



THE SAND MARCHES

by Jesse Heinig





Campaign Setting

Contents

Chapter One: Introduction.....	2
Chapter Two: The Settlement	11
Chapter Three: The Sand Marches Campaign.....	34
Chapter Four: The Southern Wastes	50
Chapter Five: The City-State of Babweru.....	245
Chapter Six: Random Dungeon Generation.....	289
Chapter Seven: New Magic, Monsters, and Psionics	331
Appendix: Pre-Generated Characters	351

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Chapter One: Introduction

The Sand Marches is a complete campaign for the **DARK SUN** setting. With this campaign book, you have all the tools necessary to run a complete **DARK SUN** game taking place in the far southern reaches of the Tablelands, with adventures to challenge your players through many levels and possibly all the way to transformation into a dragon or elemental!

The Sand Marches is a West Marches-style campaign, meaning that it's heavily built around cautious exploration, small group ventures between different teams, and a dangerous world where the player characters (PCs) must learn the environment and the creatures they face, or risk quickly getting in over their heads.

Organizing the Campaign

The most important step in organizing your Sand Marches campaign is making sure your players all understand the nature of this game.

- *The Sand Marches* is primarily a game of exploration and adventure. The story elements in it are light and tend to be self-contained. Story springs primarily from the player characters themselves and the hazards they encounter.

- The PCs are the only ones who can really effect change in *The Sand Marches*. There are no higher-level groups of non-player characters (NPCs) around to help, or save them from trouble. The high-level NPCs who do exist are either adversaries, or busy with their own agendas.
- The randomly-generated encounters and areas of the campaign mean that PCs are not guaranteed to face enemies of their level. Sometimes they'll face a challenge that's far too strong for them, and they should run away! PCs should exercise caution, scout prudently, and not be afraid to flee if the situation proves too dangerous. Death is always a possibility if luck turns bad. Players should make sure to have a character tree ready, as described in the **DARK SUN** rule book.

- Each game session of *The Sand Marches* campaign should consist of one adventure in which the PCs have a specific goal: Explore two hexes on the map, wrest treasure from the crumbling ruins, or find and defeat the dangerous monster that wiped out another team. A typical session should involve the PCs heading into the wastes, mapping as they go, facing random encounters, achieving (or failing) at their goal, and then returning.
- With enough players, you may have dynamic groups. The group venturing out one day might not be the same as the group heading out the next week. Allow your players to mix and match their parties, so their teams can trade stories and swap useful knowledge. Have your players schedule games, so that whoever's available is who plays. This way the game can continue any time enough players are ready to venture forth. Since each adventure is a there-and-back affair, characters are always ready to go at the next session. If a character is "stuck in the field," the player can swap to a different tree character.
- Be sure to carefully review all of the notes about the Settlement, Regions, and Events. These explain the sequence of play and provide helpful notes about pertinent **DARK SUN** rules.

Useful Resources

To run *The Sand Marches* campaign, you will need:

- **AD&D 2nd edition** *Player's Handbook*
- **AD&D 2nd edition** *Dungeon Master's Guide*
- **AD&D 2nd edition** *Monstrous Compendiums* 1, 2, and 12
- **DARK SUN** boxed set
- *PHBR 5: The Complete Psionics Handbook*

In addition, you may find the following accessories useful:

- *City by the Silt Sea*
- *CGR 2: The Complete Gladiator's Handbook*
- *Defilers & Preservers: The Wizards of Athas*
- *Dragon Kings*
- *Dune Trader*
- *Earth, Air, Fire, and Water*
- *Elves of Athas*
- *PHBR 1: The Complete Fighter's Handbook*
- *PHBR 2: The Complete Wizard's Handbook*
- *PHBR 3: The Complete Priest's Handbook*
- *PHBR 4: The Complete Thief's Handbook*
- *PHBR 11: The Complete Ranger's Handbook*
- *PHBR 13: The Complete Druid's Handbook*
- *PHBR 14: The Complete Barbarian's Handbook*
- *Thri-Kreen of Athas*
- *The Will and the Way*
- All other *Monstrous Compendia* for **AD&D 2nd edition**

THE SAND MARCHES

This campaign uses the original **DARK SUN** boxed set rules, but you may find the revised edition useful if you want to include PC aarakocra, pterrans, and dwarf traders.

Several of the monsters in this campaign come from *Monstrous Compendium* books for other settings. These monsters come from the lists suggested in the **DARK SUN** boxed set and in *Dragon* magazine #185.

You can purchase most of these books from DMSGuild.com, or join the forums at athas.org to ask specific rules questions.

If you don't have access to all of these resources and you find a reference that uses one of them, you can either substitute something that you do have, or engage in the age-old DM tradition of winging it. You can also find information about **DARK SUN** at Athas.org, or purchase PDFs from DMSGuild.com.

Character Creation

Once your players are all excited for your game, use the character creation rules from the **DARK SUN** boxed set. You should keep the following points in mind:

Session Zero: It's useful to hold a planning session before you start the campaign, so players know what to expect and you can coordinate what people want from the game, what people *don't* want, and what roles the players want to split up in the party. Having a wide range of character skills in the team is advantageous for survival.

Races: *Half-giants* must keep in mind that their increased food and water requirements are a large burden in the game's early stages. *Thri-kreen* have a great advantage due to their ability to survive on relatively little water. *Aarakocra* can outdistance party members with their high flight speed and ability to ignore terrain, which makes them ideal scouts.

Classes: *Bards and traders* will not have many opportunities to engage in diplomacy and socialization, as much of the Sand Marches campaign is about exploration and combat. Early in the campaign, they should rely on their use of skills, poisons, and assets. Later they'll have chances to shape the development of the community. *Druids* should keep in mind that starting at level 12, they must spend half of their time in their guarded lands, so the player should make sure to have an alternative character to play during those periods. *Defilers and templars* will not be trusted by anyone and may have little to do other than seeing to the interests of their sorcerer-monarch, meaning they can encounter a great deal of friction.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Early on, PCs will get a great deal of utility from the nonweapon proficiencies of agriculture, animal handling, animal rendering*, cooking, direction sense, heat protection, foraging**, hunting, leatherworking, navigation, survival (sandy wastes), tracking, and water find.

* See *The Complete Barbarian's Handbook*.

** See *The Complete Ranger's Handbook*.

Alignment: Since the PCs *must* work together to survive, you should consider limiting evil or uncooperative characters. A lone evil character who steals supplies and bullies the rest of the team can quickly make the game no fun for anyone else.

One other modification that you should consider is relaxing the alignment restrictions for character trees. As presented in the **DARK SUN** rule book, all characters in a tree must have the same moral alignment (good/neutral/evil). The default rule can be highly restrictive for half-giants (as you can't choose to flex your moral alignment under this ruling) and may create unfortunate restrictions, like preventing a player from having both a ranger and a druid on the same character tree (since a ranger must be good-aligned while a druid must be true neutral).

Equipment and Wealth: No PC enters play with food or drink. PCs can use their starting wealth for weapons, armor, tools, extra clothing, and even mounts (which they might butcher!), but they enter the game with no food and no water. This is deliberate: The very first thing that the PCs need to do is find something to eat and drink, before they die!

It's highly recommended that every PC makes sure to purchase starting gear that includes:

- At least one usable weapon
- Armor and clothing appropriate to their class

- A container (backpack, satchel, pouches, etc.)
- At least one waterskin (even though it will start empty)



Canteen—Smithsonian Collection

In addition, the group should have:

- Torches (and a fire kit, if nobody has fire-building proficiency)
- Some useful tools (knife for butchering, hatchet for cutting wood, mess kit for cooking, wooden spade for digging, etc.)
- A tent or tents
- Salt (for food preservation)

REMINDER! In 2nd edition AD&D, the *goodberry* spell doesn't conjure berries out of nothing—it transmutes existing berries. Taxonomically, cactus fruits are berries!

Game Procedure

Since *The Sand Marches* campaign proceeds in small exploration adventures, there is a specific order in which you should run game sessions.

1. **Organize the session.** You and your players decide on a time to play. Everyone agrees the session will cover one goal, whether the characters go out to explore a particular location, map a ruin, defeat a specific dangerous monster, or perform some other task.
2. **Provisioning phase.** Update characters with supplies based on the settlement's Food & Water, Materials, and Security ratings. *Characters cannot save food and water from session to session; leftover supplies are used by the village.* PCs can purchase additional supplies subject to availability—see the Food & Water and Materials sections of the Settlement rules.
3. **Expedition phase.** The PCs set out into the deserts to the southeast and travel from hex to hex. It's recommended that you conduct travel and camping in three-hour blocks, so they match up with the rolls for random encounters. Note that a typical marching day is 10 hours, and see the **DARK SUN** boxed set *Rules Book* pp. 87–88 for overland movement rates.

- a. Check for the possibility of additional random encounters while traveling or camping, as described for the region.
- b. Check for getting lost when moving into a new hex, per Chapter 14 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. (Direction sense proficiency reduces this chance by 5%; successful use of navigation proficiency reduces it by 20%.)
- c. Describe what the PCs discover and update the map, if needed.

The PCs either complete their goal, abandon their mission, or die in the wastes. If any survivors return home, proceed to downtime; otherwise, the session is over. After a failed expedition, PCs can switch to other characters in their character tree, or make replacements, to continue if you have enough time.

4. **Return phase.** Once the PCs return home (or to an outpost), divide up loot, award any extra experience points for completing goals or special heroics, and finalize any updates to hit points, condition, spells, and so on now that the PCs can rest.

5. **Downtime phase.** The PCs have a downtime phase of one week to conduct research, recuperate, carouse, trade, lead a project, etc. If a PC wants to perform an action taking more than one week, that PC is busy until enough downtime phases have passed to complete the action. For example, if Amy wants to make a magic item taking one month to construct, her character is busy until four downtime phases have passed. If you're running multiple groups, downtime phases are sequential, so Amy's character will be available again after three more groups have completed expeditions.
6. **Settlement event phase.** Roll for one settlement event and resolve its results.
7. **Record keeping phase.** One participant (or more) writes down a summary of their adventure.

Depending on your group's needs and wishes, you may prefer to run the downtime and settlement phases between games via email, forum, or other group. Ideally, other PCs should hear about the adventures of each group, and this can affect the goals they set. If one team encounters a horrid monster and fails to kill it, another team may decide to go after it!

Flexible Teams

The teams your players form for expeditions are completely flexible: the PCs can mix and match based on which players are available on a given day. The gladiator might go on three expeditions in a row, each time with different teammates, while a player who's busy and only able to participate occasionally may show up now and again. Teams don't have to retain a specific list of members. Whoever can play, up to the limit of players you're willing to handle, gets to participate.

Recovery Between Expeditions

Since the typical downtime between expeditions is one week, assume that PCs recuperate from dehydration, regain psionic strength points, and refresh spells during this time. As long as someone in the settlement can cast healing magic, PCs also regain lost hit points (and natural healing still takes place). Even if the settlement has no resources, there's just enough to eke out a bare margin of survival to try heading out again.

Characters "Out in the Wild"

If a team fails to complete their expedition, the characters are "out in the wild" until your players are able to assemble and finish the job. The players should switch to alternative characters in their tree if they wish to play in other adventures with other teams.

Looking for Trouble

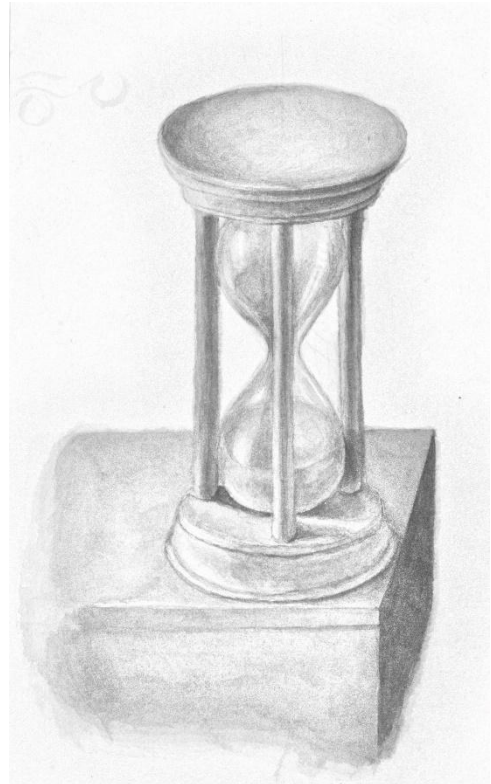
While they're traveling, the PCs will run into random encounters. Sometimes, though, they deliberately want to find something—anything—and they're on the lookout for a ruin, a monster, whatever they can spot. When the PCs are looking for trouble, they spend a three-hour block of time exploring the hex they're currently in. This forces an automatic roll on the encounter table for the region.

If the PCs have the hunting proficiency, they may be able to get close to the quarry before the encounter starts, as described for that proficiency in the *Player's Handbook*.

Explain the Looking for Trouble option to your players before they begin exploring. This way they can go looking for trouble in the early parts of the map when they need to hunt creatures for food. Later, when they're traveling further afield, they only have to worry about the occasional random encounter as they pass through known territory.

Once the PCs find trouble in a given hex, they won't find trouble there by exploring the same spot again. They need to keep moving, although random encounters always remain possible.

Note that there are never multiple unique locations in the same hex; a roll of a second unique location in a hex that already has one instead counts as *no encounter*.



Hourglass—Smithsonian Collection

Running Simultaneous Expeditions

You might decide that instead of treating each expedition as a separate event that follows the previous one by a week, different groups are out and about at the same time. If you do so, be careful to make sure the PCs stick to their stated goals; otherwise, you may run into issues of ordering, like one group wresting treasure from a ruin while the next group somehow manages to reach the ruins "before" the prior group. Typically, you should specify that at the very earliest, a given team's expedition can only happen the day after the prior team's. Keeping a week of downtime in between expeditions makes it easier to keep track of calendar time, and to ensure that PCs have enough time between expeditions to do useful things.

Limiting Expedition Time

To put a timer on players, enforce a time limit for expeditions. Tell them that they must return to the village or stop at an outpost within one week; their help is necessary to keep the village alive or the outpost functioning. This kind of limitation pushes the players to move quickly, plan ahead, and make decisions about when to rest and when to forge on while time is a limited resource.

Later, when the PCs build up the settlement to be self-sufficient, they can spend more time away without complications.

Exploring at Night

PCs who want to conserve water may suggest moving at night and sleeping during the day. See "Movement by Night" in Chapter 14 of the original **DARK SUN** boxed set *Rules Book*. The principal disadvantage is that nighttime tends to sharply limit visibility. See "Dark Sun Visibility Ranges" in Chapter 13 of the rules book. PCs exploring at night when the moons are dark may need torches or lanterns to light their way, and will find that they're often spotted at long distances before they can see monsters approaching. The advantage, of course, is conservation of water—movement at night counts as activity in shade.

Making Friends Abroad

At various points in the expedition, the PCs may encounter potentially friendly individuals or groups—elf nomads, hermits, even entire villages. If they establish contact and manage to bring the NPCs to the Friendly reaction level, award them XP as if they had defeated the NPCs in combat.

Managing Small Enemy Encounters

Some encounters have a small number of enemies—many of the high-level regions feature only one enemy at a time. Consider sprinkling minor minions into these encounters to prevent the PCs from unloading all of their firepower on the enemy at once!

Rampaging Across the Landscape

Some PCs may decide to wreck every encounter they face—even killing potentially friendly NPCs and razing whole villages. While this is reprehensible, the consequence is that they lose the potential help and resources that they could've gained—and ruin their reputations with anyone who hears about their actions, too.

PCs who attack first and negotiate after may also have problems later in the campaign when they run into characters with powerful clairsentient abilities. The PCs' rampage may be foreseen, giving NPCs a reason to be ready for their arrival and a clue as to the PCs' powers and weaknesses!

THE SAND MARCHES

Getting Loot!

Many random encounters in the wastes have little or no loot. Until they have a trading post, the PCs have no way to buy metal weapons. To find magical items they'll need to delve into the ruins and random dungeons. Large monster lairs might also have such loot. There's no expectation that the PCs will find "the right gear" along the way. They find or make what they can, and do their best with it.

"We Want to Explore to the North and West"

If PCs ask about exploring in a circle around the settlement, remind them that they or some of the other survivors came from the north and west, and they found nothing useful in those directions along the way. In addition, heading north or west puts them at risk for running into raiders or bounty hunters, or showing up enough for templars or trade houses to take notice of them. It's risky, and there's no payoff.

Journaling

It's highly recommended that you (the DM) keep records of downtime events as they happen. The PCs should keep an in-character accounting of their adventures, too (either an oral history or, for the rare literate PCs, a written one).

Award PCs a small bonus (say, 100 xp per level, for each expedition) if anyone on the team writes down the group's adventures. Keeping a calendar with a record of events helps remind when the PCs accomplished certain tasks, and allows correction of any errors in record-keeping for settlement construction, events, and training.

Fast Movers

A party composed solely of elves, thri-kreen, and/or aarakocra may have a significant mobility advantage. Elves and thri-kreen have higher overland movement speed than other characters, and aarakocra can, of course, fly. Remember, the early terrain that the PCs cross is sandy wastes, which reduces movement speed to $\frac{1}{3}$ normal. Even the faster movement of elves and thri-kreen won't help too much against this. Aarakocra can certainly fly to scout areas, but this comes with its own perils. A lone PC is easily susceptible to a dangerous monster with ranged weapons or powers. Id insinuation, a fairly common telepathic attack mode, has a range of 180 yards. Also remember that any winged flying creature cannot sustain its flight if it loses more than 50% of its hit points (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, aerial combat in Chapter 9). PCs might find clever magical or psionic solutions to these problems. In general, if they do, reward them! But keep in mind, and remind the PCs, that explorers going off on their own are taking quite a risk.

Chapter Two: The Settlement

The base of operations for the PCs is a tiny settlement. At the outset of the campaign, the settlement consists of the PCs and two dozen non-adventurers living in squalid conditions: lean-tos made of rags and sticks, with no water or food, nestled against a small outcropping of crumbling, jagged rocks and weeds in the midst of the sand dunes.

The Refugees

Due to the dire situation, the PCs are likely to be leaders of the settlement: They're the ones with the best chance of survival, and the ones who can bring back food and water. Other NPCs at the settlement help as best they can, but they largely consist of escapees, refugees, laborers, and former criminals who have fled from persecution and adversity into these now-terrible circumstances. As long as the PCs are not bullies or exploitative, the NPCs will help as they can. This largely takes the form of seeing to their own needs and using their meager skills to try to stay alive while the PCs are out hunting and exploring. Assume that while the PCs are out, the refugees are just barely able to keep themselves from dying of exposure, starvation, and thirst—and they are very grateful for anything that the PCs bring back!

Though the refugees can survive without the PCs bringing back food and materials, it's a terrible existence, and the PCs need to work on improving the settlement if life is to get any better, or if they're to have any prospects for long-term survival.

Motema the Ranger

One NPC stands out as a possible advisor and guardian for the village: Motema, a middle-aged woman from Gulg. Though she has old wounds and age has started to slow her down, Motema is no stranger to harsh conditions and survival, even if her experiences were principally in the forests near Gulg.

Motema has curly black hair and black skin, watchful eyes, and a confident expression. As a 7th-level ranger, she is very competent, moreso even than the PCs at first, but several old injuries impact her mobility. She can offer advice and a few pointers to the PCs, but her most important asset is that she is willing to stay and guard the settlement while the PCs are gone, and she has the skills to do so. Armed with a pair of bone short swords, she is nevertheless a dangerous opponent; she simply lacks the ability to engage in extended overland travel anymore. Wise PCs will engage Motema's advice and assistance.



*Motema the Ranger—Illus. by
Federico Sohns*

Motema grew up in Gulg and became a ranger in the Crescent Forest, but a nasty family squabble with a templar of that city-state led to her exile and subsequent flight. Using all of her skills she avoided capture and escaped, heading always south. She lived for a short time in Balic, but as a foreigner she was constantly suspected of being a spy, and spent a short time in the dungeons of that city at the less-than-charitable hands of the templars. After she escaped this durance, she made her way east across the Estuary of the Forked Tongue, eventually joining the refugees at the settlement.

Motema, female human (Gulgan) ranger 7: AL NG; AC 8 (10 unarmored); MV 12"; HD 7; HP 39; THAC0 14; # At 3; Dmg by weapon; SZ M; ML 15; XP Value 2,000.

Motema wears leather armor and carries two bone short swords, with which she fights with expertise (granting her 3 attacks per round). Age has started to wear down her strength and stamina, but she has a keen mind for survival strategies and can at least keep the refugees alive for a little while as the PCs are out exploring. She can also identify plants and animals that the PCs bring back to the settlement. She can tell which kinds of beasts are edible, and explain the usual powers and poisons of any creatures that the PCs encounter in the sandy wastes.

Motema can also instruct the PCs in the basics of food preservation, so they know how to use salt and cooking to extend the edibility of any raw foods that they find.

Motema as Advisor

Especially for novice players, consider using Motema as a way to provide information about monsters and help inform better choices. Motema can explain the abilities of various creatures that the PCs kill, especially if they bring back carcasses. She can also serve as an advisor for settlement projects, encouraging them to first prioritize something that will improve the food and water situation (either hunting a large amount of food, or bringing back materials to dig a well), and then encouraging improvements that will bring up the Material and Security assets of the settlement.

Settlement Resources

Because the settlement is in dire straits, the PCs need to develop the settlement if people are to survive. To that end, the settlement has three characteristics of its own, which fluctuate based on PC actions: **food & water**, **materials**, and **security**. Each of these three characteristics has four levels: **None**, **Low**, **Medium**, and **High**. The village starts with a rating of None in the three characteristics, and the PCs must work to improve these categories if the village is to survive and provide a safe, defensible home. Thus, the PCs' first adventure is not a quest to find treasure, but a fight for survival!

PC actions and downtimes, as well as settlement events, alter these characteristics. They will fluctuate up and down over the course of the campaign. PCs can scavenge materials to raise the settlement's resources, or perform projects that use up resources. Encounters, events, and projects that grant or use up resources explain this in *units*, with one unit representing a shift of one level in a resource. For instance, one unit of food & water could raise the village from None to Low, but a drought event costing one unit could reduce it again from Low to None. Eventually, experienced PCs should be able to reach a High level in all three categories, thereby turning the settlement into a self-sufficient, well-defended village.

Food & Water

Food & Water measures the settlement's available provisions. This could be herd animals, small gardens, kank honey, stores of water, or other such comestibles. At the outset, the village has nothing. There is nothing to eat or drink. This rating affects how the PCs start each adventure:

None means that there is nothing left to eat or drink in the village. The PCs start with no food or water. The villagers are in desperate straits, morale is low, and everyone is afraid of starving. PCs with special abilities like survival, water find, *create water*, the concentrate water psionic power, and the like can still use their abilities to find or make provisions for themselves once an expedition begins.

(Note that the PCs make do, somehow, between expeditions, but at this level there is never anything extra and it's a lean existence.)

Low means the village has a small amount of available food and water, but not much. PCs start each expedition with one gallon of water and one pound of food each, at no additional cost.

Medium means the village has a reasonable store of supplies, enough to outfit the PCs for a short journey. Each PC starts with up to four gallons of water and four pounds of food at no additional cost.

THE SAND MARCHES

High means that the village has a secure, established supply of food and multiple sources of water. Each PC starts with up to eight gallons of water and eight pounds of food at no additional cost.

Remember that thri-kreen PCs only need one gallon of water per week, instead of per day, while half-giants require four gallons of water and two pounds of food every day. This means that the availability of food and water will restrict how far the PCs can go from the village before they run out of supplies and must return.

Bringing Back Food and Water

The PCs are likely to butcher some of their kills for food supplies, and may want to bring back large amounts for the village. The agriculture and animal rendering proficiencies normally handle butchering, though even a nonproficient PC can get *something*, however small, from an edible carcass.

Harvesting meat and hide from a carcass doesn't require a proficiency check, but does require the use of appropriate tools—at the very least a stone knife.

How Much Does a Ration Weigh?

The core rules for AD&D 2nd edition don't actually provide a weight for any rations! For our purposes, one day's dried or iron ration for a Medium character is one pound of dense, preserved, high-calorie food. The *Black Flames* adventure pegs a ration at one pound, so this is not without precedent.

As described in *The Complete Barbarian's Handbook*, the available meat from a carcass depends upon its Size. A character proficient in animal rendering (from that book, pp. 70 and 72–73) can harvest more usable material. The table below is reproduced from p. 70 of that source. In addition, the table now includes the estimated time to butcher a carcass, based on its size, as well as values for a Tiny carcass.

Rations Produced per Animal

Size of Game Animal	Number of Rations*	Time to Process
T	1/1	1 min.
S	1d2/1d3+1	10 min.
M	1d2+2/1d3+3	1 hr.
L	1d4+4/2d3+6	6 hrs.
H	2d4+7/2d6+13	12 hrs.

* A ration is the food necessary to feed an average adult for one day. The figures to the left of the slash indicate the number of rations obtained when a character of average skill handles the butchering. The figures to the right show the number of rations obtained by a character with the animal rendering proficiency.

The time required to process a carcass is halved (cumulatively) by any of the following:

- The butcher leading the processing makes a successful proficiency check of agriculture or animal rendering.
- The butcher is Large-sized (e.g. a half-giant).

- Multiple butchers with tools work together. One butcher can work on a smaller carcass, two can work on one carcass of the same size, four butchers on a carcass one size larger, eight on a carcass two sizes larger, and so on.

Bringing back 100 rations' worth of edibles adds one unit of food & water to the village. This doesn't mean that the village just has a huge stockpile of smoked meat; some of this is used as compost, used up by scouts who come back with different comestibles, used to bait traps, fed to domesticated animals, and so on. Bringing back food supplies allows the settlement to secure and diversify its resources.



Enameled salt cellar—Smithsonian Collection

If the PCs have no way to preserve meat, assume that half spoils each day. On the trail, the PCs need access to salt—4 ounces per ration of meat if proficient in cooking, 8 ounces per ration otherwise—to prevent spoilage.

Materials

Materials measure the available wood, stone, cloth, and other substances used for making tools, shelter, and weapons. This rating affects what the PCs can buy and sell in the village.

Regardless of the village's material supplies, it is not possible to buy metal items locally until the PCs complete the settlement project *Build a Foundry*.

None means the villagers have nothing more than the rags they wear and perhaps a sharp rock or two for use as a crude tool. PCs cannot buy or sell any items, though they still have their normal starting allotment of wealth and equipment.

Low means the village has a small amount of supplies, but nothing terribly exciting; the village could perform some minor construction if absolutely necessary. PCs can buy, sell, or trade items (not including food and drinks) up to a value of 10 cp.

Medium means the village has a modest store of wood and useful stone as well as a few specialized tools, and leather, cloth, or hide for construction and clothing. PCs can buy, sell, or trade items up to a value of 100 cp (again, not including comestibles).

High means the village is well-stocked, some of the villagers now have the tools necessary to perform crafts, and adventurers and traders have brought in enough material to allow for significant trade. PCs can buy, sell, or trade items up to a value of 1,000 cp (excluding food and drinks).

PCs who want to buy or sell more expensive items must either wait for a trade caravan or visit one of the city-states. Note that trade is often via barter, and PCs might not simply trade in coinage; villagers trade goods for equipment, herd animals for gear, and so on.

Bringing Back Materials

Just like butchering their animal kills, PCs may decide that bone and leather are useful building materials. As with butchering for food, a character proficient in agriculture or animal rending can harvest useful bones, teeth, claws, and other pieces from carcasses, as described in the "animal products" section of *The Complete Barbarian's Handbook* pp. 121–123. (Compare Athasian animals to similar equivalents: aprig to pigs, sygra to goats, carru to cattle, etc.) For simplicity's sake, you might choose to simply give the PCs material resources equal to the amount of food they acquire when butchering an animal: one ration of food also comes with one pound of bones, hides, and other such usable materials.

Bringing back 100 lbs. of usable cloth, bone, leather, stone, wood, and/or metal adds one unit of materials to the village. Keep a running total of the supply stockpile so that PCs can assemble a small trickle of materials over successive expeditions and then have the satisfaction of advancing the level of Material resources when they reach 100 lbs.

Security

Security measures the village's defenses and stealth. At the outset, the settlement is woefully undefended and in miserable straits. Any significant threat causes problems, and PCs are constantly called upon to save the village from danger. As this rating develops, the village becomes more of a safe haven and the PCs can rest there without worry of being attacked or robbed. Perhaps more importantly, security also applies to secrecy: As the village becomes prosperous, secrecy is important so raiders or sorcerer-monarchs don't decide to come and attack!

Security also covers housing: Walls and roofs are necessary to protect against the environment, animals, and raiders.

None means that the village has no militia beyond the PCs, no walls, no traps, and no security. Even inclement weather can cause problems as it destroys habitations. PCs start each adventure having already suffered 1d6 points of damage due to hazards or attacks from monsters and raiders (this can't reduce a PC below 1 hit point). No hirelings or mercenaries are available.

Low means the village has a few irregular militia who stand watch, or perhaps a small protective ditch in the areas not near the rocks. The PCs can find one hireling or mercenary to join their expedition at the usual prices.

Medium means the village has a small palisade or low wall, sharp stones in some areas of the rock mound, and likely some scouts or regular militia who patrol and keep watch. The PCs can find 1d4+1 hirelings or mercenaries to join their expedition at the usual prices.

High means that the village has regular militia as well as scouting groups that check the surrounding countryside for bandits or monsters. A stout wall or palisade and ditch protects the approach to the village, while the stony rock mound has been trapped with stakes and pits. The PCs can find 2d6 hirelings or mercenaries to join their expedition at the usual prices.

Hirelings such as spear carriers and torchbearers are levelless, classless characters who typically have few skills and no supernatural powers. Mercenary henchmen are typically first level in one or more classes, but they earn experience as outlined in the DMG (gaining half shares of xp since they aren't the decision-makers in the team), and they can gain levels.

Persistent Hirelings

To provide a sense of continuity with the settlement, and to get the players emotionally attached to someone, you should consider that once a hireling becomes available, you flesh out a specific person and make that person available as long as the security rating of the village stays above None. This allows you to develop a notable personality and have the PCs befriend someone, which is all the more devastating if that character dies on an ill-fated expedition!

A persistent hireling is also a great way to spread information between groups; an NPC who's been hired for multiple expeditions will be able to speak about various threats that every group has encountered.

THE SAND MARCHES

Moving the Settlement

After finding a place in the desert that's more secure, or one that has a better water supply, the PCs might decide that they want to move their settlement and go deeper into the endless sand dunes. This is possible, but it presents several problems.

- Unless the PCs have a way to *teleport* the entire settlement, they must dismantle and carry the infrastructure improvements to their destination. This reduces each settlement rating by one, so (for example) if the settlement has a High food & water rating, this drops to Medium when it's moved, because some of the infrastructure can't be easily taken apart and re-used.
- The PCs must somehow move all of the non-adventuring refugees with them. This means an adventure in which they have to shepherd all the settlement's people across the desert to their new home.
- The PCs have to convince the refugees to move in the first place! The more that the settlement has already been built up, the more resistant people will be to moving. Nobody wants to leave a semi-comfortable lean-to to hoof it across dangerous deserts for days, risking monster attacks and sandstorms, for the promise of some destination that might or might not be better.

- Moving the settlement deeper into the desert means that traders will no longer come even a trading post is built, because the wastes are just too dangerous, and the settlement too far away, for them to add it to their trade route.

These aren't insurmountable problems, but the PCs will need a plan that is more than just "why don't we pack everything and move" if they want to relocate to a newly-discovered site.



Travelers—Smithsonian Collection

Settlement Projects

After completing an adventure, PCs return to the settlement and perform downtime actions. For most PCs, this means resting, spell research, training, crafting, or carousing. In addition, one member of the group may manage one **settlement project**. This is a set of actions or activities in which the PCs help to direct the villagers to perform some task or use resources that they've recovered to improve the village.

The rules for a settlement project are as follows:

- At least one PC must use their downtime to direct the action. PCs who are involved in crafting, spell research, or other activities can't oversee the settlement downtime. If all the PCs are busy with their own business, then the group doesn't perform a settlement project.
- Most settlement projects require the PCs to have certain proficiencies and to expend specific supplies. If the PCs don't have the appropriate skills and supplies, they can't perform the project. If there are no valid projects available, then the PCs do not get a settlement project. Note that while PCs may not know the required proficiencies at first, these provide them with good goals for personal development.
- A team only conducts a settlement project after coming back from an adventure. In general, this should only happen once per game session. Organizationally, it's easiest if this is the last thing you do while wrapping up the game, or the first thing you do before you start a new expedition. If you have an email, chat, or forum group with your players, you can always handle it between your adventure game sessions. A team can't head out into the wastes and immediately return just to get another downtime; these represent days or weeks of work in between adventures.
- When a group completes a settlement project, its effects are felt throughout the settlement. Everyone knows that it's done and who oversaw it. This means that if you have multiple groups all venturing out from Sand March, when one group completes a project, everyone benefits and everyone knows who did it.
- Unless otherwise noted, each project can only be completed once. A project that's destroyed by raiders or bad events can be rebuilt by completing it again.

THE SAND MARCHES

Food & Water Projects

Build an Animal Pen

Requires: Animal handling proficiency

Costs: 1 unit of materials, 10 domesticated herd animals

Gain: 1 unit of food & water

The PC and villagers build a tall, fenced pen to keep a herd or flock of domesticated animals useful for their food production and hide.

This project can be repeated with different animals: aprigs, carru, erdlu, and kanks.

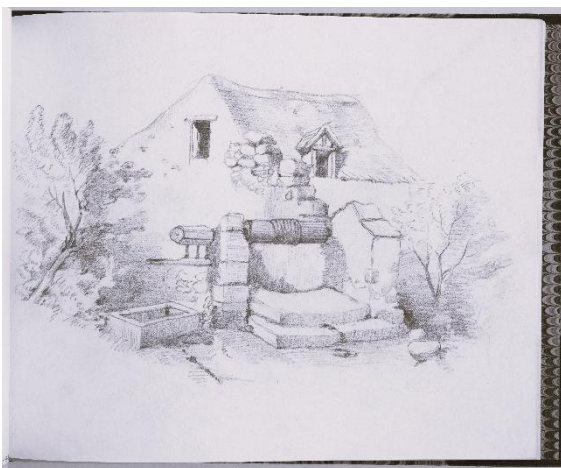
Dig a Well

Costs: 1 unit of materials

Gain: 1 unit of food & water

The PC and villagers dig holes until they strike water, then dig out a deep well and line it with rock or clay. The well provides a reasonably steady trickle of water.

Note that it is not possible to dig a well without the necessary materials. Otherwise, the sand simply collapses in upon itself; it must be shored up with a structure of wood, bones, bricks, or stones.



House and Well—Smithsonian Collection

Plant a Garden

Requires: Agriculture or gardening proficiency

Costs: Seeds (special, see below)

Gain: 1 unit of food & water

The PC and villagers clear some land to find arable soil, then carefully plant seeds and water them. The resulting plants provide fruits and vegetables.

The PCs must have access to a large quantity of seeds to undertake this project. They can find seeds in certain encounters in the wastes, or buy them from traders.

Once the PCs complete a garden, they can use botanical enchantment with any *potion fruits* they find and bring back to the settlement.

Materials Projects

Build a Foundry

Requires: Blacksmithing proficiency, kiln project complete
Costs: 1 unit of security, metals (special, see below)
Gain: 1 unit of materials, access to metal tools and weapons

Using a glazed kiln and fragments of metal, the PCs build a rudimentary foundry. The small quantity of metal tools greatly improves the ability to work with other materials. The PCs must supply the raw metals for use in the foundry; this requires at least 50 lbs. of metal (a princely sum!), either from smelted ore, or from tools and weapons melted down for new uses (an extravagant feat, given the limited metalworking technologies of Athas).

Once complete, characters may purchase metal items as if the village purchase limit is 100 times higher.

Build a Kiln

Requires: Pottery proficiency
Costs: 1 unit of food & water
Gain: 1 unit of materials

The PC and villagers use some of their precious water to mold clay and fire sheets of ceramics, thereby making a large oven kiln and a pottery industry.

Build a Tannery

Requires: Leatherworking proficiency
Costs: 1 unit of food & water
Gain: 1 unit of materials

The PC and villagers set up a tannery for cleaning, preparing, and preserving leather. This provides useful materials for making clothing, pouches, tents, whips, and light armor.

Quarry Stone

Requires: Stonemasonry proficiency
Costs: 1 unit of food & water
Gain: 1 unit of materials

The PC oversees villagers working to find useful stone among the rocky outcroppings abutting the village. This provides building materials, but the workers must be kept well-fed, which puts a burden on the village's food and water supplies.

Completing a quarry also removes the purchase price restriction for stone used in construction (making walls and buildings).

Transplant a Grove

Costs: 1 unit of food & water, trees (special, see below)
Gain: 1 unit of materials

The PC and villagers transplant several trees, and use the village's precious water to make a small riparian corridor that provides shade and small quantities of useful timber and leaves.

The PCs must have access to trees they can transplant into a grove. This can be done by finding a grove in the wastes and bringing the trees back, by use of certain magic items, or through the priest spell *tree growth*.

THE SAND MARCHES

Security Projects

Build a Palisade

Requires: Carpentry proficiency, or PC must be a fighter with the class ability to build defenses

Costs: 1 unit of materials

Gain: 1 unit of security

The PC directs villagers in shaping wood and stone to make spikes and stakes to defend the village from invaders.

Construct Armor for Villagers

Requires: Armorer proficiency

Costs: 1 unit of materials

Gain: 1 unit of security

The PC oversees villagers in making quilted and leather armor, perhaps with bark or bits of stone or bone for added protection.

Construct Weapons for Villagers

Requires: Weaponsmithing proficiency

Costs: 1 unit of materials

Gain: 1 unit of security

The PC helps the villagers make spears, clubs, and slings from the available stores of materials.

Dig a Protective Ditch

Costs: 1 unit of food & water

Gain: 1 unit of security

The PC and villagers ring the village with a wide ditch. The ditch keeps invaders from riding mounts in, and requires attackers to scramble through the ditch. The villagers use bridges made of lashed-together wood to come and go, and can pull the bridges away to thwart invasions. All this construction is thirsty work.



Trophy with Weapons—Smithsonian Collection

Train a Militia

Requires: PC must be a fighter

Costs: 1 unit of food & water

Gain: 1 unit of security

The PC helps the villagers train with simple weapons and organize a watch routine. The militia needs good meals to stay in peak condition for combat.

This project can be repeated one additional time each time the village loses a level of Security (for instance, after completing the Raid for Supplies project).

Special Projects

Build an Arena

Requires: PC must be a gladiator
Costs: 1 unit of food and water, 1 unit of materials

Construct an arena with a fighting pit, stands, fencing, and training grounds. The arena provides entertainment, combat practice, and possibly a punishment for survivors who commit crimes against the settlement.

PCs gain access to the downtime action Fight in the Arena.

Build a Kitchen

Requires: Cooking proficiency
Costs: 1 unit of food & water, 1 unit of materials

Construct a sheltered area for food preparation and storage. Dig a deep root cellar and build a stone oven. Build a large drying rack for preserving meats and hides. Sharpen up several stone or obsidian knives and platters for cooking.

With a kitchen, the PCs double the amount of starting food and water they have for each expedition based on the settlement's Food & Water rating. (Note that twice nothing is still nothing.)

Build an Outpost

Costs: 1 unit of food & water, 1 unit of materials, 1 unit of security

Build an outpost out in the wastes in a defensible spot. Provide it with supplies. An outpost serves as a location where PCs can rest and resupply and is treated as a tiny village with Low ratings in all three settlement characteristics. The outpost also serves as a starting or ending point for any expedition. This lets PCs stay deeper in the wastes without having to go all the way back to the settlement when they explore further into the south.

Outposts can only be founded at specific locations, as listed in the encounter descriptions of each region. This prevents the PCs from trying to build outposts in every hex on the map. In game fiction, outposts require some level of local resources and security in order to survive!

Encourage players to come up with fanciful, clever, or descriptive names for their outposts, and to make up foibles and appearances for the NPCs staffing it.

Build a Shrine

Requires: PC must be an elemental cleric
Costs: 1 unit of materials

The PC sanctifies a shrine to an element in the village. This affects the outcome of certain settlement events.

The presence of a shrine is necessary for clerics who wish to petition their elemental lords for special spells, or who want to engage in magic item creation.

THE SAND MARCHES

Build a Spell Library

Requires: PC must be a wizard, must have reached at least Medium in all three settlement characteristics

Costs: 1 unit of materials, 1,000 cp

The PC oversees construction of a protected area for keeping notes, scrolls, even perhaps a book or two, as well as other mnemonic devices and magical widgets. The villagers are suspicious, but since things are going well, the wizard is grudgingly permitted to do some minor work.

This is a prerequisite to creating a spell research library. Once established, any PC in the settlement can use the spell library to perform spell research as described in the *DMG* and *Spells & Magic*.

Build a Tavern

Requires: Brewing or Gaming proficiency

Costs: 1 unit of food & water, 1 unit of materials, 1 unit of security

A leather tent eventually gives way to a leaning wooden shack, which becomes a meeting and drinking establishment, perhaps with some gambling and entertainment.

A tavern attracts people to swap stories and socialize over food and drink. Building a tavern allows PCs to use the Gather Rumors downtime action.

The PC who oversees this project also has the honor of naming the establishment.



Café at Biskra, Algeria—Smithsonian Collection

Build a Trading Post

Requires: PC must be a trader

Costs: 1 unit of materials, 1 unit of security

The village constructs a trading post a safe distance away. This provides an area of neutral territory where villagers can barter with visiting traders, without giving away the location of the village or worrying about traitors and templars sneaking in under the guise of trading.

Once a trading post is constructed, roll 1d4+2. After that many expeditions, a group of traders show up to barter, with a 50% chance to have any mundane, nonmagical item that the PCs might want to buy, and the ability to spend up to 5,000 cp to purchase items from the PCs. After the traders visit, roll 1d4+2 again to determine how many expeditions elapse before they return.

If the PCs attack the traders, no new traders come.

Raid for Supplies

Requires: Train a Militia project complete

Gain: Special

The PCs and a group of villagers go raiding and come back with supplies... with some losses.

Typical raiding targets include other raiders, caravans from hostile merchant houses such as Tsalaxa, and expeditionary patrols of templars and soldiers from the city-states. PC raids typically take place off of the map, somewhere to the north or along the edges of the Sea of Silt.

There is a 50% chance to lose one level of Security when raiding. If this happens, the PCs must complete the Train a Militia project again before they can Raid for Supplies again.

Table: Raiding for Supplies

2d4 Roll	Result
2	+1 Food & Water AND +1 Materials
3	Treasure Type B
4	Treasure Type C
5	+1 Food & Water
6	+1 Materials
7	Treasure Type A
8	Roll twice, rerolling further 8s

Treasure from the Raid for Supplies project does not award experience points.



Pueblo Bonito Ruin, Chaco Canyon, New Mexico—Smithsonian Collection

Creating New Projects

If your PCs suggest a project that seems reasonable, for which they have the appropriate resources and skills, give them the opportunity to pursue it. A psionist might use the molecular bonding devotion to turn sand into bricks to create materials, or a character with carpentry nonweapon proficiency might build houses with sturdy walls or a low berm around the settlement to turn materials into security. Give the PCs the chance to feel clever and useful, and to exercise their special powers, features, and proficiencies in ways that make sense to improve the settlement.

Flavor Projects

PCs can spend their personal resources or use proficiencies to develop the settlement in other cosmetic ways: raising small pets like sand cats and hurrum, decorating buildings with tapestries and murals, or constructing cobblestone pathways. These kinds of cosmetic projects have no fixed cost, and don't change the settlement's rules. At the DM's discretion, completing a few flavor projects may improve the morale of settlers in the event of an attack (as explained in Chapter Three).

Settlement Events

In between adventures, the settlement will sometimes have special events. These can be good or bad; their nature may also vary based on the settlement's resources.

You (the DM) should roll for one settlement event after each adventure. Handle this at the same time that you handle the settlement downtime action—the two occur simultaneously. For instance, a drought might strike while the PCs are overseeing the Dig a Well project. No matter their best plans, the PCs can't account for everything, and sometimes a disastrous event will make all their work for naught! Every once in a while, a good turn will help them out, though. If order matters, assume that the downtime happens before the event—the PCs might finish training a militia just in time to intercept bandits, for instance.

Each settlement event on the table below has a complete description explaining what happens, and whether it can be avoided. Some events have requirements. If an event comes up and the requirement isn't met, treat it as *no event*.

For the first downtime week after the first expedition, you may want to select *no event* instead of rolling, just to give the players a breather and a chance to engage their downtime actions.

Remember as well that these events are just suggestions; you should vary them up and create new ones to break up too many repeats.

Table: Settlement Events

Roll (1d12 + 1d8)	Event
2	Bad Moon
3	Bad Break
4	Drought
5	Raider Strike
6	Illness
7	Thief!
8	Busy Days
9–11	No Event
12	Traders
13	Festivities
14	Comings and Goings
15	Cool Weather
16	Scout Information
17	Swarm
18	Desert Showers
19	Lucky Find
20	Shooting Star

THE SAND MARCHES

2. Bad Moon

A blood-red cast overtakes Ral and Guthay, and the twin moons lend an eerie light to the landscape. Bad luck follows. The next team suffers a -1 penalty on all saving throws on their next expedition.

If the settlement has completed the project Build a Shrine, treat this as *no event* instead.

3. Bad Break

Wear and tear, inclement weather, and use add up to break one nonmagic item, chosen at random, owned by one of the PCs in the current group.

If the village has a High Materials level, the item is repaired or replaced without incident.

4. Drought

A heat wave strikes! For days there's no cloud cover, no moisture, and no cool wind. Water sources dry up and animals become desperate, digging deep in the sand or hibernating if they can. The settlement loses one unit of Food & Water.

If the village has a High Food & Water level, the village manages to ride out the drought with its stores, and does not take any losses.

5. Raider Strike

An organized group of raiders strikes the village. Though they are driven off, they inflict considerable damage. The village loses one unit of security. If the village has a security level of None, it instead loses either one unit of Food & Water or of Materials (chosen at random).

If the village has a High Security level, the raiders are repulsed without effect.

6. Illness

Sickness sweeps the camp. People come down with fevers, fatigue, and cough, which makes it harder to get work done and means that the PCs are also at risk of the disease. At the start of the next expedition, each team member must make a saving throw vs. poison. Those who fail come down with a fever, cough, fatigue and aches, with vomiting at the worst parts. This illness applies a -4 penalty to attack rolls and causes the PC to suffer the loss of *half* of their hit points as temporary damage (like that inflicted by unarmed combat). After each full cycle of sleep (or eight hours of rest and light activity for characters who don't sleep), the PC makes another saving throw to shake off the disease; on a success, the symptoms and temporary damage clear up. *Cure disease* or the cell adjustment psionic power clears the disease up immediately, though it does not heal the nonlethal damage.

7. Thief!

Requirement: The PCs must have some amount of money, gems, jewels, or valuable art pieces or trade goods.

A villager sneakily steals 1d100 cp worth of money or goods, then flees into the desert before the theft is noticed. Deduct the theft from the PCs' stores, or randomly choose one PC as the target.

The thief has a head start into the desert, possibly with a mount. PCs without tracking skills or a supernatural way to determine the thief's direction of flight have no chance to find the culprit. If the PCs try to chase down the thief, that becomes the focus of the next expedition. There's a 50% chance that the thief is devoured in the desert with no remains left behind. Otherwise, the thief takes shelter in a random dungeon at the PCs' level band, with a dungeon depth of 1d4+2 cards.

8. Busy Days

The rote work of survival takes its toll. One PC does not gain a downtime action this week. The players may choose which character is affected, or roll randomly.

9-II. No Event

It's a blessedly slow week and no misfortune or excitement grips the camp.

12. Traders

Traders set up a camp not far from the settlement, affording an opportunity for the PCs to buy, sell, or barter. There is a base 50% chance that the traders have any nonmagical, mundane item for sale that the PCs might want, assuming it's portable enough to come with a trade caravan (the traders can't sell a castle or a siege engine, for instance).

If the PCs ask for something that the traders don't have, they are willing to take payment up front and then bring the item next time they visit. They'll also purchase jewels, gems, trade goods, and art objects the PCs may have found. The traders can spend up to 5,000 cp to purchase items from the PCs, and if the PCs offer to sell something more expensive, they can come prepared to purchase it on the next trip.

These traders arrive even if the settlement doesn't have a trading post.

13. Festivities

The NPCs find some reason to celebrate what little they have, and engage in an impromptu festival with crude drums and flutes. Any NPCs with the team on the next expedition gain a +1 bonus to their morale score.

THE SAND MARCHES

I4. Comings and Goings

One NPC decides to pack up their meager belongings and leave the settlement, and a new stranger arrives. This could be a common villager, or an NPC mentor, ally, or craftsperson to whom the PCs have become attached. This is an opportunity to introduce a new ally or antagonist, mentor, or character with interesting information.

I5. Cool Weather

The weather takes a turn to an unusually cool day (in the 90s or even 80s Fahrenheit) with notable scuttling cloud cover. On the first day of their next trip, the PCs count as being in shade (halved water consumption and reduced chance of heat exhaustion), and clouds are visible for the whole day.

I6. Scout Information

A scout returns to the settlement after exploring abroad and reports on one of the hexes that the PCs haven't visited yet. The scout describes the terrain and any unique feature, if one is present. Roll for an encounter for that hex; the scout spotted the encounter and reports it to the PCs.

I7. Swarm

A swarm of locusts or mini-kanks sweeps over the encampment. The PCs start their next expedition with an extra pound of food each from the crunchy, high-protein treats.

I8. Desert Showers

A series of short but intense rain showers wash over the camp. The villagers collect water in available containers and pick the flowers and cacti that bloom, and work together to mitigate any damage from flash flooding. The settlement gains one unit of Food & Water.

If the village has a High Food & Water level, the additional water provides no further benefit.

I9. Lucky Find

One of the villagers, while out hunting and scrounging, finds a handy gift, given to a PC randomly chosen from the current group. This item is either a single *potion fruit* (50% chance, roll for a random fruit) or a nonmagical, nonmetal weapon or tool (choose one item the PC can use or trade).

I10. Shooting Star

A shooting star crosses the heavens late at night, making a brilliant line from one side of the sky to the other. This omen carries good luck, giving the next team a +1 bonus on all saving throws for their expedition.

If the settlement has completed the shrine project, this bonus rises to +2.

You may find it useful to give the players a special token, or place a special marker on the game table, as a reminder!

Downtime

Between each expedition, heroes have a week of downtime. Downtime is useful for carousing, studying, hunting, training—all manner of tasks. Characters are assumed to work and assist the settlement during this time; downtime is their “personal time.”

A character only gains a downtime cycle after completing an expedition. Characters who didn't go on an expedition remain busy at home.

A character can do the following in a downtime action:

- *Carousing:* The character spends free time dancing, drinking, or engaging in other entertainments. This PC gains one reroll of a d20 roll on their next expedition. The player may choose which roll to use after making the reroll. If not used during the expedition, this bonus is lost.
- *Crafting:* The character uses their time to craft an item, using the appropriate nonweapon proficiency. The character must still have the appropriate tools and materials.
- *Extended Actions:* Some actions, such as a fighter teaching weapon proficiencies or construction of a magic item, may take multiple downtime actions to complete. Depending on the action, this may or may not prevent the character from engaging in expeditions while busy; some actions must be done without interruption.
- *Fight in the Arena:* Available only if the settlement has completed the Build an Arena project. The PC trains, then engages in a match in the Arena. Roll 3d6; if the roll is equal to or less than the PC's level, the character earns that many silver pieces. Otherwise, the PC earns nothing. Either way, the character starts the next expedition having taken an amount of damage equal to the roll.
Alternatively, you can run the arena battle as a one-on-one fight against an opponent of similar level, or against a group of lower-level opponents (because let's face it, the settlement isn't going to have a bunch of 14th-level gladiators visiting weekly). If the PC wins this match, award experience points—but the PC starts the next expedition still suffering from any damage taken!

THE SAND MARCHES

- *Gather Rumors:* Available only if the settlement has completed the Build a Tavern project. The PC spends several days loitering about the tavern, listening to the latest news from travelers. Roll for one rumor on the rumors table. There is no guarantee that the PCs haven't heard this rumor! Gathering rumors also grants a reroll on the first random encounter of the next expedition; take the higher roll. If multiple characters gather rumors, the next expedition team gets rerolls on multiple random encounters subsequently. That is, if rumors were gathered twice, then the next expedition gets a reroll for the first two random encounters.
- *Oversee a Project:* The character devotes the week to a settlement project, as described previously.
- *Trade:* The character travels to another settlement to buy or sell. This allows the character to purchase or trade goods of any value, instead of being limited by the Material resources of the settlement. Note that a PC might go trading to bring back food and drinks, or building materials. This is limited by their carrying capacity! A PC is unlikely to bring back a huge amount of food unless taking a mount or magical storage device, as well. For each item (or batch of the same item) that the PC wants to buy, there's a 75% chance that it's available. For instance, if a PC wants to buy 100 lbs. of food, a metal short sword, and two shields, roll a 75% chance for each of these three item groups.
- *Training:* The character trains to gain a level, if experienced enough to advance. Unless otherwise noted, this is the only way to advance in levels once the character earns enough experience points. Characters do not gain levels in the field, and level advancement is not automatic; the character must use time to advance! A multi-classed character who has enough experience to gain levels in multiple classes can train in all of them during the same week. (This keeps multi-classed characters from getting stuck constantly training with their downtime.)

Table: Rumors

Die Roll (1d4 + ½ level, rounded down)	Rumor
1-2	"Aren't you a little short for an explorer?"
3	"Beware of cacti. Some of them are aggressive."
4	"Watch out for sinkholes and slipsand. The worst have ant lions in them."
5	"There's a half-buried road somewhere in the dunes south of here."
6	"Watch out for scrabs to the south."
7	"There's an elf tribe that roams the sands in these parts, the Spike Birds. Sometimes open to trade."
8	"Heard about a big crag of bloodstone a few days to the east. Probably inhabited."
9	"In the stony barrens, watch out for basilisks. Where do you think the stone comes from?"

10	"The eastern salt flats once held mines."
11	"I heard that somewhere several days to the southeast are multiple villages with a trade network."
12	"Go south far enough and you'll find the aptly-named Dead Lands. You thought desert was bad? Try obsidian flats."
13	"Never drink water that has no insects nearby."
14	"A wanderer told a wild story about a hidden city far to the southeast, beyond a mountain in the salt flats."
15+	"Dunno why folks like you hang out here. You could shake the world."

Add more rumors based on the flavor of your current campaign, new places that you've added, and goals that you want to provide for the party. A good rumor provides a call to action or gives the players information that allows them to prepare for an upcoming challenge.

Chapter Three: The Sand Marches Campaign

Everything in the Sand Marches campaign is a starting place. Craft your own encounters, add new monsters, generate ruins, and introduce your own NPCs to make the campaign that provides your vision for the game.

The early stages of *The Sand Marches* are a survival and exploration campaign. The PCs start by looking for enough food and water to survive while developing a map of nearby sites. As they secure their location and develop the settlement, their goals may become more ambitious: Acquire metal weapons, find magical treasures, and establish outposts deeper in the marches. These developments don't come without new challenges. As the settlement thrives, word starts to spread of the PCs' success, and trouble comes with it.

Early Game

The first steps in *The Sand Marches* are all centered around survival: acquire resources to avoid starvation. Early encounters are likely to be simple monsters that provide both combat practice and a source of food. If the PCs go looking for trouble close to home, they will eventually discover the Half-Buried Road site in region A. Once they've fully explored it, they'll have a clue that pays off much later—the brass key to the Haunted Menhir. This both propels the PCs to further exploration, and pays off if they pay attention to what they find.

PCs should have little trouble bringing back enough salvage to improve the settlement's resources. Unless all the PCs are expert survivalists with access to water magic, Food & Water will be a priority, just so they don't starve while leaving on every expedition.

As the PCs develop the settlement, rumors leak out about their safe village in the southern wastes. The first time the PCs reach the Medium resource level in any category, they learn (from their village's scouts or visitors) that some traders from further north were overheard talking about the settlement. The first time the PCs reach the High resource level in any category, a small group of refugees arrives to join the settlement; these refugees explain that rumors have spread about this safe haven, and people are paying attention. This is a hint to the PCs that enemies are going to come looking for them, too! Motema or another friendly NPC may advise that while it's tempting to develop the village's resources quickly, it might be safer to take things slow—the better to avoid drawing too much attention too soon.

Along the way, PCs should find some random ruins to explore, which gives them chances to earn some better weapons and armor, as well as access to limited magical resources. It's possible that the PCs might find treasures that are part of a collection (see the descriptions of randomized treasure in Chapter Six). This drives them to keep exploring dungeons in hopes of completing the collection and earning the special benefits associated with it.

Mid Game

Each time the PCs improve a settlement resource after they've gained at least one High resource category, a friendly NPC reminds them that this definitely draws attention, not all of it positive. When the PCs develop the settlement to a High resource level in all three categories, they have their first challenge to the settlement.



Triumph of Caesar: The Corselet Bearers—Smithsonian Collection

A group of raiders, having finally tracked the location of the settlement, comes calling to sack the village, loot the supplies, and capture or kill the settlers. Run this as a special game session any time after the PCs reach the High resource level in all three categories—it doesn't have to happen immediately, if you feel that the PCs need a little more time to develop their abilities for a fair fight. On Athas, however, fights are rarely fair. The battle map for this encounter is the village itself. Put down a map and note the various improvements that the PCs have built; these should all feature on the map, as buildings or pavilion tents. Then, take a dozen dice and toss them onto the map. Each of these represents a 10' x 10' shack or tent; if a die lands inside of one of the improvement buildings, nudge it just outside and then draw the habitation. Finally, on the die that rolls the highest value, place a large 10' x 10' heap: the supply storage for the village. If multiple dice all roll the same high value, pick the one closest to the middle of the map.

When creating the map, remember to add a palisade or ditch, if the PCs completed these improvements. These can help funnel the raiders through specific choke points during the fighting.

The raiders attack from the north. The PCs have a day's advance notice that a raiding party is headed their way, thanks to their scouts. PCs with powers like precognition may be able to glean information about the make-up of the raider party.

THE SAND MARCHES

The raiders' goal is simple: steal as many supplies as they can, and kill anyone who gets in the way. Raiders fight their way to the closest building and then sack it, generally by going in, stealing anything worthwhile inside (which takes three rounds), then setting fire to the building as they leave. Raiders who manage to enter and sack a specific improvement, such as a tavern or a foundry, destroy that improvement. It's removed from the settlement, and the PCs must rebuild it later, if they survive!

When this attack happens, the PCs start anywhere on the map that they want, and arrange their defenders as desired. Their goal is also simple: Repulse the raiders and defend the settlement. The PCs win if they kill or incapacitate the raiders, or if the raiders' morale breaks and they flee.

Defenders of the Settlement

In addition to the PCs and any of their followers, the settlement has a trained militia if the PCs completed that Security project. The militia has the following statistics:

Settlement militia, 20: AL varies; AC 10; MV 12"; HD 3; HP 14; THACO 18; # At 1; Dmg by weapon; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 65. Settlement militia fight unarmed or with rocks and sticks inflicting 1d2 damage. Their statistics improve if the PCs have completed various security projects:

Construct Armor: The militia has studded leather armor and shields, giving them AC 6.

Construct Weapons: The militia carries spears (damage S-M 1d6/L 1d8), slings (damage S-M 1d4/L 1d4), and clubs (damage S-M 1d6/L 1d3).

If the PCs didn't train a militia, then the village instead has 20 settlers with 1 HD and 5 hit points each, who do their best to fight with rocks and sticks and probably die in the attempt.

The Raiders

The raiders have the following statistics:

Settlement raiders, 40: AL varies; AC 6; MV 12"; HD 3; HP 14; THACO 18; # At 1; Dmg by weapon; SZ M; ML 14; XP Value 65. Raiders wear studded leather armor and carry medium shields and spears. They ride on trained kanks, with land-based riding proficiency of 12.

In addition, the raiders include a trio of leaders, who present specific problems for the PCs:

Syrena, settlement raider

warleader: AL LE; AC 4; MV 9"; HD fighter 9; HP 68; THACO 12; # At 3/2 (2/1 with two-handed sword); Dmg *iron two-handed sword* +1 S-M 1d10+4/L 3d6+4; SZ M; ML 14; XP Value 975. The warleader has a Strength of 17 (for +1 to attack and damage rolls, already included in the damage above) and a Constitution of 16, and rides a war-trained kank, like the other raiders, but with land-based riding proficiency of 15.

The warleader fights with an *iron two-handed sword* +1 from the saddle, making terrifying roaring noises from behind a full ancient steel helm over her mismatched armor: a nonmetal *brigandine coat* +2 (covers the torso, AC value 4 points), one plate mail arm (covers the left arm, AC value 1 point), and a pair of nonmetal *studded leather leggings* +1 (covers both legs, AC value 1 point; the magical defense bonus from the two pieces of armor isn't cumulative). She is a weapon specialist with the two-handed sword, giving her an additional +1 to attack rolls, +2 to damage (included above), and two attacks per round. She also carries a small pouch with one dose of *powder of the black veil* (see the *Tome of Magic*), which she uses to blind enemies who engage her in melee. She additionally wears a *ring of coolness* (see *Psionic Artifacts of Athas*), which helps keep her from overheating while wearing a metal helm and traveling the desert.

Syrena also carries a sheaf of six javelins (damage 1d6, +1 for Strength) in case she needs to dissuade a flying enemy or one using missile weapons.

The warleader focuses on cutting down individuals who put up stiff resistance. While the other raiders are looting and burning, she engages in melee where she can, knowing that she'll get her tribute of loot from the surviving raiders after they ride out.

Vyxx, settlement raider defiler: AL NE; AC 8; MV 12"; HD defiler 8; HP 20; THAC0 18; # At 1; Dmg *bone dagger* +1 S-M 1d4/L 1d3; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 975. The defiler wears *bracers of armor* AC 8 and a *ring of mind shielding*. The defiler's spell tools are a set of carefully-folded pieces of cloth, each 6" x 6", with woven patterns that create a hypnagogic effect when viewed while in a semi-trance state. A PC who can *read magic* can figure out how to decipher these with the spellweaving proficiency, or by being placed in a liminal state with hypnosis, or with a mind-expanding tea formula (easily created by any bard). The defiler's spell tools include *detect magic* and *read magic* in addition to the spells prepared.

The defiler comes prepared with *mirror image* and *protection from normal missiles*, and focuses on putting down multiple militia settlers with a *sleep* spell, using *fire burst* if PCs are dealing with a burning building, and casting *confusion* and *slow* on PCs who put up stiff resistance.

Wizard spells:

1. *fire burst**, *grease*, *shield*, *sleep*
2. *mirror image*, *spark shower***, *stinking cloud*
3. *protection from normal missiles*, *slow*, *vampiric touch*
4. *confusion*, *minor globe of invulnerability*

* See the *Tome of Magic* or *Wizard's Spell Compendium Vol. 2*.

** See the *Wizard's Spell Compendium Vol. 3*.

Yalen, settlement raider assassin:

AL NE; AC 4; MV 12"; HD bard 8; HP 28; THAC0 17; # At 1; Dmg *bone widow's knife* +1 S-M 1d4/L 1d4; SA poison; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 975. Yalen has a Dexterity of 18 and a Charisma of 17. The assassin serves as an entertainer and storyteller for the raider group, but also a striker who goes after high-priority soft targets, like PC spellcasters. The assassin uses type D poison (save or take 30 points of damage in 1–2 minutes, take 2d6 on successful save) on both the enchanted widow's knife and on a blowgun with six darts (don't forget the +2 bonus to missile attacks from her high Dexterity). She wears leather armor and has a small wooden box strapped to the kank's saddle: a *flatbox* (see the *Tome of Magic*), containing 12 days of rations, six full half-gallon waterskins, and eight additional doses of type D poison. The *flatbox* itself is trapped; the top and sides are artistically decorated with frescoes of kank riders, two of which hold secret triggers that must be held down or else the box releases a mist of type N poison in a small cloud (save or die in 1 minute, 25 points of damage on a successful save). This can, of course, be disabled by a rogue.

Remember the *flatbox's* tendency to explode when taken through extradimensional space, if your PCs are fond of psionic teleport or wormhole powers.

Settlement raider kanks: AL N; AC 5; MV 15"; HD 3; HP 14; THAC0 17; # At 1 or 2; Dmg 1d6 or 1d6/1d8; SA crush/poison; SZ L; ML 10; XP Value 175. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

The raiders use kanks for superior speed while attacking the village, but must dismount to enter a building in order to loot it. Note that if the PCs manage to kill or drive off the raiders and capture the kanks, they could use them for the Build a Kank Pen project.

Running the Battle

You have several options for running this battle; the choices included here are just suggestions. Use the systems that make the most sense to you and provide the most entertainment for your group.

BATTLESYSTEM: The *Dragon Kings* sourcebook includes BATTLESYSTEM statistics for various units. The settlement militia counts as untrained or trained infantry (depending upon whether the PCs completed the training project). The raiders use the light kank/crodlu infantry statistics.

Narrative: Describe the battle happening in the background, and PCs have a choice to engage enemy leaders or try to protect specific buildings from groups of raiders (five raiders at a time). Use normal tactical combat between the focus groups while the settlers and the raiders clash in the background. The battle's result depends on who wins in the major clashes between PCs, raider leaders, and groups of raiders.

Abstracted: Assign each stand of 5 settlers a d4, or a d6 if they have weapons or armor, or a d8 if they have both. Assign each stand of raiders a d8. Each round, the PCs and the raider leaders act individually, but the stands engage each other abstractly by rolling their dice against each other when two stands clash. Whichever side rolls higher reduces the opposing stand's die by one type (d8 becomes d6, d6 becomes d4); if the die was a d4 and it is reduced, then that stand is defeated. PCs attacking a stand automatically reduce the die by one type on a hit; an area-effect power that incapacitates the whole stand, like *sleep* or *fireball*, defeats it immediately. Settler stands move to engage raiders as directed by the PCs. Raider stands move to attack buildings, with each stand reducing a building to rubble and destroying it by attacking it.

Squash Match: If the PCs delayed on building up the settlement until after reaching level 10 as a warrior and acquiring followers, then this is a one-sided conflict. A fighter, gladiator, or ranger with followers can deploy them to fight the raiders, and the army completely wrecks the raider forces. Other PCs with followers—psionics and wizards—can use them during the fighting, but don't generate an automatic victory in this fashion.



Phaeton Asks Apollo to Drive the Sun Chariot—Smithsonian Collection

Aftermath of the Raid

Once the raid is over, tally up the losses. Each building that was looted and burned is gone. If it was a random tent or hut, it will be rebuilt, but if it was one of the settlement's improvements, like a tavern or foundry, then that improvement is destroyed and PCs must complete that project again if they want to rebuild it. If at least half the settlers died in the fighting and the PCs had finished the Train a Militia project, then that project is destroyed and they must complete it again to re-train a new militia. Note that losing projects can reduce the settlement's resource ratings.

If the PCs won: Award them experience and, of course, they get to keep the loot, weapons, and possibly mounts from the raiders. Some PCs prefer to capture leaders to interrogate them; there's little to learn. This band usually raids small southern caravans, and it is a nomadic group that camps for a few days in one place before moving on, subsisting on hunting and gathering combined with whatever they can steal. They heard rumors about the settlement and decided to take a shot.

If the PCs lost: If the PCs all died or fled, then the settlement is destroyed. Any surviving PCs can start rebuilding from scratch, as if starting anew with no resources. Alternatively, if the PCs have an outpost established, they can switch to the outpost as their new settlement, with its concomitant Low resource ratings in all three categories (Food & Water, Materials, Security). The outpost becomes the new principal settlement and the site for future projects; it starts with no projects completed. Note that most outposts cannot complete the Build a Trading Post project because they are too deep in dangerous territory for traders to come to them—the exception is the Blasted Spar in region D.

Endgame

The endgame starts when any PC reaches 18th level or more, or when an expedition reaches region P: The Shield and the City.

Shamiso, the sorcerer-queen of the hidden city of Babweru, takes notice of the PCs as their power becomes significant. With her clairsentient abilities, she predicts that they will be a problem, and she starts to move against them.

Remember that Shamiso is highly intelligent and has access to powerful divination magic and clairsentient psionic abilities. She never enters battle alone, and always tries to have complete information and foreknowledge before she engages a foe.

Shamiso's first move is to send a spy—a powerful psionist masquerading as a mundane refugee with an *earring of the forgettable face* (see Chapter Seven: New Magic, Monsters, and Psionics). The spy slips into the settlement along with a band of another 1d4+2 refugees, using powers like conceal thoughts to avoid detection, and blends in like any other waste-wanderer hoping for shelter. If undetected, the spy returns to Shamiso after one week, with an accurate assessment of the settlement and the PCs. If caught by PCs (which depends upon their actions and general level of suspicion), the spy surrenders immediately. The spy is not a combatant, but instead explains that they are only a harbinger of things to come, before suddenly dying of a massive cerebral hemorrhage. *Speak with dead* or similar powers can confirm via the spy's body that the spy was sent by a sorcerer-queen to learn more about the settlement, but the spy is evasive about the details, and gives the minimum information possible about their patron. ("Who sent you?" "A sorcerer-monarch." "Which one?" "One you haven't heard of.")

THE SAND MARCHES

The second phase of Shamiso's meddling involves sending creatures to interfere with the PCs' expeditions. During this stage, every time the PCs start an expedition, the first time that they camp, they are attacked by a creature conjured with *monster summoning VIII*. This harassment goes on for the next four expeditions (one month) as Shamiso uses this to try to pick off individual PCs who are weak, shake morale, and learn more about the PCs' tactics.

The third phase involves Shamiso deploying an *impostor* spell against the community (see *Dragon Kings*; this is the reverse of the psionic enchantment *masquerade*). The most influential PC in the community (usually the one with the highest Charisma, but it ultimately depends upon your group dynamics) becomes a pariah; the community rejects that PC and no longer sees them as a leader-figure or important pillar of the settlement. That PC can no longer oversee projects, does not gain food and water from the community at the start of expeditions, and cannot buy or sell items. Because most of the community will not help or socialize with the PC, downtime actions also become impossible (including training to gain levels). Note that the spell does not rely on giving *rational* explanations, so the settlers may simply seem to harass the PC for no reason. This lasts for three weeks. Shamiso hopes that this pushes the PC to leave the community and go elsewhere.

This spell is normally touch range; Shamiso uses her special psionic enchantment *invisible casting beyond margin* to launch the spell. (See Chapter Seven: New Magic, Monsters, and Psionics.)

The fourth stage requires some preparation, so it happens four weeks after stage three ends. Shamiso uses *invisible casting beyond margin* to cast *abrasion* at the settlement (see the *Dragon Kings* book). The very sand becomes a weapon, causing all the people to sink into it and to be torn to pieces. The buildings are unaffected—Shamiso has used this tactic in the past against other enemy settlements, such as the Fallen Foundry (in region H).

How the PCs defend the settlement is a scene you should play out before an expedition begins. One day, people start screaming as they sink down into the sand and it rips them apart like razors. How do the PCs save them? Obviously, the PCs need to *levitate* or *fly* to protect themselves, but there are dozens, perhaps hundreds, of settlers and followers to protect as well. Climbing onto buildings is one option, but there are unlikely to be enough rooftops to hold everyone for the duration of the *abrasion*, which lasts for 120 days.

The PCs must devise their own means of dealing with this crisis. In the short term, they need to rescue people and herd animals from the *abrasion* spell; then, they must figure out where to go, since the spell isn't ending any time soon. If they don't have a way to nullify the *abrasion*, their best option may be to evacuate everyone to one of their outposts and abandon the settlement. This, of course, pushes them back to starting over with Low resource levels and no settlement improvements. If they keep checking back at the site of the *abrasion*, they eventually find it has abated, and they can move people back in at that time—but is it worth the risk, if this could happen again?

Further aggression involves Shamiso confronting the PCs more directly. The sorcerer-queen may send a unit of her army with templars to face the PCs while they are away from home on an expedition, or she may wait for them to be “out in the wild” and then arrive via a psionic wormhole to wreak havoc on the whole settlement with *meteor swarms* and *death spells*. At this endgame stage, the PCs have earned the enmity of a sorcerer-queen, simply because they are too close and too powerful for her to stomach their continued existence. Diplomacy is probably impossible.

Note while this is going on that, if Shamiso's special psionic enchantment remains intact over Babweru, nobody will be able to remember the city—but, if she or her troops make an appearance outside, the PCs certainly remember that!

During these attacks, Shamiso also has her templars use magical and psionic scrying to keep an eye on the PCs' expeditions into the wastes. She pays special attention to magical items or books that they recover, and sends agents to try to steal anything that might help her with her research.

Finale

How the campaign ends is up to you and the PCs. Do the PCs confront and defeat Shamiso, thereby ending the threat? The other sorcerer-monarchs may now see them as dangerous power players, catapulting them into yet more confrontations. Do they move the settlement deeper into the wastes to avoid detection, hiding away like Shamiso and Oronis? They might develop a peaceful society for a time, but the PCs must constantly fight off dangerous monsters in the wastes to keep the settlement safe. Do they leave for distant lands like the Trembling Plains in the north, or decide to attack one of the other city-states? Such an adventure is beyond the scope of this campaign, but could provide new directions for high-level PCs who decide that they are too powerful to remain exiled to the wastes any longer.

The Low-Treasure Campaign

While *The Sand Marches* starts off as a survival game, PCs should quickly gather some food and, once they find a ruin or two, better weapons and tools. If you want to keep them lean and hungry, try this variant.

THE SAND MARCHES

Coins, gems, jewels, art objects:

Reduce the value of all monetary treasures to $\frac{1}{10}$. Thus, instead of finding ceramic pieces, the PCs find bits; instead of decorative pottery worth 100 cp, they find damaged pottery worth 10 cp.

Weapons and armor: Replace all metal weapons and tools with bone, stone, or obsidian (depending upon the item—a mining pick could be made of stone, a sword out of bone). For magical metal weapons, reduce the + rating by one. If it was a +1 weapon, it's now a nonmagical metal weapon. This means that enemies immune to nonmagical weapons are very dangerous, and the PCs may find themselves running away more often. Metal armor is always found damaged, and requires repairs costing 10% of its value. Magical armor has its bonus value reduced by one, just like magical weapons.

Charged items: All charged magical items have half as many charges (for example, the *wand of magic missiles* in the Blasted Spar has six charges instead of 12).

Adding Story Elements

The Sand Marches has a deliberately loose and minimalist story, as the story arises principally from the actions of the PCs and their explorations, as well as the randomization of what they find. If you want to create a tighter story, here's one way to do it—and, of course, you can always make your own story.

If you decide to create story links like this, you should also consider what happens if the PCs miss a story element, so that you can get them back on track. For instance, if they never find the secret room with the fordorran in the Half-Buried Road, they won't find the brass key to the Haunted Menhir's secret room. In such a case, have an NPC opine that the PCs might've missed something at the Half-Buried Road and they should go back to explore it again, or even just have an NPC show up with the key, having taken it after cutting through the rest of the ruin, and offer to sell it to the PCs.

Motema's Map

As the PCs settle in after a successful initial expedition and decide on their next course of action (one that didn't end with everyone dying), Motema reveals she has an incomplete map of the region, drawn by an explorer who lost it in Gulg along with several other such pieces (probably due to being arrested by the templars...). The map indicates the directions to the Half-Buried Road in region A. Roll for a random hex and place the ruin there; by following the map, the PCs can automatically locate the ruin.

Keys to the Kingdom

Once the PCs clear out the Half-Buried Road and find the brass key in the fordorran's hide (encounter #A5), they may ask around about it. While Motema has never seen anything like it, the Spike Birds have (region B or E, #7). If the PCs earn the friendship and trust of the tribe, or offer to pay (a few bolts of cloth or 100 cp is sufficient), the Spike Birds tell them that the design of the key's handle looks similar to some of the artistic facing left on the Haunted Menhir (region G, #9). Roll a random hex for the location of the Haunted Menhir. The Spike Birds describe how to get there, so the PCs can investigate the use of the brass key.

In addition, the Spike Birds can mention the Broken Cairn (region C, #10) and mark it on the PCs' map (roll for a random hex in the region). If the PCs investigate, this points them toward the Three Neighbors.

On to the Trade Network

With the signpost at the Broken Cairn, the PCs have a straight line to the village of Torax's Pit. If they follow the sign directly to region F, they find Torax's Pit in the first hex of that region they enter.

At Torax's Pit, the PCs can make connections leading them to the other two villages. In addition, the dwarf trader Filgram knows of the existence of the Blasted Spar (region D, #3) and its associated raider camp, as he has run away from the raiders before while out trading. He may offer to pay the PCs if they deal with the raiders, which gives them both the location of the Blasted Spar on their map, and a reason to go tangle with these foes and claim the ruins for themselves.

After meeting the NPCs of Torax's Pit, the PCs should learn the locations of the Vineyard and Calu Village.

The Villichi of the Vineyard, meanwhile, know Eleni, the psionist of Duskbreak Village, though they don't know she's a member of the Order—only that she is mentally powerful, moreso than she appears. The Villichi don't know how to get to Duskbreak Village (and indeed, don't even know that it exists), but they can mention that Eleni and some of her companions have come to trade in the past, from further south; she might give them more information. This should point the PCs to investigate region K and eventually find the village.

THE SAND MARCHES

The Final Pieces

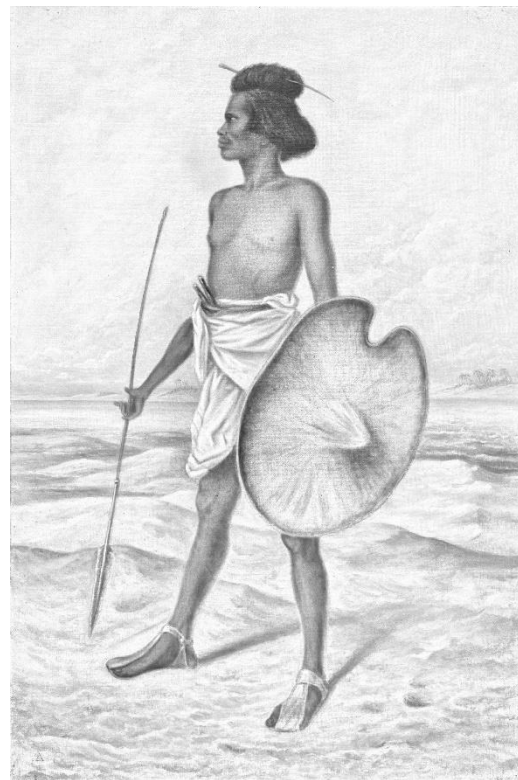
After the PCs meet Eleni at Duskbreak Village, and earn the villagers' trust, they're told of the existence of a tribe of nomadic exiles out in the furthest part of the wastes (region P). Eleni tells them there's a dangerous mountain in the salt flats that they can't miss, and that the exiles usually roam the flats not far from the mountain. Eleni doesn't know about Babweru, because the psionic enchantment keeps her from remembering it, but she knows that there's *something wrong* down there. This should give the PCs the final push to go investigate region P, meet the exiles, and learn the secret of Babweru.

The Reverse Campaign: Starting in the City-State of Babweru

Instead of starting at the edge of the desert and heading southeast, you could flip this campaign and start the PCs as inhabitants of the hidden city-state of Babweru. In this campaign, the PCs are citizens or lurkers living in the city, and to escape the tight constraints of that city's rigidly-controlled social structure and economy, they're looking for a way out.

Rather than building up a village, the PCs use Babweru as their base of operations; their first adventure is a meeting with exiles, who give them tokens to make them immune to the effects of the *dome of anonymity* protecting the city. Then, the exiles ask that the PCs head outside of the city to perform some task—killing a monster, meeting with an exile camp and delivering a message, picking up contraband and bringing it back, and so on.

As the PCs finish tasks and gain levels, the exiles offer them additional jobs and rewards. Each time, of course, they must sneak back into the city (probably through the Hollow Tunnels—see Chapter Five), avoid the notice of the templars, and conduct their business as if nothing is going on.



Nubian—Smithsonian Collection

Building Up the Resistance

After a successful mission, the PCs return and learn that the exiles were actually working with the resistance, who have a secret base in the caves and tunnels under the city! The resistance base builds up using projects just like the settlement in a normal campaign, as the PCs stock it with materials, train warriors, and try to make a self-sufficient, hidden community under the city with the eventual goal of overthrowing Queen Shamiso. But that will be a day long in coming. The exiles need the PCs to procure materials from outside the city in order to build up the resistance's supplies, because thefts from the city itself would be noticed. Eventually, the goal is for the resistance to have an impregnable base from which they can launch strikes against the templars and, someday, Queen Shamiso herself.

The Security rating in this case refers not only to physical security and secrecy, but the effectiveness of the resistance base's cover against psionic detection. High security is a necessity to shield against Queen Shamiso's formidable clairsentient powers.

The Leap

After exploring region P, the PCs discover the Shield mountain offers them tougher challenges and better rewards, but they won't be able to stand up to the encounters in neighboring regions O and L.

To get around this problem, the resistance employs a psionist to use the wormhole power (see *The Will and the Way*). The PCs need someone who can send thoughts or mindlink to let the resistance know when they are ready to come home (or the resistance can give them an empowered item to do so). When they head out for an expedition, the psionist uses the wormhole power to send the PCs to region J (roll for a random destination hex). From there, the PCs can engage in the exploration phase of the campaign, taking out minor foes to the northwest or working outward to keep hunting more dangerous monsters for their useful resources and treasure.

Alternatively, you can expand the map further to the southeast, east, and northeast, so the PCs have other regions to explore that fit their level of challenge.

The Reversed Finale

The finale of the reversed campaign comes when either the PCs confront the sorcerer-queen Shamiso with the intent of overthrowing her, or they decide to leave Babweru behind for good. Characters who start down the road of metamorphosis (as an avangion, dragon, elemental, or spirit of the land) might also try to destroy Shamiso's *dome of anonymity* spell, making Babweru vulnerable to the outside world once more. The PCs may seek out allies from abroad, such as the Veiled Alliance in another city, or they might just want to escape from Babweru and make their own new village, trading company, or raider band.

THE SAND MARCHES

In this formulation, once the PCs are 18th level and have left the city, Shamiso becomes aware that someone powerful is out in the world with knowledge of the location of her city, and she sets about to destroy them in order to protect the city's secrecy. Events then unfold as described for the endgame of the campaign.

Of course, the PCs might go somewhere that Shamiso can't reach, like Kurn or Saragar. If they do, they certainly have other challenges to handle!

Redemption?

Shamiso is an evil monarch, and has been so for centuries. Suffused with defiling power, she wants nothing more than to slowly continue her draconic transformation, in hopes of achieving apotheosis.

Yet all of her works and wiles have availed her naught. Her progress has stagnated. Her city is trapped in a cycle of paralysis.

As one of the Champions, Shamiso was a contemporary of Oronis. If she learns that Keltis is still alive, that he has changed himself and taken on a new path and a new identity, could she do the same?

Such a redemption arc is highly unlikely. The status quo suits Shamiso perfectly well at present. She is safely

insulated from the other sorcerer-monarchs and the Dragon. While her studies may be stalled out now, she is immortal and has all the time in the world to continue her work.

The best chance to change Shamiso is to make the current status quo untenable: destroy the psionic enchantment that protects her city, make Babweru ungovernable, or find a way to expose her once more to the Dragon or the other sorcerer-monarchs. Driven by the exigencies of such a threat, she has no choice but to abandon the current situation and change.

Even so, there is no guarantee that a change of tactics comes with a change of heart. Any such attempt would have to start from the proposition that it has something of value to offer her—as pragmatic as she is, she isn't open to anything else—because the inducements to change must target her current motivations. Only after she's pushed into finding another way is it *remotely possible* that she might start to consider abandoning her destructive, isolationist path for reasons that are more than opportunistic.

To truly change Shamiso, the PCs must find a way to answer the question:

How do you make a sorcerer-monarch care about other people?



Rue des Pyramides—Smithsonian Collection

Chapter Four: The Southern Wastes

The Sand Marches campaign takes place at the edge of the Southern Wastes, in the south of the Tablelands. To the southwest lies the Dead Lands, a lifeless realm of volcanic glass. To the east lies the Valley of Dust and Fire, the home of the Dragon and a realm of lava flows and volcanoes. The PCs will explore the area in between, heading through sands and badlands while searching for treasures or just the next day's food and water.

The overland map included in this campaign shows the southern wastes as a hex map. Each hex is 12 miles across from side to side (not from corner to corner), covering roughly 125 square miles of terrain. For most PCs, this is half of one normal 10-hour marching day, but the terrain and/or weather may make this take longer. Mounts can allow the PCs to move faster, and some PCs can also move at a higher rate of speed if they don't have to wait for their slower fellows.

Nearby Landmarks

You'll find this campaign's section just off the south edge of the Tablelands map far to the east, a little southeast of the Estuary of the Forked Tongue and south of the Crimson Monolith. This means that there are some nearby features outside of this area that your players might want to visit.

Last Drink

The tiny settlement of Last Drink (population: 20) hosts an oasis with a small patch of fertile land. This area is about 50 miles west of the settlement. While PCs familiar with the region might want to head there right away to get food and water, they likely have very little to trade, and the giants living there don't accept coin. Motema knows only that they're dangerous and are as likely to kill trespassers and take what they want as they are to trade.

A diplomatic mission to Last Drink is possible at a later time when the PCs have something worth trading.

The Crimson Monolith

This uncanny landmark is about 40 miles north of the settlement. Though it's used as a waypoint for strange visitors from afar, nobody has ever figured out how to travel using it, so it is of little use to the PCs until they've gained significant power as wizards and psionicists.

Regions

A *region* on the Sand Marches map consists of a contiguous area of terrain with similar characteristics. Regions are really conceits for gameplay: All the land in a given region uses the same encounter tables, has related types of climate and ecology, and most importantly, is of a shared level of difficulty.

Player characters discover regions by exploration, but learn about them through exposure. That is, once the PCs set out to the south beyond the known map, they don't know what to expect—what kind of monsters they'll face, what hazards they'll cross, or what treasures they'll find. After exploring a region and becoming familiar with it, they'll have an idea of how dangerous the area is, what they can find for survival, and whether they should avoid it or explore it.

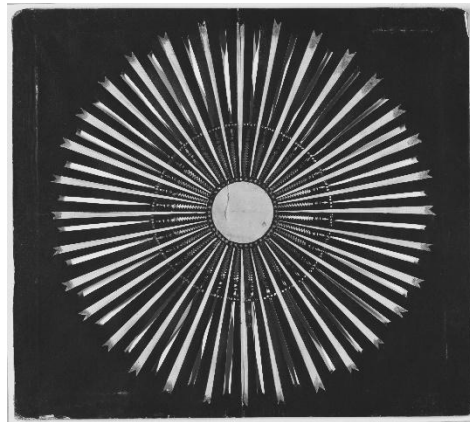
Each region has a name, and PCs can learn about those names through the use of nonweapon proficiencies like local history, or they can assign their own names as they map the region. Each region also has a letter assigned to it, so you can simply note "region A" on your map, for ease of reference.

You'll note that each region has six hexes in it. This means that if you need to randomly pick a hex, you can just assign a number to each hex in the region and roll 1d6. This lets you randomly place lairs, locations to which enemies have fled, destinations for off-target *teleport* spells, and so on.

Adventure Level: This is the typical level of encounters in the region. Most random encounters will provide some level of challenge for a party of characters at this level. Some encounters are outliers; a few will be easier, a few may be much harder.

The PCs won't know an area's adventure level, but through experience they'll discover the kinds of hazards in the region. Characters with proficiencies like danger sense may have a strong intuition that they have entered dangerous territory if the adventure level is above their own level. Characters with survival or tracking proficiency may find trail signs indicating some of the monsters in a region before encountering them, if they are careful in their exploration.

Expedition Bonus: The first time the PCs enter a region and survive an encounter there, they gain the listed expedition bonus for each party member. They gain this bonus again after they have visited every hex in a region.



Rising Sun—Smithsonian Collection

Predominant Terrain: The predominant terrain of a region aids in describing the landscape and indicates which table to use for defiling effects and use of the survival nonweapon proficiency. Remember as well to check the **DARK SUN** rules book for terrain costs for overland movement (in Chapter Fourteen: Time and Movement of the original boxed set *Rules Book*, or Chapter Eight: DM Material in the revised boxed set *Age of Heroes* book). See also Chapter Eleven of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for encounter distances.

Weather: The weather on Athas is usually unrelentingly hot, but some areas may have regional variations, or even specific unusual weather. When PCs enter a region, roll once for the current weather on the table presented for that region. Each day, roll 1d6; on a 1–2 shift down the table one step, on a 3–4 the weather remains the same, and on a 5–6 shift up the table one step. On a “shift down” while at the bottom of the table or “shift up” while at the top, reroll the weather state. This means that weather will tend to change gradually unless an encounter or magical effect is at work, with occasional swings.

Remember that as noted in *Earth, Air, Fire, and Water*, even on a clear day there's at least a 50% chance that a cloud is visible in the sky at any given time.

Encounters: Every region has a table of encounters. This encounter list scales from difficult encounters on low rolls to more unusual or helpful encounters on a high roll, with a possibility of a double encounter at the top. The frequency of encounters varies depending upon the region's terrain.

Some encounters have an encounter limit: each time the PCs fight a group of monsters, they reduce the number of monsters in the area. When they've defeated a number of groups equal to the encounter limit, that encounter no longer happens randomly. Encounter limits increase by one (up to the original value) for each week the PCs don't visit a particular region, as more monsters migrate into the region. This means that PCs can establish safe routes for traveling across the land, but if they leave an area and don't come back to it, monsters eventually take up residence in that spot again.

Some encounters are *unique*: These are a specific individual or unusual monster. When a unique encounter is defeated, it is gone; it never repopulates.

Some encounters are *unique locations*: when the PCs find one of these, the encounter is always in the same spot. Mark the encounter on the map. For instance, the PCs might find a ruin with a dungeon while exploring the ruddy badlands. Once they've found this place, it is always there. No hex can have more than one unique location—to find different places, the PCs must continue exploring.

Many encounters are places with special notes. These can be dungeons, ruins, lairs, unusual terrain pockets in the middle of the landscape, any sort of spot that is notable and probably dangerous. These locations may have special rules that override the usual region, such as a higher chance of random encounters, their own encounter table, special maps, or a different kind of local terrain.

If you roll a random encounter and the table indicates something that has already reached its limit, or a unique encounter that is already defeated, then there is *no encounter* instead.

Encounter Frequency: See the Frequency and Chance of Wilderness Encounters reference card in the *Ivory Triangle* boxed set. Each terrain lists the chance of an encounter (rolled on 1d10) and when to check for encounters at various times of day. Roll for an encounter check if the PCs are in a hex at the given time period, whether they are moving or encamped.

If you roll an encounter that indicates a location while the PCs are not moving, treat it as *no encounter*.

Varying Hit Points in Encounters: To keep monsters from feeling like they're all the same, you can quickly vary them a bit by increasing or decreasing their hit point total by an amount equal to their Hit Dice. This will give you a small range with some critters being slightly weaker and some slightly tougher.

Tracks, Signs, and Spoor: The *first time* that you roll a hostile monster encounter in a region beyond the starting region (the Dusky Sands), the PCs instead discover tracks, remains, an abandoned campsite, a derelict lair, or some other clues related to the monster rolled, rather than the monster itself. This can give the PCs some idea of what kinds of monsters reside in the region, if they have the right skills (such as the tracking nonweapon proficiency or the sensitivity to psychic impressions power). That, in turn, might tell them if the monsters in the region are too dangerous for them! Alternatively, the PCs might track the creature to hunt it down, if they have tracking proficiency. Assume that it's 4d6 hours ahead of the party. There's a 25% chance the tracks lead back to the creature's lair. If the creature is faster than the PCs and not in its lair, then they will not catch it; otherwise, they encounter it in the wild.

Treasures: Some monsters may have extraordinary random treasures. Large scorpions, for instance, have treasure type D, which can result in thousands of coins and some random magic items. To keep such treasures scaled appropriately to the party's level, you may choose to use the random dungeon parcel treasure listings in Chapter Six, based on the adventure level of the region. For instance, the aforementioned large scorpions might have a corpse of their latest prey, with a small quantity of supplies, a nonmetal weapon, and a piece of nonmetal armor.

THE SAND MARCHES

The Shield Mountain

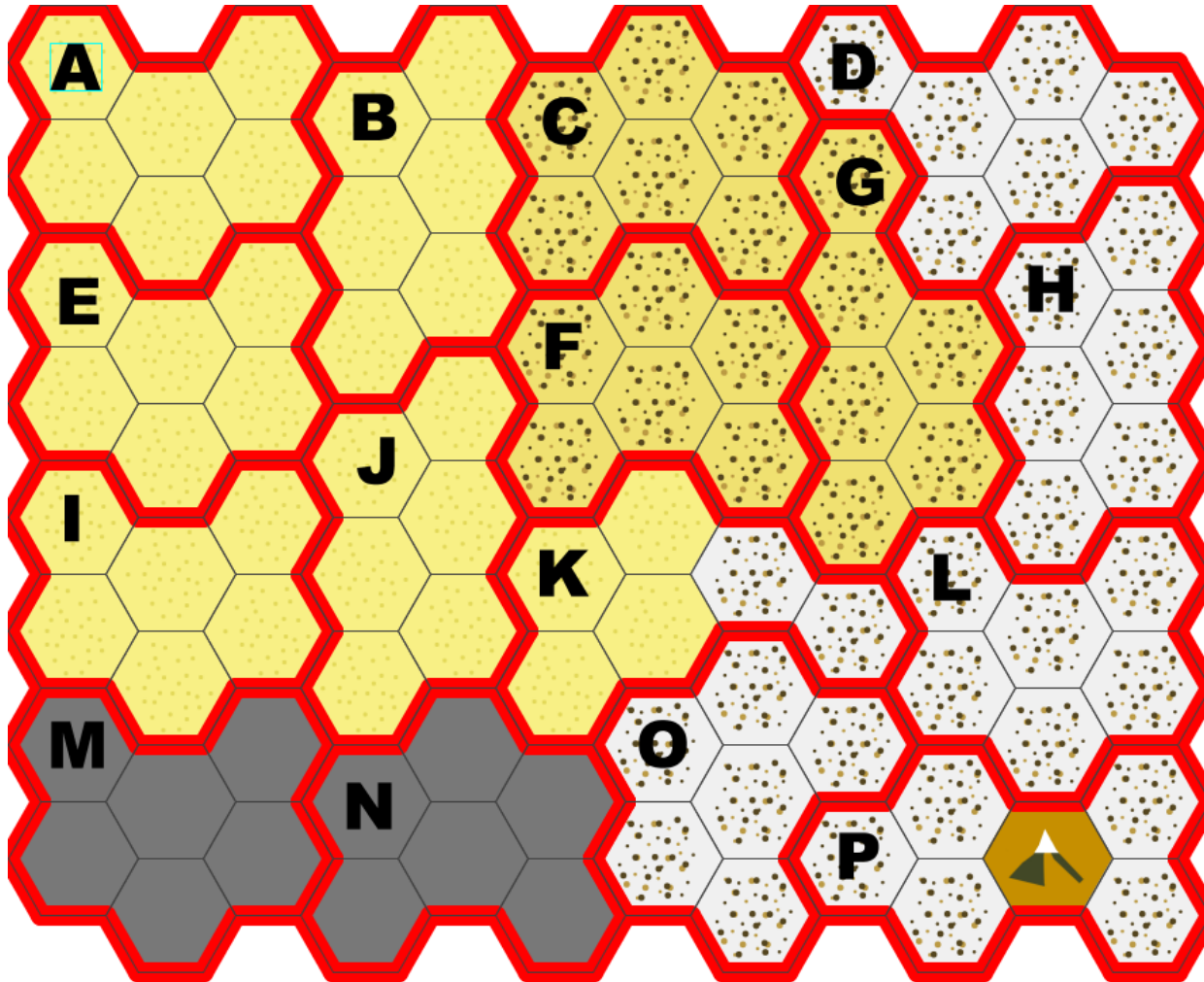
In the far southeast of the map is the Shield mountain, which rises some 15,000 feet above the salt flats. It's visible to a distance of four hexes on a clear day (anytime the PCs aren't in a sandstorm, a salt storm, or traveling at night).

Keep note of this so that the PCs spot it when they reach the appropriate part of the map—but it's also in very dangerous territory. Groups heading directly for it may bite off more than they can chew.

Trail Marking

The sandy wastes at the start of the campaign have a high chance to result in parties getting lost, even with navigation and direction sense proficiencies. PCs can use the trail marking proficiency to leave markers that they can use to find their way back. In addition, they can raise a flag at the starting settlement to give them a navigational aid that is visible from the two closest hexes (the hex marked 'A' on the southern wastes map, and the hex southeast of it).

The Southern Wastes Map



Regions

A: Dusky Sands (sandy wastes)	I: Black-Glass Ruins (sandy wastes)
B: Bloody Sands (sandy wastes)	J: Violet Wastes (sandy wastes)
C: Stumbling Stones (stony barrens)	K: Shifting Lands (sandy wastes/salt flats)
D: Hot Salts (salt flats)	L: Scouring Salts (salt flats)
E: Dotted Desert (sandy wastes)	M: Dead Lands (obsidian flats)
F: Three Neighbors (stony barrens)	N: Ebony Furnace (obsidian flats)
G: Slabs (stony barrens)	O: Mindburn Flats (salt flats)
H: Corroded Lands (salt flats)	P: The Shield and the City (salt flats)

Region A: The Dusky Sands

Adventure Level 3 · Expedition Bonus: 300 XP

Predominant Terrain: Sandy Wastes (⅓ overland movement speed).

Encounter distance 5d10×10 feet, limited by visibility. Rolling ground (20% chance of getting lost). Areas without a unique location are also featureless (+50%), except for the hex next to the settlement.

Weather:

1. Warm and cloudy
2. Warm and clear
3. Hot and clear
4. Hot and clear
5. Very hot and clear
6. Very hot and dusty (dust storms limit visibility to 100')

The settlement lies just to the north of the northwesternmost hex of the Dusky Sands.

The dusky sands are the first region that PCs explore, immediately to the south of the settlement. This region is rolling, tawny dunes, seemingly endless. It's easy to assume that nothing else lies beyond while traveling over these constant hills of sand. This area is close to the relative safety of the settlement itself, so few of the creatures in this region are truly dangerous to a team prepared for combat; this is a chance for the PCs to learn their team dynamics and to develop their sense of when to fight and when to run.

Story Beats: The Dusky Sands provide the PCs' first crack at exploration. They won't necessarily meet anyone here, but they'll learn to organize their travels and possibly discover some useful materials.

Perhaps more importantly, the PCs need to acquire food and water here. A lucky encounter with cacti or a muddy pool can provide useful edibles, and there are some local materials. Most encounters are with hungry wandering creatures, forcing the PCs to fight for their meals.

The *half-buried road* encounter location provides the first glimpse at some of the ruins in the region. A lone key in the depths of that small ruin yields dividends later as the PCs explore further abroad, and gives them a reason to keep searching for the lock to which it fits.

Encounters: A random encounter happens on a roll of 1 on 1d10. Check at 7–10 A.M., 7–10 P.M., and 3–6 A.M.

Die Roll (2d6)	Encounter	Encounter Limit
2	Lost corpse	Unique
3	Desiccated woods	2
4	Sinkhole	Unique location
5	Cactus stand, 2d6	4
6	Gorak herd, 5d6	2
7	Large scorpions, 1d4	—
8	Zhackal pack, 2d6	4
9	Spider cacti, 2d4	4
10	Jhakar pack, 2d4	2
11	Half-buried road	Unique location
12	Muddy pool and roll again	1

2. Lost corpse: The PCs stumble across a body seated in the sand; from a distance this appears to be someone meditating. The body has ragged ears, broken fingernails, and skin worn away by windblown sand. It appears to have died of exposure. The corpse is garbed in a very ragged robe and sandals, carrying two waterskins (one with a half-gallon of water in it, the other empty), a small pouch with one pound of dried erdlu jerky and tree nuts (one dried ration), and a small pouch with 3d4 ceramic pieces. The corpse additionally has one spear, one club, one obsidian hand axe, and a full suit of leather armor.

Tracking proficiency indicates the individual came from the northwest, several days ago. Healing or diagnosis proficiency finds that the individual died from heat exhaustion.

The body can be of any gender, and human or otherwise, at your discretion. For random determination, roll 1d6: 1, dwarf; 2, elf; 3, half-elf; 4–5, human; 6, mul.

3. Desiccated woods: Dead trees and brittle, dry brush cover a flat spot between dunes. The ground is dry and cracked. Once it may have had water, but now everything at the site has died.

If the PCs chop down the wood and carry it back to their settlement, it provides one unit of materials. The wood weighs a total of 250 lbs. Unless the PCs use magical or psionic powers, chopping down all of the wood takes enough time to roll for one additional encounter.

THE SAND MARCHES



The Desiccated Woods—Illus. by Federico Sohns

4. Sinkhole: The sand starts to move and shift beneath the feet of the party and then suddenly a great sinkhole opens like a maw in the desert! Have each PC make a saving throw vs. paralyzation. PCs with the tumbling proficiency may make a proficiency check instead. Those who succeed manage to race to the edge of the sinkhole before falling in; those who fail fall and land inside of the sinkhole, a 10' drop that causes 1d6 falling damage.

There is a chance that one creature is already trapped in the sinkhole; roll on the table below. Any creature already caught in the sinkhole is hostile and hungry.

Roll (1d6)	Creature in Sinkhole
1–3	None
4	1 gorak (see #6)
5	1 large scorpion (see #7)
6	1 zhackal (see #10)

5. Cactus stand: The PCs discover a small depression in the dunes with a clump of 2d6 closely-growing barrel cactus plants. The cacti are 6–7 feet tall and have flowers and fruits. PCs can pick the fruits for food and cut open the cacti and press the pulp for water. Each cactus harvested provides 1 pound of food and 1 gallon of water, but the character doing the harvesting suffers 1 point of damage from the long, sharp cactus barbs unless extraordinary precautions are taken (wearing metal gauntlets, using *telekinesis* to harvest the cacti at a distance, and so on). Note that from a distance they might be mistaken for spider cacti (see encounter #9).

6. Gorak herd, 5d6: Goraks forage across the dunes, digging in the sand for insects. The goraks are small and skittish, likely to either group up on an attacker or flee as a herd.

Gorak: AL N; AC 5; MV 15"; HD 1+1; HP 6; THAC0 19; # AT 3; Dmg 1d3/1d3/2d4; SA hypnotism; SZ S; ML 9; XP Value 120. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

7. Large scorpions, 1d4: Large scorpions prowl the dunes. With their tan or brown coloration, they are easy to miss from a distance or in the dark. They rush to hunt the PCs.

Scorpion, Large: AL N; AC 5; MV 9"; HD 2+2; HP 11; THAC0 19; # AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1; SA Poison sting (type A, +2 on save); SZ S; ML 8; XP Value 120. See *MC 1*.

8. Zhackal pack, 2d6: Zhackals lope across the sand in search of water and prey. When they catch sight of the PCs, they trail along and attack. They are cunning enough to follow the party and wait for an opportune moment to strike, such as when the party camps or after the party's injured by another encounter. With their high speed, they can easily back away and evade the party for a while, then sweep in to attack at a critical moment.

Remember that zhackals will wait until someone is badly injured or dying to attack, as they feed on the emotions of the dying. Zhackals use their psionic invisibility to sneak up on a target and use mindlink as needed to position themselves in an ambush formation, then unleash their psionic powers to kill the target.

A typical zhackal is a fairly tiny animal, weighing only 20 lbs. A single unmarred zhackal hide is worth 10 cp. A PC may collect this with a successful leatherworking or animal rending nonweapon proficiency check.

Zhackal: AL NE; AC 7; MV 18"; HD 1; HP 5; THAC0 19; # AT 1; Dmg 1d3; SA psionics; SD psionics; SZ T; ML 12; XP Value 120. The typical zhackal has 24 PSPs.

Zhackal pack leader: AL NE; AC 7; MV 18"; HD 1; HP 5; THAC0 19; # AT 1; Dmg 1d3; SA psionics; SD psionics; SZ T; ML 12; XP Value 175. The pack leader has 34 PSPs.

Zhackals have the powers contact, ego whip, invisibility, mind bar, and mindlink, and a power score of 12. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

9. Spider cacti, 2d4: Spider cacti grow in a patch. From a distance these appear to be large bright green barrel cacti with green and purple needles, but, when anything moves within 15' of them, they fire their sets of needles to paralyze and reel in the prey. Use a sandy wastes battle map, place one cactus in the center, then place the next one two squares away from the central cactus in a random direction, the next one three squares away in a random direction, and so on until all are placed.

If a spider cactus is defeated it can be tapped for a gallon of honey-like liquid that can serve as either food or water. Clever players will rely on missile attacks to defeat the cacti, then cut them open for liquid. Note that from a distance they might be mistaken for mundane barrel cacti (see #5, above).

Spider Cactus: AL N; AC 7; MV 0; HD 3; HP 14; THAC0 17; Dmg 1+; SA Needles cause paralysis; SZ M; ML 9; XP Value 270. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

10. Jhakar pack, 2d4: Jhakar cross the dunes in search of prey, following the scent of anything they can eat. Once they catch the scent of the PCs, they do not stop. They fight in a pack, all ganging up against whatever target they can reach first, and using their seizing bite to try to overbear the target and devour them.

Jhakar: AL N; AC 4; MV 15"; HD 2+3; HP 12; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SA seizing bite; SZ S; ML 11; XP Value 175. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

11. Half-buried road: The PCs stumble across a pair of broken stone pillars marking the sides of a half-buried road. Following the road for an hour leads them to a windswept ruin, where the sand has shifted to reveal a partially-covered stone building.

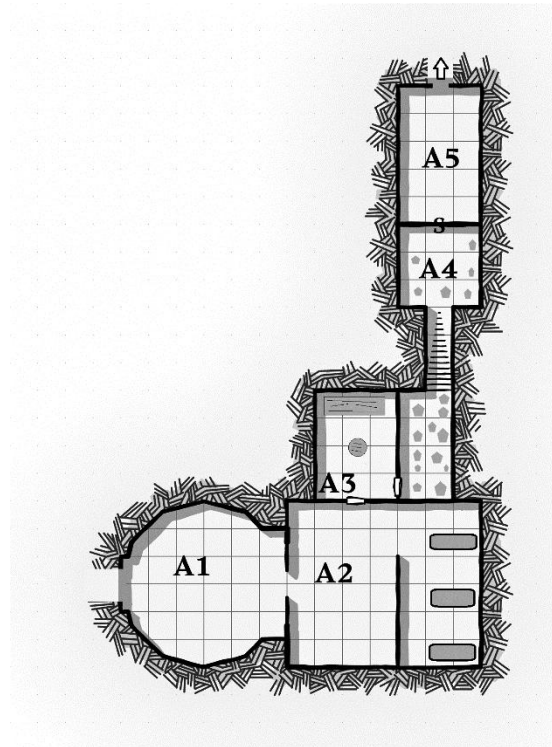
See the *Half-Buried Road* at the end of this section.

12. Muddy pool and roll again: The PCs stumble across a small muddy pool with 4d4 gallons of drinkable, if dirty, water in it. Roll again; if a creature is indicated, the creatures are encountered here at the watering hole. Otherwise, treat the result as *no encounter* (just the muddy pool with no creatures).

Player characters can fill their waterskins here for later, but the pool does not refill. (Experienced survivors may sop up the water in a cloth, then squeeze it into a waterskin to reduce the dirt.)

If the PCs return to this site later, they find that the shifting dunes have buried the hole, so they cannot use it again.

The Half-Buried Road



The party comes across a broken, partially-buried road revealed by the shifting sands. The road passes between two modest sand dunes, each about five feet high, from which protrude the shattered tops of stone columns, badly eroded and cracked. The movement of the dunes has revealed the remnants of several small stone structures, long hidden beneath the sand.

Walls here are made of pitted stone and vary from 6' to 10' high; ceilings are mostly destroyed, with only small amounts of material remaining over corners.

AI: Watchtower

The broken remnants of rough-hewn stone pillars poke through the tops of a pair of sand dunes. A badly-eroded paved road winds through them.

A short distance beyond the broken pillars stands a lonely watch tower with a small attached room. Both are made of rough stone blocks, with sand blown into cracks and pieces falling apart as the weather takes its inexorable toll. No door or curtain remains; the tower and its adjoining room are both open to the elements.

THE SAND MARCHES

The watchtower's attached guard room occasionally serves as shelter for wild animals from the dunes. There is a chance that one animal is resting in the shade of the guardhouse room; roll on the random encounter table for this region. If the result is a creature, then one creature of that type is in the room. Otherwise, there is *no encounter*.

A2: Barracks

This large chamber is separated by a stone wall in the middle. Ruined bedframes with no mattresses attest to this once being some kind of barracks. Each bed has a small footlocker, most of them staved in, rotted, or fallen to pieces.

Two scorpions nest under one of the rotted bedframes and launch angrily at the party if their bed or the footlocker next to it are disturbed. Otherwise, the room is devoid of anything but ruins and dust.

Scorpion, Large: AL N; AC 5; MV 9"; HD 2+2; HP 11; THACO 19; # AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1; SA Poison sting; SZ S; ML 8; XP Value 120. See *MC 1*.

A3: Derelict Kitchen

The pock-marked and eroded stone walls of this building give way to a dark interior in which sand piles a foot high in the doorway and arcs into the room beyond.

An ancient wooden table still stands in the center of the room, and a stone countertop is built into the far wall. To one side is a door into another, smaller room, which holds a variety of ceramic pots.

Obviously, no food survives in this former kitchen, and the wooden table is so rickety it collapses almost immediately if any weight is placed upon it. The stone countertop is scored with scratches from butchering and stained with faded blood.

The adjacent storeroom holds a dozen large ceramic jars, each a foot tall and with two handles, otherwise plain brown and unadorned. Half the jars are cracked and empty except for a few tiny bits of mold and rot, but half still have wax seals. Of those, three are filled with foul-smelling mold, while three have edible flour. Each intact jar holds four pounds of flour, which can be used to make flatbread or crackers by any PC with the cooking proficiency.

A swarm of rats lives in the storeroom. Once the room is disturbed the swarm comes racing out of holes in the walls and the broken jars. Treat the swarm as one creature that covers a 10'×10' area as follows:

Rat swarm: AL N; AC n/a; MV 15"; HD 4; HP 18; THAC0 n/a; # AT 1; Dmg 4; SA disease; SD swarm immunities; SZ L; ML 4; XP Value 175. See *MC 1*. The swarm automatically inflicts its damage to any character or creature within its bounds by crawling, biting, and scratching. Anyone taking damage from the swarm must make a saving throw vs. poison or contract a serious disease (bubonic plague). The swarm is immune to weapon damage and spells targeting individuals, but takes full damage from area attacks like flaming oil and spells that target an area such as *burning hands*. For each $\frac{1}{4}$ of its hit points lost, the swarm's damage decreases by 1 point. When all hit points are lost, the few remaining rats disperse back into cracks or flee into the desert. Note that area attacks launched in the storeroom may break the remaining sealed jars and spill out the flour, ruining it.

Once the rat swarm is dispersed and the party can search the storeroom, they find a narrow staircase behind the jars. This 5' wide staircase descends 15' into the basement (A4).

A4: Basement

The stairs descend into a cool basement. The walls are mostly intact, made of plaster over aging wood. In a few places dirt leaks through cracks in the walls. The smooth floor is flagged with thin pieces of stone, some of them cracked and partially shattered. A half-dozen 3' tall ceramic jugs are all that remains here.

The ceramic jugs, like the jars in the kitchen above, are plain and unadorned. Each jug has one large handle, has a capacity of four gallons, and weighs eight pounds. Three are unsealed; of these, two are empty, while one is a quarter full of rancid vinegar (one gallon). Three are sealed with wax. Of these, two are filled with water (full weight of jar and water being 40 pounds); one is filled with a modest wine that has become slightly sour (also four gallons, total weight 32 pounds as alcohol is somewhat lighter than water).

Of note, vinegar is useful as a food preservative for pickling.

Behind the jugs is a secret door. This is noticeable with the usual searching, but the chances to find it are 1 in 6 better because the damage to the plaster has made it easier to note (so 2 in 6 for most PCs).

THE SAND MARCHES

A5: Secret Bolt Hole

Aside from your own illumination, this room is completely dark. This room has cracked plastered walls but it's less finished than the other rooms, apparently serving as a hidden chamber for emergencies. The rough floor scrapes with small amounts of sand and occasional tiny bits of debris. An oily, nauseating stench fills the room.

Once a secret hiding place for emergency supplies and an escape route, this room is now the lair of a fordorran. With its low intelligence, the creature hides in here to sleep, then slinks out via the secret door to find prey. It often feeds on rats in the storage chamber, but sometimes wanders outside to look for more substantial food.

As usual for such creatures, the fordorran is irritable and unpredictable. Make a reaction check when the PCs first enter, to determine how it reacts. If hostile, it charges PCs and gores random targets; if the PCs retreat to use ranged attacks, it relies on its psionic powers to strike at them from a distance. If friendly, it may snuffle at the PCs and nuzzle them like an overlarge pet. Because of its unpredictability, make a new reaction check every time the PCs return to the room; it might be friendly to people that it fought before, or vice-versa.

Fordorran: AL CN; AC 4/0; MV 6"; HD 5; HP 23; THAC0 15; # AT 3; Dmg 1d6/1d6/2d4; SA Stench; SZ L; ML 6; XP Value 1,400. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

While the fordorran is a large, heavy creature, its meat is saturated with the pungent oil that gives it its signature stench, making it nearly inedible. The PCs need to use some kind of supernatural power or preparation technique to make it edible. If properly butchered, its armored plates can be used as materials to make a shield or a suit of scale or two suits of studded leather armor (assuming the appropriate proficiencies, of course).

The fordorran's treasure (1d6 gems) is embedded in its hide. In addition, the fordorran has a brass key (worth 500 cp for the metal alone!) embedded in its hide; this key opens a secret door in the Haunted Menhir (region G, room G4). PCs may question its utility since it doesn't open anything in the complex here, but wise PCs will hang onto it for future use, and powers like object reading might give some hints to its future utility.

At the far end of the bolt hole is an archway that enters a narrow escape tunnel. After a distance of 30', the tunnel comes to a blockage of fallen sand and rock. The PCs can clear this blockage with 6 person-hours of work; halve this duration if they have tools (such as picks and shovels), and count half-giants and muls as two people for purposes of work. Once cleared, the tunnel goes another 370' under the sands before it ends at a plastered-over wall that is cracked and holey. This plaster wall can be easily broken down to escape back into the desert outside.



Key—Smithsonian Collection

THE SAND MARCHES

Region B: The Bloody Sands

Adventure Level 4–6 · Expedition Bonus: 600 XP

Predominant Terrain: Sandy Wastes

($\frac{1}{3}$ overland movement speed).

Encounter distance 5d10×10 feet, limited by visibility. Rolling ground (20% chance of getting lost). Areas without a unique location are also featureless (+50%).

Weather:

1. Warm and cloudy
2. Warm and clear
3. Hot and clear
4. Hot and clear
5. Very hot and clear
6. Very hot and dusty (dust storms limit visibility to 100')

The Bloody Sands take their name from the dunes of red and orange sand covering rocky outcroppings long eroded by the wind. The ground here becomes rougher as the terrain heads east, eventually turning into stony barrens. To the south the sand darkens into odd violet patterns as it heads toward the Dead Lands.

Story Beats: The principal story element in this region is the camp of the Spike Birds elf tribe. Meeting this tribe can give the PCs an ally, a chance to trade, and a little extra knowledge of the surrounding area.

The poisoned oasis also provides the first likely opportunity for an outpost.

Encounters: A random encounter happens on a roll of 1 on 1d10. Check at 7–10 A.M., 7–10 P.M., and 3–6 A.M.

Die Roll (2d6)	Encounter	Encounter Limit
2	Tylor lair	Unique location
3	Hatori, lesser, 1d4+1	2
4	Rhaumbusun, 2	2
5	Poisoned oasis	Unique location
6	Bloodstone crag	Unique location
7	Elf camp	Unique
8	Tembo, 1	1
9	Random dungeon	2
10	Wezer hive	Unique location
11	Sand cactus, 1	2
12	Roll twice and combine	—

2. Tylor lair: Mark this location on the map. An adult tylor makes its lair in a sandy, rocky cave. The cave consists of three chambers, each 20' in diameter and roughly excavated by the tylor, with 20' long by 10' wide tunnels connecting each of them.

Tylors are very intelligent and, if the PCs score a good reaction roll, this one may prove talkative. It is evil, however, and will always try to get something out of the PCs in any exchange, either with threats or deals. This particular tylor calls himself Flenser. Flenser is probably the most dangerous creature in the Bloody Sands region, and he knows it. Conversely, he can tell the PCs about some of the other creatures of the region, since he does use this as his hunting grounds.

Remember that the tylor is an intelligent fighter, and that he has both defiling and elemental magic available. In addition, he has a 40-yard fear radius with a -3 penalty on saves, and he is immune to fire.

If the tylor takes a liking to the PCs—and they pay him with food and treasure—he may let them rest in his caves. If attacked, he defends his caves with fanatical morale, and he may chase PCs (with his high movement rate, they may not be able to escape).

Tylor: AL NE; AC -1; MV 15"; HD 5d10; HP 28; THAC0 15; # At 2; Dmg 1d10/1d20 (tail/bite); SD fire immunity; MR 5%; SZ L; ML 16; XP Value 10,000. This tylor knows the defiling spells *sleep*, *spider climb*, and *glitterdust*, and the elemental spells *hold person* and *pass without trace*. See MC 4: *Dragonlance Appendix*.

3. Hatori, lesser, 1d4+1: The first sign of trouble is a moving ridge coming through the sand as something burrows just below the surface. Upon coming close, the hatori surface to lunge at PCs with their toothy maws. Hatori are constantly hungry and omnivorous, and with Low intelligence they are smart enough to rush prey, take some bites, and flee if resistance proves tough. Lesser hatori can swallow halfling-sized opponents whole on a natural 20, which inflicts 1d12 damage per round and prevents escape unless the hatori dies or the victim has some means of teleportation. Hatori have undigested treasure (type U) in their stomachs: 90% chance of 3d8 gems and a 70% chance of one durable magic item.

Hatori, lesser: AL N; AC 2; MV 15"; HD 4; HP 18; THAC0 17; # At 2; Dmg 3d6/1d12; SA swallow whole; SZ L; ML 9; XP Value 420. See MC 4: *Dragonlance Appendix*.

4. Rhaumbusun, 2: The PCs encounter a mated pair of rhaumbusun lizards. These small reptiles are very weak but have a paralyzing gaze and rudimentary animal intelligence, about the level of a dog, and a very basic sort of clicking and hissing language. Since they are herbivores, they only attack if cornered, attacked themselves, or sickened. The rhaumbusun uses its paralyzing gaze (save vs. paralysis or be paralyzed for 3d4 turns) as its principal defense.

There is a 50% chance that the PCs encounter the rhaumbusuns at their lair, a small cave outcropping in a sandswept red rock cleft. There is a 60% chance of one egg (two pounds of food and water). Treasure is highly variable; roll on the table below.

1d4 Roll	Rhaumbusun Treasure
1-2	None
3	Type Q (1d6 gems)
4	Type R (2d8 silver, 1d4×10 gold, 3d6 gems)

Rhaumbusun: AL N; AC 6; MV 9"; HD 1+2; HP 7; THACO 19; # At 1; Dmg 1d3; SA gaze; SZ S; ML 12; XP Value 120. See MC 3: *Forgotten Realms Appendix I*.

5. Poisoned oasis: Mark this location on the map. The PCs discover a small oasis in the blood-red sands, with a pool of slightly brownish water some 15' in diameter and a small stand of rugged reeds and trees around it. Hidden in the bushes are 1-2 heway snakes. Using their poisonous slime, the heway have polluted the oasis' water, which they use to collect prey. Note that druid PCs who can identify fresh water recognizes that the water is not safe to drink or wash in.

Heway have Low intelligence and poor morale, so they typically wait and hide, then strike if prey drinks the water and becomes paralyzed. A creature drinking water poisoned by a heway must make a successful saving throw vs. poison at +2 or suffer 30 points damage within 3d6 minutes and be paralyzed for 1d6 hours. Creatures making their saving throws suffer 15 points of damage. The heway also rely on their hypnotic stare for defense (save vs. paralyzation or be hypnotized for 1d6 turns; hypnotized creatures can be enticed to follow the heway back into the bushes for devouring, or simply left behind as the heway flees).

Once the heway are defeated, the water at the oasis takes a week to clear and become palatable again. The oasis holds several hundred gallons of water, so it's not practical to *purify food & drink* on the entire oasis at once, though the PCs can refill their waterskins and then *purify food & drink* if they have the means.

Outpost: If the PCs defeat the heway, this oasis location can serve as the site of an outpost. Note that if the PCs defeat the heway but *don't* establish an outpost, the oasis attracts other monsters that use it as a feeding ground.

Heway: AL N; AC 7; MV 12" (swim 6"); HD 1+3; HP 8; THAC0 19; # At 1; Dmg 1d3; SA poison and hypnotic stare; SZ M; ML 6; XP Value 175. See *MC 13: Al-Qadim Appendix*.

6. Bloodstone Crag: Mark this location on the map. The PCs see a jutting peak of rock from a distance of five miles. The rock peak is deep red and easily visible as a landmark for miles around the dunes.

See *Bloodstone Crag* at the end of this section.

7. Elf camp: The PCs encounter a temporary elf encampment. The Spike Bird tribe counts this as part of their regular territorial route. The elves know this terrain well, and they move nomadically through the area, collecting food from the small animals and plants surviving in tiny nooks in the desert. Occasionally the elves head west or north to trade with other settlements, ranging as far afield as Balic in an annual migratory route. When the PCs find them, their camp is a small affair of lean-tos around a patch of muddy, cracked ground with a stand of barrel cacti (which the elves cut open and press to extract water) and a pair of palm trees (from which the elves harvest palm fronds and coconuts).

The elves remain encamped in this location for only three days, after which they move on; the PCs only meet them again later if a random encounter roll indicates it, or if they establish ties and arrange a later meeting.

How the elves respond to the PCs depends, of course, upon the PCs' approach and the relevant reaction roll. If the PCs attack immediately, the elves respond in kind, running away if they are clearly overmatched; if the PCs are friendly and the elves have a positive reaction roll, they invite the PCs to trade—from a safe distance, naturally.

If the PCs befriend the Spike Birds and earn their trust, award experience as if for defeating the tribe in combat: 2,345 xp.

The Spike Birds take their name from their tendency to set up camps in or near cactus stands; many of them are skilled in extracting water from cactus (since eating the pulp of raw cactus can cause severe digestive distress). They gladly trade with the PCs, though at first they ask exorbitant prices (starting at triple list price) for anything. They typically are willing to part with up to 5 gallons of water and 5 pounds of food, and they have a 25% chance of having available for trade any item with a value of 20 cp or less that the PCs request.

THE SAND MARCHES

In addition to their trade goods, the elves have some knowledge of the terrain. They can tell the PCs of the dangers of the Dead Lands far to the south (regions M and N), warning that the obsidian-covered expanse is home only to undead and that there is no food or water to be found there. They also mention they occasionally find old ruins in this region and the areas south and southeast (regions I and J), but warn that the sands shift and cover or reveal places often, so it is difficult to pin down any specific places. They do not go so far as to enter the rocky badlands to the east (regions C, F, and G), because the terrain is not conducive to running, and they avoid the salt flats because there is no water to be had and the monsters out there are more dangerous.

The Spike Birds number 20 adult elves. Their leader is Nen, a skilled nomad with a strong knowledge of desert survival and a cunning mind for taking advantage of unusual situations. She is counseled by Kalu, an air cleric who advises the group on weather and uses magic to heal injuries.

The rest of the tribe consists of:

- One 5th level psionist
- One 3rd level fighter
- 16 non-adventuring elves

Elf, Athasian: AL CN; AC 6 (10 unarmored); MV 12"; HD 1+1; HP 6; THAC0 19; # At 1; Dmg 1d2 or by weapon; SD surprise; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 35.

Elf Psionist 5: AL N; AC 6 (10 unarmored); MV 12"; HD 5; HP 18; THAC0 18; # At 1; Dmg 1d2 or by weapon; SA psionics; SD surprise; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 650. The psionist has 65 PSPs, a power score of 16, and the powers ballistic attack, body control, body equilibrium, cell adjustment, concentrate water, control sound, control wind, deflect, heightened senses, molecular manipulation, molecular rearrangement, project force, and telekinesis.

Elf Fighter 3: AL CN; AC 4 (10 unarmored); MV 12"; HD 3; HP 17; THAC0 18; # At 1; Dmg 1d2 or by weapon; SD surprise; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 65. The fighter wears studded leather armor and bears a bone tribal longsword (+1 bonus to attack rolls, offset by the -1 penalty for bone weapons) and a medium shield made of bone with hide stretched over it.

Nen, elf fighter (wilderness warrior) 5: AL N; AC 2 (6 unarmored); HD fighter 5; HP 26; THAC0 16; # At 1; Dmg by weapon +1; SD surprise; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 420.

Nen has a Strength score of 16, a Dexterity score of 19, and a Charisma score of 16.



Nen—Illus. by Kendal Gates

Nen is a charismatic adult elf woman in her 30s. She takes leadership of her tribe seriously and is skilled both at desert survival and at evaluating hazards. When she fights, she wears studded leather armor, bears a tribal bone longsword, and carries a medium shield made of bone with hide stretched over it; her Dexterity score of 18 also makes her hard to pin down in a fight. She also carries a bundle of six javelins for ranged combat.

Nen's primary short-term concerns involve finding food and water for her tribe while avoiding other raiders or monsters; her long-term concern is that she and her wife have no children (and are unlikely to), so she cannot follow elven tradition and pass on leadership of the tribe to an heir. She is considering simply declaring an heir, but doing so would cause a great deal of grumbling about "tradition." She wants to avoid fracturing the tribe over leadership, which isn't going to be a real issue for decades anyway, unless she meets a sudden and unexpected end (always a possibility on Athas).

Nen uses the wilderness warrior kit described in *The Complete Fighter's Handbook*; primarily this serves to indicate her survival skills, even though she's not a ranger.

Kalu, elf cleric (air shaman) 5: AL CN; AC 6 (8 unarmored); MV 12"; HD cleric 5; HP 23; THAC0 18; # At 1; Dmg by weapon; SA spells; SD surprise; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 650.

Priest spells:

1. *call upon faith*, *cure light wounds* ×2, *dispel fatigue**, *locate animals or plants*
2. *dust devil*, *hold person*, *idea*** , *steal breath*†
3. *wind servant*†

* See *Spells & Magic*.

** See the *Tome of Magic*.

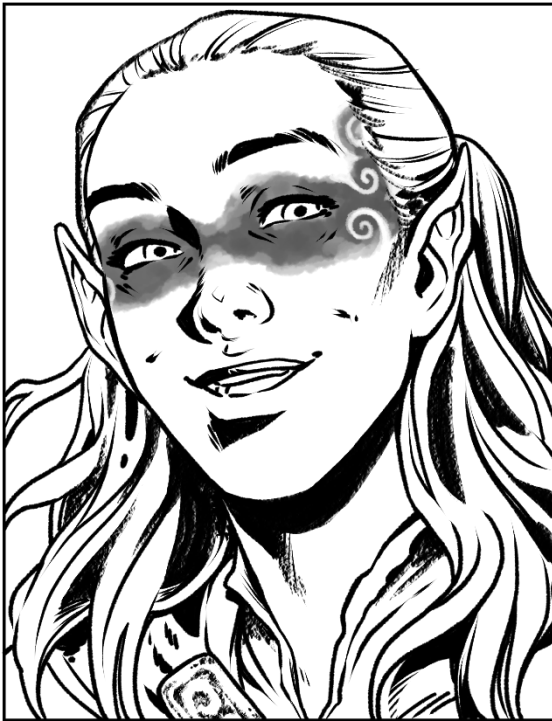
† See *Earth, Air, Fire, and Water*.

Kalu has a Wisdom score of 16.

THE SAND MARCHES

Kalu is an androgynous, agender elf who listens to the wind for spiritual advice and guidance. Kalu typically prepares spells for utility, healing, and escape. In combat, Kalu wears leather armor and fights with a sling or spear. Kalu works closely with Nen to guide the tribe, offering sound advice but often focusing on spiritual matters over pragmatic ones. Kalu will heal the PCs in exchange for money, services, or trade goods (or, if the PCs become trusted friends of the tribe, even for free).

Kalu uses the tribal shaman kit presented in *Earth, Air, Fire, and Water*.



Kalu—Illus. by Kendal Gates

Traveling with the Spike Birds. The PCs might ask to travel with the Spike Birds as they make their nomadic journey. The Spike Birds are highly suspicious of outsiders, and it takes many successful meetings and tests of trust for them to accept someone traveling along with their tribe. Even a friendly reaction doesn't guarantee that they'll let outsiders run along with them. They may find someone good company, even want to be friends, but still explain with all seriousness that the elf's life is not for those who weren't born to the tribe. Even elves of other tribes receive a solemn reminder that separate tribes do not mingle while running the deserts.

If the PCs do eventually win the trust of the Spike Birds, they still find they must keep up with the punishing running of the elves. Non-elves simply can't keep up without using a mount (about which the elves will give the character constant ribbing). Characters who fall behind are left in the dust, as the tribe can't wait up for those who can't keep the pace, even friends and family.

The Spike Birds make a broad circuit through the northwestern regions (A, B, and E), stopping occasionally at muddy ponds and cactus stands to hunt and resupply. Player characters who accompany them (or trail them) can learn the locations of these natural features and resources. This is another reason that the Spike Birds don't invite others to travel with them—they don't want their delicate resource sites disrupted and used up.

8. Tembo, 1: The PCs stumble across an always-angry tembo, searching for meaty prey. If it's daytime, the tembo is asleep under a thin layer of sand and might be missed if the PCs aren't exploring carefully. If the PCs are noisy, the tembo wakes up and uses chameleon power to wait for the PCs to pass so it can ambush them. At night, the tembo is hunting.

Remember that tembo have high intelligence and fanatical morale, so it's likely to try to ambush the PCs and then won't give up in its attempts to devour them. It uses its life-draining powers and level-draining bite to try to kill one target, then drags that target off in ectoplasmic form to devour elsewhere. The tembo won't flee and pursues PCs, and with its high movement rate, it is likely to outdistance them.

Player characters who slay the tembo and track back to its lair find a rocky outcropping with a small hollow made by the tembo's claws, with its treasure (type I: 30% chance of 1d6×100 silver, 10% chance of 1d10×10 gold, 65% chance of 2d6 gems, 15% chance of one magic item).

Tembo: AL CE; AC 4; MV 15"; HD 4; HP 18; THAC0 17; # At 5; Dmg 1d4 (×2)/1d6 (×2)/1d8; SA level drain; SD dodge missiles; SZ M; ML 20; XP Value 975. Tembo have 80 PSPs, a power score of 10, and the powers death field, life draining, shadow form, chameleon power, displacement, ectoplasmic form, heightened senses, and immovability. See the **DARK SUN** boxed set *Wanderer's Journal*.

9. Random dungeon: The shifting sands reveal a small buried ruin. Mark its location on the map. If the PCs return in the future there's a 75% chance that it's buried under the sand, so they won't be able to find it unless they use abilities like the spells *clairvoyance* or *locate object*, or psionic powers such as know course or radial navigation.

Use the random dungeon generator chapter to make the dungeon. Suit is ♠ Spades (ruins). Dungeon depth is 1d4+5 cards. Encounters should be from the level 4–6 table.

10. Wezer hive: Mark this location on the map. The PCs encounter an area of rocks sticking out of the sand, with holes in the red rock face. Domes of sand held in place by resin dot the surface, each about five feet across and anywhere from three to eight feet in height, with only one dome containing a door connecting to their tunnels.

Grab a handful of dice, one of them a d8 and the others d6s. The d8 represents the dome with an entrance, and the d6s represent other domes. Toss them on the map and connect them starting with the lowest roll to the next highest in order until all of them are connected by tunnels.

Tunnels in the wezer hive are about 4' high, so anyone taller than a dwarf or halfling takes a -2 penalty to attack and damage rolls in the tunnels, and half-giants take a -6 penalty.

THE SAND MARCHES

The domes are festooned inside with wax balls holding water (light colored) and honey (dark colored)—35 one-gallon water balls and 20 honey balls. Water balls are scattered throughout the hive, but the honey balls are found only attached to the ceiling of the brood chamber, which is the room with the highest d6 die roll when you generate the map.

The hive has 1d20×10 workers and 1d20 soldiers as well as one brood queen. The wezers function much like winged ants—workers dig tunnels, fetch water, and repair the colony, while soldiers find prey to bring back as food or for incubation of eggs. The brood mother remains in the brood chamber, where she implants eggs into prey brought to her by the soldiers.

If the PCs don't destroy the wezer colony at a strike, it hatches and replaces 1d10 workers and 1 soldier per week, and replace 1d10 balls of water and honey each week. If the brood queen is slain, the hive disperses once the PCs leave.

Worker wezer: AL N; AC 7; MV 6"; HD 2; HP 9; THAC0 19; # At 1; Dmg 1d4; SZ M; ML 11; XP Value 65.

Soldier wezer: AL N; AC 7; MV 6"; HD 2; HP 9; THAC0 19; # At 2; Dmg 1d4/1d4; SZ M; ML 11; XP Value 120.

Brood queen wezer: AL N; AC 4; MV 6"; HD 5; HP 22; THAC0 15; # At 2; Dmg 1d6/1d6; SA egg implant; SZ M; ML 11; XP Value 270.

See the **DARK SUN** boxed set adventure *A Little Knowledge* for the wezer.

11. Sand cactus, 1: As the PCs make their way across the sand, they find themselves stumbling over tiny needles sticking out of the fine surface of the dunes. Since there's only a 10% chance of spotting the needles while traveling (20% if the party's actively searching for them), there's a good chance that someone will step into the sand cactus' needles and become stung.

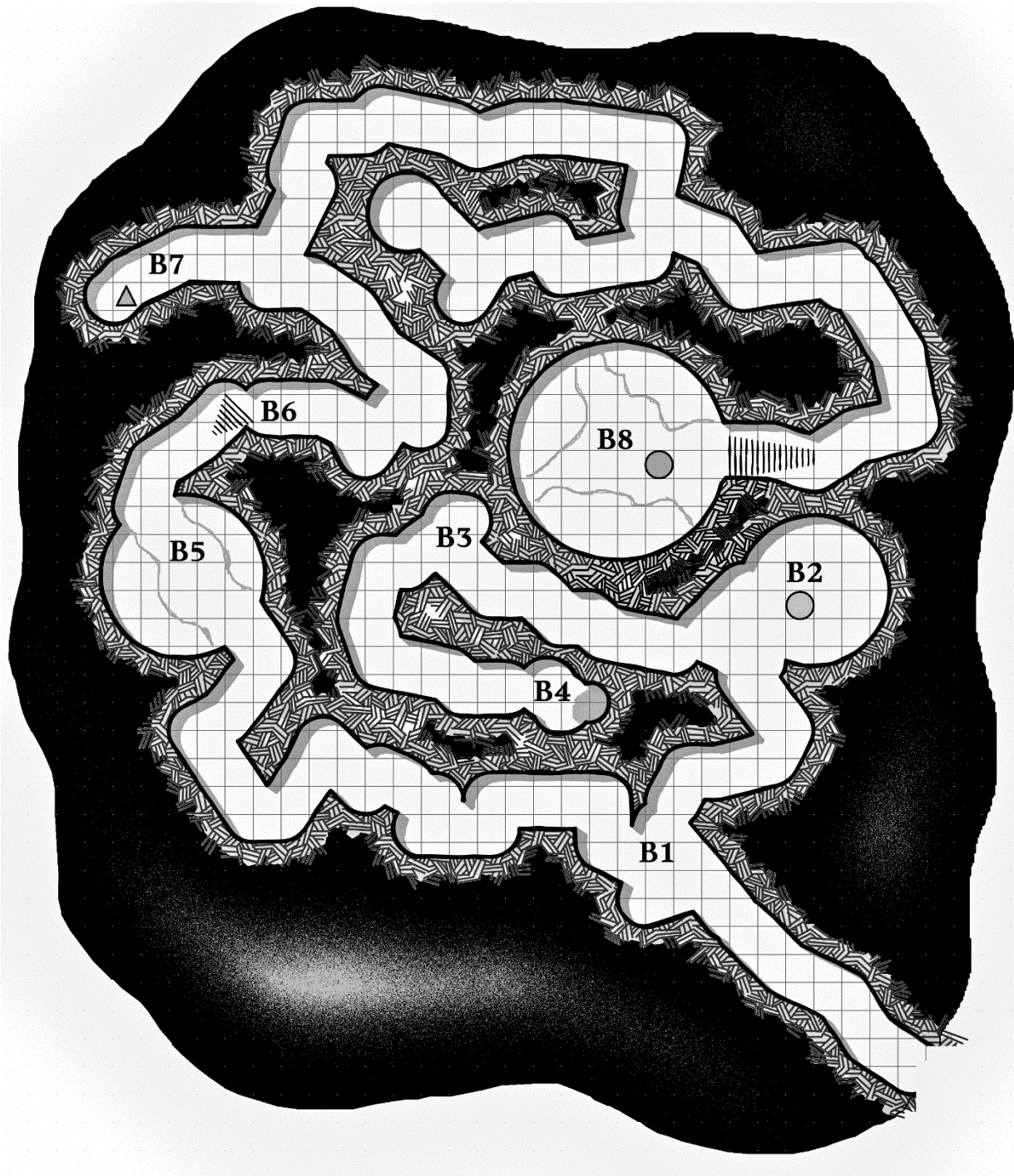
While the sand cactus can't chase PCs, it's still very dangerous, simply because any needle injury carries the risk of infection or blood drain. Cautious PCs retreat immediately; clever ones may think of a way to dig up the central body. Once the plant is destroyed, the PCs can harvest pulp from it. The cactus has about 250 lbs. of usable pulp, which needs to be filtered and cooked before it can be safely eaten; once prepared it has the consistency of slimy snot and a slightly bitter melon-like flavor.

This particular sand cactus is a small one, only 5 Hit Dice.

Sand cactus: AL N; AC 8 (body) or 3 (needles); MV special; HD 5; HP 22; THAC0 15; # At 1 per appendage; Dmg 1d3; SA blood drain; SD camouflage; SZ M; ML N/A; XP Value 975. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

12. Roll twice and combine: Roll twice on the table and combine both results. For instance, the PCs might stumble across the elf tribe in a war party fighting the tembo.

Bloodstone Crag



THE SAND MARCHES

Bloodstone Crag is roughly dome-shaped, made from deep red stone appearing like wet blood at sunset. The top is 40' above the rest of the dunes, and has a small amount of scrub grass and weedy brush on it—just enough to feed an erdlu or two. On the southeast side of the dome is an oval passage leading into a series of excavated caves inside the crag.

The excavations of Bloodstone Crag are home to a large colony of 19 hej-kin. Culturally, this group is insular and antagonistic; they are riven with internal disputes, but quickly unite to fight off outsiders. Player characters inside the hej-kin home find themselves quickly confronted (barring *invisibility* or *stealth*). By predilection, the hej-kin are inclined to hostile confrontation, though they might (on a positive reaction roll) simply tell trespassers to leave with all haste. They are not especially interested in trade, since they are self-sufficient; though they might try to bribe PCs to leave them alone, or purchase spells from a friendly preserver.

Hej-kin tunnels are rough-hewn, but not by the hej-kin—the creatures found the excavation a few years ago and moved into the area due to its abundant resources and useful spaces. The stone is hard enough to remain structurally sound even with 6' high ceilings.

The hej-kin tunnels are roughly split into two areas, with the split between them at the entrance (B1); to the right, rooms B2–B4, and to the left, a gradually ascending path leading to B6–B8. The steps leading up along the winding left path are all rough-hewn and rise about 15' over a fairly short distance, making for a steep climb.

Note that characters over 6' tall must duck to fit in the caves. This certainly provokes claustrophobia for aarakocra, and half-giants must kneel and crawl. In addition, light is limited. The hej-kin rely on their heightened senses powers when in the dark, and they know their tunnels very well indeed. Using their stone phasing powers, they can easily pop out from one tunnel to another to ambush invading PCs or flee from one-sided fights.

Hej-kin tactics: If hostilities erupt at the entrance, one of the hej-kin at B1 phases through the rock to the north alert the others at B2 and then keep going through the rock to B8 to tell the leaders, who then organize a defense. The hej-kin make choke points at narrow hallways, using their stone phasing abilities to ambush the PCs. Their goal is to inflict losses that cause the PCs to retreat. Hej-kin coming as reinforcements activate their biofeedback power before entering combat.

If the PCs manage to penetrate the warrens beyond B1, the hej-kin know they are in significant danger, and do their best to group up and harry the PCs until the party retreats. If morale fails, the hej-kin flee through the rock to head up and congregate at B8—unless the leaders are already dead, in which case they flee deeper into the earth and do not return.

Typical hej-kin share these statistics:

Hej-kin: AL NE; AC 10; MV 6"; HD 2; HP 9; THACO 19; # At 2; Dmg 1d4/1d4; SA psionics; SD psionics, rock phasing; SZ S; ML 9; XP Value 65. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*. Hej-kin have 80 PSPs with a power score of 14 and the psionic powers biofeedback, body equilibrium, contact, heightened senses, intellect fortress, life draining, mindlink, post-hypnotic suggestion, psychic crush, send thoughts, and thought shield.

Individual hej-kin carry their personal treasure (type O) on their persons: 1d3×10 bits and 1d2×10 ceramic pieces. (Vary the exact values slightly so that not every hej-kin carries multiples of 10, while you don't have to roll ten dice for each batch of coins.)

Leaders have their statistics listed in their encounter area (B8).

Mining the crag: The crag presents a large quantity of useful stone—tons of it. Expending one unit of security allows the PCs to gain two units of materials from the constant supply of stone, but only after the area is cleared. Treat this as a special settlement project requiring oversight by a PC with mining or stonemasonry proficiency.

Outpost: While Bloodstone Crag does have a small source of food and water, the cramped caves aren't very navigable to most surface-dwelling humanoids. Turning Bloodstone Crag into an outpost is possible by building extra structures, fences, and support buildings outside of the caves, which takes one extra unit of Materials.

BI: Guarded Entry

A short distance down the rocky tunnel, a small amount of smoky light illuminates a rough intersection. Spurs head to the left and to the right. Small, shadowy figures lurk in the dim torchlight.

The hej-kin keep a lit torch on the wall spur just north of the B1 key on the map. At all times, three hej-kin keep watch at this location. They switch off every few hours, one hej-kin coming from elsewhere and replacing one of the guards, and bringing more torches. A pile of a dozen torches lies haphazardly on the ground beneath the lit torch.

Hej-kin, 3, as described previously.

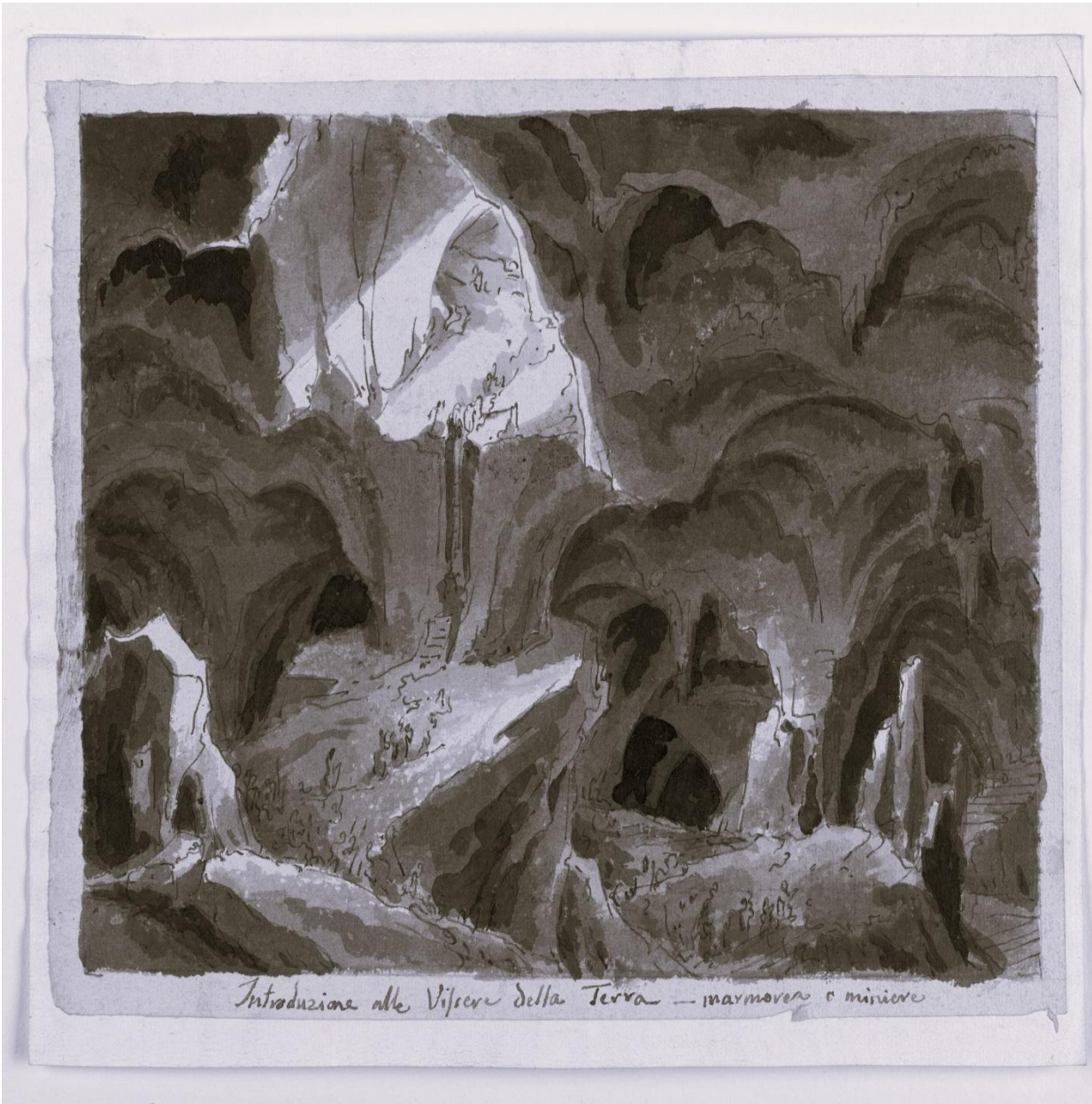
THE SAND MARCHES

B2: Communal Space

The presence of small matted furs and scattered pieces of dried dung for cooking fires indicates this is some kind of communal space for sleeping and eating. Of course, that means it's almost always inhabited.

The communal space is a place for cooking and sleeping. Privacy is limited—hej-kin who wish to engage in private business usually phase into small pockets of rock that aren't connected to the other tunnels.

Hej-kin, 8, as described previously.



Stage Design, Caves—Smithsonian Collection

B3: Swampy Stones

A small corner in a tunnel bend here has layers of muddy ground and small stones scattered about thick, reddish dirt. Mushrooms and odd subterranean mosses grow in large quantities over the wet ground, up the walls, and along the terraces formed by the stones and mud. Chunky bits of rotten flesh provide compost for this subterranean agriculture.

The hej-kin engage in limited agriculture, using subterranean fungi and plants to supplement their diets. Animals wandering near the crag are also caught and added to meals, with the offal used as compost. Player characters find the stench distasteful, and the mushrooms and mosses inedible to non-hej-kin palates. With their natural claws, the hej-kin have little need for tools for agriculture.

If the hej-kin are not in combat, there is usually one from room B2 here tending to the gardens.

B4: Muddy Pool

A muddy pool fills the furthest corner of this hallway, and the floor descends slightly to meet it. A pair of empty waterskins lie next to it.

This is the hej-kin's water source, and the empty waterskins are used either to carry water to other locations in the lair or for watering the crops at B3. The hej-kin know that their water source is crucial to their continued survival. If they have reason to suspect the PCs might try to poison it or make it inaccessible, they move to cut off access *en masse*. If the pool is covered over, dried up magically, or otherwise destroyed, the surviving hej-kin migrate out of the crag and head east, looking for some new place to live among the stones (and likely dying along the way).

B5: Family Spaces

Leather curtains stretched across opposite sides of this room make private space for small families. The old scents of cooking, refuse, and dirt combine in an earthy undertone.

Two hej-kin families use this cavern as their home, with one family on the left side and the other family on the right.

Hej-kin, 5, as described previously.

B6: Sharp Stairs

A crudely-cut staircase rises very sharply here, practically like a set of handholds carved into the rock.

THE SAND MARCHES

Any PC who can fit into the tunnels can climb the sharp stairs, though it takes a bit of effort—no roll is required. At the very top of the stairs is an invisible *glyph of warding* that, when triggered, explodes in a shower of stones inflicting 5d4 concussive damage to everyone on the stairs, and knocks the PCs off the stairs for a fall inflicting another 1d6 damage. A successful saving throw halves the blast damage and lets the PC continue hanging on to the steps; a successful tumbling proficiency check negates the falling damage. Thieves who succeed in a find traps check recognize this by the telltale scent of the incense used to cast the *glyph*. The *glyph* is keyed to trigger only for non-hej-kin.

B7: The Runestone

At the far end of this tunnel is a squat cylindrical stone, 4' high and 6' wide. The stone is covered in strange and haphazard carved runes.

This runestone serves as the spell book for the hej-kin preserver (see B8). Player characters might not immediately recognize this as magical script unless they use the spellweaving proficiency (*Defilers & Preservers: The Wizards of Athas*). PCs who cast *read magic* decipher the following wizard spells:

1: *detect magic*, *fist of stone**, *light*, *read magic*, *spook*

2: *Maximillian's earthen grasp**, *strength*

* See the *Tome of Magic*. If you don't have that resource, substitute a different spell of your choice.

B8: The Leaders' Chambers

The large room at the top of the crag interior holds three distinct spaces within—delineated by piled rocks and leather curtains. In the middle of the chamber is a low table with a ceramic lamp, burning some kind of oil.

The three hej-kin leaders reside here. The central table serves as their place of meeting, to discuss important matters of defense and resource use.

If the hej-kin caves are seriously threatened, the survivors retreat here to make a final defense with their leaders.

The leaders' treasure consists of 261 ceramic pieces, scattered between containers in their personal quarters, and a set of elegant pottery bowls and mugs worth 100 cp along with a medium *preservation jug* (see Chapter Seven: New Magic, Monsters, and Psionics) currently holding 6 rations worth of grain.

Hej-kin warrior, 1: AL NE; AC 10; HD 4; HP 18; THAC0 17; # At 2; Dmg 1d4/1d4; SA psionics; SD psionics, rock phasing; SZ S; ML 9; XP Value 175. The hej-kin warrior has the same psionic abilities as its compatriots.

Hej-kin earth cleric, 1: AL NE; AC 10; HD 4; HP 18; THAC0 17; # At 2; Dmg 1d4/1d4; SA psionics, spells; SD psionics, rock phasing; SZ S; ML 9; XP Value 420. The hej-kin cleric has the same psionic abilities as its compatriots.

Priest spells:

1. *cure light wounds, magic stone, strength of stone**
2. *barkskin, dust devil*

* See *Spells & Magic*. If you don't have that book, substitute a different spell of your choice.

The cleric has Major access to the Earth sphere and Minor access to the sphere of Cosmos, and changes spells as needed as the situation develop.

Hej-kin preserver, 1: AL NE; AC 10; HD 4; HP 18; THAC0 17; # At 2; Dmg 1d4/1d4; SA psionics, spells; SD psionics, rock phasing; SZ S; ML 9; XP Value 420. The hej-kin preserver has the same psionic abilities as its compatriots.

Wizard spells:

1. *fist of stone*, light, spook*
2. *Maximillian's earthen grasp*, strength*

* See the *Tome of Magic*. If you don't have that book, substitute a different spell of your choice.

The preserver has access to the wizard spells scribed on the runestone (B7), and changes them as needed, time permitting.

Region C: The Stumbling Stones

Adventure Level 4–6 · Expedition Bonus: 600 XP

Predominant Terrain: Stony Barrens (½ overland movement speed). Encounter distance 5d10×10 feet, limited by visibility. Open, flat ground (10% chance of getting lost).

Weather:

1. Warm and cloudy
2. Warm and clear
3. Hot and clear
4. Hot and clear
5. Very hot and clear
6. Very hot and dusty (dust storms limit visibility to 100')

The western sands give way to hard, flat ground covered in small gray and brown stones. Scrubby ground cover sometimes appears, along with the occasional lone tree. Wildlife is more common here—once the PCs reach this area, regular hunting becomes possible for small game such as ground voles and lizards. Occasional large rocks sometimes hold pockets of rare rainwater, and creatures evade the daytime heat in shadowed crags.

The stones present small tripping hazards, but are easier to navigate than the deep dunes of the sandy regions. It's rare to find stones larger than the size of a human head. Cacti and weeds, however, are plentiful.

In the far eastern part of the region, the air becomes acrid and the ground turns cracked.

Story Beats: The Stumbling Stones region is home to a variety of creatures, many of them predatory. The principal story element is at the Broken Cairns, where the PCs find clues pointing them toward region F, the Three Neighbors.

Encounters: A random encounter happens on a roll of 1–3 on 1d10. Check at 7–10 P.M.

Die Roll (2d6)	Encounter	Encounter Limit
2	Dune runners, 1d4	1
3	Crystal spider, 1	1
4	Hunting cactus, 1d2	2
5	Kes'trekel, 3d10	1
6	B'rohlg, 1d12	4
7	Brambleweeds, d%×10	—
8	The Tall Purple Grass	Unique location
9	Rock cactus, 1d10	2
10	The Broken Cairns	Unique location
11	Heavy crodlu, 1d6	2
12	Roll twice and combine	—

2. Dune runners, 1d4: The elves of the Spike Birds—and occasionally, other tribes—have their share of losses while crossing the desert. The Spike Birds rarely come to this region now, and the dune runners, undead remnants of their tribe, are one of the reasons why.

These dune runners were once typical elven tribal members, but their humble roots make them no less dangerous, thanks to the dominating aura of their compulsion to run. Remember, elf PCs gain a Wisdom check to realize what these are at first sight.

The dune runners have no treasure, but wear the stretched and dried remnants of leather armor.

Dune runner: AL NE; AC 8; MV 18"; HD 1; HP 5; THAC0 20; # At 1; Dmg 1; SA psionics; SZ M; ML 16; XP Value 65. Dune runners have 100 PSPs and the powers attraction, contact, mass domination, life detection, mind blank, mindlink, and tower of iron will, with a power score of 12. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

3. Crystal spider, 1: In a rough patch of rocks, a crystal spider spins a web to catch prey. It will gladly take humanoid blood instead of animal. At night, the web is a cutting hazard; during the day, the light reflecting from it may draw curious investigation, and the spider attacks when it notices someone approaching.

The crystal spider's treasure is incidental (type Q×2): 2d6 random gems—cast-off deposits of its crystal biology. Due to its high speed, the crystal spider may simply flee if its morale fails, rather than fighting to the death.

Crystal spider: AL N; AC 2; MV 24"; HD 4; HP 18; THACO 17; # At 3; Dmg 2d4/2d4/1d4; SA poison, grab, light beam; SZ L; ML 14; XP Value 1,400. Crystal spiders have 33 PSPs and the powers control light and inertial barrier with a power score of 16. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

4. Hunting cactus, 1d2: These highly-intelligent pale green cacti look like a potential source of food and water, until someone gets close enough to realize that the cacti are hunting them. At night, the cactus is generally asleep; during the day, it senses nearby prey with its psionic abilities and attacks. Unless it is continually threatened, the cactus stops fighting after it kills one creature (so that it has a food source). A hunting cactus suffering significant damage uses its aversion power to try to force its attackers to leave it alone.

Note that the hunting cactus is not edible. Its flesh is woody and pliable but also stiff and leathery, and unlike other cacti it does not have accessible reserves of water.

Hunting cactus, 1d2: AL N; AC 6; MV 9"; HD 5+5; HP 29; THACO 15; # At 10 or 1; Dmg 1d3 or 1d6; SA poison; SZ S; ML 13; XP Value 1,400. The hunting cactus has 25 PSPs and the powers aversion, contact, inflict pain, life detection, mind blank, mind thrust, psionic sense, see sound, and ultrablast, and a power score of 8. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

5. Kes'trekel, 3d10: A flock of small carrion-eating avians circles over a likely spot of prey. The kes'trekel have only animal intelligence, so they may follow PCs for a while hoping for a chance treat (50%), they might be wheeling and playing around their nests (25%), or they might already be feasting upon the picked-over remnants of an animal carcass (25%, with nothing usable left for the PCs). The kes'trekel may fight to keep their food, or even attack to finish off a wounded PC, but their weak morale means the flock is easy to disperse if a few are injured or killed.

The main threat the kes'trekel present is in a flock attack, if the number of birds encountered is large enough (five or more).

If encountered at their nests, there are 1d4 eggs for every two birds in the flock, and every bird gains a +4 bonus to morale. One egg counts as ½ pound of food (a half ration for a Medium-sized person) and keeps for two weeks.

Kes'trekel: AL N; AC 6; MV 1", FI 24" (C); HD 1+2; HP 7; THAC0 19; # At 1; Dmg 1d4+1; SA flock attack; SZ S; ML 6 (+1 per two kes'trekel over five); XP Value 35. A flock of 20 or more gains the aversion psionic power with a power score of 10, but they only use this to make creatures leave their nests alone. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

6. B'rohng, 1d12: A lone b'rohng may just be a wanderer or hunter; a group of them usually indicate either a hunting party or a temporary camp. These four-armed 15' tall orange giants are always on the lookout for food, moving as nomadic groups with very simple stone and leather tools and clothes. Though they can communicate with signs and grunts, they lack speech and their limited intellect means trading or complicated bargains are largely impossible ventures. How the b'rohng react to the PCs depends upon a reaction roll.

If only one b'rohng is encountered, there is a 20% chance it is a renegade b'rohng that escaped from gladiatorial captivity. In such a case, the creature wears armor made of bone and chitin (AC 1d3+2) and wields a hand axe made of metal (25%) or obsidian (75%). The renegade is otherwise equivalent to other b'rohng except for having an XP Value of 975.

If six or more b'rohng are encountered, one is a leader. B'rohng leaders use limited tactics.

B'rohng carry their treasure (types J and K) with them, along with rudimentary hide clothes and their huge spears and clubs (too large even for a half-giant to use). Their treasure thus amounts to a mere 2d6 bits and 2d6 ceramic pieces each, but much of this value is instead in simple tools or food.

B'rohng: AL N; AC 7; MV 15"; HD 5+3; HP 26; THAC0 15; # At 4; Dmg 1d8+10; SA throw rock; SZ H; ML 10; XP Value 650.

B'rohng leader: AL N; AC 7; MV 15"; HD 6+3; HP 30; THAC0 13; # At 4; Dmg 1d8+10; SZ H; ML 10; XP Value 975.

See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

7. Brambleweeds, d% \times 100: A thick, tangled mass of thorny vines occludes a wide area of the barrens. The PCs must go around it to proceed. While they might be tempted to try to cut down the brambles to use the wood, they quickly learn they're extremely hard and covered in sharp thorns—a hundred 2" long thorns per 10' square section. If the PCs have some means of protecting themselves, they can harvest a considerable amount of wood, but old bramblewood doesn't burn and isn't pliable enough to be shaped, so it's of limited utility unless further treated with other spells or powers. Inventive characters might consider transplanting brambleweed to the settlement as an extra defensive measure, but it's too dangerous to have around the non-adventuring survivors.

THE SAND MARCHES

The principal threat of brambleweeds is if the PCs run into an encounter nearby. A creature shoved into brambleweed takes 1d100 damage from thorny impalement!

Since brambleweed is a plant, the easiest way to destroy it is with defiling magic.

Brambleweed: AL Nil; AC 8; MV 1' per day; HD 1 per 10' square; THACO 20; # At passive; Dmg 1 hit point/thorn; SZ G; ML Nil; XP Value 15 per 10' square. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

8. The Tall Purple Grass: Mark this location on the map. This unique location becomes visible from a distance of about a mile. Read or paraphrase the following information to the PCs when they first spot it.

In the distance, you see what looks like a waving purple curtain, rising up from the rocky plains, but without any accompanying walls or supports. As it comes into focus, you realize it is a thick stand of extremely tall grasses, 30' high, blowing softly in the wind.

The tall grass is a light purple plant that is a filter feeder. It catches insects and wind-blown particles in its wheat-like fronds along the upper half of its length, while the lower stalk is flexible and light so that creatures can't climb it or reach its grain stalks. The plant's seeds rest at the frond tops, sheathed in thin, razor-sharp leaves. It collects moisture both from deep roots stretching into ground reservoirs and from the atmosphere at its height. At ground level, the hard dirt is still festooned with small rocks, but scrubby yellow weeds also create a cover of undergrowth.

Strands of tall grass grow about one to three feet apart, so it's possible to work through the field, but it's slow going (half speed). More importantly, the tall grass limits visibility to about 20'. Even creatures levitating or flying above it can't see what's in the grass below unless the object below is large enough to crest the field (30' high).



*The Tall Purple Grass—Illus. by
Adrienne Grady*

The tall grass can be cut down and used for fibers, able to make bulky rope or twine. It also burns readily. The grains at the top are edible, if ground into flour and cooked into flatbread or used as batter on another dish fried in oil.

Harvesting the tall grass is trivial with an edged metal tool; using a stone or obsidian tool takes much longer. Player characters can harvest enough grass to generate 10 lbs. of food and 100 lbs. of fiber materials, but if they cut down the stand, it takes a full year for it to regrow.

This tall grass isn't well-suited to agriculture, as any PC with the agriculture, gardening, or herbalism proficiency can attest: it takes years to establish its roots in the deep soil, and during that time its shoots remain stubby and don't produce any grains.

The first time that the PCs enter the tall grass, roll 1d6+4 and consult the random encounter table from region A: the Dusky Sands. The PCs encounter the indicated creature among the tall grass. Creatures in the tall grass are either foraging for food, waiting in ambush, or resting in the shade.

9. Rock cactus, 1d10: The stony barrens appear to have several large, one-foot-diameter brown rocks strewn among the smaller stones here, but these are actually rock cacti. These present no real danger to the PCs unless the PCs mistakenly try to take them for materials, thinking that they are large chunks of stone.

Rock cactus: AL N; AC 7; MV special; HD 2; HP 9; THAC0 19; # At 1d4+1; Dmg 1d3; SA impale; SZ T; ML N/A; XP Value 65. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

10. The Broken Cairns: Mark this location on the map. See The Broken Cairns at the end of this section.

11. Heavy crodlu, 1d6: Wild heavy crodlu can be dangerous, and they're too old to be readily domesticated, though a psionist with the right powers could make them docile (possibly even making such a state permanent with psychic surgery). These are descendants of heavy crodlu that escaped from captivity or from a destroyed caravan, and now wander the barrens. Heavy crodlu generally ignore PCs unless the party seems threatening, in which case they either attack or flee based on their morale check.

Heavy crodlu: AL N; AC 4; MV 18"; HD 6+6; HP 33; THACO 13; # At 5; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d10/1d8/1d8; SA ram; SZ L; ML 11; XP Value 2,000. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

12. Roll twice and combine: Roll twice on the table and combine both results. For instance, the PCs might encounter a heavy crodlu impaled on a rock cactus, or kes'trekel circling over the remains of a creature killed by a crystal spider.

The Broken Cairns

Read or paraphrase the following text to the PCs when they enter this location.

You spot several piles of rocks, some of them little more than heaps of rubble, others deliberately stacked into oblong shapes perhaps 2' in height. At one end of the scattered piles is a thin wooden post with a pointing stick attached to it.

The broken cairns are a set of rock-covered shallow graves, where various companions of the mul warrior Renshy were buried after meeting a bad end. Renshy and a few of her fellows survived their travels and eventually reached Torax's Pit, a tiny village in region F, where they settled down, but they left many of their friends and family behind in these mounds.

Throw five dice onto an open map. Each die represents one cairn. Cairns consist of piles of a hundred stones, loosely stacked over a shallow pit that has skeletal remains in it. Each skeleton is still garbed in the tattered remnants of its clothes and a pair of rotten leather sandals or boots. The cairn with the lowest die value also has an obsidian dagger, a jade anklet worth 300 cp, and a pouch with 1d10 bits and 1d10 ceramic pieces (on a tie, pick the one closest to you).

The die with the highest value on its face contains one undead creature: a unique undead that formed from Chrion, one of Renshy's fallen companions. Chrion seethes with resentment over his death and burial, and if he senses the presence of the living, he crawls from his grave to try to slay them. He is a horrid sight, with rotting flesh hanging off of exposed bones and a permanent rictus grin on his damaged face, a shock of partially-intact black hair scattered over his head and ragged wounds across his torso, now rotten and peeling.

Chrion, unique undead: AL NE; AC 6; MV 9"; HD 4+6; HP 42; THACO 14; # At 1; Dmg 3d4; SA hammerblow; SD only harmed by magic weapons, ½ damage from blunt and piercing weapons, immune to mind effects; XP Value 975.

Chrion strikes with his rock-hard fists. If he scores an 18 or more on the die for his attack and hits, the target must also make a save vs. paralyzation or be knocked prone. Chrion is a very dangerous opponent for a low-level party without magic weapons, and they may do best to run from him; if the PCs outdistance him, he returns to his grave. Chrion still wears an intact suit of *leather armor +1*.

In addition, there is a thin wooden post on the far south side of the site. It has a stick lashed to it, barely hanging on after years of exposure, but still affixed such that it points to the south. This points in the direction of region F, the Three Neighbors, indicating that Renshy and her group were headed that way after burying their dead here—though it doesn't point *precisely* toward Torax's Pit, because they hadn't yet discovered that village. Based on whatever hex the Broken Cairns are in, indicate that the stick points toward region F.



*Sentinel Rock, Echo Canyon, Utah—
Smithsonian Collection*

THE SAND MARCHES

Region D: The Hot Salts

Adventure Level 7-9 · Expedition Bonus: 1,200 XP

Predominant Terrain: Salt Flats (normal overland movement speed). Encounter distance 5d10×10 feet, limited by visibility. Open, flat ground (10% chance of getting lost).

Weather:

1. Warm and clear
2. Hot and clear
3. Hot and clear
4. Very hot and clear
5. Very hot with salt storms (see below)
6. Scorching and clear

The hot salts are punishing terrain of white, sun-beaten dirt with an inch-thick layer of salt covering many places. Water is extremely scarce and the salts sucks moisture out of the bodies of travelers. Worst of all, on bad days, dust storms filled with salt whip through the air, scraping flesh and drying out the body—during a salt storm, water consumption is doubled.

Remember that scorching weather slows overland travel.

Story Beats: The hot salts are far from both the settlement and the southern ruins, so they have limited useful resources. The important feature from the PCs' perspective is the sulfur spring and its attendant druid, who can provide a safe resting spot and a small amount of information about the surrounding regions; and the Blasted Spar, which offers an opportunity for a military skirmish and significant treasure.

Encounters: A random encounter happens on a roll of 1 on 1d10. Check at 3–6 A.M. and 3–6 P.M.

Die Roll (2d6)	Encounter	Encounter Limit
2	Bulette, 1	1
3	The Blasted Spar	Unique location
4	Lesser fire elementals, 1d3	2
5	Dwarf banshee	Unique
6	Huge scorpions, 1d4	4
7	Erdlu, 5d10×10	4
8	Sulfur spring	Unique location
9	Lirr, 2d6	2
10	Salt mine	Unique location
11	Salt golem, 1	Unique
12	Roll twice and combine	—

2. Bulette, 1: The land shark is a fierce predator, attracted to the vibrations of people walking on the flats above. It seems almost comical at first, a stony gray fin breaking through the white salt layer, until it breaks through the surface to devour. As always, the principal benefit of the bulette is the use of its back plate to make a strong shield, though hungry PCs will probably cook and eat it if they can kill it! (Tastes like shark.)

Bulette: AL N; AC -2/4/6; MV 14", br 3"; HD 9; HP 41; THACO 11; # At 3; Dmg 3d12/3d6/3d6; SA 8' jump; SZ L; ML 11; XP Value 4,000. See *MC 1*.

3. The Blasted Spar: Mark this location on the map. From a distance of several miles, the PCs spot a lonely tower rising above a damaged curtain wall. There are signs of activity around the structure. See the description at the end of this section.

4. Lesser fire elementals, 1d3: The hot sands are so waterless and parched that tenuous connections to the elemental plane of Fire form here, leaving behind small but dangerous elementals eagerly seeking out things that they can burn. These elementals are especially dangerous to parties that haven't yet acquired any magical weapons.

Lesser fire elemental: AL N; AC 4; MV Fl 15" (A); HD 6; HP 27; # At 1; Dmg 2d10; SA flame tongue; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; SZ M; ML 14; XP Value 975. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

5. Dwarf banshee: This unfortunate soul died with an unfinished focus of finding a trail through the salt flats to some place with water beyond. Now undead, the banshee has only hatred for the living, who still have a chance to complete their business. It ruthlessly attacks anyone, especially dwarves. Because of this focus, the banshee can only be permanently destroyed by taking its remains (even just a piece, or a bit of ash if its body is cremated) across the salt flats to the south and depositing them in a body of water there, such as the lake at the base of the Shield mountain in region P. PCs can learn this through use of spells like *legend lore* or psionic abilities such as object reading (used on the body after the banshee is defeated). Otherwise, the banshee rises again at the next sunset (forming a new body somewhere in the salt flats if necessary).

The banshee has been dead for so long that its clothes and gear are mostly fragments, and it has only an obsidian dagger left.

Dwarf banshee: AL LE; AC 0; MV 12"; HD 7; HP 32; THACO 14; # At 3/2; Dmg punch 1d2+10 or obsidian dagger 1d4+8; SA gaze, malediction, psionics; SD steel or magical weapon to hit, ½ damage from fire, water, or air magic, immune to psionic contact; MR special; SZ M; ML 17; XP Value 2,000. The banshee has 110 PSPs and a power score of 15 with the powers body weaponry, cause decay, chemical simulation, death field, double pain, intellect fortress, mental barrier, and shadow form. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

6. Huge scorpions, 1d4: Scorpions are not especially dangerous predators compared to some creatures of the salt flats; their most dangerous feature is the poison tail sting. They are usually aggressive.

Huge scorpion: AL N; AC 4; MV 12"; HD 4+4; HP 22; THACO 15; # At 3; Dmg 1d8/1d8/1d3; SA poison sting (type F); SZ M; ML 10; XP Value 420. See *MC 1*.

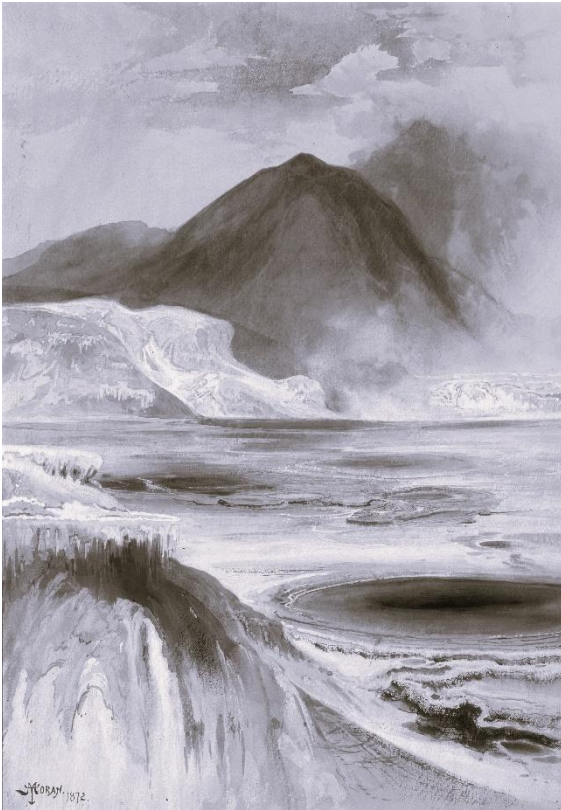
7. Erdlu, 5d10×10: A large flock of erdlu roam the salt flats, pecking for small insects or bits of scrub grass. The erdlu pick areas clean of tiny bits of vegetation (from which they garner their moisture), then move on. These wild packs are fairly common and usually skittish, but not actively hostile unless defending themselves. PCs who decide to hunt the erdlu must be careful to avoid antagonizing the whole pack, as the erdlu will likely maul them through sheer numbers. Individuals on the outskirts can be picked off by canny hunters or the use of magic and psionics. Capturing at least ten and returning them to the settlement allows for construction of an erdlu pen under the supervision of a PC with the animal handling proficiency (see Chapter Two: The Settlement); award xp for captured erdlu as if they were defeated in combat.

Erdlu: AL N; AC 7; MV 12"; HD 3; THACO 17; # At 2; Dmg 1d6/1d4; SD speed; SZ M; ML 10; XP Value 65. See the **DARK SUN** revised boxed set *Wanderer's Chronicle*.

8. Sulfur spring: Mark this location on the map. The PCs smell a horrid rotting stench, like rotten eggs, before they realize the ground is turning muddy in places. Soon they come across several bubbling mud-pits. Water from deep beneath the surface absorbs volcanic heat and bubbles up here, creating pools of stagnant, sulfurous water and mud. Throw four dice onto a blank map to indicate the locations of the mud pits or pools, which are 20' in diameter. The pools also give off poisonous vapors for another 10' in each direction; treat this as type K poison: Anyone who drinks the water or breathes the air feels dizzy and unwell and after 2d4 minutes must save vs. poison or take 5 points of damage. This continues repeatedly as long as the character remains in the area of the gasses and each time the character ingests a half gallon of water. Of course, spells like *zone of sweet air*, *filter*, and *purify food & drink* can ameliorate these effects.

The mud pits are extremely hot, and stepping in them subjects the character to 2d6 fire damage per round.

Yellow-green reedy plants grow around the sulfur springs, but there are no insects, which is a clue to their toxicity. PCs with survival (salt flats) proficiency may notice the poisons beforehand with a successful check, and this certainly triggers abilities like danger sense.



*Mammoth hot springs, Yellowstone—
Smithsonian Collection*

A druid named Galorah oversees the sulfur springs—these are her guarded lands. Galorah has few visitors, since she lives far from settled lands in dangerous territory, but as a skilled druid she is quite safe in her home. She sustains herself through her connection to the land, though she has a small amount of sorrow over the fact that there will be nobody to protect the land when she is gone someday.

When the PCs first arrive in the springs, Galorah watches them while remaining hidden, standing completely still in a spot between the pools but not quite in the poison gases. She judges the party based on how they approach the lands. If they are destructive, reckless, and hostile, she simply waits for them to leave without ever revealing herself. If they are cautious and respectful of the dangers of the springs, make a reaction roll as normal; if she is friendly, she reveals herself and engages in conversation.

Galorah's principal motivation is living in harmony with her guarded lands and maintaining the ecosystem on behalf of the spirit of the lands. Despite being a hermit, she is very amiable, and has a charming personality.

If Galorah is friendly, she offers to use her spells to help the PCs while they visit, and she lets them stay safely in her domain. If she is unfriendly, she tells the PCs to leave the area. Instead of confronting them directly if they refuse, she summons monsters and directs local wildlife to the area (force a roll on the random encounter table every three hours the PCs spend in the hex in such a case).

THE SAND MARCHES

Galorah can also share information about the region. She knows little of what goes on along the trade routes to the north, but she does know about the Blasted Spar (#3) and the raiders living there. She avoids confrontation with them, as she could probably slay several, but their massed might is too much for her, and she has no desire to leave her lands unguarded by becoming a martyr. She does know that they support their water supplies with magic, which can clue the PCs in to the fact that the raiders there have powerful clerical assistance.

Notably, Galorah is powerful enough to raise the dead if the need should arise. Since she has passed her Time of Wandering, though, she will not leave her guarded lands to accompany the party. Indeed, she is eager to have an apprentice, either a party member or a promising acolyte from among the people the PCs meet.

Galorah, human druid 12: AL N; AC 8; MV 12"; HD druid 12; HP 47; THAC0 14; # At 1; Dmg bronze khopesh S-M 2d4/L 1d6; SA spells, *shape change* 3/day; SD +2 to saves vs. fire and electricity, hide in guarded lands, survive without nourishment in guarded lands; SZ M; ML 15; XP Value 2,000. Galorah has 101 PSPs and a power score of 14 with the wild talents of contact, mindlink, and sound link.

Priest spells:

1. *animal friendship, command, cure light wounds* ×2, *detect poison, purify food & drink, sanctuary, sunscorch*

2. *augury, barkskin, charm person or mammal, clear water, cure moderate wounds, mind read, produce flame*

3. *control animal, create food and water, dispel magic, heat exhaustion, protection from fire, zone of sweet air*

4. *cure serious wounds, lungs of water, neutralize poison, repel insects*

5. *commune with nature, good weather, raise dead*

6. *heartseeker, heal*

Galorah has a Wisdom score of 18 and a Charisma score of 16. She has major access to the Spheres of Cosmos and Water, and minor access to the Sphere of Fire. She wears no armor, but has a spiral *ring of protection* +2 made of rugged stone, and a fine bronze khopesh.

Though Galorah welcomes mindful company, she has no interest in turning her guarded lands into a barracks for traveling adventurers. PCs can camp here, but she does not want them turning the local landscape into an outpost, and resists such suggestions. She also has little use for trade, as she survives through her connection to the land and has no use for tools or coins.

9. Lirr, 2d6: The bright, fringed reptile lirr move in packs during the day, seeking out water and small prey animals. Though they have animal intelligence, use a reaction roll to determine whether they ignore the PCs (friendly result) or decide to hunt them (hostile result).

Lirr: AL N; AC 5; MV 15"; HD 5+2; HP 25; THACO 15; # At 3; Dmg 1d4+1/1d4+1/1d10; SA roar, rear claws (1d6+1/1d6+1); SZ M; ML 13; XP Value 420. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

10. Salt mine: Mark this location on the map. The PCs find a shaft going straight down 20' into a room below. Use the random dungeon generator, with a dungeon depth of 6 rooms. Suit is ♦ Diamonds (mine). Adventure level is 7–9.

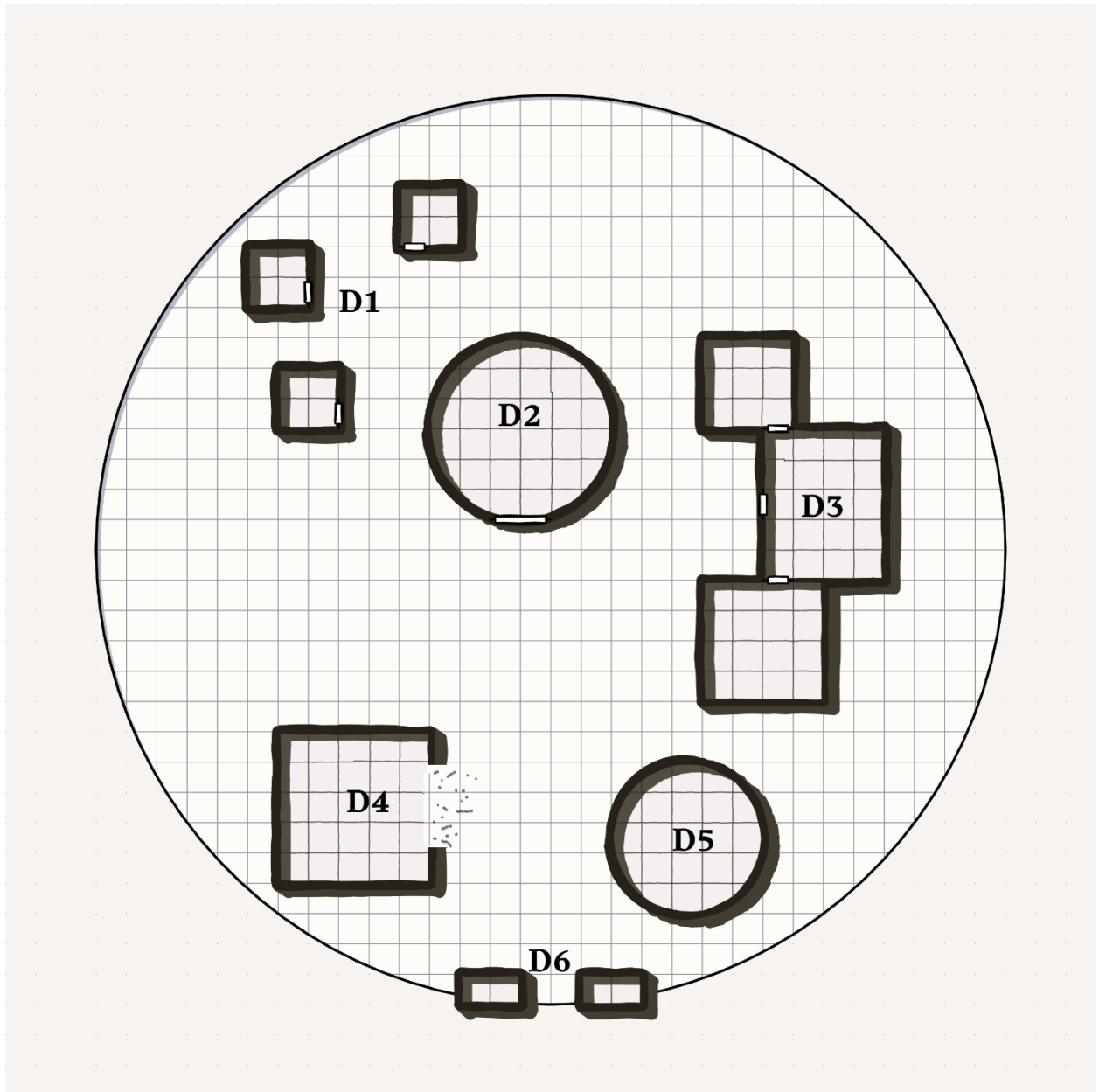
In the past, entry to the mine was through a rope and wooden plank, but time has long since destroyed such contrivances. Now the PCs can only enter by climbing down the hole, or by rigging their own rope.

11. Salt golem, 1: Created long ago by a master who no longer exists, this golem stands as a silent witness to a bygone time. Its orders are erratic and unclear, so it is 50% likely to be hostile, 50% likely to remain completely immobile unless attacked.

Salt golem: AL N; AC 4; MV 6"; HD 9; HP 41; THACO 11; # At 1; Dmg 2d8; SA pain, dehydrate; SD immune to electricity and cold, healed by fire; SZ L; ML 20; XP Value 4,000. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

12. Roll twice and combine: Roll twice on the table and combine both results. For instance, the PCs might find the herd of erdlu gathering at the outskirts of the sulfur springs, or discover the salt golem standing silent guard over the salt mine.

The Blasted Spar



As the PCs approach, read or paraphrase the following text.

From a distance, you see a tottering tower, the top of which is ruined and blasted off. Around the tower is a partially-crumbled wall, but there are signs of habitation, including areas that are shored up and... perhaps... people on the walls?

The blasted spar is, like many of the ruins in this part of the wastes, a remnant from an earlier age, made from stone hauled here long after the waters that left the salt flats behind had receded. Located somewhat close to the Silt Estuary and the southern trade routes, it is home to a ruthless raider band that sallies forth to attack travelers further to the north and east, then returns home to revel in their spoils.

The blasted spar is in a normally inhospitable space, with no water supply—the well is dry and filled with stones (though it could be dug out if sufficient motivation existed). To survive, the raiders steal water from caravans, and rely on the powers of their resident trio of water clerics.

The brutal leader of the raiders is Kurst, a mul fighter/water cleric. Kurst is a thoroughly wicked man, committed to the belief that strength is the only thing of value in the broken world. He rules the other raiders through terror and force of will, and through the threat of withholding water from those who refuse to obey. Kurst has two disciples who also support the water needs of the raiders, and a half-giant follower who acts as his personal enforcer.

For PCs, the major problem of dealing with the raiders of the blasted spar is that they are a small army—as a high-level fighter, Kurst has attracted followers who are as rough-and-tumble as he is. Cunning PCs might use hit-and-run tactics or subtle magic and psionics to pick off raiders here and there, but the raiders post guards and use magic of their own in return.

This does present an interesting opportunity: Once the PCs reach a high enough level, they can come back here with an army of their own! A PC fighter or gladiator with a small army can turn this into a field battle, either using Battlesystem or as a narrative backdrop for a race through the ruins to find and confront Kurst and his lieutenants.

Exterior Defenses: Due to his fighter skills, Kurst has developed some level of defenses. The perimeter, which once had a stone wall, now sports a ditch filled with spikes (delineated by the circle around the map). The ditch is 10' wide by 10' deep and the spikes inflict an extra 1d6 damage to anyone falling in. The ditch also holds waste and serves as a septic pit, which means that anyone falling in must make a saving throw vs. poison or contract a disease (likely campylobacteriosis or typhoid fever). The raiders typically come and go by moving the old drawbridge into place at the gatehouse (D5). If besieged, they simply withdraw the drawbridge and retreat behind cover while using missile weapons against attackers.

THE SAND MARCHES

Siege Weapons: Kurst has one functional light ballista mounted atop his barracks (D3), accessed by a ladder on the eastern wall. Three warriors trained in its use guard it at all times. See *Combat & Tactics* Chapter Eight for information about siege weapons; while crewed by at least one trained warrior, this weapon can fire once per eight rounds, and inflicts damage of S-M 2d6/L 3d6 on a hit. The ballista has twenty bolts. The guards replace used bolts at a rate of one per day.

Guard Patrols: Kurst may be arbitrary and cruel, but he is a cunning strategist. His troops are instructed to always move in groups of three. Rarely is anyone alone—doing so is a violation of orders. At any given time, two-thirds of the troops are awake and on alert.

Excursions: When Kurst takes his troops raiding, they leave one-third of his forces to garrison the keep. If Kurst returns and his forces have been overrun, he appraises the enemy to the best of his ability, uses an *augury* spell, and then either attacks, lays in for a siege, or takes his troops and heads out to find easier territory to conquer (and out of the *Sand Marches* map).

The Stealth Approach: A band of rogues or *invisible* PCs may be able to slip in unnoticed. The spar (#D2) has no roof; the other buildings do, but they are haphazard assemblies of straw and mud. The biggest challenge will be crossing the outer ditch (easily accomplished with *levitate*, *fly*, or just the rogue ability to climb walls) and deciding where to make a surprise entrance—or assassination.

Negotiation: Kurst does not negotiate. He is underhanded and cruel, and always looks for ways to turn opportunities to his advantage. He might temporarily surrender or cease combat, but he always looks for a chance to betray the PCs if he does. He may feign friendliness if necessary, but as soon as he believes he has the upper hand, he becomes domineering and arrogant. Kurst cannot be befriended; his only interest is in crushing those who oppose him and living with the luxuries that he steals.

Kurst's lieutenants, on the other hand, are somewhat more malleable. If Kurst is killed, his followers fight until their morale breaks, then scatter into the salt flats, never to return. His clerical acolytes act according to their individual motivations, as described separately.

Arena Challenge: Kurst loves pitting his foes against each other, and relishes sights of war and blood. PCs who issue a bold challenge receive an offer to compete in his settlement's arena (D5). Kurst first throws one of his regular warriors against the PCs' champion, then Mogrumor the half-giant, then offers to fight personally. If the PCs offer group combat or change champions, he might or might not take them up, depending upon how much he thinks his troops have the advantage.

Because Kurst is vindictive, he informs his troops quietly in advance that if he is defeated in the arena, his men are to kill the individual who does so, using missile weapons and the ballista at D3. If Kurst manages to defeat his enemy but the PC makes an impressive showing, Kurst might make an offer for the PC to join his band. Of course, this is a "join or die" offer.

PCs who join Kurst's band find themselves tasked as the lowest recruits on the hierarchy, and must deal with abuse from the other troops until proving they can't be bullied. Anyone who proves to be *too* competent—and, thus, a potential threat to Kurst's position—is quietly killed while sleeping (or, for thri-kreen, sent on a hunting expedition and then ambushed while fighting monsters).

On a friendly reaction roll, Kurst allows PCs to bet on their arena challenges against his troops.

Expanding the Spar: If you want to add some extra challenges, place a stairway going down in the spar (#D2) and generate a random dungeon. Suit is ♠ Spades (ruins). Depth is 1d6+6 rooms, encounter level 7–9. Kurst and his followers never went down there, as they were spooked by the presence of the spell book on the stone table next to the stairs.

Outpost: If the PCs defeat Kurst and scatter his band, they can turn this location into an outpost. Because of its location at the edge of the wastes so close to the trade routes, it acts as if it automatically has a Trading Post. Unlike other outposts, which are too deep in the dangerous wastes, merchants will come here if the PCs clear out the raiders and make the area safe. This is one way for PCs to gain access to a trading post if they haven't built the project back at the main settlement, or if the party doesn't have a trader PC.

If the PCs turn this into an outpost, you might consider having it attacked by another raider band at some point. Give the PCs a chance to be the defenders, a reason to build up the walls and defenses, and an opportunity to use the ballista!

Kurst, mul fighter 10/water cleric

10: AL CE; AC 2; HD fighter 10/cleric 10; HP 92; MV 12" (9" in armor); THAC0 11; # At 3/2; Dmg *bone battleaxe* +1 1d8+9; SA spells; SZ M; ML 14; XP Value 2,000.

THE SAND MARCHES

Kurst has Strength 19 (+3 to attack and +7 to damage), Dexterity 15, Constitution 19, and Wisdom 16. He has land-based riding proficiency with both crodlu and chariots at 16.

Kurst fights with a *bone battleaxe* +1, with which he is an expert, gaining two attacks per round. He wears nonmetal brigandine armor and bears a nonmetal *medium shield* +1. In ranged combat he uses a light crossbow with a dozen *bone bolts* +1 (damage 1d4), and carries in his pouch the key to the chest in his quarters (area #D3).

Kurst is also a powerful cleric of water, but he tends to reserve his spells for creating water, healing his own wounds, or punishing people who displease him.

Tarazad, human water cleric 7: AL NE; AC 6; HD cleric 7; HP 33; MV 12" (9" in armor); THAC0 16; # At 1; Dmg by weapon; SA spells; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 650.

Tarazad has a Wisdom of 17. In combat, he tends to throw other raiders in front of himself. If forced to fight, he wears nonmetal scale mail armor and wields a longspears and does his best to fight from a distance. For ranged combat he uses a shortbow with two dozen bone arrows.

Tarazad is an opportunist, who sees working for Kurst as a great chance to be a number-two man. He claims second choice of treasures, threatens to withhold water from raiders who displease him, and in turn attempts to curry favor from Kurst at every turn. He is thoroughly craven.

Ethvim, half-elf water cleric 6: AL CN; AC 5; HD cleric 6; HP 27; MV 12"; THAC0 18; # At 1; Dmg by weapon, SA spells; SZ M; ML 14; XP Value 420.

Ethvim has a Dexterity of 16 and a Wisdom of 16, and the religion proficiency with a score of 15. She wears leather armor and a *cloak of protection* +1 and carries a bone scimitar.

Ethvim, unlike her peers, isn't totally without scruples—but she is changeable, like the water, shifting allegiances as whims and opportunities permit. She can't be relied upon or trusted, and about the only good thing going for her is that compared to the other clerics she isn't deliberately malicious. Ethvim *might* engage in diplomacy if Kurst is slain, but there's no guarantee she will keep her word. She's likely to simply leave if she is given the opportunity. If one of the PCs is a water cleric, though, she could be persuaded to stay and help if given the opportunity to continue to learn from that PC (assuming the PC is higher level than she).

Mogrumor, half-giant gladiator 5: AL C?; AC 6; HD gladiator 5; HP 80; MV 12" (9" in armor); THAC0 16; # At 1; Dmg obsidian lotulis S-M 1d10+11/L 1d12+11; SZ L; ML 14; XP Value 270.

Mogrumor has a Strength of 22 (+4 to attack, +10 to damage) and a Constitution of 17. Mogrumor is an extremely dim half-giant who follows Kurst almost obsessively. He sees Kurst as a great example of successful leadership and he tries to emulate Kurst, which largely involves yelling at other raiders and occasionally slapping someone so hard they are severely injured.

In combat, Mogrumor wields a large obsidian lotulis (dmg S–M 1d10, L 1d12, -2 to attack, -1 to damage) with which he is a specialist (+1 to attack, +2 to damage, 3/2 attack rate). He wears a large suit of light leather scale with a large pauldron and braces of bronze plate on the left arm (total AC 7). Mogrumor is typically left to guard the fort while Kurst is out raiding; he has his own large lean-to with a cloth canopy.

Kurst's raiders, 90: AL CE; AC 5; HD fighter 3; HP 14; MV 12" (9" in armor); THAC0 18; # At 1; Dmg by weapon; SZ M; ML 12 (18); XP Value 65.

Kurst's raiders are a motley assortment of various humanoids. They are all largely crude, cruel, unimaginative, aggressive; and hungry for action, alcohol, and entertainment. Kurst's raiders wear nonmetal scale armor, and fight with stone battleaxes and medium shields. In ranged combat they use light crossbows with bone bolts, but only one-third of them are so armed; others take cover if missile fire breaks out.

While Kurst is alive and on the field, the raiders have a morale of 18.

DI: Ramshackle Cabins

A collection of leaning cabins rest here, made from scavenged wood and stone. Dull pieces of decorative cloth flap in the breeze from the rooftops, and the entrances simply have curtains over them.

These ramshackle cabins are some of the best shelter available to the regular troops—having a spot in a cabin instead of a tent is a significant reward for performance.

The cabins are smelly and dirty, strewn with refuse. Each cabin holds a scattered array of personal effects and coinage including 2d6 random items of clothing or mundane gear such as pouches, belts, packs, and quivers; 3d6 ceramic pieces; 2d6 silver pieces; 1d4 waterskins (with ½ gallon of water each); and 1d4 rations of food.

If demolished, which takes 8 person-hours of work, the cabins yield a total of 1d6×10 pounds of construction materials.

D2: The Spar

The ruined remnant of a central tower rises in the middle of the derelict keep's yard. The left side of the tower is broken apart, with the right half forming a barely-intact upthrust of burned rock, as if reaching toward some skyward lightning bolt that sundered it long ago.

THE SAND MARCHES

The spar was once the tower of the keep's resident mage. When the keep was thrown down during the many turbulent wars that engulfed Athas, the wizard was slain in a magical duel while atop the tower, and the upper floors were blown to pieces in the assault. Now only the ground floor remains intact.

The southern half of the chamber holds twenty casks, filled with potable water. Kurst and his acolytes occasionally come here to refill casks with their spells and granted powers, and the raiders use this for their water supply. In addition, the raiders store their ill-gotten gains here. While Kurst takes the best personal effects for himself, some spoils are useful or kept for later sale or trade: two comfortable agafari wood chairs with elaborate carving on the backs and stuffed seats (worth 75 cp each), twelve crates of rations with 30 pounds of preserved food apiece, a dozen spears, six spare nonmetal medium shields, three ceramic urns with two pounds of exotic spices in each (worth 15 cp per pound), a roll of 20 square yards of leather (worth 5 cp per square yard), and a bushel of 300 common feathers (worth 9 cp for the whole bushel).

Beyond the casks on the north half of the tower is a heavy stone table with a book on it. This is an ancient spell book, from a time before wizards had to hide their magic in riddles and knotwork. Kurst has ordered his men not to touch it, as he is worried about the possibility of traps on it. He is correct; the first page of the book holds *explosive runes*, and opening the book and attempting to read it detonates them for the standard 6d4+6 damage. The book itself is enchanted to be immune to damage from fire, water, and weather, which is how it has survived this long (and causes it to survive the *explosive runes*, if triggered).

The ancient wizard's spell book has heavy covers made of hide with small inset gems, and its thick pages are inscribed in a firm hand. For its fine workmanship alone it could sell (as contraband) for easily 2,500 cp, but the spells in it are priceless to another wizard.

Wizard spells:

1. *burning hands, change self, detect magic, read magic, taunt, unseen servant, wizard mark*
2. *bind, deep pockets, detect invisibility, fog cloud, irritation, summon swarm*
3. *gust of wind, hold person, Leomund's tiny hut, slow*
4. *dig, explosive runes, solid fog, wizard eye*
5. *domination, major creation*

Beside the spell book is an inkwell (long since dried up); thrust into the inkwell is a *wand of magic missiles* with 12 charges.

D3: Kurst's Barrack

Though small lines of broken stone show the ruined foundations of buildings that are no more, this one is largely intact. Hides and shutters block up windows and holes, and the roof is mostly whole; it even has a working door. To the south side of the main door is a seven-foot-tall stone statue of a kirre, standing on its hind legs, with its other four legs rampant; age and weathering have left it colorless and pitted.

Kurst has taken the best remaining building for himself, and lives in the southern room, where he has a rickety bedframe with a mattress stuffed with straw and covered with stretched hides. He also has a chair and a weapon rack holding one bone glaive, one obsidian footman's pick, and one wooden longsword. The room includes an armor stand for holding Kurst's armor when he sleeps. His bed sheets are made of red-dyed silk (worth 300 cp), and he has a calcite urn at his bedside for holding water (worth 125 cp).

The kirre statue outside the main door is not magical or special; it weighs 800 lbs., is carved from a single piece of stone, and has little decorative value (about 30 cp) unless it is somehow restored to a better condition (at its best it could command 3,000 cp).

At the foot of the bed is a chest with a crude bone lock, which can be picked; Kurst keeps the key on his person at all times. The chest is also trapped, so that when opened, it disperses a cloud of poisonous powder, type M: anyone within 5' of the chest when it is triggered suffers the poison in 1d4 minutes—20 damage on a failed save, 5 on a success. Rogues can disable the lock and trap at the normal chances with the usual skills, and Kurst knows how to open the chest in such a way that the trap does not trigger when the lid is opened. Inside is a hoard of 330 ceramic pieces, 126 silver pieces, 27 gold pieces, and six precious gems worth 450 cp each, as well as a *potion fruit of healing*.

The northern chamber is reserved for Kurst's clerical acolytes, who share the room. That room bears a pallet on either side and a large brass bowl and ewer in the middle of the room (worth 660 cp), used for water ceremonies. The bowl and ewer are typically kept empty until needed.

The central room is where Kurst holds court and takes his meals. A large wooden table runs across the room from north to south, with a heavy wooden chair on the east side where Kurst sits. During meals he sits in the chair and selected officers or exemplary troops (or guests) eat while seated on crude wooden stools. While dealing with rulership matters, he has guards standing to either side of the table as he hears problems or issues orders from his throne.

THE SAND MARCHES

The furnishings in this building, and the wood and stone for its construction, can be salvaged with 36 person-hours of work, for a total of 4d6×10 pounds of usable materials.

D4: The Kennel

This low-slung building looks like it won't last much longer; already part of the eastern wall, where there was once a large door, has collapsed and is open to the salt flats. The area is scattered with fodder and dung.

Two groups of raiders (6 warriors total) are on guard here at all times, caring for the raiders' crodlus. The raiders have a total of 20 crodlus, which are considered more important than any individual warrior, as the crodlus pull chariots or serve as war mounts for outriders and mounted crossbow scouts. The crodlus are domesticated and war-trained and (if they aren't killed in the fighting) can be herded back to the settlement, either for food or for the PCs' own use as mounts.

The kennel isn't large enough to hold all of the crodlu; they are allowed to wander a short distance from it, but never go too far because this is where they are fed and watered.

Crodlu, 20: AL N; AC 7; MV 12"; HD 3; THAC0 17; # At 2; Dmg 1d6/1d4; SD speed; SZ M; ML 10; XP Value 65. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

D5: The Arena

Not far from the gates is a pit in the ground, with straight, rough walls dug down fifteen feet and a flattened floor. A rickety ladder descends into the pit, and an equally rickety wooden railing surrounds it. Based on the bloodstains on the walls and the nearby weapon racks, the use of the pit is obvious.

Kurst's warriors use the arena for training, entertainment, and punishment—sometimes all at the once. Warriors who've committed minor infractions have a chance to avoid punishment by proving their mettle against monsters or their fellows; those who've disobeyed Kurst's orders or jeopardized the camp find themselves tossed into the pit with nothing more than a club to fight off multiple fellow warriors or the worst monster the raiders can capture. Betting on fights is expected.

The weapon racks near the arena pit include a half dozen clubs, two spears, a bone impaler, two obsidian daggers, a carrikal, and a bone quabone. The racks also include a pair of nonmetal medium shields, two leather helmets, and two sets of leather sandals and harnesses.

D6: The Gatehouse

Amazingly, while the outer wall of this keep has long since collapsed, the gatehouse still stands, as if defiantly challenging one to try to enter a ruin that one could just walk into from any point. It even has a drawbridge—more like a set of lashed planks—for crossing the ditch around the keep.

The gatehouse always has three guards in each building; they are alert and watching for attackers and monsters coming from deeper in the wastes. The old drawbridge is no longer attached to any mechanism, but the guards can drag it over the ditch or out of position to allow or restrict access.



Ancient Stone Round Tower—Smithsonian Collection

Region E: The Dotted Desert

Adventure Level 4–6 · Expedition Bonus: 600 XP

Predominant Terrain: Sandy Wastes ($\frac{1}{3}$ overland movement speed). Encounter distance 5d10×10 feet, limited by visibility. Rolling ground (20% chance of getting lost). Areas without a unique location are also featureless (+50%).

Weather:

1. Warm and cloudy
2. Warm and clear
3. Hot and clear
4. Hot and clear
5. Very hot and clear
6. Very hot and dusty (dust storms limit visibility to 100')

As travelers head south into the sand dunes, shattered pillars, bits of statuary, and ruins become increasingly frequent. The dotted desert has many small, fragmentary remnants from what was once a thriving civilization, now consumed by the sands. Further south, the jumbled terrain becomes choked with strange ruins.

PCs can risk this zone early in their careers if they're ready to run away, but otherwise they should have a little experience from the Dusky Sands region first.

Story Beats: The PCs might encounter the Spike Birds elf tribe here, giving them a chance at trade and information-gathering. There is also a small chance of discovering a useful water source, random ruins, or even a helpful creature. Conversely, the PCs may make enemies of a nest of scrabs, which can prove a persistent and dangerous foe.

Encounters: A random encounter happens on a roll of 1 on 1d10. Check at 7–10 A.M., 7–10 P.M., and 3–6 A.M.

Die Roll (2d6)	Encounter	Encounter Limit
2	Scrab nest	Unique location
3	Scrabs, 2d6	1
4	Dagorrans, 2d4	4
5	Sand howlers, 2d8	2
6	Anakores, 2d6	4
7	Elf camp	Unique
8	Crodlu, 5d6	2
9	Random dungeon	2
10	Jumbled cistern	Unique location
11	Aviarag, 1	Unique
12	Roll twice and combine	—

2. Scrab nest: Mark this location on the map. The PCs have the misfortune of stumbling across a scrab nest. At first glance this just looks like any other part of the dunes, but small tunnels pockmark the hillsides and the sand seems less prone to blowing away. Scrabs are intelligent foes and keep watch from the various vantages of their tunnel complex, which is too small for most PCs (the typical scrab is only 4' tall, so only halflings could easily fit into a scrab tunnel without hunching over). The nest consists of 1d12+12 adult scrabs, 1d6 scrab leaders, 1d6 sub-leaders (same abilities as other adults), and one nest mother, as well as 1d4×10 eggs. The scrab tunnels are solidified by scrab spittle so they are well-fortified against weather, and lead underground to a depth of 15', providing a cool, dark home for the scrabs.

The scrabs fight viciously to defend their home, driving off and even chasing the PCs if they gain the upper hand; or retreating into small tunnels to defend the nest mother in a central cave if they are overmatched.

THE SAND MARCHES

Because they are intelligent, scrabs do carry small quantities of money to bribe opponents, curry favor, or trade with more powerful groups they encounter; each scrab has 1d3×10 bits, 1d2×10 cp, and 1d6 sp. Each scrab also has a 25% chance to carry a bone or obsidian knife or dagger (roll equal chance each for material and weapon). In addition, the nest mother keeps the treasure of the hive (type B): a 25% chance of 1d10×400 bits, 25% chance of 1d10×100 ceramic pieces, 25% chance of 1d10×10 silver pieces, 30% chance of 1d10×5 gold pieces, a 30% chance of 1d8 gems, and a 10% chance for one magical armor or weapon (roll randomly or choose a type useful to your PCs).

Scrab: AL CE; AC 4; MV 18", br 6"; HD 5; HP 23; THAC0 15; # At 2 or 1; Dmg 1d4/1d4 + grip or by weapon; SZ S; ML 13; XP Value 650. Scrabs have 61 PSPs and the powers animal affinity (lizard), biofeedback, chameleon power, conceal thoughts, contact, enhanced strength, inflict pain, mind blank, mind over body, mind thrust, mindlink, psionic blast, and thought shield. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

Scrab leader: A group of 5 or more scrabs includes a leader: AL CE; AC 4; MV 18", br 6"; HD 7; HP 32; THAC0 13; # At 2 or 1; Dmg 1d4/1d4 + grip or by weapon; SZ S; XP Value 1,400. Leaders have 78 PSPs and a 50% chance to have the additional powers of ego whip and expansion. A leader who does not have extra psionic abilities instead casts spells as a 7th-level defiler, with the following spells: *burning hands, chill touch, detect psionics, hold person, invisibility, magic missile, non-detection, protection from good, psionic dampener, scare, and web*. Since there are 1d6 leaders in the hive, simply assign half of them as having extra psionic powers and half as defilers. Leaders also have a 35% chance to speak elvish.

Scrab nest mother: AL CE; AC 4; MV 18", br 6"; HD 13; HP 59; THAC0 7; # At 2 or 1; Dmg 1d4/1d4 + grip or by weapon; SZ L; ML 13; XP Value 8,000.

3. Scrabs, 2d6: The PCs stumble across a scrub hunting party from the scrub nest (#2, above). During the day, the scrabs are on the hunt. If the PCs are not taking steps to conceal their movements, the scrabs try to ambush them by using chameleon power and enhanced strength. If encountered at night, the scrabs have set up a small network of burrowed tunnels and half will be asleep at any given point during the night. Scrabs will not hesitate to launch an attack if they think they can make off with a PC or two to eat later. Due to their special hatred of elves, they attempt to capture elf party members and take them back to their nest for a grim fate.

Scrabs are intelligent foes and negotiate or flee if hard pressed in combat, but they are also unpredictable and will not hesitate to renege on a deal as soon as the tables turn. If scrabs survive a hostile encounter with the PCs and escape to flee back to their nest, they inform the rest of their hive of the PCs' abilities and tactics. Because they are intelligent, scrabs do carry small quantities of money to bribe opponents, curry favor, or trade with more powerful groups they encounter; each scrub has 1d3×10 bits, 1d2×10 cp, and 1d6 sp. Each scrub also has a 25% chance to carry a bone or obsidian knife or dagger (roll equal chance each for material and weapon).

Scrab: AL CE; AC 4; MV 18", br 6"; HD 5; HP 23; THAC0 15; # At 2 or 1; Dmg 1d4/1d4 + grip or by weapon; SZ S; ML 13; XP Value 650. Scrabs have 61 PSPs and the powers animal affinity (lizard), biofeedback, chameleon power, conceal thoughts, contact, enhanced strength, inflict pain, mind blank, mind over body, mind thrust, mindlink, psionic blast, and thought shield. See MC 12: *Terrors of the Desert*.

Scrab leader: A group of 5 or more scrabs includes a leader: AL CE; AC 4; MV 18", br 6"; HD 7; HP 32; THAC0 13; # At 2 or 1; Dmg 1d4/1d4 + grip or by weapon; SZ S; ML 13; XP Value 1,400. Leaders have 78 PSPs and a 50% chance to have the additional powers of ego whip and expansion. A leader who does not have extra psionic abilities instead casts spells as a 7th-level defiler, with the following spells: *burning hands*, *chill touch*, *detect psionics*, *hold person*, *invisibility*, *magic missile*, *non-detection*, *protection from good*, *psionic dampener*, *scare*, and *web*. Leaders also have a 35% chance to speak elvish.

4. Dagorrans, 2d4: A small pack of dagorrans makes this area its hunting territory. Dagorrans are usually active at night, but will awaken to defend themselves during the day if necessary. They can track by psionic sense, so a party that flees may find themselves hunted. Note that dagorrans especially prefer to eat thri-kreen and attack such characters first. They are only semi-intelligent, though, and so can be evaded by a clever party and do not have strong tactics.

THE SAND MARCHES

Dagorran: AL N; AC 7; MV Jp 9"; HD 4; HP 18; THACO 17; # At 1; Dmg 2d6 (bite); SA psionics; SZ M; ML 11; XP Value 1,400. Dagorrans have 20 PSPs, a power score of 7, and the powers ballistic attack, control body, detonate, inertial barrier, and mind blank. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.



Edge of the Sahara—Smithsonian Collection

5. Sand Howlers, 2d8: A pack of sand howlers make this part of the desert their home. These brown, eight-eyed lizards are carnivorous and live in burrows in the sand. They gladly hunt the PCs, howling to signal each other as they close in as a pack. A grown sand howler weighs 10 pounds, of which half is edible meat if prepared correctly; each sand howler has a 10% chance to have a white hide instead of brown, which can sell or trade for up to 150 cp if properly skinned and treated. A sand howler pack has a 20% chance to have 1–2 young, which can be domesticated and used for hunting.

Sand howlers are only of animal intelligence, so they don't use tactics against the PCs. If their morale breaks, they try to flee into narrow burrows in the sand.

Sand howler: AL N; AC 5; MV 12"; HD 4+2; HP 20; THACO 17; # At 3; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d6; SA paralyzing gaze; SZ M; ML 9; XP Value 420. One sand howler is always larger than the others and has 34 HP and gains a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

6. Anakores, 2d6: A small band of dune freaks lair under the sands, looking for tasty morsels. Individually they are not particularly tough, but in a group they may present trouble to the PCs. Note that anakores are nocturnal and they burrow, so the PCs are unlikely to see the monsters unless they choose to attack. Anakores have treasure type P, meaning that they have 1d4×10 ceramic pieces and 1d10 gold pieces from previous kills.

Anakore: AL NE; AC 8; MV 9", br 15"; HD 3; HP 14; THAC0 17; # At 2; Dmg 1d4; SA surprise bonus, paralyzation, suffocation; SD burrow; SZ M; ML 11; XP Value 650. Anakores have no psionic ability but can sense vibrations of footsteps in the sand up to five miles away. See the **DARK SUN** boxed set *Wanderer's Journal*.

7. Elf camp: See the description of the Spike Birds elf tribe in region B, #7. If the PCs left the Spike Birds in another region and there is no way the elves could've arrived here before the PCs, treat this as *no encounter*.

8. Crodlu, 5d6: A herd of crodlu run across the sands, searching for foliage and water. Though they are usually active during the day, the herd clumps together to sleep at night with shifting watchers, so stealthy PCs may be able to sneak up on them. Note that while crodlu are herbivores, they are quite tough and a large group of them can present trouble for the party.

Only 10% of adult crodlu can be domesticated, so unless the PCs have access to psionic or magical abilities to control them, crodlu cannot be captured and taken as herd animals.

Each herd has one lead crodlu. In addition, each time the PCs encounter a crodlu herd, there is a 25% chance they stumble across the nesting ground of that herd, which has 2d6+3 eggs. Eggs can be eaten, of course, or hatched into infant crodlu, which can be trained as mounts. A crodlu takes 4 years to reach maturity, so this is probably not a great proposition; the PCs are better off using the crodlu for food or using powers to make the adult crodlu rideable.

A herd also has a 25% chance to have 1d3 juveniles, which probably *can* be trained in a reasonable timeframe.

Crodlu: AL N; AC 4; MV 24"; HD 4+4; HP 22; THAC0 15; # At 5; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d8/1d6/1d6; SA grapple; SZ L; ML 11; XP Value 420.

Lead Crodlu: AL N; AC 3; MV 24"; HD 6; HP 27; THAC0 13; # At 5; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d8/1d6/1d6; SA grapple; SZ L; ML 11; XP Value 2,000.

See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

9. Random dungeon: The shifting sands reveal a small buried ruin. Mark its location on the map. If PCs return in the future there's a 75% chance it's buried under the sand, so they won't be able to find it unless using abilities like the spells *clairvoyance* or *locate object*, or psionic powers such as know course or radial navigation.

Use the random dungeon generator chapter to make the dungeon. Suit is ♠ Spades (ruins). Dungeon depth is 1d4+5 cards. Adventure level is 4–6.

10. Jumbled cistern: Mark this location on the map. The PCs come across a pair of tilted pillars standing out of the sand, with a large piece of resin-coated cloth between them. Long strings descend from the cloth into a series of small stone channels covered with ceramic glaze, and descend into a stone cistern. The sail-like cloth catches moisture on the resin surface during the early morning hours, which condenses and trickles down the strings into the stone channels and drips into the cistern below. The upper structure is built atop a hill and made specifically to rise above the sand dunes, so it is never completely covered by blowing sand.

The cistern is a roofed stone structure, covered in sand, with a closed stone trapdoor that can be cleared away and opened into a staircase going down. The steps descend directly to the water chamber, which is 10'×10' and 7' high, with arched pillars supporting its stone roof. Here and there, bits of sand trickle through cracks in the stone. The base of the cistern is plastered and glazed so that water cannot escape, with a few chunks of rough-hewn rock looking like they might have once been statuary or decorative pieces. Slightly muddy water fills the chamber to a depth of six inches. (In a 10'×10' chamber, this is 374 gallons of water, though it is slightly silty and PCs may have trouble transporting that much.)

As long as the structure remains intact, the cistern refills at a rate of 10 gallons of water per day, up to the aforementioned maximum of 374 gallons; above a 6" depth cracks in the walls and leaking sand make it impossible to store more water effectively.

Because the entire floor of the cistern is water-filled (essentially a large stone pool), this is not a viable place to sleep; the stairway isn't exactly comfortable, though clever PCs might rig some kind of hammocks or even build beds on posts in hopes of closing the trapdoor behind them for a secure place to rest. Due to the age and weathering of the structure, hammering posts or spikes into walls, or knocking holes in them to install hooks or poles, risks shattering the walls and causing the cistern to drain; the first time the PCs make such an attempt, describe the cracks spiderwebbing out from the impact point, and each successive attempt has a 50% chance of breaking the masonry and causing the cistern to leak its water out into the sand outside. Clever PCs might get around this with powers like *soften* or *stone shape*.

If the PCs stay at the cistern, roll for the possibility of a random encounter at 7 A.M., 7 P.M., and 3 A.M. Treat any fixed locations such as the scab nest, the elf camp, or a random dungeon as *no encounter*.

11. Aviarag: A lone aviarag roosts on the highest flat ground for miles around. As a flying hunter, it likely spot the PCs before they spot it. Since aviarags are intelligent, good-aligned creatures, it ignores PCs who don't threaten it, and might help PCs who are in trouble (on a good reaction roll).

The aviarag is reasonably smart and simply flies away from a bad encounter if necessary. Tracking it back to its lair if it is flying is nearly impossible. The aviarag's lair has a fur- and feather-lined nest containing 5d10 shiny baubles, each of which has a 1% chance to be valuable. The aviarag is willing to trade food (raw meat) or water (it will offer directions to a water source) in exchange for shiny baubles.

Aviarag: AL NG; AC 4; MV 12", Fly 24"; HD 8; HP 36; THAC0 13; # At 3 + special; Dmg 1d8/1d8/1d10; SA psionics, rake; SZ L; ML 13; XP Value 3,900. The aviarag has 50 PSPs, a power score of 13, and the powers all-around vision, contact, danger sense, ESP, id insinuation, life detection, mindlink, mindwipe, poison sense, psionic blast, psychic crush, radial navigation, and sight link. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

12. Roll twice and combine: Roll twice on the table and combine both results. For instance, the PCs might stumble across the elf tribe hunting a pack of wild crodlu for dinner.

Region F: The Three Neighbors

Adventure Level 7-9 · Expedition Bonus: 1,200 XP

Predominant Terrain: Stony Barrens (½ overland movement speed). Encounter distance 5d10×10 feet, limited by visibility. Open, flat ground (10% chance of getting lost).

Weather:

1. Warm and cloudy
2. Warm and clear
3. Hot and clear
4. Hot and clear
5. Very hot and clear
6. Very hot and dusty (dust storms limit visibility to 100')

The stony barrens here are dangerous, but there are also signs of life: occasional stands of scrub brush and thin trees. With the additional ground cover and small animals come more dangerous predators, though. The ground is still hard and brown, festooned with cracks and rocks varying in size from tiny pebbles to chunks the size of a human's torso, but now it's interspersed with many tracks from creatures.

Story Beats: While this region is dangerous for low-level characters, it's an important stopping point because of the Three Neighbors: three small, interdependent villages. Discovering one village and befriending it gives the PCs directions to the other two, and they can engage in trade and garner fresh supplies. In addition, the villagers can tell them more about other nearby regions—assume that the villagers know the terrain types of adjacent regions B, C, G, J, and K, and can describe at least one kind of monster in each of those regions. The villagers also know about the Spike Birds elf tribe—though the Spike Birds don't come into the neighborhood, traders from the villages occasionally encounter them in the dunes to the north and west.

When the PCs encounter one of the three villages, they learn the locations of the other villages. Assign numbers one to six to the hexes of the region, then roll 1d6 for each other village, re-rolling if it lands on a hex that already has a village. This lets you randomly place the other villages nearby, but the PCs discover how to get there if they make friends.

If the PCs befriend a village, award XP as if they had defeated the whole village in combat:

Calu Village: 3,620 xp

Torax's Pit: 2,405 xp

The Vineyard: 3,950 xp

Encounters: A random encounter happens on a roll of 1–3 on 1d10. Check at 7–10 P.M.

Die Roll (2d6)	Encounter	Encounter Limit
2	Thrax, 1	Unique
3	Mountain spiders, 5d4	2
4	Belgoi, 1d10	4
5	Wild kanks, 5d10×10	2
6	Calu Village	Unique location
7	Torax's Pit	Unique location
8	The Vineyard	Unique location
9	Id fiend, 1d2	2
10	Cilops, 1d4	2
11	Boneclaw baazrag, 1	1
12	Roll twice and combine	—

2. Thrax, 1: The thrax looks like a lone traveler from a distance, but of course it actually wants to drain the water from anyone it crosses. During the day, the thrax is at rest in a field of stones; at night, it is on the hunt. It tries to sneak up on parties while they rest. Thanks to its high movement rate, it can probably outdistance most parties, either to rush in and capture someone, or to flee if sorely injured.

Thrax: AL NE; AC 2; MV 24"; HD 9; HP 41; THAC0 11; # At 1 + special; Dmg 2d6 or metal longsword 1d8+3; SA water drain; SZ M; ML 15; XP Value 2,000. The thrax has 66 PSPs and a power score of 12, with the psionic powers of aging, cause decay, displacement, double pain, energy containment, and shadow form. This particular thrax carries a metal longsword as well as treasure types K (2d6 ceramic pieces) and M (1d6 silver). See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

3. Mountain spiders, 5d4: Though they're called "mountain" spiders, these exceptionally intelligent arachnids can exist anywhere. They blend into the rocks with their coloration, often staying low and spreading out treasures or creating unusual rock piles to attract the attention of wanderers, whom they ambush. The spiders keep treasure type E (25% chance of 2d6×1,000 bits, 25% chance of 1d4×1,000 ceramic pieces, 25% chance of 3d6×100 silver, 30% chance of 2d6×100 gold, 15% chance of 1d12 gems, and 25% chance of any three magic items plus one scroll). Additionally, each spider has its own tiny hoard of type N (1d4 gold) and type Q (1d6 gems), which it uses as "shiny bait."

Mountain spider: AL CN; AC 2; MV 12"; HD 5+3; HP 44; # At 1; Dmg 1d8; SA poison; SZ M; ML 18; XP Value 975. Mountain spiders have type O poison injected with their bite, which causes the victim to become paralyzed in 2d12 minutes on a failed save. 10% of mountain spiders have psionic powers (assume one if you roll 5–15 mountain spiders, two if you roll 16 or more). These mountain spiders have 50 PSPs with a power score of 13 and the psionic powers attraction, awe, body weaponry, catfall, contact, danger sense, domination, mass domination, ego whip, empathy, id insinuation, intellect fortress, invincible foes, mental barrier, mind thrust, mindlink, psionic blast, sensitivity to observation, thought shield, and tower of iron will. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

4. Belgoi, 1d10: Belgoi are one of the serious threats to the villages of this region, as they sneak close and use their bell to entice people off into the wilderness to be devoured. The villagers have become wise to their activities and know enough to not let anyone travel alone, especially vulnerable people, but other wanderers might not be so lucky.

The other hazard of the belgoi is that, if their morale breaks, fleeing belgoi run to find other belgoi tribes and bring them back for reinforcements. These belgoi can return hours or even days later, making these into protracted affairs. If escapees aren't stopped, the PCs may find themselves repeatedly fighting belgoi until they've exhausted all of the encounters in the region.

Individual belgoi carry treasure type M (1d6 silver pieces). If the PCs track back to their lair, they find treasure type I (30% chance of 1d6×100 silver, 10% chance of 1d10×10 gold, 65% chance of 2d6 gems, and 15% chance of one magic item).

Belgoi: AL LE; AC 7; MV 12"; HD 5; HP 22; THAC0 15; # At 2 or 1; Dmg 1d4+2/1d4+2 or by weapon; SA psionics, constitution drain; SD psionics; SZ M; ML 9; XP Value 650. Belgoi have 35 PSPs and a power score of 12, with the psionic powers of attraction, contact, domination, ego whip, mind blank, and psionic blast. See the **DARK SUN** boxed set *Wanderer's Journal*.

5. Wild kanks, 5d10×10: A large herd of wild kanks claims this location for its hive. The area has scrubby grasses growing out from under the rocks and plentiful weeds, serving as food for the kanks. Typically, kanks are docile, though of course the hive will mobilize to defend if any of them are attacked. Perhaps more pertinent to the PCs, if a small group of kanks can be separated from the hive, they can be domesticated and brought back to the settlement. Doing so generally requires use of animal handling proficiency, the *animal friendship* spell, the psionic powers of animal telepathy or domination, or a ranger's animal influencing abilities. If the PCs manage to capture and tame any kanks, award them XP as if defeating them in combat.

Wild kank: AL N; AC 5; MV 15"; HD 3; HP 14; THAC0 17; # At 1 or 2; Dmg 1d6 or 1d6/1d8; SA crush/poison; SZ L; ML 10; XP Value 175. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

6. Calu Village: Mark this location on the map. Calu Village is a curious settlement that provides necessary food supplies for the Three Neighbors and even trades with folk beyond. See the "Calu Village" section at the end of this region.

7. Torax's Pit: Mark this location on the map. Torax's Pit is a mining operation that provides salt, copper, and worked stone to the other two villages in this region. See the "Torax's Pit" section at the end of this region.

8. The Vineyard: Mark this location on the map. The Vineyard is a rocky hill festooned with vines, fed by water from an artesian well. See "The Vineyard" section at the end of this region.

9. Id fiend, 1d2: The id fiend appears as a large lizard at long distance, but quickly uses its psionic abilities as range closes. Note that the id fiend is highly intelligent, so it will try to separate groups, incapacitate individuals without psionic abilities, and disable a lone party member while the others flee, then feast upon prey.

Id fiend: AL N; AC 6; MV 12"; HD 5+5; HP 46; THAC0 15; # At 3 or 2; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d8 or 1d8/1d8; SA fear attack; SZ L; ML 11; XP Value 420. The id fiend has 140 PSPs with a power score of 16 and the psionic powers aversion, aura sight, biofeedback, combat mind, contact, danger sense, death field, double pain, ego whip, flesh armor, heightened senses, inflict pain, life detection, mind blank, mind thrust, mindlink, poison sense, psionic blast, psychic crush, though shield, and tower of iron will. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

10. Cilops, 1d4: These trackers are likely to pick up the trail of the party and follow them in hopes of a ready meal. Once they have the party's scent, they won't give up tracking until one side or the other is dead, or their morale breaks.

Cilops: AL N; AC 3; MV 15"; HD 5; HP 23; THAC0 15; # At 2; Dmg 2d6; SA stun; SZ H; ML 13; XP Value 420. Cilops have 30 PSPs and a power score of 9, with the powers contact, danger sense, ego whip, identity penetration, mind blank, object reading, phobia amplification, psionic sense, psychic crush, and thought shield. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

11. Boneclaw baazrag, 1: This massive baazrag is essentially an extremely hungry ambulatory armored beast with the intelligence of an angry pet that wants to eat you. Since boneclaws prefer fresh meat, it is quick to attack a party that doesn't find some way to mollify it.

Note that as described in the *Monstrous Compendium*, the boneclaw's shell can make sharp knives with a bonus to damage. Harvesting this shell requires use of the animal rending proficiency with appropriate tools.

Boneclaw baazrag: AL N; AC 0; MV 18"; HD 6; HP 27; THAC0 15; # At 3 + special; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d10; SA charging; SD special; SZ L; ML 13; XP Value 650. The boneclaw baazrag has 20 PSPs with a power score of 7, and the psionic powers contact, life detection, mind thrust, and mindlink. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

12. Roll twice and combine: Roll twice on the table and combine both results. Note that the three villages can't occur in the same hex; reroll if that happens.

Calu Village

Read or paraphrase the following text when the PCs encounter Calu Village for the first time.

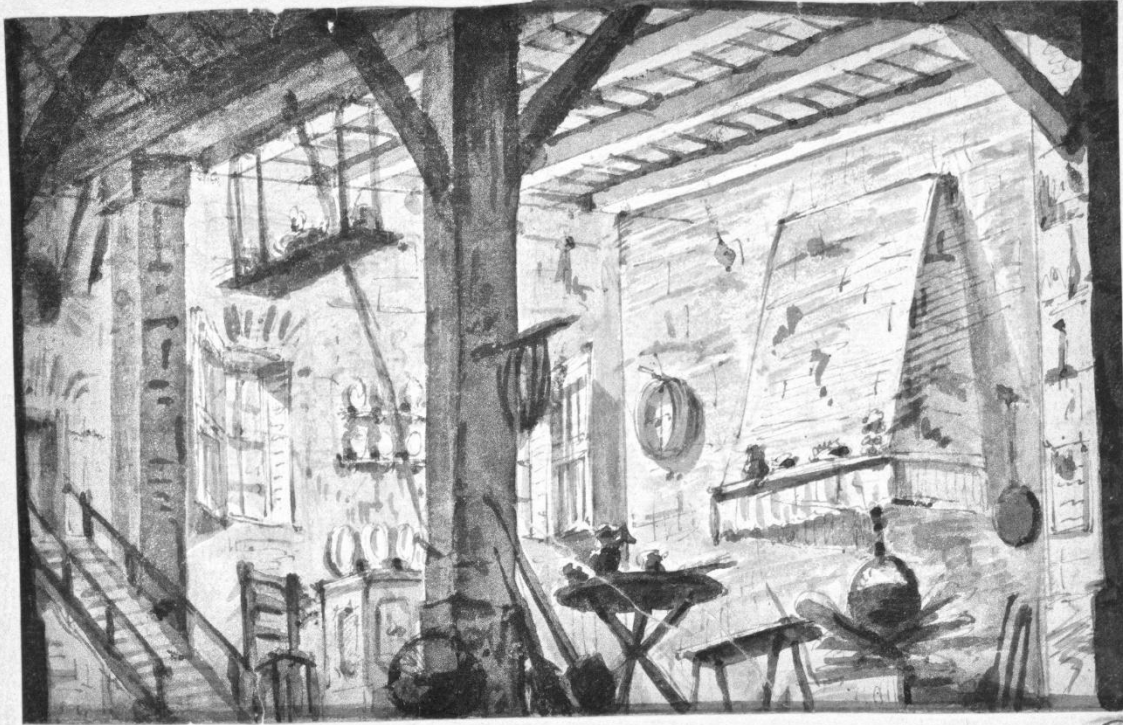
In the distance, you see a large hump, like a small hill some 50' high, of a grayish color. As you come closer you see scaffolding and signs of a small village built in the shadow of the hill, and what looks like hardy people working on excavating the giant rock or hillside.

Though Calu Village looks like a hill from a distance, it is actually the remains of a great astral balaena that was shifted to Athas by the psychic wind. The creature, not native to the material plane and unable to survive the transition, died immediately, leaving behind a massive hulk. Because the beast is from astral space, its biology is totally foreign to Athas. Its flesh is indigestible and impervious to decay—but the tareks who discovered the corpse also learned it can be rendered edible with various preparation techniques involving vinegar marinades. Now, the tareks slowly carve out pieces of the unspoiling hide, sinew, bones, and meat, prepare it in various forms, and use it for their own sustenance, for leather, and as a trade good with their neighboring villages. (It's like a Carolina barbecue.)

Calu Village boasts a population of 41 adult tareks and a handful of children. The tareks have resided here for seven years, and have become quite expert in preparing the astral flesh. They still need tools and other foods, though, so they trade the prepared meats to the other two villages for supplies.

In addition to the remains of the astral balaena, the tareks keep a small number of erdlu, principally for eggs. They'll sell the eggs, but not the birds.

If the PCs are hostile, they're potentially in for a bad time, as all of the tareks are able fighters, and working in concert they can present a threat to almost any PC (thanks to their tactical bonuses when they gang up on opponents).



Stage Design, Kitchen—Smithsonian Collection

THE SAND MARCHES

Unlike other tarek tribes, Calu Village does not have a single chief, and is not immediately hostile to outsiders. Instead, it's overseen by a small conclave of five tareks who handle issues mutually and receive the community's loyalty due to their good decision-making. The tareks are wary of outsiders (they know raiders and desperate people are a threat) but are eager to trade their product if there's an opportunity for barter. So long as the PCs are peaceful and willing to talk, any tarek laborer they meet fetches a local leader to speak to them. Keep in mind, though, that tareks distrust elves, so if the party's spokesperson is an elf, the tareks' reaction is more guarded and likely to be negative (-4 penalty).

The spokesperson for the tareks is Kreng, a garrulous cook. She is one of the five who serves on the assembly; her principal specialty is a vast knowledge of cooking recipes and techniques. Player characters might mistakenly believe her to be the leader or chief at first, because she's the one who speaks with them on behalf of Calu Village, but in truth she then takes their offers and suggestions back to the assembly to discuss before making any decisions.

The easiest way to impress the tareks is to demonstrate knowledge of food preparation. A character with proficiency in cooking, brewing, cheesemaking, or a similar skill can gain a +4 bonus to the reaction check by making a proficiency check and describing their knowledge of cuisine.

Kreng, tarek cook: AL LN; AC 7; MV 12"; HD 3; HP 14; THAC0 18; # At 2; Dmg 1d4/1d4; SA fight in concert, psionics; SD fight past death; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 120. Kreng has 30 PSPs and the psionic powers combat mind, contact, invisibility, martial trance, mind blank, mind thrust, mindlink, psionic sense, psychic crush, thought shield, and true sight.

Kreng has a score of 18 in the cooking proficiency.



Kreng—Illus. by Nala J. Wu

In addition to Kreng, there are four other members of the assembly, including an elemental shaman. The remaining 36 adults are laborers, many of them working on butchering the meat, and some also dealing with mundane tasks like cleaning, mending clothes, leatherworking, and caring for young.

Tareks, 36: AL LN; AC 7; MV 12"; HD 2; HP 9; THACO 19; # At 2; Dmg 1d4/1d4; SA fight in concert, psionics; SD fight past death; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 65.

Tarek assembly member, 1: AL LN; AC 7; MV 12"; HD 3; HP 14; THACO 18; # At 2; Dmg 1d4/1d4; SA fight in concert, psionics; SD fight past death; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 120.

Tarek assembly hero, 1: AL LN; AC 7; MV 12"; HD 5; HP 41; THACO 16; # At 1; Dmg bronze battle axe 1d8; SA fight in concert, psionics; SD fight past death; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 270.

Tarek assembly champion, 1: AL LN; AC 7; MC 12"; HD 7; HP 50; THACO 14; # At 1; Dmg steel battle axe 1d8; SA fight in concert, psionics; SD fight past death; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 650.

Tarek earth shaman, 1: AL LN; AC 7; MV 12"; HD 3; HP 14; THACO 20; # At 1; Dmg stone spear 1d8/1d8; SA fight in concert, psionics; SD fight past death; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 120.

Priest spells:

1. *cure light wounds, merciful shadows, strength of stone*

2. *dust devil*

Tareks have 30 PSPs and the psionic powers combat mind, contact, invisibility, martial trance, mind thrust, mind blank, mindlink, psionic sense, psychic crush, thought shield, and true sight. See *MC 12: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

Trading in Calu Village: Calu Village readily sells meat, leather, and leather products such as gloves, boots, shoes, aprons, and cloaks. They import vinegar, tools, salt, spices, and beverages.

Outpost: The tareks will not allow PCs to build an outpost in the same hex as Calu Village; they are suspicious of large groups of outsiders. Friendly PCs can rest at the village, though.

Ransacking the Village: Destroying the village nets the PCs enough meat to immediately push their Food & Water resources to a High level, and 200 lbs. of construction materials from wood and stone used in huts and scaffolding.

Side Quests: Friendly PCs may be employed in various tasks around the village in exchange for payment in food and leather, including:

- Guard a trade delegation to another village in the region
- Hunt down and exterminate an infestation of vermin in the village storage building
- Discover new recipes for preparing the astral balaena meat (soups, minced in dumplings, and ground up and topping pasta are all promising)
- Connect with a remote tarek settlement elsewhere in the wastes (pick a random region, roll 1d6 for the hex, and generate the settlement with the dungeon generator as a six-location ♥ habitation)

THE SAND MARCHES

Torax's Pit

Read or paraphrase the following text when the PCs encounter Torax's Pit for the first time.

You spot a huddled collection of leather tents in the distance, flapping slightly in the wind. As you come closer, you hear the sounds of guttural voices and tools hitting stone.

The dwarf Torax has a focus on delving as deeply as possible in a local mine, with the hope of finding more valuable metals far below the earth. Thus far, he has discovered large quantities of salt and small amounts of copper, but as with any dwarf focus, this doesn't dissuade him from his continuing quest.

Thanks to Torax's discovery of copper, his lone camp has slowly attracted a variety of additional workers, who expand the mine and perform supplementary chores around the encampment, such as cooking, cleaning, and maintaining the tents. The camp itself is a tent city surrounding the circling stairwell that descends into the pit. A total of 37 people now live in the camp, a mixed band of survivors and escapees not unlike the refugees at the PCs' home base. Their tents vary in size and complexity; many miners live in small single-room tents, while the local entrepreneur, a dwarf trader named Filgram, has set up his shop in an expansive pavilion tent with rough furnishings.

PCs who befriend the camp can set up their own tents and bedrolls anywhere they like, as long as they don't get in the way of the day's work.

Torax, a middle-aged dwarf, is the *de facto* leader of the camp, since he was the first to work the mine and will never leave it as long as he lives (thanks to his focus). Other inhabitants have learned not to get in his way with their day-to-day squabbles and problems, but Torax is also smart enough to realize that if the people around him have trouble, that can cause *him* trouble. He wants to keep mining as deep as he can, and that means keeping the settlement orderly and happy.

Torax has no remaining family.



Torax—Illus. by Kendal Gates

Torax, dwarf miner: AL LN; AC 10; MV 6"; HD 3; HP 14; THAC0 18; # At 1; Dmg bronze pick 1d6; SZ M; ML 15; XP Value 120.

Filgram runs a trading establishment (simply "Filgram's") in a large pavilion tent not far from the Pit. His focus is on wealth: He wants to live in luxury, and that means he heads up trade between the three villages, slowly amassing a hoard of useful tools, extra leather, and casks of beverages. He sells drinks and meals at his establishment, and is very interested in bartering for other things that he can't get locally, like jewelry, chitin, spices, wax, fruits, and even magic items. Filgram makes trips to the other two villages once per month, using a small caravan of three crodlus to carry his goods. He tries to outrun trouble rather than fighting it.

Filgram can buy treasures from the PCs, principally by trading for goods; he has large stocks of any of the materials available from the three neighbors, but only a stash of 200 silver pieces in coins. He routinely receives copper and even semi-precious gems from the miners and uses these for trade as well.

Filgram is also eager to find a spouse, and isn't terribly picky. He's had flings with a few villagers but has exhausted his opportunities locally.

Filgram, dwarf trader 3: AL N; AC 5; MV 6"; HD trader 3; HP 11; THAC0 19; # At 1; Dmg bronze-tipped spear 1d6; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 120.

Since he is wealthier than most of the villagers, Filgram owns well-made bone-plated brigandine armor and a stretched-hide medium shield, and carries a bronze-tipped spear when danger arises.

Renshy is the main guard of the camp, a veteran mul woman who served in the military forces of House Stel for several years before she lost her job in a feud with an ambitious merchant-prince. She and a few associates were banished to the desert and would've died in the salt flats if they hadn't stumbled across Torax's Pit, where they settled down and formed the nucleus of the community.

(Note that Renshy's band was the one that buried some of their dead at the Broken Cairns in region C.)

Renshy is a weapon master with the spear, and always carries a bronze-tipped one with her anywhere she goes. She tries to drill the villagers in defensive techniques, but nobody can spare the time to actually learn from her. In order to keep the village safe, she makes sure to meet all new arrivals, fights monsters from the salt flats, and oversees construction of crude earthworks to slow down attackers. Renshy has no love for Filgram, but understands that he is necessary for the village's survival; she has deep and abiding respect for Torax and his dedication.

Renshy is not interested in adventuring and will not leave the village.

THE SAND MARCHES

Renshy, mul fighter 8: AL LN; AC 7; MV 12"; HD fighter 8; HP 56; THACO 13; # At 2 (with spear); Dmg bronze-tipped spear 1d6+4; SZ M; ML 16; XP Value 975.

Renshy has a Strength of 17 and a Constitution of 17. She wears heavy hide breeches, a studded leather jerkin, and a single sleeve (left arm) of steel mail armor pulled from an ancient ruin, and carries a bronze-tipped spear similar to Filgram's.

The 34 laborers in addition to Torax, Filgram, and Renshy are a motley mix of humans, dwarves, and muls. In addition to the adults, there are a half-dozen children scattered among the families of the camp. A typical laborer has a stone tool such as a spade, pick, or cleaver, used for their work around the camp.

Laborers, 34: AL N; AC 10; MV 12" (human or mul) or 6" (dwarf); HD 1; HP 5; THACO 20; # At 1; Dmg stone tool 1d6-2; SZ M; ML 8; XP Value 35.

Everyone in Torax's Pit works hard, because it's only by trading and selling their products that they can glean the supplies necessary for survival. The laborers aren't skilled enough to venture into the wastes in search of food, because it's simply too dangerous out there. Many have harrowing tales of how they and a small group of other survivors escaped from terrible circumstances elsewhere and only arrived in Torax's Pit after losing most of their friends and family along the way. Only Renshy—and the PCs, perhaps—has the skills and gear necessary to handle serious martial problems for the village.

Trading in Torax's Pit: Torax's Pit sells stone, copper, tin, bronze, tools, weapons, and salt. It imports wood, pottery, fruits and vegetables, meat, and cloth. In addition, the dwarf trader Filgram can arrange purchase or sale of items to the other villages.

Outpost: If the PCs can make Torax, Filgram, and Renshy all friendly, they gain permission to turn Torax's Pit into an outpost. They still have to bring in their own supplies and people, but the village becomes a better-defended spot with a slightly broader array of resources.

Ransacking the Pit: Ransacking the entire village and the mines below nets the PCs 1d100×10 cp worth of gems, 20 pounds of copper, and enough stone to immediately push up the settlement's Material resource by one level (if it's not already High).

Side Quests: Player characters can earn coins, worked stone, and even metal by performing useful tasks such as:

- Help the village to develop a stable water supply
- Rescue a lost child
- Find a romantic partner for Filgram
- Acquire better tools and more wood for improving the mines
- Defeat an encroaching monster nearby making it impossible for Filgram to run his usual trade route
- Use magic or psionic abilities to aid Torax in completing his focus by finding a great deposit of metal in the deeps

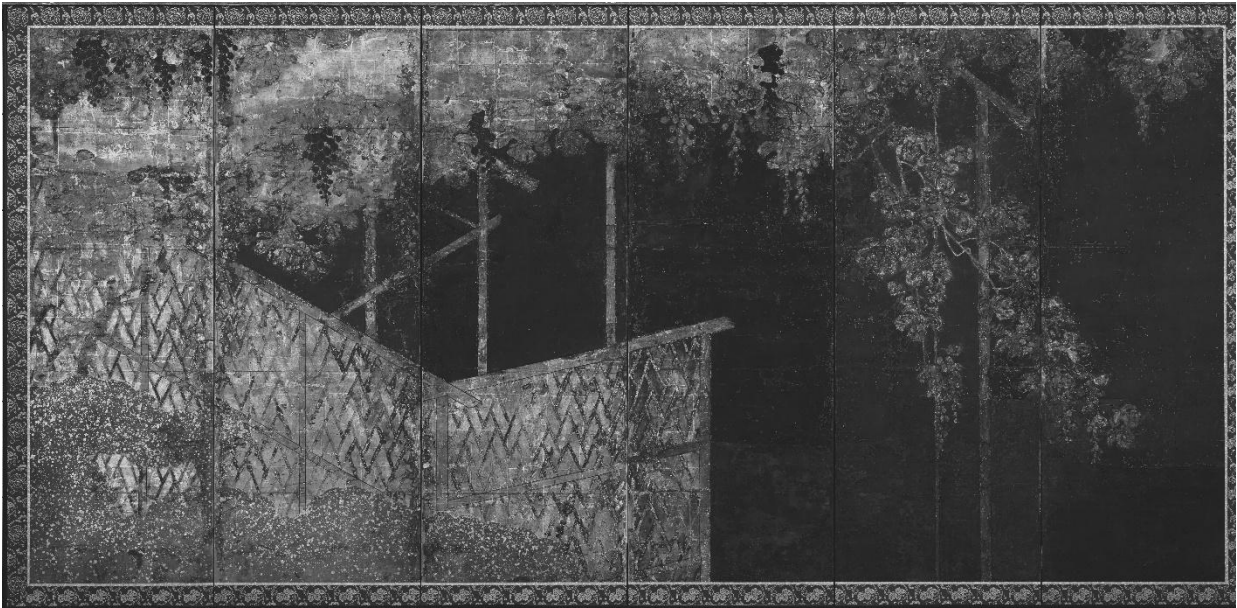
The Vineyard

Read or paraphrase the following text when the PCs encounter The Vineyard for the first time.

Ahead rises a rough hill of bleached stone, with scattered patches of scrub grass. Atop it is a ruin made of white tumbled stone pillars and wooden trellises, with green vines crawling up them.

The Vineyard is a Villich settlement. Normally the Villich would keep to themselves deep in the wastes, but they realize that by trading with the other two villages, they can access useful materials.

The Villich have a high degree of aesthetic sensibilities, and the Vineyard is a beautiful sight: green vines grow thick over sturdy trellises, and decorative pottery holds neatly-trimmed dwarf fruit trees and assortments of grains and legumes. Pathways decorated with white gravel meander under shaded awnings and between snug homes with wood-shuttered windows and sturdy slate roofs. A low fieldstone wall surrounds a central plaza paved with flagstones, in front of a squat communal building. Tumbled ruins surround the area with an eerie quiet.



Fruiting grapevines on a bamboo trellis—Smithsonian Collection

THE SAND MARCHES

The main attraction of the Vineyard is its artesian well. A high-pressure aquifer causes water to bubble up into a stone fountain in the middle of the ruin, one the Villichis have carefully repaired and protected. With this water, they support their community and grow vines to produce grapes, which they use both for food and for making wine and vinegar. In addition, they use the water with local clay to craft pottery, which they trade to the other villages.

Though the Villichis are vegetarians while at their village, they still purchase meat from Calu Village, which they use to make compost for their gardens.

The leader of this settlement is an envoy named Treese, and her three Villichis companions work with her to maintain the Vineyard and keep the place safe and prosperous. The Villichis do not leave the Vineyard—they only trade with outsiders who come to them, never traveling elsewhere. They would only leave if the Vineyard were destroyed.



Treese—Illus. by Kendal Gates

Treese, Villichis envoy 10: AL LN; AC 5; MV 24"; HD 10; HP 45; THAC0 11; # At 1; Dmg hardened wooden short sword 1d6; SA +1 attack bonus with nonmetal weapons, psionics; MR 10%; SZ M; ML 14; XP Value 2,000. Treese has 143 PSPs with a power score of 15 and the powers ballistic attack, contact, control flames, danger sense, id insinuation, invincible foes, inertial barrier, intellect fortress, know location, mental barrier, mind blank, mindlink, molecular agitation, pyrokinetic bolt*, pyrokinetic burst*, psionic blast, psychic crush, telekinesis, thought shield, and tower of iron will.

* See Chapter Seven: New Magic, Monsters, and Psionics.

Treese has a Wisdom of 18 and a Dexterity of 18. She has a rating of 18 in the psionic lore proficiency. She wears a *cloak of protection* +2 (wrapped over one shoulder like a Balician chiton) and in melee fights with a simple short sword made of wood but psionically hardened to the strength of steel.

Treese set up this tiny village far from the Villichis convent because she has unusual psionic abilities, which are sometimes dangerous. Instead of some of the common psychokinetic abilities that Villichis develop, she has pyrokinetic abilities—she can heat objects and even generate blasts of superheated flames. She keeps herself isolated from other Villichis, aside from her small circle of companions, so that she can study and develop her powers without putting the convent at risk.

Psionicist PCs who convince Treese to train them can learn her pyrokinetic powers.

Villichis companions, 3: AL LN; AC 6; MV 24"; HD 6; HP 27; THAC0 15; # At 2; Dmg bone daggers 1d4-1/1d4-1; SA +1 attack bonus with nonmetal weapons, psionics; MR 10%; SZ M; ML 14; XP Value 650. Treese's companions have 91 PSPs and a power score of 15 with the psionic powers ballistic attack, contact, control body, control sound, id insinuation, inertial barrier, invincible foes, know location, mind blank, psychic crush, telekinesis, and thought shield.

Villichis companions wear leather armor and use paired bone daggers in combat.

See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

Because the Vineyard is so sparsely populated, the Villichis have a rigid schedule. They rise with the sun to eat a lean breakfast and tend the gardens, then during the hottest part of the day retreat indoors to the shade to engage in psionic meditation and study. In the evening they eat another meal and conduct work on pressing and fermenting grapes, weaving vines and fibers, throwing and firing pottery, and cleaning. As the sun sets and the sky cools they engage in battle drills for practice before retiring to sleep, relying on their danger sense power to alert them if a threat arises.

Trading with the Vineyard: The Vineyard imports meat (for composting), tools, metal, and stone. They export fruits and vegetables, fiber, pottery, cloth, rope, wine, water, and vinegar.

Outpost: The Villichis are highly insular, and while they will allow the PCs to trade with them (from outside), they absolutely do not allow the establishment of an outpost at their home. Even if they become friendly to the PCs, they will only consent to allowing the PCs to rest at the Vineyard, never to bringing other people or setting up other defenses and industries.

Ransacking the Vineyard: Destroying the vineyards nets the PCs a collection of seeds, 100 rations of food, 100 gallons of water, and 50 lbs. of useful building materials.

THE SAND MARCHES

Side Quests: The Vineyard offers a variety of esoteric tasks for helpful PCs, with rewards in the form of food, psionic training, or possibly even an empowered item or two. Tasks could include:

- Something poisons the water supply of the artesian well; track the water to its source and solve the problem
- Help the Villichis adopt a Villich child from the city-state of Babweru
- Bring Treese a magical item that aids with fire resistance, to help prevent accidents with her pyrokinetic experimentation
- Join the Villichis in a war band to hunt a dangerous psionic enemy or creature such as a group of psurlons or an evil, high-level psionic adept with apprentices
- Assist another group of Villichis in reaching the Vineyard and joining the settlement, and in return follow up on a vision that one of them has leading to a ruin full of riches

Region G: The Slabs

Adventure Level 7-9 · Expedition Bonus: 1,200 XP

Predominant Terrain: Stony Barrens

(½ overland movement speed).

Encounter distance 5d10×10 feet, limited by visibility. Open, flat ground (10% chance of getting lost).

Weather:

1. Warm and cloudy
2. Warm and clear
3. Hot and clear
4. Hot and clear
5. Very hot and clear
6. Very hot and clear

The ground here features large, flat rocks often overlapping in small stacks. In between rock piles, large cacti grow, and weedy bushes abound. Small insects and lizards are common here, making survival simpler for those who know how to find and catch them. But the dangers of this region are also greater, as there are more predators to feed upon these bounties.

Story Beats: The main point of interest in the Slabs is the Haunted Menhir. This location provides a challenging battle and a mini-dungeon offering rich rewards, if the PCs can best its undead inhabitants.

Encounters: A random encounter happens on a roll of 1–3 on 1d10. Check at 7–10 P.M.

Die Roll (2d6)	Encounter	Encounter Limit
2	Earth Elemental Beast, 1	1
3	Flailer, 1	2
4	Wild kanks, 5d10×10	2
5	Barbed scorpions, 1d4	4
6	Lesser earth elemental, 1	2
7	Standing stones	Unique location
8	Xerichou, 6d6	2
9	The Haunted Menhir	Unique location
10	Grimlock cave	Unique location
11	Yucca stand	2
12	Roll twice and combine	—

2. Earth Elemental Beast, 1: From a distance, or in the dark, this elemental beast might resemble a large lizard, perhaps an inix. At closer range its rocky hide becomes apparent. As with all elementals, it may be hostile or not, based on its own agenda; roll a random reaction for it when the party approaches its location. The elemental beast is most likely hiding under the ground, ready to burst forth if it means to attack. If it does not choose to attack, it may still appear out of curiosity.

Earth elemental beast: AL N; AC 2; MV 12"; HD 8+3; HP 39; THAC0 13; # At 2; Dmg 3d6/2d6; SA grappling bite on natural 20, tail whip stuns (save vs. paralyzation); SD +1 or better weapon to hit; SZ L; ML 13; XP Value 3,000. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

3. Flailer, 1: The six-legged flailer pulls into its camouflaged shell and waits for likely prey to pass by. As flailers are diurnal, it can be hunting at any time. Make a reaction check as normal to see if the flailer attacks (it's hungry) or doesn't (it isn't, or it's curious about the PCs), unless the PCs spot it first. Recovering the flailer's shell to make small weapons requires use of the animal rending nonweapon proficiency.

Flailer: AL N; AC 1; MV 9"; HD 9+9; HP 50; THAC0 11; # At 5; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d8/1d6/1d6; SA surprise, back attack; SZ S; ML 13; XP Value 2,000. The flailer has 120 PSPs and a power score of 13 with the powers of all-round vision, aura sight, body equilibrium, chameleon power, combat mind, contact, danger sense, double pain, ego whip, inflict pain, mental barrier, mind blank, mind thrust, psionic blast, probe, shadow form, thought shield, and tower of iron will. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

4. Wild kanks, 5d10×10: A large herd of wild kanks claims this location for its hive. The area has scrubby grasses growing out from under the rocks and plentiful weeds, serving as food for the kanks. Typically, kanks are docile, though of course the hive will mobilize to defend if any of them are attacked. Perhaps more pertinent to the PCs, if a small group of kanks can be separated from the hive, they can be domesticated and brought back to the settlement. Doing so generally requires use of animal handling proficiency, the *animal friendship* spell, the psionic powers of animal telepathy or domination, or a ranger's animal influencing abilities. If the PCs manage to capture and tame any kanks, award them XP as if defeating them in combat.

Wild kank: AL N; AC 5; MV 15"; HD 3; HP 14; THAC0 17; # At 1 or 2; Dmg 1d6 or 1d6/1d8; SA crush/poison; SZ L; ML 10; XP Value 175. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

5. Barbed scorpions, 1d4: Barbed scorpions hunt for small game, but that may include PCs; these scorpions are aggressive and always hungry. PCs skilled in chitinwork may be able to strip chitin off the scorpions to make armor or tools. Given their size, a typical barbed scorpion provides $1d4+1 \times 10$ pounds of chitin. Treasure (type D: 15% chance of $1d10 \times 1,000$ bits, 50% chance of $1d3 \times 1,000$ ceramic pieces, 15% chance of $1d6 \times 100$ silver, 10% chance of $1d4 \times 100$ gold, 30% chance of $1d10$ gems, 15% chance of any 2 magic items plus one *potion fruit*) will be found among remains or even in partially-digested bits in the scorpion's guts.

Barbed scorpion: AL N; AC 1; MC 9"; HD 9+5; THACO 11; # At 3; Dmg $1d12/1d12/1d6$; SA poison sting; SD bards; SZ M; ML 12; XP 3,000. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

6. Lesser earth elemental, 1: This earth elemental seems like just another large slab of rock until it moves. Make a reaction roll to determine whether it is hostile or not—as with all elementals, its motives are inscrutable.

Lesser earth elemental: AL N; AC 4; MV 6"; HD 6; HP 27; THACO 15; #At 1; Dmg $3d8$; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; SZ M; ML 13; XP Value 975. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

7. Standing stones: Mark this location on the map. The PCs come across a small ring of standing stones. They might be natural or they might be placed—it's hard to tell. Roll $1d6$, then toss that many dice on the map. Each die is a standing stone with a height in feet equal to the value rolled on the die.

The standing stones have another feature as well:

Table: Standing Stones Feature

Roll (1d4)	Feature
1	6d4 scattered semi-precious gems (take 1 hour to collect)
2	Pool of water (6d6 gallons)
3	Cactus stand (2d6 rations of food, equal amount of gallons of water)
4	Scrub trees ($1d10 \times 10$ pounds of wood)

8. Xerichou, 6d6: These omnivores are active during the day, flying about in a large flock while searching for edible plants and animals. At night, they huddle together to sleep, with a few guards posted. Since they are of average intelligence, they respond with caution to PCs passing through the area, and avoid dangerous-looking groups. They are not innately hostile, though they fight back viciously if attacked, or on a poor reaction roll. The xerichou's primary threat is in their large numbers and ability to attack via displacement.

Xerichou: AL N; AC 5; MV 9", FI 15" (C); HD 3; HP 14; THACO 17; # At 2; Dmg 2d4; SA flock attack; SD teleport to lair; SZ S; ML 11; XP Value 270. Xerichou have 35 PSPs and a power score of 10 with the powers body control, body weaponry, cell adjustment complete healing, contact, displacement, mind thrust, mindlink, psychic crush, teleport, and time shift. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

9. The haunted menhir: Mark this location on the map. The haunted menhir is a large slab of upright stone in the middle of the barrens, raised by some long-ago community. See its description at the end of this section.

10. Grimlock cave: Mark this location on the map. A rocky hillside opens into a 15' wide aperture, with jumbled rocks piled about it. The hole is surrounded with filth, detritus, and bones. The hill is mostly excavated, with a large cave measuring roughly 50' in radius. This is home to an entire extended community of grimlocks, which pour forth at night to scavenge the landscape for food. Though individually weak, they move in large groups. Note that they are of average intelligence, so they are capable of some tactics and negotiation. If their morale breaks in a confrontation, the grimlocks do their best to take their meager possessions and flee into the barrens.

The lair contains 2d10×10 grimlocks. For every 10 grimlocks, there is one leader; for every 40, there is one champion. Grimlocks wield basic stone or wood weapons, principally axes and swords. Each grimlock carries treasure types K, L, and M (2d6 ceramic pieces, 2d4 gold, and 1d6 silver), and the lair holds type B (25% chance of 1d10×400 bits; 25% chance of 1d10×100 ceramic; 25% chance of 1d10×10 silver; 30% chance of 5d10 gold; 30% chance of 1d8 gems; 10% chance of one magic armor and weapon).

In addition, the back portion of the lair descends in a gentle slope leading to a dirty pool, about 5' deep. This serves as the grimlocks' communal water source. The water is filthy and diseased due to the grimlocks' unsanitary habits, but if the grimlocks are driven off it slowly becomes palatable over the course of a week.

Grimlock: AL NE; AC 5; MV 12"; HD 2; HP 9; THACO 19; # At 1; Dmg 1d6 or by weapon; SD save as 6th level fighter, +1 on surprise rolls, immune to vision-affecting spells; SZ M; ML 11; XP Value 175.

Grimlock leader: AL NE; AC 5; MV 12"; HD 3; HP 14; THACO 18; # At 1; Dmg 1d6 or by weapon; SD save as 6th level fighter, +1 on surprise rolls, immune to vision-affecting spells; SZ M; ML 11; XP Value 270.

Grimlock champion: AL NE; AC 5; MV 12"; HD 4; HP 18; THACO 17; # At 1; Dmg 1d6 or by weapon; SD save as 6th level fighter, +1 on surprise rolls, immune to vision-affecting spells; SZ M; ML 11; XP Value 420.

See MC 14: *Fiend Folio Appendix*.



*Yucca Cactus at
Hesperia,
California—
Smithsonian
Collection*

11. Yucca

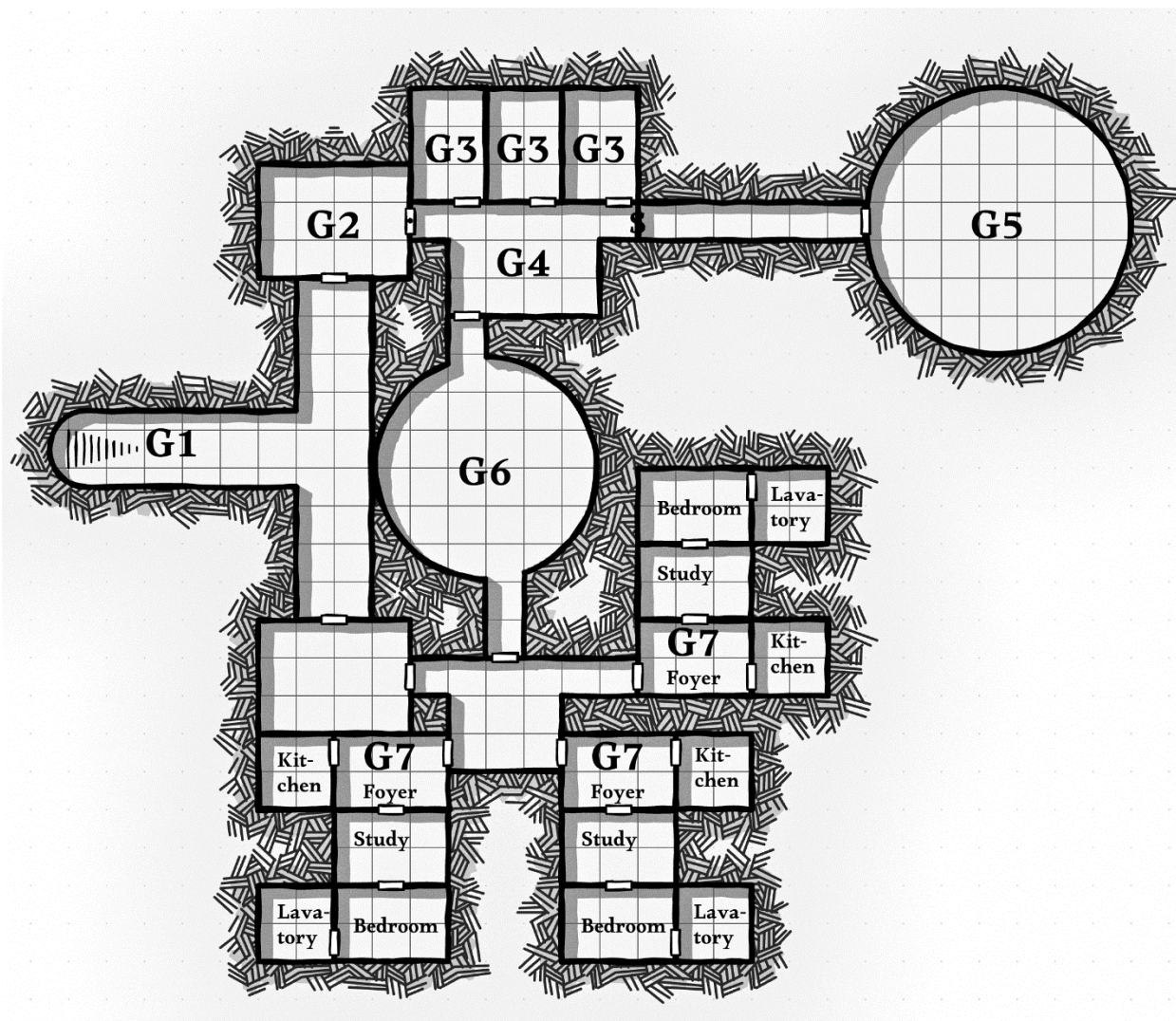
stand: The PCs stumble across a small stand of yucca plants. The cacti are useful both for food and for textile fibers.

There are 2d4 yucca plants, each 3d10 feet in height; the yucca weighs 4 lbs. per foot of height, of which half is edible and half useful for textiles. The yucca does require preparation (with cooking proficiency) to be edible. Fibers from the plant can be woven (with weaving proficiency) into a tough thread and used to make clothing or rope.

Harvesting the yucca takes half an hour per plant with appropriate tools, or four times as long if the PCs must improvise.

12. Roll twice and combine: Roll twice on the table and combine both results. For instance, the PCs might encounter a lesser earth elemental fighting with barbed scorpions, or discover a herd of kanks grazing around the haunted menhir.

The Haunted Menhir



As the PCs approach this location, read or paraphrase the following text.

From perhaps an arrow flight away, you spot a broad, flat stone rising from the hard ground. The stone is roughly rectangular, obviously crudely worked and raised up on its end by... someone.

The menhir was raised centuries ago, after the collapse of the civilization of this region but many years before the present day. It serves as a marker to the tunnels below.

The menhir is made of dark gray stone, measures 20' tall and 15' wide, and is planted 5' into the ground. It weighs about 2,500 pounds. A thick layer of dust and sand covers its surface. If the PCs clear this away, they see a set of symbols, with a star on the left, a horizontal line tracing from the star to the right, then meeting a vertical line that terminates in a pair of squares. The middle of the menhir is rugged and damaged due to exposure or vandalism, but on the right side of the face is another horizontal line that connects to a large circle. PCs who explore below may realize that this is a partial map—and the horizontal line connecting to the circle on the right is a hint as to the secret door leading to the final chamber (#G5).

Originally, the chambers below the menhir served as an emergency shelter during times of war. As the world fell into devastation, they instead became a tomb. Knowledge of their former use was lost, the secrets of the place were forgotten, and they became a site of superstition, until at last they were abandoned completely.

As the PCs approach, they see no signs of life, but once they reach the menhir they realize that in its shadow is a heavy rock slab roughly covering a pit. After the slab is moved aside (it weighs approximately 600 lbs.), the pit reveals a set of rough-hewn stairs descending into a dark tunnel, heading east.

The haunted menhir has a strong connection to the Gray. Anyone remaining in the area for more than twelve hours must make a saving throw vs. death or lose one level. This level drain is temporary and dissipates after the individual has eight hours of rest away from the site, but the PCs won't know this at first. Remaining in the area for an extended period prevents recovery and forces successive saving throws; anyone who loses all of their levels dies and turns into a mindless zombie. This effect ends immediately if the receptacle at G5 is destroyed.

Characters who pass through walls by phasing also suffer the temporary loss of one level per round of such travel.

Interiors are of worked gray stone with 12' ceilings. Doors are wooden, stuck, and must be forced open.

Outpost: Due to the level-draining feature of this area, it can't be used as an outpost unless the receptacle at G5 is destroyed or the PCs figure out some way to nullify its power.

G1: Rubble-Strewn Entrance

The stairs descend into a passage hewn into the earth, with worked stone walls, floors, and ceilings. Bits of broken debris—cracked stones, broken branches, fragments of bone—litter the floor.

The entrance has no useful debris, but inspection shows a combination of very old and somewhat recent remnants. Some of the sand and dirt has obviously blown down the stairs, as the cover for the entrance was not fully sealed.

THE SAND MARCHES

A successful tracking proficiency check indicates that a bare-footed humanoid has moved between the entrance and the northern passage, but no more information than that is discernible.

G2: Ruined Office

A wooden table, long since smashed to rotten flinders, once stood in the midst of this room, with a stuffed chair behind it, now inhabited by a rotting corpse. Small piles of dust on the floor show minor disturbances.

Once, this was an administrative office, for dealing with issues of accounting and resource distribution, but the papers have long since turned to dust, and the furniture mostly destroyed by time. The door to the east is locked with a brass lock inset into the door—enterprising PCs may want to smash the wooden door just for the metal value of the lock (135 cp). It can be picked with the usual Open Locks thief skill; it is not trapped, and the key is long gone.

The corpse in the chair is active, though, even though at first it appears quite still. This is a former cultist who once revered this place but succumbed to its necrotic powers, and has become a thinking zombie. The cult zombie does not know the true history of the location, and even if PCs establish communication, it can only explain that it was once part of a small group of tribal survivors who stumbled across this unhallowed ground and sought to explore it, but left when it became clear that the place was cursed. This particular explorer didn't make it out in time.

The zombie still holds and fights with a war club (see *Combat & Tactics*; this weapon is 6 lbs., medium size, bludgeoning/slashing, speed factor 7, damage S–M 1d6+1/L 1d4+1, and does not require special materials), and gains a +2 to attack and +4 to hit with this weapon due to its Strength of 18/76. In addition, the thinking zombie wears medium-sized piecemeal armor consisting of studded leather leggings (1 point of AC and 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.), and a bone-plated brigandine vest (2 points of AC and 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.) with leather sleeves (1 point of AC and 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ lbs.), for a total AC of 6 and 27 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. of weight.

Thinking zombie: AL NE; AC 6; MV 12"; HD 8; HP 36; THACO 13; # At 1; Dmg war club S–M 1d6+5/L 1d4+5; SA *cause disease* bite; SD undead immunities; SZ M; ML 19; XP Value 615. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

G3: Empty Storerooms

Rotted leather straps and pieces of wood show the remains of old, broken and ruined barrels and crates. Once, this place held supplies, perhaps food or clothing or tools; now, it is little more than a trash heap.

Each of the three rooms indicated as G3 on the map is festooned with the remnants of ruined wooden storage containers. The remnants can be used for firewood, but are too fragile to serve any other purpose.

One of the broken boxes in the middle storeroom holds a leather sack filled with yellow mold. When disturbed, the sack bursts open with spores—save vs. poison or die for everyone in the room. The sack also contains 3d6 silver pieces, 2d6 gold pieces, and a *kinetic crystal* (see Chapter Seven: New Magic, Monsters, and Psionics).

Yellow mold: AL N; AC 9; MV 0"; HD N/A; # At 1; SA poison spores; SD affected only by fire; SZ S; ML N/A; XP Value 65.



Stage Design, Crypt—Smithsonian Collection

THE SAND MARCHES

G4: Staging Area

Four rickety chairs remain improbably intact in a corner of this rectangular room, with doors on nearly every side. The walls bear remnants of a faded, indecipherable mural.

The staging area once served as a place to move supplies, conduct small meetings, and provide simple entertainment space. The wall mural was once a beautifully-painted scene showing many humans traveling and working on rolling fields full of golden grasses with a blue sun in the sky, but has faded into total obscurity unless repaired with magic.

The four intact chairs are nonmagical and made of hardwood. They are creaky and rickety but usable, with a very small value (5 cp each).

The secret door in the eastern wall is a cunningly-balanced counterweighted stone wall section. If it's discovered, the PCs find a small wall tile they can remove, which has a metal locking mechanism behind it. Assuming they don't pick it or break it, they can unlock it with the brass key from the Half-Buried Road, room A5. Unlocking or forcing open the secret door without using the key triggers a trap (if it's not detected and disabled first): knockout gas floods the space directly in front of the secret door (save vs. poison or be rendered unconscious for 1d4 turns), then it ignites and catches fire and burns for five rounds, inflicting 2d6 fire damage to anyone in the space during that time.

G5: The Receptacle

An immense quartz crystal rises from a pedestal in the center of this room. The pedestal is a round platform some 15' across with steps leading up a few feet to the crystal itself, which stretches up 10' to reach the ceiling. It glows with psychic power that illuminates the circular chamber—and the shadowy figures within.

The receptacle was once a great repository of psychic power for the inhabitants of this place, but it has become warped due to damage, time, and exposure to the hideous undead now inhabiting the area.

The receptacle holds 300 PSPs. The receptacle acts as a strong conduit to the Gray, and dead spirits sometimes "leak" from there into here. Anyone touching the crystal can access its PSPs, but also must immediately save vs. death or lose one level (as described previously, this is temporary until the character is able to rest at some place away from this location, but a character who loses all levels dies and becomes a mindless zombie).

The receptacle can be destroyed by striking it with weapons, spells, or powers for 100 hit points of damage, or by use of a *shatter* spell or the *detonate* or *disintegrate* psionic powers. If destroyed but not disintegrated, the receptacle shivers and then explodes with a high-pitched squeal of sundering crystal, inflicting 1d10 damage per 50 PSPs still stored within to everyone in the room (with a save vs. spells for half damage). Note that it is possible for PCs to avoid this by holding the door open and then launching attacks or powers at the receptacle from outside of the room. A PC can recognize this hazard by use of the psionic lore proficiency, and it certainly trips the danger sense clairsentient devotion if the PCs damage the receptacle.

Award the PCs 500 xp each if they destroy the receptacle, and an additional 500 xp each if they do so without anyone in the party taking damage in the act.

Surrounding the main receptacle are four smaller ones embedded in stone mountings on the cardinal positions of the map. These cloudy gray gems are receptacles with 10 PSPs each, and unlike the central crystal, they are safe to handle. Removing one from a mounting without cracking and destroying it requires successful use of the gemcutting nonweapon proficiency with appropriate tools, or clever use of powers like *soften* or *stone shape*.

The room also holds five ectoplasmic remnants—shades of the dead, empowered by the psychic energy of the receptacle, and drawn from dead spirits in the Gray. These undead monsters have no memory of life, only knowing that they have a cold hate for existence. They rush to attack any living creature entering this chamber, and follow through the entire complex, even phasing through walls, but do not leave the subterranean areas.

Ectoplasmic remnants, 5: AL NE; AC 6; MV 12", FI 3" (C); HD 5; HP 23; THAC0 16; # At 1; Dmg 1d6; SA disease; SD ½ damage from nonmagic or nonmetal weapons, undead immunities; ML 20; XP Value 420. See Chapter Seven: New Magic, Monsters, and Psionics.

G6: The Defiled Garden

This circular room has passages out on opposite sides, and in the center is a large circular planter filled with grayish dirt. All around, black dust covers the floor, and a lone, twisted tree occupies the planter, with tattered, browned leaves and peeling bark.

THE SAND MARCHES

Long ago, the garden supported a *tree of life* and a variety of plants and small insects. With the flood of negative energy in the complex caused by the damaged receptacle, the tree died and itself became undead. Now it thirsts only for life energy and drains anything that comes into the chamber. It is intelligent enough to wait for the PCs to enter the room fully before it strikes with its spells (possibly from surprise). While its defiling magic is not as powerful as a dragon's, it still causes pain to anyone in its defiling radius.

Tree of death: AL CE; AC 5; HD 8; HP 36; # At 1; SA defiling; SD magic absorption; ML 14; XP Value 2,000. See Chapter Seven: New Magic, Monsters, and Psionics.

Wizard spells:

1. *spook*
2. *choke**
3. *dispel magic*
4. *phantasmal killer*

* See the *Complete Wizard's Handbook*. If you don't have that book, substitute *stinking cloud* instead.

The incidental treasure of the tree is scattered about the defiled garden area: 101 cp, 48 gp, five gems (one ornamental worth 15 cp, two semi-precious worth 75 cp, two precious worth 75 sp), a *steel trident +1*, and a *shield of the mindwarden* (see Chapter Seven: New Magic, Monsters, and Psionics).

G7: Denuded Habitation

Once, this room might have served for entertainment, or for casual relaxation. Now, though, it is stuffed with the wreckage of destroyed furnishings and the cadavers of its former inhabitants.

Each room connected to G7 on the map is a private living area, connected to adjoining rooms labeled nearby. These rooms were once small habitations for families in this underground sanctuary, but now they are tombs for the dead. Each room has 2d4+1 pieces of incidental wrecked furnishings, such as stools, couches, end tables, chairs, and shelves, which are now usable only as firewood or improvised weapons.

Each habitation also contains the remnants of its former owners. Each room has one zombie, for a total of five for each habitation. As soon as a fight breaks out (and the zombies rise to attack as soon as a PC enters the foyer), all of the zombies *in that set of five rooms* move to engage in the same room. The zombies pursue PCs, but do not go up the stairs at G1 to leave the complex (clever PCs who figure this out may pelt them with ranged attacks from above).

Each room's original function is explained below, in case PCs use powers like sensitivity to psychic impressions or proficiencies like ancient history to try to determine the functions of the rooms.

Foyer: An entry area for entertaining guests or enjoying casual games and dining.

Kitchen: A food preparation and storeroom space, containing a small fireplace and oven with a chimney leading into small holes in the ceiling that are long since covered over with rocks and dirt above. Starting a fire in a fireplace without clearing the chimney first is a good way to die of smoke inhalation.

In the second kitchen the PCs search, they find three steel knives.

Study: Room for reclining, reading, casual games, creating art, and similar recreational activities. The first study searched for at least 10 minutes disgorges a usable book (if anyone can read Common) that is a rambling treatise on psionic and magical techniques for static cosmetic effects. It is worth 400 cp to the right kind of buyer, or can be kept for a wizard's library for spell research.

Bedroom: Sleeping area and personal private space. Each bedroom has small jars and boxes with 2d6 silver pieces and 1d6 gold pieces, as well as one small steel weapon (dagger, hatchet, knife, etc.).

Lavatory: Space for cleaning and waste removal, via a hole in the floor that leads to a large excavated, lime-lined and mushroom-filled chamber below.

Zombies: AL N; AC 8; MV 6"; HD 2; HP 9; THAC0 19; # At 1; Dmg 1d8; SD spell immunity; SZ M; ML special; XP Value 65. See MC 1.

THE SAND MARCHES

Region H: The Corroded Lands

Adventure Level 10–12 · Expedition Bonus: 2,500 XP

Predominant Terrain: Salt Flats (normal overland movement speed). Encounter distance 5d10×10 feet, limited by visibility. Open, flat ground (10% chance of getting lost).

Weather:

1. Warm and clear
2. Hot and clear
3. Hot and clear
4. Very hot and clear
5. Very hot with salt storms (see below)
6. Scorching and clear

The salt flats here are even worse than elsewhere, carrying terrible poisons in the dust that blows constantly. When salt storms blow, anyone who's unprotected suffers double water usage, *and* must make a save vs. poison or suffer 1d4 points of Constitution damage, which recovers at the rate of one point per day of rest when the storm subsides.

Remember that scorching weather slows overland travel.

Story Beats: The corroded lands hold great dangers, but also a mystery pointing toward the eventual destinations in the far southeast, as well as a chance for the PCs to acquire useful magical weapons and armor if they haven't found such equipment yet.

Encounters: A random encounter happens on a roll of 1 on 1d10. Check at 3–6 A.M. and 3–6 P.M.

Die Roll (2d6)	Encounter	Encounter Limit
2	Greater basilisks, 2d4-1	1
3	Braxat, 1d2	2
4	Animal living idol, 1	1
5	Giant ant lion, 1	2
6	Dragonne, 1	Unique
7	Dune reaper drones, 1d4+1	4
8	Dune reaper warrior, 1	4
9	Alkaline Pool	Unique location
10	The Fallen Foundry	Unique location
11	Jann, 1d2	1
12	Roll twice and combine	—

2. Greater basilisks, 2d4-1: This collection of horrid large lizard-creatures lies in wait among piles of broken sandy figures—tiny insects, birds, and lizards they have turned to stone. They have a low cunning and may exercise caution, if hunger does not overwhelm them. The basilisks' treasure (type H) lies strewn about the rocks and may take half an hour to fully collect: 35% chance of 1d10×1,000 bits, 30% chance of 1d6×1,000 ceramic pieces, 30% chance of 2d6×100 silver, 15% chance of 2d6×10 gold, 60% chance of 3d10 gems, and a 15% chance of any six magic items. As always, adjust the treasure based on the total number of basilisks encountered (1/7th the treasure for only one greater basilisk, 2/7th if two are encountered, and so on).

Greater basilisk: AL N; AC 2; MV 6"; HD 10; HP 45; THAC0 11; # At 3; Dmg 1d6/1d6/2d8; SA gaze turns to stone, poison (type K); SD surprised only on a 1; SZ L; ML 16; XP Value 7,000. See MC 2.

3. Braxat, 1d2: Braxats aren't the worst thing in the wastes, but they're up there. As they are intelligent, evil, and nocturnal carnivores, braxats hunt for food at night; during the day, they hunker down in sandy flats under outcroppings of salt-crust rock to sleep.

Harvesting braxat plates for armor requires successful use of the animal rending proficiency with appropriate tools. One braxat provides enough material to make a shield and one suit of plate armor for one Medium-sized person, using armorer proficiency.

The braxats carry individual treasure (R and V: 2d8 silver, 1d4×10 gold, 3d6 gems, and any two magic items). If magic weapons are indicated, the braxats will use them.

Braxat: AL NE; AC 0; MV 15"; HD 10; HP 45; THAC0 11; # At 1; dmg by weapon +10; SA breath weapon; SD hit only by magical or steel weapons; SZ H; ML 18; XP Vale 5,000. Braxats have 80 PSPs and a power score of 15, with the psionic powers awe, contact, inflict pain, intellect fortress, invincible foes, mental barrier, mind blank, mind thrust, psionic blast, psychic crush, thought shield, and tower of iron will.

Unless they are carrying magic weapons as treasure, braxats typically use a spear (base dmg S–M 1d6/L 1d8) or club (base dmg S–M 1d6/L 1d3). Such weapons are made for their huge size, so they gain the full benefit of their strength, and the weapons are not usable by smaller creatures (even half-giants).

4. Animal living idol, 1: This stone statue vaguely resembles a huge toad, a remnant of the empire that once sprawled across this land before its devastation. Due to its incredible resistance to weapons and magic, this statue is a serious hazard to PCs who think it will be easily dispatched—although it is vulnerable to psychokinetic powers like detonate.

Animal living idol: AL LN; AC 4; MV 6"; HD 9; HP 41; THACO 3; # At 1; Dmg 4d8; SA charm; SD immune to most spells, +3 or better weapon to hit; SZ L; ML 20; XP Value 9,000. See *MC 13: Al-Qadim Appendix*.

5. Giant ant lion, 1: The loose soil in this area descends slightly and becomes sandier, though not to the level of sandy dunes. The pit around the lion is 60 feet in diameter, but the region mostly just looks like a depression in the salt flats until one is at its edge or sliding down it. The ant lion lunges at anything disturbing its pit. The main threat is that a character at the edge of the pit has a 20% chance of sliding down into it as the salty soil gives way. If the ant lion manages to bite the victim, it holds on until one or the other is dead. The ant lion tries to hide underground (possibly by burrowing) if pelted with ranged attacks or its morale fails.

In addition to the pit, there is one passage going to the sleeping chamber of the ant lion (underground), which has an additional small passage by which the ant lion can leave if it is fleeing or when removing refuse from its pit. There is a 30% chance of incidental treasure outside the refuse tunnel: 1d4 items from:

Roll (1d20)	Ant Lion Incidental Treasure
1–6	1d4×10 cp
7–10	5d4 sp
11–13	Shield*
14–17	Metal weapon*
18–19	Jewelry*
20	Miscellaneous item*

* 10% chance that the item is magical.

Giant ant lion: AL N; AC 2; MV 9", Br 1"; HD 8; HP 36; THACO 12; # At 1; Dmg 5d4; SA grab; SZ L; ML 8; XP Value 1,400. See *MC 2*.

6. Dragonne, 1: This deadly hunter is a loner, a unique creature that hunts overnight by flying low over the ground and looking for prey it can pick off. Its lair is an isolated crag sticking out of the salt flats, difficult to track back because the creature flies. It is encountered asleep in its lair if the encounter happens during the day. The dragonne's treasure is scattered about its lair among shattered bones (types B, S, T: trees and bushes with 1d8 *potion fruits*; 1d4 scrolls; 25% chance of 1d10×400 bits, 25% chance of 1d10×100 ceramic pieces, 25% chance of 1d10×10 silver, 30% chance of 1d10×5 gold, 30% chance of 1d8 gems, and 10% chance of one magic armor and one magic weapon).

Dragonne: AL N; AC 6 (flying), 2 (ground); MV 14", Fl 9" (E); HD 9; HP 41; THAC0 11; # At 3; Dmg 1d8/1d8/3d6; SA roar; SZ M; ML 15; XP Value 2,000.

7. Dune reaper drones, 1d4+1:

Reaper drones in the sands are far too common in this harsh terrain. Drones are foraging to bring food back to their hive (in region L), and PCs can be that food.

Dune reaper drone: AL N; AC 2; MV 12", Jp 9"; HD 8; HP 36; THAC0 13; # At 3; Dmg 3d6+7/3d6+7/2d6; SA surprise leap; MR 10%; SZ L; ML 20; XP Value 4,000. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

8. Dune reaper warrior, 1: A lone dune reaper warrior has become separated from its drones, or is patrolling the area to prevent threats to the hive, or was driven out and is an exile. Regardless, it is fierce and hungry and instantly attacks any living or moving thing it encounters.

Dune reaper warrior: AL N; AC 0; MV 12", Jp 9"; HD 10; HP 45; THAC0 11; # At 3; Dmg 3d6+7/3d6+7/2d6; SA surprise leap, clamp; MR 25%; SZ L; ML 20; XP Value 6,000. Dune reaper warriors have 30 PSPs and a power score of 10 with the psionic powers ballistic attack, contact, inertial barrier, mind bar, mind thrust, mindlink, molecular agitation, psychic crush, send thoughts, and superior invisibility. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

9. Alkaline Pool: Mark this location on the map. Warm water bubbles up from somewhere deep below, but is filled with toxic chemicals. The pool is 40' in diameter and the soil around it is strangely colored. It is completely devoid of plants or insects, which should clue PCs in to the poisonous nature of the water.

Player characters can, of course, use *purify food & drink* to make the water safe, and *detect poison* notes immediately that it is toxic (type H: ingested, 1d4 hours onset time, 20 points of damage, save for half).

THE SAND MARCHES

The pool is warm but not painfully so, and 12' deep at its deepest point. Since most PCs in **DARK SUN** can't swim, it's likely that only the use of a water cleric's ability to ignore water or spells like *water breathing* will make this accessible. The bottom of the pool has a thin veneer of shiny dust on it—various metals that have come along with the salts. Enterprising PCs may find a way to collect them (such as by using the magnetize psionic power). There's a total of 2d4×10 pounds of copper, 1d4×10 pounds of silver, 1d6 pounds of gold, 2d12 pounds of iron, and 1d4+1 pounds of other strange metals; PCs can trade the latter for 100 cp per pound.

10. The Fallen Foundry: Mark this location on the map. The PCs discover the ruined remnants of a mining site and armory, destroyed long ago by Shamiso, the sorcerer-queen of Babweru. See the description at the end of this section.

11. Jann, 1d2: In the deepest parts of the salt flats, jann move in small groups while going about their business—typically, looking for magical treasures. The jann are cautious but not necessarily immediately unfriendly (use a reaction roll, as normal).

Jann typically have metal weapons and armor, and they suffer no effects from fighting in heat. They will trade their mundane arms and armor for magical items they can use, especially those with elemental powers. Jann are generally armed with either steel scimitars (50%), a steel battle axe (25%), or a steel broadsword (25%), and they wear steel chain mail armor (AC 5).

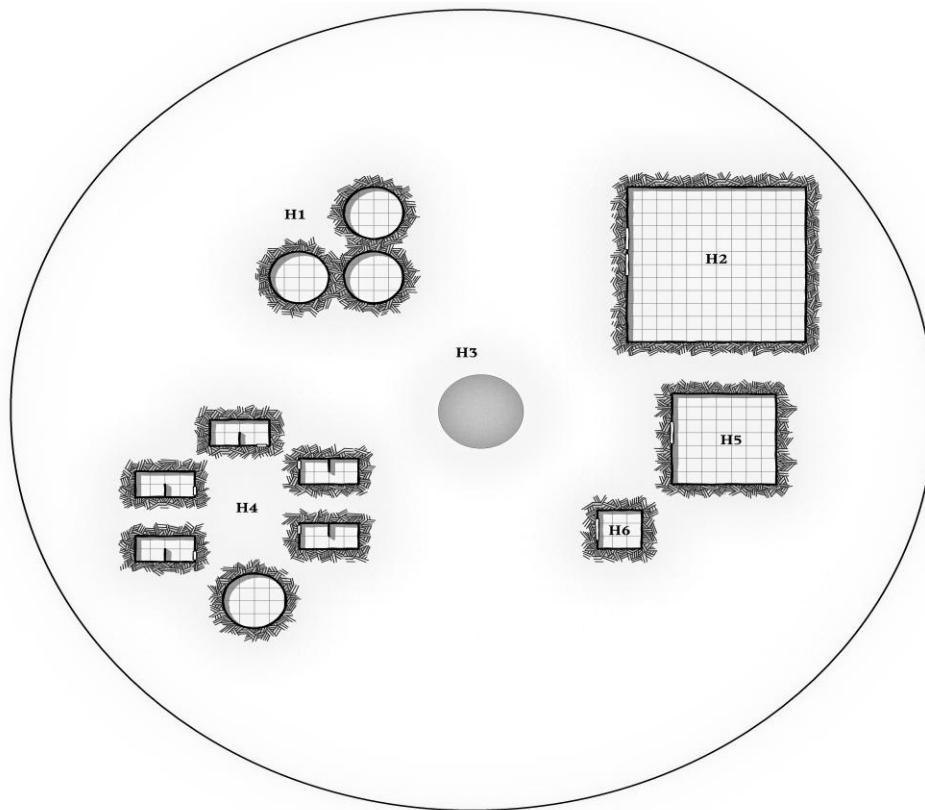
Notably, if the jann are friendly, they uphold hospitality, and offer food and shelter to PCs (within their abilities, including potentially creating food and water), but with the expectation that the PCs might do a "favor" for them at some near-future date, such as scouting a ruin or bringing back a treasure.

Jann: AL N(G); AC 2 (5); MV 12", FI 30" (A); HD 6+2; HP 29; THAC0 15; # At 1; Dmg 1d8 + Strength bonus or by weapon + Strength bonus; SA exceptional strength; SD *enlarge* or *reduce* 2/day, *invisibility* 3/day, *create food and water* 1/day, *etherealness* 1/day; SZ M; ML 15; XP Value 3,000. See MC 2.

12. Roll twice and combine: Roll twice on the table and combine both results. For instance, the PCs might encounter dune reaper drones trying to jump out of the pit of a giant ant lion, or greater basilisks wandering the outskirts of the Fallen Foundry.

The Fallen Foundry

Ground Floor



In a prior age, this foundry separated metals from salts and smelted them, making ingots of copper, tin, magnesium, mercury, and rarer materials. During the era in which Shamiso, sorcerer-queen of Babweru, undertook to hide her city from outsiders, she realized she was unable to exert control over the foundry, but also unwilling to leave a repository of such resources so close to her city-state. She destroyed it with an intense magical blast and her elite soldiers killed the inhabitants of the site and left it for the elements.

Now, hundreds of years later, the foundry is home to many creatures that have burrowed in among the ruins. Some wander the area, constantly on the prowl for food; others have turned specific spots into their lairs. All of them are dangerous.

A major product of this mine was bronze, made from the copper and tin that were fortuitously found together at this site. Bronze is roughly 88% copper to 12% tin (so, four copper ingots and one tin ingot smelted together into five bronze ingots).

THE SAND MARCHES

The entire ruin sits inside a blast radius. The land around it still bears a dark scar, like a blackened ring, of defiled ground. Over the intervening centuries, windblown dust has replenished the denuded soil somewhat, but the strong concentrations of salt and the residue of defiling magic, mean that this site bears only small scrub brush. The creatures living here feed on prey animals and sometimes venture forth to forage for food. As a result, any time the PCs are within sight of the fallen foundry, there is a 1 in 6 chance that one of the creatures living in the ruins is out hunting, and it may very well stalk them. This could potentially include the pair of cildabrin in area H14, if the PCs are very unlucky.

Most of the ruins are open to the sky now. Locations with intact ceilings are described specifically as such.

Outpost: There is little in the way of food, water, or useful protection in this area, making it unsuitable for building an outpost, especially given the predilection for salt storms in the region. Worse still, the salt storms here are toxic due to trace deposits of poisonous metals and minerals. Trying to stay here for more than a week causes nausea, dizziness, bleeding, coughing, and aches, which become progressively worse until the victim leaves or dies.

H1: The Furnaces

Three tall furnace-kilns rise from the broken ground here, but all of them have significant holes in their sides, and the tops are tumbled down. They are choked with both rubble and coal.

The furnaces used to serve as smelters for melting ore or baking bricks. Now, they are badly damaged and nonfunctional. Clearing and repairing them would take twenty person-days of labor. The kilns can only be repaired by someone with a pottery or smelting proficiency.

H2: The Storehouse

A pair of huge wooden double doors protect this massive edifice, a tremendous brick building that somehow remains mostly intact up until about 10' up, where the wall becomes little more than a ragged shell. Heavy tracks in the salt attest to the presence of a large creature or creatures inside.

Once a storage building for finished ingots and bricks ready for transport, this ruined structure is now home to three barbed scorpions. These predators are fast and always hungry, often foraging out to find small prey in the wastes.

When PCs enter this building, throw twelve dice onto the map. Each die represents a pile of rubble, which is impassible—trying to climb it results in it sliding and causing the climber to fall back down to where they started. The barbed scorpions move to attack immediately.

The barbed scorpions' treasure is from remnants of victims and bits of debris left behind in the storehouse, and consists of 200 pounds of bricks, 20 small silver ingots (each weighing 1 lb. and worth 10 cp), and 150 small bronze ingots (each weighing 1 lb. and worth 5 gp). Note that the bricks and bronze can be used for materials if taken back to the settlement, but the bronze is also useful for making weapons and armor in its own right.

In addition, PCs can demolish the entire warehouse if they defeat the barbed scorpions. Much of the wooden structure is pitted and rotted, but they can still salvage another 25 lbs. of useful building materials this way, though it takes eight person-hours of labor to do so.

Barbed scorpions, 3: AL N; AC 1; MV 9"; HD 9+5; HP 46; THACO 11; # At 3; Dmg 1d12/1d12/1d6; SA poison sting (type C); SD barbs; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 3,000. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

H3: Green Water

A large pool of green water fills the center of the ring of defiled ground. From the lack of plant life or insects, it is clearly poisonous.

Runoff from very rare rains collects here and slowly evaporates, leaving high concentrations of salt and heavy metal dust. The water is extremely poisonous to drink; anyone doing so must save vs. poison at -4 or take 4d10 damage within 1d4 minutes, or half damage on a successful save.

Some of the desert creatures that live in the ruins, such as the barbed scorpions, are able to subsist on this water thanks to their extreme hardiness.

H4: Workers' Shacks

A series of small, sagging shacks stand here, each tiny and made of wood atop a brick foundation. They all bear holes and weather wear, with the ceilings caved in. On the south side is a circular building with a counter on one end, perhaps a kitchen.

Local laborers lived in these buildings, which have fallen mostly into ruin. If demolished, they provide 3 lbs. of useful material each; each one takes one person-hour of labor to tear down.

These shacks are now home to a community of dark spiders, which use their psionic and magical abilities to aid in hunting the local region. They avoid the barbed scorpions, knowing that the poison of the scorpions is more dangerous than they wish to risk. As the dark spiders are intelligent, they always have one on guard, pay attention to their psionist's danger sense power, and they are not averse to setting an ambush if they hear movement or investigation. Each dark spider has 4 gems (base value 75 cp each) in its house. The defiler, which lives in the circular kitchen building, keeps its spells woven on intricate patterns on its webs—these cannot be removed and transported without ruining them, and PCs must use *read magic* on site to decipher and copy them.

THE SAND MARCHES

The dark spiders also lay webs throughout the shacks, to trap enemies who try to come inside (treated as a *web* spell). The spiders are smart enough to understand the tactical value of their powers and try to draw PCs into positions where they can be hit by the *fireball* and *slow* spells of their defiler.

Dark spiders, 4: AL N; AC 2; MV 15"; HD 6; HP 27; THAC0 15; # At 3; Dmg 1d10 ×2/1d6; SA poison (type F), webs; SZ M; ML 15; XP Value 975.

Dark spider defiler, 1: AL N; AC 2; MV 15"; HD 6; HP 27; THAC0 15; # At 3; Dmg 1d10 ×2/1d6; SA poison (type F), spells, webs; ML 15; XP Value 2,000.

Wizard spells:

1. *magic missile* ×2, *phantasmal force*, *wall of fog*
2. *blur*, *hypnotic pattern*
3. *fireball*, *slow*

Dark spider psionist, 1: AL N; AC 2; MV 15"; HD 6; HP 27; THAC0 15; # At 3; Dmg 1d10 ×2/1d6; SA poison (type F), psionics, webs; ML 15; XP Value 2,975. The dark spider psionist has 50 PSPs and a power score of 13 with the psionic powers clairaudience, clairvoyance, contact, danger sense, ego whip, expansion, false sensory input, feel sound, know direction, know location, life draining, mind thrust, mindlink, psychic crush, and radial navigation.

See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

H5: Tool Storage

This building looks like a sagging storage shed, in size between the ones to either side of it. Hooks on the exterior wall look like they're made to hold objects.

Still somewhat intact, this building has a gently-sloped roof. Its wood is still rotted and pitted, but at least it provides cover from shade. On the inside, the walls have hooks on them holding metal (iron) tools. The handles for the tools are long since ruined, but the rusted iron can be cleaned and restored by a blacksmith. These tools include two forks, two hammers, four sledge hammers, four farmer's picks, and four spades. (See *Combat & Tactics* for statistics of these tools.)

The shed itself can also be torn down with six person-hours of work, to yield 12 lbs. of useful materials.

The entire interior of the shed, though, is also filled with yellow mold, which thrives in the darkness. This colony is large enough that it has developed sentience, and lashes out with psionic powers at intruders, hoping to steal away their mental energy.

Yellow mold, psionic: AL N; AC 9; MV 0; HD N/A; THACO N/A; # At 1; Dmg N/A; SA poison spores, psionics; SD affected only by fire; MR 20%; SZ L; ML N/A; XP Value 65. This psionic yellow mold has 30 PSPs and a power score of 15 with the psionic powers of insinuation, mindwipe, and psionic sense. It can use psionic sense at no cost with a range of 70', and can make a *suggestion* out to that range; anyone who fails a save vs. spells is compelled to come closer (into range of the spores) and permanently loses one point of Intelligence (due to mind drain from the mold). See MC 2 and *The Complete Psionics Handbook*.

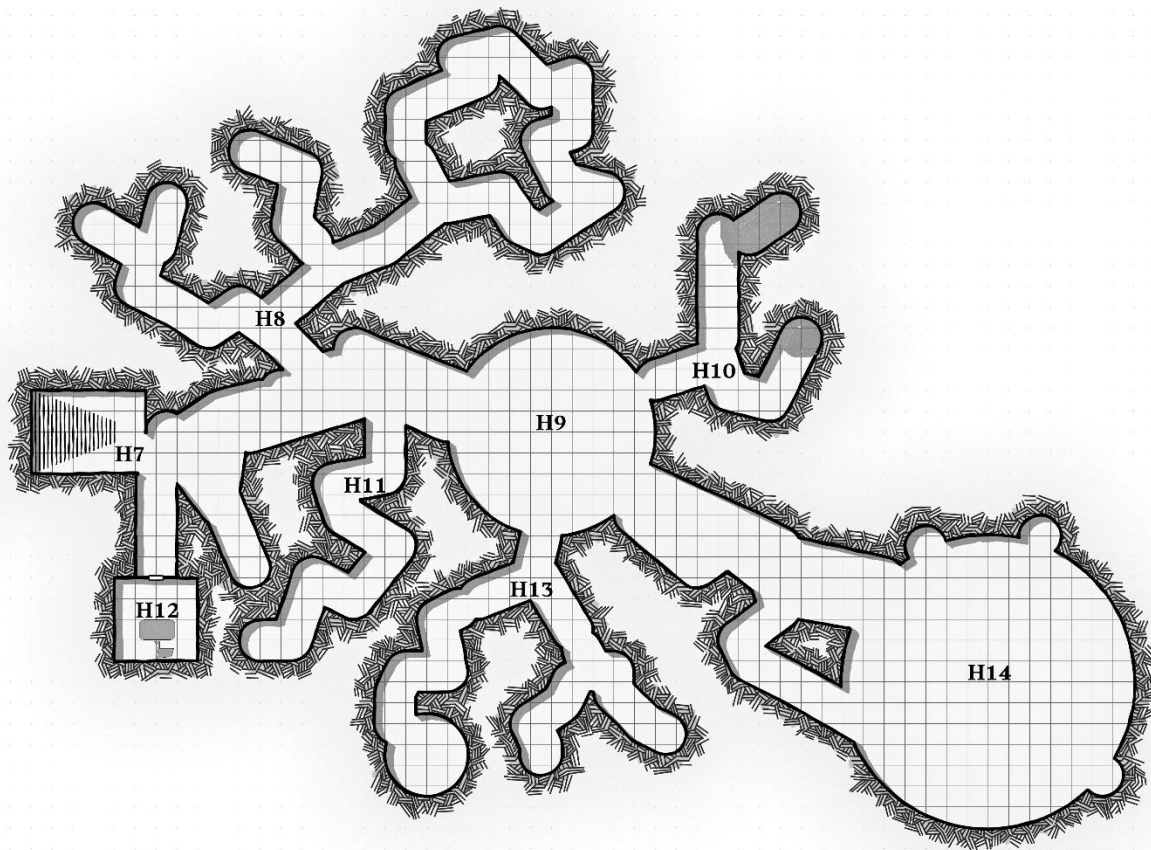
H6: Mine Entrance

This shack has partially collapsed, leaving visible a semicircular descending ramp leading down into the ground. The passage heads into a rough-hewn tunnel beneath the salt flats.

The ramp leads down into the mines beneath the Fallen Foundry, to area H7. The shack remnants can be torn down for 8 lbs. of usable material with four person-hours of work.

The Fallen Foundry

Level I



The mines are mostly unfinished, with only the entry at H7 and the hallway and overseer's office at H12 having smoothed stone. The floors are uneven, though not so much as to hinder movement. Ceilings range from 12' to 15' (so even half-giants can fit in here), with old wooden beams supporting them—area-effect destruction from spells or powers risk collapsing small areas of the mines. The unfinished mine walls are rough and show obvious signs of toolwork.

Parts of the mines still hold usable tin and copper. The PCs can excavate this to sell it or make tools or weapons, or they can use it for the Build a Foundry project back at the settlement.

All of the subterranean areas are now filled with invisible poisonous gas. The mines once had small ventilation shafts, but these have all collapsed and filled in due to age and windstorms above. Characters breathing this gas must save vs. poison every turn (10 minutes) or suffer from splitting headaches and dizziness that impose a one-point penalty to attack rolls, Armor Class, and proficiency checks, cumulative with each failed check; this clears up after spending at least half an hour outside of the mines. This can be dealt with via spells such as *zone of sweet air* or *filter*, an Air cleric's ability to *gate* in wind, or the psychometabolic devotion of body control.

H7: Entry Ramp

The semicircular ramp descends into a broad chamber with smoothed walls, which breaks out into a rough, irregular space ahead and another smoothed hall to one side. A scone attached to the wall at the corner holds the burned-out stub of a used-up torch.

The entry ramp is wide and shallow, easy for mine carts and wheelbarrows to go in and out. The passage heading south toward H12 is smoothed and finished, while the cavern to the east is rough-hewn.

H8: Tin Scrapings

These short, irregular passages twist and sometimes double back. Small chunks of fragile crystal run through the rock in narrow streaks.

The crystals in the rock are tetragonal veins of cassiterite ore, which can be smelted into tin. If the PCs have light, they see the crystals have a slightly bluish-silver color and are lustrous; PCs with proficiency in blacksmithing, mining, or smelting recognize the ore for what it is.

With a furnace, PCs can smelt the cassiterite ore into tin, but the veins here are small and it takes a good deal of excavation to extract even a small amount of tin. A person-day of mining (with appropriate tools) yields only 2d6 lbs. of useful ore, which then smelts down to half that amount of tin (the remainder becoming waste slag). The mine can produce another 60 lbs. of ore before it is exhausted.

Remember that miners must have some means to deal with the poison gas permeating the whole mine.

In addition, undead miners lurk in this area, still inert since the time they died in Shamiso's explosion of defiling death magic. Now, they are toxostannins, poisonous undead filled with pieces of metal and slag that have replaced parts of their rotten, dead bodies. Two toxostannins are at each end of the westernmost passage to the left of H8, two at the end of the middle north passage, and two on the far side of the loop to the northeast of H8. Since toxostannins retain some level of intelligence and awareness, they move to congregate and engage the party as a group if combat erupts or there is any noise. These toxostannins use bronze picks (their mining tools, valued at 400 cp) in combat.

THE SAND MARCHES

Toxostannins, 6: AL NE; AC 1; MV 9"; HD 9; HP 41; THACO 12; # At 1; Dmg 1d6+6; SA poison (type A); SD undead immunities, immune to nonmetal/nonmagical weapons; ML 20; XP Value 3,000. See Chapter Seven: New Magic, Monsters, and Psionics.

H9: Central Hub

A round chamber hewn from the rock bears multiple passages going in different directions here. At the entrance to each passage is a torch sconce on the wall, a simple stone affair that now holds only a burned-out husk of wood. Three wheelbarrows occupy the center of the room, filled with mine tailings.

Despite their age, the wheelbarrows are still usable, made of old wood is hardened with resin and lacquer to protect it against age and damage. The torch sconces can, of course, hold fresh torches, if the PCs brought their own.

H10: Flooded Passages

These passages descend slightly and then stop when the muddy ground gives way to green pools of water.

The miners stopped digging here as they excavated a poisonous water pocket. As above at area H3, this water is poisoned due to metal dust (save at -4 or take 4d10 damage within 1d4 minutes, half damage on successful save).

H11: Dead End

The passage here zigzags for a short distance before ending abruptly.

The miners found that the veins they were excavating didn't continue in this direction and ceased excavation.

The wooden beams supporting the ceiling are weak here, as they were never shored up for deeper excavation, and decayed over the years. After three PCs move past the final bend toward the dead end, there's an alarming creaking noise, and two rounds later the ceiling collapses over the last 40' of the tunnel. Anyone in the area takes 6d6 damage and must save vs. breath weapon. On a successful save, the character takes half damage. On a failed save, the character takes full damage and is also buried. Consult Chapter 14 of the *Player's Handbook* for holding breath: a character can hold breath for one-third Constitution score in rounds, halved for not getting a good gulp of air beforehand. Characters who struggle halve this again. A character can burst out from the rubble with a successful bend bars/lift gates check; otherwise, someone must dig the character out, or the character must use a psionic power or magic item to escape (since spellcasting is impossible while unable to speak or move).

H12: Overseer's Office

The finished passage ends in a door that is slightly ajar. Beyond is a room of similarly finished stone, complete with a variety of furnishings that are, curiously, still intact.

The door to the overseer's office is slightly ajar, leaving the interior partially visible from outside.

The overseer's office includes a table in the center of the room, a worn stuffed chair, and an inkwell on the table. The ink is a block, from which a piece is knocked off and powdered, then has water added, so it is still usable. A crumbling sheaf of papers indicate totals of copper, tin, and small semiprecious stones removed from the mine a long, long time ago. A lamp on the desk is made of bronze (value 55 cp); it needs a new wick and a refill of oil to function.

The foreman still lingers here, in the form of an undead toxostannin. (This is likely the first one that the PCs will encounter, unless they bypass the passageway.) He lies curled up under his desk, but when the PCs arrive to investigate, he waits patiently for them to come close, then lunges out, attempting to surprise. Unlike his workers, he carries an enchanted broadsword, which he uses with his undead strength. As long as he wields it, the blade carries his toxic salts on its strikes, as described in the monster information. Don't forget to add the sword's bonus, as well as his strength bonus, to his attack rolls.

Toxostannin, 1: AL NE; AC 1; MV 9"; HD 9; HP 41; THAC0 12; # At 1; Dmg *steel broadsword* +1 S-M 2d4+7/L 1d6+8; SA poison (type A); SD undead immunities, immune to nonmetal/nonmagical weapons; ML 20; XP Value 3,000. See Chapter Seven: New Magic, Monsters, and Psionics.

H13: Copper Scrapings

The rough walls here have more pieces of angular rock and occasional protrusions of crystalline fragments of dark coloration against the gray stone and off-white salt deposits.

The tunnels here have trace amounts of copper, in the form of mineral chalcopyrite ore. This ore forms small crystal veins and angular rocks in the walls. In light, it has a slightly greenish or yellow-brown color, immediately recognizable to any character proficient in blacksmithing, mining, or smelting.

The small tunnels of this area have 200 lbs. of copper ore, which can be excavated at a rate of 2d6 lbs. of ore per person-day of work; smelted ore refines down to half its weight in copper, with the remainder becoming slag.

H14: The Copper Crawling

The chamber ahead is large and well-excavated, though the walls still show signs of various protruding pieces of ore. The warm cave has scattered bits of mining equipment and remains all about its broad diameter.

THE SAND MARCHES

The largest chamber deep in the mines is home to a pair of cildabrins. These spider–scorpion hybrids are intelligent enough to avoid the undead haunting the other areas; they slip out at night to hunt outside, and the creatures above give them a wide berth when they do. If the cildabrins are not surprised, they are on the ceiling of the cavern, 12' up, and attempt to ambush the PCs.

The cildabrins have amassed a significant hoard from unfortunate explorers over the years, including treasures they have brought in from outside or accumulated from elsewhere in the mines and the ruins. This includes 882 ceramic pieces (scattered about and in rotten old containers such as pouches and packs), four bronze mining picks (worth 400 cp each), a well-carved ivory comb decorated with whorls and delicate striations (worth 225 cp), a bronze cloak pin with a lightning bolt insignia on it (worth 80 cp), a bone impaler, an alhulak, six spears, two short bows, 24 metal-headed flight arrows, a wooden spade, a steel bard's friend, two full suits of nonmetal brigandine armor, one set of mail chausses (chain mail leggings), and a dun-colored *sandstrider's shawl* (see Chapter Seven: New Magic, Monsters, and Psionics).

In addition, another 120 pounds of chalcopyrite ore can be mined from this area, if the PCs can figure out how to safely do so; this would expand the chamber to roughly three times its current size, at the same rate of 2d6 pounds of useful ore per person-day of work. This can then be smelted into copper, like the ore in area H13.

Cildabrins, 2: AL NE; AC 5; MV 15"; HD 11; HP 50; THAC0 9; # At 3; Dmg 1d12/1d12/1d6; SA pincer grab, poison (type O); SD spell-like abilities, spider climb; MR 20%; SZ H; ML 14; XP Value 7,000. See *MC 11: Forgotten Realms Appendix II*.

Region I: The Black-Glass Ruins

Adventure Level 7–9 · Expedition Bonus: 1,200 XP

Predominant Terrain: Sandy Wastes (⅓ overland movement speed). Encounter distance 5d10×10 feet, limited by visibility. Rolling ground (20% chance of getting lost). Areas without a unique location are also featureless (+50%).

Weather:

1. Warm and cloudy
2. Warm and clear
3. Hot and clear
4. Hot and clear
5. Very hot and clear
6. Very hot and dusty (dust storms limit visibility to 100')

The black-glass ruins are dangerous terrain, located just north of the Dead Lands. Remnants of ancient stone buildings jut out here in huddled collections mixed with spattered bits of obsidian and defiled ground. In some places the dunes have blown over obsidian mounds, scoring them with centuries of wind-blown sand and leaving eerie shapes and striations. To the east the sand dunes continue, often covered by parched dust and wind-blown silt.

Story Beats: The principal contact in this region is Shievra the necromancer, who can warn the PCs about the perils of the Dead Lands (further to the south). Shievra can also trade a limited selection of spells with PC wizards.

Encounters: A random encounter happens on a roll of 1 on 1d10. Check at 7–10 A.M., 7–10 P.M., and 3–6 A.M.

Die Roll (2d6)	Encounter	Encounter Limit
2	So-ut, 1	1
3	Gaj, 1d2	2
4	Cha'thrang, 3	1
5	Barbed scorpions, 1d4	—
6	Lesser basilisks, 1d4	2
7	Brambleweed trees, 1d20	2
8	Slig, 5d6	2
9	Sand cactus, 1	2
10	Random ruins	4
11	Shievra the necromancer	Unique location
12	Roll twice and combine	—

2. So-ut, 1: The rampager is a really bad day for PCs. If encountered during the day, it's asleep under the sand; otherwise, it is in search of something to destroy, and the party is it! Since the so-ut is immune to psionics and takes half damage from nonmetal weapons—and has an amazing Armor Class—the smartest recourse for the party may be to run away. With its high movement rate, it can outdistance nearly any party, but you don't have to outrun the rampager, you just have to outrun the dwarf...

The main weakness of the so-ut is its semi-intelligence, about the level of a lizard. This makes it susceptible to trickery, assuming the PCs can figure out a way to mislead it that doesn't rely on psionics.

So-ut hide that's removed with the animal rending proficiency can be made into armor by a character with leatherworking and armorer proficiencies. This armor functions as an equivalent to metal chain mail (AC 5, 40 lbs., causes heat exhaustion).

So-ut: AL CE; AC -4; MV 18"; HD 14+2; HP 65; THAC0 7; # At 2 or 1; Dmg 2d6/2d6 + special or 3d6; SA fear, acidic poison, armor bite; SD ½ damage from nonmetal weapons, immune to psionics; MR 25%; SZ L; ML 19; XP Value 10,000. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

3. Gaj, 1d2: Psionic horrors of the desert, gaj are terrifying and malevolent predators. They are as likely to attack PCs for their own amusement as for food. Gaj have treasure type Z: 50% chance of 1d3×100 bits, 50% chance of 1d4×100 ceramic pieces, 50% chance of 1d6×100 silver, 60% chance of 1d4×100 gold, 75% chance of 1d10 gems, and 50% chance of any 3 magic items. As always, if only one gaj is present, halve the results (rounded down).

Gaj are likely to use their psionic abilities to try to split a party by leading them off into the desert with a mirage implanted by false sensory input, or even simply with domination. If they face psionic resistance, they focus their mental attacks on the psionist while dominating other members of the party. They prefer to take prey alive so they can probe it and drain its mental energy before devouring it.

Gaj: AL NE; AC 2; MV 12"; HD 7; HP 27; THAC0 13; # At 1; Dmg 1d6; SA psionics, paralyzing mandibles, destructive probe; SD ½ damage from nonmetal weapons, psionics; SZ L; ML 15; XP Value 2,000. The gaj has 120 PSPs, a power score of 17, and the powers domination, mass domination, probe, tower of iron will, aversion, contact, ego whip, ESP, false sensory input, id insinuation, inflict pain, intellect fortress, life detection, mental barrier, mind blank, psionic blast, and send thoughts. See the **DARK SUN** boxed set *Wanderer's Journal*.

4. Cha'thrang, 3: The spiny desert tortoises always come in threes. As carnivorous animals, they are either sleeping, looking for water, waiting for prey, or moving to a new location. Cha'thrang typically aren't hostile to PCs unless attacked, but if the PCs are flying overhead, they may become tasty targets.

Though cha'thrang have no treasure, the cords they fire can be valuable to the PCs. Properly preparing the meat of the cha'thrang requires a successful check of the animal rending proficiency.

Cha'thrang: AL N; AC -2 (8 underbelly); MC 3"; HD 8+3; HP 39; THACO 11; # At 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d12; SA tethered darts; SD camouflage, withdrawal; SZ M; ML 8; XP Value 2,000. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

5. Barbed scorpions, 1d4: These predators require large amounts of food, and are likely to swarm anyone they detect. They are very dangerous for the region, with extremely tough carapaces and deadly poison. Player characters skilled in chitinwork may be able to strip chitin off the scorpions to make armor or tools. Given their size, a typical barbed scorpion provides 1d4+1×10 pounds of chitin. Treasure (type D: 15% chance of 1d10×1,000 bits, 50% chance of 1d3×1,000 ceramic pieces, 15% chance of 1d6×100 silver, 10% chance of 1d4×100 gold, 30% chance of 1d10 gems, 15% chance of any 2 magic items plus one *potion fruit*) will be found among remains or even in partially-digested bits in the scorpion's guts.

Barbed scorpion: AL N; AC 1; MC 9"; HD 9+5; THACO 11; # At 3; Dmg 1d12/1d12/1d6; SA poison sting; SD bards; SZ M; ML 12; XP 3,000. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

6. Lesser basilisks, 1d4: Lesser basilisks are extremely dangerous, and jealously guard an area of dry trees and patches of brush, where they petrify any creature who comes close. Clever PCs will engage them at range and use superior movement speed to avoid getting too close.

THE SAND MARCHES

The basilisks' treasure (type F) is scattered about the area haphazardly; remember to scale it according to the number of basilisks (1 basilisk = 25% of rolled treasure, 2 = 50%, etc.). Total is: 10% chance of 3d6×1,000 bits; 30% chance of 1d4×1,000 ceramic pieces; 10% chance of 3d4×100 silver; 10% chance of 1d4×100 gold; 35% chance of 2d10 gems; 30% chance of any five nonweapon magical items.

Lesser basilisk: AL N; AC 4; MV 6"; HD 6+1; HP 28; # At 1; Dmg 1d10; SA gaze turns to stone; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 1,400. See *MC 1*.

7. Brambleweed trees, 1d20: The PCs come across a stand of thick brambleweed, presumably drawing moisture from somewhere deep below. The formation of the brambleweed trees is random: If you want to place them on a battle map, simply throw a handful of dice onto the map and place the trees where the dice land. Brambleweed is not dangerous in and of itself unless the PCs are extremely foolish or unlucky, but it can greatly increase the danger of another encounter, especially with an intelligent enemy that uses the terrain well and tries to force PCs into the trees.

Careful PCs might chop down the brambleweed trees for timber, though this is fraught with danger; one slip can land someone into the thick of the trees for 1d100 damage. Be sure to remind the PCs of the risk before having them roll! Even if successful, brambleweed is mostly a collection of tough, thick vines, producing about 10 lbs. of wood per foot in height, of which half is usable for construction and the other half only for firewood.

Brambleweed trees: AL N; AC 5; MV 1" per day; HD 2–4; HP 2 HD: 9, 3 HD: 14, 4 HD: 18; # At 0; Dmg 1d4/thorn; SZ S-M; ML nil; XP Value 0. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

8. Slig, 5d6: A slig warband on the hunt makes for a dangerous encounter. With no real organization but a telepathic ability to fight in formation, large size, and burning hunger, the sligs can quickly overwhelm a small party. Because sligs are intelligent, it may be possible to communicate using a typical reaction check. Hostile sligs attempt to kill and eat the PCs; even friendly sligs are preoccupied with food, due to their constant need to eat.

If the sligs are encountered at night, there's a good chance they try to avoid the party, then sneak a small group into the camp to steal a precious item or even kidnap a party member in order to lure the party into an ambush.

If encountered during the day, there's a 25% chance the sligs have baited an ambush: Hiding in tiny holes dug in the desert, they wait while leaving a valuable object of some sort sticking out of the sand in the middle of their formation (roll d%: 1–50%, a jumbled pile of 2d12 bones; 51–65%, a tool of some kind; 66–75%, a stone weapon; 76%–85%, a bone weapon; 86%–95%, a metal weapon; 96%–100%, a minor miscellaneous magic item).

Sligs: AL any neutral; AC 6; MV 12"; HD 4+1; HP 19; # At 1; Dmg 1d8+1 (weapon) or 1d3 (bite); SA formation attack; SZ L; ML 15; XP Value 420. See *DARK SUN Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

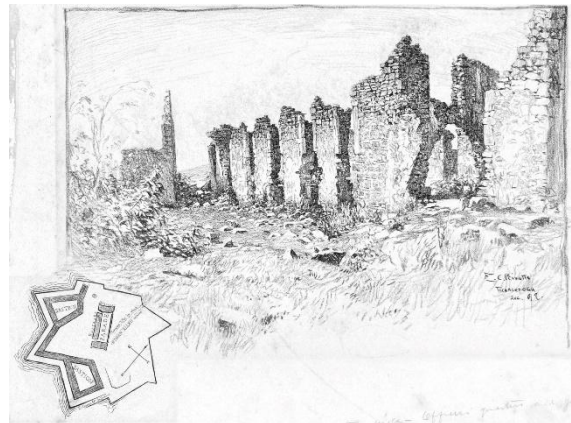
9. Sand cactus, 1: See region B, encounter #11.

Roll for the sand cactus's total Hit Dice randomly: 1d4+4 Hit Dice.

Sand cactus: AL N; AC 8 (body), 3 (needles); MV special; HD 5–8; HP 23, 27, 32, or 36; THACO 5–6 HD: 15, 7–8 HD: 13; # At 1 (per appendage); Dmg 1d3; SA blood drain; SD camouflage; SZ M; ML N/A; XP Value 5 HD: 975, 6 HD: 1,400, 7 HD: 2,000, 8 HD: 3,000. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

10. Random ruins: The PCs come across a set of jagged ruins, jutting from the sand and covered with the patina of many years of windscoring and desert-blown obsidian dust from the Dead Lands. Use the random dungeon generator chapter to make the dungeon. Suit is ♠ Spades (ruins). The ruins are 1d4+2 rooms deep with encounters from the level 7–9 tables. As always, the windblown sand and dust makes it 75% likely that the PCs will not be able to find the site again after leaving unless they use magical or psionic abilities, or engage in extraordinary efforts to excavate the area.

Note that the encounter table allows for up to four different random ruins, but they will always be found in different hexes.



Ticonderoga—Smithsonian Collection

11. Shievra the necromancer: Mark this location on the map. The PCs spot a lonely tent with a small post that flies a flapping piece of brown cloth as a wind-vane. Around the tent are chunks of broken rock, most ranging in size from a wooden bucket to a medium-sized adult human. 1d6 skeletons chip away at the rocks using small sharpened pieces of stone that they hold in their bony hands, overseen by a forbidding individual wearing a tan-colored desert robe and a black headband and face cloth. Surprisingly, as the PCs approach, the figure waves at them (unless they sneak up *invisibly* or by hiding, of course) and seems quite friendly, but also continues to watch the skeletons at work.



Shievra—Illus. by Nala J. Wu

Shievra, elf preserver (gray necromancer) 9: AL N; AC 8 (10 when surprised or flanked); MV 15"; HD preserver 9; HP 24; THAC0 18; # At 1; Dmg by weapon; SA spells; SD surprise; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 2,000.

Wizard spells:

1. *read magic, shield, spook, unseen servant*
2. *choke*, invisibility, shatter*
3. *dispel magic, hold undead, nondetection*
4. *enervation, secure shelter*
5. *animate dead*

* See *The Complete Wizard's Handbook*.

Shievra has an Intelligence score of 17 and a Dexterity of 16. He keeps his spells on a set of elegantly-carved bone rune sticks. If forced into melee, he fights with a bone dagger or a quarterstaff, and orders his undead minions to defend him. In addition to his prepared spells, his rune sticks include the spells *detect undead*, *dig*, *scare*, *stone shape*, and *wraithform*.

Shievra is a necromancer and preserver of notable skill. Though his magic is not destructive, his meddling in forces of death was too much for his faraway elf tribe (the Clearwater tribe), and he was cast out years ago. Now he ekes out a living in the dunes, using his undead minions for defense and to dig for useful trinkets. When the PCs encounter him, his skeletons are very slowly and haphazardly mining stones for small pieces of onyx, which Shievra uses for his research work.

Note that while Shievra uses the necromancer kit from *Defilers & Preservers*, he is not a *specialist necromancer*, as elves cannot pursue that specialty.

Shievra has an off-putting aura due to his magical practices, and though he is friendly and outgoing, something about him just “seems off.” Be sure to play this up to the PCs—tell them that something just seems odd about the fellow, and that his presence causes their hackles to rise and generates a sense of unease. This is an unfortunate side-effect of Shievra’s dabbling in the Gray; he is not hostile nor is he inclined to trick a powerful group of travelers who have stumbled across his camp. It’s a good reminder that judging someone just on first appearances and gut feelings might be a bad idea.

Shievra gladly trades with the PCs, selling them items that his skeletons have excavated, or buying useful items from them (especially food, water, and tools). Shievra also helpfully describes the region. In particular, he knows about the existence of basilisks and gaj in the region.

12. Roll twice and combine: Roll twice on the table and combine both results. For instance, a group of slig might be waging a losing fight trying to kill barbed scorpions for a meal, or a pair of gaj might have stumbled across Shievra the necromancer’s current encampment.

Region J: The Violet Wastes

Adventure Level 7–9 · Expedition Bonus: 1,200 XP

Predominant Terrain: Sandy Wastes ($\frac{1}{3}$ overland movement speed). Encounter distance 5d10×10 feet, limited by visibility. Rolling ground (20% chance of getting lost). Areas without a unique location are also featureless (+50%).

Weather:

1. Warm and cloudy
2. Warm and clear
3. Hot and clear
4. Hot and clear
5. Very hot and clear
6. Very hot and dusty (dust storms limit visibility to 100')

The Violet Wastes have odd striations and patterns in the sand, from windblown obsidian dust and volcanic ash. Travelers who aren't careful discover obsidian dust is still very sharp, and can lead to significant irritation of the skin, eyes, and throat. Player characters are generally safe from this level of exposure as long as they have common-sense precautions such as wearing a face cloth and shoes, sandals, or boots—and a thri-kreen's exoskeleton prevents the worst of the abrasions as well.

The ruins here are less substantial than those found in the adjacent Black-Glass Ruins (region I). The creatures are just as formidable, though, and the PCs may eventually discover the Caves of Onyx, a dangerous—but lucrative—natural formation.

Story Beats: The PCs won't find much here to tell them about neighboring regions, but they have a chance to make a valuable ally and test their mettle against larger groups of foes.

Encounters: A random encounter happens on a roll of 1 on 1d10. Check at 7–10 A.M., 7–10 P.M., and 3–6 A.M.

Die Roll (2d6)	Encounter	Encounter Limit
2	Phase spiders, 1d4	2
3	Skrit, 1	2
4	Goblyn village	Unique location
5	Cactus stand, 2d6	—
6	Vampire cactus, 1d3	1
7	Erdlu, 5d10×10	4
8	Gith canyon	Unique location
9	The Pilgrim	Unique
10	The Caves of Onyx	Unique location
11	Random ruins	2
12	Roll twice and combine	—

2. Phase spiders, 1d4: These somewhat intelligent creepers often hide out-of-phase and then pop in when likely prey comes by. Treasure is incidental remnants from other prey and trinkets the spiders collect for shininess (type E: 25% chance of 2d6×1,000 bits; 25% chance of 1d4×1,000 ceramic pieces; 25% chance of 3d6×100 silver; 30% chance of 2d6×100 gold; 15% chance of 1d12 gems; 25% chance of any three magic items plus one scroll).

Phase Spider: AL N; AC 7; MV 6", Wb 15"; HD 5+5; HP 28; THAC0 15; # At 1; Dmg 1d6; SA poison (type F); SD phasing; SZ H; ML 15; XP Value 1,400. See *MC 1*.

3. Skrit, 1: This swift hulking beetle-like creature may seem like easy prey, right up until it melts one of the PCs with its poison. As a carnivorous animal, it is a simple night-time hunter, and pulls into its shell and vanishes beneath a small layer of sand during the day. It isn't much of a hazard for a prepared party with ranged attacks.

Skrit: AL N; AC 3; MV 15"; HD 6; HP 27; THAC0 15; # At 3; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d6; SA jellification, surprise, SZ L; ML 10; XP Value 2,000. See *MC 3: Dragonlance Appendix*.

4. Gblyyn village: Mark this location on the map. The PCs discover a small village of thatch-roof huts with a crude pit-well and a palisade bearing sand-cleaned skulls, inhabited by twisted humanoids with wide snouts, huge eyes, and lumpy skin. Use the random dungeon generator to create this village; suit is ♥ Hearts (habitation). The village has four locations, and the final (fourth) location is the Q♥ Shrine—a sacrificial pit with a rough wooden statue of a robed female humanoid figure. The village has a total of 3d8 gblyyn inhabitants; when the site is first discovered, half of them are at the Shrine, and the others are spread equally through the other locations. The gblyyns are the remnants of an ancient experiment by Shamiso, sorcerer-queen of Babweru, in an attempt to make pliable minions. She found them less useful than templars and abandoned them long ago, and has since forgotten about them. Due to the magic shrouding Babweru, the gblyyns no longer remember that city-state, nor do they remember their queen as anything more than fragments of a mythic demigoddess-figure. Shamiso could still command them telepathically if she chose... but she has long since moved on to other projects.

The gblyyns generally fight unarmed, but use javelins for hunting. They have simple tools, with which they have constructed their village, as Shamiso long ago ordered them to “see to their business” and “destroy my enemies.”

Gblyyns: AL NE; AC 4; MV 12”; HD 4+4; HP 22; THAC0 13; # At 2 or 1; Dmg 1d6/1d6 or 2d6; SA feasting; MR 10%; SZ M; ML 20; XP Value 975. See *MC 10: Ravenloft Appendix*.

5. Cactus stand: The PCs discover a small depression in the dunes with a clump of 2d6 closely-growing barrel cactus plants. The cacti are 6–7 feet tall and have flowers and fruits. Player characters can pick the fruits for food and cut open the cacti and press the pulp for water. Each cactus harvested provides 1 pound of food and 1 gallon of water, but the character doing the harvesting suffers 1 point of damage from the long, sharp cactus barbs unless extraordinary precautions are taken (wearing metal gauntlets, using *telekinesis* to harvest the cacti at a distance, and so on). Note that from a distance they might be mistaken for spider cacti.

6. Vampire cactus, 1d3: Normally, vampire cacti are quite rare, but in this region, they prey upon unwary gith and lost erdlu. Looking like tall cactus bushes somewhat like yucca plants or century plants, they may be mistaken for useful food plants by PCs. If encountered during Highsun, a given plant may have one fruit upon it (counts as one ration for a Medium-sized creature).

Vampire Cactus: AL N; AC 6 (core), 7 (leaf), 8 (thread); MV 0; HD 3 (core), 1+1 (leaf), 4 hp (thread) HP 14 (core), 6 (leaf); THAC0 17; # At 12; Dmg 1d2 ×12; SA blood drain; SZ M; ML 18; XP Value 650. See *MC 5: Greyhawk Appendix*.

7. Erdlu, 5d10×10: A large flock of erdlu roam the sands, pecking for small insects or bits of scrub grass. The erdlu pick areas clean of tiny bits of vegetation (from which they garner their moisture), then move on. These wild packs are fairly common and usually skittish but not actively hostile unless defending themselves. Player characters who decide to hunt the erdlu must be careful to avoid antagonizing the whole pack, as the erdlu will likely maul them through sheer numbers. Individuals on the outskirts can be picked off by canny hunters or the use of magic and psionics. Capturing at least ten and returning them to the settlement allows for construction of an erdlu pen under the supervision of a PC with the animal handling proficiency (see Chapter Two: The Settlement); award xp for captured erdlu as if they were defeated in combat.

Erdlu: AL N; AC 7; MV 12"; HD 3; THACO 17; # At 2; Dmg 1d6/1d4; SD speed; SZ M; ML 10; XP Value 65. See the **DARK SUN** revised boxed set *Wanderer's Chronicle*.

8. Gith canyon: Mark this location on the map. The PCs come across a canyon in the wastes, 60 feet deep, half a mile long and 300 feet wide. Cut into the sides of the canyon are steps leading down to the floor, where small puddles of water collect in shaded overhangs and scrubby bushes grow.

Among the bushes are small huts inhabited by 1d10×10 gith. The gith maintain a village here, but they are hunters and raiders, always ready to take food or treasure from anyone they stumble across. Individual gith have treasure type M (1d6 silver pieces); the village has, scattered in various huts, treasure type I (30% chance of 1d6×100 silver, 10% chance of 1d10×10 gold, 65% chance of 2d6 gems, 15% chance of one magic item). Remember to scale the lair treasure according to the number of gith (treat the number of gith as a percentage: 50 gith means 50% of the treasure rolled).

For every 25 gith, there is one 5 HD gith leader; for every 50 gith, there is one 6 HD leader. If the canyon houses 100 gith, there is also a 7 HD leader. If the gith have a magic item in their lair, the highest-HD leader uses it, if possible. While the gith are individually weak, as a tribe they can present a problem even for a mid-level group. If their morale breaks, the gith flee out into the sands, but may try to sneak back to their canyon later.

Outpost: If the PCs defeat all of the gith and take over the canyon, they can build an outpost here; the small springs of water that runoff into the crevices, combined with the sheer canyon walls, make the place defensible and survivable.

Sample Gith Names: Ganek, Haza, Keehya, Kugrisht, Toogo, Zigath, Zuzar
Most gith names are two syllables.

THE SAND MARCHES

Gith: AL CE; AC 8; MV 10"; HD 3; HP 14; THAC0 17; # At 1 or 2; Dmg by weapon or 1d4/1d4; SA springing; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 175. Gith have 80 PSPs and a power score of 16 with the psionic powers of animate object, animate shadow, ballistic attack, contact, control body, control flames, id insinuation, mental barrier, mind blank, mind thrust, project force, telekinesis, and tower of iron will.

Gith 5 HD leader: AL CE; AC 8; MV 10"; HD 5; HP 23; THAC0 15; # At 1 or 2; Dmg by weapon or 1d4/1d4; SA springing; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 420. These leaders have 100 PSPs and a power score of 16 with the same powers as other gith and the addition of detonate, molecular agitation, and soften.

Gith 6 HD leader: AL CE; AC 8; MV 10"; HD 6; HP 28; THAC0 14; # At 1 or 2; Dmg by weapon or 1d4/1d4; SA springing; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 650. These leaders have 110 PSPs and a power score of 16 with the same powers as a 5-HD leader and the addition of inertial barrier.

Gith 7 HD leader: AL CE; AC 8; MV 10"; HD 7; HP 32; THAC0 13; # At 1 or 2; Dmg by weapon or 1d4/1d4; SA springing; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 975. These leaders have 120 PSPs and a power score of 16 with the same powers as a 6-HD leader and the addition of deflect, disintegrate, and intellect fortress.

Gith typically use spears (dmg S-M 1d6/L 1d8). If confronted with flying or climbing opponents, they also use short bows with bone-tipped flight arrows (dmg 1d6-1/1d6-1).

See the **DARK SUN** boxed set *Wanderer's Journal*.

9. The Pilgrim: The PCs come to a small outcropping of three rocks sticking up out of the sands. A dugout in one of the sand dunes has a piece of cloth thrown over the back and held up above it with a pair of sticks. A bedroll and a small amount of camping gear is scattered on the ground. A lone human woman sits on one of the rocks, seemingly oblivious to the heat and the sun (if it's daytime).

If this encounter is rolled while the PCs are encamped or otherwise not moving, then instead the pilgrim comes across them, traveling with naught but a simple pack, making long strides across the sand.

The woman, Suunar, is short and brown-skinned, with black hair tied in a topknot and brown eyes. She is originally from Nibenay, but for months now has wandered the wastes, challenging herself against its hazards and meditating to develop her formidable psionic abilities.

Suunar, human (Nibenese)

psionacist (sensei) 8: AL LN; AC 8; MV 12"; HD psionacist 8; HP 44; THAC0 17; # At 2; Dmg unarmed strike; SA psionics; SD psionics; SZ M; ML 15; XP Value 1,400. Suunar has 92 PSPs and a power score of 17 with the psionic powers accelerate, biofeedback, cause sleep, cell adjustment, cryokinesis, danger sense, detection, double pain, flesh armor, heightened senses, intellect fortress, know course, life draining, mental barrier, metaphysical strike*, mind blank, mind over body, nerve manipulation, regenerate, and thought shield.

* See Chapter Seven: New Magic, Monsters, and Psionics.

Suunar has a Strength of 16, a Dexterity of 16, a Constitution of 16, and a Wisdom of 17. She has the water find proficiency with a score of 14.

As a sensei, Suunar is a student of both mental and physical discipline. She fights with martial arts, gaining a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls due to specialization and an additional +1 to damage from her high Strength score (see *The Will and the Way* Chapter Four for martial arts). She carries a simple leather backpack with three days of rations, two waterskins with a half-gallon of water each, a firestarting kit and a pound of kindling, a small tent, a spear with an iron point, a simple brown robe, and a scarlet sash empowered with the psionic abilities of accelerate and flesh armor, so that the sash can activate these powers for her in combat. The sash has 16 PSPs and an Intelligence score of 14.

Suunar's goal is self-development. By overcoming the hazards of the desert, she hones her skills, gains experience, and trains herself in new abilities; she developed her special metaphysical strike ability through practice and psionic meditation. If the PCs are peaceful and score a good reaction roll, she is talkative; otherwise, she simply asks them to stop disturbing her meditation (or walks past their camp without stopping). She is interested to test her skills against a warrior PC, such as an obvious gladiator or fighter (or another sensei, if there is one in the party), but purely as an exercise, not as a fight to the death.

If Suunar determines she can learn more by traveling with the PCs than on her own, she asks to accompany them. She has traveled through regions B and J; she knows that the lands further east and south are far too dangerous for a lone traveler.

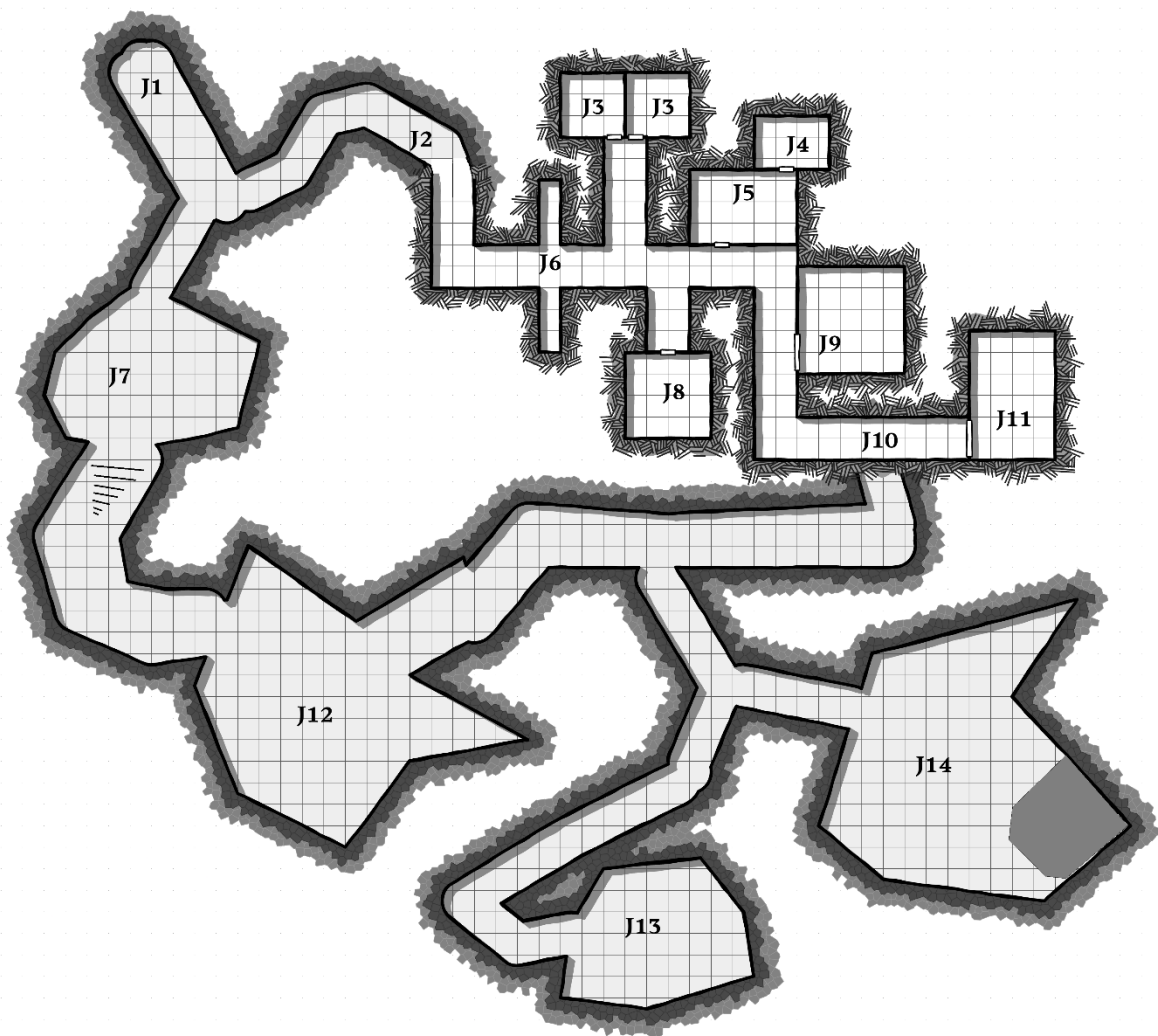
10. The Caves of Onyx: The PCs discover a rounded lump of dark rock rising from the violet sands. A passage disappears downward into the darkness. See the entry at the end of this section.

11. Random ruins: The PCs come across a set of jagged ruins, jutting from the sand and covered with the patina of many years of windscoring and desert-blown obsidian dust from the Dead Lands. Use the random dungeon generator chapter to make the dungeon. Suit is ♠ Spades (ruins). The ruins are 1d4+2 rooms deep with encounters from the level 7–9 tables. As always, the windblown sand and dust makes it 75% likely the PCs will not be able to find the site again after leaving unless they use magical or psionic abilities, or engage in extraordinary efforts to excavate the area.

Note that the encounter table allows for up to two different random ruins, but they will always be found in different hexes.

12. Roll twice and combine: Roll twice on the table and combine both results. For instance, they might discover the pilgrim Suunar cautiously hiding and watching the gith in their canyon enclave.

The Caves of Onyx



The Caves of Onyx are a partially-natural formation excavated and enlarged by a variety of inhabitants over many years. Formed out of a mix of volcanic rock and burrowed sand, the caves are mostly large (12–15 feet in height) and sandy, warm and echoing.

THE SAND MARCHES

Centuries ago, a small group excavated onyxes from the caves below, and made a small habitation of their own. Though the people are long gone, some remnants of their small home remain. Later, only a few decades in the past, a powerful fire priest and a small number of his followers turned part of the obsidian mines into a temple of fire. After the priest finished his transformation into a fire elemental, he left the place behind, and his followers eventually dispersed as well. The place has since been overtaken by desert animals, though a few guardians remain.

The passage south of J7 descends roughly 20 feet, placing J7, J12, J13, and J14 below the rest of the map. The hallway at J10 passes over the lava tunnel below.

J1: The Hole

A rough hole, with some tool scrapings along the sides, descends in the lump of rock jutting from the sand. The rock walls are dark and rough, some kind of protrusion of lava from long ago that left behind a tunnel that has since been widened. The smell of dry dirt permeates the area.

Both the floor and the walls here are rough, and sand routinely blows into the hole. Tracking finds only a few faint signs of passage, without information about the nature of the creatures that may have come this way.

J2: Transitional Turn

As you come around the corner, you see the walls become smooth, the floor likewise, and the ceiling held in place with fitted planks and beams.

The curve here enters an area where tunnels have been excavated, smoothed, and finished. The area was obviously made to be inhabited. There is no writing and there are no signs of who made the area, but it was probably enlarged and smoothed over the course of many years.

J3: Small Residence

This room is a bit musty, with a bed frame in one corner that has an old straw mattress upon it. A few pieces of broken wood indicate where other furnishings were destroyed long ago.

Each of these rooms once served as a small bedroom for an individual or couple. They have long since been abandoned, though they could be readily cleaned up and used.

The eastern room has a metal *knife* +1 underneath the bed frame.

J4: Kitchen

A small brick oven with a chimney that bends and extends to somewhere in the dunes above lies against the far wall of this small kitchen. A low stone counter on the west side bears marks of food preparation, while several bone hooks suspended on the east wall dangle empty. Under the hooks lies another low stone counter with a variety of ceramic pots and bowls.

The kitchen stove is usable due to the cunning design of its chimney, which allows it to vent to the outside above in spite of years of wind-blown sand. Any utensils once kept here are long gone. The ceramic pots measure six in number and are all plain, brown, and used for preparing or serving food.

J5: Dining Room

Defying the ages, a long, rectangular table of hard wood dominates the center of this room, set upon a thick, faded rug that bears a geometric design and many colors of weave. Against the west wall is a shelf with a stack of crockery, plates, and tankards, all ceramic.

The dining table in this room is heavy at 400 lbs., 8 feet long by 4 feet wide, and solid. If the PCs can remove it, they can sell it to an interested buyer for 220 ceramic pieces... or keep it for themselves, of course. No chairs remain to go with it.

The rug is faded and badly worn, and tears if removed; it has no value.

J6: Guard Niches

A pair of small niches extend into the walls to either side here, providing cover to anyone within—clearly spaces for guards to occupy while defending against intruders. Each niche bears a wooden gate and wooden stool.

Guards would sit in these niches once upon a time, providing a line of defense against creatures coming in from the wastes. Now, the niches have become home to a pair of giant scorpions, one from each side. The scorpions are aggressive and only too happy to attack anything coming into their lair.

Scorpions, giant, 2: AL N; AC 3; MV 15"; HD 5+5; HP 28; THAC0 15; # AT 3; Dmg 1d10/1d10/1d4; SA Poison sting (type F, save or die); SZ M; ML 11; XP Value 650. See MC 1.

J7: Mined-Out Chamber

This irregular lava chamber has walls of crumbling volcanic stone with chunks of various stony inclusions. The stones have been mined out, leaving behind only small striations of onyx and obsidian.

The mined-out chamber was long ago played out, so only small fragments of obsidian and onyx can be dug out here—3d6 ornamental pieces worth 10 cp each.

J8: Residence

This room is a humble residence, with a rickety painted screen with several holes in front of a crumbling bedframe and a large wooden trunk at its foot, all on the west side of the room. The eastern half bears an empty ceramic ewer on a small table, a humble wooden chair, and a badly-worn cabinet with three drawers.

THE SAND MARCHES

This larger residence once served a couple. The furnishings are worn with age and crumble when handled firmly. A giant poisonous snake makes its lair inside the cabinet's interior, crawling out through the underside (which is no longer intact) when it hunts. This snake is an elder, with low intelligence and ability to speak. It has lived here for many years, devouring small creatures that come into the passages. It has tangled a few times with the giant scorpions at J6, and now avoids it.

Snake, poison (giant), elder: AL N; AC 5; HD 5+2; HP 25; THACO 16; # At 1; Dmg 1d3; SA Poison (save at -4 or die in 1d4 rounds); SZ M; ML 8; XP Value 975. See *MC 1*.

Behind the tattered screen, a curled-up body lies on the bedframe, a recently-dead half-elf woman in leather armor and wearing a traveling cloak. She still has a pair of large belt pouches, one filled with five pounds of nuts and raisins (slightly dry but still edible), one with 12 ceramic pieces and 3 gold pieces in it, as well as a set of metal thieves' picks. She wears a pair of comfortable leather boots that are *boots of balance* (see *The Complete Thief's Handbook*) and she has a sheathed bone short sword and a metal *dagger of sounding* (also in *The Complete Thief's Handbook*). A sling over her shoulder holds two waterskins, one of which is empty, the other holding half a gallon of water.

This thief was bitten by the snake and died in agony in this very room. The snake, not especially hungry, had no desire to try to swallow her entire body, and simply left her alone as she died. If *raised* or communicated with via spells such as *speak with dead*, the thief explains her name is Tirlaira and she was "lying low" after generating a bit of heat from a robbery she pulled off in Balic. Upon finding the caves of onyx, she hoped to unearth some valuables or make it into a hideaway, but suffered an unfortunate end instead. (Loot from her robbery was left at some other location of your devising, either in Balic or some other place out of reach, or perhaps in an oasis, bolt-hole, or abandoned shack out in the wastes.)

J9: Meeting Room

A low round table occupies the center of this room, dominated by an elaborate crystal candelabra studded with pieces of onyx, making a beautiful combination of white quartz and black stone. Colorful pillows scattered around the table make for comfortable sitting space.

The colorful pillows are a bit flat but can be refilled with fresh stuffing, and the fabric retains its lustre, giving the four pillows an artistic value of 35 cp each. The dazzling candelabra in the center of the low table is an art object worth 1,750 cp, but it is very fragile and any time it is jostled or the person carrying it is struck it must make a save vs. normal blow (as crystal) or break.

J10: Hall of Hidden Hole

The hallway here is a bit less well-finished than other parts of the complex, with the stonework still rough and pieces of the floor covered in tiny chunks of broken rock and rubble.

The intersection of this hall with the tunnel to the south is a trap; the scattered rubble helps to conceal the trapdoor in the floor. If more than 200 lbs. of weight is placed on this spot, the trapdoor opens, dropping everyone in the space 20 feet down and into the tunnel below.

A concealed latch in the northern wall just before the pit (which can be found as if searching for a secret door) locks the floor into place when thrown, allowing safe passage over the pit.

J11: Treasure Room

Obviously, the people who lived in this cave made good money hauling out the stones and gems from below, as they saved many treasures in boxes here. Crates and chests are stacked through the room, watched over by a large statue carved out of volcanic rock.

The former inhabitants of this place took their best treasures with them when they left, but the crates and chests here still have a variety of treasures in them—as well as a few traps. The statue in the center of the room is a rock golem, told to guard this room; the golem animates and attacks anyone who tries to take anything from the boxes, or remove the boxes themselves.

Golem, rock: AL N; AC 4; MV 6"; HD 10; HP 45; THAC0 11; # At 1; Dmg 2d10; SD can only be harmed by magical weapons, immune to spells cast by wizards or priests of less than 5th level, immune to all transmutation spells; SZ L; ML 20; XP Value 3,000. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

There are a total of four crates and three chests, which contain the following:

Crate 1: Empty.

Crate 2: Contains 200 lbs. of hardwood planks, usable for construction.

Crate 3: Empty.

Crate 4: Contains a single metal pry bar.

Chest 1: Empty, but there is a trap on the hasp of the chest, so that when opened it releases a cloud of poison gas. Everyone within 10 feet must save or take 6d6 damage (half damage on a successful save).

THE SAND MARCHES

Chest 2: Has a magical trap that curses the opener so they take a -4 penalty on all saving throws until the curse is removed or the target dies. It contains 12 silver ingots (each weighing 5 lbs. and worth 10 sp), a *bag of vanishing* with 10 gold pieces in it (see *The Complete Thief's Handbook*), and three spars of perfect milky translucent quartz crystal, each three feet long, weighing 15 lbs. and worth 150 cp. In addition, there is a single +2 *short sword* made of the same translucent quartz, carved from a single piece and enchanted with permanent *stoneiron* so it has the strength and edge of metal. This blade, called *Nacre*, is neutral good in alignment, with an intelligence of 13 and ability to communicate by empathy. It has the ability to detect secret doors and sloping passages in a 10-foot radius. *Nacre* has lain dormant since the original inhabitants left the caves and awaits the opportunity to explore new places. *Nacre* enjoys visiting underground spaces, especially those with crystals and gems, which it considers kin to itself, though of course it can only communicate this through simple feelings of satisfaction, friendship, and so on.

Nacre and the three spars of crystal are wrapped inside of a faded rug, where they were accidentally left behind by the former occupants.

Chest 3: Contains a pile of dyed fabrics in various solid colors, a total of 100 sq. yds. weighing 30 lbs. and valued at 5,000 cp.

J12: Halls of Onyx

The irregular walls of this large chamber sparkle with dark protrusions of onyx and obsidian. Dark figures of similar material wait dormant inside, standing at attention.

Ten obsidian skeletons linger in this chamber, miners once put to work but now left behind. Each has black bones and a single piece of obsidian embedded in its forehead. Each also carries a metal pick, used for mining (8 lbs., worth 400 cp). The skeletons lurch back into motion once living beings enter the room, seeking out things to excavate (in this case, the intruders).

Skeletons, obsidian, 10: AL N; AC 6; MV 12"; HD 4+4; HP 22; THAC0 15; # At 2; Dmg metal pick 1d6/1d6+1; SA defiling; SD half damage from edged weapons, regenerate; SZ M; ML 20; XP Value 975.

Once the skeletons are dealt with, the PCs can mine the area for onyx and obsidian. An hour of mining turns up 1d6+1 chunks of useful material. Each chunk has a value of 10 cp. The PCs can excavate up to 100 chunks of material, if they spend enough time down here.

J13: The Shrine of Deep Fire

Though this was once a mere lava cave, it has been hollowed and appointed with unusual furnishings. A pair of large stone braziers decorate the eastern side, and as soon as you enter, they flare up with deep orange flames. The fire illuminates a great slab of basalt, shaped as a perfect hexagonal pillar, four feet high and with a flat top.

This fire shrine dates back centuries, and occasionally serves as a site for itinerant priests who find it. The basalt pillar serves as an altar, where sacrifices are made to the powers of fire.

When the party enters the chamber, the stone braziers ignite automatically, without any requirement for fuel; this is actual fire, which gives off heat and burns objects placed in it. This also causes four fire minions to materialize in the eastern side of the chamber. The fire minions make no immediate movement, instead waiting to see what the PCs do. Characters who exercise caution and show proper reverence for the powers of fire note that the fire minions watch them but do not interfere. Those who engage in hostilities or attempt to damage the shrine suffer immediate attack.

As long as the fire braziers are lit, the fire minions gain a +2 bonus to their attack and damage rolls. The braziers can be extinguished with a *dispel magic* spell, *affect normal fires*, *pyrotechnics*, or the application of at least 16 gallons of liquid per brazier. Once extinguished, a brazier no longer lights automatically until a cleric of fire uses the *gate* ability to summon fire into the bowl.

Fire minions, 4: AL LE; AC 3; MV 12"; HD 6; HP 27; THAC0 15; # At 1; Dmg 2d6; SA fire; SD immunity to fire; SZ L; ML 15; XP Value 975. See *MC 4: Dragonlance Appendix*.

J14: The Glowing Pit

The air becomes excessively warm here, moreso even than outside during the midday heat. Obsidian sparkles in the walls, and part of the floor on the far side of the cavern gives off an ominous, faintly red glow.

The marked area in this room is a thin layer of obsidian, with a small 3' space below it, and a pool of magma beneath. This is the home of a magma drake, which swims out to find prey, then swims back here to rest undisturbed. If the party makes a good deal of noise or starts mining obsidian and onyx from the walls of the chamber—a total of 2d6×20 pounds of obsidian and an equal number of onyx stones is available, taking a person-hour per 10 pounds—the drake bursts through the thin obsidian sheet to see what is going on in its lair. (Obsidian sells for 5 cp per pound; onyx, a semi-precious stone, is worth 50 cp per stone).

THE SAND MARCHES

The magma drake is not necessarily immediately hostile, though its intelligence is low and thus its motives are rudimentary. It mostly dislikes noise and people smashing holes in what it thinks of as its lair. On a poor reaction roll, it may be immediately hostile, but it may satisfy itself by simply dragging one unfortunate into the magma below and then swimming away, having made its point. (Immersion in magma here inflicts 10d10 points of fire damage per round, in addition to drowning.)

Keep in mind that magma drakes have an innate and unusual fondness for the color red. Characters dressed in red clothes or armor—or, perhaps, are covered in blood—may draw a more curious fascination from the drake.

Magma drake: AL N; AC 0; MV 18", br 6", Sw 12"; HD 13; HP 59; THAC0 8; # At 4; Dmg 2x 1d12+6/5d6/1d12; SA constriction, swallow; SZ G; ML 16; XP Value 9,000. The magma drake has 40 PSPs and a power score of 11 with the powers all-round vision, body control, contact, danger sense, ego whip, feel sound, inertial barrier, intellect fortress, mind bar, mindlink, probe, psychic crush, radial navigation, and thought shield. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

Region K: The Shifting Lands

Adventure Level 13-15 · Expedition Bonus: 5,000 XP

Predominant Terrain: Sandy Wastes ($\frac{1}{3}$ overland movement speed) and Salt Flats (normal overland movement speed). Encounter distance 5d10×10 feet, limited by visibility. Open, flat ground (10% chance of getting lost). Due to obsidian blowing in from the south and different-colored dust from the north, the shifting lands are quite navigable and do not count as featureless.

Weather:

1. Hot and clear
2. Hot and clear
3. Hot and dusty (dust storms limit visibility to 100')
4. Very hot and clear
5. Very hot and clear
6. Very hot with salt storms (see below)

The shifting lands are sandy wastes in the west and salt flats in the east. Bracketed between the obsidian flats to the south and stony barrens to the north, they represent a small corridor of desert intruding into and abutting the austere white plains of salt. The hazards here are both hidden and dangerous.

As always, dust storms and sand storms limit visibility to 100' when they arise, and salt storms also double water consumption for anyone outside of shelter.

Story Beats: The shifting lands are extremely hazardous, but also present an opportunity: the PCs can fight off a dangerous group of raiders and rescue a small village managing to hold out in the middle of a small area of scrub. Defeating the raiders not only earns the goodwill of the villagers and an automatic outpost, but gives the PCs the chance to collect some powerful magical weapons and armor, as well as mounts, vehicles, and perhaps a powerful psionic patron.

Encounters: A random encounter happens on a roll of 1 on 1d10. Check at 3–6 A.M. and 3–6 P.M.

THE SAND MARCHES

Die Roll (2d6)	Encounter	Encounter Limit
2	Dune trapper	1
3	Dragannel, 1d4	2
4	Sink worm, 1	2
5	The Cruel Oasis	Unique location
6	Raider group	4
7	Duskbreak village	Unique location
8	Greater hatori, 1	2
9	Dune turtle, 1	2
10	Random ruins	2
11	Cloud ray, 1	1
12	Roll twice and combine	—

2. Dune Trapper, 1: The dune trapper is an extreme hazard, though PCs of high level may well be flying over the region and could avoid it. It certainly triggers danger sense if someone is about to step into it. The dune trapper appears as a small oasis, about an acre across and even with small plants and a pool of clear water. When creatures get close to the water, it sucks the entire false oasis down into the ground. Since the creature is a plant-animal symbiotic hybrid, it can't be easily killed with defiling. If slain, it holds a number of quarts of water equal to its hit points, but the meat is inedible. It also has a rich treasure: Types I, O, R, and W, totaling a 30% chance for 1d6×100 silver, a 50% chance for another 4d6 silver, 10% chance for 1d10×10 gold, 25% chance for another 1d6 gold, 65% chance for 2d6 gems, 70% chance for 2d10 additional gems, a 15% chance for any one magic item, a 60% chance for any two *potion fruits*, and an automatic 10d3 bits, 10d2 ceramic pieces, 2d8 silver, 10d4 gold, and 3d6 gems.

Dune Trapper: AL N; AC 10; MV 0; HD 16+3; HP 75; THAC0 5; # At special; SA swallow whole; SZ G; ML N/A; XP Value 19,000. See MC 12: *Terrors of the Desert*.

3. Dragonnel, 1d4: These reptilian flyers might give the PCs a scare by appearing to be the Dragon of Tyr from a great distance, but even with their huge size they are clearly not that horror once the PCs are close enough to see their wing-arms. As they are semi-intelligent, they attack in groups if possible and fly away if morale breaks, but they do not understand tactics or traps. Dragonnels are typically flying overhead looking for prey at night; during the day they sleep in a shaded nook.

Dragonnel: AL N(E); AC 3; MV 12, Fl 18 (C); HD 8+4; HP 40; THAC0 11; # At 3; Dmg 1d6/1d6/4d4; SA tail slap (2d6); SZ H; ML 13; XP Value 2,000. See *MC 5: Greyhawk Appendix*.

4. Sink worm, 1: The sink worm appears by bursting out of the sand to eat an unsuspecting party member. It resembles a gigantic pale white maggot, and will likely swallow someone whole on its first attack unless the party is alerted to its presence.

The only redeeming features of the sink worm are the fact that it doesn't hunt at night or in the salt flats (if this encounter is rolled at one of those times or places, treat as *no encounter*).

Treasure type Q is found in the worm's gullet: 1d6 gems.

Sink worm: AL N; AC 6; MV 12", Br 18"; HD 14; HP 63; THAC0 7; # At 1; Dmg 2d12; SA swallow whole; SD phasing; SZ G; ML 11; XP Value 7,000. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

5. The Cruel Oasis: Mark this location on the map. The PCs spot an oasis, complete with some palm and date trees, low bushes, grasses and reeds, and a pool of water some 1d6×50' in diameter. Buzzing insects and small lizards make it clear the water is potable. Unfortunately, when the PCs get close enough to drink, they discover the oasis is home to a cistern fiend.

The only treasure of the oasis is the water itself: If the cistern fiend is killed, the PCs can freely refill their waterskins and eat their fill of dates, coconuts, and small lizards and insects. If they chop down all of the trees, they can harvest 150 lbs. of wood, but doing so disrupts this tiny ecosystem and the oasis then blows away within a few weeks.

Cistern fiend: AL N; AC 0; MV 12"; HD 10+10; HP 55; THAC0 9; # At special; SA poison, proboscis, psionics, tentacles; SD regeneration; SZ G; ML 15; XP Value 10,000. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

6. Raider group: The PCs encounter a small band of dangerous, hardened raiders mounted on crodlus. The raiders are used to living in these extremely harsh conditions, and are all experienced and quite amoral. If they spot the PCs, they are likely to size up the party as possible victims, but they might barter with a well-appointed group that looks dangerous and presents itself as a tough, insurmountable adversary.

The raiders move about the desert in small bands harvesting materials where they can find them, and occasionally attempts to raid Duskbreak Village (#7). This band is a scouting group hunting for food and water, but they'll gladly take weapons and treasures from hapless travelers.

A raider group consists of 1d4+2 warriors, one war leader, one defiler, and one psionist. All are mounted on crodlus trained for war. Each raider carries a small cask (5 gallons) of water strapped to the back of the crodlu's saddle, 5 pounds of preserved meat rations, a bedroll, a small tent, 1d6 silver pieces, 4d4 metal-tipped crossbow bolts, and small trinkets or personal effects (combs, baubles, jewelry, etc.) worth 2d10 ceramic pieces. In addition, their war-trained crodlu could be taken as prizes by the PCs; each has a saddle and harness.

If the PCs defeat two groups of raiders *and* defend Duskbreak Village (#7), or they defeat four groups total, the raiders' strength is broken and they will not be encountered again.

Raider warrior: AL LE; AC 5; MV 12" (24" mounted); HD fighter 8; HP 36; THAC0 13; # At 3/2; Dmg by weapon; SZ M; ML 13; XP Value 975. Raider warriors wear nonmetal brigandine armor, carry medium shields, and wield medium lances (S-M 1d6+1/L 2d6) while charging, and clubs (S-M 1d6/L 1d3) if forced to fight on foot. They also carry light crossbows (1d4) and can use them while mounted. They are weapon specialists with the lance, gaining +1 to attack and +2 to damage and two attacks per round. Their usual tactic is to pick a vulnerable target (someone lightly armored or not mounted) and then charge in sequence until the foe is obliterated. They also judiciously use their crossbows if they are fighting a group without mounts, firing and then wheeling to ride away before enemies can counterattack them.

Raider warrior leader: AL LE; AC 3; MV 12" (24" mounted); HD fighter 15; HP 60; THAC0 6; # At 2; Dmg by weapon; SZ M; ML 15; XP Value 7,000. The raider warrior leader wears either nonmetal brigandine and a *medium shield* +2 (25% chance), nonmetal *brigandine* +1 and a *medium shield* +1 (25% chance), nonmetal *studded leather* +3 and a *medium shield* (25% chance), or *chain mail of cool breezes* +1 and a *medium shield* (25% chance; see Chapter Seven: New Magic, Monsters, and Psionics). The raider warrior leader is a specialist with the lance and gains a +1 to attack and +2 to damage with it, and a 5/2 attack rate. The leader's sidearm is either a metal *longsword* +1 (25% chance), a metal *shortsword* +2 (25% chance), a metal *scimitar* +2 (25% chance), or a bone *battle axe* +2 (25% chance). For a missile weapon, the leader has either a *light crossbow* +1 (25% chance), a *light crossbow* +2 (25% chance), a *heavy crossbow of speed* +1 (25% chance), or a *light crossbow of accuracy* +3 (25% chance). The leader also carries an additional 3d6 silver pieces and 1d6 gold pieces.

Raider defiler: AL NE; AC 9; MV 12" (24" mounted); HD defiler 12; HP 25; THAC0 18; # At 1; Dmg by weapon; SA spells; SZ M; ML 13; XP Value 5,000. The defiler wears a *ring of protection* +1 and carries a bone dagger and a wand; roll 1d6: 1-2, *fireballs*; 3-4, *magic missiles*; 5-6, *lightning bolts*. The wand has 1d4+5 charges remaining. The defiler also carries 1d4 random *potion fruits*.

Give the defiler prepared spells appropriate to a 12th-level wizard, either from the selection below or one of your own design. The defiler carries spells on either a set of carved bones (1 on d4), a collection of inscribed stone dice that form mnemonic combinations (2 on d4), a sheaf of leather hides with mystic writing (3 on d4), or a set of glass jars with carefully-arranged colored stones inside (4 on d4). The defiler's spell devices always also include *detect magic* and *read magic*, plus 1d4 additional random spells or spells of your choice.

Wizard spells:

1. *magic missile, shield, sleep, wall of fog*
2. *bind, levitation, Melf's acid arrow, shatter*
3. *fly, Melf's minute meteors, protection from normal missiles, suggestion*
4. *dimension door, Evard's black tentacles, phantasmal killer, rainbow pattern*
5. *major creation, sending, teleport, wall of force*
6. *flesh to stone*

Raider psionist: AL LE; AC 5; MV 12" (24" mounted); HD psionist 9; HP 49; THACO 16; # At 1; Dmg by weapon; SA psionics; SZ M; ML 14; XP Value 2,000. The psionist has 120 PSPs and a power score of 15 with the psionic powers ballistic attack, cryokinesis, inertial barrier, concentrate water, contact, danger sense, ESP, inflict pain, invincible foes, kinetic control, know course, levitation, molecular agitation, mind thrust, mindlink, probe, psionic blast, psychic crush, and telekinesis, as well as all defense modes. The psionist wears hide armor and carries a small shield and a *spear* +2 (50% chance) or a metal *scimitar* +2 (50% chance). The psionist also has a collection of 1d6 crystals (worth 1d10×5 cp each), 1d6 additional silver pieces, and one miscellaneous magic item, which you should roll before combat starts in case it is usable during any fighting. Even if an unusable item is indicated, keep the result—magic items are always valuable for trade, after all.

Crodlu, war-trained: AL N; AC 4; MV 24"; HD 4+4; HP 22; THACO 15; # At 5; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d8/1d6/1d6; SA grapple; SZ L; ML 11; XP Value 420. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

7. Duskbreak village: Mark this location on the map. The PCs encounter a small village, surrounded by a palisade wall. In the middle of the village is a crumbling remnant of a fortress made of yellow-gray stone, a relic of an earlier age that has been shored up and fortified. Tall palm trees surround the fortress—a sure sign of water. See the Duskbreak Village section at the end of this region.

8. Greater hatori, 1: The huge hatori swim languidly through sand and salt, looking for tasty bites to eat. Though only encountered one at a time, that's more than enough for most groups. Note that hatori have Low intelligence, so they are a bit cleverer than a typical animal. Hatori treasure is in the gizzard, type U×2: 90% chance of 6d8 gems, 70% chance of two random magic items.

Hatori, greater: AL CN; AC 1; MV 12"; HD 14; HP 63; THACO 7; # At 2; Dmg 3d12/2d12; SA swallow whole; SZ G; ML 11; XP Value 6,000. See *MC 4: Dragonlance Appendix*.

9. Dune turtle, 1: This massive reptilian beast swims languidly beneath the sand, rising to devour any creature smaller than it. Since it is very intelligent, it might avoid dangerous PCs, or even talk if the PCs can establish communication and score a friendly reaction roll. Still, it is a hulking and hungry beast, and food is its first priority.

The dune turtle's treasure is its massive swallowed hoard of types B, R, S, T, and V, for a cornucopia of: 25% chance of 4d10×100 bits; 25% chance of 1d10×100 ceramic pieces; 25% chance of 10d10 silver; 30% chance of 5d10 gold; 30% chance of 1d8 gems; 10% chance of an armor and weapon; and an automatic 2d8 silver, 10d4 gold, 3d6 gems, 1d8 *potion fruits*, 1d4 scrolls, and any two magic items. Harvesting the shell requires use of the animal rending proficiency and provides enough material to make one set of armor and one shield with an innate (nonmagical) +1 bonus.

Dune turtle: AL N; AC 0; MV 3", Br 9"; HD 14; HP 63; THAC0 7; # At 3; Dmg 2d6/2d6/4d8; SA breath weapon, capsize vehicles; SZ G; ML 17; XP Value 12,000. Use the statistics for a dragon turtle from *MC 1*, but the dune turtle burrows in sand instead of swimming in water. Its breath weapon is superheated sand, and its capsize attack works against wagons, carts, and argosies.

10. Random ruins: The PCs stumble across a dangerous ruin. Use the random dungeon generator. Depth is 1d6+5 cards; suit is ♠ Spades (ruins). Encounter level is 13–15. As always, if the PCs leave there is a 75% chance that the ruins will be buried beneath wind and sand.

11. Cloud ray, 1: A cloud ray makes a leisurely circuit overhead, high in the sky. This is a relatively small one, though no less dangerous, as it's a fast-flying carnivore. Though it has animal intelligence, roll a reaction check: if it is indifferent or cautious, it's not hungry, and if it's friendly, it may want to swoop down to "play" (which could give the PCs a few terrifying moments). Since it is a natural animal with only animal intelligence, it could be calmed by a ranger or by various priestly spells like *animal friendship*. It's also possible that it might see the PCs as too small to make a decent meal (excepting unfortunate half-giants or large mounts, of course).

Cloud ray: AL N; AC 5; MV Fl 24" (C); HD 12+7; HP 61; THAC0 7; # At 1 tail or 1 bite and psionic; Dmg 5d10 (tail) or 10d10 (bite); SA swallow whole; SD psionics; SZ G; ML 15; XP Value 19,000. The cloud ray has 100 PSPs and a power score of 10 with the powers control winds, dream travel, inertial barrier, levitation, and telekinesis, and the defense modes mind blank, mental barrier, and thought shield. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

12. Roll twice and combine: Roll twice on the table and combine both results. For instance, the PCs might come across a sink worm attempting to devour a raider band, or dragonnells circling over the Cruel Oasis.

Duskbreak Village

Duskbreak Village is a sizable settlement of 151 people, mostly humans with a smattering of dwarves, muls, half-elves, and exactly one thri-kreen. The villagers are very competent but also very tired, as they must constantly defend their village against the region's terrible monsters. As a result, everyone in the village knows how to fight, and their leaders are extremely skilled. In addition, the village has siege weapons and defensive emplacements: They have a trebuchet and two light ballistae, a perimeter ditch, and a palisade wall 300' in diameter. Inside the palisade are a variety of buildings made of stone, wood, and leather, with a squat circular stone structure in the middle. They also have a deep well and cistern inside the central circle, which gives them a reliable water supply, and they use this water for careful agriculture.

The people of Duskbreak are suspicious of outsiders, as they are constantly attacked by raider groups (see encounter #6). Villagers only go out in large hunting parties numbering at least a dozen, and they prudently use powers and make only short forays away from home. On rare occasions they travel to region F to trade with the Three Neighbors, but they always do so in the guise of being cryptic travelers who keep to themselves, so those villages do not know of the existence of Duskbreak. (Eleni, the village psionicist, ensures their anonymity.)

The villagers have access to unusually powerful weapons and armor that they wrested from the ruined tower they now inhabit. Having killed the monsters that once lurked there, they have claimed these ruins as their own home, far from the sorcerer-monarchs of the Tablelands. Still, they are always one bad encounter away from total ruin; the loss of their skilled leaders could precipitate the collapse of their village, if they can no longer defend it from dangerous monsters or raider bands.

If the PCs are friendly and willing to trade, and they score a good reaction result, the villagers allow them to trade by placing items next to the main palisade gate, then using a rope to lower down their own village trade goods in exchange.

The *second* time that the PCs come to the village, it is under attack by two raider groups (#6) working in tandem—the warriors and war leaders ride in chariots pulled by crodlu in this case. Treat this encounter much like a *Mad Max* scene, with the charioteers circling the village and demanding that the villagers “just walk away.” If the PCs help defend the village, they are welcomed in, given free food and supplies, and thanked for their timely aid. In this case, the village now counts as an outpost, and does not require any special expenditures on the part of the PCs.

If the PCs become helpful allies of Duskbreak village, award them 16,000 xp to split among the party.

Traag, village war leader: AL N; AC 2; MV 12"; HD fighter 14; HP 129; THACO 7; # At 2 (3 with spear); Dmg +3 *spear* S-M 1d8+7/1d10+7; SZ M; ML 16; XP Value 4,000. Traag is a veteran mul fighter with bronzed and scarred skin, originally from Tyr, who has taken on the role of war leader. He wears nonmetal *scale mail* +3 and carries a body shield, and fights with a *spear* +3. He is a grandmaster with the spear: he gains a +3 bonus to attack and damage, 3 attacks per round, and inflicts S-M 1d8/L 1d10 damage instead of 1d6/1d8 when using it in one hand. He has an 18 Constitution and a 17 Strength, which affords him another +1 to attack and damage rolls. Traag routinely drills his villagers and has trained everyone in fighting with the spear, and could train a friendly PC.



Traag—Illus. by Kendal Gates

Ziev, village priest: AL NG; AC 6; MV 12"; HD cleric 12; HP 55; THACO 14; # At 1; Dmg by weapon; SA spells; SZ M; ML 14; XP Value 2,000. Ziev is a half-elf para-elemental rain cleric who serves the village by healing wounds and aiding in agriculture. Though he cannot *create water* as easily as a Water cleric, he has gained access to the spells *precipitation* and *cloudburst* from his elemental patrons (see the *Priest Spell Compendium* for these spells). Combined with his elemental *gate* ability, he can bring refreshing rains to aid in growing crops and extending water supplies.

Ziev wears nonmetal *studded leather* +1 and carries a magical spear called *Crack of Thunder*: this +1 *spear* can, three times per day, inflict an additional 2d6 electrical damage on a hit and force the target to make a save vs. spells or be deafened for 10 rounds.

Ziev is a prophet priest (see the *Complete Priest's Handbook*), and sometimes gains visions from his elemental patrons. The villagers treat him with some respect and awe, but also with a little distance. Because of these visions, whenever the PCs arrive, he has *just the right spells* for whatever situation arises—healing, defense, or fighting them off.

THE SAND MARCHES

Eleni, village psionist: AL LN; AC 3; MV 12"; HD psionist 22; HP 75; THAC0 11; # At 1; Dmg by weapon; SA psionics; SZ M; ML 14; XP Value 10,000. Eleni has 321 PSPs and a power score of 18 with a staggering number of powers; assume that she knows every attack and defense mode, ballistic attack, body control, cell adjustment, conceal thoughts, contact, danger sense, dominate, dimensional door, ESP, inertial armor, mass contact*, mindlink, mindwipe, precognition, probe, regenerate*, safe path*, telekinesis, teleport, time dilation*, time shift*, time travel*, and any other power that you decide is useful. (* See *The Will and the Way*.) She may also modify her powers with psionic meditation, so allow her to do some tricks that don't fit the normal rules. She has proficiency in ancient history, psionic lore, and reading/writing with scores of 18 in each.

Eleni has a Wisdom of 18 and a Constitution of 16.

Eleni is a Balician woman in her early 30s who serves as the village's psychic defender, but she is secretly a member of the Order. She has discerned there is some kind of massive telepathic disturbance to the southeast (the city-state of Babweru) but isn't sure what it is. She has been prodding around the edges of the problem to figure out what's going on, but keeps running into lost memories she can't seem to repair or shield. As a result, she is frustrated, and is unwilling to report to the Order until she has some success. In the meantime, she pretends to be an accomplished psionist dedicated to the defense of the village, while in fact using it as her base of operations for her psychic investigations.

Eleni fights wearing nonmetal *studded leather armor +4* and carrying a metal *scimitar of speed +2*, but she almost never engages in physical confrontation, instead preferring to move away from opponents and then telepathically devastate them. She won't reveal her special connections to the PCs unless one of them seems like a good candidate for membership in the Order. She might, however, drop hints about "something ominous" to the southeast, trying to subtly guide the PCs into investigating the problem for her and reporting back—not overtly, of course, but implying that there may be even greater riches if they press further into the wastes.

As a member of the Order, Eleni also has access to any useful minor magic items that you think might be relevant to her tasks, or to entice the PCs into helping her with her investigation. Eleni is also very interested in nonstandard powers, and offers to train PCs who demonstrate knowledge of unusual abilities in exchange for their shared skills.

Duskbreak villagers: The typical Duskbreak villager has 1d4+2 Hit Dice and is trained in the use of the spear. 10% of the villagers have wild talents. They are trained in group tactics and work together to fight monsters and raiders. They also know how to use the siege engines atop their village walls. Each villager has varying proficiencies in useful skills like agriculture, carpentry, cobbling, cooking, leatherworking, or weaving.

Sneaking in to Duskbreak: If the PCs are suspicious of the village, or just decide they want to check it out without being noticed, they have a challenge. Eleni the psionist may notice if the PCs intend to cause harm, given her clairsentient powers. Even if the PCs try to sneak in while she's away—and the party likely has no advance way to know of her precognitive abilities—the villagers are vigilant. Constant monster attacks mean they always watch the palisades for signs of trouble, and raise a hue and cry if they spot someone suspicious.

The best nonmagical way to sneak in is at night, under cover of darkness, by climbing over the palisade and hiding from guard patrols. Of course, *invisibility* works, too.

Characters caught sneaking or stealing are brought before Traag, who has someone bring Eleni to aid in questioning. The villagers assume any outsider trying to sneak into the village is a raider scout, and it takes significant persuasion to convince them otherwise.

Side Quests: Duskbreak Village serves as a potential safe point deep in the wastes, but it can also be the site of other adventures: rescuing kidnapped or lost villagers, going on a dangerous hunt for a large animal (like a cloud ray) for a feast, or exploring a random dungeon discovered beneath the damaged keep—depth 1d4+4 cards, suit ♠ Spades (ruins), level 13–15. If the PCs turn it into an outpost, it can become a secondary hub for their expeditions in the Sand Marches. In such a case you should provide some random names and personalities to other villagers, develop small tasks and petty feuds, and allow the village to become a fully-fleshed place to which the PCs hopefully become attached as protectors and local heroes.

Region L: The Scouring Salts

Adventure Level 13–15 · Expedition Bonus: 5,000 XP

Predominant Terrain: Salt Flats (normal overland movement speed). Encounter distance 5d10×10 feet, limited by visibility. Open, flat ground (10% chance of getting lost).

Weather:

1. Hot and clear
2. Hot and clear
3. Hot with salt storms (see below)
4. Very hot and clear
5. Very hot with salt storms (see below)
6. Scorching and clear

The scouring salts have regular salt storms (double water consumption if outside of shelter) and are always hot. This terrain is some of the most dangerous in the area; it is almost impossible to find sustenance, as the predators of the region are extremely dangerous. Only the hardiest creatures can survive. As usual, scorching weather halves overland travel speed, as the PCs must stop to rest, find shade, and conserve their strength.

Remember that scorching weather slows overland travel.

Story Beats: The scouring salts have little to offer beyond challenging experience. The cleric at the silt shrine of the Silt Basin can be a powerful enemy or ally and a source of limited information about lands further south.

Encounters: A random encounter happens on a roll of 1 on 1d10. Check at 3–6 A.M. and 3–6 P.M.

Die Roll (2d6)	Encounter	Encounter Limit
2	Sun drake, 1	Unique
3	Dune reaper hive	Unique location
4	Megapede, 1d4	1
5	Desert mastyrals, 1d3	2
6	Spinewyrm, 1	4
7	Random habitation	Unique location
8	Brajeti Ruvoka, 1	Unique
9	The Silt Basin	Unique location
10	Behirs, 1d2	2
11	Sand mother	Unique
12	Roll twice and combine	—

2. Sun drake, 1: This lone drake is perhaps the most dangerous creature in this entire area, across all of the endless dunes, except for the sorcerer-monarch to the south. With its high intelligence, it knows how to find, track, and judge prey; it is also possible for PCs to engage with it diplomatically, if they can communicate (perhaps with a mindlink power, or an appropriate spell). It spends much of its time sunning itself and flying over the salt flats.

Sun drake: AL N; AC -1; MV 12", Fl 24 (C); HD 17+5; HP 82; THAC0 3; # At 6; Dmg 2d6+6 \times 4/5d8/4d4; SA suffocation, dehydration, swallow whole; SZ G; ML 16; XP Value 17,000. The sun drake has 50 PSPs and a power score of 13 with the psionic powers cannibalize, contact, domination, ego whip, gird, intellect fortress, mass domination, mind blank, mind thrust, mindlink, prolong, psionic drain, psychic crush, repugnance, and tower of iron will. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

3. Dune reaper hive: Mark this location on the map. Dune reapers are extremely dangerous predators, and the landscape for half a mile around this hive is denuded and barren. The PCs are likely to spot tracks long before they find the hive itself: A series of winding, stony holes dug into a tall, adobe-like cone made from sand and rock held together with the drones' mortar secretions. Throw four dice of your choice on a map and connect them with tunnels from the lowest roll to the next-highest roll until all rooms are connected. (Any dice with matching numbers automatically connect to each other.) Each die represents a cave chamber, with a diameter of 10' times the roll on the die; any connection going from a lower die to a higher one also rises in elevation by 10'.

The hive holds 4d6+1 drones, 1d4+1 warriors, and one hive matron. Being highly territorial, the dune reapers attack immediately once they spot trespassers.

Dune reaper drone: AL N; AC 2; MV 12", Jp 9"; HD 8; HP 36; THAC0 13; # At 3; Dmg 3d6+7/3d6+7/2d6; SA surprise leap; MR 10%; SZ L; ML 20; XP Value 4,000.

Dune reaper warrior: AL N; AC 0; MV 12", Jp 9"; HD 10; HP 45; THAC0 11; # At 3; Dmg 3d6+7/3d6+7/2d6; SA surprise leap, clamp; MR 25%; SZ L; ML 20; XP Value 6,000. Dune reaper warriors have 30 PSPs and a power score of 10 with the psionic powers ballistic attack, contact, inertial barrier, mind bar, mind thrust, mindlink, molecular agitation, psychic crush, send thoughts, and superior invisibility.

Dune reaper matron: AL N; AC 0; MV 12", Jp 9"; HD 10; HP 80; THAC0 11; # At 3; Dmg 3d6+7/3d6+7/2d6; SA surprise leap, clamp; MR 25%; SZ L; ML 20; XP Value 6,000. The matron has the same psionic abilities as a warrior.

See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

4. Megapede, 1d4: Massive megapedes are some of the most horrifying monsters found in the salt flats. At over a hundred feet long, they might seem easy to spot from a distance, but while lying low against the flats their gray-white carapaces blend uncannily with the ground—and they can deliberately hide with their psionic chameleon power. Given their size, they are constantly hungry, though they hunt primarily at night—during the day, they remain inactive to avoid overheating, unless attacked. The megapedes also have formidable psionic powers, but they are unlikely to disintegrate something they want to eat.

Megapede: AL N; AC 3; MV 12"; HD 10; HP 45; THAC0 11; # At 5 or 1; Dmg 1d6 ×5 or 3d10; SA poison (type B), use two psionic powers per round; SZ G; ML 11; XP Value 4,000. Megapedes have 150 PSPs and a power score of 15, with the psionic powers aversion, biofeedback, chameleon power, contact, death field, detonate, disintegrate, double pain, ego whip, energy containment, intellect fortress, mental barrier, mind thrust, mindlink, project force, psionic blast, psychic crush, reduction, soften, thought shield, and tower of iron will. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

5. Desert mastyrals, 1d3: These dangerous scorpion-like creatures burrow just under the surface of the sand to hibernate, only bursting forth when vibrations indicate the presence of something nearby. The mastyrals' treasure is usually scattered and buried with remnants of their prey (type D: 15% chance of 1d10×1,000 bits, 50% chance of 1d3×1,000 ceramic pieces, 15% chance of 1d6×100 silver, 10% chance of 1d4×100 gold, 30% chance of 1d10 gems, 15% chance of any two magic items plus one *potion fruit*).

Desert mastyril: AL N; AC 0; MV 12"; HD 12; HP 54; THAC0 9; # At 4; Dmg 1d10/1d10/2d6/2d6; SA poison, tail impale; SD regeneration, immune to blunt weapons; SZ M; ML 11; XP Value 10,000. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

6. Spinewyrm, 1: Compared to other creatures in this region, the spinewyrm is low on the list of dangerous predators, though still a threat. With their limited intelligence, they avoid tougher creatures such as megapedes and mastyrals, while finding entities to squeeze and consume.

Spinewyrm: AL N; AC 2; MV 12", FL 15" (B); HD 8; THACO 13; # A6 1; Dmg 2d6; SA constriction; SZ L; ML 13; XP Value 2,000. The spinewyrm has 20 PSPs and a power score of 7 with the powers chameleon power, displacement, ectoplasmic form, mind blank, and shadow form. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

7. Random habitation: Mark this location on the map. The PCs discover a fortified village built in the salt flats with a well, fields of struggling crops, and a pen for kanks. Use the random dungeon generator. Suit is ♥ Hearts (habitation). Habitation size is 1d4+2 cards. Final room is always K♥ the enclosure and holds one domesticated silk wyrm. Inhabitants are a mix of humans, muls, dwarves, and half-elves, mostly level 3, with 1d4+2 leaders who are level 1d4+11 each. The village struggles to survive, relying on a very deep well and careful maintenance of its crops and kanks. They also have a large, covered enclosure holding a captive silk wyrm, which they keep for its silk. The silk wyrm has been subjected to psychic surgery with the acceptance power, so it does not try to leave. The village can trade food and water for useful tools or supplies, and offers a spot for PCs to rest if friendly. The villagers have no knowledge of the city-state of Babweru to the south, but they do know the location of the Silt Basin shrine (encounter #9)—roll a random hex in this region to place it if the PCs haven't encountered it yet.

Outpost: If the PCs make the villagers friendly, they can set up a travel route to this village and turn it into an outpost.

8. Brajeti ruvoka, 1: This enigmatic elemental entity roams the salt flats on inscrutable missions. Typically, the brajeti's business is checking on local features, plants, and wildlife, simply to see the development of the ecosystem. It has little interest in combat or dealing with outsiders; it seeks only to wander the region and continue its lonely journey of cataloging the terrain and creatures. Since it can fly, it is just as likely to be moving at a good clip a short distance in the air as to be found wandering on foot.

The brajeti ruvoka wears bronze armor (but does not suffer heat exhaustion from it) and carries a bronze shield and a large *bronze brajeti sword* +2. Since it can cast spells as a 20th-level druid (with major access to Earth and minor access to Air), it can be a brutal foe or a very helpful ally.

Brajeti ruvoka: AL N; AC 3; MV 18", FI 18" (B); HD 10+3; HP 48; THAC0 11; # At 1; Dmg 3d6+2; SA spells; SZ L; ML 15; XP Value 8,000. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

9. The Silt Basin: Mark this location on the map. The salt terrain here becomes sandy and slippery, and blows more easily in the dust. Soon, the PCs notice some kind of structure obscured by a constant swirling cloud of salty silt. See the location description at the end of this section.

10. Behirs, 1d2: These cunning, cruel beasts move at a good clip over the sands, hunting cautiously by day and curling up to sleep at night. Behirs know they are outmatched by some of the larger predators in the region, and so may try to avoid very dangerous foes. Each behir has a 10% chance of a valuable item in its gizzard: 60% chance of 1d6×10 gems; 30% chance of 1d8 pieces of jewelry; 10% chance of one indigestible small magical item. A PC with animal rending proficiency can also remove behir's scales, which can be used to craft a suit of scale mail armor with armorsmithing proficiency.

Behir: AL NE; AC 4; MV 15"; HD 12; HP 54; THAC0 9; # At 2 or 7; Dmg 2d4/2d4+1 or 2d4/1d6×6; SA lightning bolt, swallow whole; SA immune to electricity, poison; SZ G; ML 16; XP Value 7,000. See *MC 1*.

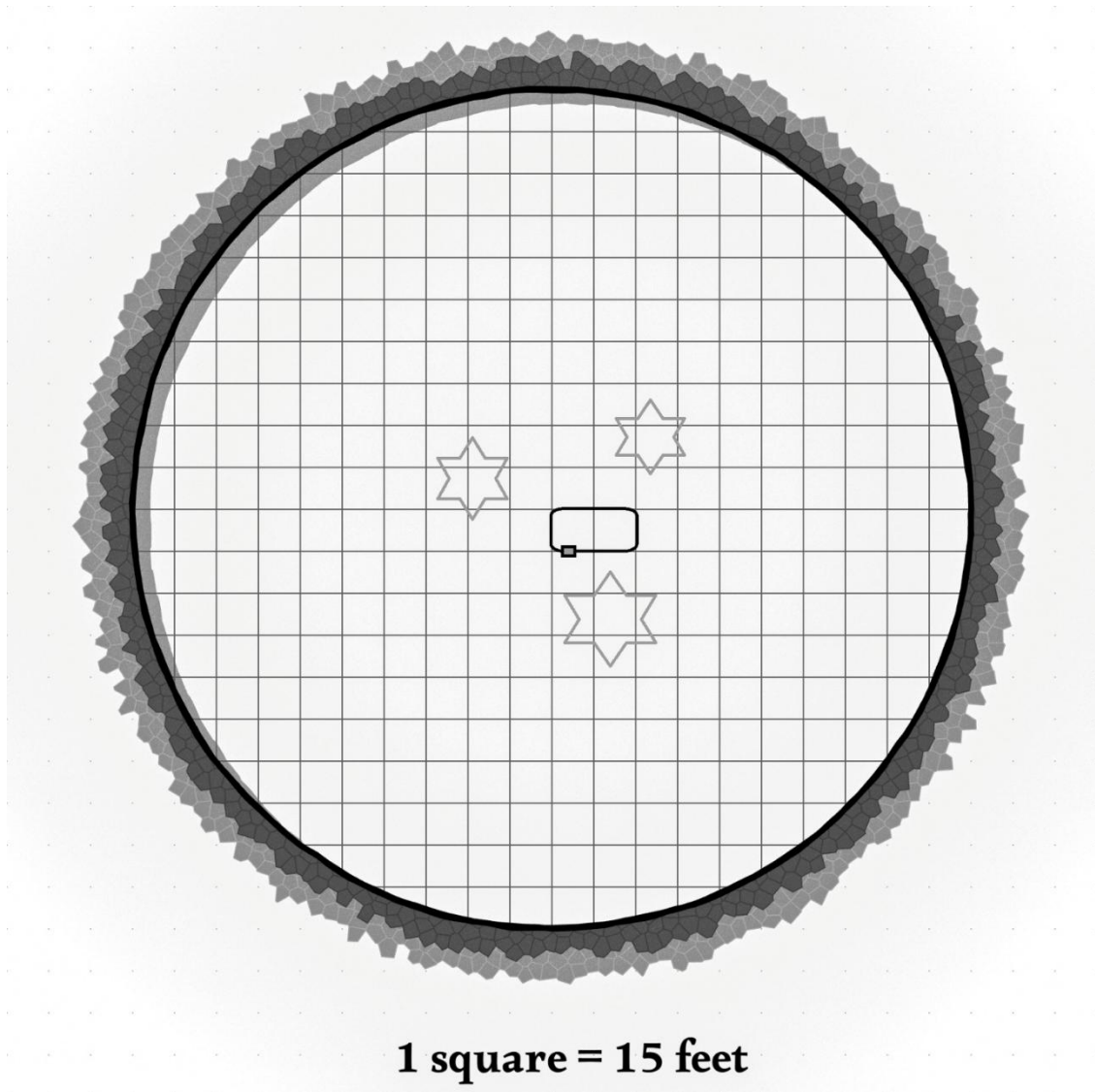
11. Sand mother, 1: This sand mother pretends to be a druid protecting a small, unlikely oasis in the midst of the salt flats. As with all sand mothers, it hates preservers and uses its cunning to separate stragglers or prey upon people desperate for water.

The sand mother's treasure is hidden among the decaying remnants of victims under the salt layer where it hunts: type B and type W, for a 25% chance of 1d10×400 bits, 25% chance for 1d10×100 ceramic pieces, 25% chance of 1d10×10 silver, 30% chance of 1d10×5 gold, 30% chance of 1d8 gems, 10% chance of one magical armor and weapon, and an additional 50% chance of 4d6 silver, 25% chance of 1d6 gold, 70% chance of 2d10 gems, and 60% chance of any two magic items carried on its person. The sand mother is intelligent enough to use magic items it can activate, especially to aid its disguise.

Sand mother: AL CE; AC -1; MV 24", Br 12"; HD 9; HP 41; THAC0 11; # At 2; Dmg 1d12/1d12; SA energy drain; SD illusion; SZ M; ML 15; XP Value 5,000. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

12. Roll twice and combine: Roll twice on the table and combine both results. For instance, the party might spot a spinewyrm being hunted by the sun drake.

The Silt Basin



The dried salt patches of the basin here give way to flows of silt, mixing together in a slurry of dry but slick particles. The desiccating power of the salt, combined with the properties of the silt, give rise to a powerful shrine to the para-element of silt—a combination of blowing, suffocating dust and dehydrating particles.

A constant blowing storm of silt and sand particles surrounds the perimeter of this shrine. Missile fire is impossible through this wind barrier, and visibility is limited to 5', making everything beyond concealed except for the vaguest outlines. Player characters outside can only make out the swirling column of silt and salt, and the vaguest hint of some kind of large, conical structures within. The silt-wall is only 5' wide, though, so once PCs step through, they see the interior clearly.

The interior of the basin slopes down shallowly, reaching a level 15' below the exterior at its nadir; the basin measures 300' in diameter. Inside, three tall irregular mineral cones rise up, surrounded by numerous smaller ones. These are tufas—mineral deposits formed long ago by water once flowing here, now remnants made of hardened salts.

In the center of the basin is a low-lying building, made of salty brick and mortar. Ceramic shingles comprise the slanted roof, and the single door is made of petrified wood. This is home to the caretaker of this silt shrine, Marojendo (MAH-row-HEN-do). A planter box outside of the building holds a robust bush with edible red berries, growing out of dry, cracked, parched dirt, and kept alive only by Marojendo's magic.

Marojendo learned his craft after spending some time as a pirate on the Silt Estuary. After falling from a ship during a fight and drowning in the silt, he was saved by the elementals and became one of their chosen clerics. Now, he works to extend the power of silt, attempting to harness the salt's ability to absorb water in order to dry out lands and spread silt across the salt flats and into the stony barrens and other lands beyond. Most of his time is spent in the shrine, communing with silt elementals, but he occasionally travels out to perform errands that help to spread the power of silt. There is a 25% chance that he's not home if the PCs visit on a subsequent outing—assume he is always home the first time they find this location.

Marojendo's agenda is inimical to most living beings, but he isn't directly hostile. He might be friendly to PCs if they approach him in a friendly fashion, based on a reaction roll, though of course he has no love for clerics or druids of water or rain. On a friendly result, he may even use his magic for healing, but only if the PCs entertain his stories of sailing the Silt Estuary and listen to his rambling explanations of how the world will be better once everyone is a silt sailor on an endless dune sea. His idea of a "better world" is delusional—nobody could survive a world completely without water—but he is, after all, touched by the silt elementals.

Marojendo has one roommate, a fellow silt pirate with a colorful past: a halfling man by the name of Brill, but nicknamed Aprig. Brill is far less talkative than Marojendo, and more suspicious; he is also a better hunter and survivalist, having come down from the Ringing Mountains as part of a ceremonial party, become a captive, escaped, joined a caravan to the east, was ambushed, escaped again, and signed up with silt pirates.

Marojendo can tell friendly PCs a bit about the region, mostly warning them about the sun drake and sand reapers. He also knows about regions G, H, and P—he hopes to one day extend the sand and silt's reach over the Slabs region, and he considers the Corroded Lands an interesting place to visit (but he doesn't want to live there). He knows the location of the Shield mountain in region P but, obviously, not about the existence of the city-state of Babweru.

If Marojendo proves hostile, he evades strong parties, instead letting his summoned elementals engage the PCs. He uses his *gate* power to generate a massive heap of silt to suffocate someone in armor, and he moves into the swirling barrier of salt and uses his ability to ignore silt to safely move around in there while pelting the PCs with spells and missile attacks, especially his custom version of *entangle*. If his morale breaks, he flees back to the Silt Estuary, never to be seen again by the PCs in these lands.

Marojendo, human silt cleric 14:

AL N; AC 2; MV 12" (9" in armor); HD cleric 14; HP 51; THAC0 12; # At 1; Dmg by weapon; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 6,000.

Priest spells:

1. *bleed*, *cure light wounds* ×2, *entangle* ×3, *orison*, *sanctuary*
2. *augury*, *barkskin*, *enthrall*, *hold person* ×2, *obscurement*, *spiritual hammer*
3. *conjure lesser silt elemental**, *curse of black silt**, *plant growth*, *sand spray** ×2
4. *sand warriors** ×3, *whirlpool of doom** ×3
5. *conjure silt elemental**, *elemental forbiddance** ×2
6. *sand blade**, *silt tides**
7. *glass storm**

* See *Earth, Air, Fire, and Water*.

Marojendo has a Wisdom of 18 and the wind-sailing proficiency at 16 (see *Earth, Air, Fire, and Water* p. 16). He has a specially-modified version of *entangle* that, when cast on sand, silt, or salt flats, causes it to turn into a grasping silty mire—the effect is identical to a normal *entangle* spell, but requires no vegetation and instead only works on sand, silt, or salt flats.

Marojendo wears nonmetal *scale mail* +2 and carries a matched pair of bronzed *tortoise blades* +2 (see *Dragon* magazine #185; damage S–M 1d6, L 1d6+1, speed factor 5, size M) that improve his armor class by 2 points thanks to their tortoise shell shields. For ranged combat, he wields a *bolas* +3 (see *Combat & Tactics*; damage S–M 1d3/L 1d2, speed factor 8, size S, range 30'/60'/90'). He wears a *ring of fire resistance* made of black marble and shaped to resemble plumes of volcanic smoke, and *boots of the shifting dunes* (see Chapter Seven: New Magic, Monsters, and Psionics). In his small house he keeps a stone box, trapped with a *glyph of warding* that inflicts 14d4 damage from desiccation to anyone who opens it other than Marojendo; inside he has 22 gold pieces, six white silt pearls (worth 500 cp each), and a carved figurine of a bird in flight (worth 35 cp).

Perhaps most importantly, Marojendo has a sail-cart he keeps parked next to his home, and uses for long journeys. This cart is 20' long by 10' wide, has a large silk sail, and features an enclosed lower deck and a cabin on top. While it can be maneuvered by a lone individual with wind-sailing proficiency (like Marojendo), it can also be handled by a team. As long as there's wind, the sail-cart rolls with its large wheels at a good clip: it covers 30 movement points per day—half-giant speed—as long as it isn't becalmed. It can carry up to eight people and half a ton of cargo. Marojendo uses it for his journeys, but if he becomes helpful to the PCs, he might loan it to them, so long as they promise to be extremely careful with it (and perhaps leave something as collateral).

Brill, halfling fighter/thief: AL NE; AC 2; MV 6"; HD fighter 9/thief 11; HP 43; THAC0 12; # At 3/2; Dmg by weapon; SZ S; ML 12; XP Value 3,000.

THE SAND MARCHES

Brill has a Dexterity of 19, and the hunting and survival (jungles, salt flats, and sandy wastes) proficiencies with a rating of 15. He wields a *bone sapara* +2 (from *Combat & Tactics*; base damage S-M 1d6+1/L 1d4, speed factor 5, size S) and an *iron dagger* +3. He is a specialist in two-weapon fighting, so he takes no penalties for using both weapons at the same time, with a 5/2 attack rate. For ranged combat he uses a boomerang (see *Combat & Tactics*; base damage 1d4, speed factor 4, size S, range 20'/40'/60'). He wears a small *leather jerkin* +2 (a leather breastplate and sleeves). He carries a set of bone thieves' picks, and has rogue skills of: PP 70%, OL 70%, FT 65%, MS 95%, HS 95%, DN 40%, CW 95%, RL 50%.

Brill is glad to live in a place where he doesn't have to worry about being constantly on the run or held in a cage. His major annoyance is that he has not seen another halfling in years, and he greatly misses using his own language and discussing matters of halfling interest. He is eager to meet other halflings and to visit places where he might find a halfling community, and offers his skills in trade if such an opportunity arises.

If the PCs befriend Marojendo and Brill, award them 9,000 xp, as if the PCs had defeated the pair in combat.

Region M: The Dead Lands

Adventure Level 10-12 · Expedition Bonus: 2,500 XP

Predominant Terrain: Obsidian Flats (normal overland movement speed). Encounter distance 5d10×10 feet, limited by visibility. Rolling ground (20% chance of getting lost).

Weather:

1. Hot and muggy
2. Hot and clear
3. Hot and clear
4. Very hot and muggy
5. Very hot and clear
6. Scorching and clear

The Dead Lands are some of the most dangerous terrain in Athas, even at the edges like in this region. Undead roam this place in large numbers, ruins are few and filled with yet more undead, and the terrain is incredibly unforgiving. The featureless obsidian plains absorb immense amounts of heat, and there is almost no water or food to be had. The only liquids are in hardy plants growing in cracks in the obsidian reaching down to the sand beneath, and the only food is the tiny insects, birds, and lizards living in those plants. The temperature is always high, sometimes crawling up into scorching territory; scorching weather halves the PCs' overland movement rate, as they must take frequent rests, search for safe areas to walk, and avoid heat exhaustion.

Remember that scorching weather slows overland travel.

Story Beats: The Dead Lands are a place for PCs to test their mettle at mid- to high levels. The creatures here are very dangerous, but the treasures are concomitantly wealthy. The ruins here may offer useful magic items, if the party can survive them.

The cataclysm that created the Dead Lands is, of course, a result of the defiling wars of an earlier era, when magma was raised in a massive destructive wave to wash over the entire region.

Encounters: A random encounter happens on a roll of 1 on 1d10. Check at 7–10 A.M., 7–10 P.M., and 3–6 A.M.

THE SAND MARCHES

Die Roll (2d6)	Encounter	Encounter Limit
2	T'liz, 1 (13 HD)	1
3	Fael, 1 (9–12 HD)	2
4	Krag, 1	2
5	Shrine with raaig (8–11 HD), 1d4	1
6	Thinking zombie (9–12 HD), 1	2
7	Athasian wraith, 1	4
8	Magma paraelemental beast, 1	2
9	Random dungeon	Unique location
10	Fire minions, 1–4	—
11	Obsidian golem, 1	1
12	Roll twice and combine	—

2. T'liz, 1: The t'liz is an undead defiler, either one who died in the eruption of the Dead Lands, or a power-hungry explorer who came here later and died while trying to excavate secrets. Regardless, the t'liz is evil and interested only in developing further magical abilities.

Keep in mind the t'liz is a supragenius (19–20 intelligence) that can pass as a humanoid (human, half-elf, or elf), especially when using magic. Depending upon reactions, the t'liz might seek to ally with the PCs for a time, in hopes of wresting more magical secrets from them or from the Dead Lands as they explore. Eventually, though, its evil nature drives it to feast upon the living in order to sustain itself, likely keeping any other magicians alive as the last survivors so it can wring any remaining secrets from them.

Since a t'liz retains its defiling abilities and was always at least an 18th-level caster, a typical t'liz has a range of spells available. Assume a t'liz that is not surprised will have observed the party for some time and makes use of powerful defenses such as *stoneskin*, *globe of invulnerability*, and *mind bar* before making contact. If combat seems likely, the t'liz also uses magic such as *improved invisibility* and *fly* to give it an advantage in maneuverability and positioning. The t'liz carries its spell tools with it (roll 1d4: 1, book; 2, thin stone tablets; 3, colored knotwork mnemonics; 4, tattoos on the entire body).

The t'liz typically has a small lair, formed by using magic to alter and shape obsidian into a subterranean study area. Its treasure is stored here (types F and T×2): 10% chance of 3d6×1,000 bits, 30% chance of 1d4×1,000 ceramic pieces, 10% chance of 3d4×1,000 silver, 10% chance of 1d4×100 gold, 35% chance of 2d10 gems, 30% chance of any nonweapon magic items, and 2d8 scrolls. The presence of bits or ceramic pieces indicates a t'liz that was a later explorer of the Dead Lands rather than one who died in the initial devastation, or has killed several such explorers. Reroll any perishable items such as *potion fruits*.

T'liz: AL NE; AC 3; MV 12; HD 13; HP 58; THAC0 7; # At 1 or 2; Dmg 1d6+6; SA energy drain; SD +1 or better magical weapon; SZ M; ML 18; XP Value 10,000. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

3. Fael, 1: The fael was a wealthy individual in life, who died in the horrors that created the Dead Lands and now persists as a ravenous glutton consuming any living thing entering its domain. The fael is reasonably intelligent but its goal is to steal as much food as possible, and eat anyone who interferes with its consumption. At first glance, especially in dim light, the fael might be mistaken for a living humanoid, but the harsh environs of the Dead Lands make it obvious that it cannot be a lonely survivor out in the middle of the obsidian waste. Note that the fael's special attack, which severs limbs, can be a severe problem for a party that doesn't have access to regeneration by spell or psionic ability. The fael carries its treasure of 2d8 silver pieces, 1d4×10 gold pieces, and 3d6 gems.

Fael: AL CE; AC 6; MC 9"; HD 6+3; HP 30; THAC0 15; # At 3; Dmg 1d3/1d3/2d6; SA special; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; SZ M; ML 16; XP Value 975. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

4. Krag, 1: The krag is an elemental priest of earth or water who died in the massive magma eruption that formed the Dead Lands. Trapped here as undead, it harbors only vengeance for the living.

THE SAND MARCHES

Remember the krag is exceptionally intelligent (15–16) and psionic, as well as possessed of elemental powers. The krag wants only to destroy the living and turn them into kraglings, and fights tactically to gain advantage against groups by separating out a weak target, softening them up, and then going in for an elemental transfusion attack to turn the target into a kragling.

Treasure for the krag is typically stashed in an outcropping or cleft in the obsidian, especially near a feature where the krag died in the initial magma blast. Ignore the chance for ceramic pieces, as those coins were not in circulation at the time of the krag's demise. Otherwise, treasure type C: 20% chance of 1d6×10 silver, 25% chance of 1d6 gems, and 10% chance of two non-perishable magic items.

Krag: AL CE; AC 4; MV 12"; HD 11; HP 49; THAC0 12; # At 1 or 2; Dmg 1d6/1d6; SA by type, elemental transfusion; SD psionics; MR 20%; SZ M; ML 15; XP Value 5,000. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

5. Shrine with raaig, 1d4: Mark this location on the map. Time and erosion have taken their toll on this shrine, leaving only a few pillars, a single broken stone wall, and a rough remnant of what might've once been a statue. The object is now a featureless lump of stone with a dusting of ash and obsidian over it, with a small stone bowl-like structure in front of it (about 2' diameter). The raaig haunting this place cannot leave, of course, and remains trapped here until destroyed.

Unlike many encounters in the Dead Lands, the raaig is not necessarily immediately hostile. Player characters showing some level of caution or reverence may coax the raaig into making an appearance and speaking with them (per the results of a reaction check). Characters engaging in destructive behavior or disrespect for the remains draw the raaig's wrath immediately.

The nature of the shrine is ultimately up to you. The **DARK SUN** campaign setting holds that Athas has no gods and never did, but that doesn't mean that people don't believe gods once existed. If you want to leave the matter unclear, simply rule that in the thousands of years the raaig has been trapped here, its memories have eroded and it no longer recalls the details of the shrine. It only knows that it is caught here as an eternal guardian for a place it no longer understands.

Note that because the raaig can remain incorporeal and invisible, it is capable of observing the PCs for some time without revealing its presence.

Treasure guarded by the raaig is scattered about the shrine, some of it possibly buried in the obsidian: type E and V, consisting of: 25% chance of 3d6×100 silver, 30% chance of 2d6×100 gold, 15% chance of 1d12 gems, 25% chance of any 3 magic items plus one scroll, and two additional magic items. Note that the hoard will not include the usual ceramic pieces or bits because it predates their use, and it will not include perishable magic items such as *potion fruits*. (Reroll if such items are indicated.) Scale treasure based on the number of raaig indicated (¼ if there is only one raaig, ½ for two, and so on).

Raaig: AL LN; AC 0; MV 9, FI 18 (B); HD 8; HP 36; THAC0 13; # At 1; Dmg 1d8; SA cause disease; SD +1 or better magical weapon to hit; MR 50%; SZ M; ML 17; XP Value 3,000. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

6. Thinking zombie, 1: This zombie is a remnant of the lands that once were, trapped in a perpetually-decaying, withered body and unable to die. Since this thinking zombie comes from the era of the creation of the Dead Lands, it predates the creation of the half-giant race, and is therefore a human or dwarf zombie. The zombie is fueled by constant pain and outrage, as it can no longer complete any tasks, due to the destruction wrought upon the Dead Lands centuries ago. It is immediately hostile.

Thinking zombie: AL NE; AC 6; MV 12"; HD 9–12; HP 41–54; THAC0 11 (9–10 HD) or 9 (11–12 HD); # At 2; Dmg 1d6+4/1d6+4; SA bite causes disease; SD immune to *sleep, hold, charm, illusions*, mind-affecting spells, death magic, cold, poison, paralysis; SZ M; ML 20; XP Value 420 + 65 per HD over 5. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

7. Athasian wraith, 1: A lone Athasian wraith is still a dangerous encounter, due to its formidable powers and ability to curse magical weapons. There is a 25% chance that the wraith currently inhabits a corpse (25% huge scorpion, 50% humanoid, 25% tembo). Either way, the wraith seeks to extinguish the living with its hate. The wraith's treasure is carried on its body (if inhabiting a humanoid corpse) or hidden nearby—type R: 2d8 silver, 1d4×10 gold, 3d6 gems.

Wraith, Athasian: AL NE; AC 2; MV 9"; HD 7+3; HP 34; THAC0 15; # At 1; Dmg 1d4 + chill touch; SA animate object, inhabit body, chill touch (1d4 damage and save vs. death or lose 1 point of strength); SD +2 or better weapon to hit, curse magic weapons, immune to paralyzation, poison, *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, death, cold; SZ M; ML 13; XP Value 2,000. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

8. Magma para-elemental beast, 1: Fissures in the dangerous ground emit steam and smoke; lava cannot be far below. One para-elemental magma beast makes this area its home. The beast has no ecological niche, so it simply tries to burn things intruding upon its domain. The beast uses its magma blast (30' range, 4d6 fire damage, save vs. spells for half) and gleefully melts the weapons of attackers (weapons must save vs. magical fire at -6, or no penalty if magic weapons, or be destroyed).

Magma paraelemental beast: AL N; AC 3; MV 9", swim 15"; HD 8; HP 36; THAC0 13; # At 2; Dmg 3d6/3d6; SA magma touch, magma blast; SD +1 or better magical weapon to hit, immune to heat and fire attacks; SQ double damage from cold-based attacks, suffer 1 damage for every five gallons of water; SZ L; ML 15; XP Value 3,000. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

9. Random dungeon: Mark this location on the map. The party discovers a cleft in the obsidian leading down into a series of rooms and tunnels carefully hewn into the ground and protected by carved blocks of stone that didn't melt during the destruction of the Dead Lands.

Use the random dungeon generator chapter to make the dungeon. Suit is ♠ Spades (ruins). The final room is automatically J ♠ the cistern.

Dungeon depth is 4 cards. Encounters should be from the level 10–12 table.

10. Fire Minions, 1d4: A region of intense lava and fire occupies a break in the obsidian plains, roughly 1d4×100' in diameter. Fire minions use this as a place to visit Athas from the elemental plane of fire. Being intelligent and evil, they likely see travelers as something new to burn.

Fire minions: AL LE; AC 3; MV 12"; HD 6; HP 27; THAC0 15; # At 1; Dmg 2d6; SA fire; SD immunity to fire; SZ L; ML 15; XP Value 975. See *MC 4: Dragonlance Appendix*.

11. Obsidian Golem, 1: Left behind during the desolation that ruined the Dead Lands, this 12' tall rough-hewn statue is a silent guardian that attacks anything coming near to it. Its rudimentary intelligence and inability to communicate means it will not stop and will pursue intruders to the edge of the Dead Lands, but will turn back if they flee to the deserts beyond. Because it does not sleep, this guardian pursues the PCs no matter how far they get away as long as they are in the Dead Lands. It might rudely surprise them while they are encamped or fighting a different battle.

Obsidian golem: AL N; AC 4; MV 6"; HD 12; HP 54; THAC0 9; # At 1; Dmg 4d10; SA fist smash; SD immune to spells cast by preservers and beings below level 7; SZ L; ML 20; XP Value 9,000. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

12. Roll twice and combine: Roll twice on the table and combine both results. For instance, a magma beast at a lava pool may be engaged in battle with a t'liz seeking to destroy it and use its essence for magical experiments.

THE SAND MARCHES

Region N: The Ebony Furnace

Adventure Level 13-15 · Expedition Bonus: 5,000 XP

Predominant Terrain: Obsidian Flats (normal overland movement speed). Encounter distance 5d10×10 feet, limited by visibility. Rolling ground (20% chance of getting lost).

Weather:

1. Very hot and clear
2. Very hot and clear
3. Very hot and clear
4. Scorching and clear
5. Scorching and clear
6. Scorching and clear

The eastern spur of the Dead Lands is dangerous not only for its encounters, but for its extreme heat. There is never a cold day on the obsidian, and the wind wicks away moisture at a moment's notice. On rare occasions, the temperature becomes so great that it is intolerable to anything but extremophiles.

Remember that scorching or hotter weather slows overland travel.

Story Beats: Very few creatures can survive for long in the incredible heat of the obsidian flats. The presence of the Heat Sink (#9) points enigmatically to the presence of ancient devices and psychic artifacts, but gives no easy answers to questions about the culture that once lived here.

Defeating some of the powerful encounters in this region (such as the defiler scavenger team) can give the PCs a much-needed set of magical weapons and items.

Encounters: A random encounter happens on a roll of 1 on 1d10. Check at 7–10 A.M., 7–10 P.M., and 3–6 A.M.

Die Roll (2d6)	Encounter	Encounter Limit
2	Fire drake, 1	1
3	Stalking horror, 1	Unique
4	Heat wave	—
5	Marilith, 1	Unique
6	Obsidimals, 1d6	4
7	Defiler scavenger team	Unique
8	Magma silt horror, 1	2
9	The Heat Sink	Unique location
10	Random caves	2
11	Tree of Life	Unique location
12	Roll twice and combine	—

2. Fire drake, 1: The ebony furnace is one of the few areas in the Tablelands with enough regular volcanic activity to satisfy a fire drake. Even a lone drake is a horror to a party. This fire drake ranges far and wide in search of prey, which it carries back to scorch in magma before devouring the burned flesh. Note that while the drake is only semi-intelligent, it is evil and malicious, and takes pleasure in scorching and devouring creatures.

Fire drake: AL NE; AC -3; MV 12", Jp 3"; HD 20+8; HP 145; THACO 5; # At 4; Dmg 1d10+10/1d10+10/3d8/4d8; SA bite/swallow, elemental, psionics, tail lash; SD psionics; SZ G; ML 19; XP Value 28,000. The fire drake has 150 PSPs with a power score of 18 and the powers awe, contact, control flames, control light, displacement, double pain, ectoplasmic form, ego whip, energy containment, false sensory input, feel light, hear light, inflict pain, mass domination, mental barrier, mind bar, mind blank, mindlink, molecular agitation, psychic crush, shadow form, and thought shield. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

3. Stalking horror, 1: The moonbeast only comes out at night to hunt. Since there are so few living creatures still alive in the ebony furnace, it ranges far and wide in its search for prey. Its lair is a cleft in a basalt protrusion, where it slithers in between eerie columns of gray-black stone.

If this encounter happens during the day, then instead of the moonbeast, the PCs find a strange sculpture left on a cracked pedestal: A vaguely humanoid figure surrounded by rising tentacles, reaching up as if toward the sky. In the humanoid's reaching hands is a black spinel gemstone worth 1,000 cp; the whole figurine has an artistic value of 5,000 cp. The figurine is made of obsidian and looks like it was somehow shaped while liquid and then cooled into a final, smooth form. This is a cursed moonbeast summoning object, so any character who picks it up becomes possessive of it and slowly turns nocturnal. The item itself grants the ability to cast *Evard's black tentacles* once per day. If the PCs carry it with them, their next random nighttime encounter, *no matter where they go*, is with the stalking horror, which follows the icon.

Stalking horror: AL CE; AC -3; MV 12"; HD 18; HP 81; THACO 3; # At 7; Dmg 2d8 × 7; SA bite, constriction, psionics, spells; SD +1 or better weapons to hit, invisibility, spell immunity; MR 25%; SZ H; ML 16; XP Value 12,000. The stalking horror has 75 PSPs and a power score of 16 with the psionic powers of astral projection, body equilibrium, contact, control body, disintegrate, displacement, ectoplasmic form, ego whip, id insinuation, inertial barrier, life detection, mind bar, mind thrust, mindlink, molecular manipulation, opposite reaction, psionic blast, psychic crush, psionic drain, summon planar creature, telekinesis, time shift, and wrench. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

4. Heat wave: The already-terrible weather of the obsidian flats flares up to incredible proportions. Increase the current temperature band by one for three hours (very hot to scorching, scorching to searing).

When the temperature becomes searing, anyone out in the open takes 2d6 fire damage per hour, and dry wood and exposed loose cloth smolders and eventually bursts into flames. Water in containers evaporates rapidly, losing half its volume every three hours. Noticeable steam comes from such containers, and any that are totally sealed make a *pop* and outgassing sound when opened. Fire resistance or the psychometabolic devotion of body control can negate the damage, but PCs must still take care to avoid their items catching on fire!

5. Marilith, 1: The PCs come across what seems to be a lone traveler or survivor. As an Abyssal creature of Genius-level intelligence that is never surprised, the marilith is quick to size up the PCs—probably spotting them long before they spot her—and then devises a stratagem to *polymorph* into an agreeable form likely to provide an opening for diplomacy. Of course, the marilith's true desire is to cause suffering and eventually escape Athas, whether by having her physical form disincorporated in combat, or by magical banishment.

This tanar'ri is a remnant of ancient wars, summoned long ago by a defiler and now trapped in the obsidian flats. Since she has no need for sustenance, she has resided here for centuries, but cannot leave the hex in which she is encountered. She has little knowledge of the outside world—only what she has heard from travelers before she kills them.

The marilith chafes at her imprisonment, but can only be released by returning her to the Abyss through the methods noted above. Still, she has no desire to simply allow someone to kill her, and revels in causing pain and suffering. She will always put up a fight, even if the PCs discover her true nature and offer to "send her home" at the point of a magical blade.

The tanar'ri presents herself as a pilgrim, traveling mage, or psionic hermit named Galla. She explains she cannot leave because she has been cursed by something she picked up in the Dead Lands and now suffers excruciating pain and passes out if she goes too far from the place where she is encountered. This is a lie, of course; she simply is physically unable to move more than a few miles from the location where she was originally summoned to, long ago.

The tanar'ri plays whatever role will get the PCs to trust her, and she plays the long game. If the PCs are anxious to leave her behind, she tries to get them to promise to come see her again, or find some way to free her from "the curse." Naturally, as a magically-summoned creature carrying magical treasures, a *detect magic* spell determines a magical aura about her, thereby giving some false credence to her story.

Though demons are rare on Athas, summoning like this does happen (see the *Dragon's Crown* adventure for another case of a defiler-summoned tanar'ri). The marilith has broad knowledge of the planes, but is just as likely to feign ignorance or lie as she is to tell inquisitive PCs anything useful.

Having resided in the Ebony Furnace for centuries, the marilith has had plenty of time to create a small hidden lair for herself, carefully shaped and carved from the obsidian, with a perfectly-fitted door and littered with treasures taken from those she has slain. Her hoard consists of half-shares of treasure types C and F: 10% chance of 3d6×500 bits; 15% chance of 1d6×50 ceramic pieces and 30% chance of 1d4×500 ceramic pieces; 20% chance of 1d6×4 silver and 10% chance of 3d4×50 silver; 10% chance of 1d4×50 gold; 25% chance of 1d3 gems and 35% chance of 1d10 gems; and a 10% chance for any one magic item and a 30% chance for any two nonweapon magic items. It's recommended you replace the low-value coins (bits and ceramic pieces) with furniture, art objects, and decorations, such as comfortable chairs, tapestries, rugs, divans, and the like—all looted from ruins in the region or captured from scavengers trying to escape the area with these ancient treasures, wrested from buried magma caves. In addition, she wields six magical weapons: a *steel impaler* +2, a *steel puchik* +2, a *steel khopesh* +2, a *steel battleaxe* +2, an *alhulak* +2, and a *steel sword of wounding*.

Marilith: AL CE; AC -9; MV 15"; HD 12; HP 54; THACO 9; # At 7; Dmg 4d6 (tail) and by six weapons; SA constriction; magical weapons; SD +2 or better weapons to hit, never surprised, spell immunities; MR 70%; SZ L; ML 18; XP Value 23,000. See the *Planescape Monstrous Compendium Appendix*.

6. Obsidimals, 1d6: Obsidimals—distant relatives of crysmals, and creatures of elemental earth and mineral—thrive in the obsidian flats. Though they are less dangerous than some of the other foes found here, they are intelligent and operate in groups; they are smart enough to leave a dangerous foe alone, or to engage in ambushes. Since their only need is for obsidian to consume, they have no desire for trade, but they might try to bribe dangerous travelers if afraid for their existence.

Obsidimals: AL NE; AC -4 or 0; MV 6"; HD 9+6; HP 47; THAC0 12; # At 1; Dmg 4d4 (3d4); SA obsidian spray, psionics; SD spell immunities; SZ S; ML 15; XP Value 7,000. Obsidimals have 130–140 PSPs with a power score of 16 and the powers animate object, appraise, contact, control sound, create sound, danger sense, ego whip, ESP, intellect fortress, mental barrier, mind thrust, mind blank, mindlink, mindwipe, probe, project force, psychic drain, receptacle, repugnance, stasis field, soften, tower of iron will, and thought shield. See Chapter Seven: New Magic, Monsters, and Psionics.

7. Defiler scavenger team: A powerful defiler, Rezzax, searches this area for lost relics and magical knowledge. The defiler is cautious and suspicious, and not above ambushing a party for their magic items. He might be persuaded to work together in order to search and clear a cave full of ancient treasures, if the PCs know where to find such a location (or convincingly pretend that they do).

The defiler carries spells on ropes of elaborately-folded paper, like origami, that dangle from a magical staff—there is no writing on the papers; it is the folding that serves as the mnemonic for the spells. These are magically protected from the elements so they don't catch fire in the extreme conditions of the obsidian flats. In addition, the defiler wears *bracers of armor AC 6*, a *ring of protection +2*, and a *ring of sustenance*, and carries a *staff of living wood* (see Chapter Seven: New Magic, Monsters, and Psionics). Choose an additional 1d8+2 spells for the defiler to know in addition to the ones currently memorized. The defiler also knows *enchant an item* and *permanency*.

Rezzax, Defiler: AL NE; AC 4; MV 12"; HD defiler 16; HP 31; THAC0 15; # At 1; Dmg by weapon; SA spells; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 9,000.

Wizard spells:

1. *burning hands, detect magic, detect undead, read magic, shield*
2. *blindness, glitterdust, knock, locate object, shatter*
3. *dispel magic, fireball, fly, hold undead, protection from normal missiles*
4. *enervation, fire shield, fumble, improved invisibility, stonewall*
5. *advanced illusion, animate dead, feeblemind, hold monster, passwall*
6. *death fog, globe of invulnerability, legend lore*
7. *limited wish, teleport without error*
8. *polymorph any object*

Warrior guards, 6: AL N; AC 4; MV 12" (9" in armor); HD fighter 8; HP 44; THACO 13; # At 3/2; Dmg by weapon; SZ M; ML 14; XP Value 975.

The defiler's guards each wear nonmetal brigandine armor and carry nonmetal body shields, as well as a *ring of protection* +1. They each fight with a *steel longsword* +1 and carry longbows and 24 metal sheaf arrows. In addition, each has one randomly-generated miscellaneous magic item. The warriors each carry 12 pounds of food, 4 gallons of water, and tents for the expedition.

Obsidian skeletons, 10: AL N; AC 6; MV 12"; HD 4+4; 22; THACO 15; # At 2; Dmg 1d6/1d6; SA defiling; SD half damage from edged weapons, regenerate; SZ M; ML 20; XP Value 975. See *Monstrous Compendium Annual Vol. 4*.

The obsidian skeletons serve as brute labor for the survey team. They carry bronze tools (picks and spades) but fight with their taloned bony hands in combat. In addition, the skeletons carry extra cargo: Each wears a pack loaded with waterskins, totaling 10 gallons of water per skeleton. Note that area-effect attacks like *fireball* or detonate risk destroying these supplies.

8. Magma silt horror, 1: A gash in the obsidian glows with the heat of magma. The fissure is 1d4×100' long and half this length across. Inside lives a magma silt horror, which feeds on anything fleshy coming close to its lair—whether living or undead. The magma silt horror is not as tough as a well-appointed high-level party, but on a lucky grab it can pull a character into the magma, which is very bad news (10d10 damage). Note that the magma silt horror is quite intelligent, and if combat goes badly, it simply retreats under the magma, where it is hard to follow.

Magma silt horror: AL N; AC 4; MV 6"; HD 12; HP 54; THACO 9; # At 8; Dmg 1d8×8; SA constriction, psionics; SD steam jet; SZ H; ML 15; XP Value 5,000. The magma steam horror has 40 PSPs and a power score of 11 with the powers clairvoyance, contact, danger sense, hear light, life detection, mental barrier, mind thrust, mindlink, psychic crush, synaptic static, and thought shield. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

9. The Heat Sink: Mark this location on the map. The PCs spot a section of tumbled, shattered obsidian fragments in a wide circle around a large, strange structure that looks like an artificial tree—a post with several flat rectangular plates attached to supporting spars radiating from it.

THE SAND MARCHES

The heat sink is an ancient structure that absorbs heat and turns it into stored energy. Because the ambient humidity in the obsidian flats is so low, there's no condensation forming around, but approaching PCs quickly notice that the temperature plummets, mist forms from their breath, and if they stay more than a turn (10 minutes), any liquids they carry start to freeze. The temperature shift causes the obsidian around the outer perimeter to crack and shatter, leaving tiny fragments of obsidian in a ring around the heat sink (a potential hazard for someone walking in thin sandals or barefoot).

Energy from the heat sink is channeled deep underground, so it is not accessible to the PCs for any useful purpose.

Since most undead are resistant or immune to cold, they have no reason to avoid the heat sink, but neither does it provide anything useful to them. Fire creatures like fire drakes and magma horrors avoid it. Player characters can use the heat sink as a place to retreat from the dangers of scorching or searing weather, as the outer edge is generally quite temperate.

10. Random caves: A hole in the obsidian leads down into tunnels that might've once been an excavation, or could be lava tubes; either way, something lives down there now. Use the random dungeon generator with a depth of 1d4+2 cards. Suit is ♣ Clubs (caves), encounter level is 16–18. Encounters are most likely undead unless you decide to place a food and water source deliberately in the caves.

11. Tree of Life: Mark this location on the map. The PCs encounter an incredible sight: A large tree breaking through the obsidian ground, flourishing in the volcanic heat and desolation. The tree offers shade, though it has no edible fruits or flowers. Player characters who don't know better (which is unlikely) might chop it down for 300 lbs. of wood, but it's more likely they quickly realize it survives by magic. The *tree of life* has all of the usual benefits of a tree of its kind, as described in the core **DARK SUN** rules.

12. Roll twice and combine: Roll twice on the table and combine both results. For instance, the PCs may encounter undead stumbling around the heat sink, or a magma silt horror grappling with an obsidian golem.

Region O: The Mindburn Flats

Adventure Level 16–18 · Expedition Bonus: 10,000 XP

Predominant Terrain: Salt Flats.
Encounter distance 5d10×10 feet,
limited by visibility. Open, flat ground
(10% chance of getting lost).

Weather:

1. Warm and clear
2. Warm and clear
3. Hot and clear
4. Hot and clear
5. Very hot and clear
6. Very hot and dusty (salt storms
limit visibility to 100')

Salt storms double water consumption
for unprotected characters when they
strike.

The mindburn flats take their name
from the psionic-draining aura
suffusing the area. This inadvertently
acts as a defense to the hidden city-
state and creatures living further east,
as psionic entities rarely attempt to
pass through this region. This effect
prevents any creature or item,
including the PCs, from regaining PSPs
in the region, as long as the source
remains alive: the psychovore
(encounter #7).

Because of the psychovore, *all psionic
creatures encountered in this region
have no PSPs until the psychovore has
been killed*. This includes creatures or
people pursuing the PCs from other
regions!

Encounters: A random encounter
happens on a roll of 1 on 1d10. Check
at 3–6 A.M. and 3–6 P.M.

Die Roll (2d6)	Encounter	Encounter Limit
2	Nightmare beast, 1	1
3	Earth elemental, 1	2
4	Watroach, 1	4
5	Tlincalli city	Unique location
6	Death living idol, 1	Unique
7	Psychovore	Unique
8	Fire lizards, 1d4	2
9	Land nautiloid, 1	4
10	Dao genie, 1, with jann, 2	Unique
11	Scrubland	Unique location
12	Roll twice and combine	—

2. Nightmare beast, 1: The nightmare beast is a true terror, cunning and physically powerful. The only saving grace for the PCs may be that it can't use its psionic abilities if the psychovore is still alive. The nightmare beast has average intelligence, so it is smart enough to soften up a party with magic before engaging. Note that nightmare beasts cannot be butchered for edible meat, but its horns and tusks can be harvested to make bone weapons.

Nightmare beast: AL CE; AC -5; MV 12"; HD 15; HP 68; THAC0 5; # At 4; Dmg 2d6/2d6/2d10/2d10/4d10; SA psionics and spells; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; MR 20%; SZ G; ML 16; XP Value 16,000. The nightmare beast has 180 PSPs if the psychovore has been killed, and a power score of 17, with the psionic powers of ballistic attack, biofeedback, contact, disintegrate, double pain, ego whip, id insinuation, intellect fortress, mental barrier, mind blank, mind thrust, molecular agitation, molecular manipulation, psionic blast, psychic crush, summon planar creature, teleport, teleport trigger, thought shield, and tower of iron will. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

3. Earth elemental, 1: The mindburn flats are strongly associated with earth and minerals, and powerful earth elementals are not unknown here. The earth elemental is likely on an inscrutable errand for its element, and its response to the PCs may be erratic if none of them are earth clerics (use a typical reaction roll).

Earth elemental: AL N; AC 2; MV 6"; HD 16; HP 72; THAC0 5; # At 1; Dmg 4d8; SA special; SD +2 weapon or better to hit; SZ H; ML 17; XP Value 10,000. See *MC 1*.

4. Watroach, 1: The watroach, or war beetle, is a massive insect with concomitantly huge dietary needs, so any watroach encountered is likely to be hungry unless it just ate something large.

Watroach: AL N; AC 2; MV 9"; HD 15+10; HP 77; THAC0 5; # At 3; Dmg 3d6/1d12/1d12; SA trample; SZ G; ML 14; XP Value 8,000. See *Dragon* magazine #185.

5. Tlincalli city: Mark this location on the map. The PCs come across a strange settlement, a set of large domed huts made from rock or packed dirt layers interspersed with smoothed wood. Use the random dungeon generator, suit is ♥ Hearts (habitation), but the inhabitants are all tlincalli—scorpion people. Size is 1d6+2 locations. For the tlincalli settlement, huts are merely apertures to ramps leading down below, and all locations are underground. There are 4d10×10 tlincalli in the settlement, divided equally among the sites, with leaders in the final location. At each location, every full 6 tlincalli includes one squad leader and one squad spellcaster (for a total of four tlincalli, one squad leader, and one squad spellcaster). Every full 12 tlincalli includes one swarm leader and one swarm spellcaster, and every full 24 tlincalli includes one noble and one sorcerer. The final location includes a high ruler and a high priest.

The tlincalli do not use psionic powers, so the presence of the psychovore presents no problems for them. As a malevolent culture, the tlincalli are usually hostile to outsiders, though they might be coaxed into trading. More likely, they will try to gather and crush any interlopers. Since their intelligence is high to genius, they are competent in tactics and spell use, and know when they are outmatched and will offer bargains. The tlincalli have a functional habitation and can trade in food, water, tools, supplies, and treasure; they are eager to gain access to metal weapons and tools, exotic foods from other locations, and magical items and scrolls their priests and rulers can use.

Tlincalli: AL NE; AC 5; MV 12"; HD 7+7; HP 34; THACO 13; # At 3; Dmg 1d4+1/1d4+1/1d3, or by weapon and 1d4+1/1d4; SA poison, possible spell use; MR 20%; SZ M; ML 18; XP Value 5,000.

Tlincalli squad leader: As tlincalli, but HD 8+8; HP 44; THACO 12; XP Value 6,000.

Tlincalli squad spellcaster: As tlincalli, but HD 8+8; HP 44; THACO 12; XP Value 7,000. The squad spellcaster casts spells as a 4th-level priest.

Tlincalli swarm leader: As tlincalli, but HD 9+9; HP 49; THACO 11; XP Value 7,000.

Tlincalli swarm spellcaster: As tlincalli, but HD 9+9; HP 49; THACO 11; XP Value 9,000. The swarm spellcaster casts spells as a 7th-level priest.

Tlincalli noble: As tlincalli, but HD 10+10; HP 55; THACO 10; XP Value 8,000.

Tlincalli sorcerer: As tlincalli, but HD 10+10; HP 55; THACO 10; XP Value 10,000. The sorcerer casts spells as a 9th-level priest.

Tlincalli high ruler: As tlincalli, but HD 11+11; HP 61; THACO 9; XP Value 9,000.

Tlincalli high priest: As tlincalli, but HD 11+11; HP 61; THACO 9; XP Value 11,000. The tlincalli high priest casts spells as an 11th-level priest.

See *MC 11: Forgotten Realms Appendix II*.

Tlincalli spellcasters are earth clerics, with Major access to the Earth sphere and Minor access to the Cosmos sphere. Since there are likely to be several of them, choose a variety of spells. If the tlincalli are not expecting attack, many of their spell selections will be healing or utility magic. (You can fudge a little and decide their spells on the fly in combat if the PCs invade their city.)

The tlincalli favor macas (dmg S-M 1d8/L 1d6, speed factor 5, size M) and bolas (dmg S-M 1d3/L 1d2, speed factor 8, size M, range 30'/60'/90'). The maca appears in the *Maztica* boxed set, and bolas appear in *Combat & Tactics*.

Each tlincalli carries a small pouch or satchel with its personal belongings and treasure type Q×2 (2d6 gems). In addition, the final location has the lair treasure, type F and U×10: 10% chance of 3d6×1,000 bits, 30% chance of 1d4×1,000 ceramic pieces, 10% chance of 3d4×100 silver, 10% chance of 1d4×100 gold, 35% chance of 2d10 gems, 30% chance of any five nonweapon magic items, and a guaranteed 1d4×10 scrolls (these are either protection scrolls, or spells usable by the earth priests). Scale based on the number of tlincalli as usual: 40 total tlincalli = 10% of the rolled treasure, 400 total tlincalli = 100% of the treasure.

6. Death living idol, 1: The PCs come across a large, hideous idol resembling some kind of twisted undead abomination or mutated humanoid. It is made of slick black stone (not obsidian). The idol hungers for worship, which it makes known through an empathic intuition that gives anyone near it the impression they will receive great rewards if they bring it an intelligent being as a sacrifice. Doing so is, of course, a very evil act, but as long as the idol is appeased, it makes its "worshippers" ageless, and imparts the sacrificial leader with powerful necromantic priestly magic.

The living idol is very hard to damage, as the PCs may not have weapons powerful enough to harm it. Furthermore, it is immune to many spells. It is only semi-intelligent, though, and moves very slowly, so the best tactic may simply be to leave it alone.

If the PCs do not destroy the idol, the next time they encounter it there is a 25% chance that it has amassed a cult of 1d6+1 humanoids (level 1d4+2 each).

Death living idol: AL NE; AC 4; MV 3"; HD 16; HP 72; THACO 3; # At 1; Dmg 4d8; SA charm; SD immune to most spells, +3 or better weapon to hit; SZ L; ML 20; XP Value 16,000. See *MC 13: Al-Qadim Appendix*.

7. Psychovore, 1: Mark this location on the map. The psychovore is the reason for the name of the mindburn flats—this eerie creature draws in all psychic energy for miles around and devours it. Once encountered, it is likely to remain in the spot where it was found. The psychovore feeds on any living thing coming nearby, but is intelligent enough to attempt telepathic contact and barter in order to save its own life, if pressured.

The psychovore's treasure (type D) is scattered around it: 15% chance of 1d10×1,000 bits; 50% chance of 1d3×1,000 ceramic pieces; 15% chance of 1d6×100 silver; 10% chance of 1d4×100 gold; 30% chance of 1d10 gems; and a 15% chance of any 2 magic items plus one *potion fruit*.

In addition, this psychovore always has one special treasure: an empowered item, the amulet Steelbender. Due to the psychovore's drain, Steelbender has no PSPs when found, but will regain them if the psychovore is killed or the amulet is removed from the area. Steelbender is Lawful Neutral with an Intelligence of 14 and an ego of 15, and has the psionic sciences of molecular rearrangement, project force, and telekinesis; and the devotions of molecular manipulation, molecular bonding, and soften. It has been opened as a receptacle, so it can hold up to an incredible 300 PSPs. Steelbender was made by a psionist from Babweru, but like everyone from that city, it has no memory of the place any longer. It only knows that its creator became trapped in the mindburn flats and died in combat with the psychovore, unable to summon the psionic strength to defeat it. Steelbender is brash, aggressive, and takes a very "shoot first" attitude toward conflict.

Psychovore: AL NE; AC 2; MV 0; HD 12; HP 54; THAC0 9; # At 0; SA psi drain, psionics; SD psionics; MR 25%; SZ H; ML 14; XP Value 6,000. The psychovore has 180 PSPs and a power score of 16 with the psionic powers aversion, awe, ballistic attack, cause sleep, chemical simulation, contact, domination, double pain, ESP, inertial barrier, life detection, life draining, mindlink, molecular agitation, repugnance, send thoughts, and telekinesis. See Chapter Seven: New Magic, Monsters, and Psionics.

8. Fire lizards, 1d4: Fire lizards bask in the sun, looking like gigantic versions of their smaller cousins. The heat and desiccation doesn't bother them, nor does the aura of the psychovore. Encounters with fire lizards are usually while they are hunting game, which they drag back to their lair—a shallow subterranean ditch. The fire lizard lair has quite a haul, treasure types B, Q×10, S, and T, all scaled according to the number encountered, of course (1 lizard = 25% of loot, 2 lizards = 50%, and so on). This totals 1d6×10 gems, 1d8 *potion fruits*, 1d4 scrolls, and a 25% chance of 4d10×100 bits, a 25% chance 1d10×100 ceramic pieces, a 25% chance of 1d10×10 silver, a 30% chance of 5d10 gold, a 30% chance of 1d8 gems, and a 10% chance of one magic armor and one magic weapon.

Compared to other creatures in this region, fire lizards aren't especially dangerous, and perhaps surprising nobody, they make good eatin'.

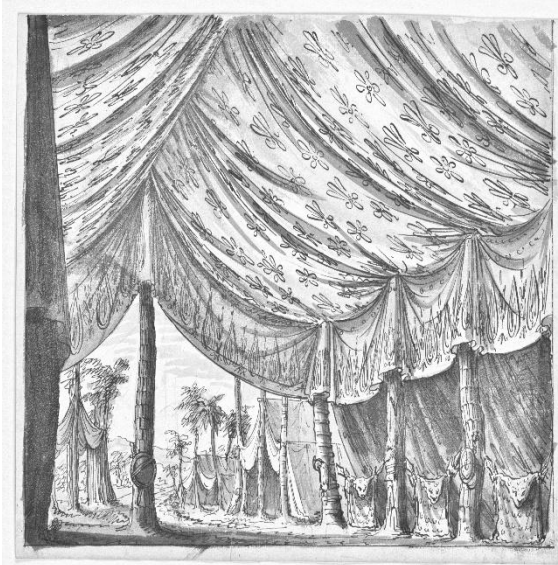
Fire lizard: AL N; AC 3; MV 9"; HD 10; HP 45; THAC0 11; # At 3; Dmg 1d8/1d8/2d8; SA fire breath; SD fire immunity; SZ G; ML 11; XP Value 3,000. See MC 1.

9. Land nautiloid, 1: This massive filter feeder crawls across the salt flats at a good clip, with its thick, giant shell providing excellent protection from both predators and salt storms. The land nautiloid ignores PCs unless they injure it, interfere with its movement, or drop food it can eat.

THE SAND MARCHES

Land nautiloid: AL N; AC -3; MV 18"; HD 18; HP 81; THAC0 3; # At 19; Dmg 1d8×18/5d6; SA grab; MR 20%; SZ G; ML 15; XP Value 19,000. See Chapter Seven: New Magic, Monsters, and Psionics.

10. Dao genie, 1, with jann, 2: The PCs come across a fabulous sight: an encampment consisting of a large pavilion tent and two smaller outlying tents. The encampment is home to a dao genie and two associated jann. Thanks to their plane-traveling abilities, the dao and jann can pack up their tents and leave any time, so they can be encountered in various places in the mindburn flats. Because their powers are magical, the presence of the psychovore does not inconvenience them at all, and indeed aids them by making other dangerous predators of the lands much more manageable.



Stage Design, Tent of Genghis Khan, for the Ballet "Genghis Khan" by Luigi Henry—Smithsonian Collection

The dao and jann are enjoying their "summer vacation" on Athas, which may extend for several years. None of them know about the hidden city of Babweru.

Because the dao is malicious, it might try to trick the PCs into doing something dangerous, though it is generally truthful—it simply omits important bits of information, so that the PCs get themselves into more trouble than they can handle. It is an eager trader, and loves trading for gems. It will barter its magical powers for such, up to and including its *limited wish*. The *limited wish*, of course, is always fulfilled in a twisted way, and whatever the PCs request, the dao always asks "Are you suuure?" before granting the *limited wish* in some altered or reduced fashion, often with a shrug and a comment that magic has its limits.

If the PCs receive a friendly reaction roll, the jann offer them hospitality, and use their magic to *create food and water* for everyone. Otherwise, the PCs can barter for food and shelter, as long as the genies aren't hostile. Once the PCs leave, the dao and jann pack up their belongings and vanish back to the elemental planes, but return the next day, so they can be encountered again in another location (if they aren't slain).

The jann wear metal chain mail armor (but aren't bothered by the heat) and wield large bronze scimitars (dmg S-M 2d4/L 2d8).

Since all members of this encampment can fly, if they're outmatched by PCs they may simply fly away for a time.

Dao genie: AL NE; AC 3; MV 9", FI 15" (B), Br 6"; HD 8+3; HP 39; THACO 11; # At 1; Dmg 3d6; SA special; SD special; SZ L; ML 15; XP Value 4,000. See *MC 1*.

Jann: AL N; AC 2; MV 12", FI 30" (A); HD 6+2; HP 29; THACO 13; # At 1; Dmg by weapon + strength bonus; SA special; SD special; MR 20%; SZ M; ML 15; XP Value 2,000. See *MC 2*.

11. Scrubland: Mark this location on the map. The PCs find a patch of scrub plains, about a mile in diameter. The weather here is always warm, unlike the surrounding area, and the ground is covered in hardy grasses, bushes, and low cacti. While in the scrubland, use the scrub plains entries for defiling, survival proficiency, the condense water psionic power, and other such abilities.

The scrublands provide a small respite from the horrors of the salt flats, even though the psychovore's influence affects the ecosystem even here—small lizards relying on psionic camouflage are unable to manifest that ability, for instance. Still, it's possible to hunt small game. The lack of shelter or significant water sources makes the area unsuitable for an outpost, though.

Within the scrublands, random encounters happen on a 1 on a d10, checked at 7–10 A.M., 3–6 P.M., 7–10 P.M., and 3–6 A.M. Encounters in the scrublands are typically with grazing animals that present no major threat to any party that could reach this region, such as aprig, erdlus, sand cats, or sygra.

Player characters with the agriculture or gardening proficiencies can spend three hours harvesting local plants to bring back sufficient seeds for the Build a Garden project at the settlement.

12. Roll twice and combine: Roll twice on the table and combine both results. For instance, the PCs may encounter a land nautiloid devouring its way through the scrubland, or a nightmare beast attacking the tlinalli city.

Region P: The Shield and the City

Adventure Level 4–6 · Expedition Bonus: 600 XP (+2,500 for the mountain hex)

Predominant Terrain: Salt Flats. Encounter distance 5d10×10 feet, limited by visibility. Level, open ground, with the mountain as a landmark, so it is not possible to get lost in this region.

Weather:

1. Warm and rainy
2. Warm and cloudy
3. Warm and clear
4. Hot and clear
5. Very hot and clear
6. Very hot and dusty (salt storms limit visibility to 100')

Salt storms not only limit visibility, but double water consumption for all unsheltered creatures in them.

The far salt flats are a punishing landscape, with seemingly endless plains of hard, cracked dirt and salt slabs, with no water in sight. To the southeast, though, the terrain becomes surprisingly more verdant, due to rainfall coming from the south. In the far east is a mountain, dotted with vegetation, and on the other side of the mountain is a city-state!

The Shield mountain is a notable location because it rises over 15,000 feet above the surrounding salt flats. Snow covers its peak year-round, clouds float lazily partway down its height, its sides are dotted with trees, streams trickle through the woods and a river pours down the eastern side. For many PCs, it may be the most verdant place they have ever seen.

The Shield mountain is visible from a distance of four hexes on the overland map.

The city-state of Babweru, nestled into the eastern foot of the Shield mountain, comprises the whole of Chapter Five. The salt flats surrounding the mountain, though, are still home to some predators. Thanks to the nearby city-state, and the people residing on the salt flats, this region is far less dangerous than many of the areas adjacent to it. The favorable climate of the Shield mountain provides food and an ecosphere for creatures for miles around.

Encounters: A random encounter happens on a roll of 1 on 1d10. Check at 3–6 A.M. and 3–6 P.M. The exception is if the PCs are in the mountain hex (but outside of the city-state). There, an encounter happens on a 1–3 on 1d10. Check at 7–10 A.M., 7–10 P.M., and 11 P.M.–2 A.M.

Note that the Shield mountain has its own encounter table. The encounters at the Shield mountain are more difficult (in some cases much more so), but if the PCs are experienced from traveling the rest of *The Sand Marches*, they should be able to handle it. The Shield mountain also has forest biomes, so PCs may encounter creatures here that they won't find elsewhere.

Die Roll (2d6)	Encounter (Salt Flats)	Encounter Limit
2	Dune stalker, 1	1
3	Cilops, 1d4	2
4	Zhackals, 2d6	—
5	Small pool	—
6	Giant poisonous snakes, 1d6	4
7	Huge scorpions, 1d4	—
8	Giant lizards, 2d6	—
9	Exile camp	Unique
10	Inix, 1d2	2
11	Random ruin	2
12	Roll twice and combine	—

2. Dune stalker, 1: The dune stalker is trapped on Athas after being summoned by a defiler long ago, and seeks violent release as it can no longer return to the para-elemental plane of magma due to an error in its binding magics. The dune stalker is immediately hostile.

Dune stalker: AL NE; AC 3; MV 12"; HD 6; HP 27; THAC0 15; # At 1; Dmg 2d6; SA kiss of death; SD can only be hit by magical weapons; MR 30%; SZ M; ML 14; XP Value 2,000. See *MC 14: Fiend Folio Appendix*.

3. Cilops, 1d4: These centipede-like horrors have learned, from living near humanoid settlements, that humanoids are good eatin', and they use their tracking abilities to follow a party until they are killed or it's clear the party is simply too strong for them.

Cilops: AL N; AC 3; MV 15"; HD 5; HP 23; THAC0 15; # At 2; Dms 2d6; SA stun; SZ H; ML 13; XP Value 420. Cilops have 30 PSPs and a power score of 9, with the powers contact, danger sense, ego whip, identity penetration, mind blank, object reading, phobia amplification, psionic sense, psychic crush, and thought shield. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

4. Zhackals, 2d6: Like the small packs seen in the northwestern dunes, these zhackals are pack opportunists preying on the already-injured. Being far weaker than many of the more hostile fauna in the region, they tend to follow cautiously at some distance, waiting for a chance to strike against a target (PCs or their foes) when it is badly wounded. Each group has one pack leader.

Zhackal: AL NE; AC 7; MV 18"; HD 1; HP 8; THACO 19; # AT 1; Dmg 1d3; SA psionics; SD psionics; SZ T; ML 12; XP Value 120. The typical zhackal has 24 PSPs.

Zhackal pack leader: AL NE; AC 7; MV 18"; HD 1; THACO 19; # AT 1; Dmg 1d3; SA psionics; SD psionics; SZ T; ML 12; XP Value 175. The pack leader has 34 PSPs.

Zhackals have the powers contact, ego whip, invisibility, mind bar, and mindlink, and a power score of 12. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

5. Small pool: Runoff from the Shield mountain doesn't always collect in Babweru; some goes back into the aquifer, some goes into small mountain streams, some joins with brief rain showers and forms stagnant pools. A small pool is 5' in diameter and 1' deep—150 gallons—and has blooming grasses and bushes around it, perhaps even flowers. The water is usually (75% of the time) stagnant, and must be purified before it is safe to drink. If the PCs leave and come back, the pool will be gone, having been absorbed into the salty ground or drunk up by passing creatures.

6. Giant poisonous snakes, 1d6: Giant snakes are not uncommon, and they tend to congregate in places where they can find food. This encounter presupposes some minor scrub brush, perhaps a small tree, a spot where the snakes can hunt. Of course, the snakes themselves can also be hunted and eaten.

Giant poisonous snake: AL N; AC 5; MV 15"; HD 4+2; HP 20; THACO 17; # At 1; Dmg 1d3; SA poison; SZ M; ML 9; XP Value 420. See *MC 1*.

7. Huge scorpions, 1d4: Like all of their kind, scorpions are common in the deserts and the larger ones are frequently aggressive. Huge scorpions have incidental treasure type D scaled by encounter size (one scorpion equals 25% of the rolled treasure), generally found on bodies nearby: 15% chance of 1d10×1,000 bits, 50% chance of 1d3×1,000 ceramic pieces, 15% chance of 1d6×100 silver, 10% chance of 1d4×100 gold, 30% chance of 1d10 gems, and 15% chance of two magic items and one *potion fruit*. Vary up treasure by replacing coins with gear from travelers who fell afoul of the scorpions and died—waterskins, backpacks, mundane weapons and armor, even vehicles like carts and chariots.

Huge scorpion: AL N; AC 4; MV 12"; HD 4+4; HP 22; THACO 15; # At 3; Dmg 1d8/1d8/1d3; SA poison sting; SZ M; ML 10; XP Value 420. See *MC 1*.

8. Giant lizards, 2d6: Giant lizards congregate in areas with large amounts of small insects, sometimes bits of grasses. Once, these lizards inhabited the swamplands that eventually turned into salt flats; they have changed over the centuries to better adapt, with shiny scales that help to reflect heat outward, and claws that grip the harsh ground with thick footpads. They're also quite tasty when grilled.

Giant lizard: AL N; AC 5; MV 9"; HD 3+1; THAC0 17; # At 1; Dmg 1d8; SA grabbing bite; SZ H; ML 9; XP Value 175. See *MC 1*.



Komodo Dragon—Smithsonian Collection

9. Exile camp: The PCs come across a small encampment of exiles—people who escaped Babweru, whether by happenstance or design. Read or paraphrase the accompanying text.

You see a small encampment of lean-tos and huts made of cloth and hide, with poles bearing small banners that flap in the breeze. No fire-smoke is visible, but people move about the camp with quick, practiced efficiency.

The exiles are nomadic, so that they cannot be easily hunted down by Babweru's templars. They rarely stay in one place for more than a few days at a time, especially if one of their number psionically predicts trouble is coming.

At first glance, the exiles are suspicious of the PCs, but if the PCs are friendly and aren't dressed as templars of Babweru, the exiles might deal with them, as determined by a reaction roll. The exiles are cautious about spies and raiders, so it takes some work for the PCs to earn their trust.

Note that while the exile camp is unique, it is not a unique location. Don't mark it on the map; the exiles move from time to time, and can be encountered in different areas. There is only one exile camp, though, and if they are wiped out, no more are encountered.

THE SAND MARCHES

Exile membership is fluid. Exiles sometimes strike out to other parts of the wastes, never to be seen again; others try to sneak back into Babweru to smuggle in contraband or smuggle out people, only to be caught by the templars and reconditioned psionically. From time to time, new escapees from Babweru make it to the exiles.

Exiles can be humans, muls, half-elves, or dwarves; other kinds of exiles are extremely rare, and are usually outsiders who are simply traveling with the camp for mutual safety for a time, rather than actual Babweru expatriates. Most exiles simply want to live their lives without interference.

Unlike other people of the wastes, the exiles *do* know about the existence of Babweru. They can point PCs to the city—on the eastern foot of the Shield mountain—and relate quite a bit of information about it, though they are more receptive if the PCs trade information, useful goods, food, and so on. Exiles can direct PCs to templars who they can bribe, provide passcodes to interact with smugglers, give a general description of the city's layout, and offer warnings about what awaits in Babweru.

Each time the exile camp is encountered, there are $3d4+3$ exiles present. One is always a psionist, and one is always a preserver. These may or may not be the same people on subsequent visits!

In addition to each person carrying individual gear—clothes, a tool, a weapon (usually a spear), possibly a shield, a pouch or two, and $1d6$ ceramic pieces—the exiles have their own small herd of $1d20$ sygra. As is always the case with such creatures, the sygra are not truly domesticated, but follow the exiles around due to the opportunities for food and water. The exiles generally rely on psionics or bolas to immobilize the sygra in order to collect milk, and when in need of rations might slaughter one for meat.

If the PCs establish friendly relations with the exiles, award the group 1,000 experience points to split. In addition, the exiles can provide the PCs with a very important tool: a *Babweru token of the outer wanderer*, which renders the owner immune to the effects of the memory-suppressing effects of the city-state while it's carried, worn, or held. The exiles can only provide one of these per visit by the PCs—they are extremely difficult to acquire, as they must be taken from templars or ambushed outer wanderers.

Outpost: Since the exiles move camp regularly, there's no point in trying to build an outpost; they won't be staying around long enough.

Side Quests: The exiles can provide a number of extra goals for PCs, paid for with goods or services, such as:

- Bring back extra food from hunting in the nearby lands
- Track down a missing scout and help them come back, or return with news of their fate
- Root out a templar spy from among a trade delegation

- Sneak into the city to contact a smuggler or fence, steal an important item, or deliver a message

Babweru exile: AL N; AC 8; MV 12"; HD 3; HP 14; THAC0 18; # At 1; Dmg by weapon; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 65. Typical exiles wear sygra leather armor and fight with a spear.

Babweru exile preserver: AL NG; AC 10; MV 12"; HD preserver 3; HP 7; THAC0 20; # At 1; Dmg by weapon; SA spells; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 120. The Babweru exile preserver has a limited selection of spells, including the usual *detect magic* and *read magic*, plus two first-level spells, and one second-level spell. Use the allotment below or select your own. The exile preserver is eager to trade for more magical knowledge. Exile preservers are always either humans or half-elves. They are distinctive in that they do not wear armor or carry spears, instead favoring either a bone dagger or a staff.

Wizard spells:

1. Choose or roll 1d6 twice: 1. *erdlu claw**, 2. *grease*, 3. *magic missile*, 4. *phantasmal force*, 5. *shield*, 6. *sleep*

2. Choose or roll 1d6 once: 1. *blindness*, 2. *flaming sphere*, 3. *fog cloud*, 4. *glitterdust*, 5. *hypnotic pattern*, 6. *web*

* See the *Wizard's Spell Compendium Vol. 3*. If you don't have that book, substitute *chill touch* instead.

Babweru exile psionist: AL N; AC 8; MV 12"; HD psionist 3; HP 10; THAC0 19; # At 1; Dmg by weapon; SZ M; ML 12; XP Value 120. A

Babweru exile psionist has 40 PSPs and a power score of 15 with two sciences, seven devotions, and two defense modes—pick a primary and a secondary selection from the sample groupings below, or make your own.

Clairsentience primary: Sciences—aura sight, precognition; Devotions—combat mind, danger sense, poison sense, see magic*, weather prediction**.

Clairsentience secondary: Devotions—know course*, sensitivity to observation*.

Psychokinesis primary: Sciences—project force, telekinesis; Devotions—ballistic attack, concentrate water**, control body, inertial barrier, levitation*.

Psychokinesis secondary: Devotions—magnetize*, static discharge*.

Psychometabolism primary: Sciences—complete healing, energy containment; Devotions—accelerate*, adrenalin control, biofeedback, cell adjustment, flesh armor.

Psychometabolism secondary: body weaponry, mind over body.

Telepathy primary: Sciences—domination, mindlink; Devotions—animal telepathy†, contact, invincible foes, psychic crush, send thoughts.

Telepathy secondary: conceal thoughts, suppress fear*.

* See *The Will and the Way*.

THE SAND MARCHES

** See *Dragon Kings*.

† See the *Forest Maker* adventure.

A Babweru exile psionicist generally wears sygra leather armor and wields a spear, and is indistinguishable from other exiles.

Sygra: AL N; AC 7; MV 12"; HD 1; HP 5; THACO 20; # At 3 (male) or 2 (female); Dmg 1d3/1d3/2d4 (male only, horns); SA gore; SZ S; ML 9; XP Value male 65, female 35. The sygra are skittish quadrupeds that are not really domesticated, but follow around the exiles for free food and water. They mostly eat grasses but will also eat offal, and provide milk, meat, and leather for the exiles. Normally, sygra would have difficulty surviving in this biome, but the exiles keep them alive with scraps. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr* (under "Domestic Animal").

10. Inix, 1d2: The occasional scrub and small pools found in the area around the Shield mountain provides fodder for inix forage, so long as the large lizards keep moving. Enterprising PCs might try to tame them for use as mounts.

Inix: AL N; AC 6; MV 15"; HD 6; HP 27; THACO 15; # At 2; Dmg 1d6/1d8; SA crush; SZ H; ML 12; XP Value 650. See the **DARK SUN** revised boxed set *Age of Heroes* book.

12. Roll twice and combine: Roll twice on the table and combine both results. For instance, the PCs may encounter an exile camp where the exiles are hunting giant lizards for food, or a pair of inixes lounging by a small pool.

Die Roll (2d4)	Encounter (Mountain)	Encounter Limit
2	Athasian roc, 1	Unique
3	Wyvern, 1d6	2
4	Cyclops, 1d8	1
5	Goblin spiders, 1d4	2
6	Tigone, 1d4	2
7	Feylaar, 1d4	2
8	Peryton, 2d4	2

2. Athasian roc, 1: This massive bird is the peak (pun intended) predator of the Shield mountain, living in a nest halfway up the side of the mountain. When encountered it is likely to be circling lazily overhead, looking for something to pick up and eat. It is still just an animal and behaves accordingly.

The roc's treasure (type C) is in its nest: 15% chance of 1d6×100 ceramic pieces, 20% chance of 1d6×10 silver, 25% chance of 1d6 gems, and a 10% chance of any two magic items. Note that there is a 25% chance of finding 1d3+1 eggs, with a value of 2d6×100 ceramic pieces to a specialty trader. To reach the nest, PCs must scale a sheer face of the mountain (an easy task for rogues with a decent Climb Walls score, but reliant upon mountaineering proficiency otherwise). The rock face below the nest is 120' high at its steepest point, so characters who fall are in for some pain. Of course, PCs can also use *levitation* or flying powers to reach the nest.

Athasian roc: AL N; AC 6; MV 6", FL 48" (D); HD 15; HP 68; THAC0 5; # At 2 or 1; Dmg 3d6/3d6 or 5d6; SA grip, surprise; SZ G; ML 11; XP Value 9,000. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.

3. Wyvern, 1d6: Wyverns roam the reaches of the mountain, looking to sting and carry off anything small enough to eat. They are somewhat smarter than a typical animal and very ornery.

As with other flying creatures of the mountain, their treasure is found in a lair that requires some climbing to reach, in this case a shallow cave in between two heavy boulders, which requires a 30' climb (or flying) to reach from below. The wyverns' victims have left behind treasure type E: 25% chance of 2d6×1,000 bits, 25% chance of 1d4×1,000 ceramic pieces, 25% chance of 3d6×100 silver, 30% chance of 2d6×100 gold, 15% chance of 1d12 gems, and a 25% chance of any three magic items plus one scroll. Scale according to total number of wyverns (1 wyvern = 1/6 total treasure).

Wyvern: AL N(E); AC 3; MV 6", FI 24" (E); HD 7+7; 39; THAC0 13; # At 2; Dmg 2d8/1d6; SA poison; SZ G; ML 14; XP Value 1,400. See *MC 1*.

4. Cyclops, 1d8: These unhappy, slow-witted giants can see Babweru from where they live, but can never remember it, thanks to the city's magical protections. They stay on the mountain to avoid having to go through the salt flats below, keeping close to the mountain streams for sustenance.

While they can communicate with a party that speaks Giant, they are generally wicked, grasping, and prone to threats. Their treasure, type C, is shared among the group (scaled by numbers, as usual): 15% chance of 1d6×100 ceramic pieces, 20% chance of 1d6×10 silver, 25% chance of 1d6 gems, and a 10% chance of any two magic items. Note that even if magic weapons or armor are indicated, they will not be of a size that the cyclops can use.

Cyclops: AL CE; AC 2; MV 15"; HD 13; HP 59; THAC0 7; # At 1; Dmg 6d6; SA hurl boulders; SZ H; ML 16; XP Value 4,000. See *MC 2*.

5. Goblin spiders, 1d4: The goblin spiders of the Shield mountain tend to live in wooded parts of the mountain, sometimes in the snow. They are surprise ambushers and may try to draw PCs to them by mimicking the sounds of someone in pain or danger.

Like other creatures of the mountain, their treasure remains from prey, found in their webs in the trees; type C, scaled by number of goblin spiders: 15% chance of 1d6×100 ceramic pieces, 20% chance of 1d6×10 silver, 25% chance of 1d6 gems, and a 10% chance of any two magic items.

Goblin spider: AL NE; AC 4; MV 18"; HD 6; HP 27; THAC0 15; # At 2; Dmg 1d8/1d8; SA grasp, surprise; SD +1 or better weapons to hit; MR 20%; SZ L; ML 13; XP Value 975. See *MC 6: Kara-Tur Appendix*. Note that goblin spiders may have a wild talent.

6. Tigone, 1d4: These graceful cat-predators blend well into the woods of the mountainside with their green fur. Since they are semi-intelligent, they are a bit smarter than other animals, and might stalk PCs out of curiosity rather than hunger.

Tigone: AL N; AC 6; MV 12"; HD 5+2; HP 25; THAC0 15; # At 5; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d10/1d4/1d4; SA psionics; SD psionics; SZ M; ML 9; XP Value 420. A tigone has 100 PSPs and a power score of 16 with the psionic powers of all-round vision, awe, clairvoyance, contact, danger sense, domination, intellect fortress, invincible foes, life detection, know direction, mental barrier, poison sense, and radial navigation. See *MC 12: Terrors of the Desert*.



Tiger's Head—Smithsonian Collection

7. Feylaar, 1d4: These intelligent, four-armed primates live in the forest regions of the mountain. They use their psionic abilities and great strength for hunting, and aren't above ripping a few wandering adventurers limb from limb.

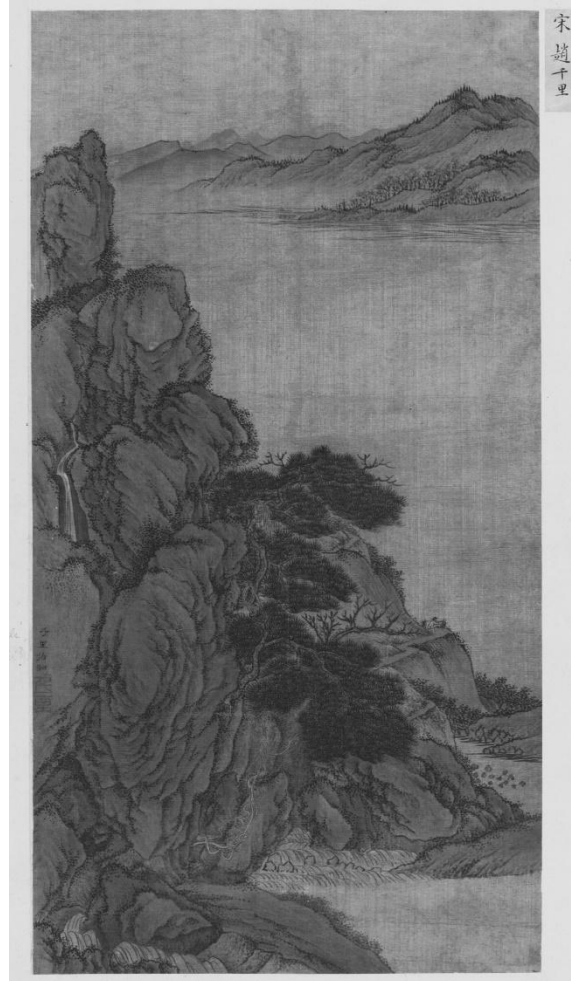
Feylaar: AL NE; AC 4; MV 9"; HD 7+1; HP 42; THAC0 13; # At 5; Dmg 4x 1d6+1, 2d4+1; SA grab and pummel, psionics; SZ L; ML 15; XP Value 2,000. A feylaar has 50 PSPs and a power score of 13 with the psionic powers of adrenaline control, blink, cell adjustment, chameleon power, contact, death field, displacement, domination, ego whip, id insinuation, inflict pain, invisibility, mind thrust, plant mind, post-hypnotic suggestion, psionic blast, psychic crush, and shadow form, as well as all telepathic defense modes. See *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

8. Perytons, 2d4: These magical predators are an annoying threat because of their predilection for swooping down and tearing out hearts, combined with their immunity to nonmagical weapons. Worse, the perytons have average intelligence, so they are smart enough to watch carefully, to track, and to take advantage of ambushes.

THE SAND MARCHES

They, too, nest in small nooks in the mountainside, where the remains of their victims are scattered about with treasure type B: 25% chance of 1d10×400 bits, 25% chance of 1d10×100 ceramic pieces, 25% chance of 1d10 silver, 30% chance of 5d10 gold, 40% chance of 1d8 gems, and a 10% chance for one magic armor and one magic weapon, scaled by number of perytons appearing (1 peryton = 1/8 loot).

Peryton: AL CE; AC 7; MV 12", FI 21" (C); HD 4; HP 18; THACO 17; # At 1; Dmg 4d4; SA +2 to attack roll; SD +1 or better to hit; SZ M; ML 16; XP Value 270. See MC 11: *Forgotten Realms Appendix II*.



*Landscape: a mountainside, a wide stream and distant hills—
Smithsonian Collection*

Additional Encounters

These extra encounters can go anywhere in the wastes. Since they rely more upon puzzles, negotiations, and oddities than upon combat, character level has only a limited effect upon them, meaning PCs of almost any level could engage them.

The Ancient Library

You spot an odd sight: A squat stone building with small doors and blocked-up low windows, covered in some kind of dead vines.

This structure serves as a repository for books, scrolls, and other informational sheafs, made long, long ago in an age before Athas fell into desolation. The hardened bricks are made from a non-local stone and psionically treated to render them immune to wear and the passage of time, and even resistant to damage from nonmagical tools and weapons. The odd, dead vines covering the structure are actually the skeletal remains of once-living, bio-shaped creatures that covered the building and aided in moderating its temperature and humidity.

Psionic traps secure the structure. First, the structure has a permanent aversion power implanted in it for anyone who is not a halfling; anyone else who tries to approach within 30' must make a save vs. spells or be unable to do so. Second, the main door has a customized telepathic trap that causes any non-halfling touching it to save vs. spells or become completely paralyzed for 1d12+12 hours (though the mind bar power resists this). Third, the main door itself won't budge from its frame, though it opens automatically for any halfling attempting to enter the building. Forcing the door open with strength counts as trying to smash open a magically-locked door, so it's only possible with a strength of 18(91) or more. As with the walls, the door is psionically hardened, and nonmagical tools simply bounce off of it, while the hinges are of an unusual screw-like spiral pattern that can't simply be removed.

Because the ancient library was made for halflings, the doors and ceilings are only 6' high, and the small windows are 3' off the ground. The windows have psionically-tempered smoked glass covered in grime, making it impossible to see inside through them (though clairvoyance could certainly do so, albeit of limited use as the interior is dark).

THE SAND MARCHES

The inside of the building has a simple layout: a rectangular room some 50' long, with two wings on the sides. The central room has a pair of ornate, low wooden tables with comfortable wooden chairs covered with strange powdery film (organic dust from the bio-shaped creatures that once served as seat cushions). A lone halfling skeleton lies in the center of the room, clutching its ribs with one hand and a fragile quill pen in the other.

Each room has shelves with stacks of books, scrolls, and parchment made of odd flesh, all covered in scribbled writing in a variety of hands. None of the writing is magical, but the material covers a wide range of topics from ecology to geology to astronomy. The books and scrolls are very delicate, and moving them requires extreme care and precision or the use of magical or psionic powers to mend them. The full collection totals a value of 6,000 cp—the PCs could sell this to a collector via a trading post or travel, or use it as the basis for a research library for spellcasters and sages.

Because of the library's great age, all the material is written in an ancient language: Rhulisti. Player characters need the *comprehend languages* spell, the ancient language nonweapon proficiency, the rogue ability to read languages, or some other means to decipher the text if they're to make use of the stacks.

Once inside of the building, another ambient psionic effect places a minor calming, hypnagogic effect upon characters. Halflings find the state soothing, and recover PSPs as if rejuvenating while inside the library. Non-halflings find the state disorienting, and take a -2/-10% penalty to all proficiency and rogue ability checks while inside the structure, and can't rejuvenate or sleep. (Again, the mind bar power can resist this effect.)

Remember to keep track of time if the PCs enter the library and stay there to do research or to (try to) rest. Random encounters may also happen upon the library, potentially trapping the PCs inside.

The Broken Pillars

Tall rocky pillars, some forming entire mesas, rise up on either side of a narrow causeway through the wastes here. This kind of terrain is perfect for ambushes, and the maze-like passages make navigation difficult... if you walk along the bottom, that is.

Mark this location on the map. Huge walls of natural, unworked stone rise up ahead (as seen on the cover of this book), with only a narrow (30' wide) passage winding through them. The passage sometimes splits or doubles back, but eventually comes out the other side, after a few miles of travel. Navigating the stony maze doubles the amount of time it takes to cross the area, unless the PCs can fly, or have previously traveled through it and mapped it with cartography proficiency.

Because the broken pillars make ambushes easy, and anyone crossing through the area must run into anyone else coming from the other direction, double the chances for random encounters in this area, and the encounter distance is only $1d6 \times 10$ feet.

Enterprising PCs might climb to the tops of the pillars and travel from above, or even set up camp there. The tops of the stones are flat and featureless, light brown and sun-baked, completely devoid of shelter, water, or anything other than the occasional bird or insect. The stones rise 150' above the ground below; anyone who climbs unsuccessfully (a rogue failing to Climb Walls, or a character failing the chance to climb with mountaineering proficiency) falls 70' for 7d6 damage. At the top, the stones are easy to traverse, but paths are broken up by the narrow causeways between the stones. The PCs can only travel across the tops if they can levitate or fly, if they can jump 30' (like a thri-kreen), or if they build bridges or rope pulleys to make their way across $1d6+1$ such breaks.

Music of the Winds

A breeze picks up and you hear a strange chiming sound, like wind chimes. In the distance you see something in the air, and as you get closer you realize that it appears to be a humanoid corpse simply... floating in the air, about thirty feet up.

The PCs come across a strange air shrine, consisting of several invisible platforms levitating in the air. To show devotion to the air spirits, a supplicant typically climbs up onto one of the platforms, then leaps from platform to platform until arriving at the top. When the shrine was inhabited, supplicants learned the jumping patterns from senior priests, but now the place is uninhabited, and the corpse on one of the invisible slabs is an unfortunate who missed a leap and fell, only to land on a platform far below.

The platform are circular stone blocks exactly 10' in diameter and 6" thick. A block that's broken apart becomes visible and loses its levitation, the pieces falling to the ground. Clever players can discover the locations of blocks by scattering sand, ink, blood, or other material to cover them, though the PCs don't necessarily have any way to know which direction to throw such materials.

The starting block is on the ground, and PCs searching the area might stub their toes on it (as it is 6" higher than the ground below it). From the starting block, a PC can leap to each successive block until reaching the top, 70' up.

Within the area of the shrine, magical and psionic flight and levitation do not function, although *feather fall* and *telekinesis* still work, as does mundane flight (such as that of an aarakocra).

THE SAND MARCHES

Using *see invisibility* allows a PC to see the platforms, but the stone is *also* transparent like glass, so it's hard to determine the exact locations and dimensions of a given platform this way. *True seeing* fully reveals the platforms.

The top-down map indicates where the platforms are located and how high each one is. The map also shows the path that a supplicant is supposed to take from lowest platform to highest. A PC who decides to "skip" this order cannot complete the rite to appease the air spirits.

When a PC jumps to a platform, have the PC make an ability check against half of the character's Strength score on 1d20. If the PC rolls equal to or less than that score, the character lands at the desired spot (which may not be helpful if the PC is just blindly jumping). Otherwise, the PC misses the jump and either hits the side of the platform and then slides off, or misses completely and falls. Player characters with jumping proficiency may use their proficiency score instead. Natural jumpers, such as thri-kreen, can still miss if they don't have any way to see where they're trying to land, or if they have only an incomplete idea of the dimensions of a platform.

The PCs can also snag the corpse (marked 'C' on the map) by using a grappling hook or similar tool and dragging it from its platform. Since it's 30' in the air, it inflicts 3d6 falling damage if someone's foolish enough to be standing directly below it. The corpse is a human with scaly skin and no hair, wearing mundane leather armor and carrying two waterskins (each with ½ gallon of water), two pounds of dried food, a pair of bone daggers, a wooden flute, and two large belt pouches.

If a PC attempts to traverse the invisible platforms by jumping and climbing, halfway up the wind becomes fearsome. Further jump checks take a -4 penalty—though an air priest could use the ability to ignore elements to avoid this problem. The wind continues until the PC reaches the top, falls off, or quits.

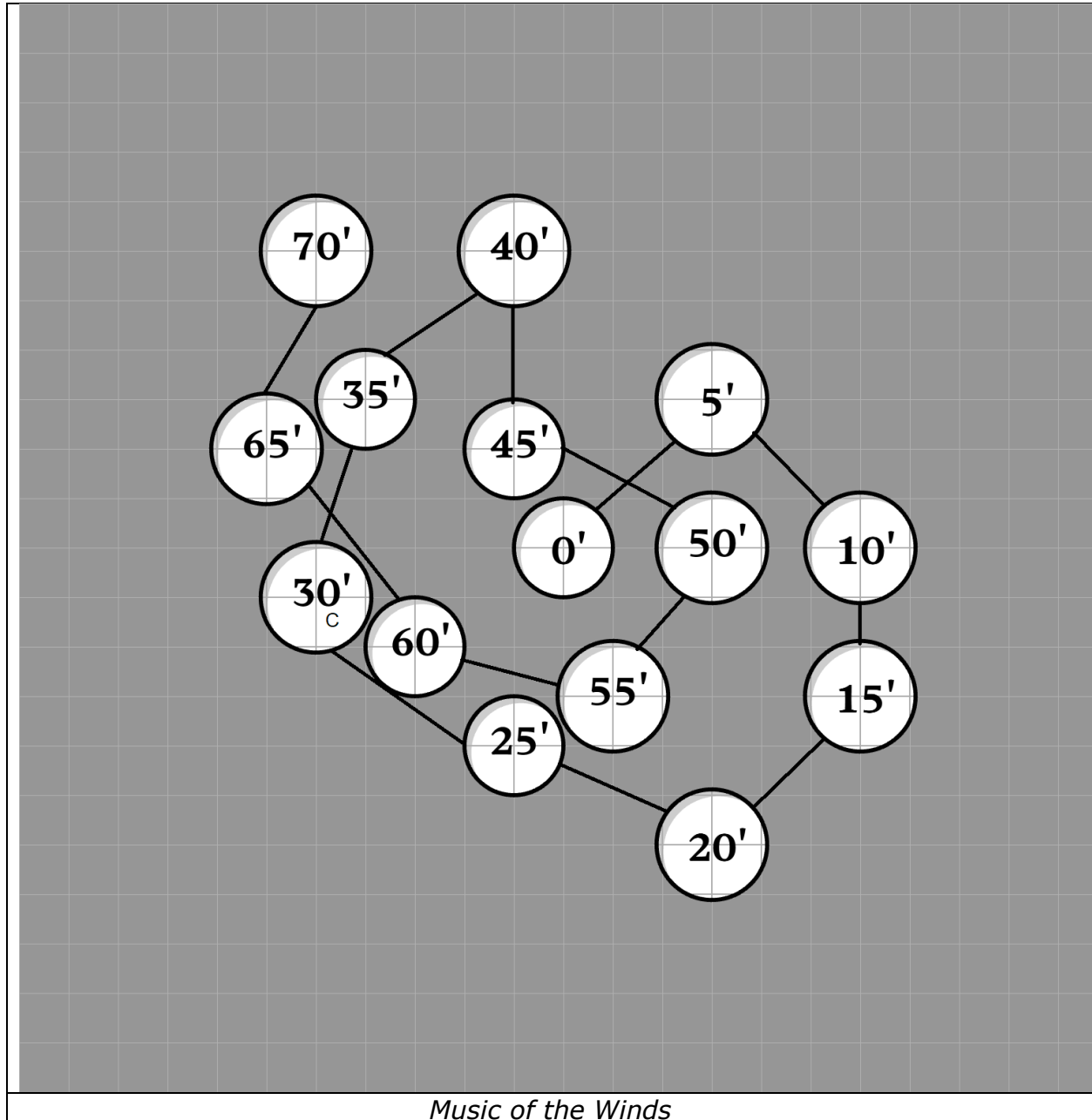
Upon reaching the highest platform, the PC hears a gentle chiming sound that sounds like a regular musical pattern. The PC can only finish the ritual by playing a musical instrument or singing, whistling, or humming to match the tune. Success on a proficiency check means that the PC wins the favor of the air spirits, and gains the following bonuses:

- A cool breeze always seems to soothe the PC in hot weather, so the PC is never affected by increased water consumption from very hot or scorching temperatures.

- When saving against poisonous gases such as a *stinking cloud* or *cloudkill* spell, or even the bad air in a mine or sulfur lake, the PC makes two saving throws and takes the desired result.

- The PC can now easily see all of the platforms.

These bonuses are permanent and apply only to the first PC to complete the challenge.



THE SAND MARCHES

To complete the challenge, a PC must start at the ground level platform (0') and traverse to each successive platform in order of height (5', 10', etc.), typically by jumping. Note that other encounters are possible while the PCs are busy trying to figure out this puzzle!

Remember that this puzzle is actually a trial to appease the air spirits. Characters who try "clever" methods to cheat may find that the air spirits are fickle and do not grant them favor for attempting to subvert the intended experience.

The Seductive Grove

Your eyes must be deceiving you, or perhaps it's an illusion. It can't be real—a grove of tall trees in the middle of the wastes, with green grassy undergrowth, forming a nearly perfect circle.

Mark this location on the map. Many years ago, a priest created this grove with the psionic enchantments *prolific vegetation* and *prolific forestation* (see *Dragon Kings*). Initially, the priest hoped to reforest a wide swath by using these spells repeatedly, but other concerns interfered. The powerful priest has since gone on to undergo post-human transformation and largely left the concerns of Athas to lesser entities, but the forest remains. In a few years, though, the magic protecting it will fade and it will succumb eventually to the natural weather of the region. Druids and characters proficient in agriculture, gardening, or herbalism can immediately tell this grove is unnatural and could not exist in this region without magic.

The forest grove is 60 yards across, with a little over 500 trees in it, as well as the associated undergrowth and animal life. Though the grove doesn't affect the weather, under the forest canopy it's shaded and slightly more humid than the desert areas of the rest of the endless dunes.

The grove provides a bounty of food and wood; the PCs can easily harvest large quantities of either if they don't care about their environmental impact. More cautious PCs can still handle their daily food requirements simply by hunting the local animal life settled in among the trees and bushes. The grove does not have any natural water, though—which is one reason it is doomed to die when its magic fails in a few years.



*The Grizzly Giant, Mariposa Grove,
Yosemite, California—Smithsonian
Collection*

The grove also has one resident Athasian treant. The treant's role is to protect and nurture the grove, though it is aware (with its supra-genius intelligence) that the grove is doomed unless it acquires a reliable source of water. The treant blends in with the other trees, unnoticed, and watches the movements of visitors carefully. Those who despoil the grove or show carelessness or greed find their campsites mysteriously ruined, discover their gear stolen and broken, and hear distant voices taunting and threatening them. The treant is smart enough to judge what kinds of conflicts it can survive, and savvy enough to wait for weaknesses and openings to deal with unwelcome intruders. It is also smart enough to know that an alliance with a skilled priest might provide it with a solution to the grove's fate.

In addition to the treant, other forest encounters are possible, such as an ankheg (MC 1), a bhaergala (MC 3), bloodgrass (MC TBT), bloodvine (MC 12), carnivorous plants (MC 2), esperweed (MC 12), ettercaps (MC 2), giant hornets (MC 1), great cats (MC 1), or a jishin mushi (MC 5). Use your own judgment about the PCs' capabilities and the kind of creatures that you might want to see, as this is a rare chance to give the desert-bound characters an encounter in a forest biome.

THE SAND MARCHES

If you decide to add an evil or destructive creature, the treant may ask for the PCs to aid it in driving the creature out or killing it—but not until it watches them and makes sure they are responsible folk. Player characters who befriend the treant gain XP as if they had defeated it in combat (10,000 xp), and the treant uses its abilities to create food and water on their behalf. The treant's treasure consists of treasure types Q×5 and X: 5d6 gems and two random *potion fruits*.

Athasian Treant: AL N; AC 0; MC 12"; HD 15; HP 68; THAC0 5; # At 2; Dmg 6d6/6d6 or 4d6; SA throw boulders; SD never surprised; MR 65%; SZ H; ML 20; XP Value 10,000.

Bringing back trees: The grove may be magically protected, but the trees can still be dug up and removed, and they don't disappear or die just because of leaving the grove. Player characters can transport saplings from the grove to transplant to their own settlement, if they can get the saplings safely all the way home. Each sapling taken in this fashion weighs 50 lbs., and the PCs need ten saplings to plant a grove. Transporting the saplings across the waste is dicey because they require five gallons of water every day, each, so PCs might not be able to manage this until they have a high-level priest who can *create water* in large quantities, or the ability to *teleport* or create a psionic wormhole.

Outpost: Player characters can create an outpost at the grove if, and only if, they convince the treant of their good intentions and their willingness to remain responsible in the use of and care for the grove. The treant also reminds them that in a few short years (1d4+1), if the grove's water situation does not change, the magic that sustains the place will fade and it will quickly die out.

Strange Visitor

Not far away, you spot a lone traveler, an apparent human woman in a brightly colored dress with no traveling gear or weapons. She trudges across the wastes with the ceaseless determination of one who has been exiled to the desert yet is determined to survive.

The PCs come across a lonely wanderer, much like themselves, garbed in strange, ragged clothes. The wanderer is apparently a human woman, strong and tall, and she wears a small locket made of metal with a thin metal chain around her neck; her clothing is a colorful, yellow-and-orange sundress, and she wears simple sandals. She has wavy brown hair tied back with a thong and covered by a patterned kerchief. She is sunburned and otherwise has no traveling gear whatsoever, not even a weapon. When she sees the PCs, she tries to flag them down by waving and shouting, but she does not speak any language that anyone knows.

This NPC is Jamie Wheeler, a woman catapulted to Athas by dimensional magic. Like John Carter of Mars, she is a skilled non-native who can survive thanks to her iron will, grit, and special skills, but she doesn't even speak the language here, nor does she have any knowledge of Athas, its animals, or its customs.

Jamie comes from a world not unlike Earth, circa the late 1800s. She knows how to ride horses, but there are no such beasts on Athas. Given a little time, she could easily learn to ride a kank or a crodlu. She is a skilled knife-fighter and gunslinger (but the gunpowder she knows of on her home world does not function on Athas, as the rules of chemistry are different). Back home, she is an equestrian, a sharpshooter, and a range-woman, able to live out of the saddle while traveling long distances, stare down bandits over a rifle barrel, and find water while on the trail. Survival in the desert isn't entirely strange to her, but she knows nothing of Athas' plants and edible animals—another thing that would take several months for her to learn.

Jamie has no psionic abilities, as these are not common on her home. Once she learns about psionics, she can be tutored by a psionist, at which time she gains a wild talent (rolled normally).

Jamie uses the Outworlder fighter kit from the *Outworlder & Scholar of War* web enhancement.

Jamie Wheeler, human fighter 3 (outworlder): AL NG; AC 10; HD 3d10; HP 23; THAC0 18; # At 1; Dmg by weapon; SZ M; ML 15; XP Value 175.

Jamie has a Dexterity of 18, a Constitution of 16, and proficiency with knives and the firearms broad group. She is also ambidextrous, with proficiency in cooking 14, fire-building 15, land-based riding (horse) 18, and survival (sandy wastes, scrub plains) 16. Because of her outworld biology, she is completely immune to all Athasian diseases. While she doesn't speak the Common tongue of Athas, she is eager to learn, tough, self-sufficient, and determined to find shelter, food, and water. If the PCs are friendly, she gladly joins them and tries to show her mettle. She isn't afraid of risks, and quickly makes herself useful around the settlement if brought back. She learns to communicate simple concepts in about a month, and she can accompany PCs on expeditions as an NPC, perhaps becoming a henchwoman to a PC with whom she develops a rapport. In such a case she gains experience, and if she rises to level six as a fighter, she learns fluency in the Athasian language.

Player characters investigating Jamie's origins via powers such as identity penetration discover that she is not a native of Athas, that she came from somewhere far beyond, and she is exactly what she appears to be: a lost human woman determined to survive.

THE SAND MARCHES

Jamie's initial goal is to return home, but upon reflection she has little reason to go back—she has no family or spouse to return to. Eventually she integrates into the local society and decides this is her new home.

Traders from Afar

You spot a small group of indigo-skinned humanoids leading pack animals, rather improbably out in the wastes.

The PCs come across a small trading band, even if they're far out in the wastes. These traders are nikaal, who travel to remote regions to trade for rare goods. These nikaal are also explorers, in search of any small spot where their kin can camp for a few days or a few weeks before moving on again.

The nikaal are inclined to be friendly if they aren't attacked immediately, as they want to engage in trade. There are $1d4+2$ nikaal, and each one leads a crodlu on a leather thong. The crodlu are trained for pack carrying but not combat.

The tiny caravan carries 100 lbs. of dried food and 50 gallons of water among its various beasts of burden, as well as an assortment of trinkets, cloth, spices, small tools made of bone or stone, and $1d10$ pounds of copper. The nikaal additionally always have one totally random magic item, which they sell for a markup ($30\times$ times the XP Value listed for the item in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*); the nikaal prefer to trade for other magic, or for easily-portable gems and jewelry. Perhaps most importantly, the nikaal sell seeds, with which the PCs can make a garden as a downtime project—two pounds of varied seeds, enough to get started, cost a mere 20 cp.

The nikaal are extremely evasive about their source and destination. As far wanderers and expert survivalists, their caravan ranges for hundreds of miles before returning to their people, who live along migratory routes near the Sea of Silt. The nikaal are not interested in joining any settlement or staffing an outpost.

Player characters can, of course, decide to be raiders and rob or murder the nikaal. This has no consequences for three months, after which time the rest of the nikaal tribe realizes that their traders aren't coming home, and they start using their wealth and trading acumen to investigate what happened by hiring psionic and clerical help. Eventually they divine what occurred and start a campaign of ruthlessly blacklisting the PCs, telling everyone they know that this small settlement is just another raider band. This causes all Trade events (if the PCs have a trading post) to become *no event*, and any PC who travels in downtime to conduct trade must now pay double for all goods and services. The PCs can only clear their names by finding a way to raise the slain nikaal from the dead, or discovering the nikaal nomad group, engaging in diplomacy, and paying a princely sum (at least 30,000 cp in trade goods, gems, jewels, and magic items) to make amends—and the nikaal will *only* accept this if the PCs' spokesperson apologizes, shows remorse, and succeeds in an etiquette nonweapon proficiency check. Assuming the PCs can locate the nikaal with their own divination magic and clairsentience powers, this journey takes four weeks, likely taking out at least one PC for some time.

Nikaal: AL CN; AC 8; Mv 10"; HD 3; HP 14; THAC0 18; # At 1 or 2; Dmg by weapon or 1d4/1d4; SA acid spit; SZ M; ML 11; XP Value 175. Nikaal have 20 PSPs with a power score of 7 and the psionic powers contact, mind blank, mindlink, psychic crush, and sight link. See the *Dark Sun Monstrous Compendium Appendix II: Terrors Beyond Tyr*.

High-Level Adventuring

Once the player characters reach level 9 and beyond, they're likely to chafe at the restriction of staying in the wastes. At this point they can probably fly, teleport, turn invisible, make themselves nondetectable, and camp an army at the gates of their foes. Who's going to tell them that they have to stay stuck in their tiny corner of the desert?

The answer, of course, is that so long as they don't attract the attention of the sorcerer-monarchs, there's nothing to stop characters from leaving and going elsewhere at this point. You will, naturally, have to develop your own adventure sites if your players go off the map, but so long as they take precautions, they should be able to visit the city-states, the distant lands to the north, or even the elemental planes.

Here are a few tips to keep in mind while building out adventures for your higher-level scoundrels.

An ounce of prevention: Occasionally, the PCs may run into a foe who has precognitive abilities, who already knows that they're coming and how they operate. In such cases, make the most out of your own defenses and

preparations. Come with spells to ward off PC attacks, like *stoneskin* and *globe of invulnerability*, and psionic abilities to keep them from sneaking up, like true sight and time/space anchor. Bring countermoves for common PC attacks and defenses. (Players especially sweat when you start taking away their own magical defenses, such as with *dispel magic* or *glitterdust*.)

Higher-level environmental hazards: Powerful characters don't have to worry much about water or heat, but they still have to worry about more exotic problems. A trip to the elemental plane of Fire demands certain precautions. Other locations may have similarly punishing natural or supernatural phenomena: You may decide that the Glowing Desert and Troll Grave Chasm are home to radiation, for instance, which isn't repelled by a simple *protection from fire* spell. Lava, with its outsized damage potential, is always a fearsome hazard, if your PCs wind up fighting in or around a volcano. And almost nobody can swim, meaning that the rare underwater adventure is a real threat.

Places of obscure lore: Your players probably know about the Pristine Tower, but their characters don't. Visiting dangerous locations like the Tower, the Last Sea, or the Valley of Dust and Fire is a good way to put a little fear into the players, as even if these locations are new to the characters, the players know that they're about to be in for a rough

time. An easy way to loop these into your game is just to make it so that a power, person, or item that the PCs need is there, and they learn about this through a rumor, divination magic, or clairsentience. Of course, they not only have to face the hazards of the location, but also defend their own secrets. What would happen if the Mind Lords of Saragar discovered the existence of a remote but prosperous settlement sending spies into their carefully-managed utopia? Or the Dragon of Tyr learned that someone was nosing around near a curious part of the desert with a lone mountain that has a strangely forgettable patch of desert nearby?

Everyone wants what you have: The examples of raiders and of the sorcerer-queen Shamiso attacking the settlement are just the start. Every time the PCs build something of value, someone else wants to take it, whether raiders, defilers, gith, psurlons, or something worse. This applies to their outposts and their allies, too. They may be called upon to defend other places, like the Three Neighbors.

Reward these challenges adequately: The experience requirements for higher levels are quite egregious. PCs who defeat a templar with a *wish*-granting genie, fight a magma priest in the para-elemental plane of Magma, or wade through the Gray to release a tormented spirit of a dead ally deserve the rewards for such dangerous and heroic acts.

Chapter Five: The City-State of Babweru

The city-state of Babweru survives in the trickle of water coming down the Shield mountain's east side, where the river forms a small lake. Part of the city is built onto the mountain itself, with the rest constructed around the lake's perimeter. Careful resource management ensures the denizens are cautious in their use of local wood, and they have sufficient water to support a city of thousands.

Shamiso, the queen of Babweru, fears the other sorcerer-monarchs and especially the Dragon. To protect herself (and her city), she has cast a powerful psionic enchantment that causes anyone outside of the city's boundary to forget it exists. Even the other sorcerer-monarchs don't remember her now. Locals are subjected to psychic surgery at an early age, implanting a permanent aversion that prevents them from approaching wayposts planted in an oval around the city. Few people enter, few leave, and those who do leave almost never remember the place.

Geography	
Type	City
Region	Endless Dunes
Size	Medium city
Society	
Demonym	Babweran
Population	15,000
Races	Human (60%), dwarf (20%), half-giant (10%), mul (10%)
Languages	Common

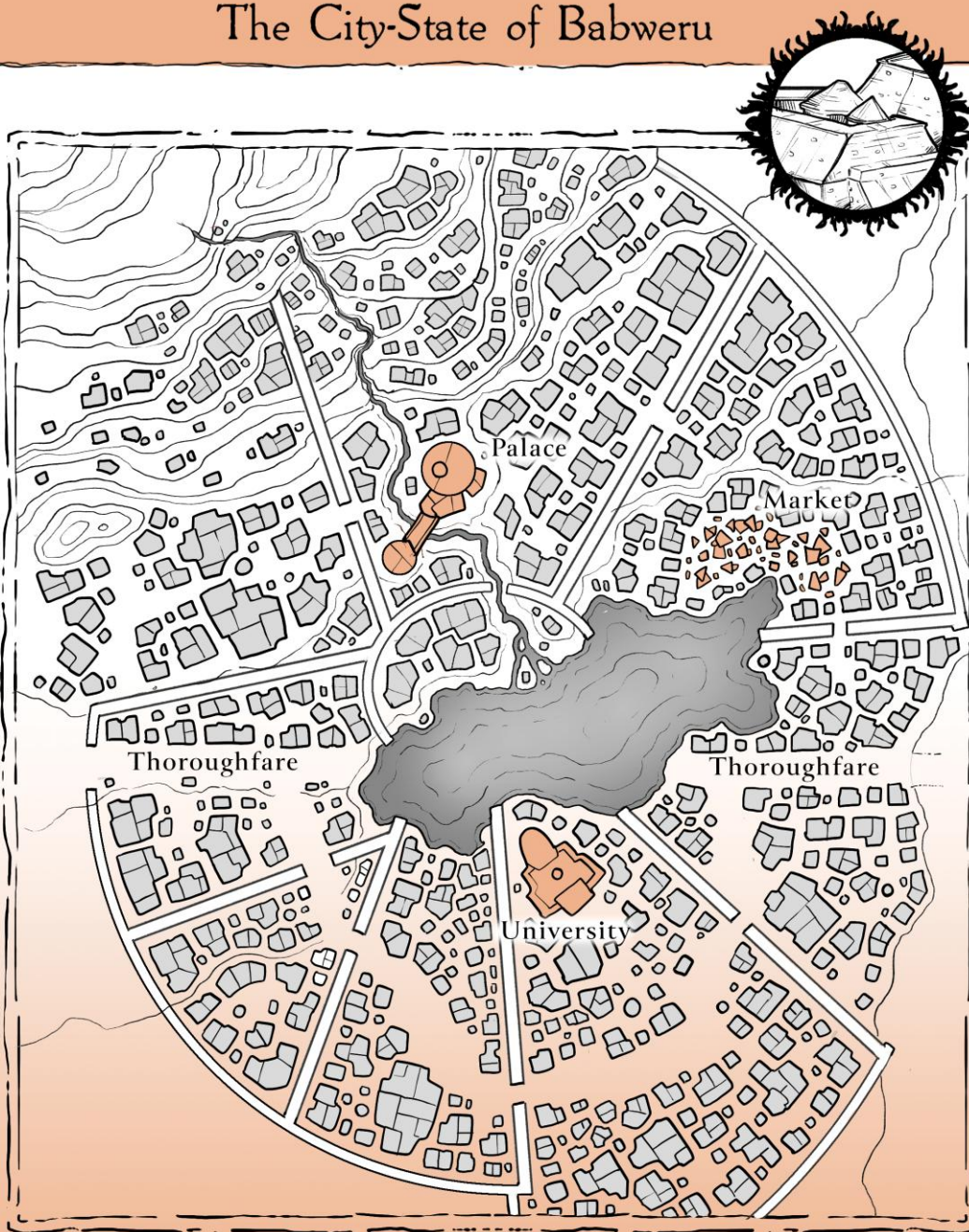
Shamiso is a fairly skilled sorcerer-monarch, but she has reached a stagnant point. Advancing further requires access to more magical knowledge, but she can't risk leaving the city and exposing herself to discovery in order to get it. For this reason, she is extremely hungry for useful operatives—like the PCs, obviously—who can bring her relics and information from outside.

Because of its extreme xenophobia, the city-state of Babweru has almost no trade with outsiders, and almost no visitors. Strangers are quickly scooped up by the templars, interrogated, then subjected to invasive psionic tampering to wipe their minds and either give them false memories (if the templars decide to let them stay) or remove all memory of the city (if the templars decide to exile them). Troublemakers are, of course, executed.

No city-state runs with perfect efficiency, though, and exiles—whether by choice or chance—live outside the city, and a few manage to keep a lifeline to the inside. Some templars even know of their existence, and turn a blind eye so unusual objects or information from the outside world flows in through black market trade. If such people became a threat to the city, though, they would be crushed in an instant.

Shamiso and her templars carefully regulate the city and control all its resources, but even they cannot catch everyone.

The City-State of Babweru

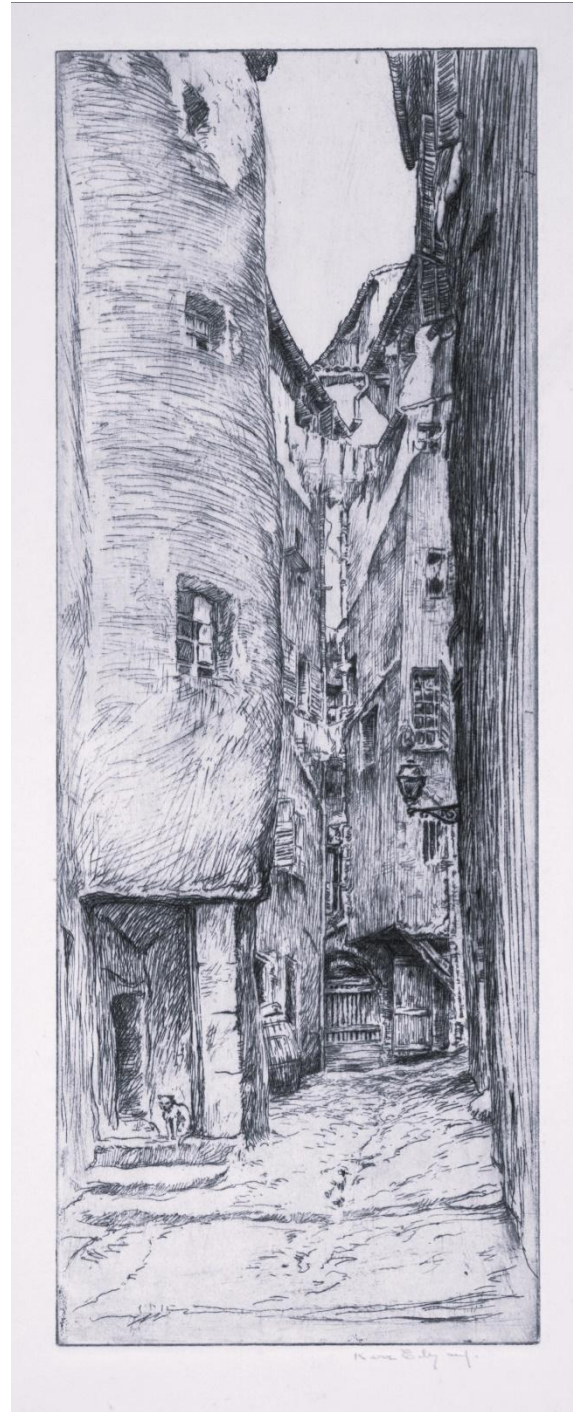


The City-State of Babweru—Illus. by Saga Mackenzie

Babweru Society

Babweran society is a rigidly-controlled isolationist culture. The sorcerer-queen permits no-one to enter or leave the city without her approval or the intercession of her highest-ranking templars. As a result, Babwerans learn at an early age that their city is their world. Those who cannot fit in are seized by the templars and put to work on behalf of the city. Those who ask too many questions likewise disappear. To survive, one must look away from the walls and recognize that, for a Babweran, there is nothing beyond.

While Babweru is divided into neighborhoods, these exist primarily for administrative purposes. Humble residences stand side-by-side with majestic noble estates, carefully manicured gardens, or crafters' workshops. The exception is the palace of the sorcerer-queen, which sits on a massive bridge built over the river falls, above the lake on the west side of the city. The palace looms over the rest of the city like a stone panopticon, flanked by a pair of smaller towers. The queen's private gardens flow over and across the grounds near the falls and along the base of the mountain. A low wall with two gates separates this royal area from the rest of the city.



Back Street—Smithsonian Collection

THE SAND MARCHES

Every building in Babweru has a history. Because the city focuses heavily on reusing resources, buildings are rarely torn down or built anew. Instead, existing locations are repurposed, given new furnishings, or turned over to new owners to undertake the same businesses or to serve as homes for a new family. Multi-generational businesses take pride in handing down family stories about their heritage and the line of people who have occupied their family home for generations.

Though Babwerans engage in trade internally, the overall use of resources in the city is heavily managed by the templarate. As a result, people are frugal. Tools, clothes, and even toys are mended or recycled rather than discarded. Wasteful or excessive use of resources draws scorn, and trying to corner markets draws down the intervention of templars. Many families plan specific events for holidays, birthdays, or neighborhood celebrations, and arrange their use of luxuries up to a year in advance.

Due to the strict controls on resource usage, families are small. Marriage is an important affair, with state-mandated limits on family size. Having children without permission can result in fines, imprisonment, and even execution in severe cases.

All of these limitations make Babwerans seem stoic, suspicious, and pragmatic. They do enjoy celebrations, festivals, and games, but must always keep in mind the templars are watching and there's nowhere to hide. Thus, they must be frugal with both their resources and emotions.

The insular nature of the city also means Babwerans know their neighbors well, because there's nowhere else to go. Living in the city for all of their lives, many Babwerans come to know all its neighborhoods, though a few stay close to home and never travel more than a few streets away. Feuds are settled quickly and harshly by templars, so most Babwerans find ways to compromise when disputes arise, rather than involve the templars.

Growing Up in Babweru

Children are dearly valued by their families in Babweru, raised mutually by parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Extended families live in large homes that house multiple generations. Since the state limits family sizes and expenditures, children are considered especially precious.

Every Babweran enters an apprenticeship at the age of six. Eventually this transitions into a job, whether for one's own family, for a mentor, or by striking out and starting a new business. Hagglng for premium apprenticeships is fierce, with families offering gifts and favors in exchange for consideration for their children. As always, if there is a dearth of labor for necessary and undesirable jobs, the templars step in, and folk who have no job—such as those who failed their apprenticeships—are the first rounded up and assigned these duties.

A successful Babweran finds a trade for which they show some talent, and practices it constantly. Not only does one need to exercise skill to earn a living, but care must be taken never to ruin valuable resources, or break tools or rare objects. Clumsy or careless laborers quickly find they cannot support themselves, and eventually draw the eye of the templars.

Babweran families care for their elderly, and provide for them to the best of their ability. Elders are responsible partly for assisting in looking after and raising children, and for passing down oral history and family stories. Their role is especially important for young parents, who still need to master their trades and require extra hands for raising children.

Connections and Favors

Babwerans are as likely to engage in favor-trading as they are to use currency or goods for exchanges. "Give to me this fine shirt, and I will do a great favor for your children at the Highsun festival" is a refrain heard by many a trader. Favors are not simply currency, but also a way to make connections with one's neighbors. Bonds of indebtedness foster interdependence, so Babwerans learn upon whom they can rely, and engage in commerce without using up valuable goods of their own for every trade.

Of course, this reliance on favor-trading and reciprocity means that outsiders have a significant disadvantage in Babweru. Not knowing anyone means that they have no trusted friends and family to gift them with favors. Even offering money and goods draws suspicion where strangers are involved—where did the strangers and their treasures come from? The constant Babweran concern over templar regulation means any unknown resource is suspicious.

Survival of the Community

While one might assume that Babwerans have a brutal society that culls any who cannot work, this is incorrect. Though templars tightly control resource usage, their accounts include a degree of expenditures for unexpected events, emergencies, and social stability. The latter category includes programs to support those who are too sick, injured, or disabled to work regularly. Such people often take on advisory roles as teachers, storytellers, or artists, supported by the patronage of the community, with a small stipend from the city.

Disability, whether from birth, injury, or illness, carries no stigma in Babweran society. Instead, Babwerans see it as a challenge for the individual to find personal avenues to pursue a life of satisfaction, whether it is considered “productive” by the state.

Indeed, some disabled individuals enter the ranks of the templatate, either because they suffered an injury preventing them from performing their former trade, or because physical limitations cause them to pursue a more cerebral career, such as accounting, civic planning, or psionic study. One should not mistake such individuals for being any more virtuous than any other templar, though—anyone who serves in the templatate must, by the nature of the position, engage in at least a certain degree of ruthlessness.

Even so, survival on Athas is difficult at best, and significant disabilities can complicate those prospects. Babweran society, based around tight-knit families and neighbors, offers personal support both as a cultural norm and because the Babwerans do not judge one’s talents simply based on one’s physical abilities.

The Property Cycle

In Babweru, individuals can own money and property, but the templatate controls large-scale resource allocation. Anyone can spend a few coins in the market to buy some cloth and a few vegetables. For large purchases and construction, the templatate is always involved. No building can be demolished, modified, or built without their approval. Purchases of goods beyond those used by a family are regulated and must be reported. Failure to do so is disciplined with heavy fines and corporal punishment when discovered. Since the templars keep accounts of the estimated materials available in the city, any large projects, shifts in the market, or unexpected missing resources draw attention... eventually.

Though Babweran families can pass down property, there are heavy taxes on all landed property other than family residences and workshops. Estates, secondary properties, and rental buildings are all subject to significant estate taxes, to encourage their sale upon the death of the owner. Since the head of family is always the owner of property, this can't be easily sidestepped by trying to transfer ownership to someone else. Even if one could bribe a templar to permit it, the rest of the bureaus would eventually correct the "error."



A Garden Path—Smithsonian Collection

Personal effects and possessions are not subject to such heavy estate taxes, and typically a family pays only a small fee to the templars at the time of the funeral in order to retain possession of the deceased's personal items.

Those families who cannot pay, or do not wish to keep the items, forfeit possessions to the template. These are then either repurposed to the city or sold at auction.

Because resources are so tightly controlled, a small but brisk black market brings in items from outside the city. Explorers managing to escape the city sometimes return and barter things that they have found, often changing hands through merchants willing to take the risk of serving as fences. Of course, only small possessions enter the city in this way—nobody is smuggling in and selling statues, large furnishings, or wagonloads of stone. Templars turn a blind eye to some degree, so that they can watch for interesting items coming in through this source.

Education

Babwerans have a simple education consisting principally of oral lessons passed down by parents and neighborhood elders. It's the duty of family members to instill skills, civic responsibility, and a strong work ethic in children. Children then learn trade skills through apprenticeship.

For adults, further education comes from one of four sources: the templarate, the psychic University of Transfiguration, the hidden elemental cleric cults, or the wizards of the resistance.

Templar Schools

Templars receive schooling in literature, mathematics, architecture, and further civic duties. All templars learn accounting and inventory management, as any templar may need to serve in tracking the city's resources.

Wealthy and influential families can pay for a partial templar education for their children. This does not guarantee a posting as a templar, but is similar to a liberal arts degree. The students pay a significant fee to the city (on the order of hundreds of ceramic pieces) in exchange for two years of schooling in arts, rhetoric, poetry, management skills, dance and etiquette, and politics. This schooling is a necessary step for those who choose to enter the templarate (except for those exceptional candidates elevated directly by the queen), and considered an important finishing element for nobles before they become adults in society.

The University of Transfiguration

While there are a few psionic teachers mentoring individual students or handing down their skills in family lines, most psionics refine their talent with the Way at the University of Transfiguration, a premier psionic academy near the heart of the city. The University accepts any student who has either significant will or deep pockets. Even those who cannot learn more than the most rudimentary abilities can remain students as long as they pay. Tuition fees run in the thousands of ceramic pieces per year for those who do not have innate skill (that is, characters who do not meet the requirements for the psionist class).

The principal focus of the University of Transfiguration is the Psychokinesis discipline, but other disciplines are taught with lesser emphasis. Non-psionic students here learn meditation, focus, and basic psionic defenses.

Because the University holds a special position in the city's political structure, students sometimes attend this school not just for the curriculum, but for forming connections to influential people outside of the templarate.

Elemental Teachings

The elemental cults offer a different sort of teaching: hidden clerics in the city teach about their elemental interests, often with a curriculum of advanced agriculture or construction techniques alongside a helping of history, oratory, and sometimes lessons in rudimentary psychic defenses.

Elemental cult teachings are necessarily haphazard, as they have no organized hierarchy or curriculum. Each cleric teaches students how to avoid notice by the templars, and slowly imparts knowledge of various skills favored by a given element, often while seeking possible apprentices.

Lessons of the Resistance

Unhappy Babwerans usually run afoul of the templars and find themselves fined, imprisoned, or worse—especially those unable or unwilling to bend and fit in. A rare few manage to find a purpose with the resistance.

The Babweran resistance includes smugglers, thieves, assassins—all manner of unsavory sorts who don't fit into society. This also includes wizards. As a result, the resistance provides an opportunity to learn unusual or forbidden skills, such as literacy, spellcraft, ancient history, bribery etiquette, and all of the secret routes of the city proper.

Just having contacts in the resistance is dangerous, though. Many templars are only too happy to arrest first and question later, and if they suspect they have a lead on resistance activities, they may bring in telepaths to raid the memories of their victims. For this reason, resistance activities usually function in small, isolated cells, with information passed only on a need-to-know basis. Earning the trust of a resistance member and learning their skills requires diligence, patience, and discretion.

Social Occasions

Since most Babwerans have limited resources, neighborhoods often pool their assets for special ceremonies. Affairs that might be considered personal in other cities become broad civic affairs in Babweru, with multiple families chipping in to defray the costs of celebrations—especially for those poor families who have only a limited ability to provide festivals and parties. Wealthy families become effective patrons of their neighborhoods, and earn prestige for their generosity in such scenarios.

Birthdays

Babwerans don't celebrate individual birthdays; instead, all people born in a specific season—Sun Ascending, High Sun, or Sun Descending—celebrate their birthday on the first day of the season. Children usually receive small food gifts, such as sweet corn bread or honey. Adults exchange small tokens of consideration with friends and family, and each of these days becomes a festive day throughout the city. Musicians play and elders spend much of the day relating thrilling stories to those children who haven't yet taken an apprenticeship.

Marriages

Babweran marriages cement ties between families, but are rarely arranged. Instead, people pick their own spouses. Usually, these matches come from the same neighborhood. In cases where a marriage happens between people from different neighborhoods, one must always move away from home and off to the other location.

THE SAND MARCHES

Newlyweds rarely take up their own home. Instead, they simply reside in a family home, raising a new generation along with the help of grandparents and siblings. Only among wealthy and noble families do marriages occasion the possibility of purchasing a vacant home and making a fresh start.

As with all Babweran ceremonies, marriages are social affairs, with everyone in the neighborhood participating. Each attendee brings a gift of some sort. It is considered rude to bring no gift, but a symbolic gift is acceptable for the truly destitute. Similarly, wealthy people who decide to stint on a gift face social scorn, which can lead to problems if neighbors don't want to do business or make agreements with their tight-fisted neighbor. Most wealthy families support marriages by supplying the wedding feast for the neighborhood, so everyone eats well.

Marriages are joyous affairs rather than formal ones, celebrated with music, dancing, and colorful garb. Most families have a collection of beautiful hand-woven scarves and blankets they bring out for such occasions, either hanging them from walls to add a festive atmosphere, or using them for picnicking during the wedding feast. A wedding between a pair of poor folk in a small neighborhood may take only an hour, with a presiding paid templar conducting the ceremony and making a note in the city register before the neighborhood engages in a small space of dancing and a meal; among wealthy families, a wedding feast and festivities may go on for an entire day, with hired actors, trained animal shows, flower arrangements, and storytellers, artisans, and cooks on hand.

Funerals

Babwerans generally have a resigned attitude toward death: All people die eventually (except the queen). It is expected that elders pass on after giving their wisdom to the youth, and they are thanked for their contributions. Funerals for elders who die of old age are simple and dominated by a paid templar who recites a series of paeans and invites attendees to share their memories of the decedent, before taking the body. Those who die young, due to misfortune, violence, or disease, tend to have more somber affairs, often punctuated with mourning.

Once a funeral ceremony concludes, the templars remove the body, and handle any processing of the accounts and affairs of the property of the dead. For wealthy families, this process can take days or weeks, and it is often highly intrusive, as templars inventory estates, seek out hidden wealth, and watch the purchasing and trading habits of surviving relatives.

Bodies are never interred. Instead, they are taken by the templarate for use in composting and mulching, reduced into raw material for the city's gardens. Those who died in Babweru are returned to the soil.

The exceptions are those living outside of the city's communities, and those from the city's distant past. Beneath the city lie twisting catacombs that still hold bodies—some undead—of people from an earlier era, and those who sought to escape the city's confines.

The Supernatural World

Because Babwerans have regular dealings with templars (even if they do not want to) and psionics, they have little trepidation about the supernatural. To them, magic and psychic powers are normal; these are phenomena that exist in the world and are dealt with by specialists. Babwerans believe the walls and spells upon their city keep them safe from the things outside. They leave investigations of the supernatural to experts in those fields.

Few Babwerans ever cross paths with mages. The distinctions of defilers and preservers are lost on Babwerans. To them, the only sorcerers are their queen, her minions, and the renegades who endanger their city with magic. Rarely does a Babweran *set out* to learn about magic; instead, it is something discovered either by an unexpected contact with a mage of the resistance, or through diligent personal study leading in an unusual direction.

As with all city-states, the practice of arcane magic is forbidden to citizens and visitors in Babweru, aside from the queen and her direct appointees. Anyone found practicing magic without the sanction of the queen or the templars is immediately arrested. Preservers are typically executed; defilers may or may not be offered a position in the city hierarchy, depending upon what skills they bring to the table. Elemental clerics generally face a life of imprisonment and service to the city, with those who prove dangerous facing execution, whether by a templar's axe or the arena.

The Veiled Alliance does not have a presence in Babweru, as the Alliance does not even know that the city-state exists.

The Dragon's Levy

Thanks to the *dome of anonymity* surrounding the city-state, Babweru does not pay tribute to the Dragon. Indeed, the Dragon does not even remember the existence of Babweru or its sorcerer-queen.

Of course, if that state of affairs changed, the Dragon would descend upon the city to make demands of tribute, just as it does the other city-states. In theory this would lessen the tribute required from each vassal state. In practice, the Dragon would likely be pleased simply to take even more people for its own purposes.

Culture and Society

Babwerans have a rich culture, informed by both tradition and creativity. The need to repurpose many resources pushes them to innovate or find novel uses for old materials. The insular nature of the city means tales are told and re-told among people, given small twists and local variants, with new stories quickly spreading across the city when they arise.

Babweran frugality informs their attitudes toward art and entertainment. Day-to-day life is simple and predictable, with special occasions calling for spending of saved wealth.

Clothes and Dress

Babwerans generally wear loose, flowing garments, often with stiff, short, cylindrical hats. Geometric embroidery is a favored form of decoration. Poor and lower-class Babwerans rely on simple undyed fabric; wealthier residents wear garments dyed in bright colors, such as red robes with yellow accents or blue wraps with black horizontal lines.

Jewelry consists of polished or painted wood or bone, worn in earrings, bangles, or necklaces. Most Babwerans have at least one piece of jewelry for festivals and formal occasions.

Clothing is usually made of linen and cotton; animal hides and leather instead see use in constructing shelters and handle-wraps for tools and weapons.

Art and Performance

Babwerans have a long tradition of music and dance. Babweran dances are energetic affairs in which individual dancers take to the center of a circle to show their skills, while those forming the circle's perimeter clap, stomp, and wait for their turns. For large festivals like weddings of wealthy families, entire groups of dancers may practice performances.

Babweran music relies heavily on percussion and woodwinds; string instruments are uncommon, though not unknown. Any bard with a drum or flute can easily find a meal by listening for festivities and then joining in.

Babweran songs tend to be short and ululating. Babweran bards train for incredible projection, allowing them to hold powerful notes that resonate across several blocks. Songs range from simple rhyming bawds to florid, elaborate chants and recitations of ancient stories.



Talking Drum—Smithsonian Collection

In addition to music and dance, Babwerans appreciate visual arts in the form of carvings, mosaics, and tapestries. Woven tapestries and rugs with dyed thread are common accents for family homes, often with angular geometric motifs. Mosaics of blue or green glass are uncommon but well-regarded. While exterior walls of buildings are rarely carved decoratively, interiors of large buildings often have elaborate engraving along corners and ceilings, always with geometric or curvilinear designs.

Statuary is rare and mostly old; sculpture is an art that few in Babweru practice, as access to large pieces of raw stone is limited. Most statuary is of ancient people or animals, placed as décor in the royal gardens.

Illustrative art is also uncommon. Very few people keep portraits or paintings; the most common forms of illustration are symbolic or abstract frescoes on walls.

Cuisine

Since Babweru has tightly-controlled resources, the food staples of the city are well-established. Squashes, millet, sorghum, okra, carrots, raisins, peas, and leafy greens such as spinach form the principal vegetable crops, while meat and protein comes from erdlu and their eggs, as well as aprigs, sygra, and carru.

Babwerans subsist on staples of porridge made from millet or sorghum, sometimes with spices or small pieces of other vegetables added. Midday meals are the largest, often incorporating small amounts of meat, and including soft flatbreads and pancakes. Cooked, mashed greens form the base of thick vegetable stews. Babwerans also eat crunchy, roasted grubs as a snack.

For more elaborate festivals, Babwerans include spicy accompaniments, honey, and bean pastes to go with the flatbread, ornamentally carved gourds with squash soups, and sliced racks of roasted meats. Plums and jujubes from private gardens make an appearance as cool, sweet, juicy desserts.

THE SAND MARCHES

Babwerans usually eat with their fingers, though food preparation is done with knives. People on the move carry food either by wrapping it in a piece of flatbread or keeping it in a gourd.

Babwerans also make teas, tinctures, and small quantities of sorghum rum and beer. Alcohol mostly makes appearances at the seasonal festivals, with tea and water forming the bulk of consumption during the rest of the year. Tea is made fresh from the leaf or powder, which is frequently stored in wooden boxes. The city even boasts a small number of tea shops where individuals can escape the midafternoon sun with a strong, bitter drink.

Religion and Cults

Officially, the only legal religion in Babweru is worship of the sorcerer-queen as a goddess-figure. She does nothing to encourage the myth of her own divine status, but neither does she discourage such beliefs, and many templars zealously promote the notion that their queen is, indeed, a deity (even if they only profess belief in order to further their political advancement).

Unofficially, Babweru has its share of underground clerics of the elements. Clerical services almost always happen at night, indoors—it's too dangerous to display clerical power in public, as the templars may prove hostile. High-ranking templars realize that clerics help to fill the gaps in social needs for community and magical support, but low-ranking templars eager to advance in their career sometimes become quite zealous in pursuing and persecuting clerics as "heretics."

Druids are effectively unknown inside of the city, but Babwerans retain an incomplete oral tradition regarding place spirits and nature spirits—a sort of fragmentary knowledge of Spirits of the Land. To Babwerans, such spirits are mysterious and distant, to be avoided or propitiated.

Outsiders and Criminals

For the most part, there are no "outsiders" in Babweru. Nobody comes in from beyond the walls—the spells of the sorcerer-queen make sure of that. No trade happens outside the city, no armies ever threaten it from abroad, and no travelers accidentally stumble into it.

In truth, a small trickle of outsiders *do* make it into Babweru, though usually on a temporary basis. In concert with a group of exiles who know how to navigate the tunnels connecting Babweru with the outside world and how to bypass its magical and psychic wards, these outsiders frequently engage in smuggling and sometimes less-than-savory tasks such as assassination, theft, or battery. Outsiders who don't look Babweran draw considerable attention, and it's dangerous for them to stay in the open too long, lest the templars descend upon them and arrest them to either execute them or figure out how they circumvented the city's defenses.

Babweran criminals, by contrast, find themselves laboring on behalf of the city-state. Minor interpersonal infractions may simply generate fines, but almost any serious crime results in imprisonment with a sentence of labor. The city-state claims the products of such laborers, and provides them with minimal sustenance and communal housing. Unlike chattel, these convict laborers are not property. They cannot be sold or traded, and they regain their liberty at the end of their sentences. It is all too easy, however, for a templar to find fault with a valuable convict and continue to "discover" additional crimes to extend one's sentence.

The Exiles

A few rare Babwerans do not fit into their city's culture, flee from injustice or prosecution, or simply must see the outside world. Among them, some manage to discover the means to bypass the city's *dome on anonymity*, and those able and willing to brave a trek through the Hollow Tunnels—an underground ruin from an earlier age of the city—can actually escape outside.

Exiles generally live in nomadic camps outside the city. Equipped with tokens or tattoos making them immune to the *dome of anonymity*, they can see and remember the city, and even return to it, if they dare.

Exiles constantly look for other Babwerans who might join their numbers. Survival outside of the city is perilous, and they need as much help as they can get. To this end, exiles routinely send individuals or small groups back into the city to engage in surreptitious trade, bring gifts from outside, and look for other unhappy or desperate people who might join their ranks.

THE SAND MARCHES

Most notably, the exiles count among their number a small contingent of well-trained preservers. Though mages are feared and shunned in Babweru, magical skills are simply too valuable for exiles to ignore outside the city. Babwerans who show curiosity about magic or an aptitude for it may find themselves approached by an exile preserver, who entices them with the promise of knowledge. Of course, once an apprentice mage acquires the rudiments of arcane skill, staying in the city becomes too dangerous, and another exile joins the camps.

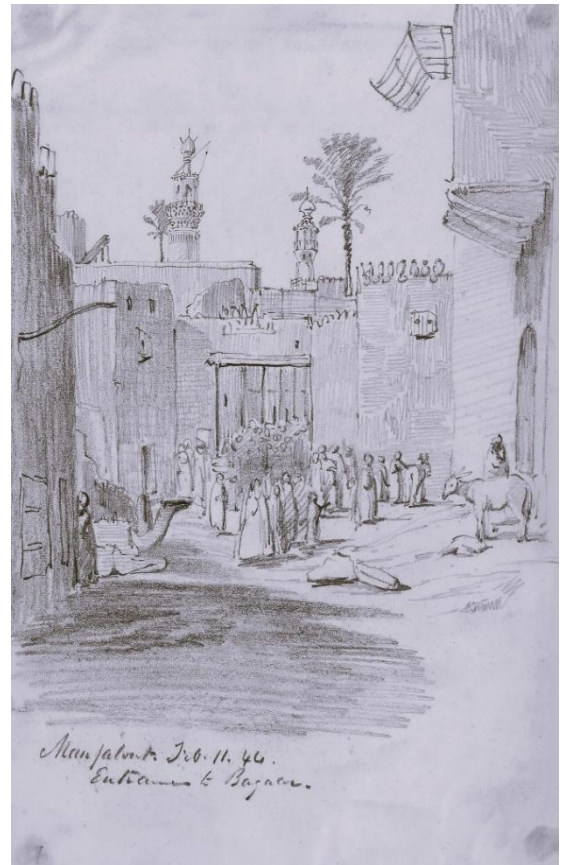
Exiles and the resistance have a good degree of overlap. Both groups have reasons to dislike the status quo in Babweran society. Not every resister is an exile, though, nor does every exile work to overthrow the city-state.

Commerce and Trade

Since Babweru has no trade with the outside world, it has no merchant houses, nor does it have contact with houses from outside. All internal commerce is through tradespeople and merchants whose business is knowing who to talk to and where to buy and sell useful products. Since noble families oversee the harvesting and re-use of raw resources, this sharply limits most merchants to either reselling used goods, selling broad selections of merchandise collected from across the city, or selling wares they make themselves—not including those merchants who deal in secret contraband from beyond the walls, of course.

While trade is legal, any large trade—anything more than roughly a hundred ceramic pieces in value—must be reported to the templars, who keep ledgers of all resource movements in the city. Merchants sometimes offer deals on goods to keep the price below the reporting value, but templars exercise their own discretion in these matters, so this is not always successful.

Merchants engaging in unreported valuable trades may accept gems, jewels, art objects, even psionic items. Magical items are generally too dangerous to trade—they can be detected by templars with simple spells, and keeping magical items is a risky, punishable offense.



Entrance to Bazaar—Smithsonian Collection

The Resource Cycle

Since Babweru brings in no outside resources, the templars must carefully manage its use of native materials. The queen's gardens grow both trees for timber and large quantities of herbs, grasses, fruits, and vegetables, for a wide range of purposes—food, clothing, rope, and medicine. Many people likewise keep small gardens at their homes for growing their own supplemental food.

The larger problem is in sourcing raw stone and metal. Without delving deeply into the Shield mountain, Babweru has no access to fresh stone or metal. To circumvent this problem, the city-state relies extensively upon the psionic University of Transfiguration. There, the most prestigious psychic specialists use powers of molecular bonding and molecular rearrangement to re-fuse broken materials or even turn simple wood and dead plant matter into metal, which is melted down and formed into ingots.

The fact that the University serves as the primary source of usable metal is not lost on the templarate, and this causes political friction. The University is too valuable to the city to alienate, and the templars must tread carefully to avoid having their requests for materials “delayed due to mishaps” or “lost.” Conversely, the sorcerer-queen brooks no incompetence, and the University must walk a careful line in maintaining standards of production sufficient to avoid drawing her ire.

Waste Not, Want Not

Recycling is a Babweran way of life. Old clothes and broken tools are mended, or else sold to second-hand merchants who repair and resell them. Useless pieces of broken stone or twisted metal are sold for a pittance to the University of Transfiguration, where apprentice psionics practice their skills by rebuilding these scraps into usable material.

Even humanoid waste products have value. Low-ranking Babweran templars oversee convict laborers who collect food waste, offal, and excrement in stinking carts and then take it back to the queen's gardens and the city's farms for use as fertilizer.

Scavengers from the poorest rungs of society often earn their keep by sorting through remnants of ruined clothes and damaged tools, looking for anything they can salvage, repair, or repurpose and resell.

The Court and Nobility

As with other city-states, the sorcerer-queen Shamiso is the final authority in the civic structure, with all templars and nobles surviving at her sufferance. Nobles are land administrators: Each noble family oversees a farm, orchard, or quarry. Shamiso's templars review annual production quotas and negotiate delivery contracts. Estates pass down in the family, with the estate tax paid through the services the nobles provide. In exchange, noble families have latitude to amass larger amounts of personal resources, ostensibly for the purpose of supporting production. In reality, much of this becomes an excuse for nobles to acquire fine foods, clothes, and furnishing for their homes.

In theory, noble families serve at the whim of the sorcerer-queen. In practice, the amount of administrative overhead and graft involved in toppling an entire house is so burdensome that large-scale shake-ups are extremely rare. "Suffer the offender, save the house," is a common refrain among Babweran nobility.

Each noble house administers a specific resource or neighborhood, and reports to the templars and pays taxes based on its income. In return, the templars provide labor contracts and additional resources from city stores when needed, and manage the inter-house administration necessary to insure that everyone has the materials they need to meet their quotas.

Queen Shamiso holds court only on rare occasions; usually, senior templars deal with issues brought up by nobles. Daily meetings deal with snags in resource deployment, emergency responses due to accidents or bad weather, and civic emergencies like plague. Perhaps once per year, Queen Shamiso holds a festive celebration in her private gardens, and invites those with whom she intends to speak. This is not always an honor—nobody knows in advance if the queen chooses to use this event to reward or discipline. While some nobles always grace the invitation lists, individual contributors who have performed above and beyond also receive invitations—such as promising psionic students, potential magical adepts who could become defiler apprentices, or craftspeople who show ingenuity in solving resource problems.

The Noble Houses

Four noble houses jockey for position in Babweru, each with its own internal agenda and identity. Residents of Babweru know about and interact with all of these Houses on a regular basis, as the Houses manage many important city resources on behalf of the queen. Direct family members of the Houses receive specialized training in the House's areas of interest, but the Houses also serve as employers for a large number of free laborers in the city.

The four houses are House Botobanu, House Enem, House Mbotha, and House Tkila. Each House fills a role in city management, and bears that as part of its identity. Each House also commonly sports a specific pair of colors—a banner with those colors, or an individual wearing an outfit with only those colors, clearly indicates an asset of the associated House.

House Botobanu

"We are the Legacy"

Common Classes for Botobanu

Members: Psionicist, Trader, Wizard

House Colors: Blue and white

House Botobanu is the most eccentric of the four noble Houses. Their day-to-day business focuses on control of real estate in the north and east sides of the city, and they constantly jockey with House Enem in trying to expand their holdings, as the two Houses jointly own most of the available real estate in the city (setting aside that the queen could, of course, demand any building at any time without question). House Botobanu's estate fortunes are less solid than those of Enem, and they sometimes struggle with tax payments, because their rents—especially on the north side—are somewhat lower than in other parts of the city.

The reason for House Botobanu's "generosity" is that they conduct a sort of shadow economy. Botobanu secretly keeps exacting records of the city's trade and resources, matching or sometimes exceeding the precision of the templarate. With this information they engage in long-term market manipulation in order to seize opportunities the other Houses might not recognize in advance.

A byproduct of House Botobanu's focus on record-keeping and scholarship is that an unusual number of its employees pick up a modicum of literacy—far more than just the nobles who oversee the House. A few even show talent for magic, and House Botobanu has become quite adept at arranging for such prodigies to be "discovered" by templars who deal with the queen's magical bureau as they search for defiler apprentices.

THE SAND MARCHES

House Botobanu also controls the parts of the city that enter the Hollow Tunnels. The House therefore oversees access to the means by which exiles commonly escape the city... and re-enter it. Though the House doesn't know the full scope of exile activity or all of the ways through the Hollow Tunnels, the House is aware of this exit, and quietly turns a blind eye so some of its agents can discreetly engage in smuggling contraband. House Botobanu thus maintains a generous cushion of wealth off the books by keeping secret stores of money and trade goods garnered by selling extra materials or unusual artifacts sourced from outside of the city. House Botobanu agents occasionally even hire exiles to fetch things back for them. Of course, any agent caught by the templars while doing so is immediately disavowed and faces stiff punishments, but the potential rewards are too great to ignore.

House Enem

"We are the Hearth"

Common Classes for Enem Members:
Fighter, Gladiator, Templar

House Colors: Black and red

House Enem oversees large swaths of city housing. Neighborhoods all across the south and west side fall under their purview.

Though many families own their homes, House Enem controls a large number of rented domiciles and workspaces. Up-and-coming craftspeople must rent a workshop from House Enem, as buying a space outright is both expensive and challenging due to city rules regarding building usage. Thanks to their connections and wide holdings, House Enem can acquire space for almost any family or workshop, and their administrators know how to negotiate with templars for permits and the occasional bribe. Thus, most people accept that doing business with House Enem is a necessity for young folk just establishing themselves outside of their family homes.

As part of their holdings, House Enem controls limited logging in the managed forest orchards of the city, principally to provide wood for housing and fuel.



*The Orchard—Smithsonian
Collection*

House Enem also garrisons internal patrols to secure their property. Templars may serve as the police, but House Enem's soldiers see to it that nobody damages their real estate with fires, theft, or vandalism. Enem's troops do not *technically* have legal authority, but the templars usually allow them to administer beatings as a sort of private militia. Since House Enem's soldiers don't have magic like the templars, they're considered an acceptable arm of city enforcement, rather than a threat to the queen's rule. Service in House Enem's soldiery is an opportunity for those with a penchant for violence or few other useful skills. Some receive promotions into the templatate as well, a connection that proves useful to House Enem—at least, when the recruits aren't directed to prove their loyalty to templatate over House.

House Mbotha

"We are the Stones"

Common Classes for Mbotha

Members: Bard, Thief

House Colors: Gray and yellow

House Mbotha handles quarrying for the city. This means digging into the mountainside to cut out fresh stone for construction. Mbotha's workers clamber up the jutting stones that cover the slopes of the Shield mountain and carefully excavate blocks.

Due to the *dome of anonymity*, House Mbotha's workers cannot stray too far from the city. Over the years they have excavated several tons of stone, and they continue to work in the vast, open pit that occupies the southeastern corner of the Shield mountain inside the city limits.

House Mbotha has the labor power to excavate far more stone than they actually supply. Due to resource controls, the templars strictly limit how much stone they can quarry, in order to prevent exhaustion of the stone supply; the templars estimate that, with careful use, the mountain's stone reserves can last for centuries. In conjunction with reclaimed stone shaped and repaired by the University of Transfiguration, the city has all of the stone that it needs to repair houses, fortify its walls, and have some left over for furnishings, art, and weapons.

House Mbotha is a great patron of the arts, able to convert raw materials into finished artistic products that command great trade value. In this way the House turns its limited supplies into a viable revenue stream. The few sculptors, woodworkers, and painters in the city all find patronage from House Mbotha, and this extends to other forms of arts as well: Mbotha is the largest employer of bards, musicians, and storytellers in Babweru.

THE SAND MARCHES

Because of their excess labor power and patronage of artisans, House Mbotha has a great deal of economic flexibility. They can pivot to exploit changing market situations rapidly by supplying labor for emergency tasks or sudden shifts in demand. Of course, this also means they are the first House to which the templars go when the city has need for emergency work or repairs.

House Tkila

"We are the Soil"

Common Classes for Tkila Members:
Cleric, Ranger

House Colors: Brown and green

House Tkila oversees agricultural management. Their mandate involves large-scale food production. Tkila thus controls the largest tracts of land inside Babweru, as they administer all of the city's major fields and gardens—excluding the small plots that individual families hold, and the queen's private garden.

House Tkila pays its taxes in the form of foodstuffs, which in turn feed the templars. Thanks to their position, the nobles receive the finest of the foods, which usually graces their tables but occasionally makes its way to those who earn their favor.

House Tkila is also the largest employer in the city. Those who have failed to earn a living with a craft, who have floundered in their studies, or who have lost their jobs or shops due to mischance, crime, or running afoul of templars can always earn their meals by tilling the hot, parched fields. It is brutal work, but for many, it is their only option. For those who have specialized knowledge of agriculture and animal husbandry, Tkila pays a premium, and offers chances to acquire leadership positions (beneath the House's nobles, of course).

Since House Tkila literally feeds the city bureaucracy, they also have wide latitude with the templars. This results in a constant push-and-pull as Tkila tests the boundaries of what they can get away with, while the templars try to keep Tkila in check without endangering their food supply.

House Tkila's large agricultural labor force comes with a broad array of backgrounds and skills. Oral traditions passed down in families teach not only how to farm effectively, but about clerical or druidic stories. A small cult of Earth clerics hides within the ranks of Tkila's laborers. A few nobles have even taken to following the Earth clerics' teachings—in secret, of course—at first with the goal of using earth magic to improve their harvests, but later out of a sense of religious devotion.

The Templarate

Closer to the queen and parallel to the noble Houses is the structure of the templarate. Templars provide civic defense and pacification, infrastructure repair projects, and oversight in resource management. Low-ranking templars handle menial tasks like patrolling the streets, collecting waste for reuse, and auditing huge records of trade. Mid-ranking templars deal with more significant problems, such as managing House disputes, deciding on prioritization of scarce resources, and investigating unusual crimes or emergencies. High-ranking templars typically manage entire bureaus in dealing with crises, ensuring smooth intra-templar cooperation, and reporting directly to the queen on current events.

The templarate operates in three broad departments: security, infrastructure, and management. Each department ultimately reports to and is managed by one high templar.

The security department is the city's army if the need should ever arise (unlikely while the *dome of anonymity* remains intact), but they are also a civic militia and militarized police force that investigates crimes, patrols the city, and arrests offenders. The civic militia sometimes employs toughs or retired gladiators who aren't templars but serve as muscle to assist in cases that involve violent criminals or pacifying widespread unrest. They also handle monsters that fly in from the mountain or over the wall.

The civic militia is also considered the most unimportant department, a distinction under which they constantly chafe; the high templar position of this department experiences turnover as contenders tend to see physical power as the solution to all problems, and have a bad habit of annoying the queen with demands for additional authority and prestige. Rumor holds that at least one prior high templar attempted an ill-advised military coup against the queen and precipitated a significant purge, from which the department's reputation has never recovered.

The department of infrastructure handles repairs and improvements to the city walls and the queen's palace, maintenance of the queen's garden, and supervision of the waterways within the city. They also deal with problems such as rodents and vermin, plague, and fire damage. Most templars consider this a boring, dead-end posting, but templars in this department do have a significant advantage: infrastructure specialists have unquestioned access to almost any part of the city, including the queen's holdings.

Infrastructure specialists also have the most opportunities for graft, as they conceal opportunism in complicated requests for funds and resources to handle construction and maintenance.

The department of management is the “plum” posting of the templarate. Low-ranking managers spend their time collecting, collating, and checking records, then filing their accounts with the bureau, while middle managers assemble this information to make sure that resource stockpiles add up, expenditures aren’t too high, and trade is well-controlled. The high templar of this department routinely interacts with the queen to keep her up to date on the state of the city’s internal resources.

This department also interfaces directly with the noble Houses, both to manage their resource holdings and to make sure the nobles aren’t trying to hide anything for themselves. The management department deals with tax assessments, though collection is carried out in conjunction with the security department. Templars in search of political power or social climbing gravitate toward this department.

Like other city-states, the templars wear obvious signs of rank, in this case necklaces with rounded beads on them. The higher the templar’s rank, the more beads the necklace bears. Low-ranking templars wear orange robes with black horizontal stripes and cylindrical hats, but higher-ranking templars have the freedom to wear garb of their choice.

Templar Adjuncts

The templarate uses *adjuncts* to handle specialized problems that need unusual solutions. An adjunct isn’t a templar, but serves under the banner of templar authority. This could include a deputized soldier from House Enem’s private army, a trader with expertise in a rare resource, even a convicted thief needed to infiltrate a cult or resistance cell.

Templar adjuncts don’t have a templar’s ability to conduct arrests or draw upon city funds—they can only do what the templars order them to do, using the resources that the templars provide. Nevertheless, adjuncts are still employees of the city, and as such they benefit from special protection: Assaulting an adjunct is a crime almost as serious as assaulting a templar.

Some Babwerans pursue roles as adjuncts in hopes of receiving a posting in the templarate, or a promotion to a permanent adjunct role if they serve well. Others try to avoid this posting and only grudgingly serve when a templar demands their compliance for a special situation.

In theory, a templar could compel a student from the University of Transfiguration to serve as an adjunct, but in practice the relations between the University and the templarate are too fragile to risk with such brusque demands. Instead, the University guarantees that students whose abilities bend toward clairsentience or telepathy are available for posting as auditors—most commonly, by offering a scholarship to those students who fit this profile but can't afford the full expenses of their training. In exchange for working as a civic auditor, the student receives instruction at the University, and thus there is no need for the templars to conscript other students (or instructors!).

Notable Locales

Babweru rests against the foot of the Shield mountain, with part of the mountain turned into a stone quarry, and a river flowing from the snow-capped peak feeds the city's central lake. Around this lake, the city sprawls in an irregular circle. Since neighborhoods don't form by economic status or profession, important areas are scattered about the city.

The Queen's Palace and Gardens

The sorcerer-queen's palace sits on a bridge over the river, with a waterfall behind it. Made from smooth, ancient stone, the palace is itself independently defensible if the city's walls and magics should ever fall. A pair of towers flank the palace, with a commanding view of the city below.

The palace connects to the private gardens, separated from the city by an inner wall. Steps inside the garden lead to the top of the wall, so the guards can patrol with bows and guests can survey the city from above. Inside, the garden is a riot of greenery, full of fruiting plants, stalwart trees, and a small orchard of *trees of life* that the queen and her defilers use for their magical experiments.

While visitors come to the garden on occasion—templars sometimes attend the queen there, and she holds a private party there once per year—invitations to the palace are more controlled. Only high-ranking templars are allowed in the palace, and the palace's guards are almost all constructs and undead. Some chambers serve as ballrooms for hosting and entertainment, but the queen's sumptuous private rooms are off-limits to everyone. Anyone caught in her personal chambers is remanded to the templars; anyone found in her magical laboratories is immediately executed. While the rest of the city is comparatively austere, the interior of the palace is festooned with art pieces—statues, abstract paintings, cut jewels, decorative masks, tapestries and rugs, elaborate furniture, and potted plants. Not a single room is empty, and some relics date back to earlier ages; there are even some faded tapestries showing creatures that no longer exist on Athas.

THE SAND MARCHES

The palace also has private stores in case of sieges: A passage hewn into the foundation-stone on one side of the bridge descends into the roots of the mountain itself, where a large basement holds a secret hoard of food, water, weapons, and spell components. To date, no thief has ever successfully penetrated this deeply into the palace, though rumors somehow circulate that the queen keeps special supplies in case of emergency.

Noble Estates

Each noble house maintains a large, walled estate in a part of the city central to its holdings. These estates consist of a multi-story house with high, sloped walls and narrow windows, surrounded by an exterior wall. Smaller outbuildings surround the noble manor house, and every estate has private manicured gardens, both for fruits and for aesthetics.

Nobles sometimes invite people in for parties, usually to solemnize a large trade deal, to celebrate a wedding or coming of age, or to compete with other nobles for social status. These present excellent opportunities for others to enter the estate, as these parties call upon bards, cooks, laborers, and additional guards.

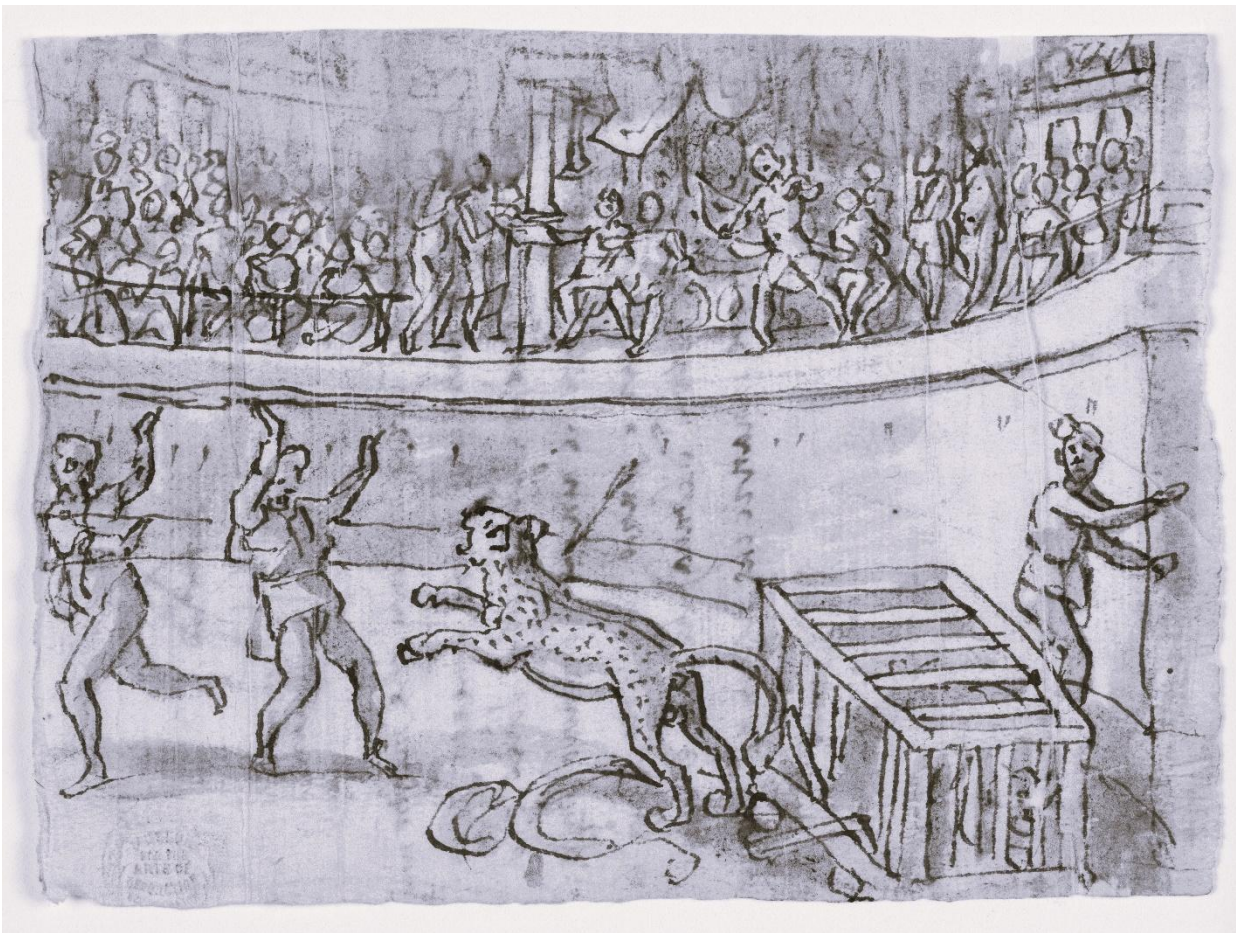
Most noble estates have established local families for maintenance, gardening, construction, cleaning, and serving work. Earning a posting relies on either family connections, or a rare opening when someone dies without an apprentice. Since job skills often pass down family lines, good jobs in noble estates likewise follow.

The Arena

Like other city-states, Babweru has an arena for entertainment and civic announcements. Gladiators compete here, just as they do in other cities, but as there are no outsiders to visit from abroad, rivalries are fierce. Death matches usually only happen as executions for criminals; other gladiatorial bouts are individual or team sparring matches, with gladiators giving way when sorely wounded. Some gladiators specialize only in wrestling, and their bouts are just as popular and famous as the armed ones. Gladiators are free agents or House employees. A gladiator can learn the trade by apprenticeship to another gladiator, or by signing on with a noble House-sponsored stable. Convicts also sometimes find themselves sentenced to the pit, but rarely last long.

The arena is a broad pit located east of the lake, not far from the main thoroughfare that splits the northern and southern sides of the city. Steps descend to the floor, where an interior wall with a fence around the top drops the last distance into the pit. Gladiators and monsters enter via tunnels, while crowds watch from above. Betting is encouraged, and nobles have been known to lose considerable sums of money in this fashion.

The arena is also where the templars make important civic announcements. The high templars have the authority to call the city to assembly for such announcements, which usually happen in the morning and then again in the late afternoon. These announcements are for matters the templatate handles, for cases where the queen does not feel the need to personally address the populace.



The Emperor Commodus Killing a Leopard—Smithsonian Collection

The Lake of Solace

Water flowing down from the Shield mountain forms a lake in the heart of the city. Shaped over the years by templar intervention, the lake now occupies a space a quarter-mile in diameter, carefully managed to avoid contamination.

Since water flows into the lake but not out, the salinity has slowly risen over time, and it is currently a saltwater body. This means it attracts large clouds of flies along the lakeside, so lake-front property is a mixed blessing—it offers a cooling breeze on hot days, but comes with swarms of biting gnats in the afternoon and evening.

The high salt content of the lake means the fresh water in the city's aqueduct system comes from the river, where the waterfall passes below the queen's palace and then flows toward the lake proper. People do sometimes use water from the lake for cleaning, and it's not unheard of for poor folk to filter the salty water through cloth to make it somewhat more palatable.

Freshwater fish do live in ponds on the mountain upriver, but they quickly die if they come down from the mountain pools and into the salt water.

The House of Interlopers

Since Babweru does not have visitors, there is little need for inns or traveling rest-stops. When someone needs a place to stay, they usually stay with family. In cases of family disputes, individuals stay with relatives or friends. For those who *have* no remaining relatives and do not have friends able or willing to provide a place to sleep, there is the House of Interlopers, a two-story building with wooden timbers and white plaster walls. Small planter boxes out front hold flowering plants for decoration, and to attract colorful insects. Music and conversation are a constant buzz in the background. The House of Interlopers provides temporary lodging for people who have no place else to go.

Like any travelers' inn, the House of Interlopers does charge for its services, and payment is expected up front. Guests are expected to be regularly looking for ways to vacate the place and find a domicile of their own. This temporary lodging also serves as a sort of ad hoc meeting location: it is flanked by popular restaurants, and since the residents are usually looking for work, it's a stopping place for people in need of laborers or apprentices—usually those who need extra hands *now*, or have some undesirable task requiring someone who won't ask too many questions.

Since the residents are often in dire straits, this location is also a regular hunting ground for the resistance, looking for likely candidates to assist them. The resistance usually approaches people with the offer of small jobs that pay a trickle of money, like delivering messages or going to the market to haggle for some item because the buyer doesn't want to spend two hours just arguing over prices when they could be doing something else. These early tasks are always quite innocent and mundane, and it's not until a bond of some trust is established—or the resident is truly desperate—that the resistance takes risks with potential recruitment.

Outsiders who find their way into Babweru might take the House for a typical inn, but while the manager accepts coin for lodging, the templars also receive a quick alert about the arrival of strangers.

The Musika

Though a good amount of trade happens among various neighborhoods, the musika—the market—serves as a central gathering place for people to swap goods and services. Occupying a large part of the east side of the city near the lake, the musika is a riot of colorful tents and temporary structures, with a few alleys between more permanent buildings.

While it's possible to purchase all manner of foods, dyed cloth and clothing, tools, musical instruments, and even limited quantities of raw materials like timber and stone, the templars keep a constant eye on the musika. Large purchases draw immediate attention, and most merchants even halt the transaction to call the templars over personally. Nobody wants to suffer the fines or imprisonment for violating trade protocols, and merchants tend to be diligent about avoiding such problems proactively.

In addition to merchants selling their wares, the musika is where laborers loiter while looking for a day's work. Anyone who doesn't have a trade or a shop of their own stays in the musika and hawks their services to passersby. Similarly, musicians and dancers hold impromptu festivals and drum circles in order to show their skills in hopes of drawing the attention of potential patrons.

To serve thirsty laborers and deal-makers, the musika also includes several small kiosks selling water, fruit juice, wine, and rum. A few are full-sized shops with wooden roofs and plaster walls; others are colorful striped tents with stools. Due to the constant movement of people through these shops, the store-owners tend to be well-informed about the latest news throughout the city, making them an excellent place to find out about unusual happenings, work possibilities, or just family drama.

Though much of the musika closes down at night, some parts remain active, with torches and stone braziers illuminating the night market. As one might expect, contraband and crime is more common at night, simply because it's easier to avoid the watchful eyes of the templars. The wineshops host hardened drunks as well as resistance members or criminals using the pretense of being dissolute revelers as a cover. Templars tend to be aggressive about questioning and searching people moving about the musika at night, so one had best be prepared with excuses and bribes.

The University Grounds

The University of Transfiguration occupies a significant campus in the southeast part of the city, spanning multiple buildings over multiple blocks. Thanks to their access to significant resources, the university maintains cobblestone paved streets, lampposts with ectoplasmic glows, and a variety of open spaces for meditation, practice, and psionic study.

Since the university staff include psionic masters, the university area seems relatively sparsely policed. Templars do visit, but their interactions are always cautious and guarded. Students move about the university with little fear of interruption, almost as if the campus forms its own village within the city.

The university's security stems from the power of its psionic masters. Clairsentient prediction of problems allows the university to head off issues before they become severe. The focus on psychokinetic powers means troublemakers quickly find themselves immobilized. The university staff tend to simply hand over problems to the templars after halting any exigent crises. Disturbing the university often carries additional penalties, simply because the university is so important to the city's economy.

Many of the practice forums are open-air amphitheaters, or spaces with pillars supporting open, slatted roof structures. In these areas, students frequently practice by telekinetically manipulating and levitating objects (or themselves). Junior students in rows form assembly lines to work on turning sand into bricks or sticks into metal bars.

Naturally, resistance activists avoid the university grounds as much as possible. The number of telepaths and clairsentients in the area makes it impossible to keep secrets in this region.

Rumor holds that the university keeps a hidden vault—possibly with an extradimensional access portal, depending upon the rumor in question—holding a massive repository of psionic items. If true, this raises other questions about how the university staff keep the queen from confiscating this cache.

Specialists in metapsionics are rare at the university, so new empowered items are uncommon, but from time to time the university brings forth surprising objects of power that keep the rumors swirling.

The Hollow Tunnels

In the northwestern area of the city, where the outer wall meets the foot of the mountain, stands an arch of stone, with a pair of larger-than-life twelve-foot-tall headless statues bearing stone spears. The statues are purely decorative, but they act as silent guardians of the entrance to a tunnel that dives into the depths below the city.

A small contingent of templars patrols this area and guards the gate, but their patrols follow a regular schedule and it is a simple matter for people to slip into the tunnels if they pay attention to the timing or have some skill at stealth.

Inside, the tunnel descends quickly into a central pillared chamber that has tunnels heading in multiple directions. Some lead into other areas deeper below the city, with crypts containing the undead remnants of the Cleansing Wars. Others head below the streets, with occasional passages out into abandoned buildings above, and into small hidden communities of exiles, rebels, and yuan-ti. A few twisting passages make their way out past the walls, exiting in the feet of the mountain beyond the city. It is through these passages that exiles and resistance fighters make their escape.

The yuan-ti survive in their small colony by the sufferance of Shamiso. One templar from the security division is dispatched to serve as liaison to them. In exchange for their continued survival, the yuan-ti provide the templars with information about people they spot coming and going. Of course, the yuan-ti don't tell the templars everything, including that a small number of them live in the city above, principally involved in criminal operations with legitimate fronts.

Law-abiding citizens stay out of the Hollow Tunnels, of course, and most do not even know that the tunnels exist. Anything or anyone encountered down there is likely to be dangerous. This does make it a proving grounds of sort for the resistance—sending new recruits into the Hollow Tunnels to find treasures, clear monsters out of an area, or chart unknown routes.

Generating the Hollow Tunnels

To make your own Hollow Tunnels, use the random dungeon generator, of course! The tunnel from the city proper enters a large circular pillared chamber with seven other exits. Treat each exit as a separate random dungeon, using Ruins, Caves, or Mines, with a depth of 1d4+2 cards. Half of these have an additional exit in their final room, either leading out of the city or to a deeper level (another 1d4+2 cards). Initial tunnels are encounter level 4–6, but deeper levels can be far more dangerous, if you need a challenge for your players!

Since the Hollow Tunnels include areas from ancient history, some of them have hidden or illusionary doors. Even if your PCs have searched all of the tunnels, you can always have an NPC or map show them a previously-missed secret door leading to a yet deeper and more dangerous section, making them the dungeon that adventurers in Babweru visit again and again.

Important Personages

Babweru's most influential inhabitants are, of course, its monarch, the high templars, and the teachers of the University of Transfiguration. A few other notables round out the city's political scene.

Shamiso, Sorcerer-Queen of Babweru

During the Cleansing Wars, Shamiso served as one of Rajaat's Champions, working as the Doppelganger Destroyer. Tasked with hunting down the face-shifting, telepathic humanoids that hid inside other communities and stole the identities of people they slew, Shamiso developed her formidable clairsentient abilities in order to better detect her foes. Using her magic and psionics to hunt down doppelgangers around all of Athas, she assensed their locations and then deployed her armies in surprise attacks to wipe them out.

Since doppelgangers are themselves mind-readers, Shamiso devised the *Mantle of Emptiness* and its associated *dome of anonymity* as a way for her to amass armies that could never be detected by the doppelgangers. Her victims never knew she was coming.

Late in the War, as the Champions formed a conspiracy to oust Rajaat, Shamiso was unable to divine the outcome of that struggle—putting her in an unacceptably risky position. Rather than throw in her lot with one side or the other, she chose to remove herself from the conflict. Using the *Mantle of Emptiness*, she recast the *dome of anonymity* over her city-state—the staging ground for her army, now turned into a self-sufficient cantonment—and effectively ceased to exist in the minds of the other monarchs, the Dragon, and even Rajaat.

With his immense power, it is possible Rajaat might have broken through the psionic enchantment. Now that he is imprisoned in the Black, the point is moot. Shamiso keeps a steel grip on her city-state to prevent incursions from outside, and thereby keeps the populace safe... at the cost of their liberty.

Unlike other sorcerer-monarchs, Shamiso does not maintain a paranoid grip or fear phantom enemies. Instead, she keeps absolute control because she is aware of the all-too-real consequences if the *dome* collapses: the other sorcerer-monarchs and the Dragon will all suddenly remember Babweru, likely with devastating results.

Isolation comes with a cost. Shamiso has stalled out in her magical research for transformation, as she has limited access to additional resources. Unwilling to risk herself by leaving the city, she gleans what she can by casting her consciousness out via psionic exploration or seizing the scraps brought in by exiles unfortunate enough to be captured by her templars. Not even her high templars know she deliberately allows small numbers of people to escape into exile specifically in hopes that those who return might bring back something useful to her.



Shamiso—Illus. by Valeria Vidal

Shamiso, sorcerer-monarch of Babweru: AL LE; AC 0; HD dragon 21; HP 103; THAC0 11; # At 1; Dmg by weapon; SA innate tongues, spells; SD immortal; SZ M; ML 15; XP Value 18,000. Shamiso has a psionic power score of 18 and 283 PSPs, with the sciences of appraise, clairvoyance, clairsaudience, cosmic awareness, empower, mindlink, object reading, precognition, psychic surgery, telekinesis, teleportation, and true sight, and the devotions of all-round vision, combat mind, compact, danger sense, dimensional door, environment, iron will, know course, poison sense, probability manipulation, predestination, prolong, receptacle, safe path, see ethereal, see magic, sensitivity to observation, spirit sense, soften, splice, time shift, and wrench.

Wizard spells in spellbooks:

1. *alarm, armor, audible glamor, cantrip, change self, charm person, color spray, comprehend languages, dancing lights, detect magic, detect undead, enlarge, erase, feather fall, friends, gaze reflection, hold portal, hypnotism, identify, light, magic missile, mending, message, mount, phantasmal force, protection from good, read magic, shield, sleep, spook, unseen servant, wizard mark*
2. *alter self, blindness, blur, continual light, darkness 15' radius, detect invisibility, ESP, forget, glitterdust, hypnotic pattern, improved phantasmal force, invisibility, knock, know alignment, levitate, locate object, magic mouth, mirror image, scare, shatter, strength, web, wizard lock*
3. *dispel magic, explosive runes, fireball, fly, haste, hold undead, invisibility 10' radius, iron mind, item, lightning bolt, nondetection, protection from good 10' radius, protection from normal missiles, secret page, spectral force, suggestion, vampiric touch*
4. *charm monster, confusion, detect scrying, dig, dimension door, enchanted weapon, enervation, extension I, far reaching II, fear, fire shield, fumble, hallucinatory terrain, improved invisibility, massmorph, minor creation, minor globe of invulnerability, polymorph other, polymorph self, rainbow pattern, remove curse*

5. *advanced illusion, animate dead, avoidance, cloudkill, dismissal, distance distortion, extension II, feeblemind, hold monster, magic jar, major creation, passwall, sending, shadow door, stone shape, teleport, wall of force*
6. *antimagic shell, contingency, control weather, death fog, death spell, extension III, eyebite, geas, globe of invulnerability, guards and wards, mass suggestion, permanent illusion, repulsion, stone to flesh*
7. *banishment, finger of death, limited wish, phase door, spell turning, teleport without error, vision*
8. *antipathy/sympathy, binding, glassteel, incendiary cloud, mass teleport without error, mind blank, permanency, screen*
9. *energy drain, foresight, power word, kill, weird, wish*
10. *abrasion, defiler metamorphosis, invisible casting beyond margin*, masquerade, mass fanaticism, pact*

* See Chapter Seven: New Magic, Monsters, and Psionics.

Shamiso has an Intelligence of 19, a Wisdom of 18, a Dexterity of 16, a Constitution of 18, and a Charisma of 19. She wears the *Mantle of Emptiness*, *bracers of defense AC 2*, a *ring of coolness*, a *ring of psionic mastery* (clairsentience -50% PSP cost), and a *black robe of the archmagi*, and wields a *staff of withering* (see *Psionic Artifacts of Athas* for the rings). She has ready access to nearly any scroll, psionic receptacle, or *potion fruit* at need.

As a highly intelligent clairsentient, Shamiso never enters a potentially dangerous situation without first meditating upon the outcomes. If she must move against an enemy, she always tries to bring overwhelming force. Capturing her by surprise is *extremely* difficult as she relies on her precognitive powers to forecast future threats and neutralize them first. If she is somehow caught off-guard, she tries to escape to a safe location as her first priority, and does not hesitate to sacrifice allies to do so.

While Shamiso has the ability to make magical items, she rarely does so due to the immense time investment, unless it is an object requiring her specific skills (for instance, something requiring *permanency*, a high-level spell that few wizards can cast). She does occasionally gift her favored templars with charged magical items if she foresees a use for them.

Because of her clairsentient abilities, Shamiso always has prepared whatever spells serve the needs of the moment, as she has foreseen their utility—unless she is caught by surprise, in which case her spells should be assigned from her books at random. (As a 21st-level dragon, she prepares 5/5/5/5/5/4/4/4/2/1 spells per day.)

Vinzano, Resistance Leader

Once a simple brewer, Vinzano turned a keen intellect toward a specific personal problem—transformation. Vinzano is a native of Babweru and a trans man: branching out from the craft of brewing, he studied illicit alchemy in secret, and after a few halting failures, made contact with an aging preserver who provided some magical pointers. Soon, Vinzano became embroiled in the hidden world of magical research, and the resistance movement against the tyranny of the templarate and sorcerer-queen. As Vinzano's studies are illegal, the personal goal of transformation came inexorably with the goal of hiding secrets from the templars and aiding those who could advance Vinzano's transformative knowledge.

Vinzano became an exile deliberately, and worked with resistance mages to develop his skills. After several years of harrowing work, he perfected an elixir that completed his permanent transformation. By this time, he was so deeply enmeshed in the resistance community—and so skilled a wizard—that he had become a *de facto* leadership figure.

Returning to the city meant moving to a new neighborhood and establishing a cover history, one that has required certain compromises and cover-ups to bury Vinzano's deadname and former past in the city many years ago. To date, Vinzano has been careful to avoid raising suspicion, sometimes with targeted enchantments to "nudge" people who are too curious or skeptical.

Now, Vinzano moves quietly back and forth between the exiles abroad and the city within, protected by the sigil that prevents the power of the *dome of anonymity*, and using magical potion fruits to aid the resistance. Able to match the queen in intelligence, he realizes that he lacks the raw power to move against her, so he plays a delicate game: Instead of trying to topple the queen directly, he settles for aiding people in need, protecting exiles fleeing the city, and working toward the day that he might make contact with a group powerful enough to shift the balance of power in the city-state. For a team with determination and special skills, whether Babweran or outsider, Vinzano could be an influential patron, mission-giver, and mentor.



Vinzano—Illus. by Kendal Gates

Vinzano, preserver 17

(alchemist)*: AL NG; AC 8; HD preserver 17; HP 46; THAC0 15; # At 1; Dmg by weapon; SZ M; ML 18; XP Value 10,000. Vinzano has the wild talent of conceal thoughts, with a power score of 16 and 81 power points.

* See *Spells & Magic* for the alchemist specialist wizard. Note that spells from the school of alchemy (marked ^A in his spell list) do not require Vinzano to use verbal components.

Wizard spells in spellbooks:

1. *affect normal fires*^A, *burning hands*, *fire burst*^{*A}, *grease*^A, *metamorphose liquids*^{*A}, *protection from evil*^A, *sleep*, *unseen servant*
2. *alter self*, *fool's gold*^A, *forget*, *glitterdust*^A, *sense shifting*^{*A}, *stinking cloud*^A, *web*
3. *flame arrow*^A, *fireball*, *nondetection*, *protection from evil 10' radius*^A, *slow*, *solvent of corrosion*^{**A}, *suggestion*
4. *enchanted weapon*^A, *fire trap*^A, *polymorph self*, *vitriolic sphere*^{**A}, *wall of fire*, *wizard eye*
5. *cloudkill*^A, *fabricate*^A, *passwall*, *transmute rock to mud*^A
6. *death fog*^A, *legend lore*, *stone to flesh*^A
7. *acid storm*^{*A}, *hatch the stone from the egg*^{*A}, *neutralize gas*^{**A}
8. *incendiary cloud*^A, *mind blank*

* See the *Tome of Magic*.

** See *Spells & Magic*.

Vinzano has a Dexterity of 16, Constitution of 15, Intelligence of 19, a Wisdom of 16, and a Charisma of 16. He is proficient in alchemy (19), brewing (19), gardening (18), and spellweaving (16), and he is literate. He is a handsome, black-skinned man with a simple mustache and goatee, short curly black hair, and expressive eyes. He dresses in well-tailored vests and robes with matching hats bearing colorful geometric designs. He almost never carries magical items if he can help it—it's too easy to accidentally attract templar notice, and a simple *detect magic* spell can then lead to problems. Indeed, he's rarely armed with anything more than a bone knife.

In day-to-day life, Vinzano seems like a simple brewer, who sells small batches of handcrafted rum or fruit wines. He lives in a simple hut not far from the Hollow Tunnels. Of course, beneath the vats and barrels of his brewery is a concealed door leading into the tunnels, where he keeps both an alchemical laboratory and a quick exit from the city out to the northeast. The brewing barrels themselves also have fanciful designs on them, showing curves, angles, and whimsical creatures, which serve as mnemonic aids—his spellbooks.

Vinzano routinely carries material components for his spells, as he always has a convincing explanation for how they're used in the brewer's trade as flavors, colors, purifiers, or fermentation agents. As a well-known brewer, his excuses are plausible and the templars are accustomed to waving him along.

Given preparation time, Vinzano can prepare almost any *potion fruit*, and he sometimes supplies these to exiles. He also meets with exiles outside the city to discuss operations and opportunities, and any outsiders who cross paths with the exiles and figure out how to gain access to the city eventually find themselves in an interview with him.

Kwazyia, Hostess of the House of Interlopers

The current manager of the House of Interlopers is Kwazyia, a no-nonsense middle-aged woman with curly hair, black skin, and a broad build. To those who don't know her (or are too young to remember), her strength is surprising: Kwazyia was a gladiatrix for many years in her youth, and she retains much of her strength and wrestling skill. Troublemakers famously get put into a headlock and tossed into the dusty road in front of the House.

Kwazyia, human gladiator 8:

AL NG; AC 8; HD gladiator 8; HP 60; THAC0 13; # At 3/2 (weapon) or 5/2 (wrestling); Dmg by weapon +1; SZ M; ML 15; XP Value 975.

Kwazyia has a Strength score of 17, a Dexterity score of 16, and a Constitution score of 17. She is a weapon master with the club, gaining two attacks per round at +4 to attack and damage, and she's surprised more than one would-be thief or troublemaker by throwing it. She is also a master of wrestling and gains the same bonuses (+4 to attack and damage, with a total +7 chart modifier) when grappling.

Kwazya has decent judgment and doesn't tolerate foolishness, but she also has a good heart and as a result turns a blind eye to the activities of the resistance in and around the House of Interlopers.

Afet-Nuf, The Provider

The small wineshops sprinkled around the Musika provide opportunities for people to socialize and haggle over a crisp or sweet beverage, and Afet-Nuf takes advantage of this by using a wineshop as a front for a thieving ring. Afet-Nuf is a skilled fence who buys and sells all manner of contraband, generally items stolen from elsewhere in the city—but he isn't too picky if there's money to be made.

Afet-Nuf is thoroughly self-interested and has befriended many templars, so he has wide leeway to conduct his operations. He also has several small boltholes and cellars at a variety of properties around the city—some owned directly, some controlled by a "friend" who earns a small stipend to lease the storage area to the provider.

Afet-Nuf also frequently works through intermediaries, so his reach through the city is not well known; many small bolt-holes, stores of contraband, and secreted weapons are actually his stashes, arranged through others via bribery or extortion.

Unbeknownst to the denizens of the city, Afet-Nuf is a yuan-ti pureblood, from the insular cult residing in the Hollow Tunnels beneath the city. The yuan-ti have lived there for generations, and Afet-Nuf, like many of his contemporaries, has been a resident of the city for his entire life. He is, however, much more selfish than his compatriots, with his own skillset that diverges from other purebloods.

Thanks to his yuan-ti heritage, Afet-nuf has sharp, slightly-elongated canines, and green scales coat the backs of his hands and the webbing between thumbs and fingers. Otherwise, he has the black skin and dark, curly hair of a Babweran, and most people ignore the foibles of his appearance, as such diversions from the human phenotype are not uncommon.

Though Afet-Nuf is untrustworthy, he is also the best-connected fence in the city. Characters trying to move contraband may decide that he is their best (bad) option. Of course, he's not above betraying them, either by selling them out to templars, or extortion, such as selling poisoned wine and then offering to cure the poison...

Afet-Nuf, yuan-ti pureblood thief 7 (fence):

AL NE; AC 4; HD thief 7; HP 24; THACO 17; # At 1; Dmg by weapon; SA spells; MR 20%; SZ M; ML 8; XP Value 975. Afet-Nuf has a power score of 17 and 105 PSPs, with the powers of animal affinity (snakes), attraction, aversion, chameleon power, chemical simulation, danger sense, false sensory input, feel sound, flesh armor, id insinuation, inflict pain, intellect fortress, invincible foes, life detection, mind blank, mind thrust, phobia amplification, post-hypnotic suggestion, poison sense, repugnance, taste link, and tower of iron will. Like other yuan-ti purebloods, he can cast *cause fear*, *darkness 15' radius*, *neutralize poison*, *polymorph other*, *snake charm*, *sticks to snakes*, and *suggestion*, once per day each. His rogue skills are PP 20%, OL 80%, FT 65%, MS 45%, HS 40%, CW 60%, RL 60%. See MC 1.

Afet-Nuf has an Intelligence of 17, a Dexterity of 17, and proficiency in appraise (19) and bribery etiquette (15); he is also literate in both common and yuan-ti. If forced into combat, Afet-Nuf typically fights with a pair of steel punch daggers, but he is more prone to run when he can. He can call upon significant numbers of other thieves if needed, including muscle for a late-night street fight. He's not above arranging a fight, then tipping off the templars beforehand while making his escape (possibly in snake form) as the templars swoop in to brutally quash the violence.

Other Notables in Brief

Cagagala (TN male human psionist 16) is the current head of the University of Transfiguration. A powerful psychokinetic, he is also very advanced in years, and expected to die or retire soon. Cagagala's central contribution to the University is that he patiently argues with the queen so effectively that she mostly leaves the University to its own devices rather than subject herself to another time-consuming negotiation with him. Cagagala speculates there are other powerful psionic organizations beyond Babweru, but has chosen not to investigate, instead remaining secure behind the *dome*. After he passes, the University must select a new head, who may have a different agenda.

Luxmox (C? male half-giant gladiator 10) is the current favorite of the arena, though fame shifts with the winds. The massive half-giant fights with an appropriately-sized war club and shield, or sometimes with other weapons for special competitions. Luxmox has a tendency to barrel through challenges on brute strength alone, and sometimes serves as an executioner for criminals sentenced to the arena—often pitting a group of hapless convicts against him, which could be the fate of PCs.

THE SAND MARCHES

Chudo (LN female dwarf earth cleric 12) is a middle-aged woman who sells pottery and small stone trinkets cut from pieces of scrap rock, but in truth she is an earth cultist. She uses her powers to aid the people of her neighborhood. She secretly keeps historical records about the city, its families, and notable events, with journals passed down from mentor to student for generations in the cult and stretching back several centuries.

Akelan (NG female mul ranger 8) serves as a warden to the queen's gardens. She seems eccentric, as a young woman who patrols the gardens with a bow and bronze hand axe, but she sometimes slips away to travel up the mountainside and beyond the city walls. Akelan isn't tough enough to handle the monsters outside of Babweru by herself, but she can guide people looking for a way out that doesn't go through the Hollow Tunnels.

Kulnu (LE male human defiler 15) is chief among the queen's defilers. Like most civic defilers, he is ambitious, arrogant, and craven. He hopes some day to entice the queen to make him her king, or even to supplant her. Shamiso is fully aware of his wild dreams and expects to replace him when a suitable candidate comes along.

Fahlah (N nonbinary human bard 12) is the city-state's premier entertainer. They excel at singing, dancing, and playing multiple instruments, and frequently work with troupes of other bards to put on performances for festivals and noble parties. Like most bards, Fahlah also undertakes a little bit of larceny from time to time, though they don't do assassinations. Anyone wanting to break into society can do so by entering Fahlah's orbit, or vice versa.

Campaigns in Babweru

If your PCs enter Babweru from outside—probably by making contact with the exiles and learning of the protective sigil, or possibly by using magic or psionics to divine the sigil—they'll immediately be seen as outsiders unless taking measures to disguise themselves. Even with a disguised appearance, outsider PCs give themselves away with accents, foreign coins, and the fact that nobody in the city knows them. For such PCs, entering Babweru is either a dangerous move because they don't understand the city yet, or part of the endgame as they try to engage the sorcerer-queen and defeat her before she destroys their settlement.

For PCs from Babweru, the city-state serves as their central place of residence, at least at first. Every Babweran PC has (or had) family in the city, and neighbors, and a history. Encourage Babweran PCs to detail what neighborhood they lived in, who they apprenticed with, and what connections their family had with the power structures of the city. Each player should contribute a local landmark, shop, notable personage, or piece of history to help color the city and their place in it.

Babweran PCs almost certainly leave the city at some point after learning of the protective sigil. A Babweran PC could even be a replacement member for a party suffering losses from outside, someone who makes it out of the city via the Hollow Tunnels and meets outsiders while forging a new life.

Intrigue in Babweru plays out similarly to other city-states—interactions with templars, psionic adepts, petty thieves and crime lords, noble houses, and local troubles—with the added twist that nobody gets out. Much like Athas itself, people cannot simply leave, so they have no choice but to face their problems and try to solve them.

Progressing Through Babweru

Like other **DARK SUN** campaigns, those set in Babweru proceed through several tiers of play as PCs gain levels.

Low levels: Starting PCs, and those up to about 8th level, deal with minor local issues. They have to handle family feuds, resource scarcity, overbearing templars, and keeping their own secrets safe. This level of play tends to involve many colorful personalities and conflicts of interest pitting the PCs' family or community ties against their personal interests, their morals, or the stability of their connections.

Mid levels: Player characters approaching the double digits, moving to 9th level and up to about 15th level, handle more significant problems. Unless they take extreme measures to guard their reputations, they become known as movers and shakers and possibly trouble. Templars start to see them both as possible assets or competitors, leading to confrontations where the templars threaten them with consequences that can be avoided if they'll just perform a *tiny* service for the city. Warriors find that they become local favorites in the arena, or sought after as mentors, and neighborhoods rally behind them. Thieves and bards earn a notorious reputation and become involved in both the political machinations of the noble families and the contraband trade in the city. At the top end of this range, the high templars see the PCs as potential assets and try to engage them to quash civic problems, destroy competitors, or even engage in surreptitious secret missions outside of the city-state.

High levels: At 16th level and beyond, the PCs enter the endgame of **DARK SUN**. Magic-wielding characters start to research magical transformations, and undoubtedly draw the clairvoyant eye of Queen Shamiso unless they conduct their studies under scrupulous protections or in extradimensional spaces. Warriors gain so much fame that large swaths of the city unite behind them, turning them into leaders and decision-makers on a broad scale. Rogues find themselves engaged in schemes to rob the palace, spy on the University of Transfiguration, assassinate high-ranking templars, or traverse the Hollow Tunnels and return with riches from the ancient world. Psionics outstrip the abilities of the University, earning some amount of jealousy and respect, and attracting their own students.

For characters remaining in Babweru for most of their careers, the final challenge is what to do about the *dome of anonymity*. Should Babweru be exposed to the outside world again, possibly risking destruction by the other sorcerer-monarchs and the Dragon? Or should the city remain locked away and lose any chance at trade, outside alliances, and a new future for people who want something more?

Exploring the City-State

For players entering the city from outside, or even natives traveling to neighborhoods they've never visited, Babweru can be a confusing place. The city has no sense of "quarters" or "districts" other than the sorcerer-queen's palace. Ramshackle housing coexists side-by-side next to lavish estates, seedy wine shops, and hard-working tradesfolk. The only way to learn the city—barring supernatural insight—is by walking its streets and seeing what it has to offer.

To reflect the chaotic layout of the city, break the city's circular map into eight pie slices. For each slice, PCs are *strangers*—they know nothing about the layout of the city.

As PCs experience the city, they become *familiar* and eventually *knowledgeable* with each piece of the city. A PC can be familiar or knowledgeable with an area while still being a stranger to other neighborhoods.

Player characters who're from Babweru (and remember it!) are knowledgeable about their home neighborhood.

Each time the PCs move through a neighborhood with which they are not knowledgeable, roll on the table below. Roll if the PCs are just wandering aimlessly, or if they're trying to locate a particular shop or home.

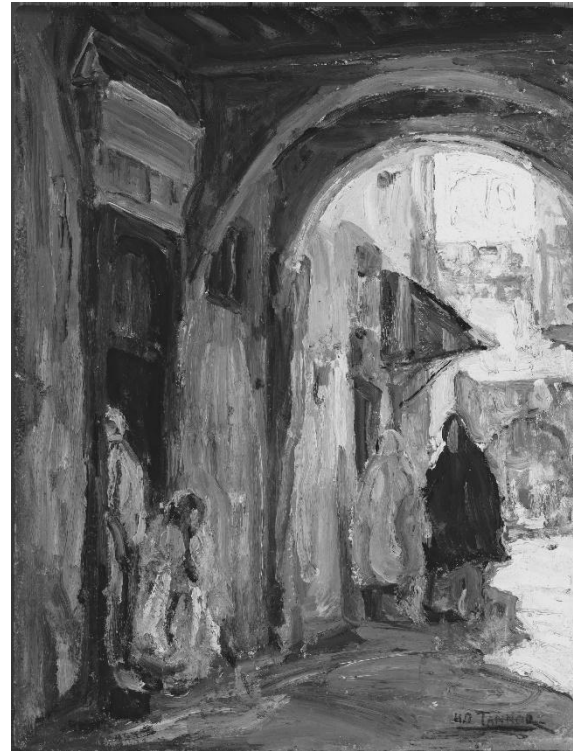
If the PCs are looking for a shop or home and don't know where it is, there's no guarantee it's in the neighborhood that they're in! If the PCs explore a neighborhood and become knowledgeable with it and never find their destination (don't roll a discovery, shortcut, or friendly encounter leading them to their goal), then their destination is not in that neighborhood, and they need to try again somewhere else. If the PCs are looking for a specific destination that could be anywhere in the city, roll 1d8 in advance and assign it to one of the eight neighborhoods. This way you know that, say, a weapon shop is in a given neighborhood, and the PCs won't find it until they head there and have a discovery, a shortcut, or a friendly encounter.

Unless otherwise noted, each roll on the table represents one hour of walking the streets.

If any PC in the party is *familiar* with the neighborhood, add +1 to the roll. If any PC makes a navigation proficiency check, add +1 to the roll. The party can benefit from both of these, for a maximum bonus of +2.

Babweru City Encounter Table

Roll (2d4)	Result
2	Hostile encounter
3	Lost
4	Dead end
5	No encounter
6	Discovery
7	Shortcut
8+	Friendly encounter



Street in Tangier—Smithsonian Collection

2. *Hostile encounter*: The PCs stumble across templars looking for someone to extort, angry drunks, or even a monster that has come over the walls. A fight is likely unless the PCs run away or engage in some fast talking.

3. *Lost*: The PCs become lost in the streets for 1d4 hours. At the end of this time, each PC makes an Intelligence check. Those who roll equal to or less than their Intelligence score gain one level of familiarity with the neighborhood.

4. *Dead end*: The PCs stop in a dead end alley or cul-de-sac. They must backtrack some distance before traveling again, which costs another hour of travel with no benefit.

THE SAND MARCHES

5. *No encounter:* The PCs have no problems. If they are following directions to a specific location, they reach it after an hour. If they are wandering aimlessly to learn the city or discover locations, they don't find anything noteworthy during the hour.

6. *Discovery:* The PCs find a specific notable shop or landmark in the city. After doing so, each PC makes an Intelligence check. Those who roll equal to or less than their Intelligence score gain one level of familiarity with the neighborhood.

If the PCs are looking for a specific destination, this roll indicates that they have found it (assuming it's in the neighborhood, of course). Otherwise, roll to see what they find.

Roll 1d4: 1 = Slum; the PCs discover a seedy neighborhood where they might be able to buy contraband or engage in disreputable trade. 2 = Estate; the PCs find a notable estate of a noble. 3 = Shop; the PCs stumble across a shop selling useful goods, with a shopkeeper who may answer questions if they buy something. 4 = Landmark; the PCs come across a local tower, statue, mural, well, or other notable feature underpinning the neighborhood. Mark this down on the city map.

7. *Shortcut:* The PCs find an alley, rooftop overpass, or shop they can cut through to speed their travel. They automatically arrive at their chosen destination at the end of the hour of travel. These shortcuts often rely on temporary structures, detours, or streets that may be blocked later, so this doesn't guarantee always finding the location again, nor does it improve neighborhood familiarity.

8+. *Friendly encounter:* The PCs encounter a friendly local, a small neighborhood festival, a busking musician, a secretive priest, or another NPC willing to give them directions or information. This takes up the hour of travel, but the PCs can gain directions, either to lead them to their destination, or telling them to try another neighborhood.

Chapter Six: Random Dungeon Generation

While **DARK SUN** games don't heavily feature dungeons, the ruins of *The Sand Marches* dot all the southern wastes, and the PCs probably spend significant time delving into underground places in search of lucrative resources to bring home. To quickly generate random dungeons, caves, and ruins, use these procedures.

Just like regions, dungeons have an *encounter level*, which determines the relative danger of monsters and hazards within.

Card-Based Generation

Generate your random dungeons using a deck of standard playing cards. Each suit in the deck represents one type of underground location, and face cards represent final room cards. Your dungeon might mix and match, or may all be made from one set of locations.

Each individual card corresponds to a room, with a map and description. Rooms have exits connecting to other halls or rooms—each time the PCs exit a room (or use powers to explore head), flip over the next card in the dungeon deck to reveal what they find ahead.

The final card for each dungeon deck is a face card, which indicates a special, final room. These rooms often have unique and dangerous features.

While exploring the rooms, the PCs also encounter threats from various encounter tables, based on the adventure level of the dungeon.

The Suits

The four suits of a deck of playing cards correspond to types of dungeons as follows:

♣ Clubs	Caves
♦ Diamonds	Mines
♥ Hearts	Habitation
♠ Spades	Ruins

♣ *Caves* indicate natural formations such as lava tubes or water-eroded tunnels. They are sometimes widened by the creatures inhabiting them, but in many places are dark, cold, and cramped.

♦ *Mines* are excavations made specifically for resource extraction. Tunnels here may be shored up with timber or brick for stability, but usually only to the minimum level for safety.

♥ *Habitations* are places where people actively live. They are generally well-maintained for safety, ventilation, and some level of comfort. Unlike other types of locations, habitations are generally above ground, and connections represent paths between buildings.

♠ *Ruins* are the buried remnants of ancient settlements, now connected only by the doors and covered-over streets left behind. They are often unstable and unsafe, but contain useful remnants of the past.

THE SAND MARCHES

Choose the suit according to the kind of dungeon you want. If you want to mix your dungeon type, simply shuffle two suits together. You can also shuffle two suits separately, then add one underneath the other to generate a dungeon where mines break out into caves, a habitation turns into ruins, and so on.

Drawing the Dungeon

To generate the dungeon, start by removing the jokers and separating your card deck, with the suits in individual piles, and the face cards also in individual piles by suit. Shuffle together a deck from the number cards of the desired suit, then draw cards to the specified depth. For instance, a dungeon that is "8 rooms deep" ends after you've drawn 8 cards.

For the last card, instead of using the usual numbered cards, draw a face card of the appropriate suit.

If you want your dungeon to be a mystery, stack the cards face down, and only turn them over as the PCs enter the various rooms! Otherwise, jot down the cards so you can save the dungeon for later reference.

You can make the dungeon depth variable by shuffling the final room face cards, choosing one, then shuffling *that* with the last four cards from your room deck, and putting it back on the bottom. Once you hit the final room, discard all the cards beneath it.

Drawing a dungeon this way is also a great resource for solo play, if you want to try out a dungeon for yourself without knowing what you'll get in advance.

Connecting Rooms

Each room has at least one exit, except for the final room(s). When PCs go to an exit, reveal the next room by flipping over the next card. You can orient the rooms any way you like, as long as exits connect: A doorway leaving the Barracks can connect to a passage in the Glassy Caves, for instance.

Once the PCs find the final room, any other unexplored exits are revealed to be dead ends!

Encounters, Traps, and Secret Doors

Each time the PCs enter a new room, roll on the random occupant table. This determines who or what is in the room.

Final rooms are an exception. A final room always has an encounter.

Rooms should also have random dungeon dressing based on the function of the location. Mines will have old tools, ropes, and candles; habitations will have tableware and sleeping spaces; ruins will have broken fragments of pottery and art; caves will have strange stones and patches of subterranean moss and fungi. Each room description includes some ideas for its décor.

Table: Random Location Occupant

2d4 Roll	Occupants of Room
2	Trap
3	No encounter
4	Encounter
5	No encounter
6	Secret door
7	Encounter
8	Roll twice

Encounters

An *encounter* indicates some kind of creature, guardian, or inhabitant. Encounters might be hostile, or they might be indifferent; communication may or may not be possible. Determine the creature by rolling on a level-appropriate table.

If you generate an encounter that makes no sense for the area, either reroll or treat as *no encounter*.

No Encounter

The room is empty. It may still have decorative items, but it has no noteworthy encounters or features beyond those described for the room itself.

Secret Door

There's a secret passage or door somewhere in the room. Draw the room and then throw a die onto it; wherever the die stops, that's where the secret passage is located. As always, PCs can find it by searching or using spells.

A secret door never leads to the final room. Instead, draw a new, fresh card from the remaining stack that you initially shuffled for the complex. That's the room beyond. All exits from the room are blocked unless another secret door is indicated.

Trap

The room contains one or more traps. Roll 1d4 for the amount, then throw that many dice onto the map to see where they're located. Roll on the table below to determine the kind of trap.

Random Trap Table

1d6 Roll	Random Trap
1	Broken trap
2	Pit
3	Pressure plate
4	Sliding wall
5	Tripwire
6	Magical/Psionic trap

Broken trap indicates there's some kind of trap (roll again) but it's broken. It may make an ominous grinding sound, or it may have visible rubble around it, but it no longer does what it was meant to do.

Pit traps open beneath a character stepping on the indicated space. There is a 50% chance the surface won't trigger for characters weighing less than 100 lbs. (gear included). The depth of the pit is the dungeon's adventure level times 5 ft., so if the dungeon has level 4–6 encounters, the pit depth is 20–30 feet.

THE SAND MARCHES

There is a 25% chance the bottom of a pit is spiked, which inflicts an additional 2d10 damage. If the bottom is spiked, there's a further 25% chance the spikes are smeared with poison (50%) or dung (50%). The former is a random injected poison: Roll 1d6+1 and consult the table for poisons for the bard class (on p. 36 of the **DARK SUN** boxed set *Rules Book*). The latter causes disease: typhus, which causes the PC to make a save vs. poison every day or suffer the loss of 1d2 points of both Strength and Constitution. Reaching 0 in either score results in death; scoring three successful saves in a row means the disease is thrown off and the character heals one point of ability score damage per day of rest. Of course, *cure disease* spells and the absorb disease, cell adjustment, and complete healing psionic powers can be useful here.

Pressure plate traps trigger some kind of weapon or hazard when stepped on. There is a 50% chance that a set of pressure plates won't trigger for a character with a total weight under 100 lbs. (gear included). The pressure plate sets off one trap from the Triggered Traps table.

Table: Triggered Traps

Roll (1d4)	Triggered Trap	Effect
1	Alarm	Roll a creature encounter that appears at an exit.
2	Darts	1d6 darts attack with THAC0 21-adventure level, for 1d3 (S-M)/1d2 (L) damage. 25% chance of poison (type: roll 1d6+1 on bard poison table).
3	Javelins	1d4 javelins attack with THAC0 of 21-adventure level, for 1d6 damage.
4	Impaler	Swinging spike attacks with THAC0 of 21-adventure level, for 1d8+6 damage.

Sliding wall traps indicate a wall slides down across the room, cutting through the space where the trap is triggered, when a character steps there. The wall is made of the same material as the surrounding area and comes down across the entire room. Roll 1d4 for orientation:
 1=north/south, 2=east/west,
 3=northwest/southeast,
 4=northeast/southwest.

Tripwire traps fire off when someone hits the wire. Unlike pressure plates, they usually don't have a weight requirement. They go off as soon as someone snags the line and tugs it. There's a 10% chance the line is coated in contact poison (roll 1d4: 1=type K, 2=type L, 3=type M, 4=type N). In addition, when tripped, it fires off a trap effect rolled on the Triggered Traps table.

Magical/Psionic traps have a supernatural trigger: They are keyed to sense when creatures pass by, and fire off automatically. The effect is generally explosive; roll on the Table: Magical/Psionic Traps. Any given trap has a 50/50 chance to be magical or psionic, and can be detected with the corresponding abilities (*detect magic* or *detect psionics*).

Table: Magical/Psionic Traps

Roll (1d4)	Magic/Psi Trap	Effect
1	Explosion	Detonates a 20' radius explosion that does 6d6 fire damage, or 10d6 if encounter level is 10+.
2	Paralyze and alarm	10' radius save vs. paralysis, and roll a creature encounter appearing at an exit.
3	Drain	Random target saves vs. spell or loses 1d6 points from random ability score for 24 hours.
4	Detonate	One randomly-chosen item explodes for 1d10 damage to everyone in 10' and must save vs. crushing blow or be destroyed.

Encounter and Treasure Tables

The accompanying encounter tables offer a random selection of creatures for the PCs to deal with. When PCs encounter creatures, place the creatures adjacent to one of the other exits of the room—so, the PCs come in on one side, and the creatures are on the other. Some rooms have specific instructions to override this.

The encounter table is a quick-reference chart, and shows you which *Monstrous Compendium* to check for the full statistics of the creature in question. Each “ref.” entry refers to a compendium by number, except TBT = *Terrors Beyond Tyr*, Annl = *Monstrous Compendium Annual*, and OPA = *Outer Planes Appendix*.

When using the random encounter tables, you can decide in advance if you want a dungeon to have only one kind of creature, or a wide selection; if the former, then roll only one for the inhabitants, and then vary the numbers from location to location. You can also create interesting dynamics by having two or three creatures in adjacent rooms, and setting them at war or giving them some other kind of relationship.

The random dungeon encounter tables are for subterranean creatures; use the random habitation encounters for aboveground ♥ habitations, unless they’ve been abandoned or overrun.

If you generate the dungeon in advance, you can develop a story from the kinds of monsters in it. Are the giant animals trained guards for the inhabitants deeper in? Who left a golem there? Why hasn’t that dangerous monster eaten the others?

Using Treasure Tables

Instead of using the standard treasure type tables, these random tables assign treasure parcels based on the encounter level of the area. A dangerous area has richer treasures!

Any room with a trap or an encounter has a 50% chance to have treasure. Final rooms always have treasure.

Roll 1d4 treasure parcels if treasure is indicated. If you roll a parcel that doesn’t fit (for instance, rolling a magic item and getting a value above the limit for that level band), just roll again or pick a value that fits.

When treasure is indicated in a room with a trap, the trap protects the treasure (on a container, in front of the treasure, etc.).

Treasure Collections

When the PCs find art objects, consider making one of them part of a collection: A figurine from a board game, a die from a set, a piece of tableware... roll 2d4+2 to determine how many pieces are in the collection. Each time the PCs find another art object at the same adventure level, there’s a 50% chance it’s one of the pieces for the collection. If the PCs assemble and sell a complete collection, it’s worth twice the value of its individual pieces.

For novice PCs, it's helpful to provide two or three pieces of a collection the first time the party finds one. That way, they immediately know these pieces go together, and there may be more. For more experienced players, simply provide a bowl, a game piece, or a die, and only suggest that it may be part of a larger collection if the PC makes an appraise proficiency check.

Ore as Treasure

Especially while exploring old mines, PCs may run across ores they can smelt for useful metal. The most common metal-bearing ores yield copper, tin, lead, zinc, and perhaps even small quantities of iron, gold, or silver.

For sake of simplicity, ore smelts down to half of its weight in useful metal: a ten-pound stone of cassiterite (a tin-bearing ore) yields five pounds of tin when smelted.

Some metals (tin and zinc) are useful principally for alloying. Bronze is usually four parts copper to one part tin. Brass is two parts copper to one part zinc.

Player characters with smelting proficiency (from *The Complete Book of Dwarves*) can operate a smelter without complications. Otherwise, smelting accidents are possible, or the PCs may get a lower rate of return for the ore they turn into metal.

Expanding Encounter Tables

These tables don't include every possible monster—they represent a selection of challenging creatures that are mostly giant animals at low levels, and fantastical beasts at higher levels. You can pencil in your own additions, such as huge bats or monster zombies, either by replacing an entry, or expanding a table to 2d6 (+4 monster choices). Remember, rarer encounters go to the top and bottom ends of the table.

Low-Level Encounters

The starting region doesn't have random ruins in it, so there's no encounter table for adventure level 3. If you need to generate encounters for that low level, use natural animals, weak undead, or small psychic creatures of Athas, such as:

- Bats, common or large (MC 1)
- Beetle, agony (MC 12)
- Chitines (MC 11)
- Goraks (TBT)
- Scorpions, large (MC 1)
- Jhakar (TBT)
- Jozhals (*Wanderer's Journal*)
- Morins (MC 11)
- Skeletons (MC 1)
- Spiders, large (MC 1)
- Striders, giant (MC 3)
- Zhackals (MC 12)
- Zombies (MC 1)

THE SAND MARCHES

Table: Random Dungeon Encounters, Level 4–6

Roll (2d4)	Creature	AL	AC	MV	HD	HP	THAC0	At/Dmg	Special	XPV	Ref.
2	Zombie, 3d8	N	8	6"	2	9	19	1×1d8	Undead immunities	65	MC 1
3	Scorpion, huge, 1d4	N	4	12"	4+4	22	15	2×1d8, 1×1d3	Poison sting (type F)	420	MC 1
4	Meazel, 1	CE	8	12"	4	18	17	2×1d4	Strangle, thief skills	120	MC 3
5	Spider, giant, 1d8	N	4	3", Wb 12"	3+3 or 4+4	17 or 22	17 or 15	1×1d8	Poison (type F)	420 or 650	MC 1
6	Snake, poison, giant, 1d6	N	5	15"	4+2	20	17	1×1d3	Poison (type E)	420	MC 1
7	Hej-kin, 2d4	NE	10	6"	2	9	19	2×1d4	Psionics, stone phasing	65	MC 12
8	Skeleton, spike, 2d10	N	6	12"	3	14	17	1×1d6	Blood burn, bonespray, ½ dmg from edged wpns, undead immunities	650	MC Annl Vol. 4

Table: Random Treasure Parcels, Level 4–6

Roll (1d6)	Treasure
1	1d6+1 rations of food and equal number of gallons of water
2	2d4×10 cp
3	Ornamented pottery, furniture, rugs, or tapestries worth 4d6×10 cp but weighing 10d10 lbs. total
4	1 nonmetal weapon (1d6: 1–3, wood; 4–5, stone or obsidian; 6, bone)
5	1 piece (not full set) of nonmetal armor. 50% chance of torso; otherwise, one limb
6	Expendable magic item (1d6: 1–3 <i>potion fruit</i> , 4–6 scroll)

Table: Random Dungeon Encounters, Level 7–9

Roll (2d4)	Creature	AL	AC	MV	HD	HP	THACO	At/Dmg	Special	XPV	Ref.
2	Tessalmonster, thessaltrice, 1	N	3	12"	8	36	13	8×1d6, 1×1d10	Petrification, poison (special)	8,000	MC 3
3	Spider, dark, 2d10	N	2	15"	6	27	15	2×1d10, 1×1d6	Poison (type F), psionics	975	TBT
4	Slig, 5d6	N?	6	12"	4+1	28	17	1×1d8+1 (weapon) or 1×1d3 (bite)	Formation attack	420	TBT
5	Scorpion, barbed, 1d4	N	1	9"	9+5	46	11	2×1d12, 1×1d6	Barbs, poison (type C)	3,000	TBT
6	Lizard, minotaur, 1d8	N	5	6"	8	36	13	2×2d6, 1×3d6	Ambush, clamp jaws	975	MC 1
7	Elemental, earth, 1	N	2	6"	8	36	13	1×4d8	+2 or better wpn to hit	2,000	MC 1
8	Golem, sand, 1	N	3	6"	8	36	13	1×2d12	Spell immunities, Suffocation	2,000	MC 12

Table: Random Treasure Parcels, Level 7–9

Roll (1d6)	Treasure
1	3d6 sp
2	1d6 gp
3	Art object or decor worth 5d6×20 cp, but weighing (1d4+1) ×10 lbs.
4	1 weapon (1d6: 1–3, nonmetal +1 <i>weapon</i> ; 4–6: nonmagical metal weapon)
5	1 full suit of nonmetal armor
6	Minor magic item (1d6: 1–2 <i>potion fruit</i> , 3–4 scroll, 5–6 miscellaneous magic item worth up to 1,000 xp)

THE SAND MARCHES

Table: Random Dungeon Encounters, Level 10–12

Roll (2d4)	Creature	AL	AC	MV	HD	HP	THACO	At/Dmg	Special	XPV	Ref.
2	Golem, obsidian, 1	N	4	6"	12	54	9	1×4d10	Spell immunities, stunning clap	9,000	MC 12
3	Thessal-monster, thessal-gorgon	N	2	12"	10	45	11	8×1d6, 1×2d6	Immunities, petrification, poison	9,000	MC 3
4	Genie, efreet, 1	N (LE)	2	9", FI 24" (B)	10	45	11	1×3d8	Fire immunity, spells	8,000	MC 1
5	Lizard, fire, 1d4	N	3	9"	10	45	11	2×1d8, 1×2d8	Fire breath, fire immunity	3,000	MC 1
6	Golem, clay, 1	N	7	7"	11	50	9	1×3d10	<i>Haste</i> , immunities, unhealing blows	5,000	MC 1
7	Giant, ettin, 1d4	CE	3	12"	10	45	11	1d10 or 2d6 + weapon	Alert	3,000	MC 2
8	Cildabrin, 1d2	NE	5	15"	11	50	9	2×1d12, 1×1d6	MR 20%, Poison (type O), spells	7,000	MC 11

Table: Random Treasure Parcels, Level 10–12

Roll (1d6)	Treasure
1	1d4 gems
2	3d6 gp
3	Art object or decor worth 10d10×10 cp, but weighing 1d6×50 lbs.
4	Weapon (1d6: 1, +1 <i>obsidian weapon</i> ; 2, +1 <i>bone weapon</i> ; 3, +1 <i>metal weapon</i> ; 4, +2 <i>wood weapon</i> ; 5, +2 <i>stone or obsidian weapon</i> ; 6, +2 <i>bone weapon</i>)
5	Armor (1d6: 1–3, one piece of nonmagical metal armor; 4–6, one suit of nonmetal +1 <i>armor</i>)
6	Random magic or psionic item up to 2,500 xp value

Table: Random Dungeon Encounters, Level 13–15

Roll (2d4)	Creature	AL	AC	MV	HD	HP	THACO	At/Dmg	Special	XPV	Ref.
2	Thessal-monster, thessal-mera, 1	NE	5/2/0	12"	10	45	11	6×1d6, 1×3d4, 1×1d12, 1×2d4	Acid, fire immobilization, immune to acid and petrify, regenerate, resist fire	10,000	MC 3
3	Behir, 1d2	NE	4	15"	12	54	9	2×2d4, 1×1d4+1 or 1×2d4, 6×1d6	Immune to electricity and poison, lightning bolt	7,000	MC 1
4	Dune reaper, warrior, 1d4+1	N	0	12", Jp 9"	10	45	11	2×3d6+7, 1×2d6	MR 25%, psionics, surprise leap	6,000	TBT
5	Mastyrial, desert, 1d3	N	0	15"	12	54	9	2×1d10, 1×2d6, 1×1d6	Immune to blunt wpns, regeneration	10,000	TBT
6	Elemental, earth, 1	N	2	6"	16	72	5	1×4d8	+2 or better wpn to hit	10,000	MC 1
7	Golem, stone, 1	N	5	6"	14	60	7	1×3d8	Slow, +2 or better wpn to hit	8,000	MC 1
8	Megapede, 1d4	N	3	12"	10	45	11	5×1d6 or 1×3d10	Poison (type B), psionics	4,000	MC 12

Table: Random Treasure Parcels, Level 13–15

Roll (1d6)	Treasure
1	5d4 gems
2	1d6×2,000 cp value in mixed coins
3	Art object or decor worth 1d6×1,000 cp, but weighing 2d4×100 lbs.
4	Magic weapon up to +3
5	Magic armor up to +3
6	Random magic or psionic item up to 3,500 xp value

THE SAND MARCHES

Table: Random Dungeon Encounters, Level 16–18

Roll (2d4)	Creature	AL	AC	MV	HD	HP	THACO	At/Dmg	Special	XPV	Ref.
2	Nightmare beast	CE	-5	12"	15	68	5	2×2d6, 2×2d10, 1×4d10	Psionics, spells, +1 or better wpn to hit	16,000	MC 12
3	Thessalmonster, thessalhydra, 1	N	0	12"	12	54	9	8×1d6, 1×1d12, 1×1d20	Acid, immune to acid, poison	12,000	MC 3
4	Tanar'ri, greater, babau, 1d2	CE	-3	15"	8+14	50	13	1× 2d4+1, 1× 1d4+1, 1× 2d4 or by weapon +7	Backstab, corrosion, gaze, thief abilities, +1 or better wpn to hit	17,000	OPA
5	Defiler scavenger team*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
6	Elemental, greater, earth, 1	N	1	9"	18	81	5	1×4d12	Earthquake, +3 or better wpn to hit	14,000	MC 12
7	Hatori, greater, 1	N	1	12"	20	90	1	1×3d12, 1×2d12	Swallow whole	10,000	MC 4
8	Drake, earth, 1	N	-4	12"	25+8	175	5	2× 1d12+12, 1× 3d12, 1× 4d12	Elemental, psionics, swallow whole, tail lash	33,000	MC 12

* See encounter #7 in region O. You should vary the defiler's spells and magic items and might want to add some additional help (e.g. high-level thieves, psionics, etc.)

If your high-level PCs are demolishing these enemies, give them minions. *Elementals* and *tanar'ri* may have lower Hit Die members of their type. *Hatori* may have smaller companions.

Table: Random Treasure Parcels, Level 16–18

Roll (1d6)	Treasure
1	10d6 gems or jewels
2	3d8×3,000 cp value in mixed coins
3	Art object or decor worth 2d4×2,500 cp, but weighing 3d6×200 lbs.
4	1 magic weapon
5	1 magic armor
6	Any 1 random magic or psionic item

Weapon and Armor Treasure Tables

When placing armor treasures, remember that 65% of all armor is human-sized, 20% is elf-sized, 10% is dwarf-sized, and 5% is halfling-sized. Half-giant armor is typically found only as special treasure (usually by taking it from a defeated half-giant enemy).

When using armor from other sources such as *Combat & Tactics*, you can substitute a different armor with the same AC value and the same material type. For instance, you could replace nonmetal studded leather armor with nonmetal light scale, or chain mail with metal lamellar.

Remember that certain kinds of armor have the advantage of lower weight or better movement rates—splint mail weighs 40 lbs., while banded mail weighs 30 lbs., but they have the same Armor Class.

To generate random metal armor but guarantee it's not one of the extremely valuable types, simply use 1d4+5 instead of 3d4 on the metal armor table.

You may substitute *buckler* for *small shield* at your discretion.

Table: Random Nonmetal Armor

Roll (2d4)	Armor
2	Padded
3	Leather
4	Studded leather
5	Shield (1d6: 1–3, small; 4–5, medium; 6, large)
6	Hide
7	Scale mail
8	Brigandine

Table: Random Metal Armor

Roll (3d4)	Armor
3	Field plate
4	Bronze plate mail
5	Splint mail
6	Scale mail
7	Shield (1d6: 1–3, small; 4–5, medium; 6, large)
8	Brigandine
9	Chain mail
10	Banded mail
11	Plate mail
12	Full plate

THE SAND MARCHES

As with random armor, random weapons are not typically sized for half-giant usage with an extended haft, wider pommel, and different center of balance, and such weapons only appear as placed treasure when you decide to provide them.

For nonmetal weapons, roll 1d6: 1–3 wood, 4–5 stone or obsidian, 6 bone.

DARK SUN includes a wide range of unusual weapons beyond those found in the original boxed set, in sources such as *The Complete Gladiator's Handbook* or *Dragon* magazine #185. If you want to use such weapons, simply substitute them for other similar weapons, such as using a tortoise blade instead of a shortsword, or an alhulak instead of a mace.

Table: Random Weapon Type

Roll (2d4)	Weapon Type
2	Bow
3	Club or mace
4	Pole arm or spear
5	Sword
6	Small weapon
7	Axe or pick
8	Special*

* *Special* results indicate a weapon not in the categories above like a blowgun or javelin, one from a **DARK SUN** sourcebook, one not indicated in the *Player's Handbook*, or some other unusual weapon of your choice. This could include weapons from other resources like *Combat & Tactics*, such as an axe-mace, boomerang, hatchet, pry bar, a thri-kreen weapon like a kyorkcha or zerka, or a **DARK SUN** weapon such as an impaler or wrist razors.

Table: Random Bows or Crossbows

Roll (2d4)	Bow or Crossbow Type
2	Composite short bow*
3	Light crossbow
4	Arrows or bolts (1d20)
5	Short bow*
6	Long bow*
7	Heavy crossbow
8	Composite long bow*

* *Bows* have a base 25% chance of being built for high strength. Roll 1d8 to determine the Strength bonus that the bow uses.

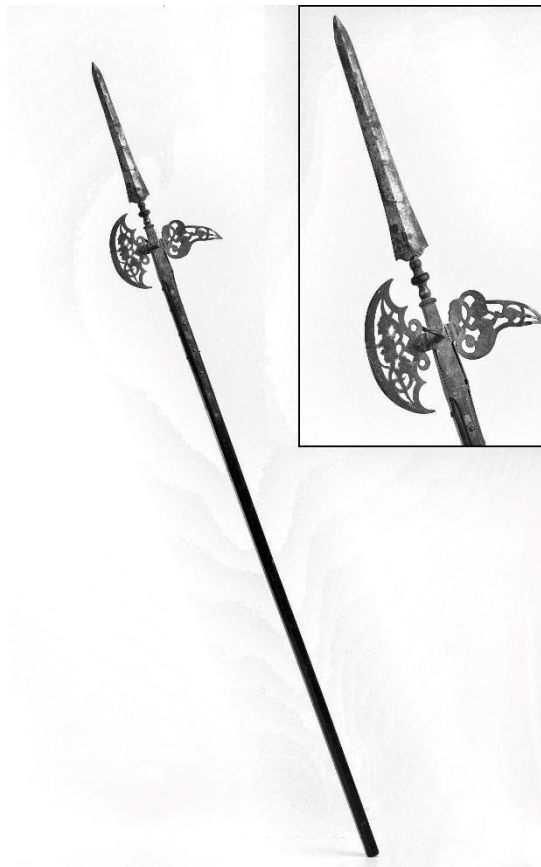
Table: Random Club or Mace

Roll (1d6)	Club or Mace Type
1-2	Club
3-4	Horseman's mace
5	Footman's mace
6	Morningstar

Table: Random Pole Arm or Spear

Roll (1d6)	Spear or Pole Arm Type
1-2	Spear
3	Halberd
4	Glaive
5	Gythka
6	Other pole weapon*

* *Other pole weapon* results indicate your choice of such a weapon, such as a fauchard, guisarme, longspear, trident, or voulge.

*Halberd—Smithsonian Collection*

THE SAND MARCHES

Table: Random Sword

Roll (1d100)	Sword Type
1–70	Long sword
71–80	Broad sword
81–90	Scimitar
91–95	Short sword
96–99	Bastard sword
00	Two-handed sword

As noted previously, if you use other game resources, you might substitute an unusual sword variation, such as a gladius or sapara instead of a short sword, or a khopesh instead of a scimitar.

Table: Random Small Weapon

Roll (2d4)	Sling Type
2	Sling bullets (1d20)
3	Staff sling
4	Sling
5	Knife
6	Dagger
7	Chatkcha
8	Darts (1d20)

Table: Random Axe or Pick

Roll (2d4)	Axe or Pick Type
2	Footman's pick
3–4	Horseman's pick
5–6	Hand axe
7–8	Battle axe

If you use the broader range of weapons from *Combat & Tactics*, you might substitute farming picks, hatchets, or two-handed axes here.

Table: Random Habitation Inhabitants

Roll (2d4)	Inhabitants
2	Thri-kreen
3	Elves
4	Mixed community of all PC types
5	Mixed community of dwarves, half-giants, humans, and muls
6	Mixed community of half-elves and humans
7	Human-only community
8	Special (roll on special inhabitants table)

Table: Special Inhabitants Table

Roll (2d4)	Inhabitants
2	Psurlons*
3	Yuan-ti**
4	Gith
5	Tari
6	Druidic***
7	Tarek
8	Villich

* *Psurlon* communities are made with odd shapes and strange psychically-hardened materials, and contain either psurlons who were expelled from Astral space or are engaging in an enigmatic research project (probably related to their attempts to use Athas as a giant psionic transmitter).

** *Yuan-ti* communities may (75% chance) be disguised to look like normal human communities, with their special serpentine activities hidden in underground temples or caves.

*** *Druidic* communities either blend into the environment or appear as small communities built carefully in harmony with the surroundings. Roll again to determine the kinds of inhabitants (rerolling a second "special" result), but all of them are part of an ecologically-mindful community. The leader is either a druid (1–3 on 1d4)—possibly multiclassed—or a pyreen (4 on 1d4). Both druidic and pyreen leaders are 50% likely to be absent during a given visit by the PCs, as these druids engage in wandering the surrounding lands to see to the security of the community and health of the ecosystem.

Location Descriptions

Each card in your dungeon deck corresponds to one location—a room, chamber, hallway, or passage of some kind. The descriptions include the following information:

Card and Location Name: The number and suit tell you which card corresponds to which location.

Map: The map segment for the location appears here. 'E' marks on the map indicate Entrance/Exit locations, where the map segment can join with other map segments. You can freely rotate segments as long as Es connect.

If a component can't connect without occluding another established location, then assume that there is an elevation change. The new area goes below the existing area, typically rising or dropping 20–30 feet.

Boxed text: Read or paraphrase the boxed text. Since your PCs might encounter the same room multiple times, vary up the descriptions and add your own flavor text.

Additional notes: After the boxed text comes any extra information needed for the location. A location with no special qualities has no additional notes. Otherwise, the notes explain any special rules about populating the area or any environmental challenges.

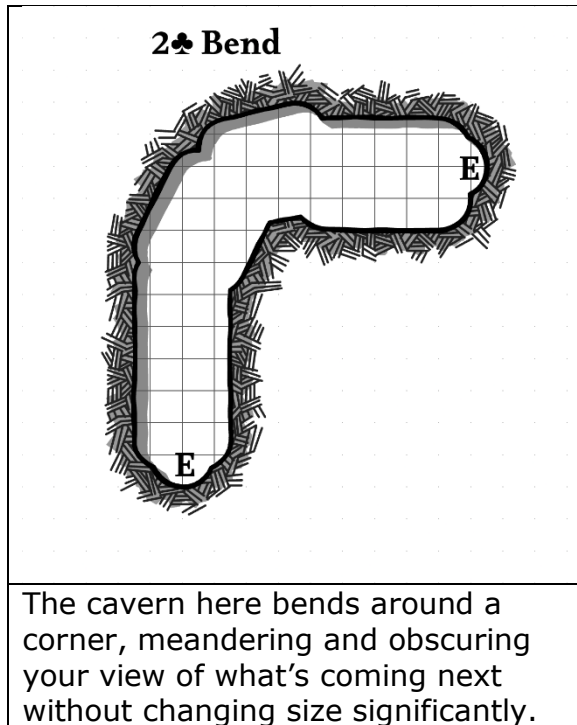
Doors: Any door appearing on a map has a chance to be locked (1 on d6) or stuck (2 on d6). Locked doors use a crude wooden pin bar, which can be picked by a rogue or smashed open with extraordinary strength. Stuck doors are simply settled or swollen shut and must be forced open with the usual chance to open doors—a pry bar or axe provides an alternative solution.

Making your own rooms: You should generate your own rooms to surprise your players with new locations of your own design. A room needs at least one entrance, and if it's not a final room, one or more exits. Consider the size and shape of subspaces in the location when determining placement of encounters and treasure: monsters tend to lair in spaces large enough for them but with some cover, while treasure is kept behind doors, in pits, on ledges, or otherwise difficult-to-reach places.

Location Descriptions: ♣ Clubs (Caves)

Caves are typically subterranean locations with a ceiling height of 15–20 feet, except where noted or where the cave narrows to a choke point. Walls are generally unworked stone. Slopes, nooks, and crumbling sections are common.

2 ♣ Bend

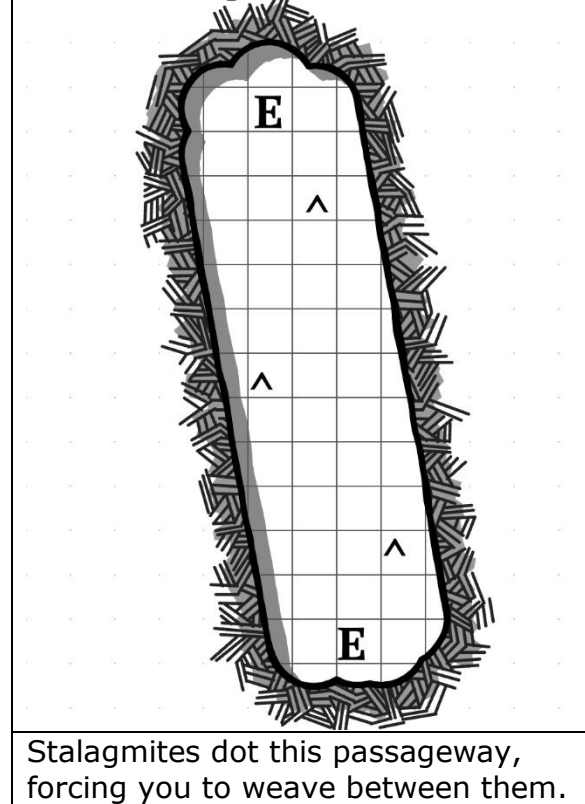


Since the bend obscures line-of-sight, stealthy characters may be able to surprise any encounters at the other end.

3 ♣ Stalagmite-Strewn Passage

3 ♣

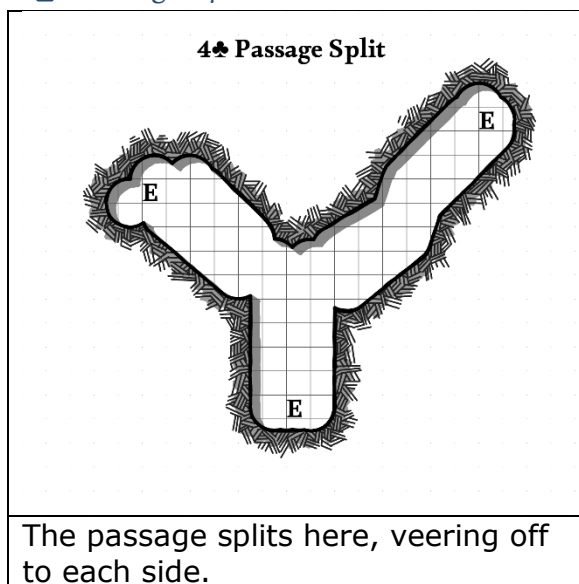
Stalagmite-Strewn Passage



When you place this location, throw or place four dice on the map section. Each die represents a stalagmite. Stalagmites are 5' to 10' high.

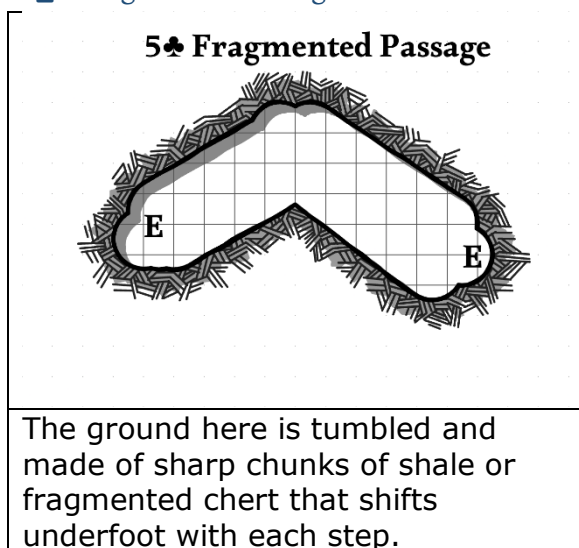
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4♣ Passage Split



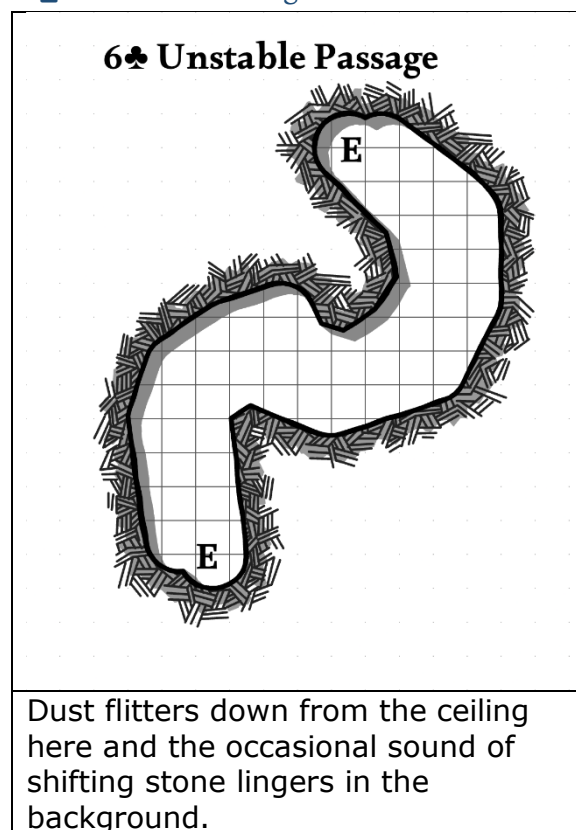
Split the remaining deck of locations and place half on one side and half on the other. If only one location remains, randomly determine to which exit it connects; the other exit narrows to a dead end.

5♣ Fragmented Passage



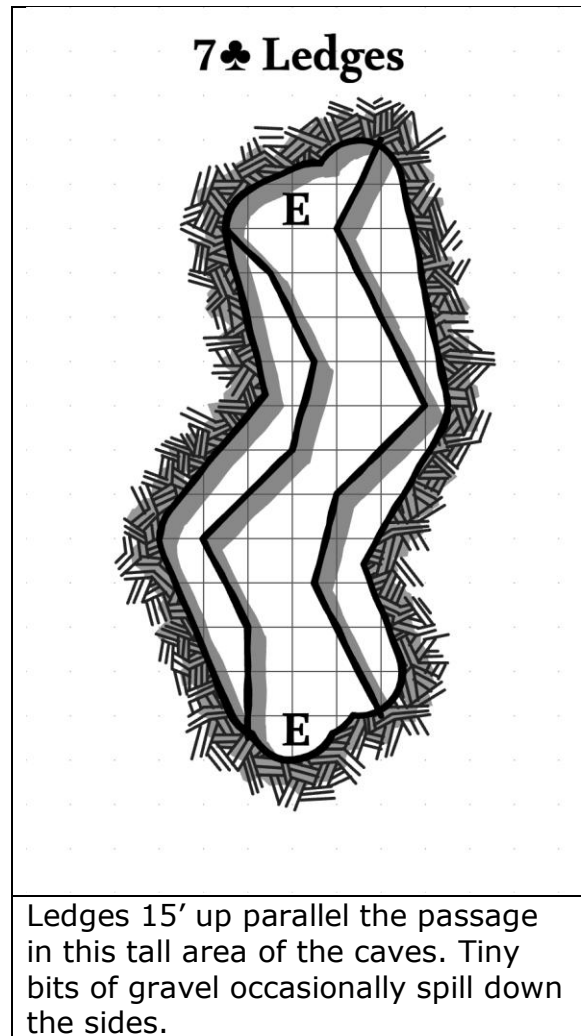
All movement in the fragmented passage is through difficult terrain, at half speed. Characters with no footwear take 1 point of damage for each 5' space they move across unless they are not touching the ground or have natural armor (such as thri-kreen).

6♣ Unstable Passage



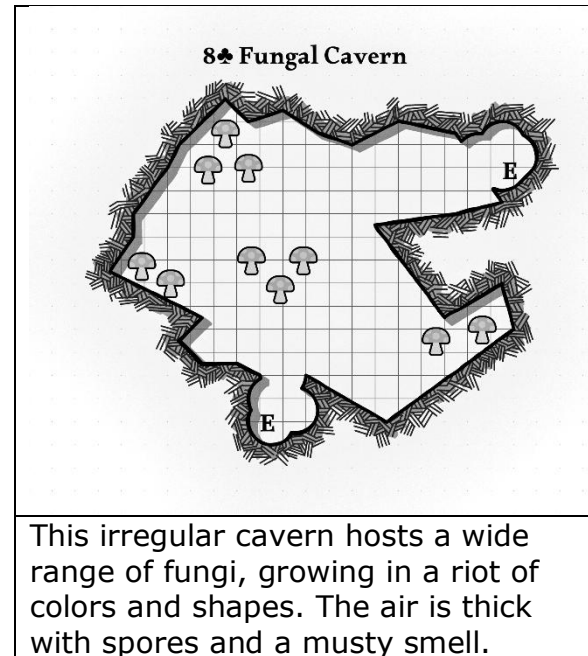
The walls and ceilings here are unstable, and the use of powerfully-destructive effects such as *detonate* or *fireball* has a 25% chance per incident to cause a minor collapse at the site of the blast (affecting the entire area). Any creatures in that area take additional damage from falling rocks: 2d6 for adventure levels 4–6, 3d6 for adventure levels 7–9, 4d6 for adventure levels 10–12, and so on. Unattended objects in the area must make a saving throw vs. crushing blow.

7♣ Ledges



If an encounter or treasure is indicated here, place it on the ledges on the sides of the passage instead of at the exit. Start at the furthest point from the PCs' entry and place creatures or treasures successively closer. If a monster is too large to fit on a ledge, place it at the usual exit instead.

8♣ Fungal Cavern



Each patch of fungus in this cave has a random type:

Table: Fungus Type

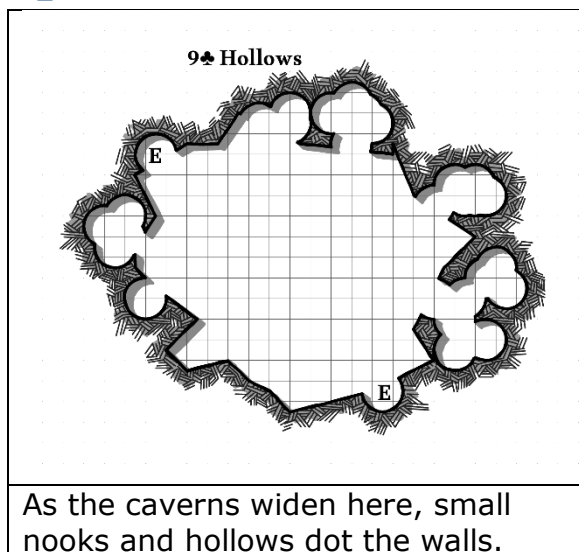
1d4 Roll	Type
1	Type J poison
2	Type G poison
3	Inedible but woody
4	Edible

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Poison fungus has its effect on anyone who consumes it. (Many monsters can eat this fungus without issue.)

Inedible but woody fungus is tough and stiff like wood, usable as construction material. *Edible* fungus can be eaten raw or prepared as part of a dish by cooking. In any case, PCs can harvest 1d4+6 pounds of fungus per patch. PCs can identify exact fungus with the fungus identification proficiency. Cooking proficiency can tell which ones are edible.

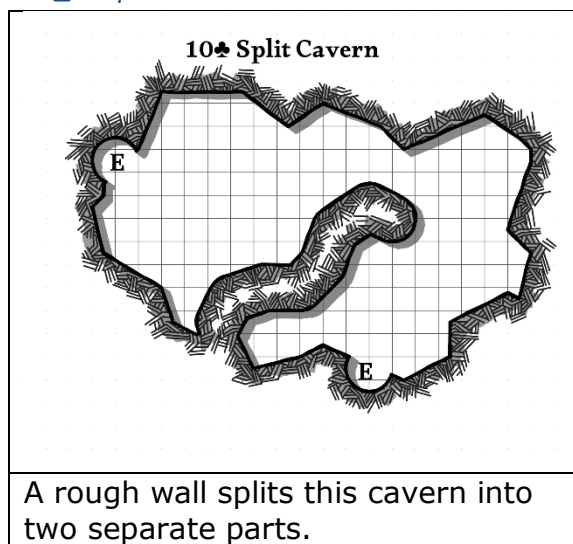
9♣ Hollows



As the caverns widen here, small nooks and hollows dot the walls.

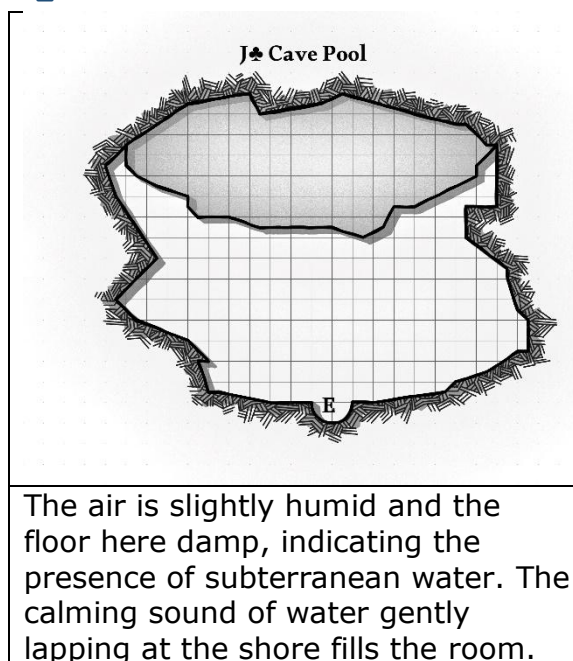
If an encounter or treasure is indicated here, place the results in the hollows in the walls instead of at an exit. Start at the furthest hollows from the PCs' entrance.

10♣ Split Cavern



A rough wall splits this cavern into two separate parts.

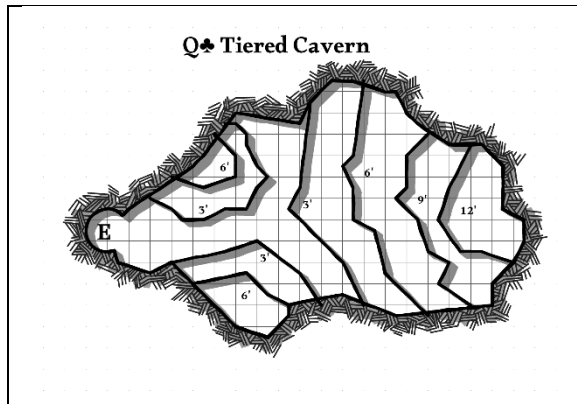
J♣ Cave Pool



The air is slightly humid and the floor here damp, indicating the presence of subterranean water. The calming sound of water gently lapping at the shore fills the room.

The cave pool connects to a small aquifer and holds (1d10+5)×10 gallons of potable water.

Q♣ Tiered Cavern

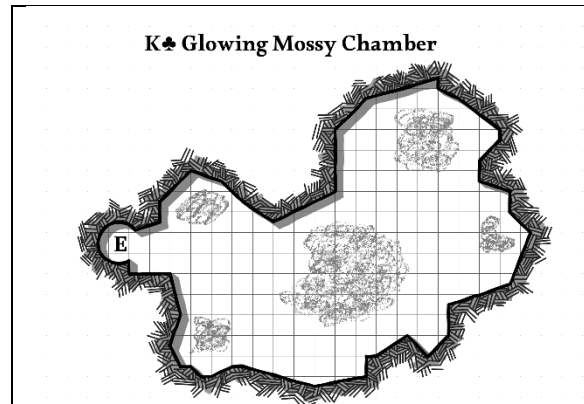


Massive columns, formed by stalactites and stalagmites meeting, festoon this cavern, while flat shelf-like layers form multiple tiers leading up to the walls. Faint smells of dust and salt hint at water that once might have shaped this room.

The ceiling in this cavern is $1d4 \times 10 + 20$ feet high; pillars extend the entire distance. Contour lines represent tiers: Each tier is a mostly-flat shelf of eroded stone, long ago molded by water or lava, about 3' high.

Characters can step up onto a shelf or drop down from one by treating it as 5' of movement, with no roll required. Each successive shelf while heading toward the wall is 3' above the last. Characters smaller than Large size can't straddle a ledge; they must climb fully up or down to one side or the other.

K♣ Glowing Mossy Chamber

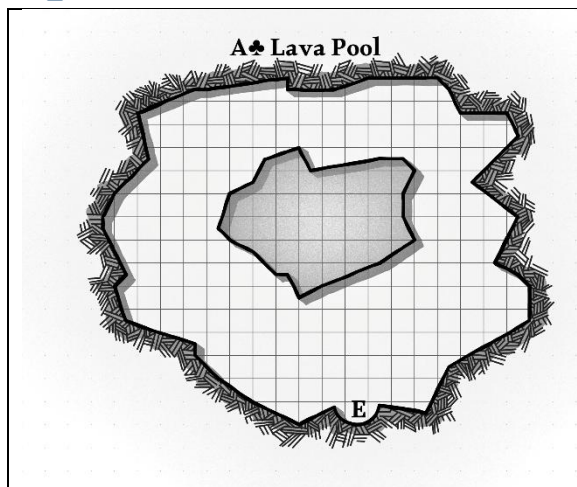


This cavern is humid, though there are no signs of surface water. Large patches of fungus and subterranean mosses cover the walls and floor, and several patches emit a soft, blue-green glow and petrichor scent.

This entire chamber is lit due to the bioluminescence of the local moss. Pieces of moss retain this glow, equivalent to a torch but without heat, for four hours if they are harvested. Place encounters surrounding the mossy areas. The moss is not edible, but it does make a comfortable surface for bedding or padding.

THE SAND MARCHES

A♣ Lava Pool



The heat in this cavern is palpable, and a glowing light fills the chamber, coming from a pool of sizzling, roiling lava breaking through the ground.

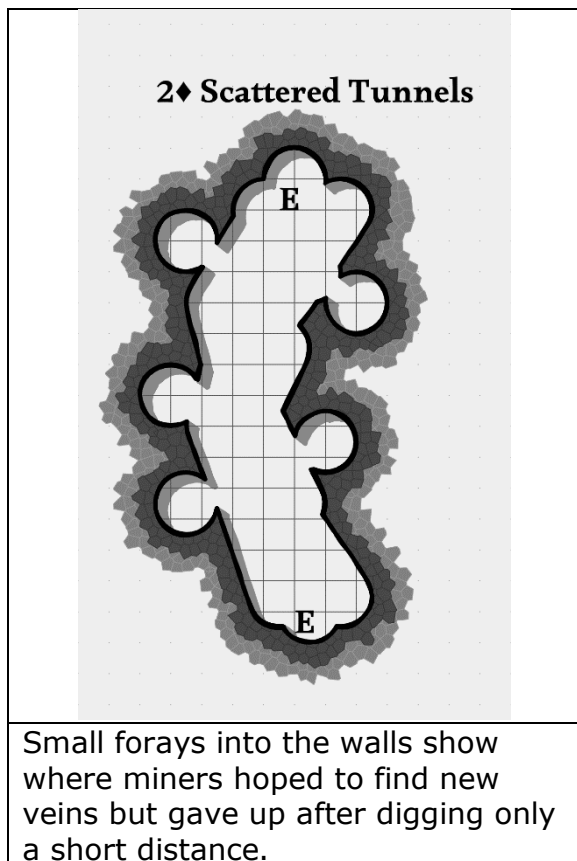
The lava pool gives off significant heat; treat this area as if fighting outdoors in the day for purposes of armor penalties and water consumption. A creature who jumps into the lava, or is pushed into it, suffers 20d6 damage. An object immersed in the lava must make a save versus normal fire at -8 or be destroyed.

No encounter in this area will be adjacent to the lava pool initially.

Location Descriptions: ♦ Diamonds (Mines)

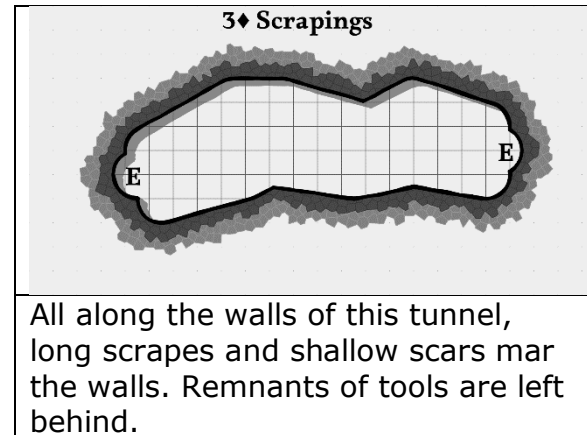
Mines, like caves, are subterranean, but their tunnels are often partially or fully finished, with support beams for stability and smoothed areas of floor, and ramps at elevation changes (to make it easier to move carts of materials and tools). Most mine passages are widened enough to make passage easy for Medium-sized creatures, but ceiling height may vary widely, coming down to five feet in tight spaces or rising to thirty feet or more in large chambers. Walls are stone with wooden supports.

2♦ Scattered Tunnels



If an encounter is indicated in this location, place creatures and treasures in the small nooks in the walls, starting with the ones furthest from the PCs.

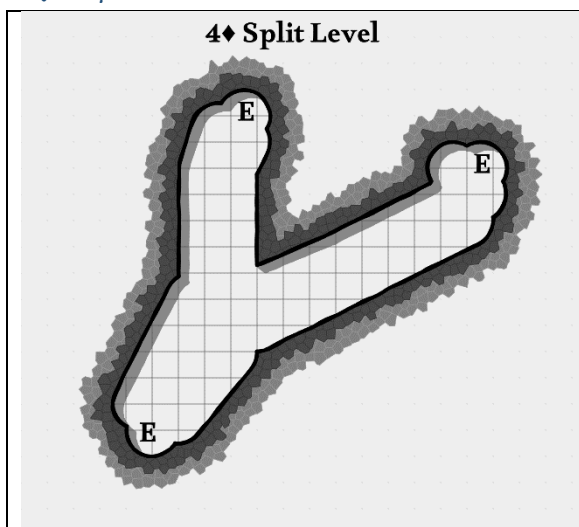
3♦ Scrapings



There are 1d4-1 broken tools in this room. If the encounter level is 9 or lower, the tools are stone; if 10 or above, they are metal. Broken tools can be repaired with magic or blacksmithing proficiency. A typical tool is a pick or spade.

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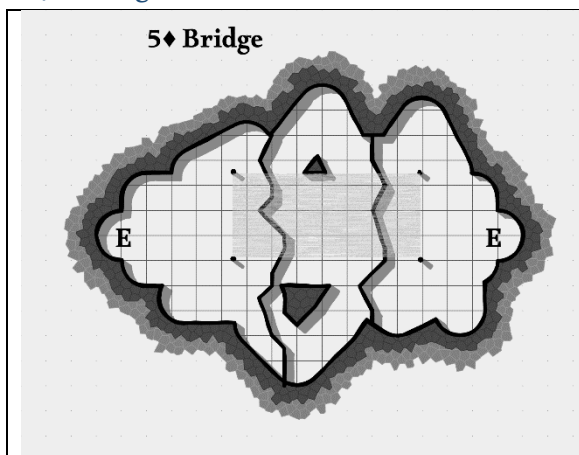
4 ♦ Split Level



The passages split here, one going down shallowly while the other descends sharply.

Orient the passages as needed to fit the map. Intelligent creatures will group up on one side; unintelligent encounters may be scattered between both sides of the split.

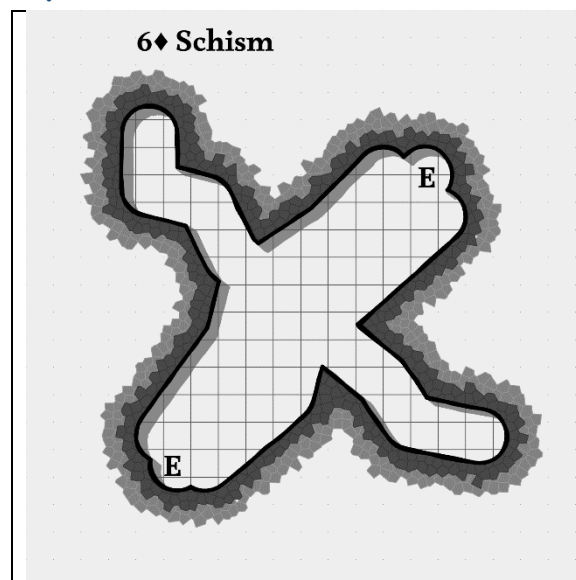
5 ♦ Bridge



A rickety wooden bridge crosses a chasm here. Chips and divots in the floor indicate places where miners once climbed down with ropes or ladders.

The bridge, made of old wood, can support up to $1d6 \times 100$ lbs. of weight at a time (which may be a problem for half-giants). The pillars to either side of the bridge run from the bottom of the chasm to the ceiling of the chamber. The chasm is 5' deep per adventure level (i.e. 20–30' for adventure levels 4–6, 35–45' for adventure levels 7–9, and so on).

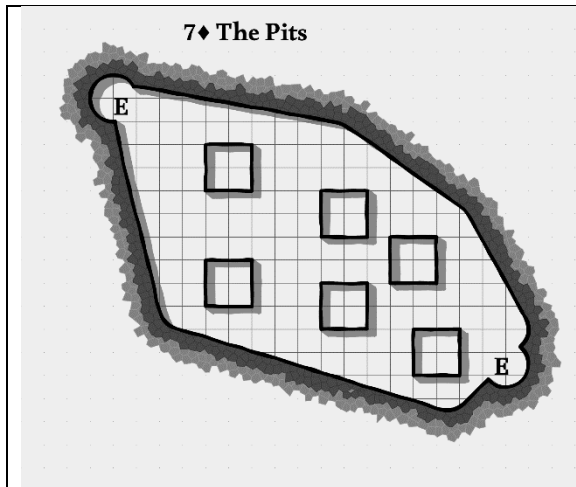
6 ♦ Schism



An intersecting narrow cave crosses this tunnel at right angles, with seams of stone and perhaps even metal in the natural walls.

The intersecting passage is a narrow natural opening in the rock. If multiple intelligent creatures are encountered here, place a pair in ambush positions on either side of the main passage.

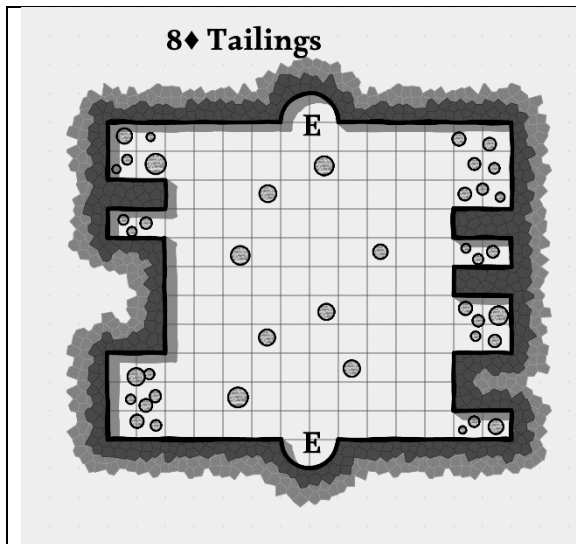
7♦ The Pits



Multiple deep, square pits dot this tunnel, where the miners excavated small plots in hopes of finding vertical deposits.

The pits in this location are 10' deep. Intelligent creatures may keep treasures or living spaces in the pits, if they can fit.

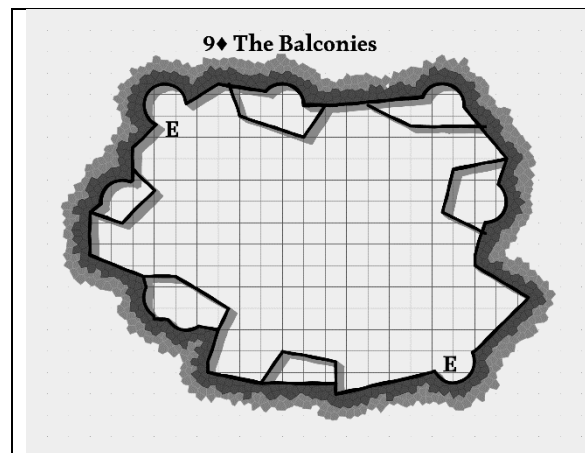
8♦ Tailings



Large chunks of discarded rock fill niches in this chamber and are scattered about in small cut-out corners along the sides.

The rocks in this chamber are piles of tailings—discarded worthless rubble. Piles of tailings are typically 3' high and so can provide some cover to Medium-sized characters; intelligent enemies will certainly make use of such cover. Treasure, if any is indicated, may be buried or hidden under rock piles.

9♦ The Balconies

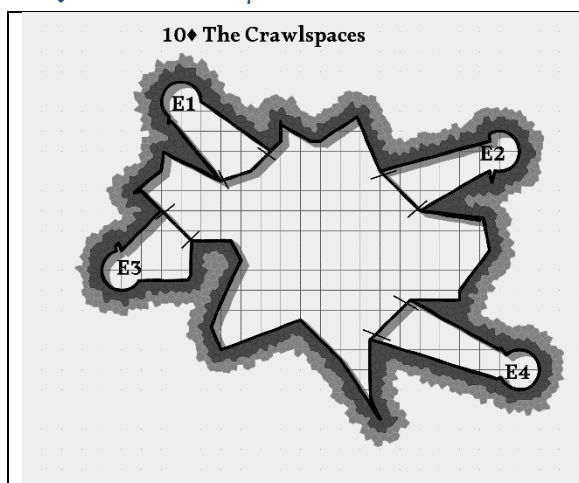


The ceiling of this chamber soars to 30' above, and halfway up along the walls are a set of rickety balconies. Divots and excavations along the rock face there show where miners once perilously worked high along the walls.

THE SAND MARCHES

The balconies indicated on the map are typically 15' up, and are wooden platforms held together with frayed rope and hammered into the rock via wooden pegs stuck into cracks and jammed into seams. A given balcony can hold the weight of two Medium-sized creatures. If intelligent creatures are indicated and can fit in this room, they are located on the balconies, and have ropes for climbing down if the need arises. Treasure is likewise placed on the various balconies.

10 ♦ The Crawlspaces



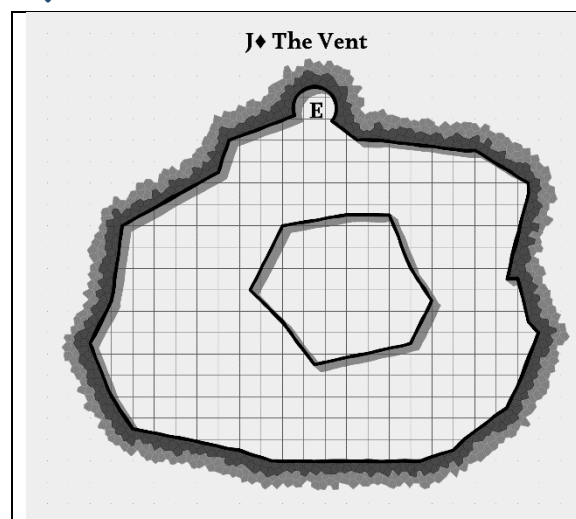
The passage narrows to a tiny tunnel, forcing anyone taller than a dwarf to duck down uncomfortably. Eventually it opens into a chamber with several other such small tunnels leading out.

After you connect one of the entrances in this room to the exit of the previous location, roll 1d4 (rerolling if you score the number of the already-connected tunnel). That tunnel is the one connecting to the next location; the other two are dead ends.

(Alternatively, you may choose to split the deck and allow exploration along multiple routes.)

Each entrance/exit has a short tunnel entering the central chamber. Double lines along the walls indicate the presence of the tunnel passage; the tunnel is a hole that enters straight into the wall (or goes down, if the location needs to connect with another overlapping location). These tunnels are roughly 4½' high, so anyone taller than a dwarf must duck in them, and half-giants and other Large-sized creatures must crawl or shimmy on their bellies. If intelligent creatures are indicated, they use the tunnels tactically and try to block people from exiting. Any treasure rolled is stored in dead-end tunnels.

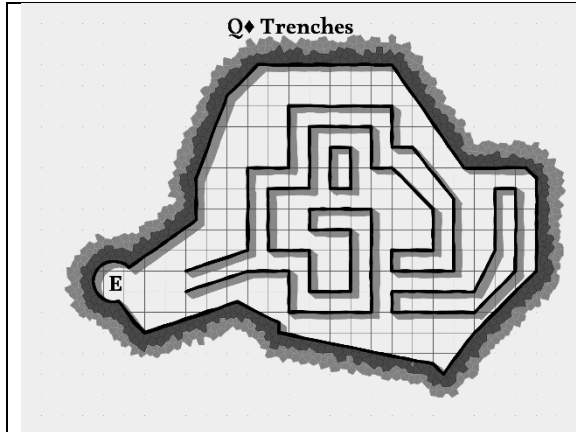
J ♦ The Vent



The large, irregular chamber ahead has the sweet smell of fresh air, and signs of sand, dust, or perhaps even light from above, with a large hole in the roof.

This chamber has a ceiling $(1d4+6) \times 5$ feet high. The central shape in this room indicates a hole in the ceiling. The hole leads to the surface, and it's possible that light comes in from outside, if the area above isn't under a rocky overhang or a tree canopy.

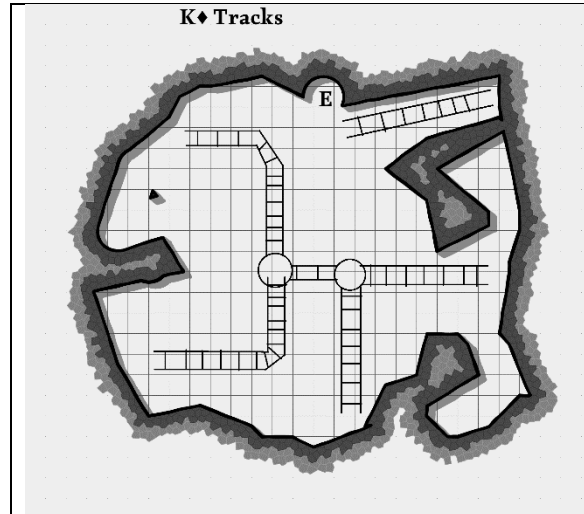
Q ♦ Trenches



Trenches zigzag across the length and breadth of this chamber, providing just enough cover for someone to duck down in them, or an obstacle that must be jumped over.

Trenches cross this room as indicated on the map. The trench nearest the entrance has a ramp down into it. Each trench is 4' deep, so a dwarf or halfling is nearly or wholly in cover while in a trench, while other Medium-sized humanoids have half cover, and half-giants generally can't fit in them. Since most of the trenches are only 5' across, it's possible to jump over them. Intelligent inhabitants use the trenches for cover with missile weapons, if combat results.

K ♦ Tracks



Wooden rails crisscross the ground in this large chamber, so carts can haul away ore and tailings from the central excavation. A few intact carts still sit on the rails.

The rails, made from old wood, are uneven and creaky but still usable. Place 2–3 mine carts throughout the room. A mine cart can hold up to a ton of rock and ore (or other materials or creatures) and can be pushed on a rail by a combined total Strength of 27 or more. An empty cart weighs 300 lbs. and can be pushed by a total Strength of 18 or more.

To add complexity to this map, roll a pair of pens or pencils on it so that they stop on the map. Each of those indicates a chasm 10' wide and 60' deep. Rails can go over chasms, so characters can walk atop or ride mine carts over them.

THE SAND MARCHES

Intelligent enemies may use mine carts as weapons, pushing them down the tracks at anyone unwise enough to get in the way; a rolling mine cart pushed hard inflicts 4d6 bludgeoning damage with a save vs. breath weapons for half damage. Increase this by 1d6 for every 500 lbs. that the cart carries.

The mine carts and tracks are because this area has a good amount of useful materials (for Athas, anyway). Much was removed long ago, but a little still remains. Bringing in tools and excavating allows the PCs to haul out some useful ore:

Table: Tracks Ore Quantity

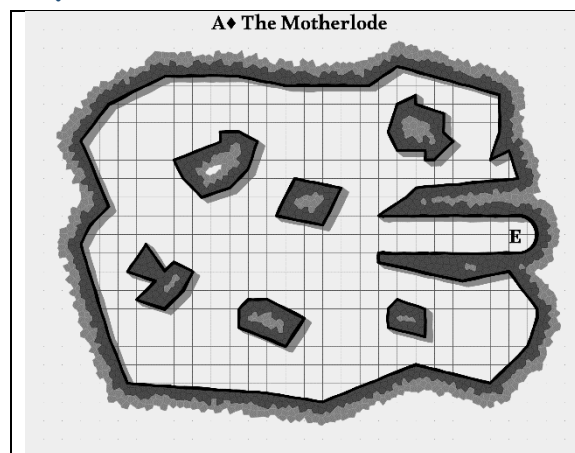
Adventure Level	Ore
4-6	1d6 lbs.
7-9	2d6 lbs.
10-12	3d6 lbs.
13-15	4d6 lbs.
16-18	5d6 lbs.

Table: Ore Type

Roll (2d4)	Ore Type
2	Silver
3	Tin
4	Lead
5	Copper
6	Zinc
7	Iron
8	Gold

As usual, once smelted down, the ore produces useful metal of half its original weight (possibly less if the PCs don't have smelting proficiency).

A ♦ The Motherlode



The walls of this immense chamber glitter. Even the dust on the ground seems to sparkle. Had the miners who excavated this survived, they would all be rich today, thanks to the quantity of minerals here.

The motherlode holds large quantities of valuable minerals. This might take the form of ornamental or semi-precious stones, or metal-bearing ores of good quantity; there is a 50% chance of either. If ore is indicated, roll for type on the Ore Type table. The quantity of stones or ore depends upon adventure level.

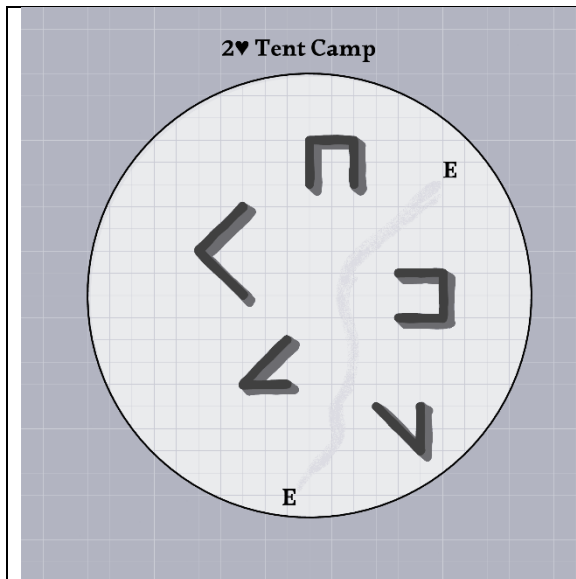
Table: Motherlode Gems/Ore Quantity

Adventure Level	Gems	Ore
4-6	2d4	1d6×10 lbs.
7-9	4d4	2d6×10 lbs.
10-12	6d4	3d6×10 lbs.
13-15	8d4	4d6×10 lbs.
16-18	10d4	5d6×10 lbs.

Location Descriptions: ♥ Hearts (Habitation)

Habitations are usually above ground, though exceptions include some dwarf communities, or gith, scrabs, and tlincalli. The entrance/exit areas on these represent well-trodden paths or routes from which one can readily see the next location. In aboveground habitations it's possible to simply walk off the beaten path, so it is useful to lay out the entire map in advance in case the PCs decide to explore it more randomly. Buildings are made of whatever local materials are available—stone, wood, sod, or leather.

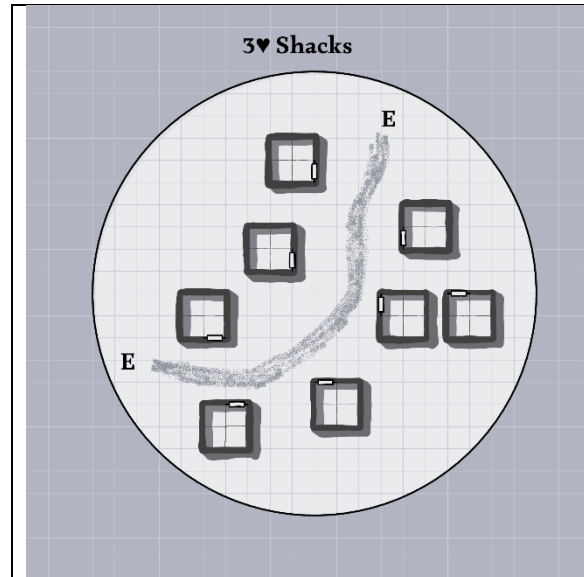
2♥ Tent Camp



Ragged tents and lean-tos huddle in disorganized clusters, barely keeping out the sun and wind for their inhabitants. Personal possessions are clustered near the backs of those fortunate enough to have a wall, or hidden under tarps and stretched fabric.

The tents and lean-tos are mostly open to the elements. Inhabitants in this location never have treasure. These structures are easily knocked over, torn, or burned if combat erupts.

3♥ Shacks



Rickety buildings line the well-trod paths here, with cloth curtains and simple wooden window shutters. Some have cracked and partial pieces of plaster caked over their uneven frames.

Shacks are generally wood or mud plaster, with dry grass and mud for the roof. Doors have a simple latch but not a lock. Most have one window with a piece of cloth over it for privacy and to keep out sand and wind.

THE SAND MARCHES

4♥ Twisting Alleys



Small routes pass between habitations and switch back and forth, leading to unknown destinations.

Each alley exits to a different location. Split the remaining deck between the alleys.

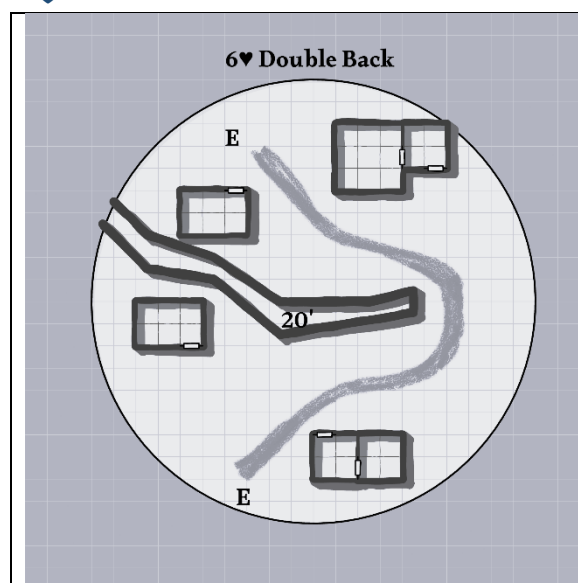
5♥ The Heights



A tall building rises above the smaller ones here, dominating the landscape and providing a commanding landmark.

The central building in the heights is three stories tall. If creatures are encountered here, some may be on the balcony of the building, watching the streets from above.

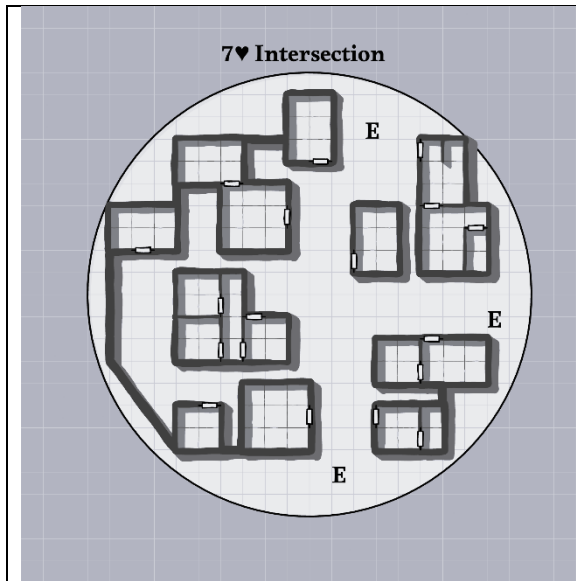
6♥ Double Back



The road follows a sharp hillside and doubles back as it changes elevation.

The indicated area of the map is a sheer drop of 20'. The path follows a curve around the drop. When you place this location, you decide which part is high and which part is low.

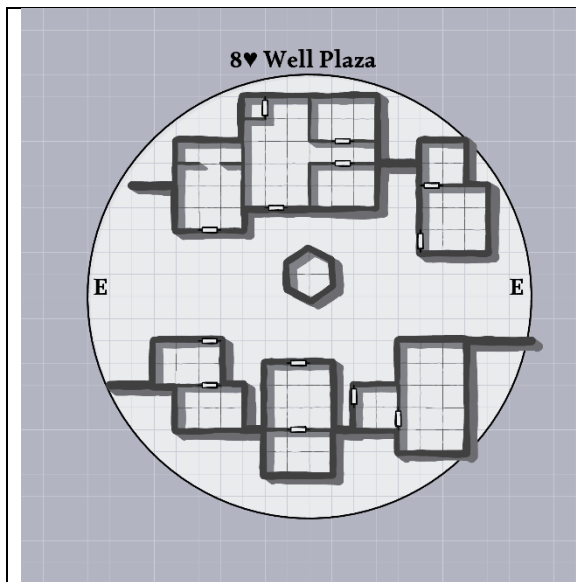
7♥ Intersection



The trails form an intersection here, leading off to two different parts of the settlement.

Split the remaining deck between the two sides of the intersection.

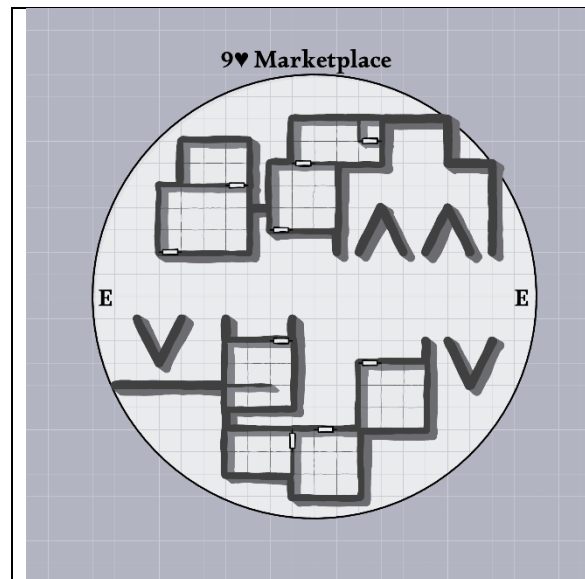
8♥ Well Plaza



A cleared plaza surrounds a central well that likely serves as the principal water supply for this habitation.

If the habitation is deserted, there's a 25% chance the well is dry. Otherwise, the PCs can fill their waterskins here, up to $(1d4+4) \times 10$ gallons of water. If there are people at the habitation, there's a 50% chance they charge for water (usually a trivial sum, like a bit for a gallon); otherwise, the PCs can drink to slake their thirsts and fill a hand-sized container, but the inhabitants generally balk at attempts to take large quantities of water.

9♥ Marketplace

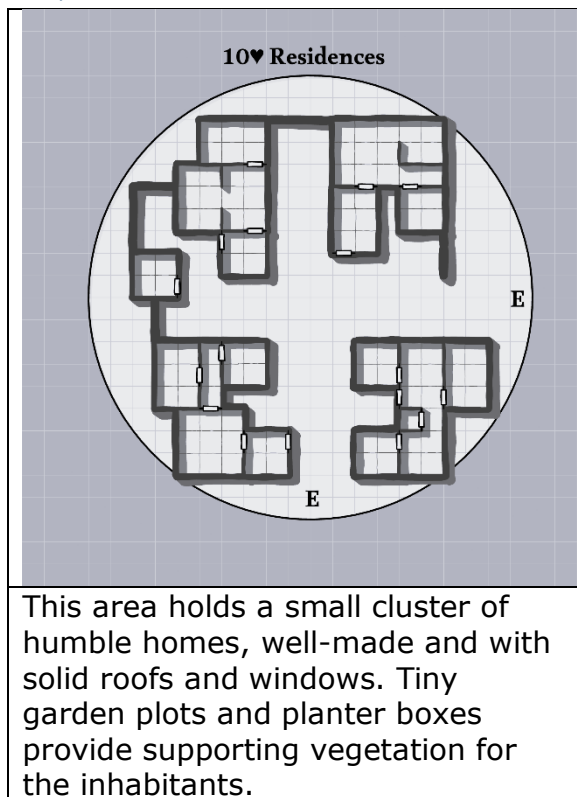


Several stalls and tents surround a central lane, with boxes for goods and signs of tradespeople's workshops.

THE SAND MARCHES

The marketplace sells goods ranging from food to rope, tools, and inexpensive weapons and armor. If the location is inhabited and the PCs aren't hostile, they have a 75% chance to find any item worth 100 cp or less available for sale if they spend at least one turn (ten minutes) browsing.

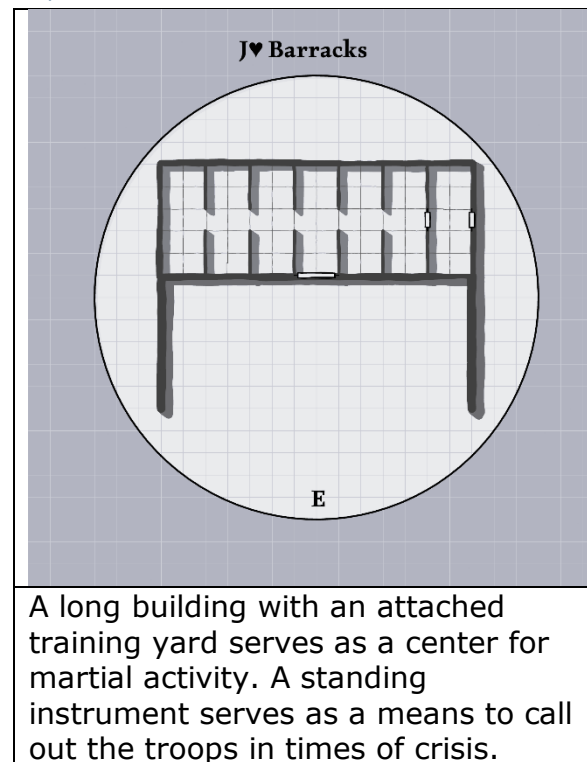
10♥ Residences



This area holds a small cluster of humble homes, well-made and with solid roofs and windows. Tiny garden plots and planter boxes provide supporting vegetation for the inhabitants.

If this habitation still has residents, there's a 90% chance that someone is home at any given house. As long as the habitation isn't abandoned, there's always someone present in this location. Attacking people, breaking into homes, or starting fires is sure to cause a response.

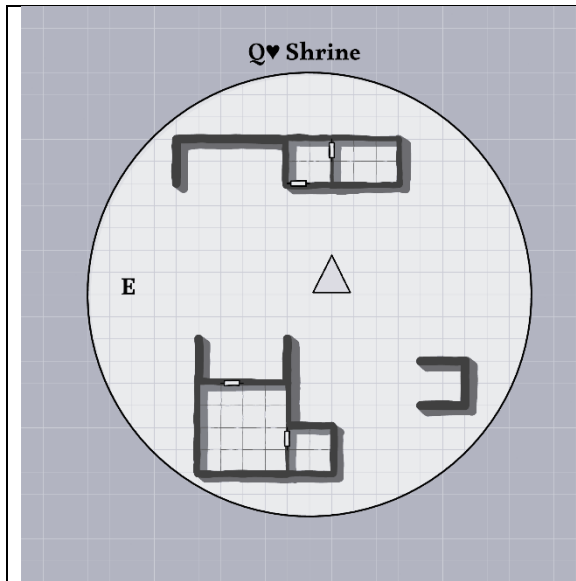
J♥ Barracks



A long building with an attached training yard serves as a center for martial activity. A standing instrument serves as a means to call out the troops in times of crisis.

The presence of barracks indicates that the settlement has a military structure, and can call up militia for defense at need. If the habitation is not abandoned, there are always $1d4+4$ people here, either training, maintaining weapons and armor, or resting. The mustering instrument is either a horn on a stand (50%) or a ceramic bell with a pull rope (50%).

Q♥ Shrine

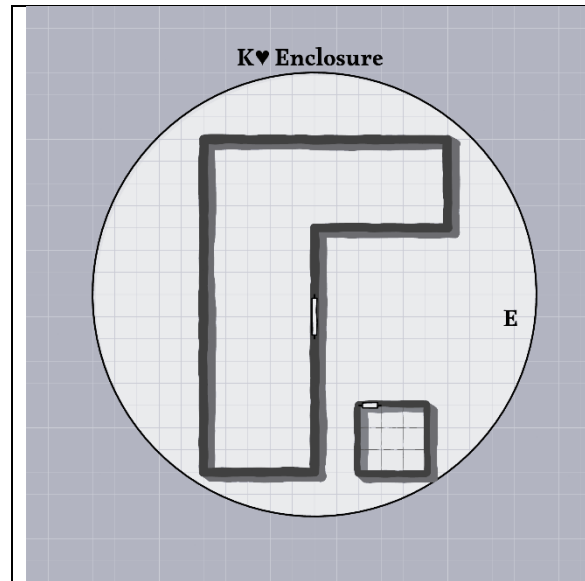


A small cleared space around a standing plinth festooned with offerings and tiny tokens shows the devotion of the locals for their civic religion.

A shrine is either to an element (1–2 on d4), a spirit of the land (3 on d4), or a local cultic religion or civic deity that doesn't actually exist (4 on d4). If the habitation is not abandoned, the shrine has a 75% chance to have a caretaker, who is a cleric, druid, or fighter (as appropriate) of a level matching the area's adventure level. If there is a caretaker, there is a further 25% chance of 1d3 attendants, each level 1–3. Shrines with caretakers gratefully accept donations in exchange for spells (if the caretaker has spellcasting ability).

Nearby buildings can be gathering places or homes for acolytes.

K♥ Enclosure



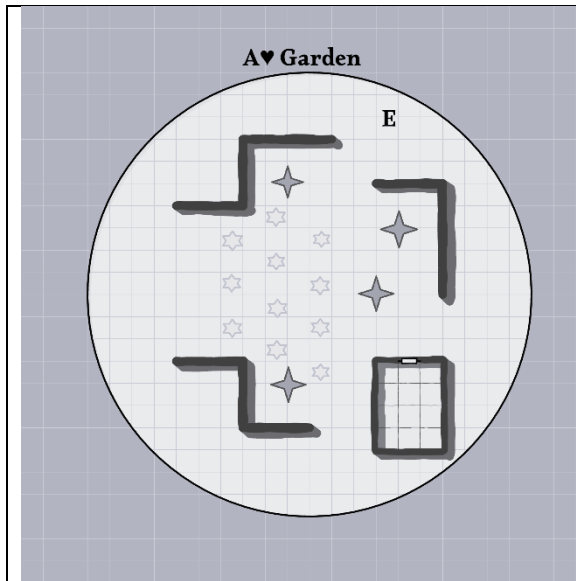
A large fenced-off area serves as an enclosure for domesticated or captive animals. The smell of animals lingers in the air.

If the habitation is not abandoned, an enclosure typically has 1d10+10 animals inside. There's a 90% chance that they are common Athasian domestic animals such as sygra, aprig, erdlu, kanks, or carru. In the remaining cases the creature is an unusual animal that has been captured and either tamed, or magically or psionically compelled to remain. Enclosures keep animals for practical uses and the 2d6 animal handlers see to the animals' feeding, watering, and health needs, as well as mucking out dung.

Depending upon the settlement, the nearby building can be a storage shed, or cottage for a local herdsworker.

THE SAND MARCHES

A♥ Garden



The scent of sage and the flash of deep green color gives a sharp contrast to the wastes that dominate the Tablelands. The landscape gives way to grassy space with brush and even a few trees.

In an abandoned settlement, the gardens are overgrown and snarled, but there is nothing to stop the PCs from taking whatever they want.

Six-pointed stars represent small plants in pots or garden plots. Larger four-pointed stars represent trees, which can be climbed. The side building can be either a storage shed or a gardener's small home.

If the habitation is still settled and tended, the garden produces seeds, fruits, and vegetables. Player characters may potentially harvest $2d20 \times 10$ rations of usable food, if they take everything; judiciously picking only a few things to eat prevents them from ransacking the garden and gives it a chance at continued existence.

The habitation's garden relies upon irrigation or a natural groundwater source to provide a greenspace with verdant plant life. Gardens form microsystems with insects, worms, small lizards, and possibly even bats or birds. Any maintained garden has $2d6$ pounds of edible fruits and vegetables and $5d10$ pounds of usable building materials (but taking the building material requires cutting down the trees and bushes, and destroys the garden). An inhabited garden has $1d4+4$ people in it at any given time, weeding, watering, or guarding the area.

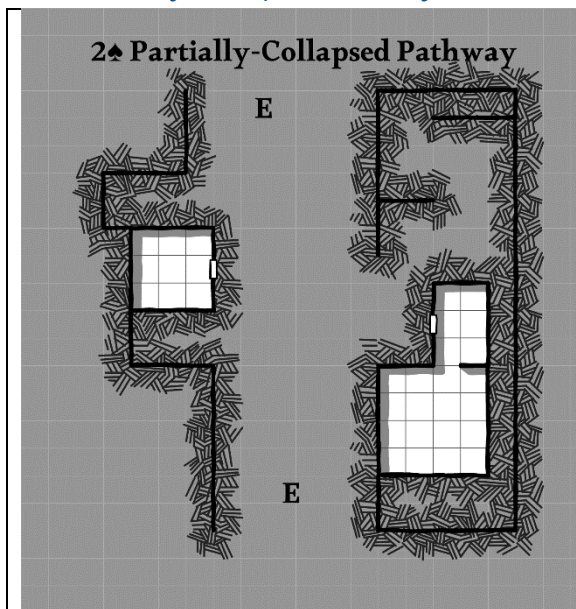
Location Descriptions: ♠ Spades (Ruins)

Ruins can occur above or below ground. Subterranean ruins are either dungeons or settlements that have sunken below settling earth and later construction. Aboveground ruins may be fallen towers and keeps, desolate towns, or abandoned forts.

In underground ruins, the walls in each location delineate the limits of that area; it is not possible for characters to wander "off the map."

Construction material is usually local, but older ruins may include materials hauled in from other places or from resources that have long since been exhausted in the region, such as metal hinges on doors or cut stone from a faraway quarry.

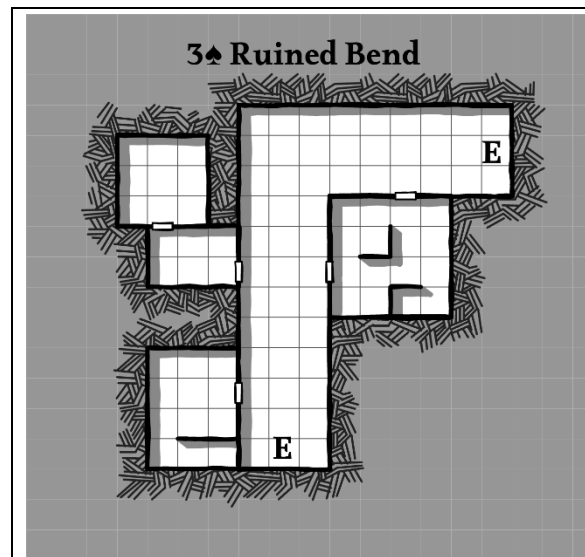
2♠ Partially-Collapsed Pathway



Broken walls line either side of a walkway that was perhaps once a simple road. Any paving is long gone, with the crumbled remnants of the buildings hiding whatever is left in their shadowed depths.

Encounters in this area are inside the ruined buildings to either side of the pathway, if they can fit inside.

3♠ Ruined Bend



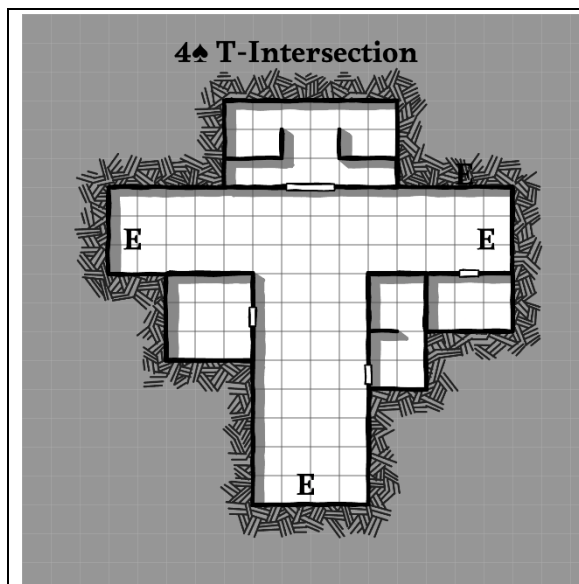
Once, these buildings held commerce or small families, but now this bend in the passage provides only an ominous sense of danger.

Any encounters in this area occupy the side rooms, if they can fit.

If you want to use this piece as a more conventional hallway with a bend, simply remove the side rooms.

THE SAND MARCHES

4♠ T-Intersection

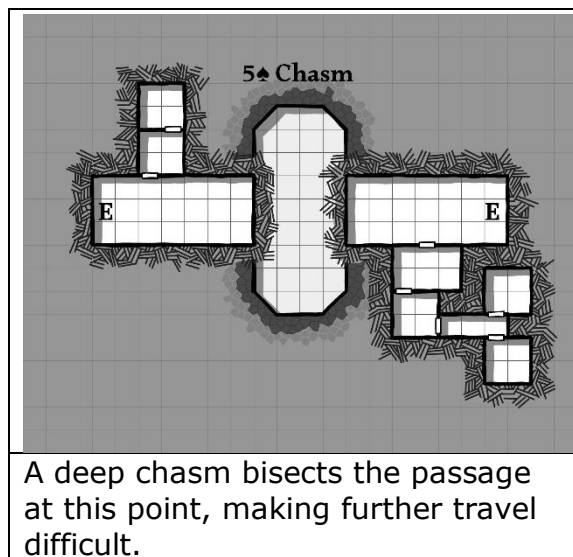


The ruins split here and head off in multiple directions, with no indication of what you might find either way.

Split the remaining deck and place half at each exit.

If you want to use this piece as a more conventional intersection of hallway, simply remove some or all of the side rooms.

5♠ Chasm

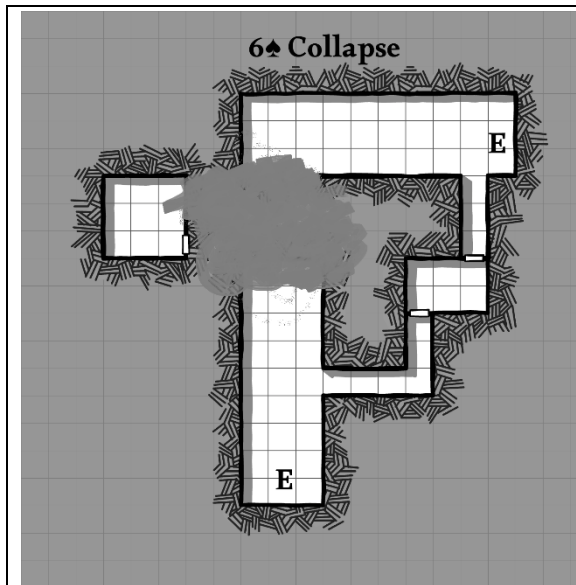


A deep chasm bisects the passage at this point, making further travel difficult.

The chasm here is (adventure level $\times 5$ feet) deep and has rough sides. If a large monster is indicated, it lives in the chasm; in such a case, it has a hole or cave at the bottom (where it can hide if it doesn't have ranged attacks or a way to attack PCs who harry it from above). Otherwise, encounters are in the side rooms.

To make this a more conventional dungeon hallway, remove some or all of the side rooms.

6♠ Collapse

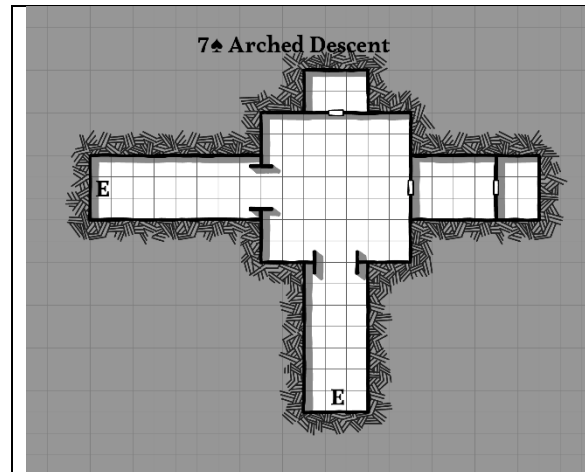


Part of the ruins have collapsed here, filling the area with rubble and dust. The remaining structures all look fractured and unstable.

The areas under the gray mark-out are collapsed rubble. This can be dug out with 1d6 person-hours of labor and tools (picks and spades), or twice as long if dug out by hand. The walls in this area are susceptible to damage from area effects such as *detonate* or *fireball*, and trigger a small collapse, filling their space with rubble, when hit with any such damage.

If you want to force the PCs to dig through the rubble or use powers to bypass it, simply remove the small side passage. Otherwise, use the side passage as a choke point for any traps or encounters in this location.

7♠ Arched Descent



A broad archway soars over the passage at this location, demarcating what may have once been a decorative walkway or an extra support for a fragile structure. Regardless, any décor it may have once had is long since eroded.

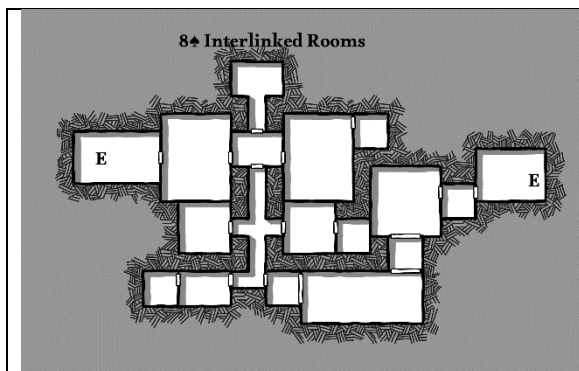
The archway here can be as decorative or plain as you like; it serves as a notable feature that aids in mapping and remembering the layout of the ruins. It may (25% chance) be damaged enough it could collapse if subjected to significant force.

The exit side of this location is always 20 feet down from the entrance. Slope the room or add stairs as appropriate.

As always, remove side rooms if you want to make this into a more conventional hall.

THE SAND MARCHES

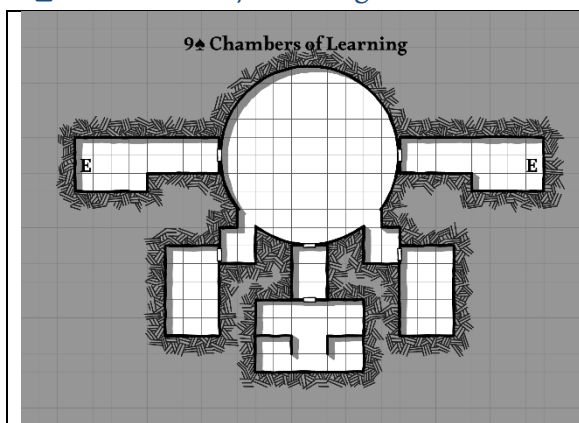
8♠ Interlinked Rooms



The passage enters a set of rooms, probably all part of a large former building. The only way through is to navigate the rooms and find an exit on the other side.

Sprinkle encounters and traps, if any are indicated, through the various rooms. Remember that creatures in adjacent rooms may hear fighting, shouting, or searching, and come to investigate. You can add or delete doors, or turn some into secret doors, in order to vary the route of progression.

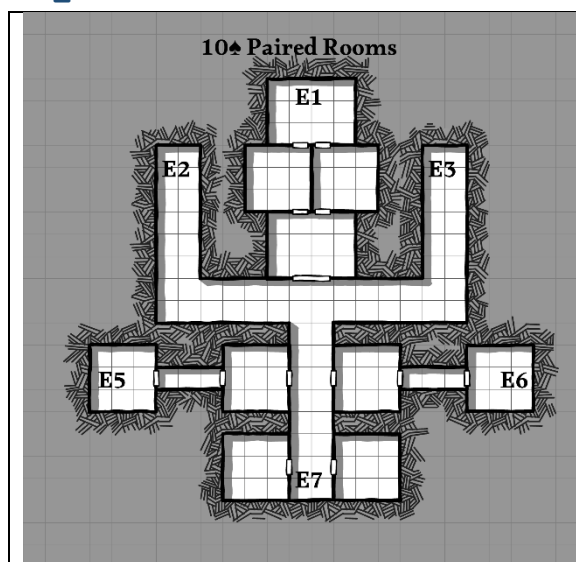
9♠ Chambers of Learning



The presence of shelves on the walls of this chamber, along with faded markings that might have once been artistic frescoes or writings, indicates this may have been a place of learning.

Interior walls in this chamber have either wooden shelves (50%) or carved niches (other 50%). If an encounter is indicated, treasures are probably stored on these shelves. Wooden shelves are not strong enough to support a climbing adventurer's weight, but niches in the stone walls can be used as easy hand- and footholds.

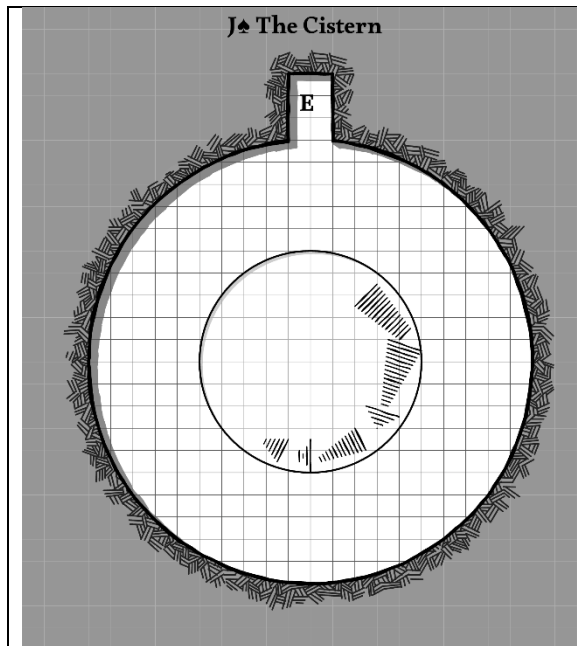
10♠ Paired Rooms



Doors line the hallways here, providing an eerie sense that this may have once been a main causeway, or even an interior hall in a great building.

Encounters in this location are scattered through the rooms, using them as living space, if they can fit inside. After you determine the entrance, roll 1d8 to determine the actual exit, and reroll if you score the entrance. All other possible exits are jammed or filled with rubble and impassable. On an 8, roll twice and split the remaining deck across both exits, rerolling if you score 8 again. This helps to make navigation of this area different across multiple random ruins.

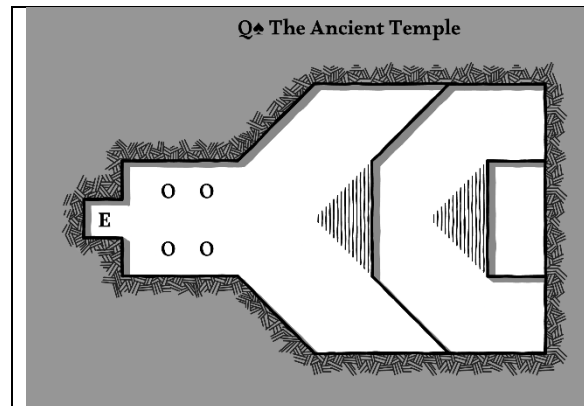
J♠ The Cistern



A short hall enters a massive circular chamber with a descending step-well entering a stone pit cistern.

The cistern is a pit 20 feet deep and 50 feet across. The cistern holds 1d6×1,000 gallons of water. The stairs descending into the pit are 10 feet wide and typically do not have railings or walls, so it's possible to slip or fall off them.

Q♠ The Ancient Temple

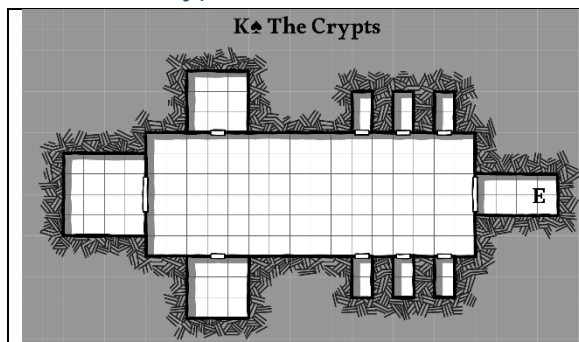


The passage widens into a column-flanked hallway with vague carvings in the walls. Ahead, steps lead up to a pair of raised platforms, decorated by stony shapes.

There is a 75% chance the temple is dedicated to a random element or para-element; otherwise, it is dedicated to a faith from the ancient world. Elemental temples may have functional décor, especially if they are still in use by intelligent creatures. Temples of the ancient world typically have only vague, broken remnants of statues and faded wall paintings.

THE SAND MARCHES

K♠ The Crypts

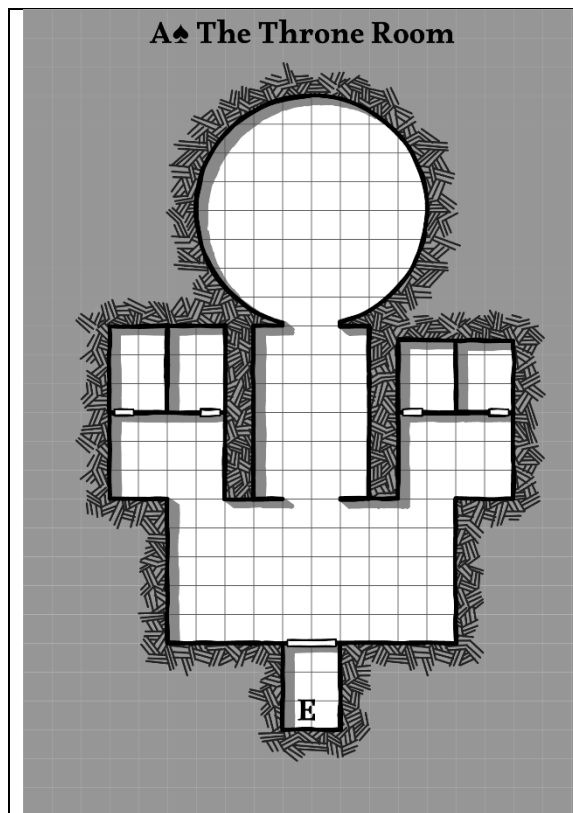


The musty smell of dried bone and linen suffuses the air, and white dust covers the ground in patches. Small niches with worn carvings indicate this is some kind of burial ground.

If an encounter is indicated in the crypts and you do not roll undead, reroll once and take the second result.

Doors for the crypts are always locked from the outside. If undead are indicated, the most powerful undead occupies the largest chamber, and other undead are spread among the smaller chambers. Treasure takes the form of grave goods scattered through the various chambers. Art objects and furnishings are always in the largest chambers; low-value coins are in the small niches.

A♠ The Throne Room



A magnificent chamber, once an opulent audience hall or throne room, stretches a great length here, with small alcoves to the sides for courtiers and waiting supplicants. Now, the former inhabitants are long gone, but the splendor of their construction remains.

If an encounter is indicated here, double the number of creatures encountered.

Chapter Seven: New Magic, Monsters, and Psionics

While exploring the endless dunes, the Player characters doubtless encounter strange creatures and phenomena, including new and unusual spells, magical items, beasts, and psychic powers. PCs can discover and use new spells and psionic abilities subject to the usual rules for learning such powers.

New Artifact

Shamiso, sorcerer-queen of Babweru, wields an artifact of the ancient world: the *Mantle of Emptiness*. With its power she keeps her city-state protected from the outside world... meaning that for any adversary, stealing or destroying this item is a necessary step.

The Mantle of Emptiness

The *Mantle of Emptiness* is a broad pectoral and shoulder drape, the cloth deep blue in color, the inset stones varying in cool hues such as green, blue, and black. All of its dozen stones are polished smooth and slightly ovoid. The *Mantle* is sized for a medium human.

History

The *Mantle of Emptiness* was made early in the Cleansing Wars, specifically for Shamiso—which is how she is able to use its powers without suffering its curses. As a powerful clairsentient, Shamiso was all too aware that enemies could predict the coming of a Champion of Rajaat and hide or organize defenses in advance. With the power of the *Mantle*, she was able to hide herself and her minions from detection, so she could strike from surprise and then vanish afterward.

Once the Cleansing Wars ended and the Champions became sorcerer-monarchs, isolated in their city-states, Shamiso used the powers of the *Mantle* to hide her city-state of Babweru from outside detection. So great is the power of the *Mantle* that even the other sorcerer-monarchs and the Dragon are not immune to its effects. All of them have long forgotten her presence and her city-state.

Campaign Use

The *Mantle of Emptiness* gives Shamiso significant powers to avoid detection and prediction, but most importantly it keeps her city-state completely isolated from the outside world. So long as she channels its power, nobody from outside can even remember the existence of Babweru, unless they are marked by a special symbol protecting them from its influence.

For PCs, this means that the *Mantle* is an object that they must either steal or destroy if they are to make Babweru accessible to the outside world once more. Of course, the PCs might also want to seize its power for their own purposes, in order to hide their settlement from the eyes of the sorcerer-monarchs. This carries other dangers, but in the short term might protect them from such interference—perhaps long enough for a high-level character to start the transformation into an advanced being.

Powers

All of the *Mantle's* powers are invoked as if cast by a 21st-level wizard/psionist.

Constant Powers—The wearer of the *Mantle* benefits from a constant *nondetection* spell effect. In addition, the *Mantle* provides a continuous conceal thoughts telepathic devotion with a power score of 18.

Invoked Powers—Once per day, the wearer of the *Mantle* may cast *invisibility*. Once per week, the wearer may cast *mind blank*.

The wearer of the *Mantle* also gains the ability to generate a *dome of anonymity*. The *Mantle* guides the wearer in casting the psionic enchantment. With a perfectly-polished obsidian orb to harness psychic energies and a collection of material components including 15,000 cp worth of chalk, diamond dust, borax, and basalt, the *Mantle*-wearer creates a powerful magical and psionic forgetting effect that shields a large area.

Preparing the *dome of anonymity* requires 30 consecutive days of work, at eight hours per day as for a psionic enchantment (as described in *Dragon Kings*). The actual casting requires a final eight hours of uninterrupted ritual chanting once the preparation is complete.

The *dome of anonymity* causes onlookers to forget ever seeing anything within it. Anyone outside the dome loses all memory of the existence of anything inside. Even objects or people from inside, when brought outside, become ciphers—a frustrating gap in memory that can only be filled with conjecture. Written descriptions of the inside of the dome can be read and retained, but there is no context to them, leaving them meaningless to the reader.

Magical and psionic defenses are powerless against this effect; even a *mind blank* spell or psionic mind bar cannot stand against the enchantment. Even sorcerer-monarchs are not immune.

Anyone inside the *dome* retains their memory of everything while they stay. Indeed, their continuity of experience is entirely undisturbed. Upon leaving the *dome*, though, they instantly forget everything about what was inside of it, or even that anything existed there.

The *dome* can cause extremely uncomfortable events for people, as they can see into the *dome* and view things that they cannot describe nor remember, because they forget what they are seeing as soon as they see it. The mind works to explain away these gaps, even if inconsistent. This psychic dissonance usually causes people to look away quickly.

The creator of a *dome of anonymity* is always immune to its effects. The caster may choose to dismiss the effect at any time, which causes the enchantment to fade in its entirety; everyone exposed to the *dome* regains their memories over the course of a few seconds. Casting a new *dome* dispels the prior one as soon as the new *dome* takes effect.

At the time of casting, the creator of the *dome* must specify a simple symbol that causes anyone wearing or carrying an item with that symbol to be immune to the power of the *dome*. Typically, this allows the wearer of the *Mantle* to provide talismans emblazoned with the symbol to followers, who can then pass through the *dome* freely without losing their memories, but the caster is under no obligation to do so.

A *dome of anonymity* can extend up to 10 miles in diameter, and the caster must be inside of the space at the time that it is cast, though caster does not need to be the center.

Means of Destruction

Destruction of the *Mantle* requires it be worn by someone currently affected by a *dome of anonymity*. The target must then be guided in drawing the symbol that negates the *dome* on the *Mantle* itself. As usual, this causes the wearer to regain all of their memory of the interior of the *dome*. Finally, the individual stones of the *Mantle* must be smashed with a magical bludgeoning weapon of at least +3 power. Upon the destruction of the final gem, the *Mantle* immolates itself and the wearer (causing 20d6 fire damage) and the bludgeoning weapon (or weapons) used to break the gems shatters.

New Magic Items

The new magic items found here are scattered throughout *The Sand Marches*, but it's also possible to use them in your other **DARK SUN** campaigns, of course. Each description includes suggested ingredients for its manufacture by a spellcaster, and its XP Value.

Boots of the Shifting Dunes:

These boots are made of the hide of some kind of desert beast, calf-high and fringed at the top. The wearer can move through sand at normal movement rate, and can walk on silt without sinking at half speed, in both cases leaving no tracks. In addition, the wearer remains comfortable in temperatures up to very hot, and if properly garbed (loose, thin clothing with an outer layer for protection from sun and wind), can even remain comfortable in scorching temperatures.

Boots of the shifting dunes are generally created with *resist fire* magic and *pass without trace* or *freedom of movement*.

XP Value: 1,500

Canteen of Clear Water:

Typically made from a hard material like a stoppered gourd or hollowed-out piece of wood, this canteen is indistinguishable from other half-gallon containers of the sort. It has a leather or rope thong for ease of carrying and a plug that snugly closes it. If water is placed in the *canteen*, after 24 hours the water becomes completely pure, affected by the *clear water* spell (see *Dragon Kings*). The water becomes completely free of impurities and sediment and twice as refreshing (counting as a full gallon of hydration).

The *canteen of clear water* has no effect upon blood, oil, fruit juices, mud, poisons, or other liquids; it only affects liquid that is principally water with small amounts of impurities.

A priest with access to the Water sphere can make one of these *canteens* by using a hand-carved or decorated half-gallon container and lacquering it with essence of a water elemental, given willingly in exchange for a service, then performing the usual rites for magic item creation.

XP Value: 200

Preservation Jug: A

preservation jug comes in one of three sizes. A small *jug* is generally a cylinder 3" across and 3" tall (about ⅓ of a gallon) with a circular lid. A medium *jug* is an urn 1' tall and 1' across (23½ gallons), either cylindrical or with a circular body and a narrow foot and neck, stoppered at the top. A large *jug* is an amphora with two handles on the sides, measuring 3' tall and 1' across (70½ gallons). Typically, they are elegantly fired pottery, painted and glazed. All of them have the same property: Any substance placed within the *jug*, when the lid is properly affixed and stoppered, is preserved indefinitely without spoilage.

A *preservation jug* can keep water or juice fresh, prevent blood from clotting, or preserve fruits, grains, or even meat. The items must be able to fit through the mouth of the *jug* (3" diameter for a small *jug*, 6" diameter for a medium or large *jug*).

A *preservation jug* does not reduce the weight of items carried within it, nor does it have any special carrying capacity; it simply prevents spoilage of the contents.

If a *preservation jug* is cracked or broken, it loses its powers.

Wizards can construct a *preservation jug* with the *preserve* spell in conjunction with *enchant an item* and the *permanency* spell. Priests can do so with the *purify food and drink* spell.

XP Value: 100 (small), 250 (medium), 500 (large)

Sandstrider's Shawl: Usually appearing as a plain cotton shawl with frayed ends and a simple desert color, this shawl is a great boon to desert travelers. While worn around the neck, shoulders, and mouth of a humanoid, it confers the following benefits:

- The wearer is always treated as being in shade (with reduced water consumption).
- The wearer can breathe and see normally in storms of sand, salt, and silt, and never suffers injuries, eye damage, or increased water usage from such storms.

Manufacturing this item requires a shawl of perfect design, including threads from silkworm silk soaked in thrax blood.

XP Value: 1,000

Staff of Living Wood: This +3 *quarterstaff* is lovingly crafted from a large branch of a *tree of life*. It still bears a small number of green leaves along its length, and its ends are never shod.

The *staff of living wood* holds an echo of the living power of the *tree of life* from which it was carved. A *staff of living wood* has 25 charges, and can be recharged, but only by a preserver.

In the hands of a defiler, the *staff of living wood* has only the power to prevent defiling. The defiler can draw power from the *staff* to offset the defiling effects of spells, with each level of a spell taking one charge. It is possible to partially fuel a spell so the spell has a reduced defiling radius, such as spending 2 charges on a 5th-level spell and resulting in defiling as if casting a 3rd-level spell instead (as $5 - 2 = 3$). Cautious defilers use this ability judiciously to pretend to be preservers.

In the hands of a preserver, the *staff of living wood* can cast the following spells:

- *Petrify wood* (no charges)*
- *Plant growth* (2 charges)
- *Rejuvenate* (2 charges)
- *Woodiron* (1 charge)*

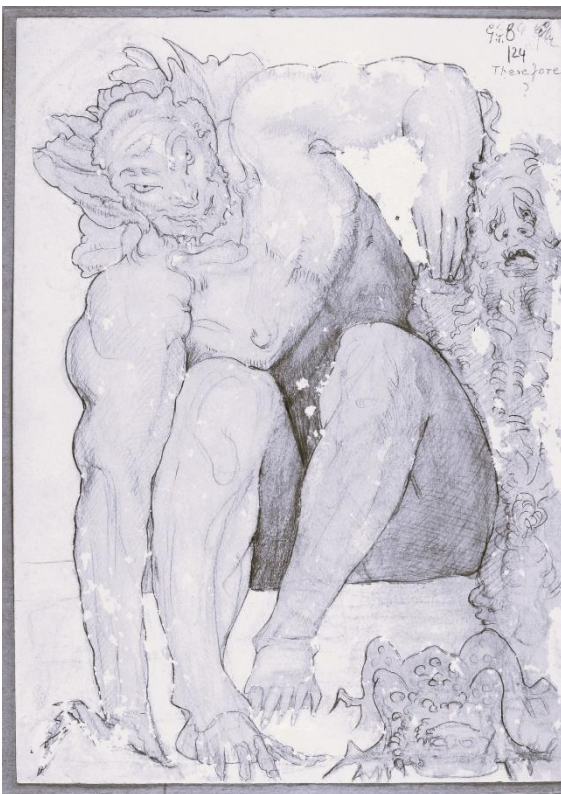
* See *Dragon* magazine #197 or the *Wizard's Spell Compendium Vol. 4*. Note that *petrify wood* was listed as *petrification* in *Dragon* magazine and renamed as *petrify wood* in the *Wizard's Spell Compendium* for clarity.

XP Value: 6,000

New Monsters

The new monsters described here can, of course, serve as interesting challenges in your own **DARK SUN** campaign. These monsters offer hazards your players haven't encountered before, to give them something new and dangerous to confront.

Each monster has its own entry, much as they would appear in a *Monstrous Compendium*. Make sure to familiarize yourself with the special abilities of new monsters *before* the players encounter them!



Therefore—Smithsonian Collection*

Ectoplasmic Remnant

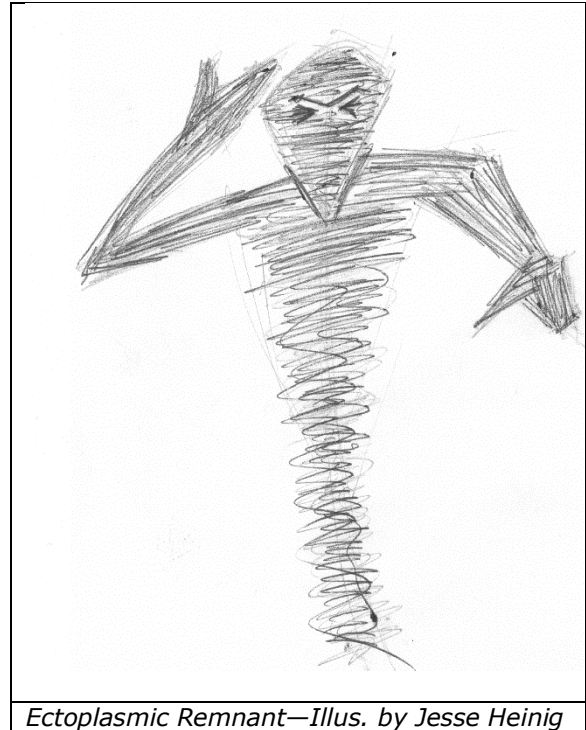
Climate/Terrain:	Any
Frequency:	Very rare
Organization:	Troop
Activity Cycle:	Any
Diet:	None
Intelligence:	Average (8–10)
Treasure:	Nil
Alignment:	Neutral Evil
No. Appearing:	2–8 (2d4)
Armor Class:	6
Movement:	12, Fl 3 (C)
Hit Dice:	5
THACO:	16
No. of Attacks:	1
Damage/Attack:	1d6
Special Attacks:	Disease
Special Defenses:	See below
Magic Resistance:	Nil
Size:	S to L (3–12' tall)
Morale:	Fearless (20)
XP Value:	420

Ectoplasmic remnants appear as gray shadowy figures, vaguely shaped like humanoids of various sizes. Drawn from the Gray, they are vengeful spirits of the unquiet dead, given a semblance of physical form through congealed psychic ectoplasm. They cannot remember their lives well enough to form more than the most rudimentary shell of their bodies.

Combat: Ectoplasmic remnants rush to engage the living, lashing out with their dead hands. They use their limited flight to reach opponents trying to climb or cross impassable terrain. Their touch chills flesh and causes it to die.

Because they are partially insubstantial, ectoplasmic remnants take only half damage from nonmagical or nonmetal weapons.

Like many undead they are immune to poison, disease, mind-affecting magic, cold, paralyzation, and death magic.



Ectoplasmic Remnant—Illus. by Jesse Heinig

In addition, after any encounter in which a character took damage from the strikes of an ectoplasmic remnant, the character must make a save vs. poison or become afflicted with a wasting disease. This disease forces another save vs. poison every 24 hours; failure inflicts the loss of one point of Constitution. The victim throws off the disease after making three successful saving throws, but dies if their Constitution falls to 0. This disease is not magical, and can be cured with *cure disease* or psionic powers such as cell adjustment or complete healing.

Habitat/Society: Ectoplasmic remnants form in places with strong psychic energies that also have a connection to the Gray. Usually, these are crypts, tombs, and graveyards near schools of thought, or where a psionist studies to develop powers that touch the Gray, such as spirit lore or wrench. Ectoplasmic remnants come over in small groups when a connection presents itself, but have no social association with one another and tend to remain near the site where they first manifested.

Ecology: As with other undead, ectoplasmic remnants are not part of the ecosystem.

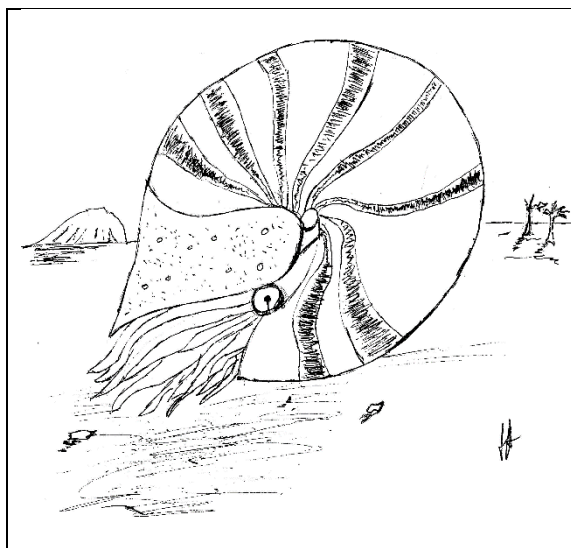
THE SAND MARCHES

Land Nautiloid

Climate/Terrain:	Salt flats, stony barrens
Frequency:	Rare
Organization:	Solitary
Activity Cycle:	Any
Diet:	Filter feeder
Intelligence:	Animal (1)
Treasure:	Nil
Alignment:	Neutral
No. Appearing:	1
Armor Class:	-3
Movement:	18"
Hit Dice:	15-18
THAC0:	15 HD: 6 16 HD: 5 17 HD: 4 18 HD: 3
No. of Attacks:	19
Damage/Attack:	1d8×18/5d6
Special Attacks:	Grab
Special Defenses:	None
Magic Resistance:	Nil
Size:	G (30' tall)
Morale:	Champion (15)
XP Value:	15 HD: 16,000 +1,000 per HD

Perhaps descended from great nautiloids that once lived in oceans in a different age, land nautiloids are massive creatures crossing the salt flats and stony barrens on slithering heaps of tentacles. Eyes peek out from either side of a huge, rounded shell. They feed by filtering tiny creatures and plants from the ground, but can present a significant hazard when enraged.

Combat: A land nautiloid lashes out with its 18 tentacles at anything threatening it. A creature hit with an 18 or higher on the die is grabbed and drawn toward the mouth for bite attacks (5d6). While grabbed, a character cannot use their arms, and can only escape with a successful bend bars/lift gates roll (one check per round). A tentacle can also be severed by taking 20 points of damage from an edged weapon. Severed tentacles regrow in about a week.



Land Nautiloid—Illus. by Jesse Heinig

Habitat/Society: Land nautiloids are animals, despite their great size, and have no organization. On the unlikely occasions when they cross paths, they gently touch tentacles to trade genetic information, resulting in large, rubbery eggs that hatch into young nautiloids.

Ecology: Land nautiloids are cleaners: They feed on the smallest elements of the ecosystem, leaving behind sand and rock devoid of plants or small animals. They usually move around larger animals and barriers such as boulders, and likewise travel around structures.

Land nautiloid meat is rubbery but edible. The shell is useful for constructing shields, shelters, and jewelry.

Obsidimal

Climate/Terrain:	Obsidian flats
Frequency:	Very rare
Organization:	Solitary
Activity Cycle:	Day
Diet:	Petrivore
Intelligence:	High to exceptional (13–16)
Treasure:	Q×2d4
Alignment:	Neutral Evil
No. Appearing:	1–6
Armor Class:	–4 or 0
Movement:	6
Hit Dice:	9+6
THACO:	13
No. of Attacks:	1
Damage/Attack:	4d4 (3d4)
Special Attacks:	Obsidian spray
Special Defenses:	See below
Magic Resistance:	Nil
Size:	S (3½' high)
Morale:	Champion (15–16)
XP Value:	7,000

Psionics Summary:

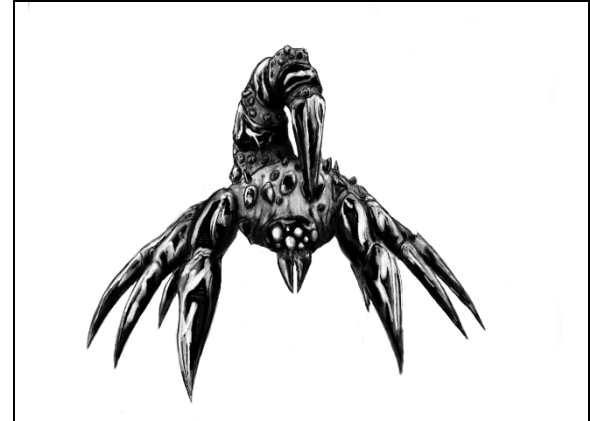
Level	Dis/Sci/Dev	Attack/Defense	Score	PSPs
10	4/5/15	MT, EW/All	16	130–140

Clairsentience—*Devotions:* danger sense

Metapsionics—*Sciences:* appraise;
Devotions: psychic drain, receptacle, stasis field

Psychokinesis—*Sciences:* project force; *Devotions:* animate object, control sound, create sound, soften

Telepathy—*Sciences:* mindlink, mindwipe, probe, tower of iron will; *Devotions:* contact, ego whip, ESP, intellect fortress, mental barrier, mind thrust, mind blank, repugnance, thought shield



Obsidimal—Illus. by Matthew Craffey

Obsidimals are distant relatives of crysmals—elemental earth creatures with a strong connection to minerals. Obsidimals feed exclusively upon obsidian, transmuting small fragments and dust into part of their material matrix.

Obsidimals resemble a scorpion-shaped heap of obsidian crystal.

See the Al-Qadim adventure *ALQ4: Secrets of the Lamp* for the crysmal, or *Monstrous Compendium Annual Volume One*.

THE SAND MARCHES

Combat: Against edged and piercing weapons, an obsidimal is AC -4; against blunt weapons it is AC 0, as its obsidian matrix is susceptible to shattering. Like a crysmal, an obsidimal attacks with a protruding appendage shaped somewhat like a scorpion's tail, though an obsidimal's is sharper and more dangerous. It can launch this appendage up to 20 yards for 2d8+8 damage, but then must attack with its secondary appendages for reduced damage (3d4).

In addition, because obsidian is highly frangible and fractures along very sharp edges, an obsidimal can launch a spray of obsidian shards in a 90° arc with a range of 20'. Anyone caught in the spray takes 2d6+6 slashing damage, with a save vs. breath weapons for half. Each use of this ability consumes 5 hit points; the obsidimal can no longer use this ability when at or below half of its normal hit point total.

An obsidimal is unaffected by fire or cold-based spells. Electrical attacks like lightning cause only one-quarter or no damage, depending on the saving throw. Poisons and gasses do not harm an obsidimal. A *shatter* spell inflicts 3d6 (3–18) hp damage on an obsidimal, a *glassee* spell blinds it for 2–5 rounds, and a *stone to flesh* spell lowers its Armor Class to 6 against all weapons for 1 melee round. The creature can move through solid rock or earth as a xorn does, taking 1 round to shift its molecular structure to do so. If struck by a *phase door* spell when shifting, the creature is immediately slain.

Habitat/Society: Obsidimals live in small groups of individuals that pursue their own interests but band together for mutual defense and feeding.

Typically, the most powerful obsidimal rises to prominence in the group, but leadership may shift if a new situation calls for different skills.

Ecology: Like crysmals, obsidimals absorb obsidian and transform it into part of their matrix. When removed from an environment with available obsidian, obsidimals slowly shrink and eventually expire over the course of a month. They have no need for water.

Though obsidimals hoard gems like their crysmal relatives (treasure type Q×2d4), they do not eat these treasures—instead, they keep gems to use as bribes or as objects for their receptacle psionic power.

Remains from obsidimals can be used to make obsidian weapons, tools, and jewelry, and they often form into sizable chunks that are rare in nature.

Psychovore

Climate/Terrain:	Rocky badlands, stony barrens
Frequency:	Very rare
Organization:	Solitary
Activity Cycle:	All
Diet:	Psychic energy
Intelligence:	High (13–14)
Treasure:	D
Alignment:	Neutral Evil
No. Appearing:	1
Armor Class:	2
Movement:	0
Hit Dice:	12
THAC0:	9
No. of Attacks:	0
Damage/Attack:	N/A
Special Attacks:	Psi drain, psionics
Special Defenses:	Psionics
Magic Resistance:	25%
Size:	H (20' tall)
Morale:	Elite (14)
XP Value:	6,000

Psionics Summary:

Level	Dis/Sci/Dev	Attack/Defense	Score	PSPs
12	3/4/13	All/All	16	180

Psychokinesis—*Sciences*: telekinesis; *Devotions*: ballistic attack, inertial barrier, molecular agitation

Psychometabolism—*Sciences*: life draining; *Devotions*: cause sleep, chemical simulation, double pain

Telepathy—*Sciences*: domination, mindlink; *Devotions*: aversion, awe, contact, ESP, life detection, repugnance, send thoughts



Psychovore—Illus. by Matthew Craffey

A psychovore is an odd creature resembling a tree made from a semi-translucent, fleshy substance. Its branch-like fronds end in broad, leaf-like suckers. The ebb and flow of fluids and glowing energies is visible through its outer skin. In spite of its delicate, fleshy appearance, its flesh is as tough as hardwood.

Combat: Psychovores are immobile; in battle, they defend themselves with their tremendous psionic abilities. A psychovore may use two psionic powers every round, and may also use a defense mode at the same time if needed.

The psychovore has a powerful psionic mind, and automatically feeds on psychic energy. Any creature within 5' loses 1d6 PSPs on its turn, and the psychovore automatically makes contact with any mind at that range, regardless of defense modes. For this reason, they are best engaged at range, with powerful spells and missile weapons.

THE SAND MARCHES

As a psychovore grows, it drains the psionic energy of every living creature around it, constantly and automatically. A psychovore radiates an aura of psychic drain with a radius of roughly one mile for each foot of its height (the shape is often irregular instead of perfectly circular). Within this aura, no creature or item other than the psychovore can regain psionic power points—all PSPs are instead drained to feed the psychovore.

Psychovores reproduce by budding; the bud instinctively teleports away to a new site to grow when it is ready. Small psychovores are less powerful (fewer Hit Dice and lower effective psionic level) but retain their ability to drain psychic energy and contact nearby minds.

A psychovore does not have eyes and cannot see, but senses vibrations via delicate fibers on its fronds, which gives it the equivalent of very keen hearing and sensitivity to movement around it. It can target all its powers without seeing its opponents, so long as it can hear or sense them psychically.

Habitat/Society: Psychovores have no society and do not communicate with one another. Instead, they spend much of their time ruminating on inscrutable enigmas. When contacted telepathically, they enjoy riddles and puzzles, but they also enjoy cruelly draining life energy and causing suffering. The only constant in a psychovore's behavior is its incessant need for psionic power.

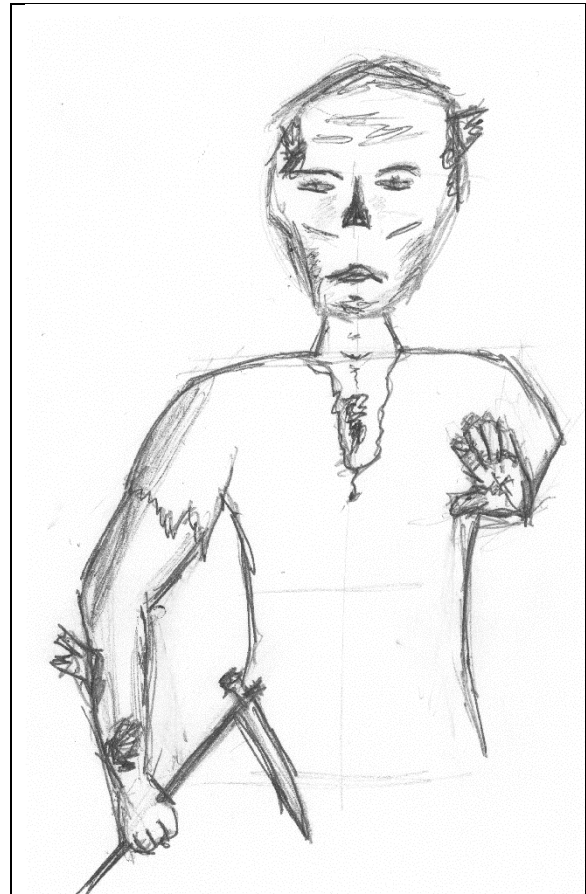
Psychovores do not value money or treasure, but do keep incidental treasure from victims nearby, or for bargaining purposes. They do value art objects to some degree and sometimes arrange items for aesthetic value, although the psychovore's sense of aesthetics is distinctly nonhumanoid.

Ecology: Psychovores have a ruinous effect on the ecology of Athas, simply because they drain the psionic energy of other living creatures and make it impossible for them to use their psionic abilities. Since many creatures on Athas have adapted to survive by using minor psionic abilities, the psychovore's draining leaves them defenseless and easy prey for larger, more vicious predators. Sometimes, this upends the usual predator-prey cycle: psionically powerful predators may become prey for creatures that are psychically undeveloped but physically powerful. This tends to wreak havoc with the ecosystem for miles around a psychovore. Intelligent humanoids avoid such areas, or conduct organized hunts to find and destroy a psychovore when one is discovered, because the destruction of psionic power in a wide radius is heavily disruptive to the common psychic tools used for defense, communication, and infrastructure by many communities.

Toxostannin

Climate/Terrain:	Subterranean
Frequency:	Very rare
Organization:	Gang
Activity Cycle:	Any
Diet:	Life energy
Intelligence:	Average (8-10)
Treasure:	Nil
Alignment:	Neutral Evil
No. Appearing:	3d6
Armor Class:	1
Movement:	9
Hit Dice:	9
THAC0:	12
No. of Attacks:	1
Damage/Attack:	By weapon +6
Special Attacks:	Poison
Special Defenses:	Undead immunities, immune to nonmetal/nonmagical weapons
Magic Resistance:	Nil
Size:	M
Morale:	Fearless (20)
XP Value:	3,000

Toxostannins rise from people who died due to powerful defiling magic while surrounded by toxic metals. While necromancers can create these undead deliberately, the usual way they form is through sudden death while working in mines.



Toxostannins appear to be rotting, animate corpses, similar to zombies, often garbed in tattered remnants of clothing and carrying a tool from their living days. They also, however, have a crust of salts, minerals, and metals covering large patches of skin. Small crystals and jagged fragments of ore protrude from their bodies, and their faces bear irregular chunks of minerals distorting their dead features.

THE SAND MARCHES

Combat: Toxostannins use their mining tools or weapons from life, or even strike unarmed. Their rocky limbs inflict 1d6 damage, and they gain the bonuses of a Strength score of 18/00 (+3 to attack, +6 to damage).

In addition, the minerals and salts coating toxostannins make them and their weapons poisonous. Anyone struck by a toxostannin must make a save vs. poison or suffer from type A poison (15 points of damage after 10–30 minutes). Victims may not even be aware that they are badly poisoned until some time after the fighting is over.

The metal deposits in a toxostannin's flesh also make them resistant to physical blows. A weapon must be either magic or metal (or both) to inflict damage on a toxostannin; otherwise, it has no effect.

Toxostannins can still be grappled and knocked down, of course; they simply suffer no damage from nonmagical or nonmetal weapons. These mineral deposits can be removed from the body once the toxostannin is defeated, a gruesome process yielding 1d4 pounds of usable metal, generally of the type in the mines where the toxostannin originally died.

Like many other undead, toxostannins are immune to mind-affecting spells, death magic, cold, poison, and paralysis.

Unlike other undead, toxostannins make noise when they move—a metallic and stony grinding and squealing sound. They can easily be heard moving about from up to 60' when active.

Habitat/Society: Toxostannins have no society; they seek only to kill or be killed so that they may know the peace of death. They usually remain in the place where they died, and congregate with their former living co-workers. They understand the languages they knew in life, but do not speak.

Ecology: Like most undead, toxostannins have no place in the ecosystem.

Tree of Death

Climate/Terrain:	Any
Frequency:	Very rare
Organization:	Solitary
Activity Cycle:	Any
Diet:	Life energy
Intelligence:	Average (8–10)
Treasure:	C
Alignment:	Chaotic Evil
No. Appearing:	1 or 3d6
Armor Class:	5
Movement:	0
Hit Dice:	6–16
THACO:	N/A
No. of Attacks:	1
Damage/Attack:	N/A
Special Attacks:	Defiling
Special Defenses:	Undead immunities
Magic Resistance:	50%
Size:	M to H (1' per HD)
Morale:	Elite (14)
XP Value:	6 HD: 975 7 HD: 1,400 8 HD: 2,000 9 HD: 3,000 10+ HD: +1,000 per HD

A tree of death is a former *tree of life* turned undead due to horrific exposure to the Gray or twisted necromantic magic. Given a shadow of existence, it becomes a powerful icon of life-draining defiling magic.

Combat: A tree of death is a powerful defiling spellcaster. The tree knows one wizard spell for every 2 HD, in successive levels: a 6 HD tree of death has one first level spell, one second level spell, and one third level spell; a 16 HD tree of death has one spell of each level from first through eighth. Trees of death learn these spells intuitively, through their connection to the Gray. Usually they develop necromantic spells, but other powers are possible.



Study of Hemlock and Beech, White Lake—Smithsonian Collection

A tree of death has no physical attacks, relying instead upon its defiling spells. So long as there is life energy for it to draw upon nearby—including animal life—it can cast any spell it knows once per round.

Trees of death sometimes absorb spells cast at them. A spell targeting the tree of death is absorbed if the tree's magic resistance succeeds and the roll is doubles (11, 22, etc.). When this happens, the spell is negated, and the tree instead heals 1d4 hit points per level of the absorbed spell.

Like many other undead, trees of death are immune to mind-affecting spells, death magic, cold, poison, and paralysis.

Habitat/Society: Though the transition to undeath awakens a malevolent intelligence in trees of death, they are incapable of cooperation and seek only to absorb life energy for themselves. Treasure found near a tree of death is incidental, from its victims.

Ecology: Trees of death have no place in the ecosystem, as their defiling powers destroy all life around them.

A wizard can learn the spells from a destroyed tree of death by steeping the curled, dead leaves into a tea and drinking them, then entering a trance for 1d8 hours and using automatic writing to transcribe the spell knowledge into a spell book (or other storage medium).

New Psionic Abilities

Psychokinesis Sciences

Pyrokinetic Burst

Power Score:	Wis -4
Initial Cost:	25
Maintenance	N/A
Cost:	
Range:	60'
Preparation	0
Time:	
Area of Effect:	10' radius burst
Prerequisites:	control flames, molecular agitation, pyrokinetic bolt, telekinesis

An explosion of sudden heat causes a low-pressure blast of flames to engulf a spherical area 10' in radius, centered at a point that the psionicist can see or sense. Every target in the area takes 6d6 fire damage, with a saving throw vs. spells for half damage.

The pyrokinetic burst does not require any material as a source, but only functions if there is air or water to superheat in the target area.

If the psionicist also has the cryokinesis devotion, this burst may inflict cold damage instead.

Power Score: Add one point of damage to each die rolled.

20: The burst detonates at the psionicist's location.

Psychokinesis Devotions

Ectoplasmic Effulgence

Power Score:	Wis
Initial Cost:	1
Maintenance	1/turn
Cost:	
Range:	touch
Preparation	0
Time:	
Area of Effect:	1 target
Prerequisites:	control light

With a touch, the psionicist causes a thin sheen of ectoplasm to form on an item. The ectoplasm does not alter the item's temperature or texture, but emits a low heatless glow, a color of the psionicist's choice. The effulgence is equivalent to torchlight, but is soft and cannot blind a creature. When the power expires, the ectoplasm evaporates harmlessly. An unwilling target is allowed a saving throw vs. spell to negate the effect.

A psionicist with the empower science can make this effulgence permanent on an item, at a cost of 100 PSPs and one day of work.

Power Score: The effulgence can affect a target as the *faerie fire* spell.

20: The psionicist accidentally self-targets the power, and can't cancel it for one turn.

Pyrokinetic Bolt

Power Score: Wis -2
Initial Cost: 6
Maintenance Cost: N/A
Range: 60'
Preparation Time: 0
Area of Effect: 1 target
Prerequisites: control flames, molecular agitation, telekinesis

The psionicist concentrates heat in a point in the air, which creates a spontaneous bolt of flame. The pyrokinetic bolt strikes at a target the psionicist can sense within range. Make a roll to hit as a ranged attack (weapon proficiency does not apply). On a hit, the target takes 1d6 fire damage, with no saving throw.

The pyrokinetic bolt does not require any material as a source, but only functions if there is air or water to superheat in the target area.

If the psionicist also has the cryokinesis devotion, this burst may inflict cold damage instead.

Power Score: Add one point of damage.

20: The bolt strikes the psionicist.

*Metapsionics Devotions**Metaphysical Strike*

Power Score: Wis -3
Initial Cost: 12
Maintenance Cost: 6/round
Range: 0
Preparation Time: 0

Area of Effect: self
Prerequisites: body weaponry, mind thrust

Focused psychic energy causes ectoplasmic power to charge the psionicist's physical attacks. The psionicist's physical attacks count as if using a metal weapon for purposes of determining what kinds of creatures they can strike. In addition, the psionicist gains a +1 bonus to physical attack rolls and damage for every four psionicist levels (+1 at 4th, +2 at 8th, etc.). This bonus also applies to the ability to strike creatures that can be harmed only by magical weapons. These bonuses affect the psionicist's weapons, both melee and ranged, as well as unarmed attacks.

The bonus from metaphysical strike is the same as a magical bonus. An item that is both enchanted and empowered with metaphysical strike uses only the higher bonus; the two are not added together.

THE SAND MARCHES

A psionist of 12th level or above with the empower science may also permanently imbue items (typically weapons, armor, and shields) with supernatural energies. This follows the usual rules for the empower science, with each day's empowerment giving the item a +1 metaphysical bonus at a cost of 100 PSPs. The psionist can empower a maximum bonus equal to $\frac{1}{4}$ of their class level, rounded down, up to +5 at 20th level. (In theory, a psionist of 27th level or above could use psionic meditation to research an alteration to the power to enable +6 empowerment.) The item permanently gains this bonus, just like a magic item, so the psionist can create items like a +1 *weapon* or +2 *armor*. The psionist can still add other powers with the empower science, and can increase the item's supernatural bonus at a later date, subject to the normal level-based limit. If the psionist doesn't empower the item with a discipline and other abilities, the item also doesn't gain an Intelligence score, communication abilities, and a personality.

Characters restricted from using magical items due to their beliefs (e.g. the sensei kit, who refuses to use a magical weapon because it is not a true test of skill) are also prohibited from using items permanently enhanced with metaphysical strike, but may still use this devotion to temporarily enhance themselves (as that is a use of their personal powers, not reliance upon an enhanced tool).

Power Score: The power's maintenance is free for four rounds.

20: The psionist accidentally tunes the metaphysical vibrations incorrectly and suffers a -1 penalty to all attack and damage rolls for the next turn.

New Psionic Items

The psionic items listed here have special powers imbued into them, and can be created by psionics with the proper knowledge. Note that unless separately enchanted, psionic items do *not* detect as magical, but can be sensed with the psionic sense metapsionic devotion. Since these items don't spend PSPs to activate, they aren't detectable with the psychic detection nonweapon proficiency.

Creating items of this sort relies on the empower (devotion) ability as described in *Psionic Artifacts of Athas*, Chapter Four.

Earring of the Forgettable

Face: This earring resembles any one common earring of the sort, and may be part of a pair (in which case both must be worn together to function). The earring may have a peg or a cuff, and can vary from a small hoop to an ornate feather-and-bone hanging assembly. Once per day, the wearer may activate the earring, the effects lasting for one hour or until the earring is removed. While active, the earring causes the wearer to seem completely mundane and forgettable. Onlookers notice the presence of the wearer, but then dismiss the individual as simply being another unremarkable person, quickly forgotten. The wearer's specific features, mannerisms, and attire—including the earring—are forgotten as well. Only a mind bar, *mind blank* spell, or similar psychic defense protects against this power.

The earring's power does not extend to combat; enemies still treat the wearer as hostile and respond appropriately if violence erupts, but they remain unable to give a cogent description of the wearer afterward.

Manufacturing this item requires use of the empower (devotion) ability and knowledge of the amnesia telepathic devotion.

XP Value: 500

Kinetic Crystal: A kinetic crystal is always a cut crystal, about 1" long by ½" wide, flat on one side and slightly convex on the opposite side. They can come in a variety of colors, but are always semi-translucent. Despite having smooth surfaces, they feel rough to the touch.

When pressed against a weapon, a kinetic crystal adheres to the item and grants the item a nonmagical +1 bonus to damage. The crystal can be removed with a determined effort to peel it from the object, which takes three rounds of continuous uninterrupted effort, after which it can be placed on another object or re-attached to the previous one.

A given item can accept only one kinetic crystal at a time; additional crystals will not adhere to an item that already has one. A kinetic crystal can only adhere to an object larger than the crystal itself (so it can't adhere to a blowgun dart or a tiny rock).

Creating one of these jewels requires use of the empower (devotion) ability and knowledge of the project force psychokinetic science.

XP Value: 100

Shield of the Mindwarden:

This small shield may be made of leather or hide stretched over a bone or wooden frame, a circle of wood, or even (rarely) metal banding around wood with leather over it. Small crystals stud the outer edge.

When held by a character with any telepathic defense mode (mind blank, thought shield, mental barrier, intellect fortress, or tower of iron will), the shield generates a dull blue field of solid psychic energy in an oblate ring around its perimeter, extending its size to the equivalent of a body shield, though its weight does not change and it's still usable by anyone able to use small shields. This field is automatic and requires no action on the part of the holder, but collapses if the holder runs out of PSPs or loses access to their defense modes.

Creating a shield of this sort requires use of the empower (devotion) ability and knowledge of at least one telepathic defense mode and the inertial barrier psychokinetic devotion.

XP Value: 250

New Spells

The spells described here are available to PCs either by research, by discovery in the ruins of the sand marches, or by learning them from other spellcasters.

Wizard Psionic Enchantments

Invisible Casting Beyond Margin

Range: 0

Components: V, S, M

Preparation Time: 20 days

Duration: 8 hours or until used

Casting Time: 1 turn

Area of Effect: Special

Saving Throw: None

The wizard spends 20 days carefully preparing plots, star charts, maps, and arcane correspondences that connect to a distant known location. This study takes one hour per day for each day of the preparation time; if it is missed, the wizard must begin again from scratch. At the completion of the preparation time, the wizard casts this spell, which then provides an eight-hour window to cast and enhance one subsequent spell.

The follow-up spell's range changes to 500 miles. This has no effect on spells that only affect the caster—it can only alter a spell that can affect another target, whether by touch or at a distance. The other spell's duration, area of effect, casting time, and other details remain unchanged. *Invisible Casting Beyond Margin* only affects one spell, but the caster may choose which spell to affect, if casting multiple spells while it is active.

The material component is a set of complex maps and star charts, costing 5,000 ceramic pieces to construct due to their exacting precision and mathematical complexity. The spell does not consume the charts, but a given set of charts and maps are useful only for one specific casting, as they detail precise times, distances, and astrological correspondences that only exist at the specific casting; thus, subsequent castings require the generation of new charts and maps.

Appendix: Pre-Generated Characters

For a quick start to your journeys, grab one of the pre-generated characters included here. You can decide the character's name, gender, and background story. Everything else is ready to go.

The first half of the characters in the roster are all generated with only the rules from the *Player's Handbook*, the **DARK SUN** original boxed set, and the *Complete Psionics Handbook*—if your DM's a stickler for just using the core rules, all of these characters should fit. The second half of the characters are built using a wide range of material from across the whole **DARK SUN** line, in case you want to play something *really* different.

Use the accompanying tables for a random name and background hook if you don't want to come up with one on the spot, or if you're making a quick NPC. (For thri-kreen, assume it's the nickname their humanoid buddies use for them.)

Don't worry if two players pick the same character—it's easy to swap a few nonweapon proficiencies, roll a new wild talent, and give them different back stories to make them feel distinctive.

Important Note!

Equipment on these pre-generated characters is purchased at the reduced rates provided in the **DARK SUN** errata (5% for stone/obsidian, 3% for bone, 1% for wood).

Table: Random Name

Die Roll (1d10)	Name (first half)	Name (second half)
1	Ab-	-koon
2	Ber-	-los
3	Col-	-myr
4	Din-	-naz
5	Enk-	-oth
6	Fin-	-pur
7	Got-	-qual
8	Hyrk-	-rim
9	Ilz-	-sek
10	Jek-	-tow

Table: Random Background Hook

Die Roll (1d10)	Reason for Exile
1	Terrible personal hygiene
2	Ate the last dessert
3	Accused of perversion
4	Accused of poisoning a well
5	Accused of stealing from a noble
6	Drew attention of the Order
7	Angered a sorcerer-monarch's defiler
8	Crossed a powerful merchant-prince
9	Accused of preaching false religion
10	Killed a templar

Roster of Pre-Generated Characters

Consult the roster below for a quick look at the kinds of available characters. The first half of these characters use only the rules from the *Player's Handbook*, the *Complete Psionics Handbook*, and the **DARK SUN** original boxed set. Characters 13–24 use kits, expanded nonweapon proficiencies, and additional rules from a variety of sources.

Remember that nobody starts with food or water, nor can they use starting money to buy any. Waterskins carried by these characters are empty.

Character #	Race	Class(es)
1	Human	Psionicist 3
2	Half-Elf	Ranger 3
3	Mul	Gladiator 3
4	Elf	Preserver 2/Thief 3
5	Half-Giant	Fighter 3
6	Dwarf	Earth Cleric 3
7	Halfling	Fighter 2/Thief 2
8	Half-Elf	Bard 2/Psionicist 2
9	Thri-kreen	Druid 3
10	Human	Fire Cleric 3
11	Halfling	Illusionist 3
12	Human	Former Fighter 3/Bard 1
13	Aarakocra	Air Cleric 2/Psionicist 2
14	Dray	Gladiator 3
15	Pterran	Druid 3 (avenger)
16	Mul	Psionicist 3 (sensei)
17	Human	Barbarian 3
18	Human	Water Cleric 3 (wanderer)
19	Halfling	Ranger 2/Illusionist 2
20	Dwarf	Trader 3
21	Elf	Air Cleric 2/Fighter 2 (battle dancer)
22	Half-Giant	Ranger 2/Psionicist 2
23	Aarakocra	Preserver 3 (militant wizard)
24	Pterran	Thief 3 (scout)

Human Psionicist 3**4,400 xp*****Choose name, gender, any non-Chaotic alignment***

Str	12	Int	16
Dex	12	Wis	18
Con	16	Cha	13

#AT: 1**THACO:** 19**Damage:** Club 1d6/1d3

Sling stone 1d4/1d4

AC: 6 in studded leather armor and small shield**HP:** 17**Disciplines:** Clairsentience, Telepathy (primary)**Sciences:** Domination (Wis -4, contact, varies), Mindlink (Wis -5, contact, 8/round)**Devotions:** Contact (Wis, varies, 1/round), Danger Sense (Wis -3, 4, 3/turn), Id Insinuation (Wis -4, 5, n/a), Invisibility (Int -5, contact, 2/round/creature), Know Direction (Int, 1, n/a), Psychic Crush (Wis -4, 7, n/a), Repugnance (Wis -5, contact, 8/round)**Defense Modes:** Mind Blank (Wis -7, 0, n/a), Thought Shield (Wis -3, 1, n/a)

Or choose 2 disciplines, 2 sciences from primary discipline, 7 devotions with at least 4 from primary discipline.

PSPs: 54**Saving Throws**

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
13	15	10	16	15

+2 on all saves vs.

enchantment/charm spells and similar effects

Weapon Proficiencies: Club, sling**Nonweapon Proficiencies:** Artistic ability, gem cutting, heat protection, hypnosis, psionic detection, reading/writing (Common), rejuvenation, water find**Languages:** Common (literate)**Equipment:** Studded leather armor, small shield, club, sling, 20 sling stones, backpack, 2 small belt pouches, chalk, fire kit, scroll case, 10 sheets of paper, vial of writing ink, 10 torches, 2 waterskins**Starting Money:** 165 ceramic pieces

Half-Elf Ranger 3

4,500 xp

Choose name, gender, any Good alignment

Str	15	Int	14
Dex	17	Wis	16
Con	16	Cha	11

#AT: 2 (with two weapons)
1 (with sling)

THACO: 18

Damage: 2 Metal hand axes 1d6/1d4
Metal knife 1d3/1d2
Sling stone 1d4/1d4

AC: 4 in studded leather armor

HP: 20

Wild Talent: Contact (Wis, varies,
1/round)

Wild Talent: Incarnation Awareness
(Wis -4, contact, 13/round)

PSPs: 70

Saving Throws

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
13	15	14	16	16

Weapon Proficiencies: Hand axe,
knife, long bow, short sword, sling

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Animal
handling, direction sense, endurance,
heat protection, hunting, navigation,
survival (sandy wastes, stony
barrens), tracking

Languages: Common

Equipment: Studded leather armor, 2
metal hand axes, metal knife,
backpack, 2 large belt pouches, fire
kit, small tent, 2 waterskins,
whetstone

Starting Money: 95 ceramic pieces,
2 bits

Mul Gladiator 3**4,500 xp***Choose name, gender, any alignment*

Str	17	Int	11
Dex	14	Wis	12
Con	19	Cha	10

#AT: 3/2 (with spear or javelin)
1 (thrown javelin)

THACO: 18

Damage: Spear 1d6+3/1d8+3
Javelin 1d6+1/1d6+1

AC: 5 in nonmetal brigandine and
body shield

HP: 31

Wild Talent: Know Direction (Wis, 1,
n/a)

PSPs: 9**Saving Throws**

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
13	15	14	16	16

Weapon Proficiencies: 1 saved

Weapon Specializations: Javelin,
spear

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Armor
optimization, armorer (3 slots), heat
protection, weapon improvisation

Languages: Common

Equipment: Nonmetal brigandine,
body shield, spear, 6 javelins,
backpack, 2 large belt pouches, fire
kit, quiver, small tent, 2 waterskins,
whetstone

Starting Money: 229 ceramic pieces,
6 bits

Elf Preserver 2/Thief 3

2,500 xp per class

Choose name, gender, any alignment except Lawful Good

Str	11	Int	17
Dex	19	Wis	13
Con	11	Cha	13

#AT: 1 (with short sword)
2 (with shortbow)

THACO: 19

Damage: Bone short sword
1d6-1/1d8-1
Short bow w/metal flight arrow
1d6/1d6

AC: 6 unarmored

HP: 8

Wild Talent: Radial Navigation (Int - 3, 4, 7/hour)

PSPs: 40

Preserver spells: Two 1st-level spells

Saving Throws

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
13	14	12	16	15

Weapon Proficiencies: Shortbow, short sword

Thieving Percentages:

PP	OL	F/RT	MS	HS
35%	55%	45%	60%	60%
DN	CW	RL		
20%	60%	0%		

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Fire-building, gaming, heat protection, musical instrument (flute), reading/writing (Elf), rope use, set snares, somatic concealment, spellcraft, water find

Languages: Common, Elf (literate)

Spell book:

- 1st level: *affect normal fires, cantrip, chill touch, detect magic, light, read magic, unseen servant, wall of fog*

Equipment: Short bow, bone short sword, 12 metal flight arrows, backpack, 2 large belt pouches, quiver, 50' hemp rope, spell book, bone thieves' picks, 2 waterskins

Starting Money: 24 ceramic pieces, 4 bits

Half-Giant Fighter 3**4,000 xp***Choose name, gender, any alignment*

Str	22	Int	10
Dex	10	Wis	10
Con	18	Cha	10

#AT: 3/2 (with halberd)**THACO:** 18**Damage:** Bone halberd
1d10+11/2d6+11**AC:** 6 in nonmetal scale mail**HP:** 31**Wild Talent:** Catfall (Dex -2, 4, n/a)**PSPs:** 12**Saving Throws**

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
13	15	14	16	16

Weapon Proficiencies: Club, sling,
two-handed sword**Weapon Specialization:** Halberd**Nonweapon Proficiencies:**Endurance, heat protection,
weaponsmithing**Languages:** Common, Giant**Equipment (all half-giant sized):**Nonmetal scale mail, bone halberd,
sling, 20 sling stones, backpack, small
barrel, large belt pouch, whetstone**Starting Money:** 64 ceramic pieces,
8 bits

Dwarf Earth Cleric 3**3,000 xp***Choose name, gender, any alignment*

Str	14	Int	12
Dex	11	Wis	17
Con	16	Cha	10

#AT: 1**THACO:** 20**Damage:** Stone footman's mace
1d6/1d6-1

Sling 1d4/1d4

AC: 5 in nonmetal scale mail and
medium shield**HP:** 20**Wild Talent:** Dimension Walk (Con -
2, 8, 4/turn)**PSPs:** 32**Earth cleric spells:** Four 1st-level
spells, three 2nd-level spells**Saving Throws**

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
10	14	13	16	15

Weapon Proficiencies: Footman's
mace, sling**Nonweapon Proficiencies:**Engineering, healing, mining, pottery,
religion**Languages:** Common, Dwarf**Equipment:** Nonmetal scale mail,
medium shield, stone footman's mace,
sling, 20 sling stones, backpack, large
belt pouch, 2 waterskins**Starting Money:** 2 ceramic pieces

Halfling Fighter 2/Thief 2**2,000 xp per class*****Choose name, gender, any alignment except Lawful Good***

Str	16	Int	14
Dex	20	Wis	16
Con	14	Cha	12

#AT: 1 (with short sword or dagger)
2 (with shortbow)

THACO: 19

Damage: Bone short sword

1d6/1d8

Bone dagger 1d4/1d3

Short bow w/metal flight arrow

1d6/1d6

AC: 4 in leather armor

HP: 9

Wild Talent: Ballistic Attack (Con -2, 5, n/a)

Wild Talent: Telekinesis (Wis -3, 3+, 1+/round)

PSPs: 16

Saving Throws

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
13	14	12	16	15

Weapon Proficiencies: Dagger, short bow, short sword, sling

Thieving Percentages:

PP	OL	F/RT	MS	HS
40%	40%	22%	70%	67%
DN	CW	RL		
50%	45%	-5%		

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Armor optimization, bowyer/fletcher, cooking, hunting, modern language (Common), rope use, water find

Languages: Common, Halfling

Equipment: Bone short sword, bone dagger, short bow, 12 metal flight arrows, backpack, 2 large belt pouches, quiver, 50' hemp rope, bone thieves' picks, 2 waterskins

Starting Money: 176 ceramic pieces, 6 bits

Half-Elf Bard 2/Psionicist 2

2,200 xp per class

Choose name, gender, any neutral non-Chaotic alignment

Str	12	Int	15
Dex	17	Wis	16
Con	15	Cha	16

#AT: 1

THACO: 20

Damage: Bone long sword

1d8-1/1d12-1

Bone dagger 1d4-1/1d3-1

AC: 5 in leather armor

HP: 11

Disciplines: Clairsentience (primary),
Psychoportation

Sciences: Clairvoyance (Wis -4, 7,
4/round)

Devotions: Danger Sense (Wis -3, 4,
3/turn), Dimensional Door (Con -1, 4,
2/round), Know Direction (Int, 1, n/a),
Poison Sense (Wis, 1, n/a),
Time/Space Anchor (Int, 5, 1/round)

Defense Modes: Mental Barrier (Wis
-2, 3, n/a)

Or choose 2 disciplines, 1 science from
primary discipline, 5 devotions with at
least 3 from primary discipline

PSPs: 33

Saving Throws

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
13	14	10	16	15

+2 on all saves vs.

enchantment/charm spells and similar
effects

Weapon Proficiencies: Dagger, long
sword

Thieving Percentages:

PP	OL	F/RT	MS	HS
40%	20%	5%	15%	15%
DN	CW	RL		
15%	60%	10%		

Poisons Known: B, E

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Acting,
dancing, gaming, jumping, local
history, modern language (Elf),
musical instrument (flute),
rejuvenation, survival (rocky
badlands), tumbling

Languages: Common, Elf

Equipment: Bone long sword, 3 bone
daggers, backpack, 2 large belt
pouches, flute, bone thieves' picks, 2
waterskins

Starting Money: 56 ceramic pieces,
4 bits

Thri-Kreen Druid 3**3,000 xp*****Choose name, gender, True Neutral alignment***

Str	14	Int	11
Dex	19	Wis	19
Con	13	Cha	15

#AT: 2 (weapon & bite)
5 (claws & bite)

THACO: 20

Damage: Claws 4×1d4
Bite 1d4+1

AC: 1 unarmored

HP: 14

Wild Talent: Life Detection (Int -2, 3,
3/round)

PSPs: 23

**Druid spells (major Air, minor
Earth):** Five 1st-level spells, three 2nd-
level spells

Saving Throws

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
10	14	13	16	15

+2 vs. fire and lightning

Weapon Proficiencies: Gythka,
impaler

Nonweapon Proficiencies:

Herbalism, hunting, modern language
(Common), survival (scrub plains),
water find

Languages: Common, Thri-Kreen

Equipment: 2 large belt pouches, 2
waterskins

Starting Money: 3 ceramic pieces

Human Fire Cleric 3

3,000 xp

Choose name, gender, any alignment

Str	14	Int	13
Dex	12	Wis	18
Con	14	Cha	16

#AT: 1

THACO: 20

Damage: Obsidian long sword

1d8-1/1d12-1

Obsidian dagger 1d4-1/1d3-1

AC: 5 in nonmetal brigandine and medium shield

HP: 14

Wild Talent: Control Sound (Int -5, 5, 2/round)

PSPs: 21

Cleric spells: Four 1st-level spells, three 2nd-level spells

Saving Throws

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
10	14	13	16	15

Weapon Proficiencies: Dagger, long sword

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Fire-building, healing, herbalism, heat protection, religion, spellcraft

Languages: Common

Equipment: Obsidian long sword, obsidian dagger, nonmetal brigandine armor, medium shield, backpack, 2 large belt pouches, fire kit, firewood (5 days), small tent, 2 waterskins

Starting Money: 3 ceramic pieces

Halfling Illusionist 3**5,000 xp*****Choose name, gender, any alignment***

Str	10	Int	16
Dex	18	Wis	14
Con	12	Cha	14

#AT: 1**THACO:** 20**Damage:** Bone dagger 1d4-1/1d3-1**AC:** 6 unarmored**HP:** 8**Wild Talent:** Danger Sense (Wis -3, 4, 3/turn)**PSPs:** 24**Preserver Spells:** Two 1st-level spells and one 1st-level illusion spell, one 2nd-level spell and one 2nd-level illusion spell**Saving Throws**

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
14	11	13	15	12

Weapon Proficiencies: Dagger**Nonweapon Proficiencies:**

Astrology, cooking, dancing, heat protection, modern language (Common), reading/writing (Halfling), spellcraft, water find, weather sense

Languages: Common, Halfling (literate)**Spell book:**

- 1st level: *audible glamor, cantrip, color spray, detect magic, mending, phantasmal force, read magic, ventriloquism*
- 2nd level: *invisibility*

Equipment: Bone dagger, backpack, 2 small belt pouches, spell book, 2 waterskins**Starting Money:** 94 ceramic pieces

Human Former Fighter 3/Bard 1

Choose name, gender, any Neutral alignment

Str	15	Int	13
Dex	17	Wis	12
Con	15	Cha	17

#AT: 1

THACO: 20

Damage: Bone dagger 1d4-1/1d3-1

AC: 5 in leather armor

HP: 20

Wild Talent: Poison Sense (Wis, 1, n/a)

PSPs: 13

Saving Throws

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
13	14	12	16	15

Weapon Proficiencies: Dagger

Previous Weapon Proficiencies:

Club, javelin, shortsword

Previous Weapon Specializations:

Spear specialization

Thieving Percentages:

PP	OL	F/RT	MS	HS
20%	20%	5%	15%	10%
DN	CW	RL		
15%	60%	0%		

Poisons Known: A

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Local history, musical instrument (lyre), reading/writing (Common), singing

Previous Nonweapon

Proficiencies: *Armorer, endurance, heat protection, survival (sandy wastes)*

Languages: Common (literate)

Equipment: Bone dagger, spear, leather armor, lyre, backpack, fire kit, 2 waterskins

Starting Money: 10 ceramic pieces

Reminder: Until your current class level exceeds your former class level, using your previous proficiencies causes you to gain no experience for the current encounter and half for the rest of the adventure.

As noted in Sage Advice in *Dragon* #166, you gain only one weapon and one nonweapon proficiency upon changing to a new class. The nonweapon proficiencies include those granted automatically to bards (local history, one musical instrument, reading/writing).

Aarakocra Air Cleric 2/Psionicist 2**2,200 xp per class*****Choose name, gender, any non-Chaotic alignment***

Str	12	Int	16
Dex	18	Wis	17
Con	14	Cha	12

#AT: 1 (with spear)
2 (with short bow)

THACO: 20

Damage: Short bow w/
metal flight arrow 1d6/1d6
Spear 1d6/1d8

AC: 3 unarmored**HP:** 8

Disciplines: Telepathy (primary),
Psychokinesis

Sciences: Mindlink (Wis -5, contact,
8/round)

Devotions: Contact (Wis, 3+,
1/round), Control Light (Int, 12,
4/round), Control Sound (Int -5, 5,
2/round), Empathy (Wis, contact or 1,
1/round), Psychic Crush (Wis -4, 7,
n/a)

Defense Modes: Thought Shield (Wis
-3, 1, n/a)

Or choose 2 disciplines, 1 science from
primary discipline, 5 devotions with at
least 3 from primary discipline.

PSPs: 37**Cleric spells:** Four 1st-level spells**Saving Throws**

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
10	14	10	16	15

+2 on all saves vs.
enchantment/charm spells and similar
effects

Weapon Proficiencies: Short bow,
spear

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Direction
sense, healing, modern language
(Common), psionic lore*, religion,
rejuvenation, water find, weather
sense

Languages: Aarakocra, Common

Equipment: Short bow, spear, quiver,
24 metal flight arrows, 2 large belt
pouches, fire kit, 2 waterskins

Starting Money: 3 ceramic pieces

* See *The Will and the Way*.

Dray* Gladiator 3

4,500 xp

Choose name, gender, any alignment

Str	19	Int	10
Dex	14	Wis	11
Con	19	Cha	12

#AT: 3 (claw/claw/bite)
5/2 (with paired wrist razors)

THACO: 18

Damage: Claws 2x 1d6+7
Bite 1d4+7
Paired bone
wrist razors 2x 1d6+9/1d4+9
Bolas 1d3/1d2**

AC: 6 in nonmetal brigandine

HP: 32

Wild Talent: Dimension Blade† (Con -1, 6, 5/round)

Wild Talent: Duo-Dimension† (Con -2, 11, 4/round)

PSPs: 61

Saving Throws

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
13	15	14	16	16

Weapon Proficiencies: Bolas**

Weapon Specializations: Wrist razor

Fighting Style Specializations:

Two-weapon style**

Special Talents: Ambidexterity**

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Blind-fighting, endurance, modern language (Common), mountaineering

Languages: Ancient Giustenal, Common

Equipment: Nonmetal brigandine, 2 bone wrist razors, 3 bolas**, backpack, 2 large belt pouches, fire kit, metal pry bar**, small tent, 2 waterskins, whetstone

Starting Money: 104 ceramic pieces, 3 bits

* See *City by the Silt Sea*.

** See *Combat & Tactics*.

† See *The Will and the Way*.

Pterran Druid 3 (avenger*)**3,000 xp****Choose name, gender, True Neutral alignment**

Str	16	Int	14
Dex	13	Wis	19
Con	14	Cha	16

#AT: 2 (claws)
1 (weapon)**THACO:** 20**Damage:** Claws 2x 1d4+1
Bone glaive 1d6/1d10
Metal hand axe 1d6+1/1d4+1
Torch 1d4+1/1d3+1
(+1 fire if lit)**AC:** 8 unarmored**HP:** 14**Wild Talent:** Contact (Wis, 3+,
1/round)**Wild Talent:** Identity Penetration
(Wis -3, contact, 6/round)**PSPs:** 42**Druid spells (major Water, minor
Fire):** Five 1st-level spells, three 2nd-
level spells**Saving Throws**

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
10	14	13	16	15

+2 vs. fire and lightning

Weapon Proficiencies: Hand axe,
glaive, torch****Nonweapon Proficiencies:** Animal
lore, animal training, herbalism,
healing, modern language (Common),
set snares, survival (sandy wastes),
tracking**Languages:** Common, Pterran**Equipment:** Bone glaive, metal hand
axe, 6 torches, fire kit, 2 large belt
pouches, 2 waterskins**Starting Money:** 1 ceramic piece* See *The Complete Druid's
Handbook*.** See *Combat & Tactics*.

Mul Psionicist 3 (sensei*)

4,400 xp

Choose name, gender, any non-Chaotic alignment

Str	16	Int	15
Dex	16	Wis	17
Con	16	Cha	10

#AT: 2 (with martial arts)

THACO: 19

Damage: Martial arts 1d3+4

AC: 8 unarmored

HP: 17

Disciplines: Psychometabolism (primary), Psychokinesis

Sciences: Life Draining (Con -3, 11, 5/round), Nerve Manipulation* (Con -3, 14, n/a)

Devotions: Accelerate* (Con -2, 10, 10/round), Adrenalin Control (Con -3, 8, 4/round), Cell Adjustment (Con -3, 5, up to 20/round), Double Pain (Con -3, 7, n/a), Magnetize* (Int -1, 2+, n/a), Soften (Int, 4, 3/round), Static Discharge* (Int -3, 5, 5/round)

Defense Modes: Mind Blank (Wis -7, 0, n/a), Thought Shield (Wis -3, 1, n/a)

Or choose 2 disciplines, 2 sciences from primary discipline, 7 devotions with at least 4 from primary discipline

PSPs: 46

Saving Throws

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
13	15	10	16	15

+2 on all saves vs. enchantment/charm spells and similar effects

Unarmed Combat Style: Martial arts* (3 slots)

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Blind-fighting, endurance, jumping, rejuvenation, running, tightrope walking, tumbling

Languages: Common

Sensei limitations: This character cannot use any armor or magical weapons.

Equipment: Backpack, 2 small belt pouches, fire kit, 50' hemp rope, small tent, 2 waterskins

Starting Money: 62 ceramic pieces

* See *The Will and the Way*.

Human Barbarian* 3**4,500 xp****Choose name, gender, any alignment**

Str	18 (14%)	Int	11
Dex	16	Wis	12
Con	17	Cha	12

#AT: 1 (axe or knife)
2 (short bow)

THACO: 18

Damage: Bone battle axe
1d8+2/1d8+2
Metal knife 1d3+3/1d2+3
Short bow w/
bone flight arrows 1d6-1/1d6-1

AC: 3 in hide and medium shield**HP:** 29

Wild Talent: Animate Shadow (Wis -
3, 7, 3/round)

Wild Talent: Know Course** (Int -2,
3, 4/hour)

PSPs: 46**Saving Throws**

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
13	15	14	16	16

Weapon Proficiencies: Battle axe,
dagger, knife, short bow, spear

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Animal
rending*, crude bowyer/fletcher*,
endurance, survival (sandy wastes)

Languages: Common

Equipment: Hide armor, medium
shield, bone battle axe, metal knife,
short bow, 12 bone arrows, backpack,
2 large belt pouches, fire kit, quiver,
small tent, 2 waterskins, whetstone

Starting Money: None

* See *The Complete Barbarian's
Handbook*.

** See *The Will and the Way*.

Human Water Cleric 3 (wanderer*)

3,000 xp

Choose name, gender, any Chaotic alignment

Str	13	Int	14
Dex	15	Wis	17
Con	15	Cha	16

#AT: 1 (spear)
2 (shortbow)

THACO: 20

Damage: Shortbow w/
bone flight arrows 1d6-1/1d6-1
Spear 1d6/1d8

AC: 4 in nonmetal brigandine +
medium shield

HP: 17

Wild Talent: Contact (Wis, 3+,
1/round)

Wild Talent: Send Thoughts (Int -1,
contact, 2/round)

PSPs: 26

Cleric spells: Four 1st-level spells,
three 2nd-level spells

Saving Throws

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
10	14	13	16	15

Weapon Proficiencies: Short bow,
spear

Nonweapon Proficiencies:

Agriculture, direction sense, healing,
local history, navigation,
reading/writing, water find

Languages: Common (literate)

Equipment: Spear, shortbow, 24
bone flight arrows, nonmetal
brigandine armor, medium shield,
backpack, 2 large belt pouches, 2
glass bottles, quiver, wooden
spade**, small tent, 2 waterskins

Starting Money: 3 ceramic pieces

* See *Earth, Air, Fire, and Water*.

** See *Combat & Tactics*.

Halfling Ranger 2/Illusionist 2**2,500 xp per class****Choose name, gender, any Good alignment**

Str	17	Int	16
Dex	17	Wis	14
Con	15	Cha	12

#AT: 1 (boomerang)
2 (two-weapon fighting sapara and knife)

THACO: 19

Damage: Boomerang* 1d4/1d4
Bone sapara* 1d6+1/1d4
Metal knife 1d3+1/1d2+1

AC: 7 unarmored**HP:** 10**Wild Talent:** Teleport (Int, 10+, n/a)**Wild Talent:** Time Shift (Int, 16, n/a)**PSPs:** 30

Preserver Spells: Two 1st-level spells and one 1st-level illusion spell

Saving Throws

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
14	11	13	15	12

Weapon Proficiencies: Boomerang, club, knife, sapara*

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Heat protection, hunting, modern language (Common), navigation, reading/writing (Halfling), spellcraft, spellweaving**, survival (jungles), tracking

Languages: Common, Halfling (literate)

Spell book:

- 1st level: *armor, cantrip, grease, detect magic, gaze reflection, message, read magic, spook*

Equipment: Boomerang*, bone sapara*, metal knife, backpack, 2 small belt pouches, spell book, small tent, 2 waterskins

Starting Money: 125 ceramic pieces* See *Combat & Tactics*.** See *Defilers & Preservers: The Wizards of Athas*.

Dwarf Trader* 3

2,500 xp

Choose name, gender, any alignment

Str	14	Int	15
Dex	14	Wis	16
Con	16	Cha	15

#AT: 1

THACO: 19

Damage: Carrikal 1d6+1/1d8
Metal hammer** 1d4/1d3

AC: 7 in leather armor and medium shield

HP: 9

Wild Talent: See Sound (Wis -3, 6, 3/round)

PSPs: 26

Saving Throws

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
13	14	12	16	15

Weapon Proficiencies: Carrikal, hammer**

Thieving Percentages:

PP	OL	F/RT	MS	HS
15%	40%	40%	10%	5%
DN	CW	RL		
15%	50%	-5%		

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Animal handling, appraising, bargain, fire-building, fungi identification†, land-based riding (crodlu), smelting†

Languages: Common, Dwarf, Thri-Kreen

Equipment: Carrikal, metal hammer**, leather armor, medium shield, backpack, 2 large belt pouches, riding crodlu with bit and bridle and riding saddle, small tent, bone thieves' picks, 2 waterskins

Starting Money: 200 ceramic pieces, 6 bits

* See *Dune Trader* or the revised **DARK SUN** boxed set *Age of Heroes* book.

** See *Combat & Tactics*.

† See *The Complete Book of Dwarves*.

Elf Air Cleric 2/Fighter 2 (battle dancer*)**2,000 xp per class****Choose name, gender, any alignment**

Str	17	Int	13
Dex	17	Wis	17
Con	14	Cha	14

#AT: 2 (with long bow)
5/2 (two-weapon fighting with
long swords)

THACO: 20

Damage: Tribal bone long sword
1d8/1d12
Bone long sword 1d8/1d12
Tribal long bow w/
metal sheaf arrows 1d8/1d8

AC: 5 in leather armor**HP:** 14

Wild Talent: Mind Over Body (Wis -3,
n/a, 10/day)

PSPs: 44**Cleric spells:** Four 1st-level spells**Saving Throws**

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
10	14	13	16	15

Weapon Proficiencies: Bows tight
group**

Weapon Expertise: Long sword
expertise**

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Armor
optimization, blind-fighting, dancing,
heat protection, musical instrument
(drum), religion, singing, spellcraft,
water find

Languages: Common, Elf

Battle Dancer limitation: This
character never gains additional
weapon proficiencies.

Equipment: Tribal bone long sword,
bone long sword, tribal long bow, 12
metal sheaf arrows, leather armor,
backpack, 2 large belt pouches, hand
drum, quiver, small tent, 2 waterskins

Starting Money: 3 ceramic pieces* See *Elves of Athas*.** See *Combat & Tactics*.

Half-Giant Ranger 2/Psionicist 2

2,250 xp per class

Choose name, gender, any non-Chaotic, Good alignment

Str	20	Int	14
Dex	14	Wis	15
Con	18	Cha	8

#AT: 3/2 (with longspear)

THACO: 19

Damage: Longspear

2d6+8/3d6+8

AC: 7 in studded leather armor

HP: 34

Disciplines: Psychokinesis (primary), psychometabolism

Sciences: Telekinesis (Wis -3, 3+, 1+/round)

Devotions: Ballistic Attack (Con -2, 5, n/a), Enhanced Strength (Wis -4, varies, varies)*, Inertial Barrier (Con -5, 7, 5/round), Levitation (Wis -3, 12, 2/round), Mind Over Body (Wis -3, n/a, 10/day)

Defense Modes: Thought Shield (Wis -3, 1, n/a)

Or choose 2 disciplines, 1 science from primary discipline, 5 devotions with at least 3 from primary discipline.

PSPs: 33

Saving Throws

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
13	15	10	16	15

+2 on all saves vs.

enchantment/charm spells and similar effects

Weapon Expertise: Longspear**

Fighting Style Specialization: Two-handed weapon**

Unarmed Combat Style Specialization: Wrestling**

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Armor optimization, direction sense, heat protection, leatherworking, navigation, rejuvenation, tracking, water find, weather sense

Languages: Common, Giant

Equipment (all half-giant sized): Longspear, studded leather armor, backpack, small barrel, large belt pouch, fire kit, wooden spade**

Starting Money: 42 ceramic pieces, 8 bits

* Note that as described in *The Will and the Way*, a character may raise Strength up to their race's maximum.

** See *Combat & Tactics*.

Aarakocra Preserver 3 (militant wizard*)**5,000 xp****Choose name, gender, any alignment**

Str	15	Int	19
Dex	16	Wis	15
Con	15	Cha	13

#AT: 1**THACO:** 20**Damage:** Javelin 1d6/1d6
Bone dagger 1d4-1/1d3-1**AC:** 8 unarmored**HP:** 14**Wild Talent:** Control Flames (Wis -1, 6, 3/round)**Wild Talent:** Telekinesis (Wis -3, 3+, 1+/round)**PSPs:** 33**Preserver Spells:** Two 1st-level spells, one 2nd-level spell**Saving Throws**

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
14	11	13	15	12

Weapon Proficiencies: Dagger, javelin**Nonweapon Proficiencies:** Ancient language (Rhulisti, literate), direction sense, endurance, heat protection, modern language (Common), reading/writing (Aarakocra, Common), somatic concealment, spellcraft, spellweaving**, tactics of magic†, thaumaturgy†, water find**Languages:** Aarakocra (literate), Common (literate), Rhulisti (literate)**Spell book:**

- 1st level: *change self, detect magic, erase, identify, magic missile, read magic, shield, sleep*
- 2nd level: *glitterdust*

Militant Wizard limitation: This character can never learn 8th or 9th level spells.**Equipment:** Bone dagger, 6 javelins, backpack, 2 small belt pouches, javelin case, spell book, 2 waterskins**Starting Money:** 45 ceramic pieces* See *The Complete Wizard's Handbook*.** See *Defilers & Preservers: The Wizards of Athas*.† See *Spells & Magic*.

Pterran Thief 3 (scout*)

2,500 xp

Choose name, gender, any alignment except Lawful Good

Str	15	Int	13
Dex	18	Wis	11
Con	16	Cha	11

#AT: 2 (claws)
1 (weapon)

THACO: 19

Damage: Claws 2x 1d4+1
Bone tortoise blade 1d6-1/1d6
Light crossbow w/
metal quarrels 1d4/1d4

AC: 3 with tortoise blade

HP: 17

Wild Talent: Suppress Fear (Wis +1,
5, n/a)

PSPs: 13

Saving Throws

DM	RSW	PP	BW	SP
13	14	12	16	15

Weapon Proficiencies: Light
crossbow, tortoise blade

Thieving Percentages:

PP	OL	F/RT	MS	HS
30%	25%	10%	70%	60%
DN	CW	RL		
55%	70%	0%		

Scouts gain +10% to Move Silently
and Hide in Shadows in the wild, but -
5% to all abilities in cities.

These thieving percentages include
bonuses for wearing no armor.

Nonweapon Proficiencies:

Alertness*, animal noise*, direction
sense, fire-building, modern language
(Common), observation*, rope use,
tracking, weather sense

Languages: Common, Pterran

Equipment: Light crossbow, 12 metal
bolts, bone tortoise blade, 2 large belt
pouches, bolt case, 50' hemp rope,
bone thieves' picks, small tent, 2
waterskins

Starting Money: 23 ceramic pieces

* See *The Complete Thief's Handbook*.

