

NIGHTS of the CRUSADES

PATHFINDER
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

Created, written and illustrated by MJ Alishah.

Special thanks to the Accursed Knowledge
Gaming Group

Version 1.1

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*If Time aids thee to victory,
He will grant thy foe revenge.
As the days' heat bears off as spoil,
The dew you took from its dawn gone by.*

*Oh Falsehood, like a star all naked, stands!
But Truth hides her face in hood and veil.
Is there no ship my outstretched hands,
May grasp, to save me from this malicious sea?*

*And Fate cares not about peace or war:
The day's arbitrary hands bestow,
Both blessings and curses,
Whether you be a man of peace or warrior.*

Al-Ma'arri

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"In hand she held a blade whereon was inscribed the name of Allah in Hebrew characters. She carved a wide circle in the midst of the palace hall, and therein wrote in Kufic letters mysterious names and talismans. And she uttered words and muttered charms, some of which we understood and others we understood not."

~ The 1001 Nights

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*'I did not believe that thou wert a knight.'
I replied, 'Lord Bohemund, I am a knight
according to the customs of my people.'*

~ Ibn Munqidh

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INTRODUCTION

As the wind and dust howled over the barren ground, the traitors walked. Their leader thought only of increasing the distance between him and the ravaged hell of Antioch – and forgetting the past. The rain that often cloaked the city reached far into the surrounding lands, and dark clouds approached that threatened to obscure the morning sun.

The walls were assaulted two days ago, and that was when these shuffling exiles left their city to the men of the western countries. Their thoughts were as much a burden as their possessions. Their bones ached from the hard ground where they slept last night. They sweated, their clothes sticking to their skin. They needed shelter.

As they descended from a barren mountain range, the stones of a ruined wall came into view, looking like the spine of a disfigured serpent. As the refugees edged closer they saw it coiled around the corpse of a small city. Behind the wall were orchards of skeletal fruit trees, and a great slum of houses and stables. A spire loomed over the city and a thin bridge joined it to the wall of a palace that perched upon a jutting section of the mountain range. Their approach was not greeted with the usual sounds of a large town, it was empty of life. It would, however, do for shelter until they decided where to go.

The previous dwellers of the village would have sought safety within Antioch's walls after hearing of the arrival of the vast army from the west. The besiegers of Antioch, in their hunt for food and plunder, would have then laid waste to their town and whatever else was left behind. Antioch would have no protection for them now. After the once-proud city was stormed, its inhabitants would have received only death or slavery. They would now rightly condemn Firuz, the leader of the traitors, for what was left of their lives.



THE SETTING

Nights of the Crusades is a **roleplaying game** set in a land and time that is familiar on the surface, but within its cracks lie tales of alchemy, madness and violence. It is a world that could have happened and then been lost to barbarity and time. Players take on characters that can explore its lands and plunder them for wealth, glory or knowledge. The Game Master is their guide, plunging them into the horrors of war and fanaticism as they pursue their goals. The world is rife with dark cults, creatures that dwell in unseen places and bloodthirsty warriors. This is a time when anyone's thoughts, from king to slave, are enough to condemn them to death and hell, and many are they that will line up to cheer the execution.

And as the characters journey through the chapters of their tale, they will become a part of the stories that they hear. Magic, djinn and foul beasts lurk within the minds of storytellers, yet many secrets and shards of knowledge can be found within these tales.

The setting of Nights of the Crusades is a mixture of the One Thousand and One Nights, the history surrounding the Crusades and both modern and ancient tales of terror.

A copy of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game PRD is needed to use the contents of this supplement.

OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

The Mythos

A description of the world that your characters will enter. It gives a (very brief) overview of the Crusades and the 1001 Nights; along with the tales that are whispered among those who have seen the secrets of the dark.

Conjuring a Character

This describes the process of creating a character. It is a simple process after inspiration strikes.

Weaving a Tale


This is a guide for the Game Master. It delves into the possible themes of a tale and how to challenge your players, enhancing everyone's experience.

Appendix One: Bestiary

Beast details for use in a tale.

Appendix Two: Adventure - Over Dark Seas

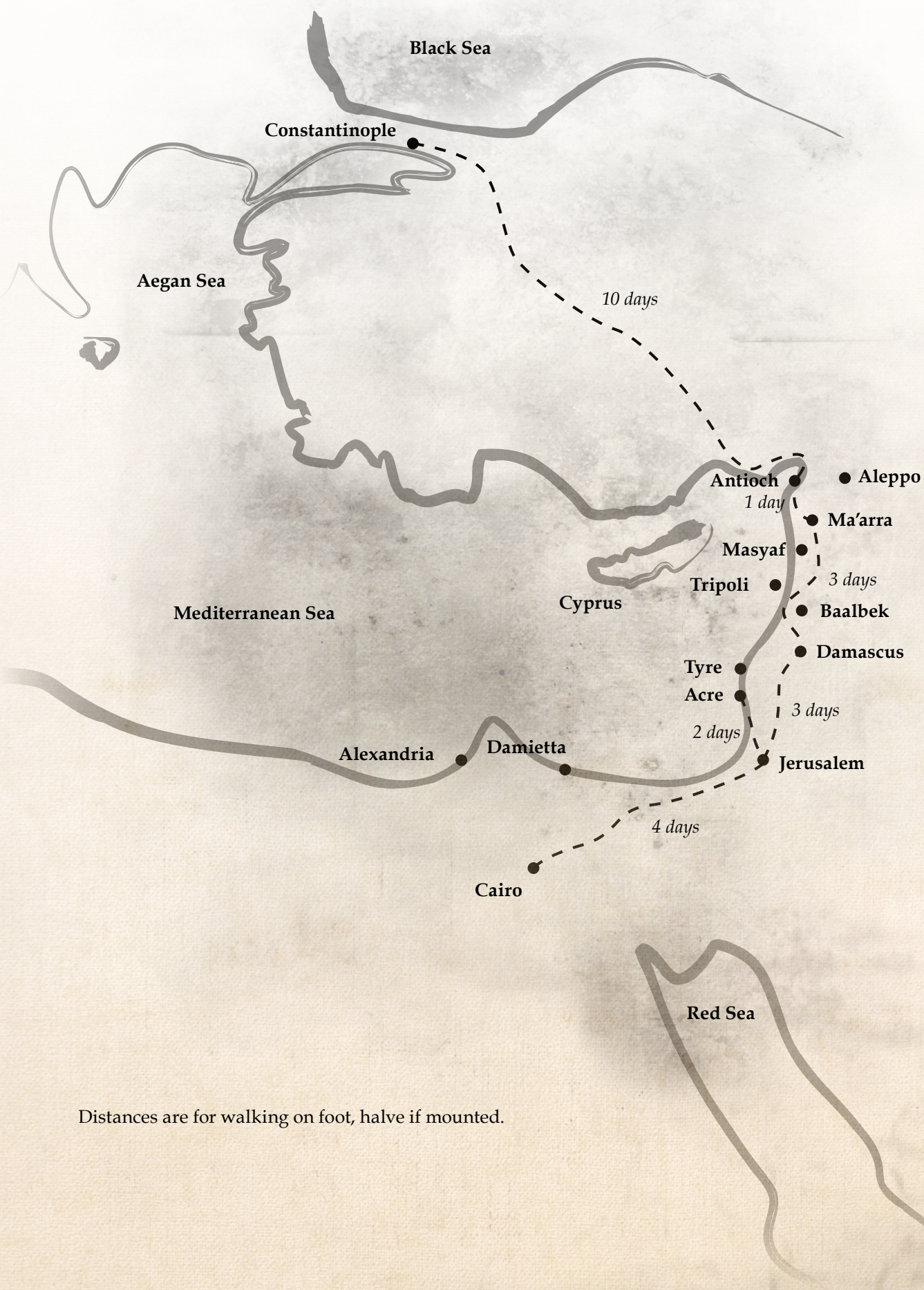
An adventure that will launch you into the world of Nights of the Crusades.



"What is man? The slave of death, a passing wayfarer. How is man placed? Like a flame in the wind."

~ Alcuin

MAP OF THE LAND



Distances are for walking on foot, halve if mounted.

THE TALE OF THE MERCHANT

A close friend of mine, Dionysius Theodoros, had asked me to visit him in Acre so we could make some business arrangements. He wanted me to meet with one of the Franj who had become accustomed to civilisation. I could not believe such a spectacle existed, so I made plans immediately.

The short journey was made even shorter, as I fascinated my crew with the stories of the sea to ease their toil. One of my favourites is that of a fellow merchant who was trying to deliver much needed supplies to a town besieged by the Franj. Their ships circled the harbour like hungry sharks, waiting for a moment's weakness to begin a frenzied assault. Oh see how this merchant outsmarted them! He shaved his beard and those of his crew and dressed in the manner of the infidel. He even placed unclean swine on the decks - but God will wash away the dirt on his hands, for this merchant's cause was just. The Franj, thinking he was one of them, let him pass. The cheers of the besieged Muslims met his crew as they were allowed into the city! But for those who know the whole story, it was a sad tale too. That city was Acre, lost to the Kings of France and England long ago, and holds many tales of sorrow and atrocity.

We soon reached port. I allowed my men to visit this wondrous city, as, though the Franj controlled it, there were many sights to see. I told even the Christians amongst my crew to be careful though. It is well known that one of the largest slave markets in the world is in Acre, and many are those slaves that were free men a week before they appeared at auction. I have heard that only a conversion to the Catholic religion of the Franj will save you from the chains of a slave-master. But I know that this law is broken as many times as enforced, as it rests on any infidel to determine the truth or falsehood of the pleas of the shackled. Of course, I asked my crew to tell me should they see any strong men that could ease their workload on the journey home, for I am not immune to the plight of a sailor.

So I found my friend, Dionysius, and he told me of this Franj he bade me meet. Apparently there are some Franj that are less prone to acts of barbarity than their newly arrived brothers, as they have dwelt in the lands of the Muslims for many years. We came to the estate of this old knight who, having been involved in the earlier wars against the Muslims, was now living peaceably. I was surprised

*"The weakness of little children's
limbs is innocent, not their souls."*

~ St Augustine

that his slaves prepared a great banquet for us, with clean food and local spices, but I had never eaten at the table of a barbarian before. As he saw my hesitation, the knight bellowed, "Eat friend, be merry in my home! I have not eaten the food of my old countrymen for many years, and have an Egyptian cook who ensures that the flesh of pigs does not enter my home." I was pleased with what he said and we left on good terms, him knowing a little Arabic and Dionysius filling in the gaps of our understanding.

After discussing business, I left to collect my men and ensure they had acted with caution throughout their day. As I walked through the market place, a Frankish woman grabbed at me. I attempted to brush her away, yet she clung tightly and began screaming in the brash sounds of her language. A great crowd of Franj began to surround me, and I saw my doom in their eyes.

But then the old knight, seemingly come from the aether, saw me and spoke harshly to the woman. He said, "Why do you impede this Muslim's business?" She spoke back to him through tears, "This is he who slew my brother. He was killed at the walls of Jerusalem!"

The Christian knight dismissed her, saying, "This Muslim is a merchant who has never raised a sword or fought for their armies." He then ordered the crowd to disband, which they did on account of his high standing amongst them. Although I had often imagined my demise to be at the hands of one of these bellicose giants, I had never thought that one would come to my rescue.

We then said a heartfelt farewell and I headed home without further incident. Truly this is a tale that the wise among you will heed!



The Mythos

The thud of hooves approached. The bandits dismounted at the base of the minaret. Gruff voices of men ascended to where the traitors lay in hiding. Firuz imagined them passing through the spire's threshold. They were confident, swaggering, obviously assuming the area was abandoned. He took a careful look around the wall. The bandits' mouths gaped as they approached the arch into the palace, wondering at the treasures within.

The cry of child echoed through the air behind him.

The bandits were startled, but quickly regained their composure. They readied their weapons. Firuz could not risk being seen now. He put his back to the wall, relying on his hearing. An arrow streaked through the archway and tumbled into the dusty ground. Another ricocheted off the palace's marble wall. More children began to cry. His stomach coiled like an agitated snake.

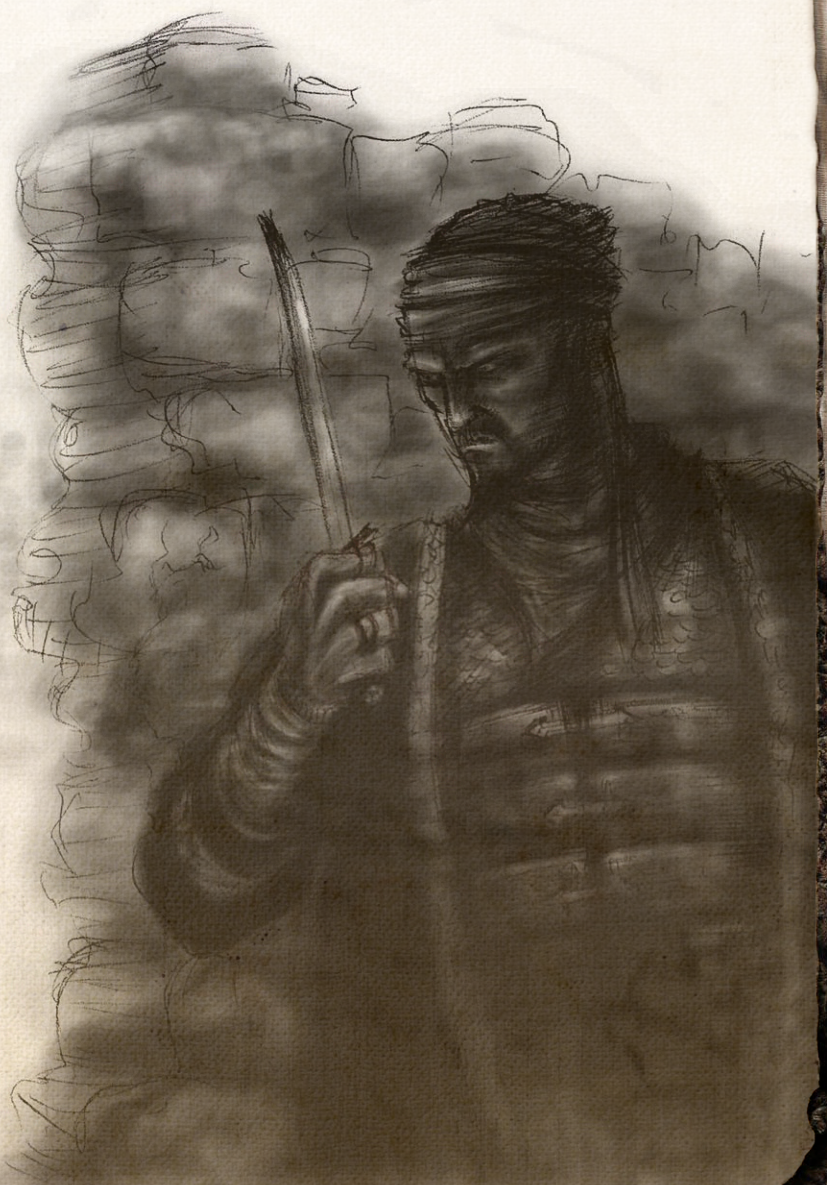
The fighting would soon begin. The whispered voice of a bandit was followed by another's menacing laugh. The stink of wine reached Firuz's nostrils. The bandits were just on the opposite side of the wall.

Peering out from behind a wide column, one of the women cried through her veil, "Please brothers, show mercy to us."

"Ha, God allowed mercy to flee this land many days ago. Are there only little boys to defend you?" The sound of a sword being sheathed rang through the tense atmosphere. "Put away your bow, Omar. They will be worth more without scratches."

A slurred voice said, "Do not be shy, my flowers, you may show your faces to your new men. We have come to cure your loneliness in these troubled times." He finished with a chuckle.

Firuz felt his body burn hot. He nodded to the man across from him.



"Christ himself will be your leader, wear his cross as your badge. If you are killed your sins will be pardoned ... Let those who have been fighting against their own brothers and kinsfolk now fight lawfully against the barbarians."

~ Pope Urban II



THE CRUSADER

God wills it! That is the cry that strengthens the spirit. The fires of justice have swept aside any opposition to our righteous cause. We march onwards to the Holy City.

In all the battles I have fought, this will be the first where I will arrive to the field without my stout horse, Bellator. He was but bones wrapped in skin when his time came. In hunger lies the devil; that is a phrase where the truth resides. I had thought of Bellator as a dear friend, yet my brothers could not contain their yearning for meat. I was admonished for the tear I shed by Father Johan, for had not Saint Augustine declared that, "refraining from the killing of animals is the height of superstition." I could not argue against the word of God, so it was with a trembling hand that I sacrificed my friend on the altar of hunger.

And worse still, as our bodies were shriveled and blasted by the harsh desert sands, a plague swept through our ranks. Mounted scouts of accursed infidels would harry us, and any arrows that pierced our armour caused a black infection. Boils and sores began to burst from our skin. It was God's punishment, cried the Father. As a penance, we sent the woman who had served our needs into the desert, and swore an oath of chastity until Jerusalem was ours. By this time my eyes and mouth were a hive of blisters. I could barely see. I had to use a rag to keep the weeping fluids from obscuring my sight.

Then we happened upon a number of heathen villages. God's fury was ignited in our souls, and we set upon them like the prophets of old as we "utterly destroyed the men, and the women, and the little ones, of every city, we left none to remain. Only the cattle we took for a prey unto ourselves, and the spoil of the cities which we took."

I saw some of my brothers, so maddened from hunger, eating from the bodies of the slain.

And so now, at the walls of the holiest of cities we march and sing and pray. The flagellants have finished their wailing and we have retired to rest under these foreign stars. When the sun rises, so too will our banners over Jerusalem.

THE ASSASSIN

The smoke from those dark nights still burns in my nostrils, and morning never came for me. I hide now, in plain sight, counting the seconds before the man before me is dead.

I have travelled far from Damascus, where I once made my home, tracking one of the cruel leaders of the massacre that butchered more than five thousand of my Isma'ili brethren. This preacher, who now stands not ten feet away, sows rumours and diverts blame from his masters, enabling them to perform their atrocities. It was him that led the Sunni fanatics to our quarter. They had been fed lies about how we were aiding the Franj to capture Damascus, and in return we were to be granted the port city of Tyre. I know not the basis of these accusations, but nor did I care as I cradled my wife's corpse.

Those of us who could escape fled into the wilderness, but we were found. Not by those thirsting for our blood – but by a shadowy savior. He claimed he was a Nizari, a follower of Sinan, The Old Man of the Mountain. They were protectors of true Islam and its adherents – the Shi'ites generally and the Isma'ili specifically. We followed him to the cliffs.

For many months we trained our bodies and souls to fight the apostates and unbelievers, those who would seek to annihilate the only untainted followers of God.

I hunted my quarry across the plains and deserts and now I wait, with my head shaved and only a dagger beneath my ragged robe. My exterior is the manner of the calm Sufi, but inside I am the fury of hate. For days the preacher has passed with his retinue, as I sat by the path in dust. His wariness is down for I am a common site to them. The flash of my dagger is not!

Blood spurts as the blade bites deep inside the throat of the false preacher. Knowing that not even a djinni from the flames of hell could survive such a blow, I leap away, evading my blood-soaked pursuers. Adrenaline floods my veins as I quicken my pace, for the alarm has been raised. Heavy footsteps are closing the distance.

Should I survive, that is all good and well, however I do not care so much. My mission is complete, and an eternity in paradise is assured.

THE PHYSICIAN

Oh, how I covet the past! I would entertain and be entertained by the stories of travelers from far lands. I would hear of Chinese silk, so beautiful that it would almost radiate light, the great behemoths that shake the lands of the south and the power of those blades of shining Damascus steel. My patients would receive a handsome style to their beard or the pulling of a deviant tooth, but alas, my services are no longer needed. Thick-skinned lemons have replaced the exotic fruits I once tasted, and there is no more sweetness in my life.

My brothers were too content; too idle in their good lives, that even those whose calling was of battle could not stand against the storm from the west. As we contemplated the twirling of the stars and the sorcery of numerals, the invaders were wading in the blood of their defeated foes.

I am a beggar now, baptized by fire and rising in dust. My fine robes of honour were stolen or despoiled, so now I am no different to the street dwellers that surround me.

I have tried different paths though. In the early days of Frankish rule, I was sought after by a man desperate to heal his wife. So I sent to him one of my Jewish students who came from the land of the Byzantines. His recollections shocked me, and I wept for us all.

My student recalled that the woman sat very still as her stomach was wracked with pain. He asked her of her lifestyle and prescribed a change in diet. If I recall correctly, he told her to desist in her over-consumption of salted meats and, instead, eat more vegetables and drink clean water. He then joined her and her husband in conversation, as he knew a little of their language and wanted to learn.

But a Frankish physician burst into the room and interrupted his farewell. The Frank was insulted that he was not sought after because his initial remedies failed. He proclaimed that my student knew only witchcraft and could not care for those faithful to Isa. The Frankish physician began examining the woman, looking under her eyelids, holding his cross against parts of her body and cursing the couple for allowing a heretic, such as my student, into their homes. Suddenly he exclaimed, "I have found the demon that dwells within her! It is behind her eyes. Her head must be shorn to expel it." So her head was shaved and she continued to eat her diet that caused her stomach to clench in agony.

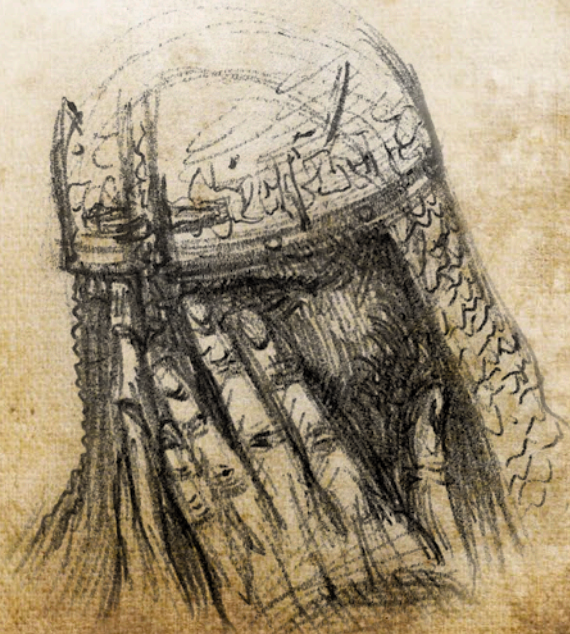
I asked about her when I passed through that district a few days later. A smith told me that her spasms had worsened, so the husband asked for the Frankish physician again. When he saw her, the physician said, "The devil has crept into her skull!"

He took a blade and carved the sign of the cross into her forehead, then lifting the skin away until the bone was exposed, rubbed salt into it. The woman died instantly! Because of this, and many other hurtful events, I gave up my practice and turned to the streets.

In the nights, as the hungry dogs howl, my dreams turn to times of the siege. I am haunted by the guffaws of soldiers as they catapulted the heads of the slain into the city. The dogs were well fed then. However, sometimes the terrors of my nightly visions fade into the brightness of my old life. I dream of feasts with benevolent Princes and retreating from the warm sun to my concubines. So it is with sadness that I awake. Hunger drives me to deeds I should shun, but my hand is halted from stealing from the Franj by thoughts of the punishments that could be visited upon me.

I have seen men and woman burned alive, their screams turning silent only when their throat blackens and their organs spill into the flames. Any man accused can fight his accuser, as their interpretation of a just God is one who grants favour in battle. The blood soaked victor leaves the arena, whilst the defeated has his eyes put out or a noose slung around his neck. Or he is dunked in water, sinking only if his weight of sins is heavy. I have heard of men thrown over bridges in sacks, weighted with iron, and filled with dogs or cats to maul the guilty as they all succumb to the cold of the deep; God's curse be upon them!

But there may be hope and perhaps I will regain my position of honour. Already there is talk among some of my street-dwelling brethren. They plot a just re-acquisition of our property from some of the noble Franj. With our lost treasures we will then flee to Damascus, or another city of believers, to escape from their wrath. But I will have to be cautious...



Nights of the Crusades combines the lands and history of the Crusades during the Middle Ages (roughly 1095 to 1295) with tales from the 1001 Arabian Nights, and darkens the mixture with themes of insanity of horror.

WHAT WERE THE CRUSADES?

The Crusades can be roughly divided into three eras...

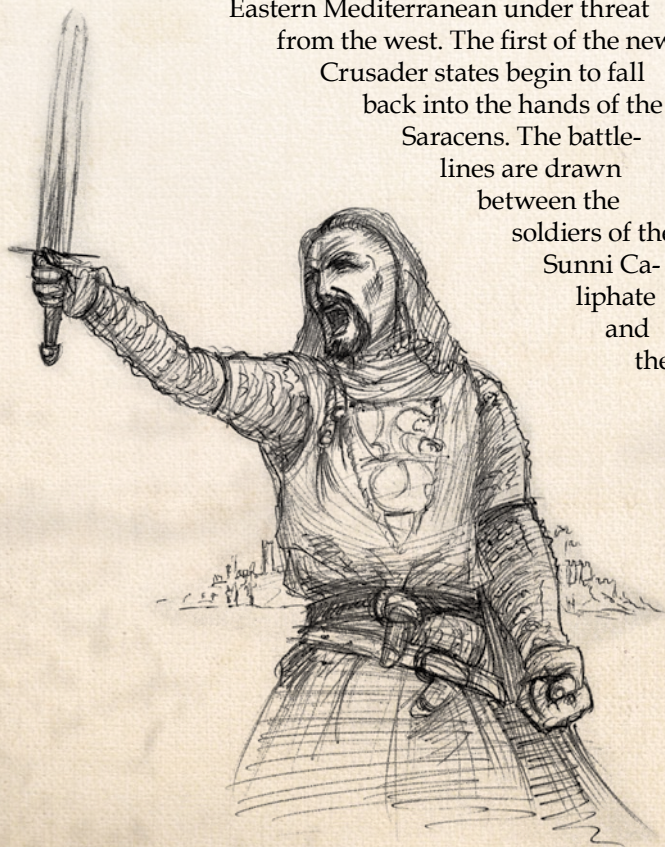
DAWN OF THE CRUSADES

Flames of war are burning the lands from west to east. The Iberian battles against the Moors, the Reconquista, are a forge for Christian clerics to construct their theories of a just and holy war; and their faithful are marching. However, the Muslim princes between the Crusaders and Jerusalem have their hands devoted to schemes amongst themselves. They do not realise the true threat of the Franj until Jerusalem smoulders in ash, along with its Muslim, Eastern Christian and Jewish citizens.

After the brutality of the First Crusade there is an eerie period of quiet between the warring factions. Merchants and the nobility from both sides rub shoulders, as Christian pilgrims from the west arrive to see the birthplace of their faith.

This is only the eye of the whirlwind. The debauched monarchs of the Muslim cities are losing their followers to more pious war leaders, as the faith of Islam is used to unite the lands of the Eastern Mediterranean under threat from the west. The first of the new Crusader states begin to fall back into the hands of the Saracens. The battle-lines are drawn between the

soldiers of the Sunni Caliphate and the



followers of the Roman Pope – Jihad versus Crusade. The Orthodox Christians, Jews and Shi'ites conspire between the two warring factions, trying to keep their heads above the rising sea of blood that quenches the scorched land.

DUSK OF THE CRUSADES

Phillip Augustus - King of France - and Richard the Lionheart clash against Salih Al-Din. The knightly order of the Hospitallers grows from an armed escort for Christian pilgrims to a battle-hardened force. The Knights Templar construct fortifications along the coast and stoke the fires of battle. The Nizari assassins plot between each, as they work towards their master plan of a Shi'ite dominated empire.

Salih Al-Din's desire to retake Jerusalem from the Crusaders can only be accomplished by uniting all the Muslim lands in its defence. The Shi'ites of Egypt had betrayed him. After storming the once-land of the pharaohs and becoming its Sultan, he turns his thoughts to the Nizaris, besieging their nine fortresses. The assassins are now the last power base of the Shi'ites in the lands of Syria. However, Salih Al-Din withdraws, begetting whispers of what may have caused the hurried retreat. Perhaps it was the knife by his pillow – said to have been laid by the Old Man of the Mountain himself – that changed his mind.

After Salih Al-Din takes Jerusalem and destroys the forces of the Knights Templar, Richard the Lionheart joins the third crusade. Sick from scurvy, the Lionheart nevertheless joins in the assault on the walls of Acre. As Salih Al-Din's forces arrive to besiege the now besieged, negotiations begin between the great Kings. They break down, and in the aftermath, Richard orders the beheading of the almost three thousand Muslim inhabitants of Acre within sight of Salih Al-Din's camp. Salih Al-Din's heart is hardened. No Frankish soldier will leave his hands alive from now on.

Schemes are brewing against both Kings. Conrad of Montferrat, the ruler of the impregnable city of Tyre, offers an alliance with Salih Al-Din against the "foreigners" led by Richard. Richard suspects this, and also revolts at the prospect of Conrad becoming king of Jerusalem – should the Christians be able to conquer it once again. After Conrad visits a Turkish bath, a blade pierces his body and he falls to the stones of his city. His murderers are caught. Under torture, the torn bodies of the captured men reveal that they are of the Nizari, and cry that it was Richard himself who employed them.

After some victories against Salih Al-Din, Richard journeys back to France to defend his holdings against Phillip Augustus who left the Holy Land earlier. Salih Al-Din dies in Damascus soon afterwards, bequeathing his rulership to civil war.

DEATH OF THE CRUSADES

Chaos and bloodshed reign. Hatred of the other thrives. The Fourth Crusade results in the Sack of Constantinople, crushing the stronghold of the Byzantines. Genghis Khan and his Mongol hordes build their strength in the north and east. The knightly orders of the Templars and Hospitallers are at odds in the domains they have carved out for themselves in Outremer, and the Nizari step carefully in the political dance between them.

Hulagu, the grandson of Genghis, ravages the Nizari fortress of Alamut and sends his warriors to Baghdad. The great libraries of these Houses of Wisdom are lost to the flames, and so are the people who defy Hulagu. The greatest knowledge of the time becomes ash and is scattered to the winds. With the Nizari surrendering to the Mongols, the path is open for them to sweep into the holy lands of the Abrahamic faiths.

A strange slave-dynasty has risen in Egypt. Mamluks, the soldier-slaves of the Muslim armies, have assumed power and placed a woman, Shajar al-Durr, on the throne as Sultana. Baibars, the true leader of the Mamluks, reunites Egypt and Syria into a powerful state. However, he is caught between the fortresses of the remaining Crusaders, and the army of the Mongols. Baibars compromises with neither. He has been hardened by the violence surrounding him, and focuses it on his enemies.

The Battle of Ayn-Jalut is the first major defeat of the Mongols, and it is at the hands of Baibars. His forces decimate the invaders from the steppe with cannons and his unflinching will. The tide of the Mongols recedes, but remains a threatening force.

Alliances are made and broken between the Mongols and the last Crusaders; the Mongols themselves are split between the religions of Christianity, Islam and Shamanism. However, every campaign the Crusader's wage against Baibars is repelled. The Christians of Antioch are cut off from their Mongol allies, and Baibars ruthlessly purges it. He mocks its ruler, Bohemond IV – excommunicated by the church for his dealings with the Mongols – as the last remaining Crusader strongholds are swept away by Baibars and his successors. Every massacre is claimed to be revenge for the events of a hundred years past.

Qalawan, once a slave bought for 1,000 dinars, leads the warriors of Egypt for a time, destroying the fortress of the Hospitallers. His son, Al-Ashraf Khalil, is the leader of the Islamic forces when Acre is finally retaken – ending the last bastion of Frankish power in the east.

"Death is not the worst that can happen to men."

~ Plato



WHAT WERE THE ONE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS?

The One Thousand and One Nights are a collection of stories from the lands between the Middle East and China that have been told since before the Islamic Golden Age.

The initial tale involves the king, Shahryar, and his new wife, Scheherazade, who marries him to save the women of her city. As punishment to all women for his adulterous former wife, the King takes a new woman every night – and then slays her in the morning. Scheherazade begins telling him stories that beget more stories, while always leaving a tale half finished at sunrise. The king spares her life, but only to hear how a story ends.

"But on my wedding night an Ifrit named Jirjis bin Rajmus, cousin of Iblis, the Foul Fiend, snatched me up and, flying away with me like a bird, set me down in this place"

~ The 1001 Nights

"I know what you are thinking. You think we are all cunning and untrustworthy. But, let me tell you! That is only because no honest Muslim would have dealings with the Franj, ha ha! Except for me of course. Now let me mind that fine horse of yours..."

~ Marid of Shayzar.

BAZAAR TALES

THE GHOULS OF MA'ARRA

What? You mean this rusted blade? I did not think that anyone would be interested in that. I will give it to you, my friend, after I tell you how I came to have it. I would be happy to be rid of it.

...No, I'm fine. It is just that some of this insufferable dust has gotten into my eyes...

You may be surprised to know that there is an interesting story behind this blade. Not too long ago, a man stumbled into the bazaar, causing a great commotion. He collapsed near my stall, just a bit behind where you stand now. He was clothed in tattered rags and dust and blood. When he fell he had knocked the stump where his arm used to be and blood began weeping into his bandages. That knife you now hold, it was in his one hand before he crumpled to the ground.

He was raving about a madness in the mountains, and I pushed my way through the crowd to hear what he was saying. It was a tale of horror and darkness.

Some mothers will tell their ill-disciplined children a story about the ghouls of the desert to scare them into behaving. I had never thought the tales were true, but there was a time when there were men who ate the flesh of men in the lands ravaged by war. It was many years ago, when the crusaders were marching towards Jerusalem and were not used to the country they had come to occupy. Many fell from disease and hunger and so were savage in their dealings with those they conquered. During the siege of Ma'arra, some were driven to eating those they captured. When the army moved on, some soldiers stayed behind. It is said that their minds had fallen into a madness brought on by realising that their sins would never be redeemed before God - the sole purpose for them to take up the cross and join the crusade. As they continued to believe that they were destined for Hell, they became more beast than man. The desolate mountains were where they lived, preying on travelers and reveling in the pain and horror of their victims - for they had given their souls to Satan and his djinn.

It is believed by me that these tales were more than just scary stories to be told to the young - the man that stumbled into the market confirmed it!

Through his bloody beard he told of how his caravan thought to travel through the mountains, rather than take a longer path around them. Creatures that bore the shape of men, but were faster than any human he had ever encountered before, attacked them. They

had skin like leather and eyes of red and black, and their teeth were all pointed. These savages could have killed them all, but they wanted them alive.

The armless man's voice wavered into a shriek when he began telling of how they were brought to a village in the mountains and kept underground in rock-hewn dungeons. Some women were trapped in gibbets, the metal bars not even allowing them room to turn. They were to give birth to mewling infants that were taken from them to be locked away, fattened, then eaten while their flesh was still tender. Their captors viewed them with an uncaring eye, and if a guard took out his frustrations upon them, they were encouraged or ignored by their inbred brothers. Tongues were cut if prisoners spoke, and fed back to them, along with any bones and gristle from a slaughter. When it came time for the killing to begin, the captives were bound and hung upside down so that their throats could be cut, yet many were still alive when the dismemberment began.

The man was shaking by this point of his tale, and began thrashing upon the ground. He had suffered many wounds and they were obviously infected. The crowd did not hear of how he escaped before he died.

The worst thing he said was that these ghouls not only used his companions' meat for themselves, but that he saw them trade human flesh to merchants bound for the cities of the East and West.

So keep that knife. Whenever I see it, I think of the despair in that poor man's eyes. He had seen that Hell is right here, existing beside us, and that there is no need for devils while humans inhabit the lands.



"So, too, the creeds of man: This one prevails, until another comes and fails; And if it triumphs; Oh, the loathsome world, will always want the latest fairy tales."

~ Al Ma'arri

THE WAVERING FLAME

Ah! Yes, these are very fine wares you see before you.

Has this book caught your eye? You bear the look of a foreigner, so let me explain.

I found it in my travels through the deep desert and have often thought of keeping it for myself, such is its beauty. It is bound in a sort of hardened fabric, not leather like the many others in my collection. This inscription here, on the inside page, it says, "The chained mind knows not whether its body is free or slave". A curious saying, yes? The chapters cover a variety of subjects too. It is like a number of studies have been combined into this one book. It is a soup of knowledge! Look at these chapters... "How the shadows upon distant obelisks prove the spheracy of the world", "The grasshopper's tale and its implications on the artificial nations of mankind" and "The hunt for the creatures who's bones inhabit the deep mines of Baalbek."

And see this? There are some portraits of the authors. Do you think this one really had two heads? And this girl with the gills, Jullanar, could that be possible?

... I have asked many questions about this book. A merchant from the order of the White Quills gave me his opinion, so you should take it as truth.

He told me that before the soldiers of the west first came to these lands, there was a great poet - Al Ma'arri. He was a terrible blasphemer, but he managed to survive persecution because he was so popular among the people. He cared for all beasts and did not eat them or steal their produce. He was also blind and spoke against bringing children into such a world of horror. He claimed that all religions were created by men and that they are only useful to those seeking power over the masses. This White Quill seemed to respect him and went on about how Al-Ma'arri's thoughts were not burdened by his culture or times, and how powerful his poetry and philosophy was. All I will say is that a man like that now would spend more time running than doing his poetry, ha ha!

So, he died a long time ago, but in between his death and the fall of Ma'arra, there sprang a conclave of scholars, artisans and poets, who looked to Al Ma'arri as inspiration. They tried to keep their locations secret, but not their message that the inhabitants of this world cannot progress without the freedom to imagine and the freedom to question. They were rumoured to have many scribes who were busy harvesting the knowledge of the globe and placing it into books. They took in the rejected and despised, and created a vast underground network. They called themselves the Wavering Flame.

When the Crusaders came to Ma'arra, they ravaged their base and their members were scattered throughout the desert. They tried to cling to their books, but over time, many were lost.

But not this one! For a very reasonable fee, it is yours my friend.

THE CURSED KNIGHT AND THE SAGE

You are right to be curious about this. It not just any shard of metal on a necklace. This story is a curious one, you may need to sit down, as your legs look tired. Here, take this stool... only 3 dinars... Ha ha! Why the frown, of course I joke.

2 dinars.

... Ha ha ha! That was another joke that we use around these parts. It is fine to laugh, why are you so serious. Hey, that stool is mine and is not for free use!

Now listen, this is the tale of the one who calls himself... The Saviour of Souls, or The Knight of Judgement.

When the Crusaders took Jerusalem, the Jews took refuge in their great synagogue. It was set to fire and, as the poor souls inside began to burn and choke, two men were seen to escape. One of these men had a dark past, and the other was a man who had planned to build a powerful Golem to protect the city. His hopes were lost to the flames.

One of the crusaders, he who had hurled the first torch upon the synagogue, had met these men before and gave chase with his retinue. The story of this knight has passed into legend. It is said he was cursed with leprosy and left the western countries





to seek favour with God and find a cure. When he arrived in the holy lands he set about slaying all who would not bow to his cross, hoping each infidel sent to Hell would count toward the blessings he would receive from Heaven. He captured one man, the Sage of Durban. He was a healer and a philosopher and managed to do what no one had done before – bargain with the cursed knight for his life. He was given a number of days to brew a potion that would cure the leprosy.

The cursed knight had gathered a number of followers that flayed the skin from their own backs and shrieked and clamoured to burn any infidel. The Sage of Durban approached the knight's throne of skulls, through rows of his impaled victims and the curses of his followers, and knelt before him. He presented a cloth, damp and reeking of herbs. The Sage of Durban said that the knight was to wrap the cloth around the handle of his executioner's blade, and when he was to sweat, the medicine would enter his body and alleviate his curse.

The cursed knight did this throughout his day of beheadings and the next morning he believed he was cured. The Sage of Durban, thinking he would be freed, was brought to the knight. The knight thanked God for delivering the sage to him after his unflinching in his work, and planned to reward the sage. However, the knight had an adviser whose heart was hardened towards the Muslims. He convinced the knight that if the sage was the only one who could cure him, then he was also the only one who could kill him, as no man on the battlefield had been able to do so. This man, with the tongue of a serpent, convinced the knight. The knight drew his great sword. The Sage of Durban tried to reason with him, but failed. Knowing that he was going to be put to death the sage took a cord from his neck that contained a locket in the shape of a book. He told the knight that if he was beheaded, and his head placed on a silver tray, he would translate some of the secret language that the book was written in, and so the knight would be able to translate the rest. The knight immediately ordered a silver tray to be bought.

The Sage of Durban prayed as the knight dipped his blade into holy water. Before the blade fell, the sage said that his head must face the knight when on the tray, and the tiny book placed before his eyes. This he did. The Sage of Durban's head was placed on the tray and the knight opened the locket. A shining dust rose from its compartment and into the air. The Sage of Durban's head smiled and the knight began to ask the sage a question. His head gargled a response. The knight became angry, but the Sage of Durban had died before he could react. He was furious, but was coughing from all the dust.

The next day, his leprosy had returned.

And so, that was the knight's past before he reached Jerusalem and started the chase through the burning streets. His dark helmet and mail covered his rotting flesh, but his death from his cursed disease was close. He sought to slay as many non-believers as he could to increase his rewards before he met his judgment. During the chase between the men, the Jew's guard drew his blade and their swords clashed. Although the cursed knight's broad blade was made from heavy iron, the defender wielded a sword made of Damascus steel. It bit into the cursed knight's weapon and shards of it scattered through the dust and ash.

And one of those pieces is this one, hanging upon this necklace. What happened to the men you ask? Well, no one knows how the Jew and his guard ended up, but the cursed knight is still seen, more than one hundred years since that day. In the greatest battles, where soldiers waded through blood, he has been sighted. It is said he has given up on all sides. It is said that he believes that for those that he kills, the just will go to Heaven and join the ranks of the armies of God, while those who are evil will burn in Hell. He wanders with his flock and seeks only to slay for his Lord.



THE APOSTLES OF SOBEK

You truly have a discerning eye. The bearers of a torch such as this should not be spoken of, but you have gained my trust. Only because you ask of it will I tell you how I came across this; but! I implore you to keep your knowledge away from the ears of the pious – for your own safety.

Many years ago, I was leading a caravan from Damascus to Antioch. Not too far into our journey, a great sandstorm led us astray. It was dark when we came across some great and ancient ruins. A scholar travelling with us noted that they could have been built by the old Romans and we had probably reached the outskirts of Baalbek. We set up camp under the crumbling idols as the wind screeched through the night.

It was hard to sleep, with the skittish animals making noises and the dust managing to find its way into my nostrils, but I soon drifted into a light slumber. I awoke to find the very earth shaking! Then I was falling. I landed heavily, followed by sand that I had to dig myself out of in the moonless dark. I could hear screams from my companions and the sound of the frightened donkeys. I tried to edge my way towards them, but became lost. I could feel jagged rock beneath my hands and feet, and decided I must be in some underground cavern or tunnel. When the noise became more distant I began to panic. I could not even see my hand in front of my face and I felt I would be lost and left to starve in the choking depths of the earth. I was overcome and knelt to the ground, hoping I was going to wake up from this horrible dream.

The sounds of my companions suddenly became screams, and stopped with the abrupt clanging of metal upon stone. I tried to remain still and shrink into the darkness. Footsteps, crunching across the cavern floor, were approaching. A flickering of light appeared, distant, but approaching quickly. I could now make out that I was in a boulder strewn cavern, the walls reaching to a roof that disappeared into the shadows. I shuffled and hid among these boulders, hoping to conceal myself from whoever – or whatever – was approaching.

Then I saw them! Slumped figures in the rags of pilgrims, led by a stout priest of a religion I have never seen. As they passed I saw he carried a staff that rattled with the bones and teeth of giant creatures. In his other hand I saw a sack, overflowing with the possessions of my friends – may God punish him! I could not see his face, though. His head was covered in a pointed hood and a wrapping of rusted mail lay under it. The followers carried stumps of hacked flesh – man and animal alike. My heart throbbed in anger and sadness. I resolved to follow them, and avenge my friends.



The tunnels twisted, but I managed to stay close because they held the only source of light. As the time crawled on, I noticed the air becoming warm and damp. A hewn archway opened into a hall blazing with torches. I kept behind the arch, watching and waiting for my moment to strike. There were many worshippers in the cavern, and they parted like a wave before their priest. He strode to an altar, a creation in the form of a nightmare. A great cauldron bubbled at the top of a ziggurat, and this was where he was headed. Rising over the cauldron, towering over the ragged worshippers, were bones assembled into the head of a monstrous crocodile. My eyes were drawn to the cavern walls. As the light flickered across them, the shadows would be chased away to reveal what could only be the skeletons of terrible beasts. These creatures swam within the rock, frozen in the states of their deaths. It was wondrous, yet this vision shook my mind with its terrible reality.

A low chanting bubbled from the worshippers, as the flesh carried by the attackers of our caravan was thrown into the cauldron. Vapours escaped, rising up into the mouth and nostrils of their blasphemous idol.

I realised that I would not be able to avenge my friends at that time. With one of their torches, I fled through the tunnels, taking the route that seemed to lead upwards. But I was followed. As I crested the threshold to daylight I extinguished my torch in the sand, then crouched above the entry to those dark passages. A hooded figure emerged, but he could not bring himself to stand in the sunlight.

After many more adventures, I found my way back to the civilised places of the world. And this torch is a reminder of the darkness that waits among the savages and infidels far from here. I feel much better with sharing my tale with you. I feel you are honest and, for your patience, I will take one dinar off this torch if you choose to buy it now.

FURTHER READING

Nights of the Crusades on Pinterest is full of boards to provide atmosphere and ideas for your games.

INTERNET LINKS

The Crusades: Just from reading wikipedia's article and clicking on any links that seem interesting, you can gain an excellent insight into the crusades, the empires and peoples that were involved in them.

The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night: This is an internet resource for Richard Burton's translation.

The Memoirs of the Lord of Joinville: The fascinating chronicle of an actual knight during the 7th crusade. He relates the harshness of the conditions he faces and has a surprisingly open-mind in regards to good and bad of both crusaders and Saracens.

The Skeptics Annotated Bible: The Bible on the internet with a number of quick links to sections such as violence, injustice and cruelty and intolerance. Should a character decide to justify a good deed with scripture, there's a section for that too. There's a version for the Qu'ran as well.

The Sowers of Thunder: By Robert E. Howard, author of Conan, during the last years of the Crusades. It's brutal and dark, and reads a bit like Conan's adventures in Palestine. Howard also doesn't allow history to get in the way of a good story.

BOOKS

By Sword & Fire by Sean McGlynn: This book explains why the history of the Middle Ages is drenched in blood and the wails of the condemned. The author goes so far as to claim that the age of chivalry is a myth – and makes an excellent argument. The sections where the author reveals his dark, dry humour is another reason why this book is worth reading.

The Crusades Through Arab Eyes by Amin Maalouf: Follows the internal machinations and history of the Islamic empires that fought against the crusaders. It offers a fascinating insight that is often missed because the wealth of information about Europe's empires often overshadows it.

The Assassins by D.B. Bartlett: An in-depth look at the Nizari sect, who, for such a small group, struck a great fear into the hearts of Franj, Saracens and Mongols alike.

The Thousand and One Nights Vol 1 & 2 by Husain Haddawy: One of the best translations of the Arabian Nights around, by a fluent speaker of English and Arabic. It is much easier for the modern reader to digest than Richard Burton's tome.

H. P. Lovecraft Omnibus III - The Haunter Of The Dark: The uncaring terror of the beings that slumber in darkness and outside of reality, waiting to be called upon by insidious cults, is a theme that the mythos of H. P. Lovecraft shares with Nights of the Crusades. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Lovecraft was fascinated with the One Thousand and One Nights during his childhood.

The Book of Saladin by Tariq Ali: The second in a series of novels set in the lands of the Muslims during the Middle Ages. It is fascinating in its depiction of everyday life and the breaking of taboos. It covers a wide range of characters, from warlords and slaves, to noble-women and scribes.

Jingo by Terry Pratchett: A focus on the 'Middle East' of Discworld where the clash of cultures gives rise to crazy and humorous adventures.

Throne of the Crescent Moon by Saladin Ahmed: Using the mythology of the 1001 Nights, Ahmed creates a world of djinn, ghouls, heretics and pious warriors. This story focuses on Doctor Adoulla Makhslood, "the last real ghul hunter in the great city of Dhamsawaat".



ATMOSPHERE

The following albums could be a starting point for the soundtrack to your tale, as they are infused with Middle Eastern darkness and fantasy. However, as music is generally a question of taste, it is entirely up to you as to what creates the best ambience for your Tale.

There is also a **Nights of the Crusades playlist** on Spotify.

Saurian Exorcisms: Karl Sanders

Kingdom of Heaven: Soundtrack

Conan the Barbarian (1985 version): Soundtrack

Hilal: Arkan

Those Whom the Gods Detest: Nile

The Epigenesis: Melechesh

Mother Tree: Eulen

CONJURING A CHARACTER

Rolling laughter wafted over the walls after the disastrous battle, followed by the heads of Ridwan's soldiers. Firuz lent against his tower as silence gripped the city. Like the sound of dropped melons, the heads cracked over the stone paths. Firuz saw fear in the eyes peering from their windows, as well as something else. It was despair. Contrary to what they had been led to believe, the Franj were stronger than them.

Rain started to pour, and it continued for many days.

The situation worsened. In the Tower of the Two Sisters, Firuz received a man covered in filth and gasping for breath. Tears washed the grime from his cheeks as he slumped against two of Firuz's soldiers.

When the sagging figure saw Firuz he blurted, "They found one of us. Yusuf was roasted right in front of my eyes. I could not watch as they laughed and threatened all of those from our lands. Aziz told me later that a starving fanatic ate him. I will never return to that hell!" The man pointed a crooked finger towards Firuz, "For many months I have been with them, trying to please the Emir so I could return to my family. I am returning to them now, Captain, I do not care how I am punished."

Firuz's men looked to him for an order. He felt for the Christian informer. In peaceful times, only the zealots could not get along. However, in times of war, western Christians treated the Arab and Turkish Christians with wariness, as they believed their loyalty would be to their countrymen.

And if Firuz's enemy were Christian, then his neighbours who worshipped Isa would be eyed with suspicion – as they were thought to harbour favour for their co-religionists.

Firuz wondered how the Eastern Christians could live like that; never feeling that they belonged in the only place they called home.



THE BOOK OF NAMES

ENGLISH

Male	Female
John	Emma
William	Moude
Lambert	Rois
Ricard	Agneta
Henry	Isabele
Gilbert	Johanna
Rauf	Sabine
Edmund	Aweline
Matheu	Alice
Clement	Cecilia

GERMAN

Male	Female
Heinric	Gertrude
Wilhelm	Elisabeth
Dideric	Methilda
Rudeger	Hedewig
Gerhard	Heidi
Sifrid	Agnes
Theodore	Berta
Johann	Helga
Ludewig	Hildeburg
Albert	Judith

ANCIENT EUROPEAN

Male	Female
Drustan	Latharna
Meadoc	Morag
Oengus	Eamhhair
Cathal	Slainte
Eogan	Kalliope
Uallas	Xanthia
Yorgos	Eydis
Auslag	Gudrun
Sichar	Steina
Valdis	Rakel

FRENCH

Male	Female
Arnaud	Adeline
Eustache	Ava
Gaidon	Emersende
Dreu	Cherie
Gris	Gaude
Malgar	Jehanne
Guichard	Marie
Hughes	Loyse
Rabel	Martine
Bernier	Juliotte

BYZANTINE

Male	Female
Leo	Augustina
Dulcitius	Clementina
Martyrius	Leontia
Maximinus	Patricia
Regino	Vigilantia
Viator	Sidonia
Francio	Iustina
Innocentius	Helena
Ignatius	Aetheria
Cyril	Alexandria

... a Saracen, very well dressed, and a very honest fellow by his looks, came to the King, and offered him milk in jars and flowers of diverse kinds, on the part of the children of the Nasac and the Sultan of Egypt; and he made the offering in French. The King asked him where he had learnt French? and he replied, that he had once been a Christian. And the King said to him: "Get you hence; for I have no more to say to you."

~ The Memoirs of Jean de Joinville



JEWISH

Male	Female
Aaron	Esther
Shlomo	Saris
Sulam	Chana
Baruch	Beila
Ya'qub	Yeintil
Ezekiel	Rashida
Elijah	Sara
Isaac	Layla
Sahl	Dhahab
Yekuthiel	Faras

TURKISH

Male	Female
Togrul	Chichek
Alp	Khatun
Malik	Serakh
Kilij	Gulbahar
Kerbogha	Selime
Duqaq	Zuhal
Yaghi	Yenge
Otemish	Zeliha
Mawdud	Kutlu
Zahir	Saljan

NORTH AFRICAN

Male	Female
Hisham	Baraka
Al-Qasim	Idlal
Hakim	Rashida
Bilal	Aziza
Rashid	Mahjuna
Tariq	Mayya
Wadih	Zahra
Jalid	Gislan
Siraj	Kanza
Zurar	Nuzha

ARABIC

Male	Female
Muhammad	Aisha
Ahmad	Jamila
Ibrahim	Hafsah
Umar	Sajah
Ishaq	Rahil
Isa	Zubaydah
Ja'far	Marajil
Yusuf	Qabul
Sulayman	Safwah
Da'ud	Nuwwar

PERSIAN

Male	Female
Ali	Mahisti
Abdullah	Mihri
Nasir	Nihani
Hassan	Bija
Nizar	Jamali
Ismail	Khadija
Jalal	Zaynab
Imad	Bidili
Rostam	Khanzada
Shahrbaraz	Tajlu

MESOPOTAMIAN AND ANCIENT EGYPTIAN

Male	Female
Arnuwandas	Pudukhepa
Mutallu	Ahassunu
Sapalulme	Ishtar-rabi-at
Enlil-bani	Shiptu
Nur-shamash	Mkhait
Ur-gula	Odjit
Ishtup-sin	Nanu
Buhazum	Irisi
Akhom	Akana
Shushu	Sekhmet



"With us are the Bedouins, who would be quite sufficient singly to oppose our enemies; and the Turkomans, who, unaided, could destroy them; even our peasants, if we were to bid them, would fight bravely against the nations which should come to invade our country, and would despoil them of their riches and exterminate them. But, if you ask us for the boon of peace, we will be at peace with you."

~ Letter from Salih Al-Din to
Emperor Frederick Barbarossa; according to Roger de Hoveden

1: BACKGROUND

Describe your recent life before your tale begins. As a guideline, a new character is assumed to be in their late teens or early twenties.

QUESTIONS TO ROUND OUT YOUR CHARACTER

Why are you here? What drives you; knowledge, virtue, righteousness, foes, wealth?

How did you get here? Have you travelled far and endured hardship?

Where were you raised and where do you call home now? A child's early life affects them greatly, and you are no different. What are some of your memories of growing up?

What do you want to accomplish? Answering this question will give the Game Master a direction and character arc for you.

Then determine your ability scores.

Al begins his character. He wants to create a pilgrim-soldier, Aldric, that has travelled from England to the Holy Land for fortune and to seek penance for a dark secret. He was born to toil in the mud and recently his wife and child have died during a difficult childbirth. He blames his lack of piety for bringing God's wrath to his loved ones. Aldric has believed what he has heard from the pulpit – that only through joining the war against the infidels can he erase his sins and gain peace for his soul.



"At once the city was taken and occupied, and the enemy without vanquished; everywhere was blood and death, and the heaps of the slain impeded their flight."

*~ Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi
(The Itinerary of King Richard), Geoffrey de Vinsauf*

2: ALLEGIANCES

Each character is human and begins with a Faction, a Religion and an Attitude. These are replacements for Races, Deities and Alignments.

FACTION

Your Faction is an indicator of which side you are on in the war, as well as your general appearance, fluent languages and customs.

You start with 2 languages. You are fluent in your first language, and speak with an accent for any others. Your fluent language must be selected from your Faction list. Characters with high Intelligence scores can choose bonus languages from outside of their Faction list.

The Franj

'Franj' is the name given to the crusaders by the peoples of the Middle East. France was the country that sent the most warriors on the Crusades, which is where the name comes from. In fact, some Islamic scholars refer to Western Europe as 'Franjistan'. The term encompasses the cultures from the Kingdoms of England, Germany and France, as well as the Holy Roman Empire.

Languages: English, French, German, Latin.

Renowned figures: Richard the Lionheart, Phillip Augustus, Conrad of Montferrat.

Major religion: Roman Catholic

The Byzantines

The Byzantine Empire lay as a barrier between the two major forces of the Crusades. Although allied with the Franj for the majority of the period, the difference of religion between the Factions made it a fickle one.

Starting languages: Greek, Latin, Aramaic, Syriac.

Renowned figures: Niketas Choniates, John II Komnenos, Alexios V Doukas.

Major religion: Orthodox Christianity

The Saracens

Originally a term used by Western scholars to describe peoples living in the deserts near the Roman province of Arabia, it soon encompassed all Arabs. By the time of the Crusades 'Saracen' meant 'Muslim' in the majority of European chronicles.

Starting language: Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Aramaic, Armenian, Hebrew, Kurdish.

Renowned figures: Saladin (Salih Al-Din), Kilij Arlan I, Zengi, Baibars, Fakhr al-Mulk Radwan.

Major religion: Sunni Islam

RELIGION

This is your life philosophy that will sometimes transcend your place of birth, though it is more often something you will be born into. The following are the major religions that dominated the area, but there were many others during the time of the Crusades. If you want to play a Cathar, Jain, Copt, Sufi, Druid or any other minority religion that existed at the time, place it in brackets after the religion it is descended from.

Roman Catholicism

The religion of the crusaders and most of Europe. The Pope is its spiritual head and Priests are one type of Roman Catholic cleric. Roman Catholics of the time included Hugues de Payens and Peter Bartholomew.

Orthodox Christianity

The religion of the Byzantines and many Christians of the East. There is a leader for each national line. Priests are one type of Orthodox cleric. Orthodox Christians of the time included John Camaterus and Nikephoros Bryennios the Younger.

Sunni Islam

The main religion of the Islamic Empire in the Holy Lands. Mullahs are a common type of Sunni cleric. Sunni Muslims of the time included Ibn al-Nafis and Usama ibn Munqidh.

Shi'ite Islam

The numerous minority of the Islamic Empire, based in Egypt until Salih Al-Din conquered it. Imams are one type of Shi'ite cleric. Shi'ite Muslims of the time included Hassan-i Sabbah and Nasir al-Din al-Tus.

Judaism

Jews were split among the lands of Europe, Byzantium and Islam. Like every other religion, there were also internal schisms, most notably between the Rabbinites and the Karaites. Rabbis are a common type of cleric in Judaism. Jews of the time included Da'ud Abu al-Fadl and Maimonides. A Jewish character has the option of selecting Hebrew in addition to her starting languages.

Paganism

This is a blanket term that covers a wide variety of religions and belief systems, yet the majority of cultures in the Holy Land will lump them together as Pagans (or idolators, infidels, witches or worse). Pagan numbers are small in the Holy Land, but could include some Mongols, Zoroastrians, Hindus and Buddhists. A Pagan can add an ancient language of the player's choosing (such as Gaelic or Sumerian) in addition to her starting languages.

ATTITUDE

This represents your outlook on the nature of good and evil, and what laws you believe would make the world better or worse. In Nights of the Crusades, evil is in the eye of the beholder.

Melee hits have a +1 against an opponent viewed as Evil; Heals checks have a +1 for targets viewed as Good, -1 for targets viewed as Evil; and Diplomacy checks have a +1 for Lawful or Neutral targets..

Attitudes are guidelines for roleplaying, and represent the extremes of the viewpoint they express. They are internal beliefs, rather than external actions towards anything. Eg; although a fanatic could think the followers of another religion were extremely stupid and ill-informed, she may have a comrade of another religion that she tolerates (though thinks this misguided comrade is the exception to the rest of his blasphemous co-religionists).

Fanatic

"I follow God's law, not those of men."

Law of revelation: Own religion G, other religions E, own faction N, other factions C.

Belligerent

"The foes' savagery has no bounds. Raze their dens and burn them. Burn them all."

Law of authority: Own faction G, other factions E, own religion L, other religions N.

Skeptic

"Not revelation, nor authority, nor tradition tells me the truth – but observation and evidence."

Law of reason: Skeptics N, fanatics CE, belligerents LE, egotists NE, martyrs and outcasts CN.

Egotist

"I simply want what is mine."

Laws for others: Self CG, everyone else is LN unless they are in the Egotist's way – then they are NE.

Martyr

"The universe is balance; so let my pain tip the scales to the benefit of others – I can handle it."

Law of sacrifice: Self CG, own religion G, other religions N, factions N.

Outcast

"Mans' law has no need for me. But I prefer the wild, I fit in better. Let them have their cities and tyrants."

Law of nature: Outcasts CN, non Outcasts LE.

Example: A Frankish, Catholic belligerent meets a Saracen, Shi'ite skeptic. The belligerent views himself as LG and the skeptic as NE, whereas the skeptic views the belligerent as LE.

3: CLASS

The following classes from the The Pathfinder Role-playing Game PRD can be used in the Nights of the Crusades setting.

Alchemist: Bubbling concoctions and a delight in explosions are all it takes for a scholar to journey onto the path of the alchemist.

Barbarian: Vast stretches of wilderness lie in the open desert, the cold lands of the north and the harsh steppe. Barbarians are drawn from these places to seek new prey or escape from starvation, warfare and famine.

Cavalier: Knights from Europe and the noble warriors of Saracen military houses fall under this class. Noble orders were made up of men with many different views of chivalry and honor, so the bonuses from cavalier orders can be shared between many knightly organisations. Cavalier orders in Nights of the Crusades include The Knights Templar, The Knights Hospitaller and The Teutonic Knights – along with those knights from royal houses and fortresses such as The Knights of the Lord of Joinville, The Cavaliers of Antioch and The Munqidite Cavaliers.

Fighter: Sellswords, soldiers and guards fill the armies and cities across the holy land. As many fight for plunder and adventure as they do for a less-worldly cause.

Rogue: An army drawn from those who hope to have their sins forgiven will be as full of rogues as it is of soldiers. And any city, whether from east or west, will call to those who see opportunity in chaos.

Prestige Classes

These prestige classes are useful for characters seeking the paths of Nizari assassins and infiltrators of royal courts, or explorers and war-leaders: Assassin, Battle Herald, Duelist, Master Spy, Pathfinder Chronicler and Stalwart Defender.

CARAVAN MERCHANT



"Better commerce than war; better to trade than pillage"

~ Shirkuh Al-Din; Damascene caravan merchant

The caravan merchant gains wealth through (her version of) honest means. A great explorer at heart, some caravan merchants are only interested in trading to pay for their next adventure through dangerous paths and exotic lands.

The caravan merchant aids her allies through the strange items she has found on her travels. Along with her caravan, her merchant wares grow more powerful as she explores the world.

Hit Die: d6.

Class Skills

The caravan merchant's class skills are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (all) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Stealth (Dex), Survival (Wis) and Use Magic Device (Cha).

Skill Ranks per Level: 6 + Int modifier.

How the Brothers Should Go About: In order to carry out their holy duties and gain the glory of the Lord's joy and to escape the fear of hell fire, it is fitting that all brothers strictly obey their Master. For nothing is dearer to Jesus Christ than obedience.

~ The Rules of the Knights of the Temple

Table: Caravan merchant

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Special	Wares per day						
						0	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	+0	+2	+0	+2	Caravan (chest)	3	1	-	-	-	-	-
2	+1	+3	+0	+3		3	2	-	-	-	-	-
3	+2	+3	+1	+3	Caravan (donkey)	4	3	-	-	-	-	-
4	+3	+4	+1	+4	Guard	4	3	1	-	-	-	-
5	+3	+4	+1	+4	Hawker	4	4	2	-	-	-	-
6	+4	+5	+2	+5	Caravan (pony)	4	4	3	-	-	-	-
7	+5	+5	+2	+5		5	4	3	1	-	-	-
8	+6/+1	+6	+2	+6		5	4	4	2	-	-	-
9	+6/+1	+6	+3	+6	Caravan (light horse)	5	5	4	3	-	-	-
10	+7/+2	+7	+3	+7	Improved aid	5	5	4	3	1	-	-
11	+8/+3	+7	+3	+7	Loyal servant	5	5	4	4	2	-	-
12	+9/+4	+9	+4	+9	Caravan (heavy horse)	5	5	5	4	3	-	-
13	+9/+4	+9	+4	+9		5	5	5	4	3	1	-
14	+10/+5	+9	+4	+9		5	5	5	4	4	2	-
15	+11/+6/+1	+9	+5	+9	Caravan (camel)	5	5	5	5	4	3	-
16	+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+10	Caravan master	5	5	5	5	4	3	1
17	+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+10		5	5	5	5	4	3	2
18	+13/+8/+3	+11	+6	+11	Trusted leader	5	5	5	5	5	4	3
19	+14/+9/+4	+11	+6	+11		5	5	5	5	5	5	4
20	+15/+10/+5	+12	+6	+12	Caravan (elephant)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

Class Features

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A caravan merchant is proficient with all simple weapons and with light armor.

Wares: A caravan merchant has a number of items available in her chest, accumulated from her adventures. Merchant wares need to be drawn from the chest and activated, and the wares available can be found in the list below. A caravan merchant must choose and prepare which wares can be easily accessed from her chest before the day begins.

Merchant wares are all found items and damaged goods, so cannot be sold. They have also been jostled around the caravan merchant's chest for so long that they are easily ruined – so once drawn, a piece of merchant ware may be carried by any character until the caravan merchant next packs her chest or until it is activated and destroyed.

A caravan merchant packs her chest to access a certain number of wares of each ware level per day. Her base daily ware allotment is given on Table: Caravan merchant. In addition, she receives bonus wares per day if she has a high Cha score, as if they were spells.

Caravan merchants must spend time packing their chests. Each caravan merchant must choose a time when she will spend 1 hour each day in a quiet place to pack her daily allotment of wares. A caravan merchant must choose which wares from the merchant wares list to prepare during her daily chest arrangement and may activate any prepared ware throughout the day.

Drawing a ware out of the chest is treated as casting an arcane spell and its effect is magical.

Caravan: At 1st level a caravan merchant gains a chest to carry her wares. Until she reaches 3rd level, she can carry her own chest without too much trouble. However as she collects more exotic items throughout her adventures, she will need bigger chests and animals to transport them. She gains a donkey at 3rd level, a pony at 6th level, a light horse at 9th level, a heavy horse at 12th level, a camel at 15th level and an elephant at 20th level to carry her chest and souk tent.

Guard: The merchant gains a guard at 4th level. This is a new warrior-class PC, controlled by the caravan merchant's player. The guard will not gain experience points, but his level will always be three quarters of the caravan merchant's. The guard begins with the starting equipment of a fighter. Other equipment must be sourced and paid for by the caravan merchant. A dead guard can be replaced the next time the caravan merchant uses her Hawker ability.

Hawker: At 5th level, whenever a caravan merchant visits a settlement with a positive modifier (described under *Table: Settlement Statistics*), she may set up her souk tent and try to trade with the locals. This uses up a day of her time. She gains an amount of gold pieces equal to D20 multiplied by the sum of the character's Level and Cha bonus.

Improved Aid (Ex): The exotic gear carried by a caravan merchant can often lend a crucial helping hand to her allies. Starting at 10th level, a caravan merchant using the aid another action grants a +4 bonus, rather than the normal +2.

Loyal Servant (Ex): When the caravan merchant reaches 11th level, this power is granted to her guard. Once a round as an immediate action, when a melee or ranged weapon would successfully strike the caravan merchant, her guard can choose to have the weapon strike him instead. The attack automatically hits the guard, regardless his AC or any miss chance in effect, and he suffers the normal consequences of the attack.

Caravan Master (Ex): At 16th level the caravan merchant gains a bond with her animals that allows her to sense any unease they feel. She also becomes used to the signs of ambush. In wilderness areas, if within 5 meters of one of her caravan animals, the caravan merchant receives a +4 bonus to Perception.

Trusted Leader (Ex): At 18th level the caravan merchant gains a +4 bonus when using the Handle Animal skill to "Push" an animal in her caravan.

Merchant Wares

Caravan merchants gain access to the following wares which, when activated, work like the italicized spells described in the core *spell list*. All wares have an included material component (described in the entry) ready to be pulled from the caravan merchant's chest. The item is activated by a simple maneuver such as tapping it, reading it, throwing it or flicking a switch.

0-Level Merchant Wares: Gourd of *Create Water*, Dust of *Detect Poison*, Astrolabe of *Guidance*, Needle of *Know Direction*, Light Paste, Purify Food and Drink powder, Atenhotep's Book of *Read Magic*, Draught of *Resistance*, Summon Instrument (drawn from chest).

1-Level Merchant Wares: Box of *Alarm*, Calm Animal treats, Jewel of *Charm Animal*, Crazy Hakim's Joke Book of *Charm*, Clay Tablet of *Comprehend Languages*, Costume of *Disguise Self*, Sheet of *Endure Elements*, Plant Pots of *Entangle*, Parachute of *Feather Fall*, Jar of *Goodberry*, Oil of *Grease*, Al-Jahiz's Guide On How To *Hide From Animals*, Book of *Identify*, Vapor of *Jump*, Vapor of *Longstrider*, Pouch of *Magic Stone*, Oil of *Magic Weapon*, Hookah of *Obscuring Mist*, Sticks of *Produce Flame*, Wrapping of *Shillelagh*.

2-Level Merchant Wares: Carrier Pigeon Animal Messenger, Balm of *Bark Skin*, Vapor of *Bear's Endurance*, Vapor of *Bull's Strength*, Shimmering Ribbons of *Blur*, Vapor of *Cat's Grace*, Vapor of *Eagle's Splendor*, Seal of *Fire Trap*, Sword of *Flame Blade*, Ball of *Flaming Sphere*, Hookah of *Fog Cloud*, Vapor of *Fox's Cunning*, Pouch of *Glitterdust*, Medallion of *Heroism*, Net of *Hold Person*, Nizar's Veil of *Invisibility*, Vapor of *Owl's Wisdom*, Rocket of *Pyrotechnics*, Balm of *Resist Energy*, Bomb of *Summon Swarm*, Clay Tablet of *Tongues*, Costume of *Tree Shape*, Oil of *Warp Wood*.

3-Level Merchant Wares: Orb of *Charm Monster*, Corpse Limb of *Contagion*, Lens of *Darkvision*, Vapor of *Diminish Plants*, Al-Jahiz's Book of *Dominate Animal*, Ibn Firnas's Folding Catapult of *Fly*, Pamphlet of *Glibness*, Charm of *Good Hope*, Brew of *Haste*, Oil of *Magic Weapon (Greater)*, Vapor of *Plant Growth*, Balm of *Protection from Energy*, Gourd of *Quench*, Mask of *See Invisibility*, Oil of *Slow*, Al-Jahiz's Book of *Speak With Animals*, Ibn Firnas's Folding Tiny Hut, Air Cask of *Water Breathing*.

4-Level Merchant Wares: Vapor of *Blight*, Oil of *Freedom of Movement*, Blessed Oil of the Holy Sword, Book of *Legend Lore*, Censor of *Repel Vermin*, Oil of *Rusting Grasp*, Ibn Firnas's Folding Secure Shelter, Horn of *Shout*, Curtain of *Zone of Silence*.

5-Level Merchant Wares: Medallion of *Heroism (Greater)*, Bomb of *Insect Plague*, Hookah of *Mind Fog*, Sculpture of *Nightmare*, Balm of *Stoneskin*, Oil of *Transmute Rock to Mud*, Seed of *Wall of Thorns*.

6-Level Merchant Wares: Lens of *Analyze Dweomer*, Bottle of *Bear's Endurance (Mass)*, Bottle of *Bull's Strength (Mass)*, Bottle of *Cat's Grace (Mass)*, Worn Ruby of *Charm Monster (Mass)*, Bottle of *Eagle's Splendor (Mass)*, Map of *Find the Path*, Bottle of *Fox's Cunning (Mass)*, Pot of *Heroes' Feast*, Oil of *Ironwood*, Bottle of *Owl's Wisdom (Mass)*, Horn of *Shout (Greater)*, Costume Box of *Veil*, Gerber's Alchemical Clay of *Wall of Stone*.

Starting character wealth: 6d6 x 10gp

"Robin Hood? The knave who would replace one king with another? The Forty Four are of a different cloth."

~ Henry of the 44

ORATOR



"It is absurd to hold that a man ought to be ashamed of being unable to defend himself with his limbs but not of being unable to defend himself with speech, when the use of speech is more distinctive of a human being than the use of his limbs."

~ Aristotle

The world echoes with the voices of would-be leaders, exhorting their followers to take on a righteous path. The causes are as numerous as the shepherds, but great deeds can be only be enacted with a great flock.

The orator's followers fill any weakness his allies have left open, while he uses his stirring voice to inspire friends or overcome adversaries to his cause.

Hit Die: d8

Class Skills

The orator's class skills are Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (Geography, History, Local, Nobility, Religion) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis) and Sense Motive (Wis).

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the orator.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: An orator is proficient with all simple weapons. Orators are also proficient with light and medium armor.

Intense Speech: An orator can use the Perform skill to 'place a spell' on those around him, including himself if desired. He can use this ability for a number of rounds per day equal to 4 + his Charisma modifier. At each level after 1st an orator can use intense speech for 2 additional rounds per day. Each round, the orator can produce any one of the types of intense speech that he has mastered, as indicated by his level.

Starting an intense speech is a standard action, but it can be maintained each round as a free action. Changing an intense speech from one effect to another requires the orator to stop the previous performance and start a new one as a standard action. An intense speech cannot be disrupted, but it ends immediately if the orator is killed, paralyzed, stunned, knocked unconscious, or otherwise prevented from taking a free action to maintain it each round. An orator cannot have more than one intense speech in effect at one time.

At 7th level, an orator can start an intense speech as a move action instead of a standard action. At 13th level, an orator can start an intense speech as a swift action.

Each intense speech has audible components. The targets must be able to hear the orator for the performance to have any effect, and such performances are language dependent. A deaf orator has a 20% chance to fail when attempting to use an intense speech. If he fails this check, the attempt still counts against his daily limit. Deaf creatures are immune to intense speeches.

Lend Me Your Ears (Su): At 1st level, an orator learns to counter magic effects that depend on sound (but not spells that have verbal components). For each round of this intense speech he makes a Perform skill check. Any creature within 30 feet of the orator (including the orator himself) that is affected by a sonic or language-dependent magical attack may use the orator's Perform check result in place of its saving throw if, after the saving throw is rolled, the Perform check result proves to be higher. If a creature within range of this intense speech is already under the effect of a noninstantaneous sonic or language-dependent magical attack, it gains another saving throw against the effect each round it hears the intense speech, but it must use the orator's Perform skill check result for the save. Lend Me Your Ears does not work on effects that don't allow saves.

Table: Orator

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Intense speech, lend me your ears, fascinate, inspire courage, vocal powers I
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Followers
3	+2	+1	+1	+3	Inspire competence
4	+3	+1	+1	+4	From lambs to lions
5	+3	+1	+1	+4	Vocal powers II
6	+4	+2	+2	+5	Suggestion
7	+5	+2	+2	+5	Vocal powers III
8	+6/+1	+2	+2	+6	Sermon of doom
9	+6/+1	+3	+3	+6	Inspire greatness
10	+7/+2	+3	+3	+7	Rabble rouser
11	+8/+3	+3	+3	+7	Vocal powers IV
12	+9/+4	+4	+4	+9	Rousing tale
13	+9/+4	+4	+4	+9	Vocal powers V
14	+10/+5	+4	+4	+9	Frightening lecture
15	+11/+6/+1	+5	+5	+9	Inspire heroics
16	+12/+7/+2	+5	+5	+10	Vocal powers VI
17	+12/+7/+2	+5	+5	+10	
18	+13/+8/+3	+6	+6	+11	Mass suggestion
19	+14/+9/+4	+6	+6	+11	
20	+15/+10/+5	+6	+6	+12	Deadly legend

Fascinate (Su): At 1st level, an orator can use his performance to cause one or more creatures to focus their attention on him. Each creature targeted must be within 90 feet, be able to hear the orator, and be capable of paying attention to him. The orator must also be able to see the creatures affected. The distraction of a nearby combat or other dangers prevents this ability from working. For every three levels the orator has attained beyond 1st, he can target one additional creature with this ability.

Each creature within range receives a Will save (DC 10 + half the orator's level + the orator's Cha modifier) to negate the effect. If a creature's saving throw succeeds, the orator cannot attempt to draw that creature's attention again for 24 hours. If its saving throw fails, the creature sits quietly and observes the speech for as long as the orator continues to maintain it. While under the spell, a target takes a -4 penalty on all skill checks made as reactions, such as Perception checks. Any potential threat to the target allows the target to make a new saving throw against the effect. Any obvious threat, such as someone drawing a weapon, casting a spell, or aiming a weapon at the target, automatically breaks the effect.

Fascinate is an enchantment (compulsion), mind-affecting ability.

Inspire Courage (Su): An orator of 1st-level or higher can use his intense speech to inspire courage in his allies (including himself), bolstering them against fear and improving their combat abilities. To be affected, an ally must be able to perceive the orator's performance. An affected ally receives a +1 morale bonus on saving throws against charm and fear effects and a +1 competence bonus on attack and weapon damage rolls. At 5th level, and every six orator levels thereafter, this bonus increases by +1, to a maximum of +4 at 17th level. Inspire courage is a mind-affecting ability.

Vocal Power I (Sp): An orator of 1st-level or higher can use a performance to *Cause Fear* or *Charm Person* (as per the spells). The spell is broken if the performance stops or the target is beyond reach of the intense speech. He may use this ability an amount of times each day equal to half of his level. Using a vocal power does not count against an orator's daily use of intense speeches.

"Have no fear, for it is not the custom of kings to kill kings."

~ Sultan Salih Al-Din to King Guy de Lusignan

Inspire Competence (Su): An orator of 3rd level or higher can use an intense speech to help an ally succeed at a task. That ally must be within 30 feet and be able to hear the orator. The ally gets a +2 competence bonus on skill checks with a particular skill as long as she continues to hear the orator's performance. This bonus increases by +1 for every four levels the orator has attained beyond 3rd (+3 at 7th, +4 at 11th, +5 at 15th, and +6 at 19th). Certain uses of this ability are infeasible, such as *Stealth*, and may be disallowed at the GM's discretion. An orator can't inspire competence in himself.

From Lambs to Lions (Sp): An orator of 4rd level or higher can use his performance to energize his followers. To be affected, his followers must be able to hear the orator perform and be within 30 feet. The orator may choose to grant them the effects of *Bear's Endurance*, *Bull's Strength* or *Cat's Grace* (as per the spells).

Vocal Power II (Sp): An orator of 5th-level or higher can use a performance to *Calm Emotions*, *Daze Monster*, *Enthrall*, *Hold Person*, *Rage* or *Scare* (as per the spells). The spell is broken if the performance stops or the target is beyond reach of the intense speech. He may use this ability an amount of times each day equal to half of his level. Using a vocal power does not count against an orator's daily use of intense speeches.

Suggestion (Sp): An orator of 6th level or higher can use his performance to make a *Suggestion* (as per the spell) to a creature he has fascinated (see above). Using this ability does not disrupt the fascinate effect, but it does require a standard action to activate (in addition to the free action to continue the fascinate effect). An orator can use this ability more than once against an individual creature during an individual performance.

Making a suggestion does not count against an orator's daily use of intense speeches. A Will saving throw (DC 10 + half the orator's level + the orator's Cha modifier) negates the effect. This ability affects only a single creature. Suggestion is an enchantment (compulsion), mind affecting, language-dependent ability.

Vocal Powers III (Sp): An orator of 7th-level or higher can use a performance to *Charm Monster*, *Crushing Despair*, *Fear*, *Geas (Lesser)*, *Glibness*, *Good Hope* or *Haste* (as per the spells). The spell is broken if the performance stops or the target is beyond reach of the intense speech. He may use this ability an amount of times each day equal to half of his level. Using a vocal power does not count against an orator's daily use of intense speeches.

Sermon of Doom (Su): An orator of 8th level or higher can use an intense speech to foster a sense of growing dread in his enemies, causing them to become shaken. To be affected, an enemy must be within 30 feet and able to see and hear the orator's performance. The effect persists for as long as the enemy is within 30 feet and the orator continues his performance. This performance cannot cause a creature to become frightened or panicked, even if the targets are already shaken from another effect. Sermon of doom is a mind-affecting fear effect.

Inspire Greatness (Su): An orator of 9th level or higher can use an intense speech to inspire greatness in himself or a single willing ally within 30 feet, granting extra fighting capability. For every three levels the orator attains beyond 9th, he can target an additional ally while using this performance (up to a maximum of four targets at 18th level). To inspire greatness, all of the targets must be able to see and hear the orator. A creature inspired with greatness gains 2 bonus Hit Dice (d10s), the commensurate number of temporary hit points (apply the target's Constitution modifier, if any, to these bonus Hit Dice), a +2 competence bonus on attack rolls, and a +1 competence bonus on Fortitude saves. The bonus Hit Dice count as regular Hit Dice for determining the effect of spells that are Hit Dice dependent. Inspire greatness is a mind-affecting ability.

Vocal Powers IV (Sp): An orator of 11th-level or higher can use a performance to *Break Enchantment*, *Dominant Person*, *Hold Monster*, *Modify Memory* or *Shout* (as per the spells). The spell is broken if the performance stops or the target is beyond reach of the intense speech. He may use this ability an amount of times each day equal to a quarter of his level. Using a vocal power does not count against an orator's daily use of intense speeches.

Rousing Tale (Su): An orator of 12th level or higher can use his performance to create an effect to remove fatigued, sickened, and shaken conditions from all those affected. Using this ability requires 4 rounds of continuous performance, and the targets must be able to see and hear the orator throughout the performance. Rousing tale affects all targets that remain within 30 feet throughout the performance.

Vocal Powers V (Sp): An orator of 13th-level or higher can use a performance for *Heroism (Greater)*, *Song of Discord* or *Suggestion (Mass)* (as per the spells). The spell is broken if the performance stops or the target is beyond reach of the intense speech. He may use this ability an amount of times each day equal to a quarter of his level. Using a vocal power does not count against an orator's daily use of intense speeches.

Frightening Lecture (Sp): An orator of 14th level or higher can use his performance to cause fear in his enemies. To be affected, an enemy must be able to hear the orator perform and be within 30 feet. Each enemy within range receives a Will save (DC 10 + half the orator's level + the orator's Cha modifier) to negate the effect. If the save succeeds, the creature is immune to this ability for 24 hours. If the save fails, the target becomes frightened and flees for as long as the target can hear the orator's performance.

Inspire Heroics (Su): An orator of 15th level or higher can inspire tremendous heroism in himself or a single ally within 30 feet. For every three orator levels the character attains beyond 15th, he can inspire heroics in an additional creature. To inspire heroics, all of the targets must be able to see and hear the orator. Inspired creatures gain a +4 morale bonus on saving throws and a +4 dodge bonus to AC. This effect lasts for as long as the targets are able to witness the performance. Inspire heroics is a mind-affecting ability.

Vocal Powers VI (Sp): An orator of 16th-level or higher can use a performance to *Charm Monster (Mass)*, *Geas/Quest* or *Shout (Greater)* (as per the spells). The spell is broken if the performance stops or the target is beyond reach of the intense speech. He may use this ability an amount of times each day equal to a quarter of his level. Using a vocal power does not count against an orator's daily use of intense speeches.

Mass Suggestion (Sp): This ability functions just like suggestion, but allows a orator of 18th level or higher to make a suggestion simultaneously to any number of creatures that he has already fascinated. Mass suggestion is an enchantment (compulsion), mind-affecting, language-dependent ability.

Deadly Legend (Su): An orator of 20th level or higher can tell a tale to cause one enemy to die from joy or sorrow. To be affected, the target must be able to see and hear the orator perform for 1 full round and be within 30 feet. The target receives a Will save (DC 10 + half the orator's level + the orator's Cha modifier) to negate the effect. If a creature's saving throw succeeds, the target is staggered for 1d4 rounds, and the orator cannot use deadly legend on that creature again for 24 hours. If a creature's saving throw fails, it dies. Deadly legend is a mind-affecting death effect.

Followers: At 2nd level, the orator gains an amount of followers equal to his Charisma bonus. The sum of the class levels of his followers cannot exceed half of the Orator's current level – so followers may gain levels when the Orator reaches a new level. The orator may choose any class available in the Nights of the Crusades setting for a follower, except for the orator class. An orator may change the make-up of his followers after spending a day in a city, town or village attracting new members to his cause. A follower joins the orator's cause with the starting equipment of the class. Any additional equipment must be sourced and provided by the orator. The followers are under the control of the orator's player, though if his Charisma bonus drops, it will be his choice as to which followers become NPCs until it rises again.

Rabble Rouser: An orator of 10th level or higher can use his performance to summon the violent and easily-led from amongst the rabble. When delivering an intense speech to a crowd in a city, town or village, D10 commoners will join his cause. The fanatical mob is armed with clubs and insulting language, and is happy to fight for their new leader. The level of a mob-member is half the orator's. After an hour following the orator's whims, the mob will grow bored or find another savior, and disperse.

Starting character wealth: 3d6 x 10gp

For those who were poor there, here God makes rich. Therefore why should one who has found the East so favorable return to the West? God does not wish those to suffer want who, carrying their crosses, have vowed to follow Him.

For we who were Occidentals now have been made Orientals. He who was a Roman or a Frank is now an inhabitant of Palestine. One who was a citizen of Chartres now has been made a citizen of Tyre or of Antioch. Different languages, now made common, become known to both races, and faith unites those whose forefathers were strangers. As it is written, "The lion and the ox shall eat straw together."

~ Fulcher of Chartres

SCHOLAR



"Had they been left alone with reason they would not have accepted the lies. But whips were raised to strike them and traditions brought to them, and they were ordered to say, 'We have been told the truth'. If they refused, the sword was drenched with their blood. They were terrified by blades of calamities, and tempted by great bowls of food, offered from disdainful hands."

~ Al Ma'arri

Seekers of knowledge and explorers of the unknown are rare in a world where a deft sword-arm or a lucky birth can gain you power and wealth. The road to understanding is hard and fraught with answers that defy the beliefs of peasants and nobles alike. However, there are some with a drive to uncover the truth of the world's esoteric laws, and the mysteries revealed are powerful indeed.

A scholar can be a great aid in any group as an inventor, a master of knowledge or as a physician.

Hit Die: d6

Class Skills

The scholar's class skills are Appraise (Int), Craft (Int), Knowledge (all) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Profession (Wis), and Spellcraft (Int).

Skill Ranks per Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are the class features of the scholar.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Scholars are proficient with the club, dagger, heavy crossbow, light crossbow, and quarterstaff, but not with any type of armor or shield.

Spells: A scholar has access to a level of science and knowledge far beyond that of the common-folk. She can access her bag of mechanical devices, her well-bookmarked tome, or her pouches of mysterious herbs to create (for rules purposes) spells. A scholar casts arcane spells drawn from the scholar spell list below. She can cast any spell she knows without preparing it ahead of time.

To learn, prepare, or cast a spell, the scholar must have an Intelligence score equal to at least 10 + the spell level. The Difficulty Class for a saving throw against a scholar's spell is 10 + the spell level + the scholar's Intelligence modifier.

A scholar can cast only a certain number of spells of each spell level per day. Her base daily spell allotment is given on Table: Scholar. In addition, she receives bonus spells per day if she has a high Intelligence score (see [Table: Ability Modifiers and Bonus Spells](#)).

At each new scholar level, she gains one or more new spells, as indicated on Table: Scholar Spells Known. (Unlike spells per day, the number of spells a scholar knows is not affected by her Intelligence score; the numbers on Table: Scholar Spells Known are fixed.) These new spells are chosen from the scholar spell list.

Upon reaching 4th level, and at every even-numbered scholar level after that (6th, 8th, and so on), a scholar can choose to learn a new spell in place of one she already knows. In effect, the scholar replaces the old spell (ie; device/research/herb) for a newer one and loses track of it. The new spell's level must be the same as that of the spell being exchanged. A scholar may swap only a single spell at any given level, and must choose whether or not to swap the spell at the same time that she gains new spells known for the level.

A scholar need not prepare her spells in advance. She can cast any spell she knows at any time, assuming she has not yet used up her spells per day for that spell level.



Table: Scholar spells known

Level	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	5	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	5	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	6	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	6	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	7	4	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	7	5	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	8	5	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
9	8	5	4	3	2	-	-	-	-	-
10	9	5	4	3	2	1	-	-	-	-
11	9	5	5	4	3	2	-	-	-	-
12	9	5	5	4	3	2	1	-	-	-
13	9	5	5	4	4	3	2	-	-	-
14	9	5	5	4	4	3	2	1	-	-
15	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	2	-	-
16	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	2	1	-
17	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	2	-
18	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	2	1
19	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	2
20	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	3

Mastery: A scholar chooses how to master the arts of Invention, Lore, or Medicine as she progresses. If she already has a level of one type of mastery, and she chooses it again, she gains the next level of it.

For example: Khadija's class level is about to reach 5 and she already has 2 mastery levels in medicine. So when she gets to level 5 she can either gain the benefits of medicine mastery level 3, or mastery level 1 in invention or lore.

Mastery Level I: The scholar gains the ability for her chosen mastery described below.

Invention – Automaton (Ex): The inventor creates a strange device, called an automaton, to have by her side. Automatons are treated as mechanical, intelligent constructs under the control of the inventor.

If the automaton is slain, it may be rebuilt after the scholar spends a day working on it in a city, town or other place that would hold a forge and other mechanical equipment. The automaton does not heal naturally. It may be repaired through spells that restore hit points to objects (such as Mending) or manually repairing the automaton through a Craft (Construct) check at DC 15. Manual repairs use a standard action and draw an attack of opportunity. Hit points restored to the automaton after manual repairs are the difference between the score of a successful Craft (Construct) check and the DC of 15.

The automaton's Hit Dice, saving throws, skills, feats, and abilities are tied to the scholar's inventor mastery level and increase as the scholar gains levels. In addition, an automaton receives a pool of enhancement points, based on the scholar's class level, that can be used to give the automaton different abilities and powers. Whenever the scholar gains a level, she must decide how these points are spent, and they are set until she gains another level of scholar.

The automaton's exact physical appearance is up to the inventor, but it always appears as some sort of mechanical, multi-legged arthropod, similar to the size and shape of a giant spider. An active automaton's whirring gears and cogs create a lot of noise, so a party containing an active automaton within 20ft of them have their stealth checks modified by -4.

An automaton can be deactivated, becoming a silent pile of metal, by a switch located on the automaton at a point of the inventor's choosing. To move a deactivated automaton, it must be carried. A medium sized automaton weighs 500 lbs, a large automaton weighs 1000 lbs and a huge automaton weighs 2000 lbs.

Lore – Studious (Ex): The scholar adds half her class level (minimum 1) to all Knowledge skill checks and may make all Knowledge skill checks untrained. In addition, the following skills become class skills for her: Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Sense Motive (Wis), Survival (Wis) and Use Magic Device (Cha).

Medicine – Physician level I (Sp): The scholar gains the ability to Cure/Inflict Light Wounds (as per spells) a number of times per day equal to her Intelligence modifier. In addition, Heal (Wis) and Perception (Wis) becomes class skills for her.

Table: Scholar

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Special	Spells per day									
						0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Mastery, new mastery level	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	+1	+0	+0	+3		4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	+1	+1	+1	+3	New mastery level	4	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	+2	+1	+1	+4		4	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	+2	+1	+1	+4	New mastery level	4	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	+3	+2	+2	+5		4	3	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	+3	+2	+2	+5	New mastery level	4	4	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
8	+4	+2	+2	+6		4	4	3	3	2	-	-	-	-	-
9	+4	+3	+3	+6	New mastery level	4	4	4	3	2	1	-	-	-	-
10	+5	+3	+3	+7		4	4	4	3	3	2	-	-	-	-
11	+5	+3	+3	+7	New mastery level	4	4	4	4	3	2	1	-	-	-
12	+6/+1	+4	+4	+9		4	4	4	4	3	3	2	-	-	-
13	+6/+1	+4	+4	+9	New mastery level	4	4	4	4	4	3	2	1	-	-
14	+7/+2	+4	+4	+9		4	4	4	4	4	3	3	2	-	-
15	+7/+2	+5	+5	+9	New mastery level	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	2	1	-
16	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10		4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	2	-
17	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10	New mastery level	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	2	1
18	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11		4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	2
19	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11	Sheikh	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3
20	+10/+5	+6	+6	+12	Universe Laid Bare	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

Mastery Level 2: The scholar gains the ability for her chosen mastery described below.

Invention – Sensory Helm (Su): Through an exotic looking helmet, the inventor can, as a standard action, share the hearing and seeing of her automaton. She can use this ability a number of rounds per day equal to her scholar level. The scholar and the automaton must be within 100ft of each other to use this effect. The scholar can end this effect as a free action.

Lore – Prodigy (Ex): The scholar adds an additional 2 to her skill ranks per level.

Medicine – Physician level II (Sp): The scholar gains the ability to *Cure/Inflict Moderate Wounds* (as per spells) a number of times per day equal to her Intelligence modifier.

Mastery Level 3: The scholar gains the ability for her chosen mastery described below.

Invention – Shield Ally (Ex): Whenever the inventor is within her automaton's reach, she receives a +2 shield bonus to her Armor Class and a +2 circumstance bonus on her saving throws. This bonus does not apply if the automaton is grappled, helpless, paralyzed, stunned, or deactivated.

Lore – Lore Master (Ex): The scholar becomes a master of lore and can take 10 on any Knowledge skill check that she has ranks in. She can choose not to take 10 and can instead roll normally. In addition, once per day, the scholar can take 20 on any Knowledge skill check as a standard action. She can use this ability one additional time per day for every six levels she possesses beyond 5th, to a maximum of three times per day at 17th level.

Medicine – Physician level III (Sp): The scholar gains the ability to *Cure/Inflict Serious Wounds* (as per spells) a number of times per day equal her Intelligence modifier.



Mastery Level 4: The scholar gains the ability for her chosen mastery described below.

Invention – Blast of the Forge (Sp): The inventor can throw a *Fireball* (as per the spell). She may use this ability an amount of times each day equal to a quarter of her scholar level.

Lore – Detective (Ex): The scholar is skilled at deductive reasoning and sensing deception. She receives a morale bonus on all Sense Motive checks equal to half her scholar level (minimum +1).

Medicine – Physician level IV (Sp): The scholar gains the ability to *Cure/Inflict Critical Wounds* (as per spells) a number of times per day equal to her Intelligence modifier.

Mastery Level 5: The scholar gains the ability for her chosen mastery described below.

Invention – Flesh Made Steel (Su): An inventor can divert up to 2 points from her automaton's enhancement pool to add enhancements to herself. She cannot select any enhancement that the automaton could not possess, and she must be able to meet the requirements as well. She cannot select the ability increase enhancement through this ability. Any points spent in this way are taken from the automaton's enhancement pool (reducing the total number available to the automaton). The inventor can change the enhancements she receives from these points any time she can change the automaton's enhancements.

Lore – Polymath (Ex): The scholar can use any skill, even if the skill normally requires her to be trained. At 16th level, she considers all skills to be class skills. At 19th level, the scholar can take 10 on any skill check, even if it is not normally allowed.

Medicine – Physician level V (Sp): The scholar gains the ability to *Raise Dead* and *Cure/Inflict Light Wounds, Mass* (as per spells) a number of times per day equal to half her Intelligence modifier.

Mastery Level 6: The scholar gains the ability for her chosen mastery described below.

Invention – Greater Shield Ally (Su): Whenever an ally is within an automaton's reach, the ally receives a +2 shield bonus to its Armor Class and a +2 circumstance bonus on its saving throws. If this ally is the inventor, these bonuses increase to +4. This bonus does not apply if the automaton is grappled, helpless, paralyzed, stunned, or deactivated.

Lore – Genius: The scholar adds an additional 2 to her skill ranks per level.

Medicine – Physician level VI (Sp): The scholar gains the ability to *Harm, Heal* and *Cure/Inflict Moderate Wounds, Mass* (as per spells) a number of times per day equal to half her Intelligence modifier.

Mastery Level 7: The scholar gains the ability for her chosen mastery described below.

Invention – Blast Master (Sp): The inventor can throw a *Delayed Blast Fireball* (as per the spell). She may use this ability an amount of times each day equal to a quarter of her level.

Lore – Esoteric Knowledge: Choose either 1 bonus 1st-level spell (as if gained through having a high ability score) or +2 to Will saves.

Medicine – Physician level VII (Sp): The scholar gains the ability of *Resurrection* and *Cure/Inflict Serious Wounds, Mass* (as per spells) a number of times per day equal to half her Intelligence modifier.

Mastery Level 8: The scholar gains the ability for her chosen mastery described below.

Invention – Pilot Automaton (Ex): As a full-round action, the inventor, who must be at least one size category smaller, can mount her automaton and ride within it. While mounted in this way, the inventor is protected from harm and cannot be the target of spells or effects.

The inventor can cast spells while inside the automaton by taking control of the automaton for the duration of the casting. Any material components used for these spells are taken from the inventor's gear, even though they are otherwise inaccessible. The inventor can direct all of the automaton's actions while mounted, can perceive sound and sight through its sensors, and can communicate through an echo-chamber device.

This is uncomfortable and draining for the inventor's mind and body, so this ability can only be used for a number of rounds per day equal to her scholar level. She can end this effect at any time as a swift action. The inventor emerges in a square adjacent to the automaton if able. If the automaton is destroyed while the inventor is mounted within it, the inventor is immediately ejected, taking 4d6 points of damage, and is stunned for 1 round.

Lore – Great Esoteric Knowledge: Choose either 1 bonus 2nd-level spell (as if gained through having a high ability score) or any one feat.

Medicine – Physician level VIII (Sp): The scholar gains the ability to *Cure/Inflict Critical Wounds, Mass* (as per spells) a number of times per day equal to half her Intelligence modifier.

"Water flows from the supply channel and falls into funnel N and flows through end H of the pipe because it is tilted towards tank K and float E..."

Mastery Level 9: The scholar gains the ability for her chosen mastery described below.

Invention – Greater Flesh Made Steel (Su): The inventor can divert more of her automaton's enhancements to herself. This ability functions as the flesh made steel ability, but up to 6 enhancement points can be taken. Unlike the flesh made steel ability, the automaton loses 1 point from its enhancement pool for every 2 points (or fraction thereof) diverted to the inventor.

Lore – Grand Esoteric Knowledge: Choose 1 bonus 3rd-level spell (as if gained through having a high ability score).

Medicine – Physician level IX (Sp): The scholar gains the ability to *Harm/Heal, Mass* (as per spell) a number of times per day equal to half her Intelligence modifier.

Sheikh (Ex): At 19th level, a scholar becomes renowned as a respected academic of the highest order, and draws a following of students. The scholar gains an amount of students equal to her Intelligence bonus. The sum of the class levels of her students cannot exceed half of the scholar's current level – so students may gain levels when the scholar reaches a new level. Each student is from the expert class. A scholar may change the make-up of her students after spending a day in a city, town or village attracting new members to her teachings. A student has travelled far to learn from the Sheikh, so joins the Sheikh's cause with starting equipment equaling 1d6 x 10gp. Any additional equipment must be sourced and provided by the scholar. The students are under the control of the scholar's player, though if her Intelligence bonus drops, it will be her choice as to which students become NPCs until it rises again.

Universe Laid Bare (Sp): At 20th level the scholar can comprehend the grand secrets of the universe. She may choose a spell from any spell list, including those from outside of the Nights of the Crusades setting. She must build a strange device, under cover and in an area away from human settlement, that turns her esoteric knowledge into reality. Creating this arcane architecture cost 15,000gp and takes a month's work. Casting the spell requires a day's preparation and a day's rest afterwards. The spell may be cast once a month.

Scholar spell list

Lore: The scholar uses her powers of deduction and references her previous studies to gain information or uncover weaknesses in her subject.

Invention: The mechanically-minded scholar throws out a strange contraption that does her bidding.

Medicine: Through healing herbs, preventative advice, counseling and surgery, the scholar adept in the art of the physician aids the sick and can push the boundaries of the human body.

0-Level Scholar Spells

Invention: Flare, Light, Mage Hand, Mending.

Lore: Arcane Mark, Detect Magic, Guidance, Read Magic.

Medicine: Bleed, Detect Poison, Purify Food and Drink, Resistance, Virtue.

1st-Level Scholar Spells

Invention: Alarm, Animate Rope, Entropic Shield, Hold Portal, Floating Disk, Mage Armour, Magic Missile, Magic Weapon, Shield, Shocking Grasp.

Lore: Bane, Bless, Cause Fear, Charm Person, Command, Comprehend Languages, Detect Secret Doors, Erase, Identify, True Strike.

Medicine: Deathwatch, Endure Elements, Expeditious Retreat, Feather Fall, Jump, Sleep.

2nd-Level Scholar Spells

Invention: Continual Flame, Dark Vision, Flaming Sphere, Make Whole, Scorching Ray, Shatter, Spider Climb.

Lore: Find Traps, Knock, Locate Object, Scare, See Invisibility, Status, Zone of Truth.

Medicine: Aid, Bear's Endurance, Bull's Strength, Cat's Grace, Delay Poison, Eagle's Splendor, Fox's Cunning, Owl's Wisdom, Protection from Arrows, Remove Paralysis, Resist Energy, Restoration (Lesser).

3rd-Level Scholar Spells

Invention: Keen Edge, Lightning Bolt, Magic Weapon (Greater), Magic Vestment, Water Breathing, Water Walk, Slow.

Lore: Arcane Sight, Clairaudience/Clairvoyance, Dispel Magic, Fear, Glyph of Warding, Hold Person, Obscure Object, Secret Page, Sepia Snake Sigil, Tongues.

Medicine: Blindness/Deafness, Deep Slumber, Gentle Repose, Haste, Protection from Energy, Rage, Remove Blindness/Deafness.

4th-Level Scholar Spells

Invention: Arcane Eye, Black Tentacles, Globe of Invulnerability (Lesser), Resilient Sphere.

Lore: Charm Monster, Detect Scrying, Discern Lies, Locate Creature, Mnemonic Enhancer, Repel Vermin, Scrying, Spell Immunity.

Medicine: Confusion, Contagion, Death Ward, Enervation, Neutralize Poison, Poison, Remove Curse, Remove Disease, Restoration, Stone Skin.

5th-Level Scholar Spells

Invention: Mage's Faithful Hound, Passwall, Prying Eyes, Telekinesis, Telepathic Bond, Wall of Force.

Lore: Dominate Person, Hold Monster, Mage's Private Sanctum, Spell Resistance, Symbol of Pain, Symbol of Sleep, True Seeing.

Medicine: Break Enchantment, Breath of Life, Feeblemind, Mind Fog, Slay Living, Waves of Fatigue.

6th-Level Scholar Spells

Invention: Antimagic Field, Blade Barrier, Chain Lightning, Disintegrate, Forceful Hand, Globe of Invulnerability, Move Earth, Wall of Iron.

Lore: Analyze Dweomer, Dispel Magic (Greater), Find the Path, Legend Lore, Mage's Lucubration, Repulsion, Symbol of Fear, Symbol of Persuasion.

Medicine: Bear's Endurance (Mass), Bull's Strength (Mass), Cat's Grace (Mass), Eagle's Splendor (Mass), Fox's Cunning (Mass), Owl's Wisdom (Mass), Transformation.

7th-Level Scholar Spells

Invention: Force Cage, Grasping Hand, Instant Summons, Mage's Sword.

Lore: Arcane Sight (Greater), Hold Person (Mass), Spell Turning, Scrying (Greater), Symbol of Stunning, Symbol of Weakness, Vision.

Medicine: Finger of Death, Insanity, Regenerate, Restoration (Greater), Waves of Exhaustion.

8th-Level Scholar Spells

Invention: Antimagic Field, Binding (Chaining), Clenched Fist, Prying Eyes (Greater), Screen, Telekinetic Sphere.

Lore: Charm Monster (Mass), Discern Location, Moment of Prescience, Protection from Spells, Symbol of Death, Symbol of Insanity, Power Word Stun.

Medicine: Iron Body, Mind Blank, Temporal Stasis.

9th-Level Scholar Spells

Invention: Crushing Hand, Earthquake, Repel Metal or Stone.

Lore: Dominate Monster, Foresight, Hold Monster (Mass), Mage's Disjunction, Power Word Kill.

Medicine: Antipathy, Energy Drain, Implosion, Sympathy.

Starting character wealth: 2d6 x 10gp

AUTOMATONS

An automaton's abilities are determined by the inventor mastery level and by the choices made using its enhancement pool. Table: Automaton Base Statistics determines many of the base statistics of the automaton. Automatons are constructs for the purpose of determining how spells affect them.

Class Level: The creator's invention mastery level.

HD: This is the total number of 10-sided (d10) Hit Dice the automaton possesses, each of which gains a Constitution modifier, as normal.

BAB: This is the automaton's base attack bonus. An automaton's base attack bonus is equal to its Hit Dice. Automatons do not gain additional attacks using their natural weapons for a high base attack bonus.

Saves: These are the automaton's base saving throw bonuses.

Skills: This lists the automaton's total skill ranks. An automaton can assign skill ranks to any skill, but it must possess the appropriate appendages to use some skills. Automatons with Intelligence scores above the base value modify these totals as normal (an automaton receives a number of skill ranks equal to 2 + its Intelligence modifier per HD). An automaton cannot have more ranks in a skill than it has Hit Dice. Automaton skill ranks are set once chosen, even if it is modified when the scholar gains a new level.

Feats: This is the total number of feats possessed by an automaton. Automatons can select any feat that they qualify for, but they must possess the appropriate appendages to use some feats. Automaton feats are set once chosen, even if it modified when the scholar gains a new level. If, due to changes, the automaton no longer qualifies for a feat, the feat has no effect until the automaton once again qualifies for the feat.

Armor Bonus: The number noted here is the automaton's base total armor bonus. This bonus may be split between an armor bonus and a natural armor bonus, as decided by the scholar. This number can be modified by some options available through the automaton's enhancement pool. An automaton cannot wear armor of any kind; it needs to be built in using enhancements.

Str/Dex Bonus: Add this modifier to the automaton's Strength and Dexterity scores. Some options available through the automaton's enhancement pool might modify these scores.

...It runs through hole P into tank A, driving the air from it, which streams into pipe J. The flute plays until the water rises to the level in the siphon S - the hole P is narrower than end H.

Table: Automaton Base Statistics

Level	HD	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Skills	Feats	AB	Str/Dex Bonus	E.Pool	Max Attacks	Special
1	1	+1	+2	+2	+0	4	1	+0	+0	3	3	Darkvision, link, share spells
2	3	+3	+3	+3	+1	12	2	+2	+1	5	3	
3	4	+4	+4	+4	+1	16	2	+4	+2	8	4	Ability increase
4	6	+6	+5	+5	+2	24	3	+6	+3	10	4	
5	7	+7	+5	+5	+2	28	4	+6	+3	13	5	Multiattack
6	9	+9	+6	+6	+3	36	5	+8	+4	15	5	Ability increase
7	10	+10	+7	+7	+3	40	5	+10	+5	17	5	
8	12	+12	+8	+8	+4	48	6	+12	+6	20	6	Ability increase
9	13	+13	+8	+8	+4	52	7	+14	+7	22	6	

Starting Statistics: Size Medium; Speed 40 ft.; AC +2 natural armor; Attack bite (1d6); Ability Scores Str 14, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 11; Starting Enhancements bite, limbs (legs) (2).

Enhancement Pool: The value given in this column is the total number of points in the automaton's enhancement pool. Points from this pool can be spent on a wide variety of modifications and upgrades that add new abilities, attacks, and powers to the automaton. Whenever the scholar gains an invention mastery level, the number in this pool increases and the scholar can spend these points to change the abilities of the automaton. These choices are not set. The scholar can change them whenever she gains a scholar level.

Max. Attacks: This indicates the maximum number of natural attacks that the automaton is allowed to possess at the given level. If the automaton is at its maximum, it cannot take enhancements that grant additional natural attacks. This does not include attacks made with weapons.

Special: This includes a number of abilities gained by automatons as they increase in power. Each of these bonuses is described below.

Darkvision (Ex): The automaton has darkvision out to a range of 60 feet.

Link (Ex): A scholar and his automaton have equipment that allows for communication across distances under 100 ft. This communication is a free action, allowing the scholar to give orders to his automaton at any time. In addition, magic items interfere with the scholar's connection to his automaton. As a result, the scholar and his automaton share magic item slots. For example, if the scholar is wearing a ring, his automaton can wear no more than one ring. In case of a conflict, the items worn by the scholar remain active, and those used by the automaton become dormant. The automaton must possess the appropriate appendages to utilize a magic item.

Share Spells (Ex): The scholar may cast a spell with a target of "you" on his automaton (as a spell with a range of touch) instead of on himself. A scholar may cast spells on his automaton even if the spells normally do not affect creatures of the automaton's type (construct). Spells cast in this way must come from the scholar spell list. This ability does not allow the automaton to share abilities that are not spells, even if they function like spells.

Ability Increase (Ex): The automaton adds +1 to one of its ability scores.

Multiattack: An automaton gains Multiattack as a bonus feat if it has 3 or more natural attacks and does not already have that feat. If it does not have the requisite 3 or more natural attacks (or it is reduced to less than 3 attacks), the automaton instead gains a second attack with one of its natural weapons, albeit at a -5 penalty. If the automaton later gains 3 or more natural attacks, it loses this additional attack and instead gains Multiattack.



Automaton Skills

The following skills are class skills for an automaton: Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), and Swim (Str). The automaton is counted as having 0 in an ability used for a skill that is not listed above.

Enhancements

Each automaton receives a number of enhancement points that can be spent to give the automaton new abilities, powers, and other upgrades. These abilities, called enhancements, can be changed whenever the scholar gains a new level, but they are otherwise set. Some enhancements require that the scholar be of a specific level before they can be chosen. A number of enhancements grant the automaton additional natural attacks. Natural attacks listed as primary are made using the automaton's full base attack bonus and add the automaton's Strength modifier on damage rolls. Natural attacks listed as secondary are made using the automaton's base attack bonus - 5 and add half the automaton's Strength modifier on damage rolls (if positive). If the automaton only has a single natural attack, the attack is made using its full base attack bonus and it adds one and a half times its Strength modifier on damage rolls made with that attack, regardless of the attack's type.

Enhancements are grouped by their cost in enhancement points. Enhancement points cannot be saved. All of the points must be spent whenever the scholar gains a level. Unless otherwise noted, each enhancement can only be selected once.

1-Point Enhancements

The following enhancements cost 1 point from the automaton's enhancement pool.

Bite (Ex): An automaton's maw is full of razor-sharp teeth, giving it a bite attack. This attack is a primary attack. The bite deals 1d6 points of damage (1d8 if Large, 2D6 if Huge). This enhancement allows it to deal one and a half times its Strength modifier on damage rolls made with its bite.

Claws (Ex): An automaton has a pair of vicious claws at the end of its limbs, giving it two claw attacks. These attacks are primary attacks. The claws deal 1d4 points of damage (1d6 if Large, 1d8 if Huge). This enhancement can only be applied to the limbs (legs) enhancement once. This enhancement can be selected more than once, but the automaton must possess an equal number of the limbs enhancement.

Climb (Ex): An automaton becomes a skilled climber, gaining a climb speed equal to its base speed. This enhancement can be selected more than once. Each additional time it is selected, increase the automaton's climb speed by 20 feet.

Waterproof (Ex): An automaton has can operate underwater indefinitely.

Improved Damage (Ex): One of the automaton's natural attacks is particularly deadly. Select one natural attack form and increase the damage die type by one step. This enhancement can be selected more than once. Its effects do not stack. Each time an automaton selects this enhancement, it applies to a different natural attack.

Improved Natural Armor (Ex): An automaton's chassis is strengthened, giving it a +2 bonus to its natural armor. This enhancement can be taken once for every five levels the scholar possesses.

Mount (Ex): An automaton is formed to serve as a combat-trained mount for an ally. The automaton must be at least one size category larger than its rider.

Pincers (Ex): An automaton has large pincers at the end of one pair of its limbs, giving it two pincer attacks. These attacks are secondary attacks. The pincers deal 1d6 points of damage (1d8 if Large, 2d6 if Huge). Automaton's with the grab enhancement linked to pincers gain a +2 bonus on CMB checks made to grapple. The automaton must have the limbs (arms) enhancement to take this enhancement.. This enhancement can be selected more than once, but the automaton must possess an equal number of the limbs enhancement.

Pounce (Ex): An automaton gains quick reflexes, allowing it to make a full attack after a charge.

Pull (Ex): An automaton gains the ability to pull creatures closer with a successful attack. Select one type of natural attack. Whenever the automaton makes a successful attack of the selected type, it can attempt a free combat maneuver check. If successful, the target of the attack is pulled 5 feet closer to the automaton. This ability only works on creatures of a size equal to or smaller than the automaton. Creatures pulled in this way do not provoke attacks of opportunity. The automaton must have a reach of 10 feet or more to select this enhancement. This enhancement can be selected more than once. Its effects do not stack. Each time an automaton selects this enhancement, it applies to a different natural attack.

Push (Ex): An automaton gains the ability to push creatures away with a successful attack. Select one type of natural attack. Whenever the automaton makes a successful attack of the selected type, it can attempt a free combat maneuver check. If successful, the target of the attack is pushed 5 feet directly away from the automaton. This ability only works on creatures of a size equal to or smaller than the automaton. Creatures pushed in this way do not provoke attacks of opportunity. This enhancement can be selected more than once. Its effects do not stack. Each time an automaton selects this enhancement, it applies to a different natural attack.

Reach (Ex): One of an automaton's attacks is capable of striking at foes at a distance. Pick one attack. The automaton's reach with that attack increases by 5 feet.

Resistance (Ex): An automaton's chassis is proofed against one particular energy type. Pick one energy type (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic). The automaton gains resist 5 against that energy type. This resistance increases by 5 for every 5 levels the scholar possesses, to a maximum of 15 at 10th level. This enhancement can be selected more than once. Its effects do not stack. Each time an automaton selects this enhancement, it applies to a different energy type.

Skilled (Ex): An automaton becomes especially adept at a specific skill it can use, gaining a +8 racial bonus on that skill. This enhancement can be selected more than once. Its effects do not stack. Each time an automaton selects this enhancement, it applies to a different skill.

Slam (Ex): An automaton can deliver a devastating slam attack. This attack is a primary attack. The slam deals 1d8 points of damage (2d6 if Large, 2d8 if Huge). The automaton must have the limbs (arms) enhancement to take this enhancement. This enhancement can be selected more than once, but the automaton must possess an equal number of the limbs enhancement.

Sting (Ex): An automaton possesses a long, barbed stinger at the end of its tail, granting it a sting attack. This attack is a primary attack. The sting deals 1d4 points of damage (1d6 if Large, 1d8 if Huge). The automaton must possess the tail enhancement to take this enhancement. This enhancement can be selected more than once, but the automaton must possess an equal number of the tail enhancement.

Swim (Ex): An automaton gains webbed hands, feet, or powerful flippers, giving it a swim speed equal to its base speed. This enhancement does not protect anything within it from water. This enhancement can be selected more than once. Each additional time it is selected, increase the automaton's swim speed by 20 feet.

Tail (Ex): An automaton has a long, powerful tail. This grants it a +2 racial bonus on Acrobatics checks made to balance on a surface. This enhancement can be selected more than once.

Tail Slap (Ex): An automaton can use its tail to bash nearby foes, granting it a tail slap attack. This attack is a secondary attack. The tail slap deals 1d6 points of damage (1d8 if Large, 2d8 if Huge). The automaton must possess the tail enhancement to take this enhancement. This enhancement can be selected more than once, but the automaton must possess an equal number of the tail enhancement.

Tentacle (Ex): An automaton possesses a long, flexible tentacle, granting it a tentacle attack. This attack is a secondary attack. The tentacle attack deals 1d4 points of damage (1d6 if Large, 1d8 if Huge). This enhancement can be selected more than once.

2-Point Enhancements

The following enhancements cost 2 points from the automaton's enhancement pool.

Ability Increase (Ex): An automaton is upgraded to increase one of its abilities. Increase one of the automaton's ability scores by +2. This enhancement can be selected more than once. It can only be applied once to an individual ability score, plus 1 additional time for every 6 levels the scholar possesses.

Constrict (Ex): An automaton gains a powerful pulley system that allows it to crush those it grapples. Whenever the automaton successfully grapples a foe using the grab enhancement, it deals additional damage equal to the amount of damage dealt by the attack used by the grab enhancement. This enhancement is only available to automatons that have the tentacle enhancement.

Energy Attacks (Su): An automaton's attacks become charged with energy. Pick one energy type: acid, cold, electricity, or fire. All of the automaton's natural attacks deal 1d6 points of energy damage of the chosen type on a successful hit. The scholar must be at least 5th level before selecting this enhancement.

Flight (Ex): A medium or large automaton gains powerful rotating blades, gaining the ability to fly. The automaton gains a fly speed equal to half its base speed. The automaton's maneuverability depends on its size. Medium automatons have poor maneuverability, Large automatons have clumsy maneuverability. A Huge automaton cannot use this ability. The automaton's fly speed can be increased by spending additional enhancement points, gaining a 20-foot increase to fly speed for each additional point spent. The scholar must be at least 5th level before selecting this enhancement.

Gore (Ex): An automaton has a number of horns on its head, giving it a gore attack. This attack is a primary attack. The gore deals 1d6 points of damage (1d8 if Large, 2d6 if Huge).

Grab (Ex): An automaton becomes adept at grappling foes, gaining the grab ability. Pick bite, claw, pincers, slam, tail slap, or tentacle attacks. Whenever the automaton makes a successful attack of the selected type, it can attempt a free combat maneuver check. If successful, the automaton grapples the target. This ability only works on creatures of a size one category smaller than the automaton or smaller. Automatons with this enhancement receive a +4 bonus on CMB checks made to grapple.

Immunity (Su): An automaton's chassis becomes extremely resilient to one energy type, gaining immunity to that type. Pick one energy type: acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic. The automaton gains immunity to that energy type. This enhancement can be selected more than once. Its effects do not stack. Each time it applies to a different energy type. The scholar must be at least 7th level before selecting this enhancement.

Limbs (Ex): An automaton upgrades to gain an additional pair of limbs. These limbs can take one of two forms. They can be made into legs. Each pair of legs increases the automaton's base speed by 10 feet. Alternatively, they can be made into arms, complete with actuators. The automaton does not gain any additional natural attacks for an additional pair of arms, but it can take other enhancements that add additional attacks (such as claws or a slam). Arms that have actuators can be used to wield weapons, if the automaton is proficient. This enhancement can be selected more than once.

Poison (Ex): An automaton has toxin injectors, gaining a poison attack. Pick one bite or sting attack. Whenever the selected attack hits, the target is poisoned. Automaton poison—type poison (injury); save Fort negates; frequency 1/round for 4 rounds; effect 1d4 Str damage; cure 1 save. The save DC is equal to 10 + half the automaton's HD + the automaton's Constitution modifier. For 2 additional enhancement points, this poison deals Constitution damage instead. This poison can be used no more than once per round. The scholar must be at least 7th level before selecting this enhancement.

Rake (Ex): An automaton has dangerous claws on its feet, allowing it to make 2 rake attacks on foes it is grappling. These attacks are primary attacks. The automaton receives these additional attacks each time it succeeds on a grapple check against the target. These rake attacks deal 1d4 points of damage (1d6 if Large, 1d8 if Huge). This enhancement counts as one natural attack toward the automaton's maximum. The scholar must be at least 4th level before selecting this enhancement.

Rend (Ex): An automaton learns to rip and tear the flesh of those it attacks with its claws, gaining the rend ability. Whenever the automaton makes two successful claw attacks against the same target in 1 round, its claws latch onto the flesh and deal extra damage. This damage is equal to the damage dealt by one claw attack plus one and a half times the automaton's Strength modifier. The automaton must possess the claws enhancement to select this enhancement. The scholar must be at least 6th level before selecting this enhancement.

Trample (Ex): An automaton gains the ability to crush its foes underfoot, gaining the trample ability. As a full-round action, the automaton can overrun any creature that is at least one size smaller than itself. This works like the overrun combat maneuver, but the automaton does not need to make a check, it merely has to move over opponents in its path. The creatures take 1d6 points of damage (1d8 if Large, 2d6 if Huge), plus one and a half times the automaton's Strength modifier. Targets of the trample can make attacks of opportunity at a -4 penalty. If a target forgoes the attack of opportunity, it can make a Reflex save for half damage. The DC of this save is 10 + half the automaton's HD + the automaton's Strength modifier. A trampling automaton can only deal trampling damage to a creature once per round.

Tremorsense (Ex): An automaton becomes attuned to vibrations in the ground, gaining tremorsense out to a range of 30 feet. This works like the blindsense enhancement, but only if both the automaton and the creature to be pinpointed are in contact with the ground. The scholar must be at least 7th level before selecting this enhancement.

Trip (Ex): An automaton becomes adept at knocking foes to the ground with its bite, granting it a trip attack. Whenever the automaton makes a successful bite attack of the selected type, it can attempt a free combat maneuver check. If successful, the target is knocked prone. If the check fails, the automaton is not tripped in return. This ability only works on creatures of a size equal to or smaller than the automaton.

Weapon Training (Ex): An automaton learns to use a weapon, gaining Simple Weapon Proficiency as a bonus feat. If 2 additional enhancement points are spent, it gains proficiency with all martial weapons as well.

3-Point Enhancements

The following enhancements cost 3 points from the automaton's enhancement pool.

Blindsense (Ex): An automaton's sensors become incredibly acute, giving it blindsense out to a range of 30 feet. This ability allows the automaton to pinpoint the location of creatures that it cannot see without having to make a Perception check, but such creatures still have total concealment from the automaton. Visibility still affects the automaton's movement and it is still denied its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class against attacks from creatures it cannot see. The scholar must be at least 9th level before selecting this enhancement.

Burrow (Ex): An automaton upgrades to have a powerful drill, allowing it to move through the earth. The automaton gains a burrow speed equal to half its base speed. It can use this speed to move through dirt, clay, sand, and earth. It does not leave a hole behind, nor is its passage marked on the surface. The scholar must be at least 9th level before selecting this enhancement.

Frightful Presence (Ex): An automaton becomes unsettling to its foes, gaining the frightful presence ability. The automaton can activate this ability as part of an offensive action, such as a charge or attack. Opponents within 30 feet of the automaton must make a Will save or become shaken for 3d6 rounds. The DC of this save is equal to 10 + half the automaton's HD + the automaton's Charisma modifier. If the automaton has at least 4 more Hit Dice than an opponent, that opponent becomes frightened instead. Foes with more HD than the automaton are immune to this effect. The scholar must be at least 11th level before selecting this enhancement.

Swallow Whole (Ex): An automaton gains the swallow whole ability, giving it the ability to consume its foes. If the automaton begins its turn with a creature grappled using its bite attack (see the grab enhancement), it can attempt a combat maneuver check to swallow the creature. The creature can be up to one size category smaller than the automaton. Swallowed creatures take damage equal to the automaton's bite damage each round plus 1d6 points of bludgeoning damage. A swallowed creature keeps the grappled condition, but can attempt to cut its way free with a light slashing or piercing weapon. The amount of damage needed to cut free is equal to 1/10 the automaton's total hit points. The automaton's AC against these attacks is equal to 10 + half its natural armor bonus. If a swallowed creature cuts its way out, the automaton loses this ability until it heals this damage. Alternatively, the swallowed creature can attempt to escape the grapple as normal. Success indicates that it has returned to the automaton's mouth, where it can attempt to escape or be swallowed again. The automaton must possess the grab enhancement, tied to a bite attack, to take this enhancement. The scholar must be at least 9th level before selecting this enhancement.

They defiled; they begot giants and monsters. They begot, and, behold, all the earth was corrupted with its blood and by the hand of giant's. Which did not suffice for them. They were seeking to devour many.

~ The Book of Giants

Web (Ex): An automaton gains a pair of alchemical spinnerets, giving it the ability to spin webs. The automaton can use these webs to support itself plus up to one creature of the same size. It can throw webbing as a ranged touch attack up to 8 times per day, entangling a creature up to one size larger than the automaton. The webbing has a range of 50 feet and a 10-foot range increment. Creatures entangled by the web can escape with an Escape Artist check or a Strength check (at a -4 penalty). The DC of these checks is equal to 10 + half the automaton's HD + the automaton's Con modifier. The webs have a Hardness of 0 and a number of hits equal to the automaton's total Hit Dice. The automaton can climb its own webs at its climb speed and can pinpoint any creature touching its webs. The automaton must possess the climb enhancement to take this enhancement. The scholar must be at least 7th level before selecting this enhancement.

4-Point Enhancements

The following enhancements cost 4 points from the automaton's enhancement pool.

Blindsight (Ex): An automaton's sensors are sharpened even further, granting it blindsight out to a range of 30 feet. The automaton can maneuver and attack as normal, ignoring darkness, invisibility, and most forms of concealment as long as it has line of effect to the target. The automaton must possess the blindsense enhancement to take this enhancement. The scholar must be at least 11th level before selecting this enhancement.

Breath Weapon (Su): An automaton learns to exhale a cone or line of magical energy, gaining a breath weapon. Select either acid, cold, electricity, or fire. The automaton can breathe a 30-foot cone (or 60-foot line) that deals 1d6 points of damage of the selected type per HD it possesses. Those caught in the breath weapon can attempt a Reflex save for half damage. The DC is equal to 10 + half the automaton's HD + the automaton's Constitution modifier. The automaton can use this ability once per day. The automaton can use this ability 1 additional time per day by spending an additional 1 enhancement point (maximum 3/day). The scholar must be at least 9th level before selecting this enhancement.

Self Repairs (Su): An automaton's gains the ability to repair itself, giving it fast healing 1. The automaton heals 1 point of damage each round. Fast healing does not allow the automaton to rebuild lost body parts (or to reattach severed parts). Fast healing functions as long as the automaton is activated. This healing can be increased by 1 per round for every 2 additional enhancement points spent (maximum 5). The scholar must be at least 11th level before selecting this enhancement.

Large (Ex): An automaton grows in size, becoming Large. The automaton gains a +8 bonus to Strength, a +4 bonus to Constitution, and a +2 bonus to its natural armor. It takes a -2 penalty to its Dexterity. This size change also gives the creature a -1 size penalty to its AC and on attack rolls, a +1 bonus to its CMB and CMD, a -2 penalty on Fly skill checks, and a -4 penalty on Stealth skill checks. The automaton must be Medium to take this enhancement. The scholar must be at least 8th level before selecting this enhancement.

If 6 additional enhancement points are spent, the automaton instead becomes Huge. The automaton gains a +16 bonus to Strength, a +8 bonus to Constitution, and a +5 bonus to its natural armor. It takes a -4 penalty to its Dexterity. This size change also give the creature a -2 size penalty to its AC and attack rolls, a +2 bonus to its CMB and CMD, 10-foot reach, a -4 penalty on Fly skill checks, and a -8 penalty on Stealth skill checks. Its reach increases to 10 feet. Any reach enhancements the automaton possesses are added to this total. These bonuses and penalties replace, and do not stack with, those gained from becoming Large. The scholar must be at least 13th level before selecting this option.

The ability increase enhancement costs twice as much (4 enhancement points) when adding to the Strength or Constitution scores of a Large or Huge automaton.

Spell Resistance (Ex): An automaton is protected against magic, gaining spell resistance. The automaton's spell resistance is equal to 11 + the scholar's level. This spell resistance does not apply to spells cast by the scholar. The scholar must be at least 9th level before selecting this enhancement.

The fourth, cut off the bishop's shorn crown, and, thrusting his sword into the head, scattered his brains and blood upon the stone pavement. Performing penance according to the pope's injunctions, they died at Montenegro, and were buried at Jerusalem before the doors of the Temple. The inscription on their tomb read: "Here lie the wretched men who martyred the blessed Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury."

~ Roger de Hoveden

4: SKILLS AND FEATS

Determine the number of skill ranks possessed by your character, based on his class and Intelligence modifier. Then spend these ranks on skills, but remember that you cannot have more ranks than your level in any one skill (for a starting character, this is usually one). After skills, determine how many feats your character receives, based on his class and level, and select feats.

5: BUY EQUIPMENT

Each new character begins the game with an amount of gold, based on his class, that can be spent on a wide range of equipment and gear, from chain-mail armor to leather backpacks. This gear helps your character survive while adventuring.

6: FINISHING DETAILS

Finally, you need to determine all of a character's details, including his starting hit points (hp), Armor Class (AC), saving throws, initiative modifier, and attack values. All of these numbers are determined by the decisions made in previous steps and further details can be found in the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game PRD.



WEAVING A TALE

Firuz turned his head, wincing as the heat dried his eyes. A flickering brightness crept into his field of vision. He saw only a hazy smoke. The glow had vanished. Firuz shifted his body to look beyond the wall at his back. The silhouettes of the jagged orchard and ruined houses were the only things that he could make out. A bead of sweat ran down from his temple. This was foolish. He would get up and find a safer place among the ruins to sleep.

He brought his feet under him. An explosion of light filled his eyes. The stench of sulphur rose through his nostrils. He covered his face and fell back heavily against the clay wall behind him.

A sound, like a gale of air rushing to feed a monstrous fire, preceded a high-pitched, crackling voice, "You may ask one wish of me."

Firuz was in danger of passing out. The heat was intense. His mind struggled. A 'wish' did the thing say? He allowed his hand to slip from his face, but was horrified by what confronted him. Two bolts of flame lit the creature's face as eyes. Its hair was black and animated, as if a powerful wind blew from below it. It had the face and torso of a child, but below its waist was nothing but a smoky trail that faded into the night. Those traits were strange enough, but rage began to mingle with the fear inside Firuz's mind – his son's face stared out from the djinni's eyes.

Its mouth gaped like a cave, "Wish for the manner of your death."

It took Firuz some moments to come to terms with what he beheld. The djinni hovered over him, arms folded, waiting for his reply.

"I..." Firuz stammered, trying to be careful of his words, "I do not wish to die."

The djinni huffed. "Your fate was sealed when you released me. If you do not make your choice then it will be mine to make – a most painful and horrifying outcome for you."

The djinni turned its head up to the moon. It was on its descent. "Quickly now, we must move past this."

Firuz collected his thoughts. "Please, great djinni, why do you reward such a good deed with evil. I saved you from your prison. Surely your lord and mine would be dishonoured by your actions."

The djinni's eyes blazed, "You would know much of dishonour, Firuz."



GENERAL GUIDELINES

Nights of the Crusades is set in an alternate version of the Earth's history, mixed with horror and the powers of arcane sciences. The following guidelines should be considered by Game Masters, though not necessarily implemented in your campaign.

DIFFERENT SIZED HUMANS

Some humans are bigger or small than the average. A Game Master may choose to allow for Small or Large characters with the following modifications at character creation.

Small: +2 Dex, -2 Str. This human is small and gains a +1 size bonus to their AC, a +1 size bonus on attack rolls, a -1 penalty to their Combat Maneuver Bonus and Combat Maneuver Defense, and a +4 size bonus on Stealth checks.

Large: +2 size bonus to Strength and a -2 size penalty to Dexterity. Large humans take a -1 size penalty to their AC, a -1 size penalty on attack rolls, a +1 bonus on combat maneuver checks and to their CMD, and a -4 size penalty on Stealth checks. A large human takes up a space that is 10 feet by 10 feet and has a reach of 5 feet.

MONSTER TYPES

In Nights of the Crusades there are many strange and powerful creatures dwelling in dark places. However, their abilities can be explained as natural by those scholars seeking to understand them. As such, the following creature types are not recommended for the setting: Dragons, fey, outsiders or undead.

TECHNOLOGY LEVEL

The crusades ended in the 13th century, before metallurgy had advanced to allow for equipment such as rapiers and armors described as 'heavy' (full plate etc). As such, it is recommended that characters only wear armor from the light and medium categories.

MAGIC ITEMS

The nature of the rules assumes that magic items are available to PCs, though the setting of Nights of the Crusades is one of gritty, low fantasy. Assuming that a scholar could explain a magic item as following some sort of technological or scientific breakthrough, it is fine to have in the campaign. Examples of these are +1 weapons and armors, flaming blades and potions of healing. Types that are possibly too far-fetched are ethereal or alignment-based items. If an alignment-based effect is encountered, it is resolved from the point of view of the activating character's Attitude.

EXPERIENCE AND CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

The way experience is gained and characters advance has a major influence on how characters act. As combat is a brutal, deadly affair, and Nights of the Crusades welcomes characters that take on roles such as diplomats and scholars, gaining experience through slaying creatures may not benefit all characters equally. An alternative method is to have each player roll a D20 after each decent gaming session (roughly 3-4 hours). If the player rolls over the character's current class level, the character gains a level. If not, the character gains a point of training. Training points can be added to future rolls until a new level is achieved.

This system allows characters to fully embrace the pursuit of their goals (which may be peaceful in nature) without offering disincentives to characters who choose to play something other than a homicidal psychopath.

COMBAT TRAUMA

Characters plunged into bloody combat, surrounded by the wails of the dying and the grisly smells of splattered gore, will not leave unscathed - in body or mind. After a combat where a human has died (whether friend or enemy) a character must take a Wisdom test at DC 15 as she falls to sleep. If unsuccessful roll on the following table and apply the trauma suffered when she wakes. This counts as a form of insanity. If a character already has a combat trauma there is no need to test for another one.

D20	Combat Trauma
1-4	Night Terrors: The character must pass a Wisdom test at DC 10 on waking or suffer from fatigue for the rest of the day.
5-6	Minor Addiction
7-8	Amnesia
9-10	Mania/Phobia
11-12	Moderate Addiction
13-14	Paranoia
15-16	Psychosis
17-18	Major Addiction
19-20	Schizophrenia

...it is written in the book of the Holy Land that when the Saracen children cried, the women would scold them, saying: "Hush! King Richard is coming!" to quiet them.
~ Jeanne de Joinville

HERO POINTS AND STORY-TELLING

Stories are how characters gain Hero Points throughout an adventure.

Fantastic realms and sorcery from a lost age can be part of the journey that characters make when they enter a Story – the nature of the tale will rely completely on the characters (and the Players) participating in it.

A Story can be started by an NPC or PC. It is actually possible to run a Story without the Game Master's involvement. During a Story, each PC will contribute in the form a scene. The Tale-Weaver plays the part of any NPC's hearing the story. The following steps describe the process of running a Story.

STEP 1: OPENING SCENE

The storyteller (the character telling the tale, whether PC or NPC) begins the Story. She describes the title of the tale, the hero and the trials that will be faced, without giving too much away.

Now the first scene begins. Only imagination limits what is told, but at the end of the scene the storyteller must decide if the hero is challenged through the genres of Adventure, Drama or Mystery. Each genre is linked to a character's prowess in an attribute:

Adventure: Strength, Dexterity and Constitution

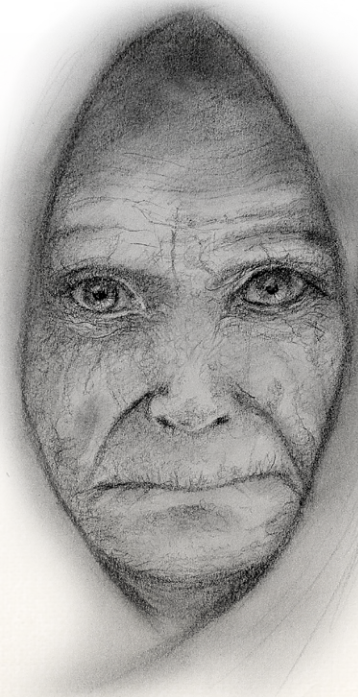
Drama: Charisma

Mystery: Intelligence and Wisdom

What is rolled is a test of any of the genre's attributes against a DC of 20. The d20 result will affect the direction for the next scene; consult the following table:

D20	Next scene's direction
1-6	Adventure
7-12	Drama
13-18	Mystery
19-20	Chosen by next scene's character

If successful in the challenge, add 1 point to the analogy pool.



STEP 2: MIDDLE SCENES

Now the remaining players (and game master if applicable) take turns to tell a scene. Just like in Step 1, players use their characters as the prism to relate their scene, however the genre will be directed by the result of the previous scene. Also, the hero and major villains should not be killed off! Should the hero succeed at overcoming a scene's challenge, add 1 point to the analogy pool.

STEP 3: CLIMAX

After everyone around the table has related their scene it is time for the focus to be on the storyteller once more. The final scene plays out like a middle scene is most ways, but is a chance for the storyteller to use her creativity to conclude the journey of the hero. This will be done by taking a performance test against a DC of 20 plus the current points in the analogy pool.

If this final test is successful then the points in the analogy pool will be converted into hero points and divided evenly among the PCs involved in the story – with a PC storyteller gaining any leftovers. If there aren't enough hero points to go around, they go to a PC storyteller first, then PCs in order of Charisma, then are randomly determined.

STORY EXAMPLE

Nadia (the game master): You're in the peddler's tent as night falls. The peddler begins, "I will tell you the Tale of the Fisherman and the Djinni. It is a story of how a fisherman tries to trick a vengeful djinni into sparing his life..."

"There was once a fisherman who was very poor. He would cast his net three times a day and hope to God that he would find something when he pulled it up, or else his family would go hungry. One day, after casting the net and not getting anything on his first two tries, he finds an old stone bottle. It is sealed with some engraved words that he cannot read, and he pries the lid off with his teeth.

His head is rocked back and his two front teeth are blown out, as a fierce smoke shoots from the bottle. It condenses into the form of a great apparition that fills the sky. A thunderous voice addresses the fisherman, "You have one wish. To choose the manner of your death so that I may deliver it to you."

The fisherman is shocked. He tries to come up with a way of delaying the djinni's judgment. "That is not fair", says the fisherman.'

This is a dramatic scene, so will be a test against the peddler's Charisma (which is 14, or +2). I'll have to roll 19 or over. The D20 roll is... 8. Sorry guys, it's a fail. You're next Al. Because I got an 8, your scene will be focused on Drama.

Al (Alric's player): Alright, the story continues: The djinni roars, "Fair?!" and throws down a massive fist, bristling with warts, upon the doomed fisherman's boat. The wood splinters and the fisherman is hurled into the cold ocean. As he rises to the surface he tries to think of a ruse to help save his life. Gasping for air, he says to the djinni, 'oh great and powerful daemon, surely my life is in your hands. When I was below the sea I saw a great monster that grasped for me. Please save me by putting me on dry land so that I may make my wish.

Aldric has a Charisma score of 10, so I'll need 20. My D20 result is... 19. Oh well.

Nadia: Luke, it's your turn next. Because Al rolled a 19 you get to choose the genre your scene will be in.

Luke (Massoud's player): It just so happens that Massoud's biggest score is in Intelligence, so mystery will be the genre of my scene. Here we go: The djinni's face darkened. "You surely take me for a fool. You should not be afraid of any monsters below the waves – just the one towering above them. I, who was a slave to King Solomon who bound me within that prison, will now choose the manner of death for you. And you will hope to be released to Hell afterwards." The fisherman raised his hands and implored the djinni, "I am truly sorry, it is just not an honourable thing

to reward a good deed with evil, as surely you are planning for me. Please tell me your tale" The djinni paused, then replied, "As I waited at the bottom of the ocean for the first thousand years I swore to reward my saviour with three wishes. When that passed I swore I would reward him with one wish. After a thousand years in dark madness, I swore I would only allow my saviour the choice of his death, as one less human would be one less creature working mischief across the earth." As the djinni was distracted with the story the fisherman has been trying to swim to some nearby caves and escape from its clutches.

Massoud has an Intelligence of 16, so I'll have to roll 17 or over... 18! Yes!

Nadia: Well done. You've added 1 to the analogy pool. Now it's time for the climax, back to me. The fisherman hauls himself out of the sea and stands on the rocks that are being lashed with ocean spray. He sees the djinni's bottle floating nearby and picks it up. A thought enters his mind, just as the djinni completes his tale. The fisherman calls out to the djinni, "Oh great and powerful daemon, you are so large, yet you have said that you were trapped in this bottle. Surely that cannot be true, which leads me to question your tale." The djinni's form enveloped the fisherman with darkness like a storm cloud. "You are certainly a fool. I will show you how I was trapped, just so you may tell my master that I do not lie when you meet him in the underworld." With that, the djinni swirled into a vortex of smoking vapour and disappeared into the bottle. The fisherman could barely believe his luck. A faint, echoing voice rang out from inside the bottle, "Your faith has been tested mortal, and you have failed." The fisherman drew the seal from the pouch he had concealed it in and tried to stopper the bottle.

So, the peddler's performance skill is at 7 and the analogy pool is at 1. He'll have to roll 14 or over. Here we go... 14! Yay! There's only one hero point though, so Massoud gets it because of his higher Charisma.

Luke: Finally, some good luck.

Al: Alright.

Nadia: The peddler finishes off the story. 'With the djinni trapped in the bottle, the fisherman almost leaps in the air with happiness. He has saved his life and now has a djinni at his command!'

... The peddler yawns after the tale and his head nods. Soon he is snoring and he doesn't notice that what is left of his mug of wine is soaking into his robe. As the peddler sleeps, his goat wakes up and seems to eye you both, chewing loudly as it reclines. What are you two doing now?

CHARACTER MOTIVATIONS

For Players that have a vague interest in the medieval middle-east and its ancient literature, it will be easy to dive into the setting at full force. For Players used to western fantasy and history, it may be best to use the Crusading forces as an initial lense to open up the vast world that awaits them.

It is worth talking to your Players to discover what motivates their characters to ensure that your campaign meets their needs. Here are some types of character motivations so that the story-arcs of the PCs can drive the central themes of their tale.

THE PATH TO RICHES

"Is there a problem? I don't see it. We just need a few dinars to grease our path"

Characters following the path to riches want wealth so that they can eat the finest foods, have the best equipment and live in luxury. Theirs could be a rags-to-riches story, like Ali Al-Din after he came across the djinni in the lamp, or perhaps they were born into wealth – and are beset by those who seek their treasures. The motivating factor for these types of characters is loot. They may not want to do it the honourable way, but they will want to be given the opportunity to gain wealth, such as banditry, hiring themselves to powerful patrons or being able to explore desolate regions where they may find long lost (expensive) artifacts. However, they may also want to build a powerful mercantile empire, with caravans and ships that travel to the most exotic places on the planet, but, like Sinbad, their gambles may leave them with many scars along the way.

THE CLIMB TO POWER

"If I was king, that type of behaviour would be forbidden so I wouldn't have to put up with it."

Power-hungry characters want authority over others for whatever reason – whether for their own selfish purposes or a more noble cause. They may believe that life would be easier for them and those they care about if only they had the manpower to get things done. But, like King Shahryar, power often brings its own problems, such as betrayal from those thought most close and the possibility of rebellion from once-loyal subjects. A tale where characters are motivated by power needs to include them gaining authority over others. Their underlings could be anyone such as a ship's crew, a small rural village, or a cult of raving fanatics. It could also be an army and the characters may seek glory on the field of battle to further their ambition, as

involvement with war was probably the best way to achieve social mobility throughout the middle ages. Characters that gain power will also gain influence and enemies among their neighbours, and they will have to enter the shadows of intrigue to maintain their position against those that covet it.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ENEMY

"I will not rest until they have been burned from the earth so that our sheep can graze freely and our women may once again nurse children in safety!"

Often through a life-shattering experience, character's that follow this path think only of the eradication of their foes. They often hold a strange juxtaposition in their minds; on the one hand they believe that their enemies are less than human – inferior creatures who deserve only death for their pollution upon the world. However they also have a tremendous fear of their enemies' power, because in their minds the foe is a danger to all that these characters hold dear. Blood, vengeance and war are the staples of a tale demanded by these characters. Pitting their combat skills against their enemies is their calling. Negotiating with anything but steel means that time is being wasted by not slaying their adversaries. These characters have a black and white view of morality, yet this view will be challenged with every step they take into the complicated tapestry of cultures and personalities in their path. Moral dilemmas are a part of any good tale, and characters whose goals are only to eradicate their enemies may look at themselves one day and realise that they are worse than the monsters they have sought to destroy.



THE SEEKING OF KNOWLEDGE

"Books are my blade, the abacus – my armour"

Knowledge seeking characters crave information about the world they are in, as well as recognition for their contributions. Characters that are deemed as highly intelligent yet have no role to play during exciting elements of a tale, such as battle, may wonder why they bother. It is the Game Master's duty to ensure that a knowledgeable character can point out that the leader of some marauding bandits bears the sigil of House Bremen, so will not attack anyone carrying a purple silk cloth; or that the character knows that a lunar eclipse is due in two nights, so that will be the best time to fool the Apostles of Sobek into believing that the companions are Heralds of Osiris. Both of these examples would translate into real benefits for the characters by making the inevitable combat easier.

These characters also seek new places, peoples and artifacts that they can discover and announce to the world. Perhaps they will find a powerful patron who also holds the quest for knowledge dear. There is danger for too much free thought in these times too. When the vast majority of the population are ill-educated and there are vested interests in keeping them that way – seekers of knowledge will gain enemies by simply voicing their discoveries. Tales focusing on the uncovering of truth will have antagonists violently opposed to their blasphemies so this will never be a path to a peaceful life.

THE PASSAGE TO RIGHTEOUSNESS

"And how many times has God granted victory to a few over many? Charge, God wills it!"

These characters will act as bastions of their faith. Either clerics or intensely devout laypeople, characters on the passage to righteousness will take vows and be on the straight path of their religion, which will, they have no doubt, lead them to paradise. Every event is seen as the invisible hand of God, angels or saints; or the work of demons and djinns. It goes without saying that tales for these types of characters are helped if all companions either follow the same religion or at least know each other well enough to be lenient in their interpretations of scripture in regards to their choice of friends. Otherwise, a fanatical zealot would have little reason to be in a group with a drinking, swearing, womanising lute-player because the zealot may well have slain others for lesser transgressions. Vast evil cults, wicked/lenient clerics (both are as bad as each other to a fanatic) and the touch of the devil should infuse these types of tales, so that the characters can truly fight against what they want to.

THE ROAD TO PARADISE ON EARTH

"Since when was a king's law based on what is right and good for us?"

This is a path not often tread in these dark times. The type of characters that follow this road seek to make the real world a better place to live in. Because those in power have not benefitted their subjects, they must be removed. Their heretical beliefs may include such views as women not needing to be servants to men; or that a ruler should be chosen for his merits rather than for his bloodline. These characters' main antagonists will be the bastions of authority that hold the world back from becoming (their version of) fair to everyone. Battling corruption and manipulation of the lower classes by the powerful will be the main focus of these characters. And this will make their lives very difficult. There are many stories of individuals seeking progress throughout the Middle Ages, but to deny the authority of a King or Caliph is not only against the law – it is against God – and the worst tortures and deaths await those who blaspheme and rebel against the rightful order.



RUNNING THE GAME

WEATHER

It is also worthwhile to prepare weather in advance. With an internet connection, getting realistic weather is not a problem, as the cities of the Nights of the Crusades are also in the real world. At the time of writing, typing 'damascus weather forecast' into a search engine results in a site that displays that Damascus has clear skies and a temperature variance of 38 C/100 F in the middle of the days to 18 C/64 F during the nights.

STRENGTH, SNEAKING OR SCHOLARSHIP?

The best tales will allow every character to shine. You, the reader, may be able to list many roleplaying adventures, whether they are on a board, using pen, paper and dice or on a computer, that only offer a single solution to a challenge – and that solution is often slaying those that stand in your way. The Crusades were a time of war and bloodshed, but that does not mean that a tale should be one constant sword fight.

After a Game Master finishes preparing an adventure, it is worth looking back on it and analysing the challenges that the characters will face. The goal of a Game Master is to offer multiple ways of overcoming these hurdles so that there will be a chance for any group to succeed if they're smart about it, no matter if they are made up of scholastic monks or the remnants of a mercenary band. This basically translates into offering a solution that may not involve combat, or will make combat much easier. The characters should be able to use strength, sneaking or scholarship to overcome any challenge.

Example

Three bandits hold up the characters' progress through a narrow mountain pass. The alternative is a dangerous journey over the jagged, dust-blown cliffs. They must use this pass to reach Acre before sunset because if they don't, Hugh Vaughn will escape from justice once-again.

Force: By killing the bandits, or making them flee by a show of force, the characters will be able to access the path.

Finesse: Although the cliff face is difficult to climb, dexterous characters could find a decent ledge to use with a Perception test, then climb it without drawing any attention with a Climb test. They will then be above the bandits so Stealth test is needed to keep from being seen. Once that is done the path will be clear.

Wits: With a successful Bluff a character can convince the bandits that a piece of junk is worth the toll and pass by safely. Also, a successful Knowledge (Engineering or Geography) test sees that the rocks above could avalanche with only a tiny bit of encouragement from a well placed bolt or arrow. Using this tactic, the knowledgeable character could either warn the bandits that they will send the rocks onto their campsite so they'll lose whatever ill-gotten gains they've received, or just run through as the dust settles and the moans of the bandits are buried under the rubble.

Famine urges the most horrible of crimes, and yet pardonable ones; man should not perish while beasts live.

~ Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi
(The Itinerary of King Richard), Geoffrey de Vinsauf

ALCHEMY, ACTION, DREAD AND ATROCITY

Action heroes are borderline super-human; dodging arrows and slaying their foes as if every soldier arrayed against them was a child. This is the fabric of fantastical stories. Warriors in Nights of the Crusades know that numbers in combat often count for more than skill with a blade, plague takes more men to hell than war, and wounds will bleed and fester when they are cut. Every combat is brutal and the wails of the dying should ring in the characters' ears long after the dust had died down.

Horror and mystery must not be overlooked, no matter what character paths your PCs are on. The mythical figures of dark fantasy and terror have always existed in our world; serial killers, death cultists, insane and uncaring science. Build up layers of dread in the tale as the characters see the remnants of some ritual. Lead them onwards through rumours of the terror that waits – then annihilate their sanity with the atrocities of men; for the unwashed events of history are far darker than the fanciful tales of a minstrel.

MANAGING STORIES

Some players may balk at too much freedom, yet others will live for it. The only limits to Stories are the players' imaginations, but it may be useful to set down a few guidelines in regards to them. Knowing your players will determine how to best run stories and how often they occur. Part of the Game Master's responsibility is saying "no" should players start telling a story at a ridiculous time, such as whispering a story when walking up a dark, spiral staircase to the Heretic of Bon's lair, just to mine Hero Points before a potentially dangerous combat. As a general rule, stories should only be entered into when there is enough time for every character involved to actually hear it (about an hour of free time) without any major distractions. Examples for good times: On a boat trip or around a campfire; whereas a bad time would be when giant boulders are bombarding the tower they are cowering in and are threatening to destroy it at any moment.

A NOTE ON WOMEN

From your own research, you may have gathered that women in the Middle Ages, from West to East where not involved in as much adventure as men were – at best. Women were able to be married very young, as there was no concept of ‘teenage years’ between childhood and adulthood. Marriage was often used as the glue between the alliances of families and empires. Noble women were educated, not in sciences, but in etiquette and courtly duties such as dancing and history. To be a better choice for powerful men they could learn the potential language of a suitor and maybe become a lady-in-waiting, spending her life by the courts and at tournaments in the hope of attracting a husband. Peasant women worked the fields but were constrained by their sex to the role of mother, wife and worker.

Biblical and Qu’ranic precedents of the sinful Eve and the laws requiring women to obey men were used to justify their place as inferior directly from the pulpit. Crimes against a woman’s honour were often unreported and unpunishable, especially by all-male courts with the backing of misogynistic clerics. As penance for the warriors, women were also thrown out of crusader camps when God would not grant them victory during a difficult siege.

However some women did gain power, the most obvious being some of the queens of Europe and Shajar al-Durr, the Sultana of Egypt after the Mamluks took power. Anna Komnene is renowned for her chronicle from the Byzantine viewpoint as well as being a princess, scholar and physician. Islamic chroniclers record their shock when they hear of women amongst the fighting forces of the Franj. Female characters, to justify their part in an adventure, could use the examples of Muhammad’s wives; Khadija the merchant and Aisha who led her troops into battle on a white camel – or Rabia Basri, an Islamic Saint that fought against the excesses of slavery. However it was generally seen as a disruption to the natural order for a woman to be equal, let alone have authority, over a man during the middle ages, and so a female adventurer will often have those supposedly closest to her – her family – pressuring her to settle down and be a lady.

Interestingly, the stories of the time often have intelligent and adventurous women in the lead roles. Shahrazad, the storyteller of the Arabian Nights, saves an entire kingdom from the vengeance of a king against any woman he lays his hands upon (however it’s hardly a feminist tale – she does, after all, marry him!).



"If thou know him not," said the Ifrit to her, "take this sword and strike off his head." She bent the sword in hand and came close up to me, and I signalled to her with my eyebrows, my tears the while flowing a-down my cheeks.

The lady threw away the sword and said: "How shall I strike the neck of one I know not, and who hath done me no evil? Such a deed is wrong in my law!"

Then my eyes filled with tears to overflowing and I cast the sword from my hand, saying: "O mighty Ifrit, how can it be lawful for me to smite her neck whom I never saw in my whole life? I cannot do such misdeed, though thou cause me drink the cup of death and perdition."

~ The 1001 Nights

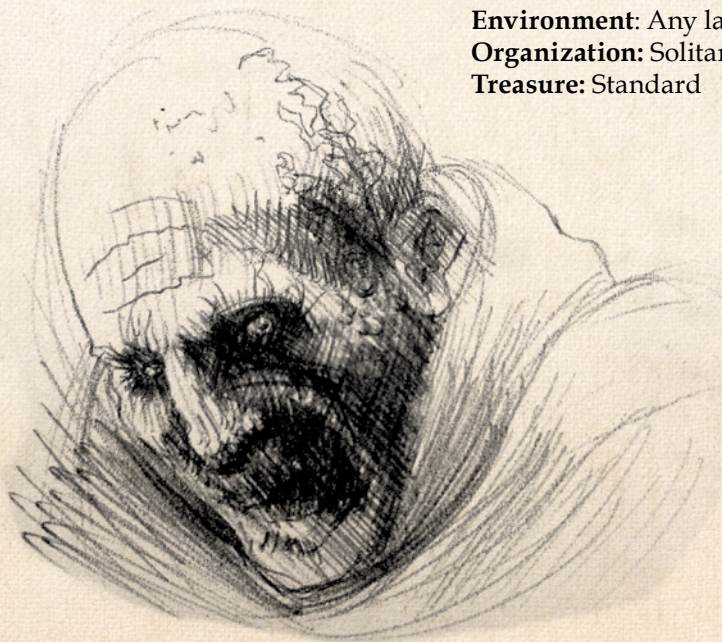
APPENDIX 1: BESTIARY

Due to the nature of the Nights of the Crusades setting, fantastic magic is extremely rare, however the wide variety of possible enemies from any number of sourcebooks do not take this into consideration. Therefore, it is recommended that an extra Challenge Rating point is added to creatures with Challenge Ratings over 10.

"So I watched them narrowly, and it was not long before I discovered them to be a tribe of Magian cannibals whose King was a Ghul."

The ghuls slaughtered them by cutting their throats and roasted them for the King's eating, but as for the savages themselves, they ate human flesh raw. When I saw this, I was sore dismayed for myself and my comrades."

~ Sinbad, the 1001 Nights



BESTIAL Ghul

After forsaking civilisation for generations, some human clans in the wilderness devolve from a soul destroying state of cannibalism to the depths of cunning monsters, ready to ambush and gorge their dark hungers on the soft and foolish who stray near.

XP 400 | CR 1

CE, Monstrous Humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft; **Perception** +7

DEFENSE

AC: 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 natural)

HP: 15 (2d10+4)

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +5

Defensive Abilities: Ferocity

OFFENSE

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Bite +3 (1d6+1) and 2 claws +3 (1d6+1)

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14

Feats: Weapon Finesse

Skills: Acrobatics +4, Climb +6, Perception +7,

Stealth +7, Swim +3

Languages: None

ECOLOGY

Environment: Any land

Organization: Solitary, gang (2-4), or pack (7-12)

Treasure: Standard

CAVERN WYRM

Haunting humid mountain caves, that bubble with strange gases from the depths of the earth, is the Cavern Wyrms. From its soft body protrudes countless clawed legs and two large antennae that seek its prey. Should its delicate touch find a suitable victim, jets of acidic slime are propelled from glands on either side of its mandibles, covering its prey in a sticky web. Its slow advance will then continue over the prisoner, as it slavers and devours limbs and bone.

XP 800 | CR 3

N, Large vermin

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft, tremorsense 60 ft; **Perception** +4

DEFENSE

AC: 15, touch 11, flat-footed 13

(+2 Dex, +4 natural, -1 size)

HP: 37 (5d8+15)

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +1

Immune: Mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed: 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee: Bite +6 (1d8+6 plus poison)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks: Web (+4 ranged, DC 19, 5 hp)

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 15, **Con** 16, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 20 (32 vs. trip)

Skills: Climb +20, **Perception** +4; **Racial Modifiers** +8

Climb, +4 **Perception**, +4 **Stealth** (+8 webs)

SQ: Acidic web

ECOLOGY

Environment: Temperate or underground

Organization: Solitary, pair, or colony (3–8)

Treasure: Incidental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

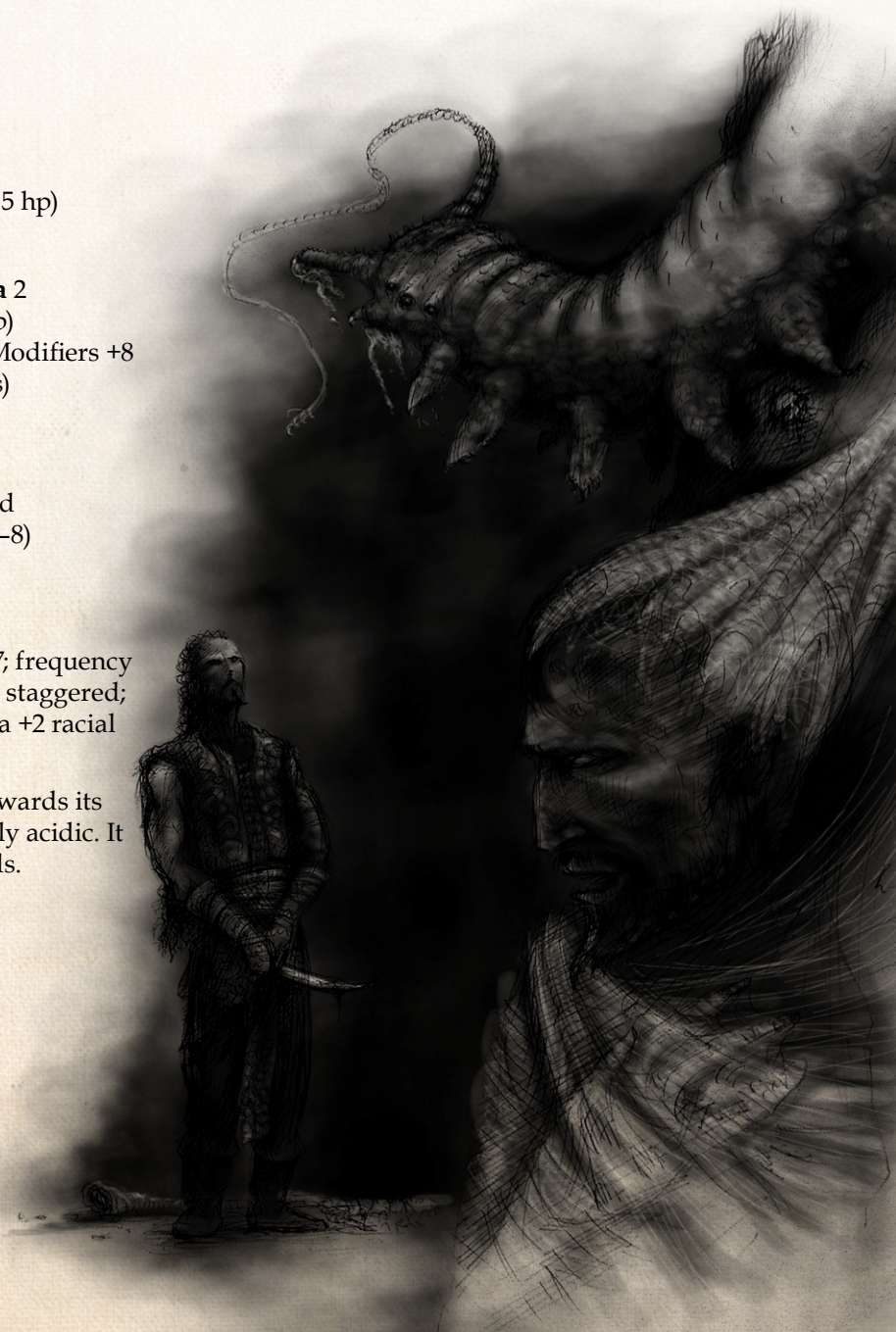
Poison (Ex): Bite—injury; save Fort DC 17; frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; effect 1d3 Con and staggered; cure 2 saves. Save DC is Con-based with a +2 racial bonus.

Acidic Web (Ex): When first projected towards its target, a cavern wyrms slimy net is mildly acidic. It deals d6 damage to a victim for d6 rounds.

"There are several vipers, which are serpents in the world. They have divers natures, and divers ways of stinging, for they will sometimes sting, and the persons will die immediately.

And sometimes the victims will swell, and then after a long time will die. And sometimes they will dry up and die by burning."

~ The Bestiary of Philippe De Thaun



APPENDIX 2:

OVER DARK SEAS

What follows is a short adventure that will introduce the characters to each other and launch them into the dark times ahead. Before play starts, each player should prepare a background story as to why they were passengers on a Byzantine merchant ship that was stopping at ports along the coast of the Holy Land, and let you know. Just a note; it's probably best if characters don't die during this adventure – unconsciousness should be the worst that can happen – but they shouldn't know that.

Send the following description of recent events to your players before the game, so that they will have answers to why they were on the ship, and can even prepare acquaintances between themselves before their tale truly begins.

You've spent a long night hearing stories from your new companions – now you finally lay your head to rest. You wonder how many more days the merchant vessel, mainly carrying Byzantines to ports along the areas controlled by the Franj, will be at sea. The ocean seems violent outside, and you pray that you can sleep through the groaning of the ship's old wood and the roar of the cold depths.

NPCs

CAPTAIN GEORGIOS POLIKSENI

The out-of-luck captain of the vessel.

Use the NPC statistics for a Travelling Merchant. He is a Byzantine, Orthodox, Egotist who can speak Greek, Latin and Arabic.

ROLF THE BOLD

A violent, disenchanted soldier turned vagabond.

Use the NPC statistics for a Drunkard. He is a Frankish, Catholic, Belligerent who can speak German and Latin.

A great crashing shudders you from your light slumber. You seem to be tilted at a crazy angle, then you are dropping to a floor or wall. You aren't sure which. The ground moves again and you feel objects flying past your head in the darkness. You almost utter an uncontrollable scream. You have lost all sense of where you are. Then it dawns. You are at sea. And the demons of the ocean must have unleashed their evil upon your ship. A chill seeps into your feet. The ship is taking on water!

You hear distant screams of panic and moans of pain as you ascend to the deck. Lightening lashes out, and from its pale, blue light you can make out where other passengers are running. You do not hesitate to follow, but there are not many left on board. As you reach the open deck, past the treasures that are on a journey to the bottom of the sea, you hear the bellow of the Captain, calling you over. It seems he has been in charge of sending off the other passengers onto smaller boats, and is now preparing the last one. You head towards him, followed by the other members of your cabin, and try to avoid looking out across the unwelcoming darkness of the churning water.

ORESTES TAPHOS

The Captain's cousin who has almost wasted away and given himself to the cold embrace of the ocean.

Use the NPC statistics for a Shipmate. He is a Byzantine, Orthodox, Skeptic who can speak Greek Latin and Arabic.

SHARK

The wolves of the sea, giving no mercy to the victims of their hunger.

Use the bestiary statistics for a shark.



SCENE 1

THE THIRSTING DEEP

Scene: The sinking merchant vessel of Georgios Polikseni. Lightning lashes the skies, rain drenches you to the bones and the ocean bucks like an angered leviathan.

Cast: Captain Georgios Polikseni, Orestes Taphos, Rolf the Bold, Sharks and Player Characters.

The PCs only have what they slept in; ie, no armour or other equipment, apart from perhaps a small weapon they kept near them.

Read the following:

Through the cracking thunder and stinging rain, you and your new companions manage to free the small row-boat from the ship,. The Captain looks at you through his dripping black hair, and asks you to help his nephew on board, indicating at the shivering boy clinging to a mast as the ship heaves. The Captain, feet as steady as if he were on land, jumps into the boat and guides the boy in.

"Now you all, there's enough room" He says.

"Hold!" bellows a deep voice from behind you in accented German (his actions also speak as strongly as his tongue if none of the characters speak German). "I will have my place on that boat!"

A blonde titan staggers from below deck and thunders towards you. "Clear my way. The boat is fit only for those in it plus me".

As he shoves past you and prepares to enter the boat, you manage to smell the scent of ale upon his breath through the salty winds that buffet you with cold fists.

*He was frightened and tried to escape,
but the fishermen caught him in their net.
The man, being an expert swimmer, had
passed their boats with a skin of Greek
fire, destined for the besieged in the city.
The fishermen landed with their captive
and after scourging him severely and gibing
at him, they sadly mangled, and then
beheaded him.*

*~ Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi
(The Itinerary of King Richard), Geoffrey de Vinsauf*

The PC's have a few options. You should reinforce the constant sinking of the ship, as well the splashing of hungry sharks, throughout whatever their course of action is. The most knowledgeable PC sees that the Captain's rations will be almost worthless with Rolf on board. PCs may try Diplomacy with Rolf, however during the negotiation he will continue to climb into the boat. He begins as unfriendly. If his disposition can be modified to indifferent, Rolf will allow the PCs to enter the boat with him. Otherwise Rolf begins to kick against the ship's wall in an attempt to desert the PCs.

Another option is to fight the giant. Rolf will surrender if badly injured and plead to enter the boat.

If Rolf starts to launch the boat into the ocean without the PCs, an Acrobatics check at DC 10 will allow a character to jump into the boat.

The PC with the highest Perception will see that a weight suspended from the ship's rigging could be used as an improvised thrown ranged weapon to swing and hit Rolf into the ocean, allowing the Captain to regain control of the boat. The AC for this manoeuvre is 20 and 3 attempts may be made before the boat is out of range.

If Rolf ends up in the sea, read the following

With a yelp of surprise, the titan falls into the black water. Lightning illuminates his stricken features as his fate dawns upon him. Grey fins edge closer to the doomed man.

"Please, your forgiveness..." His head disappears below the water. "I am your thrall should you save me!"

With his eyes wide, like a man who has had his first taste of fear, he grimaces as his head goes below the frothing sea.

The Captain wrestles with his soul and says, "my honour will not allow me to leave a drowning man at sea."

The PCs must decide whether to rescue him or not. Should they do so, Rolf will be forever in their debt, thanking them and only believing his debt to be repaid once he saves the life of every man who saved him.

Should Rolf best every attempt that the PCs make to enter the boat, they will be able to cling to a piece of wood and catch up eventually. Rolf will respect their courage against the sharks and allow them in. The battle against the sharks will have taken a toll on the PC. A PC undertaking this action will be Fatigued for D6 days.

Once all characters are on the life boat they will then have time to rest. Should Rolf have perished violently, the PCs must check for Trauma.



SCENE 2

DEAD MEN TELLING TALES

Scene: A rickety boat, almost submerged below the ocean waves. Burning sun. No land in sight.

Cast: Captain Georgios Polikseni, Orestes Taphos, [possibly Rolf the Bold], Sharks and Player Characters.

Debris from the sunken ship floats around the PCs. The sharks circle the boat. Any attempt to attack one will cause a thrashing as the other sharks take advantage of its wounds, starting a dangerous rocking of the boat. It is up to the Game Master to decide if any characters need to test to prevent being thrown overboard. Because of this it will be too dangerous to slay and eat one.

Read out the following:

The blaze of the sun wakes you. Your uncovered skin is roasting. You consider putting your hands below the salty water, just to cool your face, but think better of it. Your mind may be blurred from the constant glare of the sun, but you are not yet foolish enough to reach into the water. The slap of a shark's tail against the side of the boat reminds you of what you are afraid of.

You look at the faces of your fellow passengers that are also wary of the ocean's mercy. Captain Georgios Polikseni, the Byzantine who commanded your doomed vessel, sits quietly with his eyes closed. His face is weathered, far beyond what it should be for a man who has seen less than thirty summers. Maybe that's why you are where you are now, because of an inexperienced captain. Beside him sits his young cousin, Orestes Taphos, whose eyes never seem to leave the maelstrom of fins and teeth that circle

the small, barely floating, chunk of wood you are calling a boat. His blank stare is distant and morbid. [If applicable: Rolf lies snoring, his pale skin baking under the heat. You wonder what he will be like sober]. And then there are the others who shared your cabin before the storm, though you really do not know much about them at all.

No land breaks the endless waves. It is as much a desert as any made of sand. Only floating of debris from the cursed ship offer a change in scenery.

All characters, but Rolf, are awake now. If none of the PCs start up a conversation or one of them questions the Captain, he introduces himself and his nephew. Orestes Taphos ignores anyone who speaks to him.

Read out what the Captain has to say:

"I know there isn't much to say, but all men, [if applicable: "and I suppose, women"] are old friends at sea. You all know my name, I'm the one responsible for where you are. I've sailed through a storm every month since I became captain of that ship more than five years ago, and there's only one I didn't get through." He smiles at his joke. "This is my sister's boy, Orestes. He's been at my side since the start of the year and didn't really see himself here, I'd wager. But I suppose none of us did..." He turns away and looks into the distance, then turns back to the PC who is most likely looking at him (the PC with the highest Constitution or the one who is yet to speak). "You there, what's your story? How'd you come to be on my ship?"

Once all the PCs have finished introducing themselves as much as they plan to, night begins to fall. The character with the highest Perception sees that the rations they just ate for dinner will be their last.

SCENE 3

THE TALE OF THE PRINCE AND THE GHOUL QUEEN

Scene: A rickety boat, almost submerged below the ocean waves. Burning sun. No land in sight.

Cast: Captain Georgios Polikseni, Orestes Taphos, [possibly Rolf the Bold], Sharks and Player Characters.

The next day, leave the characters to decide what they will do, but they won't be able to do much (because they're on a boat in the middle of the ocean!). When they run out of ideas (and before they start telling a Story) read out the following:

A gleam enters the Captain's eyes. "Maybe a story will keep our minds off of our empty stomachs? It might even distract you from our other hungry friends below the water. I heard it from an old Arab friend of mine. It's called the Tale of the Prince and the Ghoul-Queen, and this is how he told it..."

Once, there was an old King who was nearing his journey to heaven. His son was growing up fast and the King was sure he'd keep his people happy and make a fine ruler.

However, the King's Vizier, didn't believe so. The Vizier thought that managing the kingdom's treasury was hard enough with the short-sighted King, but the Prince was worse, caring only for the pleasures of the harem and the glory of the hunt.

The Vizier told the boy of a great beast that laired at the base of a far-away mountain range. The Prince set off to slay it. Across the open plains, under the shadow of the tusks of the great mountains, the lone Prince raced. His fine hunting cloak whipped in the wind, revealing the blade of his ancestors, the Claw of Lions.

As the sun began to descend, he heard a soft weeping. The barren rocks began to give way to what seemed like ancient ruins, steeped in old sorcery and heathen rituals.

"My lord, save me!" came a woman's voice, followed by a hissing and a growl. A dark shape leapt passed the Prince, striking as it passed."

Captain Polikseni is the Storyteller for this and has just finished the Opening Scene. He will try to roll for the Prince to avoid the creature, using the genre of Adventure.

It is up to the players to decide what happens next. Rolf will sleep through it, so won't contribute - assuming he is still on the boat. Either will Orestes. When their turns are over, the Storyteller's challenge for the Climax is to guide the story back to the Prince escaping from the Ghoul-Queen's trap, or slaying the Vizier who sent him on the mission.



SCENE 4

THE HUNGER

Scene: A rickety boat, almost submerged below the ocean waves. Burning sun. No land in sight.

Cast: Captain Georgios Polikseni, Orestes Taphos, [possibly Rolf the Bold], Sharks and Player Characters.

The characters will now awake to experience three days of Starvation and Thirst. If Rolf is with them then their tests will be at -1 due to having more bodies to share the rations around with.

The pangs in your stomach are enough to drive you to hallucinations. The sun takes on the visage of a leering skull, and the slap of the sharks' tails sound like they are clapping and cheering at you, the jester, before a great banquet.

You spend another day, then another. You begin to lose track of time. Your skin is peeling and flakes away, all your senses are numb – except the clawing rage of hunger within you.

As the moon begins to rise one night, the Captain's hoarse voice whispers, "We need to start thinking what we're going to do here..." He trails off for a while. Then he pulls a number of lengths of wood splinters from his pocket. Even in the moonlight, you can see that one is shorter than the rest. "We'll all die if someone doesn't make a sacrifice. Old Poseidon has visited us with one of his most feared curses. But, we'll be able to go for a week on one of us. We can draw splinters to see who makes the sacrifice. What do you say, my friends?"

Allow the players to talk amongst themselves for a while. Orestes will agree almost straight away with the Captain and so will Rolf if he is still around. To any character that refuses, the Captain has this to say, "You're a selfish fool! Has your mind gone the way of your stomach – completely empty?" The PC will need to make a Will save at DC 20, and will take part in the drawing of splinters if he or she loses. If the Captain can't convince any abstainers, then before he begins to offer splinters to those participating, he will look right into the eyes of those sitting out and say, "You've been warned, coward, you're no friend of mine." The shortest splinter ends up being chosen by Orestes. Read the following:

The Captain begins to weep as Orestes just stares overboard. After a while, the Captain says, "You don't have to do it, son. I'll defend you." Orestes replies without looking away from the sharks, "No, I like my lot as well as any other." There is silence for what seems like hours. The Captain finally replies, "You should see the sun rise again at least. We should sleep." Orestes just nods his head and rests it on his hands, closing his eyes.

The characters will be so exhausted that at one point or another during the night they will all fall asleep.

"The heat of the season, too, added to the horrors of the impending famine, and want is always felt more severely by those who have been brought up in affluence."

~ Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi (The Itinerary of King Richard), Geoffrey de Vinsauf

SCENE 5

BETRAYAL

Scene: A rickety boat, almost submerged below the ocean waves. Burning sun. No land in sight.

Cast: Captain Georgios Polikseni, [possibly Rolf the Bold], Sharks and Player Characters.

The first PC to awake (the one with the highest Constitution, roll if tied with others) is greeted with the sight of a frenzy of sharks surging around the boat. It rocks dangerously. Orestes's arm has fallen over the side of the boat in his sleep. On closer inspection, the character sees that his throat has been cut and blood drips overboard, infuriating the sharks.

The PC with the lowest Wisdom (if tied with another than the lowest Constitution between them is the decider, roll if still even) is responsible for slaying Orestes in a moment of madness, but only the Game Master knows it at the moment. When the Captain awakes he finds his knife has been stolen.

Only a successful Will save at DC 22 can prevent a character from eating from the corpse. Characters that don't eat from the corpse will suffer Starvation and Thirst today and onwards with a -4 modifier. Throughout this day another Story may be told, but characters suffering from Starvation and Thirst will not be able to participate in it as they will be almost mad from famine.

As the characters begin to sleep, the PC who slew Orestes finds a bloody knife in his or her pocket. All characters need to test for Trauma tonight, and the murdering character's test is at -1. Any characters that ate from the corpse are also at -1.

SCENE 6

SANCTUARY

Scene: A beach, covered in wreckage and corpses from the ill-fated Byzantine vessel.

Cast: Captain Georgios Polikseni, [possibly Rolf the Bold], Old Woman and Player Characters.

The gnawed bones of what was once Orestes have been clutched in the hands of the starving PCs for a few days now. The PCs need to test for Starvation and Thirst.

Read out the following:

The shriek of a bird startles you. You rub your sun-burnt eyes as they adjust to the brightness of the bloated sun. Something claws at the back of your mind. That's it! Birds are only ever near land. You are close to shore! Your companions awake and realise the same thing. You all laugh madly as you guide the boat towards the gulls, trying to ignore the rotting stench and bones on the boat's floor.

Soon the faint dark line on the horizon turns into a ragged cliff-face. Upon reaching the beach you see the washed up remains of your doomed vessel and the smoke from a small village over the treacherous mountain range.

The PCs can rummage through the debris and find their soaked equipment that they had taken on their ill-fated journey. After a while, they see an old

woman hobbling towards them from the direction of a jagged cliff-face. Read out the following:

From a space between the cliffs that you would not have thought existed, hobbles a woman. She's sprightly for someone who looks like the oldest person you have ever seen. Her bony limbs thrust her robe in awkward angles and her skin looks like a weathered olive branch. She calls out in a shrill, cracked voice [in Persian accented Arabic], "Welcome strangers, welcome." She bids you to follow her. "I am healer to a nearby village, I can help cure your ills." She squints and peers over each of you. "I see you have come from a long way, but you may soon see your homes again, never worry, never worry!" She cackles, "A caravan is due in not too long a time. My merchant friend will take you to back to the cities when he arrives."

If any of the PCs are obviously Franj, she will take them aside and say, "You are a guest, so you are under my protection. But you should not wander without me in these parts. Shhh, I can not say more."

CONCLUSION

This is where the adventure ends. Each player can now roll to see if they gain an Ability.

It is up to the Tale-Weaver to decide what horrors the characters will undergo in the village by the sea, and if they will ever see civilization again...

They said: "Oh, Captain, it was by the order of Almighty Allah that the red winged Azrail took his life."

"What sort of fellow is this Azrail who takes people's lives?" said Delu Dumrul.

Now, Almighty Allah was not pleased with Dumrul's words. He said: "Look at that madman. He does not express his gratitude to me and dares to behave arrogantly in my mighty presence." He ordered Azrail: "Go and appear before that madman. Make his face pale and strangle the life out of him."

~ The Book of Dede Korkut



*The greatest cleric buried a friend he could not save;
Do you not see he brought no lesson from the grave?
The present hour is yours; the past, a babbling, dreaming queue;
And what remains has nothing sweet in store for you.*

Al-Ma'arri

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