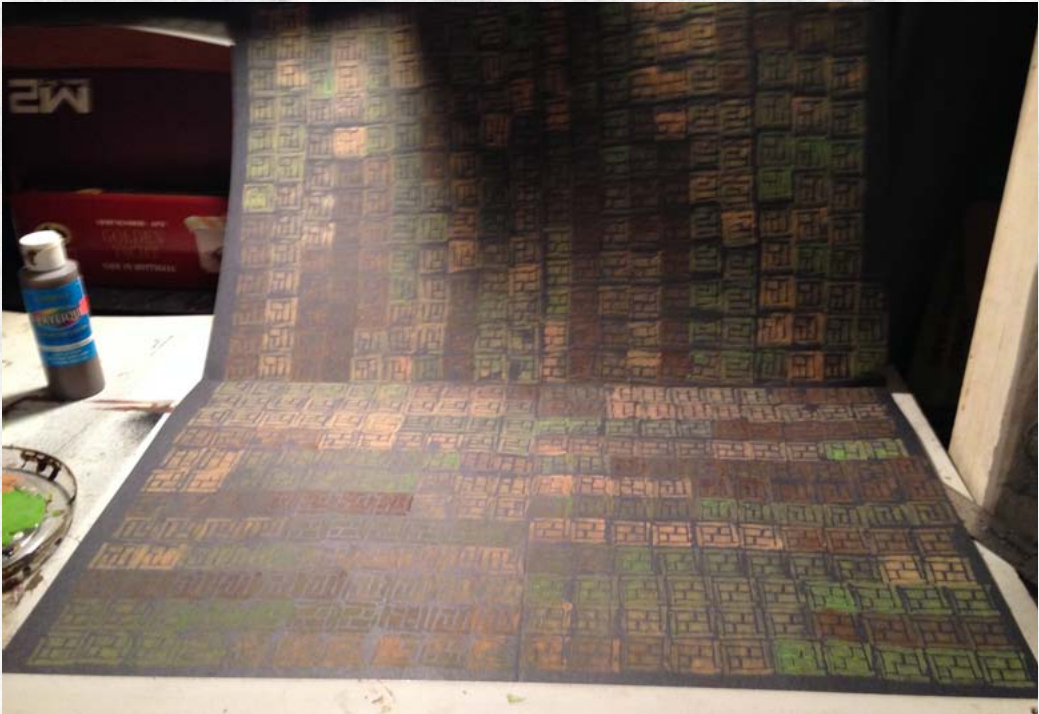




Another view of the demonboard with walls

The first step to making the card walls is easy. Repeat the steps to make a demon board, You can really rush through this one, you do not need to rotate the design or swap stampers as much, and you don't need

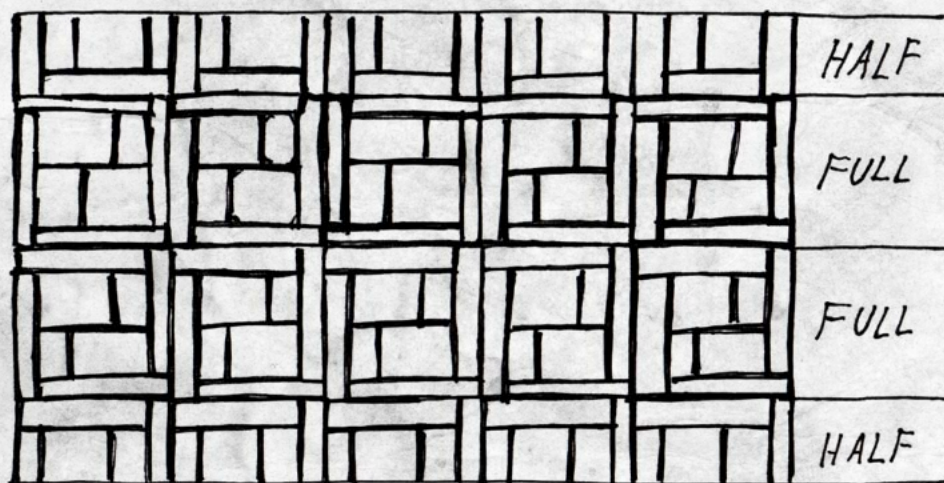
to stamp as randomly as with the board. Just start at one end of a row and work right along it till all the rows are filled. This would look odd on the demon board but works perfectly well on walls.



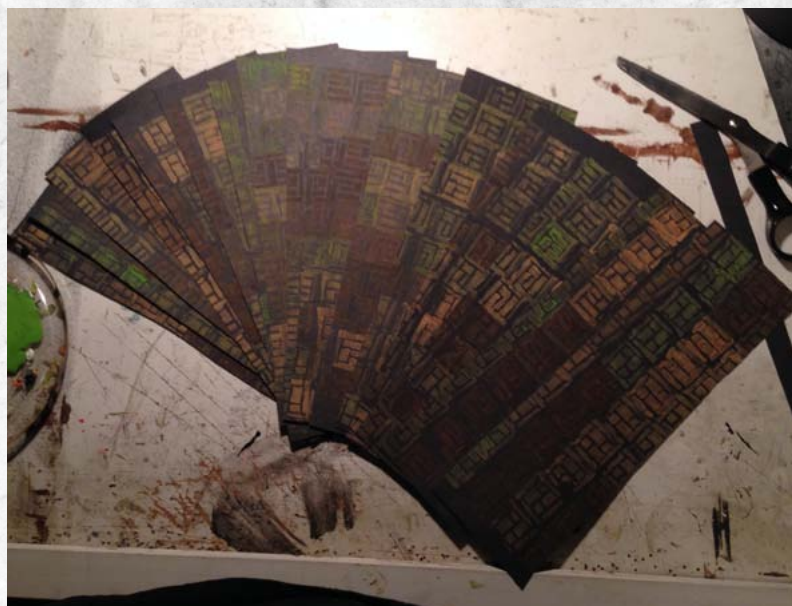
And all ready to go, don't worry how everything looks like strips now, they will look fine when cut into walls.



No we get out the scissors.
Cut the board into quarters like this, you will now have 4 big rectangles



Now cut those rectangles into strips like shown above. Each strip should have two rows of full squares in the middle and a row of half squares on each side, just like the picture

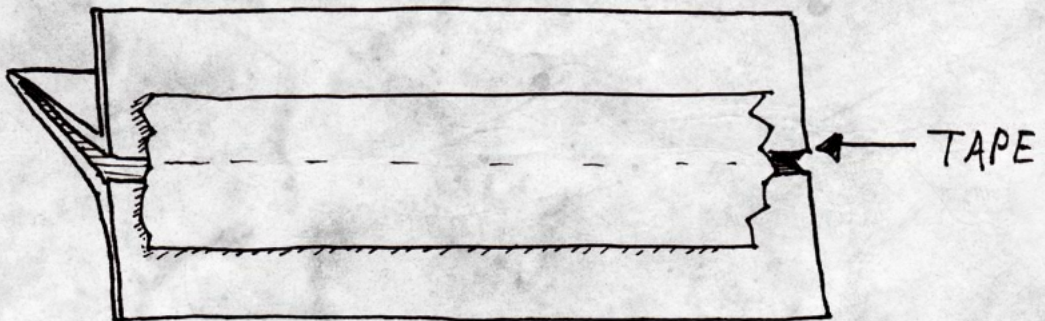


When you're done you'll have a big pile of strips, Well done!

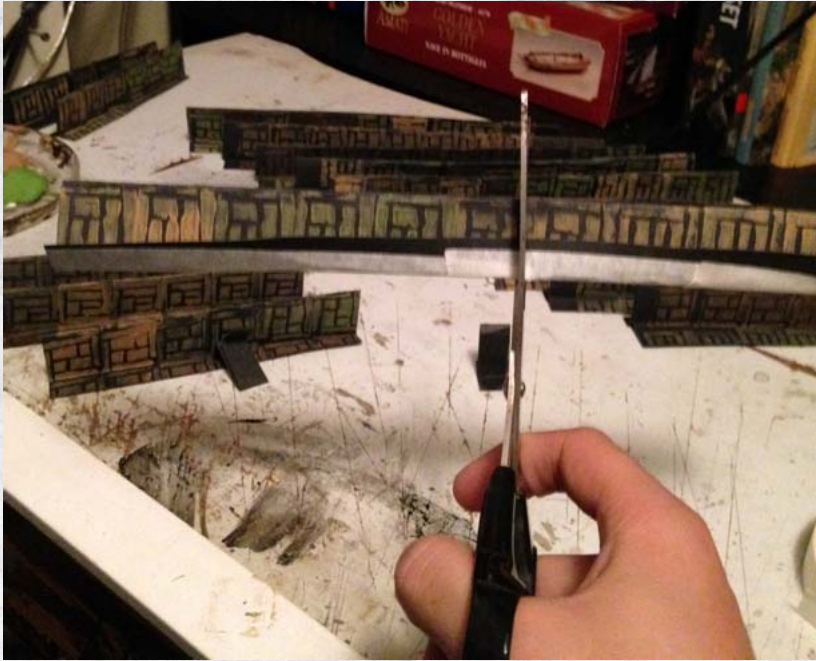


Now fold them into walls.
First fold them in half right down the middle with the paint on the outside.
Next fold up the half square wide "flaps".
When you're done you will have a lot of strips that look like this.

Now tape them all closed like this:



Now you should have a lot of long walls that look like this.



Now cut them all up! Use the scissors to cut them down to various sizes.

I use a range of walls measuring from 6 squares to 1 square long.

Look below to see how many walls you can get out of a single sheet.
1 sheet is more than enough for basic lairs but since they're so easy to make you can do one up every other week till you're swimming in them.

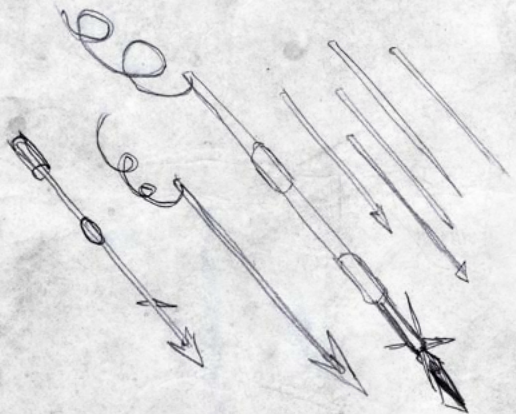




See those square edges at the end?
They tend to get in the way when you're laying out walls as they will overlap in the corners. So to save yourself the headache later just get the scissors out and trim them down.



Like so!



Now organize the walls with Ziploc baggies.
Each one is marked with the walls length in squares.

5: DEMON BLOCKS

The cardboard walls are great and look fantastic but some don't like the way they are so easy to move around accidentally.

The Demonblocks make a great alternative for walls, they look good, are solid and heavy, and can be stacked to serve

as platforms, stood on end to serve as pillars or used to represent altars, tables or other forms of cover.

They are great Lair building blocks and can be painted to match your demonboard. They are quick, cheap and easy to make.



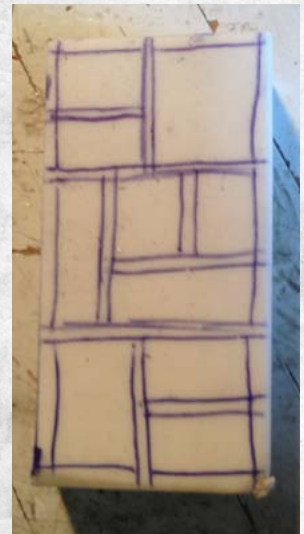
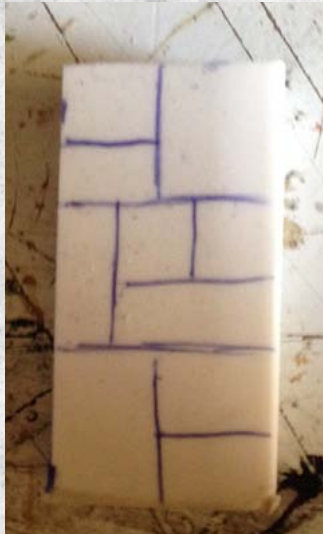
Here we see demon blocks being used to form the walls of a lair.



6: MAKING THE MOLD



Here's what we need to make demon blocks. Scissors, knife, a big eraser again, wide popsicle sticks, the big ones like tongue depressors, a pen, paper, and some masking tape. We use these to make a mold for the Demon blocks so that we can really crank them out quickly.



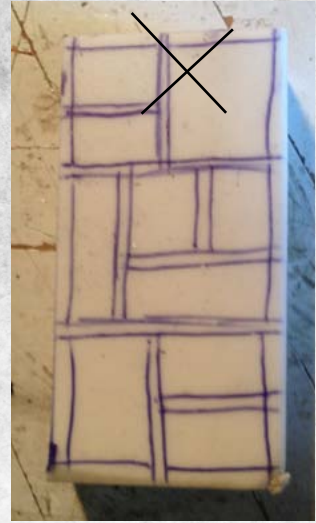
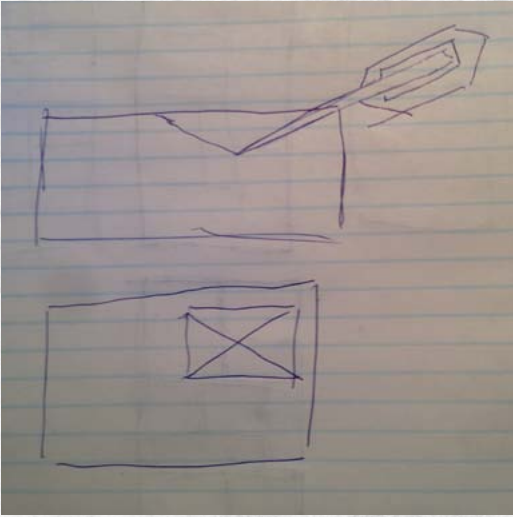
The first part is the mold bottom and it resembles the stampers we have already made.

The eraser measures 1 inch across and is 2 inches tall.

Cut the big eraser down to this size.

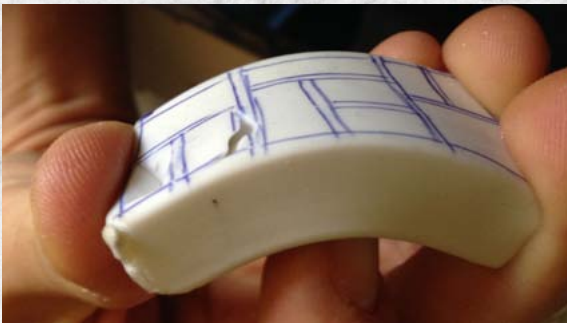
First draw it on paper till your happy, then copy it over to your eraser.

Now draw in the mortar lines between the stones. like you did with the stampers.



When making this one, instead of cutting out mortar lines and leaving the blocks we are going to do the reverse. We will cut out the blocks and leave the mortar lines intact.

You can use the knife to dig em out any why way you want but I find the best way is to cut on and angle, on all four sides of the block, when you pull the piece out it will resemble a tiny pyramid.



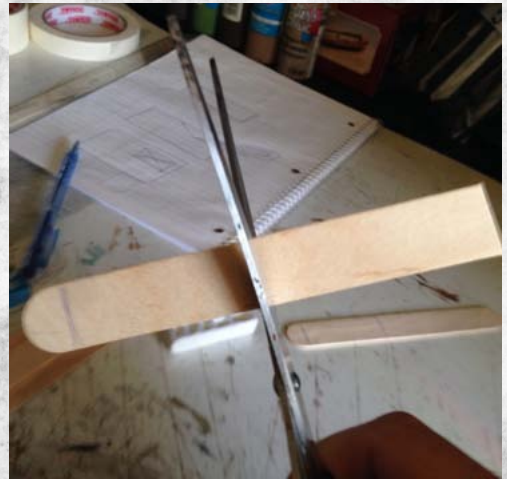
You may have to flex it a bit to pull the piece out with your fingers after cutting.



When you are done you will have something that looks like this. It will form the base of the mold and make the blocks look like they're formed from separate stones.



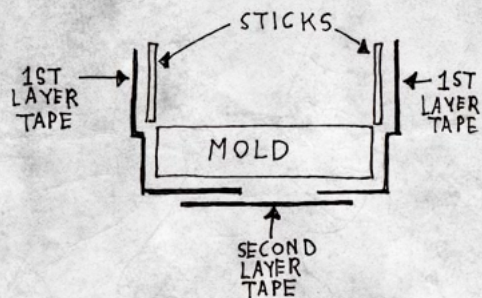
Next we need to make the four sides of our forming box. These are cut down from the large craft sticks. The two long ones are 2 inches long, the two short ones are 1 inch long. You can cut them with the knife, remember to use 2 or 3 cuts to cut through a little at a time, cutting deeper with each cut. Personally I use the scissors, sometimes it snaps the stick but I've got plenty of them.



Now put big pieces of tape on each stick, don't be stingy, We're going to make a little box with the forming part of the mold on the inside.



Just tape the sticks to the bottom of the mold, add some more tape to the bottom to hold everything together

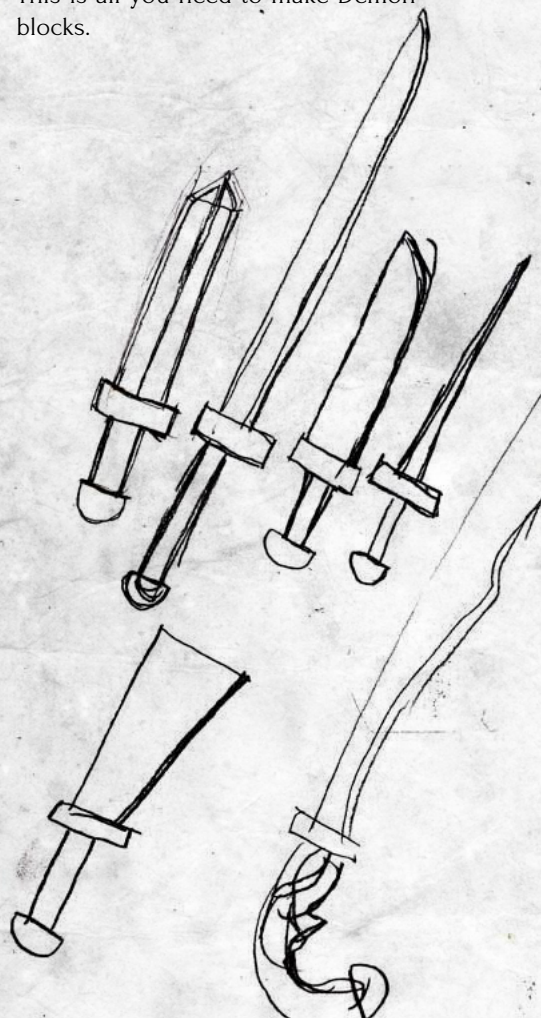


Here is a more detailed view.



Run another strip all the way around the bottom to strengthen everything. Now you've got a little box with hinged sides.

This is all you need to make Demon blocks.



7: USING THE MOLD

Now you must decide what material you will be moulding with.

You can use a plasticine, readily available from the dollar store, but it never dries so doesn't paint well.

You can also get a serviceable modelling clay as well which is a bit wet but dries very well.

Play-doh type clays don't seem to dry out completely anymore, so I wouldn't use those.

What I suggest for Kartharka is Salt Dough.

Cheap and easy to make, it dries OK if you leave it in a dry warm room for a couple of days and then finish it off in the oven for about 5 to 10 minutes at 300 degrees Fahrenheit.

The recipe is easy but be sure to read ahead and see what you're going to be doing before making it as it's working time is about an hour.

To make salt dough.

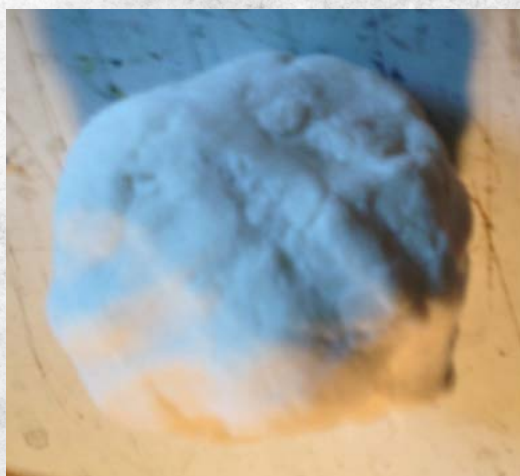
Mix:

1 cup salt

2 cups of flour

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup of water

Knead it well and it's ready to use.



Now that you have some dough it's time to get started.

First stick a wad of the dough in the box. You'll get a feeling for about how much to use after you do a few.





Squash it down a bit so it's roughly block shaped.



Flip the sides up and squeeze it into a block.



If necessary squash a bit of extra dough in after the sides are up to be sure that it is completely full up to the top, flatten it out to make a nice flat squared block.



Flip the sides down and pull the block out of the mold and you'll have something that looks like. Now repeat using up all of the dough, look to the right to see how many you get out of a single batch. Cut some of them in half before they dry and you'll have single square blocks.



One batch gives you quite a few blocks but usually you need at least two batches to have enough to comfortably work with.

One batch is suitable if you intend to use card walls, with the blocks used as special terrain features.

8: PAINTING THE BLOCKS

Let the blocks completely dry rock solid before painting, usually this takes a couple of days. Be warned though, in some houses it seems they never completely harden.

Also keep in mind that the blocks are somewhat like living things. Their centers don't seem to even completely harden so if you put too much weight on them they will squash. Also when storing them in a bag on the shelf for long periods of time they may deform a bit in the bag.

You can leave them as is but they look far better painted.

First things first, Paint em black. Really slather on the paint and get in all the crevices. Then wait till the paint is completely dry.



Next we will add the colour to the blocks. Using a technique called dry brushing. That means we will load up a brush with paint, wipe most of it off on a paper towel, and then lightly brush the blocks.



I like a nice big flat brush for this, easily found at most dollar stores. Colour choice is the same as for the demon board, alternate colours as you paint. Instead of mixing them on the stamper them in the middle of your paint palette and then apply it to the brush

Wipe off the excess on paper towel.



If you are looking for a more basic paint job you can dry brush the black blocks with grey paint and call it done.

As always, zip loc bags are our friends.





A nicely set up Lair using card walls.



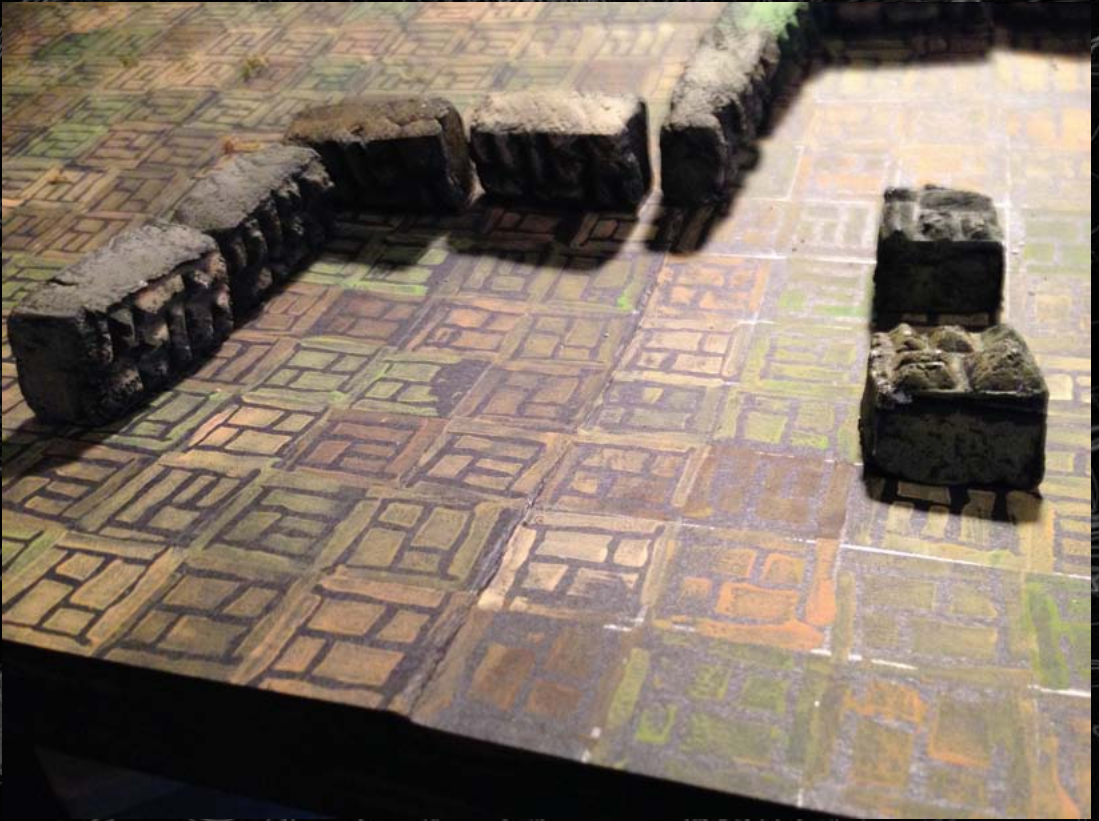
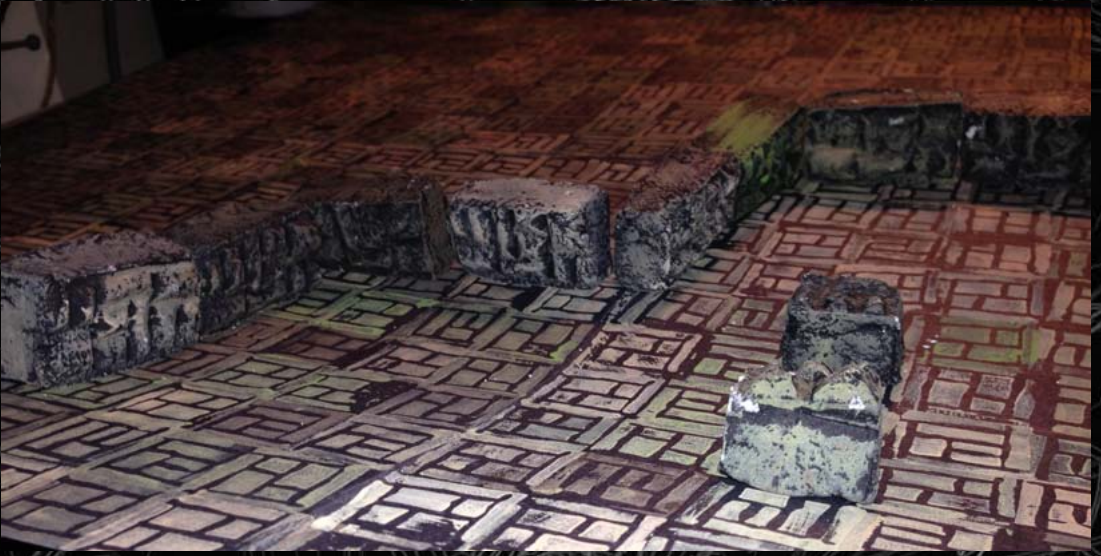
Same Lair, with a demon block altar, and demon block pillars.
The dinosaur skeletons are great enemies. The lizard men are soldiers with their heads replaced with toy lizard heads. The greenery in this underground jungle is crafting moss which you can find in all sorts of colours



Here demon blocks are used to make a stepped platform. The heroes can attack a villain at the top or hold off their enemies from there. It also handily gives cover from bows firing across the room



A better view of some demon block pillars



Some prefer to use demon blocks for their walls instead of the card ones.

Now throw all your stuff in a box. One of the best parts of Demonboard is how light it is and how little room it takes up, so its very portable.





SPOOKY ROOM PRODUCTIONS
LAIR OF SWORD & SORCERY
ISSUE 2 JAN 2015

PRICE

LAIR OF Sword & Sorcery

2

COMBAT

LAIR OF SWORD & SORCERY

Issue 2 January 2015
The Combat Issue

CREDITS

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All art, writing, and rules by:
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SUBMISSIONS & QUESTIONS:

READ CAREFULLY

Send any comments, rules questions or submissions to
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Check for updates at:
lairofswordandsorcery.blogspot.ca
By sending anything to these addresses you submit to the rules below.
Any submissions or material sent to the email or website become the property of Ripley Stonebrook.
You may or may not receive credit for any material sent.
Any material sent may be used in the Lair of Sword & Sorcery game or websites in any way in any number of reprintings.
We have an entire game and series of expansions planned and any material you send may already be in the works so if you see something that looks like something you sent in, guess what, we didn't rip you off.

WHAT YOU CAN & CAN'T DO

You may not copy anything from these game books, in whole or in part except for review purposes.
You may not copy any Lair of Sword and Sorcery in any way for any reason.
You may not post any Lair of Sword and Sorcery material on any blog, website or social media site.
You may not publish or post any of your own Lair of sword and sorcery material either online or in print. You may not publish your own rules, your own adventures, or your own source material.
You may post pictures of yourselves playing the game and may post pictures of your demonboard and game in action. You can post pictures of your character but not your characters stats etc.
If you have something you want the world to see then send it in to the addresses above, or post or comment at the official pages.

PIRACY

If you find another player who is playing with photocopies or scans of the rules, shun them. Refuse to play with them. It is officially against the rules of Lair of Sword and Sorcery to play with photocopies and scans. Pirates are terrible people that will ruin the game.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

Join your forces with the powerful creators of the awe inspiring world of Kartharka!

Well that's the whole point of the game isn't it?
Before you send us all of your fantastic stuff first read the questions and submissions info to the right and then come back.

All done?

Okay here are all the great places to send your blood soaked materials.

WEBSITE:

You best place to start is the Lair of Sword and Sorcery Site at:

lairofswordandsorcery.blogspot.ca

Here you can comment on updates, and respond to questions and polls on the direction of the game and what you would like to see, or not see, in the game.

There are also regular articles on the sword and sorcery genre, fantasy, the setting of Kartharka, the tone of the game, and designers notes on the game system.

GOOGLE :

Those who are on Google+ can get their lair updates there by adding:

Ripley Stonebrook

We also appreciate +1's and reposting of content on Google+

FACEBOOK:

You can also receive your updates on Facebook at:

Lair of Sword and Sorcery

Like and follow Lair on facebook to get updates, and we of course appreciate any reviews and reposts to your own facebook page.

EMAIL:

Send in any and all submissions, rules, art, questions, stories, comics, pictures of your demonboard, and pictures of your group.

Or if you are looking for players or demonlords in your area send in your contact email and we'll put it in the next issue or post it to the site.

spookyroomproductions@gmail.com

Retailers: If you are interested in carrying the Lair of Sword and Sorcery game then please send an email to:

spookyroomproductions@gmail.com.

If you would like your local retailer to carry the game then you can urge them to send us an email.

WHAT IS LAIR OF SWORD & SORCERY?

Welcome to the second Issue of the Roleplaying game "Lair of Sword & Sorcery" (shortened to "Lair") and the world of Kartharka in which it is set.

Issue 1 tackled the main ideas behind the game. That is should be fun, easy, and cheap to play. It also included instructions on how to make your own "Demonboard", the playing board on which all games of Lair are played.

With Lair I thought I would be upfront about how the game was meant to be played right off the bat. It is made to be played on a board, on the table, with little walls clearly marked and little figures clearly showing where everyone is.

This is because I feel that roleplaying games today (including the big ones) seem to want to pretend that a board is optional, yet the rules and gameplay are obviously based on you absolutely having to play on a board.

Play a game of modern D&D for 5 minutes without a board and try to see if you can 5 foot step around an enemy without an argument. Can't be done.

So in Lair I did something different. Instead of selling you a playing matt or board I showed you how to make and use one. In Lair you can make the simplest version of the board and a set of walls in an afternoon while watching TV. You can do it with a couple of dollars worth of Materials from a Dollar Store.

This did make for a somewhat odd first taste of a roleplaying game in issue 1. No rules, no characters, no stats or tables. What's this game all about?

Well in this issue you get to find out. Everything you need to start playing is here in this booklet.

Along with rules are Designers Notes on why things are the way they are, and notes on the overall style and feel of the game and what further issues will touch on.

So Venture on Brave Heroes, stride from the Winterlands to the Summerlands watching your heroes fame grow in the fertile ground of their enemies bodies..

Questions and Answers

Question: Why don't you just publish everything in one book and be done with it?

Answer: I already did.

Sitting on my shelves is another game. It was a basic roleplaying game, had a generic fantasy setting, made sure to include all the usual fantasy RPG tropes, and included everything for the Gamemaster including treasures, magic items and monsters.

I finished, looked at it, and realized it was just another piece of garbage to clog up the internet with. It has been done before and will be done many times more. The world doesn't need another basic RPG retroclone.

Question: So how is Lair different?

Answer: Lair is not created for Roleplayers.

Lair is created for anyone who loves Fantasy and Sword and Sorcery. It is purely for having fun on a Friday night, not for playing an epic 3 year long campaign, where you can't miss a single week and each session runs until 3 in the morning.

Question: Why a magazine format?

Answer: All great roleplaying games are written in magazine format.

In the 70's there were many new roleplaying games but the original Dungeons and Dragons rose above the rest to continue on to this day. The reason for this was because of the Magazines. On our side of the ocean there was Dragon Magazine, and on the other, White Dwarf.

Two magazines run by game companies to promote their product and publish new material.

The magazines served two purposes, new content for the game every single month, and a way for players of the game to connect with each other in an "official" capacity.

Generating a magazines worth of content every month would be difficult for any company but luckily they could rely on the fans to send in their own rules, lists, monsters, adventures, stories and art. When your material got printed in Dragon it was official Dungeons & Dragons material.

Anyone could be part of the game and could add to it and control the way it grew.

The letters column alone gave the people a way to connect with the game creators and each other.

So I thought I would just start with a magazine from the beginning.

So be a part of the game, make it your own, and send in anything you think would be interesting.

See the indica to the right for the submission rules and the email address for Submission.



A HERO IS BORN!

(NO ELFS, DWARFS, OR HALF-ELFEN DRAGON-RIDER ASSASSINS)

Are you ready to stride the mountains like a hurricane? To smash the heart of the deepest mine, to wring forth the iron from it's dripping heart?

To see the villagers tremble with fear and desire when you enter their pitiful town square heaped with the treasure of a thousand dead enemies?

Good!

To play the game of Lair of Sword & Sorcery you will need two things; a Demon Lord to lay out and plan the terrible Lairs you will enter, and a Hero to call your very own.

A hero to use, and use up. To act out your terrible vengeance on a world that displeases you, to right the wrongs that have been done to you.

Look to the Hero Record sheet appearing later in the issue. In this issue we will show you how to fill in all these boxes on the sheet to create your hero. In this issue you will also find the combat rules, so that your enemy can finally feel the crushing blow of your axe in his chest.

A couple of things first before we jump right in.

Lair is a game of Sword & Sorcery, in a brutal world of feuding empires and squabbling city states.

It is a world of Men. A world of Humans. The world of Kartharka has men of all statures, types, colours, and philosophies, much like our own. The amount of variation of people on our own planet means that there is more than enough variety in the realm of humans already without having to include "fantasy" races such as Dwarfs and Elfs in the Hero creation process.

Revel in the variety of the Human condition when creating your character and don't feel the

need to ever fall back on the old tired classic of "I'm an Elf" to make your character interesting.

There are no "classes", "jobs", "careers" or other types of distinctions between heros.

In the world of Kartharka there are certain things that all heroes can do and they do not require a title or distinction on a character sheet to do it.

Everyone can fight, worship a god of their choice, hunt for their food, or dig a hole in the ground.

What makes your hero unique, powerful, lauded or despised, are their actions. And their actions are wholly up to you.

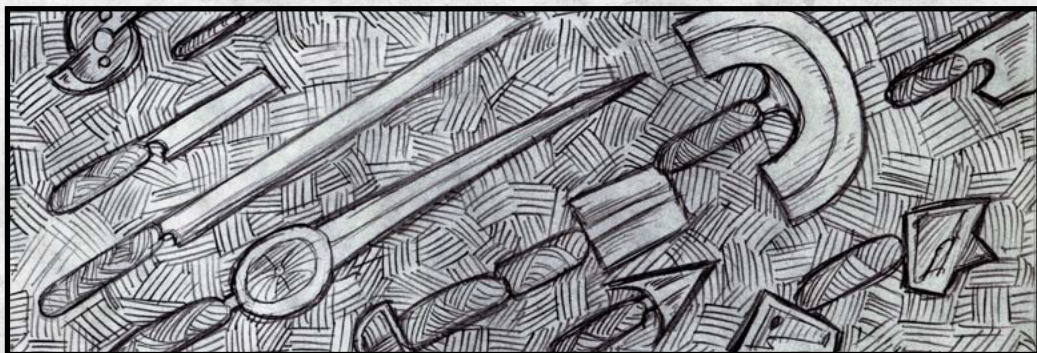
In the Lair system Heros all begin on a equal footing, it is the players choices for how they will grow and expand that set them apart. The Lair Veteran system of Hero advancement allows the players to grow their hero in any way they choose, to become a better fighter, to learn the secrets of the sages, to penetrate the inner cloisters of the Wolf-Brothers temple, or to become a spice merchant if they so choose (the travails of a spice merchants life or more perilous than you would guess).

The Lair system is one of creativity, freedom, speed, and high adventure!

You can make a character in five minutes and have him thrown into the latest Lair the Heros are penetrating. Playing an advanced game with a group of Heros that have been plundering for years is no problem! Throw that new Hero in the mix and watch him reach new and dizzying heights in no time!

Remember, all you Kartharken Blood Reavers; it's not what's on the sheet that's important, it's what the Hero does with it!





LIFE IN THE WINTERLANDS

Before creating your hero it may help to know a little of the world he lives in (or she, women warriors are welcome!)

The Winterlands are not a kind or friendly place. Survival is just barely possible through communities struggling together against the mountains.

The black road of the Emperor winds through the mountains and up to the mining capital of Stroh-Branoch.

Maintenance of the road is possible only because of the hot springs dotting the mountainside.

Each spring is ancient and each has its own story of how it was found, dug, or gifted from the gods.

These hot springs usually spill into an underground cavern filling a large pond and then flowing back out into the ground.

On top of these caverns a family will build a house, (called a wayhouse) the strong dome shaped structure made of stone common to the winterlands.

The hot springs heat the home which usually also serve as a way station or inn along the road.

The families that own these houses are responsible for maintaining the roads for a few miles in either direction.

They are gifted Iron poles by the emperor, they scrape the snow flat, while a large flat plate is dragged behind to flatten the hard packed snow, with spikes to score and break up any slick ice.

This keeps the black road throughout the Winterlands open to travel.

But what do the people eat in the winter wastes?

The evergreen trees of the winterlands provide hard bitter berries and acorns which the smaller animals eat.

Larger snow cats, bears and wolves live off of these and are in turn hunted by the people.

But the main source of food in the winterlands is the interconnected raising of Matten and the Tackett.

The Matten is a fast growing grass, whose roots are large and bulbous.

The Matten grows near the underground pools of the hot springs. Indeed it grows so fast

that if it is not harvested often it would soon choke the hot spring.

The roots make a serviceable though tasteless gruel or can be dried to make a gritty flour. (The ubiquitous matten flour, the staple of the winterlands).

The grasses are inedible to humans but are loved by the winterlands tackett.

The domestic tackett of the Winterlands resembles a large wide goat, or a tiny Bison. As tall as a mans waist they are covered with a shaggy coat.

The tackett provides meat, milk, fur, leather and wool for the people of the winterlands. So useful are they that the most ancient stories of the Winterlands are about the gift of the tacketts, matten, and hot springs from the gods.

But their use fullness doesn't end there. The tacketts also supply another useful product, manure.

The tackett manure is spread amongst the matten, causing their meagre bulbs to grow to twice normal size.

As if doubling their matten supply was not enough the people of the winterlands found another use for the manure.

After the manure is used to fertilize the Matten it becomes hard and brittle. The people of the Winterlands use this material as a fuel, burning twice as long and hot as wood. It is easy to carry taking up little room on a persons drag sled.

Indeed without this fuel many would have froze to death at night when travelling the roads.

Government and Law

The government of the Winterlands are not interested in creating laws or upholding them. They care not for the petty squabbling of people amongst themselves. The people should have the strength to protect themselves and their families.

Instead the Winterlands are governed by a group called "The Targ". Though it is mostly a hereditary title any may become a Targ if it is agreed by the people. Any Targ may also be called upon by the people to give up their position.

The Targ are in charge of the precious resources of the Winterlands, food and heat.

The Targ administrate the maintenance of the large outdoor heaters which any may gather

around. These are scattered throughout any town or village.

They also control the distribution of the food supplied by the Emperor.

The emperor trades food for the right to buy the iron ore of the Winterlands. This food is stored by the Targ and distributed to all that need it.

Food is available in any number of places throughout any town, village, or roadside wayhouse.

In a place where any traveller or town can be cut off by a storm at any time, keeping a supply of food in all places possible is important.

The little food supplied by Matten, Takkets and hunting was able to support the people of the Winterlands before the coming of the Emperor. But with so many flocking to the mines from all over the world and the Winterlands, and so much time being spent on Mining, as well as populations concentrating in the cities, the peoples of the Winterlands would now starve within months if the Emperor were to stop the shipments of food.

So the Targ are in charge of maintaining a good relationship with the emperor while still keeping the Freedoms which the people of the Winterlands have, the freedom to govern themselves and freedom from the taxes of the Emperor, the northern passing taxes of wood food and gold, and the southern passing tax of slaves.

This can be a difficult job, keeping the people at least indifferent to the emperors agents.

The Targ also administrate grievances of Mining Law.

Any may stake any claim to any mine, cave, or digging that they wish, for as long as they can hold it.

Taking an others claim if they leave it is considered acceptable so guards are often left.

If someone chooses to attack another miner to take a claim then a grievance may be placed before the Targ. Mining law is complex however, with previous claims made by the attackers, or their families previous claims to the same mine, as well as their standing in the community, past grievances they have made, as well as grievances made about them, may all be considered.

Usually the only law that most people would encounter would be that of the sheriff.

The sheriffs are in charge of dispensing "road justice".

Most are stationed at way houses along the black road and other roads of the winterlands.

There job is not to capture, punish or incarcerate. Their job is to prevent the often savage retribution which the Winterlanders would dole out to each other for wrongdoing they feel have been done to them.

If a man kills another man in a brawl, it is likely that the dead mans family would then seek out and kill the murderer. And then the murderer's family would seek out that family starting a fight leaving dozens dead. This would be considered acceptable to the thinking of a Winterlander.

And so the sheriffs were created. If a wrongdoing has been done to you or your family you can bring it before the sheriff. The sheriff will then decide if retribution is required, demanding the return of stolen items, or in the case of

someone being killed, will seek out and do away with the murderer if they deem them guilty. The sheriffs ruling is absolute and none may seek them out for revenge.

Attacking a sheriff will cause the entire family to lose status, leaving them unable to avail themselves of the food or heaters of the Targ. They also lose any rights to Mining claims. A revenge attack on a sheriff will be brought up for centuries whenever a mining claim grievance is brought before the Targ.

The post of Sheriff is an elected one. By the people nearest to the wayhouse they are stationed at. These people will usually bow to the wishes of the actual owner of the wayhouse however.



THE TARG

STROH-BRANOCH

MINING CAPITAL OF THE WINTERLANDS

This issue has the first pull out map of the Lair Roleplaying game.

The Mining Capital of Stroh-Branoch.

More information on this city will come in further issues, but included in this issue is a pull out map to stick up on the wall or put out on the table for the players to see.

The following text is the list of important buildings in the city as well as some more background history of the Winterlands.

1: The Imperial Essay office: Ore is sold to the Empire here. All platinum must be sold here immediately after being found. Also in charge of official mining claims, though these are not necessarily enforced by the Targ.

2: Sawbin Refinery: Winterlanders may sell their Ore here, or have their ore refined for a fee. They also sell Iron, copper and other metals.

3: Sawbin Suppliers: Winterlanders may buy their Mining tools and other supplies here.

4: Tyran's Moneychanger: A place where people may have their money exchanged for larger or smaller denominations, may sell or buy gems or sequins, silver, gold, copper, and iron.

5: Independent Miners Clan: All non-imperial miners are encouraged to join the Miners Clan. They keep their own records of claims and all Clan members will honour these claims. They also help support aged and injured miners. They may broker ore sales to the Empire, usually getting a better price than a Winterlander would get when selling ore themselves.

6: Winterlands local Targ (council hall): The local Targ headquarters. The Targ's duties are explained earlier in this issue. Each Targ hall also has the option of maintaining it's own security

force or even standing army if it so chooses, though this is rare.

7: Local water spring: a heated water supply for takkets or Winterlanders.

8: Imperial Stables: Horses are maintained here for the use of Imperials only. Imperials may not sell horses to Winterlanders. Horses are not native to the Winterlands.

9: Lumber mill: Quality Lumber can be bought here.

Logs, timbers and boards can be found everywhere in Stroh-branoch, remains of past shacks and mine works. These can be used for building shacks and other buildings. For a more permanent structure, or one holding more status, Winterlanders will use quality cut lumber. Heros may choose to build there shack anywhere shacks are shown on the map.

10: Independent Bronzer: In most worlds this would be a blacksmith, but with the rareness of iron most household materials, tools and weapons are made of bronze.

All materials are made to order whether they be bronze nails, pots, pickaxes, swords or armour.

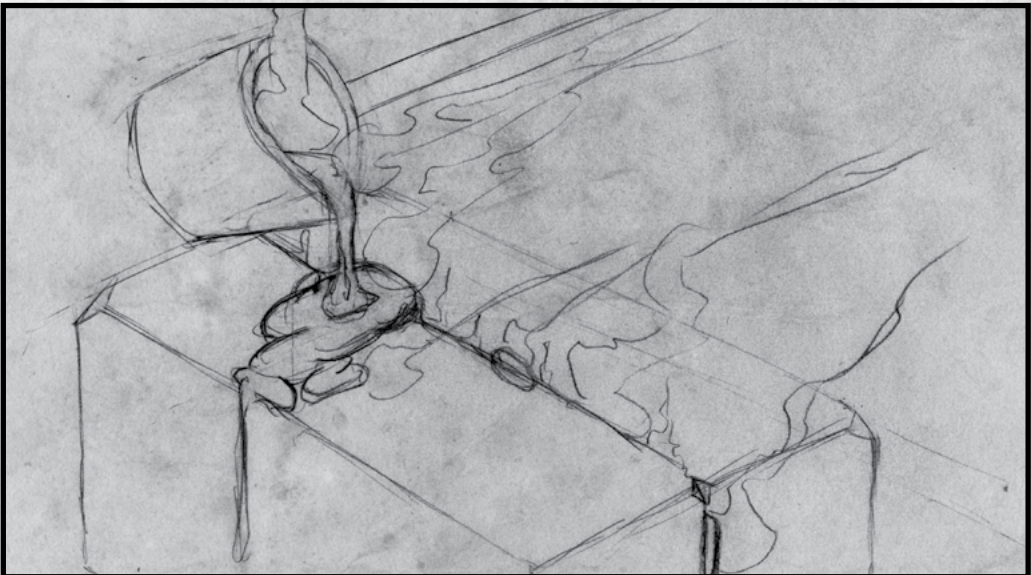
11: Independent Blacksmith: The blacksmith is a revered and honoured profession. Steel items are incredibly expensive but vastly superior to their bronze counterparts. Blacksmithing is a complicated art, and the materials are incredibly expensive. The smith is looked upon as a kind of sorcerer or mythical being.

12: Imperial Blacksmith: Available only to Imperials.

13: Imperial workers store: Only available to imperial employees (see next issue for the plight if the miners working at the Imperial mines)

14: Imperial Miners Barracks: Imperial miners can choose to live in these cramped quarters.

15: Local Targ stores and residence: Lower





ranking Targ and Targ from other towns stay here. These are also the storerooms for Targ food supplies.

16: Cast off removal: These Winterlanders are in charge of collecting cast off from the large refineries and the at home refining pits. They also keep the streets clear of debris and scrap lumber. Without them the streets would be choked with industrial debris in weeks.

17: Olne's original tavern: Food lodging and a good place for travellers to stay. No fighting or lawlessness allowed at Olne's and their Sheriff is very strict.

18: Temple of the Wolf Brother: The closest thing to a national government in the Winterlands. Each city, village, and settlement has their own Targ (collectively called the Targ).

The high temple of the Wolf Brother lies down below in the foothills of the Winterlands. All temples of the Wolf Brother follow the orders

of the high priest. Each temple has its own arch priest in charge of its running and the followers in their area.

The temple of the Wolf Brother is used for important rites; celebrations, weddings funerals, feast days etc.

Much of the priests time is spent amongst the people and hospitals or helping the people as required.

Priests of the Wolf Brother may choose to patrol the borders as security, work in the hospitals, study ancient texts or travel to other temples.

All acolytes, when joining the temple, spend their first years travelling from temple to temple, carrying letters, whether for the temple, the targs, or for other winterlanders. These acolytes are the closest thing to a messenger or postal service the Winterlands have. See future issues for more on the lives of the Wolf Brothers priests as well as the role of Wolf Brother in the history of Kartharka.

19: Imperial Miners Guild: The Free Imperial Miners, skilled, well equipped, and well paid, the Imperial miners are eyed jealously by any miner down on their luck. They work for good wage and live a relatively good life. Unlike an independent miner however they have no chance of "striking it big" when finding the mother lode.

20: Wayfarers inn or "Wayhouse": Maintained by the Targ and dotting the roads of the Winterlands. Stockpiled with food supplies for stranded or destitute travellers.

Each also has a Sheriff, maintaining road law within their jurisdiction.

21: Wayfarer Inn and Gambling Hall: Gambling is legal in the Winterlands, though some halls are more honest than others. Some act as fronts for criminals, robbers, thieves, con men, smugglers and murderers.

22: Collapsed Limrust Refinery: Once a refinery rivalling that of the empire. The refinery caught fire and collapsed mysteriously years ago. The entire Limrust family was tragically trapped inside the Refinery at the time of its collapse.

23: Winterlands Sages Hall: This hall is the living quarters for the local Winterlands sages. Each large settlement has its own Sages Hall and Tower. All training, work and research takes place in the Sages Towers however.

24: Winterlands Sages Towers: The entrance is at the base of one tower. This tower contains the working quarters and research rooms of the sages. At the top of this tower is a bridge leading to the second tower. The second tower contains the libraries of the Sages. Scrolls tablets, and books made up of sheets of paper tied between two boards. They make up the knowledge of the Sages.

It is also rumoured that below this tower are basement vaults, in which are stored ancient relics of history, relics of the lost races which once ruled the first men, broken remains of their mysterious tools, and other items once rumoured to wield great magical powers in the time of sorcery. All of these are useless now but hoarded till a time when they can be understood.

25: Autumnlands Sages pyramid. A smaller version of the stepped pyramids which the Autumnlands sages occupy in their own land. Sages travelling to the Winterlands from the Autumnlands reside and study here.

26: Autumnlands Windhall (Council Hall): Ambassadors, diplomats and merchants of the Autumnlands conduct their business in this building.

27: Autumnländ Tavern and Inn: Specialising and catering to Autumnländ visitors.

28: Takkett trainers huts and pens: Stroh-Branoch does not have hot springs, which anyone raising Takkets usually require, luckily matten grasses are so plentiful they are easily imported into the city. The trainers also supply the Takkett fuel to any who need it.

29: Unsavory encampment: The cast-off and Ne'er do wells of Stroh-Branoch. A citizen can be of no note at all, a citizen of good standing, a citizen of poor standing, or a cast off. These cast-off may not receive the free food from the Targ, may not join the others at the public heaters and may not make their dwellings in the city. They may also make no mining claims nor stay at any wayhouses. They are branded on their forehead with the mark of the sheriff who cast them out, as well as the mark of the sheriffs jurisdiction.

Encampment has no sheriffs, no food, and no heaters.

They may do business in the town if they wish but they will not be treated well, will be overcharged for any goods, and will be turned out of most taverns and gambling halls.

The unsavory encampment can be very freeing though. No laws and no rules, no sheriffs and no Targ rulings, they are free to do as they please.

30: Summerlands Peoples Senate (Council Hall): Ambassadors and diplomats from the Summerlands stay here. Closed to the public the people of the Summerlands do not mingle with the Winterlanders.

31: Summerlands Sages: closed to the public, they will sometimes have brief contact with the Winterlands Sages, usually offering trades of information or artefacts only.

32: Apothecary: The works of the Apothecary are mainly medicinal, though they can create other liquids, such as acids or polishes.

33: Imperial Hospital: Available only to Imperials.

34: Public Hospital: Run primarily by the priests of the Wolf Brother, the winterlands sages, and the apothecaries.

35: Tindyl's Wayhouse: The highest quality Inn and Gambling house in Stroh-Branoch. Frequented by the rich and powerful, entrance is allowed only to those of great influence and wealth.

36: Merchants Plaza: A huge outdoor bazaar, housed beneath a massive and sprawling tent made of cloth, fur and wood. The rule of the Targ demands that all business transactions made with the empire and outsiders must take place outdoors, in the open, in full view of all. The actual transactions that take place here are mostly ceremonial as the goods and monies are often stored elsewhere with the actual bartering taking place beforehand. Nevertheless a ceremonial bartering will still take place in public with the Winterlander of course appearing to harshly fleece the outlander with many protestations from the poor merchant that his children will starve and that the Winterlanders drive a cruel and selfish bargain. The contract is then officially



signed and the merchants leave to oversee the transfer of goods.

37: The abandoned, and rumoured to be haunted, ruins of the Limrust family Homes: Rumours of the Empire destroying the Limrust refinery live strong to this day, though the Targ declared the event officially an accident.

None wish to try the Empires patience by exploring these ruins and opening an old and still painful wound.

38: Limrust family tombs: The Limrust family did not attend the Wolf Brother temple, they instead worshipped the Stone Brother, the god of their ancestors who first came to Stroh-Branoch. Stone Brother is worshipped more commonly upon the steppes of the Winterlands and does not have a central church as the Wolf Brother does. The family were all buried according to the Stone Brother way in family Tombs. Wolf Brother followers cremate their dead and place their ashes with the rest of the community in the great mausoleum of the Wolf Brother.

39: Winterlands Mercenaries: Fighters for hire. Hired by caravans, miners, or anyone else that has need of a sword. Their honour is based on loyalty to their contract. They will not accept all contracts but once they do they must see it through to the end whether they agree with their employer or not. In Winterland law a mercenary is not responsible for any actions he takes under direct orders from his employer.

All contracts are documented and tracked at the Mercenaries hall and every one has a goal or time limit.

Once the contract is up the Mercenary is free to take another contract but may never take one which contradicts a previous contract. For instance; once a mercenary takes a contract to protect a certain mine for 6 months he may not take a contract later to attack that mine. To break this contract or to go against a previous employer will lead to the mercenary becoming an outcast and lose all standing in the winterlands.

A mercenary may choose to do a personal job for no fee but will still be expected to lodge this at the hall as an "official" contract for no fee.

40: Winterlands Chapter of the Masters of Coin: Another group of mercenaries but far farther reaching. Chapter houses of the Coin Brotherhood stretch across the Empire with the

Father house located in the Empires Capital city. A secretive group they deal also in Information, and can be contacted to obtain specific pieces of information, or certain hard to find objects. Though their reach is far they do take time to contact their other houses. They do travel quickly however as they are one of the few groups allowed to travel with the black caravan in exchange for protection.

They are an exclusive group however and few winterlanders belong to the organization.

41: Current meeting place of the Hand: In a area where the official law is so vague, and where the unspoken rules mean death if they are broken, any "Criminal" must be careful. A con man would be immediately stabbed in the belly if found out, anyone attempting to break into an average winterlanders home is asking for a sword or mining pick in the skull. In a land where you swing either a sword or a mining pick to earn your living, the weaker must find other ways to make their fortune. The sages are not an option for those not able to read and write and pay for the privilege as well. So often the weaker must make do with being a toiling craftsmen or Merchant. But in a land where most make their own tools, houses, and furniture neither the craftsmen nor the merchant have much business to rely on.

So some turn to less honest means, smuggling and crooked gambling are the most common sources of income. Theft and murder are also a common source of income for the criminal. These people are called upon to acquire something, or kill someone for those who cannot risk being caught. Those of high standing who need to remain that way. The onus of the crime lies on the thief not the one who hired them. A captured thief will be either killed or outcast and the "law" cares little who paid for the crime. The Sheriff or Targ will ignore any such information from a thief, as false accusations of these kinds can lead to a war of retribution none want.

The Law of the Winterland is that all must protect their own and a victim of these crimes is considered foolish or weak for allowing this to happen to them.

Of course all of this requires a complicated chain of contacts and go-to people to operate and this structure is organized through meetings of like minded individuals.

The Hand controls all of these things and receives a cut of each transaction. Infighting is common however and any leader of the hand is temporary. This is all considered normal to members of the Hand and promotion is not necessarily through assassination, a Hand leader that leads the group to profits, and is able to mislead the Targ and Sheriffs about their activities will continue to lead.

42: Targ Houses: Houses of the Targ council members.

43: Ancients House: These are scattered throughout the Winterlands, especially in older settlements. They resemble an ancient Winterlands structure or hall but are made of a single piece of solid stone. With doors and windows and all other normal features also all carved out of solid stone. There are no cracks or openings to the inside. They seem to be solid monuments carved in the shape of a temple or

home but with no openings.

Legend says these are the houses of the "Ancients" the peoples who lived in this land before the cataclysm that destroyed the seasons.

They serve no purpose and are mostly ignored by the people living around them. Some even build homes against them or on top of them as they would any other stony outcrop.

44: Another Ancients House

45: Puking Rock: An amusing rock outcrop from which spews a hot spring.

46: Ancients Grove: A strange grove of trees alien to the rest of the Winterlands. None travel to this place, supposedly haunted and definitely dangerous, it is roamed by particularly fierce animals.

47: Wild Takket lair: This hollow is filled by a group of wild takkets, small wiry and vicious compared to the domestic takket. Some will hunt the odd takket here, or capture a few to introduce a specific trait to the domestic takket stock.

They are mostly left alone as their wild nature makes them far more dangerous than useful. Childhood tales speak of a giant multi-horned takket that roams through this herd at night. The stories say if any come too close to the Herd while the great takket roams they will be impaled on his great horns and flown to the top of the great Fang peaks and dropped upon them.

48: Imperial Checkpoint: None enter the great Imperial fortress, housing stables warehouses and refineries as well as the local Imperial Overseer.

49: Local Merchants

50: Gambling halls which may or may not be crooked.





STROH BRANOCH

HERO RECORD SHEET

Demonlord: _____
 Realm: _____
 Homeland: _____
 Demense: _____

Current Fighting Power				
Defense	Attack	Endurance	Damage	Move
	Shield? <input type="checkbox"/> +2			

Special Abilities:

Demense Features:

Treasure	Special:
Iron:	
Gold:	Gems:
Silver:	Sequins:

EquipmentThis image shows a blank, aged, cream-colored page, likely an endpaper or flyleaf of a book. The paper has a slightly textured appearance with some faint smudges and discoloration, characteristic of old paper. The left edge of the page is bound, showing dark stitching or thread. There is no text or other markings on the page.

Fayours

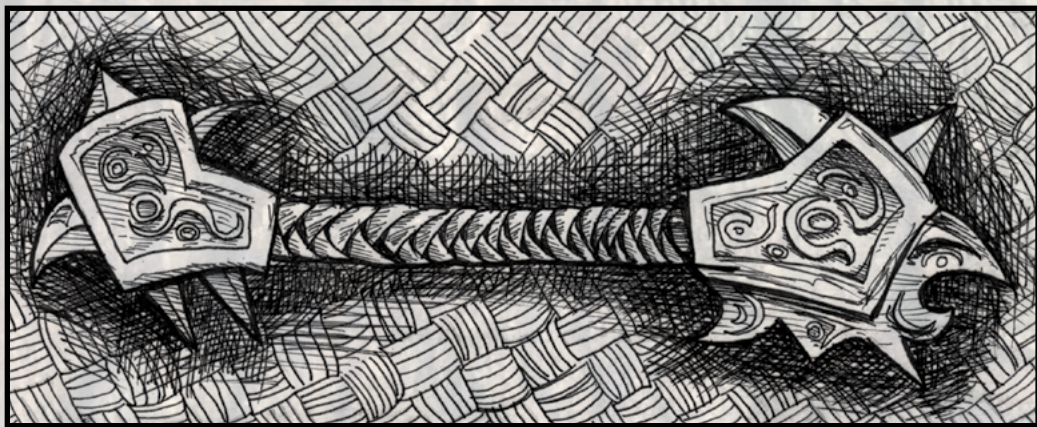
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Rank Bonus

Defense: Attack: Endurance: Damage:

Veteran Points

CLAIR OF Sword & Sorcery



CREATE YOUR HERO

(YOU NEED SOMEONE TO DO YOUR DIRTY WORK)

Where to start

The Hero Record sheet on the previous page is what you will use to track your heroes strengths, weakness, history and glory.

You will want to make a lot of photocopies of this sheet as you'll be using a lot of them in your games of Lair.

We'll skip over the information at the top of now and get right to the heart of the sheet, the part titled "Strengths and Weaknesses"

There are 6 main attributes that define your Hero. His "Body", "Mind", "Quickness", "Vitality", "Camaraderie", and "Other World".

Body: Defines how big and strong your hero is. His pure physical power.

Mind: Defines his intellectual faculties, such as learning, planning, solving riddles, reading and writing.

Quickness: The speed of the hero, whether when running, swinging a sword, dodging a blow, or reacting to something surprising.

Vitality: The Heroes vital fortitude, the ability to endure long marches, to suffer and heal from injuries, to overcome adversity, to soldier on when all seems lost.

Camaraderie: The heroes ability to lead and get along with others, whether leading a charge of warriors, haggling with a merchant or being able to tell if someone is not being truthful.

Other World: The stuff of sorcery, whether trying to enslave a demon, resist a witches spell or to know which shoulder to throw salt over to ward off bad luck, the other world attribute encompasses all this.

Don't worry about the specific details of how all this works yet, simply use this as a guideline for now.

An average denizen of Kartharka would have a 0 in each of these Attributes meaning that they are average, neither above or below the normal.

But you will be living the life of a Hero! Heroes stride the earth taking what they wish, or stand like a wall against the evil that would

imperil their land. They are a cut above, something special, and so they are given a little something special when you create your Hero.

You Have 5 "points" to distribute amongst the Attributes you would like to excel in. These are your Heroes "strengths"

If you wish to be a muscle bound brute towering above all those you survey then you could put all 5 points into "Body". You do this by writing "+5" in the box to the Right of "Body" (see the example character sheet to see more)

Or you could choose to have one attribute be +3 and another be +2, or put +1 into 5 different Attributes.

It is up to you make your Hero your own.

But Heroes have another thing in common, they always have a weakness. You must now assign weaknesses to those attributes which you have not added any bonus to.

You have 5 points of "Weakness" to distribute amongst any attributes you have not added a point to.

For example you could choose to put all 5 of your weakness points into "Other World", to do so write -5 in the box to the right of Other World. Just as with your strengths you may distribute these 5 points however you wish, with -3 to one attribute and -2 to another, or even -1 to 5 different attributes. The important thing is that you cannot assign these weaknesses to any attribute you have already added a bonus to.

Your character is now starting to take shape, he could be a huge lumbering brute of great power but very slow moving, or a little stronger and faster, but a little fearful of sorcery, and have difficulty getting along with others.

Make your Hero your own and worry not about their weaknesses, revel in them, or enjoy watching them overcome them as they grow and learn.

EXAMPLE HERO RECORD SHEET

Player Name: _____
 Hero Name: *Karnak Stonethrower*
 Role: *Hunter*
 Rank: *0*

Demonlord: _____
 Realm: *The Winterlands*
 Homeland: *Karthok village*
 Demense: *None*

Strengths & Weaknesses		Veteran Skills	
Body	Attack	+2	
	Poison		
Mind		-2	
Quickness	Defense	+2	
	Dodge		
Vitality	Endurance	+1	
	Suffocation		
Camaraderie	Followers	-1	
	Morale		
Other World	Sorcery	-2	
	Sorcery		

Current Fighting Power				
Defense	Attack	Endurance	Damage	Move
3	2	9	0	4
	Shield? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> +2			

Special Abilities:

Demense Features:

Defense	
Armour Worn	
Head <i>plate</i>	
Body <i>leather, chain</i>	
Arms	
Legs	
Quickness Bonus	+2
Rank Bonus	
Veteran Skills Bonus	
Total	+3

Treasure	Special:
Iron: _____	
Gold: _____	Gems: _____
Silver: _____	Sequins: _____

Attack	
Body Bonus	+2
Rank Bonus	
Veteran Skills Bonus	
Total	+2

Equipment

Heavy Takket Fur cloak with hood, worn
Takket fur clothes, worn
Takket fur mittens, worn
Sturdy Takket fur foot covers, worn
Sword, sheathe on belt
5 spears, quiver on belt
Weeks supply of Matten Fuel, drag sled
Weeks supply of Matten rounds, drag sled
Flint and striker, bag
50 feet of rope, worn
50 feet of rope, drag sled
2 torches, bag
2 spikes, bag
Hammer, bag

Endurance	
Starting	8
Vitality Bonus	+1
Rank Bonus	
Veteran Skills Bonus	
Total	+9

Damage	
Rank Bonus	
Veteran Skills Bonus	
Total	0

Favours

Rank Bonus

Defense: Attack: Endurance: Damage:

Veteran Points:

SLAIR OF
Sword &
Sorcery

EQUIPMENT IN THE WORLD OF KARTHARKA: DESIGNERS NOTES

The spirit of Kartharka is not one of endless tables of miscellaneous equipment broken down by price, weight, availability and cost. Your Hero is a full grown man (or woman) who has been making their own way through life for at least a year. They are often travellers and so carry a minimum of equipment. They also will have to hand all the things necessary for survival, and in the Winterlands survival means being well prepared.

All Heros will have a certain amount of equipment to start. See the next page for a list of what that is.

As Heros grow in fame and fortune they will want to improve their weaponry, armour and standard of living. These things will all be detailed in the next issue of Lair in the "Veteran" issue.

Carrying Limits: Notes

Now lets discuss the Carrying limit of your Hero. And lets be honest about why it exists. In every game there comes a point when two things will happen:

1: The Heros will want to bring every conceivable piece of equipment with them to cover every possible encounter, hundreds of feet of rope, dozens of varying weapons, poles, cages, traps, iron bars, enough food to last them months on the road, digging tools, mining tools, climbing tools etc. etc.

2: The heroes will want to bring back from their adventure every single thing which wasn't nailed down to sell; furniture, rugs, rare silks, urns full of incense, whole stone statues, etc. etc.

Game masters and designers usually react to these two things with endless rules to limit how much the heroes can carry, things like encumbrance tables, movement modifiers, combat modifiers, and more endless tables of the size, shape and weight of every conceivable item, as well as how much can fit in every bag, box, chest, or backpack.

The Heroes then respond with hiring porters, pack animals, carts and wagons, creating magical carrying devices and spells, creating teleporting potions and scrolls etc. etc.

To which the Game master again responds with more lists of tables of prices for porter and pack animals, morale systems for these poor tagalongs to see if they run off with your equipment, sorcerous ways to stymie their magical carrying equipment, and on and on.

And round and round it goes, creating more rules and spending more game time on this minutia of travel and portage and record keeping on both sides of all the details. Having to calculate the wages of your followers every time you sit down to play is not Kartharka, it's accounting.

See the next page for the Kartharka rules on carrying limits.

Armour and Weapons: Notes

The Kartharka concept of combat is very simple. Stab a man in the neck with a sword and he will die. If you stab him in the neck with a dagger he will die too. Or stab him with a sharpened stick, a Glaive-Guisarmse-Voulge, a scimitar, manriki-gusari or even a well placed dart.

All weapons can kill, what matters is how good is the person holding it. Kartharka is not about calculating the best possible weapon for any given combat depending on terrain, the opponent, his armour, your armour, whether the moon is full, or if the opponent is defending with a certain weapon. This is not Kartharka. Kartharka is when Conan ran on to a battlefield naked, swinging the chain he was shackled with earlier and crushing the skulls of every opponent he came across. So all weapons cause the same damage once they get through an opponents defence.

Death.

Armour: Notes

Many games go on endlessly about armour choices. Endlessly breaking down light, medium, heavy armour, chain, scale, leather, studded, ring, plate, full plate, field plate, helm, full helm, and on and on. Each has it's own benefits and detractions in these games, some have better defence but limit your speed, or combat ability, or the amount of other equipment you can carry, getting a better defence score always comes at a cost, and why is that? Honestly I really don't know. I believe it stems from a mind-set that came about along with the "every weapon is unique in it's own special way" thinking, and so armour must as well. They look at all the different types of armour used in our world across the ages and think there must be a reason why there are so many different types around the world. I mean if full field plate was the absolute best armour why didn't every single warrior since the history of time use it?

Of course the real answer is based on much more than "which is the best armour". It is really a case of money, time, culture, technology, and materials. This is what actually controlled armour production and not "what is the best armour", or "tactical modifiers" or "ease of movement". No soldier fighting for someone else's cause would ever trade off defence for "ease of movement". Do you really thing peasants fighting for their medieval lords chose not to wear plate armour so that they would be better able to manoeuvre on the field? No! They just could not afford it.

I could go on even more but what this boils down to is the **Kartharka tenet of armour: More armour is better, get more armour!**

The armour list included in this issue lists the most common armour available to Heros of modest means. The veteran issue will contain more obscure and better armour.



EQUIPMENT IN THE WORLD OF KARTHARKA: RULES

Starting Equipment

You Hero starts with the necessities of Life in the Winterlands. Write the items below in the equipment box on the Hero Record sheet. See the example hero sheet for how things are written.

- Heavy Takket Fur cloak with hood
- Takket fur or Takket leather clothes (any cut or style the hero prefers; long and flowing, tight to the body, well made or travel stained.
- Takket fur mittens
- Sturdy Takket fur foot covers.
- Two weapons from the equipment list, weapons come with sheathes, if a throwing weapon is chosen the hero is equipped with a bandolier of 5 of the weapons.
- 4 pieces of armour, of any type, for any part of the body. A shield counts as 1 piece. The armour rules are listed in the next column along with how to record armour.
- Weeks supply of Matten Fuel for fires
- Weeks supply of Matten Flour rounds
- Flint and striker
- 2 large items from the Equipment list (may choose the same thing twice)
- 5 small items from the Equipment list (may choose the same thing multiple times)
- Large Leather Carry Sack (shoulder bag, may hold up to 20 small items)
- Drag sled (May carry up to 5 large items as well as 40 small items)

On the character sheet write where the items are stored, only one coil of rope can be "worn".

Carrying Limits

Lets be honest, what this really means is "How much loot can I drag back to town?" In the world of Kartharka there are three kinds of loot:

1: Enough treasure for my Hero to pay for a room and food, buy a new weapon, and blow the rest at the tavern, gambling and drinking.

2: I can buy anything on the equipment list and travel to the next town for even bigger and better things.

3: Enough loot to retire to a life of luxury in the summerlands.

Anything else is just more bookkeeping. In a world where Iron is more valuable than gold (and lighter) an steel sword is more valuable as a weapon than as treasure. Steel weapons and armour are so expensive that most people would rarely see them much less own them. If you stumbled upon this as loot you would likely throw your bronze sword to the ground and leave it behind once you found a steel one, hardly bothering to bring the bronze one back to town to sell it.

And gold coins, in the form of the Imperial Princep, are rarely found outside of a merchants coffers or a money changers vault. Gold being heavy and relatively useless is used mostly by merchants and money changers as a convenient form of exchange. Iron pieces are far more sought after and are looked at more as a trade good than a form of currency, often being melted down to create something more useful almost immediately after it is acquired.

The currency of the commoner is the copper piece, being of small value but still useful in a society where bronze is the best metal available to commoners.

For merchants dealing in larger amounts of wealth, the Sequin is the usual form of currency. Very small and light, it is a copper coin set with semiprecious stones and stamped with the value of the stones in Iron Pieces.

This means that treasure encountered in the wild is often either highly portable gems or useful things like steel items. Let them carry as much of the currency as they like. For items like gold candlesticks or useful goods they can carry as much as their large carry sack and drag sled will allow.

In the third issue of lair more guidelines will be provided to allow the heros to carry more to allow them to travel longer distances. For now assume that the heroes can carry their starting equipment as well as filling their carry sack and drag sled.

Armour

The more armour you have the better.

For beginning heros the armour available is on the armour list in this issue.

You will see in the starting equipment that you can choose 4 pieces of armour, but what constitutes a piece of armour?

Armour is broken down into 4 places on a hero, head, body, legs and arms. On each of the places the hero can wear a number of armour items. Indeed in the real world a soldiers armour was made up of many varying layers of different materials.

A hero may wear one of each of the following layers on each part of the body, cloth, leather, rings, and plate.

Cloth: A thick woollen garment, a fine silk, or quilted padding.

Leather: Thick sturdy and resistant to damage. This refers to a flexible leather layer like a jacket, pants or hood.

Rings: A metal layer of rings, whether it be completely of metal like chain mail, a flexible layer of small interlocked plates like scale mail, or rings sewn to a leather backing like ring mail. This is a semi flexible at least partially metal layer.

Plate: Solid armour of little flexibility. Whether it be made of one solid piece like a breastplate, or a semi flexible layer like banded armour it is a solid defence against blows.

Three pieces of armour adds 1 point to your defence. (Round up).

Look at the example hero record sheet to see how this armour should be written

A piece of armour for the legs or arms is considered to be a pair, so one piece of arm armour refers to a pair which is worn.

But what about the shield?

The shield is not considered armour, (except for when choosing starting equipment). It has it's own rules, and modifies the heros attack score instead of defence. (Explained in the combat rules more fully)

MONEY AND TREASURE IN THE WORLD OF KARTHARKA

Tracking and Spending Money

Let's get one thing straight about the world of Kartharka; money is used by rich people. It is used to make trading large amounts of goods between cities and countries easier. Regular people use copper coins not because it is the smallest unit of currency but because it is a cheap and useful trade good, and using it in coin form means you don't have to weigh the copper every time you want to make a purchase.

Are you peasant? Scraping a meagre existence from the land for a few coppers and then using them to buy the nights food? Or are you a hero? Striding the land like a maelstrom, making blood fall like rain on the battlefield, and gold fall like rain in the taverns!

You'll notice that coppers aren't even listed on the character sheet as a hero would not even bother picking it up.

While we don't bother tracking those coppers we assume you always have a few in a purse somewhere about your person. A hero can always be assumed to have enough money to survive. They will always have some Matten flour for food and if they choose to sleep in a chair in any of the wayhouses of the land none would bother to stop them. (Or dare to for that matter).

Money is for buying a round of drinks at the inn. For buying weeks worth of food for a long journey. For buying rope, armour and weapons. In the frozen wastes of the winterlands few things are easy to make and so all equipment is expensive but with the harshness of the countryside also comes the willingness of the people to share a fire with a fellow traveller and make sure that their fellow townspeople have enough to at least live for another day.

So when your character enters a bar, don't ask how much a mug of ale costs, throw a handful of gold on the bar and tell the barman to pour until the money is gone.

Remember Kartharka isn't about counting coins, it's about living like a hero!

When you find money (or earn it) while adventuring track it in the treasure section.

10 copper coins equals 1 silver coin
10 silver coins equals 1 gold coin
10 gold coins equals 1 iron coin
10 iron coins equals 1 platinum coin

There is a place to mark in silver gold and iron coins. Sequins are tracked by total value in iron coins.

Platinum is tracked in the "Special" section.

Large gold candlesticks and such would be tracked in the "special" section or under equipment.

Spending Money

In the winterlands people fend for themselves(similar to the pioneers in our history). They make their own tools, furniture, houses, clothes, grow their own food, keep their own animals. People do not buy things.

Heroes buy things, they travel too much to carry all the tools to make things and don't have the time to do so even if they did.

But in a large town like Stroh-Branoch people come from all across the world to make their fortunes. Being travellers themselves they also have few tools and being miners also little time to build.

So there are tradespeople in Stroh-Branoch that sell their goods.

Prices vary greatly, and when a tradesman sees a hero stride in they are definitely going to charge them more. Their prices will be measured in gold, and as much of it as they can get. Return business from a hero is not to be depended on as they often disappear soon after leaving a town.

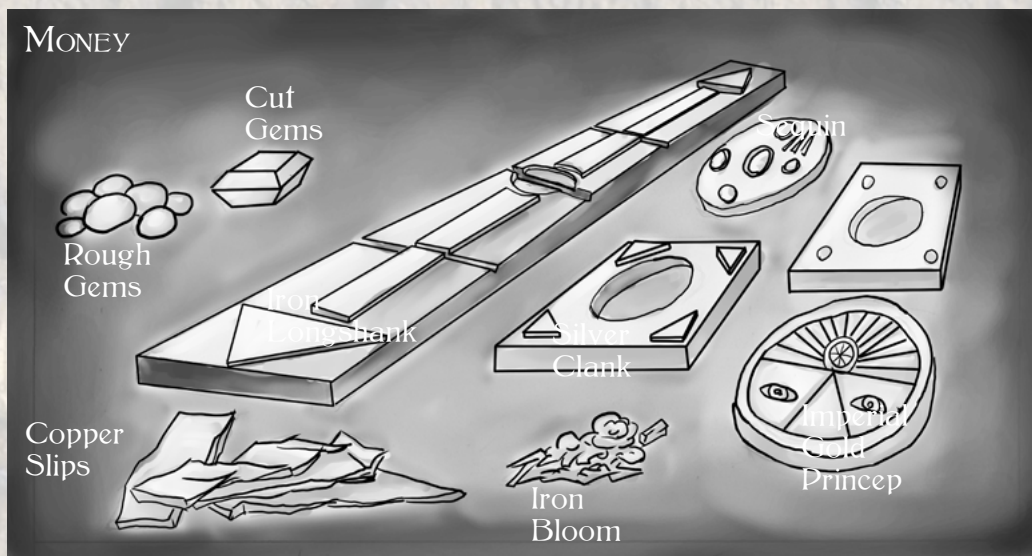
Everything on the equipment lists will cost at least a gold coin. If the Heros camaraderies is a negative this will be added to the price (A camaraderie of -1 will meant a minimum of 2 gold coins per item) or if any of the heros close friends has a negative camaraderie.

If a hero is rude, or in a hurry, or seems rich, the price will also double or triple.

And they can take the price or leave it.

Starting money

Except for the purse of a few coppers mentioned earlier the Hero starts with no money.



WEAPON LIST

All weapons are assumed to be made of bronze. Rules for steel weapons will be included in the Veteran issue.

Axe: Makes a good weapon, and can also be used to chop wood, or slaughter an animal or quarter an animal after hunting. With a 2 foot handle and a solid head with a flat side and a chopping side. The flat side can be used in combat or to hammer in a stake or nail. The flat side may be replaced with a heavy spice, or the Hero may choose to use the crescent shaped Kartharkan War Axe

Sword: A sturdy 2 foot bronze blade, good for slashing and stabbing. A Winterlands blade has a smallommel, large enough to prevent the hand from sliding up the blade but not useful for stopping an enemies blade. They are relatively light however compared to the large pommelled imperial swords.

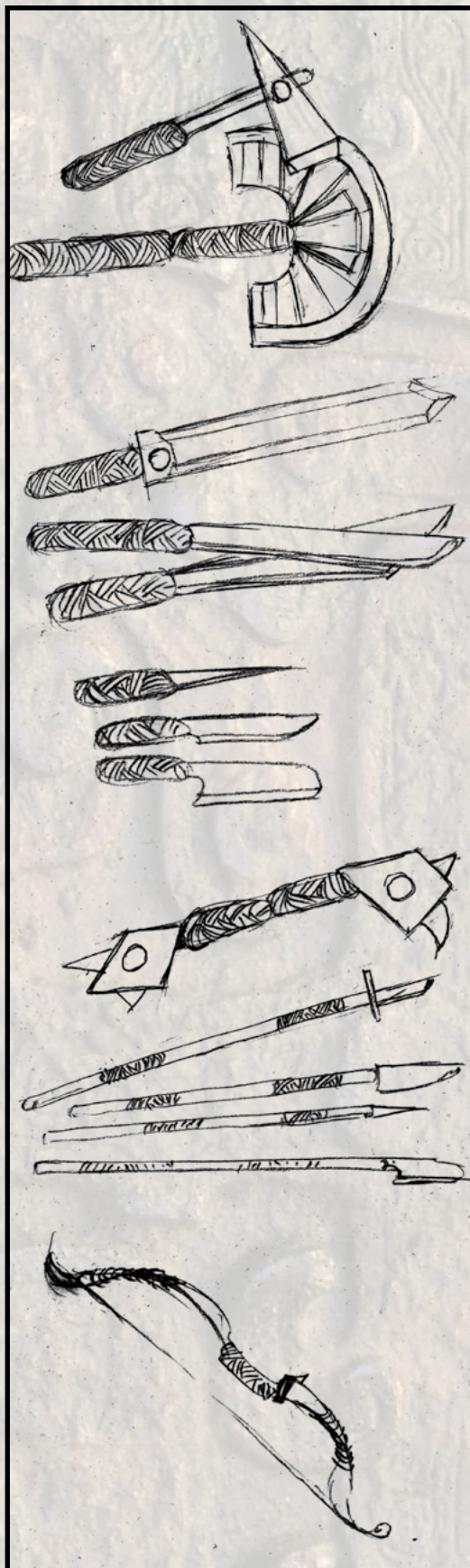
Knife or dagger: Winterland knives or daggers have no crosspieces. A knife is easily hidden, can be thrown as a weapon, and is also useful for cutting meat, rope, leather or cloth. The dagger can also be thrown. The dagger is primarily a stabbing weapon and though not as useful for cutting materials is quite good at punching holes in things.

The Kartharkan Mace: A brutal weapon. It has few uses other than killing. A two foot wooden shaft with a bronze head on each end covered in short spikes and sometimes blades. Made only for killing men it is good at it. While many carry swords for defence in the Winterlands, if someone carries the Kartharkan mace they are advertising the fact that they kill men for profit. In a land where many mercenaries are hired, to protect or attack, this is not seen as necessarily a bad thing but people think twice before menacing someone wielding this weapon.

The spear: A Kartharkan spear is a useful weapon. It may be used in hand to hand combat to stab or slash or it may be thrown at an enemy or animal as well. Indeed Most hunters prefer the spear when hunting in the wilds of Kartharka. The wild animals of the winterlands often lie in wait and a bow is of little use when the bearer is pounced upon by a savage mountain cat.

The Winterlander Composite Bow: Made from stiff hardwoods, takket horn and leather. The Kartharkan Composite bow is a deadly weapon.

You will notice there is no listing for arrows on the equipment chart. It is assumed that the Hero has "enough" arrows. They don't break as often as people think and a normal quiver can quite easily accommodate 50 Arrows. Anyone who has carried a quiver of 50 wooden arrows can attest to how light it actually is and how little space the arrows take up.

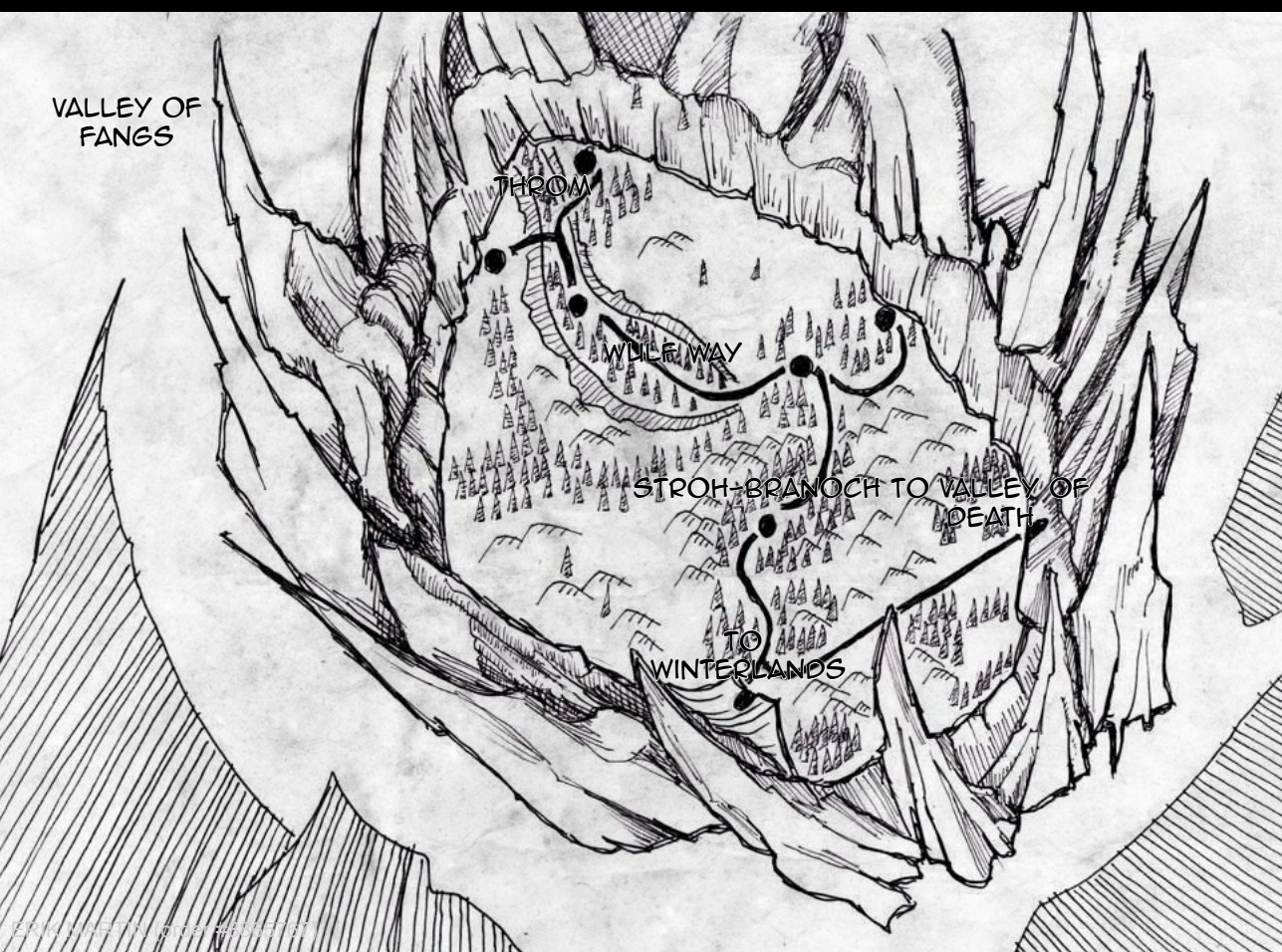


THE WORLD OF KARTHARKA









ARMOUR LIST

This is a list of Winterlander armour and any metals used are considered to be either copper or bronze. Rules for steel armour will be in the Veteran Issue.

HEAD

Cloth: A quilted takket fur covering is tied to the top of the head.

Leather: A leather hood covers the full head and neck

Rings: fine copper rings are woven into chain mail covering the whole head and neck

Plate: the Kartharkan crown of Bronze, a band surrounds the head, and sometime face, protecting it from solid strikes, it is also often surmounted by flanges to ward off blows from above.

ARMS

Cloth: heavy furs or a quilted square of heavy cloth is tied around the arms.

Leather: A thin flexible leather sleeve is worn tied to each other about a ring on the chest and back.

Rings: May either be a fine copper chain mail or bronze rings sewn to a thick leather backing.

Plate: The basic Kartharkan plate is often made of a hardwood with a thinly hammered sheet of copper covering it. May also be made of a similar style out of bronze. Kartharkan plate normal consists of long strips of wood or bronze held together with a bronze band. They are often also varnished and lacquered for strength and durability. A well made copper and wood kartharkan banded mail is often as good as it's counterpart made completely of cast bronze.

LEGS

The armour of the legs is made in exactly the same way as the arms.

BODY

Cloth: Multiple layers of quilting or fur are compressed and then stitched tightly together making a very stiff garment shaped like a vest. Pulled over the head and tied on the side.

Rings: If the hero plans to wear plate then the ring layer will usually be made of a large woven chain mail made of bronze rings. The rings are much larger than the mail of the arms legs or head. If they will not be wearing plate they will usually wear an armour of square bronze scales, held together with copper rings in a tight interlocking pattern. These scales may also be made of a hard wood with a copper sheathing and lacquered. Any of these choices can be worn with the Kartharkan plate.

Plate: The Kartharkan body plate will either be made of bands of wood and bronze held together like the kartharkan arm or leg plate.

It can also take the form of the large wooden chest plate.

Made of a solid piece of hardwood, sheathed in copper or bronze and lacquered fur and cloth it is a solid defence.

Extremely large rounded and roomy it has large opening for the head and arms. It absorbs a huge amount of impact without hurting the wearer as a network of straps and a roomy interior keeps it off the body with the weight resting primarily on the hips and shoulders.

Indeed one feels invincible when wearing these as blows bounce off easily with little impact on the wearer.

However the large arm and neck openings give ample target to an experienced warrior. These are greatly favoured by hunters as they are quite useful in protecting against the disembowelling claws of the large mountain predators.

SHIELD

The Kartharkan shield is a solid arm shield 2 feet wide and 3 feet tall. Made of wood and sheathed with copper or lacquered cloth.



EQUIPMENT LIST

The List is separated into large and small items. The Heroes may also buy any items appearing on the starting list of equipment.

Just because something is not on the list does not mean the heroes cannot buy it. If the Demonlord feels that the item would be available where the heroes are then they may buy it.

Please feel free to send in any suggestions you have for additions to the equipment list.

SMALL ITEMS

- . Leather straps
- . Flask
- . Wineskin
- . Tarp
- . Dice
- . Candle
- . Torch
- . 10 foot rope
- . Parchment
- . Writing sticks
- . Chalk
- . Spikes
- . Hammer

LARGE ITEMS

- . 6 foot pole
- . Shovel
- . Pick
- . Snow axe
- . Snow shoes
- . 50 foot rope



FILL IN THE COMBAT BOXES

WITH A PENCIL

Now it's time to fill in the combat details on the character record sheet.

These examples are from the example hero record sheet. We gave our example Hero a Quickness of +2 so we add that number to the Defence in the Quickness Bonus area.

DEFENCE:

The Defence section is where you total all the things which protect you from being injured in combat, your ability to dodge a lethal blow, protective armour and learned skills in combat..

In the armour worn section list all the pieces of armour worn by the Hero.

For every 3 pieces of armour you are wearing you get +1 to defence (round up). If you have a bonus for quickness write it in on the quickness bonus line.

The Rank bonus and Veteran skills bonus are for Veteran characters and will be explained more in the next issue "Veteran Heroes".

Tally up all the boxes in the defence section and you will have your total defence.

Defense	
Armour Worn	+1
Head <i>plate</i>	
Body <i>leather, chain</i>	
Arms	
Legs	
Quickness Bonus	+2
Rank Bonus	
Veteran Skills Bonus	
Total	+3

ATTACK:

The attack section is your heroes fighting ability. It is how hard they can swing a weapon to batter down enemy defences, their skill with a weapon to both attack and parry or block an opponents attack with their weapon.

If the hero has a body bonus write it in the appropriate section.

Rank and Veteran bonus is ignored for now.

Copy the total in the total box.

Attack	
Body Bonus	+2
Rank Bonus	
Veteran Skills Bonus	
Total	+2

ENDURANCE:

A heroes endurance refers to their ability to last in combat before being overcome by their enemy. It is a combination of physical endurance such as the ability to run, swing a weapon, and block others attacks without becoming too tired to continue fighting.

It is also the Heros ability to withstand knocks and bruises, small stabs and slashes and other physical injuries which can incapacitate a fighter without necessarily killing them.

Taking a blow to a shield, while still less painful than having your ribs crushed, still hurts. The Heroes ability to ignore and withstand these minor injuries is key to continuing a drawn out fight.

The starting endurance for all Heroes is 8. A normal man has 4 endurance for comparison.

This is because Heros also have a great deal of luck on their side, a blow which should have hit misses by an inch and the Hero is safe.

If the Hero has a vitality bonus write it in the applicable box.

Rank and veteran bonuses are ignored for now.

Tally up the total and write it in the total box.

Endurance	
Starting	8
Vitality Bonus	+1
Rank Bonus	
Veteran Skills Bonus	
Total	+1

DAMAGE:

The world of Kartharka is brutal and hard. A single blow from your enemy can easily kill you. Medicine is crude and any serious injury will soon lead to death even if you are not killed immediately on the battlefield.

You will want to depend on your ability with your weapon to keep an enemy from getting a blow in, and wear plenty of armour to keep those blows from causing damage when they land.

Note that the only bonuses to damage are for Rank and veteran skills. The damage caused by your weapon is more than enough to kill most men and animals without adding more bonuses.

Damage	
Rank Bonus	
Veteran Skills Bonus	
Total	0

FILL IN THE REST

Now let's fill in the rest of the sheet.

PLAYER NAME: Put your name here

HERO NAME: This is where you but your Heros name. Kartharkan names are always great and are followed by a title. Alternately a family name is used which usually refers to their career. The Stonecutters, Hammersmashers, Cragmen, and Ironmen are all old Stroh-Branoch Mining families for example.

Your character may be Gunta Stonecutter, or if he has turned to a life of adventure may be called Gunta Bloodreaver or a Caravan guard may be Gunta Roadwarden.

ROLE: This is the heroes job in life, what he tells others he does. It has no effect on their abilities or their combat scores but is purely for Role playing purposes. For example Gunta Roadwarden's Role would be "Caravan Guard". There are many things to do in the winterlands and if in doubt say you are a Miner.

RANK: This will be explained in the Veteran issue but for now you can write in the number 0.

Your hero like abilities may have protected you in a few scuffles and some dangerous scrapes but you haven't learned the skills of an accomplished hero yet.

DEMONLORD: Write the name of the person who is in charge of the game, he will be the guy on the other side of the table saying things like "you are attacked by a tiger...", or "sadly you were robbed while you slept".

REALM: This is the place where your heroes are now. Likely it will be the Winterlands. Your Demonlord will let you know where you will be adventuring before you make your Hero.

HOMELAND: This is where your Hero is from.

Likely it will be the Winterlands but it may not be. You can make up a name for your hometown or village or use one from the maps from Issue 1.

DEMENSE: This is where your Heros make your home. When beginning a new Hero they have no home but are travellers. As they settle in they may choose to acquire a home instead of staying at the local tavern or wayhouse.

Details for the basics of a Demense will be in the Veteran issue.

CURRENT FIGHTING POWER:

Copy the total numbers from the left side of the character sheet into these boxes. During a scenario the numbers on the left hand side of the sheet will not usually change. But your current fighting power will constantly be going up and down based on fighting and other events.

If you are using a shield tick the check box in the attack section so you will remember to add +2 to your attack rolls.

MOVE: Simply write a 4 in this box.

SPECIAL ABILITIES: You have none. This section is for Veterans only.

DEMENSE: Features: Detailed in the Veteran issue.

TREASURE: you start with no treasure, but this is where you will track any treasure you find.

Gold silver and Iron are all tracked in number of Coins. Gems are tracked by their total value in Iron coins. Sequins are tracked by their total value in Iron coins.

The Special section is where you can note something which is...special.

EQUIPMENT: This is everything your hero carries when embarking on a mission.

Player Name:	
Hero Name:	Karnak Stonethrower
Role:	Hunter
Rank:	0

Demonlord:	
Realm:	The Winterlands
Homeland:	Karthok village
Demense:	None

Current Fighting Power				
Defense	Attack	Endurance	Damage	Move
3	2	9	0	4
	Shield? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> +2			

COMBAT

DICE

All dice in Lair of sword and sorcery are standard 6 sided dice.

ADVENTURE MODE VERSUS COMBAT MODE

There are two modes of play in Lair of Sword and Sorcery. One is Adventure mode. Where players are free to move about the Demonboard however they want, and may take any action they choose, with success and failure being controlled by the Demonlord.

The other Mode of play is the combat mode. This mode kicks in whenever the players are within a lair and an enemy is on the board. Either they players have entered a room with an enemy or the enemy has walked into a room occupied by the players.

COMBAT MODE

In combat mode everyone takes turns moving, attacking, or taking other actions.

In this issue we will focus primarily on the moving and attacking portions of the game.

WHO GOES FIRST?

When beginning Combat mode the Demonlord will tell you whether or not the players will make their move first or if the Demonlord will be moving first. This will be determined by the scenario being played and how the enemy was revealed.

For now we will assume the players get to act first.

LET'S TAKE TURNS.

The player to the left of the Demonlord acts first. They move then take all of their actions and then play continues clockwise around the table, like in a board game.

MOVING

Heroes may move up to 4 squares on the Demonboard (their move score), usually to bring them close to an enemy or to retreat from an enemy.

They may move in any direction they choose on the board including diagonally. They may move through squares occupied by friends but not through squares occupied by enemies.

DOING SOMETHING

OTHER THAN ATTACKING (SOTA)

The player may choose to have their hero try to do something during this time, perhaps pull a lever to open a portcullis, open a door, knock over a table to hide behind etc. The player is considered to have 5 seconds of time during their turn. So whatever your hero could do in 5 seconds they can do on their turn. The demonlord may decide it takes more than one turn for an action in which case they may have to wait until their next turn for their action to have an effect.

TIME TO ATTACK

If the hero is on a square next to an enemy, whether in front of them, behind them, diagonal to them or to the side the Hero may attack the enemy. In lair of sword and sorcery the figures are not considered to have a "front" or back and are used only to mark the heros place on the board. The hero is able to turn in any direction at any time.

THE ATTACK ROLL

To make an attack the hero rolls 2 dice and adds the total to their Current Attack power on their character sheet.

The enemy then rolls 2 dice and adds the total to their attack score.

If the Heros score is higher he wins, see "Hero Wins!" for effects.

If the Heros score is lower he loses, see "Hero loses" for effects.

If the score is the same then they have a draw, see "A draw" for effects.

HERO WINS!

The hero has come out on top in the flurry of blows. To see how much he has weakened his enemy the hero rolls 1 die. The hero adds his Current Damage score to the dice roll to get the total damage he has done.

The enemy then subtracts their Current Defence from this amount of damage as their armour has absorbed some of the damage or they have dodged some of it.

If the total damage done is now 0 or less due to the enemies defence then the hero still does 1 point of damage to their enemy.

SPECIAL RULE: YOU ALWAYS DO AT LEAST 1 POINT OF DAMAGE IN COMBAT.

This damage taken off the enemies current endurance. Erase the enemies Current endurance score and write in the new total.

This damage is not considered to be a stab in the belly, or a brutal slash to the head, it is considered to be the attack and parry, the punching and kicking, the light slashes and quick stabs to the legs, all of the things which wear your enemy down so that they cannot defend against your killing blow when it comes.

Now subtract 1 from the heroes current Endurance as well. All of this attacking is wearing down their fighting ability as well.

SPECIAL RULE: WHEN ATTACKING YOU WILL ALWAYS TAKE AT LEAST 1 POINT OF DAMAGE.

HERO LOSES:

If the hero loses the enemy gets to score damage on him. The enemy rolls 1 die and adds their current attack power. You now subtract your defence from this total and deduct the total from your endurance. If the amount of damage is 0 or less because of your defence then you still take 1 point of damage.

The Enemy however, also takes 1 point of endurance damage. Just like the hero the enemy always takes at least 1 point of damage.

A DRAW:

Both the hero and the enemy take 1 point of endurance damage, regardless of current attack or

COMBAT CONTINUED...

Once the hero has finished his attack and whether it is a win lose or draw, the turn now goes clockwise to the next hero or the demonlord.

Each hero takes a full turn as described above, moving, taking an action (if they choose), and then combat.

When it is the Demonlord's turn they will move all of the enemies, then the enemies will take all their actions and then all of the enemies will attack.

This is to make it easier on the Demonlord so that they do not have to keep track of who already moved, acted, etc. It also means that they cannot see how well each combat works out before moving on to the next enemy.

When the demonlord attacks you use the same rules for combat as the heroes, he considers his forces to be the Heroes, and the players heroes to be the enemies.

As you can see from the rules above, combat is brutal in Lair of Sword & Sorcery.

When you attack, you do not know whether you will be dealing out damage or taking it. Because each battle is tiring, whether you win or lose, you steadily take endurance damage. If the fights are long and drawn out or against multiple enemies, even powerful heroes will soon fall to the sword.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU GET TO 0 ENDURANCE?

The hero or enemy is considered able to defend themselves until they are down to 0 Endurance. Any attack on the enemy *after* they reach 0 endurance, whether successful or not, has a chance of striking a mortal blow.

When attacking someone with 0 endurance roll for attack etc like any other combat (the 0 endurance fighter may get a lucky strike in before dying). Instead of the 0 endurance person taking damage however, they roll 1 dice.

THE DEATH ROLL

1-3 they have been **STRUCK DOWN** and are unable to fight for the rest of the battle. Lay their figure down flat to signify this.

4-6 they have managed to avoid any serious blows through a frantic swinging of their weapon. They continue to move and fight in combat as usual (still at 0 endurance).

Once the current battle is over, when either the heroes are all dead or fled, or the enemies are all dead or fled, you may check on those who have been dealt a mortal blow. If they belong to the Demonlord they can be considered dead, either they are dead already or the heroes put them to the sword after.

If it is a hero they must now roll a dice to determine their fate.

1 OR 2 the hero has died, either immediately or soon after the mortal blow.

3 OR 4 the hero is **SEVERELY INJURED** but will recover with time. Their role in the current scenario is over but if any of the heroes succeed or at least are able to flee safely, they are able to bring the injured hero back with them to be nursed back to health.

5 OR 6 The hero has been dealt a stunning blow but comes to shortly after. They still have 0 endurance but are able to rest and move on like the other heroes.

RESTING:

At any time when there are no enemies on the board the group of heroes can attempt to rest.

Depending on the scenario they are playing they may be interrupted by an enemy coming in, may be ambushed by the enemy suddenly, or the enemy may escape before they can apprehend them.

If the Demonlord says that they have successfully rested then they may regain half of any endurance they have lost (round up). No matter how long they rest the amount regained will not go up. The longer you sit in an enemies stronghold, doing nothing, the worse the tension gets, and jangled nerves do nothing for your combat prowess.

For example a hero has a usual endurance of 10. In fighting they have gone down to 2 endurance.

Resting would allow them to regain 4 of the 8 endurance they have lost bringing them up to 6.

Then if they are able to somehow make it through the next combat without losing any endurance (hiding works), then they would regain 2 of the remaining 4 endurance bringing them up to 8.

If they again are able to rest after hiding through another combat they would regain 1 of their 2 remaining lost endurance points.

If this coward hides through yet another battle then they would indeed gain the last remaining endurance point bringing them up to full (technically they would get half a point but rounding up brings it to one point).

At any time during the scenario the heroes can choose to flee back to their homes to lick their wounds. This will usually mean failure in the scenario, leading to the success of whatever dire scheme which the enemies were attempting. This will often have a negative effect on the lives of the heroes and those of the others living in the area. Sometimes fleeing is the only way to survive to fight another day.

FLEEING

To escape the scenario the heroes can simply head toward the entrance which they came in. If they are able to leave the demonboard they are considered safe. If even one hero is able to leave the Demonboard, any struck down or severely injured heroes are considered to have escaped with them. If some one else is struck down or severely injured after this time then they will have to wait for the next fleeing hero to take them out of the Lair (if there is another hero that can flee)

FIGHTING WITHOUT WEAPONS:

When fighting with any weapon in Lair of Sword & Sorcery you roll one dice for damage.

Animals and monsters consider their claws or teeth to be weapons and also roll one dice for damage.

If for some reason you find your hero to be without a weapon of any sort the following rules apply.

If fighting an opponent with no weapons (a fist to fist fight) then attack and roll damage as normal. If you opponent is wearing armour when you try to punch them you do not roll a dice for damage, you only cause 1 point plus your Current Damage score. Often this will mean that you only cause the minimum 1 point of damage. You will also take the usual 1 point of endurance damage when attacking.

If the enemy wins the combat the same rules apply when they roll damage as well.

FIST VERSUS WEAPON.

If you are using your fists and your opponent has a weapon the same rules apply for damaging your enemy but you no longer cause the minimum 1 point of damage. They are easily able to hold you at bay with their weapon without tiring themselves too much.

Also when fighting an enemy with your fists the minimum damage you take is 1 plus their damage score.

MOVING WHILE FIGHTING.

Even if you have been attacked by an enemy in the last turn and are still on a square next to an enemy you may still move away from the enemy the usual 4 squares. There are no special breaking off from combat rolls and the enemy does not get a special attack just because you moved away from them. The 4 square movement score assumes that you are moving deliberately and defensively at all times. It also takes into account turning to face enemies or turning to face an enemy and backing away while defending yourself. This is also why the amount of armour you wear has no effect on your movement. Remember Armour is made to be moved in. It is not as heavy as historians would have you believe, and if you are moving slowly and defensively anyway, it will not further hinder your movement in any way.

MISSILE WEAPONS

The Kartharkan bow is a vicious weapon capable of penetrating wood and armour.

A hero with a bow may fire it as their attack during their turn. If they decide to do so place a small marker next to them to show that they are holding a bow instead of a weapon.

If they are attacked before their next turn they will have to fight using the barehanded rules as a bow is hardly a good weapon to defend yourself with.

To fire your bow on your turn you first pick a target. The target may be any number of squares away. The target must be visible to your hero. The Hero may fire through a square occupied by a friend but not through a square occupied by an enemy.

If the target is behind an obstacle like a barricade, half wall, bush, or similar cover count this cover as an additional shield, as per the combat

rules (the enemy gets +2 to their roll).

Roll to attack as you would with a sword or other weapon adding your attack bonus (but not your shield bonus) with the enemy rolling as well to avoid the shot (they use their attack bonus as well as their shield bonus).

If you hit your target roll for damage as usual but you do not take the usual minimum 1 damage for engaging in combat. Firing a bow is far less tiring then going head to head with a fighting hero.

If you miss your target then the enemy also does not take the usual minimum 1 point of damage as the arrow did not hit them.

Throwing knives and axes are savage as well but have a lesser range. All of the rules for bows apply to throwing weapons except:

You may only throw them up to 3 squares away

If you do so you do not have to place a marker next to the hero as they have a weapon still in their hand.

SUCCESS AND FAILURE

Remember that all scenarios the heroes take part in have a punishment for failure and a reward for success. The reward may be the treasure they find after defeating their enemies, or it may be something more intangible like the protection of their village. These intangible rewards have their value as well, a village in debt to a hero for their lives can be very accommodating in future endeavours.

Failure on the other hand may mean that the enemies simply escape with their treasure, or it may mean that they are successful in leading an army to the heroes' village to plunder and destroy everyone within it, leaving only a smoking ruin when the heroes return to town.

Whether the heroes are successful in defeating the scenario or fleeing with their lives, a couple of days back at home will return all of their combat scores to their full amount unless otherwise stated.

If they have been mortally injured and been dragged back to town by the other heroes they will need to rest there for two weeks before being able to adventure again.



DOING SOMETHING OTHER THAN ATTACKING (SOTA)

In typical fantasy video games and board games you are usually limited to: attacking, moving, or in really high concept games, pulling a lever or listening to someone else spew out a bunch of text (usually telling you to pull a lever).

In a tabletop role playing game (yes that's what we call these things) you sit around a table, the Demonlord throws the board down and you can indeed, move, attack, and if the scenario calls for it, pull a lever.

But the real fun of role playing games is going off script, doing something completely unexpected. Something the demonlord or scenario writer didn't think of, something really cool. That's where these rules come in.

In other games you may have books full of rules, endless tables for effects and defences versus every possible contingency, and endless errata and corrections for those rules.

In Kartharka we have one set of rules:

DO SOMETHING OTHER THAN ATTACKING.

This is further broken down into two modes, doing something while role playing and doing something while in combat.

DOING SOMETHING WHILE ROLEPLAYING

In the Lair of Sword & Sorcery game there are two styles of play, the roleplaying mode and combat mode. You are in Roleplaying mode whenever there isn't an enemy on the table. This is when you can move where you want, pick up/examine things, talk to people, pull on levers, open doors etc. We don't need rules for things like that. The demonlord can decide whether or not you are successful at whatever you try.

Simply tell the Demonlord what you would like to do. Anything that would be considered "Easy" will be automatically successful.

If there is any doubt whether or not you would be successful, like lifting something heavy or trying to do something mechanical like fix a door, then the dice will decide. The Demonlord will decide if something is Difficult, or Very Difficult.

If it is difficult then the hero rolls 2 dice. If the score is 7 or higher then success! 6 or lower is failure.

The Demonlord may allow them to add an applicable bonus to the dice roll, such as the body bonus for feats of strength.

If the task is very difficult then the hero must roll a 10 or higher for success.

If other heroes are close to the hero making the attempt then they may be able to add applicable bonuses to the die roll if the demonlord deems them able to do so, such as many heroes helping to move a boulder.

DOING SOMETHING WHILE IN COMBAT

Combat mode occurs whenever there is an enemy on the board.

Difficult and very difficult tasks are rolled for in the same way as in Role play mode but easy tasks are no longer automatically successful. Under the pressure of combat easy tasks now require a roll of 4 or more to succeed.

When fighting off an enemy simple things become difficult, even opening a door and running through can be difficult if someone is attacking you.

THE SPECIAL SOTA RULE.

The point of the "other than attacking" rule is that you can do something other than attack. It is not meant to be used to cause damage to enemies, especially if the do something roll would be easier than making an attack.

So something like throwing a boulder at an enemy is an attack, but pushing a boulder in front of a doorway to keep people out is not.

Swinging on a chandelier into an enemy is an attack, swinging over their head and landing behind them is not.

DECIDING DIFFICULTY AND EFFECTS

The Demonlord is in charge of deciding how hard things are to do and the effects of these things are.

Deciding how difficult these special things are is the Demonlord's job. And his decisions are final. And cannot be questioned.

Remember that Lair is not like other role playing games, it is meant to be fun quick, and easy on the game master. The game master (demonlord) will either be running a pre-made scenario or will be running one of their own based on guidelines for doing so.

Unlike other games, when in active combat mode, the Demonlord will be trying to kill your heroes, or at least cause as much damage as possible.

The Demonlord does not get to do "things other than attack" unless specified in the scenario, so he doesn't have to decide how difficult any of his own tasks are.

So keep in mind that the Demonlord is not going to be pulling their punches or going easy on you, they are going to be trying just as hard to win as you are.

So be careful with your heroes, if they are getting weakened it might be a good idea to cut your losses and run away. Or if it sounds like a particular scenario may be more difficult than usual it may be a good time to pull out one of your backup heroes for this one rather than send in your favourite hero who has taken so long to build up.

A SPECIAL NOTE FOR THE DEMONLORD

When the deciding the difficulty of actions and what their effects are be as fair as possible. Don't decide that something would be very difficult just so that you can beat the heroes, they will not want to play with you for long.

Also when deciding the effects of special actions be as fair as possible.

Remember your job as Demonlord is to be the referee, not to be another player. Make sure that your scenarios are run fair and clean and if a player comes up with something cool to beat the scenario then let them do it. Your job is not to beat them but to play the scenario fairly.

THE DEMON BOARD AND FIGURES

So now that you know a little about the spirit of the game of Lair of Sword and Sorcery, that the Demonlord is actively playing against the heroes, you can see why the Demonboard (the playing board) is so necessary.

Everything is in plain sight, and the combat rules absolutely require the action to happen on a board. With these two things we can return the fun of the game to the Demonlord.

In the first issue "Demonboard" I showed you how to make your own board.

Now lets talk about the figures you will need to play.

There are many options out there for figures.

You can buy an enormous assortment of gaming "miniatures" at any gaming store. These are small one inch tall models made of plastic or metal, usually with a plastic base. There are miniatures for every type of human, monster, and animal with every type of weapon and armour. I used them for many years for gaming. I also enjoy painting miniatures which is a whole separate hobby in itself.

But you know what? They're expensive, they need to be assembled, and after paying 5 bucks for a miniature you usually felt like you had to paint it before putting it on the table, I mean all the books show people playing with painted miniatures right?

Then you've got to store all those guys, and since they're painted you can't just throw them all in a shoebox or the paint will chip off, and since they're so expensive you don't want them to break in there or get bent. All this money, time, pressure all before you've even bought a game to actually play.

The worst thing is, when you actually do play, you still never have the right figures that you need during the game and end up using other ones to stand in for them.

So go that route if you like, I still enjoy painting miniatures and will continue to buy them, but for quick role playing use I've gone another route.

Toys! That's right. They're cheap, they're everywhere, you can throw them all in a box and they won't get broken, and they're just cheap toys, they're not supposed to have an awesome paint job, they usually come with a half decent paint job as it is anyway.

Here you see a bucket full of guys I got at Toys R Us for \$25

Look at how many are inside, I'm pretty much set for anything I need for the future.

Don't just raid the toy aisle, you may have suitable guys around the house already, to the left you'll see some great soldiers I got out of an old game of "Siege".

Sometimes though it can be hard to find some old-timey knights or other fantasy fighters, that's fine too, I've got a bag of those little green army men too that I use when I need a boss that stands out. Cut off his gun and glue a toothpick to his hand, instant spearman!

The important thing is not to have the best looking miniatures or board but to just get the game on the table and actually play. It's not how good the stuff is, it's how much you get to use it.



BEFORE YOU PLAY

So now you got your little toy guys. Use them to play a few games first before you decide if you want to put in some extra effort. If you do, then read on.

BASES:

After playing for a while you may notice a few of your guys are a little "tippy", they fall over if you hit the table, or sometimes for no reason at all.

To fix this just cut out a 1" square of Bristol board like you find at any dollar store and glue it to the bottom.

That will solve all your problems. If you want to be fancy you can paint the card to match your demonboard. I just grab a few walls from my current dungeon board and cut them into squares. The best glue to use is the classic "contact cement" from the dollar store. Sticks good to all types of plastic as well as Bristol board.

PAINTING:

Sometimes your guys will be a funky colour, like red or blue. Sometimes this is good as it makes it easy to tell your guys from your enemies but if it's too garish you can paint them.

There are all sorts of books, tools and speciality paints for painting miniatures, but you know what?

If you just want the guy to look a little more normal than all blue, and aren't looking to get some museum quality pieces then painting is easy.

Primer:

Most normal paints don't stick to plastic very well so you'll need to prime them. Just grab a can of spray primer from any auto supply store and follow the instruction on the back. (read the instructions, please, I don't want anyone blaming me if you hurt yourself).

Sometimes these will melt your little guys so test one first before blasting them all.

If you're not too worried about paint rubbing off then just grab a bottle of white craft paint and slap it on there with a dollar store brush.

Painting:

Painting can be as fiddly as you want it to be.

Best bet to start is to just grab some craft paints at the dollar store, in whatever colour you want the guys to be and paint it on the guy.

For brushes use whatever is the smallest pointed brush you can find at the dollar store. There is usually a kind call "chinese brush" that are a little better than the others.

If you find you really enjoy this kind of thing ask the people at your local gaming store if they can make any suggestions for books, brushes paints etc.

DICE:

The dice for Lair of Sword and Sorcery are just standard 6 sided dice. You probably have a bunch of these in other board games but if you don't just head on down to your local dollar store and you should be able to find them in packages of 8 for a dollar.



LETS PLAY A BOARDGAME!

THE LAIR SKIRMISH GAME.

Let's put all the roleplaying rules aside for a moment and have a little fun playing a boardgame as I present to you the Lair skirmish game.

In the skirmish game each player is given a small group of warriors.

They then fight a battle against each other in a simple Lair (any place mapped out on the demonboard is referred to as a "Lair")

The purpose of the skirmish game is not only to have fun but to learn the combat rules. In a skirmish game you get to move many men around, get to attack with varying ranks of heroes, as well as defend yourself from your enemies.

The skirmish game is a great way to learn the rules and tactics of Lair of Sword and Sorcery without sacrificing your precious heroes to do so.

HOW TO PLAY THE SKIRMISH SCENARIO:

1: SETUP THE LAIR.

Get out your walls and demonboard and setup the walls as they appear on the skirmish map. The map is marked out with block walls but if you prefer the card walls please use them instead. If you do use the card walls the rooms will be a little larger, but it won't harm anything, just make sure all the doorways and corridors are the same width that they are on the map.

2: GATHER YOUR FORCES.

Every player should copy on a sheet of paper (in pencil) the list of warriors to the right. This will be referred to as your force.

Now each player grabs some miniatures, little plastic men, or card counters, whichever you prefer to use.

Decide which ones represent the normal warriors and which ones represent each of your heroes. Different coloured toys help here. Each player should write this on their sheet with the stats. (Something like "silver guys with swords" above the normal warriors, and "guy with axe" above one hero, etc)

3: PLACE YOUR WARRIORS

The first player chooses one of the player areas on the map and may place all of his forces anywhere in that area.

The second players chooses one of the areas and does the same

And so on...

4: SEE WHO GOES FIRST

Everyone rolls two dice, (re rolling ties) to see who goes first, play continues in a clockwise direction around the table.

5: ON YOUR TURN:

Your turn will proceed in the order below.

Move: Move all of your warriors that you wish to move up to their full move (4 spaces).

Attack: If any of your figures are in a square that is touching a square an enemy is in, they may attack.

Roll for the combat as per the Lair combat rules and track any damage on your sheet of paper.

It is tricky to keep track of each of the normal warriors endurance so you can use a die next to them to represent their endurance if you like. Simply adjust the die every time they lose

endurance.

When you are done the combat for all of your warriors then your turn is done. It is now the next players turn.

6: HOW TO WIN.

This skirmish is a simple brawl so the game continues until only one player has warriors still on the table.

7: SPECIAL RULES FOR THIS SKIRMISH

In the skirmish game there is no resting. Since there are always enemies on the board.

No one may "do something other than attacking" (Sota).

Enjoy!

FORCE LIST

10 x Normal Warriors

Defense	Attack	Endurance	Damage
1	0	4	0

1 x 0 rank Hero

Defense	Attack	Endurance	Damage
1	5	8	0

1 x 0 rank Hero

Defense	Attack	Endurance	Damage
5	1	8	0

1 x 2nd rank Hero

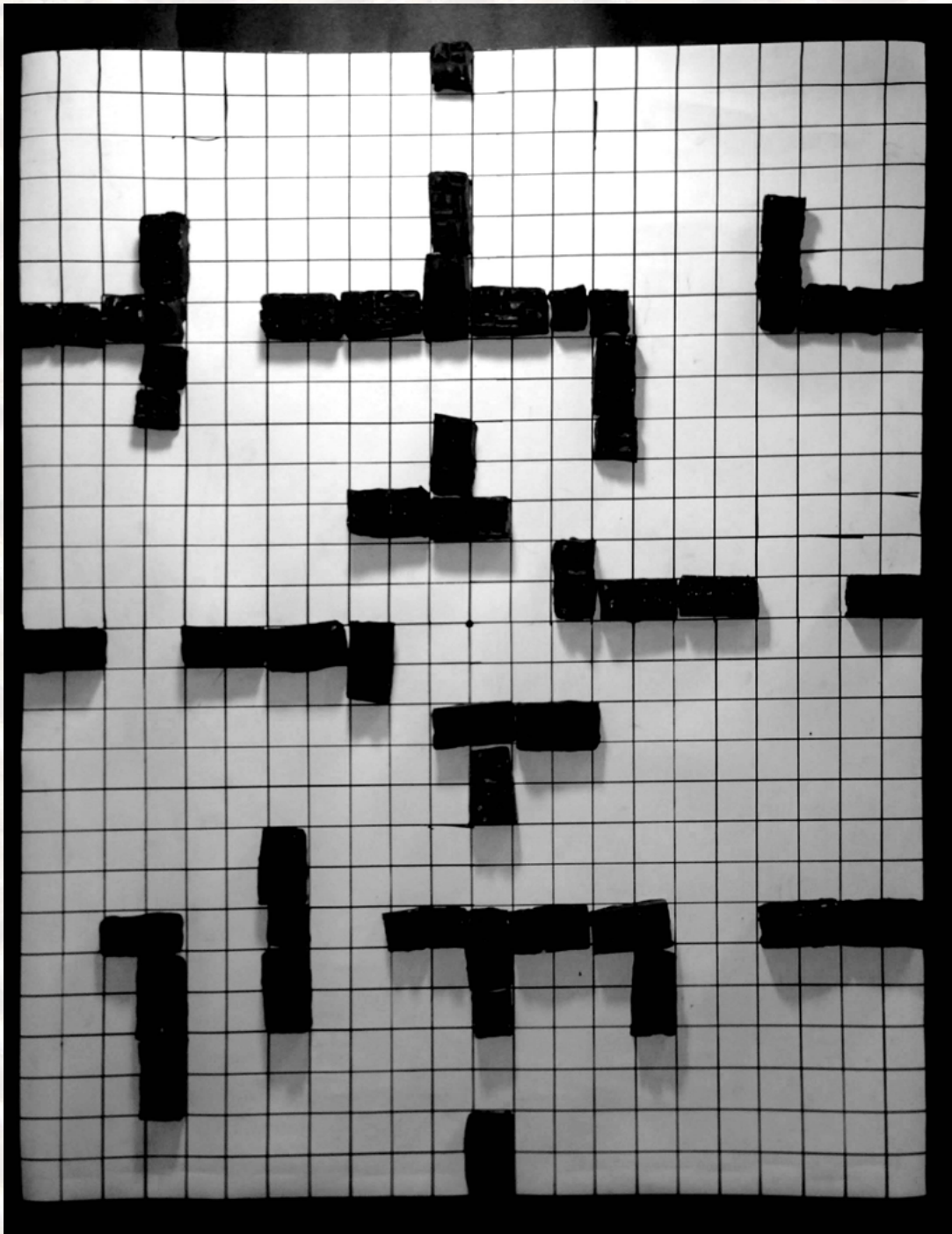
Defense	Attack	Endurance	Damage
5	2	10	2

All warriors are armed with swords and are wearing armour.



Player 1
Start

Player 4
Start



Player 2
Start

Player 3
Start

THE SKIRMISH GAME VS A ROLEPLAYING GAME

You will see in the skirmish game that a Demonlord is not needed. The rules clearly specify what can and cannot be done, and as long as everyone plays by the rules it is fair and fun.

But in a role playing game the heroes are allowed to do much more than just move and attack. Indeed they can attempt anything they can think of. It is this freedom which makes a role playing game fun and exciting.

Someone has to decide whether these attempted actions succeed, and just how difficult they will be to succeed at.

That is where the Demonlord comes in. The players tell him what they want their heroes to try to do. The Demonlord decides how difficult the action is, and tells them what they need to roll to succeed.

The player then rolls the die and the Demonlord decides what the effects of either a failure or a success are. They act as a referee to the game to make sure that everything is fair.

If someone in your group of friends would like to give the job of Demonlord a try, set up the skirmish again but replace the two zero ranking heroes with full hero characters. Generate them

with the Hero creation rules presented earlier in this issue.

Each player will have 10 normal warriors as detailed in the force list and two of these 0 Rank heroes.

The Demonlord will have 10 normal warriors as detailed in the force list and the two zero Rank heroes as detailed in the force list.

No one will have a 2nd level hero in this example as rules for generating them have not been discussed yet.

In this role playing version the players may have their heroes (but not the normal warriors) do "Something other than attack".

The Demonlord may only attack and move as in the skirmish game. (The Demonlord may never do "something other than attack" unless specified in the scenario rules.

Now although the Demonlord is playing against the players and will still try to defeat them to win the game, he must remember that his job is to be as fair as possible in his calls on how difficult Sota actions are and what the affects of those Sota actions are.

Now run through the skirmish again and see how different everything is!



EXPANDING LAIR OF SWORD & SORCERY TO A FULL ROLE PLAYING GAME

By this point you should have played a version of the skirmish game that allows people to "do something other than attacking. If not, go back and give it a try. This gives you the freedom of a role playing game, the freedom to do whatever you like.

But a Role playing game is more than just attacking and moving in creative ways.

What else do you need to have a full Role playing game?

Usually players expect to increase their power by improving their characters through some sort of reward system. In Lair this is called the Veteran system and is detailed in the next issue.

Players also expect there to be some sort of "Treasure" as a reward, either as more powerful items or cold hard cash.

So technically if players were able to increase their power, and were rewarded if they won, you could continue to play the "skirmish" over and over again with the players amassing more loot and power.

But it wouldn't be very interesting. As a minor diversion it would pass the time occasionally but going over the same territory again and again would become tedious.

So let us introduce the idea of the "Scenario".

A scenario takes place in a Lair. The Lair is the actual Demonboard layout with various walls and enemies placed on it.

The scenario is the set of rules which accompany the Lair and dictate success, failure and special features of the lair.

Every scenario will have at least one of each of the following.

SCENARIO OBJECTIVE: This is what the heroes must do to successfully beat the Lair. It may be told to them before they enter or may be mysterious and only discovered once they are inside.

PUNISHMENT: This is what happens to the heroes if they fail. Without a punishment for failure there can be no true reward. This may be told to the players before entering or be a mystery.

REWARD: What the players will get if they succeed, they may be told what this is before

beginning or it may be a surprise.

Note: The punishment may be dying in the attempt of getting the reward, and the reward may be not dying in attempting the Lair.

SPECIAL FEATURE: This will be something that makes the Lair special and appears in no other Lair. Often it will be the objective of the mission, or it may be the reason the Lair is there in the first place.

Special Features will always have accompanying rules which set them apart from other Lairs

These things set each Lair apart from the others and will keep the game fresh with every scenario.

These things all combine to give the players the Adventure they need.

The last thing required for a Role playing game is a Setting and a way to interact with it.

The Setting is what links the Lairs and scenarios together, and makes the heroes into personalities and not just stats.

Setting will be discussed in more depth in future issues of Lair of Sword and Sorcery, but you have some details of what this is already. The Lair of Sword & Sorcery game takes place in the world of Kartharka. The heroes we create in the earlier part of this issue are assumed to be from the Winterlands area of Kartharka. Heroes adventuring in the Winterlands often make the town of Stoh-Branoch their home.

This is where they will make their home, find adventures and go to heal their wounds.

The setting is the connection between the scenarios, between the adventures, the place where players can act out their hopes and dreams, at least the ones other than attacking their enemies.

When playing a game of Lair, the beginning of the game is finding an adventure, planning for the trip and the travelling to the lair.

The middle is the actual scenario which happens on the Demonboard.

The end, for the players that survive, involves a reward and a return to town to enjoy it. To plan for the future and increase their ranks.



MINERS AMBUSH: THE FIRST LAIR OF SWORD & SORCERY SCENARIO

Miners Ambush is the first Scenario for Lair of Sword & Sorcery. It contains all the things needed for a game of Lair.

Have the players each create a character using the Hero creation rules earlier in this issue.

Usually you will use the setting together with the scenario to give a reason for the Heros to be embarking on the scenario but for this mission you can simply read the "Background" section out loud to the players.

BACKGROUND: While travelling to the town of Stroh-Branoch the heroes encounter a group of wounded men camped on the side of the road.

They have been attacked by Robbers who have run off with their hard won metal ore.

The robbers have left a clear trail in the snow leading into the woods.

The Heroes decide to help the miners and, taking the least injured with them, set off to find the robbers.

OBJECTIVE: To find the Miners sacks of precious metals and return with them.

PUNISHMENT: In this scenario the punishment for failure is the lack of any reward, or perhaps death as well.

SPECIAL FEATURES: In this scenario there is a room full of sacks of metal ore. The robbers are loading it onto their wagons in preparation to leave their stronghold.

There are 30 sacks and the bandits are moving them to a wagon to escape. The heroes will attempt to get as many of the sacks as they can for themselves.

The sacks are in a large room in the middle of the lair.

Each Robber can carry one sack while still moving.

Each hero can carry one sack while still moving.

When a robber gets one of the sacks to their "exit" it is loaded on a wagon through a chute in the wall. It cannot be retrieved after that.

When a hero gets one of the sacks to their entrance the miners will claim it and load it on their wagon. It cannot be retrieved after that.

The scenario ends when there are no more sacks in the storage room. Whichever side has the most sacks including those held by heroes or robbers wins the scenario.

REWARD FOR SUCCESS: the heroes will get one gold coin for every sack the miners retrieve.

SCENARIO SET UP

AND GENERAL RULES:

Setup the walls on the Demonboard in the way shown on the map.

If a hero chooses to leave through their own exit they are out of the game and are now considered "safe".

Heroes may not leave out the Robbers exit.

Heroes may not rest when there are Robbers on the board.

Small coins or glass beads should be used to represent the "sacks".

If Hero or Robber is attacked they will "drop" their sack, in which case it is placed in the square

next to them. They cannot pick it up again until their next move and so it is able to be grabbed by someone else moving before them.

You pick up a sack by moving into a square with a sacks in it and stating that you do so. This is not considered "doing something while attacking" and is always successful.

All of the heroes and miners start the game in the room next to their own entrance. The Robbers start in the room next to their own entrance.

Each player is given 3 miners to control. Their stats are listed after the map. Each miner has a sword but no armour. Each player may move and attack with their miners on their own turn.

The Demonlord of course controls all the Robbers. The number of Robbers the Demonlord controls depends on how many Heros are playing. The actual number is listed with Robbers stats.

Torches are scattered about on the walls so none need carry sources of light to see.

TIPS FOR THE DEMONLORD

Remember, your goal as the robbers is to escaped with as many sacks as possible, not to kill the Heroes.

If you tie your robbers down with fighting, the miners will quickly grab all of the bags.



Robbers
Start

Hero's
Start

MINERS FORCES

On the players side are the Heroes, as well as a group of miners.
The miners each have the same stats listed in the stat block.
They are just regular folk though their endurance is a little higher from long days in the mines. Every miner has a sword and no armour. Each player gets 3 miners to control.

Defense	Attack	Endurance	Damage
0	0	6	0

ROBBERS FORCES

The Robbers will have a varying number of men depending on how many heroes they face.
We will assume that the heroes are newly created (since the veteran rules have not been published yet)
The Demonlord will have 2 robbers for every hero on the players side, and one robber for every miner.
All of the Robbers stats are the same and are listed in the block
Note that they are a little tougher than the miners, that's why they were able to defeat them before..
Each robber has a sword and is wearing armour.

Defense	Attack	Endurance	Damage
1	1	4	1



CREATING YOUR OWN SCENARIOS.

You can see from the Sample scenario that creating your own is easy.
Start with a story objective, like recovering the miners gold.
Use the objective to make a special feature, here we have sacks of ore with a few simple rules for picking it up and moving.
Set up the Lair to make accomplishing the Objective interesting, here we have two exits, one for each side, a large room in the middle with the special feature (pile of sacks) and some corridors and rooms between the two, allowing some tactical movement, setting up bottlenecks, creating defendable positions etc.
Once you have played the scenario you will probably think of more ways to make it more interesting.
Varying the number and power of the robbers or miners. Adding furniture to the lair like tables, chairs, and cabinets.
Perhaps the miners have brought along a push cart, maybe the robbers are much fewer in number but have laid some traps for the players.
Anything is possible.
The important thing is to have fun.
When changing the opposing forces power and number try to keep in mind balance and fairness. The heroes can always run if things get too rough though so don't worry too much.
Rules for balanced enemy forces will be formally published in the Veteran issue. For now 2 normal people equals 1 hero in a fight. The hero would usually win this fight but does have a chance of being killed.

Usually in a scenario there would be more than 1 combat the heroes would fight, with the heroes fighting a force of enemies basically equal to them each time.
Hidden rooms: During a scenario the heroes may no know the entire layout of a Lair until they have walked through it.
In this type of scenario the players can only see the rooms and corridors the heroes have actually entered. The demonboard will start off empty except for the starting room with more rooms and corridors being added to the board as they explore.
As they enter these rooms they may discover enemies within, who will sometimes be surprised, or sometimes ambush the heroes depending on the scenario.
During these types of games the heroes may "rest" whenever no enemies are on the board, and are considered to be in "Roleplaying" mode when acting.
More on all of this will be published in future issues of Lair.
For now have fun making things up. Use toys on the demonboard to represent anything fun. Have the Heroes fight monsters, explore old houses, delve into caves, solve mysteries. Anything you can imagine.
Send in any scenarios, ideas, pictures, or rules that you make up as you go and it will be added to the Lair game for all to enjoy.
Until Next issue, stop planning your games and start playing your games!

~Ripley Stonebrook~



SPOOKY ROOM PRODUCTIONS
LAIR OF SWORD & SORCERY
ISSUE 3 MAR 2015

PRICE

LAIR OF Sword & Sorcery

Adventure Game

RAISE YOUR HEROES RANK
DEMONLORD TIPS FOR CREATING AND RUNNING LAIRS

VETERAN ③

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LAIR OF SWORD & SORCERY

Issue 3 March 2015

The Combat Issue

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GET INVOLVED

Join your forces with the powerful creators of the awe inspiring world of Kartharka!

Well that's the whole point of the game isn't it?

Before you send us all of your fantastic stuff first read the questions and submissions info to the right and then come back.

All done?

Okay here are all the great places to send your blood soaked materials.

WEBSITE:

Your best place to start is the Lair of Sword and Sorcery Site at: lairofswordandsorcery.blogspot.ca

Here you can comment on updates, and respond to questions and polls on the direction of the game and what you would like to see, or not see, in the game.

There are also regular articles on the sword and sorcery genre, fantasy, the setting of Kartharka, the tone of the game, and designers notes on the game system.

GOOGLE+:

Those who are on Google+ can get their lair updates there by adding: Ripley Stonebrook

We also appreciate +1's and reposting of content on Google+

FACEBOOK:

You can also receive your updates on Facebook at: Lair of Sword and Sorcery

Like and follow Lair on facebook to get updates, and we of course appreciate any reviews and reposts to your own facebook page.

EMAIL:

spookyroomproductions@gmail.com

Send in any and all submissions, rules, art, questions, stories, comics, pictures of your demonboard, and pictures of your group.

Or if you are looking for players or demonlords in your area send in your contact email and we'll put it in the next issue or post it to the site.

RETAILERS:

If you are interested in carrying the Lair of Sword and Sorcery game then please send an email to: spookyroomproductions@gmail.com.

If you would like your local retailer to carry the game then you can urge them to send us an email.

PIRACY

If you find another player who is playing with photocopies or scans of the rules, shun them. Refuse to play with them. It is officially against the rules of Lair of Sword and Sorcery to play with photocopies and scans. Pirates are terrible people that ruin the game.

WHO THOUGHT WE'D GET TO ISSUE 3 ?

Well here we are, three issues and 5 months after it all began and things are still going strong and getting stronger.

Those of you who have been following along thank you!

FOR THOSE OF YOU JOINING US, WELCOME!

What I'm creating here is a new role-playing game that's not a roleplaying game. Something that's fun and easy, that you play at a friends house on a Friday night before you go out to do something else. Something you play on a Saturday morning after the Farmers market, something you play on a Sunday because what else are you going to do on a sunday?

Something fun that anyone can play anytime.

Lair of Sword & Sorcery is quick, fun and easy, for the players and the Demon Lord (the one who runs the game).

Games shouldn't take up a significant portion of your life, you shouldn't need to dedicate yourself to days of preparation work to run a roleplaying game or to play one.

You shouldn't have to spend a fortune to play a game. Lair of Sword and Sorcery is a game like we used to play, before things got complicated.

Before people started playing games with people they absolutely hated just so that they could actually play.

For those of you new to Rolepaloying I hope that this game is the one you've been looking for. All those fun stories you hear about role playing and hanging out at friends houses tearing through a dungeon and beating up dragons and taking home piles of treasure, that's this game.

The game where you spend an hour arguing about a rule or whether or not you can use your crazy new character build from the newest set of rulebooks, that's the other games.

I like those other games, don't get me wrong, but sometimes I just want to sit down, drink a few beers and fight some freaking dragons.

If you're playing Black Sabbath in the background it couldn't hurt either.

And if we finish itn time to go out to the bar that's cool too, but if you don't want to go out we can attack the next level of that dungeon too.

GAMING SHOULD NOT BE A LIFESTYLE CHOICE THAT YOU PICK INSTEAD OF OTHER THINGS.

You should be able to do everything else normal people do and still throw down some dice on Friday night.

So welcome all you new Blood Reavers, roll up a hero (you'll need the Combat issue, number 2, to do that) jump into the middle of whatever Lair we're plundering thiss week and carve yourself through the enemies to the treasure I've got stashed away just for you.

FOR THOSE WHO ALREADY KNOW...

Thanks for sticking with us.

If you haven't checked out the site Lairofwordandsorcery.blogspot.ca in a little while you really should. It's been redesigned for what we use if for now.

Along with news, and previews on whats coming up there are also some longer articles posted on there regularly under the "Articles of Interest" section.

The issue your holding is the long awaited Veteran issue, where your heroes can finally increase their rank, becoming better fighters, sorcerors, brigands, mercenaries or merchants if they want.

You will also learn how to settle your hero into a home and all of the things that settling in can do for you.

Also some more tips for the Demonlord on creating their own scenarios as well as some tips on using things other than humans as enemies. Now your heroes can be beset by terrible animals as well as evil thieves, you can thank me later.

And yes I did mention Sorcery, the first faltering steps of the Sorcery rules will be included in this issue, as it is built into the Lair Veteran system. Some of the things you may not now how to use yet but at least you will get a glimpse at what is possible.

The next issue, the Sorcery issue, will be the first "forked" issue with one version being published for players and the other for DemonLords.

I'm very excited for that and hope you all are too.

Gone are the days when only the Games Master get's to pore over new exciting material, now the players get their own books as well.

Sorcery is so built into the very land of Kartharka itself that it would spoil the fun to put it all in the players books, and it would be unfair to only allow the DemonLord access to the Sorcery rules.

So I present to you all the newest issue of Lair of Sword and Sorcery, The Veteran issue. I hope you all enjoy it, and remember, change what you want, add what you want, leave out what you want. Make it your own game, and if you let us know what your game is like then we'll add it to our game, and you can see your additions and changes on the website and in futrue issues of the Magazine.

It's your game, I can't tell you how to play it, you tell me how to make it.

~Ripley Stonebrook



THE LAIR VETERAN SYSTEM



What are veteran points and how do I get my filthy paws on them?

Your grand and powerful hero already wades across fields of enemies in a wash of blood. But how can you make him even better? Smashing your way through a group of thieves is thrilling but what about single handedly cutting down a mighty dragon? Taking on entire armies and winning, feeling entire kingdoms tremble beneath your feet.

To grow your hero into this incredible Titan we have the Lair Veteran System.

The players earn Veteran points for accomplishing difficult tasks or at least surviving dangerous ones which can be spent on gaining new Veteran skills.

You can receive points for surviving battles, defeating enemies, succeeding at a scenario, or accomplishing other difficult tasks.

They should also receive Veteran points for doing amazing things that make the game more fun, having their hero attempt an amazing maneuver in the middle of a combat, coming up with an amazing plan, or even dressing up like their heroes.

Whether the hero becomes a better fighter, more powerful sorcerer, or more influential politician is up to the player, they may spend their points in any way they wish.

EARNING VETERAN POINTS (VP) A PLAYER GAINS 1 VP (VETERAN POINT) IMMEDIATELY AFTER ANY OF THE FOLLOWING THINGS OCCUR:

- Survive an encounter with a group of Enemies of Equal or Greater Rank (calculating the Rank of a group is covered later)

- Survive making a death roll (this is on top of "survive an encounter with a group of enemies of equal or greater rank")

- Beat a scenario (complete the scenario objectives). The Veteran point award will usually be printed with the scenario but if it is not they should get at least 1 VP

- Succeed at an impossible task (an impossible SOTA roll) which would have caused harm to the hero if it failed

- The player has an impressive Role playing moment which impresses the rest of the group

- Dressing up as your Hero earns you 1 VP. (Leave the sharp things at home kids)

- The Demon Lord is free to also award VP for anything which they deem worthy of it

What you don't get VP for is looking for trouble. If you decide to take on the city guard who obviously out power you, and they arrest you but don't kill you, then you don't get a VP for "Surviving and encounter with a group of enemies of greater rank"

If you knew for a fact that the guards would kill you and you still chose to attack, that may be a different story but a good rule of thumb is:

If you have nothing to gain by attacking, you don't get a VP.

It is up to the Demon Lord to make the call when the heroes go looking for trouble.





SPENDING VETERAN POINTS

Now that you've got them, what are you going to do with them?

Players spend their heroes VP points to buy Veteran skills. Each of these skills will either increase an ability they already have (like increasing their attack) or give them all new skills (like summoning demons).

The players can spend their VP to buy skills only in between scenarios, never during them

They must wait until their heroes have finished the scenario, are safely back in town, camp, or wherever they are making their home at the moment.

Once they are safely home they can rest and absorb the lessons they have learned. Once relaxed and fully healed the player can spend VP to either buy new Veteran Skills or increase ones they already have.

They may spend as many VP as they like on as many skills as they like. They may even buy a skill and increase it to a higher level in the same "rest period".

You will see on your character sheet that there are 3 slots next to each stat.

These are where you write in the Veteran skills you have bought.

Each veteran skill has an associated stat. This means that a hero may only have a maximum of 3 skills in any one of their stats

For example: A hero may only have a 3 Body Veteran skills.

The hero is also only allowed to buy Veteran skills in stats they have no weakness in (a negative stat)

You may find that you already have 3 Veteran skills for a stat and would like change one of these skills for a different one.

You can "discard" any Veteran skill that you have. Simply erase it and now you have room for a new skill. However you don't regain any VP points for skills that you discard

VETERAN SKILL COSTS.

To buy a new skill costs 10 VP points

When you buy a skill you gain the benefits listed in that skills description.

YOU CAN ALSO INCREASE A SKILL YOU ALREADY HAVE.

Skills usually start with some kind of a bonus of +1 to do something.

To increase the skill to the 2nd rank (+2) costs 20 VP

To increase the skill to 3rd rank costs 30 VP And so on.

Some skills have no specific bonus but simply allow the characters to do something new. They may or may not be increased. The specific skills description will give you all information you need.

VETERAN SKILLS

Here it is, finally. What this issue is all about. As heroes encounter more horrible and terrible things, and live to tell about it, they become better at surviving. This is represented by earning Veteran points. The things they actually learn are represented by the Veteran skills.

They simply spend their Veteran points, which represents the entire process of seeking out knowledge, diligent practice in their field, careful thought, trial and error of the adventuring process and all the other things one must do to "learn".

Some of the Veteran skills will require the heroes to have certain things, like a practice yard, a teacher, or supplies. Most of these things will require money to buy.

As we discussed before some skills can be increased in power, from a bonus of +1 to a bonus of +2 or more. Each of the skills will state how high the skill can be increased, and what the hero is required to have to buy these increases.

Demenses (a fancy name for the heroes official home), teachers, and other requirements are all discussed later in the issue.

You will see that some increases can be had in more than one stat, for instance an increase to movement. They can purchase the increase as a Body skill or a Quickness skill. If the hero buys the increase to movement as a body skill then they cannot take it as a quickness skill as well.

QUICKNESS

.Increase Move: Bonus to Move. +1, 2 and 3 available to all.

.Jump: Bonus to Jumps. Allow the hero a bonus to any Sota rolls involving jumps. +1 available to all. +2 requires a Demense with a Yard.

.Throwing: Bonus to Throw. Allows a bonus when attacking with any thrown weapon. +1 and 2 requires a demense with a target. Also allows a bonus on any Sota rolls that involve throwing.

.Acrobatics: Bonus to Sota rolls for Acrobatic tasks, leaping, grabbing, swinging. Bonus of +1 or +2 Requires a demense with a yard.

CAMARADERIE

.Merchant: The hero receives a bonus when buying and selling, bartering, or other contracts. The bonus applies in the exact same way as a camaraderie bonus when buying or selling goods and may be used with the heroes camaraderie bonus. Bonus of +1 to +3 available to all. Requires any demense. A fixed address is necessary for bargaining. Leader of Men: bonus to Leadership rolls with the heroes followers (More on this later in the issue). Bonus of +1 to +3 available to all. The hero may increase their merchant bonus only as high as their natural Camaraderie bonus.

.Judgment: Bonus to any sota rolls to determine if someone is lying, or hiding information, or being deceitful in any way. +1 to +3 available to all.

.Con Man: Bonus to any sota roll to mislead someone or hide information. +1 to +3 available to all.

BODY SKILLS

.Increase Defense: Bonus to Defense. Only works when the character is armed with a weapon. The character masters the ability to defend themselves from attack with weapons. +1 is available to all. +2 requires a Demense with a training yard. +3 requires a demense with a training yard and a training dummy. +4 requires a demense with a training yard, dummy and a suitable teacher.

.Increase Attack: Bonus to attack. +1 is available to all. +2 requires a Demense with a training yard. +3 requires a demense with a training yard and a training dummy. +4 requires a demense with a training yard, dummy and a suitable teacher.

.Increase Endurance: Bonus to Endurance. +1 and +2 available to all. +3 requires any demense with a yard.

.Increase Damage: Bonus to Damage but only when the hero is armed with a weapon. +1 is available to all. +2 requires a Demense with a training yard. +3 requires a demense with a training yard and a training dummy. +4 requires a demense with a training yard, dummy and a suitable teacher

.Increase Move: Bonus to Move. +1 available to all.

VITALITY

.Increase Endurance: Bonus to Endurance: Requires a Demense with a yard. +1 to +3 available to all.

.Pack Mule: Bonus to Carrying ability. Practice carrying heavy loads, and knowledge of weight distribution, proper use and maintenance of straps and specially crafted bags and carrying racks. Requires a demense with the same tools as leather crafting. +1 to +3 available. Each bonus allows the hero to carry either 1 additional large item or 2 additional small items.



MIND

.Increase Attack: Bonus to Attack whether armed with a weapon or not. +1 to +3, requires a yard and a suitable teacher.

.Languages: each bonus allows the Hero to master an additional language. Each language can be purchased for 10 VP. Requires a suitable teacher. Requires a writing table

.Sage Lore: A bonus applicable to any Sota roll that involves knowledge of History, legends, natural history or "Science". Requires a Demnse with a suitable library, writing table and access to a Sages Hall and the teachers within.

.Crafting: Each bonus allows the Hero to craft an additional material from the list below.

Wood, stone, pottery, leather, copper, bronze, silver, gold, iron, steel.

Each bonus increases in cost like any other Veteran skill. This skill is discussed fully in the crafting article that follows.

.Potioncraft: In the world of Kartharka, Potioncraft covers many things which may be considered "Science", "Chemistry", or even Sorcery. They may brew simple remedies, for headaches or infection, stomach upset, warts or other minor ailments. They may also create potions which may be considered "drugs", such as sleeping potions, poisons, potions of alertness, healing balms to ease pain. See more in the Crafting article that follows.

**OTHERWORLD**

The Otherworld skills are all related to the knowledge and manipulation of things of the Otherworld. The Other side, the spirit world, the dark places, Magic and sorcery, sprits and creatures, demons and monsters.

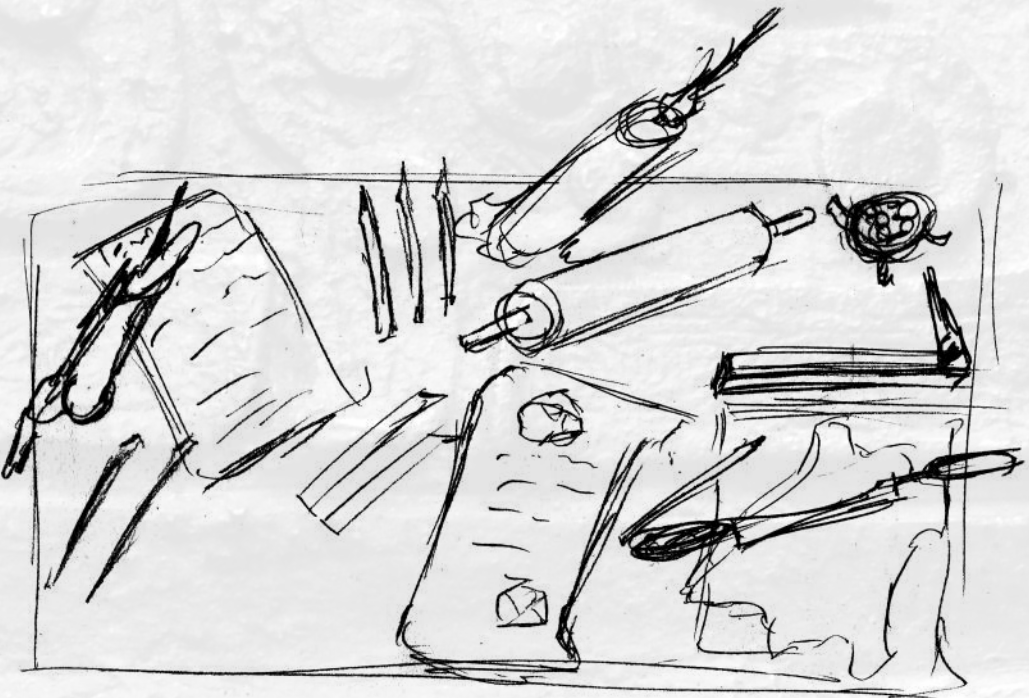
Sorcery and the Otherworld are the very backbone and history of the world of Kartharka.

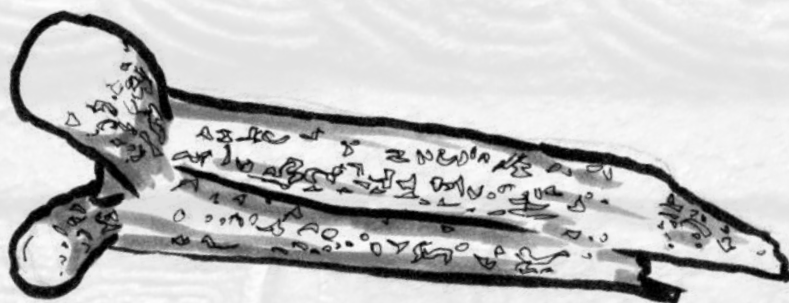
All of these skills will be discussed fully in the Sorcery issue. For now consider these to be placeholders for what it to come.

There will be a very brief discussion on some of these later in the issue so that your heroes can begin their first few faltering steps on the paths to becoming a great Sorcerer, and also to allow Demon lords to begin introducing enemy Sorcerers of their own for the heroes to battle.

.Sorcery

- oSorcery sub group summoning
- oSorcery sub group protection
- oSorcery sub group control
- oSorcery sub group imprisoning

.Sages Lore.Superstition.Potioncraft.Witchcraft.Demonlore.Artifact Lore



CRAFTING IN THE WORLD OF KARTHARKA

Crafting in Lair of Sword & Sorcery encompasses many things. It is used not only to make things. It is knowledge of the materials, and the things they are used to make.

It is how to how to make things, repair things, know the value of things, how to use things, and how to destroy things.

Each bonus in the crafting skill allows the hero to craft another type of material. The choices are Wood, stone, pottery, leather, copper, bronze, silver, and gold.

Before the hero may choose Iron however they must have either copper or bronze. Before they can choose steel they must have Iron.

They may also choose to increase any specific crafting skill to a higher bonus.

For example the hero may choose the "Crafting: Wood" allowing them to create wooden items. It also allows them a bonus to any sota roll involving working with wood. Such as repairing a wooden item, understanding wooden machines, or destroying wooden things like taking down a door, or dismantling a fence. The crafting skill also allows the hero to make a good guess at the value of things made of that material.

They may then choose to take another crafting skill, for example "Crafting: Pottery". They would then write it in another slot below the "Crafting: Wood" skill.

Or they may choose to increase a crafting skill they already have. Giving them a further bonus in Sota rolls involving that material.

If the hero has a demense with the proper tools and materials then they may create or repair items of the material they have the skill for (see the article on Demenses for the costs of these things).

They may only create items they have been given the opportunity to study in the past. To create something new may require either study of it in legends and books, or other applicable Sages Lore rolls.

CRAFTING WEAPONS AND ARMOUR

One of the first things your players are going to want to do is make their own weapons and armour.

If you consider the massive investment in Veteran Points as well as cold hard cash for a demense and a forge that is required to do so you will see that if they want to go that route they should be allowed to. The cost is going to be far higher than just buying the things themselves.

They may even be allowed to make steel weapons if they meet all the requirements.

However they should not be allowed to make the mythical master weapons which circulate in the world. Those magical weapons or weapons of such exquisite workmanship that they rise above all others in their family. These things are the products of centuries of learning passed down from generation to generation and that knowledge is jealously guarded by the scant few people in the world who hold it.

POTIONCRAFT

As stated before, potioncraft is the art of making all of the liquid items which civilization needs.

They may create minor things of limited value or efficacy. The "sleeping potion" will not knock a person flat on their back, though it may calm them, or make them a bit drowsy. Their "healing balms" will help a burn heal a little more quickly, or help to stave off infection, or take a bit of the pain away. But it certainly won't cure a severe wound or regrow a limb.

Their acids will be more of the cleaning variety, removing tarnish or stains but not burning the flesh if splashed on an enemy.

Truly magical potions will be covered in the Sorcery issue, but for now players should know that they will need at least potioncraft to create these things.

For now the players can use potioncraft to make the things that make life a little easier, but not potions which will have any combat effect, such as causing damage, increasing combat ability, or healing endurance.

FAME AND FAVOUR

Designers Notes

EARNING FAVOURS AND FAME

Here's where we get a little editorial:

In many games there is an intangible idea of "Fame". As Heroes complete their missions and conquer their enemies all the people of the land will hear of their exploits, and players may even try to trade on this fame to get a bit of special treatment from time to time. For the most part the Games Masters of other games will have to make up their own minds about whether or not these attempts are successful. The opinion of the common people towards the player's characters is also left up to debate.

In these games the players may even try to trade on this fame to ask for favours from the local governments and other people.

FAME AND FAVOUR IN LAIR

In Lair of Sword and Sorcery "Fame" and "Favours" are very specific things and have their own rules associated with them.

·Each hero has a certain amount of "Fame" and "infamy".

·Whenever they complete a particularly noble or evil act their fame or infamy will increase respectively.

·Certain scenarios will also award fame (or possibly infamy) to the heroes.

·Once Fame or infamy is gained it never goes away.

For the Most part a heroes Fame will not have a huge impact on the game. Just because a hero is famous he will not necessarily get free drinks at the bar. Nor will the bartender necessarily refuse to serve a hero who is infamous.

These scores can be used by the demon lord to colour the reactions of the local populace, but will rarely have any bearing on the outcome of any specific roll of the dice or when trying to buy or sell.

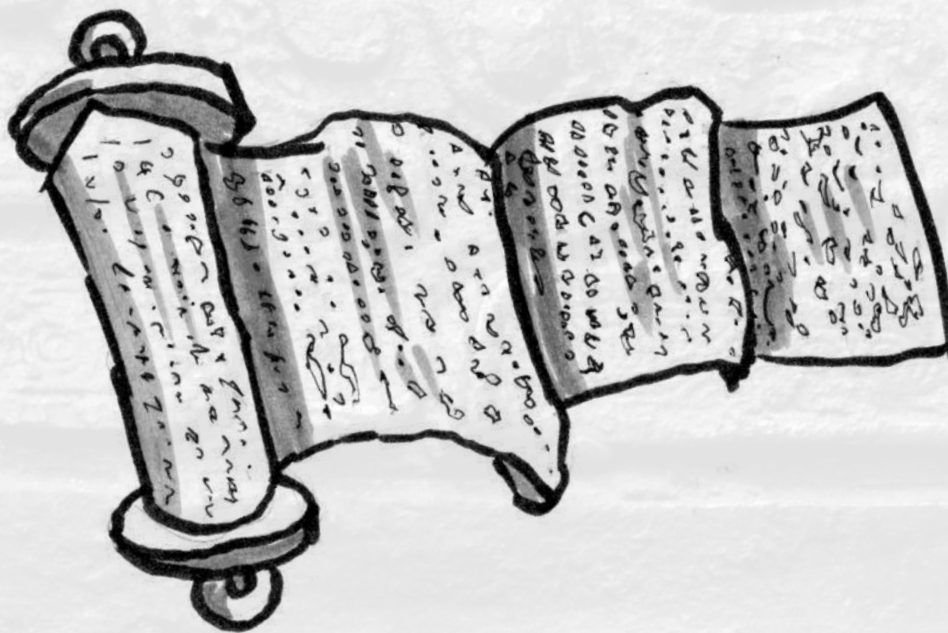
It helps the players to envision who their Hero is and to remember what they have done throughout their careers.

·Fame does, however, affect the hero whenever they attempt to cash in a favour.

Favours are very specific things in Lair which the heroes earn for completing heroic acts, often as a reward for completing a scenario. They can also be earned in other ways, sometimes for doing a favour for someone else, or even for knowing how to keep their mouth shut at the right time.

Fame and infamy control whether or not a favour can be cashed in by the hero, and whether or not the person granting the favour now considers the debt to be "paid".

·Depending on the person owing the favour the roll might be made using the Fame stat, the infamy stat, or a combination of the two.



THE LAIR FAME AND FAVOUR SYSTEM

EARNING FAME AND INFAMY

Fame is earned by the heroes for doing a great deed to benefit the community, or even a deed that benefits a single person if the stories are told often enough.

•Most often fame will be awarded by successfully completing a scenario. This will usually be listed under the rewards for success.

•Fame can also be awarded by the Demonlord for any heroic act, especially if people are close by to witness it.

•Usually heroes would gain only 1 fame point at a time but may possibly gain more for a particularly challenging or long quest, especially if it is in the benefit of the common people.

•Fame can also be awarded for any particularly impressive acts, even if they help no one.

•Once Fame is gained it never goes away.

Moving a particularly heavy stone, or beating another famous hero in an honorable duel will also grant a fame point if the Demon lord allows.

Conversely the heroes also gain Infamy points. These represent the feelings of the population about the bad things the heroes have done.

•Infamy points are earned in that same way but for evil acts or acts against the community.

•They are also sometime awarded for failing in a scenario with a noble objective, failing to save the world grants infamy of it's own kind.

•Heroes may also be awarded infamy for publicly embarking on evil quests or quests that could harm the community.

•Once infamy is gained it never goes away.

As I said before fame and infamy points do not come up often in normal play except to colour the populances reactions to them, except when dealing with the mechanics of favours.

•Fame and infamy, when gained, is never lost. Having far more of one than the other, however,

means that the people are willing to overlook these slight discrepancies.

For instance a normally good hero who has amassed 50 fame points who sets a criminal friend free gains an infamy point, but the overwhelming fame means the population will be willing to overlook this one transgression. It may even serve as an amusing anecdote in popular song and legend.

EARNING FAVOURS

•When a hero does something to help someone specific or the community as a whole they earn a "favour" from that person or community.

•Favours have a specific person or community associated with them. This is the person or group who will repay the favour.

•Heroes will earn them for specific tasks, and usually will be told ahead of time that "the community will be forever in their debt" or some other such thing.

•They will usually be earned by completing a specific scenario.

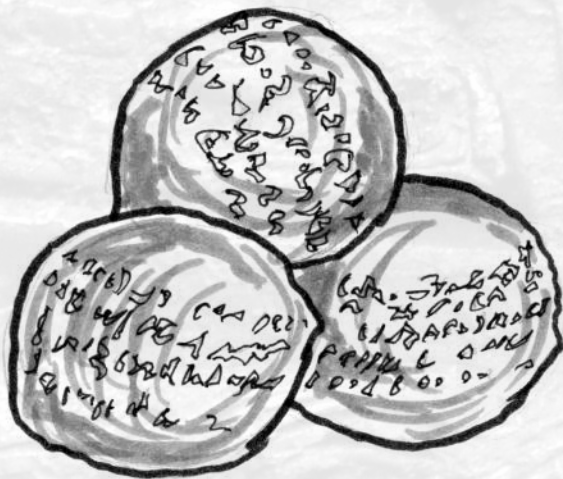
•They may also be granted by single person, a wealthy merchant, a lord or targ, or even a takket farmer running a road house may grant a favour.

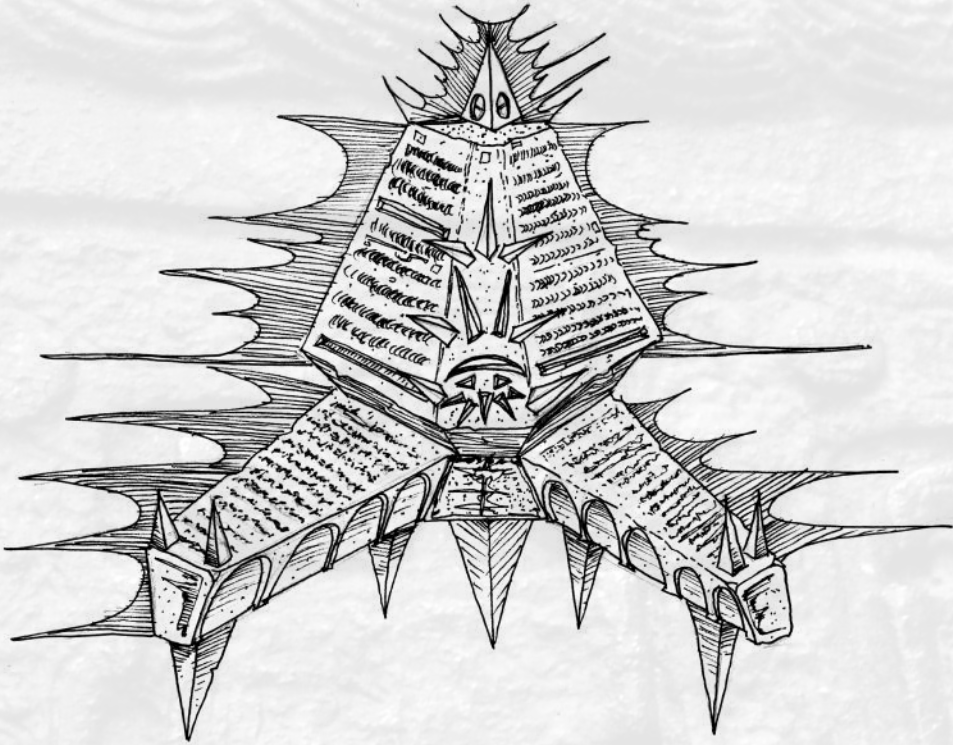
•The most sought after favours are those owed by the gods. Doing a great service for the gods may be rewarded by a favour, and having a god "owing you one" is a good thing to have.

Gods can be difficult to find when calling the favour in, however, though their priests have been known to act in their place for these things.

Favours are not granted only by good and noble people and communities. The heroes may find dark gods and evil priests owing them a debt.

•The players should track all favours on their Hero Record sheet, who owes them the favour and





CASHING IN FAVOURS

Designers Notes and Rules

In games of Lair of Sword and Sorcery favours can be far more valuable than gold, increased Veteran skills, magic weapons, or even armies in some cases.

Heroes seeking true power should carefully collect favours, cashing them in only when most necessary and for greatest reward. They must also prove themselves to these people who owe them favours by building up their fame (or infamy) before attempting to cash them in.

•To cash in a favour the hero must consider who they should petition.

•If the favour is owed by a person they must seek this person out first, or at the least have a way to contact them, by messenger, or through another go between.

•If the favour is owed by a community then the hero may petition anyone within the community.

However the power of the people within the community varies greatly. If the community of Stroh Branoch owes the hero a favour, the Hero will be best served to seek out the Targ to repay the favour as their resources are far greater than the Tarket herder who lives down the street. But if all they require is a Tarket, the Tarket herder may serve just as well. It may be a waste of a favour but

if the Hero really needs a Tarket right now and cannot wait for an audience with the Targ then go right ahead.

•If the favour is owed by a god then the Hero will have the best results if they are able to speak to the god directly. However this would be a very difficult and rare thing to accomplish. Usually the hero will have to make do with petitioning the temple of the god, or one of his priests if the temple is too far off.

•Once they have found the proper person to make their petition to, they must decide what exactly to ask for.

•Keep in mind the abilities of the person granting the favour. If they are asked to do something that is just inhumanly impossible, or so far outside of their moral code as to make it impossible for them to consider the favour will likely be cancelled.

Consider the scale of the task performed to earn the favour. The request should not be outrageously more than the original act performed to earn it.

Take into account the fame and infamy of the Hero making the petition. A favour may be more valuable to a hero with 30 fame than one with 10.

MECHANICS OF THE FAVOUR ROLL

First off here are the details of the favour roll, don't get scared if it seems complex, it's all explained below in the following sections.

•First determine the heroes reception base score, it will be a number between 1 and 10

•Determine the value of the request, which will be a number between 1 and 10

•Determine the value of the original act which earned the favour, again a number between 1 and 10.

•Minus the request value from the act value (it may be a negative) and apply this to the base score.

•This number will be the favour roll. The player must roll 2d6 and if the number is equal to or lower than this number the favour is granted.

•Whether the favour is granted or not the player rolls again against the same number to see if the debt has been considered paid.

RECEPTION BASE SCORE

First the hero must determine how well he is received.

•If the person they are petitioning is, overall, a good one, then the Hero will subtract their infamy from their fame, and divide the total by 10 rounding up. This is their base score.

•If the person is, overall, an evil one, then the hero will subtract their fame from their infamy, divide the total by 10 rounding up. This is their base score.

To give a bit of context to just how famous the hero is look up their base score on the following chart.

1=Well known in their local town

2=Known within their local area (throughout the valley of fangs for example)

4=Known throughout the province

5=Known through the land, for example the winterlands

7=Known throughout the world of Kartharka

8=All sing the praises of your Hero throughout the land

10=Your legends will be told for generations



REQUEST VALUE

Now consider the value of the request versus the value of the act that earned the favour.

This can be hard to value, but the best way is to use a number system.

•Give the value of what is asked a ranking between 1 and 10.

•1 being a trifling request, 10 being along the lines of seriously affecting the favour givers interests. Take into account the resources of the favour giver when considering this value. The value of a Takket will be much higher to a miner than it would be to a Lord.

The best way to consider it would be to think of 1 as something the favour giver would think little of giving to a friend. A 10 would be something which would seriously affect the future of the favour giver.

A miner may not be able to continue his work without a Takket but may feel so indebted to a hero that he will give it. This would be a 10.

For a lord, commanding his armies to attack a neighbouring lord may be considered a 10. If it goes poorly for him his entire reign may be in risk.

For the lord however a Takket would be 1.

ACT VALUE

•Now consider the value of the original act done by the hero to the favour giver. This should be given a value between 1 and 10. Not the difficulty of the act, which may have risked the life of the hero or may even have claimed the life of the heroes friends, but the actual value to the favour giver.

•1 could be recovering some trinket for the favour giver, 10 being saving their life or their kingdom from invasion.

Again consider the value in comparison to what the favour giver already had.

Recovering a statue worth 50 gold pieces would be worth far more to priest at the local shrine than it would to the local lordling who had treasures uncountable.

THE PETITION ROLL

•Minus the asking value from the favour value.

•The final amount may be a negative.

•Add this number to the fame base score.

•This final number is the roll the hero must match or roll below to receive their favour.

•If they succeed the favour giver will give them what they ask for.

•If they fail the roll the favour giver will decline, considering the request to be too much.





DEPT REPAYMENT ROLL

Now the hero rolls the dice again trying to match or roll below the same number as during the request.

If they match or roll below again then the favour giver considers the debt still to be owing, they may consider the request too trifling to consider as payment or they may consider their debt so great that they will need to repay it again to feel it has been honoured.

If he fails again the favour giver will deem the hero too greedy, demanding, or having little scruples in blackmailing them in this way, and deems the favour null and void. The hero gets nothing and the favour is lost.

This failure will also negatively affect their fame/infamy as well by one point. If the favour giver is good then they will gain 1 infamy, if the favour giver is evil they will gain 1 fame.

This is because the favour giver will undoubtedly tell one and all that the Hero is a terrible person for making such a demand.



THE DEMENSE

Home and Hearth of the Heroes

Whenever the heroes are not actively traveling, the place they call their home is their Demense.

It may be a clearing in the woods with a crude shelter built to protect them from the storms. It may be a room at the local inn. They may choose to build a home, buy one or rent one.

In Stroh Branoch there are many choices for the heroes.

They may stay for free in the common room of any way house.

They may rent their own rooms from these wayhouses.

They may, if they earn enough money, rent or buy a house of their own.

They may make a shelter of ice and wood in the woods surrounding the city.

If they have the right tools they may build themselves a log cabin or other structure outside the city.

These options are available in most cities and villages within the winterlands.

Stroh Branoch is a special city however.

Huge numbers of miners come from all over the winterlands and the Empire. All of these people over the years have built many structures in Stroh branoch. Shacks, homes, tool sheds, storage sheds, smelters, charcoal huts, refining stations, and other larger and smaller structures. Indeed the city itself sits atop other older mineworks, some buildings of which still stand.

This means that the entire city is full of half built shacks, old lumber, ruined houses and old sheds. Every available space is occupied by Miners, travelers and workers all looking to make their place in the city.

Heroes travelling to the city are easily able to appropriate a somewhat upright shack, and using some of lumber which fills every other available space, may repair it to make it livable.

Often people will band together, with five or six people living in each shack. They work together to keep the shack upright, make improvements, clear the roof and doorways of snow, keep the firewood pile (always stored indoors) topped up and to guard each others possessions.

The shacks rarely have locks on the doors, they are fragile enough that simply tearing boards off the side would be easier than breaking down a locked door.

With time however the shack can be built up to the sturdiness of a usual dwelling but the effort and money required to do so would be the same as building a real home.

Many a group of heroes has started out their career in one of these shacks.

The average shack measures roughly thirty by

twenty feet. Often they will have other buildings butting on to them but if these are abandoned the heroes may extend their dwellings into these as well. Bartering with your neighbors to convince them to move is common for those hoping to expand their living space.

More difficult is clearing and keeping any outdoor space or yards. Sturdy fences or palisades must be built or the neighbors will continue to build on the area.

Few Demenses are strong enough to keep out a determined thief unless they are well fortified. Usually people make do with making friends with their neighbors, sometimes paying them to keep an eye on their belongings when they are out of town, or asking others to dwell within their home while they are gone.

Some will even marry to have a wife to keep their home while they are away.

For the most part, as long as they carry their valuables with them, and keep their tools in a heavy and well locked box within their home these efforts will be successful.

As long as the heroes are citizens of good standing few will allow thieves to enter and loot their homes.

COSTS AND FEATURES OF THE DEMENSE

Rooms can be rented for 1 Gold coin a month from a wayhouse, and will contain enough furnishings for the heroes to be healthy and rested.

A house can be bought for 100 gold coins, measuring thirty by thirty feet and having a ground floor, an upper floor, and a cellar.

A house can be built by a hero as well.

To build a house the hero must pay 30 gold coins for tools and "permits" from the Targ, and spend at least a week between each adventure building their home. After 8 weeks thus spent they will have the basic home described above.

Amounts paid and time spent will be similar in other towns and cities of the Winterlands.

Making additions to a house is much more difficult than adding on to a shack. Permits and tools are required for all proper additions.

Each addition to a house will cost another 20 gold pieces for tools and permits. Each addition will also take a further 4 weeks of time.

This may be the addition of another room, another level, a yard, or adding a "demense feature".

Adding a demense feature to a shack requires the same amount of time but costs only 10 gold pieces for tools and convincing the neighbours to make room.

DEMENSE FEATURES

As you can see in previous articles in this issue, to gain certain veteran skills you will require a demense, and some of them will require a demense with special features.

A good guideline for demonlords should be that a hero cannot purchase any new veteran skills or upgrade the ones that they have without having at least some sort of demense to call home.

Without a comfortable bed and adequate living conditions it is impossible to improve your skills.

LIST OF FEATURES

Yard: A large outdoor area, fenced in.

Training Yard: An upgrade to the yard, racks for training weapons, seats, platforms, and various small targets.

Training Dummy: A specially built dummy for weapons training, with various targets, moving limbs, limbs that hold weapons and shields.

Target: Used for archery or throwing weapons, also has a large barrier to stop errant shots from reaching the neighbors yards.

Writing Table: Large table with suitable lighting, various pens and inks, a writing surface, writing materials as well as blotters, sealing wax and shelves for storing papers, books, and scrolls.

Library: A large set of shelves containing books, scrolls, and papers, copied from various local sages halls. The most common texts on more popular subjects or of interest to all. Also includes various historical, scientific and legendary subjects.

FEATURES REQUIRED FOR CRAFTING

These are more of a series of guidelines for things which would be required for crafting. Getting into the specific details of each and every tool required is not needed nor possibly wanted.

Consider the following to be examples or suggestions for Crafting.

Work bench: Needed for crafting wood, leather, or metal

Kiln: Required for pottery

Forge: Necessary for crafting metal

Anvil: Required for Iron and steel

Mixing table: Required for potion craft. Includes glassware, mortar and pestle, mixing bowls, bottles, and storage for all ingredients.

ADDITIONAL FEATURES

Players should feel free to add anything they like to their homes, the Demonlord can make the required decisions on specific costs and times to build other features but they will likely be similar to the ones already listed. Consider this to be a list of inspirations to get your players started.

Shrines to local gods, a kitchen, a map room, planning room, treasury with specially reinforced walls and door, an equipment room, storage room, anything which the heroes can think of can be added to the demense.

Get your players to draw a floorplan of their demense. Have them add to it as they add more features. Let them be as creative as they wish, it's their home after all. The more they time and money they invest in it, the more interesting and personal it becomes. The floorplan will come in handy if they heroes are ever attacked in their home.

TEACHERS:

Some veteran skills will require a teacher. The Demonlord should use these opportunities as a source for adventure ideas. Teachers should be difficult to find, expensive and far away. Finding them should be an adventure in and of themselves, and convincing the teacher to accept them as a student should also be an adventure. I believe it is in the best interest of the game at this point to leave this area completely up to the Demonlord, so that they can keep control of their own games.



LEGENDS OF THE WINTERLANDS

There are many legends of the ancient times of Kartharka, when Sorcery and Magic ruled the land.

These legends that follow is the lore that has been handed down through the ages, the stories and fables that the people have told each other around the fire since the beginning times.

None know for sure if these legends be true or false. But only a fool would completely disregard the warnings of Legend.

THE TIME OF THE SORCERERS

Sorcery lies in the very bones of the World of Kartharka. Sorcery lies in the history of the world, the gods once strode through the lands fighting their wars amongst themselves. These wars escalated until finally one of the groups unleashed their mightiest magics ever, which sundered the seasons separating them amongst the world of Kartharka.

With the destruction of the seasons also came the death of Sorcery. Ancient magic artifacts suddenly dimmed and became useless normal objects. All the otherworldly beasts of the world were cast forth into the netherworld, unable to survive in a world without sorcery.

But legend speaks of pockets of sorcery bubbling still in the wilderness and deep caverns of the winterlands. Haunted legends and stories still speak of wanderers trapped and dragged off by terrible creatures that roam the earth.

Whispered tales speak of some lone few who still wield a spark of sorcery, commanding evil spirits and casting terrible magics on the innocent people of the world.

Many believe sorcery to be completely gone from the land but the superstitious still fear creatures in the night, and avoid the places said to be haunted by Sorcerers.

Some also speak of terrible warlords with Sorcerers in their hire, sacrificing those they conquer to appease the dark spirits those Sorcerers command.

But heroes know better. Travelling the wilderness they have seen strange and unknown things. Creatures that disappear into the night after creeping close to their night fires, terrible attacks on the road by crazed worshippers of dark gods, strange chanting and mysterious lights atop hills deep in the woods that follow the roads, and tales of the Miners, stumbling across strange and terrifying things in the dark that they dare not speak of.

THE SAGES

The sages of the winterlands (and presumable the sages of the other lands as well) try to preserve and further the knowledge of the world, science, history, alchemy and other more mysterious realms of knowledge.

Though they share their knowledge of History and science gladly with all (for a price) it is said that they also conduct secret experiments in hidden libraries beneath their towers. That they still practice the arcane arts of Sorcery and magic, trying to restore the ancient magic relics rumored to lie in the vaults beneath the earth.

It is said that they search but none say what they find.

Those that travel the roads know that there are some that hold arcane secrets, things unknown to the rest of the world. The potion merchants and soothsayers are said to hold even greater powers than they reveal. For those that search, the knowledge may be hidden throughout the land, perhaps in places that they least expect.

MAGIC:

It is said that in the time of the first men, when the gods still walked the earth, that there was Magic.

Magic was wondrous, it could do anything. It could move stone, create food and water, even control the storms of the sky and the waters of the sea.

At that time great Mages walked the earth, mages who could throw fire from their hands or, summon storms, control your thoughts, bring the dead back to life or any other number of wondrous and magical things through the power of their own will and study.

But they are all gone now, in the great cataclysm that rocked Kartharka and split the seasons asunder magic died. The Mages faded away leaving their great tools to be wondered and marveled at as they lie useless now.

SORCERY:

There have always been other forces in the World of Kartharka. Dark forces.

It was said in the time before the Mages that sorcerers ruled the earth, commanding the spirits of the earth, wood, air and fire. But they became too powerful and in their greed searched for even more power.

And they found it.

In the time before the first men the Sorcerers fought the gods, with terrible and vengeful spirits, powerful and hateful things from the other side, from the beyond and from the under.

These terrible beings, kept only barely in check by the dark powers of these sorcerers, tore down the fortresses of the gods and a great war was fought, between magic and sorcery.

The gods struggled and were finally able to break the sorcerers hold over their dread minions, who then began to roam the land causing destruction and despair.

THE DREAD PACT:

The gods then forged a great and terrible magic, forcing these creatures beneath the earth and beyond the gates once again. Woeful and tremulous pacts were made with the beings though none now remember the details of that terrible bargain or what they offered the creatures in return.

MAGIC IN KARTHARKA NOW:

After the great cataclysm it is said that all the magic of the land was destroyed and made useless. The magical creatures and things either withered and died among the lands, or retreated to dark, hidden, and protected places in the earth, where some magic still remains.

Whispers around campfires tell of some mysterious figures, who roam the world still. Whether they are gods, men, or foul creatures of nightmare, no one knows, but legend says they still wield the powerful magics of the gods. That their mighty staffs still hold some magic left from the beginning time.

Whether they strive in the cause of good, evil or their own inscrutable plans is unknown.

SORCERY IN KARTHARKA:

Some say the spirits of the earth and air live on after the Dread Pact. Their powers greatly dwindled now and their actions greatly restricted. Sacred groves and hollows are still said to exist in the world where some worship in return for the boons they can still grant.

Others whisper more quietly that the Dread folk also still exist, exiled to the other side, the underworld the beyond, they still wait. Through the great and terrible pact it is said there are exceptions and loopholes that some can take advantage of even in these times.

These spirits, if called properly, and bargained with according to the ancient laws, may be still controlled by men for their own uses.

It is rumored that benevolent spirits in the otherworld can also be called up, but who is to say that these are not evil beings in disguise, misleading man once again hoping to undo the Dread Pact of the gods and once again roam the earth to enslave man.

SORCERORS, WIZARDS, WITCHES:

All of these are rumoured to haunt the world. Sometimes someone in a village has...powers. Someone who can act on a persons behalf to accomplish and act.

It may be a healing of a sick child, or to undo a disastrous growing season, or to see into the future and predict what will be.

These people are said to have the power not only to help, but to harm.

To cause children or cattle to sicken or die, destroy crops, send nightmares or disease, causing fires, ill luck and terrible storms.

Any who meddle with the spirits of the other side are suspect, their rites must be hidden, their tools and rituals kept from prying eyes.

But the villagers also know signs of the Other Side. Wizards, witches, and sorcerers all must traffic with the other side, and any who do must protect themselves at all times from the spirits they call up as well as the others whose attention they attract in their rites.

They must protect themselves with sigils and contracts, dread amulets and magical constructs. For if they were to leave themselves unprotected, the spirits they deal with would be free to take their due payment.

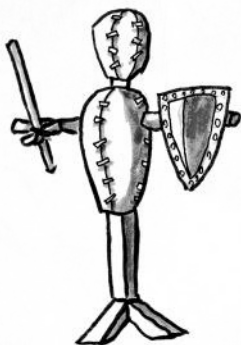
And so the sorcerers can often be known by their strange ways, mystical gestures at certain times of day. Secret magic signs, sewn into their clothes and bags, strange staffs, wands, rings, necklaces and crowns.

The sorcerer fears not only the dread spirits they truck with but the fearful people around them as well.

THE TRUTH OF SORCERY IN KARTHARKA.

The true story of Sorcery in Kartharka must wait for the Sorcery issue. That issue will be Forked, one to be bought by players interested in having heroes that search for the Sorcerous arts and the other for the Demon lord to explain the how's, whys and history of Sorcery in Kartharka.

For now I will tell you. Sorcery is rare, powerful, and tremendously dangerous.



HERO SORCERORS

HEROES WHO WISH TO BE SORCERERS:

Unlike training in Combat a hero cannot simply decide to become a sorcerer.

A warrior may spend their veteran points (which are a representation of how much they have learned) when they have amassed enough to increase their fighting skills. To actually gain these increases, they usually also have to spend time training, hire teachers, or build specific areas to train in.

A hero who wishes to become a sorcerer, however, cannot simply hire a teacher and buy some books on Sorcery.

They still have to spend their veteran points to receive their veteran skills in sorcery but, for them, this represents their ignoring their training in battle skills to further their interest in the more mysterious arts.

Training and reading the known knowledge of the world will not be enough to teach them the ways of the sorcerer however. The knowledge of their skills and ways are a jealously guarded secret. They will keep track of their discoveries and knowledge in their own secret codes and languages, and usually choose to write down as little as possible. Their arts and secrets are traded amongst themselves only, usually only through secret meetings where they speak with each other, choosing to memorize as much of their lore as possible to keep the dangerous and valuable information to themselves.

Things do sometimes slip from their grasp.

When a sorcerer or wizard dies or is killed, some of their notes and belongings will sometimes be found.

Sometimes the spirits they have enslaved will still be locked within these belongings or trapped in the area which the sorcerer has sealed them.

The Winterland sages also have certain scraps of learning and knowledge deep within their treasures. Kept safe from the casual observance of those who would misuse it.

For the Hero that wishes to become a sorcerer this means that they will need to:

- Find another sorcerer to pass on the knowledge of how to summon and command spirits.

- Kill another sorcerer and hope that his belongings and scrolls will contain enough knowledge to summon and control a spirit safely.

- Find one of the legendary tombs or ancient residences of a long dead sorcerer and hope that it has not been looted of its valuable knowledge yet.

- Search through the ancient vaults and treasures of the Sages halls in the hopes of finding enough information to summon a spirit and bend it to their will.

Usually if a hero is patient enough they will come face to face with a sorcerer, whether good or evil and begin their path then.

Other wise the best route is to inform the Demonlord that they wish to begin searching for a legendary Sorcerer or their tomb and the Demonlord will let them know of any rumours or legends which they are able to discover.

They can then set out on their mission to discover what they can.

Whether they find a book or scroll or discover a teacher they may choose to study to become a sorcerer.

The first thing they will learn is to summon a very minor spirit.

THE FIRST VETERAN SKILL THE SORCEROR WILL LEARN IS SUMMONING

VETERAN SKILL: SORCERY: SUBGROUP: SUMMONING.

Summoning; +1 available to any with with a sorcery teacher or sorcery book or scroll deemed to contain the proper information by the Demonlord.

Information on increasing summoning rank will be in the Sorcery issue.

The writings or teacher will give enough information to summon one specific spirit.

Whether it is evil or good will depend on how the student learned to summon it. An evil sorcerer will only be able to teach or write about evil spirits.

"Good" wizards or sorcerers may know of good spirits but they are most difficult to call. The student will often only be able to summon a minor evil spirit to begin.

This first spirit may be summoned at any time by the sorcerer. They may do this whether they are in combat or not. To do so they must do nothing but perform the gestures and chants of summoning.

Once summoned the spirit may remain in the world of Kartharka for only about 10 minutes at a time. They may not then be summoned again until the following day. In Lair game rules this would be equivalent to fighting in one combat, leaving once the combat is over, or, for 10 minutes of adventure mode time which the Demonlord will monitor and let the player know when the time is up.

The spirit has some uses but is not very powerful.

- It will be invisible and silent to any but the sorcerer. The sorcerer can see and hear the spirit perfectly however. These minor spirits will usually appear to the sorcerer as a wisp of smoke, a glowing spere, a flickering flame or a crackling of electricity.

- Once summoned the spirit may be asked questions, or may be commanded to complete simple tasks.

- These sprits are ancient and so will be able to

successfully answer any question about history or sorcery as if they had the veteran skill Lore +2.

•They must answer any questions truthfully and if they do not know the answer, they must state that this is the case.

•They may also perform small tasks for the sorcerer.

•Their substance is similar to that of a ghost, they may move through walls, floors or ceiling, may fly or float in any direction through any material. They may only move up to 10 squares away from the sorcerer however. This could be useful for searching the bottom of a pool, beyond a door, or inside a box however.

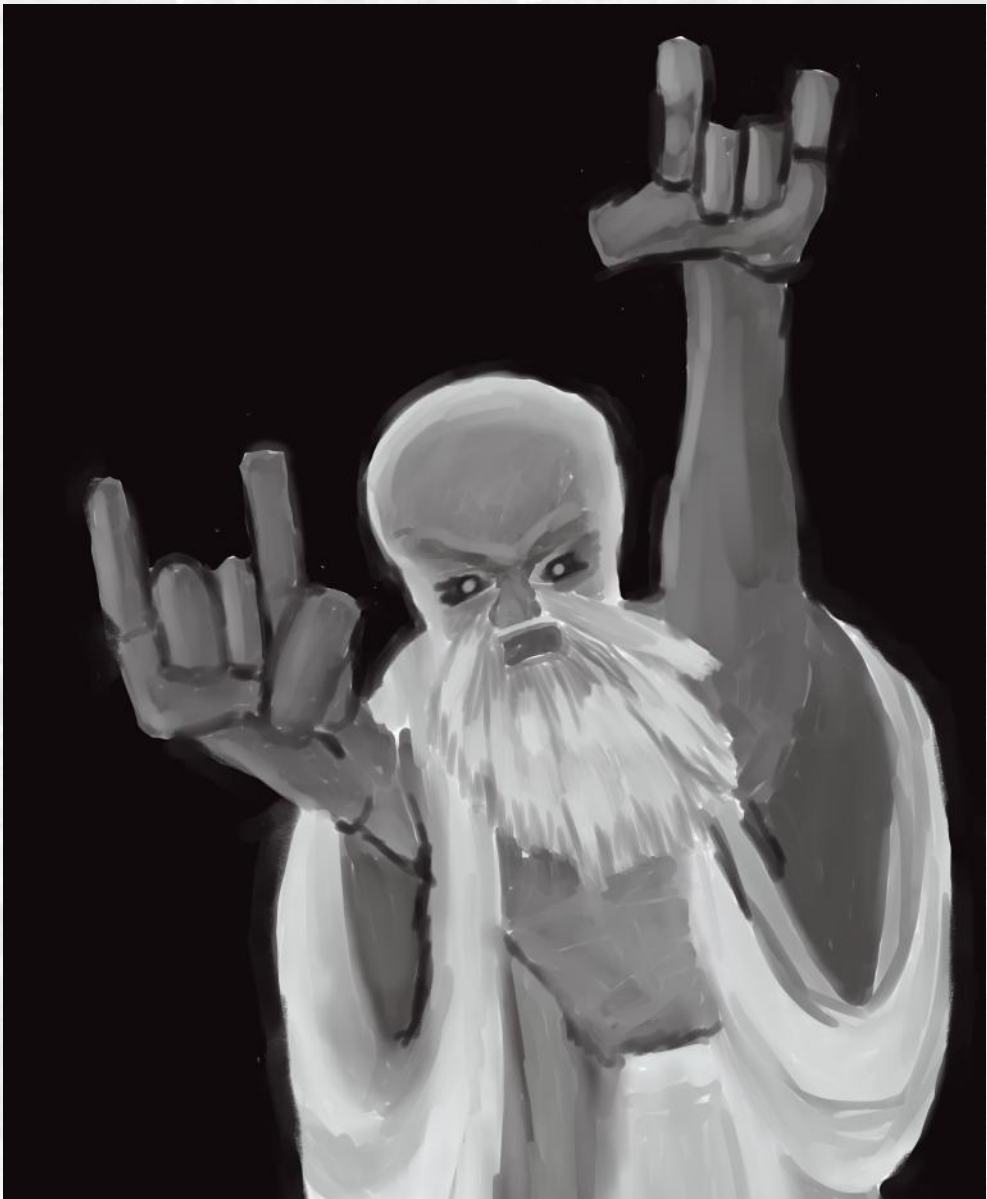
•They must follow all orders of the Sorcerer for the 10 minutes they are in Kartharka.

•They may also move small any small object around carrying it within the distance they are

allowed to move but they are quite weak. They could for example pour a glass of water, open an unlocked door, sweep a floor. But they do not have the strength to move an object hard or fast enough to cause damage. So they may fetch a dagger for a sorcerer but may not use it to attack someone.

These simple spirits have little power in our world and can come only when summoned and so the sorcerer is relatively safe in dealing with them, unless they are spotted by others while using them in which case a fearful population may choose to harm the sorcerer before he casts an evil spell upon them.

More details will come with the Sorcery issue but this should be enough to start your hero on the path of the treacherous art of Sorcery.





ADDITIONAL RULES FOR THE DEMONLORD AND HEROES

MORE EQUIPMENT AND TRAVEL:

EDITORIAL THOUGHTS ON TRAVEL AND DISTANCE

As your heroes adventure they may wish to travel farther and farther away from their home base.

It is not necessary to create a large amount of charts and tables to handle travel.

For example the heroes have to travel from Stroh Branoch to the village of Throm at the far end of the Valley of Fangs.

Every hero has a drag sled to carry their gear. All people living in the winterlands have the necessary supplies to travel and survive: fuel for fires, skins to make shelters, food to eat. All of these things are considered to be bought with the "pouchful of coppers" which every hero carries.

You will notice that none of the maps of Kartharka have a scale in miles written on them.

That is on purpose.

The land of Kartharka is incredibly vast, allowing enough room for every conceivable environment, lairs, mines, groups of villages, lost temples, forgotten tribes and secret cities.

Games happen in very small places however. For example my own campaign takes place in the Valley of Fangs high in the Winterlands. The entire valley can be crossed from one end to the other in a week to two weeks depending on the terrain they travel through.

Travel is very quick on the roads that cross it, and very slow in any place where there are no roads. This means that you can always have a place that is up to two weeks travel away from wherever the players are within the Valley. It also means that they can travel between certain places extremely quickly if required.

Sometimes the scenario will have the heroes be ambushed on the road, or have them sidetracked on another quest in the middle of the one they have embarked on.

But other than these scripted interruptions it is best to simply say that travel happens between the

two destinations. There is no need to roll for random encounters to "make things interesting". The scenario itself should be interesting enough for the heroes.

For the most part even dangerous travel need not be played out blow by blow. You may tell the heroes that they arrive at their destination "after a few ambushes by bandits, that they are able to easily deal with". This will give the idea that the trip was difficult without having to have the heroes actually risk their lives to get to the scenario. This also leaves the door open for a future scripted scenario about an attack on the road, which the heroes have already been warned about.

Certain places will be accessible only on by boat, ship, or other means of travel. This may make for an interesting scenario taking place on board a boat but otherwise you may simply say "you book passage on a ship and arrive at the foreign port".

Adventure is not about booking tickets and packing baggage, hiring horses and tracking rations.

Unless the heroes wish to travel in style and comfort allow them to simply get where they want to go.

Sometimes they will want to go somewhere and you have no scenario prepared for that place.

You have two choices at that point. You can either, wrap up play for the day and prepare something for next time or, you can make something up on the fly, perhaps lifting a few ideas from another scenario, or just taking another scenario and dropping it in to replace the location they were travelling to.

If they are headed to that place for something specific don't forget to add it in to the scenario. You wouldn't want them travelling to a place just to find a specific item just to find some random treasure.

It is best to simply discuss with the players how they would like to proceed when something isn't prepared ahead of time.

FOLLOWERS

FOLLOWERS: THE LITTLE GUYS THAT GET THINGS DONE

In the game of Lair of Sword and Sorcery, a lot of things are simplified to keep the action moving. You don't need to track a lot of equipment, treasure, rations and other things, so pack mules, animal handlers, porters, torchbearers, camp followers etc are not needed.

Something that will always be needed by those who delve deep into dangerous lands is a little more muscle. The world of Kartharka is harsh and dangerous so having some people come along to help is always a good idea.

There are always a few people around who will join the heroes for a bit of adventure. Either grizzled veterans who make their living as bodyguards or soldiers, or youths hoping to find their fortune or a bit of adventure. In a world where any day could bring a fight to your doorstep, getting paid to fight is just a sensible idea.

Heroes may hire as many followers as they like to come along with them, if they have the money.

THE AMOUNT OF AVAILABLE FOLLOWERS WILL BE LIMITED

Most scenarios will have a suggested Party rank.

This is the total rank of all the heroes and followers in the party.

If the total rank of the party is less than the scenarios suggested rank then they can hire followers to come with them.

If the total parties rank is greater than the suggested party rank then the demonlord will have instructions on how to even out the challenge.

If followers are available to the party then the lowest ranked hero may hire as many followers as the difference between them and the next hero in line. That hero may then hire as many followers as the difference between them and the next hero and so on until the party rank limit is reached.

For example a 2nd rank hero a 4th rank hero and a 5th rank hero embark on a scenario suggesting a party rank of 16.

The 2nd rank hero may take up to two followers (the difference between 2 and 4)

The 4th level hero may take up to 1 follower (the difference between 4 and 5)

The party may still take 2 more followers if they wish, the option is first given to the lowest rank, the 2nd, who may choose to take one, which he does, the next follower is allowed to the 4th rank who declines and the fifth rank hero decides to take the last one. Though he could decline

A party may always embark on a scenario that is higher rated than their party if they so choose.

COST OF HIRING FOLLOWERS

To hire a standard man whose stats are all zero (except the usual 6 endurance) will cost 1 gold coin per week.

They will have their own food and camping supplies.

They will have one weapon each and 3 pieces of armour, giving them a defense of 1.

The hero may buy them additional weapons and armour which they will use during their employment which will be returned when their contract is completed.

Usually these people will be hired in groups. This means that if one of them dies the heroes may not "loot their corpse". The other men in the group will either distribute their belongings or take them to sell and give the proceeds to the dead man's family.

At least they will usually tell the heroes that that is their plan.

To hire anyone with better stats than the average man is a costly process and will often involve hiring from one of the mercenary companies found in Stroh Branoch. Costs and availability for these are up to the Demonlord or may be suggested by the current Scenario.

FOLLOWERS.

What can followers do? What are the rules, and who controls them?

The player controls his followers in exactly the same way as his hero. He may move him, use him to attack, may have him carry items, pass items, look down hallways etc. Anything that doesn't require a Sota roll.

Each player will control their hero and their own followers on their turn, moving and attacking with them as if they were their own hero.

Their follower may not perform any Sota except for those the scenario describes.

Each follower will work for either one week or one scenario for one gold piece, whichever occurs first.

However, though followers are paid to fight they are not without their limits. When travelling or in a city they will fight in one combat before demanding another gold piece from their owner. When in a scenario they will fight in the first combat with absolute faithfulness but after that each combat is subject to a roll to see if they continue fighting. (See next page for the Flee Roll)



21 DEMONLORD RULES

FLEE ROLL:

When the combat begins (ie when enemies appear) before anyone moves each player rolls 1 die. If the score is 4-6 their followers continue to fight.

If the score is a 1-3 then they immediately start running towards safety (they are under the control of the demonlord who will move them away from enemies) They will still defend themselves when attacked but will continue to run away. Once they reach the exit they will never be seen again.

This flee roll can be modified by the camaraderie stat of the hero that owns them, adding or subtracting as applicable.

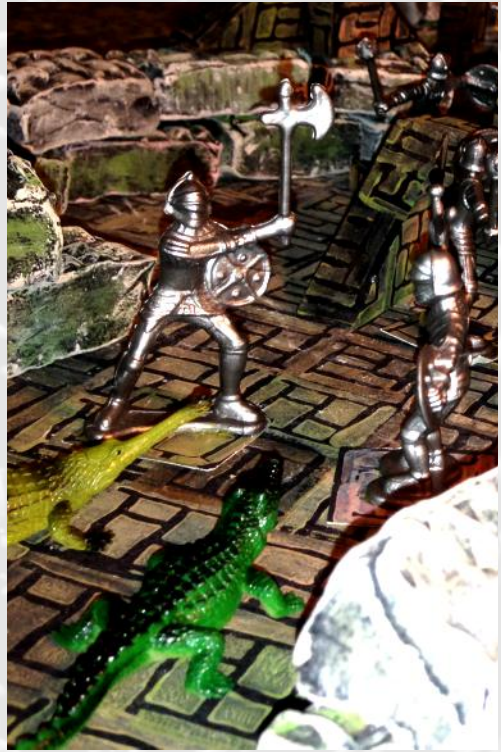
Regardless of the modifier, a roll of 6 on the die

means that they stay and fight. A roll of 1 on the die means they run.

If the running followers are still on the Demon board when the enemies are all removed from the board the heroes may attempt to call them back. The same flee roll is made as when fighting except now the roll is modified by the combined Camaraderie of the party taking into effect all the heroes modifiers. A 1-3 means that they disappear never to be seen again (remove them from the demonboard) a 4-6 means they return (move the followers to a square next to their owner).

In a scenario it may be stated that the demonlords minions will need to make flee rolls as well under certain conditions.





STEEL WEAPONS AND ARMOUR

STEEL WEAPONS

Without descending to talk of weight of Iron coins, relatively values of money, cost of craftsmen, iron content of Iron ore and iron coins we will use the following as a guide.

To have a steel item made, whether a weapon or a piece of armour, it will cost the hero 20 gold pieces and 30 iron coins (if using iron ore then you will have to determine the relative Iron content and it will cost a bit more for the smelting of the ore).

If a steel weapon is ordered from a blacksmith by a hero and the blacksmith is up to the task (demonlord decides) they may choose to have the weapon add a bonus of +1 to attack or +1 to damage. Otherwise the bonus will be randomly chosen.

If they are able to find an experienced weapons smith then they may make a weapon that is +1 to damage and +1 to attack if they are willing to pay their higher rates, (50 gold coins). The demonlord will have to decide if these highly trained weapon smiths are available, or the scenario notes or background of the area may mention this.

There are great weapons masters who can craft weapons of even finer workmanship but they are extremely rare in the world, rarely ply their craft, and command extremely high prices.

There are no known great weapon smiths in the Winterlands but there may be one or two, living in

out of the way places, unknown to all except other great smiths.

Their workmanship is perfect, and though their shape and design be strange and foreign to the eyes of modern smiths, their craftsmanship and functionality cannot be argued.

Ones who work steel in the winterlands are held in great reverence and awe. They are almost high priests of metal, living mysterious and solitary lives. Their secrets are held extremely closely with the knowledge being passed down usually from father to son only.

Other Weapons still circulate throughout the winterlands, however, ancient blades, created by great smiths, in a time when iron flowed like water from the mountains, in the time of the first men when the greatest smiths of all time lived and walked still.

The greatest of these are the "Goblin-Made" weapons of the great first time. These sometimes still turn up in ancient mines, and forgotten places, weapons of indescribable sharpness, lightness and strength.

STEEL ARMOUR HEADING

Steel armour of adequate quality will give a bonus of +2 for every 3 pieces instead of a bonus of +1.

Steel armour can only be used for the chain or plate layer of armour.



NEW WEAPONS AND RULES FOR COMBAT

FIGHTING WITH TWO WEAPONS

By giving up the use of a shield, the hero may choose to fight with two weapons.

·Instead of the usual +2 to attack the shield gives, the hero using two weapons will have a +1 to attack and a +1 to damage.

LARGE TWO HANDED WEAPONS.

Instead of a shield the hero may use a two handed weapon.

In the game of Lair it is often highly recommended to use a shield. You receive a +2 to attack for using a shield and what else would you be using your spare hand for anyway?

·If they do choose to use a two handed weapon instead of a sword and shield they will receive a +2 to damage instead of the +2 to attack that the shield gives them.

These weapons include 2 handed axes, swords and kartharkan maces.

LONG WEAPONS

Halberds, 2 handed war spears and hunting spears.

·These are long reach weapons allowing the hero to make an attack on a square 2 spaces away, instead of only the square bordering the hero.

·When attacking make a roll in the same way as attacking with a missile weapon. If the attacker loses the combat their enemy does not get to make a damage roll however, and the attacker still loses the minimum 1 endurance point.

·However if an enemy does move into hand to hand combat with the wielder of the long weapon the wielder will fight as if unarmed.

·If two people with long weapons are fighting

each other from a distance of two squares then the combat works in the same way as two people fighting normally with swords next to each other.

·If two people armed with long weapons are fighting each other from neighbouring squares then they both fight as if they were unarmed.

·Heroes armed with long weapons may attack an enemy through a square occupied by someone on their own side.

NEGATIVE DEFENSE SCORE.

The amount is added to any damage rolled against them in hand to hand fighting or missile combat.

·This does not affect the minimum 1 point of endurance damage they receive for being in combat. That is still just a 1 as it only represents the tiring of the hero.

For example if they have a -2 defense and an enemy successfully attacks them, rolling a 3 for damage, the hero takes 5 endurance damage.

NEGATIVE DAMAGE SCORE

A negative score in damage is applied to any damage roll the hero makes.

If a hero has a -2 damage stat, whenever they roll damage they subtract 2 from the roll. So if they roll a 4 they only cause 2 damage. If they roll a 1 then the enemy still takes the minimum 1 endurance damage for being in combat.

MISSILE COMBAT RULE ADDITION.

When rolling to hit for a missile attack with a bow or thrown weapon, a tie is considered a miss.

This was left out of the Combat issue and so is now added as an additional rule.

THE LAIR RANKING SYSTEM

BALANCED ENCOUNTERS, HERO RANK, PARTY RANK, ENCOUNTER RANK, ENEMY RANK, SCENARIO RANK.

Before we begin I want to point out that there is one rule change coming up.

In the combat issue I stated that a Hero begins at Rank 0

Below we will see that the hero actually starts at a different rank than 0 depending on what their choices were when creating their hero.

HERO RANK.

A heroes rank can be found by:

- Start with 1

- Add all bonuses in attack, defense, and damage, any endurance above 6 and any move above 4.(don't forget the bonus +2 for a shield). Also minus any negatives.

- If they have a special attack that causes 1d6 of damage add 1

- If they have a special attack that causes 2d6 of damage add 4

- If they have a special attack that causes 3d6 of damage add 10

For example, if a sorcerer controls a demon, add the demons rank to the rank of the sorcerer.

If a sorcerer has an item which can cause a special attack, add the bonuses of that attack to the sorcerers rank.

PARTY RANK

The party rank of the group can be found by adding together the ranks of all the heroes and adding 1 for each standard follower.

RANK OF ENEMIES

The rank of any enemy can be determined in the same way by the demonlord as determining rank for heroes.

The rank of any group of enemies can be determined in the same way as party rank for the heroes.

In this way you can determine if the party is fighting a "group of equal or greater force" for the purpose of veteran point awards.

A BALANCED ENCOUNTER.

When creating your scenarios it may be best to consider relative strengths versus the party instead of just writing down how many enemies are there.

For example if you want a group of raiders to attack the party of heroes in a specific room and you want their rank to be half of the heroes then you can write down the rank of 1 raider and in the description of the room write "half party rank of raiders".

That way it will not matter how many heroes are in the group you can easily determine how many

enemies to use and the encounter will always be the same "difficulty".

For example:

Add all of the heroes ranks together and you will have the parties total rank.

For an encounter in a scenario you will see that there will usually be a type of enemy or creature that attacks. Each creature or enemy will have a rank.

The encounter will say what amount of the parties rank worth of creatures will attack.

For example say the total party rank is 12.

The scenario says that there is an encounter with a group of bandits.

It will give the bandits stats and rank, for this example we will say that the bandits rank is 2.

The scenario will then go on to say something like: a balanced encounter, a half power encounter, or a quarter power encounter.

For a half power encounter for example it would mean enough bandits to equal half the total heroes party rank, which in this case would be 6

So simply divide 6 by the rank of the bandits giving you the answer of 3 bandits.

So 3 bandits will be in the encounter.

In this way you can always tell if the heroes are fighting a group of "equal or greater force" as well for the purpose of Veteran points.



ENEMIES OF THE WINTERLANDS

Here is the part you've all been waiting for.

Technically most games would put enemies, monsters and animal in the territory of the Games master only but I don't think anything is lost by the players knowing the following information.

Listed below are sample statistics for the animals, bizarre creatures, and human enemies of the Winterlands.

These are all things which are known to exist by most of the people of the Winterlands. Your average winterlander would know the comparable strength of a winterlands saber cat to a frost bear, their lives depend on it.

ANIMAL ENEMIES

Usually animals are used in a scenario to either spice things up, in the case of a giant snake in a sorcerers lair, or to attack the heroes with something convincing while travelling in the wilds: an attack by wolves while travelling through the woods, for example.

Or they may serve as the quest goal itself, ridding a hidden valley of rampaging dinosaurs to loot the lost temple within.

Animals can be the final enemy of a Lair, like a giant spider lurking at the bottom of a mines labyrinth of twisting tunnels.

Lair of sword and sorcery is primarily focused on people, and the enemies of the heroes will often be men, just like them. Animals and the like should be considered more like tools that the enemies will use against them, like the sorcerers snake.

Animals could take up residence in the forgotten tunnels and lairs that the heroes travel to, places where people do not travel to. A place beyond mans knowledge may still be the hunting grounds of a pack of wolves.

KNOWN CREATURES OF THE WILD:

The following animals are all considered to be natural and common in the Winterlands.

There are many more natural creatures than these, but this is a list of the ones that might pose a danger to the heroes. Their relative strengths and weaknesses are known to all and few winterlanders would be surprised to see them, though they might not be too happy.

Vulpin (Rats):

These are the squeaking food supply of the larger winterlands creatures. The vulpins breed prodigiously and can feed on anything. Larger and stronger than the common rat on earth they can grow to 2 feet long including the tail. The tail of the vulpine is shorter and thicker than that of the earth rat and the head is larger, allowing for a more fearsome bite.

The vulpine can be said to be the source of the winterland fighting spirit as all younglings learn

how to kill them quite early in life.

Luckily their larger size keeps them from invading well built homes as easily as our earth rats but they are still a scourge of the cities, making sleeping outdoors alone in a human settlement a dangerous proposition.

They are relatively easy to deal with singly, though their vicious bite will easily draw blood. Their heavy size keeps them from jumping too high as well as preventing them from climbing trees and up furniture.

Attics, cellars and other forgotten spaces can be crawling with these creatures however.

Though they will attack any intruder that stumbles upon them a successful blow will send one running.

If they are encountered in packs however they can be quite dangerous.

Def	Attk	End	Dam	Move	Rank
0	0	2	0	5	1/2

Wolf wings (Bats)

The flying Vulpins of the winterlands. Less fragile than our earth bats, they are also heavier and stronger. Not as fast a flyer they prefer to wait in high places to swoop down on their prey, or attack birds in flight.

They travel in small packs of 10 to 20 though they also will fly solo for longer distances if food is scarce.

Once on the ground they tend to be slow moving and will find it difficult to take off again, although they can if given enough time.

They will try to take down their prey in the first attack, often attacking with as many of their number as they can. On the ground they are weaker fighters.

Once they have landed and are in combat they will not try to take off again unless they are fleeing.

Their swooping attack can be fearsome and surprising but once on the ground are easy to dispatch.

They have two move scores. The first is flying, the second for walking.

When the wolfwing is encountered it will usually be either flying or perched somewhere high.

It has 2 attack scores, the first is used when it makes its swooping dive attack. The second is used after the dive on the ground

It also has two damage scores, the first for the dive attack and the second for after the dive.

Def	Attk	End	Dam	Move	Rank
0	5/0	2	+3/0	8/2	2

Frost Bear

The winterlands frost bear is smaller than our worlds Polar bear though it's appearance is similar. The Frost bear is 4 feet high at the shoulder and walks on all fours, rarely raising up on it's back legs.

It cannot climb well but runs quite quickly. They are wider than earth bears with wide flat heads covered in short horns.

They will attack with claws teeth and headbutts and can be extremely dangerous.

They tend to travel singly though sometimes a group of 3 or more are found.

Def	Attk	End	Dam	Move	Rank
2	4	8	2	6	13

Boar

The winterlands boar is large sleek and furred with a coarse thick hair. Large hoofs allow it to travel across the snow. Long tusks make it a fearsome enemy.

They travel in packs, have no fear of man, and attack fast and without warning.

Def	Attk	End	Dam	Move	Rank
0	2	4	1	6	4



Takket

The winterlands domestic Takket.

4 feet tall, powerfully built, huge hoofs, and ram horns. Fast moving, powerful. Usually used for food, clothing and, in teams of four, to pull large chariot sleds through the winterlands.

They are domesticated and usually quite calm. If attacked or sufficiently spooked they may bolt, if they are unable to run then they may attempt to defend themselves against their attackers.

Def	Attk	End	Dam	Move	Rank
0	0	4	0	8	2

Wild takket

The wild takket is smaller, sleeker, and meaner.

Wiry and stronger than their domestic kin they are also likely to bolt when danger appears. If the herd is unable to bolt or if they are directly attacked then they will definitely attempt to defend themselves.

Def	Attk	End	Dam	Move	Rank
0	1	3	0	6	1

Wild takket bull

Any herd of wild takket will have a dominant bull. Larger, stronger, and more aggressive than the rest.

It will attack any stranger threatening the herd.

Def	Attk	End	Dam	Move	Rank
0	2	5	1	6	5

Winterlands vulture

A large raptor like bird, huge, with a wingspan of 6 feet and large powerful talons.

They can be either solitary flyers or travel in groups. Groups will gather wherever a large kill lies.

They will usually wait until the prey is dead but if the prey is injured they may swoop in to finish the kill.

The first move score is their flying score, the second is for when they have landed. If given enough space they can take off again easily.

Def	Attk	End	Dam	Move	Rank
0	2	5	1	10/2	4

Reindeer

The reindeer of the winterlands and the old primal deer of our prehistory.

Massive powerful, towering over men.

Standing 6 to 7 feet tall at the shoulder, they are wid, noble, and powerful beasts. Found deep in the woods or far on the steppes, far from any settlements.

They are rarely hunted and hold a mythical place in the legends and stories of the Winterlanders.

Huge fast, dangerous if provoked, the winterlands reindeer is a powerful and dangerous beast.

Def	Attk	End	Dam	Move	Rank
1	2	10	3	6	13

They may be encountered singly or as a pair.

Winterlander saber cat

The winterlander saber cat, or mountain cat, is not as large or dangerous in combat as the winterlander wolf.

It's danger lies in its cunning.

The saber cats coat allows it to hide near anywhere in the winterlands, it can manipulate it's fur to expose the various layers of colouring it has. It can hide in the snow, the rocks of the mountain, or the dark green or brown wood of the forests or the black wood of the curse woods.

Lying in wait, they choose the most opportune moment to strike.

The attack bonus and damage stats have two scores, the first to represent this surprise strike, the second for further attacks once the prey is aware of its presence.

If the first strike does not take the enemy down and the prey is alone, the cat will continue to attack. If the prey has any backup the cat will need to make a choice whether to continue the attack. Make a flee roll for the saber cat.

Def	Attk	End	Dam	Move	Rank
0	8/0	5	6/0	6	9

Wolves

The winterlands wolf is the scourge of the mountains.

Travelling in packs, fearless, they fear no man, animal, or creature.

They will attack any group they outnumber, fearlessly striking, running, and attacking again.

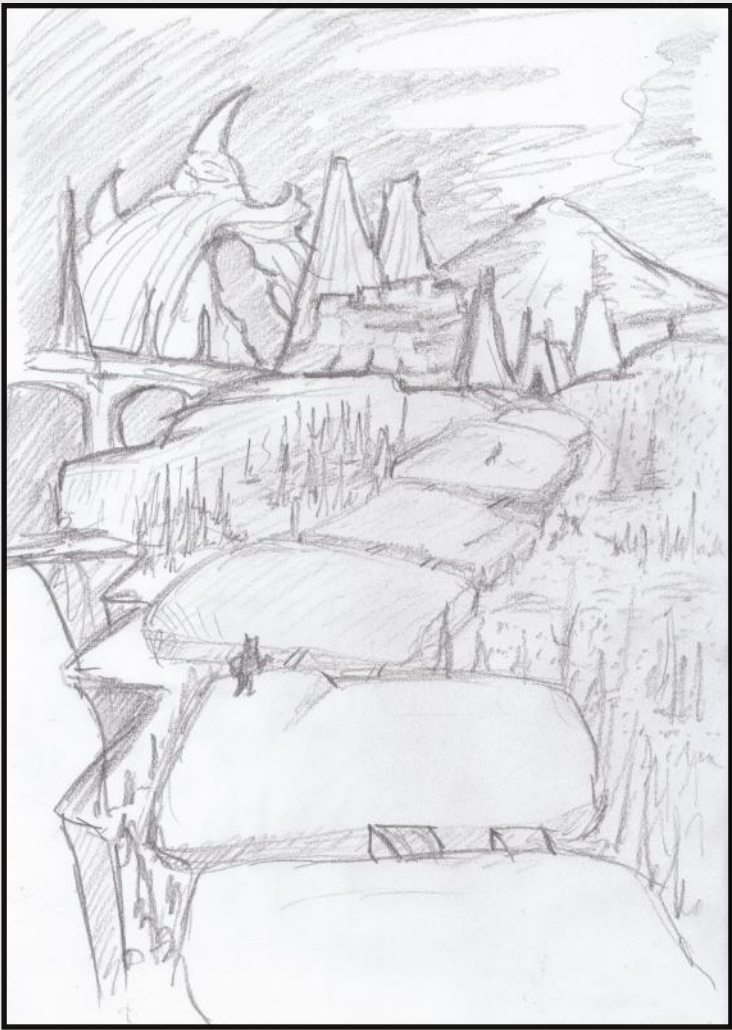
Their tactics and strategy when attacking in groups is fearsome.

Each individual will flee for a short distance when surrounded and return to attack an individual, in turn surrounding them.

They travel in packs sometimes small, sometimes large. And may even attack villages and towns if food is short, and the winter particularly harsh.

Their bodies are heavier stockier and shorter than our earth counterparts, their heads wider and their jaws stronger, having a greater number of, and larger, teeth than our earth wolves.

Def	Attk	End	Dam	Move	Rank
0	1	4	0	6	2



BEASTS OF LEGEND

MAKING UP YOUR OWN CREATURES, RUMOURED CREATURES AND MYTHICAL CREATURES

Kartharka is a vast land of Mystery and legend. In all it's forgotten valleys, and winding caves, any manner of things may creep, crawl or leap.

Not seen or heard by most in the world these things continue to live on as only legend and story.

The Heroes may encounter many things, however, in their wandering of the world. What is only a legend in the Winterlands may be a common creature in "The lost", and horrible things may be well known to those who live around the Feistmere that are unknown to the people of Stroh-Branoch.

What follows is a short list of what may lurk just around the next corner of a world where science has but begun, and where communication between two towns on the black road is dangerous enough much less travel to the next province.

GIANTS

Not the huge man shaped creatures but giant versions of everyday things.

It is said, that in places where sorcery pools, ordinary creatures can grow to enourmous sizes. And that these things may be worshipped as gods, kept as pets, or controlled as fierce killers.

Giants are the easiest creatures for the Demonlord to create, and the most common myths revolve around giant versions of common creatures.

GIANT INSECTS, BEETLES, ANTS, SPIDERS AND CENTIPEDES.

Legends tell of these creatures in hidden groves, forests, caves, mines or tunnels.

Stories of these things trickle in from travelers, miners, or old men from the outskirts of the Winterlands.

None know just how big they could grow, if they do indeed exist. Whether they would attack in groups or singly, or indeed what they would look like.

The Demonlord must decide for himself the stats of each of these creatures. Some guidelines follow this section in the next article

GIANT ANIMALS, RATS, BATS, APE/GORILLAS, OR MOUNTAIN CATS.

These may live in forgotten valleys or have been hand raised from babies, either created by sorcery, or bought from traders from faraway lands.

They make suitable pets for powerful enemies, or the protectors or ancient or hidden cities or tombs.

Ancient temples may be protected by special breeds of apes, trained to leave the priests unmolested but attacking all outsiders.

Again the actual stats for these creatures will need to be decided by the Demonlord as they are heard of by the people only in ancient legends and stories.

GIANT REPTILES-DINOSAURS, GIANT LIZARDS OR SNAKES.

The Winterlands are too cold a place for many reptiles to live above ground.

However, myths of forgotten valleys and mountain strongholds where the air is still warm are often discussed by the old men around the fires. Memories of the time before the coming of the winter perhaps, or they may be true.

Great sorceries and magics are now pouring into the Winterlands from below the earth, perhaps enough to be used by a sorcerer or an ancient artifact to create a small place of tropical heat, where the great reptiles can roam again.

Or they could be raised by a man, hatched from ancient eggs merely waiting for warmth to return to life.

Kept as guards, pets, vicious killers at their whim or even revered as gods by their worshippers.

THE MAMMOTH

A giant, violent, mountain of a beast, said to be anywhere from 7 to 20 feet tall.

Stories of Winterlanders tribes controlling vast herds of these beasts are heard across the most northern parts of the Winterlands. Fear of the herd destroying all in its path, devastating villages, cities, and armies. Whether these are just myths, rumors spread by the tribes to make the Winterlanders fear them, or based in actual fact are not known.



CREATING YOUR OWN ENEMIES

CREATING STATS FOR CREATURES AND ENEMIES, INFO FOR THE DEMONLORD.

The Demonlord has the power to create their own scenarios and enemies for those scenarios.

Enemies may be normal men, bandits, thieves, mercenaries or whatever you can imagine. Tribesmen walk the plains, traveling merchants and sages may attack the heroes. Strange shadow cultists worshipping dark gods, anything the Demonlord can imagine can be made. The hardest thing is to come up with an idea.

The Demonlord need not only create other men for the hero to fight, the animals of Kartharka are also formidable enemies, a number of them are listed in this issue.

Add to that any of the creatures in legend and rumour and the Demonlord has ideas aplenty for enemies for their heroes.

So step 1 to creating your enemy: Decide what it is.

Now that you know what it is, you must decide what it's stats are.

Step 2: determine its stats.

If find that the best way to measure the enemies stats are to compare it to a normal man, not a hero, just an average man of the realm.

Here is the average mans stats:

Def	Attk	End	Dam	Move
0	0	6	0	4

-If you want a creature that is equal to a man but a little bit stronger, then you can increase their attack.

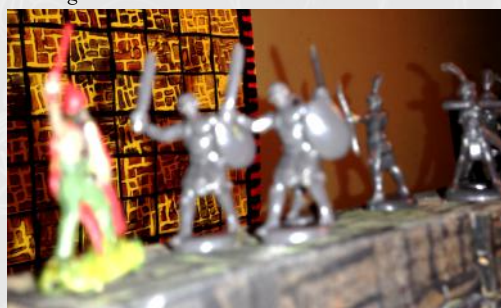
-If you want them to be large, have a thick hide, or perhaps just be difficult to injure, increase their defense.

-If you want a creature that is large, not incredibly dangerous but will take some time to kill, like an earth cow, increase its endurance.

-If it is a creature with very large claws, teeth, or some other very dangerous attack, give it a bonus to damage.

-If it moves faster than a man, increase its move stat.

-Also if it is weaker than the average man, or smaller, think about either putting a minus in one of the stats, lowering the endurance less than 6, or making the move less than 4.



ENEMY OR CREATURE RANK

To find out what their rank is simply compare their stats versus the common man stats.

Start with 1

-For any bonus over the common man add the bonus to their rank

-For any negative subtract the number from their rank.

-If they are armed with missile weapons or have a ranged attack add 1

Then you will have the creatures total rank

-If the total number is a negative then it will be considered a fraction of a rank. A negative 3 will mean that it is a third of a rank. Three of these creatures would be the equivalent of a common man.

If you decide to give a creature some kind of special ability over and above the normal combat stats then you will have to make a call on what that will add to the creatures rank.

If it is an extra attack then you can simply use the stats of the attack, if it is some kind of obscure power, like immune to certain attacks, able to control others, put people to sleep then some kind of a multiplier would be in order. In most cases it would be to multiply their rank by 2, 3, or even 4.

-You will see in the animal section that some creatures have stats with / in them. For example a flying move score and a walking move score. For these stats I add the two together and divide by 2 to find a number which I add to the rank. The same goes for / used in any of the other stats.

RUNNING LAIRS

The following rules and guidelines are to help the Demonlord in running their own Lairs.

I had hoped to have a lengthy article in this issue with a full rundown of how to create your own scenarios and Lairs from top to bottom.

Unfortunately through playtesting with my own group I found that there were still a lot of things which needed to be added to the game rules-wise to actually run a scenario. I also had some new players who were very new to roleplaying in general who were most useful in determining just what people new to the whole roleplaying (I prefer Adventure gaming) thing, would need to know.

They also were a great help in finding out what the inexperienced gamer actually expected out of an adventure game.

When sitting down to play my first instruction to myself was that if a rule was not in the previous two issues then I couldn't use it in my game. We forget as games masters just how much of these games is actually us making up the rules such "on-the-fly". With any game we run actually being an amalgamation of every ruleset we've ever played. Especially when we find that there is something not covered by the rules, in our minds we have plenty of mechanics from other systems floating around and are easily able to latch onto one of them to use.

With this game I wanted something new and different. So whenever a something came up that I didn't have a rule for, I had them decide how to handle it. It definitely slanted the game in their favour using these ad-hoc rules but they were there for fun and I was there to learn.

So I took what they came up with, which told me what they actually expected the rules to be, actually wrote them all down as they came up (we forget to do this so often), and took them back to the desk.

So here they are all shined up and ready to go. Actual rules for how to run all the little bits in a lair.

And as for how to create your own scenarios? I will be publishing the first Lair of Sword and Sorcery scenarios soon, entitled "The Blind Burrower". Along with all the info on the scenario will be included articles on how I created this scenario and more tips and rules on creating your

own. Best of all this one will be a free issue available for download from the site. Check out lairsofswordandsorcery.blogspot.com for more details.

SOTA AND THE DEMONLORD

The rules of Sota state that the Demonlord and his minions may not do SOTA unless specifically described in the scenario.

Sometimes the heroes will do SOTA that will clearly be more effective than it should be however.

For example: a simple rope stretched across a hallway back and forth several times. It would be a simple roll of 7 for a hero to set this rope up. If the hero were to try to move through this it would be a "simple" sota roll to do so, but the Demonlords minions cannot do Sota and so would be stymied by this simple rope, unable to make a sota roll to get past it.

Any intelligent human should be able to simply cut the rope and walk through, or at the very least to slip through the gaps in the rope barrier. But this would be considered something other than attacking in the game of Lair.

Why not just give the Demonlord Sota? To allow the Demonlord to Sota would give him far too much power. With this much power the Demonlord would be unable to have as much fun with each encounter, trying their best to kill the heroes. He would be relegated to the role of mere referee again, no longer able to actively try to best the heroes. So in Lair this power is traded, the all powerful game master gets to be a player of sorts.

But it is again unfair for the players to do such simple things to completely thwart the demonlords minions.

And so the special SOTA exception exists.

SOTA EXCEPTION

SOTA exception: The Demonlord can undo any SOTA the players do by making the same die roll.

So the ropes that take a 7 on a SOTA roll to set up, require a roll of a 7 by one of the Demonlords minions to cut. Of course the Demonlords Minions do not have the bonuses of the heroes to help them, such as Body or mind.



RUNNING A BLIND LAIR

•A blind lair is any lair which is not laid out in its entirety as soon as the heroes begin. Any area not in the heroes direct line of sight is not laid on the board until the heroes can actually see it.

•Usually this is when they open a door, or move into a new area.

•When the heroes can see the new area then the Demonlord can lay it down on the board, along with any enemies that are in the area. The scenario map will indicate where all the enemies are located along with all the walls, doors, rooms and other items.

•Enemies that are not on the board are considered “not to exist yet”. They will not generally hear noise and come investigating, move from one area to another out of the sight of the players, or “wander” randomly about the lair.

This may not be realistic but is much easier for the Demonlord to track and control. This frees up both the Demonlord and the players to have more fun.

DOORS

In all of my playtesting I never really used doors. Never got around to making any in all the excitement and just kept forgetting to. Until I had a scenario which had something happen when someone opened a door. Whoops no doors.

Luckily Doors are quite easy to make.

The simplest ones are made from cutting, folding and painting a piece of cardboard.

Or one can be made from “craft” sticks, the ones the size of a tongue depressor work very well.

Once you have some doors we'll need rules to go with them.

•Doors will usually be closed when the heroes enter the lair unless specifically stated otherwise.

•Doors can be opened by any human or humanoid during roleplaying without a Sota roll.

•Opening a door is an easy Sota roll for any hero once combat has begun.

•A demonlord minion can open any unlocked door with a simple Sota roll as well

Another exception, we can't let minions be stymied by a simple closed door.

•However a Demonlord minion may not open a door to an area that is unexplored by the heroes and still “blind”.

We can't have minions opening new areas and exposing the heroes to more enemies than each encounter is meant to have.

LOCKED, BARRED AND SEALED DOORS

Lair of sword and sorcery does not have thieves as we know them in the classic sense.

•A locked door has to be unlocked with a key. A barred door must be unbarred to be opened. Doors cannot be broken down by attacking them with your swords and spears.

If heroes are able to make some sort of battering ram or have brought one with them for some reason then I leave it to the purview of the current Demonlord on whether or not they are successful in destroying these doors.

SURPRISE

Shockingly I had no rules for surprise either, until it was required, and then...surprise! No rules. Here they are, so you don't have to feel my pain.

•Unless the scenario specifically states otherwise, as soon as the enemies are placed, the game switches to combat mode. When switching to combat mode the first turn is made by the hero to the left of the Demonlord with turns continuing clockwise around the table. The Demonlord may then take their turn.

•Play then continues to the heroes again in the same way.

•However if the scenario states that the heroes are “surprised” when the enemies are placed, the Demonlord gets to take their turn first. Then next will be the hero to the demonlords left and so on.

WHEN COMBAT MODE ENDS

•Combat mode ends as soon as the last enemy is removed from the board. Usually this is due to an attack. So if a hero dispatches their enemy and it is the last one on the board, play switches to roleplaying mode with the next turn going to the next hero clockwise.

•If it was the Demonlord then play continues to the hero to the left of the demonlord.

This is a very important rule because there are a lot of valuables up for grabs when the last enemy is killed. The heroes may have a system set up for dividing the spoils but otherwise it is “first come first serve”.

TORCHES AND LIGHT

•The scenario will say whether or not the lair has sufficient light for the heroes to see. If it does not then at least one of them must carry a torch. While carrying a torch the hero will not have a second hand available for holding another weapon or a shield.

•If heroes are separated in more than one room then each “group” of heroes will need a light source.

•Torches also make effective weapons and may be thrown like other thrown weapons, or swung like a club. They act in exactly the same way as any other weapon rolling 1 die for damage.

•Certain creatures or items may be particularly flammable. If this is the case then the scenario will say so.

•Torches do not go out when they are thrown or used as a weapon.

•If dropped in woods or grasses torches will not

usually cause the neighboring woods or brush to catch fire. There may be a slight chance of this happening in the short period of time the torch is on the ground but it would be deemed too inconvenient to have to roll for this every time.

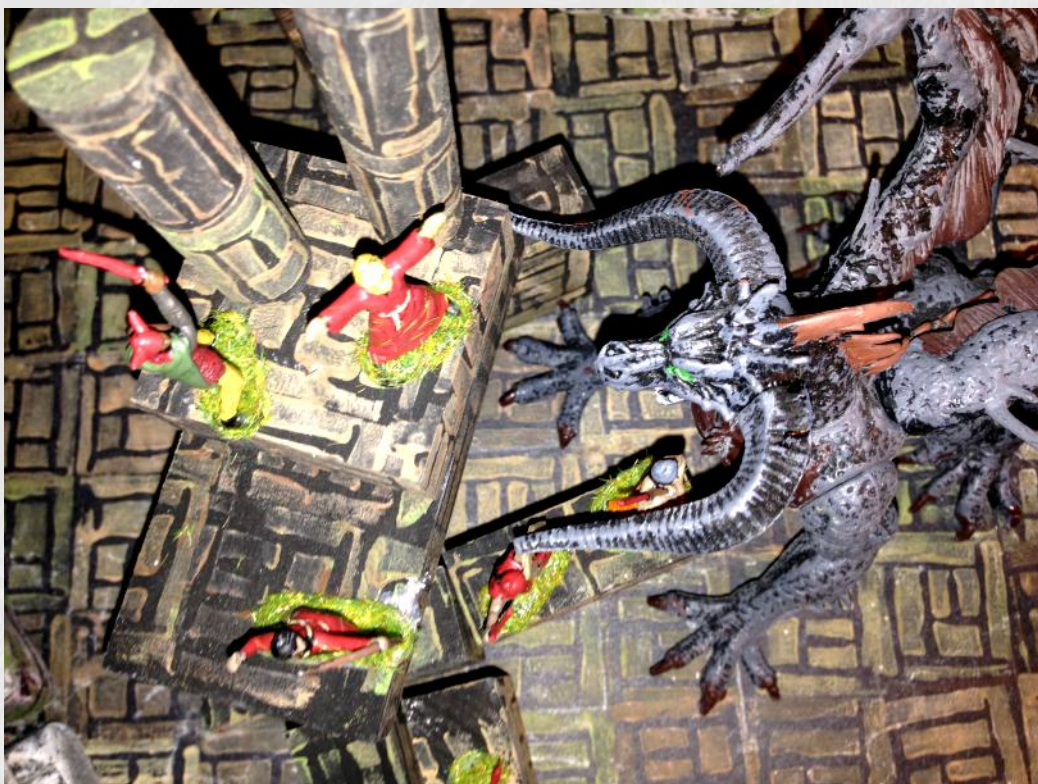
If the heroes wish to set a forest or building alight then this is possible and usually a difficult Sota roll would be suitable to be successful. If the material is particularly dry or flammable the Demonlord may change this to an easy roll.

Mini Review Hät Miniatures:

You may notice we have some new additions to the Demonboard in this issue. I took the plunge and broke my rule of only buying "toys". And I am thrilled. I personally prefer the smaller 25mm scale to today's oversized miniatures, although I love my "little" green army men" scale as well.

With Hät minis come about 40 to a box for \$7.00 and compared to today's prices that is fantastic. There is a huge variety available. \$20.00 in Hät minis more than fills up my box.

Everyone go out and check these minis out online immediately.



SORCEROUS ITEMS AND ENEMIES



SORCEROUS ITEMS

In the times before time, in the lands of the First Men...

Great and powerful sorcerers were said to have hundreds of spirits at their command. Doing their bidding at a whim, building fortresses, temples and tombs.

But each spirit must be summoned, controlled, and commanded. Even the greatest sorcerers could command only so many spirits at the same time.

These first Sorcerers sought a solution, and found that they could imprison foul spirits and demons within specially constructed prisons.

These could be gem, a bottle, a staff, wand, or weapon. These prisons were each constructed to hold a specific spirit or demon. The prison would often be constructed to hold a specific spirit or demon.

A sword for example may imprison a demon of fire, keeping it forever aflame while still being safe for the wielder to hold.

But this would require the wielder to control the demon within. The prison of the sword may be powerful enough to keep the demon from harming the wielder but may not be powerful enough to force the demon to create it's flame. Or to keep it's flame out when the sword must be sheathed.

Or it may require the wielder to have the force of will to command the demon to throw fire from the sword once they have mastered the arts of demon control.

Many sorcerous items also require something of the wielder. A sacrifice must be made to appease the spirit within or to bind it to a new wielder.

Sometimes the wielder must make a sacrifice of themselves or of another. Some will work only at specific times, or a certain number of times a day, or will only work when soaked in a certain liquid, like blood, alcohol, or refined moonlight.

Some items require constant control, with the demon within turning on the wielder the moment their attention is turned.

Sorcerous items can wield great power but are dangerous and rare.

Legends speak of the items wielded by the sorcerers of old but none are known to have come

down to the present inhabitants of the Winterlands. The sages speak of old legends and possible places where these items may still reside but the exact location of these places is just as lost to the ages as the items themselves.

Demonlords wishing to add sorcerous items to their games may use the guidelines above, but remember with every power which they grant they will have a drawback they make them as dangerous as useful. And without a sorcerer powerful enough to command the demons within them they can be just as dangerous as the spirits trapped within them.

The best way to include a sorcerous item in your games is in the hands of an enemy sorcerer. It can add great variety and power to the heroes enemies, but once the sorcerer is dead the item should be too difficult to control without enlisting the aid of a powerful sorcerer themselves.

For specific examples of Sorcerous items and how they are used, look to the forthcoming Sorcery issue of Lair of Sword & Sorcery.

SORCEROUSE ENEMIES AND MONSTERS.

Evil sorcerers may have many demons and spirits to serve them. Some will have the power to appear before the heroes and attack them. They may have special abilities, such as breathing fire, moving through walls, enormous strength, or multiple arms allowing them to attack with many weapons at once, or multiple legs allowing them to run quickly.

These Sorcerers may also summon, create, or control other bizarre and strange creatures, giant snakes, skeletons and zombies, ghosts, skeleton dinosaurs, firebreathing panthers, giant lizards, insects or anything else the Demonlord can think of.

They may also have sorcerous items which can have any power which the Demonlord can think of.

Sorcery is the great mystery of the world of Kartharka, never to be understood and always to be feared.

The important thing to remember, when creating your own sorcerers, is to have them always keep the heroes guessing.

Just make sure to consult the balance guides earlier in this issue to keep you from overwhelming your poor heroes.

PLACES OF INTEREST: THE VALLEY OF FANGS

The Valley of Fangs is the mining center of the world of Kartharka. With most of the people residing in the city of Stroh-Branoch. There is much to see in the Valley of Fangs and enough hidden places to keep any band of heroes occupied for as long as they need. Below are listed some places of interest in the Valley of Fangs.

THE GREAT GATE TO THE WINTERLANDS

Leading underground the great gate winds from the steppes of the Winterlands to the Valley of Fangs.

No torches or sunlight light the tunnel. Massive gates block the tunnel at either end. Each of the gates can be barred. The gate leading to the winterland steppes can be barred from the inside of the tunnel. The gate leading from the tunnel to the Valley of Fangs is barred from the Valley side.

The doors were built long ago, legend says in the time of the first men. They have no ornamentation. No writing to state who built them. Solid slabs of stone which have never been closed since they were built so long ago.

In theory they can be closed and barred but the amount of force needed to do so would be astronomical, the great bar alone weighing many tons as well as the massive 20 foot tall doors.

THE GATE TO THE VALLEY OF DEATH

Similar gates guard the tunnel leading to the Valley of Death. The tunnel and gates are exactly the same as those leading to the steppes.

Stroh-Branoch is the first city on the road through the valley of Fangs. Details on this city are already given in the Combat issue.

GAX

From Stroh-Branoch the black road leads to Gax, city of Nowhere.

While Stroh-Branoch is where all who enter the Winterlands aim to go, Gax is the place where they will usually end up.

The great road leads to many settlements in the valley of Fangs, but most of the Miners trails, from all the southern scarp mines, all lead to and meet in Gax.

The first stop for most miners on their way back from the mines, Gax gets the worst of the excitement and frustration of the Miners.

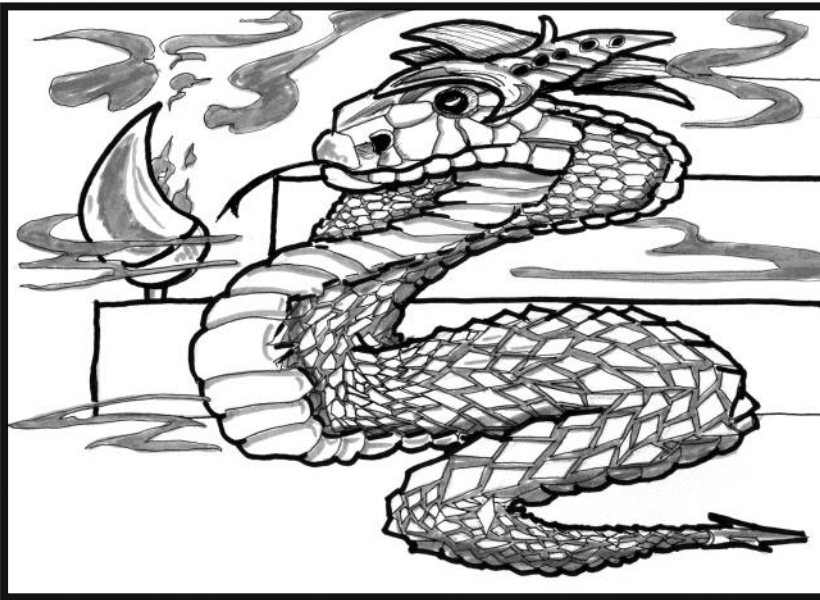
Stopping for fresh food, trading ore for ridiculously overpriced goods and materials, gambling, drinking, fighting, all of this is Gax.

By the time travelers get to the more civilized city of Stroh Branoch, with it's tidy sheriffs and diligent Targ, they are mostly all fought out and usually all of their ready cash has been left in Gax.

Gax, while still part of the Winterlands and under Winterlander law, has no permanent families or residents. Most are employees of traders from Stroh Branoch, or are working for the criminal syndicates of Stroh Branoch.

There are no families to claim blood feud, so no sheriffs to prevent them, or bear witness of any wrongdoing. The Targ feels it is in the best interest of the Valley to allow Gax to live outside of their protective gaze.

Gax is a place for undesirables to conduct their business, or for normally desirable miners to vent their frustrations before arriving in Stroh Branoch.



THE GREAT CURSEWOOD OF GAX: HARROW LOAD

A great cursewood, the Harrow Load, lies between Gax and the next town on the road, Bitwyn.

Like all cursewoods this one is dense, overgrown and impossible to Traverse. Its outskirts are tended by the workers of Bitwyn, cutting most of the cursewood used by the people of the Valley of Fangs. Cursewood being the only Hardwood available to a land of Evergreen pines, balsams and firs.

It is said the heart of every cursewood holds a great evil, something that waits and broods for any who are foolish enough to brave the heart.

BITWYN

None travel to Bitwyn, none need to.

The cursewood harvested by the people of Bitwyn is brought to Stroh-Branoch and Gax to be sold elsewhere.

Those of Bitwyn bring no ore to Stroh-Branoch, no trade goods, no Takket. They sell only cursewood.

They buy little however. They sell their goods for Imperial Gold coins and take the coins back with them.

The people of Bitwyn do not travel to other towns other than for trade, they sometimes take a wife, but the Bitwyn women do not often take husbands, though it is not completely unheard of.

They keep to themselves and maintain their own section of the great road, their massive carts of cursewood dragged by mighty teams of strong Takket, indeed, some of the best Takket in the land are said to come originally from Bitwyn stock, though they no longer sell their herd in the Winterlands.

THE WULFWAY

The grand Wulfway begins a half days travel from the Gax.

The Wulfway is a great road, built from massive 20 foot wide slabs of stone. In places it rises hundreds of feet above the land to sink back down again almost to ground level. Its mighty stones have stood since the first men and will stand for all time.

In places the cracks between the stones would make the road impossible to pass, great chasms falling hundreds of feet to the valley below. In these places sturdy newer wood bridges have been erected and are maintained.

No snows ever stay on the Wulfway, blown off by wicked winds, or melted by the heat the stone absorbs from the sun, or from some other long lost magic, it matters not, the Wulfway is always clear.

Halfway along the Wulfway two of the stones are missing. Exposed beneath the stones runs a labyrinth of tunnels, unadorned but perfectly formed, square tunnels measuring 10 feet wide by 10 feet high run along portions of the Wulfway

until ending as mysteriously as they began.

Many large vaults lead off of these tunnels and within these has grown a town.

WAYTOWN

Not a particularly large town but comfortable.

It contains a market, temple, sage's hall, and a local Targ presence.

They ensure the bridges are maintained and that what little snow is cleared from the Wulfway.

They also maintain a series of rope ladders and bucket and pulley systems to travel to ground level from the Wulfway.

Due to its safety from attack, from the tribespeople, bandits, thieves, or professional criminals many things are stored here where they can be kept safe.

The most precious and dangerous of the Sages books and artifacts are kept here.

Many merchants keep a place here to protect their most valuable goods, precious items, and hard currency.

Sheriffs abound here to keep the peace and the Targ presence also takes advantage of their right to hold a standing "security force".

It is rumored that the Targ even keeps a stockpile of Platinum here, carefully gathered and secretly moved. The Targ deny this of course, and have even let the empire search their storerooms in Waytown.

Waytown continues to be safe, quite, and relatively prosperous by Winterlands standards.

Instead of hunting, chopping, fighting, or digging, the Waypeople stay, and watch, and guard.

Of course many would prefer to live in Waytown, compared to the harsh life of a miner, but the living space is very limited, families pass down their rooms from generation to generation. Rarely is a new room available to be occupied where no possible claim can be made by a relative. In this case the Targ will hear the cases of any who would take the place. Often a great deal of money or goods will be paid for one of these places, or in certain cases someone with a very strong case for moving in will be given the place. Usually their very strong case will be that they have a vast sum of money to give to the Targ.

Waytown is very welcoming to travelers. They are friendly, accommodating, and often can help with anything someone may need. For a price.

With the feeling of the rarity of space, comes a very pronounced knowledge that all things have value, can be traded, bought, or sold.

But underneath their welcoming, friendly exterior, the wayfolk are a closed private people. They will be friendly, chat, talk, share stories, but will not speak of private or personal things.

They do not invite others to their homes. Do not visit outsiders except for business and then very briefly.

Waytown holds its own secrets, known only to the families who live there.

The Wulfway continues on to the end of the

Valley but the Black road forks, with one road leading to Throm and the other leading to the village of Uundart.

The Wulfway continues to a blank stone face in the cliffs. It would seem that the way, with its monolithic size, should lead somewhere equally important, but it would appear that it does not.

THROM

Throm is a small village, almost surrounded and cut off from the low land by its cursewood, the Arrowblack. It contains a small community of cursewood cutters, takket farmers, and hunters.

The village is small with the road existing only to ship the cursewood back to the rest of the winterlands and the few miners working small veins nearby in the northernmost scarp.

UUNDART

The true end of the black road. Serving the upper and western sides of the Scarp.

The largest mines lie to the north and are primarily Empire controlled. Many small "family holes" lie along the entire eastern face of the scarp.

The miners of this area primarily use underground tunnels to travel to either the road, leading into the valley of fangs from the steppes, or to the village of Uundart.

Imperial miners causing a disturbance in Uundart are strongly discouraged. The family miners have worked their claims for generations and are less likely to fall for the lure of a big city when travelling with a valuable load.

This makes Uundart remarkably quiet for a mining town. The miners passing through are sullen, quiet, and serious craftsmen.

These are the true men of the Winterlands, as comfortable with a sword as they are with a pickaxe.

Slow to anger over a minor dispute, they will kill for vengeance without a thought.

Serious, hard, men of the Mountains, they see and hear much in the dark beneath the world, and at night on the steppes. They care little for the learning of the sages, the teachings of the Wolf Brother or even the authority of the Targ.

They mine, they hunt, they fight, and they survive.



WINTERLANDS PROVINCES

THE WINTERLANDS

Technically the entire northern continent of Kartharka is referred to as the Winterlands.

More accurately this refers primarily to the southernmost landmass of the Northern continent.

The other landmasses of the North all have proper names, handed down from legendary past. Few have travelled to these places, and even fewer have returned.

Some stories and maps exist, though their accuracy is highly suspect.

The very least that is known, however, is their names.

THE WINTERLANDS

The most travelled is the area known as the Winterlands, containing among other places the Valley of Fangs. Also known as the home of the first men.

HEINDEL

Next is Heindel, a barren wasteland marked by a single long chain of mountains, with a Valley supposedly lying in their center.

THE AXEHEAD

Full of valleys, forests, and in the north, a scattered plain of broken islands. At the far end of the Axehead lies a mighty spire, supposedly pushed from the center of the earth in the time of the Sorcerers. Said to be the source of all evil, the entrance to the underworld from which all sorcery once flowed.



HEINGOBLYN

Where the gods were rumored to flee to, along with their servants the Gblyfolk, as well as the half goblins who bred with the first men.

The great mountain fortress is rumored to house all of these people and the still living avatars of the First Men.

None have even seen the shores of Heingoblyn in thousands of years. None truly believe these ancient legends but the ancient stories are still told.

THE LOST

Where the descendants of the first men, and their Half-goblyn families moved on to, or at least those who chose not to flee to Heingoblyn. Perhaps at a different time than the god's exodus, the stories aren't clear.

Ancient tribes of the Winterlands speak of their Ancestors coming originally from the Lost.

FEISTMERE

The Feistmere, water fist of the winterlands, sits in the middle of the northern continent. Terrible things are said to live in the Feistmere, things which keep anyone from attempting to cross it.

WINTERLAND COASTLINE

The entire coast of the Winterlands, in the southern portion, consists of high cliffs bordering the water, no beaches and no shores. No ships ply the coasts of the winterlands for there is nowhere to land. The only harbors lie in the far north at the top of the axehead and the far shores of Heingoblyn as well as the north shores of the Feistmere.

The trip is too far, the waters too treacherous, foul storms, lighting, waterspouts, and enormous waves make sailing impossible to the northern shores.

Even if these things were overcome, terrible legends of creatures living in the northern seas, enormous monsters devouring ships, ships overcome by armies of aquatic demons, and other occult and supernatural things.

No one sails the northern seas.



LAND OF THE FIRST MEN, THE WINTERLANDS

The black road enters the Winterlands in the south, stopping at the first bastion of the Winterlands.

STRIGHTMORE

The entrance to the Winterlands, the border of the great lands of the North, the interface between the Autumnlands and the Winterlands, the first Free City of the empire, free from the Southern Tax.

A strange city to the Winterlanders, a strange city to the Autumnlanders. A bridge between the two worlds, between the Targ and the empire.

The emperor's people are allowed to come to work the empire's mines. They can try to get work at a Winterlander mine but it is unlikely that they will find any. The Winterlanders are not friendly with the Empire, the tenuous agreement with the empire, trading food for iron, is always rocky.

Strightmore is the only city in the Winterlands where the empire and the Winterlander do business freely. Iron ore is almost completely bought and sold in Stroh-Branoch but some of those buyers return here to Strightmore to resell the ore and iron.

Winterlanders mostly avoid Strightmore, except for those who live there. The Targ has a very strong presence in the city along with a standing security force. It is definitely a border town, where all the people of the world can come to partake of the Winterlander ore, cursewood, and various herbs and plants.

Autumnlanders also come, some selling their goods to the Winterlander who will take them to the other cities of the Winterlands. Some travel on, those given permission by the Targ, those deemed to be safe and not imperial spies or agents. These will either hire Winterlander mercenaries to protect their goods throughout the Winterlands, or will attempt to stay as close to the black caravan as possible as it passes through.

A bustling town, "metropolitan" for the winterlands.

Winterlanders wishing to travel to the Autumnlands will usually have to pay a toll to enter the Empire. As well as a tax on any goods or money they carry.

It may be as high as 10% but may be as low as 1%.

It is also possible that the toll will be waived if the Empire owes the person a favor.

The toll itself may be anywhere from 10 to 100 gold coins. Depending on the fame and favors which the hero may have (or infamy).

Any Winterlander wishing contact with the Autumnlands or the Empire will have to travel to

Strightmore to find someone to travel on their behalf.

The town itself, and the villagers' houses, take up little room, most of the area is filled with large low, imperial buildings, for housing goods, horses, carriages and the guards who travel with them.

BINTZ

The next city is a whistle-stop on the black road. Bintz, of no more importance than being halfway between Strightmore and High Pass.

A typical Winterlander town.

HIGHPASS,

Not a large town, but seat of the High Temple of the Wolf Brother.

The center of the Wolf Brother worshippers, it is arguably more powerful even than the Targ.

The Targ is a loose collection of individual Targs, all working together but not beholden to each other.

They agree collectively about distribution of food with affiliates from all the Targs meeting in Stroh Branoch.

Most towns, cities and villages have a temple devoted to the Wolf brother, and the brothers travel throughout the Winterlands between temples. All Wolf Brother acolytes spend their early years travelling from temple to temple, carrying letters, messages and news. This web of travelling brothers keeps the Winterlands connected to each other, and the Winterlands connected to the Wolf Brothers.

Each Targ has control over only its own territory but most people bow to the wishes of the Wolf Brothers.

They are group of healers and helpers. They work in hospitals, help the sick, are skilled in masonry, bricklaying and other repairs.

They also oversee all of the major highlights of the Winterlander life, birth, marriage, and death.

They oversee all the rituals and festivals, big and small which occur in the Winterlands.

From Highpass the black road splits and heads both east and west.

To the east it heads further into the Winterlands to Scoom.

SCOOM

Soom lies in the center of the great pasturelands of the Winterlands tribes. Surrounded on all sides by the plains, which the tribes push their great herds across. They enjoy a moderately temperate climate for the Winterlands.

Hot springs abound, leading many in Soom to herding the domestic Takket.

Much of the Takket meat, leather and fur of the Winterlands is raised in Scoom.

The lives of the Scoom villagers is rather comfortable for the Winterlands. The bountiful hot springs make raising Takket a relatively easy life in comparison to those settlements made up primarily of Miners.

The closeness of the High Temple also means they enjoy access to the best healers in the Winterlands. Not a particularly rich town it boasts a large population for Kartharka. Mile, after rolling mile of pasturelands dotted with wayhouses and Takket herds.

Occasionally a squabble with the Tribes of the Winterlands will cause some tension, but the people of Scoom are very slow to anger, even in times of great difficulty. Most of these disputes are usually ended by the Scoom withdrawing from the area which is disputed.

The pasturelands lead to the mountains to the east, and funnel into the Garmach High Pass.

THE GARMACH HIGH PASS

There are other small villages through the pass, over the mountains, but they have little dealings with the rest of the Winterlands. Not having the black road to travel, traffic between villages beyond the pass and the rest of the Winterlands is difficult at best.

To the west of High Pass the Road continues on into the mountains. It passes close to the foothills of the great peaks of Zolar before entering the great tunnel to the Valley of fangs.

ZOLAR

Zolar, one of the highest peaks of the Lowlands of the Winterlands.

Few know the passes and roads over and through Zolar, but for those that do the western plains of the Winterlands are known.

The plains are populated by the peoples of Brytax, the Tree people.

BRYTAX

A massive oak tree, a dead remnant of the time before the great winter.

Towering high into the sky it is now petrified, a fossil, a statue, dedicated to a time before the winter.

A mystic people the Brytax do not follow the Wolf Brother. The Brytax follow a much older religion. One still followed by some of the tribes beyond the pass. The Brytax worship ancient spirits of Wind, wood, water, and stone. The spirits speak to some of their people, the great shamans of the Brytax. None outside of the Brytax have met these shamans, living in the base of the great tree; they live away from all outlanders, those beyond the peaks of Zolar. It is said they have great powers, over the winds, the air, the stone, beasts and even people of the Winterlands.

The sages have not been permitted to enter the Brytax in some time though in the past they have had some luck in gathering knowledge from them, but all that comes down to the modern day are hints and whispers, of the great powers of the Brytax.

THE NOTCH

In the far north of the Winterlands plains, dug from the mountain steppe, and protected from the front by the dense cursewood StoneFire it is a place of great secrets. Only a few of the tribes in the area are allowed access to the Notch by the cursewood, and only the wisest and most knowledgeable of the tribesmen's shamans will return again after visiting the Notch.

None know what lies there, apart from those that have visited it.

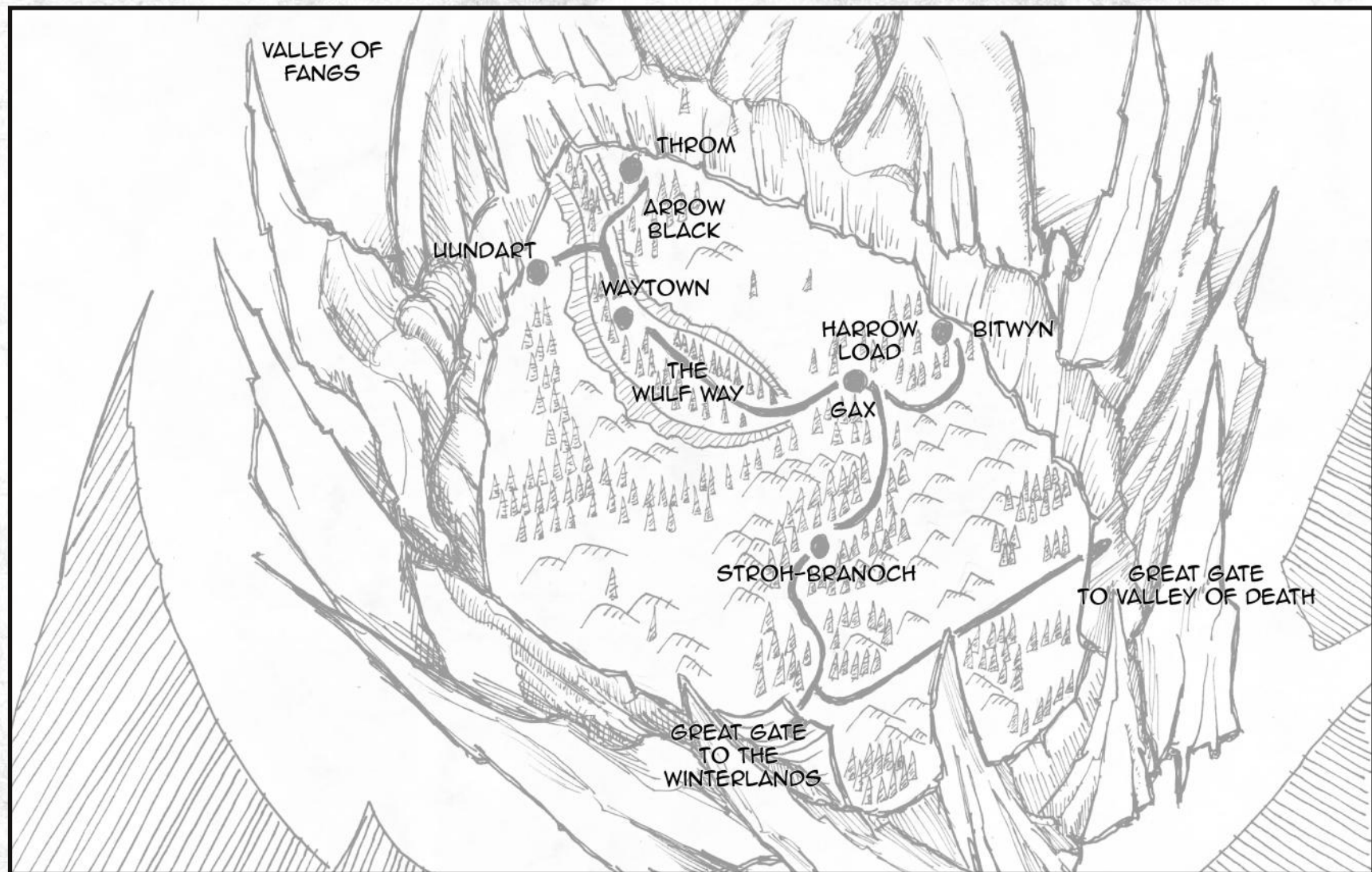
FURSTWATCH

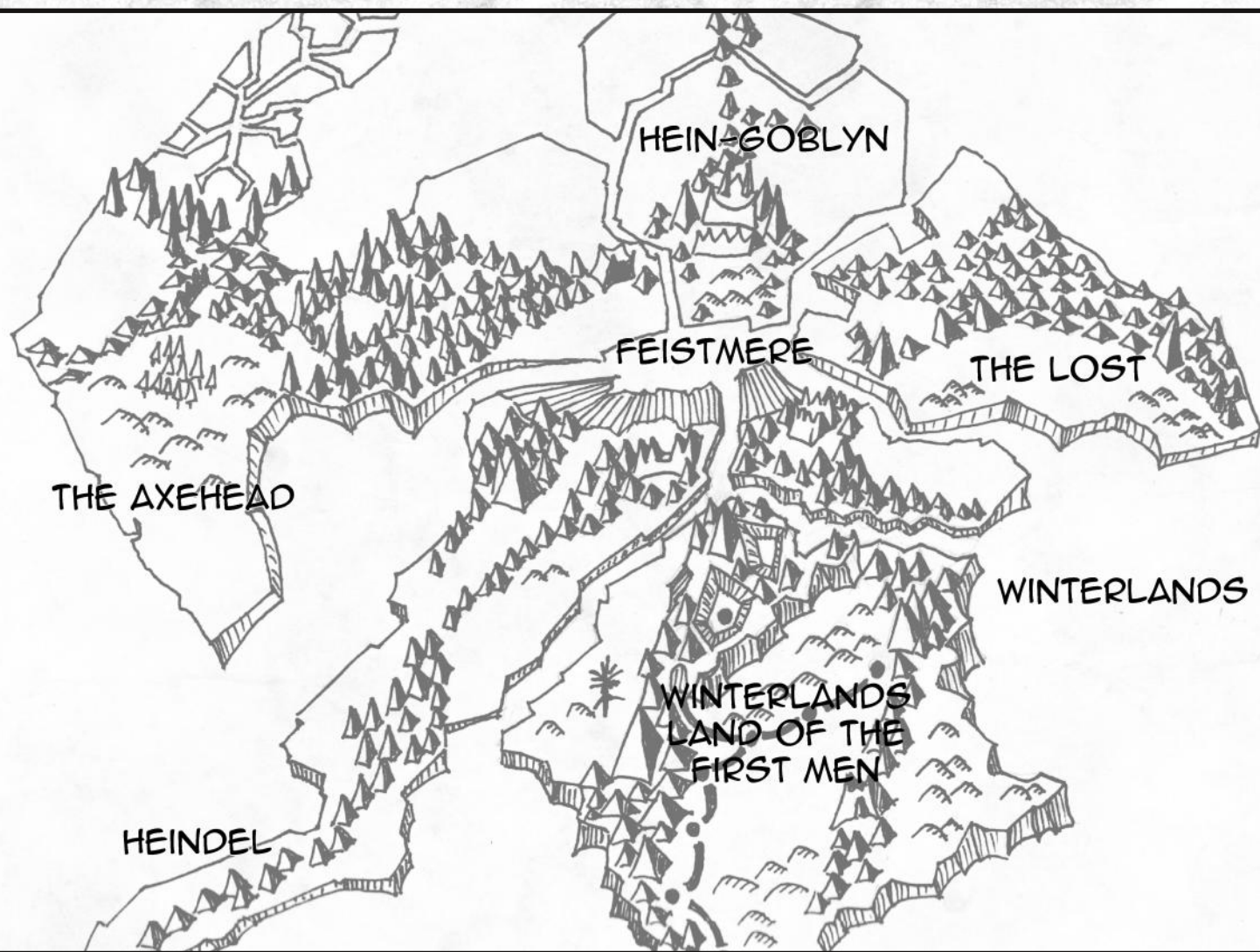
The highest peak of the Winterlands, its foothills planted at the head of the Valley of the Dead. Some say the gods first came to Kartharka there, some that they were born there, some that they live there still.

Legends, treasure, monsters, gods, magic, history, everything anyone could ever hope for is said to lie on Furstwatch.

None have ever climbed it, none have seen its foothills, none have travelled through the valley of the dead, and none know what Furstwatch holds, if anything.







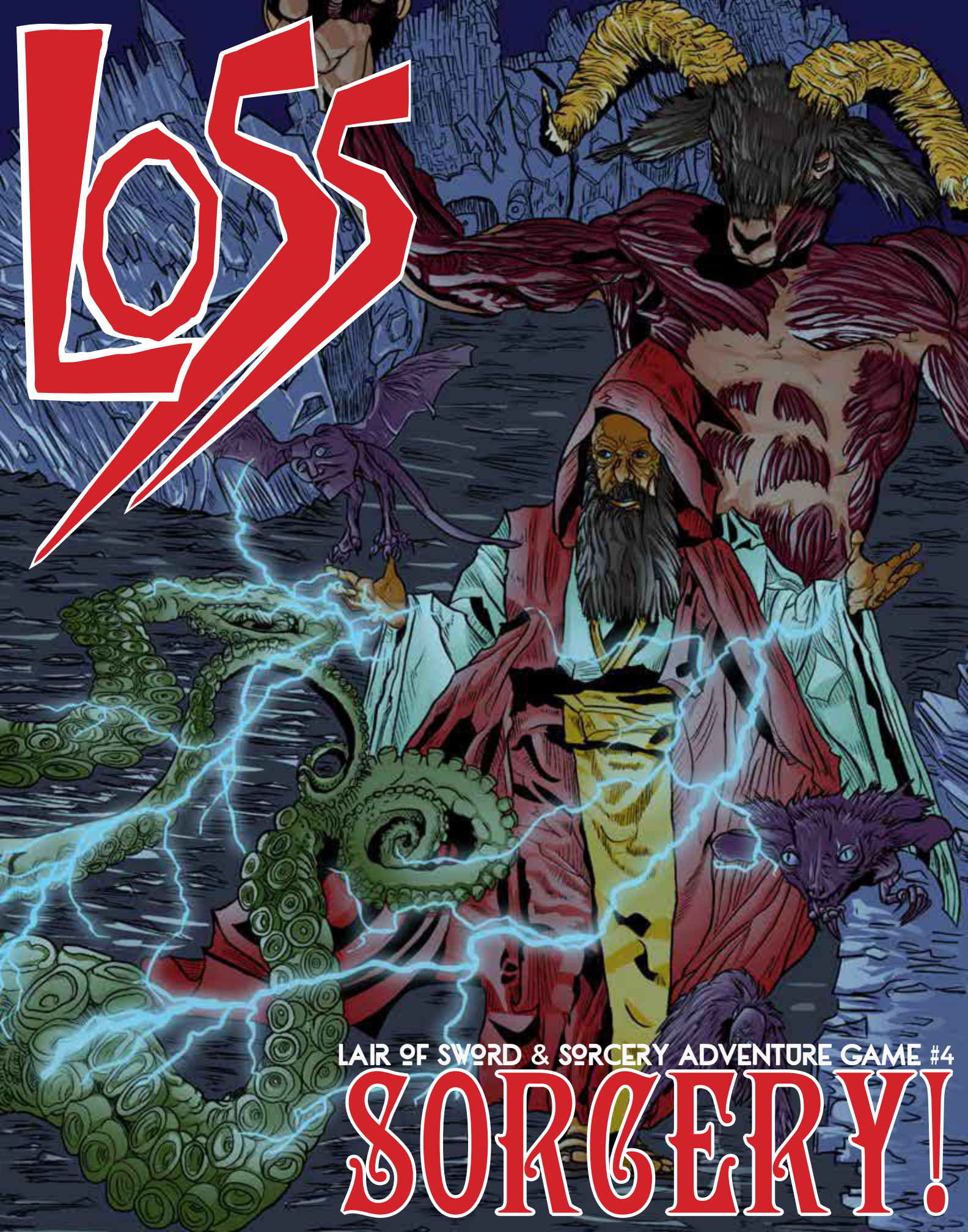
THE WINTERLANDS







LOSS



LAIR OF SWORD & SORCERY ADVENTURE GAME #4

SORGERY!

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THE EDITOR SPEAKS

Issue 4 and so much to talk about!

It's big, it's bold, and it's on the cover. The name of the magazine is officially changing to LoSS (short for Lair of Sword & Sorcery, you dig?). Adam Muszkiewicz was the first to call the game LoSS and I thank him for it!

If you're reading this as a Pdf then you'll see that this issue is in full sword swinging colour! If you are reading this as a hardcopy then you are likely looking at the usual black and white printing. Get to the website immediately to get your own full colour digital copies.

Also the size of the magazine has changed as well. Moving up to a letter size format was a hard decision but I think you'll agree that this issue looks great. The comic book size served us well in the past but it's time to move up to full size. Pricing should stay right about the same for printing and shipping so why not enjoy a bigger, better book.

LoSS and Roll20

By the time this is printed my home game will likely be in full swing on Roll20. My precious Demonboard will have to languish in it's box while we play online but that's the price you pay. It's either play online at this point or not at all as my players are all well into the kid having stage of their lives and though we hope to get together face to face every now and then online playing is just the only option now. Do not fret though all of you who still get to play face to face, more Demonboard goodness is still comin at ya.

This Pdf has Buttons!

Yep, you'll see them scattered about here and there in the pdf. Click them to see what happens. Not to fear, none of the rules or background tales will be in there so you can still happily print this



off without missing out on any game.

Sorcery!

This is the issue with all the Crazy in it! Demons, ghosts spirits, crazy wands, staffs, fireballs, lightning, all that crazy Sorcery stuff. Sorcery is difficult, dangerous, unpredictable, and weird. And now it's all in the hands of your reckless heroes and their enemies!

In this issue you will find:

The true history of Sorcery in Kartharka. You may or may not want to share this with your players, it's up to you!

Veteran rules for your heroes to climb the ranks of Sorcery themselves.

Rules for Demonlords to create their own spirits, demons, ghosts, and

other perilous enemies (or friends) from the Other World.

The Sorcery issue wraps up the last of the main "rules" for the LoSS game. All those things you need to play the game.

The next issue will describe how to actually create Stories, Scenarios and Lairs for the Demonlord.

It will discuss things like creating ideas and how to make things fun but will also contain the balancing rules for Lair creation. Since the Demonlord is allowed to get in there and mix it up with the players on the board the Demonlord needs some rules to be sure they don't write Lairs that are too hard (or too easy!)

Get involved!

Now that the Sorcery issue is out you will have in your hands the complete LoSS game as it stands now. Now it's time for you people to get in there and start mixing it up! Create some monsters, create some Lairs, populate a village and stick it on the map! Create some Villains to terrorize the provinces of the Winterlands.

Create some stuff and send it it. The LoSS community is growing all the time, might as well jump on now before everything gets grabbed up.

Me, I've still got a whole world to fill, the Hunzar jungles are calling, the far north desolation is hardly empty, and the Black Emperor calls to have his home created!

Rock on my faithful Blood Reavers! Let's get this party Rolling!

-Ripley

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THE LEGEND OF SORCERY

The history of Sorcery is the story of Kartharka itself

These events are spoken of in no books of legend or fireside stories. Dating back to the birth of the world of Kartharka this ancient history is known to none but the ancient demons that lie far beneath the earth of Kartharka.

Heroes and sorcerers may glimpse clues and scraps from their dealings with the demons but these will always be shrouded with lies and misleading tales, for the Demons still hate the living things above ground for trapping them beneath the earth.

In the time before time...

The world of Kartharka was a place of despair and misery, the landscape a blasted ruin of fire and stone. The skies burn red and black with smoking fires and choking gases.

Before the time of the gods, Demons ruled the world of Kartharka.

The demons needed not food, water, sleep or comfort, but being long lived and infernally intelligent they sought ways to relieve the tedious boredom of their world. Usually this was achieved by the constant war which raged across the planet. Armies of demons grew, marched, fought, and were betrayed, over and over again endlessly fighting to take control of the land.

But this too became tiresome, and while they were far too covetous of anything another might hold to stop the constant war, some turned to other pastimes to amuse them during their time between battles.

At first they tried to create great weapons of war, smithing enormous swords, axes, and maces and raising huge piles of stones into fortresses. Their inventive powers failed them soon after that. For demons are not creative creatures.

It is the Demons immortal lifespan which leads to this lack of creativity

If their spirit flies off to crouch in a cave or hole for centuries until it can reform itself, appearing again as a small foul imp, plotting and scheming as it grows again in power and size. This kind of setback means little to ones who live for all eternity so Demons have never formed the sense of urgency or fear which leads man to create so much in so little time.

The Bloodlings are born...

Sometime, during this great eons long war, a remarkable thing happened.

A century long battle raged in a valley of fire. Millions of demons fought and were cut down amidst the flames until a great lake of their blood filled the valley. The battle ends with both sided retreating back to their

lair, but the lake remained in the Valley of Fire, boiling and churning as it began to recede.

Crawling from the mud and blood a new race emerged into the hellscape of Kartharka.

Crude brutish things, their bodies malformed, these bloodlings crawled to the shore of the lake and looked out upon the world they had been born to.

They made crude shelters at the shore of the lake, hunting the others that emerged still confused and bleating. For the bloodlings were mortal, needing food, sleep, and shelter. Also, unlike the demons, they lived and died, and procreated on the shores of blood.

They retained the infernal intelligence of the demons and soon learned to carve stone, mine metal, and create their own weapons, as well as many other things. They created reading and writing, that their children could learn their secrets. They studied the land, the lake, and pondered how they had come to be.

They then learned the secret of creating life of their own from the lake of blood, now dwindling to smaller pools throughout the valley of fire.

They created plants to grow and eat, and animals to

pull heavy loads and raise great blocks of stone.

They created a self sustaining society. Though their lives were brutish and short, their science and craftsmanship continued to grow with each generation.

Their time of freedom was soon to end however.

The demons had rebuilt their ranks after thousands of years of waiting and, returning Valley of Fire found the Bloodlings.

The demons, upon seeing something new in the world of Kartharka, desperately fought each other to take control of the bloodlings. Each of the demons fought to claim as many of the bloodlings as they could. Many bloodlings died in that battle, defending themselves against the titan-sized demons. Many died also in the hands of their captors, who did not understand concepts of mortality or weakness.

There was a time of relative peace in the world of Kartharka afterward as the Demons had something else to occupy their thoughts.

At first the bloodlings' mortality alone was enough of a novelty to distract them.

They learned what the bloodlings needed to live and how to breed them.

They demons forced the bloodlings to teach them all their secrets, along with the secret of creating life.

The demons made all manner of things then, things that lived and crawled, that grew and flowered, and all these things died in the passing of time.

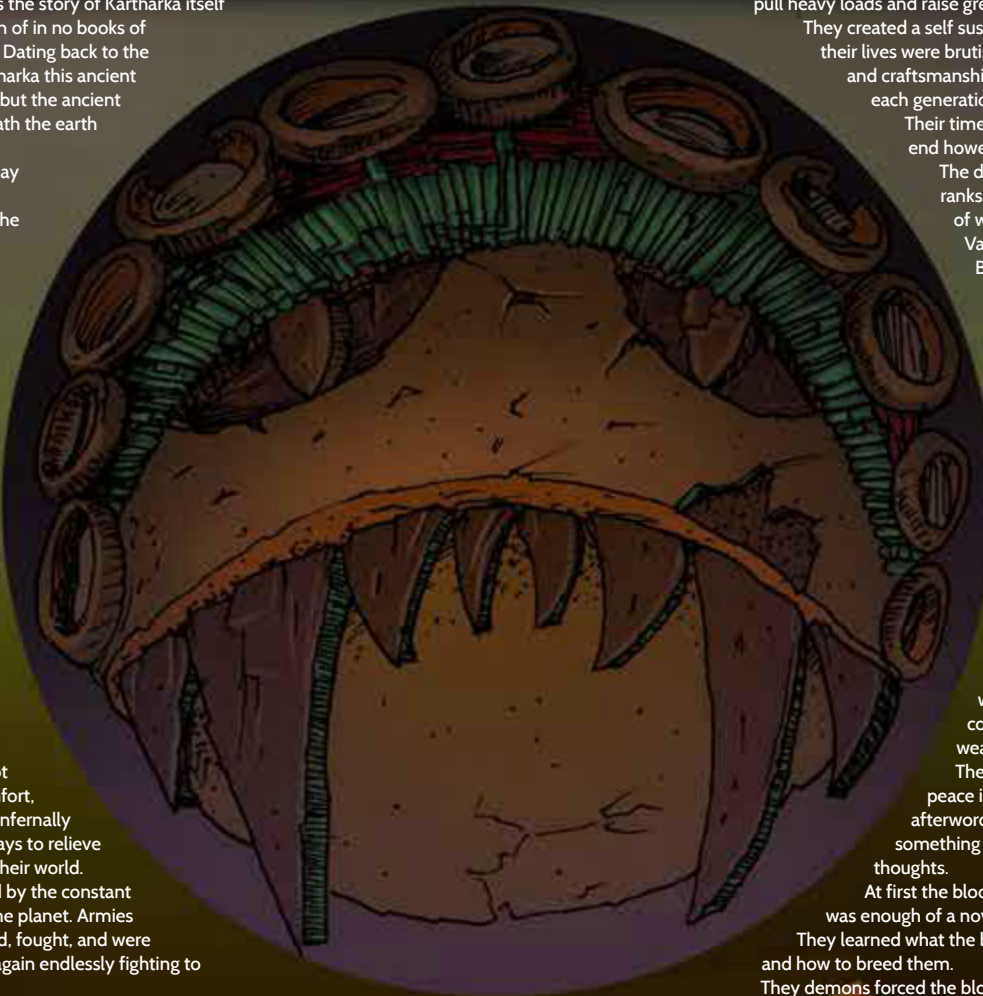
Soon the world of Kartharka was a changed place. Great thorny forests were grown to protect the demons' citadels, rivers and seas populated with terrific creatures to protect from attack on the shores. The demons' wars became more advanced and were fought by whole armies of bloodlings and other creatures raised for battle.

The demons learned other things from the bloodlings, governance, leadership, and control. The demons began to arrange themselves in great hierarchies of power and control over the lands of Kartharka.

All of the creatures, plants and "improvements" were changing the world of Kartharka. No longer a blasted hellscape, it had been remade to make it more conducive to war with the demons' minions.

Soon the demons withdrew into their mighty fortresses, planning to change the planet back to it's original hellish landscape once their enemies were defeated.

In time they were forced to withdraw into the bowels of the earth, creating a new hellscape there, a place of



fire and stone.

Someday soon, they thought, the war would be won and they could do away with these armies and retake the world.

The coming of the gods...

That is when the "gods" came.

All of these mortal creatures, all of those lives ending, their life forces trapped, building up, creating another place, the other side, the Other World.

And this other world drew something, from a place far, far away.

The "Gods" of the other side came to the world of Kartharka.

A strange insect-like race of creatures, their bodies suited to the airless void of the Other Side.

The gods came and made their own fortresses in the high places of the world, to keep as much stone and mountain between themselves and the demons' underworld as they could.

The demons' Bloodling soldiers met the gods and many chose to join them in their mountain strongholds.

The gods were much changed by this time. Shedding their hard shells in the warm world of Kartharka they were a race of tall spindly creatures.

The Bloodlings called the gods "Goblyns", meaning "Tall ones" in their language.

In the beginning they lived together peacefully.

The Goblyn kings chose to help the bloodlings, some of them even choosing to breed with the bloodlings to create a race that would be better suited to the world of Kartharka.

These half-goblyns were quite strong, dexterous, and well suited to the world of Kartharka. They were skilled at digging, mining, building and smithing.

The Birth of Man...

These half-goblyns again bred with the bloodlings, this time creating a new race, which would come to be called Man.

Man however was not respected as an equal like the Goblyns, Half Goblyns, and Bloodlings. The lives of men were much shorter than that of their Father races and it was thought that they could not learn enough in their short lives to be truly useful. Kept as slaves, soldiers, diggers, and farmers they did the menial tasks of the

Father races.

The Demon-Goblyn Wars and Magic...

During this time the demons had been busy themselves below the earth.

Their wars still raged on the surface of Kartharka.

Many of the bloodlings continued to exist as the Demons' slaves, though they could no longer be trusted to wage war or even go to the surface. But the demons could still use their evil creativity.

They wanted a weapon to destroy all the bloodlings above ground as well as the goblyns and half goblyns. The demons did not yet know or possibly care about the creature called man.

So began the great war of the Demons against the Goblyns and their kin.

The Demons rose to surface to fight this battle themselves. Endless waves of Demons attacking the fortresses of the Goblyn kings.

During this war the Goblyns revealed their great powers. They had brought something with them from the other side, a connection to the other world that linked it to the world of Kartharka.

This would come to be called Magic.

With this they could hold back the Demons attacks, but not forever. For the Father races, with all their power, were still mortal. While the Demons would die to return again, there were always more to rejoin the battle.

The Demons were patient and continued the attack, knowing that, someday, the defences would falter, and the world would be theirs.

The Other World and Sorcery...

But the demons plans were destroyed once again by something no one could have foreseen.

The wars had raged for so long that there were far more bloodlings dead and gone to the other side, than demons still on the earth.

The Demons blood, that had borne the bloodlings, that was their link to the demons, became the bloodlings strength, and the demons weakness.

All the spirits of these dead bloodlings, in the Other World had come together, and grown in power. From the Other World the bloodlings could now control the demons, cause them pain, injury, or even death. The living bloodlings used this power to push the Demons

back below the earth and bring peace, finally, to the world of Kartharka.

This power, to summon, dispatch, and command Demons, became known as Sorcery.

The Wrath of the Sorcerer Wars

But with peace comes dissatisfaction, the bloodlings, half-goblyns and men all chafed under the rule of the Goblyns.

In the times of War the Goblyns had risen to be the

leaders of Kartharka, using their magic to defend and protect all the other peoples. But now that the wars had ceased, these peoples felt that this rule



was no longer necessary. That the bloodlings and all their descendents should rule the world of Kartharka, being its rightful inhabitants and not the goblins who had indeed come to this world from another.

So began the great wars of Sorcery, led initially by the Bloodlings, then joined by the half-goblins, and their human cattle as well.

Demons raged across the land once again, and the bloodling connection to the other side was so powerful now that it even interfered with the goblins magics. War raged across the world with plains of fire sweeping across the land, whole countries wiped out in a single night, Sorcerors walking the land spouting fire from their fingers, and commanding death at a word.

Man found, with their bloodling heritage, that they could command Demons as well and, indeed, were often better at it than the bloodlings.

This turned the tide on the Bloodlings as the humans turned on their former masters, threatening to destroy all the father races of Kartharka.

The Dread Compact...

Forced into a unity against men the father races met in the great conclave upon the highest peaks of Kartharka. Together, With the bloodlings using their diabolical intelligence, pure demon blood and knowledge of the demons, the goblins using the powerful magic of the otherside and the half-goblins using earth shakingly powerful machines, was created The Dread Compact.

The Dread Compact is an agreement, a spell, a machine, a twisting of the laws of the universe, a control of the other side, a contract with reality, all of these things and none of them.

None know the specifics of the Dread Compact, perhaps not even those creating it but it created the rules of Sorcery as they were to be forever more on Kartharka.

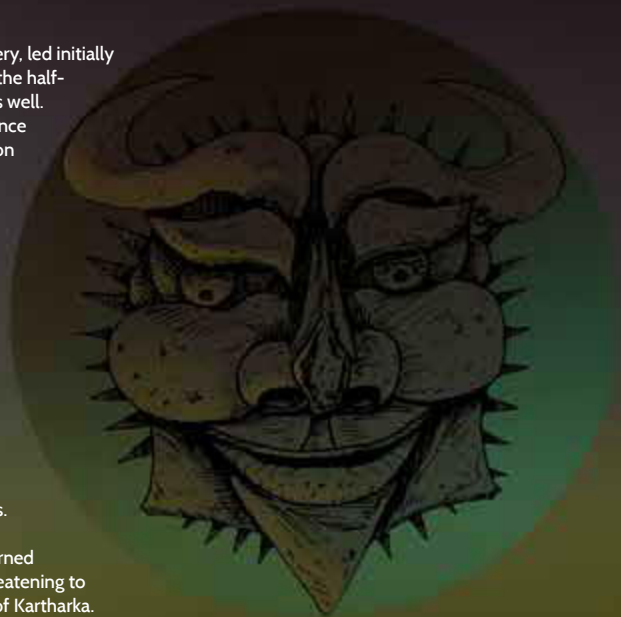
Whatever it is the Dread Compact exists, both in this world and the other side.

Its power to control sorcery is not complete, perhaps the bloodlings of the other side could not be persuaded

to allow that, but Sorcery was now controlled by laws, restrictions, convoluted requirements and ever changing dictums, depending on the moon, stars, planets, tides, and on and on.

Discovering these laws was now required to summon demons and their ever changing permutations meant that only the most powerful, dedicated, and patient of Sorcerors could summon a demon, and that the times of sorcerors wielding a thousand demons with the wave of their hand were now but a memory.

So began the time of Magic which ruled Kartharka for many aeons, before it too died long before the First Men of the Winterlands built their realm. So ends the tale of the time of Sorcery!



Bloodling

The Great Abyss

But where are the Demons now?

Some legends say The Great Abyss, the underground world of the Demons.

Some say the Abyss lies somewhere on the Other Side, no longer connected to our world but severed by the Dread Compact.

Others say the Abyss lies on the other side of the planet, on another great continent unknown to the people of Kartharka.

Perhaps they are all wrong, or all correct.

But there are definitely gates, passages, and ways to the Demons World, a place of fire and smoke.

Long winding underground corridors and passages, some of them great roads leading beneath the earth. It is said that these lead to the Realm of the demons though none who have taken the journey have ever returned.

Things also come to the surface now and again, some are called, and some find a way of their own accord, finding their own loopholes and exceptions in the great Compact.

Sometimes something comes through from the Other Side, with dread purpose and incomprehensible goals of it's own.

Compatible with:
Dread Compact/Between Devil
moon highwise bloodsooth

The Great Abyss

Dread Pact/flamefall

The Abyss does lie below the earth of Kartharka.
A place of smoke and flame, where the wars of the Demons rage on. But they have company now to keep them occupied in their aeons of boredom.

For the dread compact not only controls the demons but all those who seek to control and speak with them. All those who still carry the blood of the demons in their veins are controlled by the dread compact. This includes man, and more importantly the

Sorcerers of men.

All who dabble with the dread art of Sorcery come under the terms of the Dread Compact. Should they misstep in their rituals, or fail in their control over the powers they summon, they may be taken by the Demons and transported to the Abyss to entertain them for all eternity as their slave.

Even in death these poor souls are trapped by the Dread compact and must forever remain in the Abyss.

The great rift of Abalon, a mighty fracture leading deep below the crust. Said by some to be bottomless, by some to lead to the bottom of the world. This great fissure cuts across the mighty mountain ranges of the Winterlands.

Mostly below ground it also reaches to the surface in some hidden

THE RIFT OF ABALON

places.
Not a single wide fissure across the whole of the Winterlands, but a multifingered and winding void. In some

places beginning deep below the mountains, and in some near the highest peaks. When a mine or tunnel breaks into the rift it is often easier to close the tunnel and attempt to rise above it. In some cases a bridge may be attempted.

The many fingers of the rift interrupt workings all across the Winterlands, seemingly without rhyme or reason, and indeed the great mining essay office of the empire claims that these are not all connected in one great rift as legend says but are simply what the people of the Winterlands refer to whenever they find a deep crevasse that is impassable.



But the rift is real. And indeed not bottomless. The rift plunges deep into the earth all the way to the Abyss. Strange winds howl within the rift and some say they are the voices of the Demons calling out from the earth.

They are actually the voices of titanic hurricanes that spawn along the midpoint of the rift. Horrible winds that would pull a man in half, break wood into splinters and smash anything that remains into the cliff sides of the rift.

Some ancient legends of the Sages speak of these winds but none have climbed deep enough in centuries to witness them themselves.

They serve a purpose however. Created by the Dread Compact they prevent the Demons of Kartharka from using the rift to reclaim the world. For the Rift is an exception to the rules. Either formed by random happenstance of tectonic forces, or engineered by the demons themselves, the rift is an



allowable route for the demons according to the compact.

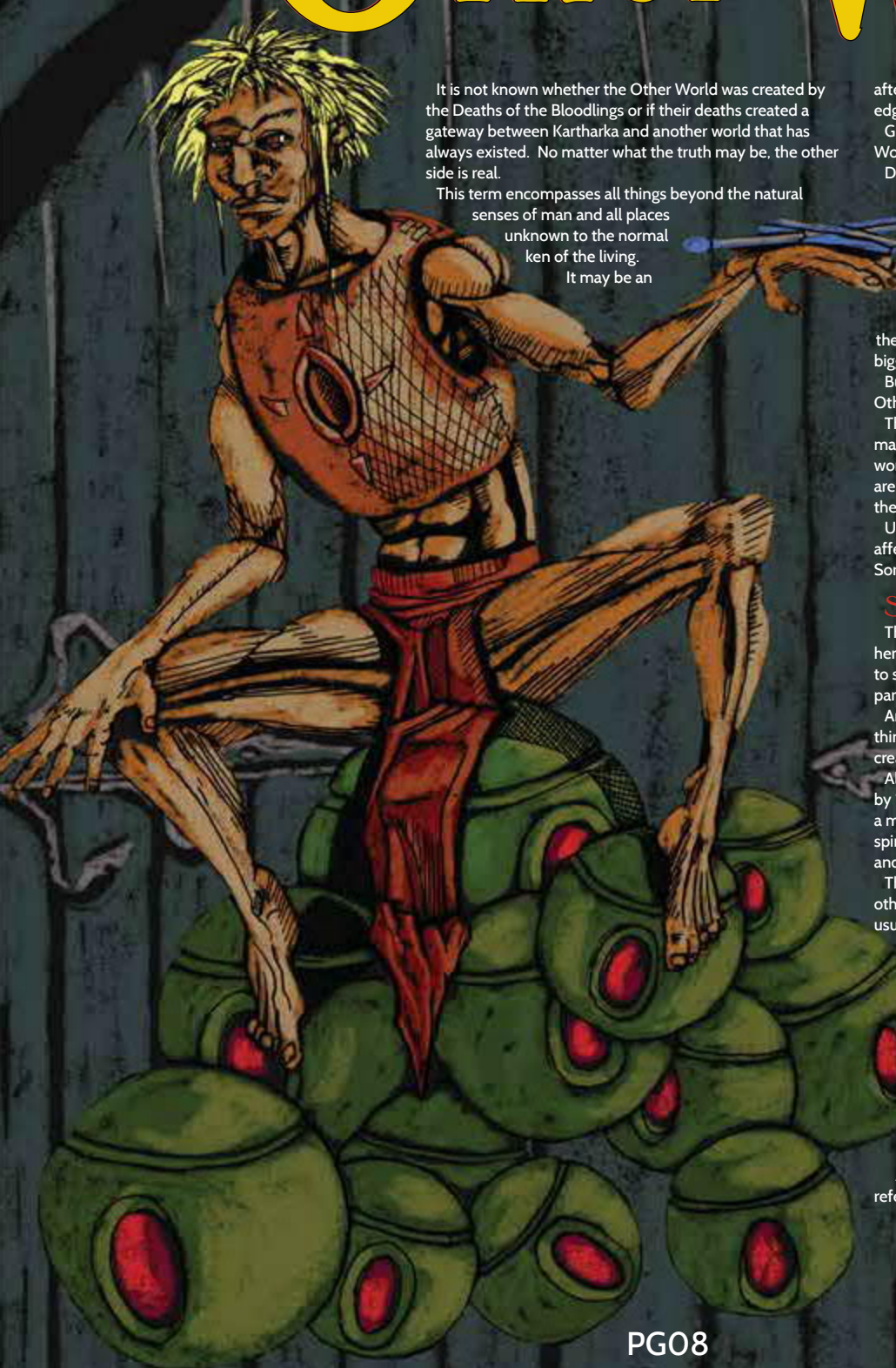
So the compact readjusted the contract and acted accordingly, creating the great whirlwinds which now block the route.

But the rift grows, changes, expands and contracts. It's smallest fissures fracturing through what were once safe mineshafts, with other parts of the rift collapsing on itself in great quakes. And every now and then a place is born where the winds have not yet formed, and something can slip through...

The abyss, a world of fire, smoke, pain and despair.

LOSS

Demons and the Other World



It is not known whether the Other World was created by the Deaths of the Bloodlings or if their deaths created a gateway between Kartharka and another world that has always existed. No matter what the truth may be, the other side is real.

This term encompasses all things beyond the natural senses of man and all places unknown to the normal ken of the living. It may be an

afterlife, another world, or may be a world living a razor's edge away from the world of Kartharka.

Ghosts, demons, magic, gods, all these are of the Other World.

Demons are kept from entering The Other World by the Dread Compact.

Generally Demons have very real, very physical forms. But, should they be killed they, do not "die" as mortal creatures do. Their essence lives on, feeding on something, some energy of the world of Kartharka, be it sorcery, magic, or some other dread thing, until they become strong enough to form again, as a tiny imp no bigger than a man's finger.

But during this time they are technically things of the Other World, though they may not travel there.

They are akin to ghosts or spirits, but with a dread and malevolent intelligence. They will attempt to stay in the world above ground until they can form again for once they are above ground they may remain until banished, so says the Dread Compact.

Until they take on physical form again they may only be affected like those other things of the Other World, with Sorcery, magic, or some other force not of this world.

Sorcery and Demons in LoSS

The next several articles will discuss how the player's heroes and the Demon Lord's villains can use Veteran Skills to summon and control demons, ghosts, spirits, and other paranormal entities.

Any hero or villain who summons and controls these things are considered "Sorcerors", and the laws and rituals, creatures and effects are all referred to as "Sorcery".

All spirits, demons and supernatural creatures are sorted by "degree". A spirit's degree is not a specific stat but is more a measurement of their power. It is not directly used by the spirit but is used to calculate how easy they are to summon and then command.

The articles will refer to a spirit's "degree" along with its other usual stats, such as combat stats etc, as well as the usual combat rank.

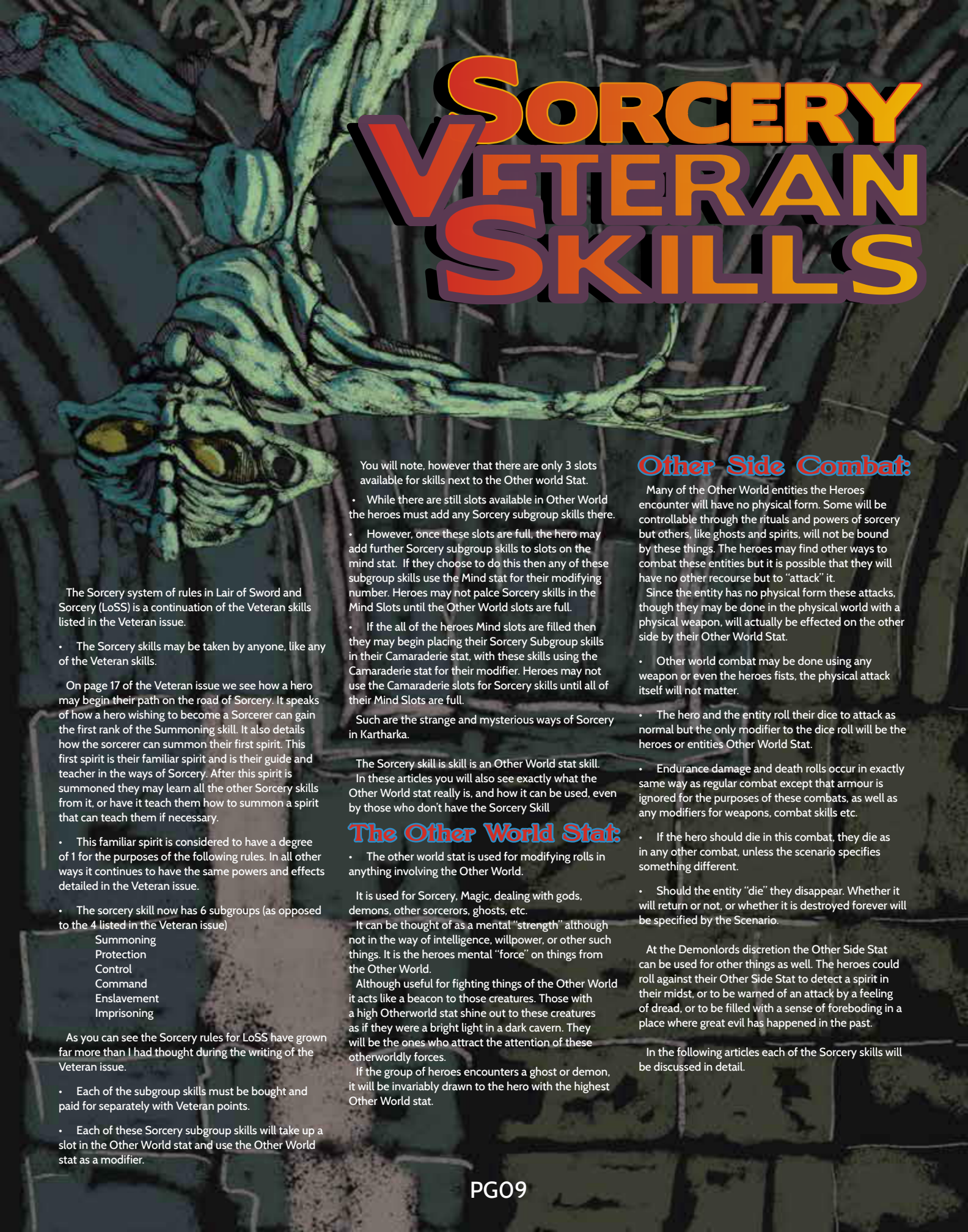
SPIRITS

It is important to point out that the term spirit is used to describe any creature of the Other world even if they do occasionally have physical forms.

Therefore ghosts, demons, and nature gods are all "spirits". Even when a demon has a physical form it is still a spirit.

Demons however are very specific types of spirits. If the rules that follow say "spirit" then it can be said to affect demons as well.

Any rules that refer to "demons" may not necessarily refer to spirits.



SORCERY VETERAN SKILLS

The Sorcery system of rules in Lair of Sword and Sorcery (LoSS) is a continuation of the Veteran skills listed in the Veteran issue.

- The Sorcery skills may be taken by anyone, like any of the Veteran skills.

On page 17 of the Veteran issue we see how a hero may begin their path on the road of Sorcery. It speaks of how a hero wishing to become a Sorcerer can gain the first rank of the Summoning skill. It also details how the sorcerer can summon their first spirit. This first spirit is their familiar spirit and is their guide and teacher in the ways of Sorcery. After this spirit is summoned they may learn all the other Sorcery skills from it, or have it teach them how to summon a spirit that can teach them if necessary.

- This familiar spirit is considered to have a degree of 1 for the purposes of the following rules. In all other ways it continues to have the same powers and effects detailed in the Veteran issue.

- The sorcery skill now has 6 subgroups (as opposed to the 4 listed in the Veteran issue)

- Summoning
- Protection
- Control
- Command
- Enslavement
- Imprisoning

As you can see the Sorcery rules for LoSS have grown far more than I had thought during the writing of the Veteran issue.

- Each of the subgroup skills must be bought and paid for separately with Veteran points.
- Each of these Sorcery subgroup skills will take up a slot in the Other World stat and use the Other World stat as a modifier.

You will note, however that there are only 3 slots available for skills next to the Other world Stat.

- While there are still slots available in Other World the heroes must add any Sorcery subgroup skills there.

- However, once these slots are full, the hero may add further Sorcery subgroup skills to slots on the mind stat. If they choose to do this then any of these subgroup skills use the Mind stat for their modifying number. Heroes may not place Sorcery skills in the Mind Slots until the Other World slots are full.

- If the all of the heroes Mind slots are filled then they may begin placing their Sorcery Subgroup skills in their Camaraderie stat, with these skills using the Camaraderie stat for their modifier. Heroes may not use the Camaraderie slots for Sorcery skills until all of their Mind Slots are full.

Such are the strange and mysterious ways of Sorcery in Kartharka.

The Sorcery skill is skill is an Other World stat skill. In these articles you will also see exactly what the Other World stat really is, and how it can be used, even by those who don't have the Sorcery Skill

The Other World Stat:

- The other world stat is used for modifying rolls in anything involving the Other World.

It is used for Sorcery, Magic, dealing with gods, demons, other sorcerors, ghosts, etc.

It can be thought of as a mental "strength" although not in the way of intelligence, willpower, or other such things. It is the heroes mental "force" on things from the Other World.

Although useful for fighting things of the Other World it acts like a beacon to those creatures. Those with a high Otherworld stat shine out to these creatures as if they were a bright light in a dark cavern. They will be the ones who attract the attention of these otherworldly forces.

If the group of heroes encounters a ghost or demon, it will be invariably drawn to the hero with the highest Other World stat.

Other Side Combat:

Many of the Other World entities the Heroes encounter will have no physical form. Some will be controllable through the rituals and powers of sorcery but others, like ghosts and spirits, will not be bound by these things. The heroes may find other ways to combat these entities but it is possible that they will have no other recourse but to "attack" it.

Since the entity has no physical form these attacks, though they may be done in the physical world with a physical weapon, will actually be effected on the other side by their Other World Stat.

- Other world combat may be done using any weapon or even the heroes fists, the physical attack itself will not matter.
- The hero and the entity roll their dice to attack as normal but the only modifier to the dice roll will be the heroes or entities Other World Stat.
- Endurance damage and death rolls occur in exactly same way as regular combat except that armour is ignored for the purposes of these combats, as well as any modifiers for weapons, combat skills etc.
- If the hero should die in this combat, they die as in any other combat, unless the scenario specifies something different.
- Should the entity "die" they disappear. Whether it will return or not, or whether it is destroyed forever will be specified by the Scenario.

At the Demonlords discretion the Other Side Stat can be used for other things as well. The heroes could roll against their Other Side Stat to detect a spirit in their midst, or to be warned of an attack by a feeling of dread, or to be filled with a sense of foreboding in a place where great evil has happened in the past.

In the following articles each of the Sorcery skills will be discussed in detail.

SUMMONING

the
Other World,
with intelligence
either dread or benevolent,
with thoughts and plans inscrutable
to Man.

The hero may know what his spirit is, or he may not. Evil spirits lie about their abilities and history, good spirits may choose to keep their powers a secret to the heroes lest they be misused.

The only way a hero can truly know their spirit is through use of the Control skill, once they have learned it.

A successful control roll will force the spirit to tell him it's true name and history. (Control is covered later in this book)

The First Spirit:

This first spirit, called the familiar spirit, is the most useful one in the Sorcerers arsenal. It does not require a summoning roll to summon, the Sorcerer simply calls it. As stated in the Veteran issue it has it's uses though it's powers are limited.

The first papers or teacher the sorcerer found which allow it to summon the spirit will also mention the skills of protection, control, and imprisoning, though it they not discuss how to use them.

The sorcerer's familiar spirit will know these things, however. It will be able to lead the hero in the ways of Sorcery, though it may choose to withhold certain information if it chooses.

The Summoning Skill rules:

The summoning skill is built up in ranks like any other skill. Each rank will give a bonus to the hero for the purpose of summoning spirits.

If the summoning is successful the spirit must appear, the dread compact will snatch the spirit up wherever it may be and drop it before the summoner.

If the summoner is unsuccessful, either nothing will appear, a spirit of greater power will appear, or a spirit of lower power will appear.

The Summoning Roll:

•To see if the summoning is successful use the following formula.

•Take the degree of the spirit, subtract the Sorcerers Other World stat. and subtract the sorcerers summoning skill.

•This is the number the Hero must roll above using one die.

•If the summoning is successful the spirit appears. However it is not controlled, and the summoner and any one else is not protected unless the hero has successfully used the protection and Control skills. (Covered later in this chapter)

If the hero fails the summoning

•Roll a die.

•1-4 Nothing appears.

•5 A spirit of a degree lower than the desired spirit appears. roll a die and minus that number from the desired spirits degree, that is the degree of spirit that will appear. If this is 0 then nothing appears.

•6 A spirit of a degree higher than the desired spirit appears. Roll a die and add that number to the desired spirits degree. This is the degree of spirit that will appear.

On page 17 of the Veteran issue, the players and Demonlord are introduced to the Sorcery skill, more specifically the Summoning skill.

Details of how to learn the first rank of the summoning skill are given as well as rules for summoning the Sorcerers first "spirit". Go back and reread that section now as the following rules pick up where they left off...

As stated in the Veteran issue the first rank of summoning is available to all with the right teachings or writings.

This will allow them to summon a weak "spirit".

In the world of Kartharka these spirits reside in many places.

They may be escaped demons from the abyss, still weak and waiting to reform their bodies.

Spirits can be long dead ghosts of priests, great sorcerers, or even the ghosts of the first men, trapped in this world by some evil magics, or some sense of purpose.

Some are the creations of the Demons or the Bloodlings, created in the times before man and the Dread Compact, still remaining long after their creators have moved on from the world.

Sometimes these spirits grow strong and powerful, they may choose to inhabit and defend a specific place, like a grove or cave, and may come to be worshipped in time by the Tribesmen of the Winterlands, or other groups of darker creatures slinking through the mountains.

The spirit may not have ever been alive but instead came to the world of Kartharka from

How to know what to summon:

A fledgling sorcerer will have no idea what is available for him to summon, the powers of demons and spirits, their abilities or their weaknesses.

To find these things out they must either:

Convince another Sorcerer to give him information.

Discover another sorcerer's writings.

Force another spirit to give him this information.

This final choice is the route most common to use, and luckily the hero has a spirit under his control for just this sort of thing.

However the familiar spirit will not want to give the hero this information. Usually the hero simply asks questions of their familiar and, if the familiar knows the answer, will immediately tell them. However, revealing the names, powers and degrees of its fellow spirits is taboo to spirits.

To give a sorcerer this information is a betrayal of the other spirit as it gives men more power over them. The other spirits will surely try to take their vengeance on the sorcerers familiar spirit if they ever can.

Since familiars are rarely trapped in the Abyss the demons are less likely to be able to take their vengeance but demons memories are long and if the familiar is ever forced to enter the abyss or if another demon should ever be freed near them their vengeance will be terrible.

And so the Sorcerer must force the familiar to give up this information. This is done using the Control skill (Covered Later).

A good rule of thumb is that a demon will only know the true names of demons one degree above themselves.

The mechanics of the summoning ritual

What does a hero actually do to summon a spirit?

The familiar spirit:

The familiar can be summoned at any time with no ceremony or special incantations. It is bound to the Sorcerer and cannot refuse it's summons. The Sorcerer need not roll to summon the spirit after summoning it for the first time.

To summon a spirit for the first time:

The hero will need certain things. The hero must make a suitable offering that will be pleasing to the spirit in question. A simple fire spirit can be summoned using a bonfire, but the most powerful fire demons would require the melting and burning of rare and strong metals, requiring a forge or furnace to reach high enough temperatures. The items consumed in the summoning would usually need to be acquired and may cost an amount of gold to buy or must be sought out by the hero.

Either the Demonlord will decide what is suitable or the scenario will state the requirements.

Next, incantations must be made to satisfy the Dread Compact, the specific gestures, motions, and times to summon are constantly changing due to the Compact but the familiar spirit will be able to guide the Sorcerer in these things.

The Dread Compact always has exceptions to it's usual rules which are constantly changing.

For example:

A spirit that must be summoned in the first moon of spring can be summoned in winter by turning clockwise while chanting, unless the time of day be in the morning in which case a wand of bone inscribed with the true name of the demon must be held above the summoners head.

The Veteran skill "summoning" is not a knowledge of true names of demons and their powers, but more a growing collection of knowledge concerning exceptions, replacements for offerings, ways to speed up the rituals, as well as the mental fortitude to will a spirit to appear.

As a Demonlord I would not waste too much time while playing to make up complex rituals for the Sorcerers to act out and special items for them to find. Suffice it to say that the Sorcerer will be making strange motions, speaking dread and mysterious words, and shaking or gesturing with bizarre items. The Sorcerer is clearly doing something other worldly and everyone who sees it will know this.

The actual actions of the summoning are not as important to those playing the game as the fact that they see someone doing a summoning and it has some effect.

Summoning time:

If a Sorcerer is attempting a summoning but there is no chance of being interrupted then it is not important how long it takes. If the heroes are in combat however the amount of time a summoning requires becomes very important indeed.

Summoning time can vary greatly for enemy sorcerers as the heroes cannot know how long was spent before they arrived on the summoning.

For heroes it will take one turn per degree of the spirit being called to attempt a summoning.

There are ways to speed up a summoning which will be discussed under the control section later.



PROTECTION

If a summoning is successful, the sorcerer will now have a ghost, spirit or demon in front them, and chances are, it's not too pleased.

If the spirit has never been summoned and controlled before (see control below) then the spirit will try to attack the hero that summoned it, and likely any others that are close by.

To prevent this Sorcerers protect themselves from Other World forces, using magic circles, amulets, charms and incantations.

Buying ranks of the protection skill is easy for those who have a familiar spirit. These ranks represent learning the ways of protection from their familiar spirit, how to create the charms and amulets as well as the proper invocations to the dread pact and the drawing of protective circles.

The Protection skill can be used in several ways, as is described below.

OTHER WORLDLY ARMOUR:

- Each rank of protection gives the sorcerer an armour bonus versus spirits and demons which works in exactly the same way as normal armour in regular combat.
- Any attack by a spirit or demon, whether they are in a spirit form or a physical form is modified by sorcerers protection skill. The Sorcerers Other World stat does not add a bonus to this.

*For example: a demon tries to disembowel a sorcerer with its claws. The Demon causes 4 points of damage, but the sorcerer has 2 points of protection so he only takes 2 points of damage.
The demon will appear to be attacking the sorcerer through an invisible wall of force.*

- The same is true of attacks by an incorporeal spirit such as a ghost. Their spiritual attacks are lessened in the same way by the Sorcerers protection skill.
- The drawback of the protection skill is that the sorcerer must wear their amulets, and clothes inscribed with the mighty charms of the Dread Compact they draw protective magics of the Dread Compact. Removing their amulets the attention of the Compact. Removing their amulets would mean that they have discarded the protection of

the Compact and every spirit and demon in the vicinity will be drawn to them by the terms of the Compact to exact their revenge on the Sorcerer.

Unfortunately for the Sorcerer the common folk of Kartharka have a great fear of Sorcerers and may react to Sorcerers in less than friendly ways. Having a few friends with deadly weapons helps to assuage the fear of the locals however.

PROTECTION DURING SUMMONING:

- The sorcerer can also use their protection skill to create a protective ward or circle around the area where a spirit is to be summoned. The hope of the Sorcerer is that if they are not strong enough to control the demon (see below) they will at least be protected from its power.
- The power of the protective circle is measured in degrees exactly the same as in summoning.
- The hero may create a protective circle of any degree they choose, however the actual power of the circle will vary depending on the apparently random nature of the dread compact as well as the heroes protection skill and the other world stat of the hero creating the circle.
- It takes a full turn per degree of protection to create the circle.
- The circles true power will not be known until a spirit tries to pass it, when it does, use the following rules to determine the circles power.

The hero rolls a medium SOTA check, adding any modifiers for their Other World stat.

If the roll is successful the power of the circle, in degrees, is equal to the heroes other world stat, plus their protection skill plus the score of one die roll.

If the roll is failed the power of the circle is the characters other world stat plus their protection skill minus the score of one die roll.

This roll can never bring the actual power of the circle higher than the set goal stated by the hero when creating the circle.

The circles final power in degrees is the level of spirits it will protect the heroes from. Spirits of that degree or lower may not pass the circle or harm anyone within it in any way.

- This is also the degree of spirit the circle will entrap. Once a spirit is in the circle it will not be able to leave until the hero dismisses it at which point it will return to wherever it came from. Even if the sorcerer is unable to control the spirit they are still able to control whether it leaves and may be able to extract a bargain from it to allow it to leave.

More on this in the control section.

USING THE CIRCLE FOR PROTECTION FROM OTHER SPIRITS:

The circle will protect the heroes from all otherworldly creatures so creating one and standing inside it will protect them from attacking Other World forces. Creating the circle and determining its strength is the same as when summoning a spirit.

The circle can be drawn in the dirt, on stone with chalk, carved in stone or wood, or any other form the hero wishes.



CONTROL

Once you have summoned a spirit, and it is safely behind a protective circle. What do you do next?

BARGAINING:

The simplest and "safest" (if such a thing exists) way to have a demon do your will is to make a bargain with it. To give it something it wants in return for something within its power.

Rarely will the hero have anything the demon desires but it may have a task which it cannot do itself or will require a sacrifice by the hero. Demons generally want two things, freedom, or amusement to while away the centuries until the Dread Compact crumbles to dust.

Once in our world it may ask to be freed from the circle in return for a favour. It will wish to be free in our world now that the summoner has brought it above ground. It will not be able to stay forever, the turnings of the Dread compact will eventually find the exception the summoner has created and erase it banishing the demon once again but it will cause a great deal of destruction and evil before leaving. It will not harm the ones present during the summoning but anyone else would be subject to its evil.

If the summoner chooses to allow the demon or spirit its freedom it will usually be sure to make it known to everyone exactly who summoned it and released it, earning the hero infamy as if he had perpetrated all the evil acts of the demon himself.

To some this would seem to be a fair trade.

AMUSEMENT:

All demons, if not allowed their freedom, will settle for amusement. A living human can be given to them

to take back to the underworld where they will be tormented for some time before finally dying.

To some this may also be a fair trade. Bargaining with spirits other than demons can be a simpler and less dangerous. Their motives however are more mysterious and varied depending on the spirit.

Some spirits may be well inclined towards man and may offer their help for nothing. However the heroes must be wary. There are many spirits in the land of Kartharka and not all are what they seem. A kindly forest spirit may be revealed to be a demon in disguise at the worst possible moment, or may ask the heroes for an innocent sounding favour only to find that they are doing the work of evil.

The control Skill is rarely used in these bargaining situations but the Demonlord may choose to allow the heroes a die roll to determine whether or not they are able to get a suitable "deal" from a spirit or demon, and in this case the control skill would be used to modify the roll.

The heroes should ask the Demonlord if they plan on using this skill in their games before spending veteran points on it.

OTHER USES:

In the Enslavement section you will see that the Control skill is used for determining how the sorcerers control range and control limit (see enslavement for more)



CONTROL

If the Sorcerer wishes to skip bargaining with a spirit they may force the spirit to do their bidding.

- All spirits and demons may be commanded by a Sorcerer with enough power.
- A hero may use their command skill on any spirit whether it is in a protective circle or not.

A circle is highly useful and suggested however, for if the hero fails the demon will immediately attack the hero with all of its power ignoring all other enemies and its own safety until that hero is dead.

The Sorcerer can try to control the spirit in two different ways, either commanding it to Answer Questions, or command it to do Perform a Task.

Answer Question:

- The hero adds his Other World stat to his Command skill and rolls a die to add to this total.
- The spirit takes its degree and rolls a die to get its total.
- If the hero has a higher score the Spirit must answer one question. If the spirit does not have a specific lore skill then it is assumed that its lore is equal to its Degree.

To other heroes the controlling sorcerer will appear to be chanting, gesturing, and displaying various amulets and charms to the spirit. If this is occurring during combat then the amount of time the controlling takes is equal to the roll of the demons die roll in turns.

- If the hero fails the spirit will try to attack the hero as stated before.
- Every time the hero attempts a control roll against a spirit the spirit gains +1 on the next roll to force it to answer a question or an extra die to enslave it or force it to perform a task.

The spirit is learning the strengths and weaknesses of the hero and will be more prepared for the next attempt to control it.

Perform a Task:

- The Sorcerer may attempt to force the spirit to perform a task.
- Careful thought must be given to what they are asking the spirit to do. The sorcerer may ask the spirit to do any task that

they wish but the spirit will be given permission to act in any way it wishes to perform the task. It will also be allowed to remain in the realm of man long enough to complete its task.

Demons and spirits do not eat, do not sleep, do not become tired, may sometimes fly or have other abilities so their power to accomplish their tasks can be great. But even they may not be able to complete a task that is ordered.

If the commands are being given during combat it is best to keep the command simple such as "kill that sorcerer" or "knock down that door" or other simple things.

- If the sorcerer says something like "build me a house" with no instructions as to size or where to get the materials the demon may choose to tear down the palace of a king for the stones and build the sorcerer a house so big that it may take a century to complete. Meanwhile the spirit will terrorize the countryside destroying every home for building materials all while technically following the orders of the Sorcerer.

- If the Sorcerer is clear on what must be accomplished and how, and does not assign a task to a spirit which will take more than a day the spirit will generally comply quickly and accurately to be away from the sorcerer as soon as possible.

- Once the spirit has completed its task it will return to the sorcerer. At this time the sorcerer may choose to make another control roll to have the spirit complete another task or they may dismiss the spirit sending it back from whence it came.

- The control roll to force a spirit to complete a task is similar to the one to answer a question except:

The hero rolls a number of dice equal to his other world stat and his control stat combined. The spirit rolls a number of dice equal to its degree (adding an extra die for every previous command from the same sorcerer). The one with the highest total wins.

The control roll therefore is much more random and dangerous for the sorcerer, and for every attempt whether successful or not the spirit gains an extra die for the next attempt.

ENSLAVEMENT

The most powerful skill of the Sorcerer is Enslavement. It allows the Sorcerer to summon spirits instantly, command them to do their bidding with needing to make rolls, and control more than one spirit at a time.

ENSLAVEMENT:

The most powerful of all the sorcerous abilities and the most dangerous to attempt.

An enslaved spirit or demon is at the sorcerers beck and call.

A Great Exception is written into the Dread Compact allowing the sorcerer to call up and command the spirit or demon whenever the sorcerer wishes.

- To enslave a spirit the sorcerer summons the spirit in the normal way, preferably with a protective circle if things don't go their way.

- They then must make a successful control roll to control the spirit to give them the ability to command the spirit.

- The sorcerer must then enslave the spirit.

- The sorcerer should have an appropriate item in

which to imprison the spirit. An item connected to the spirit in some way is required; a tree spirit could be enslaved with a wooden wand or staff, a fire demon with a brazier or a lamp for example.

- The sorcerer must now make the enslavement roll. It is the same as the control roll but must succeed 3 times in a row. If the sorcerer fails any of their rolls the spirit will immediately be freed from the protective circle and the control of the sorcerer. It will then try to attack the sorcerer and anyone else with them.

- If the enslavement rolls are all successful the demon is dismissed back from whence it came but will be forever bound to the enslaving item the sorcerer has chosen.

- If the item is stolen, anyone else attempting to use the item will indeed summon the spirit but it will not be under their control and free to attack the summoner.

- If the item is destroyed then the link is severed. The spirit will be immediately banished back from whence it came.

- An enslaved spirit may be summoned at any time,

even in combat (takes 1 round), by the sorcerer who enslaved the spirit using the item.

- When summoned, the spirit can be commanded in any way the sorcerer chooses. They will answer questions (using the usual lore rolls) and act as commanded.

- They may not leave the sight of the Sorcerer however and may not move out of "range" of the sorcerer, which is a number of squares equal to the Sorcerers Control skill.

- It may not perform SOTA but is able to attack, open doors, move, pick up and move items, untie ropes or any other mundane activity.

- The Sorcerers can command more than one spirit at a time. The Sorcerers Control skill is the limit of how many total degrees of spirits they can control at once.

Example: a Sorcerer has a Control skill of 5. They can command 1 demon of the 5th degree, or 2 demons of the second degree, or 5 demons of the 1st degree.



IMPRISONING

The most powerful of the Sorcerous arts, the imprisoning skill is used to trap a spirit directly in an item.

An enslaved spirit needs an Item for summoning but the item serves only as a doorway to the Other World. With imprisoning the spirit is forever imprisoned in the item itself.

In the previous chapters we saw that directly summoning and commanding a spirit is gives it more freedom and power than an enslaved spirit has. However an enslaved spirit can be summoned instantly and with no risk.

The Sorcerer is also limited in the amount of enslaved spirits they can control at a time.

But the great sorcerers of old were very clever. They found a way of imprisoning a spirit or demon directly in an item.

This is the most powerful of the sorcerous arts but the most difficult to master and use.

The concept is a simple one. A spirit is imprisoned within a specially prepared item. Once it is imprisoned it may no longer escape, its prison means it no longer needs to be summoned, protection need not be used and control is no longer necessary. Unfortunately an imprisoned spirit is of little use. It is trapped and unable to use its powers. While this may be a suitable goal if the purpose is to neutralize the spirit it is not very useful to the Sorcerer.

The power of the Prison lies in its exceptions.

All imprisoning items are created to "mostly" imprison a spirit, allowing it to escape only in certain ways.

For example: a prison could be created to trap a fire demon but still allow its fire to escape.

This would result in an item which continually pours forth fire and flame.

Heroes could certainly find a use for such a thing, but it could be dangerous to carry around with you.

- Usually Exceptions are controlled by a command word which turns the exception on and off.

For example: an item that normally appears to be a large orb with intricate carvings will, on speaking the command word, begin to pour forth fire.

- In combat terms this fire pouring forth would be equivalent to whatever attack the spirit would have made with fire but without going through the trouble of summoning, protection, controlling and enslaving. More refinements can be made to the exceptions as well.

For example: With our fire orb, the item could be used as a type of grenade, throwing the orb at your

enemy as you speak the command word. However this is not too elegant and may result in loss of the orb if the sorcerers enemies are not killed.

Another exception may be added to the prison, that the bearer of the orb be protected from the fire while forcing it to be directed away from the bearer. Now the item is truly a weapon.

Or the prison could be a sword. With the hero wielding a powerful flaming sword that burst into flame at command and could shoot fire at anyone it is pointed at.

This is the true power of the Sorcerer, the ability to create these powerful and terrible prisons. But they come at a price. They are quite difficult and dangerous to make.

Creating a Prison:

- The sorcerer must create the item to be used as a prison. It must be made for a specific spirit.

- At the time of creating it must be decided how many exceptions are being added to the item.

- The item will be very costly to create, needing many exotic ingredients, jewels, metals and other items to create.

- The cost will be equivalent to: Number of exceptions x the degree of the spirit x 100 gold coins.

- Since money can be quite hard to come by in the world of Kartharka the Demonlord could also have the heroes search for the materials themselves. Usually they will have to complete one difficult lair per Exception and Degree of the prison.

- To create the item the sorcerer rolls a number of dice equal to their Other World stat plus their Imprisoning stat. The Demonlord will then roll a number of dice equal to the number of exceptions plus the

Degree of the spirit to be imprisoned.

- If the sorcerers roll is equal to or higher than the demonlord's roll then the prison has been successfully created.

- The spirit to be placed in the prison must already be enslaved to the sorcerer. The sorcerer will summon the enslaved spirit and command it to enter the prison.

- The sorcerer will then roll to Imprison the spirit. The sorcerer rolls a number of dice equal to their Other World stat plus their Imprisoning skill. The spirit rolls a number of dice equal to its degree. If the sorcerer rolls equal to or higher than the spirit 3 times in a row the spirit is successfully imprisoned. If the sorcerer fails in any of his rolls the spirit is no longer enslaved to the sorcerer and may now take it's revenge on him.

- An item prison may be used by anyone that knows the control words.

SPIRITS & DEMONS

In the game of Lair, all entities of the other world, all supernatural beings, be they ghosts, demons, nature gods, or elemental energies, all of these are referred to as spirits.

Whether or not they are able to take on a physical form for periods of time they are still referred to as spirits for they exist, at least partially, in the Other World.

So all demons are sprits, but not all spirits are demons.

Demons are a very specific race of "spirits" that reside primarily in the great underworld beneath the world of Kartharka called the Abyss, beyond the great rift of Abalon and inaccessible for surface dwellers.

Although the most commonly referred to spirit in game mechanics is the demon there are many spirits in the world of Karharka.

Ranging from simple nature spirits, residing in an ancient tree, to great and powerful "gods" once worshipped by thousands of followers and now forgotten by time in ruins long abandoned by men.

The source of these other spirits is mysterious and lost in time, perhaps they were once men, or sorcerers, or wizards, or even just a tribal leader that chose to stay in our world instead of moving on to the other side once dead. Perhaps they are the ghosts of great leaders, or they may be another spirit that existed long before the death of those men, who have chosen to pretend to be people to gather worshippers and followers to act on their wishes.

Some may even truly be "gods", personifications of a forest, or a force of nature or of an entire nation, whether their followers or creators still exist is irrelevant to them as they continue on as they always have.

Many options are open to the Demonlord to create spirits to serve their needs in scenarios and lairs.

Most of the rules which will follow in this issue will deal with "demons" but simply replace the name with "spirit" and it becomes a force not of the netherworld but of the other world. Using the same stats and rules as a demon it may be a ghost, unnamed force, or a god. Its motives may be good, evil, or neutral and its source of power may be infernal or benevolent as the demonlord wishes.

So although many of the rules and lists which follow may refer to "demons" feel free to adapt and change anything you wish to add variety and spice to your own games.



CREATING CSPIRITS

There can be any number of spirits, demons, ghosts, gods, or elementals. To try to create a list of every possible one here would be a massive undertaking.

I think what would be more useful would be a set of guidelines for creating your own spirits, similar to the ones laid out in the Veteran issue for creatures and monsters.

Spirits have stats, like other creatures. They also have additional powers available only to spirits. They may have a physical form or they may not. They may be able to effect the physical world or they may not.

All of these things will be discussed in the following sections.

To create a spirit go through the following steps:

1. Determine spirit type:
2. Determine stats:
3. Assign additional powers:
4. Assign elemental powers if any:
5. Assign mortal interaction:
6. Determine Other World stat:
7. Determine degree:

All of these will be discussed, simply work your way through the list and you will have your dread spirit ready to terrorize your heroes.

DETERMINE SPIRIT TYPE:

This is the creative part of the process. Decide if you want your spirit to be a demon, a ghost, some kind of elemental spirit or anything else the imagination can devise. Use this decision when working your way through the next few sections. There is no limitations on any particular type of spirit, a ghost can be as powerful as a demon if the Demon lord chooses.

Typical choices would be:

- Demons from below the earth of Kartharka
- The ghost of a mortal being, be they a man, goblin, half goblin or something else. They lived for a time and then they died. On death for whatever reason they did not move on to the other side. They may have existed long ago or have died recently.
- Elemental spirit of the Wild. There are many spirits which are thought to be embodiments of great forces of nature. Be they the trees, the air, the storms in the sky, or a spirit of a specific forest or circle of stones.

It is not known truly where these spirits come from or what keeps them where they are found. Most of them have been worshipped for centuries by the various tribes of the Winterlands or elsewhere in Kartharka. They may actually be something else or something from the other side in disguise. At any rate they tend to be mostly an ethereal force with powers over plants, wind, or air, though sometimes they will manifest themselves as a physical creature made of their preferred element.

STATISTICS:

Each spirit will have all the usual stats of a monster or creatures, Defence, Attack, Endurance, Damage, and Move.

Even if they are never in our physical world or able to affect it, their stats must be determined, even if they are only zeros.

Like any creature or enemy you can make these stats whatever you want, but the higher the stats the higher their rank will be.

Assign the spirit stats for defence, attack, endurance, damage, and move. Remember an average man would have zero defence, zero attack, 4 endurance, zero damage, and move 4.

ADDITIONAL POWERS:

• Demons and other spirits are considered to either be carrying spectral ethereal weapons, or to have claws (as in demons) or due to their other world nature are

considered to be armed at all times. They will do damage as if they were carrying standard weapons causing 1 dice of damage, unless stated otherwise in another rule.

As if having all of this is not enough, spirits may have some additional powers.

Common powers which a spirit may have are:

Flight: The spirit may fly. They move at their move rate up, down, or in any direction.

Move Objects: Whether the spirit is ethereal or not, or whether they are able to take on a physical body they may still move objects as if they were a solid creature. It can be assumed that the creature can move objects in the same way as a normal man unless otherwise stated.

Sound(illusions) or create noises: The spirit may create noises whether they are ethereal or not. Note that spirits would usually not be able to make noise or make themselves understood by mortals unless they have this power. The noises are not necessarily limited to speech but may make any noises or sounds that they like.

Light(illusions) or create images: In the same way that spirits cannot be heard while they are ethereal they may also not be seen. But if they have this power they may appear to mortals. Note that they do not necessarily have to appear as they actually are, they may change their appearance in any way in the same way as creating noises.



ELEMENTAL POWERS:

- These allow the spirit to control an element or use it for an attack. The power may be given more than once. The first time it is given allows the spirit to “control” that element in a limited way. Fire for example would allow the spirit to start fires on readily combustible materials like an unlit campfire.
- It also allows the creature to have 1 armour point against that element. Additional slots of the same power can be used to add another armour point against that element.
- Another slot can be used to allow the spirit to “attack” with that element for 1d6 of damage. For example a spirit could have fiery hands which cause 1d6 of damage if they hit a hero.
- For each extra time it is taken the spirit gets to cause an additional d6 of damage using their element
- A slot can also be used to allow a spirit to “throw” a ball of the element with a range equal to their move stat.
- The elements available are: Fire, Ice, Wind, Electricity, Stone, Water, Wood (dead), Plants (Living).

MORTAL INTERACTION:

- The word “spirit” refer to the class of otherworldly beings, and not necessary to whether they have a physical form or not.
- When creating a spirit you must decide if the spirit has a physical form. If it does not, then you must decide how it interacts with the physical world, if it can at all.
- All spirits begin as an ethereal creature, having no physical substance. They are unable to affect the mortal world, to be seen, heard or felt. They can move through doors, walls, floors, etc. This does not necessarily mean they can “fly” or “float”. To do some they must have the “flight” special power above.

Spiritual attack:

- Some spirits, by growing their power, are able to affect the mortal realm without a physical body. These spirits are able to attack mortals using their other world stat as detailed in the Other World section earlier in this book.

If this is the case with the spirit you are creating then you should give them the “spiritual attack” power.

- Some spirits will have a physical form, such as most summoned demons. They may not use a “spiritual attack” while in their physical form. If they are able to change from physical back to an ethereal form then they can use spiritual attack when ethereal and regular attacking when in their physical form.

Demons prefer to remain in mortal form because if they “die” they must start all over again as a spirit with all stats being 0 and begin to build their power again.

- Some spirits can take on a mortal form only when summoned, many of the “gods” of Kartharka appear

in this way.

OTHER WORLD STAT:

Now decide what the creatures Other world stat will be, keeping in mind that this is the stat which will be used for spiritual attacks if the spirit has that power.

RANK

- Determining combat rank for spirits is very similar to the system for mortal creatures.
- First start with 1. Add the spirits defence, attack, damage, and any endurance over 4. Add any move over 4. Add 5 for every power (and every slot of every power).

Multiply the spirits other world by 2 and add this to the total.

This is the final Combat rank.

DETERMINE THE SPIRITS DEGREE:

The Spirits degree will vary greatly from spirit to spirit.

- A good rule of thumb is to divide the spirits Combat Rank by 5. A spirits power varies greatly depending on what powers it has and how many slots of any specific power it has.
- Published spirits will likely have a degree that varies from the simple, divide by 5 calculation.





Price

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Issue 5, October 2015, The Sorcery Issue

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THE EDITOR SPEAKS

Welcome to issue 5: Lairs! (The sideways issue)

As we near the end of another year we also near the end of the 5 core books of LoSS (Lair of Sword & Sorcery)

Lets take a look at what I've done with LoSS and why.

Issue 1: Demonboard:

Detailed the making of the all important demonboard on which all the action of the game takes place. Since a battlemat was so inherently important to the proper play of the game it was necessary to dedicate most of an issue to it. But I didn't want to just send you out to buy a battlemat or even more expensive 3d dungeon materials.

If the game was to be played by anyone I had to prove that you can make a great looking 3d dungeon yourself with just a few dollars. Not only that but I had to show a way that anyone could do it, not just artists that can create a full 3d dungeon out of foam and cardboard already.

I needed something that was cheap, easy, and not at all time consuming.

I often say that you can make a perfectly suitable Demonboard in the same amount of time as it takes to watch Conan the Barbarian.

I have in fact done that very thing myself a couple of times during the past couple of years.

I also wanted to include some material for the world of Kartharka. To show people what kind of adventures I wanted to make for LoSS. To show them a world made for exploring, for Adventure. A world created for them to tear around in and either save, or conquer.

I wanted a world full of wonder, excitement, hidden places and mystery. A world where one week you could play in the snowy peaks of the Winterlands, and another week in the steaming Hunzar jungles, or ply the coasts of the Islands, or brave the Desserts of the Summerlands.

Issue 2: Combat:

In issue 2 we really get started.

The combat issue finally started presenting some rules. Most important for adventure games is obviously the combat rules. The actual rules needed for 2 people to fight it out.

Since combat doesn't happen in a void it also included rules for the basics of moving in lairs, how to set up a scenario for people to fight in and some guidelines for small scale skirmish battles between groups of people.

It also included the all important SOTA rules. The rules for doing something other than fighting.

The combat rules were created to make heroes that can easily hold their own against regular folk. But no matter how powerful they become, they can still be taken out by large groups of enemies. But the opposite is true as well. No matter how powerful their enemies are they can still kill them if they have enough manpower.

And because you need heroes to do that fighting the Hero creation rules are in this issue as well.

Issue 3: Veteran:

But combat rules do not a Role playing game create.

One of the most important things to the way we play role playing games is the idea of advancing our heroes. Of making them better, more powerful, more skilled.

In the Veteran issue the rules for earning and spending Veteran points are included. To allow the heroes to improve their abilities.

The issue also includes lots of little things. Heroes homes, more of the world of Kartharka. Animals and monsters of the World of Kartharka as well as guidelines for crafting your own enemies.



Also included are the first set of guidelines for creating and running Lairs or your own.

Issue 4: Sorcery:

The sorcery issue finally adds the magic which all great fantasy role playing games need.

Magic items, spirits, ghosts, demons, and how to use them all. Now your heroes can become great Sorcerers, but unfortunately now evil Sorcerers and their minions are at the beck and call of the Demonlord.

Issue 5: Lairs:

This issue finally gives the actual rules and templates for creating your own Lairs.

But what does all this mean?

I wanted to create a new Role playing game from scratch. Something fun and easy to play, so anyone can play without a lot of reading or learning.

I also wanted to create something that was easy to write Lairs for, with some simple guidelines for relatively balanced encounters for the heroes. I wanted adventures that were fun to write, and easy to run.

What kind of game is LoSS?

The Rules

Well I originally went far away from what people would consider standard role playing systems. But it seems to have looped back to

where games started. A simple combat system, you earn points for completing scenario which you then use to improve your hero.

More importantly when you want your hero to do something other than attacking, you describe what you are doing and the game master assigns a dice roll to see if it works.

When writing and releasing the rules I knew that they were going to be a little confusing since they are being released in small pieces. People couldn't look at the whole game at once and understand what it was.

Not only that but the rules system was not set in stone when publishing began. Things have changed over the past year from how I had originally planned them.

This means that I could not refer to other unpublished parts of the system when presenting any of the rules. We were still playing around with the game ourselves, adding things trying things and seeing what worked.

Now with the release of book 5 everything is indeed now locked in stone.

What's with the weird release format? And why the original focus on retailers and the sudden switch to pdfs?

When I started the game I was very Friendly Local Game store oriented. I wanted to only release the game through game stores. But I soon found that contacting them and getting books on the shelves was just too difficult.

So I began selling hard copies online. But I

wanted to avoid the whole pdf thing. I liked my role playing games on paper. Well the fact is shipping is expensive. It's cheaper for most people to buy the pdf and print it wherever they are if they like it enough to want to use it. I wanted to avoid people putting up the pdfs for download and sharing them around and other nonsense.

The fact is my opinions have changed over the past year. And mostly it's due to my getting involved with the online community on Google+.

If you really want people to play your game you have to just put it out there. The pay what you want pdf system is really the best one there is right now. People can download everything for your game for free and if they like it they can throw a few bucks your way.

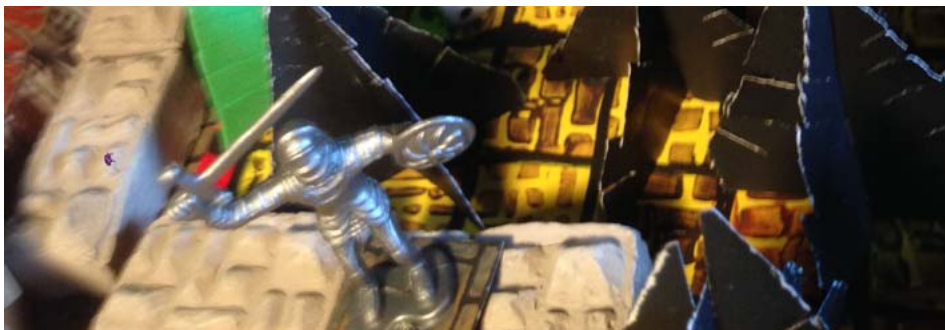
The same thinking goes for everybody publishing things for your game. If they want to put up a website writing their own adventures and rules, heck you should let them. They're all just sharing the game in their own way and the more people getting involved the better.

So what can the fans do with the game?

Whatever you want! Publish your own Lairs online, print your own fanzines, if people are willing to throw a few bucks your way to keep on doing it then feel free to sell it.

I wouldn't mind you posting a link back to the LoSS website if you can manage it.

So go on and have fun with the system, make stuff up, post your own pdfs, post content to your blogs, heck you can even put the LoSS issue pdfs up on your website if you want.





Game balance and the core of LoSS

In Lair the Demonlord sets up scenarios for the heroes to defeat. Once the scenario is set up the Demonlord is limited in what he can or cannot do but the heroes are free to do what they like.

The power of Sota is a great one and heroes can use it to great advantage.

While the demonlords minions are limited to the actions listed in the scenario and attacking the heroes are free to create traps, create cave ins, start fires, or anything else their minds can devise.

This is quite a powerful tool.

In creating lairs and deciding encounters you will see that they are referred to as 1/2 rank or full rank encounters.

These are by their nature balanced.

But what about the large set piece monsters and villains? They will usually be a certain encounter with a very specific rank. A

large monster or a powerful fighter.

In this case look to the heroes combined rank. I would suggest not having any encounters higher than double the parties starting rank.

There is a place on the story sheet to write in the Largest encounter rank. If at the beginning of the story the heroes are at less than half of that rank then you will need to supply some henchmen to bring the total up to that amount. Even if henchmen aren't technically allowed in the story.

If the heroes can't afford to pay then the henchmen will agree to work for an equal share of any treasure which may be found. In this special case these special henchmen will not have to roll after their first combat to continue fighting, they will fight on to the end in hopes of striking it rich.

They are controlled by the players in the usual way.

INTRODUCTIONS

Where to start?

Here we are with the last of the "Core" books for the LoSS (Lair of Sword and Sorcery Adventure game). Lairs!

LoSS is a special game.

When writing the game I didn't start with a combat system, magic system, or even a skill system for resolving character actions.

I started with the adventures.

With deciding what kind of adventures I wanted the players to go on, what they would do during these adventures and, most importantly, how I could write those adventures easily, and how I could run them easily in the future without any prep.

So in this issue I present to you:

The Lair templates.

They're quick, fun, and easy to fill out. You can use them to make a one shot encounter on the road, a whole series of interconnected adventures, crazy multilevel tombs crawling with monsters or sorcerers, or whole countries full of villages and mines.

Everything you need to make a LoSS adventure is on every sheet, and since everything has it's own place and easy to find, you can pull out an adventure, read it in 5 minutes and be completely ready to play. With the Loss template prepping a pre-made Lair for a game can take less time than

setting up for a board game.

The four templates all work together, with two sets of two templates.

The most often used template set are the Lair templates themselves. The Lair Outline and the Lair Details. With these two sheets you can set up a map of a group of areas along with all the extra things you need to turn it into a playable scenario like area contents and enemies

The other set are the Story background and story flowchart.

These two sheets link a number of Lairs into one long cohesive "story" or campaign.

The story background gives the Demonlord all the details they need about the story and how the lairs link together.

The Story flowchart is one of the most important tools. A simple way to create huge overlapping story lines, with one chain of events as the "Main story", a second course of events as the "Background stories" as well as a number of "miscellaneous" events they may occur at any time and a list of triggered events, things that will only happen if the characters do something or don't do something.

Using the templates:

First decide what you want your adventure to be about.

Then fill in the Story background, the story that this group of adventures tell. You

don't need a lot, just the setup of the adventure. The rest of the story will be in the Lairs themselves.

Then go to the flowchart, just write in all the things that happen our could happen on the flow chart. Draw in some arrows so that you know which one leads to which.

Then get out your Lair Lair templates. For each of the events in the flowchart fill out a set of Lair Templates.

And that's it. Just fill in all the boxes on the Lair templates and a couple of lines on the background sheets.

Each of the sections that follow give tips on how to fill in each sheet, as well as a few guidelines on how many enemies to throw in and how to use them.

Also included at the end of this issue are the sheets for the LOSS Demonlords screen.

Hopefully these will help those of you that are having a hard time keeping track of everything. I know even I could use a reference a little quicker than flipping through 4 or 5 books. Especially considering the first few issues didn't even have tables of contents or page numbers.

LAIR TEMPLATES

Lets Jump right in.

You'll see on the following pages the blank sheets for Lairs and stories.

Lets start with the Lairs first as they are the simplest part, the building blocks of the LoSS game.

LAIR OUTLINE SHEET

This information should look a little familiar as I gave some of these guidelines in the Combat issue. Here the same information is used but organized into a form to fill out. There have also been a few things added.

First lets look at all the boxes.

Map:

There is a place on the form the exact size of a Demonboard. Use it to draw in all your areas and mark down where important features and enemies are.

It is important to mark down exactly where enemies will be when the heroes enter the room so that you can be sure of being fair and not placing them to your own advantage once play has begun.

Key:

It is helpful to use symbols on your map and the key is the place where you can mark what all the symbols need.

Lair:

This is where you write the name of the current Lair you are working on. Like "cave of the witch" or "Necromancers tower level 1" This is the name of the actual Lair that the board represents.

Setting:

This is the general Location where the Lair is. Usually Lairs are organized by location, such as a nearby village or city, or by province or mountain. For example all the Lairs of the "Temple of the Blind Burrower" take place in the setting of "Throm" the village near all the action.

Scenario:

This is the name of the scenario being played out in the Lair. For example the town of Throm is used in three scenarios in the example story in this book.

One is "Enter Throm", the other is "War on Throm", and the last is "Attack of the Burrower". They all use the same "Lair" which is the village of Throm, but each scenario has different objectives.

Remember a Lair combined with objectives, punishments and rewards becomes a scenario

and scenarios linked together become a "Story".

Story:

This is the story that the Heroes have become embroiled in currently. In the example in this book the story is "Temple of the Blind Burrower". It has linked scenarios beginning with the heroes arriving in Throm, heading to the woods, entering the temple, and fighting the Burrower. Along the way they may have a war, or or fight the burrower in the town instead.

All of these things are part of the "Temple of the Blind Burrower" story.

Active:

This is a box where you can write yes or no.

This helps you to keep track of whether this Lair is part of the main story or not and help you to know whether or not it is important for the heroes to succeed or not to continue the story.

Background:

This is another yes/no box. It lets you know if this is what's known as a background scenario. They may not be important for completing the main story, they tend to be something else happening within the area so that the heroes can know that their main mission isn't the only thing going on in the area. It also serves as a welcome alternative to the heroes who may not be interested in the Main story.

Sometime it can even connect with the main story but this is not necessary.

Objective:

This is the thing which the heroes must accomplish in this scenario. If they are able to do so then they receive the reward.

If they fail or if all the heroes flee the scenario then they will have to suffer the punishment for failure.

Heroes may never return to a scenario once they have fled. They may return to the area of the Lair but the scenario ends the moment the last hero dies or flees.

Punishment:

This is what the heroes receive for failure. Sometimes it will be obvious to them what the



punishment is. For instance if their objective is to rescue someone before they are killed then the likely punishment for failure will be the death of that person.

Sometime failure will also be accompanied by infamy. Running out on people who need your help will often lead to those people despising you.

Reward:

The reward may also be obvious to the players or not. For instance the reward for finding the entrance to the next level of a tower within a layer is getting to go to the next level of the Tower. Especially if the Stories main objective is there.

Sometimes the reward may be monetary, in that case of a reward by the local townsfolk, or successfully finding a great treasure.

Usually a reward will also gain the heroes a bit of fame if the results of their adventuring are publicly known. People become famous heroes for taking down a band of outlaws or a dangerous monster.

The people the heroes are working for will also often owe the heroes a favour once they have saved their lives.

Special features:

This is one of the most important parts of each Lair. Each Lair must have something completely unique to it. This does not mean that you cannot use that feature again at some later date but you would not be able to use it as another Lairs special feature.

A special feature may be an unusual weapon used by the inhabitants of a Lair. Or a special trap, a pit full of lava, an underground river or anything else you can think of.

Or it could be a special skill had by the inhabitants or leader of a Lair.

The only necessity is that the special feature involve at least 1 new rule, usually only applicable in that one place. In the example Lair "Caverns of the Burrower" you'll see I have used wobbly pillars as the special feature. The rule is that anyone walking under them has a chance of the ceiling falling in on them. It's a simple addition but makes that Lair a little bit different than the

others. I could have used them again in the Temple Lair but in that case they would not have been the special feature of the Lair since it was already used in the Caverns but it could be added just to spice things up.

The special feature in the Temple is of course Malaks ritual, which has it's own rules as well.

Henchmen available:

This is where it will state whether or not Henchmen can be gathered up before beginning the Lair. IF they are available it usually means that heroes have time to hire people before beginning. It also means that they are in an area where there are groups of people willing to drop everything and head off to adventure, or at least crack a few skulls for a few gold coins.

Setup:

Most Lairs are set up "Blind" meaning the heroes do not know the contents of the lair. Usually they will start on one edge of the board marked "heroes enter" in a corridor or a room. The Demonlord will place this starting area only and the game begins. New areas are only placed as the heroes can "see" them.

Sometimes, though, there will be a special setup. For example in the "War on Throm" scenario the adventures start in the middle of the town with the whole town placed on the board.

Any other special setup instructions can be placed here. Usually this is also where it will say whether the lair has enough light to see or if the heroes must bring their own sources of light.

This covers the first of the Lair template sheets.

LAIR DETAILS SHEET

The second sheet, the Lair details sheet contains the meat of the Lair. What it looks like, what are in the areas, who is there, what they are



doing, and everything else that the heroes may encounter.

Areas:

This is where all the areas on the map are described. Not a lot of details are required but you can add as much as you like.

Usually they are marked with a number system like 1, 2, 3 on the map and then each area is described.

Usually you should write the rooms contents, enemies inside and anything else that may be necessary to know. Look to the example lairs to see how this is done.

You do not need to write about all the details of each monster or enemy. This is what you use the force List for. Also if there is a special item in a room it is usually best just to put the items name in the area section and then write the details

about that item in the "notes" section so that they can be easily found later.

Force List:

This is where you right in all the combat stats of all the enemies in the Lair. It has places to write in their name, what they are armed with or other equipment, what their combat stats are, and a notes section for any special powers.

Again if an enemy has a special power you can just write the name of the ability on the force list, and the details about this ability in the Notes section.

Notes:

This is where you can track notes on special monsters, abilities, items and areas of the Lair as well as any special rules or features of the Lair. Again look to the example scenarios to see how this and the other sections are used.

[illegible]

This image shows a full page of blank graph paper. The grid consists of small squares formed by thin gray lines. There are 20 columns and 20 rows of squares. A thicker black border runs along the top and left edges of the page, while the right and bottom edges have thinner borders. The entire area within the grid is white and contains no markings or text.

[illegible][illegible]

PG06

[illegible]

DEF/ATTK/END/DAM

EQUIP

NOTES

[illegible]

THE STORY TEMPLATES

Here's something a little bit special, the story sheets.

It includes all the background the Demonlords need to put all of the Lairs and scenarios into perspective, so that they can understand how everything fits together.

It also includes important details which must be known for the Demonlord to run the scenarios for the players.

STORY BACKGROUND SHEET

This part is very important but was one of the last sheets added. If you have written the story yourself fairly recently then the flowchart and accompanying Lairs contain more than enough information to run the story. But if your story is to be run by someone else or, if it's been a while since you wrote it, will be helpful to have a few written paragraphs describing the story and how all the parts work together and lead to each other.

The lair flowchart described the order things happen in and the lairs describe what happens, but the all important whys, are left out and without a bit of context to pull it all together the whole thing will be a bit of a mess.

Story:

This is the name of the Story

Location:

This is the general area where the story takes place, be it a village, town, country or valley

Highest Encounter rank:

This is used to see if the party is up to the challenge and controls how many henchmen are available if and when they become available.

This will be the rank of the largest group of enemies in the entire story. If the party is not equal to at least half of this then they should be allowed at least enough henchmen to reach this number, whether the scenario allows it or not.

Hook:

This is how the heroes get involved in the adventure. Whether it is as simple as taking a job, having a family member killed, or buying a strange scroll in the bazaar, this is how the story gets started.

Wander in:

If the heroes are randomly travelling the countryside they may stumble across the story as they enter the area. In this section is where you detail what would happen if the heroes stumble upon the story in this way.

Read aloud text for the heroes:

Some people don't approve of read aloud text, but I feel a couple of paragraphs are always welcome. I find that when everyone sits down at the table to play you need a special signal or device to separate the game world from the regular world, a way to transport the heroes to the world of the game.

I find that a couple of paragraphs of read aloud text is the perfect way to set the tone and mood for the game. It doesn't need much detail, it just needs to set the scene for the adventure to come.

Story Background for the Demonlord:

This will give the bare bones facts of the story to let the Demonlord know what is going on. Especially if there is some information which they need to know that is hidden from the players for much of the game.

It will help the Demonlord, along with the flowchart, know how to run the game, and what events came before the heroes arrive and how the lairs will be encountered and in what order.

The best way to understand all this is to flip to the included sample story and read the story sheets there.

THE FLOWCHART

Now let's talk about the story and linked Lairs and the flowchart sheet

Let's go over LoSS lingo again. A lair is an area on the Demon board, if you add objectives rewards and rules to a Lair, then it becomes a scenario.

If you like scenarios together it becomes a Story.

Here on the story flowchart sheet you see how a number of Linked Lairs can be organized and strung together into a fairly complex story which is however extremely easy to track. This means that you can pick up a Story written by someone else, read it through quickly and be running the game in no time.

There is no need to memorize everything or work out all the relationships between the parts of the story as the flowchart tracks everything for you.

On the night of the game you can simply reread the



story sheet to refresh your memory and then every lair has the pertinent information right within it so there isn't any need to put in any elaborate preparation.

First head to the example flowchart sheet later in this issue and take a look at how it is filled out for the example story.

Setting:

This is the setting

Active Story:

This chain is used to track the active story, these series of events usually go roughly in order though they may sidetrack occasionally to the background story, miscellaneous events and triggered events depending on choices the heroes make or just through their nose snooping.

Background Story:

It is usually a good idea to have at least one background story occurring in the same setting. It may be partially connected to the main story or completely independent. The heroes may encounter it during investigation into the main story, or perhaps just by wandering about. It helps to keep the characters from getting bored or feeling like the only thing they are allowed to do is the main "adventure"

Miscellaneous:

These are more like places or events of interest in town. Perhaps something interesting happens in the basement of the local bar, or in that new temple down the street, or the docks. Something that doesn't have enough complications to warrant a whole story of its own but it may be of interest to the players. Not every Lair requires a complex chain of events, it may simply be a nest of Vulpin that need seeing to.

Triggered:

This is an important part of the flow chart. When heroes find a way to move on to the next part of the main adventure, like finding the

entrance to the next level of a tower it is pretty obvious what part of the adventure comes next.

But what if a scenario only occurs if the heroes fail in a certain mission, or only occurs if they enter an area at a certain time, or only occurs if the heroes find a certain magic item, this is where the "triggered" section comes in. This tracks all of the scenarios that only occur at a certain time. Ordinarily the referee of a game would have to have memorized when and how all these things would have occurred but with the chart everything is tracked for them, thus requiring much less prep time than a traditional role playing game.

Using the story sheet you can decide what you want to happen.

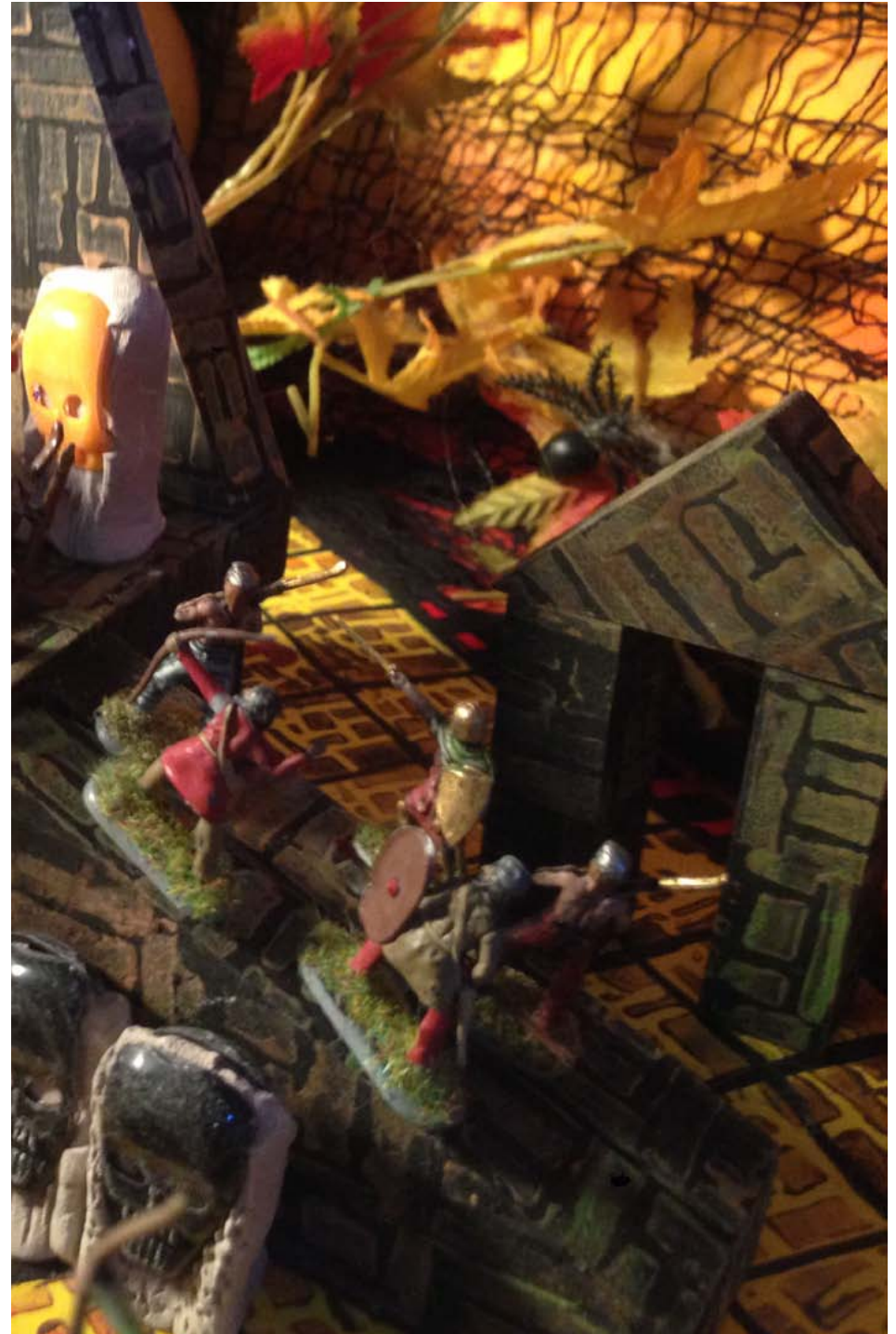
Use the flowchart to break the story down into small lairs. Large areas can be broken down into separate Lairs. Like a large tower can be broken down into separate levels, or a one large cavern complex can be broken down into series of rooms.

Simply write a single Lair in each box. Use arrows like in the example sheet to track which one leads to which.

Then get out your lair templates and fill out one template for each.

And that's it. Lucky for you the templates do all the heavy lifting and thinking for you. They make sure all of the necessary things are taken care of leaving you free to think of cool enemies for the heroes to fight, or strange and mysterious groves for them to explore.

You might think that it would take more detailed explanation on how to fill all these charts out properly but really the Loss rules system is built to make all of this easy. The rules are written in a way to make adventuring simple leaving more time for fun. They are written to work with the templates and the adventures all take place in a world made for adventure.



STORY _____
HOOK

STORY BACKGROUND FOR DEMONLORD

READ ALOUD TEXT FOR THE HEROES

ERIK MARTIN (order #8865767)

STORY FLOWCHART

SETTING:

ACTIVE
STORY

BACKGROUND
STORY

MISC

TRIGGERED

ACTIVE
STORY

BACKGROUND
STORY

MISC

TRIGGERED

ACTIVE
STORY

BACKGROUND
STORY

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TRIGGERED

ACTIVE
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BACKGROUND
STORY

MISC

TRIGGERED

TIPS FOR THE DEMONLORD

Give the heroes choices about where they go....

When you're getting started and all the heroes are brand new, it's hard to know what they want to do. Usually you can have an adventure in the town they are starting in (Usually Stroh-Branoch to start) or have a job opening to an adventure just outside of town.

They may show little interest in the adventure you have chosen because they didn't get to decide where they want to go. So pay attention to what they are saying. If it sound like they are more interested in a specific area or doing something else specific, then plan on making that happen. Next week run an adventure in the town they want to go to, or before the adventure starts let them do what they want to do. If this means trying to visit the local Targ leader and trying to kill him then fine, let them. You may have to wing it a bit but they'll have fun because it's what they want to do.

Don't be afraid to change Lairs that you have.

Try to download as many as you can, it's in their nature to be quick to prep so you might as well keep a lot of them on hand. Why make up your own adventures for everywhere in the Winterlands when other people already have.

Or if someone has made an adventure in Brytax and the heroes want to go to Bitwyn then just relocate the adventure there and change some things to match the local flavour. Just because the adventure occurs in and abandoned mine outside of one town doesn't mean you can't move it anywhere else in the Winterlands.

Heck even the Blind Burrower can be played anywhere. If the players don't feel like travelling all the way to Throm then find out what town they would like to go to, change Throm to that town and you're good to go. Or if it's a large town, you can always say the event occurs near a small

neighbourhood just outside of town. Change things as you go and have fun with it.

An adventure can happen anywhere but a players plans for their heroes lives can't. So let them act on their plans and you'll see how much more they respond to your games.

How many enemies and how often

When setting up your own Lairs the hardest thing to decide is how many enemies to put into the Lair, how many rooms should have fighting in them and tough should each combat be. If you look in the example sheets you'll see that I usually define combats as a "full rank" or "half rank" of enemies.

A full rank of enemies is a group of enemies who's combined rank is equal to the combined rank of the group of heroes.

A group of heroes should be able to beat a "full rank" of enemies without dying.

But only if they effectively use Sota. They must be creative and use their wits to come up with interesting and tactically advantageous things for their heroes to do. Because the demonlords enemies are allowed only to attack normally and may only do other actions as described by the scenario, they are limited in what they can do. Don't be fooled though, their usually complete disregard for their own health will give them a great advantage in combat. And the Demonlord always has more at their disposal.

After fighting a full rank of enemies however they will usually be quite worn out with very low endurance. Most will have only 1 or 2 endurance points left if not already at 0.

A half rank of enemies can usually be defeated by a group while losing only about half their endurance. When the combat is over they can rest and be get half of their remaining points back.

But a few encounters like this will leave them again only at a couple of endurance.

That's why it's a good idea to sprinkle in a few encounters with only 1 or two enemies to give the

heroes a chance to recover. However to make this fair (to the Demonlord anyway) there should be a risk or receiving serious damage during these encounters. For instance a single enemy which runs leading them to a trap.

Depending on what the heroes must accomplish it is useful to use your minions wisely.

It is a good idea to use full ranks encounters sparingly, usually no more than 1 per Lair, and not in the same Lair as a rank that is above the heroes.

You can have another 2 or 3 half rank encounters in the same lair but think about replacing one of these with a 1 or 2 enemy encounter with an edge, like lying in wait for the heroes when they pass.

Remember that the heroes are also free to flee at any time they choose. The punishment is usually only an infamy loss at most though many innocents may be hurt.

No adventure should ever be easy.

Victory should never be certain. In Lair of Sword & Sorcery high adventure is around every corner, but if it was easy everyone would be a rich adventurer.

But it's not easy. Even though our heroes are definitely a cut above the average citizen they aren't super humans. Every adventure involves a great amount of risk but a great amount of reward as well.

Not just in jewels and gold but fame and glory. In LoSS a large pile of money can get you whatever you want, but so can a high fame score and a handful of favours. All the great provinces of the Winterlands have money so building an army will take more than money it will take a lot of influence and leadership.

In Loss the players throw their heroes into the face of danger, the chance of failure is high, but if they are careful they can live to fight another day. In fact protecting your good name can be a lot harder than protecting your hide. Remember to remind them of the possibility of fleeing often.

So to sum up don't put too many enemies in the Lairs but if you do, they're still able to flee.

That's why the game rules make it so easy to get away.

When and where should Role playing options be...

Sometimes the heroes will want to do something other than attack the bad guys. It's shocking I know. During the times when they are not in a Lair there are usually plenty of people to talk to and plenty to do, especially when they are in a town or settlement.

But in a Lair heroes can get caught up in the hack and slash of adventure. For the most part this is a perfectly suitable plan, like wandering through caverns full of monsters. But when sneaking through an evil temple it is entirely possible that there are other humans there to interact with that may not know that the heroes are there to kill them.

In these cases and others the heroes may wish to make nice with the inhabitants, try to blend in.

Or they may try bargaining with the monsters instead of attacking, or other strange tactics.

In these cases use your judgement, sure you as the Demonlord are looking to take out a few heroes, but like in cases of adjudicating Sota, you must stay impartial. IF the heroes have a good chance of interacting with the enemies then let them do so, especially if they have something fun in mind. Don't let them push it too far though, even though the game takes place in a world of magic and demons and other bizarre things, you have to keep a firm foot in reality or it will all just seem silly.

Not every guard is going to fall for every stupid trick they come up with.

As long as the heroes are just talking and are not actually trying to get anyone to do anything you can play out these interactions in any way that seems valid but as soon as they try to talk people into doing something they want they should need to make some Sota rolls. If they have come up with a particularly convincing scheme or argument then change a very difficult roll to difficult or even easy. A characters stats can have an effect on

these, mind and more particularly camaraderie are most important in these encounters.

Rewards: how much to give, treasure..., fame, infamy, cash, favours

This is always a difficult one for Adventure gaming. How much treasure should a hero find on an adventure.

In Lair of Sword and Sorcery money is relatively useful to normal folk. They can use it to buy a nice home, fill it with nice things, and live comfortably for the rest of their lives, protected by guards and iron bars.

Of course none of this is of interest to a hero.

What a hero wants is fame, and glory, and things it brings.

Treasure and gold can indeed buy steel armour and weapons but that's about it. Once they have these things gold can buy little more for them.

Gold is also useful for hiring henchman and other helpers. But this all only supports their one real goal, fame and glory in a world of adventure!

So feel free to pour treasure onto the heroes. Everything they want to buy is extremely expensive anyway so it'll be gone soon. And even if it isn't the dangers of the road can deal with that.

Or the heroes may use that gold to hire passage to new and more exciting places full of adventure. They may dream of travelling all the way to the summerlands, to take on the Black Emperor himself. Let them amass the treasure they wish.

The other thing to remember is that the world of Kartharka is not like ours. Most things are traded on a barter system. Money is not even used by most common folk. A gold candlestick from a temple may technically be worth a fortune but spending it is harder than you'd think. Most of the people the Heroes would be dealing with couldn't make change for gold piece much less a 5 lb candelabra.

They may find themselves also being horribly overcharged, heroes are rich people say, and can afford it.

Also remember that shopping malls don't exist in Kartharka. If a hero wants a well made steel

sword it will be far more difficult to find a weapon smith who has the skill then it was to steal all that gold from the temple of the lizard men. Make spending the gold an adventure in itself and you'll find that the heroes can amass quite a fortune without the game becoming stale.

So what should they find in the average lair.

Well if 5 heroes enter and find 20 gold coins worth of treasure that's 4 coins each. That means they can pay their henchman for the next Lair, buy a couple of pieces of armour and still have a gold coin to spend lavishly in town buying rounds of drinks and finding all sorts of mischief to get into.

That means if they find 50 gold coins they have found a fortune, they can afford to hire teachers, build homes, hire servants, get training.

But then it's all gone again. 50 gold coins can buy a lot but not forever. Don't worry about heroes having too much money they business of adventuring itself is an expensive one.

Try to make them earn their money however. A simple Lair with 2 or 3 half rank encounters may sever up only a handful of coins.

A grand temple with 3 half encounters, one full encounter, and then an encounter with a terrible creature the heroes should certainly be given a rich reward. Up to 100 gold coins could be had with such a risky adventure, considering they could have turned back at any time.

Fame is a commodity to be watched even more carefully.

Even the greatest exploits must have a limited fame award. Look to the fame chart in the Demonlords screen. A fame of 0 is completely unknown to all, a fame of 100 gives a hero the kind of glory that usually only gods and emperors would enjoy.

Sure the heroes found an ancient hidden temple in the wilds of a great jungle. But if nobody has ever heard of it in the first place and no one saw them do it, then they will hardly be likely to believe their outlandish tales about defeating the

8 armed hippopotamus god of the insect people who lived there even if they do have some strange scrolls and bizarre looking necklaces.

But if the Sages had sent them to the temple, because it's insect people had been raising an army to destroy the people of the Winterlands then their reports are far more likely to be believed and spoken of far and wide.

I would hesitate to give more than 5 points of fame for anything at a time unless it was truly world changing. Remember the world is a small place. Just because your exploits are the talk of every villager in your hometown doesn't mean they've even heard of you two towns over.

Most adventures would garner a hero only 1 or 2 fame at a time.

Favours

Favours are another thing that heroes will rack up like gold coins.

But not to worry, favours can get spent more easily than gold sometimes. Heroes always have so much that they want to do that they are likely to use them right away most of the time, especially when they are low on money, as heroes often are.

Eventually they will start keeping them though and this should make you happy.

Heroes will save the favours with certain people and places because they have a plan or a goal. And plans are usually fun and interesting. Support your players in their goals.

And when they are cashed in it's usually a lot more interesting than simply buying another sword. Also unlike gold and fame they can't be combined to make one big favour. A multitude of small favours can't be combined to earn the hero and army. Though with a lot of travel and a lot of favours they could conceivably build an army one man at a time.

Punishments:

When failing a scenario is punishment enough, failure is it's own punishment.

This is the one that will be most difficult for

Demonlords to come up with.

Most scenarios will include infamy as part of the punishment, but if the heroes care little about fame, or are indeed trying to build their infamy then this will have little impact on them.

Sometimes the punishment can be a lack of reward.

For example if the reward for braving an underground mine in search of a lost cache of platinum is the lost cache of platinum, then failing the lair would be the loss of said platinum. In this case the creative part of the process is determining why, if the heroes turn back, they can't return again, thereby making it a failure.

For example, in our platinum scenario the mine could be prone to tremors, with the tremors increasing in severity, our heroes braving the depths is their last chance to find it before it falls into the earth forever.

In the case of saving a town or village, the punishment will be the deaths of all the villagers, and the infamy of abandoning them in their time of need.

Sometimes the punishment for not succeeding will be not being able to continue on. For example the heroes are searching for the entrance to a deeper level of sewers past the one they are adventuring in. Failure would mean that they do not get to continue their adventure to the end.

There may be other punishments as well but this need not necessarily be true.

If the only reward for success is moving on with the adventure that this is a perfectly acceptable punishment.

In the case of infamy I wouldn't hand out more than 5 infamy at any one time, and even then only for grievous failure. Usually 1 or 2 should be enough to spur most players on.

Making up special features

Special features are an important part of Lairs, more importantly they make the game more interesting and more fun. It may seem like it is difficult to come up with wholly new features for each and every Lair you create, but really the Lairs

create them themselves.

Every adventure will have an objective, be placed in a special area, have their own villains, have their own layouts. All of these things lend themselves to special features.

For instance in the example story, In the caverns of the Blind Burrower, I had placed a few pillars in some of the rooms just to break up the areas, but I knew that there were tremors and that the ceilings were weak so I made up some special rules for the pillars. In this case the special feature presented itself.

So too in the case of the Malaks ritual, the scenario was all about stopping Malaks ritual, so adding the rules for the ritual were necessary anyway.

I needed something to spur the heroes on to complete the burrower scenarios so I came up with the war on Throm, once I knew an attack was going to happen I thought the heroes may try to get help from the villagers. Once I knew that I wrote up some rules for rallying the villagers.

The special features will usually suggest themselves once your start writing the scenarios.

So don't try to sit down and think of cool special features, think up cool and different Lairs, and the special features will automatically fill themselves in.

Making up your own monsters, villains, etc...

When making up your own villains it can be difficult to know how powerful to make them.

Keep in mind who they are and compare them to an average man. A few small bonuses will make them extremely powerful compared to regular humans.

Remember that an enemy is far more likely to have a great number of minions than to be extremely powerful. A warlord will not necessarily be able to kill an entire party of heroes with his bare hands, but he will make his fortress with many chokepoints to force the heroes to fight them one at a time.

He will also have many well armed and

armoured soldiers, who will be disciplined and unlikely to run.

So enemies need not be extremely powerful to be dangerous.

Loners may be more powerful, but an enemy with a lot of high stats is difficult to kill but also boring to fight.

Instead try to give your villains and enemies a special power, ability or weapon. They will be weaker but still far more interesting to fight.

Remember that the combat system of LoSS is brutal enough without using overpowered enemies try to keep things interesting instead of difficult.

Coming up with a story.

This is the hardest part. The story is the thing that drives the story.

I usually start with an idea, maybe I get an idea from a movie, a book, or even a comic book.

The burrower idea was a simple one. Some giant bug living in a temple underground. Everything else that comes after is just working on that.

The temple is useless if there isn't a way to lead the heroes to it, so I came up with Malak, one of the Sages, to lead the heroes to the temple.

Since he learned about the Arrowblack from the stonecrawlers, they got involved as well, and so the war was added as a driving force for the players.

The branchlings were invented because I needed something for all those kidnapped villagers to be used for as well as needing a cool monster for the heroes to fight in the Arrowblack, something to justify the cursewoods legends.

And so on and so on.

Since there is so little work involved in making things game ready you can pretty much invent anything you want without having to convert it into something that works in game.

Keep it simple to start, with just single Lairs, and build up to large multilevel lairs.

Once you have gotten the hang of making up the main story you can add background stories,

miscellaneous and triggered Lairs.

Remember the most important thing is to have fun, if you're having fun hopefully the players will too.

Let the heroes mess with the world in any way that they want.

There's a whole lotta Kartharka out there. The players are going to want to see a lot of it. Since only so much material can be published so fast it's guaranteed they are going to want to go to a place that I haven't covered in the issues.

Well in that case you're just going to have to make it up. There are plenty of hints and clues as to what may be in those places just pick one of them and run with it, or make something up completely yourself.

Sure your world might not match mine, but after a while it's not going to look anything like mine anyway, due to the heroes actions.

Your heroes will want to take down the leaders of Stroh-Branoch and run it them selves, they are gong to want to travel to the summerlands and take on the Black Emperor, they are going to want to build armies.

You should let them try. I'm not saying make it easy for them to build an army. I'm saying that you shouldn't deny them an army just because you know they'll use it to overthrow the Black Emperor. Let them attempt things that will change the world, the world needs to change to make it

interesting.

Your world will grow and change and become different then my Kartharka and that is how it should be.

And don't be scared to mess with the world yourself.

If you want to have a village of half goblins next to Stroh-Branoch then do it. It doesn't matter that they aren't there in my Kartharka.

If you want the Black Emperor to travel to the Winterlands then do it. Have him burn Stroh-Branoch to the ground if you want. Don't feel that the background is too precious to mess with.

If you go too far in destroying the Winterlands, then there is still the Autumnlands and the Summerlands to mess with. Or maybe it's time for the heroes to retire to hang up their swords, consider it a job well done. And start out afresh, in a whole new version of Kartharka, maybe you'll give it a different name, or it'll look different, maybe even have different people and places.

Make it your own, make it someone else's, add more magic, less magic, more monsters, more evil lurking in the corners of every house.

The important thing is that you're playing and adding and growing.

There is no right or wrong way to play, no perfectly balanced and fair scenarios.

There is just the game.



STORY BACKGROUND

STORY Temple of the Blind Burrower

HOOK The heroes have accepted a mission from the Sages Tower of Stroh-Bronoch. They are to deliver a package of documents and small items to the Sages Tower of Throm. They will be paid 10 gold.

WANDER IN The heroes happen to wander into Throm on their travels. Whether through a wrong turn in the road or due some other mission has brought them to Throm or its environs. There are mining jobs in the mountains, forestry jobs in the Arrowblack forest or security for shipments.

READ ALOUD TEXT FOR THE HEROES The heroes enter Throm finding it deserted. They see some of the villagers peering at them from behind closed doors. They refuse to talk to the heroes and are clearly afraid. The heroes find that the only building not locked up tight is the Sages hall. They enter to find it abandoned. Near the door on a podium is a scroll clearly written for any who may come into the tower. The scroll reads "To any who may follow, We have woken a great evil in the cursewoods near Throm. One of our number, the Sage Malak, has been living with the Stonecrawler tribe on the far side of the Cursewood, learning their legends, and their stories of the cursewood. He had become obsessed with discovering what lay within. As all know, each cursewood, from which our precious hardwood is gathered is said to have a black heart. A place in it's tangled centre where great evil, and great power, is said to sleep, waiting for the return of the Sorcerers to the land. We have made a cursory study of our local cursewood, The ArrowBlack and did find that though the outskirts are easy to traverse, full half of the wood, the interior, is so overgrown that none may pass. Making a brief exploration we found the interior to be choked with deadfalls, thorns the size of a mans leg, as well as all number of dangerous and poisonous animals and plants. We received a number of injuries and turned back quickly before our lives were imperilled. But Malak became obsessed. From the Stonecrawlers he began to learn of the secret ways through the Arrow black, secret paths, mysterious rites which allowed him to pass all the way to the heart of the Arrowblack. What he found there we do not know. The Stonecrawlers came to us in the night. They told us Malak had disappeared into the cursewood some time ago. Thinking he had been killed trying to travel too deep in the black they thought no more of it, dismissing it as another foolish builder being taken by the land they don't understand. But in the night something had come to their camp. Something that stole their people away with only a whisper. To prove to the stonecrawlers that we were not responsible we have asked them to lead us as far in the Arrowblack as they can, to see what has become of Malak. We go now to enter the Black, to rescue Malak and stop whatever has attacked the Stonecrawler people, likely some animal that has been roused from the cursewood by Malaks exploring.

LOCATION Village of Throm: Begin in the sages tower **HIGHEST ENCOUNTER RANK** 30

STORY BACKGROUND FOR DEMONLORD Don't read this part to the heroes.

The following story is broken up into separate lairs.

When the heroes first leave Throm, whether to head to the Cursewood or to leave the area entirely, they will encounter the stonecrawler tribesmen entering town to deliver their ultimatum. Use the Enter the "Meet Stonecrawlers" Lair encounter when the heroes leave town for the first time.

IF the heroes decide to stay in town to find more information first then consult the "Enter Throm" Lair.

IF they decide to head into the Arrowblack use the Enter the "Cursewood"

IF they manage to enter the Temple then use the "Caverns of the Burrower" Lair.

IF they are able to open the great door in the Caverns use the "Temple of the Blind Burrower" Lair.

IF the heroes ever decide to turn back or retreat from "Enter the cursewood", "Caverns of the Burrower", then the next day the "Attack on Throm" Lair is triggered, use the instructions in the Attack on Throm Lair.

IF the heroes Retreat from the "Temple of the Burrower" Lair then they will receive the punishment for that lair.

The Story: Malak the sage has succeeded in penetrating to the center of the Cursewood. There he entered the temple and inside it, the Blind Burrower. The Burrower got inside his head and drove him insane. Under the burrowers powers Malak called up the burrowers minions, the branchlings, to kidnap people from the stonecrawlers and Throm to use in a great sacrifice to bring the Burrower to our world. He is in the process of completing this sacrifice as the heroes enter the cursewood.

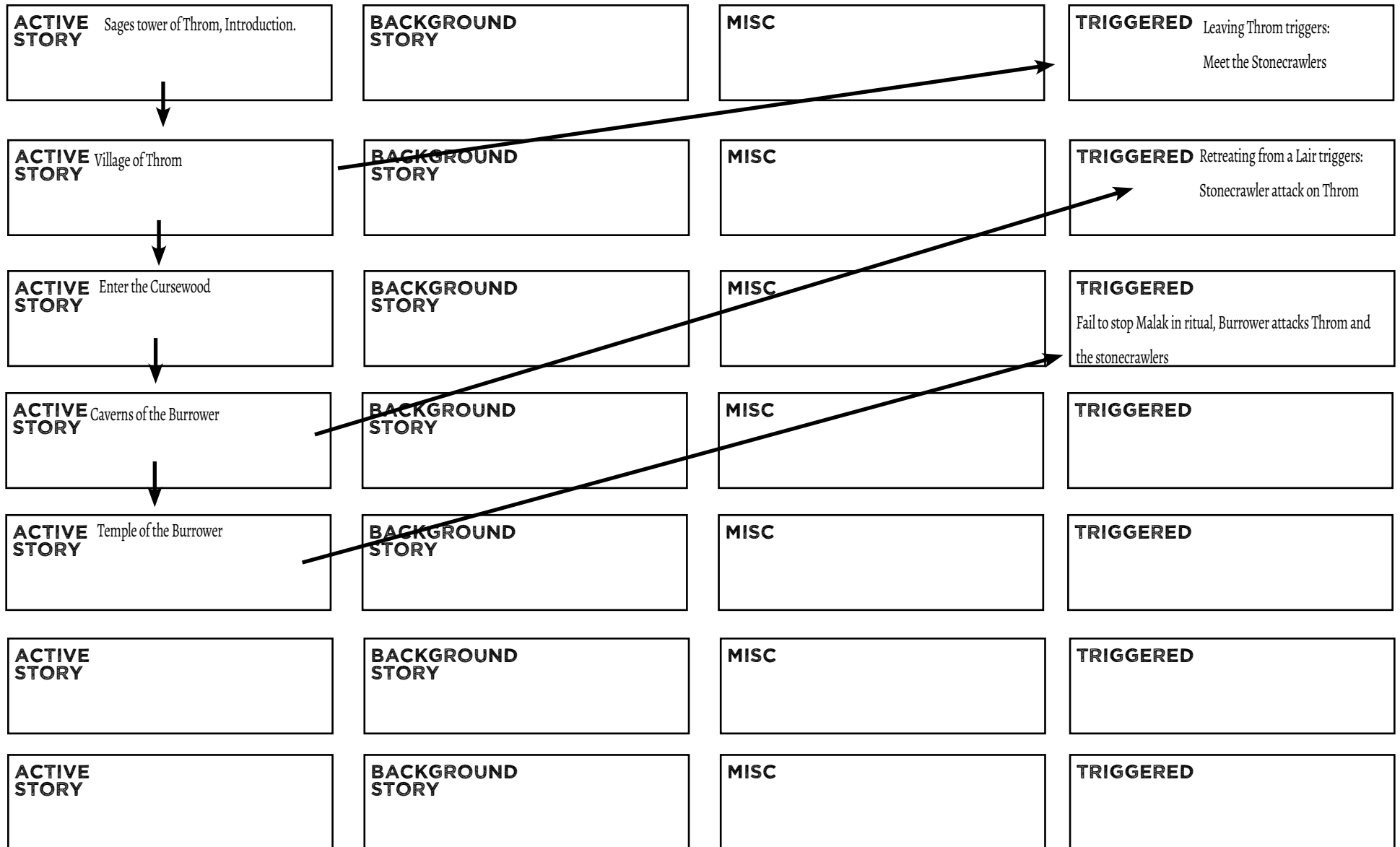
The Stonecrawlers think the kidnapping was done by the sages or the people of Throm and are declaring war on them if their people are not returned. IF the heroes cannot prove that the people of Throm were not responsible then a war will occur between the tribes people and the villagers. And the heroes will be stuck in the middle, forced to fight with the villagers as the tribes people think that they are "builders" like the townspeople. Each Lair will give full details on how to run that section, whatever "secrets" the Demonlord must know are listed in each Lair and shouldn't take more than a few minutes to read.

The Demonlord should read the whole story once to know what is happening but will certainly not need to memorize everything. Simply refreshing yourself with each Lair before you run it should be enough.

To know which Lair leads to which simply consult the story chart which leads the Demonlord through the story.

STORY FLOWCHART

SETTING: Temple of the Blind Burrower, the village of Throm



LAIR: Throm
SETTING:Throm

SCENARIO: Enter Throm
ACTIVE: Yes

STORY: Lair of the Blind Burrower
BACKGROUND:No

LAIR OUTLINE

OBJECTIVE: The heroes must decide what to do, whether they will enter the cursewood and search for the sages, or whether they will simply pick up the shipment they were to get and leave. The villagers will attempt to convince the heroes to help them.

PUNISHMENT If the heroes decide to leave without helping the villagers they will earn 5 infamy each.
This is because the villagers will know that they are "heroes" and will tell any who ask that the heroes came and left without offering any help.

REWARD The reward for this mission is adventure, as well as the chance of earning fame and fortune.

SPECIAL FEATURES Rumours: See the next sheet for the rumours the heroes will hear

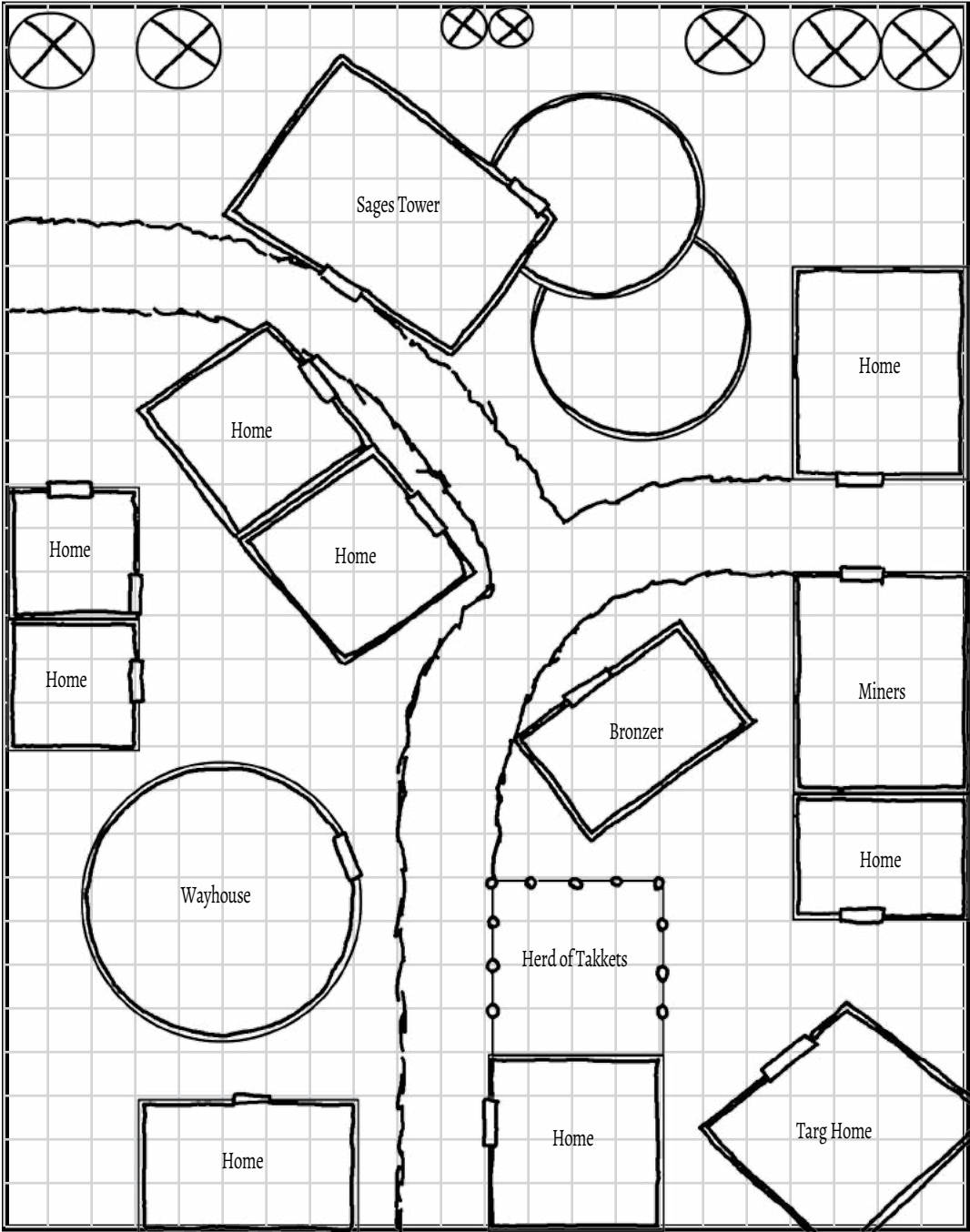
HENCHMEN AVAILABLE None of the Villagers are able or willing to come with the heroes.



SETUP The heroes are standing in the Sages hall. You may setup the Demonboard if you wish with the heroes moving from house to house but it is not necessary to use the board unless the heroes get into a fight with one of the villagers, at which point you can set up the area they are fighting in.

The heroes can visit any of the buildings and homes but the villagers will speak only through the door. They are all terrified, and have all had family members kidnapped in the night.

They only know that they disappeared silently and without a struggle.

Only the wayhouse is unlocked. The bartender will gladly serve the heroes and allow give them supplies in return for staying to protect him. If the heroes choose to stay at the wayhouse overnight the stonecrawler diplomats will meet them at the wayhouse instead of the outskirts of town.



KEY:  tree  Low fence

AREAS: Rumours: The village is full of rumours. Only some of them will be true of course.

Each of the villagers will have heard at least one of the rumours below:

1: The stonecrawlers are sneaking it at night to kidnap villagers for their dark rituals.

2: The sages have taken the villagers for a sacrifice in the cursewood

3: Evil monsters have been awoken in the cursewood and are attacking the village

4: Demons have been summoned by a sorcerer in the cursewood

5: The Sages have found an enormous pile of treasure in the cursewood, but must trade the souls of the villagers to get it.

6: A sorcerer is living in the town and is sacrificing the villagers in the cursewood.

FORCE LIST

DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME
0 0 4 0	Takkett
DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	EQUIP
0 0 5 1	
DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME
0 0 4 0	Bronzer
DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	EQUIP
0 0 4 0	Large Hammer
DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME
0 0 4 0	Villager
DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	EQUIP
0 0 4 0	Axe
DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME
DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	EQUIP

NOTES
herd of 6 takkets Move 5
NOTES
Very Strong/ Lives in Bronzing shed
NOTES
Lives in "Homes"
NOTES
NOTES

NOTES

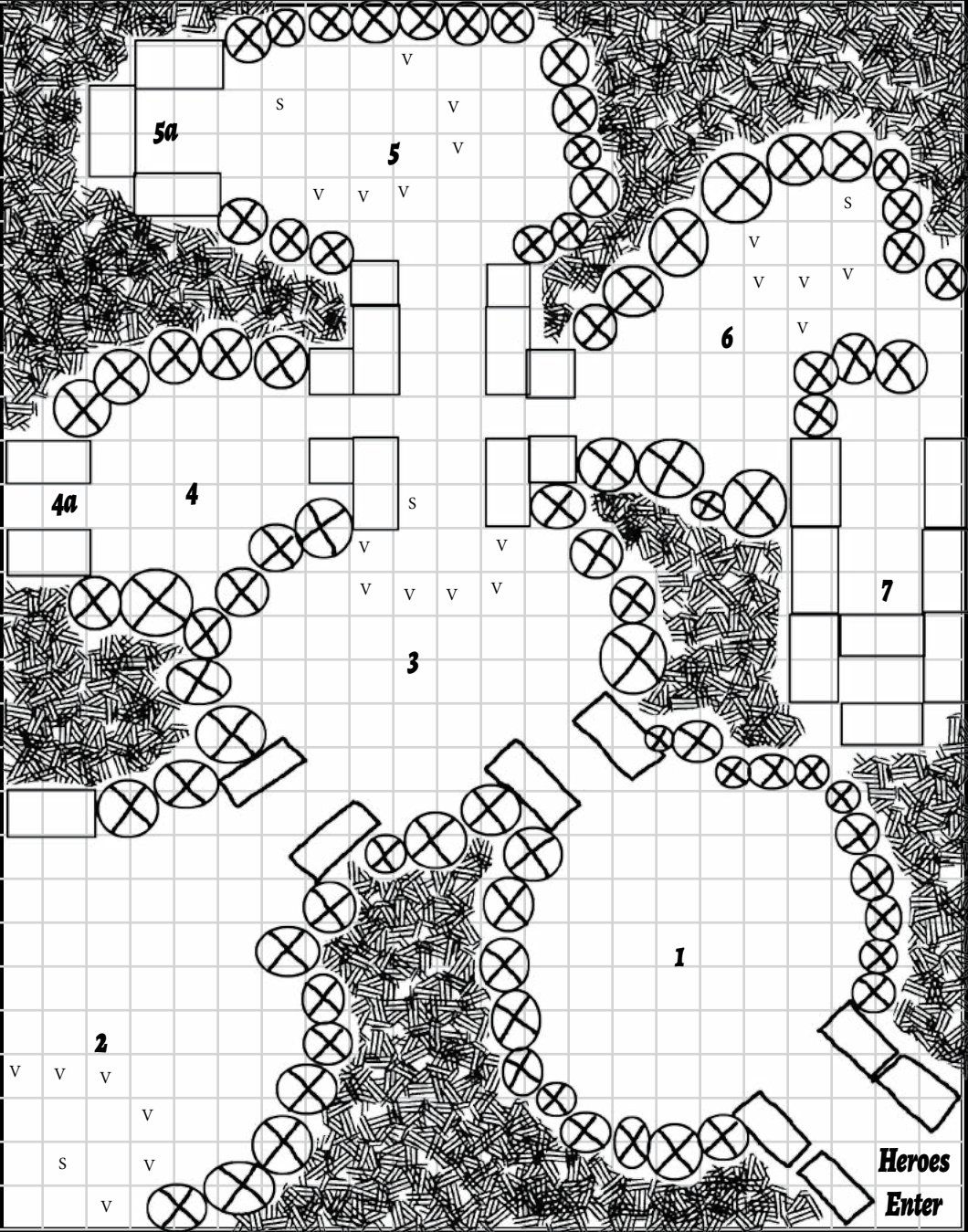
Remember that when the players try to leave town they will encounter the Stonecrawler diplomats.

The stats above can be used if the heroes decide to start a fight with any of the villagers. or try to have a bit of fun with the Takkets.

LAIR: The Cursewood
SETTING:Throm

SCENARIO: Enter The Wood **STORY:** Lair of the Blind Burrower
ACTIVE: Yes **BACKGROUND:**No

OBJECTIVE: Find the kidnapped villagers and stonecrawlers, and lost Sages from the village of Throm



PUNISHMENT Turning back from this scenario will lead to the attack on Throm scenario. If they have learned of Malaks ritual then if they turn back it will be completed, triggering the attack of the burrower.

REWARD The chance to continue the adventure by searching the temple of the Blind Burrower.

SPECIAL FEATURES Branchlings, the white tree and altar, the door to the temple, fire, pits

HENCHMEN AVAILABLE None

SETUP The demonboard is blind. Do not set up areas until the Heroes can "see them. The areas between the trees are too full of dense brush and growth to enter. The cursewood is extremely dark and the heroes must carry torches to see. The paths between glades are framed by great stone arches represented by demonblocks or walls.

The heroes can hear mysterious rustling in the woods, branches breaking and things moving in the underbrush. Some of these sounds seem to come from large creatures. The torchlight flickers in an evil way off the slimy branches and thorns.

Enemies on the board are placed on the squares marked with a letter such as S for shrieker, or V for villager. The forest is too dense to move through the areas marked as trees or the forest between glades.

SPECIAL RULES: FIRE: If a torch or other fire is dropped or thrown into the woods roll 2 dice. If the total is 11 or 12 then a fire is started. Place a marker on that square to represent the fire. But the cursewood is a terrible and mysterious place. The demonlord rolls a die every turn. 1-3, fire doubles. For every fire marker on the board the demon lord places 1 fire marker in any square bordering the fire. 4-6 fire dies, the demonlord takes off half of the fire markers on the board. The Demonlord gets to choose which where to place markers or discard markers. Any hero on a fire square loses 1 die of endurance.

KEY: tree

AREAS: 1: This glade is empty.

2: In this glade are half as many trapped villagers as heroes(round up) and one shrieker.

3: same as glade 2

4: This glade is empty. The Path leading off of the board actually ends in a deadfall a few feet in. But this cannot be seen in the gloom. Pit trap, If a hero walks on the square marked “4a” then they have encountered the pit, deep and filled with sharpened branches and covered with bracken. Make an attack roll between the hero and the pit with

the pit having a +2 to attack. If the pit wins the combat the hero falls in taking 4 endurance damage. They can easily crawl out after falling in. If the hero wins the combat then they avoid falling in. Once the pit is discovered the heroes can easily move over it.

5: In this glade is a great white tree, before it is an elaborately carved white marble altar. Later in this issue you will find a picture of the tree that you can cut out and put on the board. The altar can be represented by demon blocks or anything else at hand. The glade contains as many trapped villagers as heroes as well as one shrieker. If the heroes survive and are able to, they may inspect the carvings on the altar. Their is a picture later in this issue of what the carvings look like. You can show it to the heroes. The pictures illustrate a group of worshippers taking a branch from the tree and using it to strike the door of the temple. It also shows what appears to be a human covered in branches being placed on the altar. These pictures are a hint that if the heroes are able to capture one of the trapped villagers or shriekers and place them on the altar then they will be freed from their curse. IF the heroes actually accomplish this the trapped villager will be a stonecrawler who will be incredibly thankful but also very scared. They will also explain that Malak has taken up residence within the temple. He is in the midst of a great ritual to call up the very heart of the dark wood, the great evil that lies within it’s centre. Even now his ritual is approaching it’s climax with the sacrifice of many of the kidnapped people of the area. The released stonecrawler will stay with the heroes until they enter the temple at which point they will flee back to their people. They will explain what has happened, that they were kidnapped by the branchlings and not the settlers of Throm. This will avert the war.

6: Contains a number of trapped villagers equal to the number of heroes and one shrieker.

7: This area contains the entrance to the temple of the Blind burrower, represented by an arch of demonblocks or whatever may be at hand. The temple sits in the glade covered in vines and branches, except in from of the doors. In front of the doors the heroes can see the fallen branches where the doors have been cut free by someone recently. The doors are stone and solidly sealed. Nothing the players do will have nay effect. The carvings in the picture show the same images as those on the altar of the white tree which should be a clue to the heroes on what to do. They

FORCE LIST

DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME	Trapped Villager Rank:4	NOTES
3040	EQUIP	horrible branches	move 4, see notes below
DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME	Shrieker Rank:4	NOTES
3040	EQUIP	Thorny Claws	move 4, shriek, see notes
DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME	Branchling Rank:1/2	NOTES
0020	EQUIP	thorny claws	move 5, tree walk, see notes

must break a branch fro the white tree and strike the door of the temple with it. They may make a medium Lore roll if they have the skill to figure this out. They may also make a difficult skill check on mind to do the same. IF these do not work then they may check the library at the sages hall where they will find the answer. However this will mean a retreat from this lair which will lead to an attack on Throm if a stonecrawler has not been freed yet.

IF they do not think check the library a the sages hall then one of the villagers will suggest it After the attack on Throm.

Once they have entered the temple they continue on to the next Lair . Caverns of the Blind Burrower.

NOTESTrapped villager: These are either from Throm or Stonecrawlers. They have been captured and corrupted by the evil Branchlings of the cursewood. Their bodies have been covered with vines and branches which seem to move them against their will. They will beg the heroes for help or death, even while attacking. The branches and vines which cover them force them to attack, moving their limbs and giving them a form of armour. They have no weapons but the knotty thorny branches are equivalent to a normal weapon. They are damaged and killed in the normal way in combat, and after dying the branches and vines fall away leaving the body dead and withered.

Shrieker: These are the same as a trapped villager, covered in vines and begging for mercy. They will also occasionally “shriek”. The branches take control of the villagers voice and force it to emit a terrible shriek which summons Branchlings. On a shriekers turn it can choose to shriek instead of attacking. Roll a die for the shriek. 1-2: no branchlings appear, 3-4: 1/2 of heroes rank worth of branchlings appear, 5-6 full rank of branchlings appear. The branchlings will emerge from the space in front of the temple in glade 7.

Branchlings: A horrible collection of leaves, vines, bugs and thorns, all disturbingly black and dripping with a tar like slime. They make no sound except for the rustling of trees. They can move through the trees and deep forest parts of the board but not through the stone walls that line the pathways between glades.

LAIR: Caverns of the Burrower
SETTING:Throm

SCENARIO: Burrower
ACTIVE: Yes

STORY: Caverns of the Burrower
BACKGROUND:

OBJECTIVE: If the attack on Throm has not happened yet the heroes are acting to prevent it. They are also trying to find the missing villagers, and the missing sages.

PUNISHMENTthe heroes are not able to find out what happened to the missing villagers then the attack on Throm will occur. If they know of the temples evil then they go on to see that it causes no more harm. If they have learned of Malaks ritual then if they turn back it will be completed, triggering attack of the Burrower

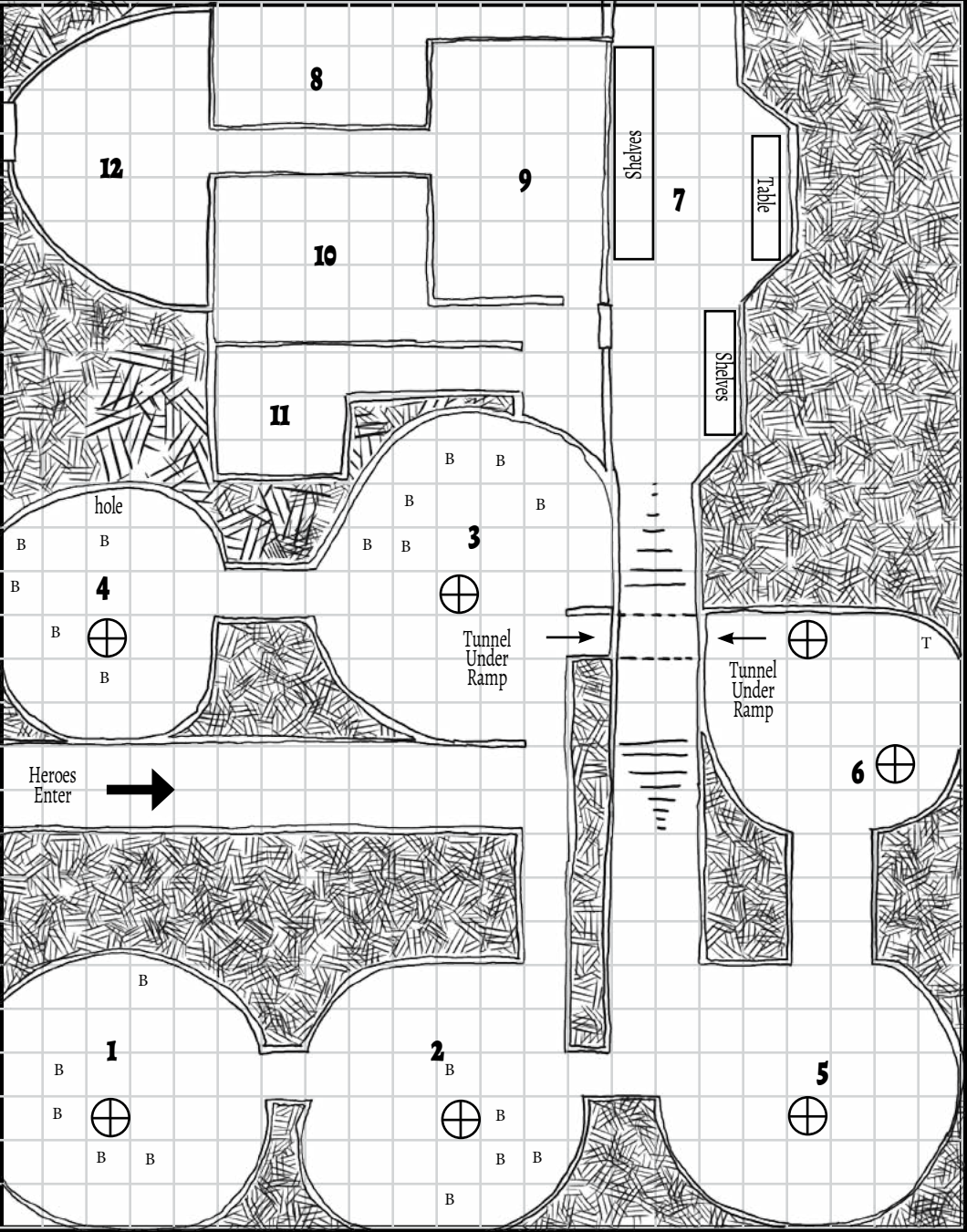
REWARD The heroes will be able to move on to the next scenario to find the source of the missing villagers.

SPECIAL FEATURES Pillars: : The caverns of the burrower are unstable. The roofs are held up with pillars in the middle of each room. If any of the heroes enter a square bordering the pillar and for every turn they stay there roll a die on the Demonlords turn. If the roll is a 6 the hero is covered with a pile of stones and rocks from above reducing their endurance by 4.
The branchlings scuttling throughout the caverns may move on or through these squares due to their light weight and knowledge of the caverns.

HENCHMEN AVAILABLE None

SETUP The heroes descend to the caverns and enter the corridor marked, "Heroes Enter".

Read Aloud to the players "Entering the great doors you see a corridor leading into darkness. These corridors have been hidden from man for centuries. Rubble, dirt, and shards of broken pottery and tools seem to be laid out in piles and rows for later study. Someone has not only been here but has obviously been studying the area closely. Fain sounds of moving stones echo in the darkness, something stirs within!" - stop reading-
The first series of round chambers are made of earth walls braced with round stones. The remaining branchlings scuttle amongst the rooms clearing pats in the rubble, obvious cave ins dot the corridors but these have been cleared recently. As the part walks they hear tremors and see dust fall from the ceiling.



KEY:  Pillar

AREAS: 1: Branchlings equal to half of heroes rank.

2: Branchlings equal to half of heroes rank.

3: Branchlings equal to half of heroes rank.

4: Branchlings equal to half of heroes rank. If the heroes defeat the branchlings and decide to search this room carefully they will find a dark hole in the wall. If they look into the hole out will jump a Tarken Wolf, which will attack.

If they defeat the Tarken they will find it was defending a litter of pups. Only one of which still lives. They may do what they wish with the pup.

5: Empty of anything but rubble and many broken pots, likely this room was once used as some kind of storeroom.

6: The rooms floor is covered in rubble but may be moved through. There are two pillars in this room that act in the same way as the other pillars. In the rubble the heroes can see a huge seated figure in a stone Throne (marked with a "T". It appears to be the skeleton of a giant human, seven feet tall, covered with dead branches and vines, like the trapped villagers. If the heroes pass the area between the pillars the skeleton will stand, it's branches falling to the ground. It will then draw a steel broadsword and attack the characters. The giant is subject to the falling rocks in the same way as the heroes. . If the heroes win the combat they will find various crude gold jewellery, totalling 20 gold pieces.

7: Former lair of the necromancer of the Arrowblack: The furniture can be represented by demon blocks.

Read aloud "This rooms walls all hold decayed and mouldering shelves, rotted and fallen scrolls and animal skins spill from them across the floor. Rotten and mouldering they form a pile of debris around edges of the room. Spread amongst them are broken urns of foul smelling dusts, powders, and liquids. There appears to have been some digging and sorting done here. A pile of papers and scrolls lie on a clean table near the door. They appear to be of the same age and material as the others on the floor, however they seem to still be intact." - stop reading- The heroes may do what they like for the moment.

A quick perusal of the scrolls will show that they contain evil and terrible descriptions and rituals. Not much can be determined from them without careful study, as well as access to a sages hall library for reference. This would take a difficult mind roll by any with these things after a weeks study. Once they have given up their secrets it will be found that most of the pages are incomplete, or are parts of larger works. However reading of them will give the reader enough information to summon a familiar spirit. It is likely that anything summoned by these dread scrolls would be an evil and vile spirit. But for one who craves the first step on the treacherous road of sorcery this would be a way to begin.

FORCE LIST

DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME	Branchling Rank: 1/2	NOTES
0020	EQUIP	thorny claws	move 5, tree walk, see notes
DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME	Tarken wolf	NOTES
0051	EQUIP	sharp teeth and claws	Move 6, see notes for description
DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME	Giant	NOTES
2382	EQUIP	Steel sword (already added to stats)	move: 3
DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME	Dead Trapped Villager Rank:4	NOTES
3040	EQUIP		move 3

Rooms 8,9,10, and 11: Each of these rooms have identical contents. Each room is guarded by things similar to the trapped villagers. But these things, though covered with vines and branches in the same way, are rotting things, with dead soulless eyes. They shamble and stumble with difficulty but with purpose. After the heroes have dealt with the horrible zombie like creatures they may search the room. Each holds a crude altar. upon each of these altars is a strange multifaceted circular stone. There will be four of these in all one on each altar of the 4 rooms. Each of the eyes is made of a beautiful lustrous semiprecious stone. Their large size makes them valuable. Each is worth 20 gold coins.

12: Show the players the illustration on the following page, or place the Lair Set piece on the board. This great carved monstrosity on the walls is actually a doorway. The "eyes" are hollows, the size and shape of the 4 strange items they found on the altars. Once all of the eyes are in place the great mouth will open revealing a corridor leading deep within the earth.

NOTES Tarken wolves are smaller than the usual wild wolves of Kartharka. More along the lines a large dog.

Giants Sword: A sturdy ancient sword its steel blade is blackened with grease and age. It is free of rust however and still strong and sharp. A steel sword of this quality will give its wielder +1 to attack.

LAIR: Temple of the Burrower
SETTING:Throm

SCENARIO: Burrower
ACTIVE: Yes

STORY: Caverns of the Burrower
BACKGROUND:

OBJECTIVE: Stop Malak's ritual before he summons the Blind Burrower. If the heroes don't know about the ritual yet then they are seeking the source of the mysterious disappearances in Throm and avoid a war with the Stonecrawler tribe.

PUNISHMENT The burrower will be wakened leading to the burrower attacks scenario.

REWARD Defeating the burrower will earn the heroes 5 fame. The villagers of Throm will owe them a favour, the sages will owe them a favour. If the burrower is defeated and the heroes have managed to save any of the stonecrawlers, then the stonecrawlers will owe them a favour.

SPECIAL FEATURES Malak's summoning ritual: As you will see Malak is in the middle of a ritual to summon the burrower. He will need 8 sacrifices to complete his ritual. However any human killed in the temple will count as a sacrifice, including the heroes and the trapped villagers and shriekers. The heroes will need to either avoid the minions entirely or at least try to avoid killing them. If any of the minions or heroes are killed the same magical noises that they heard when the first sacrifice was made will occur, giving hem a clue that they should try not to kill anyone.

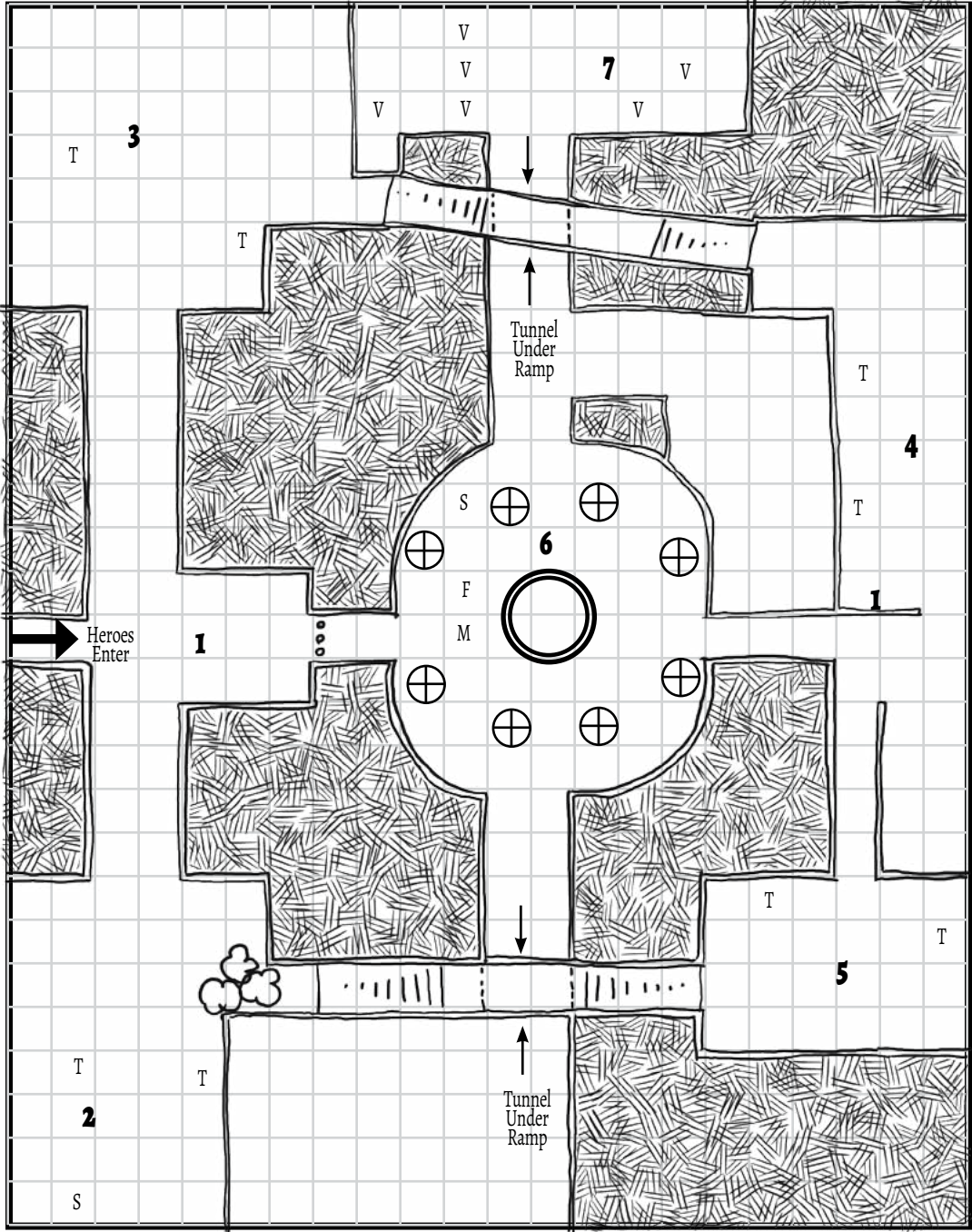
The pillars are solid and normal.

If Malak is killed and the ritual stopped, the branchlings will all run off and the trapped villagers will all be freed. At

HENCHMEN AVAILABLE least half of them will be stonecrawlers.

SETUP None available

Read aloud "As the heroes walk down the darkened corridor, they hear a voice echoing through the air. Chanting in a terrible and powerful language, it's power seems to charge the very air around the heroes as the stalk ever closer."



KEY: ⊕ Pillar

AREAS: **1:** in front of the heroes is a great iron gate. Locked and barred it is immovable. It has a keyhole through which the heroes may look. Looking through they can see “a man in strange robes, chanting and standing above a villager lying at his feet. As his words reach a crescendo he plunges an ornate dagger into the mans chest. With a scream he dies. But his scream does not, it rises in volume until the entire temple shakes at it’s power. One of the 8 pillars in the room begins to glow with a terrible light” The key hole is too small to fire an arrow through.

- 2:** Contains a shrieker (S) and two trapped villagers (T).
- 3:** 2 trapped villagers. A pile of rubble blocks the passage, it could be cleared but would take a 6 turns.
- 3:** 2 trapped villagers
- 4:** 2 trapped villagers
- 5:** 2 trapped villagers
- 6:** This room contains Malak(M), Malak’s Branchling Familiar(F), and a shrieker(S)

When the heroes enter room 6 Malak will be plunging his dagger into another victim (unless the burrower has already been summoned), if this brings the total sacrifices up to 8 then the burrower is summoned.

If the total has not been reached yet then Malak will have his Branchling Familiar fetch another villager from those chained in area 7 (he has enough villagers here to bring his total up to 8) The familiar can move at full speed when dragging a villager, the villagers seem to have no weight at all the familiar is carrying them.. Once the unconscious villager is brought to Malak and is in range he may make an automatic attack to sacrifice the villager.

The shrieker will try to summon branchlings. On a roll of 1-3 on a die the shrieker summons 1 dies worth of branchlings. They appear out of the well in the middle of the room.

When Malak makes the final sacrifice the burrower emerges from the well on the following turn. When it appears it will first eat Malak (taking one turn). It will then go to eat the remaining unconscious villagers in area 7 (eating 2 per turn). If the heroes attack the burrower before it finishes it’s meals, it will turn it’s attention to them. The burrower is too large to fit through the passageway between 3 and 4. or 2 and 5.

If the heroes defeat Malak and the Burrower they may search this room. They will find that Malak has burned the scrolls and notes he made pertaining to the burrower, the arrowblack and the ritual. The room is scattered with rare powders, liquids, metals and gems. In total thwy would be worth 30 gold coins if sold in a large city like Stroth Branoch or to the sages.

FORCE LIST

DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME	Trapped Villager Rank:4	NOTES
3 0 4 0	EQUIP	horrible branches	move 4
DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME	Shrieker Rank:4	NOTES
3 0 4 0	EQUIP	Thorny Claws	move 4, shriek
DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME	Branchling Rank:1/2	NOTES
0 0 2 0	EQUIP	thorny claws	move 5,
DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME	Branchling familiar rank 1	NOTES
0 0 2 0	EQUIP	thorny claws	move 7
DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME	Malak Rank 1	NOTES
0 0 4 0	EQUIP	Dagger	move 4
DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME	The Blind Burrower rank 23	NOTES
3 3 10 2	EQUIP	Attacks with pincer claws as a weapon	Move 8

7: Malak started off with 8 villagers (V). He killed one when the heroes first entered the temple, and another when the heroes entered area 6. he should now have 6 left unless some other circumstances have occurred.

NOTES The Burrower: A giant centipede like insect with massive strong forelimbs with claw like pincers. Huge, fast, and vicious it is the heart of evil of the Arrowblack. Once worshipped by the people of this area it’s evil intelligence is beyond the understanding of man. It must be destroyed before it kills all the people of Throm and then the Stone crawlers.

If the heroes leave the temple without defeating the burrower then it will burst it’s way through the top of the temple and start heading for Throm. This will take long enough for the heroes to arrive there first.

LAIR: Throm
SETTING:Throm

SCENARIO: War in Throm
ACTIVE: Yes

STORY: Lair of the Blind Burrower
BACKGROUND:No

OBJECTIVE: The heroes have failed to prevent the stonecrawlers from declaring war on Throm. Now it is their task to either defend the settlement from the stonecrawlers, or abandon the people of Throm to their fate.

PUNISHMENT Abandoning the villagers to their fate will earn the heroes 10 infamy points as survivors will tell all that the heroes abandoned them.

REWARD Successfully defending the settlement of Throm against the Stonecrawlers will earn each hero 2 fame. The town of Throm will also owe the heroes a favour.

SPECIAL FEATURES Rally the Defenders.

HENCHMEN AVAILABLE None can be hired, they must be Rallied to their own defence.

SETUP The heroes return to Throm just ahead of the Stonecrawler forces. Arriving in town they can see the attackers on the horizon and know they will arrive in mere minutes. They start on the square marked heroes. The Barkeep from the Wayhouse is next to the heroes.

The heroes must try to convince the villagers to rise up to defend themselves. The heroes have 5 rounds before the Stonecrawlers arrive.

If the heroes do not think of rallying the townsfolk to their own defence then the barkeep will suggest it to them, joining their cause himself.

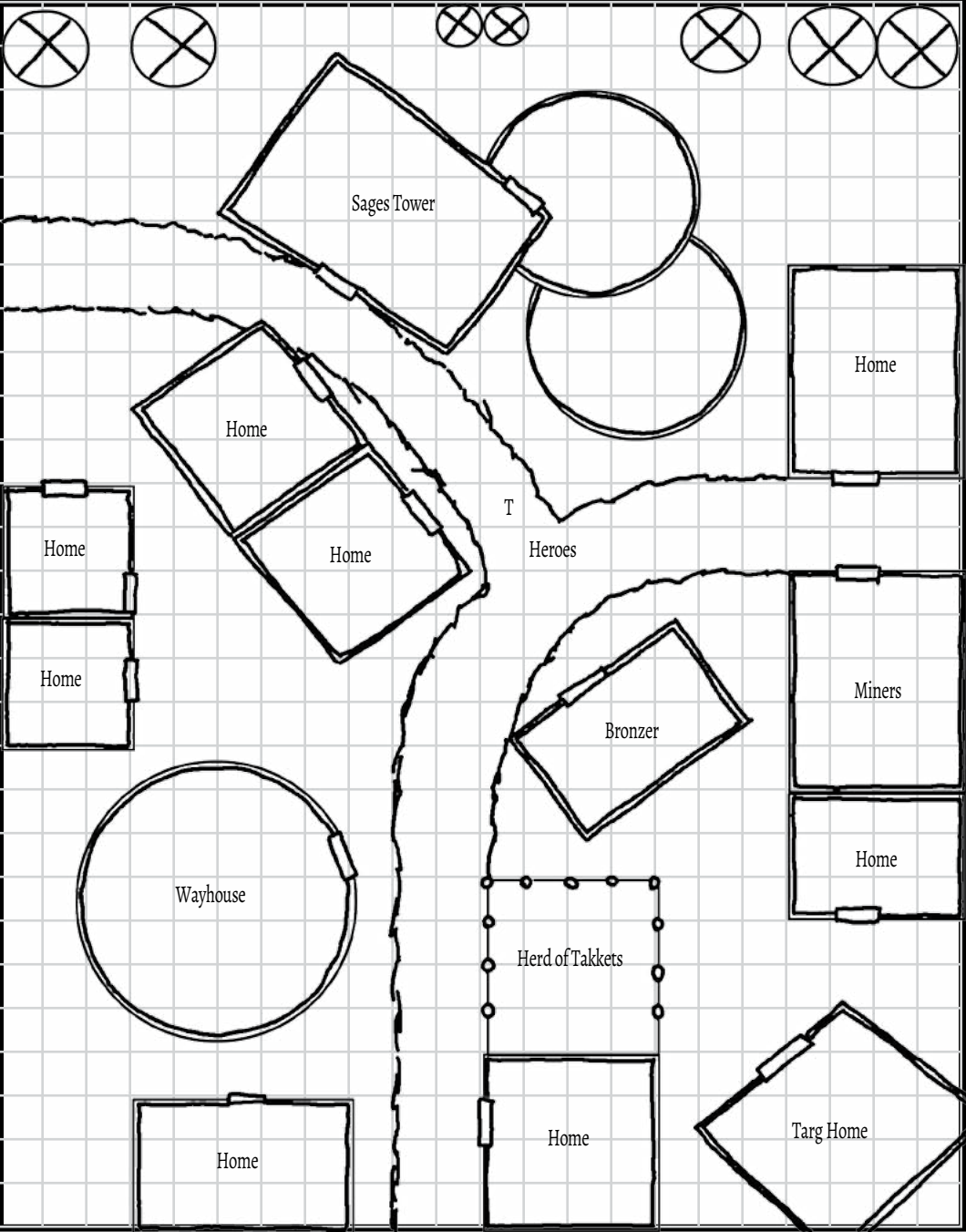
Rallying. A hero must be at the door of a building to rouse its inhabitants. They must make a difficult camaraderie roll to succeed. If they succeed roll 1 die to see how many fighters they have rallied for their cause. (each hero controls the fighters they have rallied). Mark the house as Rallied.



1-2 one fighter, 3-4 two fighters, 5-6 five fighters.

The Bronzer: The building marked Bronzer is a medium difficulty on camaraderie to rally. One of the fighters rallied will be the bronzer.

After 5 turns the Stonecrawlers will begin their attack.

See Stonecrawler attack on the next page.



KEY:  tree  Low fence

[illegible]

DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME	fighter Rank: 1	NOTES
0040	EQUIP	Axe	Move 4
DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME	barkeep rank:2	NOTES
0050	EQUIP		Move 4
DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME	bronzer Rank: 3	NOTES
0051	EQUIP	Large Hammer	Move 4 Lives in Bronzing shed
DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME	Stonecrawler Warrior	NOTES
1140	EQUIP	spears	Move 4
DEF/ATTK/END/DAM	NAME		NOTES
	EQUIP		

NOTES

Stonecrawler attack: ON the sixth turn the stonecrawlers attack. They begin with 3 stonecrawler warriors. They may enter the settlement from any edge of the board. Their main intent will be sacking the town but will fight heroes if necessary.

Every turn 2 more warriors will enter the settlement, until all the buildings are either sacked or rallied.

Sacking::A Stonecrawler warrior must be next to a door of a building to “sack” it. Any house the heroes have failed to rally or that has not yet been rallied by the heroes may be sacked. All the inhabitants are killed if the building is “sacked”. Mark it with a “sacked” marker.

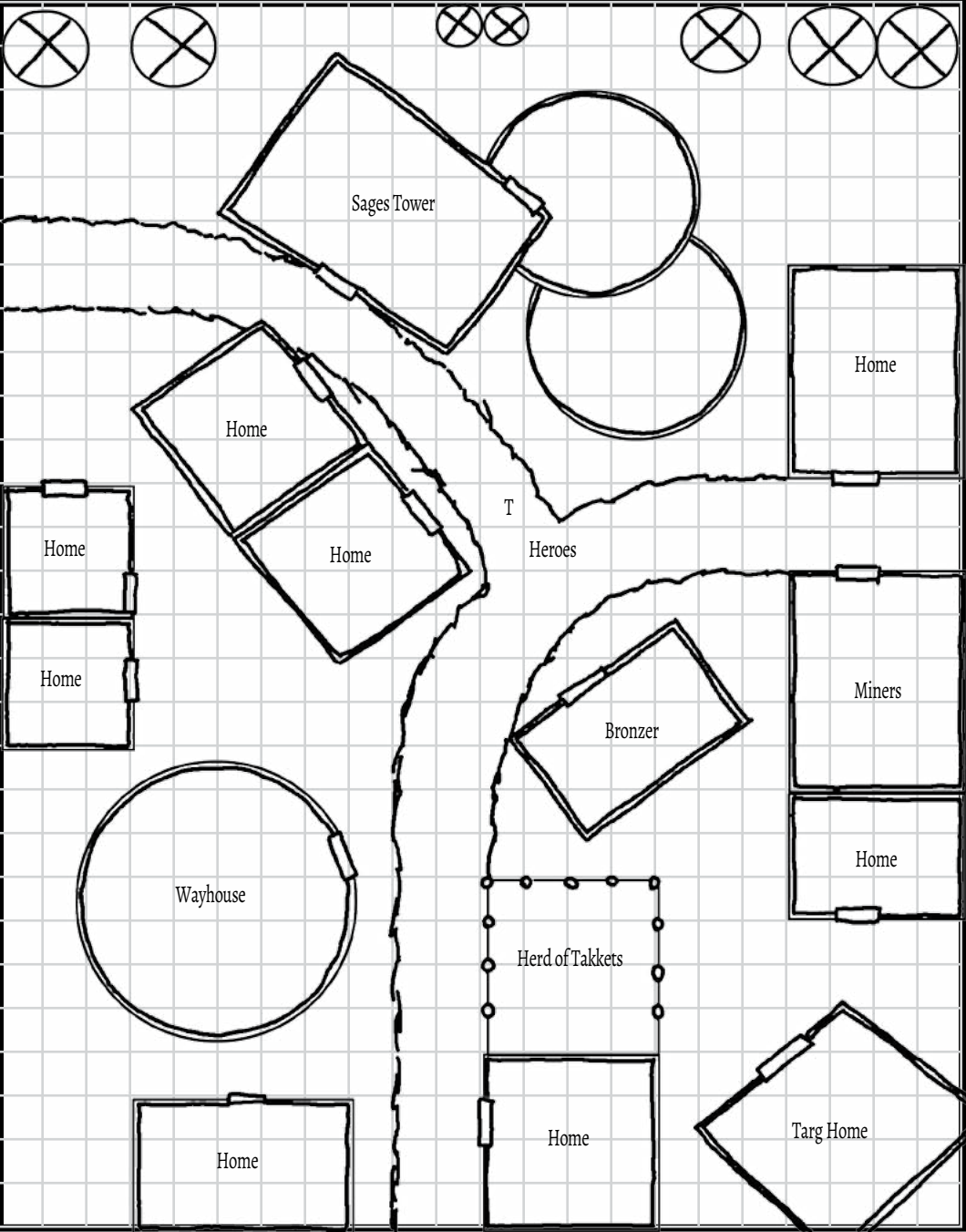
Once all the buildings are either sacked or rallied the Stonecrawlers will continue their attack until either all the heroes are dead or all the stonecrawlers are dead.

The stonecrawler warriors are a suicide squad caring nothing for their own lives.

The heroes may escape at any time and take the infamy punishment by leaving the board.

LAIR: Throm
SETTING:Throm

SCENARIO: Burrower attacks **STORY:** Lair of the Blind Burrower
ACTIVE: Yes **BACKGROUND:**No



OBJECTIVE: The heroes must either kill the burrower themselves or rally the villagers of Throm to help them Kill the Burrower.

PUNISHMENT Abandoning the town will result in the heroes earning 10 infamy points

REWARD Due to the way events shake out the Burrower may attack during the attack on Throm. In this case the heroes would earn the heroes 5 fame as well as being owed a favour by the sages, the town of Throm and the stonecrawlers. If the war has been averted then they will still earn 5 fame and be owed favours by Throm and the sages.

SPECIAL FEATURES Rally the Defenders.

HENCHMEN AVAILABLE None can be hired, they must be Rallied to their own defence.

SETUP The heroes return to Throm just ahead of the Burrower and/or Stonecrawler forces. Arriving in town they can see the attackers on the horizon and know they will arrive in mere minutes. They start on the square marked heroes. The Barkeep from the Wayhouse is next to the heroes (unless he is already dead from a previous war on Throm)

The heroes must try to convince the villagers to rise up to defend themselves. The heroes have 5 rounds before the burrower/stonecrawlers arrive.

If the heroes do not think of rallying the townsfolk to their own defence then the barkeep will suggest it to them, joining their cause himself.

Rallying. A hero must be at the door of a building to rouse its inhabitants. They must make a difficult camaraderie roll to succeed. If they succeed roll 1 die to see how many fighters they have rallied for their cause. (each hero controls the fighters they have rallied). Mark the house as Rallied.

1-2 one fighter, 3-4 two fighters, 5-6 five fighters.

The Bronzer: The building marked Bronzer is a medium difficulty on camaraderie to rally. One of the fighters rallied will be the bronzer (Unless he is already killed in a previous war on Throm)

After 5 turns the Stonecrawlers/Burrower will begin their attack.

See Stonecrawler attack on the next page.

KEY:  tree  Low fence



DEMONLORD SCREEN

CHARACTER CREATION

- +5 points to stats
- -5 points distributed to stats

STARTING EQUIPMENT

- fur mittens
- Fur or leather cloak
- Fur foot covers
- Two weapons (throwing weapons, bandolier of 5)
- 4 pieces of armour (a shield is considered armour)
- Weeks supply of matten fuel for fires
- Weeks supply of Matten flour
- Flint and Striker
- 2 large items
- 5 small items
- Large leather carry sack (may hold up to 20 small items)
- Drag sled may carry up to 5 Large items and 40 small items

CARRYING LIMITS:

- As much as the Large sack and Drag sled will allow.
- Characters are considered to "wear" up to:
- their armour
- a coil of rope
- two weapons
- A bandolier of throwing weapons
- Ammunition
- Carry something in each hand
- The rest is kept on the drag sled.

CONTAINERS

- Large leather carry sack (may hold up to 20 small items)
- Drag sled may carry up to 5 Large items and 40 small items

SMALL ITEMS

- Leather straps
- Flask
- Wineskin
- Tarp
- Dice
- Candle
- Torch
- 10 ft of rope
- Parchment
- Writing sticks
- Chalk
- Spikes
- Hammer

ARMOUR AREAS

- Head
- Arms
- Legs
- Body
- Shield

LARGE ITEMS

- 6 foot pole
- Shovel
- Pick
- Snow axe
- Snow shoes
- 50 ft rope

WEAPON LIST

- Axe
- Sword
- Knife or dagger(thrown)
- Kartharkan mace
- Spear
- Composite bow
- 2 handed sword (+2 to damage)
- 2 handed axe (+2 to damage)
- 2 handed kartharkan mace (+2 to damage)
- Long weapons: Halberd, war spear, hunting spear

MONEY

- 10 coppers=1 silver
- 10 silver=1 gold
- 10 gold=1 iron
- 10 iron=1 platinum

ARMOUR TYPES

- Cloth
- Leather
- Rings
- Plate

SOTA:

- Roll 2 dice
- Add any stat bonuses the Demonlord deems applicable.
- Easy: 4 or higher
- Difficult: 7 or higher
- Very difficult: 10 or higher

FAME

- 1=Well known in their local town
- 2=Known withing local area
- 4=Known throughout the province
- 5=Known throughout the land
- 7=Known throughout the world of Kartharka
- 8=All sing songs of your exploits
- 10=Your legends will be told for generations

FLEEING:

If at any time a hero leaves the demonboard they have "fled" and may not return. Any Severely injured heroes are considered to have been taken with them.

RESTING:

Any time after a combat when there are no enemies on the Demonboard the heroes may rest to recover half their lost endurance (round up)

EARNING VETERAN POINTS

- Earn 1 vp for:
- Surviving encounter with a group of enemies of equal or greater Rank.
- Survive making any death roll
- Successfully complete a Scenario (at least 1 vp, scenario may state a higher reward)
- Succeed at Very Hard Sota roll which would have harmed the hero had it failed
- Impressive Role Playing moment

SPENDING VP

- Buy a new skill 10VP
- Improve skill to 2nd rank 20 VP
- Improve skill to 3rd rank 30 VP
- Etc

SOTA EXCEPTIONS

- Minions can undo Sota with the same roll
- Opening doors is an easy sota roll
- Minions may open unlocked doors as well but not into areas that have not been revealed.

UNARMED COMBAT

- Creatures are considered "armed" with teeth and claws.
- If two unarmed combatants fight each other conduct combat as normal.
- If an opponent has armour you cannot cause more damage than the mimimum 1 point of damage.
- If an opponent has a weapon they roll damage as normal and the unarmed combatant can cause only the minimum 1 endurance damage.

MOVE

Standard move is 4



COMBAT SPECIAL RULES

- Long weapons: Attack 2 squares away.
- When attacking 2 squares away the defender does not get to make a damage roll if they win. Both still take minimum of 1 damage.
- If 2 squares away and both have long weapons, combat is normal.
- Someone with a long weapon may attack through a square with a friend
- If attacked in square to square combat fight as if unarmed.
- Defense
- 3 pieces of armour=+1 defense
- -Defense is added to damage rolled against them but not to minimum damage of 1
- Attack
- Shield gives +2 to attack
- Damage:
- Negative Damage
- a -damage score is subtracted from any damage the hero does, still cause the minimum 1 damage

REGULAR COMBAT

- In combat attacker and defender each roll 2 dice and add their attack bonus.
- Attacker wins:
- If attacker wins he rolls a die cause 1d6 endurance damage to the enemy adding any damage bonus. Deduct any damage for the defenders defense bonus, but will always be a minimum of 1
- The attacker also takes 1 endurance damage.
- Defender wins
- If the defender wins they cause 1d6 endurance damage to the attacker, adding any damage bonus the defender has and subtracting any defense modifier the attacker has, but will always be a minimum of 1
- Defender also takes 1 endurance damage.
- Tie
- Both attacker and defender take 1 endurance damage regardless ignoring damage bonus and defense.

0 ENDURANCE.

- Once Endurance reaches 0 any additional damage will force a death roll.

DEATH ROLL

- 1-3 stuck down. Unable to fight for rest of battle. Demonlord minions are dead.
- Heroes must make a fate roll after battle is finished.
- 4-6 able to avoid blow, continue to fight but still at 0 endurance.

FATE ROLL

- 1-2 Hero has died. Sorry
- 3-4 severely injured: the hero's role in the current adventure is over, but may play again in further adventures
- 5-6 hero was stunned but able to continue, this counts as a rest.

DETERMINING RANK

- Start with 1
- Add bonuses, attack(+2 for shield), defense, damage, and any endurance over 4, and any move over 4.
- Special attack causing 1d6 add 1
- Special attack causing 2d6 add 4
- Special attack causing 3d6 add 10
- Add the rank of any controlled spirits
- If they have an item that give a special attack add a bonus as if it was the their attack.

FOLLOWERS:

- Will be hired by the heroes.
- In a city or when travelling, after 1 combat, followers will demand another gold piece before fighting in another combat.
- When in a lair they will fight the first combat. After that they are subject to flee rolls even after being paid.
- When combat begins each player rolls a die add the heroes camaraderie.
- On a total of 1-3 that players followers flee. Every turn they will run toward the exit as fast as possible. They will defend themselves if necessary but will run when they can.
- Always Flee on a die roll of 1, always stay on a die roll of 6
- If fleeing followers are still on the board after all enemies are gone the hero may make a recall roll
- Same as flee roll, Instead of heroes camaraderie use parties total camaraderie.
- 1-3 disappear forever
- 4-6 they return, place them next to the hero

MISSILE COMBAT:

- Bow: range unlimited
- Throwing weapon: range 4 squares
- Roll for combat in the usual way
- If the shooter wins they cause the usual damage but do not take the usual minimum 1 damage.
- If the target wins the shooter takes no damage and the target takes no damage, not even the usual minimum of 1.
- Ties: same as a miss for the shooter.

FAME AND FAVOUR

- Cashing in a favour:
- When rolling to cash in a favour the hero will use the fame stat when dealing with essentially good people, or infamy when dealing with essentially evil people.
- First determine Reception Base Score
- If working with fame subtract the heroes infamy from their fame and divide the total by 10
- Second Determine Request Value
- Demonlord determines a number between 1-10
- Third Determine Act value
- A number between 1 and 10 representing the original act which earned the favour.
- Petition Roll
- First: Favour value-Request value,
- Add this total to reception base
- This final number is the roll the hero must match or roll below on 2 dice to receive what they are asking for.
- If they fail the request is declined.
- Repayment roll:
- Now the hero rolls the dice again trying to match or roll below the score again.
- If they succeed then the debtor still considers the debt still owing.
- If they fail and also failed the previous petition roll then their request was too greedy or demanding.
- The debtor considers the debt null and void and the heroes gain 1 infamy (or 1 fame if the debtor is evil).





CONTRIBUTE

How to Join the world of Kartharka

Website:

You best place to start is the Lair of Sword and Sorcery Site at:

lairofswordandsorcery.blogspot.ca

Here you can comment on updates, and respond to what you would like to see, or not see, in the game.

Please follow the site to get your regular updates

Google+:

Those who are on Google+ can get their lair updates there by adding:

+Ripley Stonebrook

Price



SpookyRoom Productions Presents:
Lair of Sword & Sorcery: The Adventure Game
Issue 4: SORGERY! October 2015

