

POCKET UNIVERSE™



HOME COMING

**AN INTRODUCTORY ADVENTURE FOR
THREE TO SEVEN BEGINNING
POCKET UNIVERSE CHARACTERS**



Homecoming

by Jeff Dee

This is an introductory adventure for three to seven beginning Pocket Universe™ characters.

Premise & Setup

The PCs are soldiers from the town of Zarikath in the land of Locria. The Hykolaran Empire has defeated the Locrian army, and the PCs are returning to Zarikath.

Locria is situated on a peninsula that extends to the northwest of the main continent, from which the Hykolaran invasion originated.

Locrians are slender, pale, and bearded. Each village has a hereditary Headman, and a Chieftain rules each group of villages from a central fortress. The Chieftains sometimes band together under an elected warlord, as they did in the war against Hykolar. Their culture is Celtic in flavor, and their native language is called Locrian.

The Locrians have five deities: Umbar the father-tree (a gnarled wood-spirit), Agnar the fire-maker, Ietra Skydweller (patron of birds and of the heavens), Hethyt the earth-mother (wife of Umbar), and Caroon the sea-goddess.

Character Generation

Create characters using the Basic Rules. Players may create Dwarf characters by taking the Small, Slow (-1) and Quirk: Quarrelsome traits on top of their normal Personal Traits. Convert cash and prices

into the Locrian currency: 1 copper piece = \$1, 1 silver piece = \$5, and 1 gold piece = \$50. Some sample Locrian names are:

Male: Female:

Badok Karik Kandri Moya
Korbek Gravah Nara Tandia
Tubek Yenya

Contacts in Zarikath



This section lists the premier citizens of Zarikath, along with their Contact costs and functions. The GM may allow the PCs to take other Contacts from outside of Zarikath if this adventure is being used as the first episode of an ongoing campaign. The GM must make up stats for any Contacts who get involved in combat. Any PC can get free accommodations in the home of a personal friend or relative.

Headman Lobak (7) is old, but he commands four men at arms. He'll loan one to any effort against the bandits, two to an



acquaintance, or three to any personal friend or relative. They have Attributes of 10, Spear skill 11-, spears, studded armor, and metal caps.

Kaniya (5) is a priestess of Hethyt. She will magically heal wounds for “donation” of 2sp per hit point. She’ll join an acquaintance on a mission for a 50sp donation, but she’ll join a personal friend or relative for free.

Tavok (3) the hunter has Forest Survival, Search, and Stealth skills of 12- and Tracking skill of 13-. He charges 8sp per day, 4sp for acquaintances, 2sp for friends and relatives.

Kleat (5) is a Dwarven blacksmith who sells weapons & armor. He charges acquaintances ½ price, but gives equipment to personal friends and relatives for free (and he charges their companions ½ price). Kleat has the “Slow” (-1 Move) Disadvantage, the Disadvantage “Quirk: quarrelsome”, and the Advantage “Small”.

Nandra (5) runs the Falconwood Inn, which rents rooms and sells food. A spot on her common room floor costs 1sp per night. A shared room costs 4sp each per night. A private room costs 8sp per night. A cheap meal costs 1sp. A good meal costs 3sp. A banquet for two costs 20sp. Trail provisions cost 2sp per day. Acquaintances get ½ price rooms, while her friends get a free private room and ½ price rooms and meals for their companions.

Garkavah (5) is a priest of Agnar. He can light fires anywhere in LOS, and can fling fire bolts: 12- to hit, inflicting 4/6/8 energy damage. He will join

acquaintances for an equal share in the loot for his temple, and he’ll join personal friends for free.

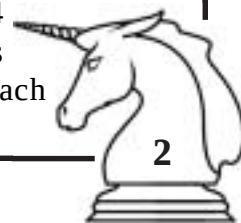
Kobah (1) is the town drunk.

STOP HERE UNLESS YOU’RE THE GM

The PCs have just arrived back in Zarikath, tired and demoralized. It is dawn, but the town feels abandoned. Then they spot Kobah emerging from the Falconwood Inn. When he sees them, or they call out to him, he yells, “Bandits!” and flees. His call alerts other townspeople in the inn, who come to the door and windows to look. One or more of the PCs’ contacts are there, and they recognize the PCs despite how long they’ve been away. They usher the PCs inside for a drink and a tale.

First they ask for news about the war. All the PCs know is that the Hykolaran Empire defeated Locria; they know nothing of the invaders’ future plans. The locals welcome the PCs home as heroes anyway.

Then they tell the PCs what’s been happening while they were gone. Gangs of deserters have been terrorizing the countryside. A gang known as Kuldair’s Cravens has targeted Zarikath. Balbo Kuldair is a huge mean one-eyed fighting man. His gang is comprised of bandit thugs and a handful of 2-headed creatures. They have a camp somewhere outside town. A group of them (1 per PC) swagger into town once a week to carry off goods and attack anyone who opposes them. Their last visit was 4 days ago. Headman Lobak has offered a reward of 10sp for each



bandit's head, plus 50sp for the head of Balbo Kuldair.

Then the crowd at the inn waits to hear whether the PCs intend to help the town brace for the next bandit attack, or hunt for the bandit camp.

Preparing For The Next Bandit Attack

The PCs have 3 days to prepare. They can use this time to negotiate with their contacts and to come up with a plan.

The number of raiders equals the number of PCs. Every 4th raider is a Two-Headed Aberrant, and the rest are Thugs. The bandits usually come down the main street from the west, stopping at the inn to demand drinks. After they get drunk the bandits scatter through the town causing trouble. They're not expecting any resistance. Drunken characters suffer a -1 penalty on DEFT and INTL based abilities.

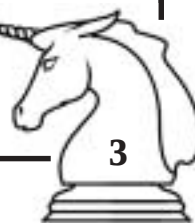
Show the map of Zarikath. The PCs can use Search skill to hide at strategic places around town. The bandit raiders use their Search skill to spot them. Until the bandits spot them the PCs can attack by surprise (5.34). If the bandits see them first then they attack immediately.

Any bandits who get away will return to their camp to warn Kuldair. This will put the bandits on alert, but it will also lower the difficulty of finding the camp to -1 (see below) because the trail is fresh. If any bandits get back to camp, Kuldair will lead ALL of his remaining bandits (see below) against the town in 4 days time.

Seeking The Bandit Camp



The PCs can find the bandit camp using Tracking skill at a difficulty of -3. The first attempt takes 2 days. If they fail, add an extra day and try again. It is possible that the PCs won't find the camp before the bandits



set out to strike again! If that happens, one of the PCs' contacts (chosen at random) dies in the attack, and the bandits remain on the loose.

Once the bandit camp has been located, the PCs can examine it from afar. Show the map of the bandit camp. One bandit is on watch for every two PCs (round up). Every fourth watchman is a Two-Headed Aberrant and the rest are Thugs.

If the PCs try to sneak up on the camp, make a Stealth skill roll for the character with the worst Stealth skill. Characters with poor Stealth (and non-combatants) can hang back. Use the best Listen skill among the bandits on duty to detect the sneaking characters. If they aren't noticed, they gain one round of Surprise (5.34). If they're detected, the fight begins with them still 12 spaces outside of camp. Characters who held back begin 12" behind the advance group.

There are more bandits resting in the tents. The total size of the bandit gang is 3x the number of PCs. Deduct the bandits on watch, any bandits the PCs already defeated in town, and any bandits who set out for another attack on Zarikath. Of the remaining bandits, the first is Balbo Kuldair himself. The rest are mainly thugs, but one in four (round up) is a Two-Headed Aberrant. It takes the resting bandits 2 combat rounds to wake up, pull on their armor, grab their weapons, and emerge from their tents to join the fight. If attacked before they emerge, the resting bandits are surprised and off balance (5.34). If an escaped bandit warned Kuldair, the resting bandits only lose 1 round and aren't surprised.

If the PCs defeat the bandits, they find the bandits' treasure: 200sp per PC (half of which was looted from Zarikath). They can return the money to Zarikath for a heroes' welcome, or keep it and become bandits themselves.

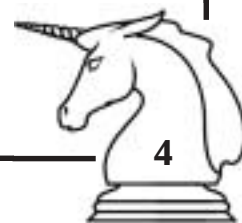
Bandit Thug

PHYS: 11 Hits: 13
DEFT: 10 Great Club: 13-, 4/6/8
INTL: 9 Initiative: 1/2/3
WILL: 8 Move: 6
Skills: Dodge 11-, Bludgeon 12-
Armor: Leather, 2/1
Melee Defense: 2
Missile Defense: 1

Two-Headed Aberrant

PHYS: 10 Hits: 10
DEFT: 11 Cutlass: 14-, 3/5/7
INTL: 9 Initiative: 2/4/6
WILL: 11 Move: 8
Skills: Search 11-, Listen 11-, Dodge 12-, Blade 12-
Armor: Chain & Metal Cap, 5/4 (5/3 on head)
Melee Defense: 2
Missile Defense: 2

Other Traits: A knockout attack only knocks out one of this creature's heads at a time. With one head unconscious, the Two-Headed Aberrant suffers an INTL penalty of -2. It does not fall over and stop moving until BOTH of its heads are knocked out.



Bandit Chief: Balbo Kuldair

PHYS: 12 Hits: 17

DEFT: 10 Battle Mace: 12-, 5/7/9

INTL: 11 Initiative: 1/2/3

WILL: 11 Move: 6

Skills: Bludgeon 12-, Dodge 12-,
Intimidation 13-

Armor: Chain, 4/2

Melee Defense: 2

Missile Defense: 2

Other Traits: Balbo has only one eye, and suffers a penalty of -2 on all ability rolls at range.

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