



GREEN WORLD

By UMBERTO PIGNATELLI





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A Sword and Sorcery Savage Worlds adventure
for a party of four Seasoned characters

What is this strange forest you have woken up in? And who is the pretty girl lying
next to you?

But, more importantly, why don't you remember how you came here?

Ancient sorceries, alien creatures that would make anyone shiver, and an old friend
await you in the third adventure of the *Beasts and Barbarians* series!





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SPECIAL UMBERTO'S THANKS TO: Marta Castellano (my wife) queen of all the Amazons, Massimo Campolucci (my uncle) for being the first real Dhaar, Simone Ronco and Polliotti Yoshi (my friends) for fighting alone against the Valk demons, and Justin Russel for inspiration and support.

SPECIAL PIOTR'S THANKS TO: Umberto, Shane, Kusy, Irek and Majkosz for their help when everything was bad.

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Green World*, the third adventure of the *Beasts and Barbarians* Savage Words setting.

To play this adventure you need a copy of the core rules of Savage Worlds and the *Beasts and Barbarians* Golden Edition. You don't need to have the Fantasy Companion, but you might find it very useful.

This scenario is made for a party of four Seasoned heroes, with some experience (30-35 Experience Points is ideal), but it can be easily modified for parties of different size and experience by following the instructions in the Golden Edition.

If you want, you can play it with characters of your own designing. Otherwise, you can download a set of pregenerated heroes for free rpgnow.com.

If you don't use gaming terrain, you will find it handy to have gaming stones and several copies of Burst Templates to represent specific terrain features in fights.

The parts in *italics* are intended to be read aloud or rephrased by the Game Master to the players.

Now, if you want to play this scenario, stop here. The following sections are intended for the Game Master only.

Instead, if you are the Game Master, keep reading and prepare to venture into the Dread Sea Dominions.

CHARACTERS REQUIREMENTS

This adventure is best played by groups with mixed skills. As always in sword and sorcery settings, brave warriors are more than welcome, but several other skills can be put to good use: Healing, Stealth, Tracking and Survival, among others. In addition, knowledge of the Ancient Keronian language will make things a lot easier.

Although all these skills are useful, none are absolutely mandatory to play the scenario.

CHARACTERS HOOK

The scenario supposes that the heroes already know each other. They have come to the village of Skirmis, not far from Faberterra, to investigate the disappearance of their close friend N'Dula, an Ivory Savannah mercenary. But, as explained in

the Background for the Game Master, at the start of the adventure they have no memory of this.

BACKGROUND FOR THE GAME MASTER

No one knows where Norran Vall, until then just a petty practitioner of magic, found the Green Orb which suddenly granted him tremendous powers.

Norran took possession of an old tower near the village of Skirmis and immersed himself in the study of the strange object. The Green Orb, a glass ball the size of a small melon, constantly emits a greenish light. But its most remarkable feature is that within it is a small, self-contained and totally alien world, full of hideous monsters.

After months of examination, Norran learned how to summon the creatures and objects from the World in the Orb but he also realized that, in exchange, a creature taken from this world must be put inside the Orb: one soul (or object) for one soul is the general rule.

The village of Skirmis has plenty of commoners and poor farmers, so there was no need to worry about finding suitable candidates. Norran started sending his dark minions summoned from the Orb to kidnap them.

But the people of Skirmis weren't as helpless as one might think: they paid mercenaries from the nearby city to get rid of the sorcerer. However, all the warriors failed against Norran's hideous monsters, and were mercilessly thrown into the Green Orb. In fact, Norran found out that strong warriors' souls are much more valuable and efficient than humble farmers'.

So, he made a pact with the villagers: if they send four (number of players) tough warriors to his stronghold every full moon, he will spare the good people of Skirmis.

Nobody wants to die in an alien world, so the farmers of Skirmis accepted, and soon discovered that it wasn't so hard to keep their end of the deal. They started luring mercenaries and adventurers, promising a great reward if they dispatched the wizard, and sent them to the tower, guided by Serene, the pretty daughter of the village chief acting as a pleasant distraction. Although unwilling at first, Serene soon started to enjoy her task and became as wicked as Norran Vall. Now she is the sorcerer's faithful apprentice and lover.

Norran Vall always knows when warriors are approaching, so their fate is the same every time: the would-be heroes are captured and thrown into the Green Orb.

The player characters have come to Skirmis because a friend of theirs, an Ivory Savannah warrior named N'Dula, was hired to dispatch the wizard and is now missing. Serene and the other villagers have fed the heroes the usual tale, saying N'Dula must have been taken prisoner or killed. As can be easily guessed, the heroes now wish to avenge N'Dula and to get rid of the evil warlock once and for all.

The party sneaked into the tower, dispatched some of the dark minions and entered Norran's quarters. But, as always, he was ready for them, and with Serene's help, he managed to throw them into the Green Orb. Yet, the heroes fought valiantly and Norran was forced to cast his spell quickly. By mistake, he sent Serene into the alien world along with the adventurers...

Note: This adventure has an additional twist. The magic used to send warriors into the Green World is so strong that it erases the unwilling travelers' recent memories. The last thing the characters remember is that they were on a road leading from Faberterra (or any other major city, Game Master's choice) to the countryside, but they have forgotten both their destination and the purpose of their journey. The goal of the adventure consists in getting their memories back, finding a way out of the Green World, and then taking revenge on Norran Vall, Serene and the villagers of Skirmis.

NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE:

MEMORIES

Heroes with amnesia are a classic feature of many stories. During the adventure, certain parts are marked as "Memories". Their purpose is to help the characters shed light on their own past, and this is why the Game Master should provide plenty of details. The Memories are usually triggered by a roll of some type. Encourage the players to tell their companions about what they have just remembered while staying in character. Good performances should be rewarded with a Bennie.

PART 1: ALIEN AWAKENING

You wake up among the ruins of a small building, on the top of a hill. You are surrounded by a vast forest and, from your higher position, you have the impression of being on an island in a sea of trees. You feel dizzy and confused, and you have no idea of where you are and how you got here. Very little is left of the building, just a few blocks of stone and a broken column, engulfed in vines you have never seen before. To your great

surprise, there is a blonde girl sleeping on the ground next to you, her chest rising and falling as she breathes peacefully. Funny, you think you should know her, but you cannot remember anything about her.

The heroes have some time to take in how strange the place is (see the Green World Environment sidebar) before the girl wakes up. Then, she stretches, opens her beautiful eyes, and looks around as amazed as the heroes.

"My name is Serene" she says in a startled voice "and I am the daughter of the village chief of Skirmis. Where are we? And, more importantly, who are you?"

Just like the heroes, Serene remembers very little of her past. She has no memory of her relationship with Norran Vall and, in this part of the scenario, she is only an innocent girl.

With a Common Knowledge roll, heroes familiar with the lands around Faberterra have heard of Skirmis before, but know nothing specific about the village. The same information can be provided by Serene herself.

With a successful Knowledge (History) roll, a character points out that the ruined building displays certain features of the Tricornian construction style. If he scores a raise, he discovers the structure was built by the ancient Keronians, ancestors of the Tricornians. A hero of Tricornian origin can obtain all the above info with a simple Common Knowledge roll.

You look for a path, but the forest goes on forever, all around you, as far as the misty horizon.

Only in one direction, which you decide is 'North' for simplicity's sake, you can barely make out towers and palaces, probably a city of some sort.

The party doesn't have many choices, besides exploring the forest a little and then making for the city.

THE GREEN WORLD

Origin. *This pocket world, a sort of rift between dimensions, came to the Dread Sea Dominions when an ancient Keronian priest acquired the Green Orb from a very powerful supernatural being, a Demon Lord called Tirain. When the Dread Star fell, to escape the cataclysm, the Keronian priest took refuge in the World inside the Orb with other priests, followers and slaves. He built a small city, but his reign didn't last long: the slaves, the small ancestors of the Pygmies, corrupted by the inherent evil of the Green World, rebelled and murdered their masters.*

The Green World is similar to the Dread Sea Dominions, but there are several small differences too. Here follows a brief description of the main ones. The Game Master should feel free to add other features to make the exploration and discovery of the Green World more interesting.

Light. *The Green World is perpetually immersed in a soft greenish light, with a different spectrum than the one in our world. This creates a range of colors wholly unknown to man but doesn't affect visibility conditions in any way.*

Day/Night Cycle. *There is no day/night cycle in the Green World, hence the amount of light is always the same.*

Different Ecology. *Many plants and animals in the Green World are not exactly the same as their counterparts in the Dread Sea Dominions. Survival rolls to find food suffer -4 before the characters learn to recognize them (reduce the penalty by one for each week spent in the Green World).*

Stars. *There are no stars in the sky, which always looks greenish and milky.*

Size. *The Green World is small and finite. Its borders are the outskirts of the forest, and beyond there are just impenetrable fog. People venturing into the fog usually reappear in another part of the forest, while a few simply disappear.*

THE MANY FACES OF PERIL

You start exploring the forest, and find it very strange. Almost all the trees look vaguely familiar, but you cannot clearly recognize them as species that you know. The bark is either too rough or too dark, the foliage either too thin or too green, and so on. The small beasts around you are different too: weird four-winged insects almost seem to sing while they dance in the air.

At a certain point, Serene, hungry and curious, picks up a green fruit resembling a wild apple but, when she opens it, a putrid, reeking liquid flows out and she throws it away in disgust. This place is definitely very strange.

The forest becomes thicker as you proceed and, at times, you are completely surrounded by it. You haven't seen any sign of human presence yet.

Just then, something wholly unexpected happens. A face emerges from the thick foliage and stares at you. The stranger is a middle-aged man with a pointed beard and a sly face that inspires no trust.

He speaks directly to Serene.



"My dear, what are you doing here? Leave these morons and come home! I am waiting for you!"

The girl seems totally surprised: "Nor... Norran!? Where... where I am? Please take me home!"

The girl moves toward the vegetation, while other faces appear among the foliage (one per hero). They belong to close friends or relatives of each of the heroes. The Faces speak of things that only true friends or relatives of the heroes would

know, and inviting the characters to enter the foliage. The characters are seriously puzzled but, being clever adventurers, will probably decide not to enter the foliage. Serene, instead, makes a terrible mistake: she takes a couple of steps toward the face, triggering the following trap.

Quick as devils, several animated vines lash out, grappling the girl and trying to take her into the foliage! Serene screams in terror, while the face of the sly man continues to talk, trying to soothe her:

"Don't worry Serene, come in and everything will be alright."

After a few seconds, other animated vines lash out and this time the targets are you!

The heroes must defend themselves!

The faces and tentacles are part of a single vegetable being, simply known as the Plant. The faces are intelligent fruits with strong emphatic powers, which can take on the shape of their targets' best friends. By probing into their victims' minds, they always know what to say to be persuasive. It is all part of a clever method to lure the victim close enough to be captured by the tentacles.

The battle area is a clearing of roughly circular form, 6" in radius. Beyond the edge of the clearing there is only very thick foliage (see below).

Place the heroes in the center of the clearing. Put the Plant's Faces along the edge of the clearing, at least 4" away from each other, trying to cover its entire perimeter.

Serene is not present since, at the start of the first round, the tentacles drag her into the foliage.

(M) Plant's Faces (1 per hero): See page 43.

TERRAINS AND PROPS

- **Thick Foliage:** Past the edge of the clearing, the vegetation is very dense. It counts as Difficult Ground and prevents the use of ranged weapons. In addition, if a hero ends his turn in the thick foliage, the Plant tries to hinder and distract him, by moving its branches and so on. It counts as a Trick made with Agility d6.

THE DRAINER

You have dealt with the tentacles, but they have taken Serene. You hear her screams become fainter as she is brought farther away.

If the heroes want to save the girl, they must cut a path through the vegetation. The branches and leaves seem to hiss and try to hinder them in every way. Cutting a path requires the heroes to make damage rolls with melee weapons against the forest's generic Toughness of 5. Each hero can inflict the damage once each round (damage rolls don't ace, but using fire or the Woodsman Edge grants +2 to the rolls).

When the heroes manage to inflict three wounds, go on with the rest of the scene. Count aloud the number of rounds the party needs to fight off the vegetation. This number doesn't actually matter, but adds a feel of urgency to the situation.

You emerge from the thick foliage in a small empty area. The ground is a mass of pulsating roots, branching out from a large pit in the ground, from where you hear Serene's feeble screams.

You look into the pit and see a terrible scene.

The shaft, at least twenty feet deep, is completely covered by vegetable matter. On the bottom, Serene lies unconscious on an enormous flower. She probably got so scared she passed out.

After a few moments, an enormous tentacle rises up from the side of the flower. It is quite different from the previous ones: it is much bigger and ends with a cruel looking sting, the size of a small sword. The tentacle arches back, emit-

ting a low hiss. Its intent clear: impaling Serene and drain her living fluids!

Just then, the girl comes around and lets out a terrible scream.

The party must act quickly and heroically if they want to save Serene. Any player saying that his hero immediately jumps into the pit must be rewarded with a Benjie, because this is the way Sword and Sorcery action works.

Regardless of the heroes' choices, the tentacle's first attack goes astray, so the characters have time to save the girl even if they don't throw themselves into the pit at once. From the second round on, the stinger-tentacle acts normally.

The combat area is the pit, 8" wide and 20" deep. Place Serene in the center of the pit. She uses the Defend action each round. The stinger-tentacle is placed in contact with her. Despite having roots, it is long enough to reach any part of the pit, so it is considered a Size 2 creature that can freely move on the battlefield.

Whenever a character is in the pit, the stinger-tentacle immediately forgets the girl and concentrates on the intruder.

(WC) Drainer Tentacle (1): See page 39.

TERRAINS AND PROPS

- **Jumping into the Pit:** The pit's bottom is quite springy due to the vegetable matter, so falling onto it only causes half damage (1d6).
- **Memory – the Drainer fears fire:** At the start of his turn, each hero is allowed a Smarts (-4) roll. With a success, he remembers the creature's weakness: fire. This is a true memory: before entering

Norran's tower, the party fought a similar guardian, brought from the Green World by the evil sorcerer, and, during the fight, discovered its weakness.

- **Thorn Spitters:** The Plant intervenes in defense of the Drainer. Any time an Ace or a Joker is dealt to a character involved in the fight, 1d4 thorn spitter plants sprout from the ground, each d6" away in a random direction from the Drainer. These plants are rooted and cannot move, but they can shoot very sharp thorns (Shooting d6, Damage: 2d6, Range: 4/8/16). Each plant has Toughness 5 and Parry 2.

A PAST VICTIM

The Drainer is finally down. While Serene is being led out of the pit (she is *very* grateful toward her savior), the party makes a terrible discovery: on the vegetable mass, there is a half decomposed corpse, clearly belonging to a man. The heroes inspect the body and find out he was a soldier of some type, wearing leather armor and a short sword. In his pocket they find a bronze key, with a bunch of grapes engraved on it.

Memory – I have one too! Pick a hero at random. He suddenly realizes he has a very similar key in his pouch. It is the key to a room in the Good Grape Inn of Skirmis, where both the heroes and the unfortunate mercenary stayed while in the village (and where they also left some of their luggage). With a Smarts roll the character remembers that he stayed at the inn with his comrades, but has no memory of why they were in Skirmis.

Note that at this point of the story Serene is still innocent. Even if questioned, she remembers nothing about Norran Vall, the Grape Inn, and so on. She pro-

nounced his name before, but only by instinct, and cannot remember who he is.

THE SACRIFICE

After your narrow escape from the many-faced plant, you advance more cautiously. After a while, you come upon an old path through the trees and you can finally move a little faster. A couple of hours later you realize the ruined city is very close, even though you can't see it yet. Suddenly you hear a human voice not far from where you are standing.

"Bastards! Let me go! Let me go!" a man is begging.

The heroes approach the area with caution and witness the following scene.

In the middle of a clearing there is a group of humanoid, dwarfed creatures. They are less than five feet tall, but stout and tough looking. Their complexion, enlivened by colorful tattoos, is extremely white, as if they recoiled from the scarce light that haunts this cursed place. But the weirdest things are the big masks they wear, which completely cover their heads and represent distorted and exaggerated human faces.

With a Common Knowledge roll, the heroes recognize these creatures as Pygmies, or some very similar race. They are at least five times as many as the heroes.

The strange creatures are carrying a ragged man, who is fiercely trying to free himself but to no avail. In the center of the clearing there is a rough altar, with four metal manacles attached to it. With nimble moves, the Masked Pygmies close the manacles around the man's arms and legs, while an impressive fel-

low, probably a shaman, chants strange incantations upon the altar while moving his ancient amber staff. You notice the staff's head bears three carved faces.

Then, the Shaman lifts his head and let out a terrible, high-pitched howl, a sound no human throat should be able to produce. The other members of the group imitate him, their shrieks ringing in the air. At this point, they quickly run off into the vegetation, leaving the poor victim to face some terrible doom.

The man cannot move and yet he shouts with all his strength: "Norran Vall! Cursed be your name for letting me die in this place! If the Gods' justice really exists, you'll be sent to a hell ten times worse than this one! Do you hear me, son of a thousand fathers?"

The clearing is empty now. If the heroes want, they can approach the altar and try to free the poor man.

The man is shabby, and madness flashes in his eyes. When he sees the heroes and especially Serene, he can't believe what he is seeing.

"Serene? Is that really you? Have you too suffered this terrible doom? Tell me, how are my wife and son?" Serene is as puzzled as you are: none of you recognizes the man.

At that very moment, you hear the sound of wood being snapped, as if something very big was approaching.

The heroes have very little time to free Ares (this is the prisoner's name). The squat stone is actually an ancient Keroni-an altar bearing powerful engraved glyphs and the metal manacles restraining the man are kept closed by magic.

The four manacles can be broken in three ways:

First, a hero who knows the Ancient Keronian language can make knowledge (Arcana) roll and recite an incantation to pry them open. A single roll, requiring a full round, is needed to break each of the four manacle.

Second, a manacle can be opened with a Lockpicking (-2) roll.

Third, the manacles can be smashed. They have Toughness 8 (2).

The party can combine different methods to open the manacles, but not more than two heroes can work on a manacle in the same round.

The heroes have six rounds to free Ares. If they haven't freed him at the end of the third round, Ares feels his end is near and hastily speaks to the party:

"Hear me! Tell N'Dula that I managed to cross the forest! He is right! There is nothing, nothing beyond! We are trapped in this place forever!"

Memory – N'Dula The heroes must make a Spirit roll. The highest rolling character realizes he knows N'Dula. He is a friend of the heroes and the reason for their trip to Skirmis, since they were looking for him.

This is the important piece of information the heroes should retrieve from Ares. It doesn't really matter whether they manage to save him, even though his rescue will grant them an useful ally (see sidebar).

At this point, the origin of the loud noise is revealed.

ARES

This thirty-year old man comes from Skirmis and is one of Norran Vall's first victims, kidnapped before the sorcerer made his evil pact with the villagers. Ares is the best hunter and tracker in Skirmis, and this is why he has managed to survive alone in the Green World until now. If the party saves him, Ares becomes their loyal friend and follows them until the end of the scenario as an Ally controlled by the players. He is a Survivor Extra with the Woodsman and Alertness Edge. His personality traits (as per the Ally Personality Table) are Experienced and Ob-servant.

THE GREEN FURY

The alien forest spits out a creature born of a mad god's nightmare. It is a sort of centipede, fifteen feet tall and at least twenty yards long, with a thick, greenish carapace. Its eyes, as big as shields and probably harder, look at you with mindless hunger, and you know perfectly well it could swallow a man whole. The creature opens its mouth and starts moving toward you!

Fighting this creature without siege weapons is impossible. The heroes' only chance is fleeing.

If Ares is free, he leads the escape. Otherwise, the manacled man shouts:

"Leave, you fools, I am doomed! The city is near! Tell N'Dula what I said!"

This is a Chase sequence, part in the forest and part in the plain near the city. It is an extended (10 rounds) Chase based on Agility.

At certain predetermined rounds, the heroes are presented with options that influence the current and following round of the Chase. The Green Fury too must

choose one of the two paths (Game Master's choice).

When on a certain path, the Green Fury cannot attack characters on the other path. On marked rounds (1, 3, 5, 7) the paths rejoin, so the heroes are all together again.

For the sake of simplicity, don't roll for Serene during the Chase, but consider her "attached" to a character. Ares, instead, moves independently.

Given her massive size, consider that the Green Fury can attack in melee even at Short Range, but suffering -2 to the Fighting roll.

(M) The Green Fury (1): See page 40.

ROUND 1

You are frantically running in the forest. In front of you there is the path you are

on now, while to your left the vegetation is thicker. Which way to go?

Clear Path. Heroes who choose the clear path move faster, gaining +1 to their Chase rolls. The flipside is that the Green Fury is faster too, gaining +2 to its Chase roll.

Thick Forest. It is harder for the heroes to move in the thick of the vegetation and, unless they have the Woodsman or Savage Edge, they suffer -2 to their Chase roll. Yet the Green Fury is even more hindered: it suffers -4 to Chase rolls.

ROUND 3

You slow down for a moment to catch your breath and assess the situation. In front of you there is a large crevasse, but a fallen tree allows you to cross it if you aren't afraid of heights. To your right there is a steep hill going up.



Fallen Tree. Characters who decide to use the fallen tree as a bridge must make an additional Agility roll (doesn't count as an extra action). In case of success they manage to get across without any problem. Failing means that they slip down, but they somehow manage to hang onto the tree. A Strength (-4) roll, which can be cooperative, is needed to regain solid ground. When the Green Fury moves onto the bridge (round 4), it collapses under its weight. It automatically fails the next Chase roll.

Up the Hill. Running uphill is more difficult. Each hero must make a Vigor roll or suffer a level of Fatigue (automatically recovered at the start of round 7). When a character reaches the top of the hill (round 4), he sees several boulders. With little effort he can make them roll down the slope to hit the Green Fury. It is an opposed roll between the hero's Strength (can be a cooperative roll) and the beast's Agility. For each success and raise of the hero, the Green Fury suffers -2 to the next Chase Roll. This action can be made instead of the hero's Chase roll.

ROUND 5

In front of you there is the vertical wall of a steep hill. Only a narrow fissure, a couple of yards wide, allows you to proceed, and you don't know if it is a dead end. To your left there is a downward slope, full of grass and rocks.

Narrow Passage. Taking the narrow passage poses no particular risk to the heroes, and luckily it isn't a dead end. The fissure is too large for the Green Fury and, if it decides to go this way, it uses its huge mass to break the walls of the passage, causing rock and debris to fall. Any hero who draws a black face card from the Ac-

tion Deck must make an Agility roll or suffer 2d6 damage from falling stones.

Down the Hill. Running down the hill speeds up the Chase. Both the heroes and the Green Fury gain an additional Action Card. On the bad side, running among the rock is dangerous, so the heroes encounter a Complication when any black card (not only Club) is dealt. Hitting an obstacle means the hero has tripped over a rock. Being so big, the Green Fury ignores all Complications.

ROUND 7

You finally leave the forest! A walled city stands in front of you. It is less than two hundred yards, but the flat ground offers no cover. You must run for it with all the strength that you have!

On flat ground, the Green Fury gains +2 to Chase rolls. At the start of Round 8 the heroes spot several figures on the ramparts, shouting encouragements (all the heroes receive a Bennie at this point). The Chase ends at round 9. Proceed with the following part.

A mighty voice roars from the city's walls: "Now!"

Then you hear a hiss and something big shoots off from the walls toward the monster. It is a massive ballista projectile, and it strikes the Green Fury's right eye. The beast starts running in circles, mad with pain and rage, and completely forgets you. In the end, it goes back into the forest, but you don't turn around to look – you are too busy climbing the rope ladder that the city defenders have thrown down. The black hand helping you up onto the walls is your old friend N'Dula's.

PART 2: GREEN MEMORIES

"I knew I could count on you to come and rescue me, brothers!" N'Dula is always the same: a big, black warrior, with a scarred face and a Mohawk. He embraces you warmly.

"I am sorry I dragged you into this mess!" he growls.

The heroes haven't the faintest idea of what he is talking about. They remember they were looking for N'Dula, but nothing more.

After this, several rough looking people, armed with crude spears, maces and other improvised weapons, approach and congratulate you.

"They are other Survivors." N'Dula says. "Mostly mercenaries like me but also some good villager of Skirmis, all victims of the evil sorcerer and his foul magic.

That damned Norran Vall! But you don't remember him, do you? Neither Norran nor the Orb, right? No problem, it is normal after the Trip, but we have ways to let your memories return. In the meantime, welcome to the City of Fungi, our safe haven in this crazy world."

You look around with great curiosity. You are in a small fortified city with tall walls, vaguely resembling the palaces of the princes of Tricarnia, but with many elements you don't recognize.

The place looks abandoned and everything is covered in a thick layer of grayish moss and fungi.

In truth the city was built by the Keronians, ancestors of the Tricarnians. Characters who recognized the style of the ruins at the beginning of the adventure automatically know this; the others are allowed a Knowledge (History) roll or a Common Knowledge roll if they are of Tricarnian origin.

"We were lucky to find this place." N'Dula says "It is easily defendable. We also found an old ballista, of strange design. It was broken, but you know there is no siege engine I cannot fix. We only have three darts, but I was glad to use one to save your skin." Your old friend grins, pointing toward the war machine he used against the Green Fury.

"And for the moment we have no shortage of food. Most of these fungi are edible, so we can survive without having to go into that horrible forest to hunt."

If Ares was killed, this is a good time for the heroes to inform N'Dula about the man's last words ("There is nothing beyond the forest"). Otherwise, Ares himself speaks to N'Dula, who seems to be the man in charge.

"So it is as I suspected." N'Dula sighs. "Ares was our best man in the wild. I sent him to explore the forest, to discover if there is something beyond – but there is nothing. This place is a sort of magical prison, and we are locked within. But your faces tell me you don't understand. Don't worry: it will all be revealed this evening."

Meanwhile, those who are from Skirmis have surrounded Serene and are asking for news about their families, but the poor girl cannot remember and starts weeping in frustration.

"Don't worry, girl. You'll remember. All of us will remember." N'Dula says, consoling her.

MUSHROOM SOUP

The heroes have some time to rest before the evening. They can explore the city or look for medical assistance. One of the Survivors is quite skilled in medicine (Healing d8) and can patch up any wounded character (they are considered to be in the Golden Hour).

In the end, evening comes. In truth, there is no way to keep track of the passing of time but, at a certain point, all the Survivors, except a couple of sentinels on the battlements, gather around a fire, eating pieces of tasteless baked mushrooms.

At the end of the poor dinner, N'Dula comes to you with a big bowl full of steaming soup.

"Everyone feels confused when they get here. In certain cases, as yours, they have lost part of their memories. They usually come back, but the process is slow. Shortly after our arrival in this place, we discovered that certain mushrooms can help in retrieving lost memories."

Then he offers you the cup.

"Drink with us." He says.

All the heroes and Serene are supposed to drink the soup. If someone refuses, N'Dula shrugs and the ceremony goes on. Non-drinking heroes are excluded from the collective memory recovery described below.

After you swallow a good mouthful, the bowl is passed to another Survivor.

"Sometimes the memories just don't want to come back but, if we all drink, our minds become one and the combined strength of us all will aid you in retrieving what you have lost."

Soon after drinking, a feeling of peace and drowsiness comes upon you.

You fall asleep.

Now the heroes have a sort of vision, revealing what happened in the past. The dream is a collective one, shared by all the minds of those who have drunk the mushroom potion.

The dream is a stressful situation and only a collective effort can make it continue until its conclusion. To simulate this, the dream is considered a Dramatic Task, with some little tweak. First, all the heroes participates to the task, rolling on Spirit, and their successes are summed up (raise counts as extra successes)

If the total of successes scored for the current round is greater than the required number, the heroes "live" this part of the dream and go on with the next one. If the requirement is not reached, the dream goes on, but the heroes (the whole party, regardless of individual successes or failures on the Spirit roll) must make a Vigor roll. In case of failure, they suffer a level of Fatigue. A character Exhausted by the dream simply wakes up and cannot roll on spirit anymore. Any Fatigue caused by the dream is recovered in ten minutes. The presence of the other Survivors adds a roll with Spirit d6 plus the Wild Die to the heroes' efforts.

The successes of each round are counted separately, they don't sum up between rounds.

ROUND 1 – BEGINNING**[1 SUCCESS REQUIRED]**

“You are on the road from Faberterra to Skirmis, a small village in the countryside. You are looking for N’Dula, a close friend of yours. N’Dula is a mercenary and he has a job in Skirmis, but you know nothing of it. However, he has gone missing and you have waited two weeks before going to Skirmis to investigate.”

ROUND 2 – HIRED**[2 SUCCESSES REQUIRED]**

Fading. Some time passed from Step 1.

“You are in the common room of the Good Grape Inn in Skirmis. The village chief is speaking to you. His pretty daughter, Serene, is with him. “We have a terrible problem. Norran Vall, the evil warlock living in an old tower outside the village, kidnaps our people for his foul experiments. We hired several mercenaries to get rid of him, but they never returned. Your friend N’Dula was one of them. If you kill the mage, we’ll give you a good reward. And maybe you can find your comrade alive or, at least, avenge his death.”

ROUND 3 – PLANNING**THE ASSAULT****[3 SUCCESSES REQUIRED]**

Fading. Some time passes. The heroes understand they accepted the mission.

“You are outside the wizard’s tower, studying the situation from a hidden position in the forest. A flickering green light comes from the highest window of the tower.

“It is there all the time, day and night.” Serene whispers.

The pretty chief’s daughter is with you because she knows the tower very well. As a child, before Norran’s arrival, she used to play in the deserted tower and knows a secret passage to sneak inside.”

ROUND 4 – TREASON!**[4 SUCCESSES REQUIRED]**

Fading.

You are in the tower, just outside the warlock’s study. You have fought many strange creatures to reach it, among them a plant with many faces.

You rush in hoping to surprise Norran Vall, but the evil wizard is ready for you. The room is filled with the greenish luminescence emanating from green orb resting on a table. “So you have come to kill me, haven’t you?” Norran says amusedly.

The heroes recognize Norran’s face as the one that spoke to Serene during the fight with the Plant.

“Well, to me you are just souls to send into the Orb, right Serene?” “Right, Master.” You turn around and the girl throws a handful of powder over you. Your muscles immediately become stiff. The girl laughs wickedly but, with his last strength, one of you manages to grab her arm. Serene cries and everything turns green.

The heroes and the others Survivors awake. All the heroes who have managed to complete the dream sequence gain a Bennie.

The Survivors already knew the story of the Orb but never suspected Serene was involved. They had never seen her enter the wizard's room, she only accompanied them to the door of his lab.

So now all the Survivors are mad at Serene, even her former village friends, and they speak of lynching her and even worse things.

Given the confusion, it takes some time for them to realize that the girl is nowhere to be seen.

THE JADE PALACE

Here is what happened while the heroes and the Survivors were dreaming.

Serene awoke a few minutes before the others and felt extremely shaken. She lived the dream from her own point of view and recovered all her memories. From this point on, she isn't an innocent girl anymore, but the wicked protégée of an evil warlock.

Anticipating how the others would react, she left the ceremony before their awakening and looked for a safe place, away from the rage of the other Survivors. Her wanderings took her in front of a slender palace with deep, shadowy arches and an elegant jade gate. The front door was magically sealed with an ancient word of power but, thanks to Norran Vall's teachings, Serene managed to open it. Certain of having found a good hiding place, the girl walked in.

Let us now return to the Survivors.

Both the heroes and the Survivors are looking for Serene. The former have many questions for her, while the latter want to

punish her for her evil deeds. The sentinels, who didn't take part in the collective dream, saw her leave a few minutes ago and say she went toward the center of the city. The Survivors and the heroes split into groups and a collective search for Serene starts. The heroes should find the girl before the other Survivors or the situation might turn ugly for her.

The heroes need to make a simple Tracking roll, which can be cooperative. In case of failure, the heroes find the palace where Serene is hiding a little too late. A group of four Survivors are standing by the gate (see below), debating whether to enter, and the heroes must convince or force them to go away.

It isn't difficult to figure out where Serene has gone. Her small footprints are easy to spot since the ground is covered in fungi and strange moss. The girl's tracks end right by the gate of a remarkable palace in the center of the city.

N'Dula says: "There's no way she can hide from us because she cannot have entered that palace. It has only one door and we never managed to open it. It wasn't built from human hands and I have the impression we are lucky it is sealed."

To everyone's surprise, N'Dula is soon proved wrong. The door is ajar and Serene's footprints lead into the building. The heroes observe the door and see that, just like the gate, it is made of polished jade. It has no handle and it is decorated with strange glyphs. With a Knowledge (Arcana) roll any hero can recognize the glyphs as magical seals of Keronian origin (the roll isn't necessary if the character opened the manacles of the Keronian altar in Part 1). Reciting the right sequence of symbols with the correct intonation

causes the door to open, and the heroes wonder how a simple country girl has acquired such skill, which normally belongs only to powerful Tricarnian sorcerers.

A dark corridor leads deep in the building. There is an atmosphere of impending doom and you constantly have the feeling that malevolent eyes are staring you from shadows.

Before the corridor ends, you hear Serene sobbing: "Norran, my love, my master, please, if you can hear my words, tell me how to leave this place! Please, I don't want to die here!"

If they move silently, the heroes can peep into the room without warning the girl.

The hall is perfectly round and windowless. The only light comes from a circular glass window in the ceiling, made of polished pieces of amber, which act as a sort of lens creating a halo of green light in the very center of the room. Serene is right there, sitting in the dirt and sobbing. She looks a lot more like a scared child now than like the hireling of an evil mage.

Just behind Serene stands an imposing statue, representing a hideous creature. It is twice the size of a man, with four legs, sharp claws, and a horrible centipede head that reminds you of the Green Fury's ugly face.

There is no way to sneak into the room unnoticed, so the heroes decide to show themselves.

Startled by your arrival, Serene suddenly stands up. She has found a rusty dagger somewhere, and points it toward her chest. "Stay away from me!" she shouts

"I'd rather kill myself than be tortured by you!"

Serene is mentally shaken. The revelations she lived in the dream shocked her, but she will probably not kill herself.

However, the heroes have a much bigger problem: the idol behind Serene starts moving, slowly and silently! It steps down from its pedestal without Serene noticing it!

If the heroes warn her, Serene thinks they are trying to distract her. Only when the creature puts its cold hand on her soft skin, does the girl realize what's going on. She panics, while the beast opens its huge mouth to eat her!

The heroes must fight the abomination. The battleground is the round room, 12" in radius, with a single 3"-wide door along the southern wall. Place the Monster Idol and Serene in the center of the room, 1" away from each other, while the heroes are placed in the southern half of the room, at least 6" away from the girl.

The Idol forgets about Serene as soon as it is attacked. First, it tries to use its breath attack on as many opponents as it can. Then it goes into melee, trying to Grab and Throw a target (see below). It also tries to stay within the Cone of Green Light as long as possible.

Serene grabs the first opportunity to move away from the fight, and then every round she is allowed a Knowledge (Arcana) roll to discover the Monster Idol's weakness (see Monster Idol description on page 42). When she finds out, she immediately tells the heroes.

After the battle, go on with the next section.

(WC) **Monster Idol (1):** See page 42.

(M) **Serene the Wicked (1):** See page 44.

(M) **N'Dula the Mercenary (1):** See page 41.

Serene is no longer the innocent girl the heroes met in Part 1. She has now reverted to her evil ways.

TERRAINS AND PROPS

- **Cone of Green Light:** The green light has a positive effect on the Monster Idol, as described in its stats. To represent the cone, place a Medium Burst Template in the center of the battlefield.
- **Grab and Throw:** One of the Monster Idol's favorite tactics consists in grappling a victim and throwing him against another enemy. It is a two-action sequence: first, it grabs the victim (normal grapple rules, ignoring the multi action penalty due to the Four Armed Special Ability of the monster) and, if successful, it executes a Throwing roll (Range: 3/6/12, -2 for multi action penalty). Both the human projectile and any target within a Small Burst Template suffer 2d8 damage.

THE RIDDLE

For the second time in the scenario, the heroes have fought to save Serene, though she probably doesn't deserve it.

After the combat, the party has a number of questions for Serene: for example, how she managed to open a passage back to their world.

"Norran Vall taught me many things, among them ancient Keronian, the language of the demons. I read the inscription on the door, and it simply opened." The girl says, with a suspicious look in her eyes you have never seen before. But then she goes back to her old self.

THE RIDDLE

While exploring the room, the heroes find a very interesting inscription on the walls and several ancient pictures that help clarifying it. It is written in ancient Keronian. If no character knows this dead language, Serene translates it.

*From a sky that did roar and burn,
To a prison of emerald.
We wait the time of our return.*

*When three-faced key is set in the green sun,
And Lord Tirain's name thrice is heard,
Back to our ancient home we shall come.*

The riddle isn't very difficult to interpret, but the painting on the walls helps clarify it (see sidebar: Keronian Paintings). The Keronians who fled to the Green World ("a prison of emerald") when the Dread Star fell ("From a sky that did roar and burn") left a door to their world, hoping to use it in future ("We await the time of our return"). Unluckily they all died out before they could return. The door is placed in this very room: the strange lens in the ceiling projects a cone of light (reminiscent of the sunset), which indicates the position of the door.

THE KEYHOLE AND THE KEY

Exploring the dirty floor, in the very center of the cone the heroes find a small round hole, big enough to slot a staff of some type (the three-faced key) into it.

What is the key the riddle refers to? It is the scepter of the old king of the city, a jade staff with three demon heads on its pommel (the faces of the Demon Lord

of Tirain). The heroes have already seen it, in the hands of the evil Shaman who tried to sacrifice Ares to the Green Fury. If the heroes don't make the connection, the various paintings on the walls offer a very clear clue: they depict the king of the city wielding the same staff they saw in the hands of the Shaman.

But the staff (which the party still doesn't have) isn't enough to open the door. They also need to find out the true name of the Demon Lord Tirain, the alien creature who gave the Orb to the Keronians.

At this point, Serene offers the heroes a deal. She knows the Demon's true name but won't reveal it. If the party finds the key, then she will say the name to open the door.

The heroes must accept the deal if they want to get back home.

KERONIAN PAINTINGS

On the walls in the inner room of the Jade Palace there are paintings and old writings in ancient Keronian, which Serene can translate. They provide plenty of info about what happened in this place.

First Painting. *A group of people (Keronians) walk through a curious triangular door made of green light to flee a land which is about to be hit by a meteorite (the Dread Star).*

They take several short and tough men with them, who look very much like Pygmies. The short men appear to be slaves, as they wear chains around their necks. Yet, they wear no masks.

Smarts roll: the triangular door can easily be the representation of a cone of light.

Second Painting. *The Keronians, ruled by a king wielding a three-faced scepter, order the slaves to build a city. The city is surrounded by a big forest and, in the middle of*

it, stands a green centipede, very similar to the Green Fury. It is hard to tell how big the centipede actually is.

The three-faced scepter is the one the heroes saw in the Pygmy Shaman's hands.

Third Painting. *The slaves revolt, slaughter the Keronian king and flee into the forest. From now on, the Pygmies are represented wearing masks and the centipede is always with them. The beast looks smaller than the Green Fury the heroes saw and it is hard to tell if it's the very same centipede, grown bigger in time, or a different one. The Pygmy leader is now represented wielding the three-faced staff. The writings under the painting also say that the Pygmies have given themselves the name of "Karun", an untranslatable word.*

Fourth Painting. *After the Karun revolt, the city of the Keronians falls into a decline. They are too few to re-capture their former slaves and choose to wall themselves inside their city (they are depicted on the battlements, wielding spears).*

The series of paintings ends, probably because the Keronians died out.

PART 3: EVIL LURKS IN THE DARK

So the heroes must go into the forest, find the Pygmy Shaman, take his staff, and return to the city to open the door.

N'Dula has firsthand information on the Masked Pygmies: they are a devious and very dangerous race, more perilous than many of the alien creatures living in the forest around the ruined city.

They attack and kidnap every man fool enough to venture into the woods, and

all of them have never been seen again (but the party knows they have probably been sacrificed to the Green Fury). They also raided the ruins a few times, looking for prisoners, but the Survivors, led by N'Dula, drove them off. Another puzzling fact about them is that they always take their dead ones away from the battlefield, so nobody really knows what is hidden behind their masks.

They probably have a hideout of some type in the forest, but no Survivor has ever managed to find it and come back. So, if they want to find the Shaman and his staff, the heroes must return to the altar of the sacrifice and try to track the savages down.

Serene doesn't feel safe with the Survivors, so she asks the heroes to go with them. She prefers unknown dangers to the rage of the men she has sent into the Green World.

N'Dula is the best fighter among the Survivors, so he offers to go with his friends. Yet, the players should not accept his offer without considering its consequences. N'Dula is the only one who can keep the Survivors together. If they were attacked during his absence, they would most likely be overwhelmed.

Once a decision is taken, the heroes go back into the dark forest. They must advance carefully to avoid the Green Fury and the many other dangers that might lurk in the thick foliage...

THE GREAT TREE AMBUSH

You trace your steps back through the forest, until you finally find the clearing with the altar where poor Ares was chained. The place is extremely quiet;

neither the Pygmies nor the Green Fury are around.

The trail of the Pygmies is quite easy to find, so a single Tracking roll is required to follow them.

The trail leads you to an area of the forest that looks truly remarkable. It resembles an overgrown park and among the thick vegetation you spot old statues, a ruined stone gazebo and even a dry fountain.

All these ruins are clearly Keronian. The masters of the city must have decided to build a park in this area.

In the end, you come to a shady clearing occupied by a lone, titan-sized tree, a sort of baobab whose branches are large enough to cover a vast area.

You notice an opening in the gnarled roots of this giant tree. The dark passage goes deep underground and the trail you are following leads right to it.

The opening seems unprotected, but it isn't. Several Pygmies are hiding in the lower branches of the tree, ready to attack any trespassers.

The battle area is the whole clearing, an irregular shape, 18" by 18", with the trunk of the baobab in its center (see below). Place the heroes at least 6" away from the southern border of the battlefield. If they haven't spread out to scout the area, they are within 2" of each other.

The Pygmies are among the branches, ready to attack. They start on Hold, while the heroes must check for surprise.

Every hero is attacked by two Pygmies who literally jump onto his head, while the others stay in the tree and pepper the

party with ranged weapons. When the ambush starts, all the Pygmies are high up among the foliage and within 4" of a player character.

The Pygmies are reckless and fight to the death.

(M) Masked Pygmies (3 per hero): See page 41.

TERRAINS AND PROPS

- **Baobab Trunk:** The trunk is so big that it can be represented by a Large Burst Template. Under its roots there is a 2"-wide passage going underground. A character in contact with the trunk can move 4" upward to get to the branches.
- **Branches Level:** This fight is staged on two different levels: the ground level (where the heroes start) and the branches level (where the Pygmies are). The branches are three yards above the ground, and they are so thick that a person can walk on them (count as Difficult ground). To indicate characters on the branches level place a gaming stone next to them. Melee attacks between the two levels aren't allowed (except with a Reach 1+ weapon), and the thick foliage grants the characters on the branches Medium Cover and +1 Armor.
- **Heads up!** The Pygmies attack by literally jumping onto the heads of their targets. Their victims must check for surprise, while the Pygmies must make an Agility roll. If the Agility roll is successful and the victims are surprised, the Pygmies gain the Drop when jumping. If the roll is successful but the victim isn't surprised, they only gain +2 to their attack roll. In both cases they are placed in contact with their opponents. If they fail the Agility roll, they scatter d4" in a random direction

and cannot perform any other actions in this turn. If the Agility roll is failed with a 1 on the Agility die, they are also Shaken.

A GRUESOME DISCOVERY

Curious heroes will remove the dead Pygmies' masks after the battle, discovering a horrible truth. They must make a Spirit roll or be Nauseated till the start of Part 4.

You remove the strange mask from the face of one of the Pygmies and you cannot stand the horror of what you see. These creatures are only partially human, their heads are those of insects, miniature copies of the Green Fury!

After this grisly discovery, the party can enter the passage with a healthy dose of caution.

WINGS OF ALIEN BEAUTY

The passage is a tunnel dug in the baobab's trunk and it soon starts sloping downward. The sides of the tunnel are perfectly smooth but they were clearly not built with bricks and mortar.

In truth, there is a whole network of tunnels under the tree, which were dug by the Green Fury. Their size varies depending on the age and actual size of the beast at the time when they were made.

You go deeper underground until you are walking on flat ground again. You soon come to a wide natural cavern of irregular shape. The walls of this place are made of soil, not rock, and long roots hang down from the ceiling, as living stalactites. Many of them are quite big and covered in mosses of various colors.

The cave is neither empty nor safe, as the heroes soon find out.

While you walk into the cave, a faint sound comes to your ears, as wings flap-ping, and after a moment you see several creatures flying toward you. They are giant moths, as big as children, idly dancing around you. These beings are of strange beauty: their wings are pale gray with lighter gray patterns that cyclically change, creating shapes of inexplicable attractiveness.

These creatures are extremely dangerous: if a hero stares at their patterns for too long he becomes hypnotized (see the Hypnotic Moths' Special Abilities). When the Moths understand their quarry is helpless, they use their sting to pierce the hero's neck and suck his blood. It isn't hard to kill the Moths, provided that the hero avoids being hypnotized.

The battle takes place in the hall under the tree roots. The cave is vast, but the battleground is only a portion of it, a 12" by 12" square. Place the heroes in the middle of this area, 1" away from each other. The Moths starts 3" away from the party and are positioned in a rough circle surrounding the group.

Their tactic consists in approaching the heroes and, when most of them are hypnotized, attacking them with the Drop. The Moths are excellent at using their hypnotic abilities and, if they must choose between attacking a hypnotized target and hypnotizing another, they usually choose the latter.

(M) Hypnotic Moths (1 per hero+2):
See page 40.

TERRAINS AND PROPS

- **Root Stalactites:** The long roots hanging down from the ceiling closely resemble stalactites. Each stalactite occupies a 1" by 1" area on the battle map and grants Medium Cover and +2 Armor. You can use gaming stones to represent them. Place up to twelve stalactites on the battlefield.

THE GREAT CAVERN

After dealing with the Moths, the heroes can move on.

The cave has no other opening except the one you came through, but on the far side of it you find a sort of artificial shaft. Someone, or something, dug a sort of stairwell leading deeper into the ground and the most amazing thing is that certain parts of it were dug through solid rock.

The Pygmies' footprints clearly continue down the stairwell.

After twenty steps the stairwell opens into an enormous cave. The steps now turn into a spiral staircase coiled around a massive column, formed by the union of a stalagmite and a stalactite. The staircase goes all the way down to the ground level, at least fifty yards below. From your higher position you can see an array of incredible plants and colorful mushrooms as tall as men. The glow of countless swarms of fireflies provides enough light to see that the cave must be at least two miles wide and one mile long. When you reach the ground level, you see a path that goes roughly eastward among the giant mushrooms.

The path was probably made by the Masked Pygmies, and with a simple

Tracking roll several small footsteps can be spotted on it. The trail continues eastward until it crosses a larger path stretching along the north-south axis. With a Tracking roll, the heroes find a great number of footsteps on the larger path.

While the heroes are at the crossroads examining the tracks, they hear the sound of several voices coming from south. They barely have enough time to hide behind a mushroom to avoid being discovered.

From your hiding spot you see a group of Masked Pygmies approaching. You count fifteen of them: ten warriors, four women carrying bundles of cloth, and, at the center of the group, the masked Shaman with the three-faced staff in his hands!

The Pygmies pass the heroes and proceed northward.

Other Options. The scripted scenario presumes the party follows the Pygmies from a distance, but very belligerent groups might decide to attack the Pygmies at once (see Sidebar) or even to let them pass and go back on their tracks. With the last option, the heroes will find their village, detailed in Appendix I on page 38. The secret Pygmy rite described in the following scene lasts four hours. Then, both the Shaman and his followers go back to the village. The players should devise a plan to infiltrate it and steal the precious staff.

ATTACKING THE PYGMY BAND

IMMEDIATELY

The players might decide to attack the Pygmies immediately. In this case, a fight will take place at the crossroads. To keep things interesting, the fight might attract some unwanted attention. If a red Joker is dealt to the Shaman and his followers, it means that

a group of 3d4 Masked Pygmies come from the village to investigate the source of so much noise. If the Shaman and his followers are dealt a black Joker, the situation is worse: the Green Fury itself appears on the scene! The heroes should grab the staff as quickly as they can and run for it.

Remember that, as explained in Never Trust Black Magic, or Pretty Girls, touching the staff has truly nasty effects.

THE SECRET OF THE MASKED PYGMIES

The Pygmies march quickly, but there is something solemn in their pace, a mix of respect and fear.

In truth they are making for a very holy place of worship, where they'll celebrate the most important ritual in their religion. The heroes won't find it hard to follow them. The group goes toward the northern wall of the huge cave. Curious heroes might try to guess what the women are carrying, but their curiosity is satisfied when a baby's cry rings through the air.

The Pygmies stop by the northern wall of the cave, in front of a massive stone gate, ten yards tall. The massive gate is flanked by two statues, one on each side, portraying the same evil idol you fought in the Jade Palace.

There seems to be no way to open the gate, certainly built for a race of giants and not for diminutive people like the Pygmies.

Then the Pygmy Shaman walks up to the gate, while the others respectfully stay a few yards back. The Shaman starts chanting a guttural invocation and, to your amazement, the massive door starts opening with a roaring sound, re-

vealing a huge, pitch-black tunnel. The Shaman, the women and eight of the warriors step in, while the other two remain behind to guard the entrance.

Now, two different courses of action are possible.

The heroes can attack the guards and proceed down the tunnel, which is the option described below.

Alternatively, after four hours, the Shaman and his followers come out of the tunnel, seal the gate, and return to their village. At this point the party must find a way to sneak into the village and take the staff. It is up to the Game Master to devise the details of this alternative course of action. A description of the Pygmy Village and its dwellers is presented in Appendix I.

So, let's continue with the main plot. The two guards at the gate can be easily dispatched. The battle area is a square, 12" by 12". The northern edge of the square is the wall of the cave, with the 4"-wide gate in the middle. The two idols, which can be represented by Small Burst Templates and grant Medium Cover, are placed on either side of the door. The Pygmy sentinels stand next to them. The heroes can choose from which side (except north) they wish to enter the battle area. Their enemies are considered inactive sentinels.

(M) Masked Pygmies (2): See page 41.

THE HATCHING

Once the guards are down, the heroes can take the dark corridor.

The passage is very tall, so that you cannot see the ceiling. You notice that, as you go on, the temperature increases, not enough to make you uncomfortable but just to make you sweat a bit. The corridor ends in a semicircular room whose walls are smooth and polished.

You see a large tunnel opening on the other side of the room and you notice that you are walking on fine white sand, like that found at the seaside. Several round rocks, as big as cucumbers, are half buried in the sand.

The Pygmies are gathered in the center of the room and they are looking at their Shaman, who is three steps ahead them and seems to be waiting for something.

The Shaman stuck his three-faced staff into the sand and now the artifact emits a greenish, pulsating light. You understand this is the source of the unnatural heat.

The whole situation reeks of dark sorcery. Any hero with the Fear of Magic Hindrance must do a Fear check.

The other Pygmies bow their heads to the ground in sign of respect, while the Shaman starts digging in the sand with his bare hands. At a certain point he finds what he is looking for: a round stone, seemingly not different from the others. Triumphant, he lifts it and shows it to his followers.

A woman hesitantly stands up, approaches the Shaman, and hands him the baby she is carrying in her bundle. The little boy starts weeping immediately.

You see him clearly: the baby has no insect-like traits, he looks just like every other every human child.

The Shaman sings, while keeping the baby high in one hand and the stone in the other. The light of the staff seems to pulsate following the melody of his invocation. Suddenly, the stone breaks and you realize it was an egg. A centipede, very similar to the Green Fury but much smaller, emerges from it and wiggles in the Shaman's hands.

The Shaman moves the helpless infant toward the creature. The centipede immediately digs its claws into the baby's head and starts tearing the tender meat! The little boy's mother and the other Pygmies watch with reverence, without intervening in any way!

The characters should attack now, because no true hero can bear to see such an abominable act. The first hero saying he attacks immediately should be rewarded with a Bennie. If no one decides to intervene, go on reading.

Despite her wickedness, Serene can't believe her eyes and lets out an exclamation of terror and disgust: "Oh no, that's horrible!"

It is enough to alert the Pygmies: the warriors turn around and draw their weapons, while the Shaman pulls the staff from the ground and points it toward you!

At this point a savage fight breaks out.

If the heroes attack before Serene shouts, the Pygmies must check for surprise, otherwise run the combat as usual.

The combat area is a semicircle, 12" in radius. The straight side is along the east west axis, and the semicircle extends northward. The heroes have come through a 4"-wide entrance opening halfway down the straight side, while a 6" wide passage opens on the opposite side of the room.

Place the heroes within 1" of the southern corridor. The Masked Pygmies and the Pygmy women are 6" away from the heroes, while the Shaman is 9" away. Place the Masked Pygmies so as to form a barrier between the heroes and the Shaman and use the Pygmy Women to fill the gaps.

The three-faced staff is stuck in the sand, 10" away from the heroes, and in contact with the Shaman. The Shaman's first action is to grab the staff and unleash its terrible power against the heroes.

All the Pygmies fight to the death. The battle ends when the Pygmies are dead and the party can finally grab the three-faced staff.

(M) Masked Pygmies (10): See page 41.

(M) Pygmy Women (4): See page 43.

(WC) Sacuchampah, Pygmy Shaman (1): See page 43.

TERRAINS AND PROPS

- **Sandy Ground:** The floor of this chamber is covered in sand. This hinders the movements of normal sized characters, reducing their running die by one step. For Brawny heroes the sand counts as Difficult ground. Characters with the Small Hindrance and the Pygmies are too light to be hindered by the Sandy Ground.

NEVER TRUST DARK MAGIC, OR PRETTY GIRLS

The heroes grab the three-faced staff but they don't know that it is holy to the evil demon Tirain, and only a follower of his cult or someone who knows his real name can wield it safely. The first character taking the staff has a very bad surprise. If necessary, you can delay this event till the end of the fight with the Pygmies.

You feel a sort of energy in the staff, as if you were wielding a living thing. The artifact's head starts emitting a strong green light, which quickly spreads to the whole staff, and... hey, your body too is emanating light!

Serene is the only one who knows what is going on: as it doesn't recognize the wielder as a true follower of Tirain, the staff is reacting. The only way to prevent a very nasty surprise is to say the demon's true name aloud. Serene takes a deep breath.

"Tirain Kalemorgas..." the girl shouts. You only hear the first part of the demon's name, because a sudden blast and a flash of light explode from your friend's body. Everything goes green for a moment, then black.

All the heroes are automatically Shaken and temporarily blinded (till the end of the scene).

Any hero with the Sorcery Arcane Background automatically understands what has just happened.

You regain consciousness only a couple of minutes later, but the situation is very different now. First, you are alive, but not able to move a single finger: in short, you are paralyzed. Second, Serene is standing close by, the staff in her hand and an evil smile on her pretty face.

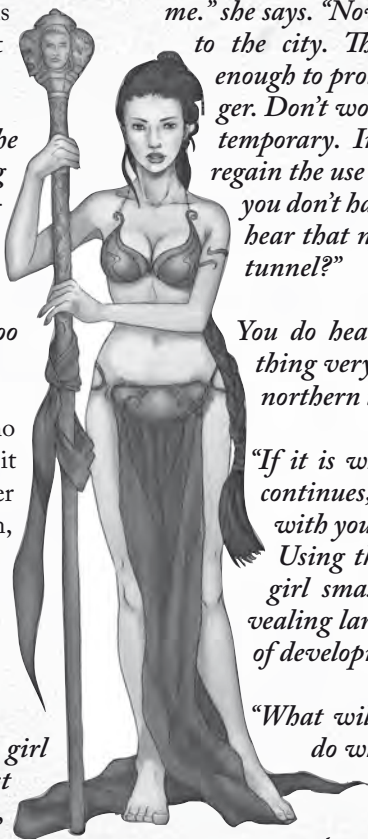
"Thank you for retrieving the staff for me," she says. "Now, I think I'll go back to the city. This staff is powerful enough to protect me from any danger. Don't worry: your state is only temporary. In a few hours you'll regain the use of your body. Thing is, you don't have few hours. Do you hear that noise coming from the tunnel?"

You do hear the sound of something very big coming from the northern tunnel.

"If it is what I suspect" Serene continues, "It will very angry with you, especially after this." Using the staff as a club, the girl smashes several eggs, revealing larvae at various stages of development.

"What will mama Green Fury do when she sees her small ones slaughtered? Such a pity I can't stay to watch. But I won't forget you: when I am in Norran's arms again, we'll drink a glass of red wine to your memory!"

Serene laughs once more and then disappears down the southern corridor, while the Green Fury rushes in from the northern tunnel.



THE THREE-FACED STAFF

This ancient staff is made from a single piece of jade. Its head is sculpted to resemble the three faces of the Demon Lord Tirain. The first face represents a man of incredible beauty, the second a horrible insect very similar to the Green Fury, and the third is a flat, featureless face made of polished jade with only a huge open mouth.

The staff can be wielded only by a true follower of the Demon Lord Tirain and it grants great magical powers (as detailed in Sacuchampah's stats on page 43). If a non-follower puts his hands on it, the staff reacts in vicious, unpredictable ways.

There is a strong, unbreakable link between the staff and the Green Orb containing the Green World. Destroying one of the two renders the other powerless.

DEMON LORD TIRAIN, MASTER OF DOORS AND CAGES

Nature: Alien

Hierarchy Rank: Lord

The Demon Lord Tirain is a very strange and ancient entity. It is also known as the World Wanderer and the Master of Doors and Cages. He has many aspects, but its favorite one is that of a tall, muscular man with a three-faced head, the same as the one carved on the Three-Faced Staff. Tirain is known to travel among many realities and to toy with dimensions. In his travels, he has discovered many pocket dimensions and abandoned worlds which he calls Cages and uses as personal playgrounds.

Tirain isn't interested in being worshipped in the traditional way: human sacrifices and prayers bore him to death. He delights instead in putting his followers (and victims) in the Cages to observe their behavior and, eventually, their death and damnation.

The Green Orb he gave the Keronians was part of a plan to lure new victims into one of his favorite Cages, the Green World.

The true name of Tirain is Tirain Kalemorgas Telugar Sokor.

**PART 4:
THE DAY OF
BECKONING****BE QUIET, VERY QUIET**

The heroes are in the worst situation ever. They are paralyzed and helpless, among the smashed eggs of a monster, which will soon vent all its rage on them.

As soon as Serene's gone, the Green Fury bursts into the room, which is barely large enough for its massive body. You understand that the Green Fury can't see very well, especially after the wound inflicted to its eye by N'Dula. It can detect movement, but it mostly smells the air with its long tongue, as snakes do to navigate their surroundings.

What the creature perceives enrages it: its babies are dead. Some primeval instinct drives it to devour the bodies of the dead Pygmies, but it ignores its own dead larvae and, fortunately, you. When Serene smashed the eggs, she smeared you with their fluids, and this probably confuses the creature.

In the end, the centipede curls around the eggs, like an enormous snake, and you find yourself surrounded by the beast's massive body!

Slowly and painfully, the heroes recover control of their bodies. Each character must make a Vigor roll. In case of success, he recovers completely; if he fails, he can move but is in pain for an hour (a level of Fatigue).

As long as they don't move, the heroes are safe, but they cannot stay here indefinitely. Sooner or later, they must manage to get out of this awful situation.

Luckily, the Green Fury falls asleep and, after a while, the heroes can stand up and assess the situation. They are totally surrounded by the centipede's body. If they want to leave the room, they must climb onto the Green Fury and jump down on the other side to reach the corridor they came from (the other passage is completely blocked by the beast's body). Silence is of the essence to avoid waking the terrible creature up.

Each hero must make two rolls to climb over the beast, using the lower die between Climbing and Stealth, but with a bonus of +2 because the Green Fury is fast asleep. Each time a failure is scored, place a Disturbed Sleep token on the table, where the players can see it. When there are more than three tokens on the table, it means the Green Fury wakes up.

If the heroes succeed without waking the creature up, continue with *Running for the Door*. Otherwise, read the following part first.

You must have disturbed the creature because it breathes deeply, moves, and finally opens its good eye. It feels you walking on its back as obnoxious fleas, and this greatly enrages it!

When the Green Fury wakes up, there is no further need to be quiet. The heroes automatically manage to climb off its back, but with some delay. Run the *Running for the Door* scene, but reduce by two the effective number of their Speed Tokens.

RUNNING FOR THE DOOR

You have just jumped off the Green Fury's back and you can see the corridor, when suddenly its stone gates start closing with a terrible sound!

The stone gate was kept open by the magic of the staff, which is now fading. This means the heroes must run if they don't want to be trapped in the chamber. Moreover, if the heroes have managed to be silent till now, the sound wakes the Green Fury up and this time the beast attacks the party.

This is a short, but intense Chase sequence.

Both the heroes and the Green Fury use Agility as Chase skill. Ignore Complications in this scene – the situation is bad enough as it is. In addition to gaining cards, each hero receives a Speed Token for each success and raise in the Chase roll.

Given her massive size, consider that the Green Fury can attack in melee even at Short Range, but suffering -2 to the Fighting roll.

From the fifth round check what players have gathered at least six Tokens, then consult the table below. For that hero the Chase ended, while it continues for the others. Go on with the Chase until all the heroes have gathered six Tokens or are dead.

RUNNING FOR THE DOOR TABLE

Round	Effect
5 th or less	The hero goes through the gates without problems.

6th-7th

The gate is closing! The hero must make an Agility roll or be caught in the doors, suffering 2d6 damage. Regardless of success or failure on the roll, he manages to escape.

8th-9th

The gate is almost closed! The hero must make an Agility (-2) roll. In case of success he goes through, otherwise he suffers 2d6 damage and fails to leave the chamber in this round.

10th or more

Crushed! The hero is stuck and the gate is crushing him! He suffers 3d6 damage each round. He can free himself only with a Strength (-4) roll. The roll can be cooperative if some friend on the other side of the door pulls him to safety.

You are on the other side! You managed it! The Green Fury throws itself against the doors, but even the massive beast cannot smash a gigantic stone gate. Anyway, you have no wish to stay here to see what will happen next. Serene has quite a head start and you must hurry if you want to catch her before she reaches the city. You know she will open the gate to your world and escape, leaving you trapped here for the eternity!

DRUMS OF WAR

You trace your steps back through the huge cave, climb the stairs, run past the Hypnotic Moths, and finally get to the surface, by the roots of the gigantic tree.

The characters are lucky: nobody has discovered the sentinels they dispatched earlier, so they can leave the underground complex safely.

You march as fast as you can toward the city, hoping to get there in time to stop Serene. The girl is at least ten hours ahead of you, but you are faster, gaining ground on her hour after hour. When you are at the city walls, you hear the sounds of drums coming from the jungle behind you.

The characters are allowed a Common Knowledge roll to understand what is happening. The Masked Pygmies discovered what happened to their sentinels and the Shaman and had no trouble understanding it was the people of the city's doing. Great is their rage, so they have assembled a war party to overwhelm the Survivors once and for all. The war party is just ten minutes behind the heroes.

Luckily the heroes have heard the drums, so they can raise the alarm.

But some more bad news awaits the party.

You arrive at the city gate and find a nasty surprise: the sentinels are lying on the ground, apparently asleep. You check them and discover that, although no wounds are visible, the two Survivors are dead, an expression of terror on their faces.

They were killed by Serene's dark magic, but she can't be very far, as the bodies are still warm.

The heroes must decide what to do first: alert the Survivors that the Masked Pygmies are coming or look for Serene?

Alert the Survivors. If the party chooses to alert the Survivors first, they find them sleeping in the ruin where the mushroom soup ceremony was held. N'Dula isn't with them; he is personally guarding the access to the Jade Palace.

The party must wake the Survivors up and take charge of the situation, as no leader is present at the moment.

The first thing to do is to send someone to the gate to assess the situation.

The sentinels come back a few minutes later. They report seeing a whole horde of Masked Pygmies on the edge of the forest, at least one hundred strong and armed with spears and torches. The Survivors are too few: they don't stand a chance against the enemies, so they decide to go to the Jade Palace to stop Serene and leave this cursed place. Alerting the Survivors doesn't really change the plot, as they are too few to fight. Yet, this doesn't mean they are useless. If all the Survivors go to the Jade palace with the heroes, the party has a group of Extras to aid them in the last part of the adventure.

(M) Survivors (2 per hero): See page 44.

Looking for Serene. Serene has most likely run to the Jade Palace and, if the heroes go there (alone or with the other Survivors as detailed above), they find the door open and a single person leaning against the wall. It's N'Dula and he is bleeding copiously from a chest wound.

"She caught me by surprise. She's gone in." He whispers. Then, with a moan, he falls to the ground and breaths no more. You'll make sure Serene pays for this too! Just then, you hear shouts and see the light of torches. The Masked Pygmies are storming in the city. A group of them

appears at the end of the road, spots you and immediately runs to attack.

The heroes can either enter the Jade Palace or stand and fight. Note that this encounter is purely optional. The party has all the time they need to enter the Palace before the enemies reach them.

The battleground is a section of road, 18" by 6", with the longer side along the north-south axis. The party is placed within 3" of the southern border, while the enemies start within 3" of the northern side.

The Pygmies run and throw javelins (multi action penalty applies), then they switch to melee. One every two Pygmies is armed with a torch made of flammable moss as secondary weapon (Str+d4, improvised weapon, targets have 2 in 6 chances of catching fire when hit).

(M) Masked Pygmies (10): See page 41.

TERRAINS AND PROPS

• **A Horde of Pygmies:** The city is being stormed, so other Pygmies are likely to join fight. At the start of the third round, and every odd round after this, draw a card from the action deck. If a club is dealt, a group of d6 Pygmies appears on the battlefield.

PATH OF DARKNESS

You enter the Jade Palace, but the corridor is shrouded in darkness so thick that even torches cannot disperse it. You have never seen such total obscurity, like water swirling in a bottomless pit.

Using the powers of the staff, Serene summoned the unnatural darkness to slow down and possibly dispatch any pursuers,

so that she could gain extra time for the ritual to open the gate to the Dread Sea Dominions.

If they want to reach Serene before it is too late, the heroes must find their way in the darkness. The obscurity is actually a living being, a sort of demon which tries in every way to consume them. In gaming terms, walking down the corridor requires three rounds, but each of them is a real trial for the heroes' souls.

“We are not Alone”. The heroes won't have to pass this test unaided. If they are in physical contact with a companion (for instance, holding hands), they give each other +1 to their rolls, up to a maximum of +2 if in contact with two comrades. Note that this bonus applies only if the characters can touch each other but doesn't, for instance, if they are bound with ropes.

Banishing. A hero with the *banish* Power has a chance to really shine in this situation. His spell must be cast each round and, if successful, grants him immunity from the darkness. If cast with a raise, it extends the immunity to the whole party. For the purpose of opposed rolls, the darkness's Spirit is considered to be d8 plus the Wild Die.

ROUND 1 – WHISPERS

You step into the darkness and start walking, with caution. You soon hear whispers all around you, and something chilly caresses your face like dead cold fingers. In a vision of utmost horror you picture a rotting face kissing your lips! You try to move away to avoid any contact, only to discover you can't!

The heroes must make a Spirit roll in this round, because the living darkness is trying to instill terrible fear in them. If they

fail the roll, they are Nauseated for the remainder of the scene. Only with a critical failure must they roll on the Fear Table.

I Spit in the Face of My Fears. The living darkness lives off the fears of those it engulfs. If a player roleplays an attitude of courage and disregard for danger, he can roll on Intimidation or Taunt rather than on Spirit, with a +2 bonus.

ROUND 2 – SOLITUDE

You know the corridor is only thirty paces long, because you have been here before. But you feel you have been walking for hours, days, whole years. What is happening? When will the darkness end?

The living darkness is trying to disorient the party, making them lose track of time. Each hero must make a Smarts (–2) roll. In case of success, he understands what is going on, endures it, and his fear soon subsides. Otherwise, he feels as if he had been marching for ages and gains a level of Fatigue. In case of critical failure, the situation is worse: the victim becomes ten years old! The GM can decide if this is true merely in appearance or if it gives the hero a Hindrance (Old and Ugly are good choices). The aging is permanent.

Count your Steps. The sensation of not moving is only an illusion; the heroes are actually advancing. Every player who states he is counting his steps or has the Alertness Edge gains +2 to his Smarts roll.

ROUND 3 –

“YOU CANNOT GO AWAY!”

Instead of subsiding, the darkness is getting thicker. And something strange is moving within it!

Arms, claws, and tentacles grapple you, trying to drag you back!

The heroes have almost reached the end of the corridor and the living darkness plays its last card to overwhelm them. Each hero is attacked by an “Arm” with Fighting d8 and Strength d8. If he is grappled, he suffers Str+d4 damage every round. If he manages to escape or kill the Arm (see below), he is finally free.

“If I can touch it, I can kill it!” The Arm restraining the character is solid, so it can be attacked. It has Parry 5 and Toughness 5. A hero can attack it without any penalty due to the darkness (normal grappling penalties apply). Moreover, a hero in physical contact with one being targeted by the Arm can help his companion, but with -4 due to the Pitch Darkness condition and, if he rolls 1 on the Fighting die, he inadvertently hits his friend.

When the heroes manage to leave the darkness, read the following part.

Suddenly the light blinds your eyes: you made it, you are out! You try to forget what you felt in the corridor and slowly regain your sight.

All the heroes should be awarded a Benne now. They’ll need plenty of them in the final scene of the adventure. If the Survivors were with the party, not all of them have managed to survive the darkness. Subtract a d6 to the previous number of Survivors.

You are in the main room of the Jade Palace. It seems you have made it just in time. Serene has slotted the staff into the hole at the very centre of the room, where the green glass casts its cone of light. She is standing just outside the cone, pronouncing for the third time the

demon Tirain’s true name: “Tirain Kalemorgas... Telugar Sokor!”

Suddenly, the cone of light and the staff itself become translucent and you can see through them, as through a fogged window. You are looking a room filled with strange contraptions.

You recognize it as Norran Vall’s laboratory. In your own world!

Serene steps into the cone of light, grabs the staff and you see her appear on the other side.

After she picks up the staff, the light starts flickering. The passage is closing! You must rush in before it’s too late!

Even though the heroes don’t know it, the passage stays open for a while, but a little rush will add tension to the scene.

NORRAN VALL’S LABORATORY

You have come through! You are in the very place where all this mess started, Norran Vall’s lab, in the Dominions again. It is full of books and weird contraptions but you immediately spot the Green Orb on a table. It is a green glass ball emanating a strong, unsettling light.

You glance behind you and see that the gate is still open, but it’s becoming unstable. For the first time in this story you see Norran Vall in person, and you don’t like him one bit.

The evil wizard and Serene are in each other’s arms and they are kissing passionately.

When he sees you, Norran pushes the girl aside and says with a worried look on his face: "My dear, it seems you have been followed."

"Oh no! Not them again!" Serene frowns. "Don't worry, my love, with the power of the Orb and the staff we'll turn them to dust!" With an elegant move she points the staff at you, ready to unleash its terrible magic, while her wicked lover picks up the green orb from the table.

This is the last battle of the scenario, and it will be a tough one!

The battle area is the lab, a 12" by 12" square with a door along the southern wall, 2" wide. Halfway down the western wall there is the gate to the Green World, this is 4" wide.

The heroes begin within 2" of the gate and start the scene Surprised, due to the effects of the dimensional jump (Serene had the staff, so she wasn't affected).

Serene and Norran Vall are within 4" of the western wall, near the table with the Green Orb (see below).

Unbeknownst to the heroes, there is a very dangerous enemy hidden in the room: Norran Vall has recently summoned a massive Plant from the Green World, like the one the characters fought at the beginning of the adventure. It is growing like a creeper vine on the rafters of the roof. Its numerous Faces must be placed in the room at a fixed distance of 3" from each other.

The wizards' tactic is simple. First, he conjures one or more *Barriers* to keep the heroes at bay; then he starts summoning creatures to attack the party with offensive spells, while staying at distance.

The situation is desperate but the heroes can still win the day by destroying the Green Orb. It can happen by chance, every time Norran Vall is hit, or with a called shot targeting the Orb directly (see Norran Vall's stats).

When the Orb is destroyed, go on with the last scene of the adventure, but leave the various miniatures on the battle map, you'll need them for the grand finale.

(M) Serene the Wicked (1): She has consumed half of the staff's Power Points in the last few hours. See page 44.

(M) Norran Vall (1): See page 42.

(M) Plant's Faces (1 per hero): See page 43.

TERRAINS AND PROPS

• **Wizard's Lab:** In the room there are up to four 2" by 4" tables, full of books, bubbling potions, assorted magical curios and dangerous chemicals. Every character in contact with a table can pick up a random prop of his choice and use it for a trick, gaining +1 to his opposed roll. If he wins the roll with a raise, the Trick has a normal effect and a secondary one. Check the suit of the Action Card and consult the table to determine the additional effect. The trickster must provide a description of how he has managed to achieve it.

Card Suite

Effect

Clubs

Curse! The target suffers the effects of a *lower trait* (Trait chosen by the character that performed the trick), cast with Sorcery d8 and lasting 3 rounds.

Spades *I've been moved!* Move the target d4" in a random direction (cannot be moved outside the battlefield). Moving away from combat triggers a free attack as for the standard rules.

Diamonds *Fire!* The target of the trick has 5 in 6 chances of catching fire.

Hearts *Healing magic!* The trickster (not the victim) recovers a wound.

• **Bookshelves:** The northern wall of the room is covered by a huge bookcase. Any character can pick up a book and use it as an Improvised Weapon (Str+d4, can be thrown with a Range of 3/6/12). In addition, a section of the bookcase can be made to collapse with a Strength (-2) roll. The fallen shelf occupies a 2" by 4" area in front of the bookcase and any target caught within it must make an Agility (-2) roll or suffer 2d6 damage. In addition, the fallen books make the area Difficult ground and targets in this area have twice the chance of catching fire.

• **Plant Vines:** The Plant is growing on the roof, so its Faces are 4" above the ground and can be targeted only with ranged weapons. With their Reach 6 they can only pick up targets on the ground within Reach 2.

THE DAMNED ORB

WON'T SHATTER!

The fight against Norran Vall and Serene is likely to end with the destruction of the Green Orb. This allows for an exciting grand finale (see The Broken Orb scene). Moreover, it wouldn't be wise to leave two

very powerful relics as the Green Orb and the Three-Faced Staff in the heroes' hands. So, it is perfectly acceptable to "cheat" a bit and say that, when Norran Vall is finally dead, the Orb automatically shatters and the staff is sucked in the Green World with Serene...

THE BROKEN ORB

When the Green Orb shatters, you feel a cold wind blowing. You turn back and see that the gate to the Green World is twisting and contracting, like the mouth of a monstrous creature struck to death.

Suddenly, the air is sucked from the room into the gate with such force that you see books, magical instruments and even furniture flying straight through the opening into to the other world!

You must grab hold of something to avoid being sucked in!

Every hero must make a Strength roll opposed to the wind's Strength. In case of failure, he is moved 1" toward the gate, 2" with a critical failure. In case of success, he manages to hold tight; if he wins with a raise, he moves 1" away from the gate. The wind's Strength depends on how close the characters are to the gate, as detailed below. The sucking effect lasts for three rounds. If a hero is dragged into the opening, he is allowed a last Strength (-4) to cling to the edge. In case of failure, the poor victim is sucked in and dies horribly (or not, sees The End).

Distance from the Gate	Wind's Strength
1"-2"	d12
3"-4"	d10

5-6"	d8
7"+	d6

But while the heroes probably survive this last danger, this isn't the case for the evil guys. They don't roll and are automatically sucked in, as described below.

Unluckily for them, Serene and Norran Vall aren't fast enough to hold onto something, and you see their faces distorted by fear for the last time, before they are blown away by the terrible wind. In the end, the storm subsides and the wall in once again flat and smooth, with no sign of gates to any alien worlds.

raise, they find jewels and other valuables (total value: 200 Moons) for each character joining the attempt. If they score two or more raises, the Game Master should also let them find a random relic among those detailed in the *Beasts and Barbarians Golden Edition* or another object of his own designing with comparable powers.

Another matter needs to be dealt with: what to do with the villagers of Skirmis?

They are part victims and part wrongdoers in this story and the players are likely to have mixed feelings toward them, which could lead to some nice roleplaying moments.

THE END

It is up to the Game Master to decide the fate of the Green World. Besides the Orb, other gates to the Green World might exist in the Dominions.

In this case, if one of the heroes is trapped in the alien world, the heroes might decide to look for another gate, leading to a new, interesting adventure. On the flipside, this means that Norran Vall and Serene might still be alive and could eventually come back to take revenge on the party...

The other option is that the Orb *was* the Green World and, with its destruction, the pocket dimension and all its mysteries no longer exist.

The heroes found no treasures during the adventure, but they can explore Norran Vall's tower and find some valuable artifacts.

As a rule of thumb, they can make a cooperative Notice roll. For each success and

APPENDIX I THE PYGMIES VILLAGE

Population: 250

Military Forces: 100 Masked Pygmies

Ruler: Shaman Sacuchampah

Government Type: Theocracy

Economy: Hunters and gatherers, primitive agriculture and fishing.

The Masked Pygmies' village is built at the southern end of the Great Cave, not far from the mushroom forest. There is also a spring of drinkable water, making this an excellent place for a settlement. The Pygmies live in triangular huts that have a wooden structure and are covered by layers of dried giant mushrooms. Here is a brief description of the most important buildings in the village.

Family Huts (30). The typical hut is 4" by 4" and hosts a family of 4-8 members. The

man of the house usually has two wives (the Masked Pygmies are polygamous) and an average of three children.

Unmarried Men's Hut. This very big hut (4" by 16") hosts the unmarried men, young warriors, and hunters. It is usually occupied by 10-20 warriors.

Shaman's Hut. Differently from the others, this hut is built on piling three yards above the ground. Shaman Sacuchampah and his three wives live here and the hut is always guarded by two veteran warriors (Henchmen).

Spring. Fresh water flows out from the cave's wall and created a small pool. The excess water then flows into a small, artificial lake located at the center of the village.

Amoeba Lake. This shallow lake (only three feet deep) is used by the Pygmies to farm the staple of their diet: a sort of white amoeba, the size of a cat. The Pygmies throw grass and pieces of mushrooms into the lake to feed the amoebas, and fish them with short spears. The amoebas are totally harmless.

Cooking Area. An open space among the huts, it hosts a big fire which burns all day long. The fire is also used to mark the day's length (see below).

Drum Tower. A sort of makeshift tower, two stories high. On its top, there is a big ceremonial drum made with human skins, bones, and pieces of carapace cast by the Green Fury. A Pygmy always stands by the drum, ready to beat it in case of danger. When this happens, the whole village becomes alert in 2d4+2 rounds.

Fields (2). The Pygmy women cleared the wild mushrooms from two areas and planted them with edible mushrooms.

Agriculture is practiced by women one and 2d4 Pygmy women always in the fields during "daytime" (see below).

Palisade. The village is protected by a three-yard-tall wooden palisade (Toughness 7). The palisade protects only the huts, while the fields and the amoeba lake lie beyond it. There are two entrance points: a gate, always watched by four warriors, and a gap in the palisade, made to let water flow from the spring to the amoeba lake (the gap is 6 yards wide).

Rhythm of Life: In the Green World, and particularly underground, there is no sun, so the daily routine is marked by an act repeated every "morning": the old women leave the village and go to the mushroom forest, cut an old giant mushroom and bring it to the Cooking Area, where it is burned. The fire is used by all the village women to cook and last for a whole "day". When it goes out, the Pygmies go to bed. The fire lasts for 12-14 hours approximately. As a rule of thumb, during the "day" at least 100 people are in the village, busy with their daily tasks, while the others are away, foraging or hunting. During the night, only 5-10 villagers are awake.

CREATURES AND NPC



DRAINER TENTACLE

The huge vegetable creature simply known as The Plant hunts men for food. Having no mouth, it absorbs living fluids thanks to the Drainer, a huge tentacle ending with a giant sting which literally sucks away blood and meat from the victim.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d8.

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10

Special abilities:

- **Improved Frenzy:** The Drainer Tentacle performs two attacks each round without any penalty.
- **Drain:** If the Drainer Tentacle deals at least a wound, it means it impaled the victim with its long stinger, and now starts sucking away liquids! At the start of any round, the victim must do a Vigor roll opposed to the Drainer Strength. In case of failure, he suffers a level of Fatigue due intense fluids lose. This Fatigue can lead to death. The victim can break free winning an opposed Strength roll (the Drainer rolls with +4) or severing the tentacle (killing it). Until the Drainer is sucking a victim, it cannot attack.
- **Sentient Plant:** Sentient plants gain +2 to Toughness and to rolls to recovering from Shaken.
- **Size+2:** When extended, the Drainer is three yards long.
- **Stinger:** Str+d6.
- **Weakness (Fire):** The Drainer is very vulnerable to fire. Any fire based attack causes it +4 damage. In addition, Intimidation rolls or Tricks based on fire (as using a torch against it) gain a +2 bonus.



GREEN FURY

This terrible creature is a titan-sized centipede. It is very old, practically immortal, and continues to grow, year after year, century after century. The Masked Pygmies consider it the physical manifestation of their god, the Demon Lord Tirain. As the heroes will discover during the adventure, this specimen is female.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d12+6, Vigor d10
Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d4.

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 19(4)

Special abilities:

- **Armor +4:** Thick carapace.
- **Fangs:** Str+d8.
- **Heavy Armor:** The thick exoskeleton of the Green Fury makes it impervious to any attack not dealt with a Heavy Weapon.
- **Huge:** Due to its size, attack rolls against the Green Fury gain +4.
- **Size +8:** The Green Fury is fifteen feet tall and twenty yards long.
- **Swallow:** If the Green Fury hits with a raise, it takes its prey in its mouth, causing him Str+d8 damage each round, until he manages to get free, winning an opposed Strength roll (the victim rolls with -4). This roll can be cooperative.

HYPNOTIC MOTH

Almost all the creatures in the Green World, even the most innocent-looking ones, are dangerous. The Hypnotic Moth is one of them. Apparently it is only a frail, giant moth, with no claws, sting or other mean of offense. It simply flies around, flaunting the marvelous patterns constantly shifting on its wings. In truth the creature is a cunning and dangerous predator: the patterns have hypnotic effects and those who look at them fall into a state of stupor. At this point, the beast uses its hidden sting to pierce its opponent's skin and suck his blood.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d4
Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d4.

Pace: 2; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 3

Special abilities:

- **Fly:** The creature flies at a Pace of 6" and Climb -1.
- **Hypnotic Pattern:** Whoever looks at the patterns on the wings of a Hypnotic Moth risks falling into a state of stupor. At the start of his round, any opponent within 3" of a group of Moths must make an opposed

Spirit roll against the Moths' Spirit. If more than one Moth is present in the area, the creatures make a single cooperative roll (gaining the Wild Die). If the Moths win the roll, the opponent is Shaken and in a state of stupor. This means he cannot move and any attack against him gains the Drop. If the Moths win the roll with a raise, the victim also has -2 to Unshake rolls. An Unshaken hero wanting to avoid this effect can close his eyes at the start of the turn and keep them closed, but this causes him to act in Pitch Black conditions.

- **Size -1:** A Hypnotic Moth is roughly the size of a dog.
- **Retractable Sting:** Str+d4. AP 2. A Moth extends its sting and attacks only hypnotized targets. If it scores a raise on the Fighting roll, it hits the least armored location of the target and remains attached, causing damage at the start of every round. A moth attached to a target has Parry 2.

N'DULA THE MERCENARY

N'Dula left the Ivory Savannah many years ago to become a mercenary. He found employment in the Independent Cities, then in Faberterra, and several other states. His scarred face shows the signs of many battles, and he has learned a lot in his career. He has many talents and is a skilled artilleryman, among other things. It is left to the Game Master to decide how N'Dula and the heroes became friends. N'Dula is a Right Hand.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Healing d4, Notice d6, Stealth d4, Survival d4, Riding d4, Repair d6, Shooting d8.

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

Edges: Brawny, Command.

Hindrances: Ugly.

Gear: Loincloth, battle axe (Str+d8).

Special abilities:

- **Artillerist:** N'Dula has +2 to Repair rolls to fix siege engines and +2 to Shooting rolls to use them.

MASKED PYGMY

These diminutive savage men have evolved from the same ancestors as those of the Pygmies living in the Dread Sea Dominions. They have adapted to the environment of the Green World in various ways. Their skin is pale, since they dwell underground, and they wear strange masks, resembling human faces with exaggerated, distorted expressions. These masks conceal their biggest secret: they have insect-like heads, resembling that of the Green Fury. Heroes savvy in the Pygmy culture will notice that their masks are very different from the ones usually worn by Masked Warriors (see *Beasts and Barbarians Gold Edition*).

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d10, Survival d8, Throwing d8.

Pace: 5; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Edges: Woodsman.

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty.

Gear: poisoned bone dagger (Str+d4, see below), poisoned javelins x 3 (Str+d6, Range: 4/8/16, see below), Pygmy mask (+1, head only).

Special abilities:

- **Low Light Vision:** Masked Pygmies ignore penalties for Dim and Dark light conditions.
- **Paralyzing Saliva:** The Masked Pygmies' coat their weapons in their mildly paralyzing saliva. Every character at least Shaken by a damaging Pygmy attack must make an immediate Vigor roll or become Fatigued. The poison is quite mild, so it cannot cause more than a single level of

Fatigue. Fatigue is recovered within an hour or with a successful Healing roll.

- **Veteran Warrior:** One in every twelve Masked Pygmies is a strong veteran with Strength d8, Fighting d8 and the Command Edge. He is a Henchman.



MONSTER IDOL

This huge statue represents a hideous creature with a bulging belly and four arms with sharp claws. But the most frightening feature is its face. It has the same insect-like features as the Green Fury's. In truth, this statue is a Swallowing Servant, a lesser demon that serves Lord Tirain.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d12+1, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Stealth d8, Throwing d8.

Pace: 7; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 12 (2)

Special abilities:

- **Armor +2:** Stony skin.
- **Claws:** Str+d6.
- **Demon:** The Monster Idol is a demonic creature, so it is immune to poison and illness and has +2 to recovering from Shaken.
- **Four Armed:** The Monster Idol has four arms, so it gains +4 to Grapple rolls.
- **Poisonous Breath:** The Monster Idol's neck contains poisonous gas. As an action, it can release a lethal breath. Place a Medium Burst Template in contact with the Idol and any character caught in it must make a Vigor roll or suffer 2d6 damage. The breath lasts for the current and next round and all creatures crossing the Template or staying within it must roll on Vigor or suffer the above damage. The Monster Idol can use this ability three times a day.
- **Size+3:** The Monster Idol is twelve feet tall.
- **Weakness (Cone of Green Light):** As long as the Monster Idol stays in the cone of green light in the hall of the Jade Palace, it has full powers. When outside the cone,

its strength greatly diminishes and it loses the Demon, Armor and Poisonous Breath special abilities. A Knowledge (Arcana) (-4) roll is needed to discover the Idol's weakness. Characters with this skill are allowed a free roll each turn of combat. The Sage Edge allows a character to ignore the modifier.



NORRAN VALL

This evil sorcerer, in truth only a second-class wizard, is the cause of all the troubles the heroes have in this scenario. He is wicked, cunning and without remorse.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Healing d6, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Arcana) d12, Notice d6, Sorcery d10, Stealth d6.

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 5

Edges: Arcane Background, Improved Block, Improved Dodge, Impressive Aura, Level Headed, New Power x2, Power Points x2.

Powers [20 PP]: *armor* (halo of insects), *burst* (ray of light for the Green Orb), *smite* (crackling energy from the Green Orb), *stun* (looking at the light of the Green Orb paralyzes his victims), *summon ally* (Giant Spider (V), Swarm (S), Masked Pygmy (N)).

Hindrances: Loyal (only to Serene).

Gear: Dagger (Str+d4), Green Orb (see below).

Special abilities:

- **Green Orb:** A whole world is contained within this ancient artifact, which is a source of tremendous power. It grants its wielder the Improved Block and Improved Dodge Edge (already accounted in the stats). Norran magical powers come from the Orb: without it, the mage only has half his Power Points, Sorcery d6 and can use only the *armor* and *summon ally* Powers.
- **Weakness (Green Orb):** Despite being very powerful, the Orb is quite fragile.

Every time its wielder suffers an Unsoaked Wound, he must draw a card from the Action deck. If the suit is Clubs, the precious object falls and shatters. The Orb can also be targeted with a Called Shot (–4). It has Toughness 4 and beating its Toughness is enough to shatter it.

PYGMY WOMAN

Even though they aren't warriors, the females of the Masked Pygmies will fight to the death to protect their children and their Shaman from the invaders.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Survival d4.

Pace: 5; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Gear: Pygmy mask (+1, head only).

Special abilities:

- **Low Light Vision:** Pygmy Women ignore penalties for Dim and Dark light conditions.
- **Poisonous Bite:** Str+d4. Female Pygmies have stronger jaws and produce a nastier poison than males. When attacked, they remove their masks and respond to the threat by biting! Every character at least Shaken by a Poisonous Bite attack must make an immediate Vigor roll or suffer a level of Fatigue.

PLANT'S FACE

The Plant uses its tentacles and face-shaped fruits, called Faces, to respectively lure and catch its victims. Then, it uses its Drainer Tentacle to suck their precious living fluids. The Plant is very large and complex, so this profile only refers to the Plant's Faces and their tentacles.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d10, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Taunt d8.

Pace: –; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

Special abilities:

- **Metamorphic:** A Plant's Face real aspect is that of a ball resembling a brain, but its powers allow it to take on the features of a person known to his chosen victim.
- **Emphatic:** The Plant's Faces instinctively know how to startle and surprise their victims so they gain +2 to Tests of Will and to Smarts Tricks.
- **Sentient Plant:** Sentient plants gain +2 to Toughness and to rolls to recovering from Shaken.
- **Tentacles:** Every Face controls two tentacles. In each round, both tentacles can perform a melee attack while the head tries to distract the target (with a Test of Will or a Smarts Trick). The tentacles have Reach 6 and deal Str+d4 damage. If they hit with a raise, it means they have also grappled their victim.
- **Weakness (Face):** The Plant's Faces are actually quite weak. They can be targeted with a Called Shot at –4, due to the fact that the tentacles try to protect them. The Faces have Toughness 4 and a single Wound is enough to disable them, tentacles included.



SACUCHAMPAH, PYGMY SHAMAN

Sacuchampah is the Shaman of the Masked Pygmies, and rules over every aspect of their lives. Note that his magical powers are granted by the Three-Faced Staff. Without it, he is just an ordinary Pygmy.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d10, Survival d8, Throwing d8.

Pace: 5; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 7

Edges: Command, Fervor, Improved Level Headed.

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty.

Gear: Three-Faced Staff (Str+d6, +2 Parry, 2 hands, see below).

Special abilities:

- **Low Light Vision:** Masked Pygmies ignore penalties for Dim and Dark light conditions.
- **Three-Faced Staff:** This ancient staff grants great magical powers to its wielder, but only if he is a follower of the Demon Lord Tirain. It gives the user 30 Power Points and a series of Powers, cast with Sorcery d10. The Powers are: *armor* (green light halo), *barrier* (wall of brambles, deals 2d4 damage), *bolt* (crackling energy from the staff's head), *deflection* (I am not here!), *obscure* (pitch darkness), *stun* (terrible howl). Any hero knowing the secret name of the Demon Lord Tirain gains the Arcane Resistance Edge to resist the staff's powers.



SERENE THE INNOCENT GIRL

Serene is the pretty daughter of the village chief of Skirmis. These stats refer to the part of the adventure before she recovers her memories, when she is still untainted by Norran Vall's corrupting influence.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Healing d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Stealth d4.

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Edges: Attractive, Luck, Temptress.

Hindrances: Damsel in Distress, Loyal.

Gear: Bikini.



SERENE THE WICKED

Serene is the pretty daughter of the village chief of Skirmis and the corrupted lover of the sorcerer Norran Vall. These stats represent her after recovering her memories. Now Serene is learned in arcane

knowledge and ancient languages (even though she isn't a trained sorcerer yet).

Note: Serene has the Three-Faced Staff only from Part Four onward.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Healing d6, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Arcana) d10, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Stealth d6, Taunt d8.

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 5

Edges: Attractive, Dodge, Luck, Temptress.

Hindrances: Loyal (only to Norran Vall).

Gear: Bikini, Three-Faced Staff (Str+d6, +2 Parry, 2 hands, see below).

- **Three Faced Staff:** This ancient staff grants great magical powers to his wielder, but only if he is a follower of the Demon Lord Tirain. It gives the user 30 Power Points and a series of Powers, cast with Sorcery d10. The Powers are: *armor* (green light halo), *barrier* (wall of brambles, deals 2d4 damage), *bolt* (crackling energy from the staff head), *deflection* (I am not here!), *obscure* (pitch darkness), *stun* (terrible howl). Any hero knowing the secret name of the Demon Lord Tirain gains the Arcane Resistance Edge to resist the staff's powers.

SURVIVOR

This rugged man is a victim of Norran Vall's sorcery and has been sent into the Green World. He has somehow managed to survive till today, which means that he is either incredibly lucky or extremely skilled.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Healing d4, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Stealth d4.

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Edges: Combat Reflexes.

Gear: Makeshift spiked mace (Str+d6).

THE BOOK OF LORE: DEMONS

This section provides further information about Demons. It is mainly addressed to the Game Master, but he can decide to share part of it with the players, especially if one of them is a sorcerer or has a connection of some sort with these dangerous creatures.

THREE FACTS AND THREE MYTHS ABOUT DEMONS

The Dread Sea Dominions are a land where ignorance and superstition are commonplace. Most people can't read or write, haven't been to a physician (not even a primitive one) in all their life, and have a very basic understanding of physical phenomena. For this reason they are ready to call "demon" anything they cannot comprehend: a pestilence, an eclipse, or the unfortunate birth of a two-headed lamb.

However, in many dark places, hooded men perform bloody sacrifices to unholy and depraved entities that grant them tremendous powers.

So what are Demons really?

There is no easy answer but, to clarify things, the following paragraphs explain some very common myths and known truths about Demons.

MYTH ONE:

DEMONS ARE THE PERSONIFICATION OF NEGATIVE HUMAN FEELINGS

This belief is actually a religious teaching of the priests of the Divine Couple and it is supported by many rationalist philosophers and "men of science", like the Syranthian sages. Some of them even claim that simply "disbelieving" a demon is enough to destroy it forever.

These people have probably never seen a demon, because what they say is totally false. Demons exist independently of humans, even though many of them grow stronger thanks to the humans' negative feelings and bloody sacrifices. Hence, it is useless to fight a monster summoned by an evil sorcerer simply by saying: "I am a good person and I don't believe you're real". It is the fastest way to have your head ripped from your body.

One might wonder why the priests of the Divine Couple don't believe demons really exist. The reason is simple: their religion was created by Salkaria, Tricarnian princess and first Empress, to give the Empire a consoling state religion. She did this so that the Tricarnians would join the Empire without suffering too much discomfort in the transition, maintaining in secret their true believings. Moreover, this allowed her to isolate the Smith Priests of Hulian, archenemies of the real goddess of Tricarnia, the demon queen Hordan. And what could have been more effective than simply denying the existence of the demons?

If a character believes demons are not real, he is affected by the Delusional (Major) Hindrance.

FACT ONE:

DEMONS ARE SUPERNATURAL BEINGS COMING FROM OTHER WORLDS

This is actually true. Demons are creatures from other worlds, which can mean both other planets and other dimensions. For most of the people living in the Dread Sea Dominions there is no great difference between the two concepts, as they both mean “a very faraway place”. Only the sages, scholars and sorcerers can truly understand the difference between “planet” and “dimension”.

Being otherworldly creatures, demons aren't supposed to be like mortal men or think like them. Imagine a boy playing with an anthill; the ants' lives are of no concern to him. He doesn't even try to understand them, because ants and humans are too different. The boy will feel no remorse if some ants die while he plays with them.

The relationship between men and demons is the same. Just like the boy with the ants, demons are too different and alien to understand humans. Do not expect them to have any human emotions, even though they can fake them very well. The most even relationship that can exist between the two is the summoning pact between a demon and a sorcerer.

MYTH TWO:

DEMONS AND UNDEAD ARE THE SAME

False. This is pure superstition. Undead creatures are quite rare in the Dread Sea Dominions (except in the Cairnlands, where they are quite common) but they are entirely different from demons. Typi-

cally an undead is the tormented soul of a living being (usually, but not always human), forced to remain in the physical world. This angers the undead and makes it suffer greatly. Demons instead, as said above, are completely alien.

FACT TWO:

A DEMON'S SHAPE ISN'T ITS TRUE FORM

It is partially true, at least about demon coming from other dimensions. Extra dimensional demons are so alien that their true shapes are unimaginable. In certain cases, as the External demons (see below), they belong to a reality where the laws of physics are so different from ours that the concept of “shape” is meaningless. When they are summoned into our world, they must take a material form of some type, usually corresponding to the expectations of the summoner. So, for example, Hordan, the depraved demon goddess of the Tricarnians, appears as part giant snake and part stunning-looking woman, because her followers “expect” something similar. Demons are extremely talented actors and will take human characteristics to the extreme. So, if a demon is supposed to be fearful, the resulting form will be so terrible it will make humans cower.

However, this somehow weakens the demon. The creature is affected by what happens to the physical body it takes. If, for example, a demon takes a shape with one hundred eyes, and the eyes are pierced, the creature actually becomes blind. In addition, every time a demon is summoned in a certain form, the form becomes stronger and more stable, so that very few changes are possible. Hence, if you summon a demon that has visited the Dread Sea Dominions many times, as Hordan, she is forced to assume her “typical” aspect of snake woman.

In the same way, demons are defined by their names: knowing a demon's real name can grant a certain amount of protection against it (see below).

MYTH THREE:

A DEMON APPEARS IN THE WORLD ONLY IF SUMMONED BY SOMEONE

This is sadly false. Demons normally come to our world because they are summoned by a sorcerer, but they have the power to appear by themselves, even though it is a rare occurrence. This also explains how the first summoning came about. In truth, it was the demons that originally contacted the humans, and the humans (the Keronians) learnt the incantations needed to summon them at a much later time.

In addition, some traveling demons have, willingly or by chance, come to live in the Dominions, without being summoned by anyone.

This leads to another burning question: why are demons interested in humans? Because humans provide "nourishment" and "entertainment", although the two concepts (see Fact Two above) have a very different meaning for demons than for humans. In fact, some demons feed on blood, others on fear, and others on immaterial things mortals are not aware of.

FACT THREE:

KILLING A DEMON IS POSSIBLE

Luckily, this is true. Even though the world "death" is meaningless to a demonic creature, the strong arm of a warrior or an elaborate spell can indeed destroy its

physical form, forcing it to abandon this world. Note that the "death" of a demon isn't permanent. The creature is only temporarily banished, but the abrupt departure weakens it so much that it won't be possible to summon it for a very long time.

ETYMOLOGY OF THE WORD

"Demon" is an ancient Syranthian word with the rather neutral meaning of "apparition", a term which includes dreams, visions, hallucinations and, naturally, supernatural creatures not born in the Dread Sea Dominions. The reasons for the shift to its current meaning are for the scholars to clarify. In gaming terms, a Demon is any creature with the Demon Monstrous Ability (found in the Beasts and Barbarians Golden Edition).

DEMONIC NATURES

Demons can either be External or Alien. Both types are briefly explained below.

EXTERNAL DEMONS

External is just another word for extra-dimensional. External demons are the commonest type of demons. They come from other realities and are usually summoned by sorcerers and evil warlocks.

ALIEN DEMONS

Alien Demons come to the Dread Sea Dominions from other planets, because they have been summoned, because they want to, or by accident. They tend to have very weird powers and be very strong. In many cases, however, since they haven't wholly adapted to their new environment, their alien nature is a drawback that causes a Weakness of some type.

DEMONIC HIERARCHIES

Cataloging demons isn't easy, as each has different features, but they are usually classified based on their power. Knowing a demon's power rank is also useful when attempting to summon one with the *summon ally* Power.

LESSER

Lesser demons are on the lowest levels of the demons' hierarchies. They are usually rather weak, and being summoned to the Dread Sea Dominions might be a shock for them. Lesser demons are usually summoned by sorcerers to be kept as pets or companions. A typical example of Lesser demon is the Keronian Imp found in the *Beasts and Barbarians* Golden Edition. A Lesser demon counts as a Novice creature for the purposes of the *summon ally* Power.

MINOR

Minor demons are a step above the lesser ones. These creatures are usually fearful and act as the typical strong minions summoned by sorcerers. Despite being quite powerful, they cannot transfer their abilities to their followers in any way. The Demonic Mastiff of the *Beasts and Barbarians* Golden Edition is considered a Minor demon. A Minor demon counts as a Veteran creature for the purposes of the *summon ally* Power.

MAJOR

Every sorcerer thinks very carefully before summoning a Major demon. Major de-

mons are extremely powerful and incredibly hard to please. A Lesser demon usually obeys its master because it fears him, and a Minor one is a faithful servant if regularly provided with fresh blood, fear or whatever it feeds on, but a Major demon is always a very dangerous customer to deal with.

First, its powers are amazing: a Major demon can conquer a city single-handedly, change the shape of an entire region or grant his master astonishing powers. Second, a Major demon isn't easy to please: blood, fear, and virgins usually aren't enough. It either wants an endless supply of the above or desires something very exotic, like the soul of its summoner. But, above all, a Major demon covets freedom. A free Major demon is truly dangerous, and makes for a great villain for an adventure or an entire campaign. The Singer Demon of the *Beasts and Barbarians* Golden Edition is a Major demon. A Major demon counts as a Legendary creature for the purposes of the *summon ally* Power.

LORD

A Demon Lord is the most similar to a god. It has tremendous powers, and can transfer them to its followers. It usually likes bloody sacrifices, but what it seeks most is adoration.

The normal summoner-demon relationship is reversed in the case of a Demon Lord: the demon owns the soul of the summoner and his followers and can use and abuse them as it wishes. A Demon Lord cannot be bound in any way, even though it can easily pretend to be for its wicked purposes. Demon Lords are luckily very rare, but the few that have roamed freely in the Dread Sea Dominions – such as Hordan or Sha-Mekri, the demon lord

of the Valk – have left a great mark on their history.

Despite their great powers, Demon Lords cannot simply walk in this world and tear it apart. In truth, they cannot even wholly manifest themselves. They usually act through agents (sorcerers, cultists, and so on) and only rarely do they allow part of their essence to be embodied in a physical form, called avatar. Ulasha the Devourer, the demon of the *Death of a Tyrant* scenario (*Beasts and Barbarians #1*), is a Demon Lord.

FOUR EXAMPLE DEMONS

The following section presents some background information about four demons that can be used in custom-made scenarios. No full stats are provided, so that the Game Master can tweak the profiles as he sees fits for his campaigns.

As a rule of thumb, each demon should have the Demon Monstrous Ability, as described in the *Beasts and Barbarians* Golden Edition.

JABELIZZAR

Nature: External

Hierarchy Rank: Lesser

A Jabelizzar is a demonic entity that cannot be summoned directly into the world, because it dwells only in reflective surfaces, like mirrors, polished gems, calm pools of water, and so on. So, after being summoned, a Jabelizzar resides in such a place.

Jabelizzars usually assume the facial features of the person mirrored in them and

twist it. So, when a beautiful girl looks at herself in a possessed mirror, the Jabelizzar turns the reflection into that of an old crone. Jabelizzars cannot interact with the world directly, but they can speak to humans and show them anything he wants. They use their power to influence people (Persuasion d12+1), scare them (Intimidation d12+1), or anger them (Taunt d12+1). The magic of their words is sometimes so strong that they can convince girls to kill their sisters or children to jump into deep wells to grab imaginary toys.

Sorcerers often summon Jabelizzars as spies, because they can “jump” from one reflective surface to another, if these are less than 12” away from each other, so that they can enter the private quarters of the sorcerer’s enemies and eavesdrop. The safest way to banish a Jabelizzar is to destroy the reflective object currently hosting it.

KALIBAH

Nature: External

Hierarchy Rank: Minor

A Kalibah appears as a very handsome man or woman, with a single distinctive feature: very green eyes.

Kalibahs are expert seducers and always try to have a carnal affair with their victims. During the sexual act, they paralyze their mates with the saliva of their kisses (as per the Paralysis Monstrous Ability) and then revert to their original shape that of a human with two mantis claws in place of their hands (Str + d6 damage). At this point, they start butchering their unfortunate mates.

The victim’s flesh is used by the Kalibah to feed its offspring, which is conceived during the sexual act. Kalibahs can look like males or females, but they are actually

hermaphrodites and, regardless of their partner's sex, they can always reproduce.

The baby Kalibah is born after nine weeks but, at this point, the demon has usually been sent back to its dimension by the sorcerer who summoned it from some time. The reason is simple: a baby Kalibah born in this world is a free entity, subject to no control, and grows at a rate thirty times faster than that of a human baby, reaching adulthood in seven months.

Besides their claws and paralyzing kisses, the Kalibahs have the same stats as humans.

Sorcerers summons Kalibahs to use them as assassins.

DREAM PLANT

Nature: Alien

Hierarchy Rank: Major

A Dream Plant appears very similar to a weeping willow, but its trunk tends to be



more twisted and gnarled. Its leaves and flowers are also different from those of the normal tree.

The leaves have a small fissure in the middle, causing them to whistle at the faintest wind. The whistle sounds like a human voice speaking an alien, musical language.

The flowers are elongated and thin, ranging from pale white to blood red, and have a very strong scent. This smell makes humans feel a sense of lassitude and relaxation that almost forces them to stop for a while under the branches of the tree. This must be avoided in every way: the soul of a person falling asleep next to a Dream Plant is dragged into a very vivid and scary dream, where he is forced to face his worst fears. If more people fall asleep under the same tree, they share the same dream, which is a collage of all the participants' fears. The Plant actually lives off these fears, and most dreamers die of terror during the dream. When this happens, their bodies decompose very quickly and their bones soon become engulfed by the thick moss growing under a Dream Plant. There is a safe way to deal with a Dream Plant: chop it and burn it.

In very rare cases, the soul of a victim under the influence of a Dream Plant is strong enough to wake up. When this happens, the Plant, scared by the fact that its secret nature has been discovered, tries to strangle the dreamer with its branches.

Dream Plants come from another world and sorcerers usually summon them to protect their dwelling places because, once summoned, a Dream Plant remains in the world permanently, unless it is destroyed or banished (if summoned with the *summon ally* Power, this counts as having Permanent duration).

THE TENTACLED ONE

Nature: Alien

Hierarchy Rank: Lord

The Tentacled One is a creature that dwells in the sewers of the city of Nal Sagath, in the Borderlands. It came from another world many millennia ago and crept into the tunnels made by an underground river. Centuries later, the Tricarnians built the city of Nal Sagath in the very same place. The Tentacled One is a mass of tentacles and has a terrible feature: it grows incessantly. In time, it has become so big it now infests all the lower levels of the city sewers. It is almost mindless and spends most of its time sleeping. Once in a while, it gets hungry, so it stretches one of its thinnest tentacles toward the surface till it finds a suitable victim. The unfortunate one is then grabbed and dragged underground, where he faces a terrible end.

The Tentacled One can be summoned only in Nal Sagath or in close proximity of the city, and answers the summoner's call only when it wants. When it appears, it must be fed a living being (which it drags deep into the sewers). If satisfied, the Tentacled One rewards its followers with its corrupting touch: when it touches the limb of a human, it permanently turns it into a tentacle of enormous strength.

DEMONS' TRUE NAMES

AND CHAIN NAMES

True Name. *Demons are known in the Dread Sea Dominions with the names assigned to them by the sorcerers summoning them for the first time or by sages. These aren't the demons' true names. They are known as "mundane names" and mean nothing. Instead, knowing a demon's true name gives a certain power over it.*

As a rule of thumb, knowing the real name of a demon grants the Arcane Resistance

Edge against its power, +2 to resisting Tests of Wills made by that demon, and +2 to Sorcery rolls to summon him. But this is only a general rule and the Game Master can grant other specific advantages for knowing the name of very powerful demons.

Note that the true name refers to a single demon, not to the whole group it belongs to. So, for instance, knowing the true name of Xarigas the Keronian Imp gives no power over his brother, Turas the Keronian Imp.

Discovering the true name of a demon might be the goal of an adventure or a small quest. If the Game Master allows it, a sorcerer can find out if he knows the true name of a demon by making a single Knowledge (Arcana) roll with the modifiers listed in the table below. With a success, he knows the demon's true name. The modifiers are cumulative. So, a roll to find the true name of a Minor Alien Demon has a -4 modifier.

Demon Name Modifiers Table

Alien Demon	-2
External Demon	0
Lesser Demon	0
Minor	-2
Major	-4
Lord	Impossible. Specific quest required

Chain Name. *Demons are devious. They know that humans are always trying to find out their true names to control them. So they sometimes say strange words to cheat humans into believing they have let their true name slip. In truth, these words are oaths of submissions, called Chain Names. A person pronouncing a chain name in front of a demon is actually saying something like: "I am willingly giving you my soul and body so that you can use it as you will".*

A character saying a Chain Name to a demon must make a Spirit roll. If he fails, he suffers -2 to resisting Tests of Wills made by that demon and -2 to Sorcery rolls to summon it. In addition, if he rolls a critical failure, the demon enslaves him as per the

puppet Power. The effect is permanent unless the demon is slain or banished. Recognizing a Chain Name requires a Knowledge (Arcana) (-2) roll.

WORSHIPPING DEMONS

Many religions and strange cults exist in the vast Dread Sea Dominions. The existence of gods is uncertain to say the least, while demons are, sadly, a reality. So, in remote areas and bustling cities alike, demons are feared and worshipped. Demon followers are a staple of the Sword and Sorcery genre, because they make for excellent villains: they are evil, fanatic, numerous and usually utterly mad.

The following sections provide the Game Master with plenty of info about demon worshippers to be used as opponent in his adventures.

OBJECT OF VENERATION

Theoretically, cultists can worship any type of demon but imagining them while they adore a one-foot tall Keronian Imp is, well... quite ridiculous. So, as a rule of thumb, the object of a demonic cult is usually at least a Major demon.

The type and identity of the demon venerated is very important, because it determines the nature of its followers. Demonic cults tend to be instrumental: the worshippers pray to their demon in order to get something in return. So, for example, a group of decadent noblewomen in Faberterra might worship a pleasure demon that can make them young and pretty forever, while a covenant of farmers in a remote village of Zandor will sacrifice

strangers to an alien demon that makes their harvest plentiful.

Another very important thing to decide is what the demon wants from its followers. Prayers, sacrifices, and sex are common choices but some demons might have even more exotic needs.

The combinations of these three factors – the demon's identity, the reward it gives to its followers and what it asks for in exchange – provide a rather accurate picture of its cult.

CULT STRUCTURE

The typical cult is organized in a pyramidal form and is led by a Charismatic Leader, the true soul of the group. Without the Leader, the cult quickly falls apart. The Leader usually has powers of some sort, the most common being the ability to summon the Demon he worships (he can do this without being a sorcerer, see the Demonic Reward sidebar). But his most important traits are his strong personality and his influence on the other cultists.

The Chosen Ones come next. They are the top-class followers, the true believers that set an example for all the other cult members and act as lieutenant of the Charismatic Leader. Depending on their master's choice, they might be given a Demonic Reward, which is a tangible sign of their devotion and envied by the other Cultists.

At the bottom of the pyramid are the Cultists. They are the backbone of the cult: they pray, run errands, fight for their master, and so on. Depending on the nature of the demon worshipped, they might have a real Demonic Reward, but usually they only have a Taint, described below.

The Cultists' aspiration is to become Chosen Ones.

TAINT AND CULT TRAPPINGS

Worshipping demons taints the cultists' bodies and souls. This can manifest itself in many ways, with physical mutations, strange behaviors, and so on. The cultists see their Taint as a sign of their master's benevolence. For example, in the scenario contained in this booklet, the Taint of the Masked Pygmies, who are demon worshippers, is their insect-like head.

The Taint adds some flavor to a demonic cult, but the Game Master can push this further and define a series of trappings typical of the cultists. For example, he can choose the specific weapon they use (a carved dagger), a secret sign (a code phrase), a body feature (shaved heads, tattooed feet), or a typical behavior (avoiding direct sunlight). When creating a demonic cult, the GM should think of at least a few cult trappings.

HIDEOUT

Demonic cults are seldom public. Many cultures rightly consider demon worshipping an abominable practice, so the cultists tend to have secret places where they gather to celebrate their dark rites. Depending on the cult's nature, they can be used only for the rites or be real hideouts where the whole cult lives. When designing the hideout, try to give it an atmosphere that suits the demon it is dedicated to.

There are two reasons for this. First, places of worship tend to be contaminated by the presence of a demon. Second, the hideout will be very likely found and explored by

the heroes, so it must be an interesting, mysterious place.

DEMONIC REWARDS

Why would anyone give his immortal soul to a demon? Because of the gifts he receives in exchange, of course!

Summoning. *The ability to summon a demon is a powerful skill, usually granted only to cult leaders. Knowing the proper rite is enough and there is no need to have any Arcane Background.*

The cult leader uses the summon ally Power, with Spirit as arcane skill. He doesn't have any Power Points but receives a Power Point for each success and raise on the Spirit roll while casting the spell. Sacrifices and specific rituals as well as the presence of followers can grant additional Power Points. All the cultists actively participating in the rite make a cooperative roll, aiding their master in generating Power Points. If they don't generate enough Power Points to summon the demon, the cultists can keep building up Power Points till they reach the demon's Power Points cost. The ritual stops (and fails) only if the main caster scores 1 on the Spirit roll.

A demon summoned in this manner isn't under the control of the caster, and can remain in the world as long as it wants.

Demonic Rewards. *Demons reward their most devoted followers with special powers, such as Edges of some type, the limited use of a Power, or even a Monstrous Ability. Remember that demonic rewards are usually double-edged, so they both empower and taint the followers.*

Here are some examples of Demonic Rewards:

Gills. *The cultists grow a set of gills, so they can breathe underwater, as per the Aquatic Monstrous Ability. As a minor drawback, their skin becomes gray and slimy, causing them to lose a Charisma point.*

Word of Pain. *The demon whispers a cursed word to its followers. When pronounced, the*

word causes terrible pain to those who hear it. The followers acquire the stun Power, using Spirit as arcane skill and with 5 Power Points. As no human mind can fully endure the power of such a word, the cultists also receive the Delusional Hindrance.

Taste for Blood. *The cultists are blessed with the dark appetite of their demonic patron: whenever they see or smell blood, they go into a frenzy, acquiring the Berserk Edge. In addition, after a fight, they must make a Spirit roll to stop them from eating the fallen enemy's flesh (counts as the Bloodthirsty Hindrance).*

DEMON WORSHIPPING HEROES

Sword and Sorcery characters aren't always knights in shiny armor and might have a dark past. So, a player can decide to choose a demon worshipper character. In this case, ignore the previous paragraph (Demonic Rewards), which refers only to NPCs.

For player characters, work directly with Edge trappings. So, a demon worshipper might be blessed by his supernatural patron with supernatural endurance (Nerves of Steel Edge), be given a cursed weapon of some sort (Trademark Weapon Edge), and so on.

FIGHTING DEMONS

This section describes groups of people involved in fighting demons. Some of them can be good patrons or allies to the heroes. Players will also find useful information to develop their own demon fighting character.

ENLIGHTENED ONES

Demons are true abominations for the Enlightened Ones. In fact, they believe that demons were once human souls that chose to follow the opposite path to that

of Enlightenment, becoming dark and twisted.

This belief is inaccurate (demons, as said before, are alien beings), yet it drives the Enlightened Ones to continue their fight against this evil.

Destroying a demon is seen as a duty by any Enlightened One worthy of his name, but two groups of monks are particularly dedicated to this task: Stylites and White Flowers.

STYLITES

The Stylites are hermits who choose to spend their lives meditating perched on the top of tall columns. They are commonly found around the Land of Idols and in certain areas of Ekul and Kyros. People usually think that the Stylites are meditating to improve themselves and finally reach Enlightenment, but this is only partially true. As he will tell everyone who asks, a Stylite is actually “protecting the world”.

The facts behind this puzzling answer are complex and frightening. The Stylites actually act as a barrier against demons. Groups of Stylites go to demon-infested lands (like the city of Collana in Ekul or the Land of Idols) and, thanks to their continuous prayers and constant concentration, no demon can cross the line between two columns, which thus form a sort of barrier against supernatural threats. It might seem an easy task, but nothing is farther from the truth. Even though demons cannot walk between two Stylite columns, they constantly work to weaken the Stylites' faith in order to kill them and feast on their souls. These holy men must fight against temptations, visions, and spiritual attacks that would shatter the soul of lesser individuals.

WHITE FLOWERS

Although no real sex barrier exists, most Lhoban monks are men, while women are almost ten times fewer.

The White Flowers are a particular group of female monks with a long-standing tradition of sacrifice and abnegation and they fight demons in a very peculiar way.

Being admitted among the White Flowers is no easy task. The candidates must be females, not yet deflowered, and of great beauty. The White Flowers are trained in an old monastery in Lhoban, known as the Garden of the Spirit. It has no walls or roof and is tended by the White Flowers themselves. Here, the novices are trained to trap demons within their own bodies.

In fact, the White Flowers believe that demons are misguided souls that wrongly chose the path of darkness. They hunt them not to banish them, but to try and bring them back to the light. From then on, the life of a White Flower becomes a constant struggle: the demon tries in every way to escape or take control of the vessel it is trapped within, sometimes with devastating effects.

A trapped demon tries to escape by weakening the spirit of its trapper, inflicting terrible pain and diseases, so that, in time, many White Flowers come to be very different from the beautiful maiden they were in youth, and this is why they wear long robes and hoods of white silk.

A White Flower's task is a life-long commitment and the female monk often dies before managing to heal the demon. With the death of the White Flower, the demon is free again. This is why, when a White Flower feels that her end is near, she comes back to the monastery and her

sisters take her to the Well of the Many Reflections, a mausoleum built under the Garden of the Spirit. The walls of this crypt are made of pure crystal and, when the White Flower dies, the demon, finally free but without a physical body, becomes confused by the many guises of it and sees all around and remains trapped in the mausoleum forever.

STYLITES' BLESSINGS

Stylites aren't suited to being player characters, but they are excellent patrons and NPCs. A Stylite knows many mysterious things and senses future events. For example, a Stylite of Collana might know when the king of a distant land dies or when a baby destined to be a hero is born in a remote village.

"I listen the breath of the world" is the usual explanation a Stylite gives, when asked how he gathers such information.

In gaming terms, Stylites have the Monk (Contemplative) Edge and are considered as having a Wild Die of d8 on Spirit based Common Knowledge rolls.

In addition, Stylites can bestow special blessings on people who dedicate themselves to demon hunting. The blessing of a Stylite lasts for an entire scenario, but it immediately expires if the individual gives up his demon hunting quest.

To check the effect of a Stylite's blessing draw a card from the Action Deck and consult the table below. All the Edges and modifiers below work only if the target is directly involved in a confrontation of some sort with a demon.

Card Value	Effect
2-3	Luck of the Brave. <i>The character gains a Bennie that can be used only against demons.</i>
4-	Demon Sniffing <i>The character gains the ability to</i>

6-7

8-10

Jack

Queen

King

Ace

Joker

"sniff" any demonic presence. He gains the detect arcane Power, limited to Demons, with 10 Power Points, and uses Spirit as arcane skill.

"I shall have no fear!" The recipient is immune to Fear caused by demons.

"You cannot touch me!" The hero gains +2 to Soak rolls against damage inflicted by demons.

Touch of Revelation. *The recipient, when hitting demons with a raise, causes d10 instead of d6 additional damage.*

Power of Disbelieving. *The character knows that a demon is only as strong as he allows it to be. He gains the Arcane Resistance Edge against demons.*

Holy Warrior. *The character gains the Holy Warrior Edge, ignoring all prerequisites.*

Champion. *The character gains the Champion Edge, ignoring all prerequisites.*

Demon Hunter. *The character gains the Demon Hunter Edge, ignoring all prerequisites.*

PLAYING A WHITE FLOWER CHARACTER

White Flowers can be interesting characters to play. This type of character requires the Arcane Background (Enlightened) and Demon Hunter Edges. In addition, she must be at least Attractive. A White Flower's Demon Hunter Edge is tweaked a bit.

First, she can use her own body as vessel.

Second, after capturing a demon with the Demon Hunter Edge, she must decide if she wants to permanently trap it within herself. If she chooses to do so, she gains an additional Bennie (as per the Luck Edge) but she also gains an additional Major Hindrance that must be decided with the Game Master, which represent the demonic spirit fighting for its freedom. Both the Hindrance and the extra Bennie are permanent.

A White Flower character cannot start the game with a demon already trapped in her body: this opportunity must arise during the game.

HULIANITES

With the Salkarian Reformation (1560 ASF) the Emperor outlawed the cult of Hulian, replacing it with the more politically correct worship of the Divine Couple, Hulian and Hordan. In this version, Hulian is a much more forgiving divinity than the original Smith God. True Hulanites were forced to go into hiding to keep up their faith.

Many centuries have passed and the Hulanites have now become integrated in society, but they continue their worship and the holy mission – fighting against Hulian’s archenemy, the demon goddess Hordan, and finally fulfilling the Broken Prophecy.

THE BROKEN PROPHECY AND THE QUEST FOR THE ONE LEADER

Immediately before the Second Tricarnian War, the High Priest of Hulian visited Emperor Domestan and revealed to him an important prophecy, saying: “If the army of the Empire is led by a single man, then Tricarnia will be conquered and the evil demon goddess Hordan will be destroyed”.

The High Priest believed the One Leader to be Domestan, but he was wrong. The Emperor, seduced by Princess Salkaria, gave up the war, so Tricarnia wasn’t truly defeated, Hordan survived and became even stronger.

Domestan wasn’t the One Leader, but this doesn’t mean the prophecy was false; the One Leader simply hasn’t been found yet. The Smith Priests of Hulian have been looking for him incessantly for many centuries, but no one knows when he will be found.

THE FIGHT AGAINST DEMONS

Although their main opponent is the goddess Hordan, the Smith Priests have very little sympathy for demons in general. According to their theology, all demons are subject to Hordan, so destroying one of them weakens the ranks of Hordan’s followers.

For this reason, the Hulanites fight demons with all their strength. It is an act of great courage, because, despite being strong warriors, the Smith Priests don’t have the incredible powers of the Enlightened Ones and fight the supernatural creatures with the mere bravery of their soul and the vigor of their arm.

There is a notable exception. The Priests Smiths know a secret that many demons greatly fear: steel. Steel is no longer forged in the Dominions (though some very old priests might still know the procedure), but the Hulanites still own some ancient steel weapons worshipped as relics, among which the most famous are the Sister Blades (see below).

Other cults might keep their relics safe in their temples, but this is not true for the Smith Priests. Hulian is a smith, and a craftsman must put his tools to good use. Hence, these relics are given to the priests, who actively use them to fight demons.

PLAYING A SMITH PRIEST

Players that want to create a Smith Priest character can do this simply by referring to the Beasts and Barbarians Golden Edition. A Smith Priest has probably taken a religious Vow and, since his cult is secret and illegal, he must choose an appropriate Hindrance to represent it (Enemy, Outsider or Wanted are all suitable).

He is a militant priest, so his best Skills are: Fighting, Repair (smith work training), Streetwise (live in hiding) and Knowledge (Religion and Arcana).

As for Edges, all Combat Edges are suitable for Smith Priests, plus the Priest Edge, of course.

In addition, a Smith Priest can choose to take the Decayed Noble (relic) Edge, tweaking it a bit. This means he has been chosen by the cult to carry a steel weapon relic and use it against demons.

RELIC IDEA: THE SISTER BLADES

Immediately before the start of the second Tricarnian War, when the cult of Hulian was at its strongest, a number of steel blades were forged. They were given to very important personalities of the Imperial army to help them fight the horrors the Tricarnian

sorcerers would surely summon in the incoming battles.

The exact number and nature of these blades is unknown but they are presumed to have been between three and nine and to have included at least a dagger, a short sword, and a long sword.

The Sister Blades, as they are called, were built with the most secret techniques of the Smith Priests and many prayers and incantations were recited upon them to make them deadly against demons.

In the turmoil of the war, these weapons suffered various fates. At least one of them, the short sword belonging to Emperor Domes-tan, was stolen by Empress Salkaria and probably destroyed or sent to Tricarnia to be studied. A dagger was luckily picked up by a phalanx soldier who returned it to the temple of Hulian in Faberterra once and for all. The fate of the other blades is unknown.

In gaming terms, the Sister Blades all have the same powers. They are steel weapons (see the Beast and Barbarians Golden Edition) and grant the wielder the Holy Warrior Edge.