

G1

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Dungeon Module G1

The Porcelain Sword of Queen Eshalla

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AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTER LEVELS 7-9



It is said that the legendary Queen Eshalla was so beloved of the Klunish gods that they whispered their divine secrets in her ear alone. These mysteries that might ensure that their chosen folk would live forever in lands of peace and reason, she etched onto the blade of a great porcelain sword. Yet in the cataclysm that saw their empire destroyed, the blade was lost, seemingly forever. Can your heroes recover Queen Eshalla's porcelain blade and return the Klunish Empire to its majestic heights? An adventure for levels 7-9.

This module was the official convention module for GrogCon 2019. It contains a challenging scenario and eight pre-rolled, playtested tournament characters. G1 is a complete adventure in and of itself and it may thus be used for competition among players (or groups of players) or as a non-scored adventure included in the context of an ongoing game. Also included are referee's maps, notes, encounter descriptions for players, and a background scenario allowing the module to be easily placed within a pre-existing campaign.



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Dungeon Module G1

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Introduction

In the final days of the first Klunish Empire, the sovereign of that vast and wondrous land was a woman named Queen Eshalla Al'Zaradin (AB: "The Enlightened"). That renowned regent's time came during truly dark days across the breadth of the Empire. Before her ascension to the throne, the spectre of war loomed to the south in the form of conflict with the hated Xuel Imperium across the Xulhaut Mountains. In these days, bloody skirmishes became increasingly frequent at the cost of thousands of lives. It was a man named King Ali Azek'hamil (AB: "The Shrewd") that was largely responsible for this terrible state of affairs during that grim period. Swearing privately to his family that he fully intended to hold a thousand year reign over the Klunish lands, he had no interest in putting an end to the war with the Xuel. Indeed, he actively encouraged it, understanding that with the darkness of conflict, the folk of the Empire were forced to rely on the might of his bound genies and the armies at his command. The Xuel served a purpose, to his mind, and so the lands at the feet of the mountains turned crimson with the blood of warriors on both sides of the fight.

When at last King Azek'hamil died – a poisoned blade quietly slipped between his shoulders while he dined – his daughter Eshalla was chosen to ascend to the throne. The idea did not rest well upon her brow. Indeed, she had done whatever she could to distance herself from her father. This is because she was devout of the Klunish gods, far more interested in studying with the clerics in the city temples than in affairs of state. To pursue the path of a priestess, barely more than a girl, she traveled far from Riez-i-Fiez to a small, nameless monastery in the region now called the Arid Steppes where she might fully immerse herself in the divine mysteries of those she revered. Even then, the clerics and monks abiding within the monastery's walls whispered of her connection to the gods of the Kluni. It seemed as if she were the favored child of the deities, wielding power far, far beyond that which her limited experience would imply. When she spoke, she understood secrets of the faith that could only have been whispered into her ear by the likes of Al'Daraz and The Weaver of Destinies themselves.

With the murder of King Ali Azek'hamil, his assistants quickly sent emissaries to return Eshalla to Riez-i-Fiez to serve as her heir. When they arrived, she would only leave reluctantly, at the behest of her teachers, who persuaded her that only one such as she might help the Empire navigate through the storm in which it was embroiled and emerge safely on the other side of its history. Their faith in her proved not to be misplaced. The newly-minted Queen Eshalla proved a leader without parallel: Fair, decisive, and insightful; wise, kindly, and merciful – all things which her father before her was not.

Yet Queen Eshalla seemed troubled upon her throne. Of why this was, she would never speak. In the second month of 2237BH, she would abruptly leave Riez-i-Fiez once more for the monastery at which she studied when a mere girl. Her final command to her most trusted advisers was that she would have the finest artisans in the empire shape for her a falchion made from porcelain: Perfect white in hue, made from clay taken from the land of each tribe in the Empire. When her couriers brought the blade to her three months later, they found that she had retreated to her old room within the edifice, where she fasted and communed with the gods. On trembling legs did they leave the monastery that day; it was an ominous portent, indeed.

No one is certain what came next. The account of a monk dwelling at the holy site claims that Queen Eshalla sat in her locked room above her porcelain sword for seventy-seven nights, without food, drink or sleep, a sharp stylus in hand. There, the gods of the Klunish whispered their last commands into her ear, which she carved into the blade of her wondrous weapon. The last words of the monk's journal describe the way that, when she was finished, Queen Eshalla placed down upon her desk her stylus and gazed to the heavens, a single tear tracing her golden cheek. It encapsulated joy and sadness and two-thousand years of history, ruined in a day.

When the teardrop fell, the Evoked Devastation destroyed the whole of the Klunish Empire in a single cataclysm that shook the world to its very foundation. There, a civilization died screaming.

She would never see her vengeful advisers loose the terrible elemental enchantment that they had prepared in her absence – that would set the Rain of Invisible Flame upon the hated Xuel – but this is a tale for another time. In the end, all that remained of the mighty and majestic Klunish Empire was

blasted, barren sands, and the memories of the handful of survivors that somehow lived on through the cataclysm. And as those brave and noble men and women slowly rebuilt their society from the ashes about them, Queen Eshalla and the details of her last days slowly faded away from their thoughts. A new day, a new empire, had been built atop the old one, as healed flesh covers bone.

Beneath it, the ribcage of a forgotten monastery.

It's heart, the porcelain sword of Queen Eshalla.

Module History:

The Porcelain Sword of Queen Eshalla was designed as an official convention module for *GrogCon 2019*, held in Kissimmee, Florida in October 2019. The module has been designed in such a way that it can be placed in any published or homebrewed Campaign Setting with little difficulty. It has been written so as to be usable with the **OSRIC™ Role-Playing System**. While the module was developed for the purpose of convention play, it can easily be adapted for use as either a one-shot adventure or worked into an ongoing Campaign with little in the way of alteration on the part of the Game Master.

Adventure Location:

This adventure takes place within Alsidrah Malkafrah (AB: *The Invisible Mosque*): A Klunish holy site hidden away beneath the roots of an imposing mountain range, where few might become aware of its existence, let alone plumb its secrets. Although this location can be placed wherever it fits best within the fabric of a Game Master's Campaign, in the context of Convention play, its entrance can be found within a lonely box canyon formed by the northern edge of the Xulhaut Mountains. This place is nearly 300 miles southeast of Lake Raknakurdu in the desolate Arid Steppes and lies nearly a half mile beneath the world's surface. All this considered, it is small wonder indeed that the place's location has only come to light now, six centuries after the cataclysm that nearly destroyed the whole of the folk responsible for its construction.

Once Player Characters arrive within this ancient place, they will have the chance to lay claim to knowledge in the form of Queen Eshalla's legendary *Porcelain Sword* that may well do nothing less than

unify the whole of the Klunish Empire and bring peace to its individual states. However, much has transpired within the Invisible Mosque since Queen Eshalla haunted its halls. It now serves as the lair for a powerful, fell monster of which Player Characters would be wise indeed to beware. Additionally, there are many individuals – possessed of great temporal and magical might – that would not benefit with a change in the status quo within the Klunish Empire that would surely come were the *Porcelain Sword* To be recovered. Unbeknownst to the Player Characters, these powers have sent a contingent of their own to ensure that their mission meets with abject failure. Thusly, from the very moment they enter the Alsidrah Malkafrah, they we be surrounded by enemies both evident and unseen.

Yet, with the fate of a civilization at stake?

Failure is simply not an option.

Background:

The Porcelain Sword of Queen Eshalla is composed of two parts: The overland travel across the Arid Steppes to Alsidrah Malkafrah and the exploration of the ancient monastery's depths. The first of these two parts takes the form of an outdoor adventure across a vast grassland prairie, while the second is a straightforward dungeon crawl. While only the second part of the module is designed for Convention play, both components are specifically designed in such a way as to get right to the heart of the action. This will allow a prospective Game Master to insert either or both of its parts into a pre-existing Campaign experience in a seamless manner. Some recommended ways in which this can be done follow:

- The Player Characters have learned of an ancient, hidden mosque predating the Evoked Devastation at the feet of the Xulhaut Mountains (perhaps by way of a treasure map, a bardic fable, or spell research). They travel to its location in search of the adventure to be found there and to plunder it of its fabulous riches.
- The Player Characters are traveling across the Arid Steppes (perhaps to the legendary Gavot Ugarab) when a powerful storm sweeps across the flat prairie. Such is the nature of the fearsome storm that they are forced to take shelter within a box canyon along the

edge of the Xulhaut Mountains. There, they find an ancient passageway spindling downward, beneath the darksome peaks....

- The Player Characters have been hired to serve as guards for a group of religious pilgrims, traveling to the far reaches of the Arid Steppes in order to prove the existence of a hidden monastery in the region alluded to in the pages of rare and obscure religious texts. Once the location of the holy site is found, they offer the heroes double their wage to accompany them into its depths.

Notes for the Player Characters:

If *The Porcelain Sword of Queen Eshalla* is being played as a Convention game, the scenario put forth in the **Background** section implies that the Players are using the pre-generated characters included with this module (see **Appendix C** for details). That said, should the Players wish to use their own characters (as one might expect, if this module were used within the context of an ongoing Campaign), the **Background** section can be easily ignored. In such a case, it falls to the Game Master to adjust the text of the module so that it fits seamlessly into the fabric of their individual game.

In the Convention scenario, the Player Characters are taking the roles of some of the most powerful and renowned heroes across the whole of the vast Klunish lands. Gathered in Ribke City by the High Caliph of the Exalted Faith, they have been assembled to travel across the vast expanse of the Arid Steppes to the location of a forgotten monastery. It is there that the sword of Queen Eshalla might be found, upon which it is said that the legendary ruler carved the last commands of the Klunish gods, prior to the cataclysmic attack that nearly wiped her civilization from existence.

These heroes have been chosen by the High Caliph after much careful consideration. They have been selected not only for their experience and power, though they have both qualities in abundance. Moreover, they were chosen because each of them, after a fashion, exemplify some quality of the Four Heads of the Hydra: The four principles by which the true Klunish guide their lives. Embodying *honor, generosity, family, & piety*, they represent the best of their folk. Given the clear importance of the mission from a cultural standpoint, once the High Caliph

mentions this, his words should galvanize the Player Characters into a tightly-knit team ready to cooperate with one another to the best of their abilities – even though they have different backgrounds (and even drastically different Alignments).

It is highly likely that experienced Player Characters will attempt to do research before setting off on their journey, trying to learn what they might encounter along the way or maybe even find a map of Alsidrah Malkafrah itself. If they choose to do this, the Game Master may offer them some or all of the following bits of information (depending on the type and depth of research they perform):

- Following a line of wicked and self-interested Klunish kings, Queen Eshalla is said to have been to her folk as a cooling oasis is to the desert nomad. Graceful, wise, and kindly of heart, it was she that guided the Empire through the troubled days leading to its eventual destruction at the hands of its enemies to the south. Some say that she was able to do this because she had no less than the favor of the gods themselves, who whispered their advice into her ear.
- In the last days before the Klunish Empire met its end, Queen Eshalla called upon the greatest artisans among the whole of her lands to create a wondrous sword. The blade was never meant to serve as a weapon of war, however. Crafted of clay taken from the land of every Klunish tribe, the weapon was said to be fragile as glass upon its creation. Its surface was so flawlessly white that it shined like the sun when kissed by even the light of a candle, no one is sure what purpose the Queen envisioned for the sword. Some suggest that upon its surface she wrote the last commands of the Klunish gods before the destruction of the Empire, that their words might live on to guide its survivors in future days.
- The nomads that roam the Arid Steppes avoid the area in which Alsidrah Malkafrah is said to be hidden at all cost. This is because the region is the dominion of a powerful blue dragon that these iternant folk call *Hazaan* (AB: “Sandstorm”). The nomads are known to leave tribute at the feet of the mountains as a form of tribute when they must travel through the region, but this is not always

enough to ensure their safe passage. Often, Hazaan is known to destroy and devour even those that offer him respect as a way of demonstrating his absolute suzerainty over the land.

The Game Master is encouraged to come up with other such tidbits to provide Player Characters that do especially-effective research. However, whatever information they manage to uncover, under **no circumstances** will they be able to learn anything about what lies within Alsidrah Malkafrah itself. Whatever will be discovered in that fell place must be found by the Player Characters themselves.

Notes for the Game Master:

This module was designed for convention-style play, and is intended for characters from 7th to 9th level. It is **strongly** advised that a Game Master preparing to run this module closely read **all** parts of the module thoroughly. If the module is being used as part of an ongoing Campaign, the Game Master will want to take notes, making changes in its text to fit its particulars into the Campaign. In this way, they can be prepared to adjudicate the results of any of these powers or abilities as they might relate specifically to the environs in which the Players will be operating.

During the course of the adventure, the Player Characters are welcome to use followers, henchmen, and hirelings to supply needed skills on their behalf. The exception to this is in the context of Convention play, in which no such Non-Player Characters may accompany them on their adventure. Should the GM choose to substitute the pre-generated characters supplied with this module with their own (such as is the likely case if this adventure is used in the context of a Campaign setting), they should compare Campaign characters and their magic items with the characters and items included in the module, in order to assemble an appropriate party.

Information presented in the key is divided into two sections. The boxed script is material which should be read to the players unless special circumstances prevent their knowing the information given there, such as no light to see by. The information not boxed is material for the GM only, and provides game details about the encounter. Characters may discover this information as play continues, but they will not know it from the start of the encounter.

Convention Notes:

The Porcelain Sword of Queen Eshalla was designed to be used as a single-event session, featuring 5 players and lasting 3 hours. Timing begins when the character sheets are distributed, and participating Players should be periodically reminded of the time limit. The goal to which the Player Characters must aspire (and which constitutes a successful completion of their mission) is to travel to Alsidrah Malkafrah beneath the Xulhaut Mountains, retrieve Queen Eshalla's Porcelain Sword, and return with the priceless holy relic to Ribke City, where it can be given to the Exalted Faith's High Caliph.

Since the adventure was designed to be played several times over the course of GrogCon 2019, certain rules were followed in Convention play to insure that many situations were handled in the same way:

1. The Players are presented with pre-generated characters. All their characteristics have been listed, along with equipment, spells, and magic items. Players may not add to or alter this list. This will guarantee that all Players start with the same chances. Players would be allowed the use of the sections of the **OSRIC™ Reference Manual** meant for Player use (those sections reserved for Game Master use are forbidden), although all magic items they possess will be known and understood by the owner completely.
2. Monsters will fight intelligently and to the best of their abilities. They show no mercy or quarter to invaders. Monsters encountered in convention play need never check morale and will fight to the death, unless otherwise noted in the text. Monsters will be fully aware of the powers and limitations of their weapons, magic items, and spells and will use them to their best advantage. In many cases, specific tactics have been listed for monsters to use in melee. If these plans are frustrated by the Players' actions, the Game Master must find an alternative. If the Players are unusually inventive and find something that is not covered in the adventure, a few minutes may be taken to establish some sort of defense for the monsters – possibly having them regroup and counterattack if necessary. In convention play, monsters will not pursue fleeing adventurers out of an encounter area unless

otherwise noted. Players will not know this, however. Monsters will make a lot of noise and will make feint attacks to give the impression of pursuit.

3. Players will never know the function of special treasures they acquire unless they should happen to discover their powers by examination or experimentation.

Campaign Notes:

The Klunish Empire: Yesterday and Today

The particular details that led to the formation of the First Klunish Empire have long since been lost to the mists of antiquity. What can be safely said, however, is that their civilization was one of the earliest and greatest human societies to develop upon its vast face. Located on the west side of the Mistcrystal Mountains and Palisade Peaks, theirs was an empire that encompassed many different nations, each with their own distinct social structure. Though it is true that throughout history such amalgamated kingdoms have been marked by factional unrest, the First Klunish Empire suffered little such strife. This likely has much to do with the even-handed leadership offered by many of the early Klunish Kings and Queens. They allowed the individual nations within their whole to maintain their own customs and many of their own laws. Likewise, they practiced religious tolerance and allowed their rulers places of authority within the Empire's hierarchy. When a nation within the Empire found themselves under attack from some external force, these kings and queens moved quickly to reinforce those places with their own armies. In this way, they made it plain that each nation could consider themselves the brothers and sisters of their neighbors - and that they would defend one another as such. Finally, they directly encouraged education throughout the Empire, sending forth clerics from the capital city of Riez-i-Fiez to teach even the most humble folk from the region's hinterlands how to read. This marked the First Klunish Empire as a place of learning and enlightenment.

The second millennium of the First Klunish Empire was marked by war. Across the Xulhaut Mountains to the south lay the great Xuel Imperium, as majestic as their neighbors in their own right. Sadly, the two fought terrific battles with one another, sufficient to stain the peaks between their lands crimson. In the course of these confrontations, anger

slowly grew to enmity; distaste eventually became unending hatred. The clashes only grew in scope and intensity with the passage of years until it became clear that their flames would only cease when one great nation stood victorious over the bones of the other. Yet the kings that held sway over the First Klunish Empire during this era did little to try and put an end to the struggle, despite the enormous toll it exacted in terms of the lives of the soldiers fighting in their names. Many of these rulers saw the war with the Xuel as a tool by which they might wield power outside of long-held laws against their rivals and enemies, while others simply used it as a pretext by which they could amass even more temporal power than that they already possessed, making them like unto living gods.

The last of the rulers of the First Klunish Empire was Queen Eshalla Al'Zaradin, who ascended to the throne after the murder of her wicked father. Queen Eshalla was an educated woman who had devoted her life to the glory of the gods since she was but a child, and quickly set about trying to reverse the damage that had been done by her immediate predecessors. Tending to the beleaguered Empire as a mother nurses her child, the Klunish folk greatly prospered under her leadership. The Empire became a place where law and reason held sway once again and its citizens glorified their deities, rather than a human figurehead. It is said that this occurred largely because of those gods themselves, who whispered their desires and wisdom into Queen Eshalla's ear, guiding her way. Still, despite her best efforts, the war raging along the southern Klunish border grew bloodier by the day.

In 2237BH, Queen Eshalla abruptly left the throne in Riez-i-Fiez to travel to the dangerous Xulhaut Mountains where she studied as a girl. While she would not explain why this was, she commissioned the creation of a wondrous porcelain sword from the finest artisans of the land before retreating to the small nameless monastery and sequestering herself away. It was only short months after her disappearance that the Xuel Imperium launched a magical attack of unprecedented scope and power upon the Klunish. This was called the Evoked Devastation: A spell of such potency that scholars do not completely understand its nature even today. Still, despite this, its effects are well-documented. Millions of Klunish died in the horrific magical attack, and the Empire in which they dwelt was nearly complete wiped from the very face of the world.

Yet the Klunish were not unprepared for this attack. As the Empire's most powerful magi received the news of the Evoked Devastation, they spent the last moments of their lives loosing a spell of their own, devised for just such an eventuality. Calling upon the power of a thousand bound Efreet, and without the merciful Queen Eshalla to order them to stay their hands, the vengeful sorcerers wrought a cataclysmic magical strike upon the hated Xuel. This retributive attack is known in modern times as the Rain of Invisible Flame, which reduced the Imperium beyond the Sulhauts to a vast basin of ash. In the end, both of the world's greatest civilizations had destroyed one another, leaving only the sun and moons to give testimony both to their former greatness and the foolishness that led them to such an end.

While the Rain of Invisible Flame completely destroyed the Xuel Imperium, the destruction wrought by the Evoked Devastation was not so complete. Small pockets of Klunish - mostly dwelling along the northern reaches of the Empire, along the Jidmard Ocean - managed to survive the massive magical assault. Though they reeled in its wake and the spectre of their extinction drew perilously close, they managed to form a society of states along the shores of that great cerulean body. As these small nations began to spread and grow to the east, it became clear that a Second Klunish Empire had risen like a phoenix from the ashes of what once was.

Today, the Second Klunish Empire is a vibrant and thriving place. Though it cannot claim to have reached the majestic heights of its predecessor, it is a noble and proud place, the same. Composed of many nations with distinct societal pillars, it is difficult to speak to the Klunish culture as a homogeneous entity. Nevertheless, there are many traits held by enough of this massively diverse folk that they can serve to loosely characterize them as a whole.

The Second Klunish Empire is comprised of eight separate nations: Ribke, Tek, the Minyaps, the Tiger Rovers, Timsut, the Wolf Rovers, Llu, and Fiez. The inhabitants of Ribek, the Tiger Rovers, Llu and Fiez can be generally said to exemplify the physical characteristics typically seen by denizens of the First Empire, while the Timsuti and Minyaps show mixed ancestry. The Wolf Rovers are often darker from intermarriages with their eastward neighbors in the Wastes. The Tekites are the least typical Klunish, having pale yellow, golden brown or tan complexions as a result of their own unique mixed ancestry.

Despite their struggles for survival in the wake of the Evoked Devastation, the folk populating the Second Klunish Empire were able to retain much of the culture developed by their ancestors. The traits they refer to as The Four Heads of the Hydra (see below) are considered fundamental virtues that guide the lives of the just and pious. Use of their classical language, Ancient Klunish, in religious observances, higher learning, and the fine arts has preserved most of their ancestral traditions. The folk of the Second Klunish Empire have many customs and taboos derived from their great knowledge of astrology, and their dependence upon horses adds many beliefs and traditions regarding their honored steeds, particularly among the nomads. Singing and dancing are widespread in their culture, and trade and exploration are major pursuits.

Settled Klunish favor bright patterns and vibrant colors in clothes, typically with gowns and robes or else long coats with short breeches. Lower classes use the same colors with a long one-piece garment supplemented with other garb. Nomadic Klunish prefer clothes with several pastel colors, enjoying fancy garments enhanced with puffs, slashes on sleeves to show contrasting colors underneath, and superfluous trim. When traveling or making war, the nomads instead wear rough items of leather, hide, or cloth, bearing shields or banners indicating clan allegiance.

Many skilled wizards are Klunish, including experts in elemental magic, divination, and summoning and binding spells (which are often used on extraplanar beings). Cooperative spellcasting is practiced by many of the clergy, particularly among the desert mystics.

The Four Heads of the Hydra

All those within Klunish society follow a core philosophical code called the *Four Heads of the Hydra*: Four principles that their folk are taught from birth to strive to exemplify throughout their lives. This has been the foremost tradition that has guided their civilization since their histories began during the dawn of the First Empire. It is important to note that these philosophies are not clearly defined strictures; although most Klunish follow a similar interpretation of these tenets, there is often great latitude as to their true definitions. The Four Heads of the Hydra areas follows:

- *Honor:* Klunish strive to act with honor in all their dealings, whether they be with friend or foe. In all instances, an honorable act is preferred above a deceitful or misleading one. The just and righteous Klunish demonstrates honor by giving respect to all people, and prefer to work with those who do the same. Traits associated with honor include loyalty, honesty, reverence and lawfulness – yet these are hardly ironclad strictures. Indeed, a Klunish will not hesitate to act against these virtues if he must to preserve their honor or that of their family.
- *Generosity:* The Klunish society is one of the most generous to be found upon the face of the world. Its folk are expected to extend gifts of wealth, food, supplies, or other forms of support to those in need. In giving such bounty, they are expected to be discreet; charity is not something that Klunish do to curry favor or respect. As such, anonymous donations are common across the breadth of the Empire. The depth of this generosity is expected to grow proportionately with an individual's wealth, and gifts given in its spirit are usually directed at people or institutions less fortunate.
- *Family:* This is quite a loose term within Klunish culture. Family is generally defined as any unit of community to which an individual belongs. For example, a given Klunish may have many families, including their blood relatives, their church community, their military unit, their village, or even their elders or superiors. The sense of community is strong among all Klunish, and they are fiercely loyal to each of their families and its members. Likewise, the sense of pride a Klunish takes in their family is powerful. An insult to any member of a Klunish family is an insult to all its members, and it is largely this sense of bonding that was responsible for their civilization to live on beyond the horrific Evoked Devastation.
- *Piety:* The Klunish are very faithful people, and they are expected to be pious in their actions. Because there are many different deities in the Klunish pantheon, they are generally very tolerant of other faiths. This allows their specific beliefs to peacefully co-

exist with those of others with whom they interact. Klunish are heavily involved in their communities church organizations and take religious matters very seriously. Temples are frequent among all of their cities, and the various faiths play important roles in government and economy.

Law & Order

The Klunish folk have a strong cultural leaning toward Lawful Alignments. This has much to do with the Four Heads of the Hydra, which by their nature, guide individuals within their society towards order and cooperation. It is expected that those who would speak would do so truly and that those who would give their word to some oath will fulfill it to the best of their ability. Likewise, within Klunish culture, law is strictly enforced by the rulers of any given region and official recourse to aggrieved members of its society is considered a matter of course. Although this is not universal – there are many Chaotically-Aligned individuals within Klunish land, specifically in nations such as Tek and Llu, which are considered lawless and treacherous – this cultural tendency exists as a powerful undercurrent within its society. Indeed, it stands as yet another reason why the Klunish were able to continue on in the wake of the Evoked Devastation, while the civilization of their Xuel enemies was scattered like dust on the sirocco wind.

The Arid Steppes

If *The Porcelain Sword of Queen Eshalla* is being used in the context of Campaign play, the adventure can begin in Ribke City. This is the wondrous capital city from which the nation surrounding it takes its name, which lies along shores of the vast Jidmard Ocean. The city enjoys a mild and pleasant climate year-round and is blessed with breathtaking, ancient architecture and majestic hanging gardens. With a population of just less than 64,000 souls, it is considered a bastion of faith and hope across the whole of the Klunish lands.

Ribke City enjoys its reputation largely because it was founded by the demigod Al'Rabka himself and is the place in which he reigned for the last decade of his mortal life. Today, it holds the presence of the High Caliph of the Exalted Faith: Al'Rabka's high priest and one of the high-ranking and most respected

religious figures within all of the Klunish lands. It is here within the Empire that faith in the gods is strongest and where the ancient laws of its society hold greatest sway. When the other Klunish nations grow dark and turbulent throughout history like an ocean in the midst of a hurricane, it is Ribke that stands in its center as an island in its eye: A place of peace, reason, and safe haven for the forces of weal.

Background for the Game Master

Queen Eshalla Al'Zaradin lived the final days of her reign vacillating between states of utter terror and near-madness. The legends regarding her are true: She was indeed the chosen of the Klunish gods, beloved and favored by the whole of the pantheon as few mortals before her. When she would sleep, they would whisper their secrets into her ear, bequeathing upon her astounding knowledge and wisdom. It is by these words that she was able to guide the Klunish Empire through one of the darkest periods in its history into a brief age of peace, serenity, and enlightenment.

In 2237BH, however, The Weaver of Destinies – the Klunish goddess of fate and destiny – revealed to her a terrible secret. Queen Eshalla would sleep each night and dream of an unthinkable horror. In her dreams, she would see the vast whole of the Klunish Empire in ruins. Cities burned in a night darker than pitch, grey plumes of smoke rising from their shattered spires and minarets. The lands around their stone walls were likewise set afire and ruined, those crops not turned into torches withered in their fields as surely as if they were sown with salt. Her beloved subjects, all across the empire, were blasted by hurricane-force gales of burning, invisible wind. She watched helpless as their flesh stripped away from their bones, which exploded only shortly afterwards into cinders. They had time only to scream, and the echoes of these cries woke her in the middle of each night in a cold sweat.

Queen Eshalla knew that the holocaust to come could not be averted. So she retreated to the place in which she studied the teachings of the gods as a girl: A place called Alsidrah Malkafrah, hidden away from the eyes of man beneath the ancient roots of a vast mountain range. There, she locked herself away in an interdicted chamber, waiting for the inevitable. Yet the divine whispering meant for her ears alone did not cease. This time, however, they were meant to soothe the queen's troubled brow. Though the

destruction of the Klunish Empire was certain, they assured her that there would be survivors. These folk would emerge from the wreckage of their slain civilization as newborn babes. Hungry, thirsty, and in need of direction, they would surely die without guidance. And so, the gods charged her with a most solemn charge. The Klunish deities would utter their final commands, those sacred words that would usher their folk out of the old age and into a new one of peace and enlightenment. They would offer these words to Queen Eshalla – and she would commit them to record, that all Klunish in future days might hear them and be filled with joy and wisdom, knowing of their future destiny.

So it was that Queen Eshalla commissioned the greatest of Klunish artisans to create for her an item most majestic and wondrous. It would be a sword made of purest white porcelain, representing the futility of war and the fragile nature of peace. Its unsullied character was made from clay taken from the land of each Klunish tribe, symbolising that by joining together as one, regardless of differences or ancient grievances, perfection might be attained. When the weapon was delivered to the queen, she labored within her chambers with a magical stylus, carving the words of the gods into its surface. It took Queen Eshalla seventy-seven days to complete the inscription, the last word in its illuminated text spoken by The Weaver of Destinies: *Love*. The utterance was so pure and beautiful that the queen was moved to tears.

When her teardrop fell to her desk, the Evoked Devastation struck the Klunish Empire. Queen Eshalla had no time to question the will of her gods. She was one of the lucky few to die instantly in the unimaginably powerful magical attack. Likewise, most of the monks inhabiting Alsidrah Malkafrah died immediately, leaving it a cold and lonely place. Queen Eshalla's wondrous blade lay exactly in the place where it was completed, her peacock-feather stylus crossing its edge, unmarred but for the blemish of a single teardrop.

In the centuries that passed after the Evoked Devastation, few had time to concern themselves with the legend of Queen Eshalla or her Porcelain Sword. The struggle to rebuild Klunish society was much more pressing, and over time, the tales regarding the last days of the First Empire were forgotten by all but a handful of sages and learned priests.

Several weeks ago, however, a renewed interest

in the legend of Queen Eshalla began to emerge, after a vision of a blade of unparalleled beauty a purity was visited upon the Shiarya of The Weaver of Destinies in Ribke City. The High Caliph of the Exalted Faith ordered that his priests assist the faith of She Without and With All Hues to learn what the portent might mean. In but a short time, the legend of Queen Eshalla was discovered within the text of ancient and obscure historical religious records found in the foothills of the Xulhaut Mountains. The two holy figures wasted little time in assembling a group of the land's mightiest and most experienced heroes and explorers to find the mythical sword described in their books. They know that if the legends regarding Queen Eshalla are true, the wisdom carved into the surface of the blade might well completely change the whole of Klunish society, bringing it into a new age where peace and unity hold sway over petty squabbles and discord.

What the High Caliph and the Shiarya do not know, however, is that the recovery of Queen Eshalla's Porcelain Sword will not be so easy as entering the monastery in which it was completed and returning it to their presence. Indeed, much has happened since the Evoked Devastation to make the former holy site a fell and dangerous place. Chief among these is that the great blue dragon Hazaan has found the place first and currently uses it as a lair. Likewise, many other monstrous creatures have come to make a home of the monastery, finding its dark and remote recesses inviting. Lastly, many of the spirits of the monks murdered here by their Xuel foes do not rest easily. Wroth with fury at their condition, they will certainly move to destroy any who disturb the ruins of the holy place.

Yet for all these perils, worst of all might be the heroes' fellow Klunish. Not all within the Second Empire wish the status quo in their land to be upset by the recovery of the legendary blade. So it is that these powerful and influential individuals have assembled a group of their own - dead set on ensuring that the High Caliph's fellowship fails in their aims.

Queen Eshalla's Porcelain Blade will not easily be exhumed from its resting place.

But if it should...all will be changed forever.

Chapter One: Before the High Caliph

Introduction

When played in either the context of a Campaign or Convention, *The Porcelain Sword of Queen Eshalla* begins in the city of Ribke City, in the Mosque of Al'Rabka. In the former case, it is suggested that Game Masters in need of ways to get their Players to this place refer to the **Background** section above, where several story hooks that accomplish this are offered. In the latter case, however, Player Characters are assumed to have been summoned before the High Caliph from all across Klunish land to receive a message of most dire import.

When the Player Characters are gathered in this manner, the Game Master may read the following boxed text:

The journey across the Klunish lands was an arduous one, fraught with peril. Many were the trials through which each of you suffered along the way. Yet the summons that compelled you to make the voyage was an irresistible one. The High Caliph of the Exalted Faith - both the high priest of Al'Rabka and the the highest religious authority across the whole of the Klunish Empire - would have words with you. When beckoned forth by such a worthy, indeed, few would be the challenges that would prevent you from appearing before his person!

So it is that each of you came to find yourself within the Mosque of Al'Rabka in Ribke City. Once arriving at that opulent edifice, a group of Farises - those redoubtable paladins loyal to the Exalted Faith - conducted you to a hidden chamber beneath the catacombs winding far underneath the structure's foundation. There awaited a great vaulted alabaster chamber. Its ceiling was illuminated in gold script, which appointed a massive painting that occupied its entire expanse: A rendering of the Righteous One's victory against the forces of darkness and woe.

Upon it sat Xargun: The High Caliph of the Exalted Faith. Swathed in fine white and gold robes with a matching turban, he regarded you over a long grey beard through pale blue eyes that bore a palpable weight for their wisdom and authority. The lot of you prostrated yourself at the foot of his seat, as was the custom of your folk. It was not long afterward, however, that the High Caliph bade to stand again with a welcoming smile.

"A saptom a'narsi," he greeted you, in the ancient tongue of your folk - a statement reserved only for esteemed guests. "I am grateful that you deigned respond to my summons. All glory to the Righteous One. May he bless you and your families with his light and grace."

"A'narsi kal'abaktu," some of you replied, as was expected of those with knowledge of Al'Rabka's faith. "May you likewise be blessed."

Xargun nodded sagely. "It was but six centuries ago," he began, "that ours was the world's greatest civilization. Three oceans bounded our lands, lapping gently upon plains, rocks, and sand. Animals grew plentiful and strong in their chosen places and the soil was fertile and offered plentiful crops for our delights. Ours was a land of peace and serenity. The gods were revered in the proper way and few wanted for anything. The laws and customs of our people were just and good, and though our kings and queens were mighty and proud, they rarely needed to demonstrate their power. Why would they when so few gainsayed their desires?"

"In the beginning of the second millenium by the reckoning of our Hegira," he continued, "this changed. Our kings were not the men of old. They were wicked and self-interested. They waged pointless wars with the

Xuel folk to the south. They mocked the gods and turned their backs upon their teachings. In their eyes, the law existed to punish those with whom they found disfavor and to fill their vaults with gold. When they would flaunt its dictates, it was to be ignored, of course. The Klunish Empire began to corrode from within. Though its folk would rebuke the Xuel across the mountains, the truth was that they had become little better themselves."

"This changed with the death of King Ali Azek'hamil and the ascension of his daughter Eshalla to the throne," the High Caliph said. "She had given herself over to the divine as little more than a child, but her youth belied her great wisdom. Indeed, it is said that Queen Eshalla was nothing less than the favored daughter of our gods - and that they whispered both cloistered secrets their own inscrutable desires into her ear. With a gentle and careful hand, she began to restore our ancient customs and beliefs. Peace began to hold sway once more over our empire and the folk within it knew joy."

"Yet much damage had been done before Queen Eshalla came to power," he continued, a sadness filling his blue eyes. "The war with the Xuel had consumed many lives and the enmity one side held for the other burned hotter than the sun in the desert sky. We would not know it, but our ancient foes would soon unleash a terrible spell upon our lands of surpassing power. This was called the Evoked Devastation - and its force would raze the whole of the Klunish Empire to its very foundation. In its wake, it would be as if we had never existed at all. Only the wreckage of a glorious civilization and a handful of survivors would stand as testimony to the truth of the past. *A zaar a'trass vik, Al'Rabka.*"

Some of you mumbled an echo of the the blessing in response before the High Caliph continued. "This was how the First Klunish Empire died and gave way to that which would follow: A collection of nations that squabble and wage war with one another beneath the guise of a great alliance and the shared blood of our ancestors. Yet there is still more to the tale and it is for this reason that I have called you to my presence."

"It is said that, in the last days of the First Empire," he went on, "the gods revealed to Queen Eshalla what was yet to come. Terrified and heartbroken, she returned to the small monastery in which she studied as a girl, a small holy site hidden beneath the Xulhaut Mountains known as Alsidrah Malkafrah. There, the gods spoke to her again. To ensure that the Klunish that managed to survive the Evoked Devastation would maintain their culture and enjoy the same peace her folk had attained, they gave her their final commands, which she inscribed upon the blade of a wondrous falchion made from porcelain. It was meant to represent a symbol of the empire and its destiny. The clay from which it was formed was taken from the land of every tribe within its bounds. It was a weapon against which foes must fear, yet as is the nature of peace, it was fragile and easily tarnished. It was flawlessly white and in its face, the words of the gods were said to reflect the fate of our entire race."

The High Caliph waited for his words to die from the air, to settle in upon you, before continuing. "The tale of Queen Eshalla was long thought to be a work of fiction, a fanciful story meant to evoke the memories of the glorious past of the Klunish," he said. "Many have been the clerics and sages that have investigated the legend, hoping to understand the truth of its passages. Those with the power to do so have even consulted the gods themselves -

yet each time, they have deigned remain silent."

"Two weeks ago," his eyes swept across your number, "this changed."

"With both our moons full in the night sky, the Shiarya of The Weaver of Destinies and She Without and With All Hues was given a great vision by her goddess. In this dream, the hiding place of Alsidrah Malkafrah was revealed. In its depths, she saw a falchion of purest white porcelain. The reason for the vision is clear: The time has come at last for mortal man to read the final commands of the gods. Perhaps they look upon our tiny squabbling nations, our wars that pit brother against brother, and they are moved to pity? Who can say?"

"What *can* be said, truly," he went on, "is that the recovery of Queen Eshalla's Porcelain Sword would change our fates forevermore. With the words of the gods made plain, we would be united once more, working towards a common goal. Once again, the divine would be given their due deference, as is the way of the just and pious. Peace would fall upon our disparate nations. The Second Klunish Empire could at last begin to heal - and perhaps one day become just as great as its predecessor. *A zaar a'trass vik, Al'Rabka.*"

Once again, some of you echo his blessing. The silence within the chamber is nearly a tangible thing. It is clear that the occasion is a momentous one; that you stand upon the precipice of history. Your actions, for weal or woe, will determine the course of millions of your brothers and sisters in blood. "The Shiarya has created a map," the High Caliph said, "indicating the place in which she believes the monastery to be hidden. It is my solemn charge - in the name of Al'Rabka and in the name of all the gods of the Klunish - that you will travel to that place and

plumb its depths. You will recover Queen Eshalla's Porcelain Sword and return it to my presence, that the words of the gods may be read aloud for all to hear and heed."

"Each one of you has been chosen carefully for this most solemn task," he said. "You are among the most experienced and mighty heroes known to the Klunish folk. Yet there is more. Each of you, in some way, embodies the Four Heads of the Hydra. You represent the best of the Klunish Empire, our heart and our soul. Only to ones such as you can such an important charge be given."

"You will leave as soon as possible," the High Caliph said. "Lest those who may have heard of our great quest arrive before you and wrest victory from your grasp. For there are many who would benefit greatly from the dissension and discord that embroils our empire - and doubtlessly, they will send their own agents to seize the sword from themselves. Of such foul individuals, you must beware. But with our gods as my witness, I have faith in you. You will take up the cause of our folk - and you will prevail!"

"For the Porcelain Sword of Queen Eshalla!" he cheers you. You blood turned fire with the exhortation, you cannot help but echo his words!

"A zaar a' trass vik, Al' Rabka!"

Given their various backgrounds (see the pre-generated character sheets in **Appendix C** and **The Four Heads of the Hydra** section above), it is highly unlikely that the Player Characters will hesitate for even a moment to accept the High Caliph's solemn charge. Indeed, as sons and daughters of the Klunish Empire, they will likely offer a few sworn oaths of their own to their various gods and pledges upon their personal honor to see the task completed and a new era ushered in for the folk who share their blood.

But of Course...

...experienced Game Masters realize that they are dealing with Player Characters, who are a notoriously unpredictable lot. So their cooperation in getting the adventure underway is anything but assured. Perhaps they are not playing the pre-generated characters included with this adventure, and so their motivations for doing so are not so clear-cut. Perhaps they are playing characters with Alignments that lend themselves to reticence. It might be that they are even of the type of Player that delights in being obstinate or difficult. Should the Player Characters, for whatever reason, not accept the High Caliph's charge right away, he will attempt to persuade them to do so with the following tactics:

- *Appealing to their faith:* The High Caliph Xargun is (arguably) the most revered religious authority within all Klunish lands. Consequently, he should be afforded a great deal of respect by the Player Characters when matters of the divine are at hand. Therefore, if Player Characters seem reluctant to accept his charge, he will remind them that it is the will of the gods that the blade be recovered from its resting place. Would they so easily defy their wishes?
- *Calling upon their families:* If the Player Characters seem unmoved by this tactic, he will remind them that the successful completion of their mission will change the whole of the Klunish Empire for the better. With the tangible will of the gods evident, peace will likely settle upon the land in short order. Wars and infighting between tribes and nations will soon end. Those who the Player Characters love and respect will not only benefit from this, but their names will be glorified thanks to their allegiance to the heroes.
- *Calling upon their greed:* If neither of these approaches seems to persuade the Player Characters to accept the quest, then the High Caliph will point out that a great queen once laid her head within the monastery which they will explore. So it is that there is likely to be no shortage of treasure to be found within the place - wealth of which they may avail themselves with his blessing. Additionally, he is prepared to offer each Player Character a sum of 2,500gp in gemstones as a way of

demonstrating his gratitude for their acceptance of his burden.

If none of these tacks are sufficient to persuade the Player Characters to take up his mission, the High Caliph will voice his disgust with them. He will turn them out of the mosque, letting them know in no uncertain terms that no cleric of a Klunish faith will ever again aid them in any venture they might undertake. The adventure has effectively come to its conclusion.

Such an eventuality is unlikely, however. It is much more probable that the Player Characters will accept the High Caliph's mission. In such a case, the adventure will continue as they plan on how they will travel to Alsidrah Malkafrah.

Across a Shattered Land

If *The Porcelain Sword of Queen Eshalla* is being played in the context of a Campaign, the Game Master may choose to play out the journey to from Ribke City to Alsidrah Malkafrah. In such a case, rules to aid in running that dangerous voyage have been included below. Remember that if the adventure is being played in a Convention environment, however, it is assumed that the travel to that dire place occurred without major catastrophe. The Game Master may feel free to skip forward to **Chapter Two: The Invisible Mosque** (see below for details).

Travel from Ribke City to its country's border is a simple matter and will likely be accomplished without event. The High Caliph will ensure this by sending forth the Player Characters with a contingent of Farises - powerful and experienced paladins - that will ride with them until they reach the nation's southern edge. Of course, since these worthies can go no futher without risking their presence being interpreted as an act of war, once the heroes leave Ribke, they are essentially on their own.

Alsidrah Malkafrah is roughly 1,200 miles directly south of Ribke's southern border. Travel to the monastery will take Player Characters across the Minyap Plains, which are a endless expanse of rolling grassland. These prairies are inhabited by the nomadic and relatively primitive Minyap folk who only rarely interact with their Klunish neighbors, unless forcibly drawn into their intrigues. The tribes of Minyaps are only very loosely affiliated, trading with one another when they must, but otherwise keeping to their own affairs. The horse is a very important part of Minyap culture, which has given

rise to their famous Riders: Lightly-armored mounted warriors to whom few peers exist.

To the south of this grassland can be found the Arid Steppes. Six centuries ago, this region was the epicenter of the Evoked Devastation, which left the once-lush and thriving grasslands a desert wasteland shunned by all but the nomadic Minyap dervishes that wander its expanse in search of the precious and rare water crucial to their survival. The region is the home to all manner of dangerous monsters and treacherous landscape, leaving it a place where few but the truly-desperate wander.

Considering the character of this land, Player Characters would be well-advised to move as swiftly and efficiently as possible across its expanse. Of course, travel by way of magic (such as long-distance *flight* or *teleportation*) would be ideal, though what sort of access the Player Characters will have to such potent spells will vary drastically depending upon the specific characters in play.

Treading the Grasslands

Because of its vast expanse (most of which is completely devoid of landmarks that stand out to characters not indigenous to the region), travel through the Manyip Plains can be difficult. Worse, the primitive nature of the tribes that dwell on the prairie means that it is nearly impossible to find a reliable map of the grasslands to use as a navigational aid. Consequently, those who would attempt an overland crossing of the grassland would be well-advised to hire a Manyip guide to conduct their passage. Retaining such an individual is not difficult, though the trustworthiness of such a hireling depends upon many factors beyond the scope of this adventure module. What should come of an attempt to hire a guide to conduct the Player Character's travel falls to the Game Master to determine.

While a skilled Manyip guide can easily navigate the grassland without difficulty, Player Characters who are not native to the region stand a very good chance of becoming lost as they traverse the land. A party traveling the Manyip Plains has a 25% chance of becoming lost for each day they travel the prairie (0%, if led by a skilled Manyip guide). In such a case, the Game Master should randomly determine the party's new course and adjudicate the scenario as they see fit, given the party's situation.

Random Encounters on the Manyip Plains

Random encounters are checked two times each day and the chance for an encounter is 1 in 12. The normal encounter distance is 6" - 24" (6d4). If a random encounter is determined to have taken place, check the following table to resolve exactly what is encountered.

Random Encounter Table (Manyip Plains)		
Die Roll	Encounter	Number Appearing
01-02	Humanoids	4d6
03-05	Men, Bandits	4d6
06-10	Men, Dervishes	1d20
11-15	Men, Merchants	3d8
16-25	Men, Nomads	4d10
26-00	Use Standard Encounter Tables	*

Treading the Steppes

Once past the Manyip Plains, the Player Characters will encounter the Arid Steppes as they drive southward in the direction of Alsidrah Malkafrah. This place is a barren wasteland of desert sands that stretch outward as far as the eye can see in every direction. Punishingly hot during the day and bone-chillingly cold during the night, it is small wonder that few folk aside of the Manyip dervishes call the Steppes their home.

Until one finds the Xulhaut Montains within their sight, it is even more difficult to successfully navigate the Arid Steppes than the Plains to the north. Since water is scarce here and its availability can easily mean the difference between life and death, the ease with which one can become lost in the desert contributes to the hundreds of travelers that die within its dry reaches each year. So it is that if finding a Manyip guide to assist Player Characters in crossing the grassland is a great boon, finding a friendly dervish to help navigate the desert is vital. As is the case of the Manyips that dwell on the plains (as described above), it falls to the Game Master to determine what comes of Player Characters' attempts to hire such a guide - but it can safely be said that without the aid of one such wayfarer, attempts at crossing the Arid Steppes will result in disaster.

Random Encounters on the Arid Steppes

Random encounters are checked twice each day and the chance for an encounter is 1 in 12. The normal encounter distance is 6" - 24" (6d4). If a random encounter is determined to have taken place, check the following table to resolve exactly what is encountered.

Random Encounter Table (Arid Steppes)		
Die Roll	Encounter	Number Appearing
01-07	Herd Animals	3d6
08-10	Horses	3d6
09-23	Humanoids	4d6
24-26	Men, Dervishes	2d20
27-29	Men, Nomads	3d10
30-32	Men, Tribesmen	3d10
51-00	Use Standard Encounter Tables	*

Chapter Two: The Invisible Mosque

Introduction

As Player Characters near the looming shadows of the Xulhaut Mountains, they will find a shallow box canyon nearly 40 miles east of where the range joins the southern spur of the Mistrystals. Any Manyip dervish dwelling within this region knows of this place, as their folk has many legends of the narrow channel leading into the peaks. They call it *Faas Sal'zakhak* (AB: "Jaws of the Dragon") and consider it a cursed place, where the mountains swallow men whole, never to be seen again. None of these folk will travel within 30 miles of the place and, if they are fond of those who they accompany, they will urge them to turn away from its mouth.

Unfortunately for the Player Characters, this is the place indicated on the map created by the Shiarya of The Weaver of Destinies - and it is here where the Alsidrah Malkafrah lies hidden.

Following the passage of the canyon, Player Characters might be surprised to find the desert sands giving way to lush grass that grows thicker and healthier as they near its closed end. This verdance leads to a small oasis at its terminus, where small date trees surround a shallow spring-fed pond. Even the harsh winds that roar across the steppes and the burning sands they bring with it are absent here,

replaces by a cool and soothing zephyr, gentle and kindly. Though they might suspect as much, this is no illusion; the location of Alsidrah Malkafrah was chosen because of this oasis, so that the monks dwelling within it might have access to its waters. This is a place of peace and tranquility.

Set into the sheer wall of the mountains that forms the rear of the box canyon, a stone arch supports the entrance to a slender staircase winding sharply southward and down beneath the peaks. Carved into this arch are the words *A'straazi i'ravka baarza* (AB: "Unseen, but forever present"). This is an allusion to the hidden nature of the monastery known as the Invisible Mosque, which lies at the bottom of the stairs.

Invisible Mosque Encounter Key

Note: Alsidrah Malkafrah was once a monastery, built by Klunish aesthetes who wished to study the divine mysteries of their gods and live lives in accordance with their teachings, far from the eyes of their brothers and sisters and the many temptations of the civilized world. Tunneled into the firmament of the Xulhaut Mountains, the walls of its chambers and corridors are composed of the peaks' solid granite substance.

The builders of the holy site had assistance from dwarven allies, so it is hardly the rough-hewn and ramshackle place one might otherwise imagine it to be. Its hallways are uniformly 10' wide and just as tall, their surfaces smooth and polished. In many places, they are decorated with breathtaking bas-reliefs, mosaics, and paintings.

Although iron sconces are set into the walls at regular intervals, the torches once held in their metal grasps have long since burned away. Now, there is no form of light within its vast expanse (unless specifically described otherwise), so Player Characters exploring its depths that have no means of seeing in lightless conditions will have to provide their own form of illumination. Doors within Alsidrah Malkafrah are made of ancient, pale wood, bound in heavy iron bands.

Jackals at their Heels

As High Caliph Xargun mentioned to the Player Characters in Chapter One's **Introduction** section (see above for details), many are those who would benefit by their fellowship's failure to recover *The Porcelain Sword of Queen Eshalla*. One such individual is Muradin, the current Sultan of Fiez (for details on this land, refer to the **Campaign Notes** section above). As the ruler of what is arguably the most powerful and influential Klunish state, he is a man with a profound vested interest in seeing that the status quo remains intact.

With many spies placed in important places within the other Klunish states, there is very little that transpires in the empire of which he is unaware. So it is that he has learned that the High Caliph of Ribke and the Shiarya of The Weaver of Destinies believe the legend of Queen Eshalla and her Porcelain Sword to be true. He also knows that they believe they have found the blade's location in a hidden monastery in the Arid Steppes. Sultan Muradin understands the inevitable ramifications that would follow in the wake of the weapon's recovery – so he has taken steps to ensure that it remains lost at all cost.

Wealthy beyond the wildest dreams of avarice, the Sultan has assembled his own fellowship, filled with assassins, blackhearts, and villains notorious throughout the Klunish Empire – many of whom are well-known to the Player Characters. Their mandate is simple: Murder the High Caliph's heroes, recover or destroy Queen Eshalla's sword, and return to Zeif with no witnesses to their deeds. They have but one major disadvantage that serves as an impediment to their goals. The High Caliph's group left Ribke two days before the Sultan's spies suggested that they might set off. Consequently, they have a considerable head start on his fellowship.

The Sultan's band of killers are detailed at the rear of this book in **Appendix D: The Sultan's Assassins**. When they Player Characters enter Alsidrah Malkafrah, the Game Master should carefully begin marking the time they spend exploring its depths. The Sultan's men will enter the monastery exactly **SIX TURNS** after they do so, tracking the path of the Player Characters and attempting to ambush and kill them if they manage to find them before they have recovered the Porcelain Sword. This adds an element of danger to the adventure far beyond the challenges that the Player Characters will face in the dungeon by itself. If the

party manages to learn that they are being watched and followed – all the better! In such a case, the Game Master is encouraged to ratchet up the tension and fear within their ranks as they slowly realize that they are being stalked by hunters most deadly....

1. AN ECCENTRIC PATHWAY

Beyond the mouth of the cavern looms a slender staircase. Its length is composed of dark stone, smooth and polished. Iron sconces jut from the walls of the corridor, though any torches that might have once been held in their grasps have long since burned to cinders. This ensconces the entirety of the stairway in utter darkness.

This stairway represents the entrance to Alsidrah Malkafrah. Its breadth extends 100' downward beneath the surface of the world over a length of 100'. This character means that the stairway was designed at a very steep slope, with each step being nearly a foot lower than the next. Despite this angle, the staircase is not especially treacherous to tread, though smaller characters (particularly demi-humans) may have great difficulty coursing its path – especially if they are forced to do so at great speeds.

The stairs are completely unlit. From the mouth of the cave that forms their top onward, there is no form of illumination to be found within Alsidrah Malkafrah. Player Characters unable to see unaided in the dark will need to provide some form of light from this point onward.

2. THE PATHEONIC FOYER

At the foot of the stairway, the corridor opens up into a voluminous room, close to 50' wide and 100' in length. The ceiling rises to a dizzying height of 50' above the floor, adding to the sense of immensity within the chamber.

The center of the room is dominated by a dais made of flawless glass. The perfectly clear material rises from its

top, becoming a great sculpture of a woman with long, straight hair and wearing flowing robes. Holding what seems to be a small loom in her hands, her imperious and impassive gaze falls upon the entrance to the room.

The glass sculpture is surrounded by five alcoves: Two on the room's east wall, two on its west wall, and one on its north wall. Each of these recesses into the walls are 20' deep and occupied by a small dais, atop which stands a stone statue – each one representing some personage. All of the sculptures are masterfully crafted and appear to be ancient beyond reckoning.

This chamber was once Alsidrah Malkafrah's foyer, where guests visiting the monastery were received. Thus, it was decorated with statues representing the various members of the Klunish Pantheon, so the function of the place was evident to such guests.

The dais in the center of the room and the sculpture atop it – which represents the nominal mother of the pantheon, the Weaver of Destinies – is made of solid *glassteed* iron. It has been designed in such a way that, when light touches it, it shimmers with brilliance, gaining a scintillating prismatic character, ever-changing as radiance plays off its surface. Likewise, the spindle in her hand seems to become a prism, multi-colored light shining forth from it in individual threads. Across the bottom of the dais is an inscription in Ancient Baklunish: *Fate favors those who follow the path of the righteous.*

Though the *glassteed* sculpture is quite harmless, the same cannot be said for the statues that occupy the room's five alcoves. The inscription at the base of the dais on which it stands offers a hint to bypassing the chamber's threats in peace. Those statues in the alcoves are as follows:

a. **THE STATUE OF NEKOUZ**

This statue takes the form of a severe Klunish man, wearing the robes of a monk. His hands are wrapped in the way of a gladiator. The sculpture is meant to represent Nekouz: Klunish demigod of Physical and Mental Mastery. If any living creature passes within 5' of the statue, it immediately animates into the form of an improved **Stone Guardian** and attacks that individual and their allies. It will not break off its onslaught until it is destroyed.

Improved Stone Guardian: AC 2, MV 10", HD 4+4, HP 28, THAC0 10, #AT 2, Damage 1d8+5 (Fist) / 1d8+5 (Fist), SD Takes 1/4 damage from edged weapons, Takes 1/2 damage from Cold, Fire, & Electrical, Immune to Mind-Affecting Spells & Normal Missiles, SQ Detects Invisible at will, SV Earth & Stone altering spells kill instantly with no save, AL N, SZ M, XP: 949.

b. **THE STATUE OF AL'RABKA**

This statue has been sculpt in such a way as to glorify Al'Rabka: The Klunish demigod of Guardianship Faithfulness and Duty. If the Player Characters have already had some violent interaction with the other statues within this chamber, this robed and armored stone effigy bearing a menacing-looking falchion may give them pause. In truth, however, it is this alcove to which the inscription below the Weaver's statue refers. The wall behind this sculpture is actually a secret door, locked but untrapped, that leads deeper into the depths of Alsidrah Malkafrah.

c. **THE STATUE OF ANEXAY**

This statue appears as a slender, athletic woman with long hair and a pair of falchions. Beautiful and deadly, it is representative of Anexay: Klunish lesser goddess of Twilight, Shadows, Stealth, and Mental Power. If any living creature passes by the stone sculpture, it will animate into the form of an **Improved Caryatid Column**, attacking that individual and its allies until either they or it is destroyed.

Improved Caryatid Column: AC 2, MV 10", HD 7, HP 44, THAC0 7, #AT 2, Damage 2d4+3 (Falchion) / 2d4+3 (Falchion), SD Base 25% chance that weapons striking will break, Takes 1/2 damage from normal weapons, Takes full damage from magical weapons, sans their bonuses, Immune to Mind-Affecting Spells, AL N, SZ LM, XP: 560.

d. **THE STATUE OF IATHSEG**

This statue is sculpt to represent a young woman standing knee-deep in a small pool. She pours water from a jug held upon her shoulder into the body in which she stands, while a small fish leaps playfully from the liquid. The statue is meant to signify Iathseg: Klunish lesser goddess of Lakes, Rivers, Wells, and Streams. Unlike many of the stone guardians within the room, this statue is quite harmless, being the hiding place of some of the wealth kept in Alsidrah Malkafrah.

A hidden drawer lies in the hollow base of the statue (which can be found in the same way a Secret Door is located). This container is both locked and **Trapped**, however. Failure to properly disarm the device that secures the drawer sprays forth a cloud of gas that is both acidic (save vs. breath weapon or suffer 2d6 damage in the first round the trap is triggered and 1d6 damage in each round afterwards) and poisonous (save vs. poison or suffer 3d6 damage and be slowed for 1 turn).

Within the compartment lies 1,250gp, 11 small gemstones, each worth 15gp, and a wickedly-curved *dagger* +1.

e. **THE STATUE OF LOQUOM**

This statue has been sculpt into the shape of a pensive man in robes. He holds a set of scales on which gold coins (which are not part of the piece's stone construction) rest on one pan, while the other pan is empty. He appears to contemplate this imbalance carefully. Those who are familiar with the Klunish pantheon will likely recognize the figure as Loquom: The lesser god of Trade, Negotiation, Ventures, Appraisal, Reciprocity.

The coins resting upon Loquom's scales are very valuable, having been minted before the Evoked Devastation, during the day of the First Klunish Empire. This is very evident, each one of the 50 coins being worth 100gp. While the statue will not come to life if it is approached, it is possessed of a powerful enchantment. If any type of wealth is placed on the empty pan, double its value will suddenly appear on the person of the individual balancing the scales. If even one of the gold pieces are removed without offering another, however, the coins removed act as a *Stone of Weight*. The beneficial effect of the statue's enchantment only works for one individual each month; the negative effect can penalize all those that would think to rob Loquom.

3. TREAD LIGHTLY

Opening the door reveals a long corridor, slowly sloping downward into darkness. Somewhere along its length, the sounds of retreating footfalls barely reach the edge of hearing.

This room is nothing more than an elaborate **Trap** that utilizes the *Audible Glamer*, *Distance Distortion*, and *Programmed Illusion* spells to devastating effect. When the door is opened, the first and third enchantments activate, yielding the scene in the boxed text above. When the room's threshold is broken, the second spell comes into being, making the Player Characters feel as if they have walked some distance, when in reality, they've only traveled 10'. This is done to ensure as many of them are in the room as possible when the Trap is sprung.

When any character reaches the last 5' of the chamber, the ceiling gives way, dropping tons of rock into the room. This does 5-50hp damage to anyone within the chamber (a successful save for half indicates that a Player Character has managed to jump out and back into the hallway).

If the Trap is triggered, the noise made by the falling rocks is cataclysmic in nature. No monsters on the first level of the Alsidrah

Malkafrah will be taken by surprise, thanks to this forewarning. There is no type of treasure to be found in the chamber (the dwarves and monks that designed it, naturally, avoided the place like the plague).

4. BE MY GUEST

This chamber takes the form of a 30' x 30' cube of smooth, polished stone. Looming in the darkness is the ancient wreckage of ruined wooden furniture, rendered moldering flinders in the room's northeast and southeast corners. Amongst the latter, shredded and filthy cloth that might have once been linens is strewn amongst the shattered timber.

A mound of torn clothing is piled high along the room's north wall. Amongst these crimson stains rainments, a macabre tangle of bleached bones rests. Surrounding these are three figures, each wearing tattered and threadbare robes. Their flesh is sickeningly grey and the foul odor of death wafts from their bodies. At the opening of the door, they offer horrifying noises - the hisses and shrieks of madmen forced through throats like since ruined.

The door to this room has been locked (though it is untrapped) by those creatures dwelling within the monastery, so as to keep the foul and terrifying creatures within it from preying upon their number.

When the Alsidrah Malkafrah was still a place inhabited by the living, this chamber was used as a guest room for visitors and travelers given shelter by the holy site's monks. In the wake of the Evoked Devastation, the land outside the monastery promised a swift and terrible death to all those who dared its expanse in the form of an incurable wasting disease. Trapped within their home, many of the monks subsequently succumbed to madness beneath the weight of long years. Bereft of edible food, some even turned to cannibalism, murdering and eating their brothers and sisters.

Three of these monks hide within this room, their blasphemous acts rendering them a unique form of undead known as a **Cenobite** (see **Appendix B: New Monsters** for details). Though their minds were shattered even before their deaths, they understand that they should be ashamed of their grisly acts and attempt to hide the bones of their victims beneath a pile of shredding clothes pushed up against the room's north wall.

Of course, they have not eaten of human flesh in hundreds of years, so as soon as the Player Characters enter the room, they will try to rectify this matter, attacking them with a terrifying fury in order to sate their bottomless, unholy hunger.

Cenobites (3): AC 6, MV 15", HD 4+12, HP 36, THAC0 13, #AT 3/2, Damage 3d4, SD Can only be hit by +1 or better magical weapons, Piercing and Blunt weapons only do 1/2 damage, Missile deflection, Undead spell resistances, SZ M, AL CE, XP: 688.

In the wreckage of the furniture in the northeast corner of the room (which was once a dresser), 127gp and 2 small pearls each worth 50gp can be found. Likewise, the shattered remains of three potions lie here. One has somehow managed to survive the years and the fury of the Cenobites, however. This is a *Potion of Fire Resistance*.

5. INITIUM, FIRST

Beyond the threshold of the open doorway, a spartan bedchamber lies. The northwest and southwest corners of the room are occupied by a pair of ancient bunk beds, so old that their dust-covered substance seems as if it might crumble with but a touch. A large area rug rests in the center of the room. Likewise covered in dust, its colors still remain vibrant and bright where they shine through the dozens of new footprints on its surface. In the south east corner of the room, a dresser stands, its drawers all half-open and askew.

This chamber was once a sleeping place for the junior monks within the Alsidrah Malkafrah, those new to the edifice and the faith. Of course, those aesthetes have long since passed, more victims of the terrible Evoked Devastation. Now the place sees use as a barracks for the humanoids under the command of the blue dragon Hazaan.

The six **Bugbears** that dwell here are hardly comfortable. They claim to sense an inherent *wrongness* within the fallen monastery that makes them ill at ease (something that is only reinforced by the presence of an ancient skeleton in the top bunk of one of the chamber's beds; they refuse to come near the dead monk, naturally). Hazaan finds their discomfort amusing and refuses to allow them to find other accommodations within the Alsidrah Malkafrah. Because of this, they generally sleep on the room's floor, on burlap mats and linens stolen from the dervishes of the Arid Steppes during their raids of that folk.

Bugbears (6): AC 5, MV 9", HD 3+1, HP 19, THAC0 16, #AT 1 or 2, Damage 1d8 (Scimitar) or 1d6 (Short Bow), SA Surprise on a 1-3, SZ L, AL CE, XP: 211.

The Bugbears within this chamber have been ordered to watch the hall at all times, lest the Cenobites in **Area #4** (see above for details) escape their confinement and wreak mayhem within the fallen monastery. Therefore, it will be hard to surprise them, even if the Player Characters take steps to remain quiet as they approach the room. As soon as they become aware of the presence of intruders, they will utter a great hue and cry that will alert their fellows in **Area #6** (see below for details) that danger is upon them. Those humanoids will rush to the area, arriving in 2-4 rounds in support of their allies.

Regardless of reinforcements, when they are aware of intruders, three of the Bugbears will rush to the doorway to engage in melee. The other three will fall to the back to the chamber and employ their short bows in their defense.

If the Bugbears are overcome, Player Characters will find the treasure that Hazaan permits them to keep for themselves under

the bed in the northeast corner of the room. This amounts to 134sp and 212gp. Additionally, one of the Bugbears has a small garnet hidden in his belt, which is worth 75gp. Finally, the monk's skeleton atop one of the bunk beds (which is actually completely harmless) wears a *Ring of Protection +2* on one of its bony fingers.

6. INITIUM, SECOND

The corridor opens into a 30' x 30' room composed of smooth, polished stone. The only exit issuing forth from its bounds takes the form of a door in the center of its south wall. Once, the room was clearly some sort of bechamber. This is apparent because of the ancient wooden bunk beds that stand in the northeast and southeast corners of the room. The former of the two has collapsed into rubble, probably because of its great age. A wooden dresser occupies the chamber's southwest corner, its drawers opened haphazardly, as if someone carelessly rifled through them at some point.

In the center of the room, a large circular rug rests. Though it was once probably quite beautiful – hand woven and filled with patterns of brilliant colors – it now bears an ominous crimson stain. Spilled out across its whole, the wide red smear tells a grisly tale of the room's past.

Just as was **Area #5** (see above for details), this room once served as sleeping quarters for the initiate monks living within the Alsidrah Malkafrah. This chamber has likewise been converted into a sleeping place for the blue dragon Hazaan's **Bugbear** allies. Five of them dwell here, mostly sleeping upon the floor. The exception to this is their leader, Fazruk – a **Bugbear Shaman** – who has commandeered the bunk bed that still stands here as his resting place.

Bugbears (5): AC 5, MV 9", HD 3+1, HP 19, THAC0 16, #AT 1 or 2, Damage 1d8 (Scimitar) or 1d6 (Short Bow), SA Surprise on a 1-3, SZ L, AL CE, XP: 211.

Fazruk, Bugbear Shaman: AC 2, MV 9", HD 5+3, HP 33, THAC0 13, #AT 1 or 2, Damage 2d6 (Spiked Quarterstaff) or 1d6 (Short Bow), SA Surprise on a 1-3, SZ L, AL CE, XP: 561. Spells Prepared: 1st: *Bless, Magic Missile, Protection from Good, Sleep*; 2nd: *Hold Person, Web*. Magic Items: *Cloak of Protection +2, Potion of Invisibility*.

If the Bugbears in this room are warned of the approach of Player Characters, Fazruk will cast *Bless* upon them, then *Protection from Good*. He will then quaff his *Potion of Invisibility* before the leading them to reinforce their fellows. When they do so, he will cast *Web, Hold Person, and Sleep* (in that order) to neutralize as many of his foes as possible. If they are taken unawares, they will utilize similar tactics to those Bugbears in **Area #5**; three will rush to melee while two will fall to the rear of the room and attack their enemies with their bows. Fazruk will dispense with his protective spells in this case, using *Web, Hold Person, and Sleep* to remove as many Player Characters from the fight as possible. If Fazruk's Bugbears are being decimated, he will drink his *Potion of Invisibility* and flee through the room's secret door (which is unlocked and untrapped, but guarded by a potent sentry station in **Area #8** (see below for details)), running to warn Hazaan of their presence in his domain. Under no circumstances will any of the Bugbears enter the door leading to **Area #7** (see below for details). If the Player Characters do so before the Bugbears are killed, all will flee from the room for their lives with all due haste.

If the Bugbears here are overcome, in addition to Fazruk's magical items, Player Characters may lay claim to the treasure Hazaan allows them to keep, which amounts to 322cp, 426sp, and 331gp. This is kept under the bed on which Fazruk sleeps, as is a small leather pouch holding his personal wealth: 16 small gemstones, each worth 75gp.

7. THE ARENA

Opening the door reveals a circular room, 30' in diameter. Along the curves of the east and west walls, two wooden racks stand, bearing several weapons, ancient in appearance.

Here the ceiling is high, reaching 50' from the floor. Past the portal's threshold, the stone floor gives way to white sand from wall to wall. This pure firmament is unsullied but for a troubling dark maroon stain near its center. Standing around this grisly discoloration are a trio of robed figures. Their garments are worn and full of holes, through which bodies long dead can be seen. Their flesh a gruesome green and grey, covered with lesions and boils, the scent issuing forth from them is truly ghastly.

When the blue dragon Hazaan laid claim to the fallen Alsidrah Malkafrah, his Bugbear allies swiftly found many undead horrors within the subterranean monastery. Reduced to cannibalism in the wake of the Evoked Devastation, these Cenobites hungered for the flesh of the living and slaughtered them by the dozen. Such was their power that Hazaan himself was forced to enter the fell place and cow them with his awesome magical might. The dragon was loathe to destroy them, however, thinking that they might be put to good use at some future time. So it was that he locked them away in the monastery's guest room (**Area #4**, as described above) and its Arena.

This is the latter of those two places. A designated area in which the monks of the Alsidrah Malkafrah could train and challenge one another, if necessary, it was considered to be one of the monastery's most important locations before its fall. Now it only holds three **Cenobites** who hover above the bones of a Bugbear victim. Since none of them had eaten in centuries since the arrival of the humanoids to their demesne, they have picked the corpse clean of flesh, its blood staining the white sand floor of their chamber. The only reminder of the great dignity of the Arena are the weapons that fill

the ancient racks within the chamber, once put in their places for the use of those practicing their art within its walls.

Cenobites (3): AC 6, MV 15", HD 4+12, HP 36, THAC0 13, #AT 3/2, Damage 3d4, SD Can only be hit by +1 or better magical weapons, Piercing and Blunt weapons only do 1/2 damage, Missile deflection, Undead spell resistances, SZ M, AL CE, XP: 688.

The Cenobites will attack the Player Characters as soon as the (locked, but untrapped) door to the Arena is opened, eager to dine upon their flesh and wet their rotten lips with their blood. If they are overcome, their foes may find that several of the weapons held in the racks are quite valuable. While the Broadsword, Scimitar, and Heavy Crossbow among them are mundane, a *Falchion* +1 "*Flame Tongue*", a *Spear* +2, and a quiver filled with 20 *Bolts* +2 rest beside them, ready for the taking.

8. THE SENTINEL

Behind the secret door, a corridor leads 30' to the east before taking a turn directly to the south. Within its length, a deadly silence lingers.

In truth, the hallway leads both to the south and into a shallow alcove to the north. The latter area is concealed by a *Permanent Illusion* cast by the blue dragon Hazaan. Behind the veil hides one of the wymm's most powerful servitors: A **Stone Guardian** which it built from a magical *Manual* found in the Alsidrah Malkafrah's library.

Stone Guardian: AC 2, MV 20", HD 4+4, HP 28, THAC0 15, #AT 2, Damage 1d8+1 (Fist) / 1d8+1 (Fist), SD Immune to mind-affecting spells, normal missiles, and poison, Takes 1/4 damage from edged weapons, Takes 1/2 damage from cold, fire, & electrical, SQ Permanently hasted, SV Earth affecting spells instantly kill with no save, SZ M, AL N, XP: 1,124.

This sentinel is made even more deadly by the *permanent haste* laid upon it by the dragon.

If any creature aside of a Bugbear or the Dragon itself passes through the corridor, the golem has been instructed to wait until all of its allies pass by, striking at the last of them from behind (it will gain a +4 bonus to hit an individual because of this tactic).

The Stone Guardian possesses no form of treasure.

9. LIBRARY

This room takes the form of a 30' x 30' square, the center of which is dominated by a 10' x 10' stone column that supports the ceiling with its stout substance. Deep spaces have been cut into each face of the column so that they can accommodate wooden shelves. Atop each one of these, several ancient, dust-covered tomes and librams rest, all manner of sizes and shapes comprising their whole. The air within the chamber is dry and filled with the unmistakable scent of old books.

Across the whole of the floor, the dust is disturbed by the tiny footprints of what appears to be a housecat. In the southeast corner of the room, a small pair of dishes are filled with water and some kind of shredded meat. Next to these rest a small cloth ball and a stick with a bit of string attached to it. A tattered feather from some dark bird had been fixed to its opposite end.

The only apparent exit from the room is a door set into the center of the north wall.

This chamber is the Alsidrah Malkafrah's library, which contains a great portion of the monastery's collected knowledge (most of which is of a religious nature). To protect the sacred holy texts in this place, the high priest of the faith summoned a **Guardian Familiar** to the location, bidding the creature to defend the books within it with its life.

Despite its potentially fearsome nature, the monks dwelling within the subterranean holy

site were quite fond of the cat. Of these aesthetes, none doted on it quite so much as the Alsidrah Malkafrah's abbot, who considered it something like a beloved personal pet. As such, he called upon allies to create a special magical item to see that the cat always had fresh food and water (even though it, as an extradimensional creature, truly had no need for either). Likewise, he crafted a pair of toys for the creature to see to its entertainment. Of course, the abbot himself is long dead, so these playthings have gone unused for centuries. The feline, however, remains – and dangerous as ever.

Guardian Familiar (Current, Undamaged State): AC 8, MV 12", HD 1, HP 6, THAC0 19, #AT 3, Damage 1d4 (Claw) / 1d4 (Claw) / 1d6 (Bite), SD "Nine Lives": When slain, is instantly reborn with +1 HD, +6hp, +2" MV, +1AC, MR 60%, SZ S, AL N, XP: 2,520.

When the Player Characters enter the chamber, they will find the creature (in the form of a small black housecat) directly in front of the bookcase-column, watching them intently. Provided that they do not touch any of the tomes, it will leave them in peace. However, the moment they lay even a finger upon one, it will attack them viciously. As is the case with most Guardian Familiars, if the Player Characters back away from the column and flee the room, it will not pursue them, returning to its lonely vigil.

If they manage to slay the Guardian Familiar, the Player Characters may loot the library of its books, many of which are quite valuable. If taken as a whole, the ancient religious texts would be worth 15,000gp to a scholar or a sage, as they cast rare insight to the manner in which the Klunish gods were regarded and worshiped during the days of the First Empire. Along with these mundane texts are also a book whose pages contain 7 *Cleric Spells* (*Augury, Commune, Cure Serious Wounds, Dispel Magic, Divination, Negative Plane Protection, and Neutralize Poison*), a *Book of Exalted Deeds*, a *Manual of Stone Golems* (which Hazaan has perused at length but cannot yet use), and a *Tome of Understanding*. The food and water dishes in the corner of the room are likewise enchanted, capable of conjuring shredded, roast chicken and fresh

water once per day as a *Create Food & Water* spell when their sides are touched by the hungry or thirsty. Though intended for a feline, they remain quite satisfying if consumed by a larger creature, as well.

10. THE ABBOT'S CHAMBERS

Opening this door reveals a 30' x 30' square chamber. In its northwest corner might have once stood a bed, though it has been rendered little more than scraps of shattered wood among tattered linens. Likewise, its southeast corner probably contained a desk and dresser, but these are also now wreckage, their remains moldering with age. The room's only appointment that seems as it might have been when the monastery was alive and vibrant is a colorful prayer mat in its northeast corner.

Kneeling upon its fabric in contemplative supplication is a figure wearing the dark brown robes of a monk. The turban upon his head is dirty and filled with dust. Absolutely silent and motionless, it is unclear whether he lives or is the remnant of a time long passed.

This room was once the bedchambers of Kaazem: The abbot of the Alsidrah Malkafrah. In the wake of the Evoked Devastation, he retreated to this room in order to both pray for guidance from his gods and protect Queen Eshalla, who had locked herself away within the second level of the monastery. Unfortunately, he did this when his fellow brothers and sisters were in dire need of his leadership, and his sequestering himself away contributed to the eventual fall of the Alsidrah Malkafrah. As for Kaazem himself, though he had little need for food and drink, he was not immune to starvation, thirst, and the weight of long years. He died in this room, his soul aching for answers as to why the gods he revered could be so cold as to allow their followers in the world above his monastery die screaming by the millions. Those answers never came, in the end.

When the blue dragon Haazan came to the monastery, he recognized Kaazem's position in its religious hierarchy by his robes and promptly cast *Speak with Dead* upon his bones to learn his story. When he had learned what he could, he realized that he might well have a most powerful servitor at his command, if he could properly animate his bones. Doing so was beyond his personal spellcasting abilities, but not out of the reach of the *Wish* he was granted by one of his Efreeti servitors. So it was that Kaazem rose from the dead in the form of a powerful, unique **Skeleton Warrior**. Under the complete control of the wyrm that raised him, as soon as he is aware of interlopers within his demesne, he will turn to attack them until either he or they are destroyed.

Kaazem, Abbot of the Alsidrah Malkafrah, Unique Skeleton Warrior: AC 1, MV 26", HD 9+12, HP 66, THAC0 9, #AT 5/2, Damage 4d4 (Fist), SA Cause Fear in any creature below 5HD, SD Can only be hit by +1 or better magical weapons, Cannot be turned, Undead spell immunities, MR 90%, SZ M, AL LE, XP: 3,474.

The dragon Hazaan (located in **Area #13**, see below for details) wears the circlet that compels Kaazem to obey his commands. Although the monk is quite intelligent, he will not utter a word unless Player Characters are somehow able to take possession of his circlet without destroying him. If they do this, the abbot will request that they give him the magical item. If they comply, he will collapse to bone and dust - but his gratitude for their kindness will be apparent in the *Wish* that all characters responsible for freeing him will receive (courtesy of the Klunish gods that were not deaf to his prayers, so many centuries ago).

The stairway that leads to the second level of the Alsidrah Malkafrah is located beyond the (untrapped and unlocked) secret door located in the north wall of the abbot's bedchambers. There is no treasure to be found here; those valuables that belonged to Kaazem were taken by Hazaan to his lair in **Area #13**.

11. THE PATH FORWARD

The end of the corridor takes the form of the mouth of a staircase, issuing down into darkness. This utter blackness is only abbreviated by tiny motes that meander weightlessly in the ebon void like distant stars within the heavens.

The stairs leading down to the second level of Alsidrah Malkafrah are protected by a subtle, but highly effective, **Trap**. The tiny motes floating in the air along the entire length of the stairway are a magical effect that *dispels magic* upon any creature within the area. While the effect causes no physical damage, it will remove any kind of persistent spells that the Player Characters may be using to enhance their abilities (such as *Bless*, *Invisibility*, *Strength*, and any number of other dweomers). It also dismisses any Summoned allies that may supplement their ranks. This spell has been put into place by Hazaan in order to ensure that the dragon has the upper hand in any confrontation that may occur within its lair. A *Dispel Magic* cast against the effect will neutralize it for 1d10 Turns.

Chapter Three: The Last Command

Long ago, this portion of the Alsidrah Malkafrah held the bedchambers of some of the monastery's most senior monks. When Queen Eshalla came to dwell among these aesthetes as she did when she was but a girl, however, the abbot gave her his personal chambers to call his own. So it was that in the final days of the Invisible Mosque, she had the bottom floor of the subterranean monastery to herself, surrounded by the chambers deemed most critical to the survival of the faithful within its bounds.

When the Player Characters descend the stairs to this level, they will immediately have to contend with Hazaan: The blue dragon that has made of the monastery its home. Afterwards, they will be forced to wind through the remainder of its halls and chambers, some of which contain monsters with which even the wyrm avoids contending.

Should they manage to best these foes...Queen Eshalla's chambers await. Within them: The potential enlightenment of all Klunish lies waiting.

12. DEEPER, INTO DARKNESS

The stairway descends deeper into the heart of the world at a steep slope. Through the tiny points of radiance lingering within its length, a lighted area becomes apparent at the end of its passage.

This is the stairway described in **Area #11** (see above for details on the motes within its length). The stairs span a length of 100' and descend just as far before opening at last into **Area #13**.

13. THE GARDEN OF IATHSEG

Spreading out beyond the stairwell's final step is a great circular room, 50' in diameter. Its ceiling is a dome that rises 50' above the floor, painted in such a way as to make it appear as a blue summer's sky, filled with songbirds. Some strange effect that must certainly be magical emanates from the dome, filling the air within the room with what seems to be gentle sunshine. At the ceiling's highest point, a wide hole exists from which a deluge of water pours forth into a 10' diameter stone pool. A misty spray from the cascade fills the air above the basin, the light making brilliant rainbows in its substance.

There are three exits from the area, in the form of deep alcoves that each end 30' away from the main body of the chamber. All along the walls, abbreviated by these brief passages, are curved stone flats, rising 2' above the floor. Atop these, lush green plants grow wild. In between small fruit-bearing trees and expanses of root vegetables, wild flowers bloom, filling the air with a heady, fragrant scent.

Between these quartered gardens is a wide channel, through which those visiting the chamber were clearly meant to walk. Occupying that area, curled around the room's pool is a long serpentine tail, more blue than the sun

of all oceans. The dragon to which it belongs, on the chamber's far side.

Sapphire eyes, staring forth, full of mirth and malice.

When the dwarven allies of the monks of the Alsidrah Malkafrah designed the monastery, they realized that it would be quite helpful if they had the ability to grow their own food within their demesne. Since the Klunish do not share their enthusiasm for fungi, they used the presence of the oasis above the place to their advantage, allowing the aquifer beneath the spring that feeds it to drain down into a great pool. In turn, this constant water supply made it quite easy for the monks to grow vegetables and – thanks to the magical effect in the room that is equivalent in all ways to natural sunlight – even some few fruit trees. Until the eventual fall of the monastery, the bounty from these lush and fertile gardens – which they referred to as *The Garden of Iathseg*, in honor of the goddess of the oasis – filled the plates of the monks nicely.

Today, however, The Garden of Iathseg has a new denizen. It is this most pleasant and comfortable chamber that the blue dragon Hazaan has claimed as its lair. The wyrm is quite arrogant and impetuous and has lived as long as it has by acting upon a policy of “incinerate first, ask questions later”. So it is that it will move to attack Player Characters the moment it is aware of their presence in its chambers.

Hazaan, The Thunderstroke Within the Sandstorm, Average Old Blue Dragon: AC -1, MV 9"/24"', HD 9, HP 54, THAC0 12, #AT 3, Damage 1d6 (Claw) / 1d6 (Claw) / 3d8 (Bite), SA Breath weapon, Fear aura, Magic use, SD Can only be hit by +1 or better magical weapons, Resistant to electrical damage, SQ See hidden and invisible, SV Vulnerable to cold attacks, SZ L, AL LE, XP: 4,099. Spells memorized: 1st: *Charm Person, Magic Missile* (x2), *Protection from Good, Sleep*; 2nd: *ESP, Invisibility, Mirror Image, Web*; 3rd: *Dispel Magic* (x2), *Slow*; 4th: *Dimension Door, Minor Globe of Invulnerability, Polymorph Self*;

and 5th: *Animate Dead* (x2), *Wall of Force*. Magic Items: *Efreeti Bottle, Ring of Protection +3, Skeleton Warrior Circlet*.

Much that occurs within this room will depend upon how much warning Hazaan has of the Player Characters' approach. If they engage in a loud, protracted fight with the abbot in **Area #10** (see above for details), he will begin preparing himself for their approach. He will cast *Minor Globe of Invulnerability, Invisibility, Protection from Good*, and *ESP* upon himself, open his *Efreeti Bottle* (commanding the genie within to defend him), then wait until he sees the starmotes within the stairway disturbed by their passage. Once he does, he will breathe lightning down its length, hoping to destroy all those that would come to his lair without invitation.

Nasrat, Efreeti: AC 2, MV 9"/24"', HD 10, HP 54, THAC0 10, #AT 1, Damage 3d8 (Fist), SA Spell-like abilities, SD Immune to normal fire, SZ L, AL NE, XP: 2,706.

If the dragon is taken by surprise, he will take flight with a mighty beating of his wings, spraying the whole of his enemies (he hopes) with water from the oasis. He will then breathe, the water-mist covering the half of the room effectively turning his lightning breath into a conical shape that should catch multiple foes in its deadly forking tongues. Only if they seem resistant to his breath weapon will Hazaan engage in melee combat.

Should the Player Characters manage to inflict enough damage on Hazaan that he is brought below 30hp, the dragon will *Dimension Door* into **Area #2** (see above for details) to escape their fury. He will then *Polymorph Self* into the form of a desert raptor, fleeing the Alsidrah Malkafrah to fight another day (this may well come once the Player Characters are successfully departing the monastery). One way or another, their score is not settled. Hazaan holds terrific grudges and the party can be sure that the dragon will one day come to plague them again.

If the Player Characters are able to somehow neutralize Hazaan's ability to escape, the

dragon will surrender, once brought beneath 30hp. He will explain his presence within the monastery and tell them what he knows of the place, provided that they swear upon their gods to leave him alive. He is aware of the secret door in **Area a** (see below for details) but the truth is that he actually knows little of what lies beyond his lair. On the occasions he has ventured beyond the secret door or ordered his allies to do so, the resistance he found was substantial enough to discourage his exploration. Since the creatures he found leave him in peace within this room, he has not tried overhard to destroy them (though he plans on doing exactly that when he grows a bit older and more powerful). He is capable of drawing them a map with a claw as far as **Area #19** (see below for details), but is unaware of the secret door at the end of the passage leading to that chamber. Once giving them this information, he will leave the chamber by way of *Dimension Door*...but this will hardly be the last time the Player Characters will hear from the dragon, as mentioned above. If beaten into giving up his hoard, he will certainly heal himself and lie in wait for the weakened party to leave the Alsidra Malkafrah, ambushing them when much of their power has been expended.

Aside of the magical items worn by the dragon, his impressive hoard (mostly stole from the various chambers of the Alsidrah Malkafrah and the local desert dervishes he and his humanoid servitors terrorize) is composed of the following valuables, spread out among the garden plants: 1,147cp, 426sp, 982gp, 411pp, 16 assorted gemstones, each worth 50 gp, a gold ring set with an emerald worth 250gp, and a hinged gold choker worth 150gp. Finally, he also hides a *Potion of Animal Control*, a *Potion of Fire Resistance*, a *Wand of Metal Command* (12 charges), a *Brooch of Shielding* (52 charges), a trio of *Javelins of Lightning*, a *Robe of Eyes*, a suit of humanoid-sized *Leather Armor +1*, and a *Scimitar of Speed +2*.

Within the three alcoves that spread out from the room are the following:

a. **STATUE OF DUOAD**

At the end of the alcove is a white marble statue of a stately Klunish man wearing loose robes and a turban, standing upon a large pedestal. With a wry grin on his face, he is captured brandishing a lantern forth on one hand, as if to stave off enemies with it. The statue represents the Klunish legend Duoad, whose adventures across the empire's north are still told about campfires to bolster the spirits of treasure-seekers on their way to glory. Despite the apparent size of the statue, the sculpture is actually hollow and easily moved. If pushed from its place, the secret door through which the remainder of the monastery can be accessed is revealed.

b. **STATUE OF QAL'ROZA**

This white stone statue captures the form of a proud Klunish paladin, fair of face and powerful of build, standing atop a square pedestal. One of the greatest of his folk's heroes, the tale of his defense of the royal family against the implacable champions of darkness has made him a figure of which even Klunish children know and revere. Not even greedy Hazaan has learned that the pedestal upon which the statue stands is hollow; within it can be found a *Falchion of Sharpness +3* and a *Potion of Extra-Healing*, laying atop an ancient velvet cushion. Esteemed weapons of the faith, these were kept here by the monks of the Alsidrah Malkafrah in case of emergency, though they could not hope to save them from the fate that eventually befell their order.

c. **STATUE OF QUEEN ESHALLA**

Upon a large pedestal, the white marble statue of a lithe and elegant Klunish woman stands at the end of this alcove. Wearing flowing robes, she hides her face away with a veil. In her hands, she holds a sword aloft, as if offering it to the gods themselves. This was the last of the statues caved within the Alsidrah Malkafrah, representing the last legend of the First Klunish Empire, Queen Eshalla Al'Zaradin. As the monastery fell only shortly after the sculpture was

completed, it bears no special property, but stands as a testimony to the life of the ruler and the great esteem in which she was held by her subjects.

14. DINING HALL

This chamber is 30' x 30' in area and composed of the same polished stone as the remainder of the monastery preceding it. Three doors once issued forth from its bounds, to the north, west and east. The wooden portals have long since been razed, however, and now they lie as wreckage upon the floor on which they stood. Beyond each are 30' deep alcoves in which rows of wooden shelves once hung. These have likewise been destroyed and now litter the floor in each, along with the debris of that which once rest upon them.

The main body of the chamber is dominated by a large wooden table. Chairs that were once pushed against the furnishing have been tossed away haphazardly. Some are intact, while others are but wreckage. Amid these broken wooden seats are the bleached bones of the dead.

Within the room are strange creatures. Like the skeletons of 9' long segmented worms, they writhe and crawl throughout its expanse and over its table. Leathery, withered bits of skin cling to their bones, rotting and moth-eaten. From a mouth surrounded by long lone and ligament tentacles, they make terrible clicking noises and hiss menacingly though throats bereft of flesh.

In this chamber, the monks of the Alsidrah Malkafrah would enjoy meals together, usually taken from the bounty of the Garden of Iathseg. Unfortunately, the Evoked Devastation tainted the waters brought to the monastery through the spring above **Area #13** (see above for details). Though they have since recovered, this robbed the monks of their food supply, bringing many of them to

starvation and even forcing some of their number to cannibalism. This is why the room is in the state in which the Player Characters will find it. The desperate monks tore the storage rooms issuing forth from it asunder in search of food. Likewise, some of them died here from the poisoned food or were murdered by their fellows so that they might dine of their flesh.

Later, a trio of **Carrion Crawlers** tunneled their way into the monastery. The tainted food and meat they found overcame even their incredible constitutions, however, and they died a short time after their arrival. When the blue dragon Hazaan would come upon their bones, he saw a great opportunity in them. He animated them and bade them remain within the chamber to guard him against that which he knew to dwell deeper within the ruined monastery. These creatures remain here, eager to fulfill his command by attacking the Player Characters the moment they enter the chamber.

Ghastly Carrion Crawlers: AC 2/6, MV 12", HD 4+2, HP 26, THAC0 15, #AT 8, Damage 1d4 (Tentacle lash), SA Paralyzation, SZ L, AL NE, XP: 859.

If the chamber's guardians are defeated, Player Characters may find some meager treasure littered among the ruined supplies in the storage rooms become alcoves. In a half-shattered clay jug in the south of these areas are 42gp of ancient Klunish mint, each one worth 50gp to those aware of their true value. In the west alcove is a Potion of Flying that somehow survived the fall from its former perch.

At the rear of the north alcove is a secret door that leads deeper into the Alsidrah Malkafrah. The door is both locked and **Trapped**; if the trigger in its knob is not properly disarmed, the stone block above its threshold drops down upon those in the 10' area before the portal, inflicting 3d10hp damage (save for half).

15. ARMORY

Past the slanting corridor is a circular chamber, 30' in diameter. Exits issue forth from the area to the north and the east. Along the curve of the west wall, a large wooden rack stands, upon which various weapons hang. Bereft of a coating of dust, they seem to be both well-kept and recently-used.

Standing within the midst of the room are a trio of figures. Each one wears the ancient robes of a Klunish monk, threadbare and worn from their great age. Beneath these robes, their withered flesh is grey, making them seem as if each of them is made of stone as old as the monastery itself. Each of them holds a stave in their hands and stares upon the world with eyes that are a pair of brilliant pinpricks swimming in a sea of night, their character hateful and furious.

This chamber once served as the Alsidrah Malkafrah's armory: Where the senior monks dwelling there would keep weaponry with which to train in their arts martial and defend their home, if necessary. Three of these individuals linger here, some of the most puissant of their sacred order, their commitment to the arts of war seeing them live on eternally as **Swordwraiths**. It was these creatures that slew Hazaan's soldiery when he sent them forth to explore the remainder of the monastery (they took their bodies to **Area #18** to dispose of them after their murder, see below for details). Filled with hate for the living and eager to ply their ancient martial techniques upon those that draw breath and would dare defile the sanctity of their home, they will immediately attack the Player Characters when they enter this room.

Swordwraith Monks (3): AC 3, MV 9", HD 7, HP 42, THAC0 10, #AT 3/2, Damage 1d10 (Quarterstaff), SA Strength drain, SD +2 or better weapons to hit, Undead spell immunities, SZ N, AL LE, XP: 1,210.

The only form of treasure to be found in this area lies in the form of the weaponry in its

wall racks, some of which are magical. These are.

- 3 javelins (one of these is actually a *Javelin of Piercing*);
- 3 jo sticks (one of which is a *Jo Stick* +3);
- 3 light crossbows (one of this is a *Light Crossbow of Speed* +2);
- 3 quarterstaves;
- 3 spears (one of which is a *Spear* +3).
- A quiver of 24 *Bolts* +1.

16. SUPERIOR'S QUARTERS, WEST

This is a 30' x 30' square chamber, clearly once a bedchamber. In the northeast corner of the room, an ancient bed stands. Beneath its stained linens, the bleached bones of a corpse lie, connected to them by a thick coat of cobwebs. The southeast corner of the room features a wooden dresser, and next to that stands a desk with a chair pushed beneath it. A book rests atop this furnishing, opened up to a page filled with elegant script.

As it appears, this was once the personal quarters of one of the senior monks dwelling within the Alsidrah Malkafrah. As the monastery was nearing its fall, this particular aesthete simply decided to go to sleep and not wake up ever again. Such was his control over his physiology that he was able to pass gracefully from this mortal coil into the afterlife.

The monk's chambers are almost exactly as they were when he died. This is because almost all creatures dwelling upon this level of the monastery fear the power of Safira in **Area #17** and stay clear of it for fear of inviting her wrath. Player Characters investigating it may find ancient clothing in the dresser that falls to pieces at the touch for the exception of a *Robe of Scintillating Colors* in its top drawer. The desk's bottom drawer contains 33 coins minted during the First Klunish Empire and are worth 50gp each.

Upon the desk are the monk's personal journals, in which much of the history of the

Alsidrah Malkafrah and the events that saw to its fall are related in painstaking detail through the pen of one Brother Razif Tazamak. The last two-score pages of the diary, meanwhile, are letters written to Safira but never sent (these might be instrumental in putting her spirit to rest, should the Player Characters encounter her). Details regarding the monastery unknown to the party might be found here at the Game Master's discretion.

The chamber is blissfully bereft of monstrous guardians or deadly traps.

17. SUPERIOR'S QUARTERS, EAST

Beyond the door is a 30' x 30' chamber. What its purpose might have once been is difficult to discern. This is because every bit of furnishing that once occupied it has been smashed and lit aflame in the room's center, long ago. Among these remains, a litter of bones exist, reduced to broken char from the heat of the flame. A great smudge of ash surrounds the blackened wreckage; on the ceiling above it, an immense sooty circle exists. All around the burned objects are a large ring of small, white votive candles. Somehow, despite the fact that they must have been lit centuries ago, they remain aflame, the tapers still completely intact.

It might be expected that the room would smell of acrid smoke, but nothing could be further from the truth. Instead, the air is fresh and clean, the pleasant scent of jasmine clinging to its quality.

As was **Area #16** (see above for details), this room was once the bedchambers for one of the senior monks dwelling in the Alsidrah Malkafrah. In particular, the aesthete that called the place their home was Sister Safira Alkhazra. The only worldly thing she loved as much as the Klunish gods was the monk that lived just down the hall from her, Brother Razif Tazamak. He was always too dedicated to the worship of Al'Rabka to return her affections, but she always thought in her heart of hearts that he was equally fond of her.

In the wake of the Evoked Devastation, Brother Razif fell into a deep ennui. Sister Safira did everything within her power to pull him from this darkening mood, but could never bring the light and joy to his soul that he sparked within her own. When she one day went to his chambers to find him dead in his bed, she went mad with grief. As a final token of affection to her would-be lover, Sister Safira collected all of her possessions in the center of the room and sacrificed them to the gods, hoping to persuade them to return him to her. When her pleas went unanswered, she threw herself upon the pyre only days later.

The grief-mad Sister Safira's spirit lingers on with this room in the form of a **Ghost**. When the Player Characters enter this room, they will see the lit candles (which remain as they were as a side-effect of the spiritual power created by her death). If they tarry within the room for even a moment longer, the pyre in the chamber's center will re-ignite into a massive inferno, from which the Ghost will come forth – eager to vent her rage upon their number.

Sister Safira Alkhazra, Ghost: AC 0 (or 8), MV 9", HD 10, HP 62, THAC0 10, #AT 1, Damage Age 1d4x10 years with touch, SA Age 10 years and flee on sight, Magic Jar, SD +1 or better to inflict full damage, Immune to spells unless cast by an ethereal caster, Silver weapons only do 50% damage, SZ M, AL LE, XP: 4,918.

The Sister will attack the Player Characters until either she or they are destroyed. If they flee the room, she will pursue them as far as the Garden of Iathseg (the religious significance of that place gives her pause to enter its bounds). The only way to cause her to break off her attack is to show her Brother Tamazak's journals, which she is unable to touch because of her intangible nature. If the Player Characters show her the monk's letters, she will at last know that his love for her was as great as her for him – even if he was never able to give voice to it. This will allow her to let go of her rage and at last slip away to the afterlife (where she can be at his side for all eternity).

There are no form of valuables within this room (sadly, those were all destroyed in the fire), but if the Player Characters are able to soothe Sister Safira's anger, the Klunish gods do not fail to reward them, putting each Player Character that had a hand in doing so under the effects of a *Bless* spell that lasts for one full year to the day of their act of kindness.

18. WHERE THE AIR ITSELF BURNS

The door leading to this area is unique. It is made of heavy stone, seemingly of the same type of which the monastery's walls, ceilings, and floors are composed.

Beyond the door is a 70' long corridor. At the end of this hallway is some type of large, stone chest. Again, it seems to be made of the exact type of smooth and polished dark stone that makes up the substance of the monastery's whole.

This chamber served as a place where the monks of the Alsidrah Malkafrah could dispose of waste. Because of its unusual design, however, it could also serve as a **Trap** that might spell doom to the whole of an incautious party.

The door leading to this area has a latch that must be lifted upward to prevent some internal spring within the door itself from pushing it back down into its original place. Trying to close it with the latch in the down position will result in a bar attached to it to slam against the door's jamb, leaving it cracked open. Therefore, to close the door, some individual must remain outside the room, lift the latch, shut the portal, then allow the bar to return to its down position.

When the door is opened, a device in the bottom of the chest - which is aught but a large, empty open-topped container that is unlocked and otherwise undefended - at the room's rear is armed. Once it is, the closing of the latch releases the extremely-powerful gaseous acid contained there to flood into the room. When operated properly, monks would enter the room and place waste somewhere in the hallway (usually within the

chest). They would then leave the hallway, closing the latch behind them and thus releasing the acid. The acid would dissipate 3 turns later, and when it did, the room would be completely clean.

Player Characters within this chamber when the door is closed will begin to feel the effects of this acid almost immediately. The first three rounds that they are exposed to it, they will suffer 1d4hp damage. Over the course of the next two turns and four rounds, they suffer 1d6hp damage (there is no save to avoid or mitigate either damage). Of course, they may escape by mundane (opening the door and leaving) or magical (*dimension dooring* or *teleporting* away, among many other options) at any time they wish and only suffer an additional 1d4hp for one round after leaving the deadly chamber.

All of the monks within the Alsidrah Malkafrah knew of the existence of this place and how it functioned. This is important if the Player Characters are followed into this place or if they manage to rouse the attention of Ramza Al'Kalif in **Area #19** (see below for details). If the latter finds them in this place, he will close the door and cast a *Wall of Stone* directly in front of it, sealing them - and likely their fates - inside the deadly place.

19. BEFORE THE KLUNISH GODS, I WAIT

The long corridor following the door opens into a 30' x 30' square chamber. In the center of the south wall, a stone slab provides a bed for what appears to be a corpse, wrapped in funerary shrouds. Before it, all across the floor, five rows of prayer mats appoint the stone firmament, colorful and elaborate even in their ancient quality. In the style typical of the First Klunish Empire, they all face north, towards Riez-i-Fiez. Above, the ceiling is vaulted and painted elaborately with a gold illuminated scene from the mythic Hegira, depicting the great hero Qal'roza defending the royal family against the forces of darkness.

As will most likely be immediately evident to those Klunish folk among the Player Characters, this chamber served as the mosque within the Alsidrah Malkafrah. Here, the aesthetes within the monastery would come to prostrate themselves upon the prayer mats on the floor and give glory to their gods.

After the Evoked Devastation and before the death of the monastery, the high priest of the edifice took steps to ensure that the sanctity of the holy site was preserved at all cost. Of course, as were most within the place, his sanity stood on tenuous ground; he turned to the blasphemous in order to achieve the goals his addled mind found sacred. With the help of some of the monks whom he most trusted, he wrought spells and materials to tender upon himself eternal life as a **Mummy**. It is this creature that the Player Characters see upon the stone slab on the room's south wall.

Jafar Al'Farad, Mummy Cleric: AC 0, MV 6", HD 10+3, HP 63, THAC0 10, #AT 1, Damage 1d12 (Fist), SA Fear, Mummy rot, Spellcasting, SD +1 or better to inflict full damage, All weapons only do half damage, Undead spell immunities, SV Vulnerable to fire, SZ M, AL LE, XP: 2,354. Spells prepared: 1st: *Ceremony, Command, Darkness, Protection from Good*; 2nd: *Chant, Hold Person (x2), Silence 15' Radius*; 3rd: *Curse, Dispel Magic, Positive Plane Protection*; 4th: *Cure Serious Wounds, Spell Immunity (Fireball)*; and 5th: *Flame Strike*. Magic items: *Ring of Fire Resistance, Ring of Protection +3*.

When the Player Characters enter this room, Jafar will be prepared for them (he has little to do each day but keep his vigil, after all). Exactly how prepared he is, however, depends upon whether or not his enemies have alerted him to their presence by making undue noise with their approach. If the Player Characters make a lot of noise in a fight with Sister Safira in **Area #17**, for example, he will ready himself for battle by casting (in order) *Positive Plane Protection* on himself, *Silence 15' Radius* on the area just inside the chamber, and *Protection from Good* and *Spell Immunity* on himself. If he has no such advance warning, he will generally begin combat by raining a *Flame Strike* upon

the Player Characters, then move to melee. One way or another, Jafar will not capitulate, nor speak to the Player Characters. His madness has consumed him to the point where neither is possible.

Aside of the magical items he possesses, Jafar's wealth is kept in the (hollow) stone slab upon which he rests. This amounts to 782gp, 3 50gp gemstones, 4 75gp gemstones, and 1 500gp ruby. Laying within these are a *Flail of Disruption +1*, a suit of *Chain Mail +2*, a *Shield +2*, and a *Wand of Fear* (0 charges).

20. HONOR GUARD

This is a circular chamber, 30' in diameter. An exit issues forth from its bound to the west. The area's floor is clean and completely bereft of dust.

Within the room, the air is so hot that it dries the eyes and brings a sweat to the flesh swiftly. The area seems completely empty for the exception of a white tile in its center, upon which a rune has been etched.

Within this area, the monks of the Alsidrah Malkafrah bound a trio of powerful defenders to see to the safety of Queen Eshalla (who dwelt in **Area #21**, see below for details). These are **Phantom Stalkers**, who will not attack Player Characters that enter the room until they begin to move towards the exit in the west wall. Bound in this place for centuries, now, they are all insane and attack those ending the bounds of this chamber in a furious frenzy.

Insane Phantom Stalkers (3): AC 2, MV 15"/27", HD 6, HP 37, THAC0 13, #AT 2, Damage 1d6 (Fist) / 1d6 (Fist), SA Explode in 6HD fireball when slain, Polymorph self, SD Immune to fire, SV Vulnerable to cold, SZ M, AL N, XP: 597.

The Phantom Stalkers here will attack recklessly and to the death, half-hoping that they will be slain and by fulfilling the terms of their binding be returned to the Elemental Plane of Fire. Player Characters hoping to

pass them may do so by either destroying them or the rune in the center of the floor (which is what keeps them held on the Prime Material Plane). To accomplish the latter, 20hp must be done to the oddly-colored stone by way of an attack form capable of damaging granite.

The Phantom Stalkers have no form of treasure.

21. QUEEN ESHALLA'S RETREAT

Beyond the door is a 30' x 30' square chamber. Somehow, no matter the intensity of its brilliance, the illumination brought within its bounds seems to diminish, leaving the corners of the room gloomy and inconsistent shadows.

In the southwest corner of the room, a large canopy bed stands. Its diaphanous curtains of dark lace make a mystery of that which lies within it. A wooden chest reinforced by bronze bands lies at its end. In the southeast corner of the room can be found a wooden dresser, next to a parchment privacy screen. Against the north wall is a desk, large and broad. It is flanked by a pair of braziers, which though long-extinguished do not fail to fill the room with the sweet scent of honey and wild flowers. On the wall behind this furnishing: A large tapestry, expertly woven so as to reflect the heavens and the gods within them.

Atop the desk lies a great falchion. Made of purest white porcelain, characters in the ancient Klunish language are carved into its surface. A peacock feather quill lies next to the blade, its tip gleaming with a razor's sharpness.

This chamber was the one ceded to Queen Eshalla when she lived among the monks of the Alsidrah Malkafrah. Though it is an ancient place, dust-covered and gone tattered with the weight of long centuries, its former

opulence is apparent. The aesthetes of the Invisible Mosque loved and revered their queen and did whatever they could to ensure her comfort while dwelling alongside them.

By the time the Player Characters reach this place, the tale of Queen Eshalla's final moments should be well-known to them. However, history has failed to record that which transpired after her teardrop fell to her famous blade and the Evoked Devastation brought to an end the entirety of a civilization. In the moment afterward, none other than the Righteous One himself - blessed Al'Rabka - appeared to Queen Eshalla, gently taking her by the hand and leading her to the afterlife. Indeed, ever the beloved of the gods, she ascended that day into the ranks of the Klunish Hero-Deities where she was given the traits of faith, patience, and peace as her purview and portfolio.

This is why, when the Player Characters reach her chambers, the corpse of Queen Eshalla is not present. All that remains as testimony that she once dwelt here is her Porcelain Sword - the fabulous treasure that is the aim of their adventure - and those personal effects that lie within the trunk at the foot of her bed, which did not accompany Eshalla on her grand apotheosis.

Within the untrapped and unlocked chest are a *Staff-spear +3*, a *Ring of Regeneration*, a *Cloak of Displacement*, a block of *Incense of Meditation*, and a *Necklace of Prayer Beads*. Of course, though these are wondrous treasures all, they pale in comparison to *Queen Eshalla's Porcelain Sword*, to which any Player Characters that might survive to see this room may lay claim.

Experienced Player Characters are very likely to expect some grand confrontation within this room, possibly as soon as they touch the *Porcelain Sword*. This is not the case, however. *Queen Eshalla's Porcelain Sword* is a symbol of peace and she has ensured that, in the wake of her apotheosis, though the Player Characters will have to fight and struggle to gain the prize, they will remain unmolested in this, her final dwelling. They may lay claim to the blade without fear.

What comes once they leave the room, however, is another matter, entirely.

Epilogue

If the Player Characters fail in their aim to claim Queen Eshalla's Porcelain Sword, it can be presumed that the group assembled by the Sultan of Fiez was successful in doing so. In this case, they will return the blade to his wicked personage and it will never be seen again. The status quo will remain intact in the Second Klunish Empire – much to his satisfaction.

If the group assembled by the Sultan of Fiez (described in the **Jackals at their Heels** section of the adventure, above) overtakes the Player Characters during their progress through the Alsidrah Malkafrah or they meet them as they emerge from its expanse with the *Porcelain Sword of Queen Eshalla* in their presence, they will attempt to slay them and take the weapon for themselves. One way or another, they will have to be dealt with. If they succeed in laying low the party, they will return to the Sultan of Fiez with the *Porcelain Sword* and the outcome described above will take place.

If the Player Characters are able to hold possession of the *Porcelain Sword*, despite interference by the Sultan's men, then they may return the blade to the High Caliph in Ribke City. Should they be able to tender it to that worthy in a whole and unbroken state, then he and the Shiarya of The Weaver of Destinies (who has been made aware of the recovery of the blade by her goddess and has traveled to the Mosque of Al'Rabka to see it for herself) will retreat to meditate over its mysteries. While they do this, the clerics within the temple will see to the injuries of the Player Characters and treat them as most honored guests. They will be given incredibly luxurious suites within the temple, where their every need will be seen to by an army of servants. They will be fed ripe dates and given fresh water and excellent wine, their treatment the envy of kings and queens. During this time, each of them will be visited by a vision from each of their gods (The Weaver of All Destinies, if they do not have one or revere multiple deities). In this dream, they will be informed that they have done the

will of the gods and wrought great change in their name. Despite their lofty positions, however, they are not above genuine gratitude towards the mortals that have acted in their names. Each one of them receives a *Wish* that they may use at any time after they wake once more.

After the passage of seven days, the High Caliph and the Shiarya will return to treat with them. They will explain what they have read on the flat of the *Porcelain Sword* and describe its implications to the Klunish folk (both of which are detailed in **Appendix A: New Magic Items**). Over the course of the next month, the most powerful and influential religious and political leaders from across the Empire will make pilgrimages to Ribke City to learn of the will of the Klunish gods. The Player Characters will be invited by the High Caliph to attend and ensure the sanctity of this grand convocation, naturally.

In the days that follow, the wars and skirmishes that embroil the borders of all Klunish lands will slowly but surely begin to come to an end. Though there are some wicked men and women that work to undermine the peace settling in over the land, their influence is not sufficient to put a stop to the word of the gods. In years to come, the borders dividing the various states and kingdoms that separate its folk will dissolve. With the *Porcelain Sword* as a symbol that unites them all, a new day has dawned in the west.

The Last Command has taken hold – and with it the Third Klunish Empire has begun.

For this, both man and deity know that their heroes are responsible.

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The Porcelain Sword of Queen Eshalla was named by Gaetano LeFavi, who won a contest earning him the right to name the official GrogCon 2019 adventure module. Thanks, Gaetano!

Special thanks to James Garoutsos, Dan Gormanski, and the GrogCon team, without whom, this module would not be possible. I am forever grateful for your faith and support.

Extra-special thanks to my wife, Amanda Lising, for putting up with all the silliness that is wound into being married to a writer. I love you.

Dedicated to E. Gary Gygax. Thank you for painting the skies of my imagination.

First Printing, 2019.

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Appendix A: NEW MAGIC ITEMS

The Porcelain Sword of Queen Eshalla

(Major Artifact)

The Porcelain Sword of Queen Eshalla takes the form of a great falchion composed completely of flawlessly white ceramic. Its guard is illuminated in gold and its handle is wrapped in the finest purple silk. A large, perfect diamond the size of a large date is set into its pommel. Across the flat of the blade, on both sides, carvings have been made in Ancient Klunish script, the handwriting flowing and elegant. Each character is filled with a shallow trace of gold.

The weapon is ill-suited for war. It is incredibly fragile and saves against all attack forms at a -8 penalty. If swung in anger at a foe, it instantly shatters and is forever gone; not even a *Wish* is capable of restoring it. If employed as a weapon, it is incapable of doing even a single point of damage.

The Porcelain Sword of Queen Eshalla is a symbol of peace. Any creature attempting to attack (either with a weapon or spell) holding the weapon must make a saving throw vs. Spells at a -3 penalty in order to do so. Failure to make this save indicates that they have chosen to attack another individual or stay their hand completely if no such target is available. If even a single character of the script on the blade is read, all creatures in a 100' radius must make a saving throw vs spells at a -8 penalty. Success means that they may act of their own accord, while failure means that they are filled with feelings of peace and serenity. Such individuals will have no desire to act in a violent fashion, no matter the situation. Indeed, they will be compelled to begin or mend sundered friendships with those around them. Those succeeding on the saving throw that attempt to act violently are instantly affected as if by a *Power Word: Stun*.

The writing on the flat of the *Porcelain Sword of Queen Eshalla* represents the commands of the gods as given to the last ruler of the First Klunish Empire. It states the need for the folk who revere the deities to be united as one if they are every to aspire to the greatness that their civilization once enjoyed. It is a mythical symbol that, if recovered, it is said could at last unify all the warring Klunish states and bring about a Third Empire where peace and enlightenment held sway and pointless squabbling and discord were vanquished as hated enemies. It was purposely created in a delicate manner so as to remind the Klunish how fragile a thing peace is, and how it must be guarded at all times to avoid its sundering.

XP Value: * **GP Value:** 120,000

Appendix B: NEW MONSTERS

Cenobite

Undead Creature

FREQUENCY:	<i>Very Rare</i>
NO. APPEARING:	<i>1d4</i>
ARMOR CLASS:	<i>6</i>
MOVE:	<i>15"</i>
HIT DICE:	<i>4 + 12</i>
% IN LAIR:	<i>100%</i>
TREASURE TYPE:	<i>Nil</i>
NO. OF ATTACKS:	<i>3/2</i>
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	<i>3d4 (Fist)</i>
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	<i>See below</i>
SPECIAL DEFENCES:	<i>+1 or better to hit, see below</i>
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	<i>See below</i>
INTELLIGENCE:	<i>Low</i>
ALIGNMENT:	<i>Chaotic Evil</i>
SIZE:	<i>M</i>
PSIONIC ABILITY :	<i>Nil</i>
ATT/DEF MODES	<i>N/A</i>
LEVEL/XP VALUE:	<i>VI/400 + 8/hp</i>

A Cenobite is a rare form of undead that is created when a monk has been cloistered away from the outside world for too long, goes insane, and begins to dine upon the flesh of their fellow brothers and sisters. This blasphemous act before the gods curses them to a perpetual existence suspended between life and death, granting them great power at the cost of their immortal souls.

A Cenobite is a creature akin to a Ju-Ju Zombie, though they differ from those horrid things in that retain many of the abilities they enjoyed as living Monks. They are preternaturally swift, climb like 6th-level thieves, and attack with great force as if they were 6 hit dice monsters. Possessed of a sinister cunning, the undead may use any sort of weapon they choose, though they usually prefer to strike with their potent punches and kicks. Because they exist in part on the Negative Material Plane, Cenobites can be hit only by +1 or better magic weapons. Because of their undead nature, piercing or blunt weapon attacks do only one-half normal damage. Only cleaving weapons (such as all axes, broad, bastard or two-handed swords, bardiches, halberds, and similar weapons) do normal damage. A Cenobite is able to deflect non-magical missile weapons with a successful save vs. Petrification.

Cenobites are unaffected by all dweomers which affect the mind. Illusions, charms, holds, etc., as well as poison, electricity, magic missiles, death, and cold spells have no effect upon the horrid creatures. Fire has only one-half its normal normal effect upon them,

though acid and holy water do their full damage, as normal. A Cenobite is equal to a Vampire with respect to clerical turning of undead.

A cenobite takes the form of an ancient monk, their robes threadbare and tattered with age. Beneath them, its dead flesh has gone a sickening blue-grey where it has not gone green with rot. Its eyes are sunken voids into its skull, the soft tissue previously within them long since withered. Its skin is covered with terrible lesions and boils, the decay of long years eating slowly away at it, but unable to overcome the sinister forces that bring it unlife. The creature flails and screams horrifically, yet the noise comes forth only as an awful wheezing like the laughter of a madman - its rotten throat no longer capable of uttering the sounds made by the living.

Appendix C: PRE-GENERATED CHARACTERS

Zahra Madani, Shield of the Righteous

Race / Gender: Klunish Human Female
 Level / Class: 5th level Paladin (Al'Rabka)
 Alignment: Lawful Good



Strength: 15 TH Bonus: ±0 Dam. Bonus: ±0 Op. Doors: On 1-2 B. Bars: 7%
Intelligence: 14 4 Additional Language Known
Wisdom: 15 Magical Attack Adjustment: +1
Dexterity: 9 Reaction / Attack Adjust.: ±0 Defensive Adjust.: ±0
Constitution: 15 Hit Point Adjustment: +1 System Shock: 91%
Charisma: 18 Reaction Adjustment: +35%

Adjusted Saving Throws	
Paralyzation:	9
Petrification:	10
Rods/Staves/Wands:	11
Breath Weapon:	11
Spells:	12

Armor Class: 3 (Scale Mail Armor +2 & Shield)

Hit Points: 45

Movement Base: 12"

Weapon in Hand: *Falchion* +2

Adjusted To-Hit Armor Class 0: [Falchion] 14
 [Short Bow] 16

Adjusted Weapon Damage: [Falchion] 1d6+3 (S/M), 2d4+2 (L)
 [Short Bow] 1d6 (S/M), 1d6 (L)

Attacks Per Round: 1

Weapon Proficiencies: Falchion, Short Bow, Spear, Dagger

Non-Proficiency Penalty: -2

Languages Known: Common, Ancient Klunish, Centaur, Dwarven, Elvish

* Save vs. Mind-Affecting Spells: 11

Magic Weapon Descriptions	Special Racial Abilities
<i>Falchion</i> +2, " <i>Sunbeam</i> ": In addition to the light typically given forth by a magic weapon, <i>Sunbeam</i> may shed a 30' diameter globe of light centered upon itself once per day. This light is equivalent to sunlight with respect to creatures damage by it (such as vampires)	None.
Other Magic Items	Spells & Special Class Abilities
<i>Scale Mail Armor</i> +2, <i>Potion of Healing</i> .	Cleric Abilities: Turn Undead (<i>Skeleton</i> : 4, <i>Zombie</i> : 7, <i>Ghoul</i> : 10, <i>Shadow</i> : 13, <i>Wight</i> : 16, <i>Ghast</i> : 19, <i>Wraith</i> : 20) Paladin Abilities: <i>Detect evil</i> , 60' (when concentrating); <i>Immune to disease</i> ; <i>Lay on hands</i> heals 10 hit points of damage per day; <i>Cure disease</i> 1/week; <i>Emanates Protection from evil aura</i> , 1" radius; <i>Turn undead</i> as 3 rd level Cleric.
Animal Companions, Familiars, & Mounts	
Amuna: A heavy warhorse with a flawless white coat and flowing flaxen mane. Intelligent and faithful, the steed serves his mistress as her special mount. Can run tirelessly over startling distances; enjoys sweet treats such as dates and strawberries. AC 6, MV 18", HD 4+4, HP 36, THAC0 12, #AT 3, Damage 1d8 (Kick) / 1d8 (Kick) / 1d3 (Bite), AL LG.	

Distribution of All Items Carried					
Left Side		Center, Back, or Feet		Right Side	
Item	Location	Item	Location	Item	Location
Large Wooden Shield	Carried	Scale Mail Armor	Worn	Falchion	Carried
Quiver	On back	Holy Symbol	Worn	Waterskin	On belt
Arrows (20)	In quiver	Cloak	Worn	50' Rope	On belt
Small leather sacks (2)	On belt	High hard boots	Worn	Leather rigging	On belt
2 weeks Iron Rations	In sack	Short Bow	Across back	Holy water vials (2)	In rigging
Fresh dates (20)	In sack			Potion	In rigging

Gold & Wealth: 33gp.
 Gold ring worth 150gp
 (Remainder given to poor)

Experience Gained: 26,323xp.

Special Notes: Zarah has become known throughout her homeland of Ribke as “The Shield of the Righteous” for her willingness to serve her patron deity Al'Rabka by protecting the meek and the poor from the vicious Timsuti raiders that cross the Blashi River. This has earned her the love of these humble folk, who celebrate her as a hero, and the admiration of the Caliphate that administers to the nation. When she single-handedly fought off a small blue dragon that thought to settle in the region, the episode cemented her status as a legend to the Ribkiri and a pillar of the Exalted Faith.

Recently, the Holy Caliph of Ribke called Zarah and her brother Hamid – a great hero in his own right – to the land's capital city to undertake a mission of utmost import and terrible danger. The final words of the gods themselves – whispered to the fabled Queen Eshalla just before the Evoked Devastation ruined the first Klunish Empire – may well have been located within the ruins of a hidden monastery far to the west, in the barren Arid Steppes. Such a sensitive mission requires those who embody the Four Heads of the Hydra and whose faith in their deities are unwavering. As both a sword and shield wielded by the will of Al'Rabka, who else could be chosen for such an adventure than Zarah? Who else, indeed! In the name of the Righteous One, she will not fail!



Hamid Madani

Race / Gender: Klunish Human Male
Level / Class: 5th level Cleric (Al'Rabka)
Alignment: Lawful Good



Strength: 13 TH Bonus: ±0 Dam. Bonus: ±0 Op. Doors: On 1-2 B. Bars: 4%
Intelligence: 14 4 Additional Languages Known
Wisdom: 18 Magical Attack Adjustment: +4
Dexterity: 9 Reaction / Attack Adjust.: ±0 Defensive Adjust.: ±0
Constitution: 15 Hit Point Adjustment: +1 System Shock: 91%
Charisma: 12 Reaction Adjustment: ±0%

Adjusted Saving Throws	
Paralyzation:	9
Petrification:	12
Rods/Staves/Wands:	13
Breath Weapon:	15
Spells:	14

Armor Class: 3 (Scale Mail Armor +1 & Shield +1)

Hit Points: 35

Movement Base: 12"

Weapon in Hand: *Footman's Flail +1*

Adjusted To-Hit Armor Class 0: [Footman's Flail] 18

Adjusted Weapon Damage: [Footman's Flail] 1d6+2 (S/M), 2d4+1 (L)

Attacks Per Round: 1

Weapon Proficiencies: Footman's Flail, Mace, Quarterstaff

Non-Proficiency Penalty: -3

Languages Known: Common, Ancient Klunish, Dwarven, Elven, Orcish

* Save vs. Mind-Affecting Spells: 10

Magic Weapon Descriptions	Special Racial Abilities
<i>Footman's Flail +1</i> : No special abilities.	None.
Other Magic Items	Spells & Special Class Abilities
Scale Mail Armor +1, Shield +1, Scroll of 3 Cleric Spells (<i>Cure Serious Wounds</i> (x2), <i>Flame Strike</i>).	<p>Cleric Abilities: Turn Undead (<i>Skeleton</i>: C, <i>Zombie</i>: C, <i>Ghoul</i>: T, <i>Shadow</i>: 4, <i>Wight</i>: 7, <i>Ghast</i>: 10, <i>Wraith</i>: 13, <i>Mummy</i>: 16, <i>Spectre</i>: 20)</p> <p>Cleric Spells Prepared (5/5/2): 1st: <i>Bless</i>, <i>Cure Light Wounds</i> (x2), <i>Protection from Evil</i>, <i>Sanctuary</i>, 2nd: <i>Aid</i>, <i>Hold Person</i>, <i>Resist Fire</i>, <i>Silence</i> 15' <i>Radius</i>, <i>Spiritual Hammer</i>; 3rd: <i>Continual Light</i>, <i>Dispel Magic</i>, <i>Prayer</i>.</p>

Distribution of All Items Carried					
Left Side		Center, Back, or Feet		Right Side	
Item	Location	Item	Location	Item	Location
Large Wooden Shield	Carried	Scale Mail Armor	Worn	Footman's Flail	Carried
Bone scroll cases (2)	On belt	Holy Symbol	Worn	Waterskin	On belt
Holy scripture	In scroll case	Cloak	Worn	Leather rigging	On belt
Spell scroll	In scroll case	High hard boots	Worn	Holy water vials (3)	In rigging
		Backpack	Worn		
		Iron rations (2 weeks)	In backpack		
		50' Rope	In backpack		

<p>Gold & Wealth: 3,500gp (3,250 of which are held by the bankers in the city of Hefok). A golden necklace set with a ruby worth 1,250gp. 5 small pieces of onyx, each worth 50gp.</p>	<p>Experience Gained: 15,478xp.</p>
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Special Notes: Although Hamid was courted by many of the temples from Hefok to Ribke City within his homeland, he eschewed the privileged life of such clerics in favor of seeing to the needs of the humble folk in Ribke's unsettled southeast, along its oft-dangerous border with Timsut. Fighting dangerous monsters, turning back rampaging raiders, and feeding the impoverished, Hamid's deeds in the name of the Righteous One has made him a hero among these people unrivaled for the exception of his younger sister Zarah - a paladin in the service of Al'Rabka.

Recently, however, Hamid has been recalled to Ribke City by the High Caliph to undertake a mission most important and dangerous. The last words of the gods - whispered into the ear of the legendary Queen Eshalla before the Evoked Devastation destroyed the whole of the first Klunish Empire - may have been located in the ruins of a hidden monastery in the desolate and remote Arid Steppes, and a group of the most powerful and accomplished heroes known to the Kluni have been assembled to recover them. Such a task will require the devout and the mighty - those who are strong in faith and with steel. With his sister fighting at his side, Hamid is eager to rise to the challenge and return to his people those commands that the gods would have them hear at last!



Rastan Turani

Race / Gender: Klunish Human Male

Level / Class: 5th level Fighter

Alignment: Lawful Neutral (tends towards Good)



Strength: 18 59% TH Bonus: +2 Dam. Bonus: +3 Op. Doors: On 1-4 B. Bars: 25%
Intelligence: 9 1 Additional Languages Known
Wisdom: 10 Magical Attack Adjustment: ±0
Dexterity: 12 Reaction / Attack Adjust.: ±0 Defensive Adjust.: ±0
Constitution: 18 Hit Point Adjustment: +4 System Shock: 99%
Charisma: 9 Reaction Adjustment: ±0%

Armor Class: 3 (*Chain Mail Armor +1 & Large Wooden Shield*)

Hit Points: 60

Movement Base: 12"

Weapon in Hand: *Falchion +2*

Adjusted To-Hit Armor Class 0: [Falchion] 11
 [Short Bow] 16
 [Dagger] 14

Adjusted Weapon Damage: [Falchion] 1d6+8 (S/M), 2d4+7 (L)
 [Short Bow] 1d6 (S/M), 1d6 (L)
 [Dagger] 1d4+3 (S/M), 1d3+3 (L)

Attacks Per Round: [Falchion] 3/2
 [Short Bow] 2
 [Dagger] 1

Weapon Proficiencies: Falchion, Falchion Specialization, Short Bow, Spear, Dagger

Non-Proficiency Penalty: -2

Languages Known: Common, Ancient Klunish

Adjusted Saving Throws	
Paralyzation:	11
Petrification:	12
Rods/Staves/Wands:	13
Breath Weapon:	13
Spells:	14

Magic Weapon Descriptions	Special Racial Abilities
<i>Falchion +2:</i> No special abilities.	None.
Other Magic Items	Spells & Special Class Abilities
<i>Chain Mail +1, Potion of Levitation.</i>	<i>Weapon Specialization:</i> Rastan specializes in the use of the Falchion. With this weapon, he has a +1 bonus "to hit" and a +2 bonus to damage. He attacks with the weapon 3 times every 2 rounds.

Distribution of All Items Carried					
Left Side		Center, Back, or Feet		Right Side	
Item	Location	Item	Location	Item	Location
Falchion	Carried	Chain Mail Armor	Worn	Large Wooden Shield	Carried
Dagger	Sheathed on belt	Cloak	Worn	Waterskin	On belt
Quiver	On belt	High hard boots	Worn	Tinderbox, flint & steel	On belt
Arrows (20)	In quiver	Backpack	Worn	Leather rigging	On belt
		Short Bow	Across back	Oil flasks (2)	In rigging
		50' Rope	In backpack	Potion	In rigging
		Large leather sacks (2)	In backpack		
		2 weeks Iron Rations	In backpack		
		Iron Spikes (5)	In backpack		
		Mallet	In backpack		

Gold & Wealth: 1gp. Golden necklace with a jade cameo of the sword of Al'Rabka within, worth 500gp.	Experience Gained: 19,229xp.
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Special Notes: Though Rastan is perhaps the greatest warrior ever to have been produced by the wild lands south of the Urgdu Forest, he is a man to whom the Four Heads of the Hydra – those guiding principles to which the true Klunish adhere – have a special sanctity. In particular, he holds humility in especially-high esteem. This is why, though his selfless acts of heroism throughout the nation of Ribke might have made him an incredibly wealthy man, he has given those treasures he has earned as an adventurer to the church and the poor within his homeland. Indeed, many do not recognize him as a warrior of might and prestige, as he shaves both his head and beard as might a pauper and has adopted the dress of a meager nomad.

The High Caliph in Ribke City, however, knows well of Rastan's value and character. Thus, he has called the warrior to join those who would undertake a mission of utmost danger and import – not only in his name but in the name of all those that would call themselves Kluni. The location of the last words spoken to the legendary Queen Eshalla by the very gods themselves previous to the destruction of the first Klunish Empire may have been located in a fallen monastery in the Arid Steppes. A remote, fell place, peril is sure to plague the steps of the heroes that would challenge it...yet with such a prize at stake, Rastan could not refuse such a call to action! His deadly falchion is at the ready...for all the world's Klunish!



Mahmoud Wind-Rider

Race / Gender: Klunish Human Male

Level / Class: 5th level Ranger

Alignment: Chaotic Good



Strength: 13 TH Bonus: ±0 Dam. Bonus: ±0 Op. Doors: On 1-2 B. Bars: 4%
Intelligence: 13 3 Additional Languages Known
Wisdom: 14 Magical Attack Adjustment: ±0
Dexterity: 16 Reaction / Attack Adjust.: +1 Defensive Adjust.: +2
Constitution: 16 Hit Point Adjustment: +2 System Shock: 95%
Charisma: 10 Reaction Adjustment: ±0%

Armor Class: 4 (*Leather Armor +1* & Buckler)

Hit Points: 49

Movement Base: 12"

Weapon in Hand: *Spear +1*

Adjusted To-Hit Armor Class 0: [Spear, Wielded] 14

[Spear, Thrown] 13

[Short Bow] 15

Adjusted Weapon Damage: [Spear, Wielded] 1d6+3 (S/M), 1d8+3 (L)

[Spear, Thrown] 1d6+3 (S/M), 1d8+3 (L)

[Short Bow] 1d6 (S/M), 1d6 (L)

Attacks Per Round: [Spear] 3/2

[Short Bow] 2

Weapon Proficiencies: Spear, Spear Specialization, Short Bow, Falchion, Dagger

Non-Proficiency Penalty: -2

Languages Known: Common, Ancient Klunish, Elvish, Gnoll, Orcish

Adjusted Saving Throws	
Paralyzation:	11
Petrification:	12
Rods/Staves/Wands:	13
Breath Weapon:	13
Spells:	14

Magic Weapon Descriptions	Special Racial Abilities
<i>Spear +1, "Umbra":</i> Creatures struck by Umbra must make a Saving Throw vs. Spells or be struck with <i>Blindness</i> (as the spell).	None.
Other Magic Items	Spells & Special Class Abilities
<i>Leather Armor +1, Potion of Speed.</i>	<p>Ranger Abilities: +5 <i>Damage bonus</i> against "giant-class" creatures; <i>Surprise</i> opponents 50% of the time; <i>Tracking</i> ability; <i>Identification</i> of tracks.</p> <p><i>Weapon Specialization:</i> Mahmoud specializes in the use of the Spear. With this weapon, he has a +1 bonus "to hit" and a +2 bonus to damage. He attacks with the weapon 3 times every 2 rounds.</p>
Animal Companions, Familiars, & Mounts	
<p>Sirocco: A light warhorse, legendary among the Paynim nomads for its beauty and swiftness. Mahmoud has raised the steed since she was a foal and the horse has given him her total trust and devotion in return. She is not at all fond of desert dogs, but greatly enjoys the sweet oats that her master sometimes gives her as a treat AC 7, MV 27", HD 2, HP 16, THAC0 16, #AT 2, Damage 1d4 (Kick) / 1d4 (Kick), AL N.</p>	

Distribution of All Items Carried					
Left Side		Center, Back, or Feet		Right Side	
Item	Location	Item	Location	Item	Location
Buckler	Worn	Leather Armor	Worn	Spear	Carried
Short Bow	At hip	Holy symbol	Worn	Waterskin	On belt
Quiver	On belt	Hooded Cloak	Worn	Tinderbox, flint & steel	On belt
Arrows (24)	In quiver	High soft boots	Worn	Leather rigging	On belt
Large pouch	On belt	Saddlebags	On mount	Oil flasks (2)	In rigging
2 weeks Iron Rations	In pouch	50' Rope	In saddlebag	Potion	In rigging
		Large leather sacks (2)	In saddlebag		
		Sweet oats	In sack		

Gold & Wealth: 87gp, 11pp. Golden holy symbol of Geshtai, worth 350gp 3 small emeralds, each worth 100gp.	Experience Gained: 22,411xp
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Special Notes: Mahmoud is a man of the Paynim tribes that ride the wastelands south of Fiez and Ribke. Few know the tale regarding his family's exile from their band of nomads, but the story matters little, now. The one the local tribesmen refer to as *The Phantom Rider* (for the swiftness with which he rides and the pale horse that serves as his mount) has become a hero within the region: One of the few that dare to fight the foul humanoids from Llu along the edge of the Llusprue Mountains. In these reaches, he serves as a guide and pathfinder to the gooldy and the meek. It is said that few know the desolate desert sand there as well as Mahmoud and those he accompanies feel mighty as giants with him in their midst.

Mahmoud's reputation is what brought him far to the north, to Ribke City. The Holy Caliph needed a man to guide a group of fellow heroes across the desert to the barren Arid Steppes. There, it is said that the very words of the gods themselves - the last whispered into the ear of the legendary Queen Eshalla before the death of the first Klunish Empire - may have been located. As a brave and noble warrior and a man of strong faith, he accepted the Caliph's charge. Soon, he hopes to help deliver the last commands of the gods to his care. It may well bring peace at last to his troubled and tumultuous land.



Hassan Rajavi

Race / Gender: Klunish Human Male

Level / Class: 5th level Magic-User

Alignment: Lawful Neutral



Strength: 9 TH Bonus: ±0 Dam. Bonus: ±0 Op. Doors: On 1-2 B. Bars: 1%
Intelligence: 18 7 Additional Languages Known
Wisdom: 10 Magical Attack Adjustment: ±0
Dexterity: 15 Reaction / Attack Adjust.: ±0 Defensive Adjust.: +1
Constitution: 11 Hit Point Adjustment: ±0 System Shock: 75%
Charisma: 11 Reaction Adjustment: ±0%

Armor Class: 6 (*Bracers of Defense AC7 & Turban of Protection +1*)

Hit Points: 18

Movement Base: 12"

Weapon in Hand: Quarterstaff

Adjusted To-Hit Armor Class 0: [Quarterstaff] 20

Adjusted Weapon Damage: [Quarterstaff] 1d6 (S/M), 1d6 (L)

Attacks Per Round: 1

Weapon Proficiencies: Quarterstaff

Non-Proficiency Penalty: -5

Languages Known: Common, Ancient Klunish, Ancient Suloise, Dwarven, Elven, Gnoll, Goblin, Orcish

Adjusted Saving Throws	
Paralyzation:	13
Petrification:	12
Rods/Staves/Wands:	10
Breath Weapon:	14
Spells:	11

Magic Weapon Descriptions	Special Racial Abilities
None.	None.
Other Magic Items	Spells & Special Class Abilities
<i>Bracers of Defense AC7, Turban of Protection +1, Ring of Wizardry (doubles all 1st level spells).</i>	Spells Memorized (8/2/1): 1 st : <i>Burning Hands, Charm Person, Detect Magic, Magic Missile (x4), Sleep</i> ; 2 nd : <i>Invisibility, Web</i> ; 3 rd : <i>Fireball</i> .

Distribution of All Items Carried					
Left Side		Center, Back, or Feet		Right Side	
Item	Location	Item	Location	Item	Location
Quarterstaff	Carried	Turban	Worn	Ring	Worn
Bracer	Worn	Robes	Worn	Bracer	Worn
Large Bag	On belt	Holy symbol	Worn	Waterskin	On belt
Spellbook	In bag	High hard boots	Worn	Leather rigging	On belt
Holy text	In bag	Backpack	Worn	Oil Flask (2)	In rigging
Small pouch	On belt	50' Silk rope	In backpack		
Tinderbox, Flint & Steel	In small pouch	2 weeks Iron rations	In backpack		
		Torches (3)	In backpack		

<p>Gold & Wealth: 5,000gp (kept with bankers in Ribke City), 77gp (kept on person). Golden holy symbol of Al'Daraz, worth 250gp A gold-illuminated holy text, sacred to Al'Daraz, worth 1,000gp.</p>	<p>Experience Gained: 24,658xp.</p>
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Special Notes: Hassan gained respect throughout much of Fiez when the former apprentice to the terrible Kermin Mind-Bender publicly rebuked his wicked master and vowed to destroy the powerful magi should he ever set foot upon Klunish soil again. These were more than words: The sorcerer led a daring attack upon the tower of one of his most notorious allies in Allopol, despite the awesome magic at his command. Nonetheless, it was he that cut the finger on which his prized *Ring of Wizardry* rest from his hand before making him denounce his evil master – and then personally slaying him.

Such deeds persuaded the High Caliph of Ribke to call Hassan to his presence, where he tasked the sorcerer with the charge of accompanying a group of heroes to the barren Arid Steppes. There, word has surfaced that the last commands of the gods themselves – whispered into the ears of the legendary Queen Eshalla before the first Klunish Empire was destroyed in the Evoked Devastation – may have been located. Clearly, a find of such significance must not fall into the wrong hands. With Al'Daraz as his witness, Hassan will not let this come to pass! He will add his mastery of the Invisible Art to the might of his heroes – and the will of the gods will be known!



Sarina Jazani, The Laughing Shadow

Race / Gender: Klunish Human Female

Level / Class: 5th level Illusionist

Alignment: Chaotic Good



Strength: 7 TH Bonus: ±0 Dam. Bonus: -1 Op. Doors: On 1 B. Bars: 0%
Intelligence: 16 5 Additional Languages Known
Wisdom: 10 Magical Attack Adjustment: ±0
Dexterity: 17 Reaction / Attack Adjust.: +2 Defensive Adjust.: -3
Constitution: 9 Hit Point Adjustment: ±0 System Shock: 65%
Charisma: 15 Reaction Adjustment: +15%

Adjusted Saving Throws	
Paralyzation:	13
Petrification:	12
Rods/Staves/Wands:	10
Breath Weapon:	14
Spells:	11

Armor Class: 3 (*Bracers of Defense AC7, Ring of Protection +1, & Dexterity Bonus*)

Hit Points: 24

Movement Base: 12"

Weapon in Hand: Dagger

Adjusted To-Hit Armor Class 0: [Dagger] 20

Adjusted Weapon Damage: [Dagger] 1d4 (S/M), 1d3 (L)

Attacks Per Round: 1

Weapon Proficiencies: Dagger

Non-Proficiency Penalty: -5

Languages Known: Common, Ancient Klunish, Dwarven, Elvish, Goblin, Orcish

Magic Weapon Descriptions	Special Racial Abilities
None.	None.
Other Magic Items	Spells & Special Class Abilities
<i>Bracers of Defense AC7, Ring of Protection +1, Scroll of 5 Illusionist Spells (Blur, Change Self, Mirror Image, Fear, Wraithform).</i>	Spells Memorized (4/2/1): 1 st : <i>Change Self, Color Spray (x2), Phantom Armor</i> ; 2 nd : <i>Fog Cloud, Invisibility</i> ; 3 rd : <i>Spectral Force</i> .

Distribution of All Items Carried					
Left Side		Center, Back, or Feet		Right Side	
Item	Location	Item	Location	Item	Location
Dagger	Carried	Circlet	Worn	Ring	Worn
Bracer	Worn	Robes	Worn	Bracer	Worn
Dagger (3)	On belt	High hard boots	Worn	Waterskin	On belt
Large Pouch	On belt	Backpack	Worn	Small pouch	On belt
Scroll case	On belt	50' Silk rope	In backpack	Tinderbox, Flint & Steel	In small pouch
Scroll	In case	2 weeks Iron rations	In backpack	Leather rigging	On belt
		Torches (3)	In backpack	Oil Flask (2)	In rigging

<p>Gold & Wealth: 112gp, 2 50gp gemstones A bone scroll case illuminated with gold filigree and gemstones, worth 350gp. Gold earrings set with sapphires, each worth 150gp.</p>	<p>Experience Gained: 19,615xp.</p>
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Special Notes: Few people within Timsut can claim to have truly seen the face of the woman known as “The Laughing Shadow” within that land's borders. Surely none of these are those loyal to the Pasha, whom the magi has worked to undo since the day of her birth. This is because her family was one of those whose lands and riches were taken from them by the greedy ruler when he came to power. He likely regretted doing so when she stole away into his great treasury and, instead of taking them for herself, threw a substantial portion of his purloined gold and gemstones to the poor and hungry outside the stronghold's walls!

The episode brought the woman to the notice of the High Caliph of Ribke, who was more than sympathetic to her struggle. Her skills were what he desired, however, and when she appeared before his holy seat, he requested that she join a group of heroes he was assembling for a mission fraught with peril. It seems that word has surfaced that the last commands of the gods themselves – whispered into the ears of the legendary Queen Eshalla before the first Klunish Empire was destroyed in the Evoked Devastation – may have been located in a ruined monastery in the desolate Arid Steppes. A woman of faith herself, this convinced Sarina to set aside her fight against the Pasha for a moment. For if the words of the gods are recovered – perhaps all Kluni might be untied to overthrow such wicked rulers as one!



Sahar Khadem

Race / Gender: Klunish Human Female

Level / Class: 5th level Thief

Alignment: Chaotic Good



Strength: 14 TH Bonus: ±0 Dam. Bonus: ±0 Op. Doors: On 1-2 B. Bars: 7%
Intelligence: 15 4 Additional Languages Known
Wisdom: 9 Magical Attack Adjustment: ±0
Dexterity: 18 Reaction / Attack Adjust.: +3 Defensive Adjust.: -4
Constitution: 14 Hit Point Adjustment: ±0 System Shock: 88%
Charisma: 16 Reaction Adjustment: +20%

Armor Class: 3 (*Leather Armor* +1 & Dexterity Bonus)

Hit Points: 26

Movement Base: 12"

Weapon in Hand: *Daggers* +2 (Dual-Wielded)

Adjusted To-Hit Armor Class 0: [Dagger, Primary] 17
 [Dagger, Secondary] 18
 [Dagger, Thrown] 14

Adjusted Weapon Damage: [Dagger] 1d4+2 (S/M), 1d3+2 (L)

Attacks Per Round: 1

Weapon Proficiencies: Dagger, Sling, Scimitar

Non-Proficiency Penalty: -3

Languages Known: Common, Ancient Klunish, Dwarvish, Elven, Orcish

Adjusted Saving Throws	
Paralyzation:	12
Petrification:	11
Rods/Staves/Wands:	12
Breath Weapon:	15
Spells:	13

Magic Weapon Descriptions	Special Racial Abilities
<i>Dagger</i> +2, "Al'Prances": A set of three identical magical daggers. Evidence exists that these may be intelligent in nature, though they have not yet deigned speak.	None.
Other Magic Items	Spells & Special Class Abilities
<i>Leather Armor</i> +1, <i>Potion of Gaseous Form</i> .	Thieving Abilities: <i>Pick Pockets:</i> 60%; <i>Open Locks:</i> 57%; <i>Find/Remove Traps:</i> 45%; <i>Move Silently:</i> 50%; <i>Hide in Shadows:</i> 41%; <i>Hear Noise:</i> 20%; <i>Climb Walls:</i> 90%; <i>Read Languages:</i> 25%. <i>May backstab opponents for x3 damage.</i>

Distribution of All Items Carried					
Left Side		Center, Back, or Feet		Right Side	
Item	Location	Item	Location	Item	Location
Dagger	Carried	Leather Armor	Worn	Dagger	Carried
Large pouch	On belt	Robes	Worn	Waterskin	On belt
50' Silk rope	In pouch	Dagger	Hidden in robes	Small pouch	On belt
Thief's tools	In pouch	High soft boots	Worn	Tinderbox, Flint & Steel	In small pouch
Large pouch	On belt			Leather rigging	On belt
2 weeks Iron rations	In pouch			Oil Flask (2)	In rigging
				Potion	In rigging

Gold & Wealth: 3,500gp (kept by bankers in Fiez).
125gp (kept on person).
5 tiny fire opals, each worth 25gp.
Jade hair pin worth 500gp (may be used as an improvised dagger or thief's tool).

Experience Gained: 11,382xp.

Special Notes: Sahar's great knowledge of Ancient Klunish lore, customs, and famous treasures rivals that of many sages throughout the lands settled by the ancestors of that folk. She has gained such information over a lifetime wandering and exploring lost and forgotten sites once well-known or sacred to the pre-Devastation Kluni. Indeed, her skill and finding such places and recovering the treasures found within them has marked her as one of the most famous and successful professional explorers in all of Zeif. She has also gained a reputation as a woman not to be crossed, as her skill with a blade very nearly rivals the profound depth of her knowledge.

With such skills at her command, it is small wonder that Sahar was called before the High Caliph of Ribke and charged with a solemn task: Joining a fellowship composed of some of the greatest living Klunish heroes to recover an item of incredible religious significance from a place most dire. Word has surfaced that the last words of the gods – spoken to the legendary Queen Eshalla before the first Klunish Empire was destroyed in the Evoked Devastation – may have been located within a heretofore hidden monastery in the Arid Steppes. The mere possibility that it might be true was enough to get Sahar to agree immediately. Even now, as she sets off with her fellows on their solemn quest, her mind races with the thoughts of the two things in the world that set fire to her blood like nothing else: The knowledge of her ancestors, thought long-lost, and the thrill of facing the dangers that surely lie in the fell place in which it hides. Sahar is eager to rise to the challenge to meet both – and to learn what the last commands of the gods of her people might have been!



Harun, Hand of the Black Lotus

Race / Gender: Klunish Human Male
 Level / Class: 5th level Monk (Anexay)
 Alignment: Lawful Neutral



Strength: 16 TH Bonus: ±0 Dam. Bonus: +1 Op. Doors: On 1-3 B. Bars: 10%
Intelligence: 10 2 Additional Languages Known
Wisdom: 16 Magical Attack Adjustment: +2
Dexterity: 16 Reaction / Attack Adjust.: +1 Defensive Adjust.: -2
Constitution: 16 Hit Point Adjustment: +2 System Shock: 95%
Charisma: 7 Reaction Adjustment: -5%

Armor Class: 5 (Class Ability & Ring of Protection +2)

Hit Points: 31

Movement Base: 19"

Weapon in Hand: None

Adjusted To-Hit Armor Class 0: [Open Hand] 18
 [Falchion] 17
 [Light Crossbow] 15

Adjusted Weapon Damage: [Open Hand] 1d6+1 (S/M), 1d6+1 (L)
 [Falchion] 1d6+3 (S/M), 2d4+2 (L)
 [Light Crossbow] 1d4+2 (S/M), 1d4+2 (L)

Attacks Per Round: [Open Hand] 5/4
 [Falchion/Light Crossbow] 1

Weapon Proficiencies: Falchion, Light Crossbow, Spear

Non-Proficiency Penalty: -3

Languages Known: Common, Ancient Klunish, Dwarven

Adjusted Saving Throws	
Paralyzation:	10
Petrification:	9
Rods/Staves/Wands:	10
Breath Weapon:	13
Spells:	11

* Save vs. Mind-Affecting Spells: 9

Magic Weapon Descriptions	Special Racial Abilities
<i>Falchion</i> +1: No special abilities.	None.
Other Magic Items	Spells & Special Class Abilities
<i>Bolts</i> +2 (12), <i>Ring of Protection</i> +2, <i>Potion of Healing</i> .	<p>Monk Abilities: +3 damage with weapons, To-Hit rolls of 5 or better than required Stun opponents for 1-6 Rounds; May deflect non-magical missiles with successful Save vs. Petrification; Only 26% chance of being Surprised; May fall 20' without damage if within 1' of a wall; Speak with animals at will; Resistance to ESP: 28%; Immune to disease; Immune to slow effects; Immune to haste effects.</p> <p>Thieving Abilities: Open Locks: 47%; Find/Remove Traps: 40%; Move Silently: 40%; Hide in Shadows: 31%; Hear Noise: 20%; Climb Walls: 90%.</p>

Distribution of All Items Carried					
Left Side		Center, Back, or Feet		Right Side	
Item	Location	Item	Location	Item	Location
Falchion	Sheathed at belt	Robes	Worn	Light crossbow	Hung from belt
Ring	Worn	Sash	Worn	Waterskin	On belt
Quiver	On belt	Low soft boots	Worn	Small pouch	On belt
Bolts (12)	In quiver	50' Rope	Hidden in sash	Tinderbox, Flint & Steel	In small pouch
		Backpack	Worn	Leather rigging	On belt
		Large bags (2)	In backpack	Oil Flask (2)	In rigging
		2 weeks Iron rations	In backpack	Potion	In rigging
		Torches (3)	In backpack		

Gold & Wealth: 3sp, 3gp, 3pp.	Experience Gained: 23,637xp.
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Special Notes: Harun is one of the devout aesthetics that worship at the Cathedral of Light and Darkness: A monastery in eastern Ribke dedicated to the worship of the Mistress of Flawlessness, Anexay. In particular, he holds the title of Hand of the Black Lotus, the monk within the order whose role it is to have truck with the outside world on the behalf of those within the Cathedral. As such, Harun has traveled far and wide across Ribke on many missions, generally to support the actions of the nation's High Caliph when some dangerous or important mission arises. In this way, Anexay's faithful demonstrate their solidarity with Ribke's religious leaders and are generally left to attend to their own affairs.

Recently, Harun has been called to Ribke City by the High Caliph for his most important and dangerous mission yet. It appears that the final words of the gods – whispered into the ear of the legendary Queen Eshalla before the first Klunish Empire was destroyed in the Evoked Devastation – may have been located in an forgotten temple in the forlorn Arid Steppes. Clearly, such an important religious document cannot be left to fall into the wrong hands. So it is that the Hand of the Black Lotus prepares his mind and his body to brave the challenges that certainly await in such a fell place. The very faith of all Kluni may hang in the balance!



Appendix D: THE SULTAN'S ASSASSINS

Turan Kiyaaalfaz

AC 3 (*Chain Mail +1* & Shield); MV 12"; Cleric 5; HP 37; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+2 (*Footman's Flail +1*); Str 14, Int 10, Wis 16, Dex 12, Con 15, Cha 12; AL LE.

Spells: 1st: *Command, Cure Light Wounds* (x3), *Protection from Good*; 2nd: *Augury, Hold Person, Slow Poison, Spiritual Hammer* (x2); 3rd: *Animate Dead*.

Magic Items: *Chain Mail +1, Footman's Flail +1, Potion of Healing*.

Traits: Cold, Unfeeling, Thoughtful, Truthful.

Background: Turan studied at the Mosque of Al'Rabka along with Zahra and Hamid Madani. The boy was expelled from his classes when he was found to be using their deity's power in blasphemous and forbidden rites. Settling in Zeif, he adventured across the land where his name and terrifying spells became the subjects of legends used by parents to scare their children into obedience.

Basir Yargargvaz

AC 3 (*Chain Mail +1* & Shield); MV 12"; Fighter 5; HP 50; THAC0 16; #AT 3/2; Dmg 2d4+4 (*Falchion +1*); Str 16, Int 8, Wis 14, Dex 10, Con 16, Cha 12; AL LE.

Magic Items: *Chain Mail +1, Falchion +1, Potion of Healing*.

Traits: Attentive, Brave, Quiet, Vicious.

Background: Basir was a loyal servant of the Beygraf of Tek who relished in the execution of his brutal liege's most terrible edicts. However, when he was found to be responsible for the infamous Massacre of the Udgru Forest (at which Rastan Turani was present and which claimed several of his loved one), he was forced to flee civilized lands. Now he travels such lawless places as Llu and the Manyips, where his grim shadow is sure to bring death and woe, whenever it appears.

Leila Al'Mudaar

AC 5 (*Leather +1* & Shield); MV 12"; Ranger 5; HP 49; THAC0 15; #AT 2; Dmg 1d6+2 (*Short Bow +1*); Str 9, Int 13, Wis 14, Dex 16, Con 16, Cha 12; AL NE.

Magic Items: *Ring Mail +1, Short Bow +1, Potion of Fire Resistance*

Traits: Brave, Driven, Humble, Suspicious, Unforgiving.

Background: Leila is a loyal tracker and soldier in the armies of the Sultan of Fiez, who has ordered her to use her skills to hunt and destroy those working for the High Caliph of Ribke. Having

distinguished herself as a huntress in helping the Sultan eradicate the nomads of the Manyap – including the family of Mahmoud Wind-Rider – her devotion to her master is nearly as legendary as her cruelty and her puissance with her deadly bow.

Saman Kavaan

AC 7 (*Bracers of Defense AC7*); MV 12"; Magic-User 5; HP 18; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6-1 (*Quarterstaff*); Str 7, Int 16, Wis 14, Dex 12, Con 8, Cha 15; AL CE.

Spells: 1st: *Burning Hands, Charm Person, Magic Missile* (x3), 2nd: *Invisibility, Web*, 3rd: *Slow*.

Magic Items: *Bracers of Defense AC7, Potion of ESP, Potion of Flying*

Traits: Amoral, Clever, Enigmatic, Mercurial.

Background: It is unclear whether the man known as "The Fiendbinder" derives greater joy in employing terrifying demonic allies to commit blasphemies in his name or in destroying goodly magi throughout the Klunish Empire (as he did the masters of both Hassan Rajavi and Sarina Jazani). In either case all those throughout the land fear his name and his dark power.

Jaleh Al'Xafuz

AC 3 (*Studded Leather +1*); MV 12; Assassin 5; HP 36; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+2 (*Shortsword +1*); Str 16, Int 14, Wis 8, Dex 16, Con 16, Cha 7; SA Assassinate, Triple damage from backstab; SQ Disguise; AL LE.

Thieving Skills: PP 40, OL 38, FT 30, MS 27, HS 20, HN 15, CW 87.

Magic Items: *Shortsword +1, Studded Leather +1, Potion of Levitation*.

Traits: Perceptive, Nihilist, Sinister, Unfeeling.

Background: Both Sahar Khadem and the monk Harun know well the sting of Jaleh's blade, both having lost loved ones to the assassin. Neither of those killed was an especially important person – she simply wished to prove a point to both as they grew in power: Never cross purposes with her. Unfortunately, the killer is clever and as slippery as they come and has never been brought to justice, despite the fact that she leaves a trail of bodies from Fiez to Tek.

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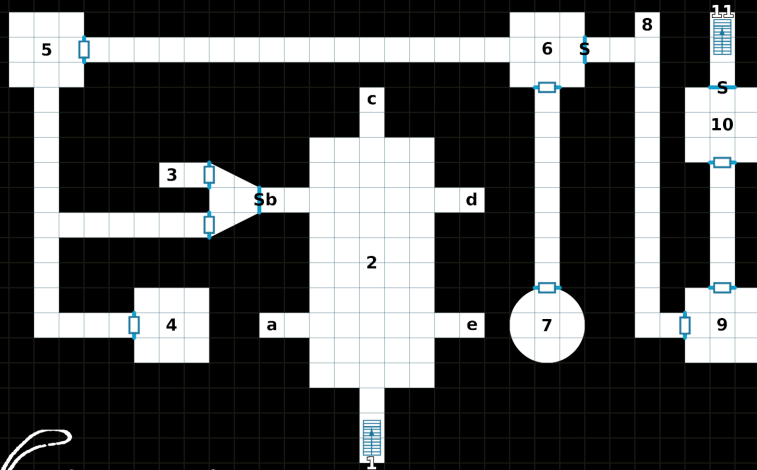
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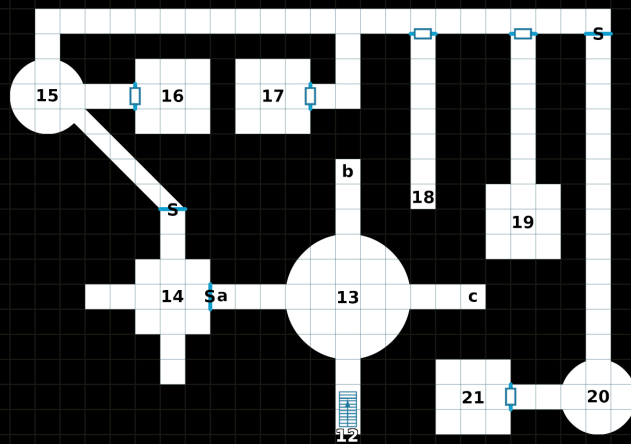
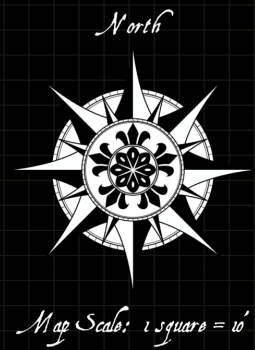
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