

LONE WOLF

ADVENTURE GAME

TERROR OF THE DARKLORDS



JOE DEVER AND CUBICLE 7



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to '*Terror of the Darklords*' - the first campaign for the *Lone Wolf Adventure Game*.

This campaign is designed to take Players through a series of interconnected adventures in which they will uncover a nefarious plan to crush Sommerlund. With teamwork, a little luck, and a great deal of stealth and cunning, all of the participating Players should survive to reach the climatic ending and become fully fledged Kai Masters.

WHAT THIS BOOK CONTAINS

The campaign is comprised of five separate but sequential adventures, each one a mission in its own right.

Unlike the *Lone Wolf gamebooks*, role-playing adventures do not necessarily follow a strict number of predefined obligatory ways. It is quite possible for the Players to wander 'off piste' from the central plot, unwittingly or not, and end up in a situation that has not been covered by the text. In these circumstances, the Narrator should ad lib an encounter or two before nudging the Players back onto the campaign track.

Since it is difficult to anticipate whether or not they will succeed at each task, a number of suggestions will be provided between the scenarios to help get the Players plugged back into the underlying story. Failure is not necessarily a bad thing if it enhances the Party's feeling of achievement in the next stage.

ADVANCING LEVELS

Simply surviving an adventure is not necessarily enough to reward Players with a rise in rank. At the end of each scenario, the Narrator should determine if the Players actually achieved the mission objective. If they only partially achieved their overall aim, they should be rewarded with an increase in rank. Failing to achieve the mission objective as a result of timidity or a lack of courage should result in no level advances being awarded.

However, Narrators should be aware that the scenarios are tough, and failing one should not be taken as a punitive critique of the

Players' abilities. They may lose a battle along the way, but it does not mean they will lose the war. Ultimately, the success or failure of the campaign will be determined by whether or not the Players prevent the final ritual from taking place.

TESTS

Unless specifically forbidden to do so in the text, all tests in this campaign allow a default bonus of half the Player's level, rounded down.

To enhance the atmosphere and increase game tension, the Narrator is encouraged to occasionally ask for tests to be taken and not reveal the precise difficulty value of the test. By doing so, the air of mystery will be maintained, making the Players wonder whether they have succeeded or not. In certain situations some tests should only be resolved by a single Player, otherwise some challenging situations can easily be rendered pointless as multiple rolls will more likely guarantee success.

BALANCING COMBAT

Combat can very quickly become deadly. The ranges of values on the Combat Results Table vary greatly, turning what often should have been a walkover into a fatal ending after a couple of unlucky results. Although frequent healing is recommended, in several of the scenarios the rapid pacing of events will prevent Players from having adequate time in which to heal.

Maintaining balance between exciting action and staying alive is the Narrator's responsibility. A careful note should be kept of the wound status of each Player. If there is little opportunity for them to rest and recover, introduce opportunities to find potions of Laumspur, or the plant itself, in order to help them to heal their injuries before the next fight. You may also consider slightly reducing the Combat Skill and Endurance scores of the foes they encounter. It should be noted that much of the campaign emphasises the moral imperative of avoiding unnecessary violence whenever possible. Players should be encouraged to use their wits rather than their weapons to overcome problems. Those who constantly endeavour to loot tombs and destroy every enemy they encounter will, inevitably,

fail to survive in the long run. They will also needlessly endanger the lives of the other Players, and for this reason they should be discouraged from behaving recklessly.

REPLACING THE DEAD

If, despite all efforts, a Player dies, the affected Player may create a replacement that is one level below that of the lowest ranking member of the party. The Narrator should introduce this new Kai warrior in a timely and fitting manner, in keeping with the circumstances of the adventure they are currently undertaking.

The name and rank of the dead Player will be recorded on the Kai Roll of Honour at the Monastery so that future Kai warriors shall be able to know and celebrate his or her life and deeds, and keep alive the memory of their noble contribution to the Order of the Kai.

LINGUISTIC ABILITY

For the purposes of this adventure, participating Kai Lords are assumed to have a working knowledge of the Giak language. They are not fluent but they have achieved a basic understanding of its grammar and vocabulary.

TIMELINE

This campaign is set in the year MS 5000. When the campaign finishes, you may wish to continue the storyline. You are free to do so. Many of the plots and story arcs presented in the solo-play game books can provide excellent missions for the party. The Narrator need only substitute the history and deeds of Lone Wolf with those of the Players. Forthcoming material will allow the Players to continue as Kai Masters if they are fortunate enough to achieve this esteemed rank. Only then will they have the abilities

HEALING

One or more of the Kai Players may be skilled in the Healing discipline. Although this useful skill can be used to remove any injuries between encounters, Healing requires a Kai to enter into a trance-like state in order for it to be effective. This takes a considerable length of time to prepare and enact, and it leaves the practitioner vulnerable to attack whilst the healing effect takes place. Narrators should encourage those Players using this skill to take refuge in a safe, secure place, before entering into a Kai healing trance. For example, attempting to heal oneself on a busy city street would be quite impossible for a relatively inexperienced Kai Lord who has yet to attain the higher abilities of the Magnakai.

Using the rules as written, having one's Endurance reduced to zero is normally fatal. Unfortunately, this can lead to a number of sudden and unexpected deaths as a result of a series of failed tests. Clearly, this is an unsatisfactory situation for any Player who is attempting to build up a significant Kai character with whom they closely identify. In order to avoid this sorry situation, Narrators may wish to apply the following alternative Master rules:

- A potion of Laumspur can save a Kai Lord from death if it is applied within a round of the Player reaching zero Endurance. In all such cases, the successful use of Laumspur will restore the affected Kai Lord's Endurance score to +2 points. If healed in this way, a Kai Lord cannot benefit from additional healing potions until they have had a minimum of eight hours sleep.
- Likewise, an emergency application of the Healing discipline by another Player can save the affected Kai Lord from dying if attended to within one round (or minute if out of combat) of 'death'. If the fatal loss of Endurance takes place during combat, saving the affected Kai will necessitate the physical removal of their body from the immediate combat area before emergency healing can take place. Emergency healing will cost the donor 4 Willpower points and will restore the affected Kai Lord's Endurance score to +2 points.
- A Kai Lord can only benefit from this emergency healing once per combat. If reduced to 0 ENDURANCE again before the current combat ends, death occurs as normal.



In both cases, the mortally wounded Player can return to action, albeit with reduced effectiveness. The severity of their wounds imposes a -1 penalty to every Random Number they choose until the scenario ends, or they are able to take a minimum of 24 hours rest in a safe environment. If saved from death multiple times during the scenario, this penalty stacks.



necessary in order to dare venture into the poisonous realm of the Darklands and face the Darklords directly.

OVERVIEW (FOR THE NARRATOR'S EYES ONLY)

One of the very first Helghast ever created was originally a powerful Nadziranim sorcerer in the personal entourage of Archlord Vashna. This evil magician, who sacrificed its magical life force and was itself transformed into an undead shape-changer invulnerable to physical injury during the process of creating the Helghast, was the only one of Vashna's inner circle to survive when its master was cast down into the fathomless reaches of the Maakengorge in the year of the Great Battle, MS 3799.

The powers of this creature waned following the demise of Vashna, and it sought sanctuary among the volcanic peaks of the Dajdokritzaga Mountains to the north of Helgedad, where for centuries it led a lonely and pitiful existence. Throughout this long self-imposed exile, little by little its powers returned. Now, after the passing of 1,200 years, it is strong enough to execute a plan that it has fomented to wreak vengeance upon Sommerlund. It intends to resurrect the spirit of Vashna and the malevolent souls of his grand army that are trapped in the Maakengorge. Upon summoning these evil spirits, it will unleash them upon an unsuspecting Sommerlund and destroy the land and its people forever. The Helghast returned to Helgedad and feigned allegiance to Archlord Zagarna, Vashna's successor. His considerable knowledge and magical powers enabled him to climb the ladder in the new hierarchy of the Darklands, and allowed him clandestine contact with those who seek to resurrect his true master – the sect of the Acolytes of Vashna. These evil necromancers, who infiltrate both the Darklands and the Freelands, enthusiastically approved his plans and provided him with their secret resources. When everything was ready, the Helghast convinced the Darklords to send him on mission in Sommerlund, supposedly only to spy on their arch enemies and cause great troubles to weaken their defences. He arrived in the city of Toran where he is tasked with decimating the population and dishonouring the Kai order. Where he should also be able to gather everything he needs to perform his evil ritual...

ADVENTURE ONE – SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES

The first indications of a possible invasion of Sommerlund are realised. By a strange twist of fate, a Kai Master (who is a suitable candidate for the sacrifice that the Helghast intends to make at the Maakengorge) is captured. The party must choose between a doomed rescue attempt or the risking of their lives to save a village of innocent woodsmen from destruction.

ADVENTURE TWO – TREACHERY IN TORAN

Sent to track down a traitor, the party pursues their kidnapped Kai Master across the reaches of Northern Sommerlund. Along the way they uncover a trail of evil. Upon reaching Toran, they must locate the fiend responsible and expose his nefarious plans. All the while they must remain undercover, for false rumours are rife that a party of rogue Kai Lords are at large somewhere in the city.

ADVENTURE THREE – CONFRONTATION IN CLOEASIA

Having exposed the Helghast behind the Order's woes and the abduction of Master Stormsong, the party must now chase it from Toran to the city of Kadan, capital of the Zultanate of Cloeasia. Their overland route is beset with peril, challenges that threaten to end both their desperate race and their lives. If they reach Kadan, they are forced to do battle with the cult supporting the Helghast, namely the Acolytes of Vashna while their quarry slips away again.

ADVENTURE FOUR – A SITUATION IN V'KA

Following hot on the heels of the Helghast, the Kai Lords track the creature to V'ka, the swamp fortress of the Gourgaz in the heart of the hellish Maakenmire Swamp. Here an army of Swamp Giaks is being mustered in preparation for the invasion of Sommerlund. After discovering a secret entrance into the city, the party face an evil Vordak prior to a confrontation with the Lord Commander of V'ka itself, and possibly discover the goal of the Helghast. To avoid death in V'ka, the Kai must commandeer Kraan and make a dramatic escape to freedom by air.

ADVENTURE FIVE – RESTLESS GHOSTS OF MAAKEN

In pursuit of the fast-cooling trail of the Helghast, the Players arrive at the ruined city of Maaken which is located on the edge of the forbidding Maakengorge. They must avoid Drakkarim patrols and discover the location of the site where their Helghast nemesis plans to enact its diabolic ritual. The saving of their Kai Master will require an act of selfless courage. Only then can the evil plan of the Helghast be thwarted, Vashna returned to his grave, and Sommerlund saved from devastation.

NOW, LET THE ADVENTURE BEGIN...



SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES



ADVENTURE ONE SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES

A number of disturbing reports have been coming in from Kai lookout posts in the Durncrag Mountains. There has been a marked increase in enemy scouting activity of late. The party is tasked by their Kai Masters to go and find out what these minions of the Darklords are up to.

OVERVIEW

Unbeknownst to the Kai, a long period of inactivity along the Darklands' border is coming to an end. A squadron of elite Drakkarim Death Knights has been sent to scout the mountain passes of the Durncrag in preparation for an invasion. This squadron commands a troop of twenty Giaks that are mounted on Doomwolves. They have received orders from Helgedad to rendezvous with a traitorous agent operating in the northern city of Toran, who may have an agenda of his own.

The Players, accompanied by an elderly Kai Master, must track down the Drakkarim Death Knights and find out precisely what they are doing on the Sommlending side of the Durncrag. Then

they must report their findings to the Kai Grand Master at their monastery in the eastern foothills of the same mountain range.

TENTATIVE STEPS

The biting wind of an unusually cold hestangor (autumn) sweeps down from the snow-capped granite peaks of the Durncrag Mountains. The unseasonable chill makes the your elderly Kai Master, Stormsong, pull his warm cloak close about his shoulders as he strides across the monastery's paved inner courtyard. For more than an hour now, you have been attempting to sweep clear this grand plaza which is littered with fallen leaves. Alas, with little effect.

'Ah, my hard working initiates' says Master Stormsong, with a wry smile. 'Your persistence in the face of adversity is admirable, but now the time has come for you to lay aside your brooms and accompany me to the Grand Master's chambers.' With relief and great excitement, for it is quite unusual for





initiates to be summoned in the Grand Master's Chambers, you obey his command and follow your distinguished master as he enters the portal of the Tower of the Sun and climbs its grand marble staircase.



The Grand Master resides in the highest level of the tower, in an ornately wood-paneled room which is lined with bookshelves. Set into the walls at regular intervals are several narrow windows which are glazed with panes of pure Caron crystal commanding a view of the surrounding hills and mountain peaks. Awaiting you here is Kai Grand Master Rune Helm. In his company is a tall man with a stooped posture. He is clad in patched clothes and scuffed old leather boots which testify to the many years he has spent working in the forest. Rune Helm gestures for you all to be seated before him on the warm flagstones of his chamber floor. Once you are settled, he begins to speak with a deep and resonant voice.



'This is Fandral. He is a forester from the village of Yrsonor. For those of you who do not know of this village, it is located two days due north of the monastery, on the lower forested slopes of the Durncrag. Fandral has come seeking our help in finding his young nephew who has recently gone missing. He reports that sinister shapes have been seen at night, moving among the trees surrounding his village. Fandral fears that the boy has been spirited away by these shadowy creatures.'

'Yrsonor is located in the Kai Protectorate, which implies our Order is directly responsible for the safety and security of the hardy folk who live there. I have decided to send you to Yrsonor, under the supervision of Master Stormsong, to investigate the disappearance of Fandral's nephew. Investigate what is going on and report your findings directly to me without delay. This will be your first real mission since your enrolment into the Order. I expect you all to do your duty, and to do it well.'

With Grand Master Rune Helm's blessing, you are dismissed from his chamber. Along with Master Stormsong, and the forester Fandral, you return to the monastery courtyard. Although Fandral is very grateful for your assistance, he is unable to mask the sadness which haunts his eyes. Quietly, he fears that it may already be too late to save his nephew's life.



The Players are allowed to take and use any equipment they desire, just as long as it fits into their Backpacks (a maximum of 8 items per pack). They may also take two weapons apiece. Kai Master Stormsong appears to be ready in moments. If any player asks how he managed to pack his equipment and prepare so quickly, he will answer:

'A Kai should always be prepared'.



Fandral the Forester will wait patiently, albeit somewhat dejectedly, for the initiates to get ready. If they wish to question him about what has occurred at the village of Yrsonor, he will willingly answer to the best of his ability.

Fandral can impart the following information:

- His nephew is called Karlo.
- The dark fleeting shapes were first sighted ten days ago in the timberland to the south of the village, namely the Fryelund Forest.
- Karlo disappeared four days ago when he was out alone, gathering nuts and edible fungi in the forest.
- The men folk of the village mounted a search for him that lasted two days, but to no avail.
- During the search, traces of dried blood were found, as well as an unusual number of animal tracks. The tracks indicated that a large number of wildlife had fled the area in panic.
- Fearful of what may have taken the boy, the villagers are now too petrified to venture deeper into the timberland. This is despite their pressing need to harvest wood and prepare it before the first of the winter snows arrive. Once the snows start, work in the forest will become too hazardous to undertake.

Once he is questioned, it will soon become apparent that Fandral believes his nephew is already dead. But he has journeyed to the Kai monastery at the behest of his kinfolk to plead for help. Fandral's immediate family is anxious to find and retrieve Karlo's body, and the other villagers are fearful that they, or their offspring, will become the next victim of the 'dark stalkers'.

Fandral is a good forester but he is a very superstitious man and his nerve is close to breaking. He is particularly disturbed by the fact that most of the wildlife has abandoned the forest near Yrsonor. This has never happened before in his lifetime. He considers it to be a very bad omen.

Although Kai Master Stormsong is the most senior member of the expedition, and therefore technically in charge, he makes it very clear to the initiates that he wishes to see them taking responsibility for their actions and making their own decisions.

"Every eagle makes its first flight alone. The time has come for you to turn theory into practice and take responsibility for your actions. I am here merely to ensure that you do not get yourselves into too much trouble in the process."

THE WISDOM OF KAI MASTER STORMSONG

If the Players have not yet encountered Kai Master Stormsong, he should be described in the following way:

Kai Master Stormsong is a wizened yet spry old warrior. He is a taciturn man who has taught you ever since you joined the Monastery as youngsters. Your Kai tutor was quick to pick you up when you stumbled and fell during training, and just as swift to chastise you when you were rude, thoughtless, or selfish.

Many are the times you have rued his punishments, however just and deserved they were. Kai Master Stormsong is a staunch believer in hard work and self-discipline. Thanks to him, none of you are strangers to chopping wood, drawing water or sweeping the leaf-laden courtyards of the Kai Monastery.

Although it is rare for him to express it openly, he has a great deal of fatherly affection for his students and he takes great pride in their achievements. He is always willing to impart his great wisdom to those who seek it. In return, the Players respect his experience and wisdom, and hold him in high regard.

YRSONOR

This hill village is situated within the Kai Protectorate, 30 miles north of the Kai Monastery, on a trail that leads to Hitchford and Dage. It is home to a community of sheep farmers whose livestock graze in the high valley of an eastern spur of the Durncrag Mountains. The high vale has a wonderful view across the Fryelund Forest to the south. The denizens of Yrsonor pay their tithes to the Order of the Kai and in return they benefit from their protection. It will take two days to reach the village on horseback. The Players are given some small, sturdy mounts that are well-suited for the difficult journey through the hilly woodland. Fandral the Forester rides on the mule that transported him to the Kai Monastery. Upon arrival at Yrsonor, all of the mounts will be lame and will require several days in which to recover before they can be ridden again.

Despite some understandable anxiety, the two-day ride to Yrsonor, including an overnight rest in the heart of the Fryelund Forest, turns out to be a blessedly routine and uneventful journey.



Away from the sun warmed stones of the monastery's walled courtyard, the hestangor winds are cold and sharp. Yet once you enter the Fryelund Forest, the trees shield you from the biting wind and you begin to enjoy the golden dappled light that is streaming through the turning leaves. Ancient broadleaf trees are displaying a stunning range of colours. From earthy browns through pale pastel yellows to vivid orange and red. The beauty of the forest stills the trepidation you are feeling as you begin your first mission and there is little to disturb you, save for the mournful hooting of an owl as you pass along the narrow Border Ranger's track.

By the end of your first day of riding you have reached the foothills of a north-eastern spur of the Durncrag Mountains. Here you rest, muscles sore after a day in the saddle. You make a simple camp and gather fallen leaves to cushion yourselves while you sleep. You awake the following morning feeling a little stiff. The crisp, chill air stirs you to life and a breakfast of berries and bread fortifies you for the next, more difficult stage of your journey: the climb to the high valley where the village is situated.

As you ascend the path so it becomes increasingly steep and overgrown. In many places you are forced to dismount, and in other places the low overhanging branches threaten to pluck you from your saddles. The nature of the forest also changes. The mighty broadleaf trees gradually give way to birches, conifers and Sommlending pines.

As the day passes, your stiff muscles ache and cramp. Yet you do not show your discomfort. You notice that Master Stormsong endures without complaint, despite the fact that he is an old man. After a brief stop for food and to rest the horses, you press onwards and upwards until eventually you hear the sound of cascading water. The path emerges beside a river and you see a beautiful array of cataracts. They have been dammed and channeled to concentrate the flow of the water. The loud rush of the river and its ice cold spray invigorates you for the final ascent.

When the sun drops behind the mountains, you catch your first glimpse of the dwellings of Yrsonor. The village commands a beautiful view of the wooded hills to the south and the open vale to the north. Away in the distance, in the dimming twilight, your keen young eyes spot the village flag fluttering atop one of the humble dwellings.

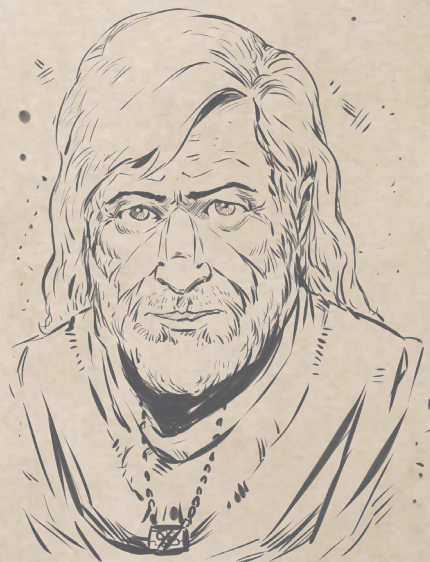
When the party approaches the village, two nervous looking men, armed with bows, emerge from one of the half-timbered houses. They are Longor and Davan, a pair of woodsmen who regard Fandral with a look of relief the moment they see him. The Players are warmly welcomed and taken to the largest building in the village.

It is a half-stone half-timber communal hall which normally houses food and provisions during the winter, but now it looks more like a fortified strongpoint. Sharpened stakes have been planted beneath the narrow windows and the doors have all been reinforced.



Inside the building are crammed the fifteen extended families that inhabit the village, along with their food, weapons, and their most treasured possessions. They are all anxious and afraid.

The Players are introduced to Werlan, the village leader. He is an honest looking man, strongly built and with silvering hair. He is very grateful for the arrival of the Kai. Master Stormsong excuses himself to go and tend to the horses. The steep, rocky climb to the high valley has taken its toll on their hooves and legs.



If any of the Players ask why the villagers are cowering in the hall, Werlan will recount the following:

THE VILLAGE ELDER'S STORY

'For the last four nights we have heard terrible sounds in the timberlands close to our village. We posted guards and lit bonfires to keep the unseen beasts away. Last night, some kind of monster attacked Tarbon's cabin on the edge of the village. He was slain, horribly. Lest the murdering beast returns, we have decided it's safer if we all stay here, together, this dreadful night.'

If asked for more information, Werlan will add the following:

'Early this morning, Trant and Rednar, our best hunters, went into the forest in search of tracks. They were expected to return at midday. They have not returned. We have one good man dead, and three others missing. Humbly, most noble Kai lords, I beseech you to help us. Find and slay this unseen beast before it returns and kills us all.'

The villagers can be questioned. They will gladly impart the following information:

- Some say there are dark shapes lurking in the woods at night.
- Most say there is only one very large shape, yet a few are adamant that there are many shapes.
- The forester's missing nephew, Karlo, was renowned for always sneaking off into the forest to avoid doing his chores. But he has only ever disappeared for a few hours at most.
- All of the villagers are convinced that Karlo has been killed.
- Poor Tarbon was slashed to ribbons by his unknown assailant.
- Some of the woodsmen say that tracks around the village are those of large wolves and bears, but the mortal wounds that Tarbon sustained clearly were not made by any ordinary wolf or bear.

After talking with the villagers, the Kai initiates should be given the opportunity to look around the village for themselves.

An inspection of the village will reveal:

- **Tarbon's remains.** The corpse of the forester is being prepared for burial. It has many unidentifiable claw wounds which have ripped deeply through the body, sundering flesh and bone.





The worst of the wounds are to the head and throat. Any Player who wishes to inspect the ruined corpse must make a difficulty 7 Test to avoid being physically sick. Failure to pass the test will render the player incapable of continuing the inspection. Those Players with either the Healing or Mindshield discipline may add a +2 bonus to their roll. Players with the Hunting discipline can determine that Tarbon's throat wound was caused by the single bite of a large and powerful creature, but they will not be able to identify it.

- **The fire damaged house.** The still-smouldering north wall of the dwelling shows signs that it caught fire during the attack last night. Any Player possessing the Tracking discipline may make a difficulty 6 Test. Success reveals that, besides copious amounts of dried blood which are splattered everywhere, there are some deep gouges in the charred wood approximately seven feet (2.1 m) above floor level.
- **Clawed prints.** In the forest to the west of the village, there are a number of clawed tracks in the loamy soil. Roll a difficulty 5 Test. Players with the Tracking discipline gain a +2 bonus. Success reveals that the tracks lead off in a north-westerly direction along an animal trail. They lead up into the mountains. The tracks are the size of a spread man's hand but their precise origin cannot be determined. The Player(s) will not have encountered tracks like these before. They will be able to conclude that the creature has four claws extending from its four paws.

The most sensible course of action is to return to the village for the evening, since night is fast approaching. If, however, the Players wish to attempt to track the suspected monster in the dark, they are free to do so, but they will suffer a -8 penalty to all Tracking and Combat rolls (-4 penalty of if they have and wish to use a light source, such as a torch or lantern).

It begins to rain during the evening. The rainfall gets steadily heavier as time passes. Whether they stand guard that evening or not, there is no attack, although some chilling moans and howls are heard approximately one mile away to the north-west. The people of the village take fright when there is a feeble thumping at the doors. If the Players call to the person (or thing) that is thumping the door, they will get no reply. The thumping will stop after a few moments if the doors are not opened. If the Players decide to take a risk and open the door to see what's there, they will find the severely wounded figure of Rednar slumped in a bedraggled heap outside in the rain. Unless medical aid is administered, he will be dead before dawn.

Rednar can be saved if he is attended to at once with an application of the Healing discipline. He has several deep claw wounds to his back, his left forearm has been badly bitten and he has a lot of

blood. Whilst being treated, he will mumble incoherently. The only words that the Players will recognize are "wolf monsters". Despite any aid given to him, he will lapse into unconsciousness and develop a fever. He will not regain consciousness for another 24 hours.

THE OLD BEAR

Early the next morning, the heavy rain lessens to a steady drizzle. The villagers, despite their anxiety, are all asleep due to the fatigue they have suffered over the past few days. Master Stormsong is the first to awaken. When the Players wake up, they see him preparing some food for breakfast. He will ask them to decide what they want to do.

If they examined the tracks beyond the village the previous evening, they will know that they lead to an animal trail that heads off towards north-west.

If they failed to examine the tracks, then they should go out and search for tracks (Master Stormsong will insist on this course of action if the Players do not propose it themselves. He will also criticize them for not having decided upon this course of action for themselves).

However, the Tracking Test now has a difficulty 9 since the heavy night rain has washed away most of the tracks. Any Players who recall that the strange noises of the previous night came from the north-west may add a bonus of +2 to the test.

If they fail to locate the animal trail, the Players must decide what they will do next. There are three choices that are most likely:

Return to the Kai Monastery and report the failure of their mission.

Stay in the village while waiting for the injured woodsman Rednar to recover consciousness. This will take 24 hours. If his clothing and equipment are searched, the Players will discover a strangely-crafted black iron arrow encrusted with dried blood. It is one of six arrows stored in his quiver. Later this evening, an old Durncrag Bear, driven mad by the pain of its wounds, will attack the village. One of the villagers will remember that this old beast lives in a cave to the north-west of the village.

Conduct a search of the forest for signs of the missing boy and the woodsman. If so, the Players must make a Luck Test:

- If the result is 0-4, they are ambushed by the wounded bear. This imposes a -4 penalty to the Kai Initiates' COMBAT SKILL for the first three rounds, before they recover from the shock

of the attack. Players with Sixth Sense may ignore this penalty. The old bear can be easily tracked in the muddy soil.

- If the result is 5-9, the party finds the dead body of Trant tied to a tree. He appears to have been stabbed to death, or shot with arrows that have subsequently been removed from his torso. No weapons can be found in the immediate vicinity.

If the animal trail is located, it can be followed. Several snapped twigs and crushed plants indicate that it has been used within the past 24 hours. Although no clean prints can be found, whatever it was that passed along the track was big, heavy and moving on four legs. At length, the track ends in a small clearing located at the base of a densely-wooded promontory. In the centre of the clearing the Players will discover the slaughtered remains of a horse.

Players with Hunting or Sixth Sense disciplines can make a difficulty 6 Test. Success alerts them to the presence of an old bear near a cave entrance. A Kai initiate with the Animal Kinship discipline may attempt to establish contact with the bear. Roll a difficulty 5 Test.



If unsuccessful, the bear will attack the party in a pain-driven rage. Success at the Test permits the Player to calm the animal sufficiently for the party to approach it without being attacked. The Player to first approach the bear will see a broken-off spearhead embedded in the creature's chest. Use of the Healing discipline will enable a Player to remove the spearhead and, in so doing, forge a bond of trust with the wounded-but-grateful bear.

If the Players enter the clearing without noticing the wounded bear, it will attack them in a killing rage.

OLD DURNCRAG BEAR (WOUNDED & ENRAGED)

Combat Skill: 20 + 1 per Player

Endurance: 30 + 2 per Player (+10 if healed)

Traits: Defence 2

This large animal is a canny creature, possessing years of experience of surviving in these tough timberlands. It is suffering an infected spear wound which was caused by a now-deceased Drakkar Death Knight whose corpse lies at the back of the bear's cave. Driven to the edge of madness by terrible pain of its infected wound, it has wandered the forest in a delirious state attacking any living thing unfortunate enough to cross its path. Some of its luckless victims include Doomwolves and their Mountain Giak riders. However, despite its pitiful state, this creature is not responsible for the missing Karlo or the injuries inflicted upon the two woodsmen.

Once the bear is either subdued or killed, the cave may be explored. The grey light of day penetrates little more than a dozen feet (3m) into the cave, beyond which point there is total darkness. Unless one of the Players has a light source which they decide to use, the party will be unable to see what lies at the rear of the cave. The air in the cave is foul, with a smell redolent of rotting meat.

THE BODY

At the rear of the cave there is a very badly mauled body. At first sight it is barely recognizable, but a closer examination will reveal it is the shredded remains of a Drakkar warrior. His spear shaft is broken off (the tip is lodged in the bear) and his black iron armour has been torn open. Pieces of ruined armour and tattered flesh lie scattered across the cave floor. These remains have been lying here for more than a week. They are crawling with maggots.

If any of the Players decide to examine the grisly remains, roll a difficulty 6 Test. Success discovers a scroll case containing some skin parchment that has been fashioned from an unknown animal. There are also some charcoal sticks. The parchment bears a crude map detailing timberland trails and passes which cross the mountains from the north-western to the south-eastern side.





On the north-western side of the Durncrag Mountains is a location marked with three Giak words: 'Tanoz okrog gogak'. They mean 'safe chasm camp'.

Master Stormsong turns to his young Kai companions and poses four questions for them to consider:

- What is a Death Knight, the élite of the Drakkarim, counting among the deadliest warriors of the Darklands, doing here in Sommerlund?
- Do you think he was seeking shelter from the rain, or was he ambushed outside and dragged into the cave by the old bear?
- Why was he making a map?
- Drakkarim Death Knights would never dare venture into Sommerlund alone. Where are the others?

The Narrator can now role-play the part of Kai Master Stormsong to help the Party formulate answers to these questions. What is of most importance, however, is for them to find out why this Drakkar Death Knight has crossed the border and infiltrated this far into Sommerlund.

If the bear is alive, removing and/or burying the remains of the dead Drakkar will result in the bear interceding to help and possibly save the Players in Scene 7 (The Battle of Yrsonor).

LOCATING THE DEATH KNIGHT'S CAMP

Whether or not the party discovers the dead Drakkar or the body of Trant, they should be alerted to the presence of an enemy war party in the surrounding mountainous timberland. This can be done by having them find distinctive footprints in the ground of the clearing made by leather boots reinforced with iron.

Their next step should be to track down Drakkarim war party. If they dither, Master Stormsong can politely remind them that the young Karlo is still missing.

If they have the dead Drakkar's parchment map, finding the hidden camp will be straightforward and the Players can set out at once to do so. If, however, they have only found the mutilated body of Trant, then they must return to the village and attempt to gather more information from the surviving woodsman, Rednar, when he recovers consciousness later this evening. When questioned, he will be able to recount the following tale:



REDNAR'S STORY

'We followed the tracks to the mountain pass. There's a narrow rocky gorge between the two high peaks which Trant and I explored when we were younger. Although it leads nowhere as there are no hamlets or villages on the northern slopes, it is the place where wild goats and deer make their way across the range. It's good hunting ground.'

'We were following the tracks down the widening ravine when we spotted some strange-looking creatures. They were Giaks clad in orange uniforms, mounted on huge wolves. They were being shouted at by men in black iron armour. Trant and I tried to sneak back up the ravine but we were spotted by one of the Giak wolf riders. It was upon us before we knew it.'

'We managed to fend off the beast, gaining enough time to make our way back the way we'd come, but the black-armoured soldiers had been alerted to our presence. Trant insisted on staying behind to cover my escape so I could bring back a warning. Did he... did he get away? Where is he? Is he here?'

'Oh Ishir, please tell me he's alive!'

If asked how many armoured troops he saw, Rednar will only say 'two or three dozen'. He is still in shock and cannot think clearly. However, he is able to give the Players precise directions to the gorge.

Trekking up to the wooded rift will take three hours. Depending on how much time has been spent searching the forest or interacting with the bear, this could mean that it is late afternoon before they arrive there.

The ravine, however, is now guarded by a troop of orange-clad Kaggazheg Mountain Giaks. They are stationed several hundred yards up the gorge. Despite having received orders to remain alert, they are derelict in their duty.

The Players have three options available to them. They can attempt to sneak past the guards, approach stealthily and ambush them, or launch a bold frontal attack on the group.

- **Sneak Past.** Attempting to use stealth to creep past these Giaks will require the Players to climb up one side of the gorge, inch their way along a narrow goat track, and then lower themselves back down into the timberland some distance further on. This is a dangerous course to pursue for if the Giaks are alerted to the Players, they will find themselves stuck on an exposed ledge and vulnerable to bow fire. Those who wish to attempt the stealthy climb must pass a difficulty 7 Test, but will receive a +2 bonus for Hunting. Failure in this Test will result in a dislodged stone that will alert the Giaks to their precise location.
- **Ambush.** This action will require some preparation. Cover can be found in the fissures that scar the walls of the gorge, or the Players can wrap their cloaks around themselves and hide among the shrubs and foliage that dot the landscape.

The Giaks can then be lured towards their positions by deliberately lobbing small stones to make a noise that the Giaks will be sure to investigate. The hidden Kai must make a difficulty 5 Test to remain unobserved as the Giaks come within 10 yards (10 meters) of their positions. Those with the Camouflage discipline will gain a +2 bonus. Once the ambush is sprung, the hidden Players will reduce the COMBAT SKILL of the Giaks by 4 for the first round of the fight. This is their ambush advantage. In addition, assuming that they are not yet defeated, the ambushing Kai can prevent any Giak from fleeing through the ravine to warn the rest of the war party that is located on the far side.

- **Direct attack.** This results in a straight fight between the two sides. If the Giaks suffer 50% of their number killed, they will attempt to evade combat and flee through the ravine. Unless shot down by a missile weapon, they will escape and alert their war party to the presence of the Players.

There are the same number of Giaks as there are Players in the party, plus two extra Giaks. They are all armed with bows and long serrated knives. These expert Doomwolf riders fight without their mounts.

KAGGAZHEG MOUNTAIN GIAKS

Combat Skill: 10

Endurance: 15

Traits: Grouping (Mob), Soldier

Special Rule: Giaks can see in the dark.





If the Players succeed in bypassing or defeating the Giaks (without letting any of them get away), the rest of the journey through the gorge will pass without further incident.

On the far side of the mountains, the rugged wooded landscape grants enough cover to allow the party to approach the enemy camp without being seen. The Narrator should be aware that Giaks possess the ability to see in the dark, which will give them a useful advantage over the Party when fighting at night. The Party is able to locate a high ridge that gives them a good view of the enemy force gathered at the encampment.

THE COVERT MEETING

From their position on the rocky ridge overlooking the campsite, the Players can see a war party comprising Giaks, Doomwolves, and Drakkarim warriors. They number at least forty, possibly more. They are arranged in small groups at the entrance to a large cave mouth and they appear to be waiting for something.

ACT OF TREACHERY

Intently, you watch the war band. This is your first sighting of minions of the Darklords. A particularly large Drakkar Death Knight, wearing a red plumed helmet with a black iron skull-shaped faceplate, strides out from the cave mouth.

Master Stormsong informs you that he is a Death Knight Nanrak: a battle captain of these Drakkarim elites, a fearsome foe. Around his neck there hangs an odd looking necklace. It resembles a pair of hands. He barks out commands in Giak and his growling troops line up and turn to face northwards.

From out of the gathering darkness there comes a lone rider. He is a tall man dressed in the manner of a Sommlending warrior. He is girded in silvered chain mail and armed with a fine sword. He also carries a spear which rests in a cup welded to one of his horse stirrups. He wears a hooded travelling cloak which keeps his face hidden from curious eyes.

The warrior calls out a greeting in Giak and dismounts. Moments later, the Drakkar Captain bows respectfully and beckons him to follow as he enters the cave. Shocked by what you have just witnessed, you are rendered speechless. Then the full import of what you've seen begins to sink in.

A Sommlending warrior is conducting a clandestine meeting with minions of the Darklords on Sommlending soil! You have

never witnessed such blatant treachery before and it leaves you all feeling sickened and disgusted.

Master Stormsong turns to you and says, softly:

'My brave students, this is no longer a time for training. It falls to me to retake command of this mission. Our Grand Master must be told of this, and at once. Stay in this vicinity, remain hidden, and await my return. I shall be as swift as I am able.'

Without further ado, the old man slithers silently down the rocky slope and is soon swallowed by the darkness.

The Players must now decide how they wish to continue. As they can be somewhat impetuous youths, they are at liberty to disobey Master Stormsong's orders. They should be told that Master Stormsong is likely to be gone for at least four days. The surrounding area provides adequate cover, but if they intend to live off this land, they will soon discover that it yields meagre pickings. Whether they decide to act contrary or not to Master Stormsong's orders, ultimately it is of little consequence.

One of the Doomwolves catches their scent on the night breeze and becomes agitated. Its uneasy reaction is noted by its rider, who in turn signals to its comrades to spread out and search the surrounding timberland. Several minutes later, there is a commotion in the forest less than a mile from where the Party is located. The sounds of distant shouting and struggling are carried towards the Party and immediately they will realise that Master Stormsong is in grave danger.

You should remind them that it is their duty to assist a fellow Kai in trouble, especially a Kai Master. It will take the Party at least ten minutes to reach the scene of the struggle by which time Master Stormsong will have been overwhelmed, captured, and dragged unwillingly to the mouth of the cave.

When the Party reaches the wooded perimeter of the clearing which overlooks the mouth of the cave, they will see the Drakkar Nanrak and the Sommlending warrior standing before their firmly-held Kai Master. They are taking it in turns to beat him with their clenched fists as they conduct a brutal interrogation, much to the malicious cackling delight of the watching Giaks.

The Players now face a difficult decision. There are at least 20 Doomwolf-mounted Giaks near the cave entrance, and close by in the ravine, as well as several Drakkarim Death Knights who are posted on either side of the cave mouth itself. It would be suicidal for them to launch an attack against an enemy this strong.



However, to do nothing but observe the brutal interrogation will likely condemn Master Stormsong to a slow and painful death.

If the Players hesitate while trying to decide what to do next, read the following aloud:

A MAGNAKAI DISCIPLINE REVEALED

You feel a tickling sensation at the back of your skull. The feeling grows until your mind is flooded with images and sounds. They are the visions and noises that Master Stormsong is experiencing, and now they are being projected directly into your consciousness!

Master Stormsong is using his Magnakai Discipline of Divination to project his dire plight to you all, both as a warning and as a cry for help. Through his eyes, you witness the blows and humiliation that are being heaped upon him by his cruel captors. The grotesque iron skull helm of the Drakkar Nanrak looms into view and you hear him interrogate Master Stormsong using broken Sommlending.

'What here you doing, old man? Who be the persons sent you to spy us?'

Master Stormsong's silence elicits a backhanded swipe of the Captain's gauntleted hand. It rakes his face and stuns him. For a few moments, the visions and sounds you are experiencing become misty and muffled as Master Stormsong reels from the heavy blow. But when his sight returns, you see the hooded Sommlending warrior stepping closer.

'No reply is necessary,' he says, in a cultured tone. 'It is obvious to me, judging by the cut of your cloth and the way in which you fought before you were captured, that you are a Kai lord. And, I'd wager, a fairly high-ranking Kai at that.'

For a brief moment, you catch a glimpse of a sardonically smiling face beneath the raised hood of this man's cloak. His angular face is neatly bearded, and his left cheek is indented by a scar.

'It may be of interest to you to know that, personally speaking, I am delighted that you've found us. It will save me the not inconsiderable trouble of tracking down and capturing another of your order. Unwittingly, you have assisted our purpose most fortuitously.'

You, or to be more precise, your blood, is required for a ritual I intend to perform. Alas, I cannot guarantee that you will survive the bleeding, but perhaps you can console yourself with the knowledge that your sacrifice will serve a greater purpose.'

The warrior turns away from Master Stormsong and gestures for his warhorse to be brought forward. With chilling nonchalance, he gives orders to the Drakkar Captain.

'Break his hands and feet. Then bind him to a horse. I shall take him back to the city with an escort of Drakkarim riders. Strike this camp within the hour - it has been compromised. Have your riders scour the surrounding timberland one last time to make sure this Kai was travelling alone. Then set them wild upon the forest village. Leave nothing intact. There must be no loose ends. We have what we came looking for, and the hunt was far swifter and easier than we ever imagined it would be.'

The Sommlending's voice turns cold and cruel before saying, 'Praised be the power and the will of Naar.'

As the Sommlending warrior mounts his horse, you see the Drakkar Nanrak unhook a warhammer from his belt and stride forwards. In gruff Giak, he orders half a dozen of his troops to place Master Stormsong spread-eagled on the ground.

He emits a cruel snigger as he raises his weapon and takes aim at the fingers of Master Stormsong's left hand. You glimpse a pair of small white hands threaded on a twist of brown encrusted sinew strung about the Drakkar's neck, and then all sound and vision abruptly ends when the warhammer comes crashing down.

The Players have a difficult choice to make. They can either:

- **Follow the Sommlending warrior** and attempt to rescue Master Stormsong.
- **Return to the Kai Monastery** to report to the Grand Master what has happened.
- **Return to the village** and protect the inhabitants from an imminent Giak attack.

Depending upon the Players' decision, the following will occur:

- **Rescue Master Stormsong.** Although a noble demonstration of loyalty, this course of action will be doomed to failure. When night falls, the group will find it increasingly difficult to track the Sommlending warrior and his escort of Drakkarim riders. They are mounted whereas all of the Players are on foot. Their horses are still recovering after the journey to Yrsonor. The Players will be seriously outdistanced overnight in the timberland. When, inevitably, they call off their hopeless pursuit, it will already be too late for them to double back and reach the village in time to save it. If this choice is made, Adventure 1 ends here.



- **Return to the Monastery.** If the Players decide to head straight back to the Monastery to report what has happened to the Grand Master, the villagers and the settlement of Yrsonor will be attacked and destroyed by Giak Doomwolf riders during the night. Upon hearing their report, the Grand Master will admonish them for failing to protect the citizens of Yrsonor, whose security is directly in the hands of the Kai as they inhabit the Kai Protectorate. He will order a troop of twelve Kai lords, plus the Players, to ride to Yrsonor at once. They arrive four days after the Giak attack and witness the terrible devastation that has been wrought upon the woodland village and its folk. Nothing has survived intact. The Players are ordered to form a burial detail as part-penance for their dereliction of duty. It is a grim task and it will be a sobering lesson hard learnt. If this choice is made, Adventure 1 ends here.
- **Return to the Village.** This is the best choice the Players can make. They overheard the Sommlending warrior give a clear order for the village to be attacked and destroyed tonight.

Without Kai protection, the villagers will be slaughtered. If the Party resolves to set off for the village without delay, they will arrive one hour before sunset. This will give them sufficient time to pick their defensive positions and get all of the villagers hidden from sight (in cellars and lofts).

If the party delays its departure, the Narrator should adjust their arrival at the village accordingly. For example, if they delay 1 hour,

they will arrive at the village at sundown. Consequently, they will not have time to hide the villagers and prepare adequate defenses before the Giaks arrive.

THE BATTLE OF YRSONOR

This is the climax of Adventure 1. The Players will be defending Yrsonor from a determined attack by creatures that fight best at night, and they do not have Master Stormsong to direct them any longer. Now they must prove that they have what it takes to become Kai Masters. This is going to be their baptism by fire. You should praise the group if they, without prompting, decide to send one of the villagers to the Monastery with a report of their situation. By so doing, no matter the outcome of the night attack, they will have ensured that the Kai Grand Master will be alerted to the fate of Master Stormsong and the threat posed by the traitorous Sommlending warrior.

ALLIES

At best, the group will have only one hour in which to prepare for battle. Ten able bodied male villagers will volunteer to fight by their side as a militia. They are equipped with axes. Three of them also have bows and a plentiful supply of arrows. The Players must decide how they wish to allocate the village militia among themselves. The Players will now use their allocated figures in the coming battle. The remaining 60 villagers are hidden throughout the village in the





cellars and attics. You should decide where precisely in the village these 60 civilians are and note them down on a piece of paper. If they are forced to flee from their hiding places, they will attempt to reach the nearest secure building and take refuge there.

If any of the Players aided the Old Bear (Scene 3), the creature will enter the village from the north-west and fight the Giak Doomwolf riders. If the Party wins the battle, the bear will return immediately to the surrounding forest.

ENEMIES

Facing the group are 20 Kaggazheg Mountain Giaks. They are armed with bows, light lances, and serrated short swords. Each of these orange-clad tough little fighters is mounted upon a ferociously powerful Doomwolf. This warband is led by the Drakkar Death Knight Nanrak (Battle-Captain). He is mounted on a black-barded horse-creature (a Nozodgorak – a horse-like Darkspawn). The Giaks will attempt to surround the village undercover of the forest.

In response to the Drakkar Nanrak's signal, they will make their approach to the village and commence their attack. Before they break cover and charge in among the houses, they will pause to light torches. The Players should be informed of this frightening apparition, as a circle of guttering torches flares into life around the village perimeter. The Giaks will attack as soon as the torches have been lit. They have no need of these torches to see their way; they intend to use them to set Yrsonor ablaze. Once a house is fired, any occupants hiding inside must attempt to escape the building by any means possible.

WINNING THE BATTLE

The Players can win the battle by:

- Killing 12 Giak Doomwolf riders
- Forcing the Drakkar Death Knight Nanrak to flee

If and when either of the above victory conditions is met, the Giaks will abandon their attack and flee from the village in a hasty rout. The Drakkar Death Knight Nanrak will engage in personal combat, but if his Endurance is ever reduced to 50% or less, he will immediately break off from combat and make his escape into the surrounding timberland.

If at any time he should receive an 'automatically killed' result on the Combat Results Table, he will be deemed to have taken a serious wound, lost his weapon and forced to make a desperate stumbling escape into the forest. The Players should be informed that, although he has escaped, his wounds are such that he will

likely bleed to death before dawn. (In truth, this evil individual, with his necklace of hands, will make a speedy recovery. He will never forget those who wounded him so grievously, and he will become fixated on exacting revenge. He is destined to become a reoccurring enemy for the Players, whose strength will also increase in the course of this campaign.) If the Drakkar Nanrak runs away, the Giaks will immediately abandon their attack and flee into the surrounding forest.

DRAKKARIM DEATH KNIGHT NANRAK (ON FOOT)

Combat Skill: 26 **Endurance:** 40
Traits: Brutal 1, Defence 3, Iron Will, Veteran 5/+1

DRAKKARIM DEATH KNIGHT NANRAK (ON NOZODGORAK WARHORSE)

Combat Skill: 28 **Endurance:** 50
Traits: Brutal 1, Defence 3, Iron Will, Veteran 5/+1

KAGGAZHEG MOUNTAIN GIAKS (ON FOOT)

Combat Skill: 11 **Endurance:** 15
Traits: Grouping (Mob), Soldier
Special Rule: Giaks can see in the dark.

KAGGAZHEG MOUNTAIN GIAKS (ON DOOMWOLF)

Combat Skill: 15 **Endurance:** 35
Traits: Grouping (Mob), Soldier
Special Rule: Giaks can see in the dark.

DOOMWOLF

Combat Skill: 13 **Endurance:** 20
Traits: Grouping (Pack), Mount

VILLAGE MILITIAMAN

Combat Skill: 13 **Endurance:** 24
Traits: Grouping (Mob), Soldier

VILLAGER

Combat Skill: 9 **Endurance:** 11

OLD DURNCRAG BEAR

Combat Skill: 20 **Endurance:** 40
Traits: Defence 2

As all of this battle will take place inside the village, you should sketch a plan view of the buildings on a large pad of paper. This can be used to keep a track of the Party, the location of hidden villagers, and the enemy positions. It is recommended that you use a pencil and eraser as the details will need to be modified as the



battle progresses. This battle is also ideally suited to be played out on the tabletop using miniatures.

A day after the battle (if the Party did not send a villager to the Kai monastery), a small troop of five King's Border Rangers will arrive at Yrsonor. They saw the glow of the fires during the night and rode here to investigate. The Border Rangers will help the villagers to dampen down fires and repair damage to their homes, allowing the Party to return to the Kai Monastery and report to the Grand Master all that has happened here.

DARK TIDINGS

The Players will by now have reported the presence of Giaks and Drakkarim including Death Knights, on Sommlending soil. Any Players with the Healing discipline will now fully recover their strength. If the Players ignored the plight of the village, or if they arrived there too late to save it, they will have already been informed of their fate: leading the burial detail in Yrsonor. If, on the other hand, the Players risked their lives and saved the village, you should read aloud the following text:

The Grand Master watches you with pride as you recount the details of your ordeal. When you finish your account, he motions you all to rise to your feet.

'These experiences have been a brutal introduction to your responsibilities as Kai, yet you met the challenge with exceptional courage and have proved to me your worth. You were willing to lay down your lives to protect those to whom we are duty and honour-bound to protect from evil. In recognition of your outstanding feat of arms, you are all hereby exceptionally raised in rank.'

The courtyard of the Tower of the Sun is filled with the cheers of your fellow Kai. It makes you feel both humble and proud at the same time. The Grand Master holds up his hand in an unspoken call for silence. The gathering settles and he addresses you directly once more:

'Master Stormsong will be rightly proud of you when he learns of your bravery. You are his most accomplished students. With Kai's blessing, we shall find and rescue him swiftly. We have mustered a troop of Elhrin and Skurdin. They ride within the hour. If he still lives, we will find him and bring him safe home. If he has perished... we shall avenge him!'

The successful Players may now increase their Kai rank by one level and gain a new Kai Discipline. Well done! The first adventure of the Terror of the Darklords ends here, but the story continues in the second installment, Treachery in Toran.







ADVENTURE TWO

TREACHERY IN TORAN

The Players are sent to track down the Sommlending traitor they saw meeting with the Drakkarim in the Durncrag Mountains and who abducted their Kai tutor. Their Kai Grand Master hopes that they will be able to locate Master Stormsong and learn more about the nefarious plot that is being hatched throughout Sommerlund.

OVERVIEW

With the loss of their personal mentor, the venerable Master Stormsong, the Players should be driven to locating him before his life is sacrificed in the evil ritual that was hinted at by the traitorous Sommlending warrior. Crossing the mountains once more to the location where the secret Drakkarim base was located, they must pick up the trail which will lead them to the city of Toran. However, in anticipation of this, the traitorous Sommlending warrior has left a few traps to ensnare and delay them en route. Unbeknownst to them, the Players have been set up as the targets in a scheme to dishonour the Kai order and decimate the population of Toran – the original mission of the Sommlending agent of the Darklords, who has in fact abducted their Kai tutor for a totally different scheme. If the Players should fail to uncover this plot and foil its perpetrators, then not only will the Kai be disgraced, the citizens of Toran will also be greatly imperilled.

NEW HOPE

The chilly hestangor (autumn) winds have turned icy cold when Grand Master Rune Helm calls the Players to a meeting. Only a few days have passed since your return from Yrsonor, and during this time, the Grand Master has dispatched mounted Kai warriors to scour every mountain pass in the Northern Durncrag for signs of an imminent invasion from the Darklands.

Once again you climb to the top of the Tower of the Sun. The stones no longer feel warm beneath your feet; they impart a numbing chill. Kaltangor (Winter) is on its way. Inside the Grand Master's chamber, you are welcomed by the warmth of a log fire roaring in a stone chimney set in the south wall. Without saying a word, the Grand Master motions you all to sit on cushions that have been placed in a semi-circle around

his ornate throne, which looks quite more comfortable than his official stone throne you saw in the Kai Masters' Hall on the previous floor.

'Under the auspices of Master Woundbinder, I am assured that you are fully recovered and able to undertake another mission. I must send you forth to uncover the precise nature of the treachery that is brewing in the north of our beloved Sommerlund. Only you have seen the face of the traitor. Thus it is fitting that you should be the ones to track him down and bring him to justice.'

The Grand Master unfurls a map on the flagstones before you. It shows in detail the territories of the north. You note the timbered foothills that descend to a fertile river plain surrounding the port of Toran, Sommerlund's second largest city.

'Somewhere in this region you are likely to discover the traitor's secret lair. It is improbable that he is working alone, therefore you must remain on your guard at all times. There may be many vipers in this nest of treachery. Use your stealth and guile to discover the truth of what is happening. To aid your mission, I have prepared a letter of introduction which you may present to the Guildmaster of the Brotherhood of the Crystal Star. It is a request that he aid you to the best of his ability in the execution of your mission. Truly, I hope that the traitor's plan is not so advanced that it will require the assistance of the Magician's Guild in order to thwart it, but if such a dire case has come to pass, then this letter will enable you to muster his valuable assistance.'

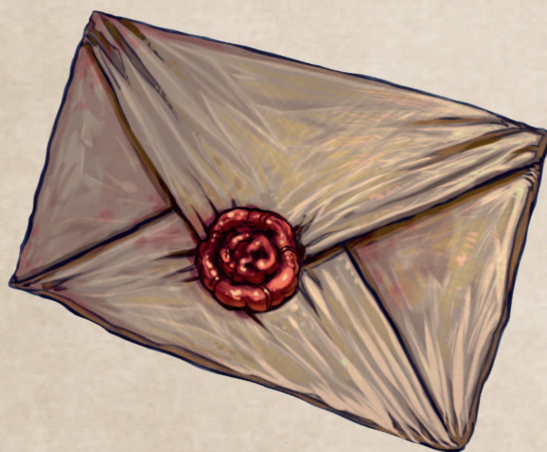
He stares at each of you in turn.

'I fully understand your natural desire to find and free Master Stormsong, if indeed he still lives. I know that he is like a father to you. However, let not the desire for vengeance deflect you from fulfilling your primary mission, namely, to discover the identity of the traitor and the nature of his accursed plans. If Master Stormsong lives, and if he can be rescued without jeopardising the mission, then by all means do so. Master Stormsong is strong and he will be sure to resist his captors

for as long as he is able, therefore we should not assume that he has perished. When you have achieved your mission, despatch a report to me by the swiftest means at your disposal. I will then direct a troop of Kai riders to recapture Master Stormsong at once. Stay forever mindful of your Kai principles and your pledge to fulfil your duty to protect Sommerlund as you depart the Monastery and travel northwards once more.'

As before, the Players are permitted to gather together any items of equipment they wish to use, aside from armour, so long as it conforms to the maximum eight items capacity of their Backpacks. They may also take any two weapons of choice. The Players are given a small Kai Purse of gold crowns to pay for the expenses of the journey. Roll a ten-sided die and add 20 to the result. The total is equivalent to the number of Gold Crowns they receive. The Players should designate one of them to be responsible for looking after this Kai Purse. In this instance, the Kai Purse counts as a Special Item that the designated Player keeps in the pocket of their tunic.

The Players should also designate one of them to carry the Grand Master's Letter. The Letter is a Special Item that the designated Player keeps tucked inside their tunic.



The Players are issued with sturdy mounts from the Monastery stables. If one of the Players possesses the Kai Discipline of Animal Kinship, they will be given charge of a messenger hawk to take with them on their mission. If two or more Players possess Animal Kinship, then they must flip a token into the Random Number tray to see who receives charge of the hawk (highest score wins). The Player in charge of the messenger hawk may, at any time during the Adventure (while they are still in possession of the hawk), compose a note.

Using their Discipline, they can command the hawk to deliver it to Grand Master Rune Helm at the Kai Monastery. The hawk travels at an average of 60 miles per hour, therefore the Narrator should

use this rate of speed to calculate how long the message will take to reach the Grand Master. Toran is eighty miles from the Kai Monastery as the crow flies. Once sent on its way, the messenger hawk will not return.

The Players are also entrusted to carry the Grand Master's Letter of introduction. It is written on yellowed parchment, rolled tightly and secured with a red ribbon and the Grand Master's wax seal. All of the Players should now flip a token into the Random Number tray. The Player with the highest score (0 = 10) is designated as Letter bearer. This Grand Master's Letter is a Special Item which the winning Player carries tucked safely inside their tunic.

COLD TRAIL

The overland route to Toran takes the Players back to Yrsonor, arriving at the end of their second day's ride. If the Players previously saved the village, then they will be warmly welcomed by the villagers and treated to a modest feast in their honour. If the Players failed to save the village, then they will have to make camp in the ruins of the village. This experience should serve as a sobering reminder of the price of failure.

In all, it will take around 5 days to cover the 110 miles between the Kai Monastery and the city of Toran following the overland route passing through the villages of Yrsonor and Dage. The Players must each consume one Meal per day or they will suffer a cumulative penalty of -2 to all their Tests, including combat. Players with the Hunting Discipline may gather enough food along the way for themselves only.

The first snows of approaching Kaltangor cover the trees with a dusting of icy crystals which transform the timberlands into a wondrously beautiful region through which to travel. The quality of the horses that you have been allocated are superior to your original mounts, and none go lame during your challenging ride.

While you are in Yrsonor, a Kai Guardian called Swiftstalker arrives. He informs you that he's been sent by Kai Master Moonwinds, the commander in charge of the troop of mounted Kai Lords that the Grand Master dispatched before you left the Monastery. They have established an encampment on the King's Highway between Holmgard and Toran, and from this base of operations they are conducting scouting missions all along the Durncrag eastern spur's border.

Swiftstalker informs you that tracks have been detected that are consistent with the traitor and his enemy escorts. Numerous tracks have been found at the Tor river's edge that indicate the enemy boarded a vessel at this point, most likely a river barge, and took their horses with them. He says that



fellow Kai troopers have marked the tracks left behind by the traitor and the escorts. They should keep a watchful eye open for these scarlet markers when they leave Yrsonor tomorrow as they will guide them to the section of the river where the boarding took place.



He declines any invitation to rest overnight at Yrsonor, saying that he is under strict orders to report back immediately to Kai Master Moonwinds. As he prepares to leave, he warns you that local Rangers have reported that the fauna that live in the wooded foothills hereabouts have become strangely hostile of late.

It will take the Players a day to reach the River Tor. To follow the scarlet markers left by the Kai troopers requires a difficulty 5 test by Players who possess the Tracking discipline. They may only test once. If all tracking tests fail then the Players will arrive at the wrong part of the river bank and suffer a Storgh attack (see **Storgh Attack** below). Success will bring them to the precise point on the river where the traitorous Sommlending warrior and his Drakkarim escort boarded their barge.

During their ride to the river, the Players will be aware of Kraan circling high overhead. They appear to be observing their progress. They do not threaten them directly until the Players come within a mile of the river bank. This is when they will dive down from the snow clouds and launch a surprise attack.

All Players with the Sixth Sense discipline will be pre-warned of the Kraan attack as the beasts prepare to commence their dive. This advantage is also bestowed upon the Player in charge of the scouting hawk, regardless of whether or not they possess Sixth Sense. All other Players will suffer a -4 penalty to their COMBAT SKILL for the initial round of the ensuing combat. The Kraan target and attack the Players individually:

KRAAN (EACH)

Combat Skill: 17

Endurance: 28

Traits: Flight, Mount

Special Rule: Remember to add +2 to the Kraan's COMBAT SKILL for the first round of each individual combat. This represents the speed of their initial diving attack. In subsequent rounds, the Kraan will hover above each Player and attempt to beat them with their





leathery wings and stab them to death with their long sharp beaks. These flying foes will not evade combat and will fight to the death.

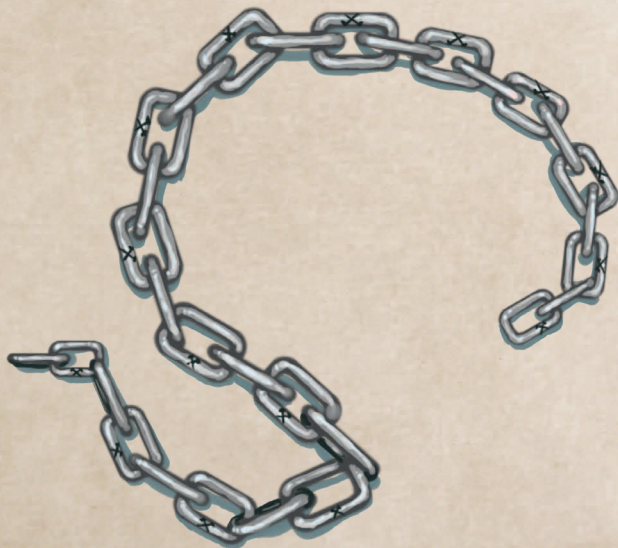
If the Players successfully followed the scarlet markers planted by the Kai troopers, they will reach the bank of the River Tor after the combat against the Kraan has been resolved. If they did not find the markers, do not read the following text but go instead to **Storgh Attack** (below).

The river is a little under 100 yards (100m) wide and the current is strong. Despite the dusting of fresh snow, you are able to detect several hoof prints at the water's edge.

Reading the tracks requires a difficulty 6 Test. Players with the Tracking discipline gain a +2 bonus to the roll. A successful test will reveal that the enemy did not take all of their mounts with them on the barge that was moored here. Some of the tracks indicate that at least two of their mounts were left at the river's edge. There are some indications that these abandoned horse-creatures were dragged, reluctantly, into the river by a heavy, web-footed creature.

Further investigation of the boarding site will uncover a length of heavy chain at the water's edge. It is in good condition and there are no traces of rust. This indicates that it was dropped here recently. On every link of the chain there is a small imprint. It is a maker's mark depicting two crossed hammers. Successfully rolling a difficulty 5 Test will reveal to the Players that this chain was manufactured in Toran. If they decide to keep it, one Player must volunteer to carry it. It takes up 2 spaces in a Backpack. If there is no room for the Chain then they must discard two items of their own choosing to create the necessary space for it.

You may now proceed to **Scene 3 – Tor River Rampage**.



STORGH ATTACK

At the place where you come to the water's edge, the river is a little under 100 yards (100m) wide and the current is strong. Despite the dusting of fresh snow, you are able to detect several prints along the bank that were made by a heavy, web-footed creature.

Tell the Players to each flip a token into the Random Number tray (0 = zero). The Player with the lowest score will trigger and fall victim to the following surprise attack.

Suddenly, a large, eyeless, crocodilian monster emerges from the freezing cold water and lunges for you (point to the Player who had the lowest score) with breath-taking speed.

The targeted Player may attempt a difficulty 8 Test. If they have the Sixth Sense discipline they will gain a +2 bonus. Success will enable them to pull their horse away from the jaws of the attacking Storgh. Failure will result in a -2 penalty to their COMBAT SKILL for the first round of the ensuing combat.

STORGH

Combat Skill: 20

Endurance: 35

Traits: Brutal 1, Defence 2

Special Rules: The targeted Player will be knocked out of their saddle in the first round of combat. The other Players may enter the combat only at the beginning of the 3rd round. The horny hide of the Storgh is very tough, enabling it to absorb a great deal of punishment. If it succeeds in inflicting an ENDURANCE point loss, the wounded Player will become ensnared in its powerful jaws. The Storgh will then attempt to drag the Player into the river at the start of the following round. Once dragged into the river and submerged, only the Player who is gripped in its jaws can continue the combat as the river is deep and the current is too strong for anyone else to wade in and offer effective assistance.

Any Player dragged into the river by the Storgh will suffer a persistent -4 penalty to their COMBAT SKILL for every round they are held underwater. This is in addition to an automatic -3 ENDURANCE points loss for every round they remain ensnared in the creature's vice-like jaws. If the ensnared Player is able to kill the beast, only then will they be able to swim back to the river bank and safety. They will find their horse waiting for them at the water's edge. If the bearer of the Grand Master's Letter is dragged into the river, they will now discover that the furled scroll has been ruined by the water. The seal has been lost and the Grand Master's writing has become illegible. This Special Item is no longer fit for its intended purpose and must be erased from their Action Chart.

You may now proceed to **Scene 3 – Tor River Rampage**.



TOR RIVER RAMPAGE

The cloudy sky is beginning to darken, heralding the approach of night. It is snowing lightly and becoming noticeably colder. You muster yourselves and set off in an easterly direction towards the distant city of Toran for this is where your quarry is heading. You are anxious to avoid having to camp out in the snow overnight. You follow a byway that heads due east and happen upon a signpost that says: 'Dage - 20 Miles'. The village is too far away to reach before darkness engulfs you.

A mile beyond the signpost you spot a burned out mill-house and catch the aroma of wood smoke being carried on the cold evening air. The squat, stone-walled mill once serviced the arable farms of this region - the Tor River Valley - milling its wheat and barley prior to it being transported by river barge to Toran. Although the mill-house itself has been gutted by a recent fire, there are two undamaged storage barns close by that offer the promise of shelter from the elements.

Ask the Players where they want to take shelter; in the ruined mill which has lost its roof and is partially exposed to the elements, or in one of the two storage barns.

If they choose the ruined mill, they may search it on a difficulty 7 Test. Possession of the Tracking discipline grants a +2 bonus. Success uncovers more than two dozen charred skeletons lying buried beneath the still-smouldering beams of the mill's collapsed timber roof. Most of the human remains are of adults, but there are four child-sized cadavers lying among them. Shockingly, the remains of these children are missing their hands.

If they decide to take shelter in one of the two storage barns, they may search it on a difficulty 8 Test. Those with the Hunting discipline may apply a +2 bonus. Success reveals the faint but tell-tale odour of Graveweed. Failure of the Test does not reveal this scent. If they all fail the test, you should inform them that there is enough grain stored here to provide each player with a Meal. They must choose whether or not they will eat the grain or consume a Meal from their Backpacks instead. If any Player decides to eat the grain then it will have severe consequences for them. Any Player who ingests the tainted grain will suffer a loss of half of their ENDURANCE points one hour after ingestion, and will feel very ill and incapable of moving or fighting for the next 8 hours.

On a successful test, the Players should be told that the grain stores have been deliberately spoiled with Graveweed. They can shelter here overnight, but before they leave the next morning they should consider destroying the barns to prevent any unwary locals from accidentally consuming the poisoned grain. If they fail to torch the

barns before leaving, two days after they arrive in Toran, news will reach the city of deaths from food poisoning of the farmers and families in this region.

Shortly after daybreak, the Players will be able to continue their ride towards the village of Dage. It will be a long ride (18 miles) in snow-covered terrain but it will be possible for them to reach Dage before sunset. During their long ride, they will reach a rickety wooden bridge that crosses a fresh water stream. They stop here for a few minutes to draw some water for themselves and their horses. An inquisitive river otter will approach the Players while they do so. Any Player with the Animal Kinship discipline may communicate with this friendly and inquisitive creature. They will see images of a barge containing Drakkarim Death Knights, the Sommlending traitor, and Master Stormsong. Although of little help directly, this vision of what the otter has witnessed will confirm that the traitor's barge party was heading down the River Tor towards Toran when the otter espied it.

It is an hour before sunset when the byway enters a copse of snow-covered pines. You all sense that something is not quite right here; a feeling of feral malevolence hangs heavy in the chill evening air. Forewarned by this uneasy feeling, you are especially watchful as you ride along the snow-dusted byway towards the middle of the copse.

A low growl alerts you to imminent danger and your reach to your weapons. In the next instance, a pack of eight wild wolves come bounding out of the trees and fall upon you from both sides of the byway.

These feral wolves are very aggressive and will attack the Players individually. If any Player has the Animal Kinship discipline and can succeed in a difficulty 6 Test they will be able to repel the wolf that has targeted them and make it turn around and run off into the trees. If the number of wolves is greater than the number of Players (which is likely), then as soon as the first wolf is turned or killed, the surplus number of wolves will run off with it. For example, if you have 4 Players, when the first wolf is turned or killed then 3 wolves will run off with it leaving 4 wolves remaining to face the Players.

WILD WOLF (X8; EACH)

Combat Skill: 15

Endurance: 18

Traits: Brutal 1, Grouping (Pack)

Special Rule: Reducing a wild wolf to half its initial Endurance score (i.e., 9 or lower) will make it evade combat and run away.

Inform the Players that it is very unusual to encounter wild wolves in this area of the Tor River Valley. They are many miles from their normal habitat and are exceptionally aggressive.



DEATH IN DAGE

The village of Dage is a small, peaceful and picturesque little Sommlending settlement that is set within a ring of low, gentle hills. The inhabitants are predominantly arable farmers who earn an honest living from the rich loamy soil hereabouts. They are an optimistic and generally happy folk and have a well-deserved reputation for hard work and conviviality.

It is almost dark by the time you reach the village of Dage. Contrary to your expectations, the village is shrouded in darkness. There is not a light showing in any of the houses or shops and there is nobody to be seen on the streets. It is not until you reach the middle of the village that you see faint candlelight flickering in the ground floor window of the village tavern named 'The Plough'. Cautiously, you dismount, tie your horse reins to a tethering rail by the front door and enter.

Inside you discover a very disturbing scene. A badly wounded and disfigured male corpse, dressed in the clothes of a Kai Master, lies surrounded by a group of dead villagers. At first glance, judging by the juxtaposition of the bodies, it seems like a Kai Master has murdered the villagers before being brutally killed himself.

Any Player investigating this scene must make a difficulty 6 Test. Those with the Tracking discipline may apply a +2 bonus. Success reveals the following facts:

- The clothing of the Kai Lord is similar but not identical to that worn by Kai Master Stormsong.
- The disfigured corpse is that of a much younger man than Master Stormsong.
- The facial features of the man have been rendered unrecognisable by more than a dozen heavy smashing blows from a warhammer.
- The hands and feet of the man are intact and uninjured.
- The dead villagers are all clutching makeshift weapons, such as pitchforks and hatchets. None of these farmyard implements show any traces of blood.
- In a large bag lying beside the body dressed as a Kai Master can be found more than a hundred vials marked: 'Concentrated Tincture of Graveweed'. Most of these vials are missing their stoppers and are empty. Also in the bag is a pouch containing 65 Gold Crowns, each one bearing the mark of the Holmgard Mint. The coins are well worn and appear to have once belonged to the villagers.

It should be obvious to the Players that this macabre scene has been deliberately set up to give the false impression that the villagers were robbed by a Kai Master, who they subsequently cornered and killed in combat here in the tavern. In the course of the fight, many of the villagers also lost their lives. The staged scene appears

to have been constructed with the purpose of bringing dishonour upon the Order of the Kai.

It is too late to push on to Toran. In the unlikely event that the Players decide to make a long night ride, you should remind them that it is pitch black outside (the moon is obscured by heavy cloud) and they may like to reconsider their decision in light of the Wild Wolf attack which is still fresh in their minds. If they decide to leave regardless, they will only cover a mile of byway before they are forced to turn around and go back to Dage. Their progress will have been painfully slow, their horses are fatigued, and they cannot see anything in the total darkness. It would be hopeless to continue.

It is the custom in rural Sommerlund to bury the dead within 24 hours of their passing (conversely, the tradition in Sommlending cities is to cremate the dead). But the hardness of the frozen ground and lack of moonlight makes the carrying out of this rural tradition untenable. The best they can do is to lay the bodies on the ground outside, at the rear of the tavern, offer up prayers to Kai and Ishir to protect their lost souls and then cover them with blankets.

There is food in the tavern kitchen but it has all been spoiled with Graveweed concentrate. The ale has not been contaminated so at least they are able to draw a tankard each. Players must eat a Meal if they have one in their Backpack. Kai Lord will obviously not break into the nearby houses to steal food. Those with the Hunting discipline can forage for potatoes in a field at the edge of the village. There are very few to be found in the frozen ground and they will lose 2 ENDURANCE due to a lack of adequate nutrition.

The Players will have an uneasy and troubled sleep at the tavern overnight before leaving at first light the following day.

TROUBLED TORAN

It is shortly after dawn when, with heavy hearts, you leave Dage. The village is seemingly empty, as if it's been abandoned by its inhabitants. You follow a trail that heads in a north-easterly direction. A snow-covered wooden signpost says simply: To Toran. It snows lightly during your ride but the journey itself is uneventful.

You reach a junction with the King's Highway by late morning and follow it northwards. The wide highway is easy to travel. You make up for lost time and approach the city's south gate and barbican shortly before nightfall.

The ancient city port of Toran is built on the east bank of the mouth of the River Tor where it empties out into the cold dark waters of the Toran Sound and the Kaltersee. Although it is not the largest city in Sommerlund, that distinction belonging to the capital, Holmgard,



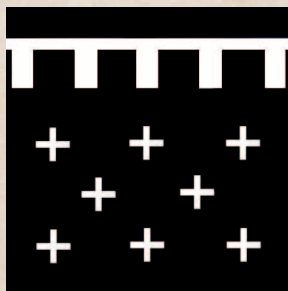
it is considered by many, most especially its native inhabitants, to be the most important. Famously, it is the home of the Magicians' Guild which is also known as the Brotherhood of the Crystal Star. For the Kai, Toran has a special place in their history and heritage. It is where their founding father, Sun Eagle, was once the ruling Baron.

The River Tor finishes its long journey here at the city port of Toran. From its source as a rapids-filled mountain waterway in the Durncrag Mountains, it swells and widens upon reaching the wooded foothills and gradually transforms into a broad river when it reaches the plains surrounding the southerly approaches to Toran.

On its eastern bank, on a small rise overlooking the Toran estuary, the weather-streaked granite walls of the city of Toran loom sternly over the river mouth. Much of this area has long since been transformed into the quays and wharfs of a busy port. The fortress walls of Toran are as strong and resolute as its citizens. Neither has ever been defeated by a Darklands attack. Above the proud city fly two flags: the Arms of the City, and the Baronial Confederation of Toran.



**Arms of the
City of Toran**



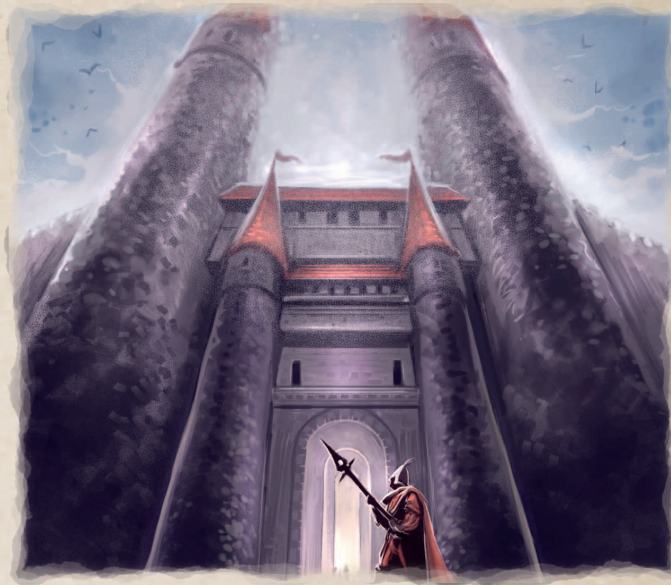
**The Baronial Confederation
of Toran**

The prosperity of the city is displayed in its architecture. It is handsome to behold, a city that is both strong and elegant. It disturbs you greatly to think that the enemy, most likely, has already infiltrated deep into the heart of Toran. This chilling realisation renews your inner determination to fulfil your mission as soon as possible.

This is the first time the Players have visited Toran and it is a much larger city than any of them had imagined it to be. It has a population of nearly 80,000 residents. The task of tracking down the Sommlending traitor, his escort and Kai Master Stormsong is going to be very challenging.

As the Players approach the South Gate and Barbican on horseback, people will begin to notice them and some will react in an

unexpectedly hostile manner. If they try to question these unfriendly passers-by, they will draw back in fear and refuse to answer. Any Player with the Sixth Sense discipline can attempt a difficulty 5 Test to read their minds. Success allows them to sense their emotions of anger and fear, and focus on what they are thinking. Two words will stand out clearly: 'murderers' and 'renegades'.



If the Players wish to avoid the risk of being arrested when they reach the gate, they must disguise themselves. Masking their real identities requires a difficulty 7 Test. Players with the Camouflage skill gain a +2 bonus. Success means that the Player can transform their appearance well enough to pass for a citizen of Toran.

Once the disguises have been completed, the Players shall be able to enter the city without being challenged by the guards.

Any Player(s) who fails the difficulty test will not be able to change their appearance sufficiently enough to pass for a native Toranese. They will be challenged by the guards at the South Gate. Upon recognizing them as Kai Lords, the guards will raise the alarm and a troop of garrison soldiers will immediately rush from the barbican's guardhouse and attempt to arrest them all.

If the Players demand to know why they are being treated this way, the garrison sergeant will produce a document and hold it up high for them all to see. It is a warrant for the arrest of all Kai attempting to enter the city, authorised and sealed by the Baron and endorsed by the Guildmaster of the Brotherhood of the Crystal Star.

The Players must now make a difficult decision:

- Do they attempt to fight their way past the garrison and escape into the alleyways and passages of the city beyond.

- Or do they permit themselves to be arrested, perhaps in the hope that they will get the chance to settle the matter diplomatically when they speak to the City Watch commander (in this instance the Narrator should skip ahead directly to **Scene 8 – Corrupted Command**.)

There are as many guards as there are Players, plus an additional tough sergeant. The citizens around the gatehouse will draw back to watch the fight, but at no time will they involve themselves directly in combat.

TORAN CITY GARRISON GUARD (EACH)

Combat Skill: 13

Endurance: 20

Traits: Grouping (Soldier), Soldier

TOUGH SERGEANT

Combat Skill: 18

Endurance: 28

Traits: Soldier, Veteran 5/+1

The soldiers are not part of the conspiracy that has taken a grip of the city. They are fiercely loyal to the Baron whom they greatly respect as their Liege Lord. They have been ordered to be especially wary of any Kai attempting to enter the city unannounced, and arrest any who arrive at the South Gate. These soldiers would normally be friendly and faithful allies of the Kai, but they have been told by their officers that you are renegades and murderers. And so they will fight to the death, fully believing that the Players are guilty of the recent massacres in and around Dage.

The surviving folk of the Dage massacre chose to abandon their village two days ago. They began arriving in the city yesterday. Ever since, the talk on the streets and in the city taverns has been about little else.

If the Players use their weapons and kill any of the city guards in combat, this will condemn them as murderers in the eyes of the Toranese citizenry. Inform them that they can elect to fight unarmed and attempt to subdue the soldiers without causing them permanent harm. If they wish to do so, they must deduct 4 points from their COMBAT SKILL for the duration of the combat.

If they defeat the soldiers, the Players can make their escape from the South Gate and into the city. All citizens will flee from them as they approach.

If they are defeated by the soldiers, then they will be disarmed and transported directly to Watch House under guard. The Players will be allowed to keep their Backpacks. The Player in charge of the Messenger Hawk will be forced to let the bird go. Without a message attached to its leg, it will seek refuge in one of the many

tall towers of the city. You can inform the hawk handler of this, and that they have no way of knowing for certain if they will ever see the hawk again. You should now skip ahead to **Scene 8 – Corrupted Command**.

Once they are past the guards and into the city, the Players will have four options to choose from:

- If they found the chain beside the River Tor, they can attempt to locate the blacksmith who made it. Go to **Scene 5 – Chain Gang** after they have been given an opportunity to purchase goods.
- If they choose to make their way to the Toran docks and check the Sound Master's records to find out when the traitor's barge arrived from upstream, skip to **Scene 6 – Crooked Customs** after they have been given an opportunity to purchase goods.
- If they are still in possession of the Letter given to them by Kai Grand Master Rune Helm, and wish to present it to the Guildmaster of the Brotherhood of the Crystal Star, go to **Scene 7 – The Magicians Guildhall** after they have been given an opportunity to purchase goods.
- If they wish to make an official report of the massacre they discovered in the tavern at Dage, they can seek out the Captain of the City Watch who is stationed at Watch House. Go to **Scene 8 – Corrupted Command** after they have been given an opportunity to purchase goods.

As they travel through the streets of Toran towards their chosen destination, the Players should be given an opportunity to replenish their supplies and purchase additional equipment from the many shops and street vendors they pass along the way.

As a precaution, they should be strongly advised to stow their distinctive Kai Cloaks and rank badges in their Backpacks. Bundled together, these items take up two spaces. If there is insufficient space in their Backpack, they must discard two items of their choice in order to make room.





GOODS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

This is a rare opportunity for the Players to purchase any extra equipment they may require, so be sure to allow them to spend as much of their money as they desire. Since Toran is a lawful and wealthy port-city, almost anything is available here and mostly at a fair price. Examples of what is available (including costs) are listed below for the Narrators' convenience. Additional items can be used from the lists that appear in Chapter Four of **The Book of Kai Wisdom**.

You should bring the Players' attention to one item on the list: Map of Toran. This could be a useful item to have when they are exploring the city.

ITEMS

Backpack 2GC (empty)
Belt Pouch 1GC
Sack 1GC
Blanket 1GC
Fur Blanket 2GC
Clothing, Plain 5GC
Clothing, Fancy 15GC
Travelling Cloak 10GC
Hourglass 5GC
Lantern 2GC
Lamp Oil 1GC – (1 pint, lasts 6 hours)
Map of Toran 2GC
Mirror 2GC
Pipe 2GC
Ration (Meal) 1GC – 1 day's worth of dried meat, fruits and hardbread
Rope 2GC (50 feet)
Long Rope 4GC (100 feet / 2 Spaces)
Spyglass 5GC
Tinderbox 3GC
Tool 5GC – Shovel, Saw, Hammer etc.
Torch 1GC – lasts 1 hour

HERBS, OILS, SALVES AND POTIONS

Potion of Alether 4GC – Adds 2 to COMBAT SKILL

Potion of Laumspur 5GC – Restores 4 Endurance when swallowed after combat

Potion of Laumwort 3GC – Restores 2 ENDURANCE

Holy Water 20GC – per flask

Malavan Tea 4GC – increases effectiveness of *Mindblast* (double the COMBAT SKILL bonus provided by the *Mindblast* discipline from +2 to +4 for the duration the next combat)

Graveweed – Unavailable, all stocks have sold out

Larnuma Oil 3GC – Restores 2 ENDURANCE

Bautarian Antitoxin 50GC – neutralises lesser poison and disease

Tobacco 1GC per 2oz pouch

WEAPONS

Arrow 1GC - for two

Axe 8GC

Bow 25GC

Dagger 2GC

Broadsword 25GC

Mace 10GC

Quarterstaff 1½GC

Short Sword 7GC

Spear 2GC

Sword 10GC

Warhammer 10GC

ARMOUR

Chainmail Waistcoat 80GC – Adds 4 to ENDURANCE

Helmet 25GC – Adds 2 to ENDURANCE

Gauntlets 20GC – Adds 1 to ENDURANCE & 1 to COMBAT SKILL (when unarmed)

Greaves 25GC – Adds 1 to ENDURANCE

Padded Leather Waistcoat 20GC – Adds 2 to ENDURANCE

Shield 30GC – Adds 2 to COMBAT SKILL

SERVICES

Tankard of Good Ale 1GC

Glass of Fine Wine 1GC

Street Vendor Food 1GC – enough for 1 Meal

Good Tavern Meal 2GC

Average Inn room 1GC (per night)

Bread 1GC (large loaf)

CHAIN GANG

If the Players found and kept the length of chain on the bank of the River Tor, they can try to locate the blacksmith who manufactured it and, perhaps, identify and locate its purchaser.

The chain was made by Aren Larston. He owns a long-established family-run blacksmithy in Gildour Street, in the Dock's Ward. He and

his three sons (Enar, Dag and Svor) make and repair all manner of ironware. They specialize in producing iron fittings for use aboard ship, and are regularly commissioned to supply equipment for the vessels of the Northern Fleet and the Northlands Trading Company.

You can locate Gildour Street for yourselves if you have a Map of Toran. Otherwise it will take you some time to find out its location by asking around. It is situated on the north-western

side of the city in the Docks' Ward district. Upon arriving in Gildour Street, it is easy to see where Aran's Blacksmithy is. The unseasonably cold weather has attracted a motley crowd of beggars and vagabonds who are warming themselves in the heat that radiates from the open smithy doors. A large shield, hanging by chains above this entrance, bears the emblem of two crossed hammers.

You tether your horses to a rail, push your way through the grumbling vagrants and enter the blacksmithy. A powerfully built young man wearing a leather apron greets you.

'My name is Enar. How can I be of service to you?'



The young blacksmith is an honest and helpful character. When questioned, he can impart the following information:

- If shown the chain, he will acknowledge it as his own work. He remembers that it was a specially commissioned job because the steel he used was of superior quality to that which is usually used to manufacture chains of this link size.
- The chain was ordered and paid for by Lieutenant Svader of the City Watch. He says: *'tis a shame he was sent upriver with those new recruits of his. They're a surly bunch of bullies if ever there was. They act like thugs and talk like foreigners. No doubt they were hired by the Baron because they're cheap to employ.'*
- When the chain was collected it was paid for with a gemstone. This is very unusual since almost all of the work done here at the blacksmithy is settled with gold crowns, even for a special commission such as this.

- Rumours are rife that some renegade Kai Lords have turned to murder and banditry. Lieutenant Svader and his brutish men sailed upriver to investigate. Enar has heard tell that Svader and his men returned to Toran a couple of days ago with one of these rogue Kai. "They say he is a Kai Master. A Kai Master! I can hardly believe it still."

This information should alert the Players that some elements of the City Watch may be corrupt. The description of the new recruits sounds like they may be Drakkarim in disguise. This is both surprising and shocking news.

The City Watch is an armed force which comprises a cassel (regiment) of regular troops who are well equipped and trained for the task of policing the city and keeping the peace. Baron Vinas, the ruler of Toran, is their commander in chief. They are steadfastly loyal to the Baron and generally considered to be free of corruption. It is considered ill-advised to attempt to bribe a member of the Toran City Watch, as to do so would be a grave insult to his personal honour and the reputation of the Watch itself. Normally, anyone who attempted such a foolish action can expect to be summarily beaten and thrown into prison for up to 30 days.

On leaving the smithy and returning to their horses, some of the vagrants close in around the Players with their hands held out. Pitifully, they beg for alms. If the Players each donate 1gc, the homeless beggars will thank them profusely and disperse.

If the Players decide not to give 1gc a piece to the vagabonds, they will chastise them for being too mean to help their fellow Sommlending when they need help most. A gang of six particularly surly beggars will scurry after the Players, taunting them continuously as they ride away. The Players can attempt a difficulty 6 Test to lose this beggar gang in the twisting streets of the Dock Ward. Those with the Camouflage discipline will gain a +2 bonus.

If they are unable to shake off these belligerent vagrants, they will become increasingly aggressive until they openly attack the Players in the street by dragging them out of their saddles. Armed combat on the streets of Toran is a serious and custodial offense. The Players must fight off the unarmed vagrants but without drawing their weapons. They will suffer a -4 penalty to their Combat Skill during the ensuing unarmed brawl.

DOCKS' WARD GANG (EACH)

Combat Skill: 12

Endurance: 15

Traits: Grouping (Mob)

Once the unsavoury encounter with the vagabond gang has been settled, the Players can further investigate the useful information they learned from the blacksmith. There is something decidedly



fishy going on at the City Watch headquarters and this is where they should investigate next. The headquarters are at Watch House which is located in Hitchford Way, in the city's Middle Ward. It is no more than a few hundred yards from the Players' present location.

Skip ahead to **Scene 8 – Corrupted Command.**

CROOKED CUSTOMS

The Players can check the records of all the boats that have arrived from upriver in the past few days by going to the Sound Master's Office. All river boat traffic entering the docks is logged routinely. The logs are kept in the Sound Master's Office. It is located in Docks Road, in the Dock's Ward precinct of the city.



The Docks are located on the west side of Toran and are easy to locate. The Sound Master's Office is a plain whitewashed stone building located in the middle of the main quay. Upon your arrival in Docks' Road, you notice that over 50 cargo barges are tied up at the piers adjacent to the Sound Master's Office.

Their owners have been served with a Baronial Order which prevents them from using the River Tor until further notice. The order has been imposed due to the reports that renegade Kai have been killing villagers upriver in the Tor River Valley area.

If any Player is still wearing their Kai Cloak and rank badge, they will quickly draw unwanted attention from disgruntled Bargees on the quayside and incite them to seek out and inform the City Watch of your presence here.

The Sound Master of Toran is Gunva Hadronsa, a retired naval admiral. The quayside office is managed by his son, Honzo, a gruff middle-aged sea dog with a propensity for the telling and re-telling of tales about his seafaring exploits, especially the time when he single-handedly repelled an attack by Shadakine Buccaneers from his storm-crippled caravel off the coast of Dessi, thereby saving his ship, its cargo, and its gravely ill crew who had been incapacitated to a man by an outbreak of Brunari Fever. Honzo Hadronsa has an office staff of fifty men. They are mostly retired veteran sailors who administer the running of the Toran Sound, including the keeping of the dock records and the collection of taxes and trade goods levies. Public examination of the meticulously detailed harbour logs is permitted for an inspection fee of 3 gold crowns.



Upon entering the Sound Master's Office, immediately you see that Honzo's staff look very tired and agitated. When asked for permission to inspect the harbour logs, they refer you to a small office at the end of a long corridor. "Go see Barksen", they say, offhandedly.

Following their directive, you go to Barksen's office and knock on the whitewashed door. "Come!" says the booming voice of a man on the other side. You twist the brass handle and enter.

Fars Barksen is a pompous minor official who dresses in an expensive fashion that belies his lowly rank of quayside clerk. He is impeccably groomed and his chubby fingers are laden with bejewelled rings. It becomes immediately obvious that Barksen



is obsessed with his vainglorious self-importance. When you ask him to be permitted to inspect the harbour log, he demands payment of 3 gold crowns which, to your surprise, he places straight into a pocket of his red velvet waistcoat. Without any prompting, he launches into an account of what has been happening on the River Tor of late.



"Several weeks ago, a river barge came floating into the docks from upriver. Quite the strangest thing we've seen in quite a while. Fully laden with grain but not a single bargee aboard. We assumed that its crew had not tied up their barge properly and it had got loose and drifted all the way down river to Toran. The cargo was sold to the Northlands Trading Company and no more was said about it. When a second unmanned barge, fully laden, came floating downriver a few days later, that's when I knew that something was amiss. Dried blood was found on its deck. I personally impounded the barge and its cargo and reported the incident to the City Watch. I heard later that Captain Svader and a squad of watchmen had sailed upriver to investigate. When they returned, I heard they'd witnessed a terrible slaughter of innocent villagers by a party of renegade Kai lords no less!

Barksen's tale is a pure fabrication, a deliberate attempt to keep hidden the fact that the barges came drifting downriver *after* Captain Svader's expedition set sail. The dispatch of the watchmen preceded the arrival of the drifting barges. If asked about the arrival of any other ships, the snobbish clerk will tell them to wait here while he goes to fetch the harbour log. Before he leaves, he produces a silver tray with a decanter of wine and several long-stemmed crystal glasses. Courteously, he pours a glass of wine for each of the Players as compensation for making them wait while he goes to fetch the Harbour Log. It is an exceptionally fine vintage.

Ask each of the Players if they wish to drink their delicious glass of wine or leave it on the tray untouched.

After waiting for five minutes, it will become clear to the Players that Barksen has no intention of returning. When the Players leave his office and go back to the front desk to enquire after his whereabouts, one of the assistants will say that Barksen mumbled something about needing 'to visit the cellar'.

If the Players ask about the Harbour Log, he will produce a large leather-bound book from under the desk. A quick perusal of the log will reveal that the most recent page has been torn out. Remnants of the torn page near the binding show that the damage has only just occurred; the page was ripped out not more than a few minutes ago.

The assistant can impart the following information but he will not offer it freely. A bribe of 2 gold crowns must be slipped across the desk into his palm in order to loosen his tongue:

- The only boat which has arrived from upriver in the past week is the same vessel that was sent out with reinforcements for the Durncrag outposts. It came in with a handful of watchmen and Lieutenant Svader. The Lieutenant personally reported to the Captain of the City Watch and the Guildmaster of the Brotherhood of the Crystal Star that he had witnessed a massacre in the Tor River Valley.
- The abandoned barges were carrying cargoes of winter grain, produce from the riverside farms. There was nothing of any exceptional value found aboard.
- The contents of the barges were claimed by the Sound Master's Office, as is customary by law, and sold to the Northlands Trading Company.
- Fars Barksen has been acting strangely for the past few weeks. His pomposity has escalated to the point where he no longer socialises with his fellow assistants and clerks. They do not miss his company.
- Barksen persuaded Honzo Hadronsa, manager of the Sound Master's Office, to petition the Baron for a Baronial Order forbidding all vessels to sail upon the River Tor. The assistant says that, in his humble opinion, it was a wise precaution in view of what has happened recently.
- Lieutenant Svader has been a frequent visitor to the Sound Master's Office in the past week. According to Barksen, he has spent hours in the cellar studying the old Harbour Logs that are archived there.

If the Players ask to be allowed to go down to the cellar and inspect the historical archives, the assistant will only agree to their request if they pay him another 2 gold crowns. In this instance, they should be encouraged to do so.



Behind the front desk there is a flight of stone steps leading down to the cellar. Quickly, the assistant ushers them down the steps before any of his colleagues notice what is going on. At the bottom of the stairs they find a locked door. Calling out Barksen's name will elicit no response. Players with the Mind over Matter discipline may mentally manipulate the lock and make it disengage if they succeed a difficulty 5 Test. Failing this, the Players may attempt to force open the door. Whichever Player volunteers to do this will lose 2 Endurance points due to severe bruising of their shoulder in the process.

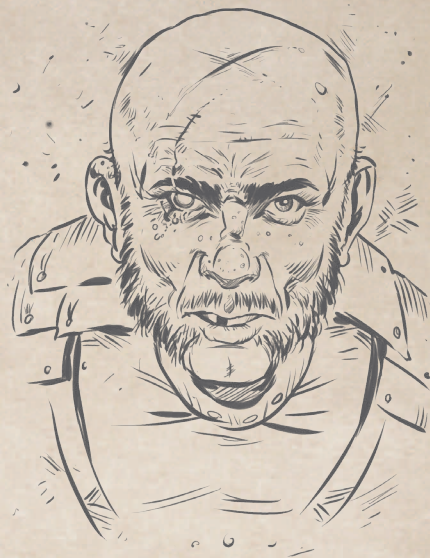
Beyond the door they will discover a large stone-walled chamber lit by ships' lanterns. Scores of neatly-stacked wooden crates and oaken chests fill the cellar. They contain the harbour log archives which date back decades. There is no sign of Barksen here. Searching the cellar will allow the Players to attempt a difficulty 8 Test to discover where the clerk has gone. Players with the Tracking discipline gain a +2 bonus.

Success leads to the discovery of some tell-tale scuff marks on the floor next to a heavy-looking crate. This crate is not what it seems. It is a hinged partition which conceals a secret passageway. Simply looking along the secret passageway will reveal that it is a very long corridor lit all along its length by lanterns. It ends at a stout, bronze-banded oak door with an ornate handle and a finely engraved lock plate and keyhole. Despite its formidable appearance the door is unlocked. Any Player who presses the door lever down will cause it to swing open silently on well-oiled hinges, revealing a smaller cellar beyond.

It is now that any Players who accepted and drank the fine wine that was proffered by Fars Barksen in his office will start to feel the effects of 'Sleeptooth' ingestion. This powerful soporific was already in the wine before Barksen poured it out into the glasses. Any Player who drank the wine will be affected. Resisting the effects of the sleeping draught requires a difficulty 25 Test, using the Player's current Endurance as a bonus to the roll. Failure will result in the victim falling unconscious, unless they can drink a Bautarian Antitoxin Vial.

If all the Players drank the wine then they will all succumb to the effects of the sleeping draught. When they regain consciousness, they will find themselves in Watch House. In this instance you should go to **Scene 8 – Corrupted Command** and continue the adventure from there.

If one or more of the Players did not drink the wine, or proved to be resistant to the draught after testing, then Barksen, in the company of a bald muscular man clad in padded leather armour, will emerge from the shadows with heavy clubs gripped tightly in their hands. Barksen is eager to finish the job of subduing the Players where his spiked wine failed.



FARS BARKSEN

Combat Skill: 12

Endurance: 21

BARGIL THE BODYGUARD

Combat Skill: 18

Endurance: 26

If the Player(s) wins the fight, they can explore the small cellar. Read the following text aloud:

There is a faint aroma of decay in this subterranean chamber. The smell is strongest in the south-east corner. There are several loose paving slabs here and lifting one will uncover the shallow grave of a man dressed in City Watch uniform. The corpse has a neatly groomed ginger beard. The sleeve insignia on the tunic indicate that his was formerly a Senior Lieutenant of the City Watch. The cause of death is plain to see; the body has over twenty stab wounds in the back chest and neck. Judging from the condition of the corpse you estimate that he had been dead for no more than 3 days.

There is an archway in the south wall of the cellar which leads to a stone staircase. This ascends to a studied wooden door banded with strips of black iron. It is held closed by a simple latch. Lifting the latch and pushing the door will reveal a well-stocked storeroom that is heavily guarded. You have now arrived in the lower first level of Watch House. This building serves as the headquarters of the Toran City Watch. Unfortunately, it also serves as the city's main prison!

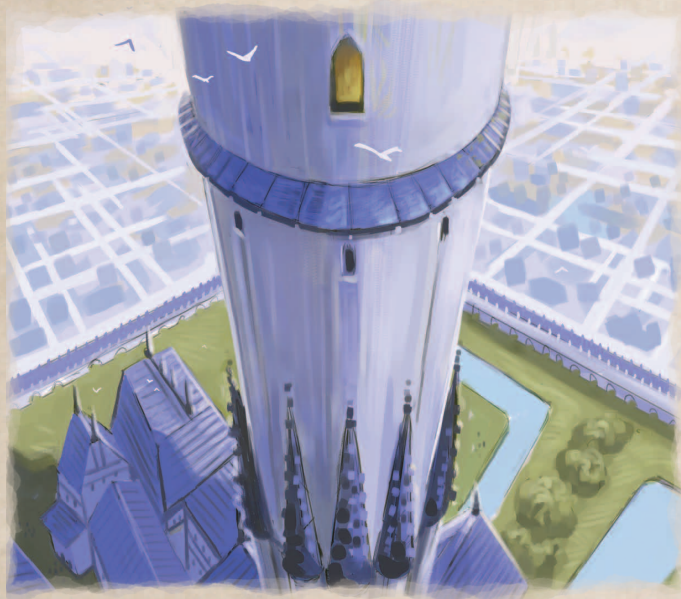
The moment the door opens, you are rushed by a dozen City Watchmen and jailors who quickly surround and disarm you. As they drag you away you are permitted to retain your Backpacks... at least for now.

The Player in charge of the Messenger Hawk will be forced to let the bird go. Without a message attached to its leg, it will fly off along a corridor and ascend a distant staircase. It causes some commotion on the level above before escaping through the front door of Watch House. Once free, it will seek refuge in one of the many tall towers of the City Residential district. You can inform the hawk handler that they have no way of knowing for certain if they will ever see the bird again.

Proceed to **Scene 8 – Corrupted Command** and continue the adventure from there.

THE MAGICIANS GUILDHALL

The Guildhall of the Brotherhood of the Crystal Star is located in Vinas Avenue in the City Residential Ward and stands diametrically opposite the Baron's Citadel. The senior ruling members (Elders) of the Brotherhood are called the High Council. They are led by their Guildmaster who is elected from among his (or her) peers and holds the office for life. During earlier periods of Toran's history, the Guildmaster of the Brotherhood has wielded more political power than the Baron. In MS 5000, the Guildmaster is called Vaceron. He also holds the post of City Chancellor of Toran and he is senior advisor to the Baron.



The Guildhall is a grand edifice with many mahogany shuttered windows and exquisite slate-roofed minarets. Its most prominent feature is the Brotherhood Tower. Atop the tower is a large multi-pointed crystal star. In MS 3879, a magical beacon was installed into the crystal star. Similar beacons are located on the top of the

Tower of the Sun at the Kai Monastery, and atop the Holmgulf Turret in Holmgard. They provide a warning system that can be triggered if ever one or more of the locations come under attack from the armies of the Darklands.

The Guildhall of the Brotherhood of the Crystal Star is very easy to find as its magnificent Brotherhood Tower is the tallest in Toran. It dominates the skyline and can be seen from all parts of the city. It is a beautiful construction of white marble inlaid with gold and silver stars. It has many almond-shaped windows that look out upon the city like a hundred pairs of benevolent eyes. The air around this tower shimmers uneasily as if it is was heated by the magical forces within. It is tall and circular, tapering gently to a point upon which is set a magnificent crystal star, the symbol of the order and a mark of respect to Goddess Ishir.

Beyond the South Gate is Farsell Lane. It is major thoroughfare which runs directly from the South Gate to the Guildhall of the Brotherhood in the centre of the city. You are riding along Farsell Lane when you are noticed by a young woman clad in a flowing blue robe that is embroidered with stars and crescent moons. She is a Brotherhood apprentice and gifted with Left-handed magic. Boldly, she strides into the middle of the street and holds up her hand, commanding you to halt.

Ask the Players if they wish to obey the young magician's command. If they do not, they can attempt to swerve their horses around her and continue along Farsell Lane at a trot.

- **If they obey her command to stop,** read aloud the following:

The young woman narrows her eyes and furrows her brow in concentration. You sense that she is casting a spell. It is a 'Sense Evil' spell and you have nothing to fear; it will not cause you any pain or hard.

Once she has satisfied herself that you do not harbour any evil or malicious intent, she apologises for her mistake, bids you good day and steps aside to allow you to continue your ride towards the Guildhall of the Brotherhood which is now plain to see at the far end of the street.

- **If they disobey her command to stop:**

You steer your horses wide of the Brotherhood apprentice and then urge them to the gallop. But you have covered less than twenty yards when she extends her hand and intones the words of the Brotherhood spell 'Net'. An arcing jet of sticky fluid shoots from her open palm and comes speeding towards your backs.



One of the Players must now attempt a difficulty 6 Test on behalf of all the Players. To determine who gets to make this test, all Players should now flip a token into the Random Number tray. The Player with the highest score (0 = 10) is the one who makes the test.

• **If the test succeeds,** read the following aloud:

The jet of translucent fluid transforms in mid-air into a net of crisscrossed gluey fibres. Fortunately, you are just out of range of the Brotherhood apprentice's spell and the fibres fall short of hitting you. However, you are not beyond range of a 'Lightning Hand' spell and this is what the apprentice launches at you the moment she sees that her Net spell has failed.

The Players must again flip a token into the Random Number tray. The Player with the highest score (0 = 10) is the one who is hit in the back by the bolt of lightning. It rips into their Backpack and destroys the third and fifth items on their Backpack Items list (these must now be erased). It also inflicts burns on their back which reduces their Endurance by 6 points.

• **If the test fails:**

You are all ensnared in a gluey net of crisscrossed fibres that brings you and your mounts to a rapid halt. You are tightly bound up by the sticky fibres and unable to move. The Brotherhood apprentice signals to a passing patrol of the City Watch to come to her aid. Rapidly, they respond and move in to surround you. The apprentice wills her spell to dissipate and the City Watchmen rush forward and drag you from your saddles.

You are quickly disarmed but your Backpacks are not confiscated. Under close escort, with spear tips pointing at you from all sides, you are unceremoniously marched to Watch House. This is the headquarters of the City Watch. It is also Toran's main prison!

The Player in charge of the Messenger Hawk will have lost control of the hawk when they became ensnared in the net. Without a message attached to its leg, it will seek refuge in one of the many tall towers of the city. You can inform the hawk handler of this, and that they have no way of knowing for certain if they will ever see the bird again.

Proceed to **Scene 8 – Corrupted Command** and continue the adventure from there.

If the Players obeyed the Brotherhood Magician and halted when she commanded them to, they will have been allowed to continue on their way along Farsell Lane. Read aloud the following:

As you are drawing closer to the Guildhall, a patrol of the City Watch comes marching into Farsell Lane from Vinas Avenue, the thoroughfare in which the Guildhall is located. They are led by a gruff looking sergeant and they all have spears couched on their shoulders. To avoid running straight into them, you turn your horses into a street on your left which, in turn, leads to a maze of smaller streets and alleyways.

Guided by the ever-present sight of the Brotherhood Tower that is visible above the rooftops, you make your way towards the tower and soon arrive in a street which is located opposite the outer wall of the Guildhall of the Brotherhood of the Crystal Star.

You are thirty yards from the end of the street and approaching the junction where it merges with Vinas Avenue, when you see another patrol of the City Watch come around the corner and marches directly towards you.

Rather than risk being stopped and arrested by this patrol, you turn and ride through the arched brick entrance to a large block of stables immediately on your left. It is a part of Toran College.



Toran College was founded in MS 3640 by King Venn I. The original college building was completely destroyed in MS 3788 during the War of the Black Muster when Toran endured four years of siege by the forces of Archlord Vashna. In the year MS 3805, it was rebuilt on the same site by order of King Bern I. It has an impressively grand fan-vault, and its small chapel's stained-glass windows are considered some of the finest remaining examples that date from that era. The principal of the college is Lorin Kelden. He is a Kai Virin who possesses mastery of the Sixth Sense discipline.

KAI VIRIN

The majority of Kai trainees rise to the rank of Kai Initiate upon mastering five Kai disciplines, but not all go on to achieve the esteemed rank of Kai Master. Usually this is because they lack an innate ability in certain disciplines and are simply unable to master them, no matter how much they strive to do so. There is no shame attached to this; all Kai are exceptional in their own special way.

The progress of those who are training to be Kai Masters is constantly assessed. If a trainee is judged to have reached the limit of his or her Kai potential and cannot achieve the rank of Kai Warmarn / Journeyman by the age of 21, then they are honourably discharged from the Monastery and can resume 'normal' life in the Sommlending community. These Kai are known as Kai Virin.

Kai Virin are still expected to uphold the ideals of the Order, and they will be called upon to serve in times of war. There is no disgrace or stigma attached to being a Kai Virin; the fact that they have had formal Kai training will earn them much respect in Sommlending society.

Within a minute of entering the Toran College stables, a number of young stable hands come forward and take hold of your horses' bridles. They insist that you dismount and assure you that your horses will be well looked after during your time in the college. They assume that you are expected visitors and they send word of your arrival to the Stables Master.



Suspecting that something is amiss, he calls for the stable gates to be closed and barred. He then informs the principal of the college, Lorin Kelden, of your unexpected arrival.

Ask the players what they want to do:

- Wait for Principal Kelden to arrive at the stables and inform him of their mission
- Attempt to escape from the college stables before Principal Kelden arrives

Wait for the Principal: when Kelden arrives, immediately he uses his Sixth Sense ability to determine who the Players are and what is their true intent. He quickly detects that they are Kai Lords and harbour no malicious thoughts or evil intentions. He is sympathetic to their plight and insists on escorting them personally across Vinas Avenue to Crystal Gate, the entrance of the Guildhall of the Brotherhood of the Crystal Star. Having Principal Kelden's endorsement will greatly assist the Players to avoid any entanglements with the City Watch and gain entry to the Guildhall.

Attempt to escape: the only way out of the stables is by attempting to climb over its barred gates. If the Players wish to attempt this, they must each make a Difficulty 6 test. Those who possess the Hunting discipline will gain a -1 to this test. Test failure test means that they will fall from the top of the gates and land in the street outside, sustaining a loss of -2 Endurance points on landing. A successful test means that they will sustain no injury during the attempted escape.

Unfortunately, the City Watch patrol will be ready and waiting for them in the street beyond the locked stable gates.

You are quickly surrounded and disarmed by the City Watch patrol although your Backpacks are not confiscated. Under close escort, with spear tips pointing at you from all sides, you are unceremoniously marched to Watch House, the headquarters of the City Watch. It is also Toran's main prison!

The Player in charge of the Messenger Hawk will be forced to let the bird go. Without a message attached to its leg, it will seek refuge in one of the many tall towers of the city. You can inform the hawk handler of this, and that they have no way of knowing for certain if they will ever see the bird again.

Proceed to **Scene 8 – Corrupted Command** and continue the adventure from there.



CRYSTAL GATE

This is the main entrance gate to the Guildhall of the Brotherhood of the Crystal Star. It is manned by Brotherhood magicians and Guild Townsmen (Men at Arms enlisted by the guilds of Sommerlund). Because (and only because) the Players are accompanied by Principal Kelden are they permitted to go through the Crystal Gate and enter the Pass Yard beyond.

PASS YARD

Visitors to the Guildhall must first pass into a smaller courtyard, known as the Pass Yard, where they are vetted by duty members of the lower ranks of the Guild. This initial assessment is done solely by the use of low level Brotherhood spells of detection with the purpose of determining the general disposition of a visiting party. It is effective at identifying would-be intruders with a malign or hostile intent.

Check if the Players are still in possession of Kai Grand Master's Letter.

If they no longer have the Letter:

You are ushered into a guardroom in the Pass Yard. Several lower ranking Brotherhood magicians enter the room after you and demand that you drop all your weapons on the floor. They are poised to launch a volley of Lightning Hand spells at you if you fail to comply. Once you have disarmed yourselves, the weapons are gathered up and taken away.



A Brotherhood Senior Mage called Acraban enters the chamber and looks at you all with deep suspicion burning in his steely blue eyes. Summarily, he orders the lower-ranking magicians to surround you

and maintain their readiness to use their Lightning Hand spells if you should attempt to from their custody.

Under close escort, you are unceremoniously marched to Watch House - the headquarters of the City Watch. It is also Toran's main prison!

Proceed to **Scene 8 – Corrupted Command** and continue the adventure from there.

If they still have the Letter:

You are assessed and cleared by the Brotherhood mages on duty in the Pass Yard, and permitted to enter the Hall of Acceptance. Here you await an audience with Senior Mage Adabor. While you are waiting you are provided with food and ale enough for one Meal. You can consume this now or store it in your Backpack for later (space permitting).

When finally Adabor arrives, he peruses your Letter with utmost suspicion. It appears to be authentic by he is not entirely satisfied that you are who you claim to be. Erring on the side of extreme caution, he orders eight of his lower-ranking magicians to come forward and surround you. He tells them to prepare Lightning Hand spells to launch at you if you should show the slightest sign of resistance.



"I am placing you all under arrest," he says, with deep suspicion burning in his steely blue eyes. He orders his eight magicians to maintain their readiness to use their Lightning Hand spells if you should attempt to escape from their custody. Without further ado, you are unceremoniously marched out of the Guildhall and escorted

by the magicians to Watch House - the headquarters of the City Watch. It is also Toran's main prison!

In both instances, the Player in charge of the Messenger Hawk will be forced to let the bird go. Without a message attached to its leg, it will seek refuge in one of the many tall towers of the city. You can inform the hawk handler of this, and that they have no way of knowing for certain if they will ever see the bird again.

Proceed to **Scene 8 – Corrupted Command** to continue the adventure.

CORRUPTED COMMAND

Narrators should now assess how the Players have arrived at Watch House and what knowledge they possess. It could be that they have been arrested in the city and brought here under escort for questioning, or they may suspect Lieutenant Svader is up to no good and have arrived here under their own volition to find out more. If they came here of their own volition, they will be arrested as soon as they set foot inside Watch House on suspicion that they are renegade Kai. In all circumstances they will be disarmed but allowed to retain possession of their Backpacks. As a consequence, they will begin the scene without any weapons.

The Player in charge of the Messenger Hawk will be forced to let the bird go. Without a message attached to its leg, it will fly out of the front door and seek refuge in one of the many tall towers of the city. You can inform the hawk handler of this, and that they have no way of knowing for certain if they will ever see the bird again.



WATCH HOUSE

Located in Hitchford Way, in Toran's Middle Ward district, this grimly imposing structure has several stories and a flat roof with a crenulated parapet which runs around all four sides of its tallest storey. It also has three subterranean levels containing over two hundred cells for the incarceration of prisoners. It serves as the headquarters of the City Watch and it is also Toran's main prison.

INDUCTION CELL

The Players begin this scene in an induction cell in Watch House. This is where persons who have been arrested are held while the circumstances of their arrests are being assessed by Duty Officers. After assessment, they are transferred to smaller cells that hold 2 or 3 inmates. The induction cell is located on the ground floor of Watch House. The lower first level is where post-assessment prisoners are transferred. There are two further subterranean levels beneath Watch House (the lower 2nd and lower 3rd levels). This is where long-term prisoners are placed after having been sentenced to varying terms of incarceration by the High Court and the Lugalim (lower) Court of Toran.



You are imprisoned all together in an induction cell on the ground floor level of Watch House. This is larger than most of the other cells in the Watch House prison complex. There is no furniture, save for half a dozen straw mattresses scattered about the granite floor. Although it isn't a comfortable place



to be, at least it is illuminated, warm and free of damp and vermin, which is more than can be said of the cells on the lower second and third levels of the prison where long-term prisoners are incarcerated. You are not alone in the induction cell. A dishevelled sailor, asleep and snoring loudly, is lying on a straw mattress opposite the cell door.

The drunken sailor will awaken and drag himself into a sitting position in the middle of his straw mattress. After more than 24 hours spent in the cell, he has slept off the worst of his excessive drinking but he is now monumentally hung-over. Ask the Players if they wish to question him. If they do not, he will slowly and painfully resume a prone position and go back to sleep. If they do, read the following text aloud:

"I promise, to everything that's holy, I'll n'er touch another dram o' grog as long as I live 'n' breathe. M'name's Finnon. Merchant seaman Finnon. Now, what's a gang o' fine young fellows like you doing 'ere in 'duction? You don't look like tavern rats nor bruisers to me.

The Players will have difficulty getting any useful information from Finnon, as he is a hopeless alcoholic. However, any Player with Sixth Sense should make a difficulty 6 Test. If successful, they will sense that he witnessed something very unusual when he was being dragged towards the Induction Cell.

Finnon cannot consciously recall the event but the Player can tap into his subconscious and see the event unfold as a series of fractured images.

In your mind's eye, you witness an unconscious Master Stormsong being carried over the shoulder of a tall muscular man dressed in an ill-fitting uniform of a City Watchman. The Watchman's brutal features betray his true identity; he is a Drakkar. Stormsong's hands are broken and caked with dried blood. The Drakkar carries him up a wide stone staircase and suddenly disappears from view.

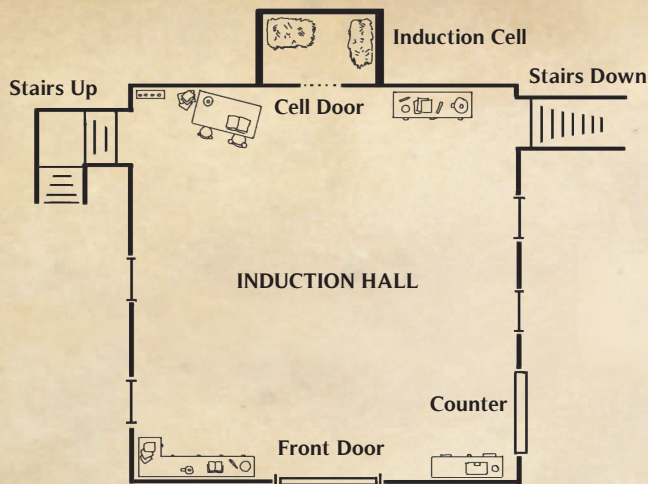
You should now ask the Players what they wish to do. A search of the cell and a search of the drunkard Finnon will not reveal anything of practical use. When they decide (as they most likely will) to examine the cell door, proceed to the following section:

INDUCTION CELL DOOR

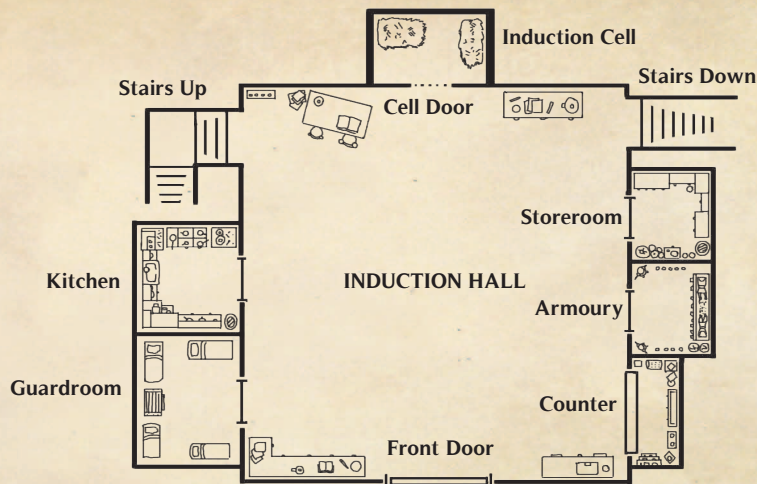
A cursory examination of the lock will reveal that it is badly worn and sorely in need of maintenance. This makes it relatively easy to pick. A Player with the Mind Over Matter discipline can test on a difficulty of 5. The others can test on a 7. Only if all tests fail will the Players need to resort to brute force to break the lock mechanism. The resulting noise will alert the Duty Officer (see Induction Hall).

INDUCTION HALL

The Induction Hall is a large reception area measuring approximately 50ft x 50ft. It is usually busy and is never completely unoccupied. If the Players have picked the Induction Cell Door lock then they can ease open the door just enough to see what is going on in this area. Pick a Random Number (0 = 10) and multiply this by 2. The result



1ST PLAN OF THE INDUCTION HALL



2ND PLAN OF THE INDUCTION HALL
(NARRATOR ONLY)



equals the number of minutes the Players must wait until activity in the hall is minimal. You should show the Players the 1st plan of the Induction Hall (below) so that they get an idea of the layout. However, do not show them the 2nd Plan of the Induction Hall which, for now, is for your eyes only, as it reveals what lies beyond each of the closed doors.

If the Players picked the Induction Cell Door lock:

At this time, only one Duty Officer is in the hall. He is seated on a tall stool behind a heavy wooden counter near to the front door. From his unusually brutish features they will be able to determine that he is a Drakkar. If they wish to make any progress, they will need to neutralize this enemy as swiftly and as quietly as possible.

Any Player with the *Mindblast* Discipline can make a Test at Difficulty 5. Success will enable them to psychically stun the Drakkar Duty Officer long enough for them (and the others if they so wish) to rush across the hall to his desk, without being seen and without him raising the alarm. If they do this, they can gag and bind the Drakkar Duty Officer and hide him out of sight beneath the counter. He has a sword and a dagger. He also has the Keys to all the locked doors in the Induction Hall. The Players can take the Keys and arm themselves with his weapons, using Random Number throws to determine who gets them (highest scores win).

If no Player has the *Mindblast* Discipline, they may each attempt stealth attack. The Difficulty of the test is 6. Players with Camouflage or Hunting gain a 1 bonus to the test. The Player with the highest END score tests first. If successful, they are able to exit the cell unseen. The next highest END Player tests and, like the first Player, they can leave the cell without the Drakkar noticing them. A minimum of 2 Players are needed in order to cross the hall and take the Drakkar unawares. They can subdue, gag and bind him and then hide him out of sight beneath the counter. He has a sword and a dagger. The 2 Players can arm themselves with these weapons. He also has the Keys to all the locked doors in the Induction Hall.

If any Player fails the test, the Drakkar Duty Officer will spot them opening the cell door and immediately raise the alarm. Two Drakkarim Duty Officers and three Jailors will come rushing up the staircase from the 1st Lower level to join forces with the Drakkar who raised the alarm and, together, they will attack the Players. For the enemy's stats, see '*If the Players forced open the Induction Cell Door*' below).

If the Players forced open the Induction Cell Door:

The noise of the breaking lock alerts the guards in the Induction Hall. Immediately the cell door opens, they draw their weapons and rush to attack the Players.

3 X WATCH HOUSE JAILERS (EACH)

Combat Skill: 12

Endurance: 20

3 X DRAKKARIM DUTY OFFICERS (EACH)

Combat Skill: 18

Endurance: 28

The Players are unarmed and must fight at a -4 penalty to their CS. They can attempt to kill the Drakkarim in combat, but they must only fight to subdue (i.e. render unconscious) the three Watch House Jailers. The Jailers are armed with daggers and the Drakkarim are armed with swords. When a Player wins a combat, they can take and use their enemy's dropped weapon.

Following successful combat, the Players should refer to the *1st Plan of the Induction Hall* in Watch House to help them decide where to go and what to do next. Only if they search the body of the Drakkarim Duty Officers will they find the Keys to all the locked doors in the Induction Hall.

BROWN DOOR (STOREROOM)

This door is locked. It can be opened if the Players have the Keys. It can be forced open on a test of 7. Players with Mind over Matter will gain a bonus of 2.

This store room is illuminated by lantern light. Its wall are shelved from floor to ceiling with hundreds of thin wooden boxes containing personal items confiscated from the prisoners incarcerated in the cells on the 1st and 2nd Lower levels.

RED DOOR (ARMOURY)

This door is locked. It can be opened if the Players have the Keys. It can be forced open on a test of 8. Players with Mind over Matter will gain a bonus of 2.

This room contains two weapon racks. The first rack holds 10 swords, 10 daggers and the weapons that were confiscated from the Players. The Players may now rearm themselves with their personal weapons. There is also a workbench on which there are all manner of armourer's tools.

GREEN DOOR (GUARDROOM)

This door is unlocked. This room is used by the Duty Officers and Jailers when they are off-duty. In addition to tables and chairs, there are 30 lockers which contain personal items belonging to the guards. They are each secured by a small padlock.

Watch House serves as the headquarters of the City Watch, but the watchmen themselves are not billeted here. They reside at the City Watch Barracks in Yardarm Street, in the Docks Ward precinct. Only duty officers and prison jailers work here, and on a shift rota



system. The rota is fixed to the wall of the Guardroom. If any Player examines the rota, they will discover that there are currently 10 Duty Officers and 24 Jailers scheduled for duty in Watch House.

Also fixed to the wall is a Plan of the Induction Hall on wall. You may now show the Players the *2nd Plan of the Induction Hall* which reveals what is behind each of the coloured doors.

WHITE DOOR (DUTY OFFICERS' & JAILORS' KITCHEN)

This kitchen is for the use of the Duty Officers and the Jailers only. Food for the prisoners is brought in and distributed by an independent provisioner at noon every day. There is a good stock of cooked meats, cheeses, fruit and bread in the kitchen's cupboards.

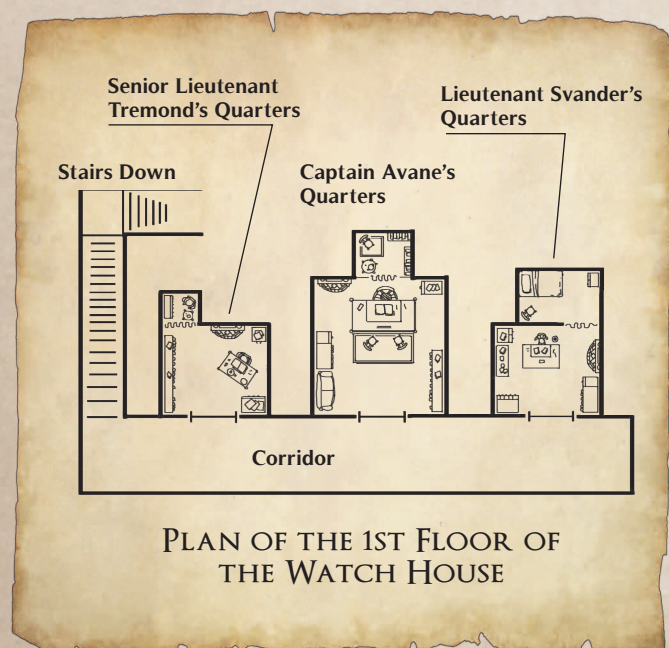
Although it would be unrealistic for the Players to prepare and eat a meal here, there is enough food on hand to provide 3 Meals for every Player that they can store in their Backpacks (space permitting).

STAIRCASE DOWN

This wide stone staircase descends to the Lower 1st and Lower 2nd levels of Watch House. The noises of the prisoners incarcerated in the cells of these levels, and the angry shouting of the jailers, should deter them from exploring further in this direction.

STAIRCASE UP

This wide stone staircase ascends twelve feet (4m) and turns sharply to the left before ascending another eighteen feet to the start of the corridor on the 1st Floor.



1ST FLOOR CORRIDOR

This long brick-walled and stone-floored corridor is lit by ceiling lanterns along its whole length. There are three doors set at regular intervals in the left hand wall.

SENIOR LIEUTENANT TREMOND'S QUARTERS

This door is locked. It can be forced open on a test of 7. Players with Mind over Matter will gain a bonus of 2. A brass plaque fixed to the middle of the door says: SENIOR LIEUTENANT TREMOND.

If the Players force open the lock and enter, they will discover the following:

- A chamber (20ft x 20ft) with a smaller chamber (12 x 12) adjoining it and partitioned off by a curtain.
- The main chamber contains office furniture, bookshelves, filing cupboards and stone fireplace (unlit).
- There is a portrait of Senior Lieutenant Tremond hanging on the wall that faces the door. He is a man in his early thirties with red hair and a neat, closely cropped beard.

If the Players entered Watch House by way of the tunnel that leads from the Sound Master's Office, and they discovered the shallow grave in the small chamber, then they will recognise at once that the man in the portrait and the corpse in the small cellar are the same person. You should inform them of this.

- A search of the filing cupboards will uncover two letters which indicate that Senior Lieutenant Tremond was seconded by the Northlands Trading Company three days ago to assist with retrieval of stolen goods found in Anskaven.
- Players with Sixth Sense will automatically detect that these letters are fakes.
- The adjoining smaller chamber contains a bed, a chair and a tall cupboard containing Tremond's clothes and personal effects.

CAPTAIN AVANE'S QUARTERS

This door is locked. It can be forced open on a test of 7. Players with Mind over Matter will gain a bonus of 2. A brass plaque fixed to the middle of the door says: CAPTAIN PEL AVANE.

If the Players force open the lock and enter, they will discover the following:

- A chamber (30ft x 30ft) with a smaller chamber (15 x 15) adjoining it and partitioned off by a curtain.

- The main chamber contains a large desk, a captain's chair, other chairs and furniture, bookshelves, a filing cupboard and a stone fireplace (unlit).
- A letter in the drawer of the desk from The Halls of Healing dated three weeks ago. It reveals that a private room has been set aside Captain Avane so that he can come in and undergo tests. It appears he is very ill, but the precise nature of what ails him has not been determined.

CAPTAIN PEL AVANE

In MS 5000, the commander of the Watch House is Captain Pel Avane, a gifted military leader of unimpeachable character. Following an honourable discharge from the King's Guard Cavalry in Holmgard on grounds of ill health (he sustained a badly broken leg during a skirmish with Giak raiders in the Durncrag Mountains, and it never healed properly), he was given this honour posting in MS 4996.

Captain Avane is a burly man with a thick bushy beard and a quick and incisive wit. He has a deep abiding respect for the Order of the Kai, and any Kai Lords who choose to seek him out will be assured of a warm welcome and his kindly assistance.



THE HALLS OF HEALING

The Halls of Healing are located in Amber Avenue, in the City Residential ward of Toran. This is where sick and injured citizens go for treatment. It is run by a contingent of Herbwardens who originally came to Toran from Bautar several centuries ago. The present herbwardens who work here are descendants of those first Bautarian settlers and are now bona fide Toranese nationals. They offer their services to the citizenry of Toran without charge as they are financed by the Baron of Toran.

The Halls of Healing comprise four rectangular buildings which form a square. In the middle of this square is a park and atrium in which herbs and plants are cultivated for use by the Herbwardens. Although they produce copious quantities of Laumspur in their small park, they do not sell any of the potions they produce here. All of their medicaments, including vials of Antitoxin tincture, are used for the treatment of citizens who come to them seeking assistance.

LIEUTENANT SVADER'S QUARTERS

This door is locked. It can be forced open on a test of 8. Players with Mind over Matter will gain a bonus of 2. If all the Players fail the test, they can re-test at a cost of 2 EP (which represents the bruising they sustain to their shoulder whilst barging the door open). A brass plaque fixed to the middle of the door says: LIEUTENANT SVADER.

If the Players force open the lock and enter, they will discover the following:

- A chamber (20ft x 20ft) with a smaller chamber (12 x 12) adjoining it and partitioned off by a curtain. The main chamber is brightly lit
- The adjoining smaller chamber contains a bed, a chair and a tall cupboard. The bed is covered by a thin layer of dust which indicates that it has not been slept in for over a month. The cupboard is empty.
- The main chamber contains office furniture, a waste paper basket, one tall bookcase, one wooden filing cupboard and brick fireplace (unlit).
- There is a small drawbolt on the inside of the office door. This can be slid across to prevent the door from being opened from outside.



If the Players decide to search Svader's office, they must each Test on a difficulty of 7. Players with Hunting or Sixth Sense get a bonus of 2, reducing the difficulty to 5. This bonus is stackable, so if a Player has Hunting and Sixth Sense the bonus will be 4, reducing the test difficulty to 3.

Only if the test is successful, the Players will discover the following:

- Hidden behind the bookcase is a secret passageway. The bookcase can be opened by pressing a large book located in the middle of the top shelf. This is not a book; it is a pressure lever.
- Tucked away at the back of the filing cupboard is a small velvet drawstring purse. It contains a Crystal Star Pendant. This pendant is worn by members of the Brotherhood of the Crystal Star.

CRYSTAL STAR PENDANT

This crystal medallion is fashioned in the shape of a multi-pointed star, the symbolic icon of the Brotherhood of the Crystal Star. It is fixed to a length of gold chain for wearing around the neck. Anyone who wears one legitimately will be considered a close friend and ally of the Magicians Guild of Toran. It is a talisman of good fortune and a ward against evil. It is imbued with a lesser form of the Brotherhood Spell Sense Evil and is a valuable tool for detecting powerful agents of the Darklords.

In the presence of such creatures, it will start to vibrate and emit yellow rays of light. When first worn it will add +1 to Kai's Favour. Players should each pick a Random Number to determine who gets to keep this Special Item and wear it around their neck.



- Rolled up in the waste paper basket is square of blotting paper. When reversed and held up to the lantern light, it reveals the following handwritten script which should be read aloud:

*To the High Council of the Brotherhood
of the Crystal Star*

Esteemed lords,

Pursuant to your express instructions.

I beg to inform you that I have swept the city and port area clean of all poisons similar to those found at Hitchford and other villages upriver which have been afflicted of late. Whether or not renegade Kai are truly to blame for this outrage, please be aware that the Border Rangers report no enemy activity east of the Durncrag. I conclude that there appears to be no imminent threat of invasion. Sadly, this casts our erstwhile comrades, the Kai, in rather an unfortunate light.

Captain Avane is honoured that you have seen fit to grant his wish that all Oede herb should be sequestered immediately and held in safe keeping at Watch House. As acting commander in his unfortunate absence, I will see to it personally that it remains safe and secure.

In light of the urgent necessity to protect the upriver villages and bolster the border guard outposts, it is my duty to report that the City Watch has now been reduced to a level that, I feel, is insufficient to provide adequate protection to the city and its citizens.

With regards to the recent recruitment of mercenaries to serve, albeit temporarily, as Duty Officers, please be assured that the cost of their services shall be met by the proceeds from the sale of the abandoned barge cargoes. They will not burden the Barons purse. The mercenaries shall be dismissed as soon as the present situation is resolved.

Ever in vigilance, I remain your loyal servant,

Lieutenant Svader

Acting Commander, City Watch. Watch House.

A Kai lord, holding the sheet of blotting paper up to the strong lantern light to reveal its imprinted ink message.



Give the Players only a few moments to digest what you have recited. Then read this text aloud with a tone of urgency:

You hear the loud footfalls of someone who is striding along the corridor. They stop outside the door. There is an insistent knocking on the door and a gruff voice calls out:

"Lieutenant Svader, we've got trouble down on Lower 3rd. You need come 'n' see this for yourself."

When no reply is forthcoming, the person outside the door begins working at the lock with the tip of a knife. They soon realise that the lock is broken and the door is only being held secure by the small drawbolt. The tip of the knife appears in the gap between the door and the jam. It bites into the soft metal of the bolt. Slowly, the bolt begins to bend.

To avoid imminent detection, the Players can open the bookcase and enter the secret chamber it conceals. The bookcase will close moments before the bolt is forced open.

SECRET CHAMBER

This is a surprisingly large chamber (40ft x 30ft) which is lit by ships lanterns hanging from iron wall brackets. Numerous excavation tools (picks and shovels) are propped against the walls. There is an insipid odour that hangs in the stale air. Any Player with the Healing Discipline will recognize this smell: Graveweed.

There are several large wooden packing crates in the middle of the chamber, similar to those commonly used to transport cargo goods aboard merchant ships and trading vessels. All of the crates can be forced open with no need for testing. The crates contain packets of dried Graveweed. The extraordinarily large quantity stored here should arouse the Players' suspicions. Graveweed is not trafficked in Toran. The city's apothecaries are permitted to stock only small amounts and all sales are carefully recorded.

One crate stands apart from the others. This contains a dozen neatly folded Kai lord uniforms, complete with Kai Cloak Badges of varying ranks. These are all counterfeit items. Their quality is disturbingly good, particularly the Kai Cloak badges which are notoriously difficult to replicate.

A large iron strongbox is bolted to the flagstone floor and secured with two padlocks. To open these padlocks will require a difficulty 8 Test. Mind Over Matter will grant a Bonus of 1, reducing the test difficulty to 7. If the test is successful, the Players will discover that it contains a dozen wax-sealed wine bottles labelled 'Antidote'.

Any Player with Healing or Sixth Sense (or the Medicine skill) will automatically detect that the bottles actually contain a very concentrated tincture of Graveweed. This bitter black liquid is highly toxic. If opened in a confined area, the arising fumes will render anyone within six feet (2m) unconscious if they fail a difficulty 25 Test (using Endurance as a bonus to the roll).

Remaining within such a noxious cloud for longer than 10 minutes will be fatal. The concentration of this Graveweed tincture is such that, if it were mixed with water, the diluted liquid would still remain deadly up to one part per thousand in solution.

In a corner of the chamber stands a large wooden crate of a markedly different design to the others. It is made of dark wood and banded with broad strips of black iron. There does not appear to be any obvious way to open it. However, it can be opened by any Player with the Mind Over Matter discipline, in which case it requires a difficulty 5 Test.

Inside are several suits of Drakkarim Death Knight armour wrapped in grubby white bed sheets. There is also a wooden chest which contains 25 sachets of very rare Oede herb.

Resting at the bottom of this crate is a black leather satchel which contains the following:

- Shipping documents which incriminate Fars Barksen. It appears that the crates of Graveweed arrived in Toran after travelling by a circuitous route overland through the Stornlands, Casiorn, and finally arriving by sea from Kadan in Cloeasia. It appears that they originated in Mogaruih, the forbidding stronghold of the infamous Cener Druids of Ruel.



◦ A small note can be found among the bills, written in script that matches the blotter paper letter above. It reads, *'Check to make sure everything purchased in Kadan has been paid for. I cannot afford complications when I sail back there.'*

- A letter from the Guildmaster of the Brotherhood of the Crystal Star addressed to Senior Lieutenant Tremond (acting commander in Captain Avane's absence), requesting that he and four of his best men accompany one of the Brotherhood's Journeymen to the Kai Monastery to determine the identities of the renegade Kai. The letter is dated 4 days ago.
- Master Stormsong's Kai badge of rank.
- Lieutenant Svader's credentials. They show that he comes from Moytura and is on secondment to the City Watch of Toran. There is an accompanying letter of commendation from Fryearl Fars Grenivan of Moytura. Both the credentials and the Fryearl's letter are genuine.

FRYEARL FARS GRENIVAN

The King of Sommerlund often bestows the title of Fryearl of Moytura upon a worthy noble of this town. Currently, this nobleman is Fryearl Fars Grenivan, a native Knight of the Realm with an impeccable military record who was given his title in MS 4973. When Baron Avan Rahdar of the Southlund Marches is in Holmgard, notably in kaltangor or for his duties as Keeper of the Privy Seal, Fryearl Fars Grenivan governs Moytura in his name with the help of the Lord Constable.

You should inform the Players that this secret cache constitutes a great deal of incriminating evidence, but it will not be sufficient to convince the Guildmaster of the Brotherhood of the Crystal Star that the Players are not Kai renegades.

In conclusion, read the following text aloud:

You hear heavy footsteps approaching. The sound of steel-shod boots on stone is coming from a section of the chamber wall. There is a dull click followed by the noise of grinding cogs and heavy chains. The wall section sink inwards and slowly moves aside to reveal five figures silhouetted by lantern light. They are standing at the top of a staircase previously conceal by the wall panel. It is Captain Svader, accompanied by four Drakkarim Duty Officers quite heftier than the Drakkar you saw in the Induction Chamber!

SHOWDOWN

Lieutenant Svader commands his Drakkarim escort to attack the Players the moment he sees them.

"Taag Dokim!" he shouts, in Giak. ("Kill them!")

He remains standing in the entrance to the secret staircase and does not personally engage in combat. The Drakkarim Duty Officers form into a line to protect Svader from missile fire as they advance upon the Players with their swords held ready to strike. Any Player who has a Bow and elects to attempt to fire at Svader will be unable to do so before the Drakkarim close for melee.



DRAKKARIM DEATH KNIGHTS (X4) EACH

Combat Skill: 22

Endurance: 28

Traits: Brutal 1, Iron Will, Veteran 5/+1

These Drakkarim Death Knights are not wearing any armour, but they are still formidable foes and they will fight to the finish.

Only when all of the Death Knights have been slain can the Players advance upon Lieutenant Svader. He is armed with a spear made of metal. Its shaft is engraved with runes and strange emblems. He does not level the spear at the Players as they approach him, rather he stands his ground defiantly and looks at them with disdain.

Tell the Players that they can attack Lieutenant Svader either individually or as a group. Svader offers no resistance. Go through the motions of a first round of combat, but as soon as a Player inflicts an EP loss on Svader, read the following aloud:

Your initial blow(s) penetrate the Captain's chest but they draw no blood. He laughs with disdain at your ineffective attempt to kill him. He is invulnerable to your weapons!

Coolly, he turns around and steps back onto a landing at the top of the secret staircase. With his free hand, he reaches to a lever protruding from the wall and pulls it. You hear the noise of concealed cogs and chains grinding into action. But as the wall panel slides across to seal the entrance, Svader's spear becomes jammed in the closing portal and he is forced to abandon it before making good his escape down the secret staircase.

The tip of the spear is firmly jammed in the wall section, but the section can be forced open just enough for the Players to retrieve the weapon. To do this, they should make use of one of the excavation tools (a pick) that is resting against the wall of the secret chamber.

If the Players manage to extract the spear, the wall section will reverse its closing action. It will depress a few inches and then slide aside to expose the top of the staircase. This stairwell is lit by lanterns and they will be able to see that it descends over fifty feet (17m).

An examination of the spear will reveal that it is a magical weapon. Players with Sixth Sense will automatically detect that its power is wholly evil and that this is a Helghast Bluefire Spear. It follows that Lieutenant Svader is a Helghast – a powerful undead shape-changer. This explains his invulnerability to normal weapons. If the Players do not come to this conclusion of their own accord, you should inform them of this fact.



If any Player is wearing the Crystal Star Pendant, you should inform them that it did not activate in Svader's presence. Helghast Svader possesses something that blocked the pendant's power of detection.

CONCLUSION

The acquisition of the Helghast Bluefire Spear is the final piece of evidence that the Players need in order to convince the Guildmaster of the Brotherhood of the Crystal Star that the Players are not Kai renegades, and that the threat to Toran is far greater than they imagine.

You should ask the Players what they wish to do now. Realistically, they have two options:

- Explore the secret staircase to see where it leads.
- Take the Helghast Spear to the Guildhall of Magicians and present it to the Guildmaster, informing him of how they came to acquire it and all incriminating evidence they have found in the secret chamber in Lieutenant Svader's Quarters at Watch House.

If they choose to explore the secret staircase:

Stalking a Helghast is an exceptionally brave or foolhardy thing to do, but they now possess a magical weapon that is effective against it. The staircase descends to a tunnel that leads, ultimately, to the corridor that connects Watch House to the Sound Master's Office cellar. If the Players entered Watch House by this route then they will recognise it.

However, before the tunnel reaches the corridor, they will discover a narrow passage that has been freshly excavated. This passageway is unlit. If they choose to explore it, they can use one of the tunnel lanterns to light their way. It leads to a musty tomb that gives off a strong and goodly aura.

This aura restores to the Players any ENDURANCE points they have lost, bringing their EP totals back to their starting levels.

The Players have entered Sun Eagle's Tomb. This place is of huge significance to the Order of the Kai, for it is here that the bones of Sun Eagle – the first Kai Grand Master and the founder of their illustrious Order – have been laid to rest.

The Players will be mortified to discover that Sun Eagle's Tomb has been desecrated. The lid of his sarcophagus has been broken open and his skull has been removed. Only the bones of his limbs, spine and torso remain.

There is no exit from the tomb save by the way they entered, i.e. the newly excavated passage. The only viable option open to the Players now is to take the Helghast Spear to the Guildhall of Magicians and present it to the Guildmaster, informing him of how they came to



SUN EAGLE

Sun Eagle was formerly a Baron of Toran with latent, but strong Kai powers prefiguring the future Kai Disciplines, whose name was Shaen Ruanor. Following the Great Battle of Maakengorge in MS 3799, God Kai appeared to Shaen and instructed him to undertake a quest to recover the lost Lorestones of Nyxator. Nyxator was the first Champion of Good sent by God Kai to Magnamund. In 12209 MS, he created the Lorestones in order to preserve the power bestowed upon him by Kai during the Age of the Dragons (13000 MS – 10148 MS). These ancient gems contained the secrets and the power of the Magnakai Disciplines. Inspired by the vision and the words of God Kai, Ruanor set out upon his quest to find the lost Lorestones.

In MS 3801, Ruanor's quest first led him to the Magiocracy of Dessi where he received guidance from the Elder Magi who had long been awaiting his coming. In MS 3434, when the Sommlending first arrived in the Lastlands, Goddess Ishir appeared to them in a vision that inspired the Elder Magi of Dessi to assist the Sommlending. In a second vision, she showed them that a powerful goodly warrior order would arise soon after the Sommlending appeared. An ancient Dessi legend told of the birth and rise to greatness of two '*Koura-tas-Kai*' ('Sons of the Sun'). The first one was named Ikar, which meant 'eagle'. This prophecy foretold that the *Koura-tas-Kai* would come from the north to seek the counsel of the Elder Magi in order that they might fulfil a great quest. Although separated by several centuries, they would share one spirit, one purpose and one destiny: to triumph over the champions of Darkness in an age of great peril. Aided by the magicians of Dessi, Shaen Ruanor came to realize the true nature of his latent powers and the purpose for which they were bestowed. Moreover, he was instructed by them as to where the seven Lorestones of Nyxator were hidden in Northern Magnamund.

With the invaluable help of the Elder Magi, Baron Ruanor searched for and found the Lorestones of Nyxator. In MS 3810, having completed his nine-year quest, he returned to Sommerlund literally a changed man. He was now stronger and wiser than before. Upon discovering the seven lost Lorestones of Nyxator he had unlocked the Kai wisdom and strength that lay dormant within him. He took the name 'Sun Eagle', thereby fulfilling one half of the prophecy of the *Koura-tas-Kai* and honouring Sommerlund, the sun-realm, with the prefix of his new name, and he paid homage to his baronial eagles' crest with his adopted suffix.

An important part of Sun Eagle's enlightenment which he had acquired during his Magnakai Quest, was the realization that there were many other Sommlending who possessed latent Kai Disciplines and that these latent skills needed to be nurtured and honed to perfection by formal training if they were to fulfil their full potential. Armed with this insight, he vowed to build a warrior school where the training of Sommlending children, being those that displayed the potential to become Kai Lords, could take place.

In MS 3810, his liege lord and friend, King Bern I, son of Ulnar, gifted to Sun Eagle a part of his Royal Estate so that he could commence the construction of the training school that was soon to become the Kai Monastery. The Monastery and the territory surrounding it for several miles were declared henceforward to be the Kai Protectorate. Completion of the Kai Monastery was achieved in MS 3822.

acquire it and all the incriminating evidence they have found in the secret chamber in Lieutenant Svader's Quarters at Watch House. They can also report the desecration of Sun Eagle's Tomb. Continue by referring to the choice selection below.

If the Players do not explore the newly excavated passage and reach the corridor that connects Watch House to the Sound Master's Office cellar, they will finally reach this building. Unfortunately, Helghast Svader's trail will have vanished in the busy Docks Ward

and they will have no choice but taking the Helghast Spear to the Guildhall of Magicians (see previous paragraph).

If they decide to take the Helghast Spear to the Guildhall of Magicians and present it to the Guildmaster:

Read the following text aloud:

Upon arriving at the Guildhall of Magicians, you are immediately placed under arrest and the Helghast Spear and your personal



weapons are confiscated. You wait impatiently in a holding cell for over an hour until the door opens and the Guildmaster himself enters.

The Helghast Spear has been thoroughly examined and found to be genuine. The Guildmaster and his advisors are very disturbed that its innate evil could not be detected by the means they have at their disposal. The Brotherhood magicians who arrested you reported that their Crystal Star Pendants were not activated in your presence, convincing them that none of you are Helghast in disguise. The Guildmaster has thus concluded that you are genuine Kai and he has decided to interrogate you personally to determine whether or not you are not Kai renegades.

Within moments of being in your presence, he detects that you are honest and genuine Kai and that you harbour no ill intent.

You inform the Guildmaster of your discoveries at Watch House, and of the confrontation you had with Lieutenant Svader and his Drakkarim henchmen. At once, the Guildmaster with an escort of magicians and advisors go to Watch House to verify your report and you accompany them there. They make a forensic examination of the secret chamber and explore the secret staircase to find out where it leads.

If the Players did not choose to explore the secret staircase, you should now inform them of the following. It is a recap of the 'Explore the Secret Stair' option that they chose not to take:

The secret staircase descends to a tunnel that leads, ultimately, to a corridor that connects Watch House to the Sound Master's Office

cellar. However, before the tunnel reaches the corridor, a narrow passage is discovered. It has been freshly excavated. It leads to a musty tomb that gives off a strong and goodly aura.

This aura restores any ENDURANCE points the Players have lost so far, bringing their EP totals back to their starting levels.

You have entered Sun Eagle's Tomb. This place is of huge significance to all members of the the Order of the Kai, for it is here that the bones of Sun Eagle – the first Kai Grand Master and the founder of their illustrious Order – have been laid to rest.

The Guildmaster is mortified to discover that Sun Eagle's Tomb has been desecrated. The lid of his sarcophagus has been broken open and his skull has been removed. Only the bones of his limbs, spine and torso remain.

Upon returning to the secret chamber, the Guildmaster's advisors report their findings and he draws the following conclusions from the evidence they present:

- The wine bottles filled with Graveweed tincture contain enough poison to contaminate the entire city's fresh water supply.
- It is highly likely that Captain Pel Avane was slowly poisoned with Graveweed administered by Lieutenant Svader. This necessitated Captain Avane's stay in the Halls of Healing and left the chain of command open to Svader once he had disposed of Senior Lieutenant Tremond.



- Helghast Svader was planning to use his Drakkarim Death Knights, disguised as Kai Lords, to poison the city's public wells and water storage cisterns. It is likely that it was his deliberate intention for the poisoning of the water to be witnessed, thereby further undermining the citizen's trust in the Kai Order.
- The use of Oede herb is the only known counter measure that would be effective in neutralising the contamination of the entire city's water supply, (Bautarian Antitoxin Tincture is not powerful enough to neutralise Concentrate Graveweed). Svader's fraudulent acquisition of the city's available supply of Oede herb would prevent this from happening.
- With its freshwater rendered poisonous, law and order in the city would quickly collapse. It would be the perfect time for the Darklords to launch an attack upon Toran.
- Further evidence was uncovered by the Guildmaster's advisors that indicates that the Brotherhood Journeyman, who was ordered to go to the Kai Monastery with Senior Lieutenant Tremond and his best men, was slain by Helghast Svader. It seems likely that his body was weighted down and disposed of in the Toran Sound by Svader's Drakkarim, using a boat belonging to Bargil the Bodyguard. (Tremond's body will soon be recovered from a shallow grave in a small chamber off the corridor that connects Watch House to the cellar of the Sound Master's Office on the dockside. He broke free of the Drakkarim and was pursued along the corridor. They caught and killed him before burying his body in the small cellar.)

GRATEFUL THANKS

The Guildmaster arranges for the secret chamber to be cleared and all of its contents to be transported to the Guildhall. You are treated as honoured guests of the Brotherhood of the Crystal Star and provision is made for you to rest and recover in some of their finest guest chambers. Two days later, you are summoned to the Brotherhood Tower where you meet with Baron Vinas, the Guildmaster and the High Council of Magicians.

In gratitude for your heroic actions, which most certainly have spared Toran and its citizens from a cruel and painful fate, the Baron awards each of you the freedom of the city. From this day forward, you will be treated as nobility whenever and wherever you venture in this great city. And as further reward, the Baron presents you each with a finely crafted chain mail vest, edged with Korlinium.

These Korlinium Chainmail Vests (Special Item) will add +2 CS and +4 END (or +2 Defense if that master rule is in effect) when they are worn in combat.

You are also given over custody of the Helghast spear you discovered. While it is a weapon of evil magic, you will need its power to put an end to its foul master, should you encounter Svader again.

The Guildmaster informs you that word has reached the Kai Monastery of your actions. In a message he has received this morning by messenger hawk, he tells you the Grand Master Rune Helm has formerly elevated you all to the next rank in the Kai Order.

He commends each of you for your personal bravery and for dispelling the shadow of doubt that was cast upon the Order by the murderous actions of Helghast Svader and its cohorts.

You have upheld the highest traditions of the Order and he praises you warmly.

Each Player may now add one additional Kai discipline of their choosing to their list of disciplines, as they have increased in rank.

When the celebration of your victory is concluded, the Guildmaster invites you join him in his personal chamber. He informs you that Grand Master Rune Helm is gravely concerned that Helghast Svader is free to perpetrate its evil plans elsewhere in Sommerlund.

The kingdom remains under an ominous cloud of uncertainty so long as the creature remains at large. The theft of Sun Eagle's skull and the unknown condition of Master Stormsong have led him to believe that the Darklords are engaged in a scheme that is a much greater threat to Sommerlund than the fall of Toran.

Thus, he has set a new mission for you to undertake: to find and recapture Master Stormsong, and to retrieve Sun Eagle's skull and return it to his tomb. Svader's documents suggested he was going to take a ship to Kadan, a possibility the Grandmaster of the Crystal Star is currently investigating.

For now, there is naught to do but wait and pray.

The adventure ends here, but more dangers await in **Confrontation in Cloeasia**, the third part of the campaign.



ADVENTURE THREE



CONFRONTATION IN CLOEASIA



ADVENTURE THREE CONFRONTATION IN CLOEASIA

The Players need to race from Toran to Kadan, a distance of 700 miles overland, racing against time to get there before the Helghast Svader and his minions arrive by ship. Along the way they will face distraction and disruption, fight the agents of the Darklords, and push themselves and their horses to the brink of exhaustion. This adventure is a race and the Narrator should keep careful track of how many days the party is taking to make the journey. There are also opportunities for the Narrator to add his own spin to events as most of the scenes of this adventure are not set, they can happen at a time and place of the narrator's choosing.

The adventure starts off with the Guildmaster of the Brotherhood of the Crystal Star reporting the following to the Players:

A RACE AGAINST EVIL

My friends, there is much to do and little time for it. You must travel overland from here to Kadan to meet the helghast's ship before it can slip away. I shudder to think what trouble that fiend will cause if it escapes us! What troubles me most is the fact it did not sail directly to the Darklands, whereas their coastal settlements in Tuz Bay are only located 150 due northwest of Toran.

You will have to establish what it seeks to achieve in Cloeasia with Master Stormsong and the skull of Sun Eagle. Could it be evidence that it acts unbeknownst to its Darklord masters, independently of its mission in Toran, or simply that the evil ritual must be performed in this country as soon as possible?

I have taken the liberty of making inquiries at the harbour for you. As suspected, the monster left on a merchant ship named Martin's Pride, a fast ship. If this weather holds, it should make the journey in twenty-five days. The Pride has a slight head start on you, but you still have a chance to reach Kadan first. It is seven hundred miles to Kadan, not an impossible ride, but you must leave today.

Take what supplies you might need from our storehouses and our finest horses along with this bag of two hundred gold crowns. May these see you safely and swiftly to Kadan in time. Farewell and may Kai and Ishir bless your quest.

It will take the rest of the day to prepare their supplies and horses, as well as heal any injuries they have suffered during Adventure 2.

WATCHED

The party is being watched while they are in Toran. This will be most obvious when they are preparing to leave and gathering what supplies they desire, as well as when they are travelling through town to the gates. The person watching is a spy for Svader's organization, one Kittle Havret, a local rogue and thief best known for being willing to take any job for anyone.



Havret can be spotted eyeing the Players with a successful TV 7 test (master rule- using Perception). Those with the Sixth-Sense discipline gain a +2 bonus to this test.

On a successful Test to spot the spy, read or paraphrase the following. Then note how the Players react. If they are subtle, Havret will not realize he has been discovered.



Nearby, there is a shadow out of place. At the corner of an alleyway, you spot dark cloth and darker eyes, the tell-tale signs of someone watching you. Now that you have seen the shape, it occurs to you that this may not be the first time. Has someone been following you?

If he knows he has been spotted, Havret makes a run for it, heading down narrow alleys and through lesser-travelled parts of the city towards his apartment. This chase should be played out as an exciting scene during which the Players dodge through the crowded streets, run down tight alleyways, ascend to the rooftops, and leap across the gap between buildings.

To catch Havret, the Players must complete several obstacles, after which they manage to catch up to him at his apartment. If none of the Players manage to catch up, Havret escapes to send out his last messages. He then leaves town and this adventure as quickly as he can.

OBSTACLES IN THE CHASE

The following six obstacles appear in sequence order during the chase. Havret negotiates them with ease – slipping, jumping, and sliding along skilfully. The Players will have to do their best to keep up. Anyone who fails to clear an obstacle briefly falls back in the chase but manages to catch up. Any Player who fails two obstacles in a row has fallen too far behind and drops out of the race. To catch him, at least one Player must be still in the chase and successfully

clear the final obstacle. At no point is there a clear shot at Havret, for he is either in a crowd or ducking around a corner or other cover.

The Narrator should allow the Players to devise clever strategies to aid them and modify the TV of the test accordingly. Reward creativity, but keep this chase scene challenging.

CROWDED STREETS

Once spotted, Havret takes off through the crowded streets, using large groups of people as concealment. There are three means of clearing this obstacle. A person can try to keep track of Havret despite the cover with a TV 8 (master rule- using Perception). Players might want to use the crowd to their advantage, either by ordering people to part or calling on them to catch Havret with a TV 7 test (master rule- Using Influence).

Finally, they might want to bull their way through the crowd with a TV 6 (master rule- using Might), though such behaviour is unbecoming a Kai Lord.

FLIPPED APPLE CART

Breaking free of the crowd, Havret knocks over an applecart, spilling the round fruit into the street. Player heroes may attempt to get by this obstacle two ways. They may attempt to vault over the applecart with a TV 7 test (master rule-using Acrobatic or Might). Alternately, they may simply plow through the apples with a TV 6 test, but if they fail they fall amid the rolling fruit and are out of the chase.





NARROW ALLEY

Seeing that he cannot escape through the crowd, Havret ducks down a side alley. This is a narrow gap between buildings – something easy for a small lightly encumbered man like him to do, but much more difficult for larger warriors carrying arms, armour, and backpacks. To clear this obstacle, the Players must attempt to squeeze through with a TV 7 test (master rule- using Acrobatics), but anyone who drops their backpack can succeed without a Test at all.

UP THE STAIRS

Hoping to lose his pursuers on the rooftops, Havret runs up a flight of wooden stairs on the outside of a low tenement. On his way up, he knocks loose several weak boards, leaving a gap and a precariously set of unstable stairs.

The gap and the shaking can be managed with a TV 7 test (master rule- using Acrobatics), but the condition of the rotting wood worsens from the traffic. Any Players that failed the last obstacle and are scrambling to catch up must make this test at a TV 8 instead.

ACROSS THE ROOFTOPS

Once up the stairs, Havret takes to the rooftops, running across the slanting slate roofs of the city. Following him requires a TV 8 test (master rule- using Acrobatics). However, Player who wants to throw caution to the wind can take the test with a TV 6 instead, but risks falling to the cobblestones below if they fail (and suffering -6 Endurance).

FINAL JUMP

The last obstacle is a dozy, a ten-foot wide gap between a building and the roof of Havret's tenement. Havret barely makes the jump, hitting the other side with a heavy thud before limping away. To make the jump is a TV 9 test (master rule- using either Acrobatics or Might). Failure results in a dangerous fall and a loss of -8 Endurance.

HAVRET'S APARTMENT

Havret's apartment is a small dirty affair in one of the poorer parts of town, on the far end of Potter Street. There is not much inside – just a table and a chair, a pallet for a bed, and a few candles. The door latches from the inside, but has no true lock. It does have a window and several cages, four of which hold carrier pigeons.

If caught in time, Havret has just got into his room but has not had time to finish a message and send off a bird. He is found hastily writing something on a piece of paper, a pigeon tucked firmly under his arm. The message is in some form of unknown code. If taken to the Guildmaster, the bright minds in the Brotherhood can decipher the code. A Player with the Sage skill can try a TV 8 test to do the same.

The message reads: *"The hounds head for Kadan overla...."*

Havret himself will talk once he has been caught. No amount of coin is worth dying over. His tale is brief and strange:

"Look here, peace, right? Peace? I don't mean any of you any harm. I don't even carry a knife and I'm so scrawny, I'd lose a scrap with a Noodnic, right? Please, just calm and I'll tell ya all I know. Right? Right."

"A few odd days ago, I got approached by someone in a heavy cloak and a deep hood. Couldn't see a bit of their face and they seemed to like it that way. This fella, he gave me ten Crowns – Ten Crowns! – just to watch you lot and send messages with these birds. I dunno where they fly and I dunno who had this room before me, I swears."

"I was thinkin' about keepin' it though. Nicer than where I was livin' and I don't mind the birds. Kinda nice once you get used to them."

From Havret's words, he must have been approached about when Svader's barge made it to Toran. Everything he just said is the truth and unfortunately, he knows little else.

If the Players think to set a bird loose and track it, it flies across town to the open window of a tavern's rental room that looks recently abandoned. Whoever was monitoring the Players has left this place and does not appear to be coming back.

EVENTS ON THE ROAD

Eventually, the Players will have to take to the long road and try to reach their destination before the Martin's Pride. It will not be an easy journey, but if the Players stay focused, they can reach Kadan before their Darklands quarry gets away.

The Players will be travelling a great distance during this adventure. There are two ways to maintain the pace of the scenario and keep the travel interesting.

As presented, there are set scenes that need to be played out; these are listed below under the appropriate headings. The Narrator can simply run through those and have a fine adventure.

However, some Narrators might want to spice up the journey a bit with variable or alternate events. The following table gives a list of events that are suitable for insertion at any part of this journey. The narrator can pick a random number or simply choose an event as desired.

ROAD EVENTS

RANDOM NUMBER	EVENT
0	Reoccurring Stranger
1	Fire!
2	Bandits
3	Wrecked Cart
4	Kai Follower
5	Angry Black Bear
6	Beggars
7	Thrown Shoe
8	Foul Weather
9	Regional Event or re-pick

REOCCURRING STRANGER

A small campsite can be seen up ahead. A steaming cookpot is held over a bright flame by blackened iron stakes, the scent of its contents catching your senses even from this distance. Beside the campfire, an older man in well-worn traveller's clothes waves as you approach.



His name is Elmyr Hart, and he keeps appearing throughout the adventure. He always has a good reason to be travelling either in the same direction as the Players or coming from the other way. Hart is not a villain, though he may be suspected of being a spy of some sort. In general, he is a jovial and convivial fellow, willing to share some of his food (providing a Meal to each Player) and information about what to expect along the road.

If treated kindly on at least three occasions, he will show the party a secret shortcut he has discovered that will shave a day off their journey.

FIRE!

A plume of smoke can be seen in the distance, rising above the surrounding landscape. The smoke is thick and dark, the scent of burning wood and thatch heavy in the air. Peering that direction, you can see that the smoke is coming from a small farmstead, now ablaze!

The residents of the house are busy trying to put out the fire and possibly save some of their belongings. They are working hard and barely acknowledge the Players as they arrive. Let the Players choose an immediate course of action before interrupting them suddenly with:

A cry goes up; someone is still trapped in the house!

This can be a child, an elderly family member, or even a pet. A Player can attempt to rescue the victim with a TV 7 test (master rule- using Acrobatics, Might, or Perception). Failure means the person or animal is not rescued and dies in the flames instead. If this occurs, the Player will have to make a second Test at TV 6 to avoid suffering a loss of 3 Endurance due to the heat and collapsing structure.

Putting out the fire and getting everyone to safety will take some time. Even after the fire something must be done for the survivors. Seeing them to a place of safety, healing their wounds, and helping them past their first ours of shock will take the rest of the day and part of the night, causing the party to lose a day of their journey.

Though this encounter seems like nothing but a net loss for the Players, struggle and sacrifice are all part of the job for the Heroes of Magnamund. *Not* helping these people is news that will reach Elmyr Hart. From this point on, the Players are no longer welcome at his campsite.

BANDITS

The slight rustling of branches nearby is your only warning before several men burst out of the undergrowth on either side of the road! With drawn blades and howls of bloodshed, they rush to attack!

Even in the best patrolled parts of Sommerlund there are bandits, this is why these areas see patrols. These bandits have decided, rather foolishly, to attack a group of Kai Lords on a mission. The bandits attack from ambush, but may be spotted beforehand with a TV 6 test (master rule- using Perception). Thos with the Sixth Sense



discipline gain a +2 on this test. Be sure to amend the text above if the Players are forewarned.

If ambushed the Players suffer a -2 penalty to Combat Skill during their first round of combat after the surprise round. This is due to the special ability of the bandit's leader, which allows him and his group to take great advantage of ambush situations.

BANDITS (2 PER PLAYER)

Combat Skill: 16

Endurance: 25

Traits: Grouping (Mob), Soldier

BANDIT LEADER

Combat Skill: 19

Endurance: 28

Traits: Ambusher (+2), Soldier, Veteran 5/+1

NEW TRAIT: AMBUSER

These enemies are especially skilled at ambushing their prey. If they successfully surprise enemies and get the benefit of a surprise round, they further enjoy a bonus to their COMBAT SCORE equal to the bonus given in the trait. If the enemy with this trait is a leader, those directly under its command also gain this benefit.

This benefit does not apply when fighting any target that did not lose its action during the surprise round.

WRECKED CART

Approaching a bend in the trail, you see an ox leisurely plodding along, occasionally stopping to nibble on some grass. A broken collar and tack trails behind it as it eyes you before languidly returning to its roadside repast. Around the curve of the road, there is a two-wheeled cart overturned in a ditch with a pair of legs sticking out from underneath it)

The legs belong to a local farmer or merchant whose cart tipped over and is now trapped and unconscious beneath it. The cart can be moved with a TV 6 test (master rule-using Might), and the person pulled out. She is badly injured and in need of medical attention with a TV 7 test (master rule- using Medicine). Someone with the Healing discipline gains a +2 on this test. Failure results in the stranger's death.

Even if healed, the stranger will not regain consciousness until the next day. The Players can get her to a safe place, but that will take

some time. They must either transport her or sit with her until she is recovered, either way they lose a day.

KAI FOLLOWER

Behind you on the trail, a young man has ridden into view. He is well dressed and mounted, with a finely crafted sword and bright chainmail armour. His bearing and bold display of wealth all hint at a young nobleman setting out into the world for the first time.

At first, this nobleman hangs back some distance, and – unless hailed – even appears to lose their trail from time to time. However, a few hours later he can be seen behind them again, riding along. The next obstacle the Players encounter, he quickly rides in to help, but he is completely useless. Any Test he decides to help on suffers a -2 penalty, and any combat he joins levies a -1 Combat Skill penalty to every player involved.



The young man is indeed a young nobleman out for his first adventure, and he has chosen to follow a group of Kai Lords and help them out. After 'aiding' the party, he introduces himself as Erryn Kelton, and proceeds to display a wide and expansive knowledge of the Kai Order.

If told to leave, he will pout and hang back for a day or two. Even so, he will show up again at the next sign of trouble, having decided that being sent away was a test of his determination and loyalty.

ANGRY BLACK BEAR

Even in a land with Doomwolves, Gourgaz, and other such monsters, there are few sights in Magnamund more terrifying than a massive bear standing to its full height and roaring at you in pure rage!

This is nothing more than an angry black bear that comes charging out of the woods, grass, or hills along the Player's path. Her cubs are on the other side of the road and the party of heroes has accidentally ridden in between them. She can be calmed down with Animal Kinship or other such abilities, and good roleplaying could easily avoid a fight at the Narrator's option.

Otherwise she roars in to attack. If the Players choose to Evade, she will not pursue them.

BLACK BEAR

Combat Skill: 19

Endurance: 30

Traits: Defense 2

BEGGARS

On the side of the road, several people reach out to you as you approach. Their clothes are tattered, their faces dirty, and several of them look nearly emaciated. With upturned hands, they beg for your mercy. your charity.

These four wretches are suffering from a myriad of ailments, and were thrown out of the carriage they were riding because the drover feared they might be contagious. They have been walking this road, trying to find a settlement for days.

If the Players share out 2 or more Meals, the beggars will have the strength to go on. If not, most of these beggars will be dead before the next sunrise.

This scene can be the basis for some wonderful roleplaying, so do not run through it too quickly. The Players have an important mission ahead of them and cannot spare much time, but these people are suffering. How the Players react to that can go a long way to proving whether they even deserve to be called heroes.

THROWN SHOE

Riding at a nice, steady pace, the tranquillity of galloping hoofbeats is suddenly dashed when one of your horses rears up painfully and nearly staggers over!

One of the Players' horses (randomly determine which one) has thrown a shoe. This will require a visit to a blacksmith or a TV 7 test (master rule- using Crafting or appropriate Vocation). If the

shoe is not taken care of, the horse will go lame after another day of travel and be unfit for riding for the rest of the adventure.

The loss of a horse, however the Players work to make up for it, means they will only travel roughly half as many miles a day as they normally would (25 instead of 40).

FOUL WEATHER

You have been blessed so far with clement weather. That was an advantage you knew could not possibly persist through your whole ride. As the skies above you start to turn unfavourable, it would seem you were right.



The weather turns foul; choose either a heat wave or rainfall. Both cause travel to become more difficult and even the horses do not want to push on. The Players can choose to suffer -2 Endurance per day of travel or seek shelter. Seeking out shelter could trigger an entirely new random event if you as Narrator wish.

This bad weather carries on for a random number of days, treating a 0 as a short burst that simply makes the journey miserable for a few hours with no Endurance loss.

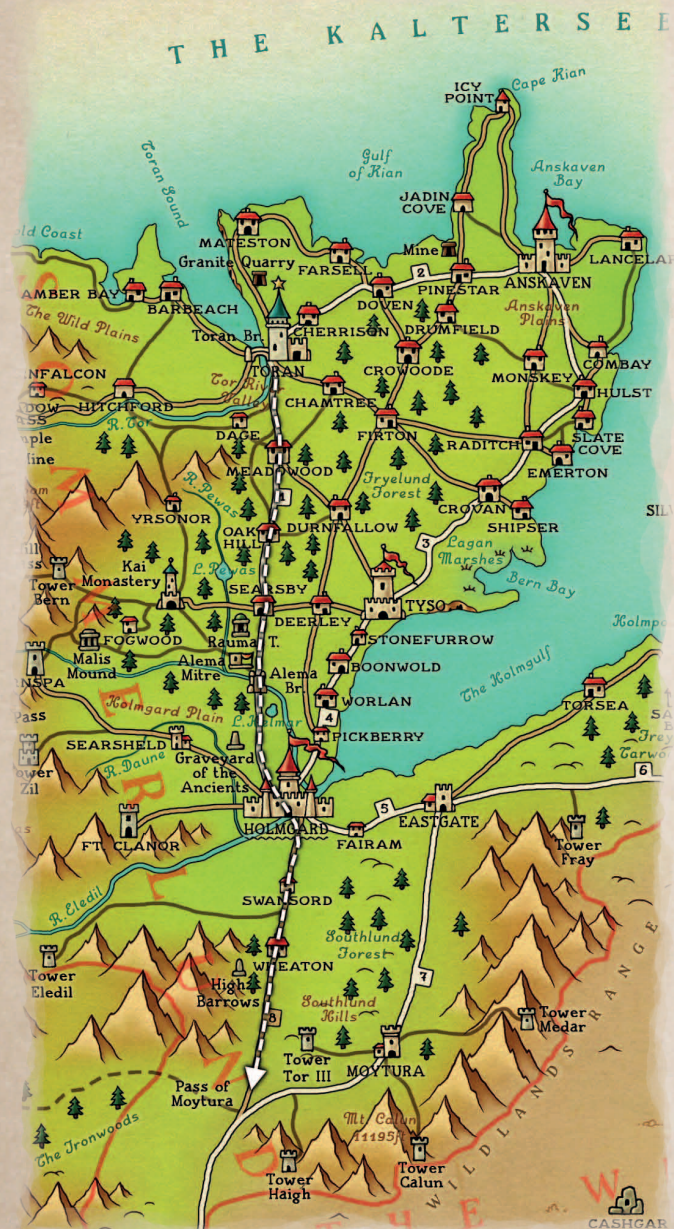
REGIONAL EVENT OR RE-PICK

Either re-pick a new number or use the regional event that coincides with where along their journey the Player have gotten.



OVERLAND FROM TORAN TO THE PASS OF MOYTURA

From Toran to the Pass of Moytura is 250 miles by road, taking the King's Highway across the Fryelund Forest to Holmgard, then the Southlund Trail across the lush plains and wheat fields of the Southlund Marches. Mounted, it will take the Players 7 days to reach the Pass of Moytura in the foothills of the Durncrag Mountains, the legendary place where King Ulnar I of Sommerlund and his allies of the Lastlands broke and routed the armies of Darklord Vashna in MS 3799.



The route is rather easy. There are inns along the road and the roadways themselves are well guarded and patrolled. In addition to civil authorities, the Players will pass other Kai Lords on various missions. Sadly, they will not have time to stop at their monastery home even though they pass right by the turn off trail that leads up to it at Searsby on the King's Highway.

REGIONAL EVENT: FARMING UP TROUBLE

A group of Kai Lords is in trouble in the Fryelund Forest and has sent one of their number to get help. The first aid the messenger sees is the Players. A decision must be made to either help the Kai or continue on the mission.

FRIEND IN NEED

You see a rider coming fast down the road towards you. As the figure nears, you can see she is wearing the distinctive green cloak of a Kai Lord. She rears her horse to a stop in front of you and calls out.

"Hail, good folk! I am Raven Shadow and we need your help! My companions and I were tracking a small party of Giaks when a larger band met our quarry. My friends are pinned down in a farmhouse not far from here. Come, aid me and we shall rescue them while these darkspawned beasts out of Sommerlund!"

If the Players accompany Raven Shadow, they will lose half a day in their trip. She leads them a few miles away from the road into the Fryelund Forest. Sneaking along through the trees, the party comes to a small farmhouse surrounded by a dozen Giak Marauders, three of them mounted on Doomwolves.

The bodies of other Giaks and Doomwolves lie scattered about, as does the corpse of a Kai Lord. This was Raging Bear, a Kai Menskurd that Raven Shadow will sadly lament as *'the bravest man I've ever known, always first into battle and last to leave. He guarded my escape... and it cost him his life.'*

How the Players approach this battle is up to them. The Giaks and Doomwolves will be startled to find a second force appearing out of the trees and attacking them. This allows the Players an automatic surprise round if they desire.

If the Players manage to kill half the Giaks and at least two Doomwolves, the rest will scatter. As soon as the Players begin their attack, the remaining pair of Kai in the farmhouse charge out. In the swirling fight that follows each Player will only face one foe at a time, as the enemy are too scattered to properly group.

GIK MARAUDERS (12)**Combat Skill:** 12**Endurance:** 12**Traits:** Grouping (Mob), Invulnerable (normal poison), Soldier**DOOMWOLVES (3)****Combat Skill:** 18**Endurance:** 25**Traits:** Grouping (Pack), Mount**GIZKAGRAT, GIK LEADER****Combat Skill:** 16**Endurance:** 18**Traits:** Defence 2, Grouping (Mob), Invulnerable (normal poison), Soldier

Gizkagrat is a particularly vicious and cunning Mountain Giak. He has taken the slain Kai Lord's armour for himself, though it is ill-fitting, and he is wearing the man's cloak, soaked in Kai Lord blood until it is stained a vile ruddy-red. His attire will surely inflame the ire of any Kai Lord who sees him.

3 Giak Marauders have smeared their blades with Fenblood, a poison which causes blood poisoning. Players scratched (i.e., if they lose Endurance from the blow of a Giak Marauder armed with a Fenblood blade) will lose an additional 2 ENDURANCE points each hour until they are cured, either by a Herbwarden of Bautar discipline, a Kai Master possessing the Magnakai Discipline of Curing, a Potion of Laumspur, a Bautarian Antitoxin Vial or a Tincture of Oxydine.

As for the remaining Kai Lords, they fight as follows:

LIGHTNING TALON (KAI MENSKURD)**Combat Skill:** 19**Endurance:** 22

Armed with a sword and shield, already factored into his statistics.

**CRIMSON SHRIKE (KAI MENSKURD)****Combat Skill:** 17**Endurance:** 25

Armed with a spear and wearing leather and a helmet, already factored in.





RAVEN SHADOW (KAI FEMSKURD)

Combat Skill: 16

Endurance: 23

Armed with a short sword and a bow (4 arrows).



After the fight, Raven Shadow thanks the party for their help. Her band of Kai will hunt down the remaining foes and care for their dead and wounded. If the Players tell them of their own mission, the Kai will offer up to 3 Meals and 10 Gold Crowns to aid the party. They can also spare one potion of Laumspur for each Player in need. Raven Shadow's group's mission is nearly at an end and they are going to be headed back to the monastery soon.

AMBUSH IN WHEATON

The journey proceeds without undue interruption (though see Events on the Road above). However, in the small plain town of Wheaton in the Southlund Marches the party may be set upon by a group of thugs hired by agents of Svader's organisation to slow down the party. This encounter only occurs if the Players failed to stop Havret, the spy that was watching them in Toran. If the agents of Svader were forewarned, these thugs ambush the Players out of a crowd in the city, aiming to damage or injure the horses. There is one thug per Player and each thug makes two attacks on a horse before trying to Evade combat.

HIRED THUGS (1 PER PLAYER)

Combat Skill: 12

Endurance: 15

Traits: Grouping (Mob), Soldier

A Player can keep their horse uninjured by defeating a thug before it causes 10 Endurance to the horse. An injured horse cannot continue on the journey and must either be replaced or the Player

must walk, cutting the distance travelled each day in half (as a general rule, Kai Lords should be able to cover about 25 miles every day if on foot and 40 miles if on horseback). If any of the heroes can provide magical healing, this can get a horse back above 10 points of lost ENDURANCE and back into rideable shape.

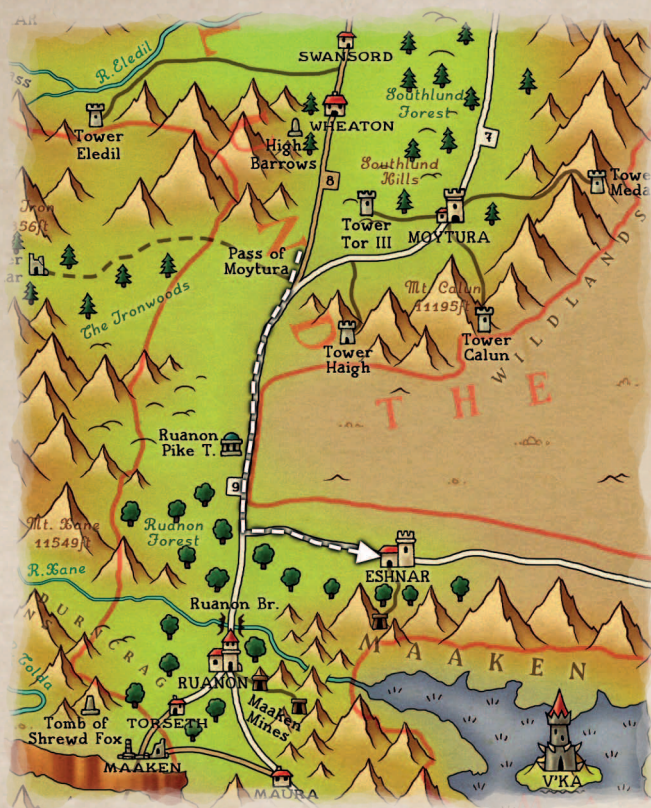
WHEATON

This plains town is located on the Southlund Trail, sixty miles (roughly two days' ride) due south of Holmgard. It is owned by the noble house of Wheaton and governed from their fortified manor house and estate located one mile south of the town on the Southlund Trail. In addition to the ubiquitous wheat grown all over this region, the farmers of this area also cultivate barley, fruit, tomatoes and tobacco. All of its agricultural produce is sent to market at the town of Moytura. Wheaton is often visited by Sommlending Knights of the Realm on pilgrimage to the High Barrows, the famous catacombs located in the foothills of the Durncrag Mountains which house the remains of Sommlending Knights and heroes of the past. The High Barrows are notably the place where the Lastlands warriors of the Battle of the Pass of Moytura were laid to rest.

OVERLAND FROM THE PASS OF MOYTURA TO ESHNAR

It is 135 miles from the Pass of Moytura to Eshnar including, in the 25 miles around the pass, rough mountain terrain where the Players will likely travel only at half the normal speed. It should thus take the Players around four days to reach Eshnar, assuming they have their mounts. Most of the journey is along the Ruanon Pike, also known as the Raider's Road, a highway, the surface cracked and full of pot-holes, which the Southlund Trail reaches in the Pass of Moytura. This stretch starts through broken foothills and mountain passes, and then skirts the edge of the Wildlands, being subject to frequent raids by Giaks and evil men out of that broken region. In this desolate area, Kai Lords cannot use the Kai Discipline of Hunting to hunt for food.

At the edge of the Ruanon Forest, the Players will reach a highway junction where a large signpost indicates two destinations: south to Ruanon (60 miles) and east to Eshnar (40 miles). They have to head east for Eshnar, along the highway known as the Venn Vada which runs along the fringes of the Wildlands. Between this junction and Eshnar, they can use Hunting to hunt for food if they possess this Discipline.



REGIONAL EVENT: AVALANCHE!

While camping after a hard day's ride in the broken foothills of the Durnerag Mountains in the area of Moytura Pass, you are interrupted by a storm with rain and thunder fierce enough to drive you into a mountain cave for shelter. In the morning, you find that several miles down the pass, a large mass of stone has fallen down the mountain and blocked the way. There is too much rock to move quickly; clearing the pass could take days.

The Players are faced with yet another choice. They can leave the road and find some way through the mountains around the avalanche or they can abandon their horses. Finding an alternate route is a TV 8 test (master rule- using Survival, reduce the TV to 6 for Hunting and similar abilities). If all the Players fail this test, they are lost for a day and can try again.

Alternately, the horses can be left and new ones purchased later if the party thinks they have enough money. However, travelling on foot halves the amount of ground they can cover in a day, which could easily result in the failure of their mission.

REGIONAL EVENT: UNINVITED GUESTS

While travelling along the Ruanon Pike you hear the nearby howls of Doomwolves in the night. They sound close, three or

four miles perhaps. Normally stealthy enough to approach a wary village unseen, the fact that they are making such noise suggests they do not know you are here yet.

There are six Giaks and their Doomwolf mounts, a small raiding party intent on using the Raider's Road to infiltrate past Sommerlund's famous Border Rangers. They are six miles away when the party first hears them.

The Players can attempt to stalk and ambush them, but this will eat away at least a day of travel. This leaves the heroes with a choice to make – risk the mission or let the Giaks strike into the heart of the kingdom. Allow the Players to use their creativity if they want to find some third solution and, if it seems clever enough, give it a fair chance of working.

If the Players do choose to fight, they might even ambush the travelling group of marauders if they are careful enough.

GIAK MARAUDERS (6)

Combat Skill: 13

Endurance: 13

Traits: Grouping (Mob), Invulnerable (normal poison), Soldier

DOOMWOLVES (6)

Combat Skill: 18

Endurance: 20

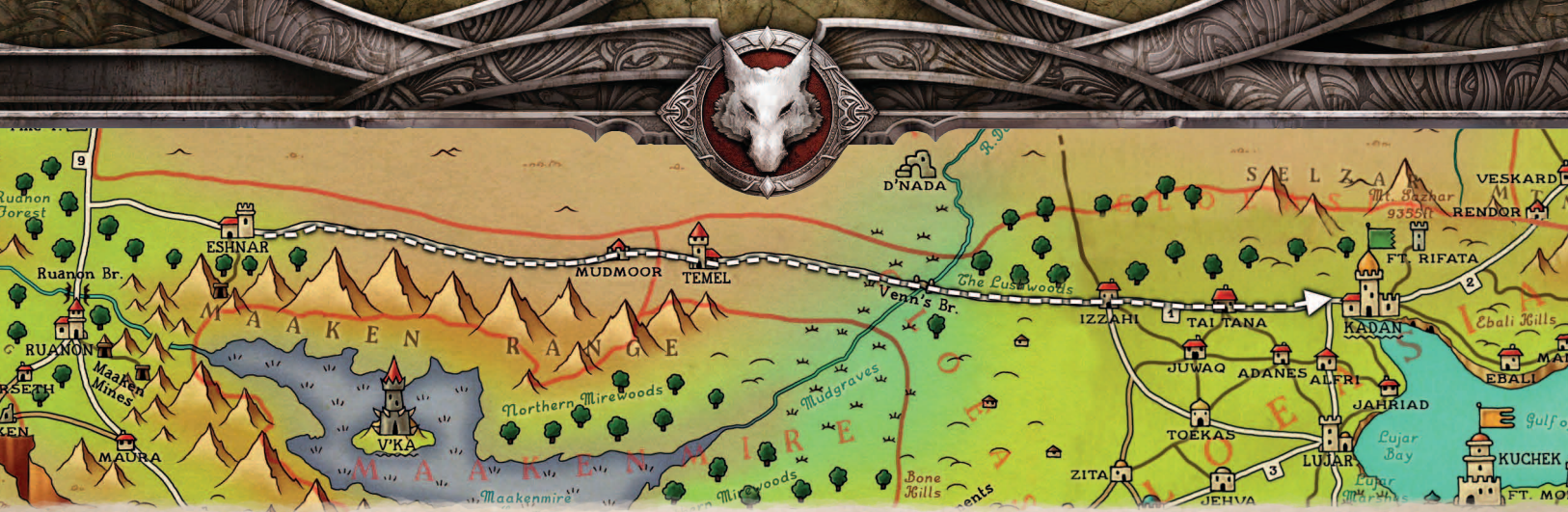
Traits: Grouping (Pack), Mount

These Giaks and their savage mounts will not attempt to Evade combat. After all, their commanders will punish them for failure in ways that make death at the hands of the Players seem like a kindness.

FROM ESHNAR TO KADAN

From Eshnar to Kadan is 350 miles, making this the longest leg of the journey. It should take the Players 10 days to reach Kadan on horseback via the Venn Vada highway. In addition to being the longest part of the race to Kadan, it is also the most hazardous. Before reaching the safety of the plains of Cloesia and crossing the Lushwoods, the road skirts the southern edge of the Wildlands and has no natural protection from the fiendish creatures and desperate raiders that pour out of the north.

Furthermore, to the south of the Venn Vada is the Maaken Range, a chain of mountains of which the splendour contrasts with the notorious and well-earned evil reputation, for it separates Sommerlund from the infamous Maakenmire Swamp. Between Eshnar and the Venn's Bridge, Kai Lords cannot use the Kai Discipline of Hunting to hunt for food.



ESHNAR

Located between the southern fringes of the Wildlands and the forested northern foothills of the Maaken Range, Eshnar is a squalid and dilapidated town sitting astride the Venn Vada highway that leads to the Zultanate of Cloeasia. It has only one street, the Venn Vada itself, and most of its timbered buildings, constructed in haste from hardwood after the town was fired by the Vassagonians during the Second Vassa Sommlending War (MS 4975 - MS 4977), line this rutted road.

The outskirts of Eshnar are not extensive but in MS 5000, there are several small farm holdings located on the south-western side of the town, and its inhabitants, who are mainly employed as miners in the northern tunnels and shafts of the Maaken Mines, enjoy a good living despite the constant threat of bandit incursions from the Wildlands. They take great comfort from the fact that a permanent garrison of Border Rangers from the 3rd Cassel of Wildlands Rangers, "The Timbersmiths" is stationed in the town's original fortifications, located less than a mile due east of the town square.

The town is governed by Sheriff Vaceron Wengar from a fortified manor near the town's original fortifications. Eshnar has one central market square in the middle of which there is an ancient bronze shrine which dates back to MS 3820. It depicts an effigy of Queen Maura I, holding aloft the sun and moon emblems of God Kai and Goddess Ishir in her delicate hands. During the Feast of Fehmarn, the townsfolk gather around Queen Maura's shrine and offer up collective prayers to Kai and Ishir, invoking their blessings and protections for the coming new year.

Eshnar's largest tavern is the Pick & Shovel Tavern, a drinking establishment constructed and established in MS 4991 by a retired miner and his grown-up family. It provides one of the few places where the townsfolk can congregate near to the western side of the settlement. It is a brightly lit and popular tavern which sells good food and ale at standard prices (typically 25% less than the cost of food and ale in the taverns of Ruanon Town). It does not have any lodging facilities, contrary to the old Wild Boar Inn which is located less than a hundred yards (33m) from the Pick & Shovel Tavern.

Large and boisterous, the Wild Boar Inn is a favourite watering hole for miners and their families. In MS 5000, it is owned and run by ex-miner Vinas Fliskin, his affable wife Hensa, and his three sons Oren, Ulnar and Eral. Players can find food and lodging here for 2 Gold Crowns per night. This includes a basic meal of cold meat, hard boiled eggs and wine. Hensa supplements her family's income by selling Potions of Laumspur (5 Gold Crowns per potion). At any given time, she has five of these on hand and can restock in a week.

Eshnar was established in MS 3808 as a fortified outpost to protect the eastern approaches to the fledgling Ruanon province in Sommerlund. In MS 3920, an overland trade link was made with the Cloeasian outpost at Temel, and in the following decade, this route was extended all the way to the Cloeasian capital of Kadan. The route was named Venn Vada in honour of King Venn I. In MS 3653, King Venn I sent military engineers to build a great stone bridge across the River Dorn in Cloeasia and paid for its construction and upkeep.

For their part, Cloeasia supplied several hundred labourers who assisted the Sommlending engineers with the construction. This collaboration sealed a military alliance between Sommerlund and the Zultanate, and later, Venn's Bridge ensured that the new overland trade route between Sommerlund and Cloeasia could flourish.

During the years MS 3941-MS 4212, Eshnar and Temel became regular coaching posts for merchant caravans travelling to and from Holmgard and Kadan. However, in the period MS 4213-MS 4220, the highway was subjected to frequent bandit and wild creature attacks from out of the Wildlands and the Maakenmire respectively. The situation became so dire that in MS 4221, King Frey II of Sommerlund forbade its continued use and he removed all military escorts that had been afforded to Sommlending merchants using this now-treacherous route. As of MS 4222, all official trade traffic from Holmgard to Kadan was henceforward conducted by sea, via the Rymerift. Eshnar and Temel shrank in size following the abandonment of the overland route to Kadan by Sommlending traders.

During the period MS 4230-MS 4552, it reverted to its original role and purpose as a military outpost, and was placed under the command of a Sheriff, a unique Sommlending rank. Eshnar's fortunes greatly improved during the period of the Great Ruanon Gold Rush. It became a dormitory town for prospectors who panned for gold in the mountain tributaries of the River Xane, and mined the north-western area of the Maaken Range.

Many of these entrepreneurial prospectors fell afoul of bandits, or were ambushed by equally murderous creatures that emerged, usually at night, from the Maakenmire Swamp. However, so strong was their lust for gold that these deadly attacks did little to deter the survivors from returning and trying their luck again and again.

Eshnar is the last truly safe stop on the route before the civilized part of Cloeasia beyond the Venn's Bridge. The small hamlet of Mudmoor offers little in the way of resupply and Temel is nothing more than an outpost town on the fringes of the Wildlands where everything is prohibitively expensive due to its isolation.

The Players will need to make sure they are well supplied in Eshnar. This might be a good opportunity to purchase new mounts, extra mounts, and plenty of Meals. Beyond the Venn's Bridge, they will be able to resupply in the Cloeasian villages of Izzahi and Tai Tana at normal prices if needed.

The Players may want to take some time to rest in Eshnar, especially if they are a few days ahead of schedule. The Wild Boar Inn is the finest in the city and should prove a fitting place to recover before pressing on to Kadan. Natural healing can take days or weeks to complete, but some recovery is possible during an adventure. Every day spent doing nothing but recovering from injury will heal 2 points of Endurance.

Passing by the Maaken Range presents more than just the beautiful sight of those magnificent snow capped peaks. The hills have eyes, after all, and seeing a group of Kai riding hard to the east will attract the wrong kind of attention.

Also, the Players may not be the only ones active in Eshnar. If they were unable to stop Havret from sending his last message, agents of the Darklords will be waiting in the town.

DARK DEEDS ON THE TRAIL

Like before, this event occurs if the Players failed to stop Havret from sending his final message. During their stay in Eshnar (if they bypass the city and press on, then one night in camp outside the city), they are attacked by Kurlow, a powerful Acolyte of Vashna allied with Svader.

Kurlow slips up to where they are sleeping, though anyone standing watch can make a TV 7 test (master rule- using Perception) to detect him before he reaches camp.

The agent possesses a Netherflask, a strange bottle that glows with a black light. If unnoticed, he flings the bottle into wherever the Players are sleeping. If they are in an inn, the bottle sails in through a window (open or closed). If camping out he simply tosses the bottle into the midst of the camp. Should the agent be spotted before he has a chance to throw, he still throws the bottle. However, if this happens then the Players do not suffer during the first round of combat for being ambushed.



Your sleep is interrupted by the sound of shattering glass and a hiss of vapour. Rising up from the glowing black remains of a broken bottle is a winged, ethereal shape. The ghostly figures quickly coalesce into a thing of terrible legend - a Daemonak - its black talons reaching out of the mist to assail you!

DAEMONAK

Combat Skill: 25

Endurance: 25

Traits: Flight, Swift

Special Note: This creature has been weakened by its containment in the Netherflask. As such, it does not have its paralyzing venom and cannot use that ability in combat.



If this blatant assault fails, Kurlow will try other things. For the sake of the story, assume that Kurlow possesses several dark powers, including the ability to disappear into shadows and escape from the Players if and when he is ever spotted.

Pick a random number from the table below or choose one of the agent's delaying tactics. Kurlow will only attempt three delaying tactics before the Players have gotten away. He will never directly confront the Players, and for this adventure, cannot be confronted in return.

DELAYING TACTICS

RANDOM NUMBER	DELAYING TACTIC
1	Caltrops
2	Poisoned Wells
3	Snipping
4	Giaks on their Trail
5	Hostage
6	Misdirection
7	Bridge Out
8	Rockslide
9	Lure
0	Sleepless Night

CALTROPS

The agent has spread caltrops across the road ahead of the Players. These can be spotted with a TV 6 test (master rule- using Perception). If not spotted, one randomly selected horse loses 4 ENDURANCE, goes lame, and cannot be ridden any further. The party only makes half their normal mileage if forced to walk. Healing the horse (if possible) will restore it.

POISONED WELLS

Every water source the party comes across has been poisoned. Streams have dead skunks in them, well have had noxious plants dumped down them, and streams have been polluted in the worst possible ways. Until freshwater sources can be found, the Players must ration what water they have and most of that will likely go to the horses.

It would take a day of hunting for water of the road and a successful TV 6 test (master rule- using Survival, automatic for the Hunting discipline or a similar ability) to find enough water for the group to ride for a day. Doing this twice will get the Players past the obstacle.

SNIPPING

Kurlow has placed Quarrel, an infamous Vassagonian mercenary archer on a perch in the nearby mountains, one that the Players cannot easily get to, and had her wait for them to come by. All the Players can see is a figure crouched amongst the rocks and as soon as they spot her, the arrows come arching down. The agent fires a dozen arrows from cover with a COMBAT SKILL of 20 before disappearing into the mountains. Shooting back is possible, with each attack from the Players resulting in the sniper firing one less arrow.

When Quarrel is out of shots, she slips away after doing her trademark move – blowing a kiss and waving goodbye. Players with the Investigation or Sage skill can try a TV 8 Test to identify her from that action.

GIAKS ON THEIR TRAIL

The agent has been given command of a raiding party of Giaks and sent them after the party. Alert Players will notice the Giaks stalking them with a TV 6 test (master rule- using Perception). If not spotted, the Giaks will try to ambush the Players as soon as the sun sets.

GIAK MARAUDERS (2 PER PLAYER)

Combat Skill: 12

Endurance: 15

Traits: Grouping (Mob), Invulnerable (normal poison), Soldier

1 Giak Marauder per Player has smeared his blade with Fenblood, a poison which causes blood poisoning. Players scratched (i.e., if they lose Endurance from the blow of a Giak Marauder armed with a Fenblood blade) will lose an additional 2 Endurance points each hour until they are cured, either by a Herbwarden of Bautar discipline, a Kai Master possessing the Magnakai Discipline of Curing, a Potion of Laumspur, a Bautarian Antitoxin Vial or a Tincture of Oxydine.

HOSTAGE

As you ride along, you spot a small pile of rocks in the middle of the road. A thin branch sticks up out of the pile with a note tied to it. The rocks are stained with several drops of blood, dried but still fresh enough to be red.



If the Players read the note, they find it written in excellent Sommlending script, the kind of penmanship only a scribe, a scholar, or a noble might have.

“Greetings, travellers. I have captured a merchant bound for Eshnar. If you want him back alive, ride north for ten miles and look for the lone tree. He was safe and alive when I tied him there, but who knows how long he will stay that way...”

This is a clever ruse to get the Players to waste their time riding across the cracked and broken ground of the Wildlands, enduring its endlessly howling wind. Have the Players make a TV 6 test to navigate due north (master rule-using Survival, automatic for Tracking or similar abilities). There is, of course, no tree or merchant, not that the Players know this.

MISDIRECTION

This trick is best saved until the party reaches the village of Izzahi in the Lushwoods of Cloeasia.

During the night, as you are crossing the sleeping Cloeasian village of Izzahi, the road comes to a five way fork with four other wide paths angling off in different directions. Normally, there would be a signpost here to direct travellers. Instead, there is a stump of wood and several small signs lying on the ground. These read “Ragadorn”, “Kadan”, “Lujar”, “Duwaq” and “Temel”.

The Players will have to choose which road to take, though a TV 8 test should help them out (master rule- using Survival). Alternatively, clever Players might try to use the Investigate skill to determine the proper placement of the fallen signs, or try to ask the sleeping denizens of Izzahi and convince them to help.

Taking the wrong road will take them days or week out of their way.

BRIDGE OUT

While the Venn’s Bridge at the River Dorn is the most well known, there are several small bridges that cross mountain streams through this area between Eshnar and Temel. In some places, the road even spans narrow ravines between spurs from the Maaken Range. Kurlow has managed to collapse a portion of one of these bridges. A horse can jump the gap, though with some difficulty.

A TV 7 test (master rule- using Riding) gets rider and horse across. Failure on this test sends both into the ravine below. The horse is killed and the rider takes -10 ENDURANCE. Alternately, the party can lose a day and ride around.



Again, be sure to allow the Players the chance to find a creative solution to this problem. Creativity and good roleplaying should always be rewarded. Not every idea can succeed, but you should encourage the Players to try.

ROCKSLIDE

In a place where the road rises up into the foothills of the mountains, the agent of the Darklords has placed a cunningly contrived trap – a prepared rockslide that will bury the heroes, their mounts, and the road.

As the party approaches, they can make TV 6 tests (master rule-using Perception) to spot the rock fall trap in time. If they do so they can stop or turn back and find an alternate way, losing a day of travel.

Alternately, they can attempt TV 7 tests (master rule-using Riding) to charge past the point of danger and escape the tumbling rocks. Those who fail to escape the point of danger are caught in the rock fall. Their mount is slain and they take -10 Endurance.

Other solutions are of course possible, such as attempting to disarm the trap. Assign an appropriate difficulty and let the Players try anything they come up with.

If they do not notice the rock fall, their only warning is the sudden rumble of a mass of rocks coming their way. At this point they need to try the same test as above to ride past, with the same risk of failure.

LURE

The ground here is torn up in several jagged rows and saturated with some kind of foul-smelling oil, a scent that makes your horses rear back in abhorrence. There is no obvious way to go around this patch, but some parts of the soaked ground look safer to traverse than others.

The agent has set out a lure that brings Burrowcrawlers to the road, and a starving pair have fallen for the bait. They caused the ground damage the Players can see before settling in under the tilled earth to wait for a passing meal. These beasts rise up to attack as soon as the Players approach. As with the thugs from before, these insectoid Agarashi focus their attacks on horses (and can cause the same laming effect if they inflict 10 or points of END loss).

BURROWCRAWLERS (2)

Combat Skill: 17

Endurance: 10

Traits: Burrow, Iron Will, Lurker

SLEEPLESS NIGHT

As the Players prepare to make camp for the night they are awakened by a distant sound of trumpets. Minutes later, more trumpets appear closer. All night the quiet is interrupted by the sound of trumpets blaring out beyond the light of lanterns and torches. A TV 6 test is needed to get some sleep during this nocturnal concert, and failure results in a loss of -2 Endurance. The sounds are coming from hunters chasing their night-running prey at a far distance from the Players. Unfortunately, their horns carry in this area and the din can be maddening.

ONWARD TO MUDMOOR

Once the Players have outdistanced the tricks and traps of Kurlow, they can cross enough open distance to put Eshnar far behind them. This means the next bit of civilization they will encounter is Mudmoor, and it hardly counts.



While not much of a town, Mudmoor does provide a chance for the Players to acquire new mounts. The Border Rangers will be happy to trade mounts with the party, allowing them to ride off on fresh steeds while their own rest from the long journey. Fresh steeds increase the speed of travel to 40 miles per day for the rest of this leg of the journey.

It is possible to get a replacement horse from the Border Rangers for a Player who has lost theirs. This requires a bit of convincing as to the extreme need of the Kai Lord's mission, a TV 6 test would do (master rule- using Influence). Equipment can also be purchased here, though the prices are rather inflated out on the frontier. All mundane goods are normal priced, but weapons, armour, and special items are double.

Encounters can occur en route, at Mudmoor, Temel or Venn's Bridge. Use the random chart given above or create similar diversions of your own.

town's main sources of income. To enter Temel, each Player must pay the Cloeasian Border Rangers 2 Gold Crowns or be forced to skirt around the town.

MUDMOOR

This small, fortified border post is located on the Venn Vada a little less than twenty miles west of the town of Temel. At a distance of more than one hundred miles from Eshnar, it is considered as the most remote settlement of Sommerlund, and was sometimes temporarily lost during encroachments by the brigands of the Wildlands.

It was once a dilapidated Wildlands village which was seized by the Army of the South in MS 3820 when the Venn Vada was extended between Temel and Eshnar. A Crown Revenue Post was installed here to levy taxes upon merchant traffic entering the kingdom by way of this highway.

Mudmoor is ringed by a palisade and benefits from the protection of a small permanent garrison of Wildlands Rangers of the 3rd Cassel ("The Timbersmiths") who are based in a fortified watchtower overlooking the Venn Vada. Due to its origins as a Wildlands village, it has a distinctly different architectural style to other Sommlending villages. Many of the villagers are of Cloeasian descent.

Interestingly, it is the only village in Sommerlund where Szalls are tolerated so long as they do not break any laws, especially those regarding the theft of property.

There is one inn in Mudmoor, a shabby establishment called The King Bern I, named in honour of the Sommlending King who authorized the inclusion of the village into the realm in MS 3820. Very basic lodging can be obtained here, as well as barely passable meals.

WELCOME TO TEMEL

The border Cloeasian town of Temel is in MS 5000 even more dilapidated, if possible, than Eshnar. Surrounded by barren lands and pestered by the brigands of the Wildlands and the monsters of Maakenmire, it is slowly depopulated.

Defended by crumbling fortifications hold by Cloeasian Border Rangers and mercenaries, it still houses ancient domed buildings dating back to the Northern Cloeasian period, but they are poorly maintained by the natives who have to strive to survive in this harsh environment. The control of the Venn Vada is one of the

TEMEL

Founded during the Age of the Black Moon, Temel represents an aborted attempt by the Zultanate of Cloeasia to retake control over the Wildlands. After the upheavals which caused the ruin of Northern Cloeasia, the Zultanate withdrew behind the River Dorn, the Lushwoods and the Selzar Mountains and was maintained around the city of Kadan, while its former northern colonies degenerated into the barren desolation of the Wildlands, populated by Szalls and mutants.

Once their country was secured, the Zultans however tried to regain control of their former territories. In MS 3653, with the technical and financial help of their new Sommlending allies, the Cloeasians erected a great stone bridge across the River Dorn, namely the Venn's Bridge. This bridge was supposed to be used to supply the bridgehead which would undertake the recapture of the western Wildlands, and the military outpost of Temel was built in this regard on the ruins of an ancient Northern Cloeasian town destroyed during the earthquakes of MS 3055. Unfortunately, the creatures of the Wildlands and Maakenmire proved to be too resilient for the Cloeasians, who had to keep the bulk of their military forces on their southern border to deter Vassagonian expansionist views, and Temel never manages to expand its territory north and west. Its denizens made a living of herding sheep and mining copper in the north-eastern spur of the Maaken Range.

Temel considerably grew after MS 3920 when a major overland trade link – the Venn Vada – was made with the Sommlending town of Eshnar. Ruined manors and temples dating back to Northern Cloeasia during the Golden Age of the Shianti were restored. However the joint flourishing of Temel and Eshnar was brutally interrupted several centuries later following the abandonment of the overland route to Kadan by Sommlending traders in MS 4222. While Eshnar could rely on the gold mines of the Maaken Range, Temel had not such sources of income and reverted to its original role and purpose of military outpost resisting for better or worse the Gourgaz incursions from Maakenmire.

Horses and equipment can be purchased in Temel, though the prices are rather inflated out in this forgotten area. All goods are thus double priced. The most interesting items to be purchased in



Temel are probably Gourgaz Leather Waistcoats (Special Item – 60 Gold Crown each; when worn it adds 3 ENDURANCE points to a Player's total. It can be worn with a Korlinium Chainmail Vest) made from the Gourgaz regularly killed by the town defenders.

The best inn in Temel is a relatively comfortable establishment named the Great Cloesia, of which the main hall is adorned with a great map depicting the ancient Zultanate when it stretched from the Gulf of Durenor to the sand dunes of the Dry Main. This inn is always frequented by Cloesian troubadours on their way to Sommerlund and the Stornlands and the ambiance is excellent. Although expensive, meals are the best to be found on the Venn Vada. As for Eshnar, the Players may want to take some time to rest in Temel. They could enjoy a good evening among the troubadours in the Great Cloesia Inn and even gain money in games of chance.

AMBUSH AT THE BRIDGE

The Venn's Bridge is an arching stone bridge built centuries ago to facilitate trade and military treaties between Sommlending and the Zultanate of Cloesia. Its footing sink deep into the banks and beds of the River Dorn and are lapped by the Mudgraves moors.

There is no easy going around the bridge, as the river valley is steep and the bottom is filled with the mighty river and surrounding swamplands.

As Kai Herra River Blade might say, 'Sometimes, the only way forward is straight through.'



It is here that the agents of the Darklords have set their biggest trap for the Players. While the harassing efforts that have occurred were intended to delay the Kai, this trap is meant to kill them. A band of Giaks has been hidden under the bridge and are strengthened by the inclusion of a Gourgaz.

As the Players approach the bridge they may detect the danger with a TV 8 test (master rule- using Perception). The Sixth Sense discipline grants a +2 bonus to this test. If they succeed, the party can stop before crossing more than a few feet onto the bridge, giving them the opportunity to avoid the ambush by retreating or ready themselves for a fight.

Should they fail to foresee this encounter, the party will be trapped by a vicious ambush in the middle of the bridge with foes in front and behind them.

If they succeed in spotting the attack, read or paraphrase the following:

Something is wrong on the bridge ahead. The once gleaming stone, now cracked and stained, is draped with clinging mosses, but some of those thick patches are being used to cleverly hide grappling hooks. The ropes dangling from them trail through the hanging vinery and disappear under the bridge, no doubt where attackers hide in wait.

If they fail to do so, read or paraphrase this section instead:

As you make your way across the fading and cracked wonder of the Venn Vada the hanging mosses and vines that drape the down to the river below begin to rustle. A force of ten Giaks climb up hidden ropes and leap onto the bridge behind you as another group of five do the same to the front. They are joined by a massive clawed and scaly hand grips the edge of the bridge and propels a roaring Gourgaz onto the bridge in front of you. You are trapped, and must fight your way clear of this cunning ambush!

While there are groups on both sides of the Players, they cannot Evade combat. If they can defeat either party of foes they can certainly flee. If the party is mounted, the Giaks and Gourgaz give pursuit, but soon fall behind. Should our Players be on foot, the chase can continue until either the attackers are slain or the Players devise some scheme to escape them.

There are two attacking groups:

GIK MARAUDERS (6)

Combat Skill: 16

Endurance: 15

Traits: Grouping (Mob), Invulnerable (normal poison), Soldier

Special Notes: The +2 CS bonus for being within 200 meters of a Gourgaz has already been included.

AND

GIK MARAUDERS (4)

Combat Skill: 16

Endurance: 14

Traits: Grouping (Mob), Invulnerable (normal poison), Soldier

Special Notes: The +2 CS bonus for being within 200 meters of a Gourgaz has already been included.

These 4 Gik Marauders have smeared their blades with Fenblood, a poison which causes blood poisoning. Players scratched (i.e., if they lose ENDURANCE from the blow of a Gik Marauder armed with a Fenblood blade) will lose an additional 2 ENDURANCE points each hour until they are cured, either by a Herbwarden of Bautar discipline, a Kai Master possessing the Magnakai Discipline of Curing, a Potion of Laumspur, a Bautarian Antitoxin Vial or a Tincture of Oxydine.

BLUDSKUL (GOURGAZ)

Combat Skill: 24

Endurance: 33

Traits: Brutal 3, Iron Will, Soldier

Special Notes: Bludskul gets his name from his habit of 'painting' his upper head with the blood of his first kill in combat. He will do that during this encounter as well. After reducing the first Player to 0 ENDURANCE, he will spend an entire round smearing blood over his pate. During this round, he does not inflict ENDURANCE in combat.

Once the Players either fight their way through this deadly ambush or use their mounts to escape it, they have left the majority of the Darklands' ability to assault them behind. Their journey to Kadan is nearly at an end!

ARRIVAL IN KADAN

The city port of Kadan, capital of the Zultanate of Cloeasia, nestles in a rocky bay of which white cliffs overlook the warm, turquoise waters of the Kuri Sea. Its ancient walls, minarets and domed palaces have stood there since long before the first Sommlending set foot on Northern Magnamund and look totally exotic to the Kai.

Once they passed the West Gate, the Players enter a wide avenue leading to the harbour. It is flanked by workshops and houses illustrating the long tradition of free trade of this ancient port. Made of sandstone, the buildings are often sheathed in white plaster. They are generally smaller than in Sommlending cities and densely packed. Some have red tiled roofs, an architecture borrowed from

the allies of Cloeasia among the Freelands, but most have a spire crowned with a bulbous, onion-shaped dome that soars into the sky in typical Cloeasian fashion.



KADAN CONFRONTATION

The Players have had 24 days to reach Kadan, the ship they are expecting to meet sails in two days late. The Narrator should have been keeping track of the days travelled (if they did not lose time at all, they reached Kadan in 21 days, five days before the arrival). There are three directions this final scene can go, depending on if the Players are early, on time, or late.

EARLY ARRIVAL

You ride into Kadan well before the Martin's Pride is scheduled to make port. Checking with the local harbour master's office, adjacent to Kadan's famous magnificent light tower, you learn that the ship has not arrived yet but is expected soon. You will need to find a place to stay for a few days and keep an eye out of Svader and his minions.

This would be an excellent opportunity to rest up, reequip, and refresh your supplies.

There are plenty of dockside taverns and inns for the party to stay at, costs run around 2 Gold Crowns per day. The city watch of Kadan does not take kindly to people lurking about or sleeping in the streets. Anyone caught will be rousted out and gruffly told to move on.

A second encounter with the watch will lead to arrest and a night in prison. Even if this country is a member of the Freelands Alliance



CLOEASIA

The Zultanate of Cloeasia is a small but wealthy nation of the Lastlands bordering the Kuri Sea with a long tradition of free trade, coveted by the Empire of Vassagonia. It relies on its wealth to continue to arm its troops and to fund mercenaries, and to its alliance with the Freelands.

'Cloeasia' as a country first came into being in around 2750 MS during the Age of the Old Kingdoms. Originally, it was a rich territory occupied by the Elder Magi and the Drodarin, and, at its height, it incorporated those areas that are currently known as Cloeasia, the Wildlands, Maakenmire, Casiorn, Western Vassagonia, and Anari. In MS 5000 (the time setting for LWAG), Cloeasia is about 20% of its original size.

Cloeasia has had a very chequered history. It never fully recovered following the decimation of the Elder Magi by the Great Plague of 2514 MS. By 2500 MS, the few surviving Elder Magi had completely abandoned Cloeasia in favour of Dessi. Part of its formerly fertile plain was lost to the encroachments of the Maakenmire Swamp after MS 3055, and parts of its southern grasslands were transformed into desert and later seized in wars of territorial acquisition by the Vassagonians (see below).

During the period between 2200 MS and MS 2950 (5,000 years) Cloeasia, although retaining its name, essentially became a wilderness inhabited by human outlaws and nomads, most notably Vassa exiles that rejected the rule of the Majhan since MS 900. The most famous were Haffan the Black Cowl and his band.

The Vassa nomads of Cloeasia created tent cities that developed into permanent settlements between MS 1755 – MS 2950. The Zultanate of MS 2950 was a culmination of the slow transformation of its population from anarchic nomads to settlers. The Zultanate was established by Zultan Grazhali – the unifier of Cloeasia (in Vassagonian, which is the common language of Cloeasia, Zultan means 'a man who brings people together'). His benign dictatorship was established in the city of Kadan, which had been the largest of all the Cloeasian tented settlements.

Kadan was established on the coastal ruins of an Elder Magi city called Kharda. It prospered, as had Kharda, due to the plentiful fish in this region, a pure source of fresh water from underground aquifers, and its natural harbour. Kadan became the principal city of Cloeasia, dwarfing the other inland cities by comparison.

The Zultanate of Cloeasia partly collapsed after the upheaval caused by the opening of the Maakengorge in MS 3055. The earthquakes led to the creation of the marshland of Maakenmire, which separated Northern Cloeasia from the southern colonies when a vast bowl of land sank below sea level (thus creating the Maakenmire). Casiorn, a Cloeasian outpost built at the edge of the Dry Main, became independent at that time (MS 3074).

Decades later, the tainted run-off from the Maakengorge polluted the Maakenmire and turned its once peaceful reptilian inhabitants into evil monsters. These foul creatures preyed upon the striving survivors of Northern Cloeasia and exterminated them, leaving the entire area in ruins. A mass exodus of Cloeasians was able to move north out of the killing zone with most entering Sommerlund or crossing the Rymerift into Durenor. Only a scant few remained, while thousands of Szalls migrated from the Darklands into this region to avoid the tyranny of Vashna, the mightiest of the Darklords.

A strong Cloeasian state nevertheless survived around Kadan (with the borders that this country has in MS 5050) in the fertile plain between the Vakar and Selzar Mountains, which maintained the Zultanate while the Wildlands turned into barren wastes. This new Zultanate then attracted a swell of Vassagonian nationals and cartels with a promise of free trade and political power for any merchant house willing to move their headquarters to Kadan, which ensured its economic survival. Strong ties were also established with the Sommlending after MS 3434, and notably King Venn I who financed the building of the Venn's Bridge on the River Dorn. Cloeasia entered the Freelands Alliance and later the Zultan sent his famous light cavalry to assist Sommerlund and Durenor during the Battle of the Pass of Moytura in MS 3799.



While the Majhan ruled Vassagonia (up to MS 3004), the Cloeasians never had any problems with the Vassagonians. In fact, the Majhan helped the Cloeasians to develop and grow as a separate culture, and respected their territorial boundaries. However, after the Exodus of the Majhan, and especially between MS 4551 – MS 4771, Cloeasia was invaded many times by the newly acquisitive Vassagonians, and Kadan was frequently made to endure periods of forced occupation, sometimes for decades at a time. However, Cloeasia was never fully subjugated by the Vassagonians. This was mainly due to the fiercely independent nature of Cloeasians. Despite hostile invasions by their powerful neighbour, they have been successful in maintaining their identity and resisting full integration into the Vassagonian Empire.

For several centuries, the Zultans have allocated a large part of their fortune to hire elite mercenary companies to reinforce their army and repel Vassagonian raids and incursions on their borders again and again. The most famous are the extremely effective but brutally expensive Talons of Rashuur, a loyal group with a code of honour and a 600 year long contract who proved to be able to resist the mighty Black Army on the battlefield. In times of war against the Vassagonians, the Zultans can also rely on the Assassins' Guild of Kadan, which is the most fearsome assassin brotherhood and criminal organization of the Lastlands. Fortunately for the Players, the Assassins of Kadan have not been hired by Svader to escort him.

and an ally of Sommerlund, in Cloeasia the Kai Order is not as well respected as in the Sun-realm, and Players should not expect special treatment from the local authorities.

Watching the docks might pay off, for the Players are not the only ones waiting for the *Martin's Pride* to come in. A group of elders of the Acolytes of Vashna, agents of Darkness, are waiting for Svader to aid him in his quest.

While under disguise, the Acolytes are noticeable in both their interest in the docks and the palpable aura of menace that surrounds them. They can be spotted with a TV 7 test (master rule- using perception). Those with the Sixth Sense discipline gain a +2 bonus to this test.

The Acolytes Elders selected for this mission are seasoned practitioners of the Black Arts, who lead in secrecy the cult in the Zultanate, and are incredibly dangerous, something the Player will know as soon as they see them. If a group of them are here, saving Master Stormsong will be even harder than the Player expected.

If they are not spotted, the Acolytes will continue to go about their business of watching and waiting. They will also spot the Kai Lords moving about the docks unless the Players take steps to disguise themselves. This will naturally draw the Acolytes' attention and lead to them trying to pick off any of the party who go off on their own.

How the Players react to this group is entirely up with them. Use their statistics below if the Players try to eliminate them or run afoul of their attentions before the *Martin's Pride* arrives.

Regardless, the *Martin's Pride* docks on day twenty-sixth of the adventure. Svader and company disembark without incident. If the Acolytes are still around, they meet Svader with saddled horses in hand. As a group, they all mount up and ride off.

See Confrontation below.

ON TIME

Should the party arrive on the appointed day (day 26 of the adventure) they make it to the docks just to see Svandr, his minions, and a disguised Master Stormsong mount horses and ride off. Svader shouts for the Acolytes to intercept the Players – 'Stop them! No matter what it takes!' – which they do so without question.

See Confrontation below.

LATE

Should the worst happen and the party arrives after the twenty-sixth day of the adventure, Svader and his minions have already left, taking Master Stormsong with them. The harbour master can report that the *Martin's Pride* landed, that a party of passengers met some others on the dock, mounted on their horses, and headed west. Asking around the dockworkers reveals that one of the cloaked figures who got off the *Martin's Pride* seemed drunk, and that a man with him mentioned they were heading into the Maakenmire for someplace called 'Valka'.

CONFRONTATION

There are six Acolytes of Vashna waiting for Svader and company at the docks with horses saddled and ready to go. If the Players



AGENTS OF DARKNESS

The Agents of Darkness infest all strata of human societies, with but few exceptions. Many lead mundane lives while others may hold influential positions in courts or commerce. On the surface they may seem to be quite ordinary, likable, and unremarkable folk, but this veneer of banality is but a carefully crafted façade designed to keep secret their true devotion to the Dark God Naar.

Most Agents of Darkness are fanatical devotees of Naar. They are wholly convinced that eventually Naar will triumph over the Gods of Good – Kai and Ishir – and subjugate the entirety of Magnamund to an irresistible and perpetual reign of darkness. They believe that their complete devotion to Naar will be rewarded when the ‘Final War’ is waged upon Magnamund. They are convinced that Naar will spare them the agonies of a violent death and imbue them with immortality so that they will each become Demi-Gods of Evil (After all, this has already happened for several Cenerese Arch Druids of the past, such as Malis).

They believe that once they have become immortal by the grace of Naar, they will each receive an inhabited planet in the vast universe of Aon over which they shall be allowed to rule supreme for all eternity. To further their foul cause, they engage in subversive acts designed to damage and weaken the forces of Good.

Some groups receive assistance from agents of the Darklords of Helgedad. This most often takes the form of magical spells, amulets imbued with dark power, or cursed weapons. Sometimes the Darklords’ agent, often a Helghast, may assist them in the execution of a specific mission. Players who encounter an Agent of Darkness will invariably have their

work cut out for them if they are to defeat this enemy and live to tell the tale. They will be perceived as mortal enemies by the Agent and its brethren, and can expect to receive no quarter from them in any ensuing combat.

Only a few have ever been known to renounce their Evil faith, and those that have done so are invariably hunted down and destroyed by their former brethren, lest their conversion to Good should prove contagious and inspire other Agents of Darkness to emulate them.

THE ACOLYTES OF VASHNA

One of the most prominent and infamous groups among the Agents of Darkness are the Acolytes of Vashna. This evil cult is led by a cabal of powerful necromancers whose sole aim is to free the restless spirit of the greatest of all the Darklords, Archlord Vashna, from the fathomless depths of the Maakengorge.

When gathered together for their secret ceremonies, the Acolytes of Vashna wear red cloaks with black hoods that are adorned with a skull-like emblem. Every Acolyte possesses an amulet of fealty that signifies their unshakable devotion to Naar. Acolyte Elders often possess artefacts imbued with evil powers, many of which have been manufactured by Nadziranim sorcerers in the fell laboratories of Helgedad.

Acolyte Elders may also be skilled practitioners in the necromantic arts, and all possess strong psychic powers that they use to bewitch their followers and slay their enemies. Acolytes of Vashna are especially numerous in the Stornlands and Vassagonia.

have already dealt with this group because they managed to arrive early, six new Acolytes arrive just in time to take their place. This replacement group is not as skilled (reduce their COMBAT SKILL by -2).

Once the Kai Lords have revealed themselves, the Acolytes move in to attack. Read or paraphrase the following when Svader arrives and this happens:

You see Svader and a pair of Drakkarim Death Knights forcing a cloaked and hooded figure toward a band of a half dozen figures

holding the reins of horses. Just as the groups meet, one of the cowed figures lets out a shout, pointing in your direction!

Svader and his minions quickly force their captive onto a horse, mount up, and prepare to ride off as the cloaked figures draw blades and rush you. Foul words of evil magic echo out from under their hoods as they cover Svader’s cowardly escape. Have you really come all this way just to lose Master Stormsong again?!

The acolytes’ goal is to cover the retreat of Svader and his captive Maser Stormsong. They will fight to the end for their cause. Svader

and his Death Knights will not aid the cultists in any way, as a few more deaths mean nothing so long as they get away with their Kai prize.

ACOLYTES OF VASHNA (6 ELDERS)

Combat Skill: 22

Endurance: 26

Willpower: 10

Traits: Grouping (Mob), Iron Will

Special Rules: These Acolytes Elders are able to attack using Mindblast.

Special Notes: Foul Words

Agents of Darkness favour the use of destructive magical spells or cursed weapons when engaging in close combat. By calling forth the name of the Dark God Naar as they attack, they are able to greatly enhance their strikes. For this 'Dark Curse' to be effective, the target must clearly be able to hear the foul words that they utter. The successful enunciation of a Dark Curse will add +3 to their Combat Skill for the duration of the ensuing combat. It can only be spoken once per day (a complete 24-hour cycle), and will only affect the specific target to which it is addressed.

The fight continues until all the Acolytes are slain. Svader and company have disappeared into the streets of Kadan. They have no doubt either gone to ground or ridden far ahead while the acolytes held the Players up. Though they left on horses, Svader and his riders have left no trail past the edge of town. It is as if they simply vanished!

With the Acolytes dead and no trail to follow, it might seem the heroes have failed...

However, all is not lost. Once the Players leave town and discover Svader's tracks have vanished, one of them (at random or whoever makes the highest Perception Test) will discover the following:

Just off the edge of the road, a small bundle of dark leather catches your eye. It is a small battered backpack with one broken strap and a Kai Badge pinned to its back. The badge is instantly recognizable – it belongs to Master Stormsong!

Inside, you find a scrawled map of the Maakenmire with notes scribbled on the back. They seem to be directions to someplace called 'V'ka'. That word is circled several times.

No matter what terrible things they have done to your mentor and friend, it seems Stormsong is still finding ways to help you...

Thus ends the third adventure in **Terror of the Darklords**. The story continues with **Adventure Four – A Situation in V'ka!**

Though the Players were unable to fulfil their mission, as Svader escaped with Master Stormsong, their efforts are certainly worth some measure of recognition and reward. Before proceeding to the fourth adventure, the Narrator should award the Player with a Kai Rank if they managed arrive in Kadan in time (or early), face the Acolytes of Vashna, and discover the map. Alternately, you can also award a Kai rank to the Players if they were late, but only IF they exhibited great heroism and compassion during their travels.



ADVENTURE FOUR



A SITUATION IN V'KA

ADVENTURE FOUR

A SITUATION IN V'KA

With the knowledge that Svader, his minions, and the captive Kai Master Stormsong are on their way to the island fortress of V'ka in the heart of Maakenmire, the Players must once more give chase. Although time is important, they have no idea how far ahead of them their quarry is, nor even if they can catch up to their foes. There are many roads that lead west, and several ways to enter and cross the Maakenmire Swamp.

Thanks to Master Stormsong and the backpack he managed to pull free from one of his Death Knight captors, the Players know the Helghast's destination, the impenetrable fortress of V'ka, heart of evil and dread home to things even fouler than Svader. Now, armed with this knowledge, the party of Kai Lords must somehow slip through the swamp, get into the fortress, and get out with Master Stormsong and the skull of Sun Eagle.

However, before they can reach that terrible place and face the dangers there, the Players will have to deal with a far more mundane – and immediate – threat here on the docks of Kadan.

After the last of the Acolytes of Vashna falls you see that Svader and your master have ridden off. Before you can reach your own mounts and affect a pursuit you are surrounded by members of the city watch of Kadan. Their halberds are lowered in a fighting stance and the watch sergeant is shouting at you to lay down your weapons. Will you fight these stalwart defenders of the peace or watch impotently as Svader rides off?

Fighting the watch is a poor choice, and one that will likely end in the death of at least one Player. No doubt already taxed by their

POOR CHOICES

There is no victory in battling the local law, only various stages of defeat. The first team of watchmen number only three, but they arrive on the scene blaring whistles and ordering the Players to lay down their arms and surrender. If the party keeps fighting, every combat round a group of five watchmen arrives. This will keep up for three rounds before the city's military arrive on horseback, armed and armoured and looking to put an end to this.

At any point during this battle the Players may lay down their arms and plead for mercy. Naturally, the watchmen and the soldiers will be angered but they will do their duty and take the party prisoner if possible. That all changes if the Players kill any guardsmen. Once that happens, all Kadan forces will attack to kill.

That stops when the soldiers arrive. Their better discipline will mean their cries of 'Surrender! No one else needs die this day!' are honest ones.

GUARDS (3, FIRST GROUP)

Combat Skill: 14 **Endurance:** 18

GUARDS (5, SECOND GROUP)

Combat Skill: 15 **Endurance:** 19

GUARDS (5, THIRD GROUP)

Combat Skill: 16 **Endurance:** 20

GUARDS (5, FOURTH GROUP)

Combat Skill: 16 **Endurance:** 22
Traits: Grouping (Soldier), Soldier

SOLDIERS (10, FIFTH GROUP)

Combat Skill: 18 **Endurance:** 25

SOLDIERS (10, SIXTH GROUP)

Combat Skill: 18 **Endurance:** 25
Traits: Grouping (Soldier), Soldier, Veteran (5, +1)

With the water at their backs and innocent soldiers willing to fight and die because they do not know what has happened here, the heroic thing would be to surrender. Evading this fight is impossible.



battle with the Acolytes and worn down by the long chase from Toran, the party is likely in no shape to enter a long and protracted combat.

Furthermore, the watchmen are innocents in this affair. They do not know what the Players are doing here or why. The guards only know that they are people who engaged in a fight on the docks and killed several people.

A few of the slain are even townsfolk from Kadan, cultists that have long hidden their true allegiances. (see the sidebar Poor Choices for how to handle the decision to fight the city watch).

Assuming the 'heroes' have not slaughtered all the city guard and its military, they will be quickly – if not gently – taken into custody. Once they down their weapons and surrender, the Players are escorted to the dockside watch station, stripped of all their equipment and thrown into a cell. There they wait until the next day when a tall well dressed nobleman comes to get them.

If they did not kill any guardsman, they receive food and basic medical aid and can each heal 2 ENDURANCE points. If the Players did kill one or more guards, they receive no healing or food. This will cause every Player to suffer the normal penalty for skipping a Meal.

SAVED

You are tossed rather brusquely into a damp and mouldy cell deep in the dungeons beneath the Watch Tower of Kadan. You wait there overnight, and it is late morning when you hear footsteps coming down the hall. Two guards are leading a

well-dressed man, a nobleman no doubt by his bearing and fine Cloeasian clothing, with greying hair and curly beard that is oiled and sculpted into ringlets. The trio stop in front of your cell.

"Greetings, I am Khafir Zaldanario, a lord of sorts here in Kadan. I hear that you claim to represent the Kai Monastery and are here on an important mission. Pray tell me, what proof do you offer?"

The Players may now plead their case as best they can and offer what proof they have. While this is a good chance for roleplaying and the Players should be encouraged to participate, the Khafir has already made up his mind that the Players are indeed with the Kai and that some sort of evil is afoot in Kadan. He just wants them to tell their story in their own words.

After hearing them out he orders the guards to release them and return their possessions, arms and armour as well.

AN OFFER

After being freed from the cell and having your possessions returned, the Khafir bows graciously and with a broad sweep of his arms.

"My apologies brave warriors, but the watch has duties to discharge and your battle at the docks was suspicious to say the least. I know of your Order. In my youth I once travelled to your kingdom and spent time amongst your people. The mission you are on is no doubt of great importance, and if there is any assistance I might be able to offer, then all you must do is ask.





"For now, please be my guests at my meagre townhouse. Enjoy my hospitality while I see to your ills and injuries."

If the Players take the Khafir up on the offer, he beckons to a waiting carriage that whisks them through the city streets past the crowded marketplaces and streets echoing with the calls and sounds of tradesmen.

In a short amount of time, they pass into a district of fine houses sporting three or more storeys, each with carved sandstone walls and ornate arabesques picked out in silver and gold, and topped by one or more spires crowned with a bulbous, onion-shaped dome.

If the Players are focused on leaving and refuse the offer, the Khafir will accept their choice. He laments their rush but he understands. After a stern warning about the dangers of the path ahead, he gives them a lift to the edge of city and sees them on his way. Proceed directly to 'Toward the Maakenmire' if this is the case.

The discipline of Sixth Sense will be of no assistance, as both choices are equally valid and the Khafir poses no immediate danger.

THE HEIGHT OF HOSPITALITY

If Players choose to stay with the Khafir, read this section aloud, paraphrasing if you wish.

The carriage pulls through the gates of a low stone wall and stops in front of a tall domed house of five stories, its walls made of some richly veined stone. Above you, there are high arches decorated with intricate carvings of plants and flowers. A bevy of liveried servants race down the front steps to wait upon the master of the house, your host Khafir.

A stool is rapidly placed below the carriage doors before they are opened for you. Other servants hold large parasols ready in case the Khafir desires shade while others stand by to unload any baggage or assist in different ways.

Your backpacks are taken and hurried into the house while a few servants reach out to ease your cloaks from your shoulders. Still others step up to aid any wounded amongst your number in reaching the shady insides of the house.

"Please, my new friends. Make yourselves my guests. Freshen up and my personal healer will see to your injuries. When you are ready, there shall be cool drinks and other refreshments awaiting you in the gardens. We can speak more deeply there."

The attentive care of the servants, warm baths, clean clothes and expert medical care will see each Player healed of 1 + a random

number of lost Endurance. It takes a full hour, but eventually the Players have been refreshed. When they are ready to speak with the Khafir, they are directed to find him in his garden.

Read or paraphrase the following:

After bathing, dressing in new clothes provided by your host, and having your injuries tended, you are led by a servant into a walled garden courtyard. The courtyard is filled with a profusion of scented flowers and green plants.

At the centre is a small fountain and four wide stone benches. Wooden trays laden with larnuma fruits, nuts, olives, and chesses, as well as cups of scarlet wine sit next to each bench.



Your host sits upon one bench enjoying a dish of honeyed dates dusted with crushed almonds. He rises to greet you,

"Ah, my friends. I see that you are recovered from the recent unpleasantness. Come and sit and tell me of your mission. How I may aid you?"

The Players may now tell the Khafir anything they wish. He is willing to aid their mission in whatever manner he can, including but not limited to the following:

- Providing common equipment, supplies, mounts, and even arms or armour. (*Time cost: 2 hours*)
- Arranging for an escort as far as the edge of the Maakenmire
- Writing letters of passage and introduction for the party so they may pass through Cloeasia with ease. These grant them free travel. They also command all servants and officers of the Zultanate to provide them with aid and succour. (*Time cost: 1 hour*)



- Bring in healers to see that all the Players are fully recovered before setting out. (*Time cost: One hour per END point restored to the most injured Player.*)
- Sending out his own agents to search for signs of Svader and his minions, as well as gather information about the Maakenmire Swamp. (*Time cost: One day.*)
- Advice on how to proceed in their mission.
- Send messenger hawks to the Monastery in order to inform them of the mission's status.

He will also answer question, though he knows little personally. His agents can turn up more, though taking him up on that offer will cost the Players another day, as noted on the aid list above.

One question they are likely to ask is, 'Why are you helping us?' His honest answer:

"A fair inquiry, my friends. Indeed, I would have been disappointed if you had not asked. In truth, I aid you because you have already done a thing in one day that I have not accomplished in years. You drove the shadows out of my fair Kadan."

He refills his wine glass from a bronze ewer, gladly topping off your own if you wish it.

"I saw the faces of the men and women you dealt with on the docks. I knew most of them, trusted them. One has even been in my home, sat at my table, and called me his friend. Now I know that every moment of that was a Naar-spun lie!"

Khafir's free hand clenches in rage, his eyes narrowing dangerously before finally relaxing again. Even though his voice is call when he next speaks, his fist is still red-fingers and white-knuckles.

"Forgive me, friends. I curse my own foolishness. While my eyes are now open, my reach is still short. You, however, can go where I cannot. You can chase the fiends responsible for poisoning my people with their treachery. That is why I help you, why I will do all I can to support you. Let me do this, I beg you, and Kadan – my home – will be forever open to you."

The Narrator should let the Players make their own decisions as to what to request, but if they become stuck, allow the Khafir to make suggestions as to what he can do.

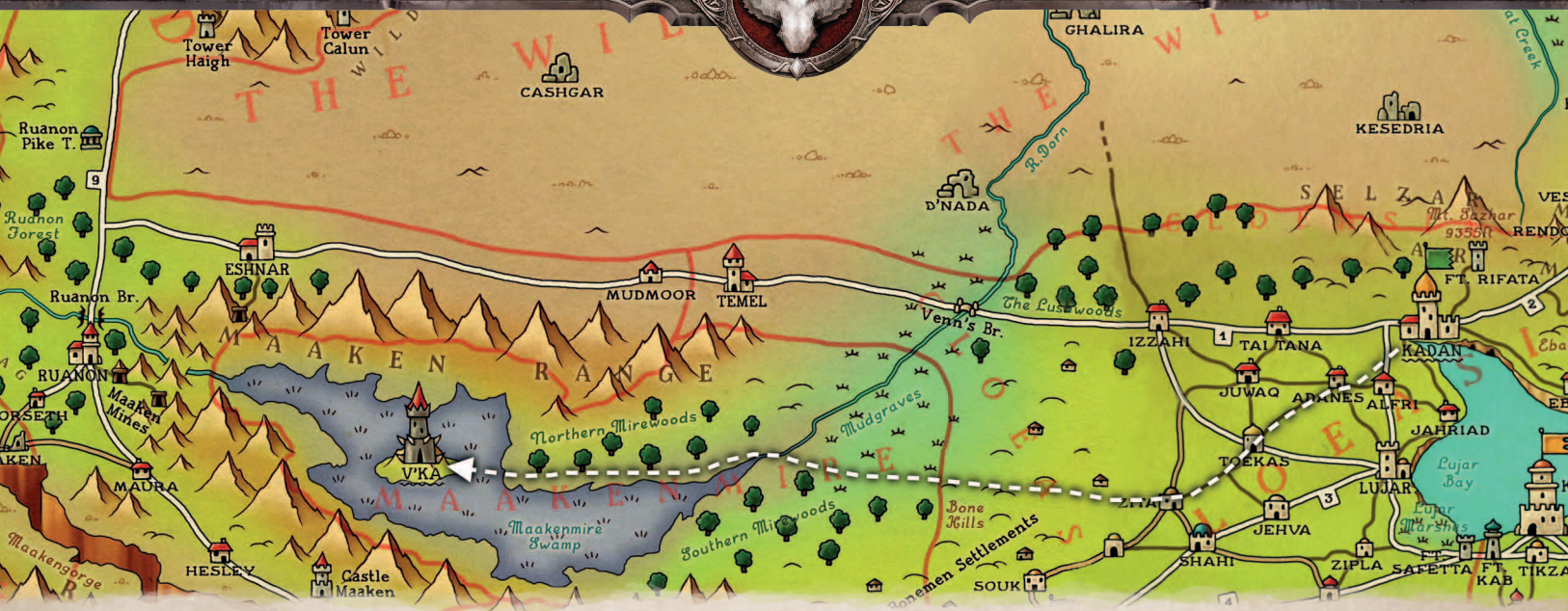
He is an eager and useful character, but make sure the Players are driving the story. He can only help them if they allow it, and only as much as they earn through roleplay.

ADVICE AND INFORMATION

The following are pieces of information that the Khafir's agents can uncover for the party:

- Svader and company headed due west, taking back roads and little travelled lanes instead of taking the Venn Vada up to the Venn's Bridge.
- They entered the swamp and abandoned their mounts in order to set out in skiffs provided by their agents.
- The prisoner they were carrying appears to be drugged, but in otherwise good health.
- The Maakenmire is a dangerous place that few people bother to explore. There are no known resources there; it is filled with dangerous quicksand, disease-ridden insects, and poisonous snakes. It is home to giant carnivorous mutated reptiles and to amphibian Agarashi. Worse, it is the haunt of some of the vilest and nastiest servants of the Darklords, namely the Gourgaz.
- The area of the Venn's Bridge is still patrolled by Gourgaz forces from Maakenmire, the same as those which ambushed the Players when they came to Cloeasia, denying access to the swamp by taking the vale of the River Dorn. The Players should follow Svader's party instead of resuming their steps to reach V'ka.
- The Bone Hills which stand between Kadan and the Maakenmire are inhabited by a tribe known as the Bonemen. They are xenophobic and reclusive, but defend their territory with courage and ferocity. Gifts can placate them as they rarely trade with outsiders.
 - Khafir will supply the Players with small gifts known to be valued by the Bonemen. (Exotic Gifts is a Special Item, taking up one space in a backpack. Each Player will need to carry one.)

The Players can take advantage of the Khafir's help and guidance and then continue on their mission. If in spite of everything they decide to again take the Venn Vada (see Adventure 3) to reach the Venn's Bridge and enter the Maakenmire following the vale of the River Dorn, they will discover the bridge's area is patrolled by Gourgaz and Giak forces and should be encouraged to enter the Bone Hills to avoid them. If escorted to the edge of the Bone Hills by the Khafir's guards, the journey is safe and uneventful. They



travel across the Cloeasian Plains, following trails until they reach the picturesque village of Zita at the feet of the hill range. If not, the Narrator should feel free to spring a random event from Chapter Three's list on the party.

TOWARDS THE MAAKENMIRE

Before crossing into the Maakenmire itself, the party must first make their way through the Bone Hills. These low hills with easy slopes covered with dusty coarse brown-green grass and sparsely scattered clumps of frail-looking scrubs have soils too impoverished for farming. The primitive Bonemen have long been allowed to maintain this small part of what was once their ancestral homeland, primarily because this land has little of value and is not worth the blood it would cost to claim it from them.

There are no trails from here on, simply animal tracks and the occasional short path between Bonemen encampments. Even heroes with Tracking or similar abilities will find the ground here difficult to read, as if the wastes shift and change like slow, dry ocean waves.

A WARNING

Shortly after entering the Bone Hills, you see a pile of stones. This small cairn is topped with a human skull and decorated with dried herbs, soot smudges, bird skulls, and the leg bones of some large animal. The skull is painted with red ochre and a blue-green pigment.

As you examine the strange marker, you hear the approach of several figures. Eight people with brown skins and jet black hair top the nearest rise, all men, only dressed in knee-length

white cotton breeches or animal skins and painted in whites and greys that make them look like skeletons. Once you see them, they stop moving entirely. They stand stock still, ominously silent and expressionless.



The Players have entered the lands of the Bonemen, a culture just emerging from the stone-age that lives in the Bone Hills. This war band is not looking for trouble, but in their minds trouble has found them. If the party advances toward them past the marker stone, the Bonemen howl and make several false rushes towards them. Each time, they pull back after a few strides, shout, and thrust their spears in a threatening manner.



This encounter can end in violence, but it does not need to. The Bonemen simply want the intruders to go away, but are willing to fight and die to protect their lands. If approached by a Kai Lord making gestures of peace, the barriers of culture and language might be crossed with a TV 8 Influence test, gaining a +2 bonus if the Players brought along Exotic Gifts.

A TV 7 Sage test reveals the taboos inherent in Bonemen culture as well as a recollection of a few words such as 'Peace', 'Trade', or 'Help'.

FIGHTING THE BONEMEN

Any violence towards the Bonemen, including attacking them at Range, instantly destroys the possibility of peace and initiates real combat.

BONEMEN WARRIORS (8)

Combat Skill: 12

Endurance: 20

Traits: Grouping (Mob)

Unlike many other primitive cultures, violence here will not draw reprisals unless necessary. The Bonemen are not stupid foes and will realize the Players are serious enemies. As long as the Players do not approach their encampments, they will avoid them completely. However, they will frighten away all game around the Players and ensure that they encounter nothing at all during the time it takes to cross the Bone Hills. This has the effect of making it impossible to hunt here. When prompted to eat a Meal before the next section, Players with Hunting cannot use that Discipline to avoid doing so.

If the Players in spite of everything decide to approach one of their tent encampments scattered across the hill range, the local Boneman Autarch, a towering muscular tribesman wearing a brightly patterned silk shawl over his shoulders, symbol of his power, will send every warrior available to protect his people, including his best raiders.

These Bonemen are real killers, equipped with real swords looted in the Cloeasian villages during previous raids. Moreover, the Bonemen warriors will be preceded by packs of frenzied Reebdan, medium-sized armoured six-legged carnivorous mammals originating from the Cloeasian Plains and tamed by this primitive people. Stout articulated shell-like plates cover the Reebdan's bodies, and their large powerful paws are equipped with strong, hooked yellow claws. The shell-like plates between their ears are articulated and clatter and rattle notably when they are irritated.

REEBDAN (10, FIRST PACK)

Combat Skill: 16

Endurance: 22

Traits: Defence 2, Grouping (Pack)

BONEMEN WARRIORS (20, FIRST GROUP)

Combat Skill: 14

Endurance: 22

Traits: Grouping (Mob)

REEBDAN (10, SECOND PACK)

Combat Skill: 18

Endurance: 25

Traits: Defence 2, Grouping (Pack)

BONEMEN WARRIORS (15, SECOND GROUP)

Combat Skill: 16

Endurance: 24

Traits: Grouping (Mob)

BONEMEN RAIDERS (10)

Combat Skill: 20

Endurance: 28

Traits: Grouping (Mob)

BONEMEN AUTARCH

Combat Skill: 21

Endurance: 29

Traits: Veteran 5/+1

There is no victory in battling an entire encampment of neutral tribesmen who only seek to defend their territory from people they see as ruthless invaders. Extermination of other peoples is not the way of the Kai Lords to say the least and the Players should realize they cannot achieve anything here.

Moreover, they will certainly be outnumbered and killed. If the Players do not flee in front of the first pack of enraged Reebdan after the first round, every new combat round a new group of foes arrives (see here above).

If the second group of Bonemen Warriors reaches them during the fourth round, the Players will be surrounded and will not be able to flee anymore. They will have to fight to the death, which is a high probability in that case. The Bonemen will not show any mercy after this. If against all odds the Players win, they will realize they exterminated the husbands and fathers of the women and children of the encampment.

If on the contrary the Players have the intelligence to flee, the Bonemen will hunt them down and harry them until they leave the Bone Hills and enter the Mudgraves. This will prevent the Players from resting, restoring and hunting. The Players will lose 3 ENDURANCE points in the process because of exhaustion.

THE BONEMEN

The Bonemen are a superstitious and secretive tribe. They consider all other peoples as foreigners and, although they live in Cloeasia, they do not consider themselves to be Cloeasians. Their language marks them as a very ancient human people which largely predate the settlements of the Vassa (MS 900) in Northern Magnamund. The Bonemen appeared in Magnamund during Age of the Old Kingdoms, making them contemporaries of the Vakeros tribesmen of Dessi. They were the first nomads who settled in Great Cloeasia after the exile of the Elder Magi following the Great Plague, and much before the coming of the Vassa exiles from Vassagonia who rejected the rule of the Majhan. The Bonemen knew the former inhabitants of Maakenmire before they turned into aggressive Gourgaz after the opening of the Maakengorge. In MS 5000, the Bonemen can only be found on both sides of the Bone Hills (both in Cloeasia and Maakenmire) where they leave in encampments of leather tents.

This cultural group of loosely affiliated tribes gained their name from their appearance. Few have encountered Bonemen aside from patrols of warriors or raiders, no doubt due to their culture's insular nature. When they leave their encampments, Warriors paint their bodies with white clay, darkening the region around their eyes, mouths, and cheekbones with charcoal dust mixed with fish oil. The rest of their bodies are decorated with dark grey designs using the same pigmented oils, giving them a skeletal appearance. Those knowledgeable about the Bonemen culture can determine a warrior's tribe and lineage based on these designs. In MS 5000, this tradition is still present but is losing ground, for the Bonemen are slowly evolving through contact, even unwillingly, with their Cloeasian neighbours. The Bonemen are indeed raiding the villages of the Cloeasian Plains more and more frequently, initially plundering their grain and their livestock, but now seizing steel weapons and cotton stocks for their needs. Some tribes are now producing crude cotton breeches, and their best warriors receive stolen steel swords.

The autarchs, chieftains of the Bonemen tribes, do not agree on the relationships they should have with the Cloeasians. Some consider they should invade the Cloeasian Plain up to Lujar and enslave the villagers so that they cultivate the land for them, others on the contrary think they should try to establish commercial links with the villages, selling them rare herbs, spices, fungi, fishes and animal skins from Maakenmire. The Zultans of Cloeasia have been unable until now to exert reprisals for all their military forces are constantly assigned to defend the southern border with Vassagonia.

The Bonemen are a very insular and secretive people who view all other cultures as intruders upon their land or threats to their collective peace. Interlopers are likely to be met in force by a party of warriors, but on rare occasions even the isolated Bonemen recognize the inherent goodness of those who serve the Kai and give them aid. They dislike the Cloeasians and are hated in turn, and occasionally hunted for sport by those who have fallen under the sway of the Darklords, such as the Acolytes of Vashna the Players encountered in Kadan.

Bonemen are known for their unusual language and complex religious practices that feature myriad taboos of a personal and tribal nature. The language of the Bonemen, which they call K!thlsa (which is also the name they give themselves), features many sounds not found amongst other peoples of the Lastlands, such as clicks (as phonemes) and explosives, as part of their common speech. Few of the Bonemen speak the languages of foreigners, mostly due to personal taboos against interacting with people outside of their immediate families.

Except in crises, the Bonemen are known to hide their emotions under a veneer of disinterest, frightened of what any display of emotion might reveal. Most people thus regard them as dour and stoic, but this is not entirely true. Their cultural taboos restrict the open displays of emotion and influence many other aspects of their existence, even if they tend to slowly abandon them under the influence of their Cloeasian neighbours. For example, centuries ago the Bonemen discarded their superstition that the spirits of the evil dead, thought to walk freely during the night, are attracted to burning hearths. Nonetheless the Bonemen habitually extinguish their campfires at night and no Boneman strays far from their own tent at night unless it is absolutely essential that they do so. It is also their belief that the gods grant fortune and spiritual power to those that obey their taboos, and withdraw their gaze from those that do not. While to outsiders this might lead to odd behaviour, close observation will show that these restrictions serve to regulate and moderate Bonemen society as effectively as a codified set of laws would in other cultures.



PEACE WITH THE BONEMEN

If the Players take the time and effort to make peace with these tribal folk, they will be shown the Bonemen's bizarre way of interacting with strangers. This requires letting the Bonemen paint their faces with ochre and grey mud, listening to them tell stories (in K!thlsa, which none of the Players likely speak), and being escorted out of the Bone Hills quickly. During the process, the Bonemen will remain dour, they will not show any emotions.

To the Bonemen, this is an honour, as outsiders are assumed to be lost and helpless in these sacred lands where they are not authorized to stay. Realizing the Players want to venture in the Maakenmire, they will even warn their new friends of the dangers of the Mudgraves and show them how to avoid them (see next part 'Muddy Graves'). Escorting them out is helping them, as it is essentially the Bonemen passing on secret paths and ways to their new friends.

Finally, either with escort or without, the Players will reach the far side of the Bone Hills. Along the way, they must eat a Meal or suffer the usual penalty (if they are not pursued by an entire tribe of Bonemen!).

MUDDY GRAVES

In the east, the Maakenmire swamp itself is bordered by the Mudgraves, treacherous moors dotted with invisible quicksand bogs, enclosed between the River Dorn and the Bone Hills. At first glance the Mudgraves seem to be a damp, but firm terrain with rich soil covered by thick superposed blankets of luxuriant mutated peat mosses, but the Players must be extremely cautious when they cross them for they earned their name. Indeed, the peat moss layers hide small but deadly quicksand bogs, which Players may mistake them for firm ground..

Only a TV 5 Sage test can warn the Players that the Mudgraves hide countless invisible quicksands. If they are suspicious (automatically if a Player possesses Sixth Sense) a TV 6 Perception test can allow them to detect a first concealed quicksand bog when they enter the Mudgraves. If they fail the Perception test, the Players may attempt to cross the Mudgraves without taking all of the necessary precautions, which will require a Survival test against a TV 8 each day. There are 60 miles between the Bone Hills and the Maakenmire Swamp. Due to the difficult terrain, the Players will need 4 days to cross the Mudgraves.

If they were warned of, or if they detected, the quicksand bogs before entering the Mudgraves, the Players can try to find a way around the Mudgraves and enter the Mirewoods to the south, but they will lose one day and will soon realize the thick humus of this damp timberland is as treacherous as the peat moss of the Mudgraves. In both cases they must forge ahead, which will require

an Acrobatics or Survival test against a TV 7 per day. If the Kai Lords attempt reasonable precautions, such as roping themselves together or using staves to probe ahead, they can earn a +3 to the test. If they befriended the Bonemen, they can earn another +3 for they were taught how to detect the quicksand bogs.

Any Player who fails their test to cross the quicksand bogs has fallen in. They begin to sink at a rate of a foot a combat round, but can be pulled out using Escape or Might test with a TV of 5 + the number of rounds they have been sinking. Someone who sinks below the surface suffers suffocation as normal (see *Book of Kai Wisdom* page 16).

MUDDY FOE

If more than 2 Players have fallen and got pulled out from a quicksand bog during the trip across the Mudgraves, a vast, amorphous mass of slime and mud, wreathed with peat moss, rises up out of the quagmire the last Player to fall has just passed.

This is a Mud Giant – a relative of the fearsome Swamp Giants of Southern Magnamund – and it intends to absorb and digest the Player who woke it up. This huge ooze attempts to grab and smother its prey. It will hold a victim to its beslimed body with a crushing bear hug with the intention of rendering them unconscious and consuming them alive.



MUD GIANT (1)

Combat Skill: 20

Endurance: 40

Traits: Aegis, Brutal 2



Special Rule: Mud Giants have the ability to swallow any normal weapons that touch them. During combat, at the start of the third round, a Mud Giant can steal by absorption the weapon of a Player who has managed to wound it. The Player must then fight without this weapon until the end of the combat. This ability is doubly-dangerous for any Player who is unarmed. If they touch the Mud Giant, they will be swallowed up by it at the start of the third round and begin to suffocate (losing 3 END each subsequent round until they, or the Mud Giant, is dead).

HUNGRY PEAT MOSS

During the last day of their trip across the Mudgraves, the Players will inadvertently walk on a blanket of Blood Sphagnum. Due to the lingering corruption of the Maakenmire nearby, these mosses have mutated into carnivorous plants with powerful tendrils that feed on animals. Their usual diet consists of large reptilians from Maakenmire, but they become frenzied when they detect warm-blooded creatures such as humans. Instantaneously, they launch their tendrils in an attempt to capture and consume the Players.

If these tendrils are able to wind around the limbs or torsos of a Player, their barbs will be able to penetrate any exposed or lightly clothed skin to suck blood.

BLOOD SPHAGNUM (1 MASS PER PLAYER)

Combat Skill: 16

Endurance: 30

Traits: Aegis, Reach, Trapper

Special Rule: A Player is considered to have been ensnared when they inflict their first ENDURANCE loss upon the Blood Sphagnum. All ENDURANCE points lost by the Player will be due to blood loss through the barbs. When caught by Blood Sphagnum tendrils, a Player must deduct 2 COMBAT SKILL from their base level score for the duration of the combat due to encumbrance.

Past the Mudgraves, the Players finally enter the Maakenmire swamp itself, in a waterlogged area near the source of the River Dorn.

THROUGH THE MAAKENMIRE

The moment you cross into the Maakenmire, you know that you have entered a terrible place. The ground has become soft and wet, reeking with every step as you turn up rot and dark, black mud. Befouled water, rancid and grey, rises out of the tortured earth to fill your tracks. Roots break the surface all around you, but few seem to lead to any plant life you can see.

Sometimes they move. Sometimes they turn out to be bones instead. Every once in a while, those move as well.

Despite the creepy atmosphere, the main concerns with travelling the Maakenmire are food and the ever present muck. The former is difficult, as edible game is scarce in the swamp and edible plants even more rare. Even those with the Hunting Discipline find themselves hard pressed for food; they can only find a meal every other day. Others must make a TV 8 test to find food (master rule-using Survival).

The muck and wet of the Maakenmire presents its own problems. The mud and water seep into everything and even the most hardened explorer finds their supplies getting damp, their skin developing rashes, and their soul weighed down by the miasma of despair. Every three days in the swamp, each Player needs to make a TV 6 test (master rule- using Survival). If they fail, they lose either -1 Endurance or a random item from their backpack is waterlogged and ruined. The Player may choose which.

There is an even more insidious threat in Maakenmire. The evil lingering corruption which turned this place into a rotting polluted swampland centuries ago is still effective, and it may affect and weaken even Kai Lords over time. Every five days in the swamp, each Player needs to make a TV 5 WILLPOWER test (if they have Mindshield they can add +1; if they have the Special Trait of Magical Soul they can add another +1). If they fail, they lose 1 permanent WILLPOWER point due to the corruption.

Though it is only ninety miles to V'ka from the point they entered Maakenmire after crossing the Bone Hills or the Southern Mirewoods, i.e. near the source of the River Dorn, the Players are hampered by the nature of the swamp itself. They cannot take their mounts into the swamp. The land, or more accurately thicker patches of water, shift and flow so much that even if they have the map recovered from the Acolytes of Vashna they can easily get lost. Under normal circumstances the journey should take ten days.

Each day of travel a TV 7 test needs to be made to stay on course (master rule- Using Survival). Failure means a day is wasted in backtracking and wandering into the wrong parts of the swamp. Unlike the great pursuit from Toran to Kadan, speed is not the issue here. Instead, the Players need to keep pressing on in the face of overwhelming opposition.

HAZARDS OF THE MIRE

The following events are meant to be played out in a random order, and some of them can be skipped if the slog through the marsh is dragging on or the party is becoming too beat up to continue. A good pacing is one event every three days of travel. The Narrator should either pick from the following list or pick a random number to determine which event happens. Some of these events are closely linked, such as Old Man Jyn and The Great Sink, and should be played one after the other.



MAAKENMIRE SWAMP

The geography of the Lastlands underwent a dramatic change during the formation of the Maakengorge in MS 3055. Formerly an expanse of rolling grassland nestling in the heart of the Maaken Range, the Maakenmire Swamp was created when a vast bowl of land sank below sea level as the tremors from several earthquakes in the Southern Durncrag Mountains spread eastwards.

The swampy marshlands created in the wake of this event underwent a dramatic transformation when the whole area was heavily polluted by run-off from the Maakengorge, and later by the underground infiltrations of tributaries of the Nengud-Kor-Adez, the lake of evil fire which surrounds Helgedad and which has run below and corrupted the soils of the Darklands since MS 3072. The Maakenmire became a fetid swamp filled with rotting mutated vegetation, and was soon settled by amphibious Agarashi such as the Jenghi. The once-peaceful tribes of Gourgaz who inhabited the fertile vale of the Maaken Range and traded with the Bonemen were destroyed by internecine conflicts as they mutated into aggressive and hatefully carnivorous predators.

The mutated Gourgaz took control of the swamp and frequently ventured beyond the borders of the Maakenmire in search of warm-blooded prey, notably in Northern Cloeasia. Even after their alliance with the Darklords of Helgedad in MS 4711, the island stronghold of V'ka is rumoured to contain many thousands of these hostile creatures along with other mutated reptiles such as the Kwaraz. The swamp is infamous for the many poisonous plants and venomous animals that dwell in the steaming, fetid reaches of its hostile domain.

MAAKENMIRE EVENTS

RANDOM NUMBER	DELAYING TACTIC
0	Old Man Jyn
1	Quick Sand Bog
2	One Dry Spot
3	Swamp Giak Patrols
4	Maddening Hordes of Mosquitoes
5	Ill Wind and Foul Air
6	Wandering Gourgaz
7	Hunting Kwaraz
8	The Great Sink
9	Mud Geysers

OLD MAN JYN

Ahead of you, beneath the hanging moss of the swamps and between the twisted and contorted trees, you spot the edge of a something you never expected to see this deep in the Maakenmire, a building. Creeping closer, you see it is a shack made of scavenged wood and perched above the mud and muck upon five rotting piers.

This shack is the home of Old Man Jyn, a crazed hermit who lives in the Maakenmire. He left his family in Holmgard nearly two decades ago, driven by strange visions and personal demons to seek out a place far from his fellow man.

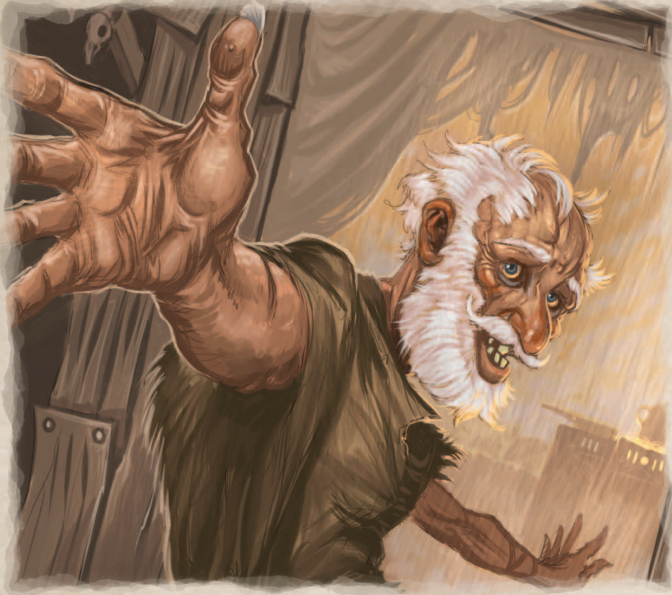
Somehow, he managed to penetrate deep into the swamp. He has survived all this time by learning to avoid the worst dangers while at the same time scavenging food and raw materials from the swamp.

Occasionally a traveller comes by and Old Man Jyn either invites them in, drives them away, or waylays them. In the latter case, the crazed hermit loots the body and dumps it in the Great Sink.

Being in a good mood, Old Man Jyn invites the Kai Lords into his home, offering them pickled snake eggs, fried sparrows, and other delicacies of the swamp. They are welcome to stay the night, if they can put up with his repugnant appearance and the stench of his half-rotten shack. The many dangerous, intelligent creatures that live in the swamp have developed a strange tolerance for the hermit and leave him alone. Thus, his shack is something of a haven.

If the Players have behaved themselves and interacted kindly with the old man, Jyn awakens them the next morning with breakfast and extra crazy. Read 'Rise and Shine' to the Players before moving on through the swamp.

If the Players were rude, unkind, or treated Old Man Jyn harshly in any way, their behaviour has caused him to have a psychotic break. Read 'Rude Awakening' to them instead.



RISE AND SHINE

You awaken to the smell of more of the Old Man's strange cooking and the sound of him singing tunelessly to himself in what passes for this place's kitchen. He is wearing a 'hat' of blue-green moss and very little else, humming the Sommersang, the anthem of Sommerlund, distressingly off key.

"Oh ho ho, awake I see! This is good, very good. I have the best of the mire for you today, a treat no soft Lastlander has enjoyed in many a year, I wager. Hee hee, so good. You will like this from your rumble-belly to your teensy tasty toes!"

While he may not be sane, he does know a thing or two about cooking. This breakfast is made with mirelash eggs. Mirelashes are huge reptiles that mutated in the Maakenmire just as Gourgaz did but never became bipedal. Instead, they developed a retractable dorsal fin and bone spikes at the end of their incredibly powerful tails. Their eggs are incredibly nutritious and, when cooked correctly, have an amazing one-time effect on those who eat it.

Any Player who braves the man's strangely green repast will gain a permanent point of ENDURANCE one day later. This will happen while the Players are travelling, so do not reveal the bonus to them until after they have left Old Man Jyn's house and are on their way. If they try to find their way back to Jyn afterwards, they will not find him. Even Tracking fails here; the Old Man is just gone.

Special Note: If any Player has been especially kind to Jyn, his madness has caused him to see them as one of his abandoned children. Pulling them uncomfortably close, he will whisper to that Player, *"Sweet Jhavo... your legacy is out there. All for you. Remember. When you see a rope, you have to pull it up. Up up up, like how much you've grown!"*

This cryptic message refers to the rope found in The Great Sink, below.

RUDE AWAKENING

Your sleep is interrupted in the thin light of false dawn by the screeching of your host. "You! You come here to take me away! You know what I've done! You... you know all, but you will not have me, no! I will give myself to the swamp before I let you take me back!"

With this Old Man Jyn begins to beat at you with his cane, lashing about in ineffective fury, before bolting down the ladder to the base of the shack below.

The presence of Kai Lords has finally done what years of swamp life and madness could not. Overwhelmed with feelings of guilt and shame but still warring with his homicidal rages, Jyn can no longer bear the stain of his own existence.

When the Players follow him out of the shack, read the following:

Old Man Jyn has just smashed something against the side of his own shack. Small, spherical, and made of clay, the object shatters in a burst of flame. The old rotting building, however, is too sodden to catch fire, however, and the blast quickly goes out.

"You are so good! Too good. Too bright! You hurt to look at, so I have to close my eyes!" the old man howls, doing just that. "Close your eyes with me! Let's keep them closed forever!"

Just behind him, you can see several sparking lines starting to cross under the house. The flaming ball may have gone out, but it seems to have started burning dozens of strange knotted vines, each one of which is only seconds from reaching several barrels beneath the shack – barrels stamped with Borese symbols!

If the Players start running immediately, they can escape the blast radius of four full barrels of Boom Powder stashed under Old Man Jyn's abode. If they do anything else before trying to escape, they will need to succeed at a TV 6 (master rule- Acrobatics skill) roll to survive.

Failure at this roll means an explosive death at the hands of a gibbering madman.



QUICK SAND BOG

Ahead of you the trees and grasses of the swamp thin out and a large field of mud that stretches as far as your eyes can penetrate the constant murky mist of the Maakenmire. Here and there, you see small islets formed around scraggly and unpleasant looking trees – the only solid ground in this land of sucking mud.

A large expanse of quick sand bogs interspersed with firmer land spreads out in front of the party's path. They can either try to find a way around it, in which case they lose a day's worth of travel, or they can forge on through. Forging ahead will require an Acrobatics or Survival test against a TV 6. If the Kai Lords attempt reasonable precautions, such as roping themselves together or using staves to probe ahead, they can earn a +2 to the test.

Any Player who fails their test to cross the quicksand bogs has fallen in. They begin to sink at a rate of a foot a combat round, but can be pulled out using Escape or Might test with a TV of 5 +the number of rounds they have been sinking. Someone who sinks below the surface suffers suffocation as normal (see **Book of Kai Wisdom** page 16).

ONE DRY SPOT

Ahead of you, you spot a rise cutting across the swamp. This steep sided ridge appears to be a natural feature, some sort of promontory of rock that managed to survive the catastrophe

that flooded this region. There are tall trees, some even relatively straight limbed, clean looking grass, and most amazingly of all, dry land.

Even a swamp like the Maakenmire is not all uniformly fen-like. This ridge is a half-mile long and rises up twenty feet above the surrounding marsh. It is dry and covered in vaguely healthy plants. Even better, there are hares here as well as herbs and wild vegetables, thus providing a chance to replenish fading food supplies.

The ruins of a stone farmhouse of unknown origins cover the rise's summit. It might have been built by settlers from Northern Cloeasia, or even, judging by its alien architecture, by the once peaceful reptilians who mutated into the evil Gourgaz, before the corruption of the region. Finally, from the vantage point of the ridge, or especially a tree growing along the spine, one can see across the swamp for several miles. This one dry spot allows the party to stop and cook food, clean gear, and even clean up if they wish. However, this spot is a landmark for this region of the Maakenmire, and any lights or fires there will be spotted from far away. The evil denizens of the swamp will certainly come to investigate such a beacon (use one of the monster encounters from this table).

SWAMP GIAK PATROLS

Sharp eyes spot signs of the passage of a large number of warriors through the swamp. Brush has been disturbed, bones and other trash litter small campsites, and tracks of small

SWAMP GIAKS

These Giaks are smaller, lesser cousins of the Mountain Giaks who constitute the backbone of the armies of the Darklords. Swamp Giaks were in fact the first of Giak-kind to be spawned during the early years of the Age of the Black Moon (MS 3004 – MS 3799). They were named after the swampy slime-filled rifts of the Naogizaga, where initially they settled and thrived. Hundreds of thousands of them were used by Darklord Vashna as slave labour in the construction of Helgedad. Upon its completion, Vashna began producing a newer, tougher kind of Giak and these became known as Mountain Giaks. Following the rise of Mountain Giaks, the Swamp Giaks were still spawned in large quantities, but not for slave labour or military purposes. They were used primarily to provide food for the other creatures of the Darklands, including the Mountain Giaks. They were also skinned for their hides. After MS 4711, Swamp Giaks were sent to the island stronghold of V'ka in the Maakenmire Swamp to serve as shock troops and provide a ready supply of food for the Gourgaz allies of the Darklands. It is even rumoured they are now spawned in the depths of the stronghold of V'ka.

Swamp Giaks normally make poor soldiers. They are too weak and cowardly to fight with any great effectiveness. But those who reside here, in the Maakenmire, breathe its foul air. This air contains the scent of the thousands of Gourgaz native to the swamp. This scent causes a chemical reaction to take place in Giak blood, stirring the affected creature to battle frenzy. The Swamp Giaks encountered here are physically smaller and weaker than their Mountain Giak counterparts, but what they lack for in muscle they make up for in tenacity. They are often mounted on Haraz, pony sized amphibious reptiles that originated in Maakenmire and that can cross even marshy terrain on their widely-splayed feet. Haraz are also fair swimmers, though they cannot do so with a Swamp Giak on their back. These vicious animals are not nearly as dangerous as Doomwolves, but they do possess a low cunning.

feet and some clawed, reptilian mount can be found sinking into the oozing muck.

Preferred to the tougher Mountain Giaks due to their marshy affinities, a large force of Swamp Giaks has been mustered in the Maakenmire under Gourgaz supervision, no doubt as the prelude for an invasion of Sommerlund. They have sent out patrols throughout the swamp to look for stragglers, forage for food, and to keep the unruly Giaks occupied. The Players should encounter signs of their passage from time to time. If they do not take precautions, the Players will run afoul of a patrol of six Swamp Giaks mounted on Haraz, an amphibious reptile well suited to the swamp.

SWAMP GIAK (6)

Combat Skill: 12

Endurance: 6

Traits: Grouping (Mob), Soldier

Special Rule: Giaks can see in the dark.

HARAZ (6)

Combat Skill: 10

Endurance: 10

Traits: Grouping (Pack), Mount

Special Rule: Haraz can see in the dark.

MADDENING HORDES OF MOSQUITOES

Up ahead you hear a loud buzzing, a sound that soon amplifies to a constant drum of insects swarming in dark clouds. These clouds move along the surface of the swamp and up into the tops of the trees, flowing like living fog. The swarms have spread from horizon to horizon, threatening to sweep across the entire Maakenmire!



Telchos has sandstorms; the Maakenmire has insect swarms. This particular swarm covers miles of swampland, a massive cloud of mosquitoes that threatens to blot out what little sunlight can be seen through the miasmic atmosphere. There is no going around this doom cloud; the Kai Lords must slog on through this pestilence. The mosquitoes do more than drink the blood of those who pass through, they carry a disease known as Blood Madness.

Those infected are driven insane by the burning feeling that squirming larvae have inhabited their blood. Only the roots of the Maakenbrush shrub can be made into an effective cure, but one must find this rare plant and have access to a fire for several hours to produce the infusion. It is a Survival TV 7 test to find Maakenbrush in the Maakenmire. Making the infusion is a simple task that anyone with the Medicine skill can do without any need for a Test.

BLOOD MADNESS

Method of Infection: Mosquito Bite

Difficulty Rating: 6

Known Cures: infusion of Maakenbrush root.

Effects: The constant burning and itching sensations coming from their veins distract the target. They suffer -1 CS each time they fail a roll to resist the disease. For every 5 CS they lose, all skill tests suffer a -1 penalty.

Note: If the Players take some precautions against the mosquitoes such as slathering exposed skin with mud or wrapping themselves in cloaks and blankets they gain a +2 on test to resist contracting the disease (this does not effect tests to throw off the disease once infected).

ILL WIND AND FOUL AIR

You smell something, something odd, a hint of sulphur, a bit of rotten garlic, and a touch of three-day-old frog in the hot sun. The air, already thick and miasmic, seems even more oppressive here. Somehow it is thicker, too thick to push through. You just want to lie down for a minute, just collapse onto that hummock of marsh grass and rest.

The reeking aroma of rotting vegetation, stagnant water, and ripening fungus fouls the air in the Maakenmire Swamp. Some areas are worse than others, and clouds of dangerous pestilential gases well up from below, coming even sometimes from underground tributaries of the Nengud-Kor-Adez that flow deep under Maakenmire (See the "Mud Geysers" event), and hang in fetid pockets beneath the moss-coated trees. The Players have



wandered into one of these pockets. The air has been scented with the sweet-sick smell of decay, made sulphurous with the bursting of bubbles along the surface of brackish ponds, and tainted by the spores of hundreds of fungi. It is also corrupted by the insidious evil power which maintains Maakenmire in this evil state, as an echo of the Darklands. Treat this as a poison, Foul Air, and apply as per the adjacent box. The area can be detected before the Players are truly exposed through a TV 7 Perception or Survival test.

FOUL AIR

Method of Delivery: Inhaled

Target Value: 6

Known Cures: None. Exposure to fresh air is vital.

Effect: The victim becomes lethargic and confused, unable to direct his own movement. What the victim most wants to do is lie down and take a nap. The effects last while in the befouled air and continue for a random number of hours afterwards. During this time, the victim's CS is halved and they will resist attempts to forcefully move them or prevent them from lying down. However, in their befuddled state victims cannot effectively take actions.

WANDERING GOURGAZ

As you wade and scramble through the swamp you come upon a line of trees with heads and skulls nailed to them. These severed trophies are of wild animals, Gtaks, humans, and one large Gourgaz head. The latter is still fresh.

Crude symbols have been carved into the trees below the skulls, each one repeated on the crown of the skulls in blood. The line of markers goes on for some distance in each direction.

The Players have come across the boundary markers for a small band of Gourgaz. They may attempt to find a way around the territory of these fearsome humanoid reptilians, which will trigger another swamp event, or attempt to sneak through with a TV 6 test (master rule- using Stealth). If spotted, or if the Players just brazenly wade past the boundary, they must face a band of three adult Gourgaz and a clutch of six young. If a fight occurs, the Gourgaz do not attack all at once. One adult will come out to seek the intruders. A cunning party might be able to lure them out one at a time and tick or trap them.

GOURGAZ (3)

Combat Skill: 23

Endurance: 33

Traits: Brutal 3, Iron Will, Soldier

RED DEATH PLAGUE

Method of Infection: Exposure to Gourgaz blood (injured Gourgaz)

Difficulty Rating: 3 (if the Players possess Healing, they may add 1)

Known Cures: Resin of Druse tree (a very rare, powerful, and expensive plant variety of Southern Magnamund that can be found in the remote Forest of Fernmost)

Effects: There is appearance the day after the infection of growing red buboes in the face, groin, neck and armpits, which ooze putrid, infected and infectious blood which can potentially infect other Players if touched. On the second day, there is apparition of acute fever and vomiting of infectious blood (the infected Players lose immediately 5 COMBAT SKILL points and their ENDURANCE is halved, rounded down). Most victims die between three to seven days after initial infection. Players lose half their ENDURANCE score, rounded down, each time they fail a roll to resist the disease (TV 5) each day after the second day (Players who possess Healing may add 1).

Note: Characters with the Medicine skill can make a skill test to identify the disease and realize there is only one cure, the Druse sap. The Medicine skill will be of no use to slow the disease's progress and lessen its effects. If players contract this disease they are in grave peril, for even the discipline of Healing cannot protect them and there is no Druse tree to be found in Maakenmire. If they are infected while they are exploring the swamp, they must leave the group and Maakenmire at once and head for the Kingdom of Durenor in the east. There the Durenese Herbwardens might have some Druse sap to cure them. There are 200 miles between the heart of Maakenmire and the city of Ryme (i.e. between 10 and 5 days of travel depending on whether they manage to get horses), so if the Players do not carry (or cannot buy) healing potions, this is a desperate quest. If the Players are infected attacking or exploring V'ka (see next section The Island Fortress of V'ka), they may find a way to escape Maakenmire more quickly and reach a Sommlending city where Herbwardens might help them. If they survive, these Players will be able to join again the party in the next adventure.



Special Rule: A Gourgaz automatically raises the COMBAT SKILL of any Giaks within 200 meters by +2. Gourgaz are sometimes carriers of the Red Death Plague virus, although they are themselves immune to the effects of this terrible disease. Exposure to Gourgaz blood (i.e. each time the Gourgaz is injured the Player who wounded it must make a TV 5 test using Acrobatics – master rule) carries with it a small risk of contracting this plague. In the present situation, only the third Gourgaz is carrier of the virus.

GOURGAZ YOUNG (6)

Combat Skill: 13

Endurance: 16

Traits: Brutal 1, Iron Will

Special Rule: Young Gourgaz automatically raise the COMBAT SKILL of any Giaks within 100 meters by +1.

If defeated, or simply distracted enough to draw the entire band away, their lair can be easily discovered. It is a large hollowed out opening in a mud bank.

Inside are the remains of an explorer the band has recently slain and eaten, including an expertly-made spear of Chai origin (+1 bonus to COMBAT SKILL when wielded) and a backpack that contains a potion of Laumspur and three meals worth of dried meat and fruit.

HUNTING KWARAZ

You hear a sound from deep in the swamp, a roar that rolls across the fetid waters and bounces off the blackened trees. Something large is out there, something that sounds both hungry and angry.

A second roar thunders loud enough to shake the swamp around you. A third roar reveals that whatever it is, it is getting closer!

The roaring is that of a Kwaraz, a giant carnivorous reptile, on the hunt. The beast is a large four-legged creature with huge oval eyes, splayed clawed feet and a powerful tail that allows it to move swiftly over the muck or slither rapidly through the water. It has a fearsome fanged jaw and an unending hunger, its favourite meal being human flesh.

The only real weakness of a Kwaraz is that it is very susceptible to psychic power. Using the Kai Discipline of Animal Kinship upon this reptile will enable the user to persuade the creature to halt its attack and retreat into the swamp.

KWARAZ

Combat Skill: 24

Endurance: 35

Traits: Invulnerable (poison, disease), Swift

Special Rules: Kwaraz are very susceptible to psychic power. Players may add +4 to Combat Skill for the duration of any combat with a Kwaraz if they possess Mindblast. They can also be repelled using the Discipline of Animal Kinship.

THE GREAT SINK

You hear a movement of water and spot an area where the overarching canopy of twisted branches has been broken, allowing in some faint light. Approaching you see a great swirling body of brown water carrying broken limbs, rotting corpses, and other debris. Several streams feed this body of water, some darker and even more befouled than others.

This appears to be a great sinkhole of some kind, and that the water and the flotsam it carries is being drained into some depths below. At the heart of this revolving pool is a lone island with a single gnarled tree. From the tree, a rope leads down into the slurry.

Several streams in this part of the Maakenmire flow together and plunge down into this sinkhole. A constant flow of water down creates a slight suction that seems ever willing to take in more water, yet the swamp seems to always have more water to give.

The Great Sink is roughly a hundred and fifty feet across and has no discernable depth. The area around it is, impossible as it may seem, sunken lower than the surrounding swamp. The water is deeper, up to the chest of a grown man, and there is a noticeable flow. At the edge of the sink proper, devoid of plant life, the flow is more noticeable.

Past this point, it takes a TV 5 Might test to avoid being sucked in, the TV increases to 6 thirty feet in, 7 forty feet in, and so on until the centre is reached at seventy feet. Those sucked in can attempt a new Test each time the TV would increase, with any result meaning they have managed to swim or wade to safety. Failure to resist entirely sends a person down into the last depths and a watery grave.

JYN'S LEGACY

Forty feet in there is a small island formed around a particularly strong and sturdy tree. A long rope stretches from this island into the centre of the Great Sink and plunges below the surface. Pulling this rope out is a long and tiring action, but not a difficult one.

At the end of the rope is a box crudely wrapped in oiled leather. Inside are the treasures that Old Man Jyn has looted from travellers over the course of several years. Inside are three Potions of Laumspur, twenty Arrows, and an ancient curved Vassagonian Scimitar with a hilt encrusted with jewels (this weapon counts as a sword and possesses the Cleaving 1 and Quick properties.



Unbeknownst to the Players, it is also a sorcerous weapon of which powers will be revealed in Adventure 5).



MUD GEYSERS

The mud and waters of the swamp begin bubbling ahead of you and then erupt into a geyser of hot, caustic mud. The steaming torrent shoots high into the sky before raining down over you all!

Beneath the Maakenmire are the cracked remains of the land that was torn asunder to create the Maakengorge. Unbeknownst to the Players, its ancient faults and fissures have been since filled by underground tributaries of the Nengud-Kor-Adez, the lake of evil fire which surrounds Helgedad, and run below the surface of the Darklands and beyond, maintaining and even increasing the corruption of Maakenmire.

Mater and mud from the swamp seep down to contact those supernatural lava channels, often boiling up in great gouts of tainted mud and water.

After succumbing to the first one, the Players can detect further mud geysers with a TV 7 test (master rule- using either Perception or Survival). Those with Sixth Sense gain a +2 bonus on this test.

The erupting geyser showers the party with tainted, caustic mud. This mud inflicts 2 ENDURANCE in damage initially and an additional 1 END and 1 VOL (because of the evil taint of the Nengud-Kor-Adez, unbeknownst to the Players. The Narrator can only tell them the lingering evil of Maakenmire weakened their minds too) per minute until it can be washed off with water (easy to find in the Maakenmire) and a TV 6 test. Those who suffer more than three rounds of the burning mud have their clothes ruined, and after five rounds their armour as well. The mud shower of an undetected geyser can be avoided with a TV 7 test (master rule- using Acrobatics).

The Players need to make their way past three more of these geysers before they can get past this burning field of muck and continue on their way.

ANOTHER PATH: THE NORTHERN MIREWOODS

Looking at a map of the region, Players may decide that rather than heading through the deadly mire, they will head to the Northern Mirewoods bordering the northern edge of the Maakenmire Swamp in order to progress towards V'ka more easily.

From the point they entered Maakenmire after crossing the Bone Hills or the Southern Mirewoods, i.e. near the source of the River Dorn, it will theoretically take only one full day to reach the Northern Mirewoods across the swamp for its eastern part is quite narrow. However, during this single day of travel, a TV 7 test needs to be made to stay on course (master rule- Using Survival). Failure means a day is wasted in backtracking and wandering into the wrong parts of the swamp and the Players fail to reach the Northern Mirewoods.

If they are successful, from this point they can travel 60 miles across this damp woodland heading westwards (it will take only 3 days, and the Players will not have to make the tests they should have to do when crossing the swamp), until they are forced to again enter Maakenmire to reach V'Ka. The remaining distance to be travelled across the swamp will be no more than 15 miles, and so it will not take more than 2 days to reach the island if the Players do not get lost. During these 2 days of travels, the Maakenmire Events will apply.

However, the Northern Mirewoods have threats of their own and it might not be easier to travel through this woodland. If they choose to explore the Mirewoods, the Narrator should pick from the Maakenmire Events list each day either the events "Wandering Gourgaz", "Swamp Giak Patrols" or "Maddening Horde of Mosquitoes".

THE ISLAND FORTRESS OF V'KA

The fortress of V'ka is a dark heart of evil in the middle of the Maakenmire, rising hundreds of feet above the surrounding swamp. Its sheer cyclopean walls made of obsidian and covered with odd spikes offer little chance of entrance save the main gate that is guarded by hordes of Giaks and their Gourgaz commanders. Drakkarim provided by the Darklords wait upon the battlements for anyone foolish enough to approach.

The island itself is part of the defences, a dark and fetid river lapping up to steep cliffs that sport many trails. These seem to

offer a way to ascend to the foot of the fortress wall, but most of these are dead ends, exposing those who use them to attack by V'ka's defenders.

In order to penetrate the terrible fortress that stands at the centre of the island, the Players will first have to locate a secret passage that will take them under the fortress walls. The passage begins in the vault of a Gourgaz necropolis located on a small islet near the stronghold island. This ancient burial complex is now home to a group of undead creatures, commanded by a Vordak. They are a formidable enemy, but the lesser of two evils.

If the Kai do not find and follow this route into the fortress, they may find themselves having to face an entire Swamp Giak army

V'KA

The biggest eminence of firm ground in the Maakenmire swamp, the island of V'ka was initially a massive rocky horst which protruded when the central vale of the Maaken Range widened and sank below sea level as the tremors from several earthquakes in the Southern Durncrag Mountains spread eastwards in MS 3055. After the vale was filled by the waters flowing from the snowy peaks of the Maaken Range and turned into the Maakenmire Swamp, the horst became a mountainous island towering the increasingly fetid marsh.

As the corruption of Maakenmire gradually transformed its denizens into fearsome monsters, the island was infested by Kwaraz, giant carnivorous reptiles which can easily climb its rocky walls thanks to their curved claws. It was also claimed and settled by the Gourgaz, who turned it into a stronghold dominating the entire swamp due to its central and towering location.

During the Age of the Black Moon, the cracks which fissured the rocky basement of the island were filled by an underground tributary of the Nengud-Kor-Adez, the lake of evil supernatural fire which surrounds Helgedad and flows deep under the surface of the Darklands. As the evil fire melted the surrounding rocks, volcanic eruptions subsequently occurred, depositing thick layers of basalt and obsidian in the caves and on the mountain slopes of the island. The Kwaraz and the Gourgaz survived this new cataclysm and the latter became truly evil creatures.

After their alliance with the Darklords of Helgedad in MS 4711, most of the Gourgaz emigrated to the Darklands to lead their Giak armies. However, some remained in Maakenmire to establish a Darklands bridgehead in the heart of the Lastlands. The Darklords provided the Gourgaz commanders of Maakenmire with Drakkarim labour forces and an army of Swamp Giak slaves. The Drakkarim provide the leadership and management necessary to accomplish mining, construction, and the gathering of mineral resources in the nations under Darklord control, while the Swamp Giaks are known to thrive in marshy environments.

In a very short period of time thanks to the brutality of their Drakkarim task masters, the Swamp Giaks mined the island to extract blocks of pure obsidian, which were used to build a fearsome massive black fortress, nestling in the middle of the peaks of the ancient horst. The island and the stronghold were formally named 'V'ka' at that time by the Drakkarim.

The fortress' architecture was strongly influenced by the alien wishes of the Gourgaz Lord Commanders, which explains why V'ka differs from the other strongholds built by the Drakkarim, with its walls built at unusual angles, its odd spikes and flanges sticking out from the fortifications. In the dungeons located deep below the towers of V'ka, Nadziranim Breedmasters sent by the Darklords installed a Swamp Giak Spawning Pit drawing power from the Nengud-Kor-Adez tributary flowing below Maakenmire, in order to provide the Gourgaz with a constant flow of fresh troops and meat.



instead. That is not to say this method of entry is impossible, but the odds are seriously stacked against the Players if they choose open assault.

Once they penetrate the main tower of the fortress, the Players will have an opportunity to discover the Gourgaz commander's plans for invasion. There are also clues to be found regarding the nature of the Helghast Svader's intended ritual.

DOING THINGS THE HARD WAY

If the Players want to assault V'ka directly, they will have to contend with the fortress' defenders directly. The following waves will meet them in combat (though careful play might avoid some of them, depending on the Player's attack plan), one emerging every other round until they are all engaged.

If this looks like the Players could be quickly overwhelmed, you are correct. A frontal assault is likely suicide. Be sure to allow them to Evade combat at any point. However, if the Players insist on this course of action, show no mercy.

WAVES 1, 3, 6, 7, AND 10 (BATTLE FODDER)

SWAMP GIAK (6)

Combat Skill: 12

Endurance: 6

Traits: Grouping (Mob), Soldier

Special Rule: Giaks can see in the dark.

WAVES 2 AND 4 (ELITE ASSAULT TROOPS)

GOURGAZ (4)

Combat Skill: 26

Endurance: 34

Traits: Brutal 3, Iron Will, Soldier

Special Rule: A Gourgaz automatically raises the COMBAT SKILL of any Giaks within 200 meters by +2. Gourgaz are sometimes carriers of the Red Death Plague virus, although they are themselves immune to the effects of this terrible disease. Exposure to Gourgaz blood (i.e. each time the Gourgaz is injured the Player who wounded it must make a TV 5 test using Acrobatics – master rule) carries with it a small risk of contracting this plague. In the present situation, only one Gourgaz per group is a carrier of the virus.

WAVES 5 AND 8 (INFANTRY ASSAULT)

DRAKKARIM SHADZA (8)

Combat Skill: 16

Endurance: 24

Traits: Grouping (Soldier), Soldier

WAVE 9 (GOURGAZ CHAMPION OF SUURVEK)

SKARCRUSHR, GOURGAZ (1)

Combat Skill: 28

Endurance: 38

Traits: Brutal 4, Iron Will, Veteran (5, +1)



If the Players survive these waves, two hundred Swamp Giaks, twenty more Drakkarim Shadza, twelve Drakkarim Konkordulaga (elite archers), ten Gourgaz warriors, a Drakkar Ziran named Lursh'na (battle-caster supervising the secret Swamp Giak Spawning Pit on behalf of the Nadziranim), and the Lord Commander of V'ka await them past its now undefended gate. Good luck to them.

Assuming the Players take the smarter and safer path of the mausoleum, continue on below.

WALKING THE DEAD PATH

As you view the fortress from the relative safety of the swamps you see a small outlying islet in the dank river that encircles the island. The map found on the Acolytes of Vasha shows that an entrance can be found into the fortress from this islet, but gives no other information.

Amid the endless grey and black, you can make out Swamp Giaks standing guard on the islet. There are several of the creatures there, but they number far less than those that surround the great gate of V'ka itself.

The guards are not terribly watchful; being Giaks they are a ragged and raucous bunch. The long wait of any sort of action and the knowledge that their brethren are out patrolling the swamp have frustrated them, and they spend more time quarrelling amongst themselves than keeping a sharp eye out for intruders.

A TV 6 test will be needed to slip past the Swamp Giaks (master rule- using Stealth). Success finds the Players following the map to the entrance to the tunnel that leads under the river and the walls of the fortress. Failure alerts the guards and causes six Swamp Giaks to rapidly descend upon the party (see the statics for Swamp Giaks above). These Giaks are more afraid of what lies in the building they are guarding than they are of the Players, so they will not raise an alarm or try to Evade combat. Once at the tunnel, the party are halted by large stone that blocks the portal.

PORTAL INTO NIGHTMARES

An ornately carved stone portal sealed with a heavy stone that bears both the marks of the Darklords and images of death blocks the entrance of the tunnel. Grinning skulls, fanged mouths, grim skeletons, and worse stare back at you from the stone, their terrible gazes far more fearsome than mere stone should allow.

Opening this heavy stone door requires a TV 6 test (master rule- Using either Might or Tinkering). If successful, the Players either force the door open or discover a hidden counterweight that allows

it to roll aside. Mind over Matter can open this door without need for a test, as it finds and activates the mechanism easily.

As the door slowly grinds open, a fetid odour rises from the darkness that yaws before you. Stonewalls, slick with dampness, frame a staircase descending into the ground. A terrible miasma of evil ashes over you from the lurking darkness below.



Like many burial sepulchres, the layout of the crypt is linear and simple. Despite the lack of complexity in its design, is a still a deadly place in which to trespass. It has its guardians, and they will hunt down intruders the moment they are detected.

One aspect of this tomb is that the aura of evil spirit inhabiting this crypt pervades every corner of it. This aura renders the Kai discipline of Healing. In addition, all Kai who enter will suffer the cumulative loss of 1 Endurance point for every hour they spend inside. Narrators should remain mindful of the time that elapses after the Players enter. Players should be told when to reduce their Endurance, and by how much, for the duration of the time they remain in the tomb.

The party will need to light their way as the crypt is completely dark. If they lack any light sources, upon searching, they will find several old torches scattered about. They are damp and difficult (but not impossible) to light. Once lit, they give off only a dim oily light.

STAIRCASE UP

You have arrived at a broad stone staircase leading up to the next level. The way up is carved from some sort of pitch black



stone, perfectly polished, with small skulls carved into the centre of each facing.

These steps have been trapped. The trap may be detected with a TV 8 test (master rule - Using Perception or Tinkering). Ascending the stairs without due caution will trigger a trap; a whirling bronze blade will emerge from the crease of the step and swing out in an arc. This trap occurs three times along the stairwell.

The Player in the lead might be hit by this spinning blade and must make a Luck Test. Success means the disc breaks. The blade shatters against the stone and the pieces clatters away into the gloom below. Failure means the blade strikes the Player for an END loss equal to 1 + a Random Number.

TOP OF STAIRS; ENTRANCE CHAMBER

The wide staircase opens out into an entrance chamber. You can see three exits, archways to the left and right, which open into

rooms further on, and a passageway straight ahead. The chamber was once ornately decorated, but the ever-pervading humidity has long since rotted every wall hanging and soft surface.

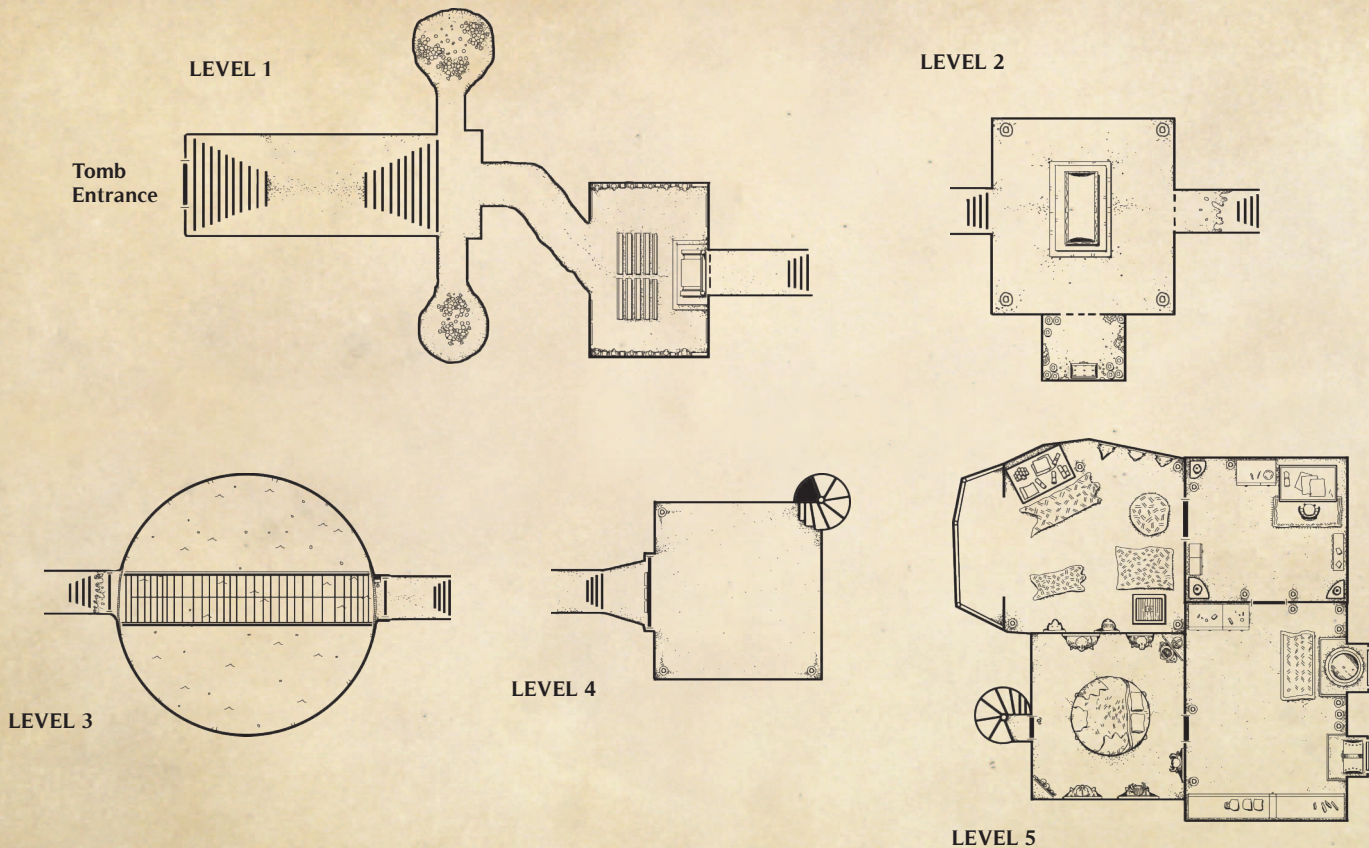
What little remains depict scenes that appear to glorify the ferocity of the Gourgaz. Several of the reptilians, tethered by leashes, are shown devouring their enemies in battle. The leashes trail back to the gauntleted hands of a trio of tall, hooded figures.

While fearsome, the imagery is just that – fragments of past foul artwork and decoration. There are no traps or important features in this area.

OSSUARIES

Small open chambers to the left and right of the entrance, these Ossuaries contain thousands of bones that have been painstakingly stacked in macabrely impressive mounds. From

THE TOMB





the archways of each, you can see that the bones form a macabre work of art. Most of the bones seem human, although there are several other species among them.

The most impressive aspect of this work is the skulls that are set in the middle of the design. They are impressively large and well toothed.

Searching the first ossuary will reveal a set of fresh bones. They appear to have come from a Swamp Giak. The bones and skull are scarred with fang marks, hinting at the fate that befell this luckless creature.

Upon examining the second ossuary, the first player to enter will glimpse something reflecting in their light. To get a closer look at what caused this reflection, the Player will need to disturb the display of bones. Clearing away the surrounding bones will reveal the source of the reflection.

Unfortunately, the gleam in question is the crimson eye of a Dhorgaan, a death serpent!

DHORGAAAN

Combat Skill: 20

Endurance: 40

Traits: Brutal 1, Trapper

Dhorgaan are very long bodied snake-like creatures that only ever appear on Magnamund when summoned and infused with the power of Death by a Darklord or a powerful Nadziranim sorcerer.

Those that are summoned are sometimes used as guardians to keep secure a valuable treasure. These creatures have ghoulish habits, as befits spawn of the Dark God. Their vile tastes make them ideally suited to guarding graves and tombs.

LARGE ANTECHAMBER

The short corridor heads off to the southeast to a large antechamber in which the souls of the dead would normally have been venerated. There are rows of stone benches to sit an audience, and a great obsidian throne is set facing them. It is engraved with golden serpents.

The walls are decorated with murals, mostly ruined by damp and fungi. The parts that you can see depict disturbing scenes of ritual sacrifice, of torture, and the slaying of humans by raging, blood-thirsty Gourgaz.

Arranged around the room are twelve alcoves, each occupied by the skeletal remains of Gourgaz. Their reptilian frames are clearly much larger than humans. Some of the skeletons are encased in armour - corroded bronze breastplates, greaves, and bracers. Age-gnawed bronze weapons rest against their bony thighs.

Shortly after entering the ante-chamber, those Kai who possess the Sixth Sense discipline must now attempt a TV 7 Test. Success allows the Kai to detect an evil malevolence that is gathering force in this chamber. Forewarned, they can make a hurried exit if they so wish.

If any Players remain in the antechamber, then the Gourgaz skeletons on display will animate. They come to unlife two at a time, one pair every round.

GOURGAZ SKELETONS (12)

Combat Skill: 9

Endurance: 14

Fortunately for the Players, these skeletal guardians have become fragile in their old age. However, they will all focus their attacks on one Kai at a time and relentlessly assault that individual until either they are all destroyed in the process, or the Player is killed. There are twelve skeletons in all.

If the party defeat these skeletons, they may conduct a detailed examination of the antechamber. Their search will reveal fresh tracks in the moss that carpets its paved floor. They lead up to, and appear to pass beneath, the obsidian throne.

The throne is carved from one solid piece of the obsidian, it has two armrests, and the ends of these rests have indentations to accept the sitter's hands. The backrest to the throne is engraved with the inlaid body and head of a golden snake. Its open, fanged jaws form an awning that curves over the head of any person who would dare sit upon this grand chair.

To open the secret door, which is concealed inside this chamber directly behind the throne, one of the Players must volunteer to sit on the obsidian throne. They must place their hands into the indentations and tightly grasp the ends of the armrests. When this is performed, the heavy throne slowly moves aside on its hidden bearings, revealing a narrow passageway in the wall behind. This process can be figured out with a TV 8 test (master rule- using Investigation), and circumvented with a Test (Tinkering) at the same TV.

Sitting upon the throne and failing to grasp both armrests within 10 seconds of sitting down, will trigger a trap. If the trap is sprung, the Player must make a Luck Test. Success allows him to dive away from the throne before the trap catches him. Failure to pass the test will result in instant, brutal death. The head will lunge downwards and its jaws snap shut, instantly decapitating the person sitting in the chair.

Their adventure ends here.

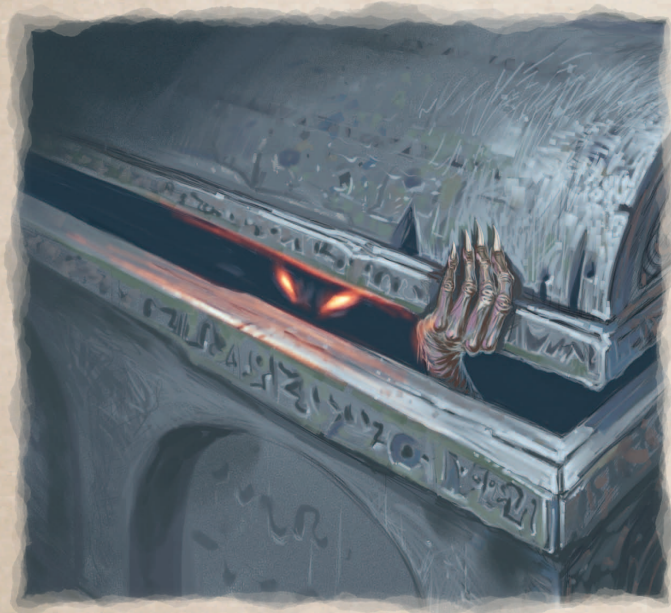


VAULTED CHAMBER

Another staircase ascends from the antechamber to a large chamber on the level above. The centrepiece of this vaulted room is a large obsidian sarcophagus, carved with strange glyphs. The walls, unlike previous chambers, have not been plastered. They comprise huge blocks of black rock, their close-fitting seams filled with a dimly luminescent moss. In each corner is set a black iron brazier. These burn with ethereal blue flames that shed no smoke but reek of burning blood.

The aura of evil is very palpable here; every Player will sense it radiating from the black vitreous sarcophagus. Sixth Sense is useless here, as it is overwhelmed by the aura.

Hiding in the obsidian sarcophagus is a Vordak, guardian of this evil necropolis. If the party leaves the sarcophagus untouched, the Vordak will remain in its dim, dark slumber. If the Kai attempt to touch or strike any sort of blow on the sarcophagus, the Vordak will awaken, hurl the lid aside, and rise up to attack the Players immediately.



The heavy lid overbalances and shatters when it hits the floor. The noise momentarily stuns you. From within the open stone coffer, a darkly crimson shape arises. Your heart pounds and your blood freezes the instant as you realize that you have disturbed a Vordak, a powerful undead lieutenant of the Darklords.

A piercing scream fills your ears as the creature raises a huge black mace and, with unnatural speed, leaps from the sarcophagus to assault you! Pain lances through your head as the Vordak launches a second, simultaneous attack with the destructive force of its mind.

VORDAK

Combat Skill: 22

Endurance: 30

Willpower: 15

Traits: Invulnerable (poison and disease), Iron Will (Mindblast only), Soldier.

Special Rules: Vordaks possess the ability to attack psychically using a Mindblast, which has a similar effect to the Kai Discipline of the same name. Vordaks can use their Mindforce to detect any sentient beings in their vicinity (100 feet / 30 meters radius), and can thus rarely be taken by surprise. When not engaged in combat, they are able to regenerate and fully heal all wounds within an hour of receiving them.

When the combat is over, or if the Players did not disturb the sarcophagus, they will be free to examine the vaulted chamber. Succeeding in a TV 7 Test (master rule- using Perception) will reveal two concealed doors. One is in the south wall; the other is in the east wall.

The hidden door in the south wall leads to a treasure chamber. The door in the east wall leads to a slime-stained staircase leading upwards to the next level (see South Tower).

TREASURE CHAMBER

The walls of this chamber are covered with edible fungi, but their bizarre shapes and garish colours are not the most notable feature of the room. In among the many mushrooms and shelf molds, you see dozens of precious items, from gold-chased armour plates to gem-encrusted sceptres and crowns. The wealth of a small nation lies here, seemingly unguarded!

There are enough fungi here to provide each Player with 3 Meals, while the treasure here, probably looted in the ruined cities of Northern Cloeasia by the Gourgaz, is easily worth tens of thousands of gold crowns. Nestled among these artefacts are canopic jars made from bone-coloured clay and engraved with blood-red symbols (a TN 6 Occult Test will recognize these as Right-Handed Magic).

If the Players do not disturb the treasures, then nothing untoward will happen to them. However, if they touch or move any treasure item, the guardians that protect this treasure will activate. From out of each jar will spring forth a terrifying Crypt Spawn, slimy, brain-like monsters, with clawed bat wings and long trailing tentacles, intent of slaying the offending tomb robber! They must be fought as a single enemy.

CRYPT SPAWN (SWARM)

Combat Skill: 25

Endurance: 40

Traits: Flying



Taking any of the treasure from the tomb would be a very unwise thing for a Kai to do. The treasure is tainted by the evil forces and the means by which it was acquired. If a Player takes and keeps any item from the chamber, they will lose 2 EP every 5 minutes until the object is returned to the hoard.

SOUTH TOWER

This flight of stairs is in poor repair but seem stable enough to climb. They are streaked with slime in several places, however, and could prove treacherous, especially near the top where the pallid grey ooze is the thickest.

At the top of the stairs is a landing with a black wooden door set into the wall. Peering through its split timbers will reveal a brick built cistern with a high vaulted roof lies beyond. Opening the black door requires a TV 8 test (master rule- using Might) because damage and moisture have swollen it shut.

Failure requires that the door be broken open. This requires weapons but no Test. This form of entry is very loud and will awaken the Kwaraz nearby.

Passing the broken door reveals a rough room between twenty and thirty feet long. A cistern filled with swamp water crosses the floor area of this chamber. There is an iron drawbridge that can be lowered to span the cistern and allow access to another black door on the far side, but the winch controls are also on the far side.

In order to reach the black door on the far side, the players will need to wade through the cistern water, which is more than three feet deep. The water is also the lair of two young adult Kwaraz. They are currently sleeping, but will attack anyone who awakens them. Stealthing past the beasts will require a Test at TV 7.

YOUNG KWARAZ (2)

Combat Skill: 18

Endurance: 26

Traits: Invulnerable (poison, disease), Swift

Special Rules: Kwaraz are very susceptible to psychic power. Players may add +4 to Combat Skill for the duration of any combat with a Kwaraz if they possess Mindblast. They can also be repelled using the Discipline of Animal Kinship.

Once the Kwaraz are defeated (or avoided), the Players can work their way across the circular cistern to the black door on the far side, which is unlocked. Beyond it lays a short tunnel leading to a large dull-bronze door. Lying close by this portal is a Kwaraz nest constructed from gnawed bones.

Amid the bones is an old black iron bracer that once belonged to a Drakkar soldier. The outer surface is scratched with letters

that spell out “Jag-Daz-Jag”. (This is a clue for solving the dials on the Bronze Door below.) Leaving this sunken area, the Players have ascended to the ground level of V’ka. Past here, they are traversing within the fortress itself. The first place they reach, the antechamber just ahead, has long been forgotten by the denizens of the citadel. This provides the Players with a rare opportunity to rest.

Before they can take advantage of it, they have to get past...

THE BRONZE DOOR

This door is too solid and secure to be beaten down. A careful examination of its surface will reveal three raised dials. They must each be turned until they click and stop moving in a particular direction in order to release the door lock. The pattern is **First Dial right**, **Second Dial left**, and **Third Dial right**.

Any Player with the Sixth Sense discipline will detect the relevance of the dials, and also determine that the door is capable of triggering a trap, as could a TV 8 test (master rule- using Tinkering). A TV 9 test (master rule-using Tinkering) can disable the trap. Movement of the Mind can be used to disable the trap automatically.

Failing to turn the raised dials to the correct unlocking position will trigger a trap on the first attempt causes a large block of stone to drop from the tunnel roof and block the door. A Player who triggers the trap by failing the difficulty test can only avoid being crushed and suffering -10 Endurance loss with a successful Luck Test.

As soon as the Players open the bronze door, they will enter a warm, dry antechamber where they can rest and recover some of their strength (5 Endurance points per Player).

In the corner of the dry antechamber, there is a circular stone staircase that leads upwards. Thick dust here and in the antechamber reveals that no one has been here in a very long time.

At the top of the spiral staircase there is a single latched door. It has an oval depression and two horizontal eyeholes positioned slightly above the top of your head. The purpose of these holes is to enable someone or something to peep through them to check if the coast is clear before they open the door.

BARBARIC BEDROOM

A peek through the eyeholes reveals a torch lit bedchamber decorated with macabre trappings. Large skins of reptilian monsters and gigantic snake skeletons are draped upon its walls. Among them are some mounted heads, a few of which are human. In the middle of the chamber stands a circular bed. It is large, its concave surface strewn with pelts and furs.



A rack of armour dominates one corner, its wooden frame bearing the weight of a large bronze breastplate and a pair of greaves. An impressive looking helm made of bronze, fashioned to look like a reptilian skull, rests on top of the rack. Over on the opposite side of the bedchamber, there is a rack of weapons - mighty swords, two large wooden clubs, and a long-shafted great axe.

The weapons and the armour have been crafted for use by a creature that is much taller and broader than an average fighting man.

The door is perfectly counterweighted and will open silently if pushed. The Players may step through it and enter the private chamber of Gourgaz Suurvek, Lord Commander of V'Ka. Their arrival in this chamber will not be observed or otherwise detected by its owner.

Once the Players are clear, the door will swing back into its closed position. From inside the chamber the location of the door is virtually impossible to detect which is why it has remained undetected by Suurvek so far. There is a small lever at ground level that will release the door lock and make it swing open, but the party will need to conduct a thorough search of the wall at floor level (and succeed at an Investigate test, TV 8) in order to find it.

LEAVING THE BEDCHAMBER

The chamber's black wood door opens into a study with two windows, each located in the upper rear surface of a deep alcove. In one alcove there is a large black iron cauldron set into the stone paved floor. It is filled with what look and smells like swamp mud, slowly simmering on a low heat. This cauldron is, in fact, a bath. The mud it contains is being kept hot by a fire located directly beneath it.

In the other alcove there is a large wooden chest. It is heavily padlocked. The chest is brimming with gold crowns (3000 coins) and small items of jewellery (seven large pieces worth 250 gold crowns each). Among the furs that are scattered across the bed, gnawed haunches of meat can be found. They are distressingly fresh.

A look through either of the two windows will reveal a dramatic view of the fortress from above. Its sloping battlements and courtyards are lit by hundreds of torches, and patrolled by dozens of Swamp Giaks. Small groups of Drakkarim are also visible.

Immediately below the windows, about twelve feet down, you can see an open-sided parapet. It appears to lead back into

the tower, somewhere on the floor immediately below. The unmistakable scent of Kraan drifts up from below, hinting that these unwholesome and evil beasts are in the immediate vicinity.

Other than by breaking a window and jumping down to the platform immediately below (detailed in Scene 6), the only other way to leave the bedchamber is by way of the door to the study. Listening at this door enables a Player to overhear a deep, sibilant voice bellowing in the Giak language.

The party will be unable to hear the speech clearly enough to translate the words. All they can discern from it with any certainty is that it is being responded to very favourably by hundreds of Swamp Giaks gathered in the main courtyard at the bottom of the tower. Their occasional roars of approval reverberate through the streets and avenues of this grim, grimy fortress.

LORD COMMANDER OF V'KA STUDY

Unfortunately for the Players, Helghast Svader and company have left the tower astride Kraan. They are now flying towards the Maakengorge, Kai Grand Master Stormsong still their unwilling captive. He has been roped and bound to the saddle of a Kraan that is attached by a long chain to Helghast Svader's winged mount.

There are a few important things that can be found in the Commander's study, such as:

Lying upon a marble table are several significant documents. They are all written in Giak and mostly logistical reports detailing the composition and state of supply of the Swamp Giak warband. This would undoubtedly be of great interest to Grand Master Rune Helm.





Additionally, there are a few scraps of parchment. One is written in formal Giak, a sophisticated variant of basic Giak that is used by Drakkarim commanders, Death Knights and high-ranking creatures of the Darklands. This has been inscribed using Giak blood for ink.

Working together and pooling their knowledge of the Giak language, you will be able to decipher the writing.

'The skull of the First Kai, drenched in the blood of his Order, shall awaken our restless master and free him from his fathomless prison.'

Another document details the precise location of a shattered bridge overhanging the Maakengorge. This must be where Helghast Svader intends to carry out an unholy ritual of Resurrection!

A DARK PLAN REVEALED

Beyond the wooden door in the study, there is an irregular-shaped chamber, similar in size to the previous one. Ghoul-like trophies and shrivelled heads decorate its walls, and a large, scroll-covered desk made from a hewn slab of obsidian, is positioned against one of the walls. Across the room, the floor is scattered with animal pelts and furs, save for an area taken up with a large trap door.

The only other exit is an open archway leading out to a broad stone balcony, as the trap door is locked from the other side. Stepping out onto the balcony brings the Players to the final scene of the adventure.

IMPORTANT NOTE

There is a chance, however slight, that the Players may decide to turn back at this point. Either they have the information they seek from the study or they do not and they have no desire to fight the master of this place. If, for whatever reason, the Players avoid the encounter with Suurvek, **do not force them into it**. There is a provision for the Players to be able to continue the campaign if they flee here. There is even a way for the story to continue if they have failed to find Svader's notes and map. The normal conclusion below will not apply, however. As Narrator, you will have to improvise their escape and withdrawal from V'ka. That is where this adventure will end for them. See Adventure Five – Restless Ghosts of Maaken for more details.

Though you are still hidden by flanking walls on either side, you are now directly behind a sweeping balcony ringed in large black stones. On each of them, a shrieking Kraan is held in place by a retaining chain with just enough give to let them rear their heads. Each time they do, they screech in time to the bellowing speech being given by the figure up here with them – a massive armoured Gourgaz!

The Players will hear Lord Commander Suurvek's voice more clearly. He is using his booming voice to impressive effect now, rousing to frenzy the mass of Swamp Giak troops gathered on the steep slopes of V'ka Island below. Although the Players' command of Giak might still leave a lot to be desired, they can decipher enough of Suurvek's speech to discern the following:

- Suurvek has mustered a large army of Swamp Giaks and they are fiercely loyal to him.
- He has informed them that they will shortly be joining forces with a powerful ally who commands an army that cannot be killed.
- The Giaks are frothing with rage, so incensed by their leader's pheromones and war-voice that they are even snarling at the Drakkarim among them. Several near-fights happen before the speech is even finished.
- They will all taste the spoils of victory when Sommerlund falls.

You become aware, by the tone of the Giak reactions, that Suurvek's speech is drawing to a close. It will not be long before the Gourgaz leader leaves the balcony and returns to his personal chambers.

Helghast Svader remains the most significant and immediate threat to the security of your homeland. He intends to perform a ritual, using the skull of Sun Eagle and the freshly drawn blood of Master Stormsong, that will have devastating consequences for Sommerlund. He must be stopped!

But you have a unique opportunity here to thwart Helghast Svader's wicked plans before you even confront him. This place is filled with Giaks whipped into a murder frenzy. The only thing keeping them from turning on the Drakkarim here is the presence of their Gourgaz commander, forcing them to obey his will.

And then suddenly, that opportunity becomes an obligation. Suurvek, spotting you, roars out a command and a massive block of stone slams down between you and the door to the study.



"Yes! The perfect display for my forces!"

He throws back his head and howls, "Now watch, warriors of V'ka, as I hack these would-be heroes apart." As he shouts, he hefts a huge axe of ancient bronze and dark magic.

"Limb from dripping limb!"

And with that, the scene is set for the Players to deal with the only thing keeping this tempestuous collection of Drakkarim and frenzied Giaks from tearing itself to pieces before the other Gourgaz leaders of the fortress can intervene - Gourgaz Suurvek - Lord Commander of V'ka.

LORD COMMANDER SUURVEK (GOURGAZ)

Combat Skill: 30

Endurance: 40

Traits: Brutal 3, Invulnerable (poison, disease), Soldier, Veteran (10, +2)

Suurvek stands nine feet tall. His thick belly scales are coloured green-grey, but his flanks and back have a darker hue that becomes jet black around his head and fang-filled jaws. About his scaly neck there hangs a black amulet of curious design.

He has a broad, thickly-muscled torso and a pair of powerful legs with webbed claw-tipped feet. His powerful tail swishes agitatedly. He hisses with rage the moment the combat starts, yet his style

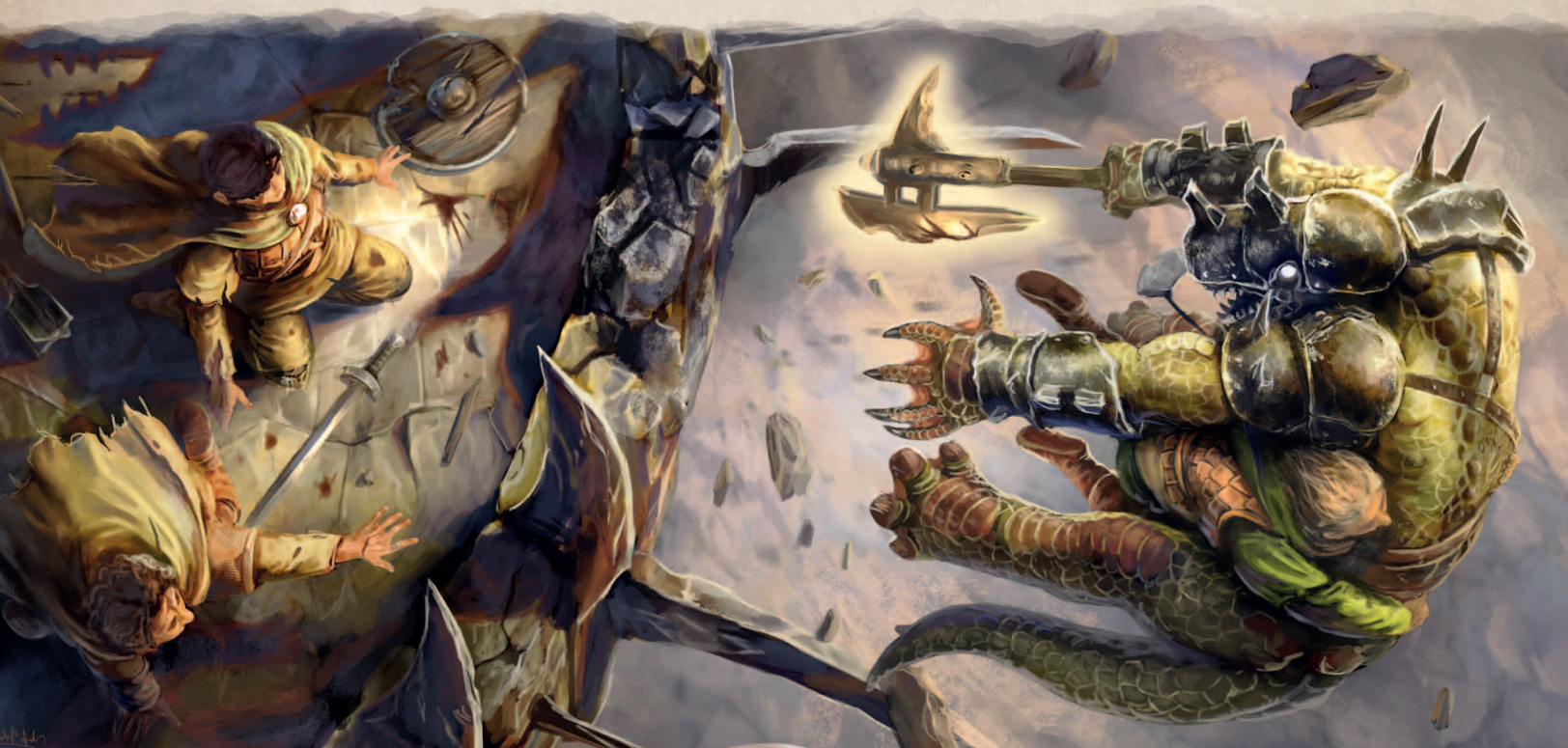
of fighting is unusually disciplined for a Gourgaz. Suurvek is an experienced and skilful warrior, perhaps the toughest of his formidable breed.

Note: Suurvek wields Ruzzaran ('Destroyer' in Giak), a huge Axe with a gleaming bronze head that shines like a torch for an hour after shedding blood. Its keen edge is razor sharp and it strikes with incredible force. As a weapon, it has the Impact 1 and Two Hands qualities, while its enchantments add a +2 to COMBAT SKILL (already figured in to Suurvek's statistics) when wielded.



DEFEATING SUURVEK

In order for this combat to be successful, the Players would be wise to gang up on the Gourgaz leader. They could be easy meat for Suurvek otherwise. This is the hardest fight in the campaign thus far and will be a true test their courage and fortitude. If it looks as if



the party is going to be wiped out in the course of this combat, the Narrator should allow any Kai who is reduced to zero Endurance to perform a heroic last act.

This will take the form of the doomed Player body-tackling the evil reptilian and forcing it over the cliff-side of the balcony. Locked in deadly struggle, they plunge to their mutual doom on the slopes of V'ka Island far below.

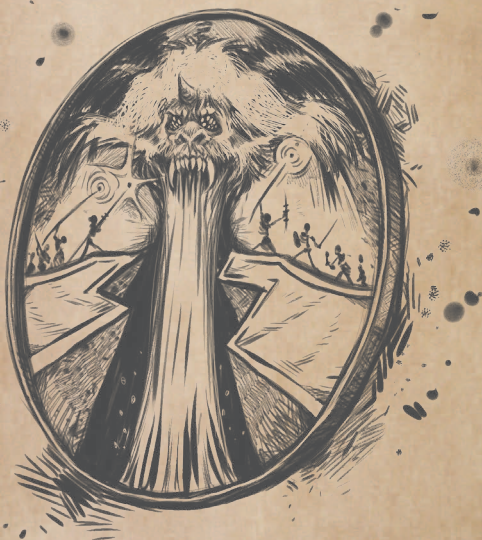
That Player should then be allowed to bring in a new character for the last section of the campaign, starting at one rank behind the other players but with two extra points of Kai's Favour as a reward for their heroic act.

THE BLACK AMULET

This macabre piece of jewellery is supernaturally cold to the touch. It is engraved on one side with a chilling scene, the portrayal of a resurrection of a monstrous creature from the depths of a great gorge. The entity is flanked on all sides by a seething horde of skeletal warriors armed with ancient weapons.

It is a sinister depiction of Darklord Vashna and his minions, rising up from the fathomless depths of the Maakengorge. The Black Amulet is in fact an amulet of fealty worn by the Acolytes of Vashna.

This Special Item demonstrates Suurvek belongs to this evil sect. It can be worn around the neck or placed in a Backpack.



If Suurvek is slain, his only real valuables are Ruzzaran and the Black Amulet around his neck. While Ruzzaran is safe to loot from the beast's body, the Player who takes the amulet instantly suffers a permanent -1 Endurance loss.

If Suurvek is slain, his Giak thralls become a screaming horde of violence, setting on the Drakkarim, the other Gourgaz, and even themselves. Within moments, all of V'ka becomes a theatre of violence and murder. Before the blood-frenzy fades, this citadel will be little more than shattered ruins and a mass grave.

RUNNING AWAY

The party is permitted to attempt to evade combat at any point. Suurvek will pursue them, but with no great haste. He believes they are trapped up here on the balcony with him, after all, and he is right. Going over the balcony is a straight fall into a courtyard full of raging Giaks or off the side down to the island below.

Only one sure route is open to Players who wish to get away from Lord Commander Suurvek and the forces of V'ka. They must climb up one of the rough ten foot stones to a waiting Kraan and free it from its chain!

ESCAPE BY KRAAN

Even if the heroes defeat the huge Gourgaz, the block of stone will not hold out the beast's soldiers forever. The Players are trapped and there is only one way out – up!

Climbing the stones is not an easy task to carry out and will require each Player to make a TV 7 Test (master rule- using Might). Failing the test will result in the Player falling off the stone, suffering 1 point of ENDURANCE loss, and having to try again.

Those who manage the climb will be able to reach the Kraan perched there and the chain holding it down. These Kraan will be susceptible to mental commands given by any Player with Animal Kinship. By this method, they can be subdued sufficiently to allow all Players to mount one. They are already saddled. Alternately, if none of the Players have that discipline, a TV 8 test (master rule- Using Riding) can be attempted.

When the Players take to the air upon the backs of their newly acquired mounts, initially the Kraan will rail against them. Controlling them will require each Player to pass a difficulty 7 Test (master rule-using Riding), with the usual +2 bonus for the possessing Animal Kinship. Failure means that the Kraan will stab at the Player with its sharp beak and cause EP damage equivalent to half the value of a Random Number pick (rounded down, minimum of 0).



A DARING ESCAPE

On the slopes of V'ka Island, the Swamp Giak warband will dissolve into chaos. Fighting erupts between rival factions and the situation will deteriorate rapidly as the Players steer their reluctant mounts towards the west. With the fetid swamp of the Maakenmire speeding past below, the Players must steel themselves for the final challenge that must be faced before victory can be claimed. By the ashen light of a waxing moon, the party rides the skies towards their rendezvous with destiny.

If the Players were able to slay High Commander Suurvek, or search his quarters for the important clues that will point them to where Helghast Svader plans to carry out the ritual before they escaped, then they will have achieved enough to warrant going up one Rank and gaining a new Kai discipline.

Failure to slay Suurvek (by evading combat for example) and not searching the Gourgaz fiend's study will result in no advancement in rank being attained and no bonus Kai Discipline awarded.

It is important for the party to find out where the ritual will take place at the Maakengorge. If they have failed to garner this information, the Players are fortunate that the Kraan were being readied to fly to the ritual site. Though normally used to patrol the area as far out as Ruanon, these Kraan have been to the site before and a map leading there can be found in one of their packs.

Read or paraphrase the following:

The Kraan, still loudly, protesting your presence on their backs, pull at their reins and all turn in formation. They apparently have a destination in mind and will not be swayed from it. Steering these beasts seems next to impossible.

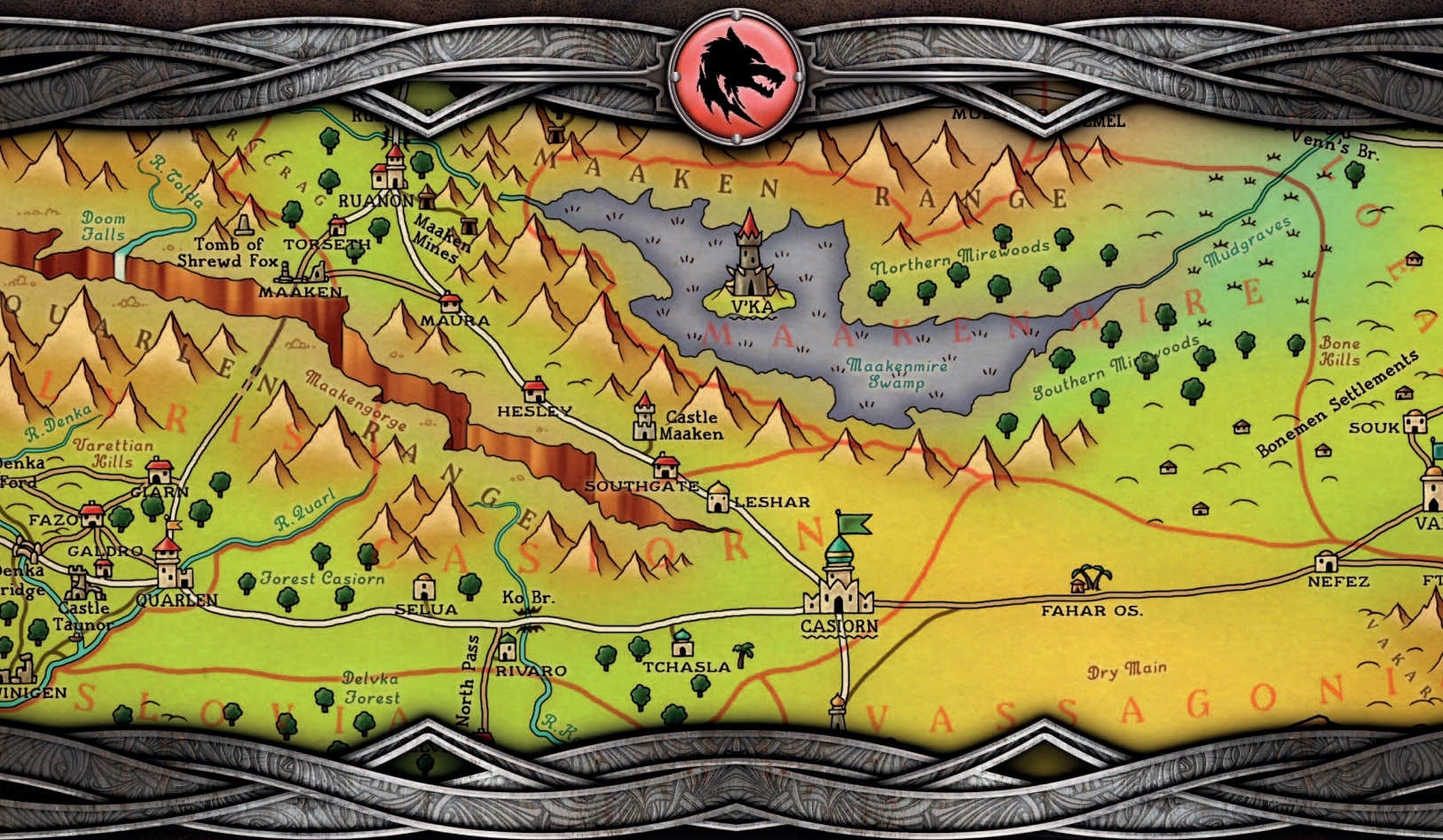
As high as they are flying and as stubborn as they have become, you have little choice but to hold on tight and pray to Kai you are heading in the right direction...

These creatures are heading to Ruanon, as that is the first leg of their normal patrol flight. As this is not too far from where the ritual will take place and the Players doubtless need supplies and rest, such a detour is not actually as bad a thing as they might initially believe.

The journey will take hours, but the flight means there is still a chance for the Players to catch Svader and rescue their mentor. Now that they know the Helghast's dark purpose, stopping him is more important than ever.

Here ends A Situation in V'ka but the adventure continues with the conclusion of the campaign – **The Restless Ghosts of Maaken!**





ADVENTURE FIVE

RESTLESS GHOSTS OF MAAKEN

The Players now face their final challenge. They must travel to the haunted ruined city of Maaken, defeat Helghast Svader, rescue Kai Master Stormsong and prevent the resurrection of Archlord Vashna and his legions of undead from the chasm of Maakengorge. The future of their beloved realm is at stake.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

After successfully escaping the Maakenmire, the Players must journey directly westwards to the Maakengorge if they are to be successful in preventing Helghast Svader from carrying out the ritual successfully. The sacrifice of Master Stormsong will take place at the time of the next full moon, leaving the Players only a small window of opportunity to thwart Helghast Svader's plan.

Arrayed against them are a small army of Acolytes of Vashna, Drakkarim loyal to the spirit of the Archlord, Doomwolves, and skeletal Undead raised by the Acolytes. Yet there are allies to be found by the Players; unexpected allies. Within the broken walls of the haunted city of Maaken, there walk the ghosts of those Sommlending who died during the climactic battle against Archlord Vashna in MS 3799. Long they have waited their chance to pursue and destroy his army for once and for all time. Raising this host of the Sommlending fallen requires the Players to enter the city and put right the desecration which has blighted the Temple of Ishir.

Deep within the temple's vault lies the Banner of the Moon, with which the Players can call forth and rally the Sommlending fallen. By taking command of these ghostly warriors, they will be able to fight a path to the sacrificial site that is perched upon the rim of the Maakengorge. In a final showdown, the Players must destroy Helghast Svader before the fell creature completes the summoning ritual.

ISHIR'S DREAM

How this scenario commences is dependent upon how the Players concluded Adventure 4. If they escaped the Fortress of V'Ka on the backs of Kraan and headed west towards the Maakengorge, you should read the following text aloud:

The High Road

Flying westwards through the night, you pass over the magnificent snow-capped tops of the Maaken Range. At the crack of dawn, you see the town of Ruanon in the rays of the rising sun. You steer your flying mounts towards the town. You are less than two miles distant when they become too reluctant to continue, fearing of flying openly in what they feel to be hostile country.



You abandon the Kraan and set off on foot towards Ruanon. In under an hour you reach the South Gate in its palisade wall where you are stopped and questioned by the two guards posted there. Upon satisfying themselves that you are Kai Lords, eagerly they escort you to the Baron's Keep in Gold Bürg, the northwest precinct of Ruanon where, an hour later, Baron Radnor Vanalund grants you an audience with him. He welcomes you graciously and enquires as to the reason why you have come here unexpectedly.

OR

If the Players failed to uncover any clues and somehow managed to evade the balcony trap, they would have had only one recourse – return home and consult the wisdom of their masters. If the Players



seemed lost or confused about how to proceed, it is perfectly acceptable to suggest that to them. As trained Kai Lords, seeking the Monastery's aid would be their first instinct.

Using the Venn Vada road between Kadan and Eshnar and then the Pass of Moytura, they could make quick work of such a ride, though the time such a return would cost them would still be tragic.

This path requires a different introduction, as follows:

The Low Road

Your return trip to the Kai monastery was plagued by misfortune. The Kraan became uncontrollable shortly after you flew through the Pass of Moytura and you abandoned them. No horses could be found for hire. The King had commandeered all Southlund horses to supply the Army of the South in readiness for an imminent invasion by the Darklords after the events of Toran. When eventually you arrived at the Monastery, Grand Master Rune Helm was not there. So, too, were absent most of your brother Kai of similar rank and age.

It took several days to locate the Grand Master. He was encamped with the Army of the North outside the walls of Toran. When eventually he received your report, he acted with all haste, realizing the Darklords will not attack from the Durncrag Mountains this time..

That night, while the Grand Master slept deeply, he had a prophetic dream in which the evil machinations of Helghast Svader's plan were revealed to him. He saw Kai Master Stormsong being dragged forcibly towards the edge of the Maakengorge. He saw Helghast Svader and his Drakkarim Death Knights cackling with glee, and he saw the skull of Sun Eagle encased within a sphere of crackling scarlet energy.

When he awoke, the images of his dream were still vivid in his mind's eye. Forewarned by his dream, Grand Master Rune Helm sent you south to Ruanon with a warning message for the Baron of the mining province. Ruanon was at dire risk of being destroyed if Helghast Svader's ritual came to pass, and Archlord Vashna and his undead horde arose from the Maakengorge.

THE TOWN OF RUANON

In the kaltangor of MS 3799, the territories that were later to become the Baronial Province of Ruanon were claimed by King Bern I of Sommerlund. A grand castle was constructed in the middle of the newly acquired territory. Originally, Ruanon Town was sited close to the Baron's Castle and for several centuries it consisted of a large settlement enclosed by a palisade wall. However, in MS 4552, following the discovery of gold in the Maaken Mines, a mass exodus occurred. Nearly all of the inhabitants of the old town moved east and settled near to the mines. An underground river was discovered and a new town sprang up and rapidly expanded, fuelled by the migration of prospectors and entrepreneurs from the north who came to the Maaken Mines looking to make their fortune.

In MS 4560, the new town had become so much larger than the old town that the judicial and provincial offices were moved to 'New Ruanon' which became de facto capital of the province. The old town, having now been virtually abandoned by its townsfolk, became little more than army encampment for the 3rd Ruanese Cassel.

Ruanon Town is the principal town and trading centre of the Baronial Province of Ruanon. It is the newest provincial town in Sommerlund, but also the most vulnerable to attack. In MS 5000, its defences comprise a palisade wall of sharpened logs that encircles the perimeter of the settlement, punctuated by timber watchtowers with slate roofs. There are four fortified main gates at each of the compass points. In the north part of Ruanon there is a large stone watchtower with a good view of the northern approaches to the town.

In early MS 4999, due to growing concern about Ruanon Town's overcrowding and its relatively inadequate defences, Baron Radnor Vanalund initiated the construction of a new perimeter wall around the existing palisade. This one is being built entirely of stone. Progress in the first year has been badly hampered by an insufficient number of carpenters and stonemasons who are prepared to work on the New Town Wall. It is far less lucrative for them than working in the mines, and there is an insidious attitude among the townsfolk that a new wall is an unnecessary waste of effort and revenue.

In MS 5000, the population of Ruanon Town numbers approximately 13,000. They have a strong entrepreneurial spirit and they are famously hard workers.



You were given horses by the cavalry of the Army of the North and it took you 9 days to cover the 360 miles that separate Toran from Ruanon. Upon your arrival at the Baron's Keep, Baron Radnor Vanalund granted you immediate audience. You deliver the Grand Master's message to Baron Vanalund and he studies it with growing concern. He thanks you for your service and says that he must act on the Grand Master's missive without delay.

Comfortable quarters are provided for you within the Keep and you are told to rest and recover your strength after the long days you have spent in the saddle. Following a hot bath and a sumptuous meal, you each retire to your individual quarters and promptly fall asleep.

Regardless of how the Players arrive in Ruanon, they eventually do so and have to seek out safe rest. The first time they sleep (as noted above), read or paraphrase the following:

Ishir's Warning

That night your sleep is disturbed by a dream of unreal solidity and definite portent. Even those on watch or otherwise awake doze off for a few moments and experience the dream though thankfully no danger approaches from the darkness.

In the dream you rise rapidly into the air and on invisible wings glide rapidly across the province of Ruanon towards and ancient city broken and overgrown with weeds. The city sits on the edge of a tremendous abyss the bottom of which no sight or light can penetrate. The cracked and shattered ruins of the city creep over the edge of the chasm and deep into its fathomless reaches.

Your flight slows and you glide down to touch on the moonlight bathed flagstones at the centre of the long abandoned metropolis. Ghostly apparitions of men in tattered uniforms rise up, but they do not exude an aura of dread or menace. The spirit soldiers escort you onward towards a temple looming out of the gloom.

A courtyard wall shimmers in the night, its length pierced by one maw like gate. The spectral soldiers stop at the gate; somehow you know they will not accompany you inside. Willingly or unwillingly, you cross the threshold into the courtyard beyond. There you see a well trimmed well hole and before it the hulking shape of a Drakkar Death Knight captain, in one foul hand a banner wreathed in sorcerous blue-white fire. In the centre of the banner is an emblem of a silver crescent moon.

The Drakkar raises the banner up in its gauntleted fists and brings it down across its armoured knees in a resounding crack before tossing the pieces into the well. This rises a fearful wailing from the spectre waiting outside. As you stretch out your hands to grasp the pieces before they tumble a horrid wailing and terrible scuttling sound arises from the well.

Quickly, a horde of severed hands swarm out of the well, crawling along on bloodied fingertips towards you, tearing at your boots and clawing up your legs.

With a shudder you awake, your flesh still feeling the last touches of those horrid hands and your skin drenched in cold sweat.



The dream is a message implanted into the Players' unconsciousness by Goddess Ishir herself. It is a premonition of things to come. The night of the ritual must be one when the moon is full. Tomorrow there will be such a night. Forewarned, the Players should depart for Maaken immediately.

Baron Vanalund will provide everything they will need in order to reach the ruined city as quickly as possible (fast horses, provisions). He also provides each Player with 2 Potions of Laumspur. Each Potion of Laumspur takes up 1 space in a Backpack.

The Players journey south does not pass without incident. Five miles from Maaken, they run into heavily armoured Drakkarim mounted on Nozodgorakim, black horse-like creatures spawned in the Darklands on the byway from the village of Torseth. There are a number of mounted Drakkarim equal to the number of Players.

DRAKKARIM ZAGGANOZOD (1 PER PLAYER)

Combat Skill: 16

Endurance: 28

Traits: Grouping (Soldier), Soldier

Special Rules: These riders are clad in plain black helmets and scarlet chainmail hauberks. They are armed with a mix of swords and maces. Each one has a bow with 12 arrows.

The Drakkarim stay mounted and fire a volley of arrows in the first round of combat. They will only draw their close combat weapon once the Players reach them. They do not dismount, though they are forced from their saddles once their ENDURANCE reaches 8 or less.



The Drakkarim fight until only one remains alive. This survivor will remount if he must and attempt to flee along the byway that leads to Maaken. Any Player with a prepared missile weapon may get two shots at the fleeing cavalryman before he passes beyond range. If the Drakkar soldier escapes, he will immediately report to Helghast Svader what has happened here.

If this happens, the Players will lose the element of surprise.

THE CURSED CITY

By the time the Players reach the outskirts of Maaken it is dusk. The last rays of the setting sun bathe the buildings of this broken city in a warm orange light.

Note: The next section of text to be read aloud is quite long. In situations like this, Narrators should feel free to paraphrase or only read small sections and allow roleplaying between the paragraphs. Nothing kills the epic mood of a Lone Wolf adventure like twenty minutes of droning descriptions.

Before you is an expanse of dead land, littered with broken rocks and sickly briars. It slopes gently to the edge of an immense chasm that stretches away into the darkening distance as far as your eyes can see. A mournful wind howls in the depths of this titanic abyss, chilling your flesh and your soul. This is the legendary Maakengorge: the Chasm of Doom.

A beautiful city once stood here. Its architecture was unique and inspiring, and it held dominion over the lush grasslands that

once carpeted this region. More than one millenium ago it was that disaster struck the beautiful city of Maaken. A huge tremor tore apart the land and forever changed the face of southern Sommerlund. The plains were split asunder, and the city of Maaken was shattered to pieces by the violent upheaval. Much of it was consumed when the titanic chasm which had already torn apart northern Lyris centuries before expanded and swallowed its dwellings. What little remained was left perched precariously upon the rim of the monstrous Maakengorge. The ruins of the proud city of Maaken were abandoned by those who had survived, and no-one dared venture into its shattered streets until now.

Maaken was founded by the Sommlending the year after their victory at the Great Battle of Maakengorge. King Ulnar I and his army pursued Darklord Vashna and his forces of evil to the very brink of the abyss, located near Doom Falls at that time. Battle was waged and the Darklord was slain by King Ulnar I in mortal combat. The remnants of Vashna, together with the bodies of his defeated army, were hurled into the abyss and swallowed up by its fathomless darkness. Then the Sommlending expanded their kingdom southwards and founded the province of Ruanon. The new outpost of Maaken, commanding the lush valley between the Southern Durncraggs and the Quarlen Range, was promised to become a city as wealthy as Toran and Tyso thanks to intense trade with the Stornlands, and its growth was meteoric.

It is however fitting that the Maakengorge should be called the Chasm of Doom. The winds that haunt its lightless depth are believed by many to be the vengeful howls of the spirit of Darklord Vashna, and the plaintive tortured cries of his doomed legions. In any case the Maakengorge brutally put an end to the expansion





of Maaken in MS 3959, when it extended two hundred miles east from its original location at Doom Falls, swallowing the southern part of the city and cutting the trade road with the Stornlands.

As the sky darkens, so the battered landscape is washed by the ashen light of a full moon.

If the Players stop to observe the ruins from their elevated position, they will see small groups of Drakkarim and packs of Doomwolves patrolling among the ancient broken-paved streets. Entering the city unobserved requires a TV 7 Test (master rule-suing Stealth). Players with the Camouflage or Hunting disciplines may add a +2 bonus. The ruins provide plenty of cover, so it will be a fairly easy task for the Players to sneak in without being seen. However, the deeper they go towards the middle of the haunted city, the number and frequency of the patrols increase.

The Narrator should give the Players a couple of scares, such as Drakkarim patrols suddenly marching out of streets close to their location, or passing patrols abruptly stopping and looking in their direction as if they have heard something. Try to raise the Players' tension and uncertainty as they make their way towards the temple at the centre of the city.

DECISIONS

As they near the centre, an encounter occurs which tests the morality of the Players. Whilst hiding from the sounds of an approaching patrol, the Kai Lords see a man come running around a nearby corner. Ahead of him is a dead end. A few moments later, a squad of Drakkarim arrive, following in the footsteps of the frightened man and trapping it in this cul-de-sac. The Drakkar leader barks a command in Giak, which the Players can understand well enough to discern:

"Seize him, the Captain will reward us for his strong hands."

Make it clear to the Players that if they become embroiled in combat with the Drakkarim squad, it will likely end very badly for them. There are many other patrols in the vicinity and the noise of a fight will be sure to attract their unwanted attention. Yet the man is in a terrible situation, and will only be spared mutilation by the Drakkarim if the Players intervene to stop this outrage from happening.

If they decide not to intercede, the Players will witness a dramatic and unexpected occurrence.

The cornered man, likely just a poor traveller lost in the worst possible place, unsheathes a dagger from inside his jacket and plunge the sharp blade deep into his chest, taking its own life rather than allow itself to be taken captive by the Drakkarim!

The evil soldiers will stop to taunt and abuse the lifeless body of the man before turning about and marching away in silence. By refusing to intervene to save the man's life, the Players have deprived themselves of the one person who could have helped them to find the entrance to the temple. The Narrator should now go to **Bridge of Doom** and continue the adventure from there.

If the Players decide to attempt to save the man, they must face off with an equal number of Drakkarim. The ensuing battle will be to the death. However, there is the possibility of withdrawing and escaping into the scattered warren of the nearby ruins. If they do this, the wounded man will also escape. He finds them in the ruins again once the Players are safe. See **Just Reward** below.

DRAKKARIM SHADZA (6 OR 9)

Combat Skill: 16

Endurance: 24

Traits: Grouping (Soldier), Soldier

COMPLICATIONS

If the Players did allow a Drakkar Zagganozod to escape them on the road before, these patrols are all increased by three soldiers.

If the Players are unable to defeat all of the Drakkarim before the start of Combat Round 7, then another squad of Drakkarim will arrive to reinforce the first. This resets the turn countdown, but in another seven rounds, a third squad appears. This could quickly result in the Players being overwhelmed. Evasion might start looking better with each new skull-faced helmet that joins the fray. The Players should be reminded of the possibility of escape; other squads are likely already on their way. If they flee, the Players will hear the sound of their heavy iron-shod boots echoing through the surrounding ruins as the dark warriors converge on this location.

JUST REWARD

"Come," whispers the haggard-looking man as he dashes towards a pile of old rubble and the shadows beyond it. "I know a place where we will be safe!"

The man will bid the Players to follow as he makes a hurried escape along a narrow alleyway that is overgrown with thorny vines. These vines form the roof of a tunnel that keeps their escape hidden from the other patrols that are advancing towards the cul-de-sac.

If any Player wishes to use Sixth Sense on the man, his intentions feel pure. On a Discipline Test of 7 or better, that Player also feels that both great danger and great reward await if the Players follow him.

As the party hurries along this dim passageway, they will catch glimpses of the city through the many ragged gaps that punctuate the walls of the alley. As Narrator, try to impart that they are all

experiencing as strong sense of déjà-vu. They recognise parts of the city from the nightmarish dream they had whilst staying at the Baron's Keep in Ruanon.

However, contrary to their dreams, when they arrive in the courtyard of the temple they discover no Drakkar Death Knight awaiting their arrival. Instead, there are the torn and crumpled remains of several Drakkarim guards. It is an unexpected and disturbing spectacle. It is made all the worse by what is circling the area: a host of angry phantoms.

WARRIORS OF THE PAST

Hovering over the broken bodies of the Drakkarim are glowing spectres, armoured and bearing swords that glow even brighter than they do. Their eyes are like beacons, their blades like pillars of white fire.

"Don't be afraid," the man you rescued murmurs. "They will not hurt you. They only attack the black soldiers. I hide here for several days in safety."

He holds open an empty pack. "I was only out there because I ran out of food. Spirits protecting you is a great thing, but eventually a man has to eat." He sighs. "I didn't make it far before they caught me."

"Oh, and I am Dolarn of Ruanon, but you can call me Dullard if you want. It is an old nickname, but the way this journey has gone, I deserve it."



After a moment, the ghosts will sense the Players' presence even if they attempt to hide. Once they do, the circle of spectres will all turn to face them at once. While unnerving, these long-dead soldiers have no ill-intent.

The apparitions standing in the courtyard are clad in Sommlending armour of a kind that has not been worn for more than a millennium. These spectres are the ghosts of Ulnar I's army, brave Sommlending warriors who lost their lives in the Great Battle of Maakengorge. Because of the cursed nature of the Maakengorge, which is a scar inflicted upon the flesh of Magnamund by the vengeful hand of Naar himself, the souls of these heroic soldiers were denied to pass into the Spiritual Plane and remained trapped as formless ethereal Spirits on the Material Plane, irremediably bound to the Chasm of Doom.



However Goddess Ishir, although unable to break Naar's curse and release the Sommlending Spirits, turned these heroes of Light into powerful goodly Ghosts, gave them back a wispy translucent semblance of how they once looked, and tasked them with guarding the tomb of Vashna forever.

Later the Priestesses of Ishir erected a holy temple in Maaken, which was not destroyed when the Maakengorge swallowed half of the city. The temple's goodly aura acted like a beacon on the Sommlending Ghosts bound to the Maakengorge, who have nearly all settled in the ruins of the city ever since.

One of the Sommlending fallen comes closer, its features suddenly more distinct. It raises a bony hand and the vengeful cries of its ghostly comrades fall silent. Solemnly, the spirit points to the tile-edged well in the centre of the temple courtyard. When you look



to the well, you see a rope ladder has been anchored firmly to the edge. Its rungs descend into the darkness.

The Sommlending ghosts wish for the Players to prevent the Drakkar Death Knight captain from desecrating the temple (see below). Gathered together into small groups, these ghosts make for a fearsome host, but these righteous spirits were not powerful enough to prevent the Drakkar and his forces from entering the temple ruins.

AN ACT OF KINDNESS

As for Dolarn, giving him a Meal and some water would be a kindness. It is also one he can repay in kind, by giving the Players a small bag with two vials containing a bright orange liquid. These are Potions of Alether (+2 to COMBAT SKILL for a single combat).

"These are all that's left of the caravan I was with. I suspect you can make better use of them than I ever will."

ISHIR'S TEMPLE

The Players must descend into the depths of the well in order to retrieve the Banner of Ishir. There, they will face vile Daemonaks and navigate a maze of tunnels to find the hidden treasure vaults. Once the Banner is acquired, they can proceed on to awaken the restless spirits of their countrymen and carry on their mission to stop the Helghast Svader and save Master Stormsong.

Keep in mind, Ishir's Temple and the Banner are not required parts of this adventure. The Players can certainly refuse to follow the spectre's direction. They will miss on a very powerful item, one they may well need to defeat Svader, but never force your Players into actions they have no wish to perform.

THE WELL

The well shaft descends thirty feet to a dry pit. A heap of dead Giak bodies lay strewn about the floor. Most have had their throats torn out and brackish blood has been sprayed everywhere. Whatever killed these curs did so viciously.

Past the carnage, you can see a narrow unlit passageway in the pit wall.

This dark passage leads to a junction where the passage splits in two. In order to find and follow the correct direction, the Players must make a TV 8 Test (master rule- using Survival). Players with the Tracking discipline are able to add a +2 bonus.

Travelling along the wrong passage will take the Players towards a dangerously unstable section of this subterranean tunnel. They will

have to make another TV 8 Test (master rule- using Acrobatics) in order to avoid being injured by falling masonry. Those who fail the test will lose 4 ENDURANCE points.

Beyond the unstable section, the passage arrives at a hexagonal chamber. There are fresh bloodstains on the floor but no sign of a victim or a body. If any of the Players looks up at the ceiling, read the following:

Gazing up, you see three gargoyles carved from black rock perched atop three of the four columns that stand in the corners of this room. Their gaping, motionless mouths are stained with blood.

These statues are not made from rock; they are living, breathing creatures. They are deadly Daemonaks!

The hideously carved, black stone reliefs that are perched on the columns are not all they seem to be. Their dull, hateful eyes follow your every move. You stare at them intently, and their mouths begin slowly to open and close. It is as if they are shouting silent curses at you.

Suddenly, one of the 'statues' spreads its leathery wings and glides down from its high perch to attack!

Fortunately for the Players, there are only three of these dreadful creatures, but the ensuing battle will be a tough one. The fourth was destroyed long ago. When diving to attack, the Daemonaks each gain +2 to their Combat Skill. Once on the ground, they lose this bonus.

DAEMONAK

Combat Skill: 25

Endurance: 25

Traits: Flight, Swift

Special Rules: The lingering presence of Ishir in this place prevents these Daemonaks from being able to produce their normal venom. These are evil creatures that have survived here after the fall of Vashna, their master and creator, and the destruction of Maaken. Lured in by the magical power that once filled this place, they have been trapped within the ruins ever since.

Each Daemonak fights individually. Knowing they are trapped, these fiends will not attempt to Evade but the Players may do so if they wish. The Daemonak cannot pursue prey past the Well leading into the ruins, which is where they massacred the Giaks found earlier.

LEAVING THIS ROOM

Choosing the correct tunnel to take at the fork will bring the Players to the bottom of a staircase. It ascends to an ornate iron door that has been smashed open by brute force. Behind the twisted metal of

this smashed portal lies a labyrinth. This subterranean maze can be negotiated by passing a TV 9 Test (master rule- using either Sage or Survival). Players with the Tracking discipline may add +2 to their roll. Failure to pass the test will bring the Players back to their starting point and none the wiser. Success will allow them to reach the secret treasure chamber located below the temple.

THE BRIGHT LIGHT OF HOPE

This room must once have been quite grand. The remains of pillars, their crests and footers chased with gold, lie strewn across the intricately tiled floor. The dust and rot of long-since ruined furnishings fill every corner save for a brazier-flanked alcove in the back of the chamber.

A guttering torch lying on a block of marble that might once have been an altar reveals a single figure there. Clad in black armour, the man is battering away at a large stone coffer. Both hands wrapped right around the long handle of his dark mace, he brings it down one more time and succeeds in sundering the lid.



Occupying the treasure chamber is a Drakkar Death Knight Nanrak (Battle Captain). As soon as he stops swinging his mace, he senses the Players' arrival.

The figure turns to face you, torchlight revealing that his helmet's faceplate has a leering silver skull for a faceplate. Strung about his neck is a gruesome necklace comprising the several severed hands. Many are now atrophied and desiccated, grey bones jutting from their broken skin.

"Those fluttering fiends outside wouldn't fight me. Did a number on my Giaks, however." Slinging the head of his flanged mace over his shoulder, he points at you all with his black-armoured fist.

"You all look like more amusing sport. It's been a while since I crushed the skull of a Kai-born whelp!"

His fist becomes an open hand, beckoning you closer. "Choose your best to face me. Even if I win, I'll let the rest of you go."

The Players are not obliged to accept the Drakkar Nanrak's challenge to combat. If they do, they must decide who will be the first of them to fight. If this Player managed subsequently kills the Death Knight Nanrak, it will be considered an exceptionally heroic combat victory.

VAGAZED, DRAKKAR DEATH KNIGHT NANRAK

Combat Skill: 30

Endurance: 20

Traits: Brutal 1, Defence 3, Iron Will, Veteran 5/+1

Special Notes: Vagazed's mace has the Heavy quality and is made from Kagonite, giving it the Quick quality as well. His statistics above assume he is wielding it with both hands.

Although this will be a tough fight, there is one factor working to the Players' advantage. Vagazed was injured by the Sommlending ghosts when he barged his way into the ruins earlier. His normal ENDURANCE is 35 and he has not taken time to heal yet. Thus, his COMBAT SKILL may be high, but he can be brought down if the Player or Players are careful.

THE GIFT OF LIGHT

When the Drakkar Death Knight Nanrak is slain, small wisps of golden light begin to float free from the necklace of severed hands that hangs around his neck. Anyone with Sixth Sense will feel the presence of dozens of innocent souls. These grateful spirits, now set free, will bestow a blessing upon them for releasing them.

Each Player may now restore any ENDURANCE points they have lost this far. If a Player fought Vagazed in honourable single combat, he or she gains a *permanent* point of ENDURANCE as well.

THE GIFT OF HOPE

Once Vagazed is defeated, the Players can claim the treasure he was here to defile.

Within the now-broken coffer, resting atop a pile of age-blackened silver coins, is the Banner of Ishir. It is the flag that appeared in the Players' shared dream. Caked in the grime of several centuries, this precious artefact looks like an old wooden pole that is partially wrapped in a roll of musty cloth.



If the pole is grasped firmly and shaken by any being of Sommlending descent and good heart, all the detritus will be dislodged and its true nature will be revealed.

THE BANNER OF ISHIR

The pole to which the banner is attached is a spear imbued with magical properties. It grants its wielder a +5 bonus to their COMBAT SKILL. Its unique power can enable its wielder to summon and rally the Sommlending fallen.

Once summoned by the banner, the Sommlending fallen will follow the bearer's every command. They will only respond if the banner is wielded by a person of Sommlending descent who commands them to perform a righteous deed.

Important Note: The Narrator should be aware that it is the cloth banner itself that is imbued with magical properties, and not the spear pole to which it is attached. Any spear that the banner is fixed to will gain the benefits outlined above. The Banner of Ishir is also quite old, its power almost spent.



With the Banner of Ishir in their possession, the Players will have no further reason to remain underground. Upon leaving the catacombs, they will discover that the host of Sommlending fallen is growing steadily larger.

The leader of the spectral host, a lordly figure whose softly-glowing armour bears the arms of the Royal House of Ulnar, approaches you as you emerge from the ruins. After bowing his head to the bearer of Ishir's Banner, he raises his hand to point southwards now, just as silently insistent as he was before.

The leader of the ghosts will say nothing to the Players. If they hesitate to act, the ghostly lord will stare at them intently with glowing eye sockets as impatiently he waits for them to head off in the direction he has indicated.

DOLARN, AGAIN

If the heroes fed him and treated him kindly, Dolarn is still here. Otherwise, he has struck out into the lost city and will not be encountered again. Dolarn is no fighter and would be of no use to the Players, but he will wish them well if he is present.

"Kai and Ishir go with you. No, seriously. Gods attract attention and I would really like to remain hidden..."

THE BRIDGE OF DOOM

With the full moon nearing its zenith, the Players must press on without undue delay. They must reach the sacrificial platform that is perched precariously at the very edge of the abyss. Helghast Svader and his Drakkarim have been here for several hours and with the help of Acolytes of Vashna, they have completed the preparations for the ritual they intend to perform.

If the Players possess the Banner of Ishir, which they could only find if they rescued Dolarn from the Drakkarim, the ghosts of the Sommlending fallen will now fade from sight. They will be back soon, just when the heroes need them most.

CHASM OF DOOM

As stealthily as you can, you avoid the last of the roving patrols as you make your way south. The ruins ahead appear to thin out. Beyond the few remaining heaps of rubble, you can now view an unsettling sight.

At the edge of the precipice, the broken arch of a stone bridge protrudes into the gaping void. Helghast Svader, now reverted to its true form, is standing at the end of this shattered span. Before him is a makeshift altar of heaped and levelled stones.

Bound to the uneven surface of this grim edifice is the spread-eagled body of Kai Master Stormsong. He is unconscious and severely emaciated. Resting by his head is the skull of Sun Eagle.

Clustered around the rim of the gorge are several dozen Acolytes of Vashna. They are kneeling with their heads reverentially bowed. A formidable line of fifty animated skeletons stands between them all and the edge of the gorge. These bone soldiers stand stiffly at attention, shoulder to bony shoulder. Each is equipped with pieces of armour, a shield, and hand weapons.

Give the Players a chance to react to what they see. This is an excellent time for them to discuss strategy, try to come up with battle plans, and roleplay during what will prove to be the climax of the entire campaign.



Regardless of their discussions, interrupt them after ten to fifteen minutes, sooner if they are about to physically act against the ritual.

One of the Acolytes has a large drum that is slung by a strap around its shoulder. The Helghast gestures and this cultist beats the drum with a wooden club. The assembled Acolytes react to the beat of the drum by chanting a mournful dirge. Gradually, the beating of the drum and the chanting increase in volume until they rise to a terrible cacophony.

The Players should be given a chance to interrupt things at this point. If they do, skill the rest of this descriptive text and proceed to Let This Be Our Final Battle below.

If the Players still want to wait and watch (or prepare), continue:

Bolts of blue-white lightning tear open the roiling black clouds that have now gathered overhead. Their blinding flashes coalesce into a vortex of bubbling blackness that seems to float down and halt within touching distance of the Helghast. The winds of the gorge increase in ferocity. They seem to be howling in eager anticipation of the ritual that is about to be performed.

The Helghast raises its cadaverous hands and gives voice to a terrible evocation.

"I summon forth from the Chasm of Doom, Lord Vashna, True Archlord of Darkness, Prince of the Legions of the Restless Dead! Come back to us, Master! Come back to us now and fulfil your glorious destiny!"

The storm rages louder with every word, grey rain now starting to fall like bitter ashes over the ruins of Maaken.

"We are your loyal and faithful servants! Reward our faith with your presence this fateful night. This glorious night. Arise again, Master. Arise! Arise and claim all that you have been denied for so long!"

"Arise and lead us to glory!"

LET THIS BE OUR FINAL BATTLE

How this apocalyptic scene will play out depends upon what resources the Players have mustered so far. To be sure of victory, the Party must have the Banner of Ishir, the Helghast Spear, Suurvek's axe Ruzzaran, the jewelled scimitar from the Great Sink, or a flask of holy water. These are needed because if the Players cannot cause damage to the Helghast, they are almost certainly doomed to fail.

The Players must decide how they intend to reach the Helghast to prevent it from completing the ritual. This is not as impossible as it may at first appear, but the Players' options depend entirely on their previous actions.

Continue with **Charge of the Light Brigade** (if the Players have the Banner of Ishir), **Eye of the Storm** (if they do not), or **Once More Into the Breach** (if you would rather not have any outside force help the Players).

Alternately, if the Players come up with some other strategy, feel free to let them pursue it instead. Look to the options below to see what they are up against and react to them accordingly.

This is meant to be an epic conclusion to five long adventures and many hours of play. Do your best to finish this campaign in true Lone Wolf style!

CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

Bearing the Banner of Ishir, you see it begin to grow brighter until it throws off jagged bolts of lightning, lancing out and arcing up to form a mighty beacon. Amid the forces of the Helghast, shouts of rage and surprise drown out the thunder from above.

Before they can act, a spectral army of the Sommlending fallen manifests in a vast circle around you. The apparitions appear more solid than they did before, and they are surely more numerous. Their weapons now burn like sentry beacons and their eyes are like shards of the sun!



Your foes draw their weapons and move to confront you, but the Sommlending fallen charge through them, consuming all who would dare stand before you. A vanguard of the apparition-warriors tears into the line of armoured skeletons and hurtles with them down into abyss.

Those few Acolytes of Vashna that survived the host's charge suffer a similar fate, each one grasped by golden arms and carried over the edge to meet their unholy end in the cursed darkness below.

The way ahead has been cleared for you reach the Helghast. Strike now!

With just the Helghast to deal with Players have a much better chance of ending this atrocity once and for all. Proceed to **Slaying Svader** below.

OR

EYE OF THE STORM

This option is tragic, as it requires the sacrifice of Master Stormsong, but if the Players have no other options (or if this event suits the style of your campaign), use it as you wish.

Amid the din of the ritual, a new voice is suddenly heard. Past the acolytes, you see Master Stormsong force himself, weak and weary, off of the altar as he bellows, "For Sommerlund!" He grabs the skull of Sun Eagle and, before the stunned Helghast standing before him can react, smashes Svader in the face with it! The goodly power within the skull burns away most of the blackened flesh from the fiend's face, trailing golden fire as Stormsong turns to run towards the far end of the bridge.

Svader, screaming in pain and outrage, gives chase almost instantly. With one bony hand, he slashes across Master Stormsong's back. Your mentor staggers in pain as the Helghast's claws leave an arc of red blood in the air between them.

At this point, the Players are almost surely trying to interrupt and help. Let them do so, as you should never opt for text over their actions. They can engage the outlying Cultists, as given below, but only run one round of combat before continuing with the scene description below.

ACOLYTES OF VASHNA (4 ELDERS)

Combat Skill: 25

Endurance: 30

Willpower: 15

Traits: Grouping (Mob), Iron Will

Special Rules: These Acolytes Elders are able to attack using Mindblast.

Special Notes: Foul Words

Agents of Darkness favour the use of destructive magical spells or cursed weapons when engaging in close combat. By calling forth the name of the Dark God Naar as they attack, they are able to greatly enhance their strikes. For this 'Dark Curse' to be effective, the target must clearly be able to hear the foul words that they utter. The successful enunciation of a Dark Curse will add +3 to their Combat Skill for the duration of the ensuing combat. It can only be spoken once per day (a complete 24-hour cycle), and will only affect the specific target to which it is addressed.

Tortured, drugged, and bleeding, Master Stormsong lashes out with the skull again. Svader is battered back, losing his footing and dropping to one knee on the narrow bridge. Seizing the moment's respite, Stormsong starts running again. He is hobbled and hurting, but his spirit remains unbowed.

The sound of your battle and the furious shouts of the acolyte horde make him glance back. Seeing you brings a tired smile to his face, but it fades when he sees how hopelessly outnumbered you are.

Run a second round of combat for the Players. Describe more Acolytes of Vashna rushing towards them, daggers drawn and curses howled. When the round of battle is over, finish the scene text as follows:

Without hesitation, Master Stormsong turns toward you. Forcing himself into a full run, he sprints past the still-stunned Helghast and rushes the line of skeletons at the end of the bridge. His eyes find yours amid the heat of your battle, a last moment of silent thanks and praise.





Then, as he barrels into the undead, Master Stormsong raises the skull of Sun Eagle over his head and roars the rest of his battle cry. "And the Kai!"

A blast of light brighter and hotter than a hundred summer days erupts from the eye sockets of the skull, enveloping the fleshless and the befouled alike. The wave of sunlight is blinding, forcing you to look away or have your sight forever burned away. Light becomes your entire world – the light of Kai.

Nothing remains where that brilliance passed, nothing save a steaming skull, the shadow of your mentor scorched into the earth, and the billowing ashes of your foes.

Before the Players can even think to grieve, they will discover that one foe has survived. Horribly burned, Svader was somewhat protected by the unholy altar between him and the blast.

Proceed to **Slaying Svader** below.

OR

ONCE MORE INTO THE BREACH

To give the Players a clue on how they can reach Svader and stop the ritual, let them all take a TV 8 Test (master rule- Might). You can also let one willing Player spend a point of Kai's Favour to succeed on this Test automatically.

The tactic is simple, blunt, and dangerous as all the Daziarn, but it just might work...

Since most of the worshippers are kneeling in obeisance, and facing towards the gorge with their heads devoutly bowed, it is possible for the Players to move along the very edge of the gorge where no Acolytes are kneeling before making a heroic charge through the line of skeletal warriors.

Trying to smash and weave through the line of skeletons will take a lot of nerve. It will also require a TV 12 Test (master rule- using Acrobatics of Might), but this decreases by 1 Defence point for any armour the Player is wearing. Thus, wearing mail and a helmet reduces the Difficulty to 10.

Players may further deduct 1 if they possess Mindshield, and 2 if they are armed with any non-bladed melee weapon (i.e. a mace, warhammer or quarterstaff).

Thus, the TV can be reduced to as low as 7. Failure to pass the test will result in the Players having to fight two skeletal warriors simultaneously.

ARMoured SKELETONS (2)

Combat Skill: 18

Endurance: 18

Traits: Iron Will

Any Players who breach the line of Skeletons may advance upon the Helghast. A TV Test of 6 (master rule- using Acrobatics) should now be made. If the test is failed, an armoured skeleton will attack them from behind.

The Acolytes of Vashna have been expressly ordered not to set foot on the bridge span, for to do so will likely collapse it and consign them all into the abyss. Because of this rigid order, none of them will attempt to advance in support of the armoured skeletons.

If the Players are able to get past the Armoured Skeletons and advance towards the Helghast on the span of the bridge, they will face a final climactic battle. Only the Helghast remains to be defeated now, or so it seems.

Proceed to **Slaying Svader** now.

SLAYING SVADER

"No! I have not come this far only to fall to the likes of you!"

Svader immediately attacks the Players, initiating combat unless they already have. As its first action, the Helghast will rake its talon-like nails across Stormsong's chest or raise them in triumph towards the approaching Players (whichever is appropriate). The significance of this action may not be apparent until after the battle is over.

FIGHTING ON THE BRIDGE

To fight Svader (and to rescue Stormsong, if he still lives), the Players will have to brave the broken bridge where the ritual altar has been raised.

Beneath the crushing pressure of the storm, sections of the bridge begin to collapse. To avoid these sudden drops and find stable footing, the Players must succeed a TV 9 Test (master rule- using Acrobatics).

The Hunting Discipline adds a +1 bonus (+2 if Advanced or +3 if Mastered). Whoever is carrying the Banner of Ishir or the spear it creates when it dissolves will gain an extra +4 bonus.

Any Player who fails this test must immediately make a Luck Test. Those who fail will be swept from the collapsing bridge and sent plummeting into Maakengorge amidst a shower of jagged debris, never to be seen again.



SVADER, HELGHAST

Combat Skill: 30*

Endurance: 40*

Willpower: 20

Traits: Aegis, Soldier

Skills: Influence, Occult

Special Rules: Helghasts possess the Mindblast Discipline. They cannot lose Endurance to non-magical weapons.

* If Svader was attacked by Master Stormsong, reduce these to 26 and 30.

Only a Player who possesses the Banner of Ishir, the Helghast Spear (acquired in Adventure #2), Suurvek's axe Ruzzaran (from Adventure #4), or the jewelled scimitar from the Great Sink (also gained in Adventure #4) is capable of destroying the Helghast.

If a Player possesses a flask of holy water they can splash the Helghast with it. If they do, Svader can be harmed and even killed by normal weapons for ten rounds before the water boils away and his invulnerability returns.

Reducing the Helghast's Endurance to zero will destroy it completely, leaving no trace. The destruction of the Helghast will cause any remaining Armoured Skeletons to disintegrate to dust. The Acolytes of Vashna will flee from the edge of the chasm and rout into the ruins of Maaken in abject terror.

If the Players let the Acolytes flee unhindered and do not pursue them, they will be able to free Kai Master Stormsong from the

altar and/or retrieve the skull of Sun Eagle, depending on how they reached this moment.

Once this has occurred, proceed to the concluding scene – ***The Blood of Heroes.***

THE BLOOD OF HEROES

With a mounting sense of dread, you realise that the storm has not abated since the Helghast was slain. Powerful bolts of white lightning lance out of the stormy skies and strike the ruins of Maaken, shattering its ancient stones and hurling the glowing stone fragments in all directions.

The skull of Sun Eagle was here. Master Stormsong bled.

The dark ritual is complete.

The howling winds rise to such a pitch and strength that it is fast becoming impossible for you to remain standing upright. The fragile arch starts to fail, the bridge is breaking apart, and – with rising horror – you hear a terrible voice rise from the depths of the Maakengorge.

It roars, repeating two words of the forbidden Dark Tongue over and over again. You should not understand them but you do, and that comprehension sears your very soul.

"I live! I Live! I LIVE!!!"



Give the Players a moment to speak and act before continuing. This is a prime moment for roleplaying, especially if that roleplaying is expressing pure, unadulterated panic.

Vashna is being resurrected. This could well be the end of all Sommerlund...

When you are ready, continue:

Along the edge of the chasm, shimmering silver in the light of the full moon, are dozens of glowing spirits, the fallen warriors of Sommerlund who died here long ago. They approach, radiating no malice but only hope, bright and pure.

The spirits look down into the abyss and you follow the direction of their gaze. You behold a terrifying sight. Climbing up the jagged walls of the Maakengorge, their bony fingers seeking purchase wherever it can be found, you see countless thousands of hollow-eyed undead.

Above them floats an inky black presence that radiates an immensely powerful aura of evil and that is slowly taking shape again thanks to the unholy ritual you failed to prevent. It will only be a matter of minutes before this terrible horde of corruption and undeath overflows the dark chasm and erupts into Sommerlund unchecked.

If one of the Players is carrying the Banner of Ishir, the leader of the Fallen Host will all turn to face that Kai Lord. If not, they will address the Players as a group and can be 'led' by any of them willing to do so.

The regal leader of the ghostly host, a warrior whose shield bears the crest of Ulnar I, speaks, her voice like a distant whisper but clear and audible nonetheless.

"We are bound to the service of Ishir, charged to put down what must never rise again. We can do this, but we must be led."

Her voice becomes ethereally sombre, her next words dire as she looks over the edge at the rising End of All Things.

"A leap of faith."

This is a hint that one of the Players must make the ultimate sacrifice. If the Players have the Banner, its bearer must jump voluntarily into the gorge. If they do not, their status as Kai Lords qualifies them in its stead.

The Sommlending Fallen will follow the selfless Kai down into the depths of the abyss and there engage in a supernatural battle with Vashna and his legions of undead.

This will cost the willing Kai Lord his or her life, but by so doing, they will dispel the legions and prevent the Archlord's final resurrection from out of the Maakengorge on this fateful night.

If no Players are willing to sacrifice themselves in this fashion or if they just do not understand what they are being asked to do, Master Stormsong (or his spirit, suddenly appearing at the head of the Fallen Host) bids his beloved students a touching farewell before stepping off the cliff and into the darkness.

First hundreds, then thousands of Sommlending spirits – the fallen army that gave their lives once before to protect the world – pour past you into the Maakengorge to do battle with the legions of the undead.

Far down in the fathomless, inky depths of the Maakengorge, the howling screech of Vashna is slowly be overwhelmed by the roaring battle cries of your valiant friend and these loyal and selfless defenders of the Light.

All throughout the night, this courageous song echoes above the howling winds until, shortly before dawn, the noise quiets down to the softest of whispers.

Undying Vashna is dead once more.

THE QUEST ENDS

Surviving Players can return to the Kai Monastery where they will be received with pride by Grand Master Rune Helm, as well as sadness and commiseration for any of their number who died. The loss of Master Stormsong, if he also fell, will be met with grief as well. Their heroism and sacrifices have brought honour to the Monastery and to Kai. For that and much more, the Grand Master is overjoyed.

Yet, the Helghast has been destroyed and the resurrection of Archlord Vashna has been thwarted, at least for now. If the Sommlending fallen prevented the return of the Darklord and the rise of the Legion of the Restless Dead, they were also sadly annihilated during the battle, sacrificing their spiritual existences in the process.

They will not stand again between Vashna and Sommerlund if the Darklord was to be resurrected again. But for now, nothing indicates the ritual to do so could be undertaken again and their holy mission has been successfully accomplished.

The conclusion scene below should only be read as-is if the Players have consistently earned a Rank after each of the four previous Adventures. If they did not, adjust the text accordingly. While



Rune Helm is still grateful and proud of those Kai that did not quite reach Kai Master, they still obviously need some training before they are ready to hold that esteemed position.

A BITTERSWEET HOMECOMING

When eventually you arrive at the Kai Monastery, you receive a rapturous reception. Once the celebration finally wanes, Grand Master Rune Helm summons you at once to his chambers. There, he listens in awe to the story you have to tell. Tears well-up in his steely blue eyes when you present him with the skull of Sun Eagle. Graciously, the Grand Master acknowledges your achievements, which are many. He gives praise to the ultimate sacrifice that was made to ultimately complete your mission.

"The bravery and courage you showed in thwarting the evil plans of Vashna's Helghast is in accord with the very highest traditions of the Order."

'My young Kai,' Grand Master Rune Helm continues proudly. 'Our beloved Sommerlund would surely have fallen were it not for the outstanding courage and fortitude you demonstrated in the pursuit

of your missions. You have upheld and exceeded the very highest traditions of our Order.'

He opens a box, showing you the enamelled badges within. Each bears the sun mark of a rank only a few in the Order can ever hope to attain. "Your achievements shall become legend. They will be retold with reverence by present and future generations of Kai Lords yet to come. In recognition of your extraordinary actions, I am proud to give my blessing for your promotion to the rank of Kai Master. No need to wait for the next Fehmarn."

He pins your cloaks closed with the badges, each of you in turn.

"Effective forthwith, and most assuredly deserved!"

Congratulations! You and your Players have completed the campaign successfully. They have rightly earned their place in the legends of the Kai.

The adventure and the campaign, **Terror of the Darklords**, ends here.



FOR SOMMERLUND AND THE KAI!

APPENDIX: TERROR OF THE DARKLORDS FOES

ACOLYTES OF VASHNA

(Page 75. Vairiant appears on page 116)

Combat Skill: 22

Endurance: 26

Willpower: 10

Traits: Grouping (Mob), Iron Will

Special Rules: These Acolytes Elders are able to attack using Mindblast.



BANDIT LEADER

(Page 58)

Combat Skill: 19

Endurance: 28

Traits: Ambusher (+2), Soldier, Veteran 5/+1



BLOOD SPHAGNUM

(Page 85)

Combat Skill: 16

Endurance: 30

Traits: Aegis, Reach, Trapper

Special Rule: A Player is considered to have been ensnared when they inflict their first ENDURANCE loss upon the Blood Sphagnum. All ENDURANCE points lost by the Player will be due to blood loss through the barbs. When caught by Blood Sphagnum tendrils, a Player must deduct 2 COMBAT SKILL from their base level score for the duration of the combat due to encumbrance.

BLUDSKUL (GOURGAZ)

(Page 71)

Combat Skill: 24

Endurance: 33

Traits: Brutal 3, Iron Will, Soldier



ARMoured SKELETONS

(Page 117)

Combat Skill: 18

Endurance: 18

Traits: Iron Will

BANDIT

(Page 58)

Combat Skill: 16

Endurance: 25

Traits: Grouping (Mob), Soldier

BARGIL THE BODYGUARD

(Page 36)

Combat Skill: 18

Endurance: 26

BLACK BEAR

(Page 59)

Combat Skill: 19

Endurance: 30

Traits: Defense 2

**BONEMEN AUTARCH**

(Page 82)

Combat Skill: 21**Endurance:** 29**Traits:** Veteran 5/+1**BONEMEN RAIDERS**

(Page 82)

Combat Skill: 20**Endurance:** 28**Traits:** Grouping (Mob)**BONEMEN WARRIORS**

(Page 82. Variants appear on the same page)

Combat Skill: 12**Endurance:** 20**Traits:** Grouping (Mob)**BURROWCRAWLERS**

(Page 68)

Combat Skill: 17**Endurance:** 10**Traits:** Burrow, Iron Will, Lurker**CRYPT SPAWN**

(Page 98)

Combat Skill: 25**Endurance:** 40**Traits:** Flying**DAEMONAK**

(Page 66. Variant appears on page 112)

Combat Skill: 25**Endurance:** 25**Traits:** Flight, Swift**DHORGAAAN**

(Page 97)

Combat Skill: 20**Endurance:** 40**Traits:** Brutal 1, Trapper**DOCKS' WARD GANG**

(Page 33)

Combat Skill: 12**Endurance:** 15**Traits:** Grouping (Mob)**DOOMWOLF**

(Page 21. Variants appear on pages 61 and 63)

Combat Skill: 13**Endurance:** 20**Traits:** Grouping (Pack), Mount**DRAKKARIM DEATH KNIGHTS**

(Page 48)

Combat Skill: 22**Endurance:** 28**Traits:** Brutal 1, Iron Will, Veteran 5/+1**DRAKKARIM DEATH KNIGHT
NANRAK (ON FOOT)**

(Page 21)

Combat Skill: 26**Endurance:** 40**Traits:** Brutal 1, Defence 3, Iron Will, Veteran 5/+1**DRAKKARIM DEATH KNIGHT
NANRAK (ON NOZODGORAK
WARHORSE)**

(Page 21)

Combat Skill: 28**Endurance:** 50**Traits:** Brutal 1, Defence 3, Iron Will, Veteran 5/+1**DRAKKARIM DUTY OFFICERS**

(Page 43)

Combat Skill: 18**Endurance:** 28**DRAKKARIM SHADZA**

(Page 94. Variant appears on page 110)

Combat Skill: 16**Endurance:** 24**Traits:** Grouping (Soldier), Soldier

DRAKKARIM ZAGGANOZOD

(Page 108)

Combat Skill: 16**Endurance:** 28**Traits:** Grouping (Soldier), Soldier**Special Rules:** These riders are clad in plain black helmets and scarlet chainmail hauberks. They are armed with a mix of swords and maces. Each one has a bow with 12 arrows.**DURNCRAG BEAR**

(Page 15. Variant appears on page 21)

Combat Skill: 20 + 1 per Player**Endurance:** 30 + 2**Traits:** Defence 2**FARS BARKSEN**

(Page 36)

Combat Skill: 12**Endurance:** 21**GIK LEADER**

(Page 61)

Combat Skill: 16**Endurance:** 18**Traits:** Defence 2, Grouping (Mob), Invulnerable (normal poison), Soldier**GIK MARAUDERS**

(Page 61. Variants appear on pages 63, 67, 70 and 71)

Combat Skill: 12**Endurance:** 12**Traits:** Grouping (Mob), Invulnerable (normal poison), Soldier**GOURGAZ**

(Page 90. Variant appears on page 94)

Combat Skill: 23**Endurance:** 33**Traits:** Brutal 3, Iron Will, Soldier**Special Rule:** A Gourgaz automatically raises the COMBAT SKILL of any Giaks within 200 meters by +2. Gourgaz are sometimes carriers of the Red Death Plague virus, although they are themselves immune to the effects of this terrible disease. Exposure to Gourgaz blood (i.e. each time the Gourgaz is injured the Player who wounded it must make a TV 5 test using Acrobatics – master rule) carries with it a small risk of contracting this plague. In the present situation, only the third Gourgaz is carrier of the virus.**GOURGAZ SKELETONS**

(Page 97)

Combat Skill: 9**Endurance:** 14**GOURGAZ YOUNG**

(Page 91)

Combat Skill: 13**Endurance:** 16**Traits:** Brutal 1, Iron Will**Special Rule:** Young Gourgaz automatically raise the COMBAT SKILL of any Giaks within 100 meters by +1.**GUARDS**

(Page 77. Variants appear on the same page)

Combat Skill: 14**Endurance:** 18**HARAZ**

(Page 89)

Combat Skill: 10**Endurance:** 10**Traits:** Grouping (Pack), Mount**Special Rule:** Haraz can see in the dark.**HIRED THUGS**

(Page 62)

Combat Skill: 12**Endurance:** 15**Traits:** Grouping (Mob), Soldier**KAGGAZHEG MOUNTAIN GIAKS**

(Page 17. Variant appears on page 21)

Combat Skill: 10**Endurance:** 15**Traits:** Grouping (Mob), Soldier**Special Rule:** Giaks can see in the dark.**KAGGAZHEG MOUNTAIN GIAKS (ON DOOMWOLF)**

(Page 21)

Combat Skill: 15**Endurance:** 35**Traits:** Grouping (Mob), Soldier**Special Rule:** Giaks can see in the dark.**KRAAN**

(Page 26)

Combat Skill: 17**Endurance:** 28**Traits:** Flight, Mount**Special Rule:** Remember to add +2 to the Kraan's COMBAT SKILL for the first round of each individual combat. This represents the speed of their initial diving attack. In subsequent rounds, the Kraan will hover above each Player and attempt to beat them with their leathery wings and stab them to death with their long sharp beaks. These flying foes will not evade combat and will fight to the death.



KWARAZ

(Page 91)

Combat Skill: 24

Endurance: 35

Traits: Invulnerable (poison, disease), Swift

Special Rules: Kwaraz are very susceptible to psychic power. Players may add +4 to Combat Skill for the duration of any combat with a Kwaraz if they possess Mindblast. They can also be repelled using the Discipline of Animal Kinship.



KWARAZ YOUNG

(Page 99)

Combat Skill: 18

Endurance: 26

Traits: Invulnerable (poison, disease), Swift

Special Rules: Kwaraz are very susceptible to psychic power. Players may add +4 to Combat Skill for the duration of any combat with a Kwaraz if they possess Mindblast. They can also be repelled using the Discipline of Animal Kinship.

LORD COMMANDER SUURVEK (GOURGAZ)

(Page 102)

Combat Skill: 30

Endurance: 40

Traits: Brutal 3, Invulnerable (poison, disease), Soldier, Veteran (10, +2)

MUD GIANT

(Page 84)

Combat Skill: 20

Endurance: 40

Traits: Aegis, Brutal 2

Special Rule: Mud Giants have the ability to swallow any normal weapons that touch them.

During combat, at the start of the third round, a Mud Giant can steal by absorption the weapon of a Player who has managed to wound it. The Player must then fight without this weapon until the end of the combat. This ability is doubly dangerous for any Player who is unarmed. If they touch the Mud Giant, they will be swallowed up by it at the start of the third round and begin to suffocate (losing 3 END each subsequent round until they, or the Mud Giant, is dead).

REEBDAN

(Page 82. Variant on the same page)

Combat Skill: 18

Endurance: 25

Traits: Defence 2, Grouping (Pack)



SKARCRUSHR, GOURGAZ

(Page 94)

Combat Skill: 28

Endurance: 38

Traits: Brutal 4, Iron Will, Veteran (5, +1)

SOLDIERS

(Page 77)

Combat Skill: 18

Endurance: 25

Traits: Grouping (Soldier), Soldier, Veteran (5, +1)

STORGH

(Page 27)

Combat Skill: 20

Endurance: 35

Traits: Brutal 1, Defence 2

Special Rules: The targeted Player will be knocked out of their saddle in the first round of

combat. The other Players may enter the combat only at the beginning of the 3rd round. The horny hide of the Storgh is very tough, enabling it to absorb a great deal of punishment. If it succeeds in inflicting an ENDURANCE point loss, the wounded Player will become ensnared in its powerful jaws. The Storgh will then attempt to drag the Player into the river at the start of the following round. Once dragged into the river and submerged, only the Player who is gripped in its jaws can continue the combat as the river is deep and the current is too strong for anyone else to wade in and offer effective assistance.

SVADER, HELGHAIST

(Page 118)

Combat Skill: 30*

Endurance: 40*

Willpower: 20

Traits: Aegis, Soldier

Skills: Influence, Occult

Special Rules: Helghaists possess the Mindblast Discipline. They cannot lose Endurance to non-magical weapons.

* If Svader was attacked by Master Stormsong, reduce these to 26 and 30.



SWAMP GIAK

(Page 89. Variant appears on page 94)

Combat Skill: 12**Endurance:** 6**Traits:** Grouping (Mob), Soldier**Special Rule:** Giaks can see in the dark.**TORAN CITY GARRISON GUARD**

(Page 31)

Combat Skill: 13**Endurance:** 20**Traits:** Grouping (Soldier), Soldier**TOUGH SERGEANT**

(Page 31)

Combat Skill: 18**Endurance:** 28**Traits:** Soldier, Veteran 5/+1**VAGAZED, DRAKKAR DEATH KNIGHT NANRAK**

(Page 113)

Combat Skill: 30**Endurance:** 20**Traits:** Brutal 1, Defence 3, Iron Will, Veteran 5/+1**Special Notes:** Vagazed's mace has the Heavy quality and is made from Kagonite, giving it the Quick quality as well.**VILLAGE MILITIAMAN**

(Page 21)

Combat Skill: 13**Endurance:** 24**Traits:** Grouping (Mob), Soldier**VILLAGER**

(Page 21)

Combat Skill: 9**Endurance:** 11**VORDAK**

(Page 98)

Combat Skill: 22**Endurance:** 30**Willpower:** 15**Traits:** Invulnerable (poison and disease), Iron Will (Mindblast only), Soldier.**Special Rules:** Vordaks possess the ability to attack psychically using a Mindblast, which has a similar effect to the Kai Discipline of the same name. Vordaks can use their Mindforce to detect any sentient beings in their vicinity (100 feet / 30 meters radius), and can thus rarely be taken by surprise. When not engaged in combat, they

are able to regenerate and fully heal all wounds within an hour of receiving them.

**WATCH HOUSE JAILERS**

(Page 43)

Combat Skill: 12**Endurance:** 20**WILD WOLF**

(Page 28)

Combat Skill: 15**Endurance:** 18**Traits:** Brutal 1, Grouping (Pack)**Special Rule:** Reducing a wild wolf to half its initial Endurance score (i.e., 9 or lower) will make it evade combat and run away.

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