



The Promised Land

THE FIRST PART IN THE CHRONICLE OF THE COPPER CROWN

AN ADVENTURE FOR *Symbaroum*

Introduction

WELCOME TO THE PROMISED LAND, the tutorial adventure for Symbaroum. Our aim is that it should provide a balanced introduction to the rules and setting of Symbaroum, suitable for both experienced role-players and beginners. The adventure deals with a perilous journey through the Titans. The player characters can be Ambrians about to make their first contact with Queen Korinthia's new realm or travelers from the north who so far have kept some distance from the newly established civilization. In that way none of them know much more about Ambria than what is detailed in the first section of this book.

THIS INITIAL CHAPTER includes a narrative tutorial meant to illustrate how the communication between a player and the Game Master may flow during two sequences of play. The text can be read by both players and Game Masters, but it is primarily written for the latter as it is based on scenes from this adventure. Hence, the players should not be given access to the text before their characters have made it through the mountain pass.

After the narrative tutorial, nine premade characters are presented, for the players to copy or use as inspiration when filling out their character sheets. Among them there are both individuals who originate from the Davokar region, as well as those who have never set foot north of the Titans.

The adventure that follows after the premade characters is divided into three chapters, in turn broken up into a number of scenes. For the benefit of inexperienced Game Masters, the Promised Land has been constructed as a linear story with scenes that follow each other like pearls on a string – something which delimits the options of the player characters and thereby makes the task of the Game Master less complicated. However, role-players are of an unruly breed and not easily

controlled. Naturally, the player characters may act in a way which is not covered by the manuscript, in which case the Game Master must be prepared to improvise and gently guide them back to the main path of the adventure.

The chapters of the Promised Land may be summarized as follows:

CHAPTER 1: ONWARDS TO YNDAROS

When the game begins, the player characters are held up south of the Titans, in a caravan camp full of stragglers looking for traveling companions to accompany them on the journey over the mountains. The chapter introduces the mood of the setting as well as the basic rules of combat. Furthermore, the player characters are given a reason for why they are leaving the south and a hint of what they are headed for: the ample fields and swaying forests of Ambria.

CHAPTER 2:

IN THE COMPANY OF THIEVES

Chapter 2 is focused on teaching the rules of problem-solving. The players will also receive a deeper understanding of the setting, not least of



THUS SPOKE AROALETA

*"... and king upon king
sent his people to die,
in wave upon wave
over rolling plains;
men and women on
whose broken hulls,
an imposing realm
was built. Such was
the foundation of
Symbaroum: built
with flesh and blood."*



the hardships associated with traveling: newly made player characters are competent but far from full-fledged heroes who can do whatever they like without risk to their lives. The world will prove to be bigger and darker than they imagine, despite previous encounters with the hordes of darkness.

CHAPTER 3: THE TOLL OF THE MOUNTAINS

In Chapter 3 the adventure reaches its climax, with scenes where the rules of combat and problem-solving are mixed with pure roleplaying. The player characters are harshly greeted by the

north, as age-old conflicts meet up with them on the mountain road. Ambria is both beautiful and fertile, especially compared to the dead lands they have left behind. But it is nonetheless wise to keep your hand close to the hilt of your sword.

It is revealed that two of the player characters' traveling companions have angered the Iron Pact by pillaging ruins in Davokar. The elves are far from delighted. In fact, they are prepared to slaughter a whole caravan of innocents to make the plunderers pay and to stop the blight from spreading. What slumbers in the murky deep of Davokar must not be awakened!

Narrative Tutorial

THE RULES OF SYMBAROUM are easy to use once you have learned how they operate. Basically, the player character has eight attributes with a value between 5 and 15. When faced with a challenge in the game world, the player must roll a twenty sided dice (d20). In order to overcome the challenge the dice must land on a figure which is equal to or lower than the player character's value in one of the attributes. For instance, if the character tries to do something which requires him to be quiet or cautious the attribute *Discreet* is used; if he searches for something or is on his guard then *Vigilant* is the active attribute.

However, there are two aspects that add to the complexity. First the Abilities, which represent the particular skills of a player character. Abilities sometimes open up the possibility for the player to use another attribute than the one which seems natural in a certain situation. A common example occurs when it is time for combat. In order for the player character to hit an opponent with his weapon, the player normally rolls the die against the attribute *Accurate*. But if the character, for example, masters the ability called *Iron Fist* he can choose to roll against *Strong* instead. In the same way, the ability *Feint* makes it possible to role against the character's value in *Discreet* and the ability *Dominate* against the value in *Persuasive*. To be sure of what applies in different situations both the player and the Game Master must study and learn how the various abilities operate.

The other complication has to do with the fact that many challenges become easier or harder depending on who or what the character interacts with. Sneaking past a guard is for instance easier or harder depending on how *Vigilant* the guard is. And to hit an enemy with a sword can be more or less difficult depending on how *Quick* the opponent is. Rule-wise this is achieved by modifying the

value that the player must roll against, most often in a way which is directly related to the attribute values of the opponent. In concrete terms: If the aforementioned guard has the mediocre value of 10 in *Vigilant*, no modification is made (± 0); if the guard is very absentminded and only has 5 in *Vigilant*, the player gets to add 5 (+5) to the attribute he must roll against; and should the guard be so alert that he has 15 in *Vigilant* the player must subtract 5 (-5) from the value he must roll against with the d20.

Now, let us accompany the ogre Grumpa, the example character in the Core Book, as she tries to convince the caravan master Argasto that she should be invited to tag along on the journey over the Titans (see page 10). She is facing a guard, dressed in a scale mail armor and carrying sword and shield. Grumpa is of course equipped with her leather apron and has armed herself with a long staff.

Relocating the scenario

The basic premise of the adventure – the journey from Alberetor to Yndaros – is pointless if the player characters are already in Ambria. If that is the case, some changes must be made, but it is still possible to keep the core of the adventure relatively intact.

Tentatively the characters could instead depart from Yndaros, with Karvosti or Thistle Hold as the final destination. The mountain pass could be made into a lengthy valley and the snowstorm in Chapter 3 into heavy rains or a hailstorm. What to make of Chapters 1 and 2 is less evident; the theft of the Sun Stone is less alarming if it does not threaten the caravan. But if one or more characters are tasked with bringing the stone from an Ordo Magica chapter to the destination, some of the narrative pressure still applies and the scenes can run as intended. Chapter 3, which is based on the Iron Pact hunting abominations, is relevant no matter where in Ambria or Davokar the characters may be.



First the turn order must be determined – that is, which of the two acts first – which is normally decided by looking at the opponent's value in *Quick*. In this case both combatants have 10 in *Quick*, in which case the order is instead determined by the value in *Vigilant*. Grumpa has 9 in *Vigilant*, the guard 11. Hence, the latter is first to act.

However, the first turn differs somewhat from those to come. Grumpa wields a weapon with the quality *Long*, which means that she first of all gets to make a free attack on the guard. The Game Master tells Grumpa's player to role a die against *Accurate*, modified by the opponents *Defense* which is +1. The player picks up a D20 and will try to get a result which is under or equal to 11 (*Accurate* 10, modified by the enemy's *Defense* +1). The player rolls 14: the guard deflects the staff with his shield and it hits the ground. Time for the adversary to retaliate!

The Game Master tells Grumpa's player to roll a die against her value in *Defense*, but modified by the enemy's *Accurate* which is 13 and therefore gives a modification of -3. Ouch, the stout ogre is in trouble since she only has 6 in *Defense*. Because of the skilled opponent the player must roll under or equal to 3 to avoid being hit (*Defense* 6, modified by the enemy's *Accurate* -3). The die lands on 7 and

Grumpa fails to parry the swing. But that does not necessarily mean that she gets injured ...

The Game Master says that the guard's sword deals 4 in damage. Luckily Grumpa is well prepared to handle that – she has the trait *Robust* which lets her ignore 1D4 of Damage each time she is hit, and she also has her apron that also protects for 1D4. Grumpa's player rolls 1 on the first D4 and 4 on the second. When added together (1+4=5) and the result has been subtracted from the damage of 4 it shows that Grumpa is totally unharmed (Damage 4, minus Grumpa's Armor 5 = less than 1). And now it is her time to act!

Instead of going for another swing with the staff the player wants Grumpa to make use of the mystical power *Confusion*. The Game Master says that a roll against *Resolute* has to be made, but without modifications since the guard has 10 in *Resolute* (±0 modifier). Hence, the player must roll under or equal to 15 (Grumpa's value in *Resolute*). The dice lands on 4 and the confusion takes effect, but two additional rolls must be made. First the player rolls a D4 to determine how much temporary Corruption Grumpa is afflicted by – she rolls a 3 and makes a note of that on the character sheet. Second, the player rolls a D6 to determine the effect of the *Confusion*

Concerning the ←

The arrow pointing leftwards and which is used in the formula for describing challenges means "modified by". Consequently, the formula [*Quick*←*Accurate*] means "*Quick* modified by (the opponent's) *Accurate*", a modification which can be either positive (+) or negative (-).

(see page 133 in the Core Rulebook). The outcome is a 2 which according to the power's description means that the opponent becomes temporarily paralyzed.

Next turn. This time around the length of Grumpa's weapon has no effect, but since the guard is paralyzed it still is the ogre's time to act. First the Game Master says that a roll against *Resolute* must be made (modification ± 0), to see if the *Confusion* will last for yet another turn. The die lands on 14 which means that she succeeds. With that done, the ogre lifts her staff into the air and bashes down on the enemy.

The guard may be stunned but he gets to defend himself just the same – the *Confusion* only makes him lose his active actions, not the reactive ones such as *Defense*. The Game Master says that the same terms apply as before: the player must roll an 11 or less with the D20. The die lands on a 6. A hit!

The Game Master tells the player of Grumpa that the scale mail armor of the guard absorbs 3 in damage. Grumpa's staff deals 1D6 in damage and the trait *Robust* makes it possible for the ogre to deal 1D4 of additional damage once each turn. Since the fight is to be ended at "first blood", the sum of the two dice rolls must be more than 3 for Grumpa to be victorious. The player rolls the D4 and gets a 2. The tension is rising! The D6 lands on a 5. Hence, the total damage is $2+5=7$, out of which 4 points (Damage 7, minus the opponent's Armor 3) affects the *Toughness* of the guard – a great hit that sends the bold warrior staggering backwards.

Grumpa smiles smugly, looks at Argasto and mumbles: "Sorry, I didn't mean to hit him that hard ...".

A MOMENT LATER ...

Later on, Grumpa has been asked to find the thief who has stolen the caravan's vitally important artifact: the Sun Stone (see page 23). A traveling companion has helped her to track Keler to a ruined windmill but is afraid to escort her all the way – the capturing of the thief is a challenge that she must deal with on her own. Grumpa's player says that the ogre sneaks her way towards the ruin. The Game Master tells her to roll a die against [*Vigilant* -3]; consequently the die must land on a number less than or equal to 6 for Grumpa to succeed, since the ogre has the value 9 in *Vigilant*. The player rolls a 5, and the Game Master informs her that Grumpa notices a leghold trap hidden in her path under a thin layer of undergrowth.

After having sidestepped the trap Grumpa sneaks closer to the windmill ruin. It is located about 20 paces from the forest edge – precisely as far as the ogre can get in one turn by using both her actions for movement (see page 158 in the

Core Rulebook). Seeing that Grumpa is really bad at moving quietly (value 5 in *Discreet*), the player decides to make a run for it. The Game Master says that it is time for a roll against [*Discreet* - *Vigilant*] to determine if the person or persons inside the ruin take notice of the onrushing ogre. That is an impossible challenge, since Grumpa only has 5 in *Discreet* and the thief Keler has 15 in *Vigilant*, meaning a modification of -5 (*Discreet* 5, modified by $-5 = 0$). But Grumpa still makes it to the wall of the ruin; Keler has spotted her but is taken by surprise and unable to react until the start of the next turn.

Just like in the fight against the caravan guard, the values in *Quick* are not enough to determine the turn order, but since the thief has 15 in *Vigilant* he may act first. He leans out through a hole in the ruin's wall and shoots down at Grumpa.

The Game Master tells the player to roll a die against *Defense* with a -2 modification, because Keler has 10 in *Accurate* and also an Advantage over her (see page 162 in the Core Rulebook). The player must roll 4 or under to avoid being hit by the crossbow bolt fired by Keler. The dice lands on an 8. The Game Master says that the bolt deals 7 in damage (5, +2 for the advantage), after which the player rolls 2D4 to determine the value of Grumpa's Armor – one D4 for the leather apron, and one for the trait *Robust*. The result of the dice rolls turns out to be $2+4=6$. After having subtracted the sum from the damage ($7-6=1$), it is shown that the ogre takes one point in damage, which is noted on the character sheet before it is Grumpa's turn to act.

From up above she can hear Keler starting to reload the crossbow and how he desperately cries (in the voice of the Game Master): "You will regret this! The undead Mal-Rogan will find you and chop you to pieces. Not even death could beat him; you think you are a match for Mal-Rogan, the Master of Death!?" Since nothing else is stated in the adventure, the Game Master tells the player that it only takes one movement action to reach the top of the ladder and thereby Keler. Why hesitate!?

Grumpa storms up and the Game Master decides that the cowardly Keler throws the crossbow to the ground and raises his arms in the air. The ogre searches his clothes and finds the Sun Stone in a pocket inside the tunic. No die roll is required to find the stone, but the Game Master tells the player to roll a dice against *Vigilant* anyway, modified by -5. The player rolls a 12 which means that the ogre fails.

Hence, Grumpa continues to examine the thief's belongings without noticing the sounds from outside – sounds from the robbers that Mal-Rogan has sent to scout the windmill ruin and make sure that the coast is clear ...

Attributes and Modifiers

Value	Modifier
5	+5
6	+4
7	+3
8	+2
9	+1
10	± 0
11	-1
12	-2
13	-3
14	-4
15	-5

Premade Characters

THE PROMISED LAND can be played with any kind of characters but it is balanced for the ones described below. The three Ambrians – Orlan, Bartolom and Ansel – are particularly suitable for new players, since none of them have been north of the Titans and know as little about Ambria as the players themselves. The barbarians Kvarek and Karla as well as the ogre Rageor, the changeling Niha and the goblin Fenya originate from the north but do not know much more about Ambria and Korinthia's rule than the newcomers.

Kvarek, barbarian mercenary

"What's in it for me?"

You have walked the path of steel from early childhood, as a member of the proud clan Jezora. But ever since your clan was annihilated by Ambrian forces a dozen years ago you have wandered alone – most likely as the only surviving Jezite. You have leased your weapon to the highest bidder, Ambrian or barbarian, but the constant warring has begun to eat at your soul. And you are plagued by a nagging conscience due to the fact that you survived when your brothers and sisters followed Chieftain Haloban into death. It is time to retire.

You are probably employed as a caravan guard, hoping that it will prove to be a low-risk job that lets you earn enough to eventually stop working and settle down somewhere close to the forest of Davokar. On the way south you may have befriended some or all of Rageor, Niha, Karla and Fenya.

KVAREK

Race	Human (barbarian)
Traits	<i>Contacts</i> (sellswords)
Accurate 15, Cunning 9, Discreet 7, Persuasive 5, Quick 13, Resolute 10, Strong 11, Vigilant 10	
Abilities	<i>Bodyguard</i> (novice), <i>Man-at-arms</i> (novice), <i>Shield Fighter</i> (adept)
Weapons	Dagger 1D4 (short), Bow 1D6, Sword 1D8, Shield bash 1D4 (+chance to knock-down)
Armor	Crow armor 1D6 (Impeding)
Defense	11 (shield)
Toughness	11 Pain Threshold 6
Equipment	Pipe and tobacco, dice set, camp equipment, weapon maintenance kit, 9 shillings
Shadow	Blooming green (corruption: 0)

Orlan of the House Daar, Pansar

"You have my word!"

You are the youngest son of a – besides you – extinct house of nobility. The estates and your relatives perished in the Great War; you were accepted into the ranks of the Queen's Pansars, thanks to your skills and your family name. After a time of service you have had enough of patrols and drills, and have resigned from the knights' guard in order to find a purpose in life, perhaps even the strength to rebuild your house from its ruined state.

You may very well have stayed behind in Alberetor as a member of the rearguard while the Queen and her people traveled over the mountains, possibly because you have a hard time leaving the tombs and lands of your family. Bartolom and Ansel can be old acquaintances of yours, maybe from the battlefield during the last clashes of the Great War.

ORLAN OF THE HOUSE DAAR

Race	Human (Ambrian)
Traits	<i>Privileged</i>
Accurate 11, Cunning 7, Discreet 5, Persuasive 13, Quick 10, Resolute 10, Strong 15, Vigilant 9	
Abilities	<i>Dominate</i> (novice), <i>Leader</i> (adept), <i>Two-handed force</i> (novice)
Weapons	Dagger 1D4 (short), Sword 1D8, Two-handed sword 1D12
Armor	Fortified chainmail 1D8 (Impeding)
Defense	6 (dodge) or 7 (shield)
Toughness	15 Pain Threshold 8
Equipment	Pouch with soil from the family residence in the south, camp equipment, weapon maintenance kit, 1 thaler and 5 shillings
Shadow	Gleaming silver (corruption: 0)

Rageor, ogre berserker

"Annoy me not!"

Many years ago you came wandering through Davokar nameless and blank, and were taken in by a witch who taught you to speak and behave. She never gave you a name, aware that you do not need one – after all, you know who you are and that is enough. Instead the servant of the witch named you, with a nickname to suit your temperament. Since then you have been known as Rageor, and when the witch died of old age you left the forest behind.

There seems to be much to learn about the world. You may have ended up south of the Titans by chance ("What lies down south?"), or because you previously befriended Fenya, Karla or Kvarek and just tagged along. A thrilling alternative is that the witch who raised you may have been killed by Templars. If that is the case you may very well be hunted by both witches and Black Cloaks who wish to know more about what the witch was doing or why she died.

RAGEOR			
Race	Ogre		
Traits	Long-lived, Pariah, Robust (novice)		
Accurate 10, Cunning 9, Discreet 5, Persuasive 7, Quick 11, Resolute 13, Strong 15, Vigilant 10			
Abilities	Berserker (novice), Twin Attack (adept)		
Weapons	Dagger 1D6+1D4 (short), 2 swords 1D8+1D4		
Armor	Leather apron 1D4 (Impeding)		
Defense	8 (parry)		
Toughness	15	Pain Threshold	8
Equipment	Self-made flute that only plays in minor, 4 ortegs		
Shadow	Dark green like moss (corruption: 0)		

Ansel, theurg

"Begone, skeptic!"

You are a servant of the faith schooled in the Church of Prios, also a priest mage, one of few selected by Prios to be the light in the world. Your conviction may be unwavering, but your relationship to the Church is not: intrigues fester behind closed doors, sharp elbows and pure defamations are not uncommon in the struggle for positions in the Church hierarchy. You constantly struggle to determine what is the actual will of Prios and what is part of your superiors' schemes.

You are determined to stay a champion of the former and refuse to get dragged into the latter. You were probably one of those who stayed behind in Alberetor, by choice or on order, to look after some ancient temple to the Sun God. Now you have been called to close the temple gates for good and join your brothers and sisters up north. You are possibly familiar with Orlan and Bartolom, maybe after having served for a time in the same unit of Queen Korinthia's proud army.

ANSEL			
Race	Human (Ambrian)		
Traits	Contacts (the Sun Church)		
Accurate 13, Cunning 10, Discreet 5, Persuasive 15, Quick 7, Resolute 11, Strong 9, Vigilant 10			
Abilities	Leader (adept), Theurgy (novice), Witch Hammer (novice)		
Weapons	Dagger 1D6 (short), Warhammer 1D8		
Armor	Priest robes (flexible)		
Defense	9 (shield)		
Toughness	10	Pain Threshold	5
Equipment	Warn copy of the Lightbringer (the holy book of Prios), camp equipment, 1 thaler and 3 shillings		
Shadow	Shimmering gold, like the sun reflecting off a silver mirror (corruption: 0)		

Bartolom, Wizard of Ordo Magica

"Interesting, this must be scrutinized."

You are a novice in Ordo Magica, Ambria's biggest and most influential order of wizardry. When all others journeyed north you and your master stayed in Alberetor to study the dying earth, although you wanted nothing more than to tag along in search for the truth behind rumors about Davokar's herbs and the magic of barbarian witches. Now that your master is dead it is time to put that plan into action. The first step is to locate your old colleague, Master Vernam who is said to live in Thistle Hold.

The last thing your departed master asked of you was to bring the one true treasure of your tower to Grand Master Seldonio in Yndaros – the ancient artifact known as the Sun Stone. Once that is done you are free to do whatever you like, but you probably contemplate joining the chapter in Thistle Hold. You may be friends or acquainted with Orlan or Ansel.

BARTOLOM	
Race	Human (Ambrian)
Traits	Privileged
Accurate 10, Cunning 13, Discreet 5, Persuasive 10, Quick 11, Resolute 15, Strong 9, Vigilant 7	
Abilities	Alchemy (novice), Beast Lore (novice), Brimstone Cascade (novice), Medicus (novice), Wizardry (novice)

Weapons	Dagger 1D6 (short), Walking staff 1D6 (long)		
Armor	Blessed robe 1D4 (flexible)		
Defense	11		
Toughness	10	Pain Threshold	5
Equipment	The Sun Stone (artifact, see page 23), camp equipment, aged sherry, 3 herbal cures, 3 thaler and 9 shillings		
Shadow	Fiery copper (corruption: 0)		

Magdala, barbarian witch

"The spirits want it so."

You grew up in the shadow of Karvosti, the plateau of the High Chieftain in Davokar. Your initiation ended in tragedy as the ritual was cut short by an abomination sprung forth from the forest deep. In the fight you found your inner beast, and because of that the leader of your hex circle has sent you south. You are deemed to be able to defend yourself against the depraved Ambrians, should the need arise. Your mission is to observe and to report back to the hex circle. Davokar is about to awaken, in part because of the newcomers, and the forces that work for a waking must be found and fought.

The Huldra on Karvosti is interested in everything related to the people of the Queen and may have tasked you with studying the ruined south in order to gain a better understanding of the Ambrians' past. In order to avoid unwanted attention you may claim to be exiled after having violated some taboo. Or you may actually have broken some vow and willfully chosen to lay low far from the witches' territory. You have probably met and familiarized yourself with others who have traveled south, most likely the barbarians Kwarek and Karla or Elder Folks like Rageor, Niha and Fenya.

MAGDALA			
Race	Human (barbarian)		
Traits	<i>Bushcraft</i>		
Accurate 10, Cunning 9, Discreet 7, Persuasive 5, Quick 13, Resolute 15, Strong 11, Vigilant 10			
Abilities	<i>Natural Warrior</i> (novice), <i>Shapeshift</i> (adept), <i>Witchcraft</i> (novice)		
Weapons	Dagger 1D6 (short), Claws (in animal form) 1D8 (short)		

Armor	Witch gown 1D4 (flexible), Skin 1D4 (in animal form)		
Defense	13		
Toughness	11	Pain Threshold	6
Equipment	Camp equipment, 2 thaler and 7 shillings		
Shadow	Red with a few flakes of rust (corruption: 1)		

Niha, changeling con artist

"You won't regret it!"

You were exchanged for your parents' firstborn in a barbarian settlement, and from there it only got worse. "Mother" and "Father" had you work as an apprentice of the village tanner and sent you away as soon as your heritage became apparent. Since then you have learned to manage on your own, but you have always wondered why your elven kin gave you up.

You have traveled the countryside of Ambria hoping to find answers, or at least some other outcasts to form some sort of communion with. If all else fails you have heard of a human named Vernam, who lives in Thistle Hold and is said to know much about elves.

You may have ended up south of the mountains for various reasons, but most likely as the traveling companion of Rageor, Magdala or Fenya. If you have any friends it is because they are outsiders or because they may have knowledge about the elves that once abandoned you to the humans.

NIHA			
Race	Changeling		
Traits	<i>Long-lived, Shapeshifter</i> (novice)		
Accurate 10, Cunning 7, Discreet 15, Persuasive 13, Quick 11, Resolute 9, Strong 5, Vigilant 10			
Abilities	<i>Backstab</i> (novice), <i>Feint</i> (adept)		
Weapons	Dagger 1D6 (short), Walking staff 1D6 (long)		
Armor	Studded leather 1D4 (Impeding)		
Defense	9		
Toughness	10	Pain Threshold	3
Equipment	Straw doll found by your crib (presumably left by the elves), camp equipment, 11 shilling and 3 ortegs		
Shadow	Polished brass (corruption: 0)		

Karla, barbarian Ranger

"Silence, let the tracks tell their tale."

You are originally from Eastern Davokar but live in exile after a bloody misunderstanding with the son of the clan chieftain. The chieftain has many sons left but still holds a grudge, which is why you decided to explore the world outside Davokar. In truth you did not have much of a choice.

Two of your problems were solved when you got employed with one of the caravans traveling back and forth over the Titans: for one thing it brings you far away from any vengeful relatives of the boy you slew, second it provides a welcome addition to your coin purse. You may have befriended other characters on the road south across the mountain, for example Kvarek, Rageor, Niha or Fenya.

KARLA			
Race	Human (barbarian)		
Traits	Bushcraft		
Accurate 5, Cunning 7, Discreet 11, Persuasive 9, Quick 13, Resolute 10, Strong 10, Vigilant 15			
Abilities	Acrobatics (adept), Marksman (novice), Sixth sense (novice)		
Weapons	Crossbow 1D12, Dagger 1D6 (short), Handaxe 1D8		
Armor	Hardened leather 1D4 (Impeding)		
Defense	11		
Toughness	10	Pain Threshold	5
Equipment	Camp equipment, hunting snares, fishing rod, quiver with 12 bolts, 6 shillings and 6 ortegs		
Shadow	Green like baby leaves (corruption: 0)		

Fenya, goblin treasure-hunter

"There you are, my precious treasure!"

You were born and raised in the goblin village of Karabbadokk, where your family settled down when the rest of the tribe joined a band of robbers held up in the forests of Meravidun. When you could not find work in Thistle Hold, the alluring city in which you never got to set foot, you left Karabbadokk in search of a better life. You have to make haste – you have already reached the age of five and life is short!

On your way south you met a grumpy old sow which you ensnared with your goblin magic and named Kverula. Over a short period of time the two

of you have developed a deep love-hate relationship. Together with Kverula you have enlisted as mule keeper on a southbound caravan. During the journey you hope to recruit companions and gather funds for arranging a treasure-hunt into Davokar. Kvarek as well as Rageor, Magdala, Niha and Karla may very well have been approached on the topic, already on the road towards the dead lands below the mountains.

FENYA			
Race	Goblin		
Traits	Pariah, Short-lived, Survival instinct (novice)		
Accurate 10, Cunning 5, Discreet 13, Persuasive 7, Quick 15, Resolute 9, Strong 11, Vigilant 10			
Abilities	Polearm mastery (adept), Ritualist (novice, Familiar)		
Weapons	Dagger 1D6 (short), Spear 1D10 (long)		
Armor	Leather gown 1D4 (Impeding)		
Defense	13		
Toughness	11	Pain Threshold	6
Equipment	Camp equipment, 3 ortegs		
Shadow	Red as oxygenated blood (corruption: 0)		

KVERULA, THE WILD SOW			
Race	Beast (sow)		
Traits	Armored (I), Natural weapon (I)		
Accurate 11, Cunning 7, Discreet 9, Persuasive 5, Quick 13, Resolute 10, Strong 15, Vigilant 10			
Weapons	Tusks 1D6 (short)		
Armor	Skin 1D4 (flexible)		
Defense	13		
Toughness	15	Pain Threshold	8
Shadow	Yellowish red, like aspen leaves in the fall (corruption: 0)		

On gender and names

Feel free to change the gender of the premade characters if you wish.

Below are suggested names for the example characters with their genders switched: Kvarek becomes Kvara, Orlan becomes Oria, Ansel becomes Anselma, Bartolom becomes Bartala, Magdala becomes Magbrod, Niha becomes Niho and Karla becomes Karlas. Both Rageor and Fenya remains the same regardless of the character's gender.

Onwards to Yndaros

THE PLAYER CHARACTERS have for different reasons ended up in a caravan camp just south of the Titans. The camp spans a vast area, vegetated by slender trees whose leaves have started to shift in autumnal nuances. About forty wagons are parked in a random pattern and between them tents have been raised. Most of the tents are tiny and weathered but a few of them look like small palaces made of cloth – evidently belonging to some of the nobles who have waited until the last moment to leave their estates. In a dozen places fires are burning day and night, some of them surrounded by logs, other by more or less sloppily crafted benches.

The Lost Land

Player characters who have been raised in some part of Alberetor or have been there some time all carry dark and haunting memories from the journey to the camp.

South of the camp the ground still has vigor enough to nourish vegetation, but the crops soon to be harvested are not what they once were. The fields are sparsely vegetated by pale stalks with shrunken ears of grain; the orchards that used to be full of apples, lemons and sweet plums are all but naked; and scrawny cattle can be seen everywhere, grazing in the all but naked fields, roaming wild after being left adrift by their previous owners and caretakers.

The ones who come from a place further south or out east have witnessed even darker scenes. In those places the soil is blackened and completely lifeless, often transformed into dusty deserts incapable of absorbing water from either rains or rivers. Abandoned cities, deserted residencies and castles, ghostly farms whose livestock enclosures are occupied by nothing other than carcasses – Alberetor is dead and all but gone. All that is left is what the people of Queen Kortinthia carry with them on the journey over the mountains.

MOST OF THE people in the camp give face to a mixture of sorrow, relief and hope. They are sad to have to leave the place where their family has lived for generations, where their ancestors are buried and where so much of themselves is tied to the earth, the landscape and the now abandoned buildings. They are relieved to finally be on their way, to have left the ash deserts of the south and reached the still living soils of the mountain region. And the hope they feel can be seen in their slightly curved lips; the hope that the world north of the Titans shall prove to be as flourishing and welcoming as everybody says.

Scene 0: Beginnings

WHETHER OR NOT the player characters are acquainted with each other, it is suggested that they happen to meet while gathering around the same fire at the border of the camp. By the fire is also one or more of the persons who are to become their traveling companions, possibly the talkative coachman Telk, maybe also the pathfinders Belun and Ludo.

The persons around the fire prepare their supper and discuss the latest in a long list of bad news: all

caravan owners have decided to make ready for winter on the south side of the Titans, because of the rapidly approaching snows. The question is if they are right in assuming that the mountain passes soon will be closed off or if there still is a chance to make it through before the winter reigns supreme.

There is also time to talk about other things. The coachman Telk (or whomever makes the characters company) is a curious fellow and is not afraid to ask his new acquaintances where they are from and where they are going – a great opportunity for the players to “get to know” their own characters and introduce them to one another.

After a while, yet another person joins the circle around the fire, Telk’s friend Keler. He is visibly excited and leans in to whisper something in the ear of the coachman. The character who succeeds with a roll against Vigilant can make out the essentials: there is one caravan owner who has decided to brave the danger and dare an attempt to reach Ambria before the snows.

If none of the characters should hear what is said they will probably still understand what is going on – Telk brightens up like a midsummer sun, excuses himself and rushes to his tent to pack his belongings. The player characters can either extort the truth from the weak-willed Keler with a successful roll against [Persuasive +5], or they can without further ado tag along with the duo as they walk towards the northern part of the camp. There Master Argasto is preparing to leave, as soon as the next morning comes.

Scene 1: The Tryout

ARGASTO SITS in his pavilion inspecting the inventory for the trip. At the same time he takes the opportunity to interview potential companions. Outside a small line has formed, and in front of the characters stands Telk and Keler, maybe also Belun and Ludo. Both these couples can brag about having survived a number of trips over the Titans and will consequently leave the tent with bright smiles on their lips. Then it is time for the player characters to enter the pavilion.

Master Argasto – a plump man in his fifties with rose-red cheeks, dressed in baggy clothes of felts and skins – ogles them briefly before returning to his list of equipment with a short: “Well?”. It is now up to the player characters to try to convince the caravan owner that they are suitable for a place in the traveling company, and that they will prove to be more useful than troublesome. When they have made their arguments he looks up: “Can you defend yourselves? I am not convinced ...”

Manner

In the descriptions of non-player characters and creatures there is a characteristic called Manner. What is written there is a suggestion on how the Game Master can portray the person or creature in a way which both says something about the NPC and makes it easier for the players to distinguish between the figures they meet.

He stresses that there is a limit to the number of people he can accommodate, and the ones who receive a spot need to be “individuals of importance”, meaning persons who improve his chances to get the wagons across the mountains. If the characters want to tag along they must prove themselves worthy by participating in a fighting test against some of his loyal caravan guards. He is not suggesting a fight to the death, only to “first blood”. Hence, the combatant who receives 1 point of damage or more to his or her Toughness must step aside and admit defeat.

The fighting test takes place in light of the great fire outside Argasto’s tent, and before it starts the caravan owner loudly proclaims that he does not want to see a slaughter. Bruises and cuts are acceptable; more severe injuries must be avoided at all costs since he needs everyone fit to travel by morning! Whatever the outcome of the combat may be, Argasto will accept all player characters as traveling companions – he enjoyed the performance, even if they were defeated by the guards.

Caravan Guard

“I’ll be careful, I promise ...”

A group of women and men (numbering as many as the player characters +1) of Ambrian origin, that all have survived a number of journeys over the mountains. They are tough fighters that never back down from a fight, even if they are lacking somewhat in terms of personal skill.

Manner	Grins confidently, swings their swords provokingly		
Race	Human (Ambrian)		
Resistance	Weak		
Traits	Contacts (caravan guards)		
Accurate 13 (–3), Cunning 7 (+3), Discreet 5 (+5), Persuasive 9 (+1), Quick 10 (0), Resolute 10 (0), Strong 15 (–5), Vigilant 11 (–1)			
Abilities	None		
Weapons	Sword 4		
Armor	Scalemail 3 (Impeding)		
Defense	+2 (shield)		
Toughness	15	Pain Threshold	8
Equipment	1D10 shilling, chewing tobacco		
Shadow	Unpolished copper (corruption: 0)		

Tactics: The player character that seems biggest and strongest is initially attacked by two guards. Remaining guards move against one character each.

In the Company of Thieves

THE SECOND CHAPTER deals with the hunt for and confrontation with a thief who is bold enough to steal the Sun Stone – an artifact that the caravan will have a hard time managing without as the winter takes its hold. Aside from a more or less challenging combat sequence the chapter also includes various forms of simpler problem-solving. The characters need to find out who the thief is, interrogate his acquaintances and finally track the scoundrel through the wilds. While trailing the thief they are at risk of triggering a trap and when they catch up to him there is the problem of approaching his hideout without being targeted.

ARGASTO'S CARAVAN has left the camp and the journey north has begun. The landscape is still forested, often so densely that the characters cannot see more than trees and the wobbling wagons on the road ahead. The journey goes slowly upwards, winding between wooded hills and shallow canyons. At times the wagons reach a crest from where towering mountains can be seen further north. The sun shines from a clear blue sky, as if the Sun God Prios has heard the travelers' prayers for good weather conditions. Even Argasto seems at ease: *"The Lawgiver's face smiles warmly over the pass; that bodes well."*

At dusk it is as usual time to make camp, and the caravan forms a corral. The Ordo Magica novice Bartolom walks off to wash the road dust away in a nearby stream and shortly after that a cry is heard. The voice is Bartolom's: *"Thieves, thieves!"*

While the novice was bathing someone sneaked up and went through his coat – the Sun Stone was

taken from an inside pocket! With the artifact gone the caravan may not be able to keep warm if the worst happens high up in the mountains. Argasto tells it like it is: *"Retrieve the Sun Stone or we must turn back, favored by Prios or not!"*

Scene 2: Find the Thief

IT IS EASY for the characters to identify the thief, but harder to catch up to him. The villain is a mule keeper called Keler who has gone missing. His wagon team does nothing to try to hide his absence, quite the opposite. However, his best (and only) friend Telk is withholding some information, if he cannot be persuaded otherwise.

There are two ways of finding the thief: they can either trail him from the crime scene, or they can convince the wagon team to speak up. After all, the Sun Stone may prove to be essential for the survival of them all.

PERSUADING THE THIEF'S FRIEND

(Quick solution)

Keler was part of a larger team but he primarily confided in another mule keeper, Telk. Telk knows that Keler is a thief and a liar but found the friendship heartening; he must be persuaded if he is to divulge any leads as to the whereabouts of Keler. Characters speaking to Telk (many can confirm that he was the one closest to Keler) have to pass a die roll against *Persuasive* to get information from the mule keeper: "Keler mentioned some kind of hide-out hereabout; I can point you in the right direction". That being done the trailing will become easier (see below).

TRAILING THE THIEF

(Long Solution)

The thief has left tracks that can be followed from the crime scene (the place on the riverbank where

Bartolom left his coat). Keler has made an effort to hide the tracks and has also rigged a trap at the end of the trail (the trap is described in Scene 3)

To trail the thief to the windmill ruin takes two successful dice rolls against *[Vigilant←Discreet]*. Each player gets one try; start with the one who is most *Vigilant*. Only one successful roll is needed if Telk gave them the clue.

An alternative to tracking is to try to sense the direction to the Sun Stone by mystical means (characters with the ability *Witchsight* or some mystical power may try). In that case they may roll against *[Resolute -5]* the first time and *[Resolute -3]* the second to locate the ruin. The attempt can be made even if the characters earlier have failed to track Keler.

When two rolls have been successfully made (only one is needed if they have Telk's clue from Scene 2-1) the characters arrive at the windmill ruin, where the second-rate thief Keler is waiting for his companions.

Bartolom as a player character

If Bartolom is under the control of a player some adjustments may have to be made. One alternative is to have another Ordo Magica novice along for the ride (Edira) and it is she who carries and gets robbed of the Sun Stone. Another way to handle it is to have the thief pick the pocket of the player character, maybe when he is sleeping or when someone has taken the opportunity to spill soup on his cloths so that he has to change.

Scene 3: Retrieving the Sun Stone

KELER HAS RIGGED a mechanical leghold trap which is triggered if someone is inattentive enough to step on it. The characters detect the trap if the one who walks first makes a successful roll against *[Vigilant -3]*. When spotted the trap is easily avoided.

If the trap is triggered two things happen: The one who triggers it must pass a roll against *[Quick -3]* or take 4 in damage, and if damage is dealt the character gets caught until passing a roll against *[Strong -3]*.

Whether or not someone gets damaged, the trap makes such a loud noise that Keler knows they are coming. If so, determine the turn order and start the fight with ranged weapons. Keler is at the top of the ruin with his crossbow loaded and ready.

If the trap is not sprung, the characters may try to sneak up to and inside the ruin. For that a successful role against *[Discreet -5]* is needed, and remember that some armors may give further negative modifications. All who try to sneak must pass or Keler will notice them and start shooting at them with the crossbow.

Keler, Second-rate thief

"Please let me go, I will never steal again!"

Keler sees himself as a misunderstood genius and in particular as a misjudged master thief. Due to his curiosity and watchfulness he took notice of Bartolom's treasure, when the novice pulled it out of his pocket to warm his frozen fingers.

In order to prove his superiority Keler decided to pinch the artifact and make for the hideout of the gang of robbers he once was a member of. There he is determined to wait for his former companions to arrive, hoping that they will regret kicking him out when he hands them the Sun Stone. The best plan he has had in years, according to himself.

Manner	Shifty eyes, stutters
Race	Human (Ambrian)
Resistance	Weak
Traits	Contacts (outlaws)
Accurate 10 (0), Cunning 13 (-3), Discreet 11 (-1), Persuasive 7 (+3), Quick 10 (0), Resolute 5 (+5), Strong 9 (+1), Vigilant 15 (-5)	
Abilities	None
Weapons	Crossbow 5, Dagger 3 (short)
Armor	Leather cuirass 2 (Impeding)
Defense	+2
Toughness 10	Pain Threshold 5
Equipment	The Sun Stone, 3 thaler, lucky charm (dysfunctional), 12 bolts in a quiver
Shadow	Darkened silver (corruption: 0)

Tactics: Keler fires his crossbow and pulls his dagger if backed into a corner. But as soon as it is evident that he will get hurt, he throws his weapons away and pleads for his life.

If the player characters close in on the ruin Keler shouts: “You will regret this! The undead Mal-Rogan will find you and chop you to pieces. Not even death could beat him; you think you are a match for Mal-Rogan, the Master of Death!” He will not enter into melee. Instead he throws both himself and the crossbow to the ground if the characters come close. The Sun Stone is in his pocket.

If Keler is brought back to the caravan he will be the target of harsh words as well as of pebbles and dirt. Argasto will deprive him of food and tools and then send him into the wilderness as punishment for his crime. If the player characters should suggest some other form of reprimand, Argasto will concur with the argument since it was they who found the stone and captured the villain.

SCENE 3.1: MAL-ROGAN ARRIVES

If the Game Master is on a mean streak or if the players choose to wait for Keler’s companions, a raggedy band of robbers soon arrives from the south along the overgrown footpath. A couple of robbers act as scouts and the leader follows behind – Mal-Rogan may be undead but he is not stupid.

Mal-Rogan, undead brigand chief

“The Fire Stone is MINE!”

The Queen’s guard Rogan Gorinder died in the war against the Dark Lords. He got an arm chopped off in combat, the wound festered and the healers were powerless to neutralize the black blood infection that coursed through his veins.

But instead of dying, Rogan arose as an undead, with puss dripping from his truncated arm and with blackened veins visible on his neck and temples. Why? No one knows, but Rogan took it as a dark sign that he had been chosen for greatness. Nowadays the robber baron calls himself Mal-Rogan and leads a band of robbers in the mountains where he grew up, dreaming of founding a veritable bandit kingdom.

If the player characters cannot stop the blight-stricken nobleman he will make a name for himself throughout the southern parts of Ambria, were he roams around as a raving horror leaving desecrated corpses in his wake.

Manner	Speaks in a croaking voice, tilting his head back and forth
Race	Undead
Resistance	Challenging
Traits	Long-lived, Undead (I)
Accurate 7 (+3), Cunning 5 (+5), Discreet 9 (+1), Persuasive 10 (0), Quick 11 (–1), Resolute 13 (–3), Strong 17 (–7), Vigilant 10 (0)	

Pansar Rogan and Ambrian characters

Player characters like Orlan, Bartolom and Ansel may very well have met or even been friends with Rogan in the past, making for an interesting reunion ...

Abilities	Curse (master), Exceptionally Strong (adept), Iron Fist (adept)		
Weapons	Spiked club 6		
Armor	Fortified chainmail 4 (Impeding)		
Defense	+3		
Toughness	15	Pain Threshold	—
Equipment	His own mummified hand in a rusty chain around the neck (artifact, see page 23), 4 thaler		
Shadow	Black as tar (corruption: thoroughly corrupt)		

Tactics: Rogan lets his followers attack first, while he puts a curse on what he believes to be the toughest enemy. When the curse has taken effect he moves in with his spiked club.

Robbers, (as many as the PCs) “Your money or your... or you die!”

Manner	Stares with misty eyes		
Race	Human (Ambrian)		
Resistance	Weak		
Traits	<i>Bushcraft</i>		
Accurate 13 (–3), Cunning 10 (0), Discreet 15 (–5), Persuasive 7 (+3), Quick 10 (0), Resolute 5 (+5), Strong 9 (+1), Vigilant 11 (–1)			
Abilities	None		
Weapons	Crossbow 5, Spear 4 (long)		
Armor	Leather cuirass 2 (Impeding)		
Defense	+2		
Toughness	10	Pain Threshold	5
Equipment	5 shillings, card deck or dice set, chewing tobacco, 6 bolts in a quiver		
Shadow	Rusty iron (corruption: 2)		

Tactics: The robbers fire a salvo with their crossbows before attacking with spears. They try to stay alive while Mal-Rogan kills the enemies one by one.

Expansion tip

The undead Rogan can be used to complicate the life of the player characters for a very long time. After the encounter at the windmill ruin he may come to believe that the Sun Stone is vital for the success of his grandiose plans. If so, he will most likely trail the characters, to Yndaros and beyond, and grow into a remarkably tenacious nemesis. Prior to that he can appear when the characters are threatened by the elves (see Chapter 3), offering to help if they but give him the stone.

Leghold trap



2x2m

THE WINDMILL RUIN

The Windmill was built long ago by some overly optimistic baron, hoping to colonize the mountains. Nowadays it is covered by moss and creepers and the mid-level floors have caved in so that only the stone-based top floor remains. The robbers use a ladder to get up there, a ladder that is too tall to be hoisted up or toppled inside the ruin. From the windows of the top-floor you have a good view of the surroundings.



Toll of the Mountains

THE CHARACTERS KNOW NOTHING about it, but among their fellow travelers are a couple of persons who have been active in the forest of Davokar, as pathfinders for treasure-hunters from Thistle Hold. Because of that they have managed to attract the interest of the Black Cloak Lestra, fallen out of favor with the Iron Pact, and also attracted a horrible curse that already has killed most of their previous companions. This third chapter describes what happens when the elves of the Iron Pact catch up to their prey.

THE GAME MASTER should note that Chapter 3 is of a more open nature than the previous ones, thereby more in line with how adventures normally are designed for Symbaroum. The GM sets events in motion (see Scene 4), then the it is up to the players to take the rudder.

The ability to respect the players' initiatives is crucial (the golden rule of being a Game Master). Intense gaming moments occur due to the interaction of player choices and the GM's presentation

of the world. After the opening scene a number of other scenes are described, but in which order they will appear – or if they take place at all – is an open question. Also remember the silver rule of the GM: plans mean nothing, but planning is imperative! The Game Master needs to understand the goals of different agents and what they are prepared to do in order to reach them; from that the sequence of the scenes will be derived, based on the players' actions and the reactions of the NPCs.

The Game Master's Introduction

SOME TIME AGO the two barbarian pathfinders Belun and Ludo were active as treasure-hunters in the city of Thistle Hold, close to the southern edge of Davokar. When they learned that other members of their most recent expedition had started to die in horrible ways they fled. Some of their companions died in silence, others were slain and some were ... transformed. They turned into abominations, and as such they were of course killed by the city's watchmen and residents.

As far as the brothers know the expedition they took part in was a miserable failure – they never reached the ruins of the deep and had to make do with a smaller tomb closer to the forest's edge. But

it seems that someone else views things differently. Agents of the Iron Pact (an alliance of elves and Elder Folks) believe that the members of the expedition are infected by the blight of Davokar – and must be killed. The elves have trailed the brothers, determined to slay them before the corruption they carry affects others.

And it does not help that the Black Cloak Lestra who travels with the caravan starts suspecting that something is not right with Belun. She is correct to do so, because the pathfinder has begun to show signs of a grave blight-sickness. Player characters with the right abilities will soon be able to confirm the suspicions of the Twilight Friar ...

The Players' Introduction

ON THE ROAD up to the mountain pass the weather continues to be favorable, even if the cold bites on cheeks and fingers. The Sun Stone has not been activated yet. By "the laws of magic", which stipulate that every lit candle creates shadows, that

must not be done until truly called for. You who have befriended Bartolom (or Edira) also sense that the novice knows that waking the warmth of the stone will come to affect the one doing so – another reason for not waking it prematurely ...

Scene 4: The Price of Firewood

SUN STONE OR not, for the iron nights in the pass you also need firewood. For that purpose the travelers make short forays into the increasingly sparse vegetation on the hills. Suddenly the roaring of a beast is heard, soon merged with desperate cries from humans. The characters are nearby and arrive first on the scene. By then the following stage is set:

A monstrous wolf (a successful roll against *Beast Lore: Hunger Wolf*) stands snarling and drooling in front of the two pathfinders and a Black Cloak. Behind the monstrosity a number of smaller wolf beasts have formed a half-circle (a successful roll against *Beast Lore: Jakaars*).

Consequently, the upcoming fight will involve the characters and a group of enemies, one of which is more dangerous (the hunger wolf) than the others (the jakaars). The characters also have a couple of NPCs on their side, to make use of in a tactically sound manner.

If the players refrain from giving orders (a roll against *Persuasive* is needed if the order entails facing the hunger wolf) the pathfinders will take on the jakaars, while the Black Cloak heals them (and searches them for signs of corruption). If so, that fight can be handled summarily and without rolling any dice; the main fight is the one between the characters and the hunger wolf.

Note that the pathfinders and the Black Cloak Lestra can be hurt or struck down in this fight, but are not supposed to die at this stage. The reason for involving the trio in the scene is for the characters to get to know them. Should the Game Master prefer to swap them for other travelers who can die here, please do so.

Hunger Wolf, the elf scout Keri-Las in her wolf shape

Growls with bared teeth, then tries to attack Ludo and Belun

Race	Elf (Summer elf)
Resistance	Ordinary
Traits	<i>Armored</i> (I), <i>Natural weapon</i> (I)
Accurate 10 (0), Cunning 7 (+3), Discreet 5 (+5), Persuasive 9 (+1), Quick 15 (–5), Resolute 13 (–3), Strong 11 (–1), Vigilant 10 (0)	
Abilities	<i>Acrobatics</i> (novice), <i>Natural Warrior</i> (novice), <i>Shapeshift</i> (adept)
Weapons	Bite 4 (short)
Armor	Wolf hide 2 (flexible)
Defense	–5
Toughness 11	Pain Threshold 6
Equipment	An arm bracelet of rusted iron, 6 shillings
Shadow	Blood red with a slightly coagulated rim (corruption: 3)

Tactics: Keri-Las tries to get to the barbarian scouts and will kill them if she cannot catch them alive. She tries not to kill others (like the player characters), but will hurt them if they stand in her way.

When the hunger wolf dies it transforms back to its original shape.

A severely battered elf lies on the ground, as lifeless as the beast just killed by the characters. She is dressed in a simple wool coat and carries no weapon. In truth her name was Keri-Las and she was a scout for the group that has been hunting the brothers.

She wears a nicely decorated bracelet round her left upper arm. A player character with the ability *Loresmaster* who makes a successful roll against *Cunning* realizes that it must be an ancient elven oath ring; a symbol for the Iron Pact, supposedly an age-old alliance or agreement between humans and elves.

Tracking the hunger wolf – respect the player initiative

It is not unlikely that the players will want to backtrack the movement of the hunger wolf, back to the elven camp. To do that the characters must make three successful rolls against [*Vigilant* +5]. Start with the most skilled tracker of the group (the highest value in *Vigilant*), then let the others give it a try.

Jakaar, (as many as the PCs)

The jakaar is a canine pack animal, as prone to capture its own prey as it is to eat from cadavers left by other beats. The pack following Keri-Las takes the chance of attacking together with the hunger wolf.

Race	Beast
Resistance	Weak
Traits	Armored (I), Natural weapon (I)
Accurate 13 (-3), Cunning 7 (+3), Discreet 11 (-1), Persuasive 5 (+5), Quick 15 (-5), Resolute 9 (+1), Strong 10 (0), Vigilant 10 (0)	
Abilities	None
Weapons	Bite 3 (short)
Armor	Wolf hide 2 (flexible)
Defense	-5
Toughness	10 Pain Threshold 5
Equipment	None
Shadow	Green like spring grass (corruption: 0)

Tactics: The jakaars trail the hunger wolf and attack one opponent each (or the pathfinders if the PCs take on the hunger wolf).

SCENE 4.1: REACTIONS TO THE DEAD ELF

If the hunger wolf dies during the battle, the characters have the corpse of an elf to dispose of. The reactions of other travelers will depend on who learns about what has happened, which of course is decided by whom is present during the fighting and who the player characters talk to after returning to the base camp. Below is a recount of how the most prominent individuals in the caravan will react to the news, information that the Game Master can use as a basis for the drama amongst the travelers.

The player characters who successfully roll against [Vigilant +3] notice that the sight of the elf makes Belun and Ludo, the two pathfinders, very nervous. They try to hide it by acting as if it is raining, and they will not tell anyone else about the corpse whether or not the characters ask them to keep their mouths shut.

The Black Cloak Lestra is apparently curious about the corpse and asks out loud: "Who or what was the hunger wolf out to get?" A successful test against Vigilant reveals that she glances at the barbarian brothers.

If Argasto learns of what has happened and what was hidden under the pelt of the hunger wolf he becomes even more eager to get a move on: "Elves are bad news, we must hurry to Yndaros, we'll be safe in the city of the Queen!"

Whispering Elves

The content of the elven conversation can be understood by someone with the ability Loremaster (adept), if they pass a test against Cunning.

Saran-Ri: "Let us strike them all, we don't know who else is infected."

Godrai: "No, the two are enough, no others."

And, if the PCs have battled and beaten the hunger wolf:

Saran-Ri: "They slew my Keri-Las."

Godrai: "I know, her sacrifice will not be forgotten. But the killing ends with the blight-stricken barbarians. We won't start a war today."

Saran-Ri: "Huh, you know as I do that war is inevitable. If not today ..."

Godrai: "Enough!"

Saran-Ri growls and backs away. Vigilant: There is something beast-like in how the elf moves (Saran-Ri is also a shapeshifter).

Bartolom/Edira can tell the others about the bracelet carried by the corpse but has no opinion on the matter. However, he/she is very interested in the shapeshifting magic used by the elf: "It seems to be some kind of elven witchcraft. Have I told you about my own tradition, the order of Wizardry, which is a refined version of the primitive practice of the witches?"

Intermediary scene: Stormnight

THE CARAVAN STRUGGLES up the steeper and steeper road toward the pass. As the first crest is traversed the wagons roll out onto a plateau, and suddenly the weather changes for the worse. The wind picks up, the sky grows dark and snow starts falling.

Argasto orders the wagons to form a corral for protection against the storming elements. A character who has mastered the ability Witchsight may roll against Resolute to realize that the storm is conjured (the elf Godrai has used the ritual Turn Weather) and the PC hears a wrathful voice singing in the winds. If none of the PCs hear it, the Game Master can let Lestra do so, if only for the effect.

The travelers in the caravan cover any openings on their wagons, put blankets over the huddled pack animals and prepare for a long night in the cold.

Scene 6: The Ultimatum

WHEN MORNING COMES the storm subsides. But the situation is far from ideal; it is doubtful if the caravan can continue since the snow lies deep across the plateau. A brawling discussion erupts between those who want to push onwards and those who would rather not risk getting stuck down the road.

Right then two shapes emerge out of the light snowfall, two wanderers on foot approaching the corral. The lookout Telk cries out: "Elves, I think it is elves!". The quarrel dies out, everything is silent.

The first of the two elves introduces himself as Godrai and his quiet friend as Saran-Ri. Godrai says: "We want the ones called Belun and Ludo." When asked why he answers: "They have violated the treaties; they have tunneled too deep into the soil of old Davokar. They are blight-stricken and must be purged."

If the characters do not speak up and refuse to hand over the pathfinders, Argasto will. Godrai's companion whispers something in the ear of the leader, who responds calmly. And after the sibilant conversation Godrai says: "I will have those two. Blood will flow if you refuse. We will return at sundown."

The elves leave and the people of the caravan are left to discuss the ultimatum.

What really happened

If the PCs are afforded the opportunity to question Ludo and manage to make him speak (requires a successful roll against Persuasive and credible threats) he has the following story to tell: He and Belun were hired as pathfinders by a group of treasure-hunters, headed by an unpleasant individual named Gorak and his second, the changeling Alahara.

The group traveled deep into Davokar but did not reach the planned target: the darker parts of the forest and its well-preserved ruins from the days of Symbaroum.

Instead they came across a smaller tomb, the final resting place of a long dead barbarian lord. The others in the team got away with gold, jewelry and mystical objects; all that Gorak wanted for himself was the verdigris-covered copper crown worn by the dead lord; a crown that had merged with the cranium.

Once returned to Thistle Hold, the expedition's members lived like kings for a while. Then they started to die, or change (if Belun already has changed, Ludo says that the same happened to the others).

Gorak and Alahara disappeared after having talked to Lasifor Nightpitch, the Mayor of the Hold. Then Belun started to feel as if someone were watching him and they fled to the south.

Ludo suddenly remembers another detail: one evening by the fire everyone in the expedition got to hold the cranium with the crown. He recalls that the skull, despite being dead, was warm to the touch and that he for a moment felt as if its dead eyes looked back at him in the glow from the camp fire ...

Scene 7: Negotiations under the axe

THE CARAVAN COMPANIONS have to make up their minds: do they hand the pathfinders Belun and Ludo over or do they defend them when the elves reappear? The caravan owner Argasto is full of doubt but will be forced to make the final judgment. Before he does, he wants to learn what others think on the matter.

The Black Cloak Lestra wants to put the brothers in shackles and take them to the monastery of the Twilight Friars on the northern slopes of the Titans, where member of her order can *"care for them if they are sick"*. The Black Cloaks are very interested in everything related to the blight and corruption of Davokar.

Lestra will say and do whatever it takes to make that happen. She is, for instance, willing to lie about what Godrai and Saran-Ri whispered to each other; she claims that they will kill everyone, extradition or not, but that they would prefer to have the two handed over first. Then all others will die, for safety's sake.

The two barbarians are of course opposed to being extradited; something that Ludo loudly

proclaims while Belun mutters it. The mule keeper Telk wants the brothers to be surrendered: "Better them than me!" Concurring mumbles and cries are heard from many others in the caravan.

The PCs will tip the scales. If they are for an extradition Argasto decides in their favor, according to scene 8-1: Extradition. If the player characters are against it and recommend that the travelers take up the fight against the elves, then Argasto will reach a decision along those lines. If so, see scene 8-2: Final Battle.

If the decision is to hand them over, Lestra will make a final attempt to persuade the player characters to reverse their choice: *"You are seriously mistaken if you believe this strengthens our position. Prios, the One and the Giver of Laws, wants the corrupted brought to Ambria, where my brothers and sisters will care for them."* If the PCs are not susceptible to such religious arguments she adopts a more practical approach: *"We can't just hand them over, they must be studied! The horrors of Davokar must be understood if we are to fight them."* If the PCs still stand their ground, then Lestra reluctantly accepts it.

Scene 8: Extradition or Combat

ARGASTO'S DECISION ON what to do with the blight-stricken brothers either results in a fight with the barbarians and an extradition (8-1), or in a final battle between the people of the caravan and the elves (8-2). Irrespective of what happens, the caravan owner will likely need the help of all capable companions.

SCENE 8-1: EXTRADITION

When Belun realizes that he will be turned over to the elves he enters the last stage of his condition. This happens before the elves have returned to demand their prize. Ludo will also put up a fight, but seems to be as shocked as everyone else when Belun transforms.

If Ludo survives and is handed over to the elves, Saran-Ri will transform into a beamon (a huge bear beast), bite hold of the barbarian and drag him away in the abating storm.

The last the PCs see of the pathfinder is his waving arms and desperate facial expression. Soon they disappear from sight and moments later the cries of Ludo go silent, either because they are drowned out by the cold winds of the mountain pass or because not even the blight-stricken can make sounds when they have passed over into the realm of the dead.

Belun, blight born

"I feel fine ... no ... no, noooooooo ..."

Belun dies a bloody death when something terrible literally claws itself out of his skin: a towering creature with bare muscles, with fingers transformed into knives of bone, and with outgrowths from the cranium, as if it wore a pointy bone crown.

The abomination is furious and famished, and will kill indiscriminately until it is slain. In death the body collapses into a bloody, shapeless heap that rapidly begins to rot. All that remains is the deformed cranium.

Manner	First trembling with fear, then trembling from the dark power that surges through him
Race	Abomination (Blight born)
Resistance	Challenging
Traits	<i>Armored</i> (I), <i>Natural weapon</i> (I), <i>Robust</i> (I)
Accurate 13 (-3), Cunning 9 (+1), Discreet 7 (+3), Persuasive 5 (+5), Quick 10 (0), Resolute 11 (-1), Strong 15 (-5), Vigilant 10 (0)	
Abilities	<i>Berserker</i> (master), <i>Natural Warrior</i> (master), <i>Man-at-arms</i> (novice)
Weapons	Claws 12/10 (short), two attacks at the same target
Armor	Tough flesh 5
Defense	+2
Toughness 15	Pain Threshold 8
Equipment	None
Shadow	Oozing black (thoroughly corrupt)

Tactics: The abomination that once was Belun attacks the target which is biggest, closest or did the most damage during the previous turn. It never tries to defend itself and ignores the risk of being hit by free attacks if passing enemies on the way towards a particular target.

Ludo, pathfinder

"I am not sick, I barely touched the skull, I promise!"

Ludo wears a stigma as a sign of his growing corruption – he has wounds that will not heal in the creases of all bodily joints. Note that if Ludo is saved, he too will sooner or later reach the same end as Belun did. When Ludo is transformed the Game Master can reuse the appearance and stats of Belun.

Manner	Blinking eyes, quavering voice
Race	Human (barbarian)
Resistance	Weak
Traits	<i>Bushcraft</i>
Accurate 10 (0), Cunning 9 (+1), Discreet 7 (+3), Persuasive 5 (+5), Quick 13 (-3), Resolute 10 (0), Strong 11 (-1), Vigilant 15 (-5)	
Abilities	None
Weapons	Bow 4, Axe 4
Armor	Leather armor 2 (Impeding)
Defense	-2 (shield)
Toughness 11	Pain Threshold 6
Equipment	None
Shadow	Moldy green with spots of growing darkness (corruption: 9)

Tactics: Ludo wants to survive and will do his utmost in the fight against the PCs.

SCENE 8-2: FINAL BATTLE

If the player characters do not speak up for surrendering the pathfinders, Argasto decides to fight for them. In that case, combat with the elves is inevitable.

The elves are dangerous. Godrai is a summer elf in full bloom and Saran-Ri a young summer elf skilled in battle – which becomes apparent when the fight begins. However, they are only out to get Belun and Ludo; the PCs can surrender or flee at any time.

The elves make their move at sundown. They take aim on Belun and Ludo and will withdraw once the barbarians are dead; they will not hunt those who run or strike at persons that have surrendered. Argasto, Lestra and the brothers will fight alongside the player characters. There are two ways to handle the fight:

- the players get to handle one each of the above mentioned individuals during the battle, relieving the GM from that task.
- the player characters fight either Godrai or Saran-Ri; the other elf is facing Argasto and his companions. In this case the outcome of both fights is decided by what happens in the characters' fight – if they win, both groups do; if they fail, both fail.

Ludo will do his utmost in the fight against the characters. However, despite his barbarian weaponry and appearance he is really not that tough.





Godrai, elf of late summer

"Give us what we want and you are free to go."

Godrai approaches riding on a huge elk, but dismounts before the battle. The characters who heard a voice in the storm can tell that it was Godrai's when he speaks or cries out.

Manner	Lordly stature, stern expression
Race	Elf (summer elf)
Resistance	Challenging
Traits	Long-lived
Accurate 15 (–5), Cunning 11 (–1), Discreet 9 (+1), Persuasive 10 (0), Quick 13 (–3), Resolute 10 (0), Strong 5 (+5), Vigilant 7 (+3)	

Abilities	Acrobatics (master), Alchemy (novice), Marksman (adept), Poisoner (adept), Quick Draw (novice), Ritualist (novice, Turn Weather)		
Weapons	Bow 5, Sword 4, both with poison (damage 3 for 3 turns)		
Armor	Lacquered Silk Cuirass 3 (Flexible)		
Defense	-2		
Toughness	10	Pain Threshold	3
Equipment	Two quivers with 12 arrows in each (the arrows in one of them are coated with weak poison), headband of rusty iron		
Shadow:	Bluish red (corruption: 1)		

Tactics: Godrai will shoot poisoned arrows at enemies with ranged weapons and use movement and acrobatics to stay out of melee.

Saran-Ri, elf of early summer

"It always ends this way, with your blood on the ground."

The shapeshifting elf comes rushing through the snow in his beamon form, fully prepared to sacrifice himself in order to kill the blight-stricken barbarians.

Manner	Wary and alert
Race	Elf (summer)
Resistance	Ordinary
Traits	Long-lived. As beamon: Armored (I), Natural weapon (I)

Accurate 13 (–3), **Cunning** 7 (+3), **Discreet** 5 (+5), **Persuasive** 9 (+1), **Quick** 11 (–1), **Resolute** 10 (0), **Strong** 15 (–5), **Vigilant** 10 (0)

Abilities	<i>Iron Fist</i> (novice), <i>Natural Warrior</i> (novice), <i>Shapeshift</i> (adept)		
Weapons	Claws 3 (short)		
Armor	Bear skin 2 (flexible)		
Defense	-1		
Toughness	15	Pain Threshold	8
Equipment	Ring of rusty iron		
Shadow	Burning red with dancing flakes of soot (corruption: 3)		

Tactics: Saran-Ri will try to beat down the strongest melee opponent first, then the rest of the melee fighters before moving on to mystics and marksmen.

Argasto, caravan owner

"It is MY caravan, I'm in charge!"

Manner	Sighs deeply, shakes his head
Race	Human (Ambrian)
Resistance	Ordinary
Traits	<i>Privileged</i>
Accurate 10 (0), Cunning 11 (-1), Discreet 5 (+5), Persuasive 15 (-5), Quick 10 (0), Resolute 9 (+1), Strong 13 (-3), Vigilant 7 (+3)	
Abilities	<i>Recovery</i> (novice), <i>Shield Fighter</i> (adept), <i>Steadfast</i> (novice)
Weapons	Sword 4
Armor	Scalemail 3 (Impeding)
Defense	+1 (shield)
Toughness 13	Pain Threshold 7
Equipment	4 thaler and 4 shillings, caravan with 6 wagons
Shadow	Bronze, dull and unpolished (corruption: 0)

Tactics If the decision has been made to defend the pathfinders Argasto will do so to the best of his ability – as long as they are traveling with his caravan they are his responsibility!

Lestra, Black Cloak

"I have my orders and you are in my way."

Manner	Bites her lip
Race	Human (Ambrian)
Resistance	Ordinary
Traits	<i>Privileged</i>
Accurate 5 (+5), Cunning 15 (-5), Discreet 10 (0), Persuasive 10 (0), Quick 9 (+1), Resolute 13 (-3), Strong 7 (+3), Vigilant 11 (-1)	
Abilities	<i>Beast Lore</i> (adept, Abominations), <i>Medicus</i> (novice), <i>Witchsight</i> (novice)
Weapons	Spear 4 (long)
Armor	Blessed robe 2 (Flexible)
Defense	+1
Toughness 10	Pain Threshold 4
Equipment	Sun symbol on a necklace, scroll entitled "The Inner Nature of the Abomination", 5 thaler
Shadow	Brushed steel with a few dark spots (corruption: 1)

Tactics: Lestra is used to commanding Templars to do the dirty work once she has unmasked an abomination. But if that is what it takes to battle the feral forces of nature, she will face both abominations and elves with spear in hand,

End Scene:

View to the Future

NO MATTER HOW Scene 8 ends the storm finally dies out. The strong winds subside, the snowfall ends and soon the world rests peacefully under its snow white blanket.

After two more days of struggles the caravan makes it across the snowy plateau, up through the last pass where the passengers get a fantastic view of the landscape that stretches out before them.

Below in the distance lays Yndaros, the grand capital city of Ambria, towering over a farmland covered in swaying fields and pierced by glittering rivers. Here and there are patches of forest, burning in yellow and red. The patches become more frequent and grow bigger and bigger the further the gaze wanders north, and somewhere far away the trees gain mastery over the lowland – trees that together make out the dark and mythic forest of Davokar.

It is probably only your knowledge of its existence that makes you imagine seeing the red flame of Thistle Hold's beacon, located at the forest edge. Karvosti, the plateau ruled by witches and barbarian warriors, cannot be seen as it lies deep in the woods; the same goes for the haunted ruins of old Symbaroum. And that is likely for the best, since the ruins are said to be monstrosly beautiful, almost hypnotic in their overgrown splendor.

Argasto interrupts your daydreams with a high pitched order to mount up. As soon as the cookware has been stowed away, the break is over and the caravan can resume its journey towards Yndaros. The wagons sway on bumpy routes, with animals in front and exhausted travelers holding ropes tied to the wagons behind.

Weary faces are gleaming with sweat in the chilly mountain air. Steamy clouds fume from mouths and muzzles alike. But despite fatigue and cold, the eyes of the travelers shine as brightly as the pinnacles on the Queen's palace – the Promised Land awaits their arrival.

Appendix

IN THIS SECTION you will find a description of the mystical artifacts that the player characters can find or be affected by during the scenario. The section also includes two maps and short portrayals of some of the places visited in the final chapter of the adventure.

Artifacts

MAL-ROGAN'S MUMMIFIED HAND

The "amulet" of Mal-Rogan is in fact his own left hand, mummified and hung from a rusty chain. Mal-Rogan's soul is tied to the amulet and it can give others beside himself the powers listed below. However, the hand comes with a severe negative effect: as long as the amulet exists, Mal-Rogan will respawn, irrespective of how he was slain or what was done to the corpse – and he will do anything to reclaim his corrupt soul!

Word of Doom: If the owner of the amulet masters the ability *Leader* he can utter words of doom over his enemies. With a successful roll against *Resolute* the enemy's chance of making a successful hit is reduced for the remainder of the scene – the owner may make two attempts against *Defense* to avoid physical attacks.

Action: Active

Corruption: 1D6

Black Bliss: With a successful roll against *Resolute*, the owner of the amulet may once per turn reroll a success test.

Action: Free

Corruption: 1D4

Mal-Rogan's revenge: It is possible for the one tied to the amulet to destroy it; all it takes is a successful roll against *Resolute*. If that happens, the released

soul of Mal-Rogan will try to possess its previous master, according to the rules for the ritual *Possess* on page 145 in the Core Rulebook. Mal-Rogan is very vindictive and will do his utmost to punish all who were involved in slaying him and stealing his prized medallion – that is, the whole group of player characters and not only he who has carried the amulet. If the possession fails Mal-Rogan dies a final death. The same happens when a successful possession has run its course.

THE SUN STONE

In ancient times wizards tied a wild fire spirit to this stone. Normally it glows with a pale light and gives off a mild warmth (enough to keep someone warm on an icy winters day). He who bonds with the stone can awaken the fire spirit and command it to perform more dramatic actions, namely the following:

Strike with Fire: The master of the Sun Stone can with a successful roll against *Resolute* set an object in his sight on fire – including enemy garments. The fire burns for 1D4 turns and does 1D4 of damage each turn. Armor protects as usual. A burning person can put out the fire by rolling around on the ground (movement action) and passing a roll against *Quick*.

Action: Active

Corruption: 1D4

THE PROMISED LAND

Amplify Flame: If the lord of the stone masters powers which produce fire he can use the stone for amplifying his fire spells. With a successful roll against *Resolute* the effect is increased by one step (e.g. from 1D6 to 1D8, or with +1 if already 1D12).

Action: Free

Corruption: 1D4

Fire Spirit: With a successful roll against *Resolute*, the master of the stone can release the captured fire spirit, thereby destroying the artifact. The spirit appears as a towering humanoid made up of flames and soot. It is grateful and will obey its former master for the remainder of the scene. It can be given simple commands (free action) like “guard this place”, “attack that individual” or “keep me safe”.

Action: Active

Corruption: 1D6

FIRE SPIRIT

Resistance Challenging

Traits *Natural weapon (III), Spirit form (II)*

Accurate 15 (-5), **Cunning** 10 (0), **Discreet** 5 (+5), **Persuasive** 7 (+3), **Quick** 13 (-3) **Resolute** 9 (+1), **Strong** 11 (-1), **Vigilant** 10 (0)

Abilities *Natural Warrior (master)*

Weapons Burning embrace 9 (long), two attacks against the same target

Armor None (takes half damage from all attacks)

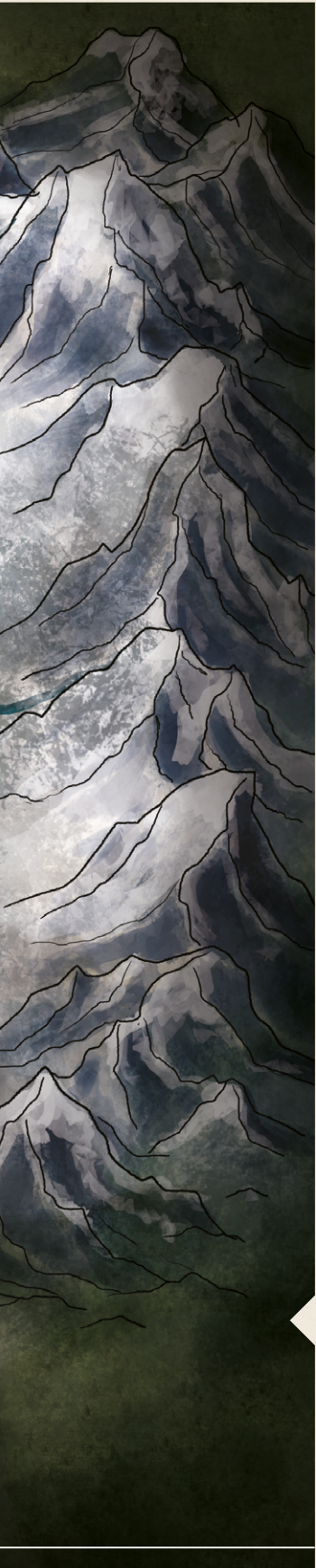
Defense -3

Toughness 11 **Pain Threshold** 6

Ordo Magica and the Sun Stone

The masters of Ordo Magica will come to demand a very good explanation from the person who binds himself to the stone: a desperate fight against an abomination or with elves trying to take the stone count as valid reasons. If the Game Master does not think otherwise, a master who catches the PC with the Sun Stone will demand to have it back, on the Order's behalf, or demand a favor in exchange for the artifact. The latter can of course be a great opening for a larger or smaller adventure ...





Locations

THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS are featured in the adventure. If the GM wishes to expand on it or if the PCs take initiatives which lead them elsewhere, you can always draw your own maps, before the game starts or during play.

THE MOUNTAIN PASS

The pass is in truth two passes, fringed by high slopes to the east and west and with a vast plateau between them.

THE CORRAL

The six wagons of the caravan form a corral each evening, or when under threat. Between the wagons wooden gates are placed, leaning against barrels. All travelers have a designated post in the event of

danger, at a gate if the person can fight and otherwise in shelter behind the wagons. Finding one's place in the corral is a well-rehearsed routine which does not require instructions – an alarm from a guard or an order from Argasto is enough for everyone to rush to their assigned place, weapon in hand.

THE ELVEN CAMP

The elven camp is located about halfway over the plateau, on the western slope (the Game Master decides on a suitable location). The camp is simple, with an earth-toned tent, some equipment and three beds on which to rest or meditate. One of the elves is always on guard and the camp is skillfully concealed, although possible to find by following their tracks.