

The Shadow of the Ragged King

(a World of Xoth Adventure by Paul Kirk)

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Swords against an Ancient Evil in the Savage World of Xoth

Two thousand years have passed since the hordes of Sheng, led by the Demonic Warlord known as the Ragged King, swarmed over the northern borders of Elder Kuth. The northernmost outpost of that ancient land was Akharon, 'the Maiden City', so called because it's defences had never been breached.

The siege of Akharon has long been forgotten by most mortal men, yet it's repercussions echo down through the ages. The stubborn defence of the city bought time for the Giant Kings to bring their power to bear and to drown both Akharon and it's besiegers in a deluge of sand.

Now, time and the desert winds have conspired to reveal the ancient ruins and release the terrible power trapped within it's crumbling shell. The player characters find themselves in mortal danger on the road between Zul Bazzir and Dipur as the shadow of the Ragged King falls once more across the land.

The Tale of the Ragged King and the fall of Akharon

More than two thousand years ago, the Giant Kings of Elder Kuth found their lands under attack by a barbarian horde from far eastern lands. These invaders, the Sheng, conquered all in their path. None, it seemed, could stand against them and their relentless advance. It was said that they were led by a Demon of the Outer Darkness, so hideous and alien in appearance that he was forced to take human form to lead his armies. It was whispered that the mere sight of his true form would drive men beyond the brink of their sanity.

The Demonic entity appeared to its followers as a small, shaven-headed, man wearing a crown of black iron and clad in tattered yellow robes such as those worn by the priests in latter day Taikang.

He was known as 'The Ragged King' and under his guidance, the victories of the Sheng were beyond the counting. He led his troops in person, mounted on a huge demonic steed with a spiked tail, a leonine mane and huge tusks.

The northernmost city of the Kingdom of Elder Kuth was Akharon, 'the Maiden City'. The stronghold of the Giant King, Ekhrumun, it was a mighty citadel whose defences had never been breached.

For three turnings of the moon the city stood firm against the Ragged King's horde. Finally though, its mighty walls were torn down and its population destroyed in an orgy of rapine and slaughter. The Maiden city was a maiden no longer. Ekhrumun was taken captive and executed, bloodily, in his own throne room. Surrounded by the severed heads and impaled corpses of the royal family and their bodyguards, the Ragged King held court in the devastation that was Akharon and dispatched emissaries to deliver his missives and threats to the other Giant Kings.

But he had not reckoned with their mystical might. The Kuthans could not hope to prevail upon the field of battle against such numbers as the Sheng could muster, but Ekhrumun's dogged defence of Akharon bought the much needed time for their sorcerous cabals to join together and wreak destruction upon the Ragged King's horde. The city of Akharon, The Ragged King and the Sheng horde were swallowed up by a great deluge of desert sand, save for a handful who were subsequently slaughtered by the slave warriors of the Giant Kings.

The centuries passed, as did the Kingdom of Elder Kuth. The fall of Akharon and the fate of the Ragged King was consigned to history and largely forgotten in the mists of time. Yet the time's relentless march and the desert winds conspired over the intervening millennia to reveal the location of the ruins.

The Khazrajites do not understand what exactly it is that they fear about the ruins that lie west of the Oasis of Yirlat but, they are certain that something evil resides there. The tales say that those who have journeyed there are driven mad by their nightmares. Few willingly go there and many more will not even speak of it, afraid that its mere mention will invite evil and misfortune to their campfires.

Some months before the adventure starts a group of Ikuna slaves, bound for the fighting pits of Zul Bazzir, escaped from their Zadjite captors. Pursued by the Slavers, they were forced to flee north, even beyond that city, in order to shake them off.

They stumbled out of a sandstorm into the ruins of Akharon and discovered the throne room where, his host body destroyed, the Ragged King's soul remains eternally trapped within his crown of black iron. Dibak, the Ikuna's savage leader placed the crown upon his brow and was possessed by Tsultha'ustar. The Shadow of the Ragged King has returned and is cast, once again, over the ruins of Akharon.

The Desert of Al Khaz

This region of rocky badlands and sand dunes stretches over several hundred miles from north to south and a similar distance from east to west. To the north of this desert lie endless steppes, while to the west lie the Whiperling Waste and the city states of Jairan. A mere handful of people call this region home as there is little water and fodder available for livestock. Those who dwell here are known as the Khazrajites, kin to the Khazistanis, but who have never abandoned the nomadic ways of their ancestors. They are herders who drive their flocks from oasis to oasis and who fight among themselves as readily as they attack traders on the caravan road between Dipur and Zul Bazzir. The fort at Yirlat lies at an oasis near the centre of the Al Khaz and is the cause of continued conflict between the Khazrajites and the soldiers of mighty Khazistan.

The Khazrajites do not worship any gods but revere their ancestors. They believe in the existence of a Demon God, Al Tawir- The Lord of Empty Wastes, who sleeps beneath the desert sands but fear him and do not invoke his name. They hope that by ignoring him that he, in turn, will ignore them.

- Several ancient ruins litter the desert, remnants of cities of Elder Kuth that were abandoned in the face of the encroaching desert sands. One such ruin is Akharon, the location of this adventure. Others includes Pythos and Chaldor, both best avoided due to the effect that the leeching of ancient magic into the sands has had on their local wildlife. Fortunately, neither of these ruins lies on any current trade route and it is likely that only those who are lost in the desert, or those who deliberately seek them out will ever have the misfortune to visit them.

Storms in the Desert - The Breath of Al Tawir

The nomads of the western deserts believe that a Demon God, Al Tawir, sleeps beneath the sands of the Desert. The sudden, fierce sandstorms that occasionally sweep it are said to be the breath of this sleeping entity. The ferocity of many of these storms lends credence to the nomad's belief that his slumber is anything but peaceful.

The garb of the desert nomads is designed to provide some protection against these storms. Turbans and Keffiyehs are designed to be wrapped about the face to protect the eyes and to enable them to breathe amid the swirling clouds, for it is almost certain death to inhale the breath of Al Tawir. Voluminous desert robes, known as 'Kandureh', offer some protection against the sands which might otherwise, upon a very rare occasion, flay a man to his very bones.

Travelling in a sandstorm is inadvisable and almost impossible, as any caravan master or nomad will tell you. The best course of action is to hunker down and take shelter until the storm has passed. Only a fool or one who was truly desperate would attempt a journey through the Breath of Al Tawir.

Depending on the severity of the sandstorm, all Perception rolls vary from Difficult(-20%) to Formidable(-80%).

Characters caught in a sandstorm must make an immediate survival roll. All modifiers listed are cumulative.

- Those without appropriate desert clothing suffer a -20% penalty to the roll.
- Those who attempt to travel in the storm suffer -20% penalty to the roll.
- Those with appropriate desert clothing attract a +20% bonus to the roll.
- Those who take shelter from the storm attract a +20% bonus to the roll.

A success means that the character suffers no ill effects for the duration of the storm.

On a failure, the character starts to take damage. This is at the rate of one to four points of damage to all locations every hour until the storm abates. A storm can last anything from 1-8 hours. The damage is dependent on the severity of the storm. (The most severe storms are referred to as 'The Wrath of 'Al Tawir'. These storms require a Formidable(-80%) Survival roll and do four points of damage every hour. Armour provides half protection(rounded up).

A Fumbled Survival roll means that the character inhales and chokes on the swirling sands. The rules for Asphyxiation are applied to the character. The character is effectively doomed from this point unless they spend a Hero Point for a second chance.

Proposed Adventure Synopsis

This is just one possible synopsis for how the adventure might unfold. Please be aware that there are a number of other possible ways to have the characters drawn to the ruins of Akharon. Other GMs, having read the background on the city of Dipur, might have their characters in the employ of the Kardeslik and could be in pursuit of 'the Toecutter', to retrieve Sutrahmunah. Either or neither (even both) abductions can be used or ignored at the whim of the GM and only Dibak and his escaped Ikuna slaves are actually necessary for the scenario to function. A very simple version of this adventure might have the characters hired in Zul Bizzar by Chamash the Slaver to aid his Zadjites in his pursuit of the escaped Ikunas. They might happen upon the ruins and fall into the grasp of the Ragged King, without going anywhere near Fort Yirlat or Dipur.

Scene 1) Arrival at Fort Yirlat

The characters arrive as part of a caravan at Fort Yirlat, the staging point for the final part of a journey across the Desert of Al Khaz to Zul Bazzir. The characters are friends or mercenaries in the employ of Haram Baal, a merchant from Dipur who is the owner of the caravan.

The atmosphere at the fort is relaxed. The garrison are quite friendly and like to hear tales of far off places from the merchants, their drovers and hired guards. Several other caravans are also there, awaiting the arrival of the escort patrol which is due to return in five days time. Haram Baal visits the Exciseman, grumbles about the amount of tax he has to pay to water his livestock, bemoans his poor timing and settles down to wait for the escort patrol to arrive.

The atmosphere changes palpably after a pair of dusty riders arrive at the fort and are taken directly to the commander.

Within the hour, all non residents are ejected from the fort with no explanation. Force may be used against any who fail to comply immediately. A Khazistani officer, Captain Kilij Arshak, accompanied by a single Yemarite Corporal comes out to the caravan encampment and tells the caravaneers that they must leave the fort's environs the next morning. Once again, no explanation is offered.

Scene 2) The Road to Zul Bazzir-First Day

The next morning, as the caravans prepare to make their way to Zul Bazzir, the gates of the fort swing open and a small troop of mercenaries ride out, led by the same young officer from the previous day.

He rides over to the gathered merchants and addresses them before returning to his soldiers, an imperious look upon his face.

Haram Baal returns to his caravan and grumbles that for the price he paid, he would have expected more than a measly score of riders led by a yapping pup, barely weaned off his mothers teat.

The convoy sets out and any observant characters may notice the two riders from the fort joining the rear of the column. There are now well over a hundred camels as well as some three score of assorted merchants, drovers, servants and caravan guards. Nothing else of any great import happens on that day.

Scene 3) The Road to Zul Bazzir - The Second Day

Mid morning the characters may spot a handful of camel mounted nomads observing the caravan from the crest of a sand dune to the east of the road. The soldiers spot them as well and Kilij Arshak leads his men up the dune to chase them off. The nomads flee without a fight and the young officer will lead his men back with a pleased expression.

That afternoon, a violent sandstorm blows up. The caravaneers hunker down and seek shelter. Survival rolls to be made by characters every hour, or 2 points of damage to all locations is sustained every hour, until the storm abates(D8 hours).

That night, the camp is raided by a half dozen Ikuna cultists. They are attempting to kidnap one or more drovers from the caravan. They happen upon Jamila and attempt to steal her away. Any character standing watch can make a Difficult Notice roll to observe the abduction attempt.

Any aid offered by the characters will be gratefully accepted by Azam, who will immediately begin to size up their potential for use as accomplices or patsies, as well as spinning them the tale about how Jamila and he come to be travelling together.

Scene 4) Blood on the Sands - The Third Day

On the afternoon of the third day, the crests of the dunes swarm with hundreds of Khazrajite warriors. Haram's caravan guards fight bravely but are no match for the fury of the desert warriors. Eskaros' lancers swing into a line and charge into the horde of nomads, toppling them from their camels and desert steeds with their long spears. They die bravely and surprisingly their deaths are not an exercise in futility. They survive and fight for long enough to punch a hole through the tightening ring of nomads. Azam escapes through the breach with Jamila in tow. Soon Haram Baal, several of the Drovers and the characters are all that remain, captives of the Al Jafari. Captain Kilij Arshak is also alive, having been dragged from his mount in the melee and restrained.

It is, of course, possible that the characters have also fought their way free of the massacre. In this event, their flight takes them west towards Akharon.

If events unfold as described previously the characters find themselves bound and gathered in a group.

There are uncomfortable murmurings from among the gathered nomads. The kidnapper has fled into the cursed area of the desert and the Shaykh wants his men to go after her. Despite his haranguing ("Cowardly Dogs and Sons of Dogs"), the nomads cannot overcome their fear of whatever it is that haunts that region. None will venture forth to do their Shaykh's bidding.

The Shaykh approaches the gathered prisoners and informs them that if they return his granddaughter to him, they will live. Otherwise they will meet the same date as this lapdog of the Pahlidishah. To emphasise the point, Kilij Arshak is stripped and beaten, before being spreadeagled and tied between four lances to slowly cook in the sun.

The survivors of the caravan are given their weapons and several days worth of food and water. The Shaykh indicates the stricken Captain, staked out to die in the sun and reminds them that the same fate awaits them if they fail in their task or if they attempt to flee back to the fort.

As the characters set off westwards and the nomads depart into the east, the slowly circling vultures descend to feast upon the bodies of the slain.

Haram Baal is taken away, a captive of the Khazrajites. He is clearly a wealthy merchant and probably worth a hefty ransom.

It is possible, at this point, that the characters may return to rescue Kilij Arshak. Doing this will incur the wrath of the Khazrajites but will earn them the undying gratitude of Kilij Arshak and his family(who wield considerable political clout in Dipur).

Scene 5) At the Court of the Ragged King - The Fourth Day and Beyond

The characters and the drovers stumble across the desert for several hours until night falls. During the night the temperature falls and it becomes almost unbearably cold. The drovers (Hamosh, Shemnah and Japh) are afraid. They know that the nomads, both Khazrajite and Jairani avoid this area, though they know not why.

That night the dreams of the characters are strange and nightmarish. The following morning the drovers look haggard and ill rested.

In the late afternoon, the characters may make a Notice test to spot vultures circling some way off to the southwest. Beyond the next dune they find the remains of the horse that Azamat and Jamila escaped the ambush on. A pair of arrows jut from its left flank but, it has clearly been slain by a thrusting blow to the throat. The vultures protest noisily as the characters drive them off, alerting an approaching band of Ikuna Cultists to their presence.

These Ikunas had previously ambushed Azamat and Jamila as they camped the previous night. They were returning to the scene to harvest the horse meat when they discover that they have more than hungry vultures to deal with.

Unless the characters state they are mounting a watch, the Ikunas launch a successful ambush. There are as many of them as there are characters, plus one for each drover. The drovers scatter into the dunes and the characters are left outnumbered by the cannibalistic savages.

If they defeat them, the characters may climb the dune. To the west they see the ruins of an ancient citadel, mounted on a great crag of black stone, jutting out from the sands of the desert.

They stumble across the sands to explore the ruins of Akharon and discover the fledgling cult of the Ragged King. Azamat and Jamila are likely to be their prisoners. Can they rescue them from the savages and survive an encounter with the Ragged King? If so, will they return Jamila to her grandfather or will they accept an offer of coin from her kidnapper to deliver her to the Satrap in Zul Bazzir? Will they rescue Sutramunah and return her to the Satrap of Dipur? Will they find aid in their task from the the Zadjite Slavers or, will they find themselves in chains at the adventure's end.

The Cast

Azam - A Spy for the Khazistanis in the camps of the Khazrajites. Has abducted the daughter of a powerful Chief.

Chamash - Captain of a group of Zadjite slavers. They are pursuing the Ikunas who lurk in the ruins of Akharon.

Dibak - Mightiest Warrior among the escaped Ikuna slaves. He is now the Avatar of Tsultha'ustar known as 'The Ragged King'.

Eskaros - Commander of Fort Yirlat, a Nabastissean mercenary in Khazistani employ.

Guram Khal 'The Toecutter' - A Zorabi gang leader. He abducted Sutrahmunah from Dipur and now shares her fate amid the ruins of Akharon.

Haraam Baal - Susrahnite Merchant. Owner of the caravan that the characters are travelling with.

Jamila - Grandaughter of a Khazrajite Shaykh who has been kidnapped by the villainous Azam.

Kilij Arshak - A Khazistani Nobleman and second in command at Fort Yirlat

N'Gomba - Azimban bodyguard of Haram Baal

Muleh Al Jafari - Shaykh of the Al Jafari Khazrajites.

Sutramunah - Yar Ammonite Slave Girl. She is the lover of the Satrap of Dipur and has been abducted by persons unknown.

Tsultha'ustar - God of madness and unnatural desires, a Demon of the Outer Dark.

Adventure Locations and NPC Stat Blocks

The Caravan

Haram Baal's caravan is bound for Zul Bazzir, across the Al Khazi desert, with a cargo of cloth(including exotic silks from Taikang), grain for the warehouses of the city and spiced Nabastissean wine for it's inns and taverns. The proposed adventure, 'The Shadow of the Ragged King', will involve the player characters travelling along with this caravan, either as friends and associates of Haram Baal or, as hired swords to supplement the Susrahnite guards.

There are thirty camels loaded with trade goods and six more loaded with supplies for the journey. Haram Baal rides on a camel, as does N'Gomba. Tarsham Tar, the guards and the drovers all travel afoot. The player characters will be assumed to be travelling to Zul Bazzir on foot as well, unless they own their own camels.

Susrahnite/Adartani Caravan Guards (12)

A band of street toughs who originate from Dipur. Life on the road has made them a tough, fairly competent bunch and Haram's gold ensures their loyalty. Their leader is a dour individual named Tarsham Tar with black dreadlocked hair and a ringleted beard. He is a stone cold killer and his occasional smile is never reflected in his eyes.

These fellows wear armour of baked leather, dyed blood red before being worked into shape. Their helmets have cheek guards which tie beneath the chin and sport black horsetail plumes. Their shields are adorned with the symbol of a set of traders scales, a symbol used by many Mercenary companies and representing the balance of their bargain of service for coin.

Strength).	13.	Combat Actions.	2.	1-3.	Right Leg.	2/5
Constitution).	12.	Damage Mod.	+D2.	4-6.	Left Leg.	2/5
Size).	13.	Improvement Mod.	na.	7-9.	Abdomen.	2/6
Intelligence).	10.	Magic Points.	11.	10-12.	Chest.	2/7
Power).	11.	Movement.	8m.	13-15.	Right Arm.	2/4
Dexterity).	12.	Strike Rank.	11(8).	16-18.	Left Arm.	2/4
Charsma).	11.			19-20.	Head.	3/5

Common Skills.

Athletics 45%, Brawn 46%, Culture(Susrahnite) 54%, Evade 44%, Language(Susrahnite) 71%, Lore(Dipur) 54%, Perception 41%, Persistence 32%, Resilience 40%, Unarmed 50%

Advanced Skills

Gambling 41%, Language(Khazi) 31%, Lore(Caravan routes) 35%, Streetwise 36%, Survival 41%

Equipment - Hard leather cuirass and skirt, Hard Leather greaves, bracers and cap with Scimitar, round shield, sling and 10 stones. Each has 24 Silver coins in a belt pouch.

Tactics - These men fight on foot. Their tactics are to loose sling stones until their opponents attempt to close with them, then hack viciously with their scimitars. They are a unit of semi professional soldiers and try to fight as such, offering support to each other in combat whenever possible. At the end of the day though, they are hired swords whose loyalty is to coin and coin alone. Normally, if defeated and offered the chance to live, they will take the offer. Tarsham Tar would then make arrangements to return any coin to their previous employer. However, none of these men would willingly allow themselves to be taken alive by Khazrajite tribesmen.

Weapon.	Size.	Reach.	Damage.	Ap/Hp.	Range.	Special
Scimitar.	M.	S.	D8+D2.	6/10.	Na.	Bleed
Round Shield.	L.	S.	D4+D2.	6/12.	Na.	Na
Sling	L.	na.	D8+D2.	1/2	200m.	Stun Location

Combat Styles - Caravan Guard (Sling, Sword and Shield) 55%
Street Bravo (Cudgel, Dagger, Unarmed). 50%

Add +15% to all skills and an Influence skill of 30% to represent Tarsham Tar.

Haram Baal - Susrahnite Merchant from the City of Dipur

Haram Baal is a short and somewhat plump individual with a shaved head and an oiled beard. He is good natured with a pleasant demeanour and a kind word for most people. Although not exactly a facade, this serves to disguise a shrewd and calculating business mind. He is exceptionally well liked and would fetch a sizable sum, by way of ransom, from his family and colleagues in Dipur. He is quite willing to 'speculate to accumulate' and will happily indulge in risky ventures. He pays well, which is likely to be what will attract the player characters to him in the first place.

He wears fine damask robes, edged with gold brocade and a white turban with an, ostentatious, peacock feather plume. His scimitar hilt is worked with gold wire and has a red garnet gemstone set in it's pommel. It possesses the Highly Desirable quality.

Strength)	10.	Combat Actions.	2.	1-3.	Right Leg.	0/5
Constitution).	12.	Damage Mod.	-D2	4-6.	Left Leg.	0/5
Size).	09	Improvement Mod.	+1.	7-9.	Abdomen.	0/6
Intelligence).	15.	Magic Points.	13.	10-12.	Chest.	0/7
Power).	13.	Movement.	8	13-15.	Right Arm.	0/4
Dexterity).	11.	Strike Rank.	13.	16-18.	Left Arm.	0/4
Charisma).	13.	Hero Points.	1.	19-20.	Head.	0/5

Common Skills

Athletics 21%, Brawn 19%, Culture(Susrahnite).67%, Evade 52%, Evaluate 58%. Influence.76%, Insight 42%, Language(Susrahnite) 87%, Lore(Caravan Routes) 59%, Lore(Jathpur) 67%, Perception 48%, Persistence 56%, Resilience 34%, Ride 44%, Sleight 44%

Advanced Skills

Commerce 88%, Courtesy 48%, Culture(Khazistani) 52% Language(Khazi) 52%, Language(Taraam) 48%, Lore(Al Khaz) 37%, Lore(Dipur) 67%, Streetwise 56%.

Equipment

Expensive Desert Robes, scimitar and dagger, mounted on camel, 30 Gold in a coin belt and 3000 silver coins in a chest, guarded by N'Gomba (his bodyguard).

Tactics - Haram is no warrior and relies on N'Gomba and his hired swords to do any fighting for him. He will attempt to fight to defend himself if necessary, but will surrender as soon as that option becomes available to him. He relies on his wealth and the promise of a large ransom to secure his survival.

Weapon.	Size.	Reach.	Damage.	Ap/Hp.	Range.	Special
Scimitar.	M.	M.	D8-D2.	6/10.	na.	Bleed
Knife.	S.	S.	D3-d2.	5/4.	na.	Bleed, Impale

Weapon Styles - Ineffective Flailings(1H Sword,Dagger). 31 %

N'gomba - Haram Baal's Azimban Bodyguard

An imposing dark skinned warrior, hailing from the lands of Azimba. N'gomba is tall and muscular with a shaven head and fierce black eyes.

Stolen from his village as a youth by slavers, he was taken to the auction blocks of Sahfir, where he became the property of a Khazistani Pit Master named Yildim. N'gomba proved to be such an exceptional talent in the fighting pits of Zul Bazzir that ,eventually, no other Pit Masters would send their fighters against him.

Finally, an exasperated Yildim sold him to a Susrahnite merchant named Haram Baal.

Haram arranged for N'Gomba to be taught to speak Susrahnite and he was tutored as to how to behave in polite company. Upon completion of this training, N'gomba was given position as Haram's personal bodyguard.

N'gomba wears a Corselet of Bronze scales, hard leather greaves and bracers. His iron helmet is of the spired style favoured by Khazistani lancers and the pelt of a lion is draped about his broad shoulders.

He carries an iron bladed spear in his right hand and two javelins are carried in a sheath that is strapped across his back. A curved bronze dagger hangs from his belt in a leather sheath and he carries a round shield.

Strength).	18.	Combat Actions.	3.	1-3.	Right Leg.	2/6
Constitution).	14.	Damage Mod.	+D4.	4-6.	Left Leg.	2/6
Size).	16.	Improvement Mod.	Na.	7-9.	Abdomen.	4/7
Intelligence).	12.	Magic Points.	10.	10-12.	Chest.	4/8
Power).	10.	Movement.	8m.	13-15.	Right Arm.	2/5
Dexterity).	14.	Strike Rank.	13(9).	16-18.	Left Arm.	2/5
Charisma).	10.	Hero Points.	2.	19-20.	Head.	4/6

Common Skills.

Athletics 58%, Brawn.70%, Culture(Azimban) 56%, Evade 65%, Influence 47%.

Language(Azimban) 72%, Lore(Azimba) 74%, Perception 49%,

Persistence 38%, Resilience 66%, Ride 51%, Stealth 63%, Unarmed 82%.

Advanced Skills

Courtesy 36%, Language(Susrahnite) 44%, Language(Zadjite) 23%,

Lore(Dipur) 35%, Survival 67%

Equipment - Scale Hauberk, Hard leather greaves and Bracers, Helmet(4Ap), 3x Shortspears, 27 Silver coins in a belt pouch. Mounted on a camel.

Tactics - N'gomba attempts, whenever possible, to place himself between his master and any opponent. His first tactic is to throw his spear and then to attack aggressively.

Weapon.	S.	R.	Damage.	Ap/Hp.	Range.	Special
Shortspear.	M.	L.	D8+1+D4.	4/5.	na.	Impale
Thrown Spear.	M.	na.	D8+1+D4.	4/5.	25m.	Impale
Target Shield.	L.	S.	D6+D4.	4/12.	Na.	Impale

Combat Styles - Azimba Warrior(Club, Spear, Shield, Thrown Spear). 55%

Pit Fighter(Buckler, Cestus, Dagger, Knuckledusters).90%

Heroic Abilities - Awesome Smash, Mighty Blow

Adartani Drovers (12)

Clad in desert robes and armed only with knives, these men lead and care for the camels of Haram's caravan. They are simple men, from the slums of Dipur, with simple desires. Haram has coin aplenty to pay for wine, women and song. Thus, their loyalty is assured.

Strength).	11.	Combat Actions.	2.	1-3.	Right Leg.	0/5
Constitution).	12.	Damage Mod.	Na.	4-6.	Left Leg.	0/5
Size).	11.	Improvement Mod.	Na.	7-9.	Abdomen.	0/6
Intelligence).	9.	Magic Points.	10.	10-12.	Chest.	0/7
Power).	10.	Movement.	8m.	13-15.	Right Arm.	0/4
Dexterity).	10.	Strike Rank.	10.	16-18.	Left Arm.	0/4
Charisma).	9.			19-20.	Head.	0/5

Common Skills

Athletics 31%, Brawn 32%, Culture(Susrahnite) 48%, Evade 30%
Language(Susrahnite) 48%, Lore(Dipur) 48%, Perception 31%, Persistence 30%,
Resilience 34%, Stealth 30%

Advanced Skills

Craft(Animal Husbandry) 35%, Craft(Drover) 38%, Lore(Animals) 29%,
Lore(Caravan Routes) 30%, Gambling 24%, Streetwise 28%, Survival 29%

Equipment - Desert robes, turban and curved dagger, 2D4 Silver coins each in belt pouches.

Tactics - Generally Flee or Beg for Mercy. Fight like a cornered animal if neither of the other options is available.

Weapon.	Size.	Reach.	Damage.	Ap/Hp.	Range.	Special
Jambiya Dagger.	S	S.	D4 .	6/8	na.	Bleed

Combat Styles - Cornered Animal (Dagger, Unarmed). 40%

Camels - Ships of the Desert

As any desert tribesman will tell you, a horse may be a symbol of wealth but a camel is a symbol of wisdom. Camels have greater endurance than horses and can travel further across the sands without food and water. They can carry more upon their backs in a pack saddle than any horse and situations that will panic a horse into running off will scarcely bother them.

Their padded feet enable them to move quietly and easily across the desert terrain and they are smarter than horses at extricating themselves from difficult situations.

For these reasons they are favoured by merchants for transporting goods over long distances and are highly regarded by the Khazrajites.

Strength).	4D6+20.	(34).	Combat Actions	2.	1-3.	Right Hind Leg.	1/12
Constitution).	2D6+15.	(22).	Damage Adj.	+2D8.	4-6.	Left Hind Leg.	1/12
Size).	4D6+25.	(39).	Improvement Adj.	-1.	7-9.	Hindquarters.	1/13
Intelligence).	5.	(5).	Magic Points.	11.	10-12.	Forequarters.	1/14
Power).	3D6.	(11).	Movement.	10m.	13-15.	Right Foreleg.	1/12
Dexterity).	2D6+6.	(13).	Strike Rank.	9.	16-18.	Left Foreleg.	1/12
Charisma).	5.	(5).			19-20.	Head.	1/12

Common Skills

Athletics 48%, Evade 35%, Perception 30%, Persistence 25%, Resilience 50%, Stealth 25%

Advanced Skills

Survival 80%

Weapon.	S.	R.	Damage.	AP/ HP.	Range.	Special
Kick.	M.	M.	D8+2D8.	As Leg.	Na.	Na

Combat Style - Kick. 47%

Azam - Khazrajite Kidnapper and Spy

Azam is likely to be observed for the first time, just before the caravan traders are ejected from Fort Yirlat. The first actual encounter with him is likely to occur when the Ikunas raid the camp and attempt to kidnap his female companion. Azam will be very grateful for the characters' aid in driving off the kidnappers. He will invite them to join him at his fire while he weaves his tale and sounds them out for suitability as accomplices.

He tells them of how he had lived among the tents of the Al Jafari and of how he had fallen in love with the daughter of a respected warrior. It was then that he discovered exactly how he was regarded amongst them. The father was outraged and threatened to kill the girl rather than give his consent to their relationship. This was despite the fact that she was a mute and no suitors were forthcoming from amongst her own clan. The two eloped in the night and were in the process of fleeing to Zul Bazzir. There, he explains, their different clan backgrounds would not even raise an eyebrow. Azam is the only son of a Khazrajite slave in Zul Bazzir, a member of the Tribe of Ahram, who was raised in the household of the Khazistani Governor. Devious and wily, he offered his services to the Governor as a spy among the camps of the Khazrajites and gained freedom as his reward.

Disguised as an envoy from another clan, Azam had entered the tents of the Al Jafari Bahramites. There he encountered and seduced Jamilla, the wilful and spoilt granddaughter of the Shaykh. He convinced her that a fine life awaited her if she accompanied him to Zul Bazzir. The smitten girl agreed and the two set off into the night. They were discovered by the girl's younger brother who thought to deal with the situation himself. He was no match for the wily Azam and soon his blood stained the desert sands. The girl was overcome with remorse and was set to return to the camp and throw herself upon her grandfather's mercy. Azam had other ideas however and sorcerous skills he had learned in Dipur proved most useful. The girl has been ensorcelled to obey his every command and never to speak. She is bound for captivity in Zul Bazzir, a hostage against her people's attacks on the caravan road.

Tall, charming and devilishly handsome. Azam dresses in black desert robes and turban. His beard and moustache are neatly trimmed and worn in the style currently favoured by Khazistani noblemen.

He is intelligent and witty, speaks a number of languages fluently. He has even studied the mystic arts under Wo Peng of the Jade Dragon Temple in Dipur, though he dares not return there for fear of the vengeance of his master regarding the theft of a magical ring. Black sorcery corrupts a man's soul and Azam has been tainted by his use of it. He trusts no one and has been known to turn on and murder an erstwhile companion for no reason. Those who know this man well and there are only a very few who do, keep their eyes peeled and their wits about them when in his company.

He wears a scabbarded scimitar at his waist along with a curved 'Jambiya' dagger. A pair of throwing knives are tucked into his high felt boots and four more are concealed beneath his robes. His scimitar has the Highly Effective quality and his, finely balanced, throwing knives possess the Highly Effective quality.

Special Ability - Taunt Opponent

Azam is the archetypal, sneering, villain who knows exactly how to provoke a reaction in his opponents. Through use of cleverly worded sleights he incites his enemies to attack him with reckless abandon as they seek to put an end to his weaselly words. Each round the foe must succeed on a Persistence test. Failure means that all that opponents attacks and parries are at -20% for the duration of that combat. Azamat can engage up to three NPCs at once (but only a single PC) with this special ability.

Strength)	13.	Combat Actions.	3.	1-3.	Right Leg.	0/6
Constitution).	16.	Damage Mod.	+D2.	4-6.	Left Leg.	0/6
Size).	14.	Improvement Mod.	+1.	7-9.	Abdomen.	0/7
Intelligence).	17.	Magic Points.	16.	10-12.	Chest.	0/8
Power).	16.	Movement.	8m.	13-15.	Right Arm.	0/5
Dexterity).	15.	Strike Rank.	16(16).	16-18.	Left Arm.	0/5
Charisma).	18.	Hero Points.	3.	19-20.	Head.	0/6

Common Skills.

Athletics 58%, Brawn 47%, Culture(Khazrajite) 71%, Evade 90%, Influence 72%, Insight 57%, Language(Khazi) 86%, Lore(Zul Bazzir) 67%, Perception 71%, Persistence 62%, Resilience 70%, Sleight 57%, Stealth 71%, Unarmed 63%

Magical Skills

Grimoire(Jade Serpent) 49%, Manipulation 51%, Mediatation 42%

Advanced Skills

Courtesy 50%, Culture(Susrahnite) 52%, Culture(Khazistani) 64%, Disguise 73%, Gambling 68%, Language(Susrahnite) 51%, Language(Yar Ammonites) 57%, Language(Taikangese) 37%, Lore(Susrah) 50%, Lore(Al Khaz) 44%, Lore(Dipur) 51%, Lore(Khazistan) 47%, Lore(Yar Ammon) 41%, Mechanisms 49%, Seduction 81%, Streetwise 69%, Survival 52%

Equipment - Desert robes, scimitar and dagger, six throwing knives, mounted on desert steed, 12 Gold and 23 Silver coins in money belt, The Ring of Xhankor Mu.

Tactics- Azam uses his Taunt Opponent special ability to provoke opponents into making reckless attacks whenever possible. In single combat he is cruel, like a cat playing with a mouse and will attempt to cause wounds to multiple locations. He gains perverse pleasure from inflicting pain and rarely wants a fight to end quickly. Only if his opponent is worthy or dangerous will he attempt to end the fight.

Taint level - 3 points(Mild), suffers from Mild Paranoia as described in SGB.

Weapon.	Size.	Reach.	Damage.	Ap/Hp.	Range.	Special
Scimitar	M.	M.	D8+1+D2	6/10	na.	Bleed
Jambiya Dagger.	S.	S.	D4+D2.	6/8.	na.	Bleed
Throwing Knife.	S.	Na.	D4+D2.	4/6.	10m.	Impale

Combat Styles - Sneering Villain(Dagger, 1H Sword, Scimitar and Dagger) 93%
 Thrown Dagger(Inc+5% for Highly Effective). 90%

Jade Serpent Grimoire (Dominate Human, Phantom Sound, Phantom Vision). 49%

Heroic Abilities - Deflecting Parry, Duellist, Linguist

Special Item - The Black Ring of Wo Peng

This item is a hoop of fire blackened iron, the inner ring of which is etched with strange mystical sigils. The ring is enchanted using the Hide Life Sorcery spell from **Arcana of Legend: Blood Magic**. It functions as a soul jar for the Vizier Wo Peng. Although Azam does not realise it, he has the very life of the Vizier in his hands...quite literally.

Jamila - Desert Princess

A beautiful desert rose and the apple of her grandfather's eye (Her father was killed in a petty squabble with a rival clan of Bahramites). She knows that the desert is a dangerous place at night and that it was foolish of her to arrange a tryst with the stranger. Her grandfather would never have permitted it but, Jamila is headstrong and wilful. Now because of her actions her younger brother lies dead also, his lifeblood staining the sands and she is a now prisoner, ensorcelled to be unable to tell the truth of events and explain why she travels with Azam.

Jamila is of middling height with a slim but athletic build. Her long hair is raven black and hangs in loose curls. Her eyes, unusually, are a bright and piercing green colour and she has the swarthy complexion that is common among her folk.

Strength)	11.	Combat Actions.	3.	1-3.	Right Leg.	0/5
Constitution).	12.	Damage Mod.	na.	4-6.	Left Leg.	0/5
Size).	10.	Improvement Mod.	+1.	7-9.	Abdomen.	0/6
Intelligence).	12.	Magic Points.	12.	10-12.	Chest.	0/7
Power).	12.	Movement.	8m.	13-15.	Right Arm.	0/4
Dexterity).	16.	Strike Rank.	14.	16-18.	Left Arm.	0/4
Charisma).	17.	Hero Points.	2.	19-20.	Head.	0/5

Common Skills.

Athletics 37%, Brawn 23%, Culture(Khazrajite) 54%, Dance 63%, Evade 62%, Influence 33% Language(Khazi) 81%, Lore(Al Khaz) 54%, Perception 54%, Persistence 34%, Resilience 41%, Ride 39%, Sing 41%, Sleight 43%, Stealth 48%, Unarmed 27%

Advanced Skills

Courtesy 49%, Play Instrument 44%, Seduction 59%, Survival 44%

Equipment - Dancing Girl costume and knife, mounted on desert steed.

Tactics - Jamila is the daughter of a warrior, from a long line of Shaykhs. She seems unable to act against the villain who has kidnapped her and cannot even speak to others of her situation. She does however possess, as yet, untapped reserves of grit and determination and if freed from her ensorcellment, she will wreak a bloody revenge upon Azam for the death of her brother and to avenge her honour. She will maintain an aura of subservience and fear until such time as she finds an opportunity to attack her opponent from behind.

Weapon.	Size.	Reach.	Damage.	Ap/Hp.	Range.	Special
Knife.	S.	S.	D3.	5/4.	na.	Bleed, Impale

Combat Styles - Hidden Depths (Knife, Unarmed). 67%

The Khazrajite Nomads

The Khazrajites are peerless desert raiders with neither fear of, nor respect for, the riders of Khazistan. They attack merchant caravans with seeming impunity along the caravan trails that cross the Al Khazi and the authorities have been powerless to halt their predatory raids.

It is unlikely that they will be met (during this adventure at least) as anything other than foes. They do not readily accept strangers into their midst. There are always exceptions to the rule, of course, but these folk are not easily impressed and it would take an exceptional deed to gain their respect and acceptance.

The Khazrajites are divided into a number of tribes and a number of clans within each of these tribes as follows.

- The Tribe of Khazram(Khazramites) is the largest tribe and can muster many hundreds of fierce desert warriors. The Al Jafari can call upon many allies from among these folk.
- The Tribe of Zulram(Zulramites) is another large tribe. Their merchants and traders are the most inclined to deal peacefully with outsiders and thus they are the wealthiest of the tribes by far.
- The Tribe of Bahram(Bahramites) are known as 'The Shepherd King's due to the numbers of camels their clans possess. The Al Jafari are a clan of this tribe.
- The Tribe of Biram(Biramites) are renowned as Alchemists and traders of bitumen, myrrh, frankincense and naphtha.
- The Tribe of Yiram(Yiramites) are small in number but famed for the knowledge of their mystics and scholars.
- The Tribe of Jharam(Jharamites) are another smaller tribe whose clans follow a Matriarchal system of leadership.
- The Tribe of Ahram(Ahramites) are a small tribe whose members are regarded with disdain and suspicion by their fellows. They are renowned as thieves and tomb robbers and it is said that many are in the employ of the Padishah in Khazabad. The Khazrajite kidnapper, Azam, is a member of this tribe.

The Desert Patrol

Every twelve days, a patrol of mercenary horsemen departs from Dipur bound for Fort Yirlat . The 'Desert Patrol' escorts the many and varied caravans that take this route through the territory of the Bahramites. As soon as this patrol arrives at Fort Yirlat, a further patrol is released by Eskaros to escort any waiting caravans on the return journey to Zul Bazzir. Patrols moving in either direction usually encounter each other on the sixth or seventh day of their journey.

The journey between the two locations assumes that the patrol is escorting caravan traffic which, is likely to include persons who are on foot. The journey could be made by the patrol itself or, by a small and mounted group of travellers in 7-8 days.

Although, through the course of this adventure, these fellows are likely to be allied to the characters. There is always the possibility that by the end of it that the characters will have been accepted by the Bahramites and the Desert Patrol could now be potential enemies.

Nomads of the Al Jafari clan of Bahram

Lean and wolfish, these warriors are as harsh and unforgiving as the desert they dwell in. They are cold blooded killers and peerless raiders but are desperately superstitious. They are terrified to enter the region of the desert that lies to the west of the caravan road. Their skin is tanned and leathery and they go barefoot or wear sandals. They grow their beards and moustaches long. Clad in the white desert robes and kheffiahs that are characteristic of their people, they wield wickedly curved scimitars with wide flaring blades, spiked targes and shortbows. Their hand to mouth nomadic existence means that they do not usually keep slaves. Only those who might be worth ransom or provide good sport are spared on their raids. Hideous tortures such as the 'death by a thousand cuts' await those for whom ransom cannot be achieved.

Strength)	13.	Combat Actions.	2.	1-3.	Right Leg.	0/5
Constitution).	12.	Damage Mod.	na.	4-6.	Left Leg.	0/5
Size)	11.	Improvement Mod.	na.	7-9.	Abdomen.	0/6
Intelligence).	11.	Magic Points.	10.	10-12.	Chest.	0/7
Power)	10.	Movement.	8m.	13-15.	Right Arm.	0/4
Dexterity)	12.	Strike Rank.	12.	16-18.	Left Arm.	0/4
Charisma).	11.			19-20.	Head.	0/5

Common Skills.

Athletics 44%, Brawn 30%, Culture(Khazrajite) 54%, Evade 36%, Language(Khazrajite) 73%, Lore(Al Khaz) 55%, Perception 34%, Persistence 30%, Resilience 45%, Ride 65%, Stealth 52%

Advanced Skills

Gambling 45%, Language(Susrahnite) 22%, Language(Yar Ammonite) 23%, Gambling 45%, Survival 42%

Equipment - Desert Robes with Scimitar, Target Shield, Shortbow and 20 arrows mounted on camel. While raiding, Khazrajites carry little in the way of valuables.

Tactics - These warriors are raiders, first and foremost. Hit and run tactics with soaring flights of arrows are their preferred method of attack. It is only when the numbers are firmly in their favour that they will swarm in with their slashing scimitars. Their other preferred tactic is to attack in the dead of night, kill guards and destroy their victim's water supplies.

Weapon.	Size.	Reach.	Damage.	Ap/Hp.	Range.	Special
Scimitar.	M.	M.	D8.	6/10	na.	Bleed
Target Shield.	L.	S.	D6.	4/12.	na.	Impale
Shortbow	L.	na.	D6	4/4	80m.	Impale
Curved Dagger.	S.	S.	D4+1.	6/8.	na.	Bleed

Combat Styles - Desert Wolf (Scimitar and Shield, Bow) 60%
Ghost Jackal Killer (Dagger). 60%

Muleh Al Jafari - Shaykh of the Al Jafari Bahramites

The Shaykh of the Al Jafari Clan of the Tribe of Bahram remains a powerful warrior despite his advancing years. He is grey bearded and bears the ritual, warrior, tattoos of his people upon his cheeks. He wears white desert robes and a white turban and wields a Shamshir(Great Scimitar) in battle.

He is an extremely serious individual and does not suffer fools gladly in his presence. The apple of his eye is his Granddaughter, Jamila. Muleh would attempt to storm the walls of Khazabad itself to take revenge upon any who would harm her. A man should consider his options very carefully before making an enemy of the Shaykh of the Al Jafari.

Strength).	15.	Combat Actions.	3.	1-3.	Right Leg.	0/6
Constitution).	16.	Damage Mod.	+D2.	4-6.	Left Leg.	0/6
Size).	13.	Improvement Mod.	Na.	7-9.	Abdomen.	0/7
Intellect)	11.	Magic Points.	12.	10-12.	Chest.	0/8
Power).	12.	Movement.	8m.	13-15.	Right Arm.	0/5
Dexterity).	15.	Strike Rank.	13.	16-18.	Left Arm.	0/5
Charisma).	11.	Hero Points.	1.	19-20.	Head.	0/6

Common Skills.

Athletics 59%, Brawn 47%, Culture(Khazrajite) 55%, Evade 68%, Evaluate 55%, Influence 70%, Insight 44%, Language(Khazi) 75%, Lore(Al Khaz) 59%, Perception 62%, Persistence 51%, Resilience 60%, Ride 75%, Sleight 39%, Stealth 47%, Unarmed 71%

Advanced Skills.

Courtesy 69%, Oratory 58%, Language(Yar Ammonite) 43%, Survival 60%, Tracking 57%

Equipment - Desert robes and Great Scimitar, mounted on camel. Carries nothing of any value whilst raiding.

Tactics - Normally, the Shaykh of the Al Jafari stays out of combat and directs his warriors from the crest of a nearby dune. He is no coward, but is aware that his men are likely to give up the fight upon his death, unless victory is absolutely assured.

While attacking the Caravan of Haram Baal he leads from the front, laying about him with his great two-handed scimitar. His fury at Azam, the villain who would dare to abduct his granddaughter, knows no bounds and he enters Battle Fury before the attack.

Weapon.	Size.	Reach.	Damage.	Ap/Hp.	Range.	Special
Great Scimitar	L.	L	D10+D2	6/10	na.	Bleed, Sunder

Combat Styles - Desert Chieftain (Scimitar and Shield, Shortbow, Great Scimitar) 90%

Heroic Abilities - Battle Fury, Mighty Blow

Fort Yirlat

The fort, built of clay bricks and whitewashed against the heat of the desert sun, lies roughly twelve days journey to the west of Dipur and a similar distance to the north of Zul Bazzir. It is located at the Yirlat Oasis, from which it takes its name and was originally a place where the Khazrajite nomads of the Tribe of Bahram watered their livestock. About twenty years earlier, the Satrap of Dipur had sent troops west to build a fort at the oasis with the intention of taxing caravans for its usage. As ever, they had not considered the impact this would have on the nomads and their herds. The reaction of the Bahramites was predictably hostile but, although they could muster many hundreds of riders, they were unable to carry the fort by storm. Eventually, they took to raiding caravans and attacking patrols on the road in retaliation. They have become a major thorn in the side of both the Satrap of Dipur and the Governor of Zul Bazzir.

The extra taxes that the Satrap had hoped to raise from thirsty merchants and traders are being used to pay the mercenaries who ride escort duty for those very same merchants and travellers.

Over the years there has been a gradual reduction of the garrison at Fort Yirlat. It is manned now by a single company of mercenaries under the command of the Nabastissean, Eskaros. The Bahramites, meanwhile, have settled into a grudging acceptance that the oasis is no longer theirs and they water their livestock elsewhere.

There are 111 persons currently dwelling there. The garrison consists of 80 mercenary horsemen. They are led by eight Corporals and a Khazistani Captain under the command of General Eskaros, a Nabastissean. The remainder of the inhabitants are non combatants that provide assorted services to the garrison.

Eskaros is less than impressed when Azam arrives with his prisoner and orders the kidnapper to leave the fort. The escort patrol from Zul Bazzir is not expected to return for another six days. He can spare only a score of riders and his second in command, Kilij Arshak, to lead them. This will leave the garrison desperately short on manpower but, if the Al Jafari discover the girl is within, they will assault the fort and burn it down around their ears.

The Key to Fort Yirlat

A) The Gatehouse

A pair of two storey towers flank the gates of Fort Yirlat. There are always eight guards at the gate house. One is located in each flanking tower and two at the entrance itself. The other four are to be found gambling or dozing in the downstairs rooms of the flanking towers.

B) The Courtyard

The courtyard is a perfect killing ground, all the buildings having crenellations that overlook it. The most obvious feature of the courtyard though, is the oasis' well which is surrounded by a low wall of clay bricks.

C) The Barracks

This long two storey building contains billets for two of the four companies under Eskaros' command, as well as the fort's armoury. Two guards stand a watch on the roof.

D) The Watchtower

A whitewashed, four storey, tower. This edifice contains the officers quarters, the Corporals' billets, the treasury and a gaol. A Corporal and a single soldier stand guard on the steps which lead to the tower's first floor entrance. A pair of soldiers stand their watch on the roof. The treasury currently holds taxes worth D12x1000 silver coins.

E) The Stables

This two storey building houses the livery and stalls for the garrison's mounts as well as an upstairs barn for animal feed and hay. Two soldiers are posted on the roof to stand watch.

F) The Smithy

The blacksmith and his two sons are non military personnel who live inside the fort. They are Susrahnites from Dipur. The father is named Urbaal and is an excellent smith. His sons are Orbanes and Belshaq. The elder has inherited some of his father's skill while the second is a big simple fellow, but strong as an ox. The workshop and smithy are on the ground floor and the smith and his sons live on the first floor.

G) The Exciseman's Building

This is a small two story building where taxes are collected from travellers. A clerk, Artan Malik (who lives on the upper floor) has his work supervised at all times by a single Corporal. A single soldier stands his watch at the entrance. At evening time, after the gate is closed, the taxes are transferred into the treasury in the tower. There are generally taxes to the value of D100x6 silver coins in the excise room during the daylight hours. Artan Malik is a Khazistani from Dipur. He is a weasel faced penny pincher with poor social skills and worse personal hygiene. He complains often to Eskaros because he believes that Yadida's girls charge him more than the going rate for their 'services'.

H) The Tavern

Part of a long building which also houses the canteen, the tavern is where off duty soldiers are generally found. Here, they can meet with travellers and hear tales of their journeys, while scrounging for free drink. The atmosphere is jovial and violence against the patrons by soldiers is considered a serious offence, punishable by a flogging or worse.

The Taverner lives upstairs with his wife, his two sons and daughter. They are native Khazistanis who moved to Fort Yirlat from Zul Bazzir. The Taverner is named Gombuk. He is a jolly chap with drooping moustaches and a bald head that constantly drips with sweat, which he wipes with the same cloth that he uses for the tankards. His wife is Aygunna. She is well into her middle years and pleasantly plump but it is obvious that she was once quite a beauty. She henpecks her husband mercilessly and often strikes him with a skillet, or a poker, or anything else comes to hand. She flirts shamelessly with some of the older soldiers but loves her husband and would not dream of cuckolding him.

The sons, Ekrim and Emin, are both young boys barely into their teens. They serve as pot boys in the tavern.

The daughter, Aygala, is almost eighteen years old and has her mother's looks. She is the object of desire for almost every man at Fort Yirlat. Like her mother, she is flirtatious but is somewhat dim. Her father has had to reach arrangement with Eskaros for her protection. Now, the man who tries to defile her can look forward to living the rest of his life as a eunuch.

I) The Canteen

Another long two storey building contains long trestles and benches as well as a kitchen. Upstairs is the storehouse and the cook's quarters. Gulim, a Khazistani from Dipur, is a lonely man who never married and has a face like a camel's rear end. He laughs loud and often to disguise his unhappiness at never having been with a woman he did not have to pay for. He shares the upper floor with his two cats, whose job is to keep the supplies free of vermin, no mean task. He is, however, a passable cook and is valued as such by the men of the garrison.

Two soldiers stand guard across the rooftops of the tavern and the canteen.

J) The Livestock Corral

This is where all visiting travellers must tether their livestock. Owners may then enter the fort to obtain water and feed, after paying the appropriate amount of tax to the Padishah's exciseman of course. A pair of soldiers stand watch on the gate into this fenced off area.

K) The Guard Post

Although this two storey building was originally conceived as a guard post, it has become the home of a small group of women. These dozen women, outcasts from several different peoples, have made a life for themselves at Fort Yirlat. They provide services to the inhabitants of the fort including laundering the soldiers' garments and serving up food in the canteen. A few of them also accompany soldiers into their barracks to provide 'companionship'. They attend to the needs of the men and General Eskaros ensures that they are not abused and that a fair price is paid for each of their services.

The oldest woman, who has become their matron and speaks on their behalf, is named Yadida and she is an Adartani mongrel from Dipur.

The Desert Patrol (80)

The Satrap of Dipur maintains a force of some six hundred mounted soldiers, mercenaries from the Jairani City States, who provide escort patrols on the caravan road to Zul Bazzir. These cold hearted killers are clad in bronze scale hauberks and conical helmets, wound about with white turbans. They carry lances, short horseman's bows and round shields. Curved iron sabres hang from the saddles of their warhorses. Each wears a white linen shirt under their armour and loose fitting trews that reach to the knee with ankle high sandals.

Strength).	13	Combat Actions.	2.	1-3.	Right Leg.	0/5
Constitution).	12.	Damage Mod.	Na.	4-6.	Left Leg.	0/5
Size).	11.	Improve Mod.	Na.	7-9.	Abdomen.	4/6
Intelligence).	11.	Magic Points.	10.	10-12.	Chest.	4/7
Power).	10.	Movement.	8m.	13-15.	Right Arm	3/4
Dexterity).	12.	Strike Rank.	12(8)	16-18.	Left Arm.	2/4
Charisma).	11.			19-20.	Head.	4/5

Common Skills.

Athletics 44%, Brawn 33%, Culture(Jairani) 55%, Evade 34%, Language(Jairani) 74%, Lore(Jairan) 56%, Perception 31%, Persistence 30%, Resilience 42%, Ride 60%

Advanced Skills

Gambling 40%, Language (Khazi) 23%, Language(Susrahnite) 21%, Lore (Al Khaz) 24 %, Lore(Dipur) 27%, Survival 28%

Equipment - Scale Hauberk and Spired Helmet(4AP),Hard Leather Bracers.

Sabre, Round Shield, Lance, Shortbow, 20 Arrows mounted on horse. Each carries 2D6 Silver coins in a pouch.

Tactics - These riders prefer, if possible,to close quickly with their enemies and engage them with their spears and slashing sabres. Their foes are generally nomad raiders who are, for the most part, better at mounted archery. The soldiers generally use their bows only if mounting a pursuit against a fleeing enemy, in order to slow them down.

Weapon	Size.	Reach.	Damage.	Ap/Hp.	Range.	Special
Lance.	H.	VL.	D10+2.	4/10.	na.	Impale, Sunder
Sabre.	M.	M.	D6+1	6/10.	na.	Bleed, Impale
Round Shield.	L.	S.	D3	6/12.	na	
Shortbow.	L	na.	D6	4/4.	80m.	Impale

Combat Styles - Horse Archer (Shortbow) 45%
 Lancer (Lance and Shield, 1H Sword and Shield) 55%

*Add +10% to all the above skills, add Influence 30% and +D2 to Damage Bonus to represent a Veteran soldier or Corporal.

Captain Kilij Arshak (Khazistani Noble Officer)

Kilij Arshak is an ambitious young nobleman, who hopes one day to take over command of Fort Yirlat from General Eskaros. He is keen to impress and readily volunteers to lead the patrol that will escort Azam to Zul Bazzir, despite the obvious dangers.

Tall and hawk faced, he is a martinet who will happily have his soldiers flogged for the most minor of offences, making him quite unpopular with the men of his command.

He wears his beard in the chinstrap fashion and sports a well trimmed pencil moustache.

He wears a white khalat over his armour, which is well maintained. His spired helmet is chased with gold filigree and wrapped in a turban of white silk from Taikang (It has the Highly Desirable quality). He wears high boots of black felt and baggy white trows that reach to just below the knee. Kilij is from an important family in Dipur and takes offence at the merest hint of a slight. His Uncle is Malik Khan, commander of the Oxartus Valley Tamari horsemen.

His yataghan is a family heirloom and is crafted from the finest Zadjite steel. It has the Highly desirable and Highly effective qualities.

Strength).	14.	Combat Actions.	3.	1-3.	Right Leg.	0/5
Constitution).	12.	Damage Mod.	+D2.	4-6.	Left Leg.	0/5
Size).	12.	Improvement Mod.	+1.	7-9.	Abdomen.	5/6
Intelligence).	13.	Magic Points.	11.	10-12.	Chest.	5/7
Power).	11.	Movement.	8m.	13-15.	Right Arm.	2/4
Dexterity).	13.	Strike Rank.	13(9).	16-18.	Left Arm.	2/4
Charisma).	13.	Hero Points.	2.	19-20.	Head.	5/5

Common Skills.

Athletics 52%, Brawn 46%, Culture(Khazistani) 79%, Evade 46%, Influence 36%, Language (Khazi) 82%, Lore(Khazistan) 67%, Perception 44%, Persistence 42%, Resilience. 53%, Ride 80%

Advanced Skills

Language(Susrahnite) 41%, Language(Azimban) 35%, Lore(Al Khaz) 30%, Lore(Dipur) 63%, Lore(Tactics) 51%, Oratory 34%, Survival 36%

Equipment - Mail Hauberk and Spired Helmet (with nasal bar and mail aventail) - 5AP, Hard Leather Bracers. Yataghan, Target Shield, Shamshir, Korshani Bow and 20 Arrows mounted on horse. Kilic carries two Gold and seven Silver coins in his belt pouch.

Tactics - Kilij Arshak fights aggressively as, he believes, his honour demands it. In single combat, he fights with his Shamshir and his first action will be to attempt to Sunder his opponents weapon. He enjoys accepting the surrender of a defeated opponent, especially after he has taken away their offensive capabilities. He likes to know that he is the better man but, he is not stupid and will not persist with this approach if his own life is endangered.

Weapon.	Size.	Reach.	Damage.	Ap/Hp.	Range.	Special
Shamshir	L.	L.	D10+D2.	6/10	Na.	Bleed, Sunder, 2H
Yataghan	M.	M.	D6+2+D2.	6/10.	Na.	Bleed
Target Shield.	L.	S.	D6+D2.	4/12.	Na.	Impale

Combat Styles - Khazistani Officer (Sword and Shield, 2H Sword) 80%

Eskaros - Commander at Fort Yirlat (Nabastissean)

Eskaros the Nabistissean is a tall and muscular man with a neatly trimmed beard, cropped hair and the olive complexion that is common to his people. He is a fierce warrior and a fine leader of men. He is an honourable, if strict, man and keeps his word once it is given. He is both trusted and respected by Tarkhan Bey, the Satrap of Dipur, who has made him commander of the garrison at Fort Yirlat with responsibility for protecting the caravan road to Zul Bazzir. His clothing is drab, his armour and weapons purely functional. He knows that young Kilij Arshak envies his command and his influence with the Satrap, but he tolerates this, based on the belief that the young officer will become a fine commander one day. He accepts that Khazistani officers are often harsh with their men over the slightest infringement and he rarely sees reason to interfere with their commands.

Strength).	18	Combat Actions.	3.	1-3.	Right Leg.	2/8
Constitution).	18	Damage Mod.	+D6	4-6.	Left Leg.	2/8
Size).	18	Improvement Mod.	+1.	7-9.	Abdomen.	5/9
Intelligence).	14.	Magic Points.	12.	10-12.	Chest.	5/10
Power).	12.	Movement.	8m.	13-15.	Right Arm.	2/7
Dexterity).	13.	Strike Rank.	14(9).	16-18.	Left Arm.	2/7
Charisma).	13.	Hero Points.	2.	19-20.	Head.	5/8

Common Skills.

Athletics 59%, Brawn 71%, Culture(Nabastissean) 65%, Evade 66%, Influence 51%, Insight 52%, Language(Nabastissean) 87%, Lore(Nabastis) 67%, Perception 74%, Persistence 60%, Resilience 74%, Ride 73%, Unarmed 86%

Advanced Skills

Culture(Khazistani) 51%, Culture(Susrahnite) 47%, Language(Khazi) 52%, Language(Susrahnite) 50%, Lore(Al Khaz) 42%, Lore(Dipur) 33%, Lore(Tactics) 67%
Oratory 58%, Survival 53%, Tracking 27%

Equipment - Chainmail Hauberk and Spired Helmet (5Ap- Aventail and Nasal bar), Hard Leather Bracers and Greaves, Scimitar and Target Shield, Shamshir, Korshani Bow and 20 Arrows.

Tactics - Eskaros fights with sabre and shield as his weapon combination of preference. He fights with little flair, preferring to incapacitate, or kill, his foes with as little fuss as possible. He is a calculating opponent and never allows himself to be caught in a position where he is outnumbered or outmatched.

Weapon	Size.	Reach.	Damage.	Ap/Hp.	Range.	Special
Scimitar.	M.	M.	D8+D6	6/10.	na.	Bleed
Target.	L.	S.	D6+D6	4/12.	na.	Impale
Khorshani Bow	H.	na.	D6+D6+1	4/8.	80m.	Impale

Combat Styles. - Mercenary (1H Spear and Shield, Sling). 75%
Khazi Officer. (Sword and Shield, 2H Sword). 92%
Horse Archer. (Bow). 73%

Heroic Abilities - Mighty Blow

The Ruins of Akharon

About a days journey west of the road between Fort Yirlat and Zul Bazzir lie the ruins of the ancient city of Akharon. Except for the Ikuna cultists, nothing else calls this place home. Even the serpents and scorpions avoid this cursed place.

The map shows the palace citadel, atop the acropolis of Akharon. (The shaded areas have a roof that is more or less intact. The lighter areas are open to the elements.) Here and there, across an area of roughly a mile in diameter, beyond the map, can be found shattered walls of cyclopean stone, collapsed buildings and broken pillars. None of the buildings outside the citadel have roofs and in most cases, rarely exceed a few feet in height. A layer of verdigris covers exposed statues of bronze, perhaps hinting at a different climate in bygone ages. Scattered throughout the ruins are the accoutrements of the vanquished Sheng horde. Bronze breast plates and helmets, weapons and shields, all coated with the blue green patina of age.

The Key to the Ruins of Akharon

A) Guard Post

A small, lean-to, shack built against the outer wall of the citadel. There are always at least two cultists here, watching for signs of approaching intruders.

B) The Sphinx Gate

Two sandstone towers flank a gatehouse, carved with bas relief images of a pair of, eagle headed, Sphinx. The wooden gates have long since rotted to dust, leaving only hinges of green tinged bronze to suggest they were ever there. The cultists do not maintain a guard here, relying on those at the guard post to notice intruders.

C) The Main Courtyard

A wide and open sandy area, it is surrounded by stables, a covered walkway and the great steps that lead into the palace proper. There are, at present, a half dozen camels in the stables. These poor beasts have been stolen from passing caravans and are poorly cared for. Their inevitable fate will be death as there is no water in the citadel and the Cultists of the Ragged King have no need of it anyway. The well that once existed here is filled with sand and rubble. Even if cleared out, it is no longer linked to the ancient source that fed it.

D) The Megaron

This is where the Ragged King holds court. The Megaron is a massive chamber, it's roof supported by four stone pillars. A great throne of, fire blackened, marble stands against the southern wall of the chamber. The walls of the chamber are adorned with friezes which were once beautiful but now defaced by the new inhabitants. This is the main dwelling area for the cultists. Under the gaze of their 'Living God', they cavort and indulge in vile acts. A circular pit has been excavated in the middle of the floor for the cannibals to cook their victims. The floor of the pit is stained brown with spilled blood and gnawed bones are scattered around floor. The Ragged King himself is generally found here or in his private chambers, which lie beyond the doorway at the rear of the megaron. There is always, at least, one cultist on guard duty on the palace steps.

E) The Royal Appartments

This entire area was once the appartments for the royal family of Akharon. The walls are decorated with friezes, worn with age and defaced by the Ragged King. Even the Ragged King requires privacy sometimes and these chambers have been claimed as his own. No cultists are ever found here, save by his express order, on pain of death.

The Ragged King requires no sustenance or sleep due to the sorcerous nature of his crown. Despite this, he still likes to indulge in torture and cannibalism, if only to relish the fear of his victims. Gnawed bones and mutilated body parts are scattered, here and there, throughout these chambers, a grisly testament to his vile insanity.

F) The Armoury

Bronze shields and helmets, in their scores, are piled haphazardly in one corner of this large, four pillared, room. Axeheads, Spearheads, Shortswords and daggers are stacked in another. There is enough wargear to equip a small army, if only the leather straps and wooden hafts had not, long since, returned to dust.

G) The Larder

Two captured Zorabis are bound in this chamber under the watch of a single cultist. They are scared out of their wits, having witnessed up close, the vile majesty of the Ragged King. There were originally five of them and the two survivors can only guess at what became of their companions, but tortured screams and the sound of pitiful sobbing haunt their dreams and every waking hour.

Their leader is named Guram Khal. He is known as 'The Toecutter' and is the leader of a small gang from the area of Dipur known as the Den. He is the right hand man of Borak Cham. His companion has succumbed to mewling insanity and his own sanity hangs by a thread. He was hired to transport a girl from Dipur to Zul Bazzir. The man who hired him was masked and heavily robed. That the girl was obviously the victim of abduction did not concern him and he was paid handsomely fo the job. The Ikunas fell upon them in the night when they were drunk and tormenting the girl with tales of what delights would await her in the harem of some fat, sweaty, merchant.

Guram Khal is a potential ally in the fight against the Ragged King and his followers. He is brave enough and would make a useful and grateful contact if he were returned safely to Dipur. He does not know the name of the man who hired them to transport Sutrahmunah from Dipur to Zul Bazzir, but he remembers the voice and swears he would recognise it if he heard it again. It was high pitched with an odd accent.

Assuming that the tale unfolds as intended, Azamat will also be there, chained to wall by bronze manacles. He has been beaten severely and will be unconscious when discovered, his handsome features bloodied and perhaps, permanently marred.

H) The Seraglio

The Ragged King has few needs but many desires. The ground floor of this tower is given over to female prisoners, taken from caravans or stolen from the outskirts of Zul Bazzir to slake his vile appetites and those of his followers.

There is only one woman held here presently, a Yar Ammonite with raven black tresses and kohl rimmed eyes, smudged from the streams of frightened tears she has wept. Her name is Sutrahmunah and she will be 'extremely' grateful to any rescuer.

She remains untouched by the Ragged King. Those who have felt his tender caresses do not survive such 'pleasures'.

Likewise, she has not been defiled by the Ikunas. They have been instructed that she is their master's property and not for the likes of them.

Other, captured, women who have not fanned the flames of desire in the Ragged King have been left to their grisly fate at the hands of his cannibal cultists. Although the Ikunas have been instructed to retain some of them for breeding stock, none have so far survived their horrid interests.

Jamila will also be held here, assuming that she has been captured. She will be watched over by a further pair of cultists. She has struck up a friendship of sorts with Sutrahmunah who had revealed to her, her identity as the mistress of the Satrap of Jathpur.

Tsultha'ustar

Demon God of Madness and Unnatural Desires

Tsultha'ustar is one of the Old Gods, a Demon of the Outer Dark who dwells in the blackness between the night stars. He is a squamous and tentacled horror, so hideous and alien to the mortal mind that a mere glimpse of his true form would drive a man insane.

He appears to his followers in humanoid form, wearing tattered robes of ochre yellow and a spiked crown of blackened iron. His voice whispers to them in the darkness, seducing them into performing acts too vile to document here.

It is more than two thousand years since Tsultha'ustar last had any mortal worshippers in this world. His avatar lies buried and forgotten, beneath the desert, in the ruins of the ancient city of Akharon.

Magic -

Grimoire (Incessant Whisperings) - Abjure Water, Abjure Sleep, Damage Enhancement, Damage Resistance, Dominate (Male Human), Dominate (Female Human), Palsy, Regenerate, Wrack.

Heroic Ability - Tireless

Initiate - Must have carried out a murder in the Cult's name and practice ritual cannibalism upon the victim's corpse.

Acolyte - Must have carried out a murder in the Cult's name without spilling blood. Must practice cannibalism and drink only blood as dietary norms. Must have five of the Cult's skills at 45%.

Priest - Must have tortured, murdered and cannibalised a member of your immediate family. Must have five of the Cult's skills at 60%.

High Priest - There is only ever one High Priest and that is The Ragged King, the saffron robed avatar of Tsultha'ustar.

Cult Combat Styles - Ritual Killer (Cudgel, Strangle Cord, Unarmed)

Cult Skills - Athletics, Brawn, Combat Style: Ritual Killer, Grimoire (Incessant Whisperings), Manipulation, Stealth, Summon, Survival, Unarmed

The Ragged King - Avatar of Tsultha'ustar

Strength)	13.	Combat Actions.	3.	1-3.	Right Leg.	20/6
Constitution)	17.	Damage Mod.	+D2	4-6.	Left Leg.	20/6
Size)	13.	Improvement Mod.	+1	7-9.	Abdomen.	20/7
Intellect)	18.	Magic Points.	23.	10-12.	Chest.	20/8
Power)	24	Movement.	8m.	13-15.	Right Arm.	20/5
Dexterity)	15.	Strike Rank.	17.	16-18.	Left arm.	20/5
Charisma)	13.	Hero Points.	3.	19-20.	Head.	20/6

Common Skills.

Athletics 68%, Brawn 66%, Culture(Ikuna) 69%, Evade 90%, Influence 76%, Insight 70%, Language(Ikuna) 83%, Perception 81%, Persistence 96%, Resilience 84%, Stealth 63%, Unarmed 78%.

Magical Skills

Manipulation 100%, Sorcery(Grimoire) 100%, Summon(Manticore) 100%

Advanced Skills.

Language(Susrahnite) 53%, Language(Demonic) 100% , Lore(Tsultha'ustar) 100%, Mechanisms 76%, Oratory 73%, Seduction 90%, Teach 88%

Taint Level - 13 points(Moderate), suffers from Nightmares, Cannibalism.

Combat Styles - Unnatural Weapons(Tentacles, Fanged Maw, Claws). 90%

Weapon.	Size.	Reach.	Damage.	Ap/Hp.	Range	Special
Tentacles	M.	M.	D3	as arms.	Na	Entangle
Fanged Maw.	T.	S.	D6+D2.	as head.	Na	Na
Claws.	M.	M.	D6+D2.	as arms.	Na	Na

The Ragged King rarely enters hand to hand combat(although he does not fear to do so), preferring to leave this to his minions. He is quite a capable opponent though, when necessity requires it. The Ikuna warrior named Dibak was a fearsome warrior before he was possessed and fights in the frenzied style of his people.

The Ragged King can mutate it's host body, at will, to allow it to sprout tentacles or claws and a great fanged maw with which it can attack opponents. Anyone who has the misfortune to witness this eventuality must make a Persistence roll or be forced to flee in terror from the confrontation. A simple failure means that the character will flee for D6+1 rounds. A fumbled roll will mean that the character must expend a Hero Point to ever face the Ragged King again.

Destroying the Ragged King is likely to be a daunting task, given his Damage Resistance. Realistically, it will take a lucky roll for a character with a high damage weapon and a large Damage Modifier or a character with Sorcerous capabilities.

(A final, if pyrrhic option, would be to collapse the throne room of the Megaron on top of him. This massive damage will destroy his body and leave the Crown buried but will be the death of the character who collapses it. The pillars that hold up the roof of the palace are cracked and under immense pressure. A character will be able to topple one of the pillars by making a 'Formidable' Brawn test. Any other character may provide support using the normal rules but they, also are most likely to be caught and slain in the collapse.)

The Black Crown of Tsultha'ustar - Enchanted Artefact

The infernal artefact known as the Black Crown of Tsultha'ustar is the Demon God's conduit into the mortal realm. Using the crown, he can force a fraction of his being into either a willing or unwilling recipient causing them to become his avatar, the Ragged King.

The Avatar can now avail of the blessings of Tsultha'ustar.

- The first of these manifests itself in the form of a Spell Enchantment (Damage Resistance) with a Magnitude of 10 that may be cast once per day.
- The second is an immediate doubling of the Int and Pow statistics.
- The third is in the form of the Magical Skills of Lore(Tsultha'ustar),Grimoire(Incessant Whisperings) and Manipulation, all known at 100%.
- The fourth blessing manifests in the physical body of the host no longer requiring sustenance or rest.
- The fifth blessing is that the Ragged King can summon (with a 100% chance of success) a demonic entity known as 'Manticore' to do his bidding. Manticore may be asked to complete a single task and remains in existence until it is completed or until he is destroyed(Manticore is a creature from the Monsters of Legend book).
- Finally, the sixth blessing. The wearer of the Black Crown can automatically cast the spell 'Enslave' (from Legend:Blood Magic) with an Intensity of 9 and within a one mile radius, without expending Magic Points. This is not a spell taught through the Cult Grimoires and is a unique ability. The effect is permanent and lasts until the Ragged King is destroyed. Player Characters may make a 'Difficult' Persistence test to avoid the effects of this. Although the use of this blessing does not require the user to expend magic points, it does not happen instantaneously and still requires the appropriate time to cast. In addition, casting the spell for a second time frees any previously enslaved victims and may present a window of opportunity for their escape.

Sutramunah - Yar Ammonite Dancing Girl

Sutramunah has always been a slave, born of a line of slaves. Her earliest memories are of life in the walled villa of a Yar Ammonite nobleman on the outskirts of Zul Bazzir. At sixteen years old, she was kidnapped from her home and taken east, to be sold upon the slave blocks of the caravanserai at Dipur.

Her beauty is almost supernatural, with raven tresses and dark smouldering eyes. Tarkhan Bey fell for her instantly and bought her at the cost of 25 Gold Coins, an exorbitant sum. He took her to his palace and had her prepared by the other women of his seraglio. Sutrahmunah was greatly relieved by how gentle he was with her and that he did not 'misuse' her after the fashion, so crudely suggested to her by her kidnappers.

In the intervening years, Sutramunah has grown into an even more beautiful woman, yet she has never felt the love for her master that he so clearly feels for her. He is kind and often happy with just her company. He is one of the wealthiest and most powerful men in the entire Kingdom. She found herself protected by armed men at all times, yet she still felt like a slave and that her favours were purchased, not willingly given.

Her fall from grace has been rapid and unexpected. Unknown to her, she had made enemies of the High Priestess of Belit Lil (who was the Satrap's previous lover) and of Wo Peng, the Vizier.

Whoever they were, her abductors are no more. Murdered in the night by howling black skinned savages, their corpses were devoured. She was dragged, kicking and screaming, to the ruins of an ancient city where she now finds herself imprisoned and waiting upon the whims of their demonic leader.

Strength).	12.	Combat Actions.	3.	1-3.	Right Leg.	0/5
Constitution).	12.	Damage Mod.	na.	4-6.	Left Leg.	0/5
Size).	10.	Improvement Mod.	+1.	7-9.	Abdomen.	0/6
Intelligence).	14.	Magic Points.	14.	10-12	Chest.	0/7
Power).	14.	Movement.	8m.	13-15.	Right Arm.	0/4
Dexterity).	18.	Strike Rank.	16.	16-18.	Left Arm.	0/4
Charisma).	19.	Hero Points.	1.	19-20.	Head.	0/5

Common Skills.

Athletics 35%, Culture(Yar Ammonite) 81%, Dance 86%, Evade 75%, Influence 72%, Insight 41%, Language(Yar Ammonite) 89%, Lore(Dipur) 58%, Perception 46%, Persistence 31%, Resilience 46%, Sing 53%, Sleight 49%, Stealth 50%

Advanced Skills

Courtesy 80%, Language(Khazi) 52%, Seduction 88%, Survival 43%

Equipment - None, if encountered in the ruins of Akharon. Wealthy clothing, dripping with jewellery and wearing a gem encrusted headdress if encountered at the court of Dipur.

Tactics - Subservience. Life as a slave has taught Sutramunah that the best way to avoid being hurt is to comply with the wishes of those who threaten her. She is unlikely to fight, unless it appears that those who threaten her wish nothing less than her death. Then she will make an attempt to defend herself whilst sobbing piteously.

Weapon Styles - Ineffective Flailing (Dagger, Unarmed) 30%

Weapon.	S	R.	Damage.	Ap/Hp.	Range.	Special
Knife.	S.	S.	D3.	5/4.	na.	Impale, Bleed

Guram Khal, 'The Toecutter' - Zorabi Kidnapper

Guram Khal is the head man of a criminal street gang from the Den district of the City of Dipur. He is tall and whip thin with an eyepatch over a missing left eye, a hook nose and long black hair, hanging loose and sweat caked around him.

He is a Zorabi by birth and counts the gangs of 'the Dives' as his bitterest enemies, even ahead of the soldiers of the Black Guard. They were responsible for the loss of his eye. He gained his nickname because of his penchant for mutilating his victims in a certain way. His little gang of cutthroats, footpads and kidnappers, the Toecutters, were paid handsomely by a hooded man to transport a slave girl to Zul Bazzir. Guram Khal sits now, his sanity hanging upon a thread, in the dungeons of Akharon and reflects upon his life and the events which have brought him here. He prays to his ancestors for his deliverance and promises to be a better man.

Should he be rescued from his fate, Guram Khal would prove to be a brave enough ally and a resourceful contact in the City of Dipur. It is extremely doubtful though that his new found morality would last for long, once he was safely back in his home city.

Strength)	11.	Combat Actions.	3.	1-3.	Right Leg.	0/6
Constitution)	13.	Damage Mod.	+D2.	4-6.	Left Leg.	0/6
Size).	15.	Improvement Mod.	+1.	7-9.	Abdomen.	0/7
Intelligence).	14.	Magic Points.	10.	10-12.	Chest.	0/8
Power).	10.	Movement.	8m.	13-15.	Right Arm.	0/5
Dexterity).	12.	Strike Rank.	13.	16-18.	Left Arm.	0/5
Charisma).	13.	Hero Points.	1.	19-20.	Head.	0/6

Common Skills.

Athletics 43%, Brawn 46%, Culture(Zorabi) 60%, Evade 54%, Evaluate 48%, Influence 47%, Language(Zorabi) 78%, Lore(Dipur) 61%, Perception 44%, Persistence 40%, Resilience 46%, Ride 42%, Stealth 53%, Unarmed 70%

Advanced Skills

Gambling 53%, Language(Susrahnite) 35%, Language(Khazi) 45%, Streetwise 64%

Equipment - None, if encountered in the dungeons of Akharon. Leather Hauberk and trousers, club, dagger, scimitar, Zorabi Knife and a money belt containg 16 silver coins if encountered in 'the Den' district of Dipur.

Tactics - Presently, Guram Khal has little inclination towards tactical combat. His sanity is almost blasted and if freed, he will simply launch himself into a frenzied attack on any opponents. Once returned to the safety of Dipur, he is a wily leader who prefers his underlings to do the fighting. He will attempt to sneak up on his foes and ambush them.

Weapon.	Size.	Reach.	Damage.	Ap/Hp.	Range.	Special
Club.	M.	S	D6+D2.	4/4.	Na.	Stun Location
Scimitar.	M.	M.	D8+D2.	6/10.	Na.	Bleed

Combat Styles - Street Bravo(Club, Dagger,Unarmed). 70%
1H Sword. 68%

Chamash - Zadjite Slaver Lord

Chamash is a cruel fellow with a vicious temper who never forgets a slight. He is not particularly large but leads his followers through a mixture of his forceful personality, quick wits and cunning. He is lean, leathery and hawk faced, sporting a full beard shot through with the grey of impending age.

He has been tracking the escaped Ikunas for several months, knowing full well that he must make good on their value or face repercussions from his employer, the Slave Sultan, Darmesh the Black, for their escape. Whispers have reached him of drovers disappearing upon the road to Fort Yirlat. He has put two and two together, gathered his men and set off from Zul Bazzir.

Any alliance made with this villain is likely to be to short lived and born only out of necessity. He is most likely to aid the characters until the Ikunas are killed or recaptured and then attempt to make slaves of them also. While it is possible that Chamash might be encountered during the sojourn in Fort Yirlat, the proposed story has it that he will show up in the ruins of Akharon as an untrustworthy ally.

Strength).	13.	Combat Actions.	3.	1-3.	Right Leg.	2/6
Constitution).	14.	Damage Mod.	+D2.	4-6.	Left Leg.	2/6
Size).	13.	Improvement Mod.	+1.	7-9.	Abdomen.	3/7
Intelligence).	16.	Magic Points.	13.	10-12.	Chest.	3/8
Power).	13.	Movement.	8m.	13-15.	Right Arm.	2/5
Dexterity).	12.	Strike Rank.	14(10).	16-18.	Left Arm.	2/5
Charisma).	15.	Hero Points.	1.	19-20	Head.	4/6

Common Skills.

Athletics 50%, Brawn 52%, Culture(Zadjite) 65%, Evade 56%, Influence 46%, Insight 44%, Language(Zadjite) 80%, Lore(Zadj) 64%, Perception 49%, Persistence 54%, Resilience 58%, Ride 65%, Stealth 58%

Advanced Skills

Commerce 59%, Language(Ikuna) 39%, Language(Khazi) 44%, Language(Yar Ammonite) 51%, Lore(Al Khaz) 43%, Lore(Cannibal Coast) 42%, Lore(Yar Ammon) 50%, Streetwise 56%, Survival 57%, Tracking 50%

Equipment - Ringmail Hauberk, Spired Helmet, Hard leather Bracers and Greaves, Cudgel, Scimitar of Zadjite Steel, Shortbow and 20 arrows, mounted on a camel. Has 3 Gold and 57 Silver coins in a money belt.

Tactics - Chamash normally fights with his bow at a distance. He will only close with an opponent if he has the advantage of superior numbers on his side. He favours combat manoeuvres that maximise the potential to capture the opponent, such as disarm, stun location and trip opponent. He commences such combats with his cudgel unless it is absolutely necessary for an opponent to die. whereupon he will attack with his Scimitar.

Weapon.	Size.	Reach.	Damage.	Ap/Hp	Range.	Special
Scimitar.	M.	M.	D8+D2.	7/10	na.	Bleed
Short bow.	L.	na.	D6+D2.	4/4.	80m.	Impale
Cudgel.	M.	S.	D6+D2.	4/4.	na.	Stun Location

Combat Styles - Zadjite Slaver Lord (Cudgel, Scimitar, Bow) 75%

Zadjite Slavers (12)

Lean, mean and cruel of visage, these fellows wear dusty black desert robes over their armour and rust-red turbans. Four of them carry man-catcher staves while the remainder wield short bows. These fellows are every bit as vicious as their demeanour suggests. Their scimitars are forged from Zadjite Steel.

Strength).	12.	Combat Actions.	2.	1-3.	Right Leg.	2/5
Constitution).	12.	Damage Mod.	na	4-6.	Left Leg.	2/5
Size).	12.	Improvement Mod.	na.	7-9.	Abdomen.	3/6
Intelligence).	11.	Magic Points.	12.	10-12.	Chest.	3/7
Power).	12.	Movement.	8m.	13-15.	Right Arm.	2/4
Dexterity).	13.	Strike Rank.	12(9)	16-18.	Left Arm.	2/4
Charisma).	10.			19-20.	Head.	0/5

Common Skills.

Athletics 35%, Brawn 34%, Culture(Zadjite) 55%, Evade 36%, Language(Zadjite) 72%.
Lore(Zadj) 53%, Perception 43%, Persistence 34%, Resilience 44%, Ride 51%,
Stealth 44%

Advanced Skills

Gambling 37%, Language(Ikuna) 22%, Language(Khazi) 34%,
Language(Yar Ammonite) 31%, Lore (Al Khaz) 40%, Lore (Cannibal Coast) 37%,
Lore(Yar Ammon) 32%, Survival 42%, Track 34%

Equipment - Ring mail Hauberk, Hard Leather Greaves and Bracers, Cudgel, Man-catcher, Scimitar of Zadjite Steel, Shortbow and 20 arrows, mounted on horses. Each carries 4D6 Silver coins on their person.

Tactics - these men are bullies and cowards at heart but, they know that their lives are forfeit if they fail to retrieve their missing property. They only attack when they have the advantage of numbers. The Slavers with the man catcher staves will attempt to surround their quarry while the bowmen will feather any who look likely to cause problems to their fellows.

The Bowmen are likely to target aimed shots at their opponents legs to prevent their flight.

Weapon.	Size.	Reach.	Damage.	Ap/Hp.	Range.	Special
Mancatcher.	L.	VL.	D4.	4/10.	na.	Entangle
Scimitar.	M.	M.	D8.	7/10.	na.	Bleed
Short bow	L.	na.	D6.	4/4	80m.	Impale
Cudgel.	M.	S.	D6.	4/4.	na.	Stun Location

Combat Styles - Zadjite Slaver (Cudgel, Man-catcher, Scimitar, Bow) 60%

Sample Player controlled Character

Arshaf Abu (Khazrajite Nomad/Tracker)

Strength)	13	Combat actions.	3	1-3.	Right Leg.	0/6
Constitution)	14	Damage Mod.	+D2	4-6.	Left Leg.	0/6
Size)	13	Improvement Mod.	Na	7-9.	Abdomen.	3/7
Intellect)	12	Magic Points.	14	10-12.	Chest.	3/8
Power)	14	Movement.	8m	13-15.	Right Arm.	0/5
Dexterity)	13.	Strike Rank.	11	16-18.	Left Arm.	0/5
Charisma)	10	Hero Points.	3.	19-20.	Head.	4/6

Common Skills

Athletics 61%, Brawn 36%, Culture(Khazrajite) 54%, Dance 23%, Drive 27%, Evade 41%, Evaluate 32%, First Aid 35%, Influence 20%, Insight 36%, Lore(Al Khaz) 69%, Perception 76%, Persistence 53%, Resilience 63%, Ride 72%, Sing 24%, Sleight 48%, Stealth 60%, Swim 27%, Unarmed 36%

Advanced Skills

Gambling 26%, Language(Azimban) 73%, Language(Khazi) 53%, Lore(Dipur) 34%, Streetwise 24%, Survival 60%, Track 60%

Weapon Skills

Sword and Shield 76%, Bow 66%

Weapon.	S.	R.	Damage.	Ap/Hp.	Range.	Special
Scimitar.	M	M.	D8+D2.	6/10.	Na.	Bleed
Target Shield.	L.	S.	D6+D2	4/12.	Na.	Impale
Shortbow.	L	na.	D6+D2	4/4.	80m.	Impale

Arshaf Abu is a Khazrajite outcast, banished from his clan for crimes which he has neither revealed, nor admitted, to any outsider. Forced to take 'the long walk', he was fortunate enough to be found by outriders from a passing caravan before thirst and sunstroke could kill him. The caravan was led by a Susrahnite merchant named Haram Baal and it was bound for Dipur. Upon arriving there he signed up as a bounty hunter, utilising his skills as a tracker and fighter to make himself useful to the Khazistani rulers.

He has accepted many contracts from the Black Guard and is well regarded by Captain Balchak, although he would not count him as his friend.

The merchant, Haram Baal, values his abilities greatly and regularly hires him to guide caravans across the Al Khaz to Zul Bazzir.

He no longer dresses in Khazrajite garb but wears a, spired, Korshani helmet and a faded grey tabard under a Ringmail Hauberk He wields a scimitar and target shield as well as a short bow and a quiver of 20 arrows.

Possessions - Spired Helmet(4Ap), Ringmail Hauberk, Scimitar and Target Shield, Shortbow and a quiver of 20 arrows, Knife. Camel with riding tack and harness. A coin pouch containing three gold and seven silver coins.

Sample Player controlled Character

Gatheric (Tarag Thulan Barbarian/Warrior)

Strength).	16	Combat actions.	3	1-3.	Right Leg.	0/6
Constitution).	13	Damage Mod.	+D2	4-6.	Left Leg.	0/6
Size).	14	Improvement Mod.	Na.	7-9.	Abdomen.	5/7
Intelligence).	12	Magic Points.	12	10-12.	Chest.	5/8
Power).	11	Movement.	8m	13-15.	Right Arm.	0/5
Dexterity).	13	Strike Rank.	11	16-18.	Left Arm.	0/5
Cha).	10	Hero Points.	3.	19-20.	Head.	0/6

Common Skills

Athletics 62%, Brawn 66%, Culture(Tharag Thulan) 54%, Dance 24%, Drive 24%, Evade 60%, Evaluate 21%, First Aid 27%, Influence 20%, Insight 23%, Lore(Tharag Thule) 50%, Perception 47%, Persistence 55%, Resilience 73%, Ride 29%, Sing 21%, Sleight 23%, Stealth 59%, Swim 30%, Unarmed 48%

Advanced Skills

Gambling 23%, Language(Thulan) 72%, Language(Susrahnite) 33%, Language(Khazi) 24%, Lore(Military Tactics) 24%, Streetwise 38%, Survival 46%, Track 36%

Weapon Skills

1H Sword 78%, Sword and Shield 78%, Sword and Dagger 58%, 2H Sword 58%

Weapon.	S.	R.	Damage.	Ap/Hp.	Range.	Special
Scimitar.	M	M.	D8+D2.	6/10.	Na.	Bleed
Dagger.	S.	S.	D4+1+D2	6/8.	Na.	Bleed, Impale

Gatheric is a man with a mission. His village was destroyed and the young women of his clan carried off as slaves by followers of the Witch King, Arkanth Mal of Galuga. Gatheric was left for dead on the field of battle, but not before he had laid low the Captain of the slavers with a mighty blow.

When he regained consciousness and recovered from his wounds, he followed the raiders back to the land of Yg. He discovered that all of his people were destroyed and that the Slaver Captain had survived his injuries, although the villain's once handsome visage was now horribly scarred. Now known as 'Bloodeye', he had departed the northlands with a small band of followers on a mission of great import to his master.

Gatheric has tracked him for nearly three years and rumours that a man fitting his description has been sighted in Zul Bazzir has brought Gatheric to the city of Dipur, known as the 'Gateway to the East'. He has taken employment with a merchant named Haram Baal , to guard his caravan which is bound for Zul Bazzir.

He wears, well worn, desert garb over a Chainmail Hauberk. He carries a scimitar at his waist and a curved 'Jambiya' dagger in his boot. A pouch on his belt contains a pair of silver coins and a single gold one.

Possessions - Chainmail Hauberk, Scimitar, Dagger and coin pouch containing twelve silver coins and two gold coins.

Sample Player controlled Character

Darshaam Dar (Susrahnite Decadent/Thief)

Strength)	12	Combat actions.	3	1-3.	Right Leg.	0/5
Constitution)	12	Damage Mod.	Na	4-6.	Left Leg.	0/5
Size).	13	Improvement Mod.	+1	7-9.	Abdomen.	2/6
Intelligence)	12	Magic Points.	11	10-12.	Chest.	2/7
Power).	11	Movement.	8m	13-15.	Right Arm.	1/4
Dexterity)	15	Strike Rank.	13	16-18.	Left Arm.	0/4
Charisma)	13	Hero Points.	3.	19-20.	Head.	0/5

Common Skills

Athletics 67%, Brawn 35%, Culture(Susrahnite) 59%, Dance 53%, Drive 26%, Evade 70%, Evaluate 60%, First Aid 37%, Influence 36%, Insight 53%, Lore(Dipur) 54%, Perception 53%, Persistence 42%, Resilience 44%, Ride 26%, Sing 24%, Sleight 78%, Stealth 77%, Swim 24%, Unarmed 37%

Advanced Skills

Courtesy 25%, Gambling 35%, Language(Susrahnite) 75%, Language(Khazi) 51%, Mechanisms 47%, Seduction 36%, Streetwise 44%

Weapon Skills

1 H Sword 72%

Weapon.	S.	R.	Damage.	Ap/Hp.	Range.	Special
Sabre.	M.	M.	D6+1	6/10.	na.	Bleed

Darshaam Dar is a native of Dipur, born and raised in the slum district, known as the Dives. An orphan with no living family that he knows of, he became a thief out of necessity after his parents were murdered by a Gang Leader named Balchak when he was not yet ten summers old. Darshaam Dar harbours a deep desire for revenge upon this particular enemy, but he is not prepared to die to achieve this vengeance. He has few connections of any worth but is well acquainted with Tarku the Moneylender in the Bazaar of Coins, although he would certainly not consider the man to be a friend.

He spends much of his coin in trying to impress the 'ladies' at the House of Satin Caresses, a brothel in the Dives. His chief rival is an Adartani rogue named Absalom, who frequents the same establishments and constantly strives to outdo him in acts of bravado and generosity.

A botched attempt to rob a rich Khazistani woman on the Square of the Grand Souk has led to his having to flee Dipur for a time. He has joined the caravan of Haam Baal as a guard and he intends to spend a few months in Zul Bazzir.

He wears a heavy leather hauberk over a faded crimson tabard and high strapped sandals. He carries a horseman's sabre in a tatty old scabbard hanging from his belt. A coin pouch hangs around his neck on a frayed leather thong.

Possessions - Heavy Leather Hauberk, Sabre, Knife. Pouch containing three gold coins, six silver coins and a Lockpick.

Sample Player controlled Character

Tarek Mirza (Khazistani Civilised/Noble)

Strength).	13	Combat actions.	3	1-3.	Right Leg.	0/5
Constitution)	11	Damage Mod.	+D2	4-6.	Left Leg.	0/5
Size).	13	Improvement Mod.	+1	7-9.	Abdomen.	4/6
Intelligence).	12	Magic Points.	12	10-12.	Chest.	4/7
Power)	12	Movement.	8m	13-15.	Right Arm.	2/4
Dexterity).	13	Strike Rank.	9	16-18.	Left Arm.	2/4
Charisma).	14	Hero Points.	3.	19-20.	Head.	4/5

Common Skills

Athletics 46%, Brawn 41%, Culture(Khazistani) 54%, Dance 27%, Drive 25%, Evade 56%, Evaluate 56%, First Aid 25%, Influence 73%, Insight 44%, Lore(Dipur) 54%, Perception 44%, Persistence 49%, Resilience 42%, Ride 55%, Sing 26%, Sleight 27%, Stealth 50%, Swim 24%, Unarmed 26%

Advanced Skills

Courtesy 56%, Culture(Susrahnite) 24% Gambling 34%, Language(Susrahnite) 51%, Language(Khazi) 76%, Language(Azimban) 51%, Streetwise 46%, Survival 33%, Tracking 33%

Weapon Skills

Sword and Shield 66%, 1 H Sword. 76%

Weapon.	S.	R.	Damage.	Ap/Hp.	Range.	Special
Yataghan.	M.	M.	D6+2+D2	6/10.	Na.	Bleed
Target Shield.	L.	S.	D6+D2	4/12.	Na.	Impale

Tarek Mirza is a young Nobleman of Dipur, whose family have fallen upon hard times. As such, he has been forced out into the world to fend for himself. Fortunately, he is an accomplished swordsman and has made a name for himself fighting honour duels on behalf of those who are wealthy enough to have another man risk death in their stead. Besides death, there are other complications in this line of employment. Many of the Khazistani elite feel that he cheapens the martial honour of their people by fighting duels for coin and thus, he has few friends among those of his own social standing.

He has several contacts throughout the city, the most useful of which are Kumbagash the Swordsmith from the Street of Hundred Bazaars, Rostam Baros the Barber Surgeon from the Square of the Grand Souk and Aram Anshal, the owner of the Inn of the Gilded Palm where he rents his room.

It was through Aram Amshal that he met Haram Baal, a merchant of some renown and ended up as a caravan guard on the road to Zul Bazzir.

Although his chosen profession has not yet earned him any real enemies, it is most likely only a matter of time before it will. His most outspoken critic is a Khazistani nobleman by the name of Serjuk Mirza, a Captain of Imperial Lancers at the Conqueror's Kasbah.

Possessions - Scale Hauberk, Spired Helmet(4ap), Heavy Leather bracers, Yataghan, Target Shield, knife, ten gold coins and eight silver coins in a belt pouch.