

WONDERS of the WILD

A Wilderness Companion for Blood & Bronze
and Other Fantasy Games of High Adventure and Role Playing

Text

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LEAGUES
1 2 3 4 5

AGADE



Ashur



GREAT ZAB

WEST
FOOTHILLS

ZAGROS MOUNTAINS

ARALLI



Dur Kurigalzu

WHITE
MARSH

GREAT
BARRENS

ROCKY

DESERT

STAR OF

Mari



THE SHIFTING



WILDERNESS ADVENTURES

When traveling the wild, all characters must test Vigor. If the traveling party totals at least one success per adventurer, they may exit the zone they are currently in or arrive at a specific location within the zone. Otherwise the party suffers **misfortunes** (opposite), and the referee decide where they end up. Regardless, the referee rolls for chance encounters.

A journey's length is determined by the number of hexagons traversed; its duration by dividing this length by the travel speed for the zone.

CHANCE ENCOUNTERS

Roll encounter di(c)e and check the corresponding entry for the current zone.

Interpret the result as imaginatively as you can. Elaborate the entry, using your imagination and inspiration from things you have seen, heard, read or experienced. Sometimes you will find that an entry inspires an adventure in its own right. Others will feel less engaging, and still other times the players will devise a plan to avoid the encounter altogether.

Mark it on the map. If the entry provides a location that the adventurers can return to, mark it on the map.

Once the encounter has played out, cross it out and write your own. The new entry can be as similar or dissimilar to the old one as you like, as long as it isn't identical. This way, the charts will continue to provide you and your friends with literally endless adventures.

HUNTING & FORAGING

If the player characters lack food and water, they may attempt to hunt and forage for survival. Doing so will force the adventurers to slow their pace, reducing the travel speed by 1 hexagon per day. For particularly barren landscapes the referee can require each player to make a search test, equating each success with food and water for one person.

Expanding the World

This booklet provides chance encounters for a handful of zones. As the referee, you are encouraged to populate the other zones of the map in similar fashion, changing details, creatures and events to suit the different climates and conditions found therein. Start with the closest zones, and proceed towards the fringes as they adventurers venture there.

CREATING A ZONE

Set a theme. A zone is recognized by its terrain and climate. When you create a new zone, start by outlining the general look, feel, smell and sound of the area.

Decide the zone's dominant feature. Each zone should contain one thing that is truly extraordinary: a powerful foe; a supernatural event; a volcano, ghost city or other dangerous location; a sorcerer, demon or deity; or anything else you can think of. This feature can be small or large, but its presence will dominate the zone physically, mentally or both. Make sure that this feature suits the theme, either by reinforcing it—like a fire-sorcerer in the desert of shifting sands—or contrasting it—like a snow-capped mountain in the same place.

Populate the zone. For the most part, your chance encounters should contain a location, someone or something encountered there and a small treasure, trap or other secret to uncover. Consider the zones location, its theme and dominant feature. For example, a populated area might have a lot of soldiers, bandits and intrigues, whereas less-traveled zones might have more monsters, savage tribes and lost ruins.

KEYED LOCATIONS

Chance encounters is a simple tool for running wilderness exploration, but you can also add keyed locations to your map. Mark a hexagon and key it like a room in an adventure location. If the adventurers pass through that hexagon—and only then—will they have a chance of encountering this specific location.

Misfortunes

When the adventurers suffer misfortunes during their travels, roll a twenty-sided die.

MISFORTUNE

- 1 Minor mishap. A sprained ankle, broken rib, or larger abrasion slows the party down. Increase travel time by 1 day.
- 2 Bad weather. Travel time is prolonged by 1d4 days.
- 3 Bad terrain. Travel time is prolonged by 1d6 days.
- 4 Lost. One of the PCs must check Senses: on a hit they are finally able to recover their path—increase travel time by 1d8 days; on a miss they end up in another zone or location than they were heading for—roll twice for chance events, once for this zone and one for the new they stumbled into.
- 5 Circling vultures, stray dogs or similar makes travel unpleasant and makes stealth and surprise impossible.
- 6 A menacing pack of 3d4 jackals: pwr 1, save 5, end 4. Bite (dmg 1d6).
- 7 2d4 wild beasts. Hyenas, baboons, reptiles or similar, depending on terrain: pwr 2, save 7, end 10. Bite (dmg 1d8).
- 8 2d4 large beasts. Lions, gorillas, hippopotami or similar, depending on terrain: pwr 3, save 9, end 16. Natural weapons (dmg 1d10).
- 9 An marching enemy host forces the PCs to flee, hide or risk being caught or worse. 4d10 soldiers: pwr 2, save 8, end 14. Armor 5, spears (dmg 1d8).
- 10 2d6 bandits: pwr 2, save 8, end 12. Armor 3, clubs or maces (dmg 1d8).
- 11 2d6 hired fighters: pwr 3, save 9, end 14. Armor 5, spears (dmg 1d8). Someone thinks the adventurers owe a debt and hired fighters to collect it—decide who it is and what they want.
- 12 2d6 assassins: pwr 3, save 11, end 16. Armor 5, hidden weapons (dmg 1d6). The assassins are masquerading as common folks. Someone wishes the adventurers dead—decide who and why.
- 13 Lack of water. Unless the PCs carry water themselves, they are dying from thirst (rules booklet, p. 49).
- 14 Hunger and thirst. All rations and water the PCs carry are spoiled or spent. The adventurers must forage or suffer thirst and starvation (rules booklet, p. 49).
- 15 Broken equipment. Perhaps the merchant was a liar, the craftsman a fool or it is simply wilderness taking its toll on the artifacts of men. All PCs must check Craft: on a miss, one of their carried items breaks.
- 16 Exhausted. The road takes a tremendous toll. All PCs get one point of exhaustion per day's travel. These points of exhaustion counts as equipment for encumbrance purposes, and recovers at a rate of 1 per day in a city, inn or similar.
- 17 Major mishap. A mud slide, flood or wildfire, depending on terrain. All PCs must check Vigor: on a miss they are caught and must enter next encounter or adventure bloodied (half endurance).
- 18 Sun-sickness. All adventurers must check Might: on a miss they are beset by nausea and vertigo and must roll twice and choose the worst outcome for all checks and saving throws until they have spent a full day indoors or underground.
- 19 Roll again and combine the result with a chance encounter.
- 20 Roll twice and combine.

The Great Barrens of Karkal

The land surrounding Sippar is arid, consisting of sand and stone interrupted by occasional boulders of limestone or basalt. Vegetation is sparse, mostly thistles and thorny bushes of stunted growth, but here and there small copses of date palms and twisted citruses offer their shade and meagre produce. The proximity to Sippar makes it relatively civilized, but reavers often brave the area to pray on the caravans carrying wealth to and from the merchant city.

FLAT: Travel speed is three hexagons per day.

CHANCE ENCOUNTERS (2D8)

2 **The warm wind brings the laughing voices of a group of women, bathing in an azure pond of remarkable depth.** The group is led by Amala, a young woman of dusky complexion. They hail from a cavernous settlement of hog-farmers an hour's travel away, and Amala will allow the adventurers to follow them there to eat and rest if treated with courtesy.

BATHING WOMEN: pwr 2, save 7, end 10. Crude tools (dmg 1d6; no crit).

AMALA: pwr 2 (+Guile –Senses), save 10, end 6. Small axe (dmg 1d6).

3 **A long line of prisoners of war are being escorted to Sippar by a troop of well-armed soldiers.** One of the prisoners is an Akkadian prince, promising a bountiful reward if he were to be freed and brought to his kinfolds in Ashur.

PRISONERS: pwr 2, save 6, end 6. Naked and unarmed: dmg 1d4; no crit.

SOLDIERS: pwr 2, save 7, end 16. Bronze armor and shields (armor 6; def 2). Spears (dmg 1d8).

PRINCE UDDUT: pwr 2, save 8 (–Might) end 8. Naked and unarmed: dmg d4; no crit.

4 **In an abandoned quarry, lies an incomplete statue of a winged beast.** At daybreak it shivers as if trying to break free.

5 **A mourning woman, her hair pale from sorrow and her name lost to grief, seeking her daughter Vana.** The daughter was taken by a band of slavers and the woman carries 400s in silver to buy her back.

MOURNING WOMAN: pwr 2 (+Vigor –Craft), save 5, end 18. Unarmed (dmg 1d4; no crit).

6 **A rabble of paupers start following the PCs.** They cry for alms and curse the adventurers, clinging to their clothes and slurring unintelligibly. If the PCs drive them off they will try to retaliate by stealing rations and luring out a giant lizard to eat the adventurers.

PAUPERS: pwr 1, save 3, end 5. Crude tools (dmg 1d6; no crit).

GIANT LIZARD: pwr 4, save 12 end 36. Armor 8. Saw-like teeth (dmg 1d10).

7 **The site of a recent battle.** 2d10 measly amorites led by Ezial are scavenging the battleground. If the PCs spend a day searching as well, they will find a bone crown but the amorites will become hostile if they notice; demanding that it is given over to them.

AMORITES: pwr 2, save 8, end 8. Bronze javelins (dmg 1d6; thrown: reach 1).

EZIAL: pwr 3 (+Vigor –Craft), save 9, end 18. Armed with a slender bronze axe (dmg 1d6+1).

BONE CROWN: Treasure: 1800s. Restores to life a recently dead on whose head it is placed. If the crown is removed, the head detaches from the body and she immediately returns to death.

8 **A group of 8 ragged men have sought shelter amongst some large boulders.** They are escaped slaves from Sippar, and will lie as best they can to avoid being caught. They will prefer to assassinate the PCs in their sleep over going back into slavery, but are helpful if treated well. Should the slaves be brought back, they are worth 150 shekels each as treasure.

RAGGED MEN: pwr 2, save 6, end 7. Armed with cudgels (dmg 1d6; bludgeon 1d6).

9 A caravan carrying purple clams to Eshnunna for a wealthy merchant named Zusul-Sabar. The caravan consists of 2d4 carts, 6d8 slaves and 2d12 armed guards. The cargo of each cart is treasure worth 700s in Eshnunna, but only 240 outside of that area.

CARAVAN GUARDS: pwr 2 (+Might –Guile), save 7, end 14. Armor 6. Spears (dmg 1d8).

ZUSUL-SABAR: pwr 2 (+Senses –Lore), save 6, end 8. Armor 5. Bronze khopesh (dmg 1d6+1).

10 The adventurers are hailed by a dozen toll-collectors, expecting a tenth in tax for all goods they are carrying. The toll collectors are led by Farrak, a corrupt notary secretly keeping half of the collected wealth from his masters in Sippar.

TOLL COLLECTORS: pwr 2 (+Guile –Vigor), save 6, end 12. Armor 6. Bronze spears (dmg 1d8).

FARRAK: pwr 2, save 7 (+Senses –Guile) end 6. Armor 7. Bronze mace: dmg 1d8.

11 A group of bandits has surrounded a surprisingly well-defended caravan. The caravan has dug in on a stony hill, hesitant to attack but unwilling to give up. The caravan is bound for Mari and carries precious goods for a noble family there. If the adventurers are spotted, both sides will try to sway them to side with their cause.

BANDITS (10): pwr 2, save 8, end 18. Salvaged armor 4. Axes (dmg 1d6).

CARAVAN GUARDS (12): pwr 2, save 7, end 14. Bronze armor: 5. Spears: dmg 1d8.

12 An oasis, where the male sage Dinah has set up camp. Dinah is searching for the carcass of a great crawler god that collapsed onto the earth at the end of the second era according to myth.

DINAH: pwr 2 (+2 Lore), save 8, end 18. Simple robe and wooden staff (dmg 1d4). Knows 1d4 lotus spells and carries an equal amount of lotus powder.

13 Khemal the Fair, a beautiful young prince, carried on a palanquin by two massive slaves. A third and shorter slave by the name of Gobo scurries alongside, babbling reassuringly about the prince's qualities and the fine outlooks of his future. They are headed for a city of tents to attend a great festivity (see 14).

MASSIVE SLAVES: pwr 3 (+Might), save 10, end 32. Sickles-swords (dmg 1d6; versatile 1d8).

GOBO: pwr 2 (+Lore –Might), save 6, end 16. Bronze dagger (dmg 1d6).

KHEMAL THE FAIR: pwr 2 (+Guile –Vigor), save 8, end 12. Armor 7. Mace (dmg 1d8).

14 In the middle of the desert, a city of tents has sprung up. Here, a drunken revelry is held to the deafening sounds of countless cicadas. The ecstatic festivities culminates in an ancient ritual—led by **Tuol Aham**, a copper skinned priest from Borsippa—where two teenage boys are sacrificed to summon the vile cockroach demon Bahaga.

BAHAGA, THE COCKROACH DEMON: pwr 4/3 (+Lore –Senses), save 14, end 45. Carapace (armor 9). Spiked legs (dmg 1d12). **Paralyzing shriek.** All hearing must check Might or lose their next action.

TUOL AHAM: pwr 3 (+Guile –Vigor), save 9, end 18. Armor 4. Iron blade (dmg 1d8; iron).

REVELERS: pwr 2, save 6, end 10. Miscellaneous weaponry (dmg 1d6).

15 Among limestone pinnacles clawing the skies like fingers of a dying man, a fiery red Lamasu hunts.

HARAGAL THE LAMASU: pwr 4/4, save 14 (+Vigor –Craft) end 60. Thick fur: armor 5; Attacks with old man's teeth: dmg 1d6+2; piercing or lion claws: dmg 1d10 (roll twice, choose highest). Outruns a horse and can fly.

16 The Reavers' Fort, or roll twice and combine.

The Tall Grass Steppe

A vast stretch of sun-burnt grass, bending and rising under the hissing desert wind like the swell of a sea. Only seldom is the monotonous line of the horizon broken by desiccated bushes or low trees outlining wide wadis, or by sudden stones placed here by the giants of old. Without such landmarks, travel would seem hopeless and

FLAT: Travel speed is two hexagons per day; three by chariot or mount.

CHANCE ENCOUNTERS (2D6)

2 Innumerable termite mounds are scattered over the area, like tombstones of a subhuman civilization. Anyone threading the ground will be swarmed and slowly eaten by the termites (+1d4 damage, ongoing; shields and armor effectless). Several wanderers have met their death here, and their bleached remains lay scattered between the mounds. One of the corpses is carrying the horn of the locusts. Every round an adventurer spends searching the bodies, her player rolls a ten-sided die. She finds as many shekels as the die indicates; on a 9 she successfully finds the horn.

THE HORN OF LOCUSTS: When blowing the horn of the locusts, test Lore. For each 5+, 1d100 locusts burst forth from the horn to swarm and propagate (860 shekels).

3 A withered statue of a majestic woman glances west; probably a queen of old, signaling her claim of the land. The statue's thick features and braided hair are colored jet by ancient paint. Its left arm is missing without trace, but her right hand forms a circle with thumb and index finger like a magnifying glass missing a lens. In its shadow, six speckled lions are dozing.

SPECKLED LIONS (6): pwr 2 (+Vigor), save 5, end 14. Teeth and claws (dmg 1d6+1).

4 A band of slavers, rolling their wagons towards Borsippa to sell their human cargo to the reed-folk merchants there. In one of the wagons, trapped behind bars of sturdy wood and bound by sinew-rope sits a young woman. She will plead the adventurers to free her from her misery, and reunite her with her elderly mother.

SLAVERS (2D6+3): pwr 2, save 6, end 9. Protected by bricolage armor and narrow shields (armor 4; def 2), fighting with tall stone-hammers (dmg 1d8; first strike: may attack first at the beginning of combat, regardless of initiative; wt 5).

5 Four wounded travelers, toiling to repair their broken cart and capturing stray donkeys noticeable unwilling to heed their masters. Surrounding the cart are signs of ambush and strife, together with half-a-dozen corpses. The living men are in fact the ambushers, now masquerading as the merchants they killed. They are anxious to leave the scene, and will offer food and drinks in exchange for help with mending their cart. If presented with an opportune moment, the travelers will drug the adventurers with a potent sleeping drug, steal their valuables and abandon them.

SLEEPING POTION: Drinker must check Might: on a miss she falls unconscious for 1d12 hours; on a hit, she stays awake but suffers a negative reroll to all actions for the same amount of time. Any strong shock or damage suffered allows the drinker a new Might check. Rogues may roll checks twice and choose best.

REAVERS, DISGUISED AS TRAVELERS (4): pwr 2, save 8, end 8. Clad in blood-stained merchants' clothes, and fighting with curved knives (dmg 1d6) and short bows (dmg 1d6; reach 1; 4 arrows).

6 A new irrigation canal. The canal is currently under construction by eleven slaves under the supervision of two engineers and their leader Olumad Hana. A twelfth slave is tied to a pole, bleeding from lash-marks and terribly swollen from innumerable stings and bites. He attempted escape and was nearly eaten alive by terrible ants when he sought to hide among the pylons they construe (see 2).

WORKERS (11): pwr 2, save 5, end 8. Shovels and pickaxes (dmg 1d6; no crit)

ENGINEER (2): pwr 2 (+Craft), save 6, end 12. Equipped with sextants, measurement sticks and long daggers (dmg 1d6).

OLUMAD HANA: pwr 3 (+Senses +Guile), save 9, end 12. Clad in a many-layered tunic and wide trousers, armed with a mace of office (dmg 1d8; wt 2).

7 A sumerian war band, a hundred and twenty strong, drawing north and west, led by the ambitious deputy Lamar. They are seeking to conquer a golden statue from an ancient monastery in the foothills of Sardun and bring it before their ruler as a token of power over the sun.

SUMERIAN WARRIORS (120): pwr 2, save 7, end 14. Clad in gleaming harnesses (armor 6) and armed with sky-blue wicker shields (defense 2) and duck-billed axes (dmg 1d8).

LAMAR: pwr 3, save 9, end 27. Wearing an electrum harness (armor 3, def 5/10 against fire; worth 450 shekels) and fighting with a two-handed shotel made from blackened bronze (dmg 1d8; impact: roll twice and choose best; shield breaking; wt 6; 220 s).

8 By a dried out creek, a large field of wilted yellow brome grass sways to an unfelt breeze. The dry grass is home to lizard-headed ostriches, hunting in 1d6 packs of 2d4 individuals each.

LIZARD-BIRDS (2d4): pwr 2, (+Vigor) save 4, end 14. Claws and toothed beak (dmg 1d8).

9 A burned down hamlet. A single survivor curses and cries for vengeance. If the adventurers bring him the heads of the four soldiers (7) who killed his family and plundered their home, he will repay them by revealing a secret door in the Ziggurat of the Apes (10), leading straight to the jewel hidden at its center.

OLD MANTARBAN: pwr 1, save 7, end 5. Clad in dirty clothes, smeared in blood and soot.

10 An ancient ziggurat. The ziggurat houses a host of very territorial apes and their queen who worships a giant aquamarine (2000 s; withers in sunlight: -100 shekel's worth per day outside the ziggurat).

APES (12): pwr 3, save 4, end 30. Fighting with their fists (dmg 1d10; bludgeon 1d6) or hurling blocks of baked clay from their ziggurat (dmg 1d8; thrown; always as called shots).

XILA: pwr 3, save 15, end 24. Clad in finest silk and adorned with a headdress of gold and lapis lazuli (425 s), wielding a tall bronze axe (dmg 1d10; wt 4) and whispering enchantments between vermilion lips. 3 doses lotus powder.

Enthrall (lotus spell). Target must check Lore or suffer a negative reroll to all actions disproved by the caster; on a hit it recoils. The effect lasts for 1d6 weeks, but can be broken prematurely by performing an act of love or compassion benefitting the caster.

11 An abandoned pit where precious gems have been mined. The mining stirred a wicked toad-dragon, hibernating underground in wait for the next flood.

DRAGON TOAD: pwr 4, save 8, end 62. Bite (dmg 2d6). Free action, once per turn: sticky tongue (reach 2). Target must check Senses or be caught by the creature's tongue, giving it a free success for its bite attack the following round. 56 precious gems can be retrieved from its stomach (worth 2d20 x gems retrieved).

12 Roll twice and combine.

The Rocky Desert

A desert of stone pillars, black boulders, gravel and rocks. Beast-men and savage tribes rule the land, and the lack of water and food makes travel dangerous and hard.

RUGGED TERRAIN: Travel speed is two hexagons per day.

BARREN: Foraging takes a full day.

CHANCE ENCOUNTERS (2D6)

2 A gale, screaming like a thousand madmen, torments this land of crooked basalt boulders. A keen ear can pick up the howling of 13 jackal-headed men prowling the land, nigh inseparable from the wind.

JACKAL MEN (13): pwr 2 (+Might), save 7, end 10. Wearing threadbare clothes and wielding toothed obsidian blades (dmg 1d8; bleeding +2; wt 4).

3 The hollow, semi-petrified carcass of an enormous lizard-like creature.

Two bandits, Ben-Mennaka and Mena, have set up a camp in its mouth. There is a 2-in-6 chance that they are home—sleeping, cooking food or tending their equipment—otherwise they are nearby. Buried in the sand is a hoard of 232 shekels in silver.

BEN-MENNAKA: pwr 4 (+Guile – Lore), save 13, end 20. Wearing an armor of lizard's scales (armor 7; 10% retrievable after defeat) and equipped with a narrow shield (def 2) and a meteorite khopesh (1d8; iron; wt 2).

MENA: pwr 4 (+Craft – Guile), save 15, end 20. Wearing thick leather armor (armor 2) and fighting with a bronze cudgel (1d8; bludgeon 1d12; wt 4).

4 Near the yawning mouth of a narrow cave, a young woman is bound as a sacrifice to a hideous god. With every loud noise, there is a 1-in-6 chance that the many-limbed demon will crawl forth from its nest.

MANY-LIMBED DEMON: pwr 4/2/2 (+Vigor), save 10, end 60. Triple attacks: claws, feelers, stinger (dmg 2d6).

VANA, THE BOUND WOMAN: pwr 2 (+Vigor), save 9, end 14. Fighting with whatever she can find (dmg 1d6; no crit).

5 A small village ruled by Nagar the Bent; its inhabitants sick with a fatal disease seeping up from the ground. To alleviate their suffering, the villagers buy slaves from passing slavers (see 6) to sacrifice to their malicious god (see 4). Given the chance, the villagers will sacrifice the PCs as well.

Once every day spent here, each adventurer must check Might. On a miss, she suffers one point of damage that cannot be healed in the Rocky Desert.

NAGAR THE BENT: pwr 3 save 9 (+Lore –Guile) end 14. Copper harness (armor 3), jawbone axe (dmg 1d10)

VILLAGERS (25): pwr 2 save 6 (+ Craft –Lore) end 6. Stolen weapons (dmg 1d6)

6 A band of 21 amorite slavers, herding a group of slaves towards Mari. If asked, they inform the adventurers that Vana have been sold to the inhabitants of a nearby village (see 5).

AMORITE SLAVERS (21): pwr 3, save 8, end 14. Moving with great grace (def 3) and fighting with cruel blades of black stone (dmg 1d8; wt. 4) or hurling thin harpoons (dmg 1d6; piercing +2; thrown. Pinning: on a critical hit the harpoon sticks. The target suffers a negative reroll on all physical actions. In addition, the caster can forfeit her turn to instead let the target choose: suffer 1d6 damage or be reeled in. Breaks on a 1-in-six).

7 Ruined citadel remains. When the sun hangs low, the degenerate citizens of a nearby settlement come here led by Chugal the Deviser. The people toil with mad and clumsy sorrow, trying to restore the building to its original grandeur despite lacking the knowledge and motoric skills needed to do so. They are very fond of bright colors and fineries.

If aided, they will cry affectionate tears, but if anything is stolen from the citadel they will enter a murderous rage.

CITIZENS (15): pwr 1, save 4, end 12. Stone tools (dmg 1d6; no crit).

CHUGAL THE DEVISER: pwr 2, save 4, end 30. Tall spear (dmg 1d8).

8 A small settlement of mud-brick huts, near a bountiful orchard. A group of children are playing by a pomegranate tree, throwing rocks at the ripe fruits to make them fall. The village elder, Bar Handa, offers a golden bracelet (armor 4; durable: on a missed armor roll, armor rating is halved instead of breaking. Only when armor drops below 1 does it break; worth 700 s) for the return of her son Doud, who was kidnapped by desert nomads and brought to their city of tents (see Karkal 14).

9 Among boulders of dark-veined granite, a tall statue of a portly woman glances north. The noble appearance and the scale of the statue tells of royal lineage. Her arms are held so that her wrists meet, with her palms facing the sky. Among the boulders, a pack of wild dogs is resting.

WILD DOGS (20): pwr 1 (Vigor 3), save 4, end 7. Teeth (dmg 1d6). **Bearer of disease.** When a character is bit by a wild dog, there is a 1-in-20 chance that the unclean bite also transfers disease. Afflicted characters will catch a high fever and begin salivating constantly. Their maximum endurance is lowered by one per day until dead or properly treated. A successful Might save halves the pace. **Pack tactics.** All dogs will target the same PC until attacked by someone else.

10 A caravan under the supervision of Rabik Sima, carrying palm-wine from Mari to the merchant Zusul-Sabar in Sippar. Unknown to the caravaneers, the wine has been poisoned by agents of Yor Khalbim in an attempt to assassinate the merchant. Mark the date of their arrival in your calendar.

RABIK SIMA: pwr 3, save 9, end 14. Dressed in white and armed with a long spear (dmg 1d8).

HIS CARAVAN DRIVERS (18): pwr 2, save 5, end 12. Slingshots (dmg 1d4; missile: reach 1) and axes (dmg 1d6).

11 Two naked men—impaled on sharpened sticks but still alive—are drawing the attention of four large lizards who impatiently await their demise. A band of tribesmen, led by their warrior queen Zuraza, are cheering the lizards from a nearby boulder.

TRIBESMEN (14): pwr 2 (+Might), save 5, end 16. Fighting with stone clubs (dmg 1d6; bludgeon 1d6; wt 2)

ZURAZA: pwr 4, save 9, end 30. Wielding a heavy bronze axe (1d12; expert fighter: roll twice and choose highest; 2-handed; wt 5)

LIZARDS (4): pwr 2, save 5 (immune to sorcerous effects) end 20. Metallic scales (defense 5), bite (dmg 1d10)

12 A howling demon, rushing across the desert with the speed of the wind. It will follow the adventurers like a constant wail of woe and a small tornado of ill luck: blowing sand into their eyes and their food, alerting others of their presence and extinguishing flames. On stormy days, there's a one in six chance that the demon leaves the adventurers for good and a two in six chance that it grows in power.

The Wailing Hills of Gána-Ga

These hills are generally safe to travel, busy with trade and teeming with life, for Nippur—the Sumerian religious center and home to Enlil, the god of fertility and growth—lies here.

CRISS-CROSSED BY ROADS: As long as the adventurers keep to the roads, no Vigor test is needed to cross the zone.

MOUNTAINOUS: Travel speed is one hexagon per day, two with a guide.

CHANCE ENCOUNTERS: 2D8

2 A fair-eyed traveler named Tarrash pursues the party, eager to travel with them as a guide. At the most opportune moment, he will try to murder one of the adventurers in a way that makes her death seem like an accident, in hope of taking her place.

TARRASH: pwr 4 (+Guile), save 12, end 20. Armed with a poisoned knife (dmg 1d6). Poison (1d6 doses): +1d6 dmg ongoing, recovers on a 5+; Might saves for half.

3 A persistent thunderstorm creates flash floods of muddy water, cascading down the hillsides and nearly drowning the PCs. Each player must check Vigor: on a miss her character is swept away and has a 3-in-6 risk of losing a piece of equipment in the mud. Once the rain subsides, traversing the area takes twice as long.

4 A band of eight sick pilgrims, seeking aid and protection. The pilgrims will cling desperately to the adventurers, pleading for help and catching up with them late at night if left behind during the day. For each day spent in their company, each adventurer has a 1-in-6 chance of becoming infected (1d4 dmg per day, recovery is halved, heals on a 7+).

If escorted to the Shrine of Ablution in Borsippa, the pilgrims will offer one medicinal root each, doubling all recovery dice when ingested.

SICKLY PILGRIMS (8): pwr 2, save 9, end 4. Humble clothes. Unarmed (dmg 1d4; no crit).

5 A brisk and life-giving rain falls during the evening, making toad large as a man's head come out of the ground. During night, the drone of their calls sounds like distant drums and humming pipes.

6 In a sparse forest of cypresses echoing with the sad cries of peacocks, a woman sits kneeling by the side of a pit trap shouting at a fellow wanderer caught in it. The man in the trap is badly wounded, but still reluctant to climb out as he is actually the woman's prisoner.

HUDURA, THE CAPTOR: pwr 4 (+Guile – Lore), save 13, end 20. Wearing hardened leather (armor 5) and equipped with a meteorite khopesh (1d8; iron; wt 2) and a flatbow (dmg 1d8; missile: reach 1; 6 arrows).

EWAN, THE PRISONER: pwr 3, save 9, end 6/18. Improvised weapon (dmg 1d6; no crit).

7 The hills level off in a large plateau, where a field of purple crocus grow. The women of a nearby settlement work the fields, while their men idly process the harvest and trade dye and resin with each other.

THE PEOPLE OF THE CROCUS (2D10+10): pwr 2, save 5, end 8. Hoes and pickaxes (1d6; no crit).

8 Two meeting caravans of donkey carts block the road completely as their drivers shout insults and argue resentfully over who is to give way in a tricky pass. The PCs must either slow their pace to match (adding 1d6 days to their journey) or leave the road.

MAHRAM: pwr 4, save 10, end 18. Dressed in fine silk and wielding an axe with long handle (dmg 1d8, versatile 1d10; wt 4). Leader of the home-bound caravan and refusing to give way.

MILAM: pwr 4, save 10, end 18. Better dressed than his rival, with a taller axe of expert craftsmanship (dmg 1d8, versatile 1d12; wt 5). Mahram's brother and bitter rival in trade and love

CARAVAN DRIVERS (4D6 EACH): pwr 2, save 5, end 14. Short spears and knives (dmg 1d6).

9 A retinue of ageing bureaucrats returning from Borsippa. The group has set up camp by the head of a broken bridge, roasting tarantulas over a sagewood fire and drinking away their time with sparkling wine. Without the skills to navigate the mountain or strength to climb across—but insistent on not returning back—the retinue is stuck. If the PCs help them reach Nippur, they offer hospitality and leeway with taxation as reward.

BUREAUCRATS: pwr 2 (+Lore), save 7, end 12. Clad in exquisite—albeit old—robes and armed with ceremonial weaponry (dmg 1d4; unbalanced: while often ineffective, the weapon's design occasionally makes it surprisingly deadly—for critical damage, roll 1d12).

GULIAM THE LONG-BEARDED, THEIR LEADER: pwr 3, save 12, end 10. Keeping his long beard rolled with silk ribbons and his equally long hair in a blue turban rising like a minaret from his head. Armed with a heavy mace (dmg 1d10).

10 The rough lands give way to a shallow vale, full of blooming camel thorns. Here, a small caravan bound for Kish has set up camp. Deserted by the soldiers who were paid to escort them, their leader is willing to pay the PCs 30 s each to take on this role.

ISHABAN, THE MERCHANT: pwr 2, save 9, end 10. Dressed in turquoise and armed with an oval shield (def 3) and a narrow blade (dmg 1d8).

HIS CARAVAN DRIVERS (8): pwr 2, save 5, end 14. Short spears and axes (dmg 1d6).

11 A company of excisemen. The group is interrogating a group of soldiers by a circle of pillars. In the center of the circle of pillars stand a tall statue of a man, his shadow moving over the them like a sun-clock's dial.

EXCISEMEN (10): pwr 2, save 6, end 12. Bronze spears (dmg 1d8).

BADAR, THEIR LEADER: pwr 3, save 9, end 10. Shield (def 4) and a bronze mace (dmg 1d6).

SOLDIERS (2d4): stats as the excisemen.

12 A young woman of noble birth. The woman is fleeing from her older sisters—two criminals convicted of poisoning their mother, now seeking to end her life as well (see 13). She carries a small pouch of heirlooms, worth 310 shekels, and is willing to part with half in return for safe passage to Borsippa where she intends to get on a boat and start a new life somewhere else.

ILLIARA: pwr 3 (+Craft), save 5, end 14. Long knife (dmg 1d6). Can concoct several potions.

13 Two female warriors of noble birth. The pair pursue their younger sister, who poisoned their mother and laid blame on them (see 12). Now shunned by their kin in Nippur, the warriors live only for revenge. One of them is carrying a dark brass horn (worth 450 s). If sounded, all who hear it must forfeit their actions to instead writher in terror until the noise subsides (Might saves).

GALIA AND HASARA: pwr 3 (+Might), save 6, end 18. Clad in bronze harnesses (armor 5) and wielding tall spears (dmg 1d8).

14 A procession from Kish—carrying stone idols and gleaming emblems—passes by in the distance.

15 A group of bandits lying in ambush as the evening mist rolls in.

BANDITS (2d6): pwr 2, save 8, end 8. Fighting with curved knives (dmg 1d6) and horn-bows (dmg 1d8; reach 3; 4 arrows).

16 Remnants of a royal road from a past eon. By its eastern side, the unhinged doors of eighty-eight ransacked mausoleums stare like empty eye sockets. Four specters live in the shadows, sucking life from those who step out of the sunlight.

SPECTERS (4): pwr 3, save 10, end 6. Soul drain (special: for each success, target permanently loses 1 point of a randomly determined ability score). Cannot be harmed by normal weapons, suffers 1d10 dmg per round in sunlight.

The Forest of Thorns

The land here is covered in brown thistles, small trees and dense bushes with long thorns.

TRAVEL IS SLOW OR PAINFUL: 1 hexagon per day or 2 hexagons without extended rests.

CHANCE ENCOUNTERS (2D8)

2 A band of kuthi raiders led by Oxol Othak are torturing a prisoner. If rescued she offers to work as guide for the adventurers for three months, making them arrive without misfortunes wherever they choose to go during that period.

RAIDERS (2D4+3): pwr 2 (+Senses -Guile), save 6, end 12. Obsidian clubs (dmg 1d8).

OXOL OTHAK: pwr 3 (+Lore -Senses), save 9, end 16. Heavy bronze axe (dmg 1d10).

SURIN, THEIR PRISONER: pwr 3 (+Lore), save 7, end 12. Clad in sturdy clothes and unarmed (dmg 1d4; no crit) but with her bow (dmg 1d8; missile: reach 2) and axe (dmg 1d10) nearby.

3 A yew tree, the height of fifteen men and a circumference of twelve paces.

From its branches, the gruesome corpses of ten dead humans are hanged. The corpses are smeared with feces and mutilated: hands cut off and stuffed into their gaping mouths, sharp sticks driven through the eyes and scalps cut off and tied back as beards. One or more of the corpses can be successfully identified by the PCs. Roll 1d6: on a 1 it is someone they hate, on a 2-5 it is someone they have met but don't necessarily know, on a 6 it is someone they knew or cared about.

4 A large ruined temple. The temple is ransacked and its idols smashed. During night, wraiths of the slain come here to lament their deaths and steal life from the living. Anyone spending the night within sight of the temple recovers no endurance during the night, and instead suffer 1d6 damage.

5 Beneath the gnarled roots of a large fig tree lives a squat gray-skinned tribe ruled by Umarat, the Artisan. During daytime they dwell in their lair, crafting delicate items from stained glass and a bluish metal for trade with passers-by. Every new moon, they adorn their tree with gleaming objects, light fires and sing soft hymns in a dead tongue.

UMARAT, THE ARTISAN: pwr 3, save 6, end 16. Wearing fine silken clothes and fighting with a meteorite axe (dmg 1d8; iron).

PEOPLE OF THE UNDERFIG (21): pwr 2, save 5, end 12. Misc. tools (dmg 1d6; no crit).

6 A pit trap with a wounded wanderer. Around it, a large pack of wild dogs drawn by the smell of blood are waiting. If the PCs approach, the dogs will try to steal away anything that can be eaten before returning to their cubs.

WILD DOGS (4D6): pwr 1, save 4, end 6. Bite (dmg 1d6).

DJIBRI, THE WOUNDED WANDERER: pwr 3, save 9, end 4/20. Short spear (dmg 1d6). Four rations, six fathoms rope, 1d20 shekels.

7 A sage searching for red viper eggs. The Sage hides by a rock among the thorny bushes as a war band passes in the distance.

HUM-KULAKUM: pwr 3 (+2 Lore), save 10, end 22. Simple robe and bronze spear (dmg 1d8). 1d6 viper eggs, hatching in 1d10 days. Knows 1 spell and carries 1d8 doses of lotus powder.

WARRIORS (2D6 x 10): pwr 2, save 7, end 14. Wearing gleaming bronze harnesses (armor 6), red shields (def 3) and axes (dmg 1d8).

8 A wrinkled wanderer, old but of remarkable physical strength, heading for Nippur. She offers to guide the PCs there as she has traveled this path many times before.

AMIRIA, THE WANDERER: pwr 3 (+Might), save 14, end 24. Wearing a leather harness (armor 3) and equipped with a spear (1d8) and a flatbow (dmg 1d8; missile: reach 1; 6 arrows).

9 Six stout jackal men escort 17 odalisques stolen from a noble in Nippur.

JACKAL MEN (6): pwr 4, save 10, end 22. Obsidian battleclubs (dmg 1d8; bludgeon 1d8; wt 8).

ODALISQUES (17): pwr 2, save 8, end 7. Wearing embroidered gowns, unarmed (d4; no crit).

10 An ambush.

Among profuse carob trees, the adventurers are ambushed by eight mercenaries led by Karagin the mauler. They accuse the adventurers of having stolen a scroll of demonic lore from their captain.

MERCENARIES (8): pwr 3, save 6, end 16. Wearing battle-torn leather war-gear (armor 2) and armed with duck-billed axes (dmg 1d8; wt 2).

KARAGIN, THEIR LEADER: pwr 4, save 8, end 16. Horned helmet (armor 3), poisoned blade (dmg 1d6; 1d4 dmg for 1d8 rounds, Vigor halves).

11 A small village of swine herders and twig-collectors.

The villagers live in fear of a beast-man (see 12) that has killed some of their kin and many of their swine.

12 The lair of a beast-master of some renown.

Living more like the creatures he controls than a man, he uses his powers to raid nearby settlements.

RABALLAH, THE BEAST-MASTER: pwr 5, save 15, end 22. Wearing layer upon layer of animal pelts (armor 8) and fighting with an enchanted knife of pure gold (dmg 1d6; piercing +3; can damage ghosts; worth 400 s). Can control six beasts.

BEARS (1d6): pwr 4, save 9, end 25. Dmg 1d8.

13 A group of bandits have set up camp here.

BANDITS (2d6): pwr 2, save 8, end 10. Javelins (dmg 1d6; thrown).

DEHUD, THEIR LEADER: pwr 3, save 6, end 18. His rotund body is covered by a cape of red silk, and he fights with a spectacularly long pike that allows him to strike first but only every other round (dmg 1d20; piercing +4; reach 1; first strike; unwieldy; wt 10) or a small brass knife when opponents come too close (dmg 1d6).

14 A group of wanderers.

They tell a cautionary tale of a traveler of fair mien (see Wailing hills 2) who caused them many accidents that eventually killed three of them. They chased him off, but have since come to believe that he was working magic upon them. If the adventurers kill the man, they will be rewarded with ownership of the fallen comrades' houses in the canal gardens to the south-east.

WANDERERS (5): pwr 2, save 5, end 12. Clad in sturdy clothes, and fighting with adzes (dmg 1d6) and javelins (dmg 1d6; thrown).

MALMARAN, THEIR LEADER: pwr 3, save 6, end 12. Yellow clothes and a large turban, adze (dmg 1d6) and a small bow (dmg 1d6; missile: reach 1). A small ring with a bull-headed bird (80 s).

15 The thorny bushes here are home to hundreds of birds.

Any loud noises will startle the birds and send them circling and crying to the skies, drawing the attention of a violent group of apes living nearby. Among the bushes lies the corpse of a man, decomposed beyond recognition. A golden ear-ring with an ox-headed bird (50 s) lies in the dust.

APES (2d6+3): pwr 3, save 4, end 30. Fighting with their bare fists (dmg 1d10; bludgeon 1d6) or fangs (dmg 1d6; piercing +2).

16 By a wadi full of desiccated bushes with foot-long thorns, a giant serpent has its lair.

The serpent has two heads and two of every internal organ. Any attack dealing more than 10 damage has a 50% chance of separating the halves, making the creature twice as dangerous.

GIANT SERPENT, TWO HEADED: pwr 5/5, save 10, end 40. Thick scales (def 5), venomous bite (dmg 1d8; 1d6 dmg for 1d6 rounds; Might halves). Hypnotic glare: each round as a free action, the left head can hypnotize a character into submission (Lore saves). If split in two, each half gains the same stats as above—minus any damage already suffered. However, only the left head is capable of this hypnotism.

Canal Gardens

Verdant fields, separated by straight ditches where egrets and flamingoes patrol or deeper canals where narrow canoes scurry with produce or construction material between wading buffaloes and flowering water lilies. Everywhere are small farmsteads and abundant orchards, where copper-skinned men collect harvest or drive oxen to till their fields while the women dig new ditches or supervise the division of water with their infants sleeping on their backs in cocoons of flax.

Travel speed is 2 squares by foot or boat.

CHANCE ENCOUNTERS (1D6)

1 A group of houses, irrigated by several ditches and canals shooting through the lush gardens like capillaries of a leaf. The settlement is headed by Pakhara, a recent widow who carries out her responsibilities with dignity and diligence. Her husband died while traveling with produce to Nippur, and she resents Malmara (see Thorn forest 14) for not returning his corpse nor his belongings which would lawfully be hers.

PAKHARA: pwr 3 (+Lore), save 10, end 12. Cudgel (dmg 1d6).

FARMER: pwr 2, save 5, end 8. Tools (dmg 1d6; no crit).

2 In a small grove of sweet-fragranced citrus trees buzzing with jewel-colored insect two statuesque, androgynous humans have set up a small camp. Their skin has a strange hue not found in this land and their accent has an ancient ring. If treated with courtesy, they will offer the PCs to share their camp.

DHABA: pwr 4, save 14, end 24. Dressed in robes, the color of almond flowers, and equipped with a tall axe of curious design (dmg 1d12; guard breaking; wt 4; 75 s).

DHIMA: pwr 4, save 12, end 28. Wearing robes, the color of mango flowers, and equipped with a similar axe (as above).

3 The construction of a new irrigation canal has temporarily come to a halt, as a large group of farmers have gathered to protest it. The farmers claim that the new canal unlawfully taps water from theirs. A canal inspector has been summoned from Borsippa to adjudicate the dispute, but the farmers accuse him of bias through intermarriage and have sent for the well-respected engineer Olumad Hana (see Steppe 6) to overrule his decision.

NI RHAZAL, THE CORRUPT CANAL-INSPECTOR: pwr 4, save 9, end 16. Clad in a many-layered robe over orange trousers, armed with a mace of office (dmg 1d8; wt 2). 30 shekels in silver.

CANAL DIGGERS (20): pwr 2, save 4, end 7. Tools (dmg 1d6; no crit).

DISGRUNTLED FARMERS (12): pwr 2, save 4, end 10. Tools (dmg 1d6; no crit) and slingshots (dmg 1d4; missile: reach), but 10% also have spears (dmg d8; thrown).

4 At night, strange atmospheric phenomena shed an eerie light over the land. Crops are extraordinary rich. A band of smugglers operate in the gloom, carrying their small rafts between canals to avoid the deputies.

SMUGGLERS (2d8): pwr 2, save 7, end 16. Clad in dark clothes and coats of woven reed (armor 2), and fighting with basic weapon (dmg 1d6).

5 Five orchardmen, repairing a broken fence while lazily minding their grazing water buffaloes. They speak of a great beast (see 6) that has killed some of their cattle and driven them away from their home.

ORCHARDMEN (5): pwr 2, save 6, end 8. Spears (dmg 1d8).

6 The burrow of a huge crocodile that wreaks havoc among the unprepared farmers. **CROCODILE:** pwr 3, save 6, end 40. Armor 6, bite (dmg 1d10). Once the crocodile gets hold, it will pull its prey into the water to drown it. To tear herself free from the jaws, a character suffers 1d10 dmg.