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A fanzine of M.A.R. Barker's World of Tékumel

# INTRODUCTION

Well, this issue took longer to produce than I expected!

Strictly speaking, that's not true. This issue took almost as long to produce as all the others — once I finally sat down and started writing it. But a combination of factors kept me from doing just that and so half a year has gone by since I last wrote one of these introductions. That's life, I suppose, and I don't feel too bad about the delay, because I always knew I'd return to the 'zine eventually. I hope there won't be as long a gap between this issue and the next one, but that's not something I can predict with any reliability. That's why I said, way back in December 2014, when I released issue #1, that I shall not commit to a schedule, and I have no plans to change that.

For that reason, I'm no longer seriously considering a method of handling subscriptions. I looked into several potentially promising possibilities, but, in the end, all were either more work than I can justify or would cut too much into my meagre profits. More to the point, given the length between issue #4 and this one, I feel better knowing that I don't have anyone's money in advance of the release of a new issue. So, for the foreseeable future, I'm sticking with the electronic announcement list at <http://lists.totalpartykill.ca/listinfo.cgi:tetvtotalpartykill.ca> to keep interested parties abreast of the latest news about the 'zine. I have also established a minimalist webpage at [tetvzine.com](http://tetvzine.com) as well, which I'll update every time a new issue becomes available.

As I allude to in the first article of this issue, I started refereeing a second *Empire of the Petal Throne* campaign in January. Unlike the other campaign (nominally set in Sokátis and which celebrated its first year anniversary of roughly weekly play), this one takes place not in Tsolyánu but in Mu'ugalavyá. After polling the prospective players, it was decided the campaign would centre on Gashchné, the famed "City at the Edge of Nothingness."

So far, it's going well, even though nearly all of the eight players involved are Tékumel novices. It's been a learning experience for me, too, because I've never set an *EPT* campaign entirely outside the eponymous Empire of the Petal Throne before. While there are many similarities between Tsolyánu and Mu'ugalavyá, they're not identical and I'm making a point to highlight some of the differences (for myself, if no one else), so as to get a better handle on what makes the Mu'ugalavyáni tick.

As you might expect, I'm spending a lot of time reading and rereading certain sections of *The Tékumel Sourcebook*, along with the third volume of *The Armies of Tékumel*, to find out all the ways that the Red Hats differ from their rivals to the east. Of course, I've also found myself having to "fill in the blanks" from my own imagination, since the Sourcebook barely scratches the surface of many topics. A good case in point is the Mu'ugalavyáni deity, Hřsh, about which almost nothing is said beyond emphasizing how important his worship is to the ruling classes of the land!

I realise by now that I say this nearly every issue — and likely *multiple times per issue* — but it bears repeating: don't be afraid to make things up in your Tékumel campaign. Almost any campaign is eventually going to venture into territory unexplored by published materials. Rather than fear this, embrace it. Tékumel is a vast, ancient world full of oddities both subtle and obvious, as well as exceptions to nearly every "rule." That leaves a lot of scope for individual interpretations and creativity, not to mention occasional whimsy. Have fun! That's what Tékumel (and roleplaying) is for.

James Maliszewski  
April 2016

# The EXcellent Traveling Volume



## ISSUE FIVE

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

— PAGE 2 —

#### **Mu'ugalavyáni and N'lüss Characters**

— PAGE 15 —

#### **A Portion of the Underworld of Sokátis**

— PAGE 20 —

#### **Bestiary**

— PAGE 22 —

#### **The Underpeople**

— PAGE 25 —

#### **The Tomb of Vrikheshámma**

— PAGE 30 —

#### **Demons of Belkhánu & Qón**

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# Mu'ugalavyáni and N'lúss Characters (Additions and Changes)

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The action of my current *Empire of the Petal Throne* campaign takes place in eastern Tsolyánu and across the border in Salarvyá and Pecháno. For years, though, I have been intensely interested in Mu'ugalvyá. For that reason, I recently started a second campaign in which the characters are all Mu'ugalvyáni living in the frontier city of Gashchné. In preparation for refereeing this campaign, I have assembled modifications and additions to the *EPT* character generation rules to facilitate the creation of Red Hat (and N'lúss) player characters. What follows are the most noteworthy of these rules alterations, all of which are explained in reference to the appropriate sections in the *Empire of the Petal Throne* rulebook.

Though much of what follows is derived from information in *Swords & Glory, Volume 1: Tékumel Sourcebook* and other writings by Professor Barker, some of it (e.g. the N'lúss level titles) is my own invention and should not be considered an “official” addition or expansion of the Tékumel setting. It is nevertheless hoped that it will not only prove useful to *EPT* players and referees with an interest in generating Mu'ugalavyáni and N'lúss characters, but also as a reminder that creating new material for one's personal Tékumel campaign is not “wrong” but, rather, to be encouraged.

## 310. ALIGNMENT

The alignments of Stability and Change are as meaningful in Mu'ugalavyá as they are in Tsolyánu, though the situation is complicated somewhat by the presence of the god H'rsh, described on p. 4-5. Among the N'lúss, the only

deities worshipped with any fervour are Vimúhla and his cohort, Chiténg, both of whom are aligned with Change. However, in the absence of the gods of Stability, Change is not treated so much as an alignment as simply a fact of life. In any event, the N'lúss are not much given to philosophical speculation, making such distinctions largely irrelevant.

## 320. CHOICE OF SEX

The institution of Aridáni exists in Mu'ugalavyá, just as it does in Tsolyánu, though it is rather less common. Mu'ugalavyáni women have a much less prominent presence in the military or politics. Priestesses are more common, particularly in the temples dedicated to goddesses, though many can also be found in service to Lord H'rsh. The N'lúss meanwhile are even more patriarchal in their outlook, favouring men over women in almost every context. Consequently, there is no formal recognition of Aridáni status among the N'lúss. Exceptions exist, of course, but the weight of tradition and social pressure is powerful; it is a rare N'lúss woman who successfully pursues a vocation beyond being a wife and mother. Most of those who do so must leave their homeland to achieve it.

## 630. LEVELS OF EXPERIENCE

For Mu'ugalvyáni characters, use the following level titles rather than the Tsolyáni ones listed on p. 27 of the *Empire of the Petal Throne* rulebook.

## 800. THE “HIRILÁKTE” ARENAS

Hirilakte arenas exist in Mu'ugalvyá but they are rarely used for gladiatorial

Level	Warriors	Priests	Magic-Users
1	Asúmish	Khangálish	Sha'adúish
2	O'ísh	Shardúish	Nálmaish
3	Balkétlish	So'ómish	Rzálish
4	Dibkétlish	Néjdish	Va'álzish
5	Emkétlish	Qosónish	Dru'únish
6	Hakkúmish	Hrgsish	Cha'ánish
7	Dü'ümúnish	Mre'édish	Shale'énish
8	Bazúnish	She'émlish	Hnashátish
9	Mrengálish	Thirrutlánish	Vadárgish

N'lúss characters use the following level titles:

Level	Warriors	Priests	Magic-Users
1	Ázakh	Chrána	Chatlánü
2	Mázak	N'yurúna	Vréq
3	Khósag	Hmurébo	Chlungár
4	Jnák	Túmka	Mrika
5	Ngárrha	Pekhá	Zháqa
6	Nrgé	Jáshku	Khürrída
7	Bórrügh	Ngórl	Sumákh
8	Vazún	Verréngha	Tkárrsa
9	Sárq	Háyuch	Tkór

combats after the fashion of Tsolyánu. Instead, they are primarily for athletic contests, games, and state ceremonials, as well as for mock battles between army units and temple guard contingents. They are thus the sites of training exercises rather than popular entertainments. Duels of honour are conducted in small arenas near the courts that have been set aside specifically for this purpose.

The N'lúss have no such arenas whatsoever, even though athletic competitions, duelling, and ritual

combat are commonplace among them. Such activities instead occur in any place deemed suitable (and convenient) by the parties participating in them. Even so, some N'lúss chiefs imitate the Mu'ugalavyáni by creating arenas in which their warriors demonstrate their martial prowess by engaging in combat, but this is mostly an urban phenomenon of larger cities like N'lússa or Malcháiran.

## 900. STARTING THE GAME

In Mu'ugalavyá, the unit of currency is the gold Alótish, which is worth 1½ Tsolyáni Káitars, and divided into 100 copper Qúra. The N'lúss employ a very similar system, consisting of gold Hlóz made up of 100 copper Kór. Starting player characters begin with 4–80 (4d20) Alótish with which to buy equipment from the list in this same section.

## 2100. THE GODS, COHORTS, AND DIVINE INTERVENTION

Like Tsolyánu, the people of Mu'ugalvyá worship the deities of Pavár's pantheon, albeit under local names. The Lord of Flame, Vimúhla, is worshipped as Vemélsh, while Chiténg is adored as Kténgish. Vimúhla occupies a pride of place in Mu'ugalvyá far beyond that of any of the other gods of Pavár. This pride of place is further complicated by the tangled relationship between Vimúhla and the uniquely Mu'ugalvyáni deity known as Hřsh, who will be discussed below.

The Mu'ugalavyáni call Hřú'ú by the name Hre'esh, but they consider the Master of Negation to be too abstract a deity to garner much devotion. His cohort Wurú is known as Uruish. Lord Ksáruł is revered as Ksoruélsh and is held in high regard. The Mu'ugalvyáni legends of the Battle of Dórmoron Plain (especially as preserved in *The Epic of Ielúnish the Bard of Ch'óchi*) claim that Ksáruł granted Hřsh the Right of the First Blow, hence the reverence they show for the Doomed Prince of the Blue Room. Grugánu is called Kru'ugaish. Dlóma is the Mu'ugalavyáni version of Dlamélsh. Her worship is less overtly sexual, giving equal (or greater) weight to other types of physical experiences. One local aspect of Dlóma is Gariyáldi Ssá, who revels in the experience of battle, not unlike Mrikáya, the

34th aspect of Dlamélsh by Tsolyáni reckoning. The Mu'ugalvyáni dub Hriháyal Hrélu, though she retains the lascivious nature known so well in Tsolyánu. Sárku is known by several names. In the east, he is known as Gyu'umish, while in the west he is known as Gu'umúish or Guru'umish. An older name for the Lord of Worms is Su'urkánish, but it is little used except by scholars. Durritlámish goes by Tórmuish in Mu'ugalavyá.

Lord Hnálla is called Hnéluish and his cohort, Drá, is named Trekhúish. Interestingly, Trekhúish is not the passive, uncaring god known to the Tsolyáni but rather a stern servitor of Hnéluish who bears a Rod of Light with which to smite the enemies of Stability. The Mu'ugalavyáni know Thúmis as Tu'úmesh and his cohort, Keténgku, as Kténish (who is not to be confused with Kténgish, the local name for Chiténg). Awédha is Avánthe's sobriquet in Mu'ugalavyá, while Dilinála's is Di'íla. Bo'olkón is how the Red Hats address Belkhánu; his cohort, Qón, is Aqónish. Finally, Lord Karakán is known as Karkánish. He has many temples in Mu'ugalvyá, though fewer than either Vimúhla or Hřsh. His cohort, Chegárra, is called Kigársh.

Like the Salarvyáni, the Mu'ugalvyáni worship an additional deity beyond those twenty laid down in the Scrolls of Pavár. This deity is Lord Hřsh, called the Master of Time, Space, and Being. The aristocracy of Mu'ugalavyá revere this beast-headed god above all others. Hřsh's precise relationship to the other gods is unclear and much debated, even within Mu'ugalavyá. Some see him as a wholly separate being, while others claim that Pavár's gods are faint reflections, even aspects, of the eternal splendour of Hřsh. Another school of thought — a popular one — connects Hřsh to Vimúhla, suggesting

that the Flame Lord is just another name and title for Hřsh. Regardless, most Mu'ugalavyáni are united in their belief in the reality of Hřsh and sneer at the Tsolyáni for not revering him as they do.

The worship of Hřsh is both ancient (being pre-Engsvanyáli for certain and probably much, much older) and widespread. Indeed, Hřsh is also known and adored by the primitive, half-human Fungus-Eaters of M'mórcha and there are reports of tribes devoted

to him in both the Great Desert of Galái and throughout the jungles and forests of the southwest. Within Mu'ugalavyá, his temple is pre-eminent, enjoying social and political prestige and influence which no other temple can match. With few exceptions, the most powerful clans of Mu'ugalavyá are devoted to Hřsh, as such devotion is a good way to ensure advancement within the machinery of the ever-present state.

Male Names	Female Names	Lineage Names
Agmáish	Aéka	Aomé
Buyutlénish	Chaíma	Arúa
Chumínish	Cháya	Birednyá
Chusúnish	Ekúna	Dorigá
Ettumínish	Firúsa	Dráiga
Harkuésh	Gayána	Drísa
Herekkúnish	Ikúra	Echékwa
Huru'usámish	Ilráma	Firu'úna
Ka'uléggish	Jaláqa	Gatléna
Kómish	Jarága	Hékkai
Kseménish	Kaítla	Kalélu
Kurukkúmesh	Kirída	Ketláino
Marúish	Leksá'a	Khinángin
Mi'itlénish	Mikatíka	Ko'ól
Miriktásh	Miri'íkka	Mi'isénish
Miridátish	Neríga	Miyó
Mrekkélísh	Nikána	Mrizish
Nequ'énish	Nimá'a	Ri'í
Palusánish	Nrá	Sayánu
Qanáish	Ra'ákka	Ssa'amússa
Sekkénish	Ritlá	Surogdámish
Sha'amétish	Shársa	Tlatlúga
Siukámish	Soríya	Tsélel
Tu'umúnish	Ssirúka	Tu'un
Vínesh	Su'úga	Vársha
Virúish	Tse'énga	Vimodáya
Vusómish	Vriyála	Virúbu



As descendants of the legendary Dragon Warriors of old, the chief god of the N'lúss is, of course, Vimúhla, whom they call Metlish Va'am, while his cohort Chiténg is known as Chatákh. The other deities of Change are known but their worship is observed only in larger towns and cities and even then without much zeal. Hřsh is worshipped among some N'lúss, the faith having been introduced under Mu'ugalavyáni influence. The religion is largely restricted to cities in eastern N'lúss (such a Nrótlú in hex 5431, which hosts the largest shrine to Hřsh among the barbarians). Temples tend to be small and poor compared to those in more southerly lands.

## MU'UGALAVYÁNI NAMES

Mu'ugalavyáni naming patterns are not unlike those in Tsolyánu. Most Mu'ugalavyáni have a personal name and a lineage name. Male names typically end with the suffix -ish (or, occasionally, -esh), while female names end with -a. Lineage names are much more varied in form, but, like Tsolyáni lineages, derive from legendary or historical personages of importance.

## MU'UGALAVYÁNI CLANS

Mu'ugalavyá is a clan-based society, as are all the descendants of the Engsvanyáli imperium. However, clans exercise even greater influence in Mu'ugalavyá than they do in Tsolyánu. Councils of clan elders are closely involved in decision making throughout the nation; the most powerful clans even play a role in the choosing of the four Princes who rule from Ssa'átis.

The list below provides the names of several Mu'ugalavyáni clans. Especially noteworthy ones are called out.

*Blade Red with Blood*

*Blazing Sun of Day*

*Bright Blade*

*Deep River of Fire*

*Deep Well of Joy*

*Dust of Gold*

*Fields of Red*

*Golden Coin*

*Iron Crown:* A widespread mercantile clan.

*Lacquered Shield*

*Lintel of Iron:* A martial clan of western Mu'ugalavyá.

*Marbled Pinnacle*

*Night of Shadows*

*Pillar of Yellow*

*Raised Dagger*

*Rapture in Flame*

*Red Blaze*

*Red Flames Rising*

*Red Stone*

*Red Sunrise*

*Red Sword:* This Vimúhla worshipping clan can also be found in Tsolyánu.

*Scarlet Flame of Blood*

*Smoke of Burning*

*Sun at Dusk*

*Tilted Stone Table*

*Wand of Gold*

*Weeping Tree*

*Wondrous Visage:* An aristocratic clan whose members have included several Princes.



Male Names	Female Names	Lineage Names
Bakhtérr	Bülkhá	Burrád
Bárgdil	Brákki	Délnir
Béshka	Dagté	Drékka
Chtégh	Diáppar	Harrghá
G'yúdr	Gól	Hürrglúk
Hóruk	Gréri	Kedéz
Hún	K'lél	Lúkhargr
Marékh	Lúr	Mradúr
Mgéğ	Mchésa	Nákh
Mirghá	Mgók	Ógdak
Nhúgr	Mréba	Ónsir
Nrgá	Náthu	Orúz
Oródr	Nethé	Tajnérr
Porrókh	N'lái	Tárgn
Shemékh	Nrīga	Tasnár
Tkérr	Órba	Tayéhl
Tkétnar	Orlátr	Tkálgür
Tréchka	Sávnis	Vetárr
Vrébo	Shagá	Wénrat

## N'LÜSS NAMES

N'lüss naming practices differ somewhat from those of the Engsvanyáli-descended empires like Tsolyánu or Mu'ugalavýá. All N'lüss, regardless of sex or social status, have a personal name. Lineage, as they are known among the peoples of the Five Empires, are largely unknown among them. Instead, men may add their father's name to which they attach the prefix *Grí-* (e.g. Béshka GríBurrád, meaning Béshka, son of

Burrád) or the name of their band (see below) to which they attach the prefix *Vág-* (e.g. Hún VágMradúr, meaning Hún of the Band of Mradúr). This practice is rare among women, but it is occasionally employed among women of noble birth or station. In any event, the names in the “lineage” names in the chart below can be used either with the prefixes *Grí-* and *Vág-* or simply as sources of additional personal names.

## N'LÜSS CLANS

Being outside the Engsvanyáli cultural groupings found in the Five Empires, the N'lüss follow their own distinctive ways. One notable difference between these northern barbarians and their southern neighbours is that they do not have clans as that term is usually understood. In their place, the N'lüss have war bands known as Ónürr. These bands usually bear the names of a famous chief (or Sárq), though some ancient ones have more elaborate names. Unlike clans, Ónürr are much more likely to be localised and associated with a specific fortress or citadel (called a Tén, Thén, or Thé'in, depending on the local dialect). Of course, N'lüss society has a feudal aspect to it, with more powerful Ónürr being more widespread and having tenant bands that owe fealty to them. In a similar fashion, some Ónürr are tenants of Mu'ugalavyáni clans. The situation is often very complex, especially for outsiders used to the relative straightforwardness of the Engsvanyáli clan system.

The list below provides the names of several N'lüss Ónürr. Noteworthy ones include a note.

*Band of Mirizhá*



*Black Band of Mnérr*

*Grdrá:* A noble pro-Mu'ugalavyáni Ónürr

*Jné*

*Khomán*

*Mrádur:* An enigmatic band reputed to know the location of the Secret City of Schuák

*Mrrgshá:* A noble pro-Mu'ugalavyáni Ónürr

*Rising of the Moons:* The Ónürr of the current Sà-Sárq (king) of N'lüss

## AT THE CLANHOUSE

Previous issues of The Excellent Travelling Volume have provided many examples of patrons, individuals who might act as employers to the player characters. While such patrons do, of course, play an important role in Tsolyáni society, especially for newcomers to the Empire of the Petal Throne, they are far from the only people who might serve as spurs to adventure. What follows are five examples of another type of potential “employer” — fellow clan members.

Though written with Tsolyánu in mind, all of the characters presented in this section are sufficiently archetypal that they could easily be adapted to other clan-based cultures or nations. In order to ensure their flexibility, each character is given simply a descriptive title rather than a name. Referees can easily come up with personal and lineage names appropriate for the clans in their ongoing campaigns. As with patrons appearing in previous issues, each of the five characters below is given *Empire of the Petal Throne* game statistics in order to make it easier to use them in play.

### LEGION VETERAN

Level IV Warrior; STR 72, INT 49, CON 88, PSY 26, DEX 61, COM 73; To Hit +3; Damage +1; AC 3; HP 20; Original Skills: Bootmaker, Interpreter, Mountaineer, Smith-Armourer, Tanner; Professional Skills: Axeman, Bola-Slinger, Crossbowman, Mace/Flail User, Slinger, Spearman, Swordsman; Languages: Salarvyáni, Tsolyáni

The Legion Veteran is dashing and charismatic, perhaps all the moreso because of the battle scar across his right eye, which, far from marring his face, only accentuates his natural good looks. Though now retired from the legion



he served since his youth, he is forever talking about his military service to the Petal Throne, regaling anyone who is interested — and quite a few who are not! — with tales of his heroic exploits. He is especially popular with the “good clan girls,” whom he treats chivalrously, leading them to sing his praises around the clanhouse.

The Legion Veteran will take an interest in any young clan warriors who are not currently gainfully employed. His definition of “gainful” employment is fairly narrow, meaning that he will pursue anyone who has not signed on with a legion (preferably his own former unit) and attempt to browbeat them into doing so. Conversely, his definition of “warrior” is quite broad. The Veteran will just as happily speak to priests and magic-users, citing the example of individuals from his former legion who belonged to such professions and nevertheless proved themselves in the field of battle.

1. If one or more characters agree to follow in his footsteps, the Legion Veteran will be ecstatic. He will immediately take the character(s) to meet a Molkár of the legion with whom he is friendly. The Molkár will praise the character(s) for their decision to enter

into a military career and will begin the process of determining whether or not they are suitable material for his legion. Meanwhile, the Legion Veteran will take the character(s) back to the clanhouse, where he will use his influence to ensure that they are given a celebratory send-off. Should the Molkár determine that the character(s) has what it takes, a new phase of the campaign can begin.

2. As 1, except that the Molkár must regretfully decline the enlistment of the character(s). He explains that the legion's ranks are swelling and there is no room for any new recruits at this time, but he encourages the character(s) to return in the future. The Legion Veteran is disappointed and promises to “keep an eye” on the character(s) until he is satisfied that he (they) has achieved the “noble destiny” he is sure awaits him (them). To this end, he may have other “errands” on which to send the characters, thereby ensuring that he remains a regular presence (or nuisance) for some time.

3. As 2, except that the Molkár takes the character(s) aside privately and explains that he knows the Legion Veteran well and understands the predicament of the character(s). He asks them if he (they) really wish to join the legion. If he (they) does not, the Molkár offers to invent an excuse as to why he cannot accept him (them). Of course, in doing so, the character(s) owes a debt to the Molkár and he just so happens to have a little endeavour that needs doing and for which the character(s) is ideally suited...

4. If one or more characters confront the Legion Veteran and tell him they are not at all interested in military life, he will be disappointed and even a little angry. He will reiterate his points in an attempt to get them to reconsider. If the character(s) is respectful to the Legion Veteran, he (they) will earn his grudging

respect and he will relent. If the character(s) is not, however, the Legion Veteran will instead intensify his efforts to convince him (them) of the virtues of military life.



## MATCHMAKER

Level III Priestess; STR 39, INT 67, CON 45, PSY 72, DEX 59, COM 58; To Hit +0; Damage +0; AC 9; HP 7; Original Skills: Artist-Sculptor, Dyer, Perfumer, Scribe-Accountant; Professional Skills: Cure Light Wounds, Detect Good/Evil, ESP, Produce Light; Bonus Spells: Sleep; Languages: Ancient Salarvyáni, Engsvanyáli, Pecháni, Salarvyáni, Tsolyáni

The Matchmaker is an Aridáni priestess (probably of Avánthe, if that is appropriate to the clan, but she could just as easily serve almost any deity). She is middle-aged and plump, with a smiling, friendly face. She is a ritual priestess, meaning that she is frequently away from the clanhouse, participating in the rites of her temple. However, when she is not engaged in her religious duties, the Matchmaker spends the rest of her time among her clan mates, where she has a well deserved

reputation as a busybody and a gossip.

The Matchmaker's favourite "leisure activity" is ensuring that the young people of the clanhouse have all done the "respectable" thing and been married at least once by the time they have reached 30 years of age. Of course, the Matchmaker prefers that everyone is married well before that age, which is how unmarried characters are likely to encounter her. Once she learns that one or more of the characters are "evading their responsibilities" by being unwed, the Matchmaker is relentless in her efforts to rectify the situation.

1. If one or more of the characters acquiesce to her ministrations, he (or they) will quickly be introduced to potential spouses from another lineage within the clan. The referee can use this as an opportunity to introduce new NPCs into the campaign, as well as the complications that can arise from arranging a marriage.

2. As 1, except that the Matchmaker has decided to introduce the character(s) to potential spouses from other clans. This process is somewhat more complicated and fraught, as alliance between clans have much more far reaching repercussions than simply between different lineages within the same clan.

3. The Matchmaker has great difficulty in finding a suitable spouse for the character(s), owing to his (their) supposedly "bad reputation" among the clans of the local city. Consequently, it will, in her words, "take some work" for her to find a suitable spouse for him (them), but she promises to keep looking. This may lead to travel to one or more nearby cities to meet with potential spouses and all that that such journeys entail...

4. If one or more of the characters tell the Matchmaker to back off, she

will be deeply offended. However, she will cease looking for potential spouses; indeed, she will speak badly of the character(s) to anyone who will listen, which might make matters more difficult if, at a later date, one of them attempts to enter into a marriage, since the Matchmaker's words carry a lot of weight with many of the local clans.



## REBELLIOUS YOUTH

Level I Warrior; STR 64, INT 47, CON 60, PSY 19, DEX 68, COM 54; To Hit +2; Damage +0; AC 5; HP 5; Original Skills: Mason, Hunter; Professional Skills: Axeman, Mace/Flail-User, Spearman, Swordsman; Languages: Tsolyáni

The Rebellious Youth is a young man in his late teens or early twenties. Though handsome enough by Tsolyáni standards, he seemingly cares little for his appearance. He pays almost no heed to the niceties of dress and his hair is wild and unkempt. Needless to say, this earns the Rebellious Youth the opprobrium of his elders, both within the clan and without – not that he cares. Most of the time, he is out of the clanhouse with his friends, engaged in who-knows-what; it's only a matter

of time before he does something so foolish that the clan's own reputation might suffer for it.

When he approaches the characters, the Rebellious Youth has, in fact, done something rather foolish and he's hoping the characters might be able to extricate him from the consequences of it. They are under no obligation to do so, of course, but, if they do not, the Rebellious Youth's actions will certainly reflect badly on the clan, which could, in turn, result in difficulties for the characters, if only directly. More importantly, helping the clan to avoid embarrassment as a result of the Youth's actions is just the sort of thing that wins one the respect of elders within the clan.

1. The Rebellious Youth has insulted a member of one of the city's high status clans. Rather than demand Shámtila in compensation for this affront, the insulted noble has instead challenged the Rebellious Youth to a duel in the Hirilákte arena. Of course, the noble is not going to appear himself but has instead chosen an experienced champion to fight on his behalf. The Rebellious Youth fears for his life and so asks that one of the characters act as his champion or finds some way to extricate him from this dire situation.

2. The Rebellious Youth has taken a girl with whom he has fallen in love away from her clan. She is currently in hiding somewhere in the city and he claims she wishes to marry him as soon as possible. This in itself is not necessarily a problem, except that the girl is already betrothed to someone else and her clan has no desire to see that betrothal broken, especially because of a rake like the Rebellious Youth. The girl is not an Aridáni and thus has no ability to act on her own and more easily resolve this situation, which is why

the Youth has approached the characters for assistance.

3. The Rebellious Youth has stolen a collection of scrolls from a temple, as part of an elaborate dare from his friends. He still has the scrolls in his possession. They are not especially valuable in and of themselves, but their disappearance has been noted and the Youth fears that one of the temple acolytes might have seen him in the act of stealing. He wants to return them to the temple without his complicity in the theft becoming known and asks the characters to assist him.

4. The Rebellious Youth has lost a large sum of money (the precise amount to be determined by the referee) after spending the previous night playing Kévuk. Not being able to pay the debt himself, he claimed that another member of his clan — namely, one of the characters — would make good on what he owed...



### RESPECTED ELDER

Level II Priest of Stability; STR 35, INT 44  
Level III Warrior; STR 39, INT 70, CON 44, PSY 52, DEX 62, COM 46; To Hit +1; Damage +1; AC 9; HP 12; Original Skills: Jeweller-Goldsmith, Merchant,



Orator, Scribe-Accountant, Wine-Maker; Professional Skills: Axeman, Bola-Slinger, Mace/Flail-User, Slinger, Spearman, Swordsman; Languages: Tsolyáni

The Respected Elder is, as his name suggests, an old man. In his youth, he was a warrior of some note – or so he claims, at any rate – but the years have taken their toll on his body and he is no longer able to fight as he once did. Now, he contents himself with sitting on clan councils and offering advice based on his lifetime of experiences. The Elder rarely travels outside the clanhouse anymore, except to attend religious rites at the temple. Consequently, he frequently engages in conversation with younger members of the clan, in which he shares his wisdom with them.

When the characters encounter him, he regales them with stories of his younger days, stories that, if they are true, might lead to exciting adventures.

1. The Elder tells the characters a tale of his explorations into the Tsuru'úm beneath the city. On one occasion, he and his companions (now all sadly deceased) came across an Engsvanyáli era tomb of located much closer to the surface than it ought to have been – or perhaps it was really a more recent tomb simply done in the Engsvanyáli style. Regardless, the tomb had never been looted and was guarded by what appeared to be six Ru'ún! The Elder and his companions lacked the fortitude to take on such formidable foes. However, he remembers where the tomb is located...

2. As 1, except that the Elder does not precisely remember the location of the tomb. He assures the characters, however, that one of his companions made a careful map of the underworld and that the map still exists somewhere in the archives of the clanhouse, if only someone could locate it.

3. As 2, except that the map is now in the archives of another clan, with whom the Elder's clan now shares a bitter rivalry, owing to a failed romance between the Elder and a girl of the other clan, when they were both youths.

4. As 1, except that the Elder's tale is a complete confabulation. There is no such Engsvanyáli tomb or Ru'ún. In fact, he was never a warrior, much less an adventurer, in his younger days. His stories are simply a way to overcome his loneliness of his old age.



## ZEALOUS PRIEST

Level V Priest; STR 51, INT 82, CON 47, PSY 88, DEX 42, COM 36; To Hit +1; Damage +1; AC 5; HP 20; Original Skills: Bird-Trainer, Glass-Blower, Jeweller-Goldsmith, Merchant, Orator, Paper-Ink Maker, Scholar, Scribe-Accountant; Professional Skills: Control Person, Cure Light Wounds, *Detect Good/Evil*, *ESP*, *Produce Light*, *Protection from Evil/Good*, *Telepathy*; *Bonus Spells*: *Dispel Evil/Good*, *Dispel Magic*, *Heal Serious Wounds*; Languages: Ancient Salarvyáni, Classical Tsolyáni, Engsvanyáli, Livvyáni, Mu'ugalavyáni, Tsolyáni

The Zealous Priest is a devoted ritual high priest in the temple of one of the clan's



gods. Though much of his life is spent overseeing or participating in religious rites, he nevertheless maintains a strong connection to his clan. When he is at the clanhouse, the Zealous Priest can be found engaging in discussion and debate about theological matters. He especially likes to seek out younger members of his clan whom he deems “too lax” in their own devotions, in an attempt to impress upon them both the importance of his temple and the importance of piety to the proper functioning of the Imperium.

One way that the Zealous Priest tries to achieve his goals is by telling stories about great mysteries associated with his temple — mysteries that enterprising young people such as themselves might wish to investigate.

1. The Zealous Priest tells of a wondrous statue of an obscure aspect of his god. The statue is reputed to have oracular powers when asked questions by those truly devoted to the deity. Unfortunately, the statue is long lost, hidden away somewhere in the underworld beneath the city. He encourages the characters to go and seek it out and then prove their worth by asking the questions of the statue.

2. The Zealous Priest wishes the characters to accompany him to a shrine in the underworld. The shrine is still maintained by the Priest's temple because of its antiquity, as well as the presence of many important relics there. Though the Priest stresses that the journey to the shrine is mostly safe, there is still the possibility of encountering unpleasant underworld denizens, which is why he asks the characters to join him.

3. As 2, except that the shrine to which the Priest is going is the site of a ritual invocation of a divine aspect or the summoning of a demon (as appropriate) and he hopes that this will sufficiently impress the characters that they will

devote themselves more fully to his god.

4. The Zealous Priest possesses a small relic of one of his priestly predecessors (the exact nature of which can be determined by the referee to suit the clan and deity). When held to a wound, it functions as the Group II spell, *heal serious wounds*, once per week. He gives it to the characters to use on their next adventure, saying that, if they find it aided them in their endeavour, they should return to him and offer a donation to his temple in thanks. The Priest hopes that this will be the start of a deeper relationship between the characters and his temple.

## TEACHERS AT THE CLANHOUSE

An oft-overlooked guideline in *Empire of the Petal Throne* is discussed in Sec. 421, regarding the possibility of learning original skills by means other than experience. There, it is explained that a combination of time and money can result in the acquisition of new original skills, provided that one can find a clanmaster willing to teach the character. As a referee, I have found this guideline very useful, both as a way to enable players to broaden the scope of their characters' knowledge and, just as importantly, to involve them in the business of their own clan or other clans, which can, in turn, lead to interesting adventures.

For example, the House of Worms clan in my Sokátis campaign includes many wine-makers. If a character of the clan wished to learn the Group I original skill “wine-maker,” he would need, according to the *EPT rules* two months and 1,000 Káitars at minimum. However, clanmaster might decide that the character in question might learn more if he accompanied a clan caravan to Salarvyá, where he might visit an Urtsé berry farm and observe the process by which these fruits are turned into Drónu wine and Dátsu brandy — and an adventure is born. A clever referee can thus turn what might otherwise be a banal transaction into an opportunity for an exciting adventure on Tékumel.

# A Portion of the Underworld of Sokátis

Like most Tsolyáni cities, Sokátis has an extensive Tsuru'úm, or underworld, beneath it. This underworld consists of many different strata (or levels), each one the result of the custom of Ditlána by which a city is “renewed” roughly every half-millennium by razing its buildings, filling in their basements and cellars, and constructing new edifices atop the old ones. What follows is the description of but a small portion of the underworld of Sokátis, located below the Foreigners’ Quarter, a common starting point for new player characters. The portion described here connects to the portion detailed in issues #2 and #3, but is completely usable on its own. Issue #4 of *The Excellent Travelling Volume* detailed a portion of this map (areas 1–17), while the present issue details areas 18–34. Future issues may add new maps that expand on this one, but referees are encouraged to add to it as they wish or simply to use what is presented here as inspiration in creating their own underworlds.

## 18. Demon

Within this chamber is a copper representation of Gereshmá’a, the Nighted One of the Lonely Tomb, a demon in the service of Lord Sáрку. For its materials alone, this idol is worth in excess of 5,000 Káitars, but it is bulky and weighs approximately 300 pounds. Furthermore, it is protected against desecration by powerful magic. Anyone who attempts to remove the idol – even a worshipper of Sáрку or Durritlámish – must make a successful saving throw versus spells or be afflicted by the Group I spell *withering*. Unlike ordinary versions of this spell, it can only be cured by *remove curse* cast by a priest of the Lord of Worms. Spells cast by priests of any other deity are ineffective.

## 19. Copper Pillar

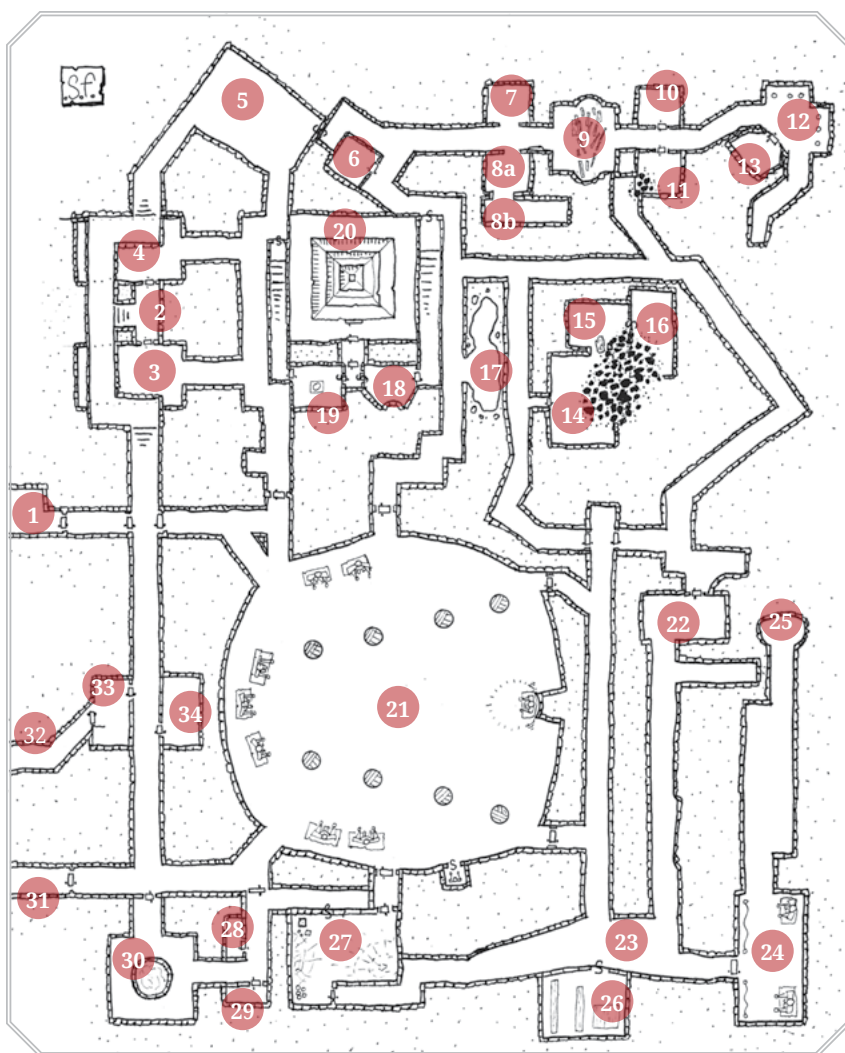
In the centre of this room stands a large copper pillar. The pillar’s surface is covered with what appear to be dents and slashes. If a follower of Sáрку or Durritlámish strikes his weapon against the surface of the pillar, the weapon gains a +1 bonus to hit and damage against servants of Stability for 1–6 hours afterwards. A devotee of the two aforementioned gods can receive this blessing multiple times but only once per week. Characters who serve any other deity receive no benefit from the pillar.

This room is guarded at all times by four Mnéktan (see p.18). They attack anyone who enters who does not prominently wear a symbol of Sáрку or his cohort.

**Mnéktan** (AC 7 MV 9” HD 3 HP 13, 11, 10, 9)

## 20. Shrine of Batha’ák

Beyond the secret doors in Rooms 18 and 19 is a shrine dedicated to a mystical, contemplative aspect of Sáрку known as Batha’ák, “the Eye of Eternity.” The shrine consists of a black-stained wooden step pyramid, atop of which rests a large piece of amber that has been shaped to look like a human eye. This “eye” is worth 7,000 Káitars but anyone who attempts to remove it from its place atop the pyramid must immediately make a saving throw versus paralysis/hypnosis or be overcome with the desire to do nothing except sit in contemplation before the idol. This effect dissipates if the affected character is forcibly removed from the shrine, but he is forever after unable even to consider looting a place dedicated to the Lord of Worms. If he is not forcibly removed, he will remain there, forsaking food, water, and any other physical necessities, until he dies,



after which his body will be claimed by the temple of Sárku and reanimated as one of the undead guardians of this area of the underworld.

### 21. Chamber of Statues

This large, rounded room contains eight alabaster pillars, as well as eight statues of the same material. Seven of

the statues depict unnamed high priests and priestesses of Sárku, dressed in their ritual garb. These statues are heavy and effectively immobile. The eighth statue, seated upon a raised dais, depicts an aspect of Sárku known as Dijátł the Copper-Clawed, who weighs the deeds of the newly-dead and metes out the Pleasures and Punishments of the

Sepulchre. The statue become magically animated and attacks anyone who attempts to move or damage any of the statues in this chamber.

**Statue of Dijátl** (AC 3 MV 6" HD 7 HP 27)

Hidden behind a secret door along the south wall of the room is a much smaller (2 feet tall) copper statue depicting an Engsványáli warrior wearing armour and carrying a shield. The statue is heavy (about 100 pounds) and worth 3,000 Káitars. The shield is detachable and functions as a shield +2, but only if it is never exposed to sunlight or any form of magical light, both of which cause it to dissolve into brownish dust.

## 22. Guardroom

This now-empty room was once a post for temple guards. There is a wooden weapons rack against one wall and a stool. The rack does not presently contain any weapons. There is a key in the lock of the door to the north. In addition to opening this door, it can be used to open the lock to area 31.

## 23. Patrol

Every time this area is entered, there is a 50% chance that 1–4 Level II priests of Sárku, accompanied by 1–6 Level I temple guards. The priests possess all professional skills through *detect evil/good* and each one knows a single Group I bonus spell, as determined by the referee. The warriors all wear chain armour and carries shields and spears. Each priest will have 1–20 Káitars on his person, while each warrior will have 1–10.

## 24. Shrine of the Guardians

This rectangular room contains two statues made of Grú wood. One depicts the aspect of Sárku known as Siyenágga, the Wanderer of the Tombs, and the other depicts an aspect of Durritlámish known as Jewéth. Both of these aspects

are invoked to guard tombs and underground temples, such as this one. In front of each statue stands a brazier for the lighting of Olúrash incense. If the braziers are lit and the appropriate prayers said, the characters become effectively invisible to the undead for the next 24 hours. This blessing is negated if the characters either attack the undead or despoil or desecrate an area sacred to Lord Sárku, who is the Master of the Undead. Also to be found in the room are two finely made tapestries illustrating the Seventy Pleasures of the Tomb (worth 2,000 Káitars together).

## 25. Treasury

Four chests can be found here. One contains 2, 213 copper Qirgáls. Another contains 1,354 silver Hlášh. A third is coated with contact poison and contains 3,690 Káitars. The final chest holds three gems (worth 100, 500, and 1,000 Káitars) and eye of illuminating glory with 23 charges and an indicator in Ancient Salarvyáni.

Lurking on the ceiling of this area are three Turuvándu (see p. 21), which drop down to attack anyone who loots from the treasury.

**Turuvándu** (AC 6 MV 12" HD 2+3 HP 15, 9, 5)

## 26. Secret Shrine

Powerful sorcery hides the door to this shrine to Urádz, the Wield of the Mace, an aspect of Lord Qón dedicated to fighting creatures of the underworld. Followers of any Change-aligned deity can neither see the door nor can they pass through it, while those aligned with Stability can do both with ease. Passing beyond the door reveals a worship area, including an idol of Urádz (worth 1,000 Káitars). Characters who enter the shrine and offer a prayer to Qón (or indeed any of the gods of Stability) are healed 1–6 hit points. This blessing

is repeatable but only once per week. There is a 20% chance that the shrine is currently occupied when the characters enter it. Use the table in Sec. 1110 of the *Empire of the Petal Throne* rulebook to determine who is encountered, disregarding any inappropriate results. In addition, no more than six individuals may be encountered.

### 27. Shrine of Khóm Dlá

This chamber is devoted to an aspect of Lord Durritlámish known as Khóm Dlá, who appears in the form of a hideous brown beetle-like creature. The room contains an altar to this aspect, along with two idols (each worth 700 Káitars). There is a 30% chance that a Level V priest of Durritlámish will be here at any given time, engaged in rituals of his deity. He possesses all professional skills up through *protection from evil/good* and has the following bonus spells: *curse/ bless, dispel magic, doomkill, door control, and fly*. He also possesses an *eye of frigid breath* with 36 charges and an indicator in Llyáni.

Regardless of whether the priest is present, the shrine is always guarded by three Dláqo, who attack anyone who enters the area uninvited. If the priest is present, he can command the Dláqo, who will obey his commands without question, even at the cost of their own lives.

**Dláqo** (AC 2 MV 6" HD 3 HP 14 (x2), 6)

Hidden in the southwest corner of the room, amid ritual paraphernalia, is a wooden coffer, inside of which is an *amulet of warding off Thúnru'u* and a gem worth 500 Káitars.

### 28. Storeroom

Within this room are a dozen brown robes to be used by priests of Sárku when attending to rituals in the underworld. Also here is a copper Ta'ón, the sanctified knife used in rituals of

the temple of Sárku. The Ta'ón in this storeroom is particularly finely made and worth 200 Káitars.

### 29. Locked Room

The door to this room is locked. Beyond is a set of narrow stone stairs leading down. The referee can determine precisely where the stairs lead, whether it be to the second level of the underworld or somewhere even deeper.

### 30. Pool

A large, murky pool dominates this room. The pool is 10 feet deep and contains six Nenyélu, whose swimming within can be observed if someone takes the time to shine a torch or lantern over the surface of the pool. At the bottom of the pool is a necklace (worth 1,000 Káitars) and two gems (worth 100 and 500 Káitars), in addition to the bones of small animals fed to the Nenyélu by the priests of Sárku.

**Nenyélu** (AC 6 MV 15" HD 2 HP 11, 8, 7, 6 (x2), 5)

### 31. Guard Room

This area connects to area 9 on p. 16 of issue #2 of *The Excellent Travelling Volume*. A single Qumqúm stands watch here and will attack anyone who enters this area who does not bear a symbol of either Sárku or Durritlámish. The door beyond is locked.

**Qumqúm** (AC 6 MV 12" HD 9 HP 34)

### 32. Living Mosaics

As with area 31, this area connects to area 9 on p. 16 of issue #2. The walls of this corridor are covered in beautiful, if morbid, mosaics depicting scenes from the *Five-Sided Tome of the Putrescent One*, an ancient ritual text of the faith of Lord Sárku. The figures in the mosaic are enchanted to spring to life, impeding the progress of anyone (except worshippers of Sárku and

Durritlámish) from passing through the door to area 33. There is one figure for every character who attempts to pass through the door. If attacked, the figures will respond in kind. If “killed,” the figures return to the mosaic and cannot animated again for 24 hours.

**Mosaic Figures** (AC 3 MV 9” HD 2)

### 33. Mortuary

Eight recently deceased bodies, wrapped in shrouds, are stacked here, awaiting burial elsewhere in the underworld. Standing watch over the bodies are four Mrúr, all of which wear steel armour and carry steel swords. Other than the weapons and armour, there is nothing else of value in this chamber.

**Mrúr** (AC 3 MV 6” HD 1+3 HP 8, 7, 5, 4)

### 34. Crypt

There are two dozen niches in the walls of this chamber, nineteen of which are currently filled with mummified remains. One of the mummies wears a demonic mask made of gold (worth 500 Káitars) and another holds a cursed scroll that afflicts anyone who reads it with a rotting plague that is fatal in two turns if a *cure serious wounds* or *eye of healing* is not applied.

The crypt is guarded by three Mnéktan (see p. 20) that will allow anyone wearing a symbol of Sárku or Durritlámish to enter the area without incident. However, they will attack anyone who disturbs the mummies, regardless of the symbol they might wear.

**Mnéktan** (AC 7 MV 9” HD 3 HP 12, 11, 9)

## ALTERNATE EXPERIENCE POINT AWARDS

Sec. 600 of the *Empire of the Petal Throne* rulebook provides only two ways for characters to accrue experience points: acquiring treasure or slaying hostile beings. While this system works perfectly well for campaigns in which the exploration of the Tsuru’úm is the primary activity of the characters, it is somewhat limiting in campaigns where delving in the underworld represents a much smaller part of the characters’ activities. In refereeing my Sokátis campaign, I found myself looking for alternative ways to grant experience points without fundamentally changing the approach described in the *EPT* rulebook. My goal was not for the characters to advance quickly — I’m actually quite fond of a slow-but-steady pace of advancement — but rather to ensure that the characters did not need to slay hordes of Ssú or loot tens of thousands of Káitars from tombs to have a chance to make progress toward the next level.

For that reason, I have recently adopted the following awards, all of which are based on discovering what magical or technological items do. Note that

this is not the same thing as using the items in question. A character can, for example, learn how to use a particular type of eye but never actually use it himself. In that case, he would still gain the experience point award listed below, since it is a reward for acquiring knowledge, which, in my campaigns, are often every bit as valuable as material wealth.

**Amulets:** 500

**Books:** 100

**Eyes:** 200

**Miscellaneous Magic Items:** 1000

**Scrolls:** 100

If by some chance a character manages to obtain the exact same item again and, in the referee’s opinion, it should be obvious what the item does based on previous experience, no award is granted. In my own campaign, all eyes look alike, so it is impossible to determine what it does without experimentation, even if it is a type of eye the character has already encountered.



## Bestiary (Addition)

Though *Empire of the Petal Throne* includes descriptions of a wide range of the alien planet's flora and fauna, not to mention intelligent non-human species, *Tékumel* is vast and new creatures are always being discovered. What follows are details of two such new creatures, both of which are strange undead that can be encountered in the Tsuru'um beneath Sokátis. Like everything in *The Excellent Travelling Volume*, these new creatures are intended to serve as examples of how to expand upon and add to the material presented elsewhere in order to make *Tékumel* your own.

### MNÉKTAN "THE SWORD-HANDED"

*Number Appearing:* 3–12

*Hit Dice:* 3

*Armour Class:* 7

*Treasure:* nil

*Movement:* 9"

*Lair:* 30: 4–48

*Treasure in Lair:* B: 40

A Mnéktan is a reanimated corpse of a human being whose hands have been replaced by sharpened blades of bone. Due to their sharpness, these blades deal +2 damage on a successful hit. Because of a quirk in the process of creating it, a Mnéktan takes damage from healing spells equal to the amount that would otherwise be healed, while spells such as *cure disease* and *neutralise poison* destroy them outright.



This form of undead was originally created by the temple of Ksárul, but, over the years, the temple of Sárku reproduced the technique and now employs Mnéktan as well. Indeed, these deadly monstrosities are now far more common as guardians of the tombs and sepulchres of the Worm Lord than among locales associated with the Ancient Lord of Secrets.



## TURUVÁNDU “THE SCUTTLE”

*Number Appearing:* 1-20

*Hit Dice:* 2+3

*Armour Class:* 6

*Treasure:* B: 20

*Movement:* 12”

*Lair:* 30: 2-40

*Treasure in Lair:* C: 50



A Turuvándu is a frightful form of undead created by the secret society of the temple of Sárku known as the Brotherhood of the Amber Coiling. The ritual of creation is complex and only works on beings who *willingly* allow themselves to be slain and then reanimated for the glory of the Five-Headed Lord of Worms. In form, a Turuvándu looks like a pale, flexible human being whose arms and legs are contorted backwards to be used for

locomotion. Despite the oddness of its appearance, a Turuvándu moves quickly and can, in fact, climb up walls and ceilings with preternatural grace. Indeed, this form of undead frequently lurks on the ceiling to drop down on unsuspecting victims, surprising opponents on a roll of 1-4 on a six-sided die.

# The Underpeople

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The recorded history of Tékumel long; its unrecorded history is even longer. Consequently, there are innumerable nations, peoples, cultures, and species that are either completely forgotten or at least not widely known by the contemporary inhabitants of this alien planet. This is no less true among the inhabitants of the Five Empires, whose outlook tends to be insular, often to the point of xenophobia – especially when considering species other than Man. A good example of this are the so-called Underpeople.

The Underpeople are those partly-human (or non-human) species that are considered “lesser” in the eyes of the Tsolyáni and others for any number of reasons: from being few in number to not having recognised homelands to simply being beneath the notice of the “greater” races of Tékumel. In Chapter 28 of Professor Barker’s novel, *The Man of Gold*, a Pé Chói character, Ítk t’Sá, has this to say on the subject: “You know of the Hehegánu and their cousins of the swamps, the Hehecháru. Many more exist. Some dwell with you in your cities and yet you see them not, while others hide in the mountains, the jungles, the wastelands, even in the seas. Several there are who prefer the dark places beneath the most ancient of your cities. There are some who have only a flicker of intelligence, yet they would also weave their own Skeins under the sun. The Rényu, for instance, who are treated as clever pets in your land; the Dzór, who are thought to be half-witted giants of the woodlands; the Serúdlá and the Sró, whom you consider dragon-like monsters...”

In my own *Empire of the Petal Throne* campaigns, I have used the term

“Underpeople” to refer primarily to human or semi-human mutants, beings like the aforementioned Hehegánu and Hehecháru who are (likely) the result of genetic experimentation on the human form by the Ancients or the lords of the Latter Times. I do this not to exclude other intelligent species from the appellation – quite the contrary – but because, over the course of the years, several different groups of human mutants have played significant roles in the adventures of the player characters and I needed a handy, catch-all term to describe them.

Several of these Underpeople from my campaign will be described briefly below. My intention in doing this is not only to provide some insights into the content of my own campaigns but, more importantly, to encourage other referees to do the same in their campaigns. Tékumel is a rich and diverse setting, ripe with possibilities for adding new and interesting species and cultures to those already described by Professor Barker. None of the Underpeople have game statistics, as I treat them all as human beings, with professions and levels, just like any others.

## THE CHAKKARJÁNE

While exploring the Tsuru’úm beneath the western Salarvyáni city of Khúm, the characters of my Sokátis based campaign encountered a group of hairless Underpeople whose large mouths were filled with needle-sharp teeth. Calling themselves the Chakkarjáne, they claimed to serve “the Lord of the Azure Citadel” and that they “hearkened to his wondrous voice.” Not much else was learned about these beings, except that they seemed to

have a great fear of Tsolyáni, owing to a previous encounter with a Tsolyáni warrior woman whom they said served “the Lady of Blue and Gold” and who had slain many of their kind.



## THE NGA'Á

On the shores of Lake Parunál in eastern Yán Kór is the city of Ngakú. The city has a sinister, or at least eerie, reputation, owing in large part to some of its weird inhabitants, who evince piscine or batrachian features, such as narrow heads, flat noses, bulgy eyes, and pale complexions. Though not all of the Ngaküyáni look like this, enough of them do that many outsiders suspect interbreeding between the locals and the aquatic Nyaggá of the lake, with whom they engage in trade.

When the characters of my Sokátis based campaign visited Ngakú, they discovered that the situation in the city was even more complex. There were in fact three different groups

dwelling within the city. The first were “normal” humans, most of whom were of the same stock as the inhabitants of Chayákkú to the northeast (i.e. stocky and bow-legged). The second group were the “weird” humans described above, which were, despite travellers’ tales to the contrary, a distinct minority of Ngakú’s people. The third group were the Nga’á, who, while humanoid, were unmistakably not human.

The Nga’á are short (stand 5 feet on average), with greyish, clammy skin, wide mouths and large eyes. So far as anyone observed, the Nga’á do not speak or communicate verbally, instead employing some kind of telepathy by which they make their thoughts and feelings known. These people dwell apart from the rest of Ngakú’s inhabitants, in a shanty town of little stilt houses by the city’s docks. Though clearly a breed apart, Ngaküyáni merchants and sailors employ some of the Nga’á to act as go-betweens with the Nyaggá, with whom they seem to have a powerful rapport.

## THE WALKS BY NIGHT CLAN

The Walks by Night clan (mentioned p. 6 of issue #4 of *The Excellent Travelling Volume*) is another group reputed to have a connection to Lake Parunál, owing to their pallid complexions and the gill-like features on their necks. Found primarily in and around the Yán Koryáni city of Rüllá, these people are renowned as fierce fighters and devotees of Su’úr, the local version of Lord Sárku. They are also heavily involved in slaving, which only adds to their dark reputations, even within Yán Kór.

In my own campaign, the Walks by Night clan have no connection to

Lake Parunál whatsoever; that is a misunderstanding by outsiders. That said, they are still far from completely human. Whether by magic, selective breeding, or ancient genetic engineering, members of this clan have developed traits that better able them to fight against the Shunned Ones,

who dwell in the vicinity. The “gills” that outsiders report seeing on their necks are, in fact, part of an advanced respiratory system that makes them immune to most forms of poison gas, including that released by the *eye of the creeping fog of doom*.

## RANDOM UNDERPEOPLE CHARACTERISTICS

While it is probably preferable that a referee specifically think about the appearance and special abilities of any human mutants that appear in his campaign, sometimes a little inspiration can be helpful. To that end, here are a couple of random tables to provide just that. Roll no more than twice on each table.

None of the physical features and few of the special abilities are given specific rules-related

details. In many cases, this is unnecessary, as they clearly reference a skill or spell presented in the *EPT* rulebook. In the remaining cases, the intention is for the referee to decide for himself just how to implement the feature or ability in his adventures and campaigns. The tables presented here are not complete systems but rather rough and ready idea generators for those times when the referee simply needs to come up with Underpeople on the fly.

### NOTEWORTHY PHYSICAL FEATURES

1. Albino/Pale Complexion
2. Clammy/Slimy Skin
3. Clawed Fingers
4. Distinctive Odour
5. Double-Jointed
6. Fanged Mouth
7. Hairless
8. Hairy
9. Hunched
10. Larger Eyes
11. Long/Prehensile Tongue
12. No Ears
13. No Nose
14. Scaly Skin
15. Shambling/Loping Gait
16. Short (under 5' tall)
17. Smaller Eyes
18. Tall (over 6' tall)
19. Webbed Hands and Feet
20. Wrinkled Skin

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

1. +1 Damage
2. +2 Damage
3. Calm
4. Change Self
5. Charm Creature
6. Control Person
7. Cure Light Wounds
8. Control Underworld Creatures
9. ESP
10. Extra-Vision
11. Fear
12. Haste
13. Immune to Mind-Affecting Magic
14. Paralysis
15. Racial Memory
16. Regenerate 1hp/round
17. Seeing Other Planes
18. Surprise on 1–4
19. Telekinesis
20. Telepathy

## The Tomb of Vrikheshámma

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“The Tomb of Vrikheshámma” is a small keyed locale — a step pyramid that serves as the burial place for a Bednálljan sorcerer whose memory continued to be revered for several generations after his death, particularly by magicians who hoped to follow in his footsteps. Of course, very few men can withstand the relentless assaults of Time and the existence of Vrikheshámma and his tomb were eventually forgotten. Now, the step pyramid lies hidden in some desert or badlands, waiting to be discovered by anyone bold enough to explore the area.

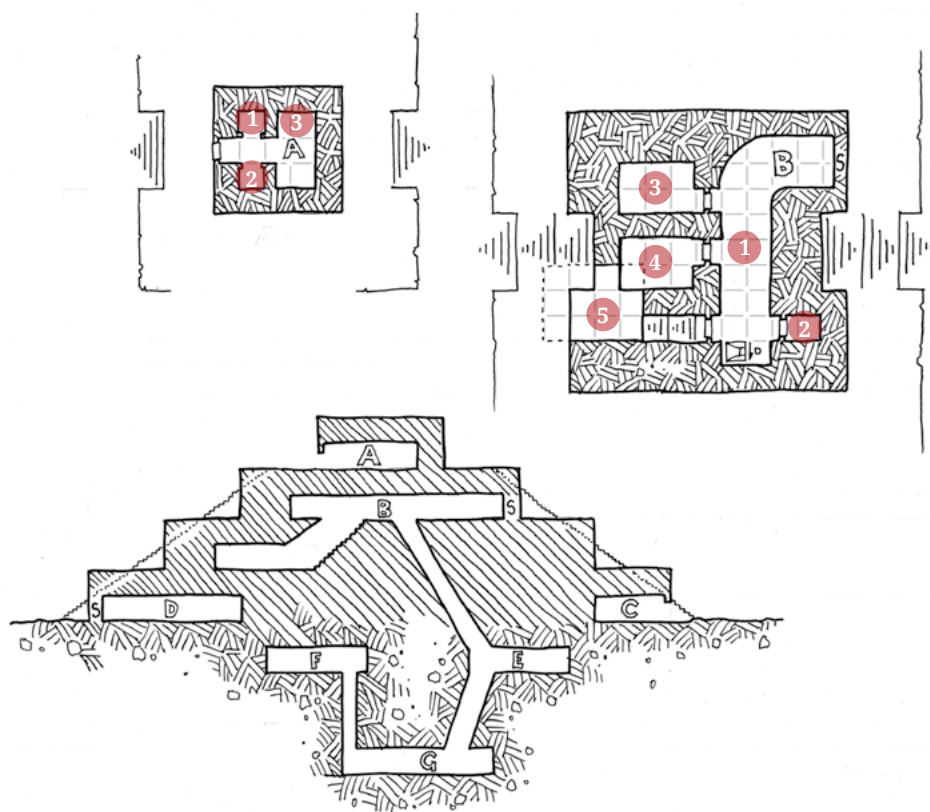
The tomb is largely devoid of inhabitants, being mostly a historical curiosity, but there are a few rather dangerous guardians dwelling within its chambers, in addition to magical protections against would-be tomb robbers. Consequently, it is probably not a suitable adventure locale for low-level characters, unless they are extremely well equipped and/or clever. On the other hand, mid to high-level characters should fare much better here. As ever, referees are encouraged to alter the inhabitants and treasures found within to better suit their own campaigns.

Vrikheshámma Cháidi was a worker of magic who lived during the reign of the Bednálljan emperor, Meshkanúma Améssu III, some two hundred and fifty years after the priest Pavár wrote his scrolls and introduced the gods and cohorts of Stability to the First Imperium. This was before the Concordat between the temples had fully stabilised. Strife between the followers of Change and Stability was no longer commonplace perhaps, but it was still far from unknown, despite official sanctions against it.

For his part, Vrikheshámma was, at least outwardly, a worshipper of Lord Enomé, an ancient aspect of Ksárul that was not nearly as bloodthirsty as those aspects known as Jráka or Chótl, but he still demanded human sacrifice and other unsavoury rites. Perhaps for that reason, it was whispered — more after his death than before, it should be noted — that Vrikheshámma was secretly a servant of the dark goddess Mshékh, whom the Llyáni had named Kúu Tép and the modern Tsolyáni called the Goddess of the Pale Bone.

True or not, these rumours no doubt contributed to the combination of fear and reverence that sorcerers paid to Vrikheshámma Cháidi during his unnaturally long life (he is reputed to have lived well over a hundred years) and even after his demise (at the hands of assassins sent by a rival, or so one of many legends says). Vrikheshámma had already prepared a burial place for himself, as well as for his chief wife, Msháku Pijékka, who was a formidable sorceress in her own right and the similarity of whose personal name to that the foul deity her husband supposedly worshipped is almost certainly a coincidence. His protégés and servants placed their remains within the step pyramid he had constructed, along with (some of) his wealth and magical artifacts.

For decades afterwards, they tended to it, ensuring that the memory of their former master was preserved for the ages. Unfortunately, their efforts proved in vain, as the tomb was lost to history — until the player characters stumbled upon it...



## TOMB KEY

There are two maps describing the Tomb of Vrikheshámma. One map shows a side view of the tomb, as well as the upper portions of it. The other map shows the lower portions of the tomb. The tomb itself has multiple entrances, two of which are easily accessible, while two others are hidden behind secret doors. The interior of the tomb itself consists of seven distinct areas, designated by Roman letters. Some of these areas have distinct sub-areas, designated by Arabic numerals.

### A1.

A sand-worn stone statue stands here. The statue is still identifiable as a man

wearing a loose-fitting robe, but few other details remain.

### A2.

The intact statue of a woman stands here. The woman is beautiful in appearance but has a very severe expression on her face. She is dressed very similarly to the statue in A1.

### A3.

A stone altar stands in the centre of the room. On either side of it are copper braziers, which are bolted to the floor. The walls of the room are covered in the remains of mosaics that depict scenes of a sorcerer engaged in various activities (e.g. summoning demons, battling an

army, research, etc.). Like everywhere else in area A, this chamber is covered by a thin layer of dust and sand, indicating that no one has been in here in quite some time.

**B1.**

This large chamber shows few signs of age or wear. There is little dust or sand here, but the air is stale, suggesting that it has not been opened in many years, if ever. The walls are beautifully decorated with mosaics depicting whirls of colour and geometric shapes. Aside from the doors and stairs leading to other rooms in this area, the only other point of interest is the hidden panel in the floor that leads to a 60-foot deep shaft leading to Area E. The shaft bends an additional 40 feet beyond that to lead to area G.

**B2.**

The door to this room is locked. Beyond it are six chests, inside of which can be found 12,000 gold *Rachár* – *Bednálljan* coins worth approximately 4,800 *Káitars* solely on the basis of their metal content. However, they might be worth as much as twice that to a collector or scholar of *Bednállján* times.

**B3. and B4.**

The door to both of these rooms are locked. The rooms beyond each contain a single ornate sarcophagus, inside of which rests a mummy wearing a silver mask worth a mere 200 *Káitars*. These are false tombs intended to trick robbers.

**B5.**

The door to this room is magically sealed. Only spells such as *door control* or *dispel magic* can open it. The room beyond is another false tomb, but a much more elaborate one. The walls are covered in frescoes, which remain vibrant despite the passage of time. They depict otherworldly landscapes

and creatures. Anyone who looks at them for more than a short time must save versus spells or be afflicted by the Group I bonus spell, *fear*.

There is a single crystal sarcophagus in the room, inside of which seems to be an exceptionally well-preserved corpse of a man, dressed in what look like magician's robes, surrounded by a faintly green gas. The sarcophagus does not seem to have any seams and therefore cannot be opened. If it is shattered, the gas is released (it is harmless) and the corpse crumbles to dust, including the robes. If the dust is searched, a fake *amulet of peace amongst the servers of Ksárul* can be found.

**C1.**

This is an open, largely empty room, other than dust and sand, which seems to fill its corners.

**C2.**

The remains of several sleeping mats can be found here, along with evidence of previous habitation, such as tattered bits of cloth, broken glass, and the bones of some small animals.

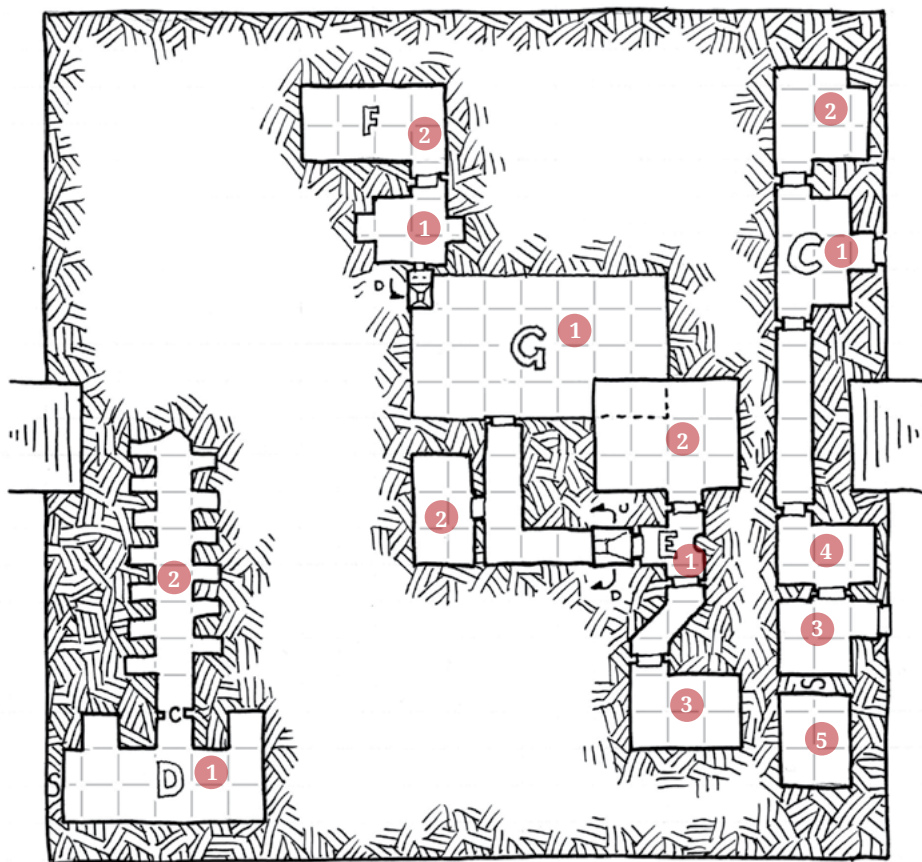
**C3.**

This chamber is similar to C2, except that there is a 20% chance that it is currently inhabited by another explorer. Use the reaction table in Sec. 1020 of *Empire of the Petal Throne* to determine how he behaves toward the characters. The explorer will be a priest (1-3) or magic-user (4-6) of Level I-IV, aligned with Change. Other details are up to the referee to determine, bearing in mind Sec. 1910 and Sec. 1920 for the outfitting of nonplayer characters.

**C4.**

This area is completely empty, except for some pieces of desiccated wood on the floor.



**C5.**

The door to this room is hidden. The area beyond contains a wooden reading desk atop which rests a copy of *Pūrohlan Znamrīshsha Kagēkta*.

**D1.**

This large area was once a tomb, but it has obviously been desecrated and looted. The frescoes on the walls have been defaced and the stone sarcophagus that once dominated the area has been smashed to pieces. Other than a few fragments of bone, there is nothing else here.

**D2.**

Thirteen burial niches lie beyond the concealed door from area D1. All of the niches contain mummified remains. One mummy holds a gem in its hands worth 500 Káitars and another wears a necklace worth 1000 Káitars. None of the others have anything of value on them.

**E1.**

This area is reachable only by a shaft from B1 above. The doors to areas E2 and E3 are both blocked by sealed

stone doors that require a total of 300 Strength percentiles to budge.

## E2.

This is the tomb of Msháku Pijékka, the chief wife of Vrikhéshamma. Her mummified remains are inside of an ornate sarcophagus worth 5,000 Káitars. The remains wear a jewelled headdress 10,000 Káitars. Unfortunately, the tomb is guarded by a Ru'ún that attacks anyone who dares to enter it.

**Ru'ún** (AC 2 MV 15" HD 11 HP 48)

## E3.

This chamber contains the treasures of Msháku Pijékka, which consist of the following: 11,139 copper coins, 4,634 silver coins, and 2,907 gold coins, all of which are of Bednálljan origin. All of these coins are scattered about several dozen chests of varying sizes. Buried beneath the coins in one of the chests is the *Music Box of Nekkutháne*.

## F1.

This area is reachable only by a narrow chimney that climbs up 30 feet from area G1. Two Ru'ún stand guard here to protect the tomb in F2.

**Ru'ún** (AC 2 MV 15" HD 11 HP 57, 50)

## F2.

The door to this room is protected by a magical wall of fire (cf. Group III bonus spell), which burns to death any beings who touch it and do not make their saving throw versus spells. Once dispelled, the door opens, revealing the tomb beyond. The tomb is lavishly decorated, with frescoes, mosaics, and inset gems (worth 12,000 Káitars, if they could be removed intact). Vrikhéshamma's sarcophagus is made of plain stone; it requires a total of 150 Strength percentiles to lift. Inside is an inner coffin of gold (worth 15,000 Káitars). Inside of that coffin is

Vrikhéshamma's mummy, which wears rings, a circlet, and an amulet, all of which are worth 20,000 Káitars. In the mummy's right hand is a *thoroughly useful eye*, with three charges left and an indicator in Llyáni.

## G1.

This large chamber houses the treasure hoard of Vrikhéshamma. The hoard consists of the following: 20,000 gold coins; 12 gems (worth 100 (×6), 500 (×3), 500 (×2), 1000), 6 pieces of jewelry (worth 1000 (×3), 3000 (×2), 5000), a *dagger +1*, and an *amulet of perceiving the scintillation of metals*. At the referee's discretion, other items may be placed here.

## G2.

This smaller chamber contains other treasures of less obvious value, such as maps from Bednálljan times, the skeletons of strange animals (some of them no longer extant in this part of Tékmel), preserved flowers, and other esoterica. These items were from Vrikhéshamma's researches and, as such, were eclectic in the extreme. Once again, the referee should feel free to include whatever he wishes in this chamber, particularly if it will spur future adventures.

## Demons of Belkhánu & Qón (Addition)

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While peasants may use the term “demon” to refer to almost any inimical creature or misunderstood phenomenon, scholars use it refers to a specific type of being, usually (but not always) native to one “the Planes Beyond” – extra-dimensional realms whose physical laws are often quite different than those of Téकुmel. Demons (whom the Tsolyáni call Sharétkoi) are entities of power, who draw some form of sustenance or energy from the beings or planes of their patron gods.

Demons native to a plane controlled by a particular god may be said to be of that god’s “substance.” Those whose goals and behaviours indicate an alliance with a given deity are said to be of that god’s “essence.” However, since the goals, alliances, and planes of the gods and demons are not truly within the grasp of mortal

understanding, these terms are, at best, gross approximations of reality. What is known is that certain demons seem to ally themselves with or do the bidding of various gods and that these demons will usually respond more favourably to requests made by mortal worshippers of their patron deity.

In this issue, three demon races associated with Belkhánu and his cohort Qón are described, along with game statistics for their use in *Empire of the Petal Throne* adventures. Their potency varies and, as such, they are not all suitable as opponents for low or even mid-level characters. However, they all provide the referee examples of what beings of the Planes Beyond might be like in order to aid him in creating his own. Future issues of *The Excellent Travelling Volume* will include additional examples of demons.

## ENTITIES OF LIGHT

*Number Appearing:* 1–8

*Hit Dice:* 8

*Armour Class:* 1

*Treasure:* nil

*Movement:* 30"

*Lair:* 20: 3–24

*Treasure in Lair:* H: 40

The Entities of Light have the appearance of 10-foot spheres of insubstantial white light. They are servants of Lord Hnálla and are thus of his substance and essence, but these demons frequently interact with the followers of both Avánthe and Belkhánu, which is why they are described here. The Entities of Light rarely appear on Téकुmel of their own accord. However, they can be enticed into service through certain rituals known to the temples of Avánthe, Belkhánu, and Hnálla and through offers magical devices, books, scrolls, and the like.

By their very presence, the Entities of Light illumine a circle of 180 feet in diameter, which blinds any mortal beings within it. For the purposes of combat, treat the Entities as if they were invisible, according to the rules on p. 22 of *Empire of the Petal Throne*. Being insubstantial, they carry no weapons or devices. Instead, they attempt to come into contact with foes, dealing two dice of energy damage to those they successfully strike.

## MACE WIELDERS

*Number Appearing:* 2–16

*Hit Dice:* 6

*Armour Class:* 2

*Treasure:* nil

*Movement:* 9"

*Lair:* 20: 3–36

*Treasure in Lair:* D: 60

The Mace Wielders are a bipedal, beetle-like demons in the service of

Lord Qón. They stand slightly over six feet tall and possess yellowish carapaces, which, despite its natural toughness, they nevertheless reinforce with steel armour, helmets, and shields. As their name suggests, they arm themselves with maces, which are +2 to hit and damage. Their maces can also be used to *dispel evil*, like the Group I bonus spell of the same name. They are implacable foes of Change and gain an additional +1 to hit with their maces when fighting demons or mortal beings aligned with Change (for a total of +3).

The Mace Wielders communicate by means of a low-pitched humming that functions similarly to the priestly professional skill *telepathy*. Priests of Qón summon them to Téकुmel by offerings of diamonds, citrines, and gold, all of which they greatly relish. They are typically summoned to act as guardians of ancient shrines, temples, and tombs. More rarely, the Mace Wielders can be found acting independently in the underworlds, seeking out enemies of Belkhánu and Qón.





### GROUP III BONUS SPELL: *THE DEMON*

The Voyagers of the Farther Isles are a good example of an appropriately powerful demonic race that can be summoned through the use of this spell by priests and magic-users devoted to Lord Belkhánu or his cohort, Qón. Worshipers of other gods and cohorts may summon other demon types (e.g. the Spirits of Air, Water, and Earth for Avánthe or the Demons of the Dark for Hrü'Đ). Future issues of *The Excellent Travelling Volume* will describe more demon races for use with this bonus spell, in addition to others to be used as opponents, antagonists, and possibly even allies of the player characters in their adventures.

### VOYAGERS OF THE FARTHER ISLES

*Number Appearing:* 1–12

*Hit Dice:* 9

*Armour Class:* 4

*Treasure:* nil

*Movement:* 12"/24"

*Lair:* 30: 2–24

*Treasure in Lair:* I: 50

The Voyagers of the Farther Isles are scintillating, insect-like, 7-foot tall beings who fly on dainty rainbow-hued wings and fight with slender lances. They also use needle-sharp, one-handed swords. Both types of weapon deal two dice of damage against opponents. The priestly professional skill *revivify* is less effective against a being slain by one of the Voyagers. Such a being must make a successful saving throw against spells before *revivify* proves successful. Otherwise, the spell simply does not work and the being remains dead, though it is rumoured that the temple of Belkhánu possesses a spell which is always efficacious in this circumstance.

Both ritual and scholar priests of Belkhánu treat often with the Voyagers, offering them gold and yellow gems in exchange for their services. Otherwise, these demons do not concern themselves with events on Tékmel, preferring instead to flit about the Planes Beyond on errands for their godly master. They are infallible guides between the Planes and have a 70% chance per turn of knowing where a lost interplanar traveller may be. In addition, they perceive nexus points automatically and have a 40% chance of opening such an interplanar doorway, which is usable by others. Such a doorway remains open as long as the Voyager remains present.



# The Tékumel Project

Being 28mm miniatures for M.A.R. Barker's Empire of the Petal Throne setting.

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# Next Issue

*Livyáni and Tsoléini Characters*

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*Spells of the Inimical Races*

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*A Sákbe Road Village*

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*Random Underworld Generation*

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*And More!*

