

TWM1

DIAMOND EYES
A TRUE WORLD TALE OF BETRAYAL



Skymaster

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Special Thanks:

Thank you once again to the whole Piazza community and David Shephard in particular – who seems to bring me back to the gaming world every time I, for some strange reason, get distracted by the real world!

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Manufactured by Hasbro SA, Rue Emile-Boéchat 31, 2800 Delémont, CH.
Represented by Hasbro Europe, 4 The Square, Stockley Park, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB11 1ET, UK.



INTRODUCTION

Diamond Eyes is a myth from the land of Maztica that has only grown in popularity since the coming of Cordell and his Golden Legion. Before that fateful day in 1361 DR, the True World knew nothing of the pale faced men who lived a whole world away.

Or did they?

Diamond Eyes is a tale of magic and betrayal not among men, but rather among the gods themselves! If it is true, it undeniably proves that even if the mortals of the very different cultures were unaware of one another – the same could certainly not be said of the gods. Faerun may have had much more of a hand in shaping the fate of Maztica than previously believed.

WHAT IS IN THIS BOOK?

TWM1 Diamond Eyes – A True World Tale of Betrayal is as its title in part suggests, simply a myth. However, to accompany the myth, there are 5th edition “crunch” materials that accompany the story.

The TWM tag stands for “True World Mini,” since this product is neither a fully developed rulebook, adventure nor other product. Rather, it is a small collection to whet a DM’s appetite for adventure in the True World.

MAZTICA ALIVE!

In the 1990 Maztica Boxed Set, the name “Maztica Alive” was given to the game book designed solely for the dungeon master. In 2010, when a name was needed to represent the legion of remaining fans and the community that they were slowly forming, there was in truth no name that could have been more appropriate. Fittingly, this community began exactly two decades after the introduction of Maztica. “Maztica Alive!” therefore, has come to represent a growing community of game enthusiasts who are determined to see Maztica

survive in each new game incarnation.

Currently, the group is most active in the Yahoo Group of the same name. To join the group, simply follow the link provided:

<https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/MazticaAlive/info>

Also, discussions are actively growing in the community known as The Piazza:

<http://thepiazza.org.uk/bb/index.php>

Though the intention of this netbook is to draw in new fans, the group itself is always looking for new authors, artists and contributors. Please feel free to join us at either site and participate in the conversation. Perhaps your material will shape the events in countless campaigns for future fans!

Keep an eye out for future products from “Maztica Alive!” under the following tags:

TWC – “True World Core.” A Maztica Alive Core Setting Sourcebook.

TWA – “True World Adventure.” A Maztica Alive! Adventure book.

TWN – “True World Novel” A Maztica Alive! Novel

TWM – “True World Mini” A Maztica Alive! Mini-Sourcebook

Affiliated Products:

TWC1 The Maztica Campaign Guide

<http://www.dmsguild.com/product/171534/TWC1Maztica-Campaign-Guide>

TWN1 Azure Skies

<http://www.dmsguild.com/product/173183/TWN1-Azure-Skies>

DIAMOND EYES

The “History of Maztica” section of **TWC1 The Maztica Campaign Guide** describes a moment in the deity Qotal’s immortal existence where he performed a terrible act upon his sister Kiltzi. This deed eventually led to him leaving the land in shame, with only a prophecy promising of his return. This legend fully details the events that led up to Qotal’s guilt-driven departure and is accepted by many Mazticans as the literal history of one of their most benevolent deities. Qotal’s priests do not hide from, nor suppress this myth – fully believing that not even the divine are infallible.

THE LEGEND

Long before he fled the True World in shame, the great god Qotal fell in love with a woman and lavished upon her great gifts of pluma.

The woman’s black eyes sparkled like diamonds and were unlike any seen before. Upon his first sight of her vast beauty, Qotal realized that he must have her.

Qotal knew that if he wished to win over the mortal woman he would have to come to know her and he could not use his divine grace to simply take her as his own. His sister, the goddess of love Kiltzi, had taught him of the finer points in love and he chose to play by her rules.

Qotal decided to take a number of forms in order to learn of the woman and make have her return his love.

First, Qotal took the form of a beautiful butterfly, but she paid the creature little heed. Next, he tried a multihued macaw. In this form she found his call to be irritating. Finally, he chose the form of the great couatl, but she ran in fear from his serpentine form.

Even the beautiful anklet and headdress of pluma the couatl offered could not earn her trust.

In desperation, Qotal turned to the stone god Plutoq and from this brother he begged advice. Qotal had been too embarrassed to go to any other – Kiltzi in particular, after his display of amateurish ineptitude.

Plutoq told him. “Brother, if you really want her to love you, you must go to her as one of her own.”

Qotal heeded the advice of his brother and took the form of a great Eagle Warrior. Qotal stood nearly as tall as a stalk of mayz and his body was as unmovable as a mountain.

As he began to approach the woman, Plutoq intervened and warned, “Wait brother! It is true that you appear as one of her kind, but do you not see the obvious nature of your divinity? If you truly wish for her to consider your love, you must stand with her as an equal. It is not only your face that you must hide.”

Qotal pondered Plutoq’s words and saw wisdom in them. He was thankful; but also ashamed for not realizing this truth himself.

Qotal took much of his divinity and power and hid it in a beautiful necklace of pluma which he wore around his muscular human neck.

When Qotal finally approached the woman he called her Diamond Eyes, for he did not know her name. Those sparkling, impossibly black orbs of hers pierced his soul in a way none had before. He knew that there was nothing that she could ask of him that he would not give and his longing was infinite. When her eyes settled on his pluma necklace and she held out her hand as if to take it, Qotal knew that he must resist.

Without his pluma necklace and its sequestered divinity, Qotal knew he would be vulnerable to the predations of his dark brother Zaltec. Certainly, Zaltec had expressed his jealousy of the goddess Maztica’s favored child before when he had beheaded her with his dark mācuahuitl! If Zaltec were to know of Qotal’s temporary weakness or worse yet, seize the necklace from Qotal’s beloved, their age long enmity could come to an abrupt and violent end.

Qotal was faced with a choice. Would he choose love and accept its accompanying vulnerability? Was his love for Diamond Eyes potentially worth his own immortal existence?

Qotal gazed longingly at Diamond Eyes and threw caution to the wind as he placed the talisman upon her neck.

He moved to embrace his love and at that instant he realized the terrible error of his choice.

Diamond Eyes laughed in a voice that echoed of emptiness, lies and an endless nothing. Qotal felt weak and somehow hollow. Vulnerable from the loss of his divine spark, the pain from his betrayal felt almost...human.

With her necklace, Diamond Eyes allowed a black emptiness to burst forth from her soul and it laid waste to the surrounding jungle. Her appearance shifted though she still remained cruelly beautiful.

She was Shar, the Goddess of Loss – and she had made herself known in the True World!

Shocked at the loss of his divinity and by the horror of what had been unleashed; Qotal fled to the relative safety of the jungle.

It did not take long for the human Qotal to gather his dignity and plan to right the consequences of his foolishness. He knew that he could not defeat Shar in battle, yet somehow, he needed to get the necklace talisman back.

This task – Qotal knew he could not do alone, and so he turned to the only one he knew could help. Defeating one so evil required the assistance of one equally foul. It was time to turn to his dark brother Zaltec.

Enlisting Zaltec might not be wise, but it was a necessity. Knowing that Zaltec would first deride Qotal for his foolishness he stilled his temper before calling upon the Bringer of War.

Zaltec watched his brother approach as he gorged himself on fresh hearts. "Ah brother," he

laughed. "It seems as if you are not yourself these days. Could it be that your weakling priests have not been as fervent as they might have once been? Let me tear out their hearts and we could feast together."

Qotal could barely hide his disgust as Zaltec took another bite and pinkish drool fell from his lips.

"Little brother," Qotal stressed the word little, "I require your assistance, and no, it has nothing to do with my priests. They continue to worship me with love that you could never understand, for it is far more powerful..."

"You seek my help and yet you insult me?" Zaltec interrupted. "Come, tell me what troubles you so and explain to me why I should not tear out your own heart right here and now. It has been long since I tasted the blood of my own kin and I'm sure yours would be as delectable as that of our mother's."

Qotal ignored both the threat of violence and the pain from Zaltec's casually cruel words. The mention of his mother's death from the very being who murdered her was almost too much to bear. Qotal knew the sanctity of the True World and his own divinity hinged on his brother's help, so he stayed his tongue.

Qotal explained the whole truth of the woman he knew as Diamond Eyes. He spoke of the loss of the talisman and his divinity, the decimation in the jungle, and the name he heard in a whisper as he fled the wood.

"Shar."

When Qotal said the goddess' name, Zaltec's entire demeanor began to change, much to Qotal's surprise and cautious delight.

"She dares!" Zaltec growled with the voice of a thousand jaguars. "Yes brother, I will avenge you! But know that our alliance has nothing to do with so foolish a notion of love or loyalty. Shar's theft is an act of pure evil, and evil in the True World my dear brother, belongs to me!"

Qotal still had much to fear. What if the dark goddess defeated them both? If they did win, what if his brother decided to keep the talisman and its powers for himself?

Wary but determined, Qotal led Zaltec to the blackened jungle where he last encountered the Lady of Loss.

There she sat upon a throne of ash and bone; ever the image of pure hatred and despair. She smiled at the approaching brothers, an awkward and fake expression from one that knew only darkness and the cold comfort of the void.

"Welcome, children of the interloper Kukul. Apparently there is something of yours which I currently have in my possession."

Qotal began, "Return it to me, Maiden of Loss. These lands are not to be fouled by your presence any longer."

"Die bitch!" growled Zaltec as he swung his mācuahuitl at her head, interrupting Qotal's plea.

Before the mācuahuitl could make contact, Shar disappeared and much to the brothers' surprise, left behind the necklace containing Qotal's divinity.

Not understanding why, but quickly overcoming their shock, both brothers grabbed for the necklace. Success dissolved the truce and the temporary allies regained their relationship as mortal enemies.

Upon grasping the necklace, the brothers were given a vision. Their sister, Kiltzi, was revealed to them tending one of her many vast gardens. At first the vision was from such a distance that her features were hidden to them. As the moments passed the image grew closer and clearer until she finally turned to face them both. Kiltzi was shockingly beautiful and both brothers flushed with lust. Most startling of all, Qotal noticed a feature of his sister's that he never noticed before...her sparkling black diamond eyes.

With the vision spent, Qotal's divinity returned to him from the talisman. Zaltec howled in rage at the unfairness of it all and swore revenge upon his brother before returning to his dark realm and grisly feast.

Qotal quickly forgot Zaltec's threat, Shar's recent appearance, and even the destruction she had wrought during her brief tenure in the True World. His mind became uncomfortably focused on his sister Kiltzi and the beauty in her eyes. How he had not recognized her from the start, he did not know, nor did he care to; for now he was of only one mind.

He must have his sister! He must have Diamond Eyes!

From her dark realm, Shar laughed at the sight of it all. Lady Loss had succeeded in bringing her particular brand of emptiness to the so called True World with unreasonable ease.

As she watched Qotal exile himself from the world after his dark deed she consumed the great loss felt by both mortal and divine.

"Amateurs," she mused.

MAGIC ITEMS

The following magic items were mentioned in the legend of Diamond Eyes. Perhaps your players may come across one or both of these items, but they are unique and quite powerful – though not so powerful that they have the same campaign altering effects of an artifact.

The tags “hishna” and “pluma” may be added to an item’s description in the True World, but they have no special rules of their own. Rather, the tags are added to determine if certain spells have effects on the said item (for example, should there be a zone where hishna magic does not function).

THE ANKLET OF DIAMOND EYES

Wondrous item, legendary (requires attunement) [pluma]

This beautiful anklet is a masterwork in plumaweaving. Its delicate features disguise an unbreakable band of featherwork, golden fibers, and small precious stones.

The wearer of the anklet has a Charisma score of 19 while the item is worn. It has no effect if the wearer already has a Charisma of 19 or higher, or if the anklet is removed.

The anklet also increases the wearers walking speed by 10 feet.

If the wearer is also attuned to the *headdress of Diamond Eyes* they may also cast *charm person* (spell save DC 13) on a humanoid within 30 feet once between short and long rests.

THE HEADDRESS OF DIAMOND EYES

Wondrous item, legendary (requires attunement) [pluma]

The headdress of Diamond Eyes is a beautifully multihued head piece of feathers and stands of golden fibers. Its patterns match the *anklet of Diamond Eyes* perfectly.

The wearer of the headdress has a Wisdom score of 19 while the item is worn. It has no effect if

the wearer already has Wisdom of 19 or higher, or if the headdress is removed.

The headdress also increases your awareness acutely and you cannot be surprised while it is worn.

If the wearer is also attuned to the *anklet of Diamond Eyes* they may also cast *chromatic orb* once between every short and long rest. The wearer must still make a ranged attack, but the material components of the spell are unnecessary.

ARTIFACT

Artifacts in the True World are rarely created by even the greatest of artisans. If a plumaweaver or hishnashaper were to construct one, it would certainly be the stuff of legends.

The gods, with Qotal and Zaltec in particular however, are responsible for many. The artifact below was intentionally crafted by Qotal, but it only gained the vast majority of its power when it held the divinity of the Plumed Serpent.

THE NECKLACE OF THE PLUMED SERPENT

Wondrous item, artifact (requires attunement) [pluma]

Even more so than the Cloak of One Plume (**TWC-1 Maztica Campaign Guide**), it is believed that the necklace of the Plumed Serpent is Qotal’s greatest feat of plumaweaving. The necklace’s appearance has been known to change appearance at its wearer’s whim, but in its raw form, the necklace is a stunning mix of feathers from creatures that have not been heard from since the dawn of time.

Qotal crafted the necklace for the goddess Shar when he mistook her for a beautiful human woman and he fell in love. He sequestered divinity within the necklace in order to please the goddess and when she took it from him, she corrupted its magic. Qotal’s divinity was eventually returned but his interaction with the

goddess and her corrupted necklace eventually drove him to commit a terrible deed.

Random Properties. The necklace of the Plumed Serpent has the following random properties (DMG pg 219-221).

- 2 minor beneficial properties
- 2 minor detrimental properties

Spells. The necklace of the Plumed Serpent has 7 charges when found and regains 1d4+3 charges every morning as the sun rises. An attuned wearer can use an action and expend 1 or more charges to cast the following spells (save DC 18): *breathsense* (TWC-1, 1 charge), *conjure animals* (5th level version, bird or snake beasts only, 2 charges), *elevate* (TWC-1, 1 charge), *great screech* (TWC-1, 3 charges) or Kiltzi's love (TWC-1, 1 charge).

Great Beauty. An attuned wearer's beauty amplifies greatly. This effect does not increase the wearer's Charisma, but any word spoken by the wearer causes humanoids of the opposite sex to react to the wearer as if they were a *suggestion* (Wisdom save DC 18).

Covetousness. Shar intentionally left a portion of her malevolence within the necklace before it was returned to Qotal. Those who wear the necklace become increasingly covetous of members of the opposite sex. This curse is unavoidable and can even affect a deity or other being normally immune to charms and enchantments. The wearer will begin to act irrationally around members of the opposite sex. Jealousy, pettiness and even violence can occur at any moment as determined by the DM. The only way to stop this curse is to destroy the necklace, either permanently or temporarily (see below). It affects any who attempt to wear the necklace, not just those who are attuned.

Destroying the Necklace. The Necklace cannot be destroyed except through an agreement between Qotal and Shar allows for it. It can be thrown willingly into the fires of Mount Zatal, however, and this will cause the necklace to disappear for 1d100 years. The

necklace will reform somewhere in the True World.

LOCATION

The Black Jungle (Far Payit): All know and avoid the region of Far Payit's jungles known as the Black Jungle.

The goddess Shar briefly held Qotal's divinity when it was contained within the Necklace of the Plumed Serpent and she unleashed her own power through it to decimate a five mile swath of jungle. All life but the divine perished within the confines of her blast and when the trees eventually grew back, they were literally the color that gave the jungle its name.

No living creatures dwell within the Black Jungle, but that does not mean it is uninhabited. Undead inhabit the area in the hundreds and while most are well known types; there are others never before seen.

At the current time, the undead stay within the confines of the wood as they have for centuries, but some say the being known as Camazotz has taken an interest in the region. Activity has certainly increased and the occasional wandering zombie or skeleton has had to be put down by the jaguar and eagle knights of Tulom-Itzi.

What will become of the jungle and its undead inhabitants in the near future remains to be seen.

Game effects. All undead in the Black Jungle gain advantage against turning attempts and to magic with the pluma or hishna tags.