

Swords of Forgotten Age The World of Skarynth

A Setting Supplement for Sharp Swords & Sinister Spells



Swords Of A Forgotten Age: The World of Skayrnth
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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
New Classes.....	2
BEAST MASTER.....	2
THE CULTIST.....	3
TATTOOED SORCERER.....	5
The Races of Skarynth.....	7
BEAST KIN.....	8
LEMURIAN.....	9
TUATARAN.....	10
New Magic Spells.....	11
Antagonists & Monsters.....	13
The World of Skarynth.....	21
THE GODS: THE THINGS BEYOND.....	23
THE LANDS & CITIES OF SKARYNTH.....	27
<i>Aklonia: The Cross Roads</i>	27
<i>Caedoria: The Forge</i>	30
<i>Chesk: The Wastelands</i>	31
<i>Jahdor: The Sacred Land</i>	34
<i>Tzwali: Land of the Blood King</i>	37
<i>Zyguria: Land of Mists & Secrets</i>	40
<i>The World Within</i>	42
Caravan of Secrets.....	43

Introduction

Welcome to Swords of a Forgotten Age: The World of Skarynth.

This supplement offers up new races, classes, spells, and monsters for your campaign. Game Masters are encouraged to the material and twist for their own campaign.

This supplement uses the Core Book of *Sharp Swords & Sinister Spells* as well many of the optional rules found in the *Sharp Swords & Sinister Spells Addendum*. Both books are recommended for play.



New Classes

Beast Master

Beast Masters are blessed with a special rapport with animals unlike any other mortal. Unfortunately, Beast Masters also tend to get along better with animals than other people.



Hit Dice: 1d8 HP per level

Luck Die: d6

Prime Attributes: Physique and Intellect.

Special Abilities:

Beast Speech: With a successful **INTELLECT Test**, a Beast Master may communicate with mundane animals. The quality of the communication is still limited by the animal's intelligence.

Eyes of the Beast: With a successful **WILL Test**, the Beast Master may see through the eyes of an animal with which he has bonded (See *Pack Leader*).

Nature Sense: Beast Masters can sense the nervous anxiety in animals and when the flow of nature is disturbed with a successful **INTELLECT Test**. They are able to predict natural disasters, and the presence of unnatural creatures in the area.

Pack Leader: Beast Masters attract a pack of normal animals to assist them. The total Hit Dice for a Beast Master's pack is equal to one half Beast Master's level.

The Beast Master's Pack: Common animals should be at most 2 HD and common sense should be used about any special abilities. Birds of prey can fly and have good vision. Dogs and wolves should be good at tracking and so on.

The Cultist

Hit Dice: 1d6 HP per level

Luck Die: d8

Prime Attributes: Intellect and Willpower.



Special Abilities:

Blessing of the Gods: Each day the Cultist recovers one die step of their Luck die (up to the normal maximum of d8) as long as they have not **Angered the Gods**.

Sacrifice: The Cultists may offer a ritual blood sacrifice to their god of sentient beings. The Cultist must sacrifice a number of HD of victims equal to one half the next higher die step. For example, to increase the Luck Die from d8 to d10, the Cultist must sacrifice 5 HD worth of beings. This may increase the Cultist's Luck Die up to a d12.

Soul Burn: Cultists may use their Luck Die to improve their spell casting. The result of a Luck Die roll boosts their **INTELLECT** in regards to the casting of a single spell. Regardless of the Luck Die's result, the character's Luck Die downgrades one die step.

Spells Known: At first level, the Cultist is granted two spells. When the character gains a level, they may attempt a **WILL TEST**. If successful, the character is granted an additional spell. Each day, The Cultist may pray to their god to change their spells. This reduces the character's Luck Die by one die step for each spell changed.

Spell Casting: A Cultist's spells are powered at the whim of the gods. The maximum **PL** of a spell is equal to the highest number possible on the The Cultist's current Luck Die. The Cultist then must succeed an **INTELLECT TEST** modified by the Power Level of the spell. If the Spell Check fails then the character's Luck Die downgrades one die step. On a roll of a Natural 20, the Cultist has *Angered The Gods*. The character will not regain any Luck until the Cultist has Appeased the Gods.

You Must Appease The Gods!

1	The Cultist must perform a long ritual lasting 2d4 hours and perform a sacrifice to his god. (Roll 1d6. 1-Sentient Being; 2 to 6 Animal).
2	Perform an expensive ritual with rare incense and oils costing 3d6×10 GP and lasts 2d6 hours.
3	Spend a day in prayer and fasting. No work. No adventuring.
4	Self Inflicted Blood Sacrifice causing 1d4 damage/character level.
5	The Cultist must perform an act of cannibalism.
6	Defeat an opponent sent by the god in single ritual combat. This divine opponent's HD equals the level of the Cultist.
7	The character must either (choose one) drink the blood of another sentient being or convince someone to willingly drink his blood in an elaborate ritual that lasts 1d6 hours.
8	The Cultist must perform a vision quest. The Cultist enters a trance like state for 3d6 hours at the end of that time, he loses 1d3 Willpower.
9	The Cultist must perform an act of self flagellation. As a result, he is reduced to 0 Hit Points (which return normally) and permanently loses one point from a random ability score.
10	The Cultist must parent a child.
11	The Cultist must build an elaborate shrine in honor to his god.
12	The Cultist must defile a temple to another god.

Tattooed Sorcerer

Hit Dice: 1d6 HP per level

Luck Die: d6

Prime Attributes: Physique and Willpower

Special Abilities:

Talismanic Tattoos: Tattooed Sorcerers do not have spell books but inscribe the spells on their own skins. Even after death, a Tattooed Sorcerer's skin remains a prized object and can act as research aid for a Magician's library.

Tattooed Sorcerers have the power to scribe magical runes their flesh (spells). The area of skin where a tattoo is scribed must be exposed in order for the tattoo to work. Common sense should be used about which areas of the body are exposed. In general, Light Armor imposes a Negative Die on spell casting while Medium or Heavy Armor make it impossible for them to cast spells.

Fast Caster: A Tattooed Sorcerer may cast more than one spell in a round. The sorcerer makes one **WILL TEST** modified by the total **PL** of all the spells. The same spell cannot be cast more than once in the same round. If the roll fails then all the spells fail.

Read Magic: Tattooed Sorcerers have an affinity for glyphs and runes. They gain a Positive Die to understand arcane texts.

Life Magic: This works the same as the Blood Sacrifice Ability of a Magic-User.



Starting Tattoos: A Tattooed Sorcerer knows a maximum three spells with a total maximum **PL** of six. When a spell is selected or a new spell is learned, the character also chooses the PL of the spell. *All of a Tattooed Sorcerer's spells have a their PL selected when the character learns them and those spells can only be cast at that PL. No more. No less.*

When a Tattooed Sorcerer gains a level, they attempt to learn a new Talismanic Tattoo with a successful **INTELLECT Test**. Increasing the **PL** of an existing tattooed spell counts as learning a “new” spell. There is only so much room on a Sorcerer's skin. The maximum number of Talismanic Tattoos inscribed equals the Sorcerer's Physique score.

Spell Casting: In all other respects, a Tattooed Sorcerer casts, loses, and recovers spells the same as a Magic-User.

The Races of Skarynth



The most predominant race on Skarynth is human but there are three nonhuman races; the proud Beast Kin, the corrupted Lemurians and the bloodthirsty Tuatarans.

The nonhuman races are presented as Racial Archetypes. However, if Game Masters prefer they may be played as Racial Vocations using the Archetypes as inspiration. Also at the Game Master's discretion, they may be played as Multi-Archetype Characters.

Beast Kin

The gods have always demanded obedience from mortals. A primitive tribe dared to defy the will of the gods and were cursed to be part man and part beast.

Beast Kin have beast-like features which vary from individual to individual. A few are slightly more hirsute than humans, while others have facial features that appear feline, canine/lupine, simian, or ursine.

Hit Dice: 1d8 HP per level

Luck Die: d6

Prime Attributes: Agility and Willpower



Special Abilities

Animal Senses: Beast Kin gain a Positive Die for tests related to tracking and perception.

Combat Instincts: The character's HD is considered one die step higher for purposes of initiative. Also, when attacked by a **Powerful Enemy**, the Beast Kin is considered two levels higher. This only affects the foe's attack. It does not aid The Beast Kin when attacking a **Powerful Enemy**.

Defiant: Beast Kin gain a Positive Die to resist Mind Control and Charm effects.

Survival of the Fittest: If a character rolls poorly for Hit Points upon gaining a level. They may opt to re-roll but must take the second roll even if it is worse.

Lemurian

The lure of magic is seductive. A few humans delved too deeply into the darkest secrets of the arcane and they were changed forever. The chaos and corruption of magic flows in the blood of the Lemurians. Some appear nearly human with oddly colored skin, hair, or eyes. While others appear strange and otherworldly.

Hit Dice: 1d6 per level

Luck Die: d6

Prime Attributes: Agility and Intellect

Special Abilities:

Arcane Manipulation: When attempting to resist a spell, Lemurians may attempt to do so with a Negative Die. If successful, they gain control of the arcane energy of the spell and the character gains a Positive Die to all Physique, Agility, and Willpower tests for a number of rounds equal to the spell's PL.

Ancient Secrets: Lemurians instinctively know how to cast one randomly determined spell. The character follows the normal spell casting rules of Magic-Users.

Parietal Eye: With a successful **INTELLECT Test** the character can sense the presence of magic. A successful **INTELLECT test** with a Negative Die allows the character to see through smoke, mists, veils, blindfold and even detect the invisible.

Tentacles: The character has 2 to 4 tentacles. The tentacles are neither strong nor dexterous enough to be used to wield weapons or shields. However, they do gain a Positive Die for grappling and climbing checks and other checks at the GM's discretion.



Tuataran

Ancient Serpent Folk Sorcerers performed insane and vile experiments on humans to create a better soldier. They were too successful and it led to the creation of the Tuatarans and the fall of the Serpentine Empire.

Tuatarans have human features but with reptilian skin and eyes. A few have tails and/or forked tongues.

Hit Dice: 1d10 per level

Luck Die: d6

Prime Attributes: Physique and Willpower



Special Abilities:

Fast Healing: Increase all healing by one die step.

Scaly Hide: A Tuataran's scaly skin grants them some protection. They take -1 damage (same as Light Armor). This will not stack with worn armor.

Resilient: Tuatarans gain a Positive Die to resist poison and disease.

Soul Eater: Tuatarans have the ability to consume the souls of the dying. When a Tuataran slays an opponent in melee combat, the character may attempt a **Will Test**. If successful, the character heals 1 HD.

New Magic Spells

Spell	Effect
Arcane Sense	The character can detect the presence of magic for PL rounds.
Blink	Attacks against the caster receive a Negative Die for PL Rounds.
Charm Undead	The caster gains control of PL HD Undead within nearby range for PL Turns. Can be resisted.
Curse of Contrariness	The caster touches a PL HD target and curses them for PL hours. The victim will say exactly the opposite of what he means. From the target's perspective, what he is saying is totally accurate and true. Can be resisted.
Death Mask	This spell allows a caster's spirit to possess a fresh corpse for PL hours. Any wounds or other signs of death remain on the corpse. The caster's body is helpless while he is possessing the corpse. If his real body is destroyed or sustains enough damage to normally kill him then he cannot return to his body and is trapped in the corpse until the spell's duration ends at which time he will also die. The caster's mental ability scores are unchanged but uses the physical ability scores and Hit Points of the corpse in life.
Karma Wheel	For PL rounds, a nearby target rolls 1d6 before rolling any test. If the d6 is odd then the target receives a Negative Die on the test. If even; a Positive Die. Can be resisted.
Night Eyes	The caster can see in total darkness for PL Turns.

Spell	Effect
Power of the Demon Lords	The caster summons forth the essence of a demon into his own body for PL rounds. For the duration of the spell, the caster uses WILL rather than PHYSIQUE for melee attacks, increase the damage of melee attacks by one die step but the caster will attack the closest target (friend or foe). The caster may attempt to end the spell early with a successful WILL Test modified by the spell's PL .
Over Think	The caster exposes a nearby target to the endless possibilities of any action the target takes for the next PL rounds. The target must succeed on an INTELLECT Test to perform any action. Can be resisted.
Strangling Tentacles	For PL rounds, the caster is surrounded by a mass of alien tentacles. Close targets take 1d8 damage. Can be resisted.
Vision of the Shattered Mind	The caster transfers PL points of Insanity on to a Close target. Can be resisted.
Weeping Cuts	For PL rounds, increase the damage the target takes from successful attacks by one die step. Can be resisted.



Antagonists & Monsters

Creature	HD	Special Abilities
Amazon Naga: Elite warriors in service to the Medusa Queen. They have a humanoid female torso and the lower body of a serpent stretching 20 to 25 feet.	4	Immune to Poison. Medium Armor: -1d Damage. Poisoned Weapons: PHYSIQUE Test or take Negative Die to all actions. Lasts until target succeeds on two consecutive PHYSIQUE Tests .
Arachnoid-Brain: Strange alien creatures appear as a blood soaked brain with eight spider legs. Arachnoid-Brains are masters lore, knowledge, and forgotten secrets. They comprehend all languages.	4	Psychic Attack: Roll against target's WILL . Damage ignores Armor.



Creature	HD	Special Abilities
<p>Blighted One: A large horrific creatures with an emaciated humanoid body with the head of a locust or cock roach.</p>	8	<p>Blight Bringer: It's presence causes mundane plants to wither and die. Once per day, it may cause a 1 acre area to become barren.</p> <p>Ravenous Hunger Curse: The target must eat flesh or take 1 HP of damage. The curse ends when the victim has consumed a week's worth of food. Can be resisted.</p> <p>Wasting Disease: If a character is damaged by a Blighted One, the character must pass a PHYSIQUE Test or be infected with the Wasting Disease. The character loses 1 point of PHYSIQUE every hour. The character may attempt an additional PHYSIQUE Test every hour and must succeed twice in order to fight off the effects of the disease. Lost PHYSIQUE points return normally.</p> <p>Create Famine Zombie: Any creature killed by a Blighted One's Hunger Curse or Wasting Disease returns to life as a <i>Famine Zombie</i>.</p>

Creature	HD	Special Abilities
<p>Briar Maiden: A writhing mass of vines and briars that is nearly invisible in the forest or jungle. Legends say that a Briar Maiden grows wherever a young maiden kills herself from sorrow while others insist that is merely a plant corrupted by sorcery.</p>	2	<p>Stealthy; Negative Die to detect while hidden in undergrowth.</p> <p>Strangle: Automatic damage after successful hit.</p>
<p>Desolation Worm: Giant worms with a segmented armored body and a viscous pair of mandibles that can easily sever arms and legs. An average worm is 30 feet long but there many tales of worms four to five times that size. They are very territorial and are virtually fearless. Desert nomads tell tales of a Queen Worm who sleeps deep in the heart of the world and killing her would kill all of the other worms.</p>	10	<p>Burrows underground at normal movement speed.</p> <p>Swallows whole on critical hit. A successful Agility Test avoids getting swallowed but doesn't reduce damage from a Critical Hit.</p>
<p>Echo of Chaos: A beast of pure chaos and a horrific site. A human torso with its limbs and head rearranged randomly. Tentacles randomly erupt from its flesh. Eyes appear, disappear and move across its skin. Mouths mysteriously and suddenly appear and scream out the Words of Chaos. There's a legend that says the creature can be held in place if it is shown its own reflection in a mirror.</p>	5	<p>Damage Resistance: -3d Damage,</p> <p>Confusion Aura: Any character with 30 feet of the Spawn must make a WILL Test each round in order to act.</p>

Creature	HD	Special Abilities
Elder Ones: Mysterious and cadaverous humanoids with a mouthless face and soulless black eyes. They communicate telepathically and are highly intelligent and malign. No one knows their origin or agenda.	4	Magic Resistant: Positive Die to resist spells. Spell Caster: May cast (Willpower: 15). <i>Mind Control, Read Thoughts, False Face, Drain Spells, Transfer Life.</i>
Famine Zombie: Victims of the Wasting Disease rise from the dead as Famine Zombies. These creatures descend on an area and eat any organic material but they prefer flesh.	1	Mob Attack! Wasting Disease: Famine Zombies attacks spread the <i>Wasting Disease</i> . See <i>Blighted One</i> .
Great Albino Apes: The peaceful and reclusive Great Albino Apes inhabit a hidden temperate valley near the caldera of a long dormant volcano in the Hoar Crown Mountains. The apes will only fight to defend themselves and sometimes not even then. They are great philosophers, sages and healers. The Great Apes freely give their aid to those in need. They are more than willing to cure those corrupt souls who fallen to the lure of magic.	3	Strong: +1d Damage.
Lizard Man: Primitive and savage inhabitants of the Tzwali Jungles who regularly prey on explorers and raid vulnerable villages. They worship the Serpent Folk and Medusa Sorceresses as living gods.	2	Leathery Hide: -1d damage from attacks. Warrior: +1 d Damage. Lizard Man Shaman: May cast the following spells (Will; 12): <i>Arcane Projectile, Arcane Barrier, Life in the Deep, Summoning, Cannibalize.</i>

Creature	HD	Special Abilities
<p>Medusa Sorceress: Medusa Sorceress appears as a beautiful woman whose hair is a writhing mass of snakes. They are intelligent and cunning.</p>	6	<p>Petrifying Venom: Any character damaged by a Medusa Sorceress must attempt a Physique Test. On a failure, the character takes a Negative Die to all PHYSIQUE and AGILITY tests (including attacks) but also takes -1d Damage from attacks for 1d6 rounds. Then the victim attempts a second Physique Test if this test fails, the victim is turned to stone.</p> <p>Immune to Poison.</p> <p>Spell Casting: A Medusa Sorceress can cast the following spells (Will: 15): <i>Arcane Blast, Arcane Projectile, Disrupt Spell, Create Portal, Summoning, False Friendship.</i></p>
<p>Moorspawn: Moorspawn are the most evil of men returned from the dead to cause even more death and destruction. They are usually criminals who were sentenced to death by drowning in the moors.</p>	2	<p>Regenerates: 1 HP/round until destroyed.</p>

Creature	HD	Special Abilities
<p>Sand Dwellers: Strange nomads who roam the Amplar Desert. They cover themselves from head with various rags. They make routine raids on merchant caravans and unwary travelers. Recently, they've been known to raid small settlements near the desert. It is believed that they are a degenerate hybrid of Lizardmen and humans.</p>	2	<p>Hide Tracks: They cannot be tracked in the desert.</p> <p>Ambush: Targets gain a Negative Die to detect Sand Dweller ambushes.</p>



Creature	HD	Special Abilities
<p>Sea Witch: Sea Witches are green skinned aquatic humanoids with black eyes, sharks teeth, and tentacles for hair. According to myth, they are servants of the Drowning Queen.</p>	5	<p>Summon Sea Monsters: Sea Witches can summon sharks or other dangerous sea creatures once per day. Roll 3d6. This is the total HD of the creatures summoned. Add duplicate numbers together. <i>For Example: Roll of 1,3,3 would be one 1 HD monster and one 6 HD monster. On a roll of 18. Release the Kraken!</i></p> <p>Spell Casting: Sea Witches may cast the following spells (Will: 13): <i>False Friendship, Curse of Weakness, Death Fog, False Vision, Song of Seduction.</i></p> <p>Sea Healing: Regenerates 1 Hit Point/round while in water.</p>
<p>Serpent Folk: They ruled the world in ancient times but a plague wiped out their civilization. The survivors fled to the World Within. Now, they plot to return to the surface and rebuild their empire. They routinely kidnap surface dwellers to be used as slaves or subjects of their mad arcane experiments.</p>	4	<p>Immune to Poison.</p> <p>Spell Casters: Serpent Folk usually know following Spells (Will: 16): <i>Corrupting Touch, Create Portal, Mind Control, Invoke Ghosts, False Face, Kthulhu's Monolith.</i></p>

Creature	HD	Special Abilities
Servitor Demon: One foot-tall humanoids with contorted features and small bat-like wings. Many sorcerers use them as spies and familiars.	1	Spell Caster: Servitor Demons may cast the following spells (Will: 12); <i>Magic Comprehension, Mystical Shield, Shadow Cloak</i>
Shadow Beast: A shadow beast is a semi-solid mass of claws and tentacles that erupt from the shadows.	4	Light Sensitive: Shadow Beasts take Negative Die when it is exposed to sun or other bright light. Teleport: Shadow Beasts can teleport from one shadow to another as part of their movement.
Stone Warriors: Stone warriors are the unfortunate victims of a Medusa's petrifying gaze then reanimated by the powerful magics. The stone warriors can stand perfectly still for years. They do not need to eat, drink, sleep or breath.	3	Living Statue: Immune charm/fear, mind control, sleep, poison and disease. Stone Skin: -2d Damage.
Trogs: Degenerate humanoids who barely have a language and are not that far removed from beasts. These primitive brutes wander the country side in packs and attack anything they happen to encounter. It is believed that they were once human but were corrupted by evil sorcerers.	1	

The World of Skarynth

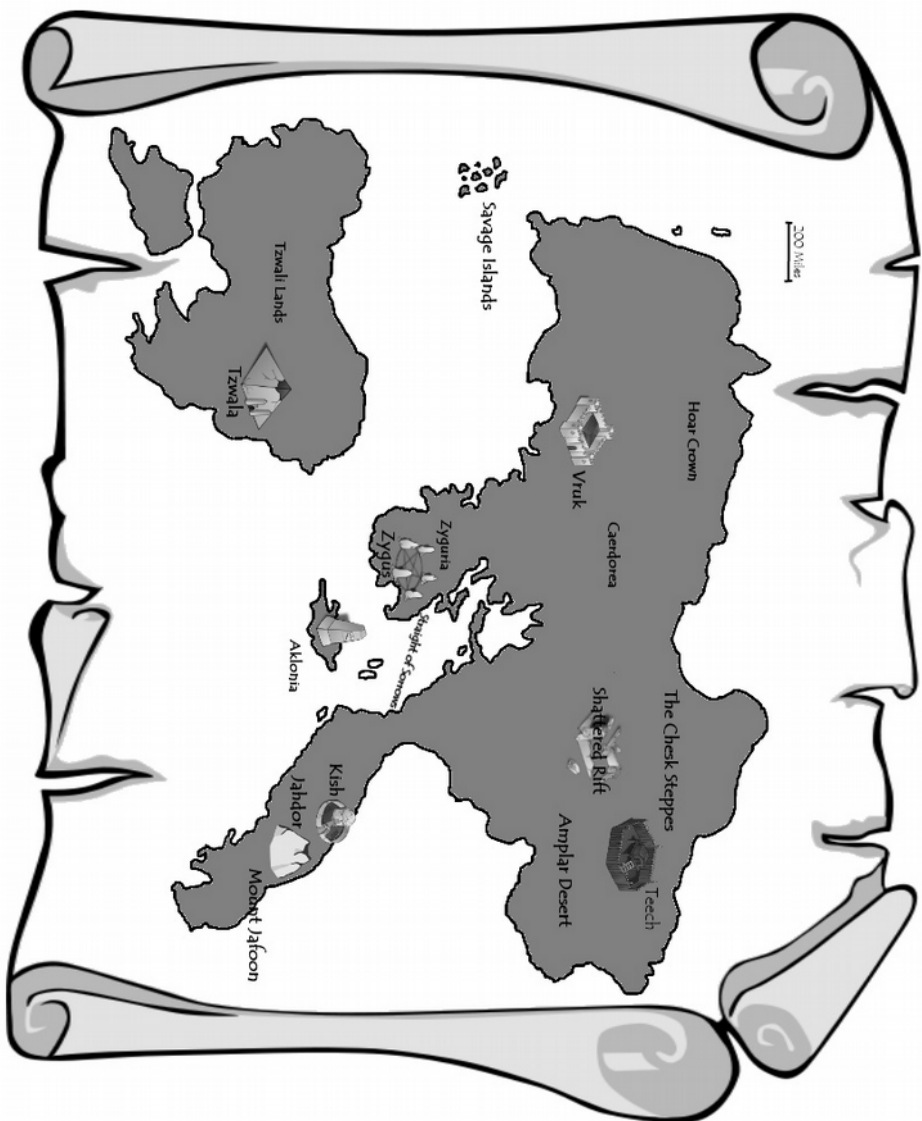
Skarynth is a harsh and brutal world. The wilderness is an unexplored, untamed, and lawless wasteland. Rumors of lost temples filled with treasure lure adventurers seeking fame and fortune. Sorcerers and cultists seek out lost and forbidden arcane secrets. And ancient evils lurk in the darkness.

There are no kingdoms, only the decadent city-states. Small towns and villages dot the landscape and are ruled by brutal warlords, arrogant nobles, and petty merchant princes.

The common people are desperate and superstitious. They rarely strays farther than a few miles from their homes. What little they know of the rest world is learned from legends, and travelers' stories. Locals are mistrusting of strangers, especially dangerous-looking, well-armed ones. They could be bandits or worse. The common folk are quick to blame any misfortune on meddlesome sorcerers, foreign cults, or curses brought on by outsiders.

The Languages of Skarynth: Aklonian is the most commonly spoken language thanks to the many Aklonian traveling merchants.

- Aklonian
- Caerdorian
- Cheskish
- Jahdor
- Tzwali
- Zygurian.



The Gods: The Things Beyond

The Gods of Skarynth are petty beings who bestow more banes than boons upon the mortals of the world.

Religious practices do not center around thanking the gods or asking for their aid but appeasing them and hoping not to incur their wrath. Farmers do not pray for a bountiful harvest but instead offer sacrifice to avoid famine. Many believe that even uttering the names of the gods might anger them.

Arachnimos, The Spider Lord

The Spider Lord is patient and cunning. He spins his web and waits for prey to fall into his trap. Arachnimos' followers are generally nobles, politicians and merchants hungry for wealth and power.

- *Sacrifices:* Hanging.
- *Holy Places:* Any place in the shadows, generally covered in spider webs.
- *Holy Symbol:* A spider on a web.

Clav-Ra, The Watcher from the Moon

The Lord of Fear, Insanity, Pain and Nightmares is at his greatest influence over the minds and souls of mortals when the moon is full.

- *Sacrifices:* Torture.
- *Holy Places:* Deserted locations and ruins when the moon is full.
- *Holy Symbol:* A barbed whip.



Garkg, The Lurker in the Shadows

Master of Change, Chaos and Corruption. The Lord of the Beasts. In the dark corners of the Tzawli jungle, in the bottomless bogs of Caerdoria and in the twisted lands of the Chesk Steppes, the Lurker hides and corrupts all who fall under his sway whether man or beast.

- *Sacrifices*: Fed to ceremonial animals or thrown into a swamp or bog.
- *Holy Place*: The darkest corners of the wilderness or sewers.
- *Holy Symbol*: Cat or reptile eye.

Harilith, Mistress of Lust, Desire & Jealousy

Life is experienced through sensations. Any sensation can be pleasurable. Mortals were given flesh so they could enjoy it. Harilith's followers include hedonists, addicts, and jilted lovers.

- *Sacrifices*: Poison or drug overdose.
- *Holy Place*: Sacred drug dens or houses of ill repute.
- *Holy Symbol*: An inverted bleeding heart.

Kor, The Sleeper under the Mountain

As long as his blood lust is sated, The Lord of War, Conflict, Destruction, Earthquakes and Volcanoes sleeps beneath his great mountain.

- *Sacrifices*: Thrown into a volcano, buried alive, or blood sports.
- *Holy Places*: Caves and Volcanoes
- *Holy Symbol*: A solid black oval surrounded by a triangle.

Leka, The Hunger for the Sky

The Herald of Plague, Disease and Famine lurks in the storm clouds. When the Hunger strikes, it swarms across the land consuming whole villages in its wake. Farmers offer sacrifices to protect crops and livestock. Many cities hold ceremonies to placate The Hunger to avoid the plague or famine.

- *Sacrifice*: Starvation or ritual cannibalism
- *Holy Places*: Barren or fallow fields.
- *Holy Symbol*: A skull within a storm cloud

The Nameless One From Beyond

The Nameless One brings only total and complete destruction and insanity. His followers include those driven by revenge and the few madmen who want to bring about an end to the world.

- *Sacrifices:* Complete destruction by fire or acid.
- *Holy Place:* Any deserted location when the stars are right.
- *Holy Symbol:* A black disk.

Pha-Uz, The Lord of Demons

The most powerful and vile of the Demon Lords. His servants are routinely necromancers or sorcerers specializing in summoning. His followers lust for arcane power. Usually, this ends in disaster as the mortal overreaches his capabilities.

- *Sacrifices:* Long and ritualized arcane rites.
- *Holy Place:* Any place of arcane power.
- *Holy Symbol:* A demonic skull.

Sleska, The Snake Queen

The Snake Queen consumes her prey whole and when there is no prey, she consumes herself. The Snake Queen's followers consume all. They take until nothing is left then they will turn on each other.

- *Sacrifices:* Choking or force feeding.
- *Holy Place:* Any place there is an over abundance of food.
- *Holy Symbol:* Ouroboros

Uqa, The Wanderer in the Void

He is Lord of the Dead and Undead. Harbinger of Ill Omens. When the Wanderer crosses the night sky, it is a sign that barrier between the realms of the living and dead are thin. The dead rise from their graves and restless spirits torment the living. Many of Uqa's worshipers are necromancers, morticians and grave robbers.

- *Sacrifice:* Exsanguination
- *Holy Place:* Cemeteries
- *Holy Symbol:* A red comet

Yri, The Drowning Queen

The Lady of Prophecies and Lies has domain over rivers, lakes and seas, scrying, divination, illusion, deception and storms. She rests in the deepest part of the ocean where she toys with the souls of those lost at sea. Sailors routinely offer sacrifices to the Drowning Queen to ensure safe travels.

- *Sacrifices:* Drowning
- *Holy Place:* The seas or any body of water.
- *Holy Symbol:* A squid or octopus with tentacles reaching upwards.



The Lands & Cities of Skarynth

Aklonia: The Cross Roads

The Aklonian Islands run the length of the Strait of Sorrows, a narrow inlet separating Jahdoria and Zyguria. The straight is filled with treacherous tides and dangerous reefs. The rich and powerful merchant city-state of Aklonia is on the southern most island.

Aklonians are sailors, merchants, map makers, and explorers.

Unfortunately, many also consider them to be thieves, pirates, and con artists. Aklonians are quick

witted and enjoy life. They are generally very superstitious and put great faith in omens. Seers and fortune tellers hold special places of honor.



Aklonia

Aklonia is the port of call for merchants, pirates, and adventurers from around the world and the city is the most cosmopolitan in the world.

Aklonia is ruled by a council consisting of the heads of the three most powerful merchant families. Feuds and power struggles between these families and the lesser families who are attempting rise to power ensure that the politics of the city remain dynamic and bloody. Experienced assassins, spies and thugs can always find work in the city.

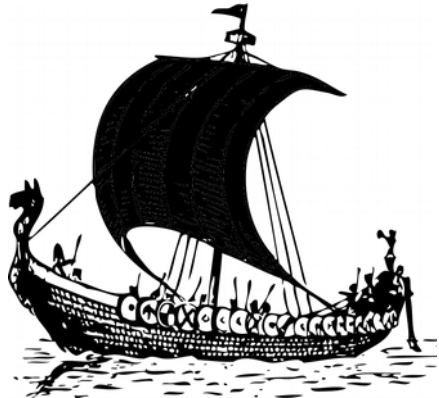
Persons of Note

Merchant King Ryss of the Cutting Winds. This dashing man is known for his blazing red hair and jewel encrusted eye patch. If asked how he lost his eye, he'll only grin and say it was in a tavern fight. Others insist that he gave it up as payment to a demon for the ability to see the future.

Black Sail Pirates: Led by the mysterious Queen of the Black Sail, her ships appear suddenly to pillage seaside villages and unsuspecting merchant ships and then just as quickly disappear.

Rumors and legends surround the Pirate Queen. Some say she is an immortal sorceress. Others say she is demon in human form. A few say she is a long forgotten goddess of the sea and her crew are her cult. All the tales of her exploits have one thing in common. They attest to her cruelty and cunning.

Despite hefty rewards offered by powerful Aklonian merchants, very few are foolish enough to face the wrath of the Pirate Queen of the Black Sails.



Places of Interest

Beggars' Island: Land is at a premium on Aklonia. The poor simply can't afford to live within the city. Beggars' Island is a makeshift community consisting of old ships, barges and flotsam lashed together and located down wind just off the coast. It's where people go to die or hide.

Beggars' Island is destroyed at least once annually during the storm season but is quickly rebuilt in a couple of months.

The Floundering Rock: A small towering rock outcrop off the coast is used as prison for the most dangerous of criminals. No one is said to have ever escaped and few survive their sentences. It's rumored that the lower levels of the prison are a temple to The Drowning Queen and prisoners are routinely offered up as sacrifices to ensure the safety of Aklonian merchant ships.

The Grand Bazaar: With enough coin, anything can be purchased at The Bazaar. of Aklon has everything from Caedorian steel, Jahdorian silk, Tzwali slaves, spices, and forgotten treasures. There are plenty of money lenders for those who don't have enough coin and are desperate.

The Twin Sisters: The Straight of Sorrows is bordered by the Twin Sisters, two stone formations at the mouth of the Straight. It is that said two sisters fought over a man and ended up killing each other. As it would turn out the man had deceived both of them and their ghosts haunted him to death. Later, their angry spirits formed in the stones known as the Twin Sisters.

Caerdoria: The Forge

Caerdoria is an untamed wilderness dotted with a few small villages. The land is harsh and unforgiving. Like their land, Caerdorians have no pity for the weak. They value survival, combat and craftsmanship above all else. Caerdorian weaponsmiths forge the finest blades in the world. The coming of age ceremony for a young Caerdorian warrior centers around receiving their first sword.

Caerdorians are wary of magic and distrust those who wield it.

Vruk

Vruk is a solemn fortress and mining boom town on the edge of the wilderness between the Schatten Wood and the Hoar Crown Mountains. It was built from stone and steel as a monument to the strength and will of the Caerdorian people. Foreign merchants flock to the city with exotic items from around the world to trade for Caerdorian steel.

Persons of Note

Seglar The Wolf King: A cold and calculating man whose skill with a blade is unmatched.

Places of Interest

Mines of Vruk: Smithing is the one the most honored professions in Caerdoria but mining is considered one of the lowest. Slaves and petty criminals toil away in the mines. Besides high quality iron ore, sometimes precious metals are also discovered. Deeper in the mines, occasionally something ancient, sinister, and otherworldly is unearthed.

The Fighting Pits of Vruk: Many young Caerdorian warriors want to prove their skill and head to the Fighting Pits. Bloody spectacles pitting man against man or man versus beast or some other variation are held regularly. Many of the popular and skilled gladiators become local celebrities.

Schatten Wood: The ancient trees of the Schatten Wood hold many secrets. It is said that the trees house demons that feed off the souls of unwary travelers.

Hoar Crown: No one knows what mysteries lay hidden in the frozen wastelands north of the Hoar Crown Mountains. Rumors say the hidden valley of the Great White Apes is there. While others insist they have found a long lost passage to the World Within.

Moors of Caerdoria:

Scattered throughout Caerdoria are seemingly bottomless bogs which spawn all manner of nightmarish creatures. According to legends, those who fall into the bogs are sucked down into the center of the world where the Lurker in Shadows slowly feasts on their flesh.

Slag Lake: This dead lake is fed by warm springs from deep underground. No creature of this world can survive the polluted water. The Caedorians have dumped decades of waste from mines and foundries into the lake

making even more toxic. Bizarre crystal formations surround the lake and may hold strange magical powers.



Chesk: The Wastelands

In the north, the frozen winds tear across the steppes. In the south, the sun bakes the Amplar Desert. In between lies the Shattered Rift, a wasteland covered with a labyrinth of canyons and ravines. This is the homeland of the Beast Kin.

The Beast Kin of Chesk travel in nomadic tribes through this wasteland. The tribes spend as much time fighting each other as they do the unnameable horrors that crawl from the Shattered Rift.

Teech



Teech is nothing more than a fortified camp on the southern Chesk Steppes. It serves as a refuge and supply point those daring enough to venture into the Shattered Rift or the Amplar Desert in search of lost treasures or arcane secrets.

Every year, the Chesk Tribes gather at Teech for the Great Gathering. The tribes trade, exchange stories and compete for honors. The chieftains settle disputes, arrange alliances, and make claims to hunting grounds. Foreign traders flock to Teech for this festival for the opportunity to trade with the clans.

Persons of Note

Khan Lat-Ach is the Great Khan of the tribes but he is getting on in years and soon his successor will be named. The other Khans are already maneuvering for his position and a few might even go

as far as hastening his demise. La-tach has no plans to pass the rulership of the tribes to any of his rivals or his heirs

The Oracle of Teech: Travelers and the desperate make a pilgrimage to Teech just to visit the oracle. At the center of Teech is a raised hut simply known as The Oracle's Den. Here an ancient elder of the Beast Kin speaks the Prophecies of the Dreams. Even many foreigners come to Teech to seek the counsel of the Oracle if they can afford the price.

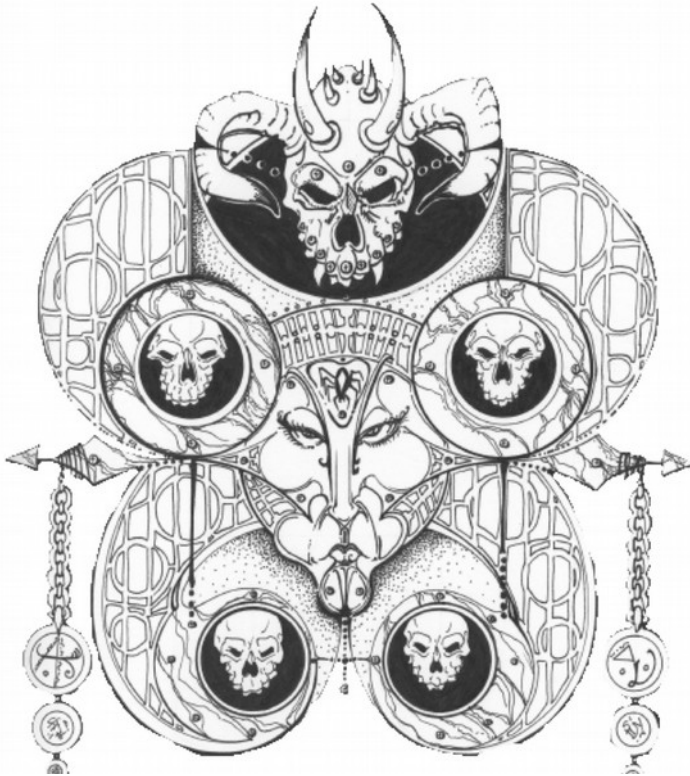
Places of Interest

Amplar Desert: Nothing lives in the Amplar Desert except the dreaded Desolation Worms. This doesn't stop treasure seekers from attempting to hunt for the lost temples and ruins rumored to lie in the desert. Somewhere in the heart of the desert is the legendary Desolation Worm Graveyard. It is said that the worms migrate there to die; their stomachs hold many treasures and wonders.

The Shattered Rift: This is the land of exile and death to the Chesk. The border between the mortal world and the places beyond comprehension has been torn asunder. The chaotic powers of magic behave even more unpredictably. Demons, undead and corrupted horrors roam the twisting canyons of the Shattered Rift.

The Lonely Obelisk: This mysterious structure lies within the Shattered Rift. Scholars have puzzled over its origins for centuries. The ebony obelisk is over 60 feet tall and covered with mysterious glowing runes. It is said that if studied long enough the runes move and change. The obelisk has no seams or tool marks. It is cold to the touch on a warm day and warm to the touch on a cool day. It emits a constant low hum. Scholars would study the structure more but any one who remains near it is slowly driven mad and their flesh melts from their bones.

Jahdor: The Sacred Land



Jahdor is a fertile, prosperous and peaceful land. But such success comes at a price. That price is freedom. Jahdorian culture is xenophobic, heavily invested in sumptuary laws and traditions which are reinforced by a strict caste system. Jahdorian nobles always wear ceremonial masks that denote their station, family history and accomplishments.

The castes in rank from highest to lowest are:

- *Nobility (Rulers)*
- *Scholars (including Magicians)*
- *Warriors*
- *Tradesmen/Craftsmen*
- *Slaves,*
- *The Casteless.*

Kish

Kish, The Immortal City is famed for its meticulously tended gardens, detailed mosaics and exquisite statuary and is considered the most beautiful city in the world.

Jahdorian laws and customs confuse most outsiders. Foreigners are often targeted with severe penalties for seemingly minor offenses. Things like public disturbance warrant a fine or a few days in the dungeon. Blocking the path of a noble could warrant a lashing. Offering food or aid to the Casteless could mean expulsion from the city. Removing a noble's mask is punishable by death. By Imperial decree, the city is free of malfeasance but like any other it has an underbelly filled with vice and corruption. Most of the routine business of the city is handled by a few petty noble advisers and corrupt bureaucrats.

Persons of Note

The Immortal Faceless Emperor: Intricately sown robes and an ornate mask are all that is seen of the Immortal Emperor in public. The nobility insist the Emperor is immortal and has been ruling Kish for centuries. Due to the mask and robes, it's impossible for an outside observer to tell if the Emperor is male or female, let alone the same person.

The Emperor is rarely seen in public and then he is surrounded by an army of bodyguards, nobles and advisers. He never addresses the masses directly but his edicts are passed onto the people through the nobles of the Imperial Court.

The Emperor has no known consort nor does he partake in any sort of vice. Any rumors of such are considered sedition and punishable by death.

Even foreign nobles and dignitaries are considered below the station of the Immortal Emperor. This has done nothing to improve the relations with the other city-states.

Sword Masters of Kish are considered to be the most skilled in the world. They dedicate their lives studying the art and science of swordplay. They held in the highest regard around the world.

Places of Interest

The Faceless Palace: The opulent home of The Immortal Faceless Emperor overlooks the city. Only those entrusted by the Emperor may set foot within its walls. This is enforced on penalty of death. But rumor has it that the wealth in the royal treasury is worth the risk

The personal Emperor's servants are blinded to ensure that they cannot lay eyes on The Glory of the Immortal Faceless One or the Imperial treasures. Their tongues are removed so they cannot tell others of the palace's secrets. And their ears deafened so they cannot hear the secrets of the Imperial Court.

Hanging Gardens of Kish surround the Faceless Palace. The secrets of the Hanging Gardens are closely guarded by the Emperor's most loyal and skilled Swordmasters. It is also rumored that horrific beasts patrol the gardens. Despite the risks, many would-be thieves attempt to pillage the garden for its rarities.

The fruit born by its trees are said to have magic properties. Legends vary greatly about these magical powers.

Mount Jafoon is located north of Kish in Jahdor and is said to be the Mountain of The Sleeper. Many claim that carrying a sword to the peak of the mountain will enchant the weapon against a warrior's greatest foes.

Tzwali: Land of the Blood King

Tzwali is the one region which most resembles what one could call a kingdom. Most villages are deep in the jungles and built within ancient ruins. Rumors persist of long lost temples hidden deeper in the jungle. Their chambers filled with treasures and lost arcane secrets. All Tzwali villages pay tribute in gold, grain or slaves to the Blood King who is worshiped as a living god. In return for tribute and loyalty, the Blood King sends forth his fanatical Blood Priests to defend the villages from threats. Failure to pay tribute is met with quick brutal reprisal. Whole villages are razed and the inhabitants sacrificed or sold off as slaves.



Hidden deep jungle is the last remnants of the Serpentine Empire. Degenerate lizard men worship the last few serpent folk sorcerers.

Tzwala

Built in the ruins of what many believe was the capital of an ancient empire is Twzala. Except for the Great Temple and the Blood Field, the city is a labyrinth of over grown ruins. On the edges of the city it is nearly impossible to tell where the city ends and the jungle begins.

The city is under the iron rule of the Blood King. By royal edict, the Blood King is a living god. His Blood Priests patrol the streets and enforce the King's divine will. They seek out any signs of heresy and deal with the troublemakers quickly. Foreigners generally only enter the city when it is absolutely necessary.

Persons of Note

The Blood King is a hulking Tuataran who is a master of the blade and dabbler in the arcane arts. None dare speak of any terrestrial origin to do so is heresy and punishable by death. He routinely dyes his gray-green skin a deep crimson with special dyes created by rare jungle plants. His one driving goal is to build an empire in his name.

T'schee Who Hunts: The Blood King controls Tzwala. T'schee Who Hunts controls the jungles. She roams the jungle with her tribe of Beast Kin and has little patience or tolerance for interlopers or those who would dispute her leadership. Any who travel the jungles of Tzwali must appease her or be put to the spear by her tribe. She knows the dangers of the jungle as well most of its secrets.

Places of Interest

The Great Floating Temple: This is the center of the Blood King's power.. The Temple is a gigantic stepped pyramid floating over the city. It is so massive that even the residents have yet to explore all of its chambers.

The Blood Field: This large open area at the foot of the Great Temple is where the Blood Games are held. The Blood Games are simple. Two large teams enter the field. The goal is to throw opposing team members into any of the spiked pits on the field. When one team is victorious then that team is divided into two teams. This continues until there is only one survivor.

The Blood Hearth: The arcane engine that keeps the Floating Temple aloft. It is said that it is powered by the souls of those who have fallen into the Blood King's disfavor. Some say it is the source of the Blood King's strength and powers. And other legends say that it is a gateway to the realm of Dead Gods and once it is filled with souls a portal will open and release otherworldly abominations.

Zyguria: Land of Mists & Secrets



Most of Zyguria is covered in swamps with scattered and isolated villages. Zygurians delve into the deepest and darkest secrets of sorcery and the swamp holds many mysteries.

Zygurians crave power and knowledge above all else and are known for pillaging forgotten temples and ruins for all their secrets. Their drive for arcane power is greatly hindered by their own infighting, pride and decadence.

Zygus

The city of Zygus is also known as the Unsleeping City. It was built over the ancient ruins of a long forgotten city and is the center of sorcery and learning in the known world. Scholars and sorcerers from around the world travel to Zygus to study and conduct research. Sorcerers are a highly competitive lot and routinely employ assassins and thieves to deal with rivals making the city an even more dangerous place. While Zygus is a city of learning, it is also a center for decadence and vice. No matter how bizarre the taste, it can be fulfilled in Zygus.

Persons of Note

Mirnyth The Witch-Queen of Zygyus is a beautiful, powerful, and vain Lemurian woman who views her kingdom as a piece of jewelry and her subjects as playthings. The Witch-Queen of Zygyus taxes her people into near starvation. She has ordered huge temples and monuments constructed in her honor. Some fear the gods will destroy the city because of the Queen's pride and arrogance. Others fear that she will release the legions of hell onto the world with her arcane experiments. Despite this many fear the Queen more than they fear the gods or an army of demons.

Places of Interest

The Standing Stones: Scattered through the Zygyria are strange standing stones. These stones are of unknown origin and possess bizarre and dangerous powers. For those of great arcane power, the Standing stones can be used as powerful magical tools. For others, they lead only to insanity and pain.

Palace of the Witch-Queen is the home to two of the most frightening magical artifacts in the world. The Chimera Cauldron is a vile device used to merge two or more creatures into an insane abomination. The Charnel Well is a pit deep in the dungeons of the Witch-Queen. Malcontents, rivals and petty criminals are cast into the pit and emerge as warped undead.

The Great Library of Zygyus holds many of arcane secrets of the world. Even the librarians charged with tending the books do not know the extent of the knowledge stored there. Access is limited only to those who are trusted by the Witch-Queen. The penalty for breaking into the library is death or worse.

The Undercity of Zygyus: The ancient city beneath Zygyus is not uninhabited. An army of undead wander the maze of catacombs.

The Elder Mist Swamp covers most of Zygyura. The swamp is home to all manner of deadly flora and fauna. The swamp is inhabited by the most alien and corrupted Lemurians.

The World Within

The ancient Serpent Folk fled underground when their empire crumbled. They discovered a land deep within the core of the world. A place where there is no night and an arcane sun shines on a lush wild jungle. They discovered many lost cities from a civilization that was beyond their memories and magical artifacts beyond their comprehension.



Giant reptiles and carnivorous flora lurk in the primordial alien jungle which covers most of the World Within. Primitive tribes of savage humans manage to survive despite the dangers of the jungle and being routinely hunted for sport used as slaves, or as experimental subjects.

Persons of Note

The Medusa Queen: A powerful sorceress in her own right, she primarily wishes to be left to her own devices. She deals with intruders quickly and brutally except the few who somehow manage to peak her interest. Those poor souls end up being the subjects of her arcane experiments or experiments of a more romantic nature.

Places of interest

The Garden Place of the Medusa Queen: With sorcery and slave labor, the Medusa Queen restored an ancient palace to its former grandeur. Powerful magics protect the palace walls from the encroaching jungle. The place grounds are covered in a beautiful and ever changing topiary maze

Caravan of Secrets

Your purse is light so you took a simple job. Guard one of the many merchant caravans between Aklonian and Teech. It shouldn't be that difficult but intrigue and sorcery make the simplest of jobs dangerous. *If you are planning on being a player in this adventure stop reading now.*

Getting The Job

The characters are hired by Orth, an Aklonian merchant, to guard his caravan on the way to Teech. He will pay them 100 SP each upon reaching Teech. The journey normally takes eight days. Basic travel rations will be provided during the journey. Guards are not provided with mounts, tents, or any other equipment.

Orth has series of strict rules during the trip. No drinking, gambling or other carousing. Punishment is usually forfeiture of pay. He does this not out of any moral sense, he just doesn't want to pay the guards. Any goods lost or damaged by raiders come out the guards' pay. The rules are enforced Ars the Guard Captain but he usually turns a blind eye to minor infractions.

The Complications

There are plenty of subplots going on to make the journey interesting.

- Orth is under the sorcerous influence of Suldra, his Zygurian wife. On the fifth day of the journey, he will take a small group and head out to the Lost Crypt of Zolaster. This is under Suldra's instruction.
- Orth's newest concubine, Issarda, is actually an assassin hired by a rival to kill him.
- Suldra is possessed by a succubus and needs to feed.
- Ars, the Guard Captain, is in love with one of Orth's concubines. If Orth finds out, he will probably kill Ars. Ars plans to earn enough money to buy the woman from Orth and then retire.

The Non-Player Characters

The Game Master should attempt to keep the major NPC's alive until the escape from the Lost Crypt of Zolaster. After that point, anything can happen.

Orth, Aklonian Merchant

Hit Dice: 2

Orth is a corpulent Aklonian merchant with plenty of enemies. He's greedy, lazy, cowardly, and arrogant. As long as he makes a profit, it doesn't matter. Orth expects to be obeyed and served by those he views as inferior which is just about everyone else. He will look for any opportunity to not pay the guards and porters for their work. He will only fight in self defense.

Ars, Beast Kin of Chesk & Captain of the Guard

Hit Dice: 3

Special: -1d Damage (Medium Armor)

Ars is brave and no nonsense. He respects bravery, loyalty, and honor. He stays with Orth not out loyalty to the merchant but for his love of one of Orth's concubines, Sirny. She shares Ars' feelings. The two have kept their affair a secret from Orth and hope to run away as soon as this one final job is completed.

Suldra, Orth's Wife & Zygurian Sorceress

Hit Dice: 5

Spells: *False Friendship, Ferocity, Death's Kiss, Mind Control, Song of Seduction, Summoning, Will: 15*

Suldra plays the role of a power hungry wife, the perfect mate for Orth. But secretly she is a sorceress. A botched summoning ritual has caused her to be possessed by succubus. Suldra is in control and has learned to use some of the succubus' powers but she suffers from the hungers of the demon. It takes so much of her will to keep the demon in check that she can't use her own powers. She's learned of the location of Lost Crypt of Zolaster. It's rumored that it may contain an ancient amulet that will rid her of the demon. She's used her abilities to make Orth search out the relic during this trip.

Issarda, Jahdorian Assassin

Hit Dice: 3

Special: Sneak Attack as Specialist Ability.

Issarda is an assassin hired by one of Orth's rivals. She has infiltrated the caravan as one of Orth's concubines. She's been slowly poisoning Orth to weaken him and also to curtail his carnal urges which has made Suldra even more on edge. She plans to kill Orth on the night of the seventh day of the journey then head out to Teech on her own. But events will probably cause her to change those plans. If there's an opportunity to kill Orth sooner without it being traced back to her, she will do it. She will only fight to defend herself in hopes of maintaining her cover.

Depending on the encounter, the player characters might have a chance to notice that Issarda is more than just a concubine.

Porters, Servants & Concubines

Hit Dice: $\frac{1}{2}$ (1d4)

These are the common people of the caravan. They will only fight to defend themselves if they can't run away. Any fleeing porters who later return to the caravan will be punished by Orth. There are 21 porters, 4 servants, and 4 concubines (including Issarda and Sirny).

Other Guards

Hit Dice: 1

There is a total of 2 dozen guards including the player characters. Game Master's should have a few of the guards have interesting personalities to make this interesting for the player characters.

The Caravan

Orth's Chariot is in the lead and driven by one guard. Suldra's Chariot follows and is driven by another guard. Then comes the wagon with concubines, servants, tents, supplies, and gear for Orth and his retinue. Also driven by a guard.

The actual caravan consists of twenty camels loaded with spices, fabrics, trinkets, and exotic oils plus one camel with supplies for the guards, servants and porters. Each camel is lead by a porter. If the camels bearing supplies are lost, Orth will not share supplies. The camels should have been guarded better. If Orth manages to survive the trip, he will reduce the pay of each character by 10 SP for each camel lost.

Camels & Horses: 1 HD

The Encounters

Day 1

If the player characters don't already know each other know is a good time for them to get acquainted. They should take this opportunity to learn anything they can about their employer and other traveling companions.

Day 2

Bandits attack the caravan during the night. At least one of the player characters should be on watch. The bandits goal is not to fight but to hit and grab whatever they can then slip off into the night. There should be two bandits per player character. The NPC guards and porters shouldn't have that much of a spot light during this fight. It should be the player characters who do the important things.

Bandits

Hit Dice: 1

Despite the actual results of the raid, Orth will be furious at all the guards. If necessary, he insists that they track down the bandits now. He will not allow it to be done during the day when tracking is easy. He has a schedule to maintain and he is in charge. The guards are divided into three equal groups. One group stays back and guards the camp and the other two groups are to go out into the night and search for the bandits.

One group will consist of the player characters plus enough NPC guards to round out the number. This group will find the bandit camp mostly by blind luck. Tracking at night is nearly impossible. At the bandit camp there will be three bandits per player character. Here the bandits will fight. If the party wins, they get back the lost goods. They also find 3d6 x10 SP worth of other stolen goods. How they divide among the other guards is up to them.

Day 3

This day is uneventful. If the player characters have distinguished themselves in combat, Ars will warm up to them and show them signs of respect.

That night Suldra's hunger finally gets the best of her. She seeks out one of the player characters (gender doesn't matter). She'll use spells to seduce the character on if there's no other choice. The "lucky" character must pass a WILL test with a Negative Die or suffer a Negative to all tests the next day as a result of having their life force drained by the succubus.

Day 4

While the caravan is traveling through a canyon a mob of Troggs viciously attack. They are insane and will attempt to kill everyone and everything in the caravan. The Troggs are not interested in the goods or supplies.

There should be two Troggs per player character plus an additional Trogg per surviving guard. If the GM wants to avoid the extra bookkeeping then combat between the NPC guards and Troggs can be resolved with a single die roll.

Roll 1d12:

1 to 5: The Trogg wins.

6 to 10: The guard wins.

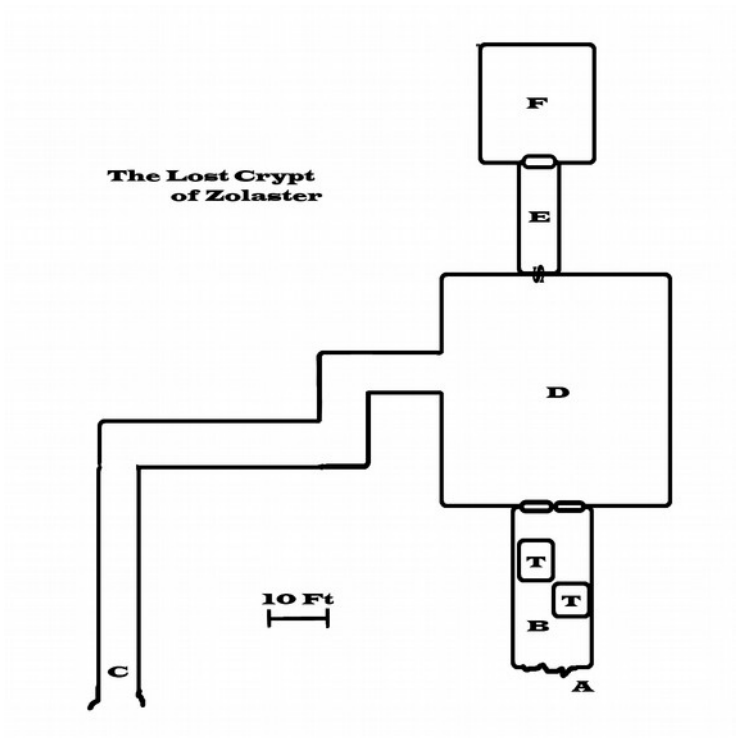
10 to 12: The fight is stale mate and roll again next round.

Troggs

Hit Dice: 1

Day 5

The caravan makes camp early. As the sun sets, Ars approaches the characters with a special task. They are to accompany him, Orth, Suldra and half a dozen porters on a little side trip. He won't explain why but if the player characters put up any resistance Orth has authorized Ars to offer each player character an additional 100 SP for the task.



The Lost Crypt of Zolaster

Zolaster was a powerful sorcerer and a despot, he gained an incredible amount of power, wealth, and enemies. After his death, his followers hid his tomb hoping the sorcerer would rest in peace for eternity. Such is not the case. The crypt is a trap for any potential grave robbers and a prison for Zolaster.

A. The Entry: It appears as a plain stone door on the canyon wall. The door has no knobs, handles or decorations. Close inspection reveals that the door is also supporting several tons of rock. The door pivots on a central axis and is difficult to open. It requires a combined Strength of 35 to open and only three characters with pry bars can attempt to open it at one time.

B. Trapped Hallway: The passage is dark, dusty and covered in old spider webs. The spider webs are covered in dust as well and cover the entire length of the hallway. Unless someone is clearing away the spider webs ahead, there is a 4 in 6 chance that anyone carrying a torch or other open flame will cause the webs to ignite. Characters in the hall must succeed on an **AGILITY Test** or take 1d6 damage. Characters may use a torch or oil to clear the hall without entering.

After the webs have been cleared, the characters can more closely inspect the hallway. The walls are covered with an ancient mosaic detailing Zolaster's rise to power and reign. The original pact with an ancient demon, obscene rites, torture, and other horrendous scenes are depicted. Mixed in with the scenes are various runes and arcane markings.

Any character attempting to decipher the runes may attempt an **INTELLECT Test**. If successful the character glimpses into the face of chaos and lose 1d4 Sanity. If the character is a spell caster, they may sacrifice another 1d4 Sanity to gain a Positive Die on their next attempt to learn a new spell.

The hallway is also trapped with two pit traps. Each trap is the same. It is a 10 foot pit covered with a thin clay sheet. The weight of average person will cause the clay to break and the character to fall into the trap. The fall will cause 1d6 damage. But that isn't all of the trap. 2D4 rounds later a stone pillar falls from the ceiling into the pit. This kills any character in the pit. Any character

looking into the pit or leaning over it when the pillar falls must make an **Agility Test** with a Positive Die or suffer the same fate.

C. The Secret Tunnel: If the characters give up at the main entrance. They may search the area for another way in. If they don't think of that then Suldra will suggest it. If character makes a successful Intellect Test then they find tunnel. If none the player characters fail to find it, keep the adventure moving and have a random guard or NPC find it. There is a 1 in 6 chance that the characters will come across Issarda in their search. What happens just depends on any previous interactions. Issarda will insist that she's only curious unless one of the characters has reason to believe that she is more than she appears.

The Secret Tunnel is cramped and the characters must crawl down it single file. Orth is none to happy about it but does so complaining the entire time. The tunnel leads to the Fake Burial Chamber.

D. Fake Burial Chamber: The sarcophagus is broken. Coptic jars are shattered. What were once ornate boxes lay broken on the floor. Orth will be dumbstruck and Suldra will be furious. She will scream orders for everyone to search. She will frantically search through the rubble. Once the group has dispersed to search the room, eight giant scarab beetles come out of hiding and attack.

Giant Scarab Beetles

Hit Dice: 3

Once the beetles has been defeated the group may return to searching. Orth and Suldra insist. Any character making a successful INTELLECT Test will find the secret door leading to the Ante Chamber.

E. Passage to the Antechamber: The passage to the antechamber is remarkably clean and dust free. A pristine mosaic decorates the walls, similar to the ones in the entry passage. The scenes depict a hideous scorpion like demon murdering, torturing and performing all manner of despicable acts. If a character attempts to decipher the mosaics, the GM should make an **INTELLECT Test** for the character in secret. If the roll fails, then the GM tells the character that the mosaic is a warning to

potential grave robbers and that any who disturb the tomb will be tortured in the after life. If the roll succeeds then the character understands the truth. The mosaic is a warning. But to the world, Zolaster has been transformed into the hideous scorpion creature and that this isn't a really a crypt but a prison. Disturbing the place could let the beast loose.

F. The Antechamber: This is as close as the characters can get to actual Tomb of Zolaster. The actual tomb is completely inaccessible.

The Antechamber is filled with glorious treasure. Ornate boxes line the walls. Ancient rugs and silks have been magically preserved. Mysterious coptic are prominently displayed on shelves carved into the rock. Scrolls are piled neatly on a large table in the middle of the room.

Suldra will immediately head towards the scrolls. As soon as any character reaches the center of the room, a mummy breaks through the false wall in the chamber and attacks the party. Suldra will continue to loot the scrolls and books while everyone else is fighting the mummy.

Mummy

Hit Dice: 6

Special: Non-magical weapons do half damage; Rot: Characters wounded by the mummy must pass a PHYSIQUE Test or suffer a Negative Die to all healing attempts until they are fully healed.

The mummy wears a very obvious and ornate necklace. If the characters have a chance to inspect it they will realize that it bears the inscription of "Zolaster". With the a successful **INTELLECT Test**, they will know that this doesn't mean the mummy is Zolaster but it means the mummy is property of Zolaster. If a character is wearing this necklace during the Final Encounter then Zolaster will only attack that character if the character attacks first.

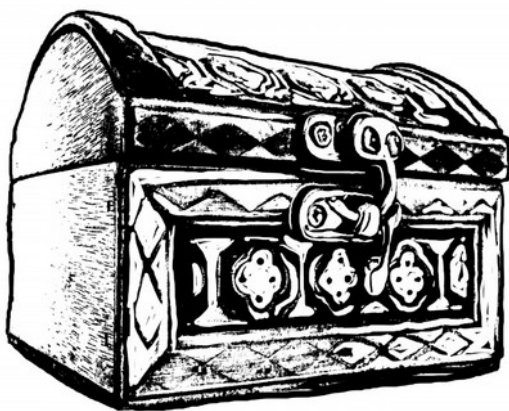
As soon as the mummy is vanquished, the crypt begins to collapse. This is the final trap. This entire scene should be played with as much tension and excitement as possible.

As the crypt collapse, any surviving porters and Orth will immediately run. Ars will follow Orth to protect him. Suldra will spend one more round searching the books and scrolls.

At the beginning of each round, every character still in the crypt must succeed on an **AGILITY** Test or take 1d6 damage from falling debris. Each round a character may loot one random box, book, scroll or jar or move towards the exit. It takes 4 rounds to exit via the Main Entrance or 5 Rounds to exit via the Secret Tunnel. Starting on Round 4, the **AGILITY** Test to avoid falling debris is made with a Negative Die.

When all of the characters escape or are knocked unconscious by falling debris, the crypt collapses. Any survivors can dig their way to the surface hours later. They will find a destroyed camp with everyone murdered and a demonic monster on the loose. The GM could have Issarda survive the attack and tell the player characters what happened.

Once outside the crypt, the characters can inspect what (if anything) they have looted. Roll 1d12 for each item.



Jar or Box

1	It's very nice and very empty.
2	It looks like some dried human organs. They might be valuable to somebody.
3	A swarm normal spiders or scorpions!
4	Ancient Coins worth 1d10 x 10 GP. Possibly more to a collector.
5	On a failed WILL Test , the character's soul is trapped in the container. If the container is destroyed, so is the soul. The soul is trapped there until another soul is trapped in the container. Unfortunately, the character's soul will now be in the body of the person who opened the container.
6	A mysterious and foul liquid. Any character drinking it must make a PHYSIQUE Test . If successful then a random Attribute increased by 1. If failed then a random Attribute score is reduced by 1.
7	A handful of semiprecious stones worth 1d6 x 5 SP
8	Trapped with blinding powder! The character must make an AGILITY Test or be blinded for 3d6 hours.
9	A piece of jewelry worth 3d6 x10 GP.
10	Ancient and rare dried herbs worth 1d6 x100 GP. Might be useful some rituals.
11	An ornate dagger but fragile dagger. It is considered magical when attacking supernatural creatures but will break on the roll of a Natural 20 in combat.
12	The spirit of very ancient sorcerer. Roll 1d20. 1 to 15: The sorcerer is angry and immediately violent. (Spectral Sorcerer: HD 6, Spells GM Choice); 16 to 20: The sorcerer is friendly and becomes a ghostly adviser to the player character.

Book or Scroll

1	It's very old and very blank.
2	Who knows? it crumbled into dust.
3	Insane gibberish. Any character attempting to understand it loses 1 Sanity point.
4	If the character fails an INTELLECT Test then character will sit there and try to solve the puzzles for 1d6 hours or until interrupted and never realize that the riddles were meant for children.
5	It's a cookbook with recipes for things you probably don't want to eat.
6	It contains beautiful artwork and is worth 2d12 x 10 GP to a collector.
7	Any character reading this passages and failing an INTELLECT Test thinks that they may have stumbled on to a revolutionary new magical theory. Instead, they will waste 2d6 days and 1d10 x 10 GP researching this flawed theory.
8	The character loses 1d4 Sanity but gains the ability to cast one random spell.
9	A treasure map to a lost temple on the other side of the world.
10	On a failed, INTELLECT Test , the character reading the passages accidentally summons a 7 HD demon.
11	Contains 1d4 random Spells.
12	Ancient Demonic Erotica. Any character reading it will lose 1d3 Sanity but gains a Positive Dice to seduction attempts.

The Final Encounter

Things start happening again as soon as the characters get the caravan organized or finish going through any of the treasures they looted from the crypt.

The first sign of any trouble is the uneasiness in all of the animals. Pack animals will attempt to bolt and start making distressed sounds. A few seconds later a low and slow thumping can be heard throughout the camp. It may be a drum in the distance or something else may be the heart of some giant beast.

If the characters want to gear up and get ready for any trouble let them. As soon as they are ready, scores of zombies erupt from the ground. They attack everyone and everything in the camp.

Only worry about the zombies that are attacking the player characters and any remaining important NPC's. The Game Master should describe the zombies attacking the porters and pack animals to build a sense tension and excitement.

On the third round of combat with the zombies, Zolaster breaks out of his prison. The giant beast springs from the canyon wall and attacks the camp.

Ancient Weakened Zombies

Hit Dice: 1

For a more theater of the mind approach: Each round the player characters must succeed on an **AGILITY Test** or take 1d6 damage from the zombie horde. Players characters may make normal attacks, a successful hit kills a zombie. Be descriptive as the player characters hack their way through the zombies.

Zolaster

Hit Dice: 8

Special: Chitinous Hide: -2d Damage

Zolaster is huge undead scorpion-human abomination. He has a human torso, scorpion claws and tail.

Day 6 and Beyond

Now what? Who's in charge will depend on who survived. If Orth doesn't survive then Suldra is in charge, If Suldra doesn't survive then it falls on Ars (who is a much more honorable employer than Orth and will just divide the goods and animals among any survivors and move on). If none the above survived the crypt then it will probably fall to one of the player characters. Let them role play this out.

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