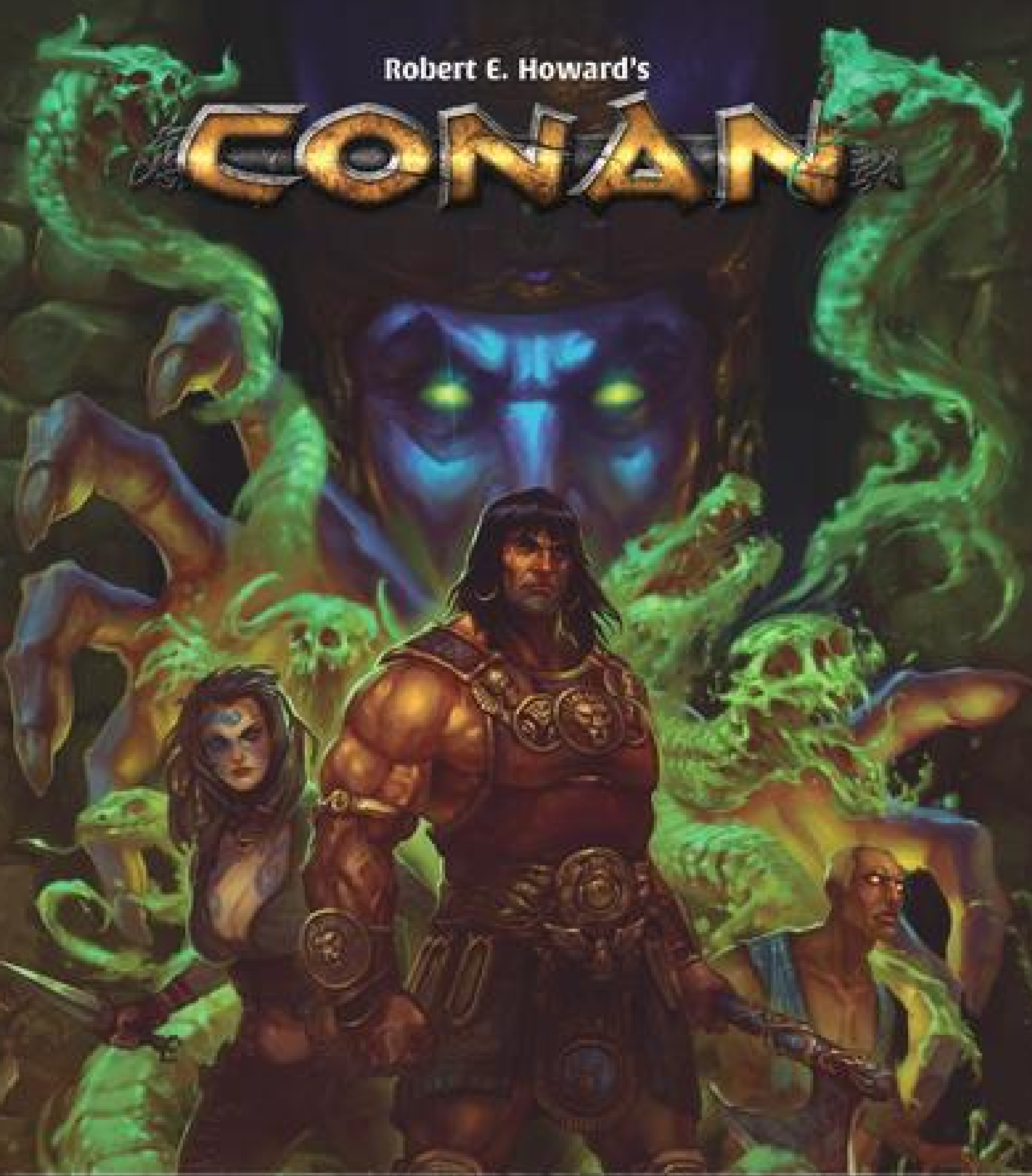


Robert E. Howard's

CONAN



MADIPHIUS
ENTERTAINMENT

THE AGE
OF CONAN

AGE OF CONAN





Robert E. Howard's
CONAN
ADVENTURES IN AN AGE UNDREAMED OF

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INTRODUCTION

THE FAMILIAR AND THE STRANGE

*“Why should a man in Stygia send Kalanthes a gift?
Ancient gods and queer mummies have come up the caravan roads
before, but who loves the priest of Ibis so well in Stygia, where they
still worship the arch-demon Set who coils
among the tombs in the darkness?”*

*The god Ibis has fought Set since the first dawn of the earth,
and Kalanthes has fought Set’s priests all his life.
There is something dark and hidden here.”*

— Promero, “The God in the Bowl”

Welcome, wanderer, to a new world of adventure, one unlike that depicted prior within *Conan: Adventures in an Age Undreamed Of*. It is not the Hyborian Age as has been depicted prior, but instead, it is the *Age of Conan*. Drawing from the same rich and vast legacy of source material created by Robert E Howard and expanded on by many others, *Age of Conan* is a massively multiplayer online roleplaying game (an MMORPG) developed by Funcom, released in 2008 and still active throughout the globe.

In *Age of Conan*, players adventure across a virtual, online landscape, undertaking quests, raids, and battle one another as well as simulated monsters and other foes. They explore this 3D environment pursuing fame, treasure, and glory, much in the same way that players of the tabletop game explore these realms through print and imagination. Many of the names are the same, but just as each iteration of the Hyborian world differs, *Age of Conan* offers its unique take on Conan’s environment.

AN AGE UNDREAMED OF...

The *Age of Conan Sourcebook* draws inspiration from the settings and gameplay from the *Age of Conan* online game but is not a direct correspondence, due to the radically different styles of play. This content has additionally been adapted to better fit alongside existing content from the roleplaying game. Thus, locations are more inspired by *Age of Conan*’s locations than they are straightforward adaptations. This looseness allows the gamemaster more freedom in presenting the material and allows players familiar with the computer game to explore these areas anew, unspoiled by prior experience and over-familiarity.

INTRODUCTION BY JACK KIROWAN

A 'Society of Scribes'

Archivists working among the unprocessed manuscript repository Trinity Library in Dublin have just released exciting news! These searchers were chasing rumors of a rare draft of the Book of Durrow. Instead, they found fragments of an inventory manifest I believe is tied to the Hyborian Age of which I have spent many years researching and seeking for evidence about, despite the relative such work faces.

Granted, the poor condition of the documents requires some guesswork, but I believe this to be record pertaining to a shipment of a chest of books or scrolls willed to the estate of the former barbarian turned soldier of fortune turned King of Aquilonia., the man called Conan.

While the contents are of course lost to history and all that remains is a curled and delicate scrap of parchment folded within a lead envelope, the precious bit is enough to offer proof of its veracity.

It is unclear from whence these items came, or if the king himself ever was aware of their existence (we must assume the burdens of a kingship were the same in this mythical era as our own). The royal receiver notes they arrived from a transport vessel of some kind; whether a caravan wagon or ship. It remains unclear. The actual itemized accounting of the items is decayed beyond my ability to salvage, but again the receiver's notation offers a tantalizing glimpse into said contents.

I reproduce the script, translated of course, as best I am able below. My guesswork is noted with the inclusion of the (), and the vulgar "___" for any illegible elements.

Rec(eived) from trade _____
 Across ___ Sea,
 _____ written materials from S (ociety) of Scrib (es)
 (Eul)ogistic matter.

This small scrap invites very large questions. Did Conan's cadre of admirers include a literary circle formed the learned? If so, what where these laudatory works? Were they embellished accounts of his martial virtues, or fictions in which he played a role? I have made a sizable donation to the good people at Trinity, urging them to greater efforts. I await the results of their renewed vigour. Until then, we can only speculate on what this 'Society of Scribes' wished to share with the object of the affects, Conan of Cimmeria... barbarian, thief, bandit, mercenary, pirate, and eventual king.

— Prof. John Kirowan (Phd, FRS, FRAI, FRGS)

Much in the vein of Conan Exiles from the same development team, this sourcebook is a tool to allow the player characters and gamemaster to make the leap from the screen and onto the page. Designed as a toolbox to merge the popular *Age of Conan* online game with that of *Conan: Adventures in an Age Undreamed Of*, this sourcebook provides a wealth of options and threads for the gamemaster to draw on elements of the video game as inspiration for adventures within their own tabletop games.



CHAPTER 1

THE AGE OF CONAN CAMPAIGN

“The very outlines of the land are changed. It is like some familiar thing seen in a dream, fantastically distorted.”

— Xaltotun, *The Hour of the Dragon*

In the first Conan story, “The Phoenix on the Sword”, the shade of Epemitreus the Sage tells the dreaming King Conan of the cosmic war between Mitra and Set, and his role in it. This spiritual battle for the fate of the age lurks in the background of many of the Conan stories. Though this **metaplot** (as such devices are called) did not dominate the Conan stories, on occasion was evident, such as in “Black Colossus”, when the grieving Yasmela puts her faith in Mitra and is immediately guided directly to the one man who can save her kingdom, a mercenary named Conan.

Similarly, in *Age of Conan*, a profound and far-reaching plot is at work behind the scenes: the rivalry between two significant personalities of the age, Kalanthes, priest of Ibis, and Thoth-Amon, the leader of the Black Ring and a powerful, if unwitting, agent of the serpent god Set. Though many of the activities the player characters embark upon are of lesser import, they occasionally brush up against it and eventually come to grasp the full scope of this epic narrative.

AN AGE-OLD STRUGGLE

Following is an overview of the metaplot that is threaded throughout the quests in *Age of Conan*. This plot itself can easily serve as fodder for an exciting campaign set within a *Conan: Adventures in an Age Undreamed Of* campaign. Furthermore, *Chapter 9: Campaigns & Adventures* further breaks this metaplot down into manageable portions that can remain interlinked or used as written in any campaign, even those that otherwise ignore the metaplot entirely.

THE INTRIGUES OF KALANTHES OF HANUMAR

Both a long-time proponent of Conan and champion of Ibis in the god’s seemingly endless war against the serpent god, Set, high priest Kalanthes has a hand in *Age of Conan*’s storyline from the very outset. Washed up on the beach from a shipwreck, Kalanthes is the first character that the player characters are introduced to. It is worth noting here that the use of a shipwreck to thrust players straight into the story and plot is an excellent example of launching point that Howard himself might use to thrust the titular hero into the action from a story’s outset.

Kalanthes’s presence on the beach is of course no accident. Strom, the leader of the pirate band known as the Red Hand currently in control of the nearby city of Tortage, is a puppet in the machinations of the Stygian sorcerer Thoth-Amon, who is using Tortage as a covert staging point for slaves before having them shipped on to Stygia. Aware of the growing power and menace of Thoth-Amon, foremost of Set’s priests, Kalanthes is not only seeking to recruit new heroes in his fight against his ancient nemesis, but also setting the players on a path to supporting old ally, Conan.

Trapped by the mantle and responsibilities of King of Aquilonia, the grizzled Cimmerian is no longer able to ride out alone and lay waste to his enemies with his sword. With threats to the Aquilonian crown growing on all sides, though none more dire than the machinations of Thoth-Amon, Kalanthes is quietly gathering allies that can help stymie the tide of the forces gathering against the beset monarch.

As the plot progresses, however, Kalanthes eventually reveals that his interest in supporting Aquilonia’s stand



against its enemies runs deeper than simply preventing its downfall. Quietly pulling strings to ensure the legendary Phoenix Medallion is reconstructed, Kalanthes reveals that it is the only source of magic that can defeat the Grim Grey God, an ancient Atlantean god of chaos and madness that Thoth-Amon seeks to resurrect and bind to his control.

Sitting as he does at the heart of the resistance against the serpent sorcerer's quest for domination, Kalanthes's guiding hand is continually felt throughout the main campaign in *Age of Conan*. Far from being a permanent presence, the priest of Ibis appears at opportune moments to reveal the player character's ultimate destiny, impalpably nudging their direction in the background all the while.

As a genuine force for good in the Hyborean Age in search of new heroes to take over the mantle, Kalanthes serves as the perfect guide to the campaign without eclipsing the player character's involvement.

THE SECRET SCRIBES

Throughout this book, and influencing many of the entries, are comments by a clandestine organization of so-called "Secret Scribes", a group of loosely allied scholars, priests, and seekers of knowledge who chronicle what they consider to be the hidden history of the Hyborian Age and the world of Conan. Their notes provide invaluable assistance to adventurers and those who seek to cast light on the encroaching darkness. Though they are not directly affiliated with any specific cult, many of their members are drawn from the cults of Mitra and Ibis, two gods who seek to rid humankind from the shackles of cruel fate, inflicted by the gods or by the wicked.

The world of *Age of Conan* is not necessarily the one created by Robert E. Howard, but it was directly inspired by it. It has also been inspired by other authors' contributions to the canon, and to a large degree invented and devised by the team that created *Age of Conan*.

As such, all of those who add to and flesh out Conan's world are members of this influential, yet little known group. Every gamemaster who devises a new adventure for their players are Secret Scribes, and thus, despite the span of untold eons, the Secret Scribes live on, their work felt everywhere that bold deeds are done in the name of Conan.

So take up your pen, o learned scribe, and join the ranks of the Secret Scribes, and make new adventures to span the epochs and thrill the blood of countless many.

FATHER SET STRIKES!

Thoth-Amon, Lord of the Black Ring. Unrivaled sorcerer and most powerful of the snake god Set's priests. In *Age of Conan*, this dark-hearted magician seeks one thing only: the ultimate domination of all Hyborian kingdoms under the heel of his god and master. Thoth-Amon's has clashed with both Conan and Kalanthes several times across the decades, serving to foster a bitter hatred of the Cimmerian warrior and Nemedian priest that will only be sated by the utter destruction of the two. Thankfully, for Thoth-Amon at least, his plans to bring the continent to heel under the worship of Set have placed him on a direct path to see that very thing happen.

Rather than place himself in direct conflict with his nemeses from the outset, the Lord of the Black Ring slowly weaves threads that extend his power base far beyond the boundaries of his current fortress in Stygia. From pulling the strings of Strom, leader of the piratical band controlling Tortage, to spreading the shards of the Phoenix Medallion to the four corners of the Hyborian world, and installing deadly minions to guard them, Thoth-Amon's machinations have been in place for many years, slowly building until they threaten the freedom of every sentient being on the continent.

With his reach extending far across the known world, less altruistic characters might find themselves working to extend Thoth-Amon's influence and further erode Aquilonia's forces, a relatively straightforward task with many possible approaches.

Perhaps they begin play as part of the Red Hand and seek to reingratiate themselves with the Setite after the downfall of Tortage, or maybe they are sent out to hunt down Acheronian artefacts that will further fuel Thoth-Amon's power. Understanding that deception and diplomacy are also key to bringing down his old foes, the player characters could be sent as representatives of the master sorcerer, to stir the Picts into action or prompt the Nemedians to break their long-standing truce with Aquilonia.

While all these plot lines could be tied into a campaign that ultimately aims to bring about the downfall of Aquilonia itself — and perhaps even pits the player characters against King Conan and his mighty Black Dragons in a final climactic battle.

Naturally, such an approach puts the player characters squarely in the role of villains, and certainly needs discussion before any campaign begins, as siding with Thoth-Amon may not be to everyone's taste. However, a campaign structure might be one in which the player characters become antiheroes standing against their former master or usurpers seeking to steal Thoth-Amon's place as the favored agent of Set...

All is possible.

ARCHETYPES

*The world was entering an age of iron,
an age of war and imperialistic ambition;
some strong man might well rise above the
ruins of nations as a supreme conqueror.
Why should it not be himself?*

— *The Hour of the Dragon*

Archetypes from *Conan: Adventures in an Age Undreamed Of* are highly specific types of professions drawn from the Conan stories, while those offered in *Age of Conan* are more tailored to the demands of online gameplay, with supporting abilities and specialties. There are four broad **archetypes**, more categories of gameplay styles, and each *Age of Conan* archetype has three “**classes**”. Following are the twelve classes from *Age of Conan*, referred to here as archetypes for compatibility with *Conan: Adventures in an Age Undreamed Of*.

The gamemaster may allow players in an *Age of Conan*-based campaign to draw from those archetypes presented in the **Conan** corebook and various sourcebooks, and for those playing a traditional *Adventures in an Age Undreamed Of* campaign, these archetypes may be used, with the gamemaster's permission. Notably, magic and is far more prevalent in *Age of Conan* than within *Adventures in an Age Undreamed Of*.

GUILDS AND CLANS

Two new options available to player characters: membership in either a guild or clan. These are described on pages XX-XX and are best selected during the character generation process. The gamemaster should consider whether these options will play a part in any campaign and make them available accordingly.



MAGES

Barriers are made to broken. Locks always have a key. The price must be paid. Much of the belief of those called **mag**es can be summed by those three precepts. These explorers of the arcane seek to possess extraordinary agency over the mundane world by any possible means. Beings beyond human dimension may be called by a mage; treated with to share their power for some diabolical act. From ancient tablets or forgotten script, mages may call rain or lightning upon their enemies. Bodies of the dead rise from their whispered command, propelled by nameless will or spectral infestation.

To be a mage means knowing who, or what to summon and perhaps more importantly, how to bargain the price.

THREE ARCHETYPES

Any with passing knowledge of the dark arts can quickly distinguish which of the three paths a mage walks upon. Superstition, or willful ignorance, may blur the distinction, but each of these three paths produce a very different type of mage.

DEMONOLOGIST

Untold worlds filled with strange alien beings intersect the Hyborian world. These creatures may be separated by the remoteness of millions of miles of dark space, an unseen dimensional membrane, or millennia-spanning temporal distance. What natural separates, a demonologist may tear asunder. These practitioners open a channel and bargain with a nightmarish array of powers.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Expertise and +2 Focus in the Sorcery skill

CAREER TALENT: *Patron* (Conan corebook, page 84)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Alchemy, Discipline, Linguistics, and Lore

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Command, Counsel, or Insight

EQUIPMENT:

- Sorcerous accoutrements
- Personal library
- Sturdy travel garb
- Portable alchemical laboratory

NECROMANCER

Even the most pious priest or wizened scholar cannot say with certainty what death holds. The necromancer reaches into this mysterious void beyond life to draw its servants back into the realm of the sun. Countless are the dead who wish to make such a passage back, however fleeting, for their own sinister purpose. Others may wish to forget the mortal world but have no choice. It is their doom to die over and over in penance for some misdeed. Of the three mage classes, the necromancer is the only one not subservient to a greater power. However, the dead are restless, and loyalty is for the living. Giving an opportunity they would revolt against their hated master.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Expertise and +2 Focus in the Sorcery skill

CAREER TALENT: *Scribe* (Conan corebook, page 72)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Alchemy, Command, Lore, and Persuade

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Counsel, Healing, or Insight

EQUIPMENT:

- Sorcerous accoutrements
- Personal library
- Sturdy travel garb
- One ingredient

The thought came vaguely to Conan that the spells of magicians were more closely bound to their personal beings than were the actions of common men to the actors.

— “The People of the Black Circle”

HERALD OF XOTLI

This age-old sect is believed to have its beginnings in mythical Atlantis. Before the great flood, a cadre of necromancers marshalled their talents and breached a bleak realm beyond any concept of existence. Waiting to greet them was Xotli, an ancient demon-God of the elder night. Great power was offered to these first pilgrims, and any who followed in their path. Xotli is a jealous God. In exchange for its blessings, acolytes must forsake any other power. Xotli also demands martial skill. Swords and armor are as necessary as talisman and spell. What Xotli ultimately gains from such worship remains a mystery.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Expertise and +2 Focus in the Sorcery skill

CAREER TALENT: *No Mercy* (Conan corebook, page 73)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Insight, Healing, Lore, and Melee

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Animal Handling, Athletics, Melee, Parry, or Ranged Weapons

EQUIPMENT:

- Pick from either a suit of mail armor (Armor 3: all locations; Noisy) or a brigandine long coat (Armor 2: Torso/Arms/Legs) with a helmet (Armor 3: Head; Heavy)
- Two weapons of choice
- Sturdy travel garb
- Sorcerous accoutrements
- Personal library (scrolls, books)
- Holy relic of faith
- Three sorcerous offerings



PRIESTS

Where mages may cull power from the dead, eldritch beings or other planes, **priests** call upon the mysteries of the divine. For many centuries, countless churches and edifices have been built to their glory, innumerable curses and blessings are invoked daily upon their honor. To do their will and gain their favor is the unending campaign of a priest.

THREE ARCHETYPES

Bear shamans reside in remote places of the Hyborian world, drawing upon the energies of a primeval predator: the Great Bear. Their abilities are martial, from their own strength and training and harnessed from the wilderness. Priests of Mitra resemble ordinary people of faith and may pass for these typical wardens of faith until their skill of healing and influence are displayed. A Tempest of Set must always be a Stygian by birth. Destruction dogs their heels. Willing or not, they are the agents for devastation wherever they set foot.

PRIEST OF MITRA

Proud and strong, these holy crusaders fight to keep justice and honor alive in the war weary Hyborian kingdoms. They know that their noble task is one that must be built generation by generation. Stoke the flame a little brighter for the next generation and pass the sacred teachings to those who will follow in their footsteps. Priests of Mitra are most effective in the rear echelon of battle, rather than blade-to-blade. Their sage wisdom can flow into suffering and exhausted warriors. Skilled hands can heal grievous wounds. When pressed, they fight fiercely to defend their creed, leading a charge into enemy ranks... if Mitra wills it.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Expertise and +2 Focus in the Counsel skill

CAREER TALENT: *Quiet Wisdom* (Conan corebook, page 62)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Insight, Healing, Lore, and Persuade

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Alchemy, Linguistics, Society, or Sorcery

EQUIPMENT:

- A single melee weapon (often a staff, sword, or knife)
- Sturdy travel garb and religious accoutrements
- Personal library (scrolls, books)
- Holy relic of faith
- Healer's kit

TEMPEST OF SET

Only Stygians have been known to wear the mantle of a Tempest of Set. Like their patron god, these priests take what they will whenever they are able. If a desire fulfilled results in the ruin of others, or spoiling of the natural order, so be it. Set's hunger is a relentless black whirlwind that roars from end to end over the desert sands. In hidden chambers of long-dead pharaohs these priests learn the craft of Father Set. To attain any measure of understanding requires spilling the blood of the thralls. By the time they have learned their first incantation, the fledgling Tempest of Set has sent dozens of sacrifices screaming into the pit. A Tempest of Set may journey into another kingdom on some dark mission. They may even band with others if their purpose mirrors theirs. Those who do risk travel with this dark emissary should recall that the blood of the serpent is cold.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Expertise and +2 Focus in the Sorcery skill

CAREER TALENT: *Patron* (Set, Conan corebook, page 72)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Alchemy, Command, Lore, and Persuade

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Counsel, Healing, or Insight

EQUIPMENT:

- One melee weapon (usually knife or small blade)
- Holy relic of faith
- Oils, incense, and herbs
- Sorcerous accoutrements
- Personal library
- Sturdy travel garb
- One ingredient

He had squatted for hours in the courtyards of the philosophers, listening to the arguments of theologians and teachers, and come away in a haze of bewilderment, sure of only one thing, and that, that they were all touched in the head.

— "The Tower of the Elephant"

BEAR SHAMAN

Not all divine spirits are housed between the walls of a temple or have human semblance. In the rugged wilderness, reflections of the first primordial bear echo. These aspects of great potency roam unseen from uncharted mountain peaks and through the grassland herds. Bear shamans have learned how to bridge the divide from humankind and the wild that civilization widens ever year. Their wisdom allows them to work miraculous arts of healing with just bark and herb. Legend holds truly proficient bear shamans may even call upon their totem animals and assume some manner of their fearsome aspect. Hands seem to twist into claws, and inhuman strength floods their bodies. Those who travel with a bear shaman wonder whether this one has tamed the wild, or is it simply the other way around?

CAREER SKILL: +2 Expertise and +2 Focus in the Sorcery skill

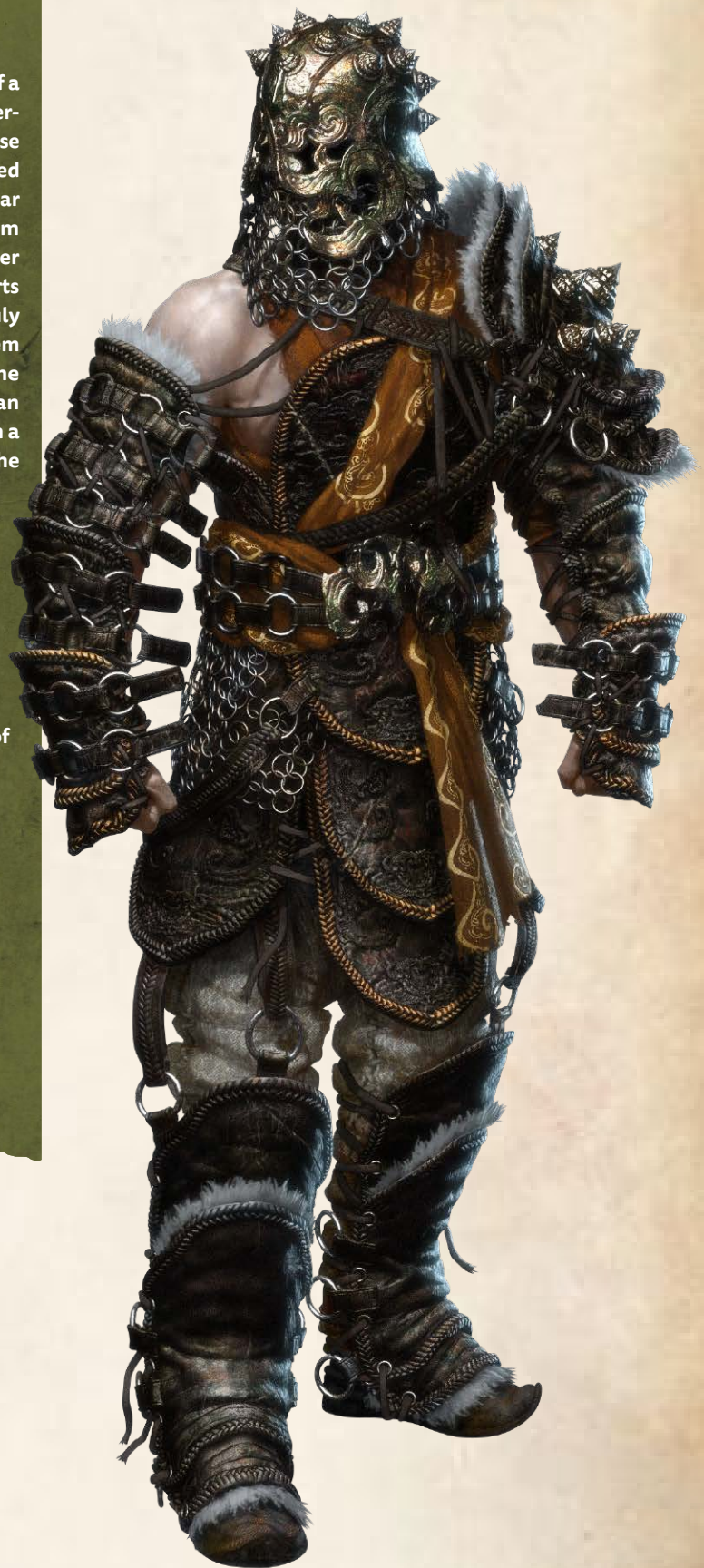
CAREER TALENT: *Force of Presence* (Conan corebook, page 76)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Animal Handling, Athletics, Healing, Lore, and Survival

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Counsel, Insight, or Stealth

EQUIPMENT:

- A melee weapon
- Choice of either toughened leather jacket (Armor 1: Torso/Arms) or brigandine vest and trousers (Armor 2: Torso/Legs)
- Healer's bag with three doses of medicine
- Totem (worn and made of natural elements)



ROGUES

These devious killers know the difference between tourney field and battlefield. In the end, all that matters is who draws breath when the battle is done. Knavery, stealth, or simple brute force all suffice in place of a parade ground maneuver. To maximize their strength and speed, they don lighter armor and strike with light, quick weapons.

THREE ARCHETYPES

Rogues do not fit a simple mold. Barbarians of the frozen wastes, woodmen of the primal glen, and footpads of the back alleys all belong to the larger category of rogue. It is not a shared heritage or even set of skills, but rather the unique fashion their talents are used to bend the world to their will.

Despite their similar names, the assassin and barbarian archetypes presented below are quite different from those in the **Conan** corebook and *Conan the Thief* sourcebook. These are denoted with an (AoC) for clarity.

BARBARIAN (AOC)

The term barbarian flows easily from the civilized lips. This term carries a dismissive bent; one lacking in eloquence or refinement may be dubbed a barbarian. True barbarians hail from the remote unfinished places of the world. Honor and loyalty are bred deep in their bones, and they fight savagely to avenge a slight or protect their clan. Simpler martial weapons are wielded, perhaps inelegantly, but with deadly precision.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Expertise and +2 Focus in the Melee skill

CAREER TALENT: *Strong Back* (*Conan* corebook, page 60)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to

Animal Handling, Athletics, Stealth, and Survival

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Craft, Parry, or Ranged Weapons

EQUIPMENT:

- Ragged furs, which counts as heavy clothing (Armor 1: Torso/Arms/Legs)
- Two weapons of choice
- Sturdy travel garb
- Survival kit
- Sturdy travel garb

ASSASSIN (AOC)

Vampires, devils, ghosts, fiends of the black lotus. The common folk of the Hyborian world use these words to describe this brotherhood of hired killers. Such is their skill, they seem to leap unbidden and unseen from Stygian shadows, strike their targets with supernatural precision, and vanish before the gods can be called for protection.

Diabolical wisdom of root and branch allows them to brew poisons fatal and strange. Should their clients' wrath demand an unseen ministering of a poison to produce a crippling paralysis, or a quiet death in slumber, they know the formulary. If their task requires the touch of the blade, they are wise to many toxins that cling potently to metal, able to be transmitted to the blood and flesh by its feral kiss. A dagger, held expertly, is the favored weapon for this approach.

Ingested poisons, taken over a lifetime, thicken in their blood and organs, altering their physiology. Such change can produce astonishing effects, if the tales are to be believed. Resistance to mortal harm, altering the timbre of one's voice, and quickening their pulse to a degree that allows them to move between eyeblinks are all part of the lore. Such is their training at maneuvering and fighting in the darkness that it almost seems if the assassin is the master of the shadows; that their will reigns supreme over the dark corners. Whispers of rumors recall tales of assassins moving, shrouded by a gloom that seems to follow their very path. Though harsh years of relentless training in the black arts may have dulled the essence of humanity within these assassins, mortal they very much remain.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Expertise and +2 Focus in Stealth skill
CAREER TALENT: *Living Shadow* (*Conan* corebook, page 85)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Acrobatics, Alchemy, Athletics, Lore, Ranged Weapons, and Stealth

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Melee, Parry, Resistance, or Thievery

EQUIPMENT:

- Two weapons of choice
- Padded jerkin (Armor 1: Torso, Arms)
- Alchemist's kit
- Travelers kit

RANGER

Despite its age, the world is barely reclaimed from the primordial elements. Standing in immense fastnesses across the world are countless leagues of broad-timbered woods. Connecting these places to the frontier are rangers. These hardy folk spend their lives finding patterns in these places empty of human civilization. Perhaps they keep the ways to their own counsel or share only with their kindred. Others choose to serve as guides and scouts for those edging into the places beyond comfortable borders.

Wherever they walk, they bring their favored weapon in hand: the bow. No one can wear the mantle of ranger without demonstrating substantial skill in bringing down prey on the hoof, or by felling enemies hidden behind metal armor.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Expertise and +2 Focus in the Ranged Weapons skill

CAREER TALENT: *Accurate* (Conan corebook, page 77)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Animal Handling, Observation, Stealth, and Survival

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Athletics, Melee, or Parry

EQUIPMENT:

- Padded gambeson and trousers (Armor 1: Torso/Arms/Legs)
- Bow of choice and 3 reloads of arrows
- Melee weapon of choice
- Riding horse

In one of these dens merriment thundered to the low smoke-stained roof, where rascals gathered in every stage of rags and tatters—furtive cut-purses, leering kidnappers, quick-fingered thieves, swaggering bravoos with their wenches, strident-voiced women clad in tawdry finery.

—“The Tower of the Elephant”



SOLDIERS

So long as the amusements of merchant princes, priests, and kings continue, soldiers find easy employ in the Hyborian world. These warriors may pledge themselves to a cause or crown, but place their true faith in their strength of will and in the courage of their comrades in arms. Few of this breed look further than the next coin purse or campaign. To be a soldier means a life of hardship. Never stop striving or slaying — the bottom of unmarked grave on a cold foreign field awaits those who falter.

THREE ARCHETYPES

Every tribe, city or empire produces soldiers. These individuals defy easy distinction, and are varied as the times and places they live in. However, a survey of the rosters, past and present, allow the wise to roughly classify three distinct archetypes.

GUARDIAN

These heavily armed and armored warriors are the best drilled, and often best equipped in any battle, famed wherever fighting-folk gather and speak. Guardians charge into the most desperate of frays encased in armor, thick of plate, broad shields arrayed before them. They have learned to use their bodies as battering rams, knocking their foes off their feet and across the field. Many of their number specialize in use of the shield, turning the traditionally defensive weapon into a deadly offensive one. Any weapon is deadly in their hands, but they show special cunning with the spear, poleaxe, or polearm. Their strength, bolstered by the many hours of wearing their burden of a second steel-skin, gives them an unlooked-for speed.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Expertise and +2 Focus in the Melee skill

CAREER TALENT: *Strong Back* (Conan corebook, page 61)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Alchemy, Insight, Healing, and Lore

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Acrobatics, Animal Handling, Athletics, Melee, or Ranged Weapons

EQUIPMENT:

- A suit of heavy armor (any type, all locations) and choice of shield
- Three weapons of choice

True soldier of fortune, no shift of fortune, however outrageous, surprized him much.

— Almaric, "Black Colossus"

CONQUEROR

If any can be considered a true artist of the battlefield, it is surely the conqueror. As a sculptor studies the human frame, the conqueror studies the unholy anatomy of the killing fields. Nimble insight allows them to tap into the gestalt of the armed hosts. They know precisely when a campaign can be turned or lost, when a brave rally or act of valor may strengthen failing morale, or when a foolhardy charge is needed to carry the day. One thousand faces and cues register at once, animating this leader in lightning action. When breath seems stilled, and the pain of a half-dozen wounds too much to go on, the conqueror is there with a steady touch, or bold word, and new strength blooms.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Expertise and +2 Focus in the Observation skill

CAREER TALENT: *Captain* (Conan corebook, page 61)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to

Command, Insight, Melee, Persuade, and Warfare

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Animal Handling, Athletics, or Counsel y

EQUIPMENT:

- A suit of heavy armor (any type, all locations) and choice of shield
- Two weapons of choice
- Riding horse
- Sturdy travel garb
- Maps of nearby territories
- Lodestone
- Flint and tinder

DARK TEMPLAR

The gods invoked by these warrior-priests are jealous, giving them exceptional agency against casters of other powers. Dabblers in magic must strike quickly and surely when a dark templar is about! Spite from their dark masters corrupts their incantations. Besides from being adept at defeating a rival's magic, a dark templar is skilled in lending their power to their comrades. They may call down a dark blessing to protect or augment allies or drain the essence from a foe. Such powers are bought by blood or boon. These are no sheltered scholars, or weak-willed priests covering behind gilded altar, but are able fighters. In concert with their sorcerous studies, they walk the path of the blade.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Expertise and +2 Focus in the Sorcery skill

CAREER TALENT: *Scribe* (Conan corebook, page 71)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to Alchemy, Insight, Healing, and Lore

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Animal Handling, Athletics, Melee, or Ranged Weapons

EQUIPMENT:

- Pick from either a suit of mail armor (Armor 3: all locations; Noisy) or a brigandine long coat (Armor 2: Torso/Arms/Legs) with a helmet (Armor 3: Head; Heavy)
- Two weapons of choice
- Sturdy travel garb
- Sorcerous accoutrements
- Personal library (scrolls, books)
- Holy relic of faith
- Three offerings



NEW TALENTS

COMPANION (NEW TALENT)

Prerequisite: None

Maximum Ranks: 1 (multiple versions of this talent may be taken to describe different companions)

Experience Point Cost: 400

Many adventurers in *Age of Conan* have abilities that let them summon temporary creatures to assist them, usually in combat. Here, they are designated as **companions**. However, these beings are a persistent presence rather than appearing temporarily, and should ideally have names, descriptions, and personalities all their own. These creatures function similarly to Minions, but they are usually controlled by a combination of the player and the gamemaster.

SAMPLE COMPANIONS

The following is a list of appropriate companions for a starting player character. Any one of these companions may be selected by a player character taking the Companion talent, and the gamemaster may allow other such companions from other *Conan* sourcebooks. Players are encouraged to take companions that are thematic to their archetype or background, such as a pirate having a pirate companion, a priest or priestess having a cultist, a noble warrior a warhorse, a shaman or witch having a wise old bird, a nomad with a camel, a mercenary a guard, a Stygian a serpent, etc.

For the most part, it is recommended that all such companions be Minions, though with the gamemaster's approval a select companion may be equivalent to a Toughened example.

Human Companions

- Bandit (Minion) (*Conan* corebook, page 312)
- Black Ring Soldier (Minion) (page 38)
- Cultist (Minion) (*Conan* corebook, page 313)
- Guard (Minion) (*Conan* corebook, page 317)
- Nemedian Legionnaire (Minion) (page 39)
- Pirate (Minion) (*Conan* corebook, page 319)
- Thug (Minion) (*Conan* corebook, page 321)
- Vanir Reaver (Minion) (page 40)

Beast/Animal Companions

- Bird, Wise Old (Toughened) (*Conan* corebook, page 324)
- Boar (Minion) (page 41)
- Camel (Toughened) (*Conan* corebook, page 324)
- Dog (Minion) (*Conan* corebook, page 326)

- Horse, Riding (Minion) (*Conan* corebook, page 326)
- Horse, War (Minion) (*Conan* corebook, page 327)
- Hyena (Minion) (page 42)
- Snake, Constrictor (Minion) (*Conan* corebook, page 328)
- Snake, Venomous (Minion) (*Conan* corebook, page 330)
- Wolf (Minion) (*Conan* corebook, page 333)

Supernatural Companions

These are not recommended for most player characters, but might be suitable for a priest or priestess, a shaman or witch, or a sorcerer. Obviously, such entities are bound to cause dismay and fear amongst normal folks and potentially other player characters, so their presence is only subject to the approval of a gamemaster. The gamemaster may also choose to add 1 Doom to any scene in which a supernatural companion manifests, to emphasize their unreal nature and the peril it invites.

The player should also present the gamemaster with a reason such a relationship exists. In most cases, a companion of this nature cannot be controlled by other members of the player character's group. If the creature is a Horror, the effects of that are experienced by all allies of the player character, though the gamemaster may determine that these fade with familiarity.

- Corrupted Wolf (Minion) (page 45)
- Ghost (Minion) (*Conan* corebook, page 337)
- Grol (Minion, Horror) (page 52)
- Rat Thing (Toughened) (*Conan* corebook, page 341)
- Shadow on the Wall (Minion, Horror) (*Conan* corebook, page 187)
- Skeletal Warrior (Minion) (*Conan* corebook, page 342)

Any player character may obtain a companion through purchase of a Talent, or perhaps awarded the opportunity to do so via events during a campaign. These companions provide aid and assistance to the player character, taking actions alongside their own, and control varies based on the situation. The *Faithful Companions* and *General* talents (*Conan* corebook, pages 59 and 91) describe similar such relationships.

For animal/beast companions, the term “owner” implies the one the animal has been trained or is inclined to follow. For human companions, the term does not denote ownership but stands to represent the one who controls their actions, as much as can be done, whether through some personal bond, a debt owed, or through regular payments (handled as an automatic part of Upkeep). It does not imply slavery or slave ownership.

Companions Outside of Combat

During normal play, a companion will follow any orders given to them by their owner. They must be able to perceive and understand these orders, and there are obvious limits as to what kinds of orders a companion can carry out — a hunting dog may not be able to understand complex instructions from their owner, and certainly cannot carry out a task that requires erudite speech or the use of opposable thumbs.

If a companion’s action requires a skill test, then it may be taken as normal as if the companion were a player character within the group (including being able to spend Momentum or add to Doom to purchase additional d20s). The player character may assist these tests with a successful Animal Handling or Command test (as appropriate to the companion type, with a Difficulty set by the gamemaster). This represents the owner being able to keep their companion focused on the task at hand through training and their bond.

Similarly, the companion may assist the owner’s skill tests in various ways, such as a hunting beast helping its owner follow a trail to track prey. Obviously, there are some tasks that a companion cannot logically assist with; a falcon is unlikely to be helpful when haggling a price with a merchant.

Companions in Combat

In combat, a companion may take any action that their owner determines for them, but they are only able to perform a limited range of actions, as follows:

- **Conflict:** Companions do not receive a separate action in a conflict; instead, their actions (per the limitations below) are resolved as part of their actions of their owner.
- **Free and Minor Actions:** Companions will perform whatever Free and Minor Actions are needed to keep up with the player characters, as well as any necessary to follow the orders of the player characters (if the owner allows others to command them). They do not have to spend Momentum to perform extra Minor Actions.
- **Major Actions:** A companion cannot attempt a Major Action that requires a skill test with a Difficulty above 0, and they may not roll dice for the skill tests they attempt. If they are ever required to attempt a skill test for another reason, they automatically generate 0 successes. They may, however, use the Assist Action to benefit their owner, and they may grant additional benefits to their owner’s Actions.
- **Reactions:** Companions may not perform Reactions by themselves; if their owner takes a Reaction, and the companion is within Reach of their owner, the companion will take the same Reaction.
- **Direction:** An owner may spend a Major Action directing their companion to perform a Major Action. This is the only circumstance in which a companion may make a skill test with a Difficulty above 0, and the only circumstances in combat in which they roll for the skill tests they attempt.

If a companion’s owner is slain or incapacitated in some fashion (knocked out, etc.), the player may immediately take control of their companion for the remainder of the scene, controlling them as if they were a normal player character.

Companions which are mounts follow all the normal rules for mounted combat so long as they have a rider. Their rider will normally be the owning character.



Companion Training and Talents

Companions can train and advance just as player characters can. Whenever a player spends experience points to take an advancement, they may give that advancement to your companion instead. Each companion's training is tied to a specific skill; this is normally Animal Handling for animal companions, Sorcery for magical companions, and Command for human companions. This may vary, at the gamemaster's discretion.

Like player characters, companions often have talents that grant them useful benefits or bonuses. As befits their purpose, a companion's talents often provide benefits when the companion acts on their owner's behalf or assists their owner's skill tests.

A companion begins with a single talent, associated with its highest skill. The gamemaster may assign additional talents if appropriate, or the companion's owner may purchase additional talents as described above. However, a companion may not have more talents than your rank in Survival (or whichever other skill of yours the companion's training is tied to).



Athletics Talents

- **Swift Runner:** When this companion rolls Agility as part of a skill test or to assist, a successful test generates 1 bonus Momentum. Bonus Momentum cannot be saved.
- **Mighty Beast:** When this companion rolls Brawn as part of a skill test or to assist, they may re-roll one d20. In addition, if the companion assists when its owner makes a melee attack, the owner may spend 1 Momentum to add the Stun effect to that attack and knock the target prone if they become stunned.

Melee Talents

- **War-trained:** This companion has been trained for battle. When the companion's owner succeeds an attack, they may spend 1 Momentum to have the companion attack as well. The companion's attack hits automatically.
- **Fierce Loyalty:** This companion is highly protective of its owner and gains +2 Morale Soak when in the same zone as the owner. If the owner is defeated, the companion may spend the owner's Fortune points, and may re-roll 1d20 on any attack made while within close range of their fallen owner.

Observation Talents

- **Helpful Awareness:** This companion's senses are extremely keen, and their awareness of their surroundings can warn their owner of things that may not be immediately apparent to human senses. When the companion assists their owner on an Observation test, the Difficulty of the test is reduced by -1, to a minimum of 0. If the test's Difficulty was already 0, then the test instead generates +1 bonus Momentum, which may not be saved.
- **A Sense for Danger:** The companion is known to pick up on subtle, often imperceptible signs of trouble that their owner might otherwise be unaware of. Once per scene, when the gamemaster spends any Doom, roll a number of ♣ equal to the number of Doom being spent: add +1 Momentum to the group pool for each Effect rolled, due to the companion's warning. This ability may be used after the gamemaster has announced how much Doom they are spending.

Persuasion Talents

- **Judge of Character:** The companion has a sense for people and has a strong reaction to anyone it regards as a threat. When the companion meets a new non-player character (human or animal), they may add 1 point to Doom to make an Observation test, opposed by that being's Discipline, immediately to judge whether that non-player character is a danger to the companion's owner.
- **Soulful Eyes:** The companion's gaze and demeanor are striking, impressive, or endearing, and few people find themselves able to dislike the companion. When the companion's owner makes a Persuade skill test, the companion may assist, and allows the owner to re-roll 1d20 from their dice pool.

Resistance Talents

- **Tough Old Beast:** The companion is sturdy, resilient, and too stubborn to stay down. The companion's maximum Stress is increased by an amount equal to its Resistance skill.
- **Indefatigable:** When the companion would roll a skill test (or, if a mount, assist the rider's skill test) to resist gaining Fatigue, the first extra d20 bought for that skill test is free.

Stealth Talents

- **Pack Hunter:** The companion is used to hunting as a group, carefully encircling prey to trap them. At the start of a scene, the owner may add 1 Doom to the pool and declare the companion to be 'prowling'. They are not present but are assumed to be somewhere nearby, waiting. At any point during the scene — at the start

of any of the owner's actions in combat — the companion may appear, emerging from hiding. They may appear anywhere, so long as there is darkness or some other sort of concealment to emerge from, or their re-appearance can be reasonably explained.

- **Find the Hidden Path:** The companion is used to staying out of sight and they can guide their owner along unseen routes. When the companion assists on a Stealth skill test, ignore the first complication generated on the skill test.

Survival Talents

- **Forager:** The companion is more than capable of finding food and water for themselves in the wild, and this activity can often help their owner find additional supplies too. Unless, for some reason, there is no food or water nearby, the companion can always find sufficient food and water for itself when stopping to rest in the wild. The companion's owner may also re-roll 1d20 on any Survival tests to find food or water.
- **Tracker:** The companion's keen senses allow them to detect the trails left by prey and threats alike, and they're trained to guide their owner to follow those trails. Whenever the companion makes a skill test, or assists a skill test, to track another creature using Survival, the Difficulty of the test is reduced by one step, to a minimum of 0. In addition, the companion may re-roll its dice when it assists on these skill tests.

Tactics Talents

- **Coordinated:** The companion has been trained to understand more complex commands from their owner. When the companion's owner takes an action, if the companion doesn't assist, the owner may spend 1 Momentum to allow the companion to take a Major Action of their own. This does not apply if the companion is a mount.
- **Teamwork:** The companion has been trained to accept commands from more than just a single owner. Each turn in combat, the companion's owner may select a different ally within Medium Range; the companion assists that ally as if they were the companion's owner during that turn.

GUILDS, CLANS, AND COMPANIONS

Chapter 8: Guilds & Clans describes two types of groups the player characters may be part of. If desired, a given human companion can be from either (or perhaps both) of these groups, a fellow guild and/or clan member who is subservient to the player character. In the case of a guild, the companion counts as a guild member, just as if another player character, and a non-player character who is a clan member can also be utilized as a player character, if need be.

In the latter case, the gamemaster is encouraged to work with the player to re-define the companion's attributes, skills, and talents, so that they are suitable for use as a player character. If this is done, the companion clan member becomes a full player character, and may designate a new companion non-player character.

Defining a Companion

From time to time the gamemaster may need to use this companion as a means of relaying information to the player(s) and the more defined the companion is, the better. The back side of the Conan character sheet has a section for **Creature** which can be used for just this purpose.

The player is encouraged to flesh out their companion as if it were a player character: give it a name, describe it, add a personality or behavioral quirk. If it is human, then assign them a nationality and an age. The nationality descriptions in the **Conan** corebook and regional sourcebooks provide many sample names to draw from, and the *Gamemaster's Toolkit* from the *Conan Gamemaster Screen* has many resources to flesh out a personality and mannerisms, including a Squad/Minion sheet to define one or more non-player character followers.



CHAPTER 3

EQUIPMENT

At her command they brought harness to replace Conan's chain-mail — gorget, sollerets, cuirass, pauldrons, jambes, cuisses, and sallet. When Yasmela again drew the curtains, a Conan in burnished steel stood before his audience. Clad in the plate-armor, vizor lifted and dark face shadowed by the black plumes that nodded above his helmet, there was a grim impressiveness about him that even Thespides grudgingly noted.

A jest died suddenly on Amalric's lips.

— “Black Colossus”

More so than *Adventures in an Age Undreamed Of*, unique and exceptional armaments and equipment in *Age of Conan* are far more common, their qualities vaunted above mortal equivalents. There are many, many weapons available to *Age of Conan* characters, and due to the game's structure, each character advance means that a slightly better weapon can be instrumental in the outcome of a battle. However, in *Conan: Adventures in an Age Undreamed Of*, gear is less incremental in the way weapons are defined. To this end, presented here are several themed sets of weapons for player characters to chose from, as well as their armor counterparts.

Additionally, some consumable items are provided here, like petty enchantments from the **Conan** corebook. Though such items are rare and oft-times unattainable in *Conan: Adventures in an Age Undreamed Of*, they are far more common and available in the *Age of Conan* world.



ARMS OUT OF TIME

Though no one is certain how these eons-old artifacts defied the decay of time, Atlantean and Acheronian weapons have been spotted all over the Hyborian world. Accounts of the origins of these ancient relics vary — some whisper of lost tombs and forgotten temples, others of crooked and clever blacksmiths — but one thing is certain: they all are of marvelous make.

Perhaps composed of some lost alchemical mixture, Atlantean steel, from that far-gone eon of Thurian history, is nigh-unbreakable and holds as keen an edge as any Akbitanian blade. The name is a misnomer, as the true Atlanteans were barely metalworkers. Undoubtedly the term reflects steelmaking from the kingdom of Valusia, but history is a river that creates its own path, and this the metal is called “Atlantean” by the few who know it at all.

However, the war-gear made in the Acheronian fashion is almost all newly-crafted, wrought by the resurgent Acheronian cultists and their followers, eager to recreate their diabolic age in this own. Their weapons, on the other hand, are less tenacious as the Atlantean gear, but as darkly beautiful as they are deadly.

All these relics are highly valued, and any collector or warrior hoping to obtain one should prepare to pay handsomely in gold... or in blood.

WEAPONS

The following weapons can be added to any campaign, whether available through specialized blacksmiths, rare dealers of antiquities, gifts befitting a noble, or as valuable items of treasure, found or won in battle. Few who knowingly possess such items surrender them lightly, and almost never for mere coin, so the gamemaster should determine the price for any of these items in Gold, in the unlikely event one comes up for sale.

ATLANTEAN WEAPONS

The secret of ancient Atlantean metalsmithing is discussed in the *Kull of Atlantis* sourcebook (page 23). The following items are made of that ancient metal, fashioned with traditions long lost to the world, yet still outliving the age in which they were made. Atlantean weapons all have the Atlantean quality, described below.

Atlantean

Atlantean weapons never break on a Complication, unless the gamemaster spends 2 Doom to do so. Metal armor made wholly of Atlantean steel gain 2 points of protection, and any metal-bound shield sacrificed will be destroyed as per normal, but solely due to the failure of the non-metallic portions of the shield. An item that is not traditionally armor, such as a crown or armlet, may also yield some degree of protection (usually 2 points) to the area it is worn upon.

Atlantean Battleaxe

For chopping weapons, the Atlanteans favored bearded, double-headed axes. Like all Atlantean gear, these axes speak to the wondrous artistry and brutal martial techniques of that epoch.



Atlantean Mace

The Atlantean mace is as decorative as it is deadly. Forged of some ancient steel alloy, its large striking head is deceptively light and sports four bestial visages. Due to its size, this bulky piece was likely used more during ceremonies than in combat, but a mighty-armed warrior could certainly swing this with considerable power.



Atlantean Sword

These heavy blades may be wielded one or two-handed (depending on the strength of the wielder) and sport an extended handle which runs well above the guard. Perhaps this unusual design favored some lost martial technique or was created in response to the techniques of the Atlanteans' enemies. Not only are these swords of fine make, but their ornate decorative elements provide a glimpse into the splendor of the Atlantean culture. It is rumored that King Conan's sword is of Atlantean origin, and some claim it once belonged to another great king.

ATLANTEAN WEAPONS

| Weapon | Reach | Damage | Size | Qualities | Availability | Cost | Encumbrance |
|----------------------|-------|---|------------|---------------------------------|--------------|---------|-------------|
| Battleaxe, Atlantean | 2 | 5  | Unbalanced | Atlantean, Intense, Vicious 1 | Special | Special | 1 |
| Mace, Atlantean | 2 | 3  | 1H | Atlantean, Knockdown, Vicious 1 | Special | Special | 1 |
| Sword, Atlantean | 2 | 5  | Unbalanced | Atlantean, Intense, Parrying | Special | Special | 1 |

ACHERONIAN WEAPONS

| Weapon | Reach | Damage | Size | Qualities | Availability | Cost | Encumbrance |
|------------------------|-------|---|------|----------------------------------|--------------|---------|-------------|
| Polearm, Acheronian | 3 | 4  | 2H | Knockdown, Vicious 1, Piercing 1 | Special | Special | 3 |
| Shortsword, Acheronian | 1 | 4  | 1H | Vicious | Special | Special | 1 |

ACHERONIAN WEAPONS

Crawling up from forsaken depths and spreading across the Thurian continent, fanatics of dark and sorcerous Acheron once more draw breath. These acolytes have formed new cults, razing villages and infesting abandoned ruins from where they recruit the willing to their ranks and sacrifice those who deny them.

Because these cultists are descendants of pure-blooded Acheronians, it should come as no surprise that their aesthetic motifs and craftsmanship have returned as well. Traditionally, traces of the Acheronians' vile magic transferred to their tools and trinkets, but much of what has survived is of curious — if not magical — make. The following entries detail pieces of steel and precious metals, not sorcerous creations.

Acheronian Polearm

Acheronian weapons are most easily identified by their curious curves and cruel edges. While most of these relics are ceremonial blades and armor, some pieces have been brought to bear as vicious yet elegant weapons. Acheronian polearms are relatively common (for such wholly rare relics), which suggests they were widely used by the guards and foot soldiers of the time. The heads of these polearms range widely in their designs, offering an array of hooks, barbs, and blades.

Acheronian Shortsword

To complement their lengthy polearms, the soldiers of Acheron kept short blades for when the fighting distance closed. Many of these double-edged swords featured teeth along the length of the blades and narrow guards, suggesting that parrying was not a huge part of their utility. Some of these swords also featured barbed tips, perhaps for disarming their opponents or hooking flesh.

ARMOR

As with weapons, armor from the bygone ages of Atlantis and Acheron have become more common in this era, whether re-discovered in forgotten tombs or barrows, or manufactured according to ancient ways.

ATLANTEAN ARMOR

Atlantean soldiers favored plate armor which afforded them strong protection, but also the maneuverability to slay. Such is the balance all armor must strike, but the Atlanteans excelled in the forge, creating lightweight yet tenacious pieces. Typically, these suits covered the wearer from head to toe, but unlike full plate armor, Atlantean armor traded protection for greater martial finesse, relying on leather and hide to cover the joints. A rare few of these armor sets remain intact, but pieces of them—stray helmets, pauldrons and vambraces—have been spotted on many piecemeal-clad warriors.

All Atlantean armor has the Atlantean Quality (page XX) and is equivalent to Very Heavy Armor from the *Conan* corebook (pages 155–156) in use and coverage, though are far superior in quality. Due to its fitted making, it cannot be layered with other armors.

ACHERONIAN ARMOR


Acheronian armor trades protection for an intimidating aura and grim aesthetic. These macabre suits are of intricate make, composed of precious metals, jewels, and terribly sharp edges. Painstakingly fitted to an individual's frame, most often a priest, these suits are likely worn for sacrificial

ATLANTEAN ARMOR

| Armor Type | Item | Hit Locations Covered | Armor Soak | Qualities | Availability | Cost | Encumbrance |
|------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|------------------|--------------|---------|-------------|
| Very Heavy Armor | Cuirass, Atlantean | Torso | 6 | Atlantean, Heavy | Special | Special | 2 |
| Very Heavy Armor | Arm or Leg Plates, Atlantean | Single Limb | 6 | Atlantean, Heavy | Special | Special | 1 each |
| Very Heavy Armor | Full Plate Armor, Atlantean | All | 6 | Atlantean, Heavy | Special | Special | 6 |
| Very Heavy Armor | Helmet, Atlantean | Head | 5 | Atlantean, Heavy | Special | Special | 1 |
| Very Heavy Armor | Great Helm, Atlantean | Head | 6 | Atlantean, Heavy | Special | Special | 2 |

| ACHERONIAN ARMOR | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|---------|-------------|
| Armor Type | Item | Hit Locations Covered | Armor Soak | Qualities | Availability | Cost | Encumbrance |
| Light Armor | Jacket, Acheronian | Torso and Arms | 2 | Noisy | Special | Special | 4 |
| Light Armor | Hauberk, Acheronian | Torso | 2 | Fearsome 1, Noisy | Special | Special | 3 |
| Light Armor | Sleeve or Legging, Acheronian | Single Limb | 2 | Noisy | Special | Special | 2 each |
| Light Armor | Helm, Acheronian | Head | 2 | Fearsome 1 | Special | Special | 2 |

rituals or dark masses. Elaborate headdresses, masks or helmets offer a modicum of protection, but the spiked straps lining the limbs are perhaps more dangerous to the wearer than their enemies. That said, to look upon a priest of Acheron, bedecked in this demoniac garb, covered in the blood of fresh sacrifices, is to glimpse a terror few could forget. Due to the protuberant spikes and ornamentation, it cannot be layered with other armor types.

Due to the particularly horrific ornamentation upon the armor, any Display the wearer attempts does 1 additional  in Resolve damage. This is not stackable, and the bonus is only granted once, no matter whether a hauberk and a helm are worn. Additionally, any attempts at intimidating a foe, such as with a Persuasion test, are at +1d20 if garbed in Acheronian armor (maximum +1d20 to the roll, cannot exceed the maximum normal dice pool).



Acheronian Armor

GEAR & FOODSTUFFS

The following goods and consumable items range from rare to commonplace, and are often sought by adventurers and renegades throughout the Hyborian world.

ALCHEMIST'S CACHE

These caches contain all one requires to conduct alchemical experiments or follow tried and true recipes. Not only do these kits house all the tools of the craft — scales, flasks, mortar, and pestle, etc. — but many are accompanied with rare and valuable ingredients. These kits are not sold but may be purchased piecemeal. Typically, an alchemist cache takes the form of a chest of wood, steel, or iron. They may be found in the dwellings of priests and sorcerers and are often booby-trapped due to their precious contents.

| KITS | | | | | |
|---------|-------------------|----------|--------------|---------|-------------|
| Skill | Item | Type | Availability | Cost | Encumbrance |
| Alchemy | Alchemist's Cache | Facility | 4 | Special | 2 |

BATTLEGUT TONIC

A cup full of this thick, green liquid — brewed from ground hematite, black sulphur, and wormwood — steels the muscles and lights a fire in the belly. None are certain from where it originated, but these potions are widely used by various primitive cultures to calm the nerves of warriors before battle. A character who has drunk a dose of battlegut tonic may ignore the first point of Trauma they suffer during a scene. After the scene is over, the user must make an Average (D1) Resistance test or suffer from the Dazed condition until they rest.

Cost: Made with the Alchemy skill, Challenging (D2)

Availability: —

Encumbrance: —

CANDIED SEA SLUG


As disgusting as they may sound, sea slugs are considered a delicacy in Khemi. The candied variety, a specialty dish prepared by Mayur the meat merchant, is considered the finest of all. Mayur is a discerning butcher, cook, and judge of character, and he's not willing to do business with just anybody. His recipes often require rare ingredients, which can be dangerous to procure, so he only entrusts those cunning and mighty enough to get the job done. Those whom he trusts stand to grow heavy with coins and a hearty helping of his famous candied slugs.

Cost: Made with the Alchemy skill, Easy (D0), or purchased (1 Gold per serving)

Availability: 1 (in Khitai), 3 (elsewhere)

Encumbrance: —

RAIN OF KHITAI

This colorless, transparent liquid is extremely rare outside of Khitai, and even within its borders is hard to come by. According to folk knowledge, it is of divine origin, having been blessed by a guardian spirit, a kami, and gifted to humankind. If one were to consult a Khitan alchemist, however, they would find this "rain" is more science than supernatural. Regardless, it is a prized delicacy and expensive to purchase, should one manage to find a seller. It can also be brewed via the alchemy skill. Characters who drink it will be temporarily granted renewed vitality, allowing them to restore 3  lost Vigor.

Cost: Made through Alchemy, Challenging (D3), rarely available for purchase

Availability: 3 (Khitai), 4 (elsewhere)

Encumbrance: —

SOULSLAKE MEAD

This foul-smelling, frothy drink should be considered mead only in name. It is an alchemical concoction, brewed and drunk by sorcerers and priests to aid physical recovery after casting strong spells or communing with fiends from the Outer Dark. There's a price for sorcery, but soulslake mead allows sorcerers to pay a little less. After consumption, for the duration of a scene, a sorcerer may roll one additional +1d20 for Sorcery tests (up to the normal maximum). Additionally, if they completed a Counsel test after drinking soulslake mead, they make resting sleep checks easier by one step.

Cost: Made through Alchemy, unavailable for purchase

Availability: —

Encumbrance: —



WILDWOOD HEART

Wildwood heart is an alcoholic drink favored in the western kingdoms. It is quite rare, as it is notoriously difficult to brew, takes years to complete, and contains precious ingredients. While it tastes like other ales, those with discerning palates will notice the exceptional aromatics and clean finish. The few tavern owners fortunate enough to sell this prized drink will boast of its magical flavor — a claim perhaps not as hyperbolic as it sounds, as only sorcerers seem capable of brewing it. If a character consumes a single serving of wildwood heart, they may instantly recover one point of Trauma. Additionally, they may automatically pass any Resistance test after eight hours of rest and remove up to two levels of Fatigue rather than 1. Subsequent doses within a one-day period do not confer additional benefits.

Cost: Made through Alchemy; 6 Gold where sold.

Availability: 3 (if available)

Encumbrance: —

CHAPTER 4

MAGIC

“It was a black reality,” answered Hadrathus, “an empire of black magicians, steeped in evil now long forgotten. It was finally overthrown by the Hyborian tribes of the west. The wizards of Acheron practised foul necromancy, thaumaturgy of the most evil kind, grisly magic taught them by devils.”

— *The Hour of the Dragon*

Wonderous relics and powerful rituals await those with the skill and tenacity to wield them across the Hyborian lands. Mystical artifacts can turn a peasant into a rugged hero overnight. From vile sorceries to the powerful magic of the gods, those with the will to draw down the gods' powers are rightly feared across the realm.

RELICS

Swords of great warriors, armors of heroes from ages past, and necklaces prized greater than any jewels can be found by those who are daring enough to face the great dangers that guard them. Many a hero has made their name not just for their own deeds but the miraculous relics they wield on their adventures.

The sets of armor listed here are rarely found as a whole set. Instead, bits and pieces of the relics are often found scattered about the realms, as different owners have crossed the far corners of the world wearing individual pieces. Unless otherwise specified, having more than one piece of a set does not grant any additional bonuses.



ARC OF ETERNAL WINTER


While this bow looks more like a Hyrkanian horse bow (**Conan** corebook, page 151), its origins lie deep within Asgard. Said to have been a gift to a Asgardian chieftain from a visiting dignitary from the east, the chieftain soon became famous for his strange eastern bow, and the number of beasts he was able to slay with it.

Each hunting season the chieftain would provide more and more meat for his tribe by hunting with the strange and powerful bow, until one year, there were no beasts to be found. As times turned desperate, the chieftain went out to hunt when the winds were starting to blow cold, despite being warned he might freeze.

When a blizzard blew in before the chieftain's return, everyone feared the worst, a winter of starvation, and their chieftain dead. A few days later the snows ended, and at the edge of the village the chieftain's body was found, along with the twin carcasses of giant beasts that he had slain with his bow. It is said the village survived the rest of the winter off the meat of those two beasts.

Since then, anyone who wields the chieftain's bow finds it cold to the touch. Often, arrows fired from this bow impact their targets and encase them with ice which spreads from the wounds they leave.

Description: A Hyrkanian horse bow, carved with Æsir runes which seem to have been added much later after the bow's crafting.

Reputed Qualities: This recurved bow has Range M, Damage 4 , 2H, Encumbrance 2, and possesses the Qualities of Spread 1 and Stun. Targets hit by the bow are sheathed in ice when struck, spreading painful cold from the wound and making it difficult to move.

BLADE OF THE ENSLAVING OPIATE

It is said that a Nemedian assassin named Volincal thrust a dagger into the heart of a priest of Set during the middle of a lotus-fueled ritual. The dagger was the priest's own, a particular choice of the assassin. Why he was sent, no one remembers. While the assassin succeeded in his mission, he died, victim to the snakes of the Temple of Set. The dagger was buried with the priest.

Tomb robbers later found that the dagger, whenever unsheathed, dripped with snake-like venom. Victims of the venom were often robbed of their senses and thrust into a state of near slumber momentarily, even while it the blade itself punctured the victim's vital organs.

It is also said that any who wield the dagger can, like the assassin who once wielded it, steal their way into even the very heart of a Temple of Set, the dagger somehow muting their very footfalls, the power of Set itself making them move as silently as a serpent.

Description: A dagger wrought in a serpentine motif.


Reputed Qualities: This dagger has the additional Qualities of Persistent 3 and Stun, as the poison that drips from the blade boils through the victim's veins while lulling them into a stupor for a few moments. In addition, it grants a +1d20 to Stealth tests when carried unsheathed.

BLADE OF THE MANIC HAZE

The origin of the Blade of the Manic Haze is lost to time, but the stories of the blade are many and often follow a familiar pattern. The sword is discovered in a tomb or on the body of a recently slain adventurer. Its ability to pierce and overwhelm a foe are quickly discovered and the sword is prized by its new owner, often to a fault. Many are the tales of an owner killing their companions to keep the sword to themselves.

Gripping the hilt makes one feel calmer. Anxieties and fears seem to fade away. It is a feeling that few are willing to part with, and anyone who attempts to take the sword often finds it buried in their flesh instead. Killing with the sword is invigorating, and the sword's owner often waffles between the state of heightened elation from the kill and the dull haze of the sword's calming nature.

Description: An ordinary looking broadsword with a curiously colored mottled pattern on the blade.

Reputed Qualities: This sword has the additional Qualities of Piercing 1 and Stun. Those struck by it are often dazed and confused by the magic of the blade and temporarily unable to act. The wielder gains +1 Courage when wielding the blade and gains +1  Morale whenever the blade is used to kill. This Morale fades at the start of the wielder's following turn.

CAACKLING MARIONETTE

Known as the Caged Advisor, the original wearer of the Cackling Marionette was an eccentric madman who often seemed to be moving as if on the end of the strings of a marionette. At one point he bit one too many people for his master's liking, so he was forced to wear a cage like helmet. Over time his wardrobe become more and more garish. He wore clawed gloves and shoes, and would laugh at almost anything, cackling at the slightest hint of mirth.

The fact that the Caged Advisor did not seem to mind only added to his legend as a bizarre madman. There was no deny his use to his master though. His intellect, while bizarre, was unsurpassed, even if his company was a very acquired taste. Many plots he cooked up netted his master fortune and fame, until one day his master fell to a very simple assassination plot.

The plot was so simple that many around him wondered at how the Caged Advisor could have missed it, or if he had. Soon rumors spread that the Advisor was behind the plot, and he was executed. Even as he was hung, his body jerked and moved as if dangling at the end of more than one rope.

Since then, the clawed gloves and shoes, the caged helmet, and the garish clothing that he wore appear now and then. No matter who wears it though, their movements seem to become odd, as if whatever afflicted the Caged Advisor has moved on.

Description: A complete suit of armor, consisting of garish garments (body and limbs), clawed gloves and shoes (hands and feet) and a caged metal helmet (head).

Reputed Qualities: Each piece of this armor set has Armor Soak 1 and Encumbrance 1. Any character wearing a piece of armor from this set adds +2d20 to any Intelligence-based skill tests as their head is filled with knowledge but adds one step of Difficulty to any tests using Coordination, as their movements become somewhat jerky and seemingly a bit random.



CHAIN OF AKKARIA

The Aquilonian general Akkaria (likely a corruption of Acarius) was renowned for the victorious campaigns he led. As a reward for a particularly effective campaign against the Picts, the king gifted him a thick silver chain and proclaimed him the protector of Aquilonia. It is said that after each battle, Akkaria would grip the chain as a reminder of the title and trust the king had placed in him. Over time the silver tarnished, but still Akkaria wore the chain. The chain became as much of a part of his battle gear as the very armor he trusted with his life.

One fateful morning, when Akkaria's camp was attacked, he did not have time to dress for battle. It is said that the reason he fell that day was not that he did not have time to don his armor, but because he was missing the chain of the protector of Aquilonia, left in his war-tent.

Since then, the chain has made its way to many different owners, each claiming that the spirit of Akkaria protected them and guided them in battle.

Description: A metal chain with an oval silver pendant.

Reputed Qualities: The wearer of this chain like necklace gains +1 Armor Soak in all locations and any weapon they wield gains the Quality Piercing 1 or increases its existing Piercing Quality by +1.

EARTH MOTHER

The Pictish shaman Torkani was known by her tribe and the others around them as the Earth Mother. Her power and influence were unmatched, and she advised many chieftains throughout her lifetime. Not only was she gifted at the healing arts, but she was a powerful warrior, said to have the strength of the earth itself running through her blood.

Over her life she gathered many trinkets and trophies, adorning her leather armor with them, striking a fierce figure in battle. When the battle would end, she would set aside her weapons and begin her work to help those in need. Often, she helped as many from other tribes as from her own, even when they had been on the opposing side of the battle.

All the tribes of her area soon knew of Torkani, the Mother of the Earth, and her legend grew. When her chieftain answered the drums of war on the eastern fringe of the Pictish Wilderness, she finally fell in battle to Aquilonians. Her body, along with her war-gear, was never recovered, but now and then a piece of her distinctive armor is seen, often worn by a Pictish shaman, granting its strength and wisdom to the wearer.

Description: A suit of rough, bloodstained leather armor of Pictish fashion, festooned with small tokens and trinkets made of stone, obsidian, bone, copper, bronze, iron, and

steel. Fitted for a woman, it is nonetheless loose enough to be worn by an average sized man.

Reputed Qualities: Each piece of this armor set has Armor Soak 2 and Encumbrance 2. Any character wearing a piece of armor from this set counts 1d20 on any Healing test as if it had rolled a 1 (choose before rolling) as if the player had spent a Fortune point. In addition, they gain +1d20 to any tests involving Brawn.



ENDLESS SANDS

From deep in the Zuagir desert come tales of a nameless, horned sorcerer. Said to be a master of the sands, he was reputed to control the scouring winds and able to bend the dunes themselves to his will. Many say he was once a slave, as he was always seen with manacles about his wrists, the chain ends dangling beside him.

Legends say his death was swift and the battle fierce, but that beneath the cloth, horns, and manacles was a shriveled old man, wrapped in ancient cloth as if a shroud. Since those days, the wraps he wore, his horned headdress and even the manacles that adorned his wrists are said to carry a bit of his essence, allowing any who wear it to gain just a bit of his ancient knowledge. The cost is often dear though, some say wearing the cloth ages the wearer, making them old like him, bent beneath the weight of the sorcerous knowledge the wraps bestow. Some also say that he was not the first to bear these wraps, and that he, once too, was a young and hearty warrior.

Description: Ancient looking cloth robes and body wraps, interwoven and independent enough to be donned separately. A horned headdress serves as a helm, and manacles adorn the wrists. Covers all hit locations if complete.

Reputed Qualities: Each piece of this armor set has Armor Soak 1 and Encumbrance: 1. Any character wearing a piece of armor from this set automatically generates 1 Momentum for any sorcery that involves the elements of earth or fire, such as *Fury of the Elements* (**Conan** corebook, page 181) or *Blasts of the Elements* (page XX). Additionally, the wearer automatically knows the sorcery spell *Quicksand* (page XX) without having to spend Resolve to learn it but forgets it once the armor is removed for more than a day.

KOPAS OF THE DUNES

This curved blade is like the ones used across in Stygia and further east. Once wielded by a renegade Turanian prince of whom it was said that he was a master of arms, but also that none could capture him. The crimes that made the prince and outlaw are lost, but the legend of his ability to evade capture is legendary.

Tales have it that he was once cornered three times in the same night in Zamboula, and each time he managed to evade capture. Finally, in the light of the full moon he was cornered upon a tower rooftop. Rather than let himself be captured, he threw himself from the tower, but not before leaving his sword buried in the chest of a foe.

Since then, many a swordsman has wielded the prince's blade. Few have been captured alive.

Description: A kopas — also called a kopesh — of fine make in Turanian fashion, something of an oddity as the Turanians never favored such a blade.

Reputed Qualities: This blade acts as a cutlass (*Conan* corebook, page 145), with Piercing 1 Quality. In addition, the bearer is not slowed by difficult terrain, is immune to the *Quicksand* spell (page 36), and gains a +1d20 to resist the Grappling Quality or similar effects.

MASQUER OF THE SANDS

The warrior Kalavin was a desert raider working out of Zamboula, known for his viciousness and ability to survive brutal assaults. His armor was originally patched together from his many kills, but over time, various new pieces and layers were added to the point that what once seemed patchwork became a cohesive set of heavier armor, not common for desert use. This protected Kalavin for years.

Despite the armor's protection, Kalavin was hurt several times, but always survived the wounds. His companions started to claim he was unkillable, something that Kalavin soon seemed to take to heart. He threw himself into combat with abandon, knowing his armor would protect him from the worst of it, and usually it did.

When his raiding party set upon a witch Kalavin was burned alive within his armor, and the heavy protection doing nothing to save him from the fire. Miraculously, the armor survived. Though charred it was intact, and pieces of it appear now and then, protecting their wearer from the worst wounds, but always looking a bit charred, no matter how well it is taken care of.

Description: A blackened and scorched set of piecemeal, patchwork brigandine and plate from a variety of styles and sources. All hit locations covered.

Reputed Qualities: Each piece of this armor set has Armor Soak 3 and Encumbrance 3, with the Heavy Quality. When struck, roll X^W with X equal to the number of pieces worn (a maximum of 5^W). Each Effect rolled absorbs an additional point of Vigor damage. However, this armor inflicts one point of Fatigue when worn after a combat, that can be recovered normally.

KNIGHT OF THE SILVER TWILIGHT TOKEN

The Silver Twilight is a cult of sorcerers known for their interest in everlasting life. This interest has led many members to become some of the Hyborean Age's most skilled necromancers. They scour tombs not only for riches and knowledge, but the perfect corpses for which to conduct their vile rituals on. Many a hero has died trying to prevent



the Silver Twilight's machinations, overrun by their minions or the blades of the cult themselves.

The Knights of the Silver Twilight are a tight knit cabal at the center of the cult. They are the leaders of the cult; each granted a boon in the form of a token of power. These tokens, said to have come from an ancient Stygian tomb, are infused with unholy death magic. Bearers of these tokens can detect corpses nearby.

Prized for both their magical power, the tokens also represent status in the cult. If a token is stolen, or worse, looted from a knight's corpse, the Silver Twilight will do everything in their power to get it back.

Description: A silvery, jeweled scarab token worn upon a chain.

Reputed Qualities: Anyone who holds this relic in their offhand automatically generates 2 Momentum when casting the sorcery spells *Gangrenous Touch* (page 34) or *Raise Up the Dead* (**Conan** corebook, pages 184–185). Additionally, anyone holding the token will know the location of any corpse within Medium Range, regardless any intervening rock, stone, or earth or other impediment.




MAUL OF THE RAGING EARTH

This massive mace was wielded by a Khitan bear shaman named Hiyani. He was a protector of his people and crushed foes with mighty swings of his maul. Few were able to stand to the shaman's brutal attacks. Outside of combat, Hiyani was a gentle giant, known to be caring and loving to those that he befriended.

Few could keep up with Hiyani when the man set his heart to something. It is said he once ran through the jungle for three days straight to deliver medicine to a village in need. In another tale he scaled a sheer cliff unaided to rescue a child.

Whether the tales are true of a fanciful reimagining of Hiyani's true exploits, his maul passed on to others after his death and each report to becoming stronger and more capable when using their strength to aid others or using the maul to crush their foes.

Description: A long-hafted, heavy, flanged mace (Reach 3, 4  damage, 2H, Knockdown, Stun, Piercing 1, Vicious 2, Encumbrance 3).

Reputed Qualities: This maul provides the user +1d20 to any Athletics tests, up to the normal maximum.

RING OF THE ASTRAL STEP

The Nemedian sorcerer Halista is said to have been the first bearer of the Ring of the Astral Step. He claimed the ring was a gift from an otherworld. With it, Halista was nearly unkillable. No sooner than one threatened his life, he would step away and disappear, often reappearing not far away to cast death upon those who tried to oppose him.

Halista grew ever more disturbed, coinciding with the how often he used the ring. Those that knew him said that he claimed to move through another world when he used the ring, and many feared that the exposure to that world was slowly driving him mad. The fact that his madness only made him more paranoid did not help the situation.

The mad sorcerer was finally killed when those that new him turned on him. It is said that he laid a trap for him. They lit fire to his bedchamber then attacked him in the throne room. When he used the ring to flee to his sanctum, he found the door barred and burned alive, screaming at his betrayal.


Description: A simple silver ring embossed with cryptic glyphs.

Reputed Qualities: The bearer of this ring can perform a Minor Action and spend 1 Fortune point to move instantly to any space within Long Range which the bearer can see or knows well. The move is unhindered by anything in the material realm, as the bearer steps through the astral plane to the desired location. While moving, the bearer is unable to be seen, but there are obvious sorcerous effects at each end of the movement, making the use of the ring very obvious to anyone able to perceive it.

STAFF OF THE PRIMAL SPIRIT

The head of this staff is a massive carving of swirls with a pair of wings flaring from the end. Inlaid with gold and gems, the staff is unwieldy to use as a weapon. It has been passed down for generations as a relic of healing power. From priests to priestess, to shamans or witch doctors, the staff has always found its way to those that specialize in healing magic.

Upon the death of its owner, the staff often is overlooked by looters, as if they are not worthy to take it, despite its obvious value. Soon enough it will find its way into the hands of a new healer, who will find themselves infused with its magic, compelled to aid others, as if guided by some form of primal spirit of life.

Description: A winged, wooden staff covered in gold with jewels and various gems set into it. It is too cumbersome and fragile to be wielded effectively in combat, however (treat as a normal staff, but with the Fragile Quality). If it reaches 0  it is destroyed utterly, its power lost.

Reputed Qualities: This staff has Reach 3. When the wielder attempts to cast *Touch of Healing* (page XX), they count a single d20 as if it had rolled a 1 (choose before rolling) as if they had spent a Fortune point.

STEEL BEHEMOTH

The Steel Behemoth was Aquilonian knight, known for his brutal combat prowess. The Behemoth lead charge after charge, always throwing himself into battle with abandon. His full plate armor was often caked in the blood of his enemies, and few dared face him.

It is said that once, the Behemoth strode out between his own army and an oncoming army. The enemy general went to ride him down, and so brutal was the Steel Behemoth's retaliation that the enemy routed at the sight of their general being viciously dismembered.

As the Behemoth's legend grew, he became weary of battle, but he was not allowed to retire. Instead, he was repeatedly called on to fight for his people, no matter how minor the stakes. He would take his anger out upon the enemy at not being left alone. Finally, one day he snapped. In the middle of battle, he began killing indiscriminately, enemy and friend alike. Legend says both sides ceased their fighting to try and defeat the raging Steel Behemoth.

When the battle was over, the only winners were the carrion, for the Steel Behemoth, his allies and his enemies all lay dead, his corpse buried beneath a mound of armor and flesh. Scavengers took his armor apart, each one taking a piece until nothing was left but the finally resting body of the Steel Behemoth.

Description: An uncharacteristically gaudy and ornate suit of partial plate, chased in silver, with a rhinoceros-like horned crest at the front of the chest piece.

Reputed Qualities: Each piece of this armor set has Armor Soak 4 and Encumbrance 2 and has the Very Heavy Quality. In addition, any weapon the wearer wields gains the Vicious 1 Quality or increases an existing Vicious Quality by +1.

VESTMENTS OF THE ASCENSION

Deep in the mountains of Corinthia lived the healer Talisia. While some called her a witch, many knew of her ability to help the sick and tales of her saving those on their deathbed spread throughout the land. A prince from a faraway land heard of her abilities and traveled for months to find her. Some say it was to heal his son of an illness, in other versions of the tale it was the prince himself who is ill.

Regardless, Talisia refused to help. They say that she was unmoved by his tale or his promise of riches. She said she

could see the stain on his soul and knew that he was not a kind man, well-deserving of the pain he suffered. In a fit of rage, the prince killed Talisia, much to the dismay of the many followers she had gathered around her.

It is said that as she breathed her last, her soul lifted from her body and ascended over the gathering. There, she cursed the prince before ascending toward the heavens. The prince died that day. Some say he died of the curse, other say he died of the disease that had afflicted him, while others say he died of fright.

Regardless, the followers took the prince's money and the vestments of Talisia and divided them among themselves and fled into the mountains. Now and then a blood-stained piece of leather is found that bestows amazing healing powers to any who don it.

Description: A set of robes with pieces of stiffened, ornate armor affixed.

Reputed Qualities: Any character wearing one or more pieces of armor from this set automatically generates 2 Momentum for casting the sorcery spell *Touch of Healing* (page XX). In addition, they add +1d20 to any Healing test.

WARDED BRUTE

The Brute was a Nemedian mercenary known for his massive stature and nearly impregnable armor. It is said he won many fights by casting aside his weapon and crushing his foes with his giant armored arms or stomps of his massive, armored boots. The more he killed, the more he grew sure of his impervious nature.

The coffers of the mercenary company he served grew, but so too did the Brute's ego. He killed the company's commander and all who dared speak out against him, until the company was his. It took years before someone was able to find the kink in the Brute's armor, which turned out to be a drink laden with deadly poison.

The Brute always had one of his men test his food, but a slower acting poison was used, one that would not be detected for hours after drinking. It is not known if the tester was a willing sacrifice or an unwitting accomplice, but they say that before he died, the Brute crushed the man's head with his armored hands.

The Brute's men divided up his armor, each wearing a piece as a badge of honor for killing the Brute. Eventually, in turn each fell, and the pieces of the Brute's armor were passed around from mercenary to mercenary.

Description: An ornate suit of partial metal plate, with a leather skirt.

Reputed Qualities: Each piece of this armor set has Armor Soak 4 and Encumbrance 2, with the Very Heavy Quality. In addition, the wearer is always considered to have a weapon with the Parrying Quality wielded, even if unarmed.

SORCERY

Across the world, many strange rituals and forms of magic are practiced. These rituals can lead to wondrous boons to benefit the players characters, or vile damnations to be directed at one's foes. These rituals are closely guarded secrets of the sects that practice them, but commonalities can be found if one studies them closely.

BEAR'S CLAWS

Difficulty: Average (D1)

Duration: 1 scene

Cost to Learn/Cast: 2 Resolve

Bear claws are dangerous weapons that allow a bear to rend the flesh from their foes. Like a bear, you can use these claws to tear at your enemies and even protect yourself.

You grip a bear claw between your knuckles and call forth the essence of one of the mightiest beasts. If successfully cast, massive bear claws extend from your knuckles, giving you a natural claw attack that does 3 physical damage.

BLASTS OF THE ELEMENTS

Difficulty: Average (D1)

Duration: 1 attack

Cost to Learn/Cast: 1 Resolve

Many sorcerers call on the elements, preparing blasts of energy at their foes. Whether it is the fires of hell being unleashed, the chill of death's cold touch, or lightning energy from the storms above a sorcerer who can command the elements to attack is a formidable force indeed.

A successful casting allows you to pick an elemental effect (fire, cold, or lightning) and summon forth a roiling ball of it between your hands. When you unleash it upon your foes, make a ranged Sorcery attack, with a Range of Close that causes 2 physical damage and ignores armor. Each element type adds a Quality to the attack:

| Element | Quality |
|-----------|--------------|
| Fire | Incendiary 2 |
| Lightning | Stun |
| Cold | Knockdown |

BEAR'S CLAWS MOMENTUM SPENDS

| Type | Momentum | Effect |
|---------------------|-------------|--|
| Claws of Stone | 1 | Your claws gain the Parrying Quality. |
| Claws of Corruption | 1 | Your claws gain the Fearsome 1 Quality. |
| Claws of Life | 1 | Each Effect rolled heals 1 point of your lost Vigor (up to your normal maximum). |
| Claws of the Reaper | X (up to 3) | Your claws gain the Persistent X Quality, where X is the Momentum spent. |

BLASTS OF ELEMENTS MOMENTUM SPENDS

| Type | Momentum | Effect |
|-------------------|----------|--|
| Bursting Element | 1 | The attack gains the Area Quality. |
| Tenacious Element | 1-3 | The attack gains the Persistent X Quality where X is the Momentum spent. If the element is fire, this instead increases the rating of the Incendiary Quality by X. |
| Reaching Element | 1 | Increase the Range to Medium. |





DEMONIC FORMS

Difficulty: Average (D1)

Duration: 1 scene

Cost to Learn/Cast: 2 Resolve

Those who deal with demonic forces often learn to allow such beings to inhabit their form, if for just a short while. While you stay in control of your form, it shifts into that of a demon, ready to tear and rend at your foes.

A successful casting allows the caster to take the form of a demon for a scene. They gain a natural attack of claws (3☠, Vicious 1) and Armor Soak 2. Transforming to a demonic form is dangerous. Suffering one or more Traumas in this form, you are likely to have demonic remnants left over once you transform back, if you can transform back at all.

GANGRENOUS TOUCH

Difficulty: Average (D1)

Duration: 1 attack

Cost to Learn/Cast: 1 Resolve

Those that deal with the dead become intimately familiar with death's rotting touch. Having studied how the dead waste away and the vile arcane energies that are released you learn to gather those energies and use them against your enemies.

A successful casting allows you to call forth the rotting touch of death, encasing your hands with the vile energy of the dead. You can then make a single melee attack at Reach 1 that does 3☠ physical damage, ignoring armor. The attack has the Persistent 1 Quality.

DEMONIC FORM MOMENTUM SPENDS

| Type | Momentum | Effect |
|----------------------|----------|--|
| Demonic Fortitude | 1-3 | Gain X Vigor, where X is the Momentum spent. This increases your current and maximum Vigor until the spell ends. |
| Desecrating Essence | 3 | Gain a ranged attack that does 3☠ physical damage with the Area 1 Quality. |
| Demonic Supplication | 1 | Desecrating Essence attack gains the Persistent 1 Quality. |
| Dread Visage | 1-3 | Gain Fear X, where X is the Momentum spent. |
| Winged Fury | 1 | Your demonic form can fly. |



GANGRENOUS TOUCH MOMENTUM SPENDS

| Type | Momentum | Effect |
|--------------------|----------|---|
| Pestilential Blast | 1 | The attack gains the Area Quality. You cannot be affected by your own attack from this spell. |
| Life Leech | 1 | Each effect rolled on the damage, you heal 1 Vigor. |
| Death from Afar | 1 | The attack is now a Ranged attack with a Range of Close. |
| Flesh to Worms | 1-3 | The attack gains the Fearsome X Quality where X is the Momentum spent. |

INFERNAL PROTECTIONS MOMENTUM SPENDS

| Type | Momentum | Effect |
|---------------------------|----------|---|
| Co-conspirators | X | The protection affects additional people equal to the Momentum spent. |
| Shield of Infernal Flames | 1 | Anyone who attacks the target of the spell gains Backlash 1 Quality to all melee attacks. |
| Mystic Suppression | 1 | Gain +1 Armor and Courage Soak vs magical effects. |

JUDGEMENT MOMENTUM SPENDS

| Type | Momentum | Effect |
|------------------|----------|--|
| Eye of Judgement | 1 | The attack gains the Fearsome 1 Quality. |
| Cleansing Fire | 1 | The attack gains the Area Quality. |
| Condemn | 1 | The attack gains the Stun Quality. |
| Rebuke | 1-3 | The attack damage increases by X, where X is the Momentum spent. |

INFERNAL PROTECTIONS

Difficulty: Average (D1)

Duration: 1 scene

Cost to Learn/Cast: 2 Resolve

Demons are loathe to lose their connections to the mortal realms. As one they know (but of course, do not trust), they will lend you aid to help protect you from your enemies. Afterall, if you die, they must find someone else to take your place and that takes time and energy they would rather not spend.

A successful casting increases your Armor Soak by +1. You appear encased in a light blue glowing flame that turns away harm.


JUDGMENT

Difficulty: Average (D1)

Duration: 1 attack

Cost to Learn/Cast: 1 Resolve

Priests are the holy men and women who speak the will of their god, and when challenged they often call down retribution from their deity in the form of a judgement.

You call upon your deity and point your holy symbol at an enemy. If the spell is successfully cast, your deity answers and lays their judgement upon your foe in the form of holy fire, holy light, or foul unholy pain. This is a ranged attack with a Range of Close that causes 4  physical damage.

OTHERWORLD PACT

Difficulty: Average (D1)



Duration: 1 scene

Cost to Learn/Cast: 2 Resolve

Dealing with demonic powers has given you insight into how they work, and what they can do for you. You are adept at bargaining with the demons and can call upon their demonic powers to aid you. While clutching a small idol representing the demon you wish aid from, you make the bargain and give up a small bit of your soul each time. Your body is drained while the spells last, but your demonic ally aids you in casting sorceries for a time.

A successful casting reduces all Resolve costs for Sorcery spells while you maintain the pact by 1 (to a minimum of 1). Each round you maintain the pact you take 1 point of Vigor damage, which ignores all Armor and Cover Soak. You can end the pact at any time.

OTHERWORLD PACT MOMENTUM SPENDS

| Type | Momentum | Effect |
|--------------------|----------|---|
| Infernal Knowledge | 1 | Any fire-based sorcery spell increases the damage it inflicts by X  physical damage, where X is the Momentum spent. |
| Diabolic Knowledge | 1 | Any electricity-based sorcery spell increases the damage it inflicts by X  physical damage, where X is the Momentum spent. |


QUICKSAND

Difficulty: Average (D2)

Duration: 1 round per Momentum

Cost to Learn/Cast: 2 Resolve

Many sorcerers are known for the tricks used to keep their enemies at bay. For some, it is turning the earth beneath their enemies into quicksand, for others it is creating summoning vines to grab and hold their enemies. Regardless of the form the spell takes, the results are the same, the sorcerer's foes are slowed or stuck and unable to reach them while the sorcerer rains down foul magic upon them with impunity.

You raise one hand and point out a circular area within Medium Range, Close Range in size. Muttering arcane words, you hold fast attempt to hold fast anyone in that area. If successfully cast, you make a Sorcery attack, doing 2  physical damage with the Grappling Quality. Anyone who enters the area, or who begins their turn in the area but who is not grappled by it, suffers the same damage as

well. Anyone ensnared by the spell takes no further damage unless they escape from it and move back into the area again while the spell continues.

The spell lasts 1 round plus 1 round per Momentum generated. When the spell ends, anyone still ensnared is freed.

SHAMANIC RUNES

Difficulty: Average (D1)

Duration: 1 scene

Cost to Learn/Cast: 2 Resolve

Shamanic runes are powerful spells drawn either on an object or in the air. Shamans are aware of the flow of magic through storms and can sense that and through the casting of runes protect themselves or their allies from electricity. More powerful runes can protect against all magical effects or even spur your allies to fight more fiercely.

You trace the rune you wish to cast either in the air on an object you hold with coal, blood, or chalk. When




successfully cast the rune flashes with magical power then disappears though its effects linger for an entire scene. You gain +1 Armor or Courage Soak for any electrical attack that targets you.

TOUCH OF HEALING

Difficulty: Average (D1)
Duration: 1 attack
Cost to Learn/Cast: 1 Resolve


Priests of many sects can call upon the power of their deities to heal themselves or others. For some deities this come in the form of radiant light and calming healing, while for others the process of healing is one of torment and pain. Regardless, the recipient of the spell is left mended, even if the process to get there is quite different.

You call upon the aid of your deity and ask for their healing upon the creature you are touching while saying a healing prayer. If successfully cast, you or one ally you touch is healed 3  points of Vigor.

VENOM STRIKE


Difficulty: Average (D1)
Duration: 1 attack
Cost to Learn/Cast: 1 Resolve

Priests of Set are infamous for the worship of snakes. They include them in their temples, carve them into their architecture, and include them just about all aspects of their lives. Their sorcery is no different.


You call upon the wrath and fury of Set while pointing your upheld hands at your foe. If successfully cast, snakes appear in your hands and spit vile venom at the opponent. This is a ranged attack with a Range of Close that causes 3  physical damage, Persistent 1.



SHAMANIC RUNES MOMENTUM SPENDS

| Type | Momentum | Effect |
|--------------------|----------|---|
| Larger Rune | X | The rune affects additional people equal to the Momentum spent. |
| Rune of Resilience | 1 | The protection is against all magical damage, not just electricity. |
| Rune of Aggression | 1-2 | Those affected by the rune gain +X  to physical attack damage where X is the Momentum spent. |
| Rune of Grounding | 1 | The protection is increased to +3 Armor and Courage Soak, but anyone effected is Hindered |

TOUCH OF MITRA MOMENTUM SPENDS

| Type | Momentum | Effect |
|-----------------|----------|--|
| Radiance | 2 | The healing effects all allies within Close Range. |
| Renewal | 1 | The same healing is applied for rounds equal to the number of Effects rolled. |
| Fierce Recovery | 1-3 | The amount of healing provided is increased by +X  , where X is the Momentum spent. |
| Vitalizing Jolt | 1 | Increase the Range to Close. |

SNAKES OF SET MOMENTUM SPENDS

| Type | Momentum | Effect |
|-----------------------|----------|--|
| Set's Writhing Hatred | X | The attack's Persistent Quality is increased by +1 per Momentum spent. |
| Cobra Spit | 1 | Increase the attack's Range to Medium. |
| Shroud of Snakes | 2 | The attack gains the Area Quality. |

CHAPTER 5

ENCOUNTERS

“There are dark worlds barely guessed by man, wherein formless monsters stalk — fiends which may be drawn from the Outer Voids to take material shape and rend and devour at the bidding of evil magicians.”

— Epimetreus the Sage, *“The Phoenix on the Sword”*

Age of Conan brims with creatures able to challenge even the most jaded adventurers. The beings in this chapter are otherworldly horrors, mundane creature transformed by magic or corrupted by eldritch elements, or unliving things that do not draw breath. Generally, they tend to be more dangerous than the creatures listed in the Conan corebook, due to the different requirements and nature of gameplay. When using one or more of these creatures, the gamemaster should scale the abilities accordingly to fit the flavor of their game, and the strengths of their own player characters.

DENIZENS OF THE HYBORIAN WORLD

These men and women are followers. They almost always are found doing the bidding of someone far greater. On their own, they pose little threat, but follow the thread back to their leader and you almost always find someone of great renown and great danger.

BLACK RING SOLDIER (MINION) OR FURY (TOUGHENED)

The Black Ring hires all kinds to help protect them. The best among them rise through the ranks to become Furies, men and women whose only existence is to bend their anger into force that the Black Ring can guide.

ATTRIBUTES

| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| 7 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 10 | 11 | 9 | |





FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

| Combat | 2 | Movement | 1 |
|-----------|---|----------|---|
| Fortitude | 1 | Senses | 1 |
| Knowledge | — | Social | — |

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 6, (Fury 11), Resolve 4 (Fury 9)
- **Soak:** Armor 3 (Mail), Courage 2

ATTACKS

- **Sword (M):** Reach 2, 4 , 1H, Parry
- **Shield (M):** Reach 2, 2 , 1H, Knockdown, Shield 2
- **Crossbow (R):** Range M, 3 , Unbalanced, Unforgiving 1, Volley
- **Fearsome Gaze (T):** Range C, 3  mental, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Protect the Ring:** When taking the **Interpose** group action, Black Ring soldiers have an Armor Soak value of 4 rather than 3.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Fury of the Ring:** A Black Ring Fury may spend 1 Doom to give their weapon Vicious 1 for the remainder of the scene.




KUSHITE SCAVENGER (MINION) OR PLUNDERER (TOUGHENED)

Many Kushite raiders and plunderers have scoured the lands outside of Kushite for riches and bounties. Finding a forgotten ruin or lonely campsite gives them the freedom to take anything they want by force.

| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 8 | 9 | 8 | |

| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------|---|
| Combat | 1 | Movement | 1 |
| Fortitude | 1 | Senses | — |
| Knowledge | — | Social | — |

| STRESS AND SOAK | |
|---|--|
| ■ Stress: Vigor 5 (9 Plunderer), Resolve 4 (8 Toughened) | |
| ■ Soak: Armor 1 (Leather), Courage — | |

| ATTACKS | |
|---|--|
| ■ Tulwar (M): Reach 2, 4  , Unbalanced, Cavalry 1, Parrying | |
| ■ Throwing Knife (R): Range C, 3  , 1H, Hidden 1, Volley | |
| ■ Furious Cry (T): Range C, 2  mental, Stun | |

| SPECIAL ABILITIES | |
|--|--|
| ■ Hidden Attack: Whenever the gamemaster spends 1 or more Doom to bring additional Kushite scavengers into the scene, they appear within Close Range. | |





NEMEDIAN LEGIONNAIRE (MINION) OR CENTURION (TOUGHENED)

The professional soldiers of Nemedi are known for their strength in arms and tenacity. Many a brave adventurer has fallen to the massed ranks of the legionnaires.

| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 8 | 7 | 7 | 9 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 9 | 11 | 9 | |

| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------|---|
| Combat | 2 | Movement | 1 |
| Fortitude | 1 | Senses | 1 |
| Knowledge | — | Social | — |

| STRESS AND SOAK | |
|--|--|
| ■ Stress: Vigor 6 (11 Centurion), Resolve 5 (9 Centurion) | |
| ■ Soak: Armor 3 (plate), Courage 1 | |

| ATTACKS | |
|--|--|
| ■ Short Sword (M): Reach 1, 4  , 1H, Parrying | |
| ■ Javelin (M/R): Range 2, 3  , 1H, Fragile, Piercing 1, Thrown (M) | |
| ■ Shield (M): Range C, 2  mental, Stun | |
| ■ Stalwart Warrior (T): Range C, 3  mental, Stun | |

| SPECIAL ABILITIES | |
|--|--|
| ■ Shield Brothers: Any Nemedian Legionnaire or Centurion fighting within Reach of one or more Nemedian Legionnaires or Centurions gains +1 to their Shield Quality. | |

| DOOM SPENDS | |
|--|--|
| ■ Commanding Voice: A Centurion may spend 1 Doom to grant all Legionnaires within close range +1d20 to their next action. This bonus dice expires at beginning of the Centurions next turn. | |






STYGIAN DEATHMASTER (NEMESIS)

Known as Deathmasters, Stygian necromancers are known for their ability to create the most fearsome of the walking dead. Clad in bone and cloth armor, deathmasters surround themselves with the dead and dying.

| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 9 | 10 | 10 | 11 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 7 | 8 | 8 | |

| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------|---|
| Combat | 1 | Movement | 1 |
| Fortitude | 1 | Senses | 2 |
| Knowledge | 3 | Social | — |

| STRESS AND SOAK | |
|---|--|
| ■ Stress: Vigor 9, Resolve 12 | |
| ■ Soak: Armor 2 (Clothing and Bone), Courage 3 | |

| ATTACKS | |
|---|--|
| ■ Dagger (M): Reach 1, 3  , 1H, Hidden 1, Parrying, Thrown, Unforgiving | |
| ■ Staff (M): Reach 3, 4  , 2H, Knockdown | |
| ■ Death's Gaze (T): Range C, 4  mental, Stun | |

| SPECIAL ABILITIES | |
|---|--|
| ■ Doom-Herald | |
| ■ Necromancer: Deathmasters know the spells <i>Gangrenous Touch</i> (page XX) and <i>Raise Up the Dead</i> (<i>Conan</i> corebook, page 184–185). They are often surrounded by Undead minions such as skeletal warriors (<i>Conan</i> corebook, page 342) doing their bidding. | |
| ■ Fearsome Minions: Deathmasters are adept at creating Minions that are fearsome to behold. Increase the Fear Quality of any Undead created by the Deathmaster by +1. | |

| DOOM SPENDS | |
|---|--|
| ■ Knitting Bone: The Deathmaster can spend Doom to revive fallen undead minions. For 1 Doom they may raise up two Minions or one Toughened Undead. | |






VANIR REAVER (MINION)

Often led by a Vanir raider (*Conan the Pirate*, page 71), Vanir reavers are more numerous, swarming their foes to the ground, overwhelming them with numbers and sheer strength.

| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 8 | 6 | 7 | 7 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 9 | 10 | 9 | |

| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------|---|
| Combat | 1 | Movement | — |
| Fortitude | 1 | Senses | 1 |
| Knowledge | — | Social | — |

| STRESS AND SOAK | |
|---|--|
| ■ Stress: Vigor 5, Resolve 4 | |
| ■ Soak: Armor 2 (Brigandine), Courage 1 (Savage) | |

| ATTACKS | |
|---|--|
| ■ Battleaxe (M): Reach 2, 6  , Unbalanced, Intense, Vicious 1 | |
| ■ Shield (M): Reach 2, 4  , 1H, Knockdown, Shield 2 | |
| ■ Howling Threat (T): Range C, 4  mental, Stun | |

| SPECIAL ABILITIES | |
|--|--|
| ■ Strength from the Sea: Vanir reavers are used to combat aboard ship and only suffer penalties in the fiercest of weather. | |
| ■ Strength in Numbers: When acting as part of a Mob or Squad, these non-player characters generate 1 bonus Momentum on a successful test for every two members of the Mob/Squad. This bonus Momentum cannot be saved. | |

WILD BEASTS

These men and women are followers. They almost always are found doing the bidding of someone far greater. On their own, they pose little threat, but follow the thread back to their leader and you almost always find someone of great renown and great danger.




APE KING (TOUGHENED)

These beasts, found primarily in dense primeval jungles, stand easily twice the height of the tallest man. Their origins are unclear; whether a remnant of an older world, or mundane a beast transmuted by magics. They attack with massive fists, canine teeth, and can hurl large rocks and trees at prey or trespassers on their territory. When angered, their roar, and chest pounding shakes the trees, sending smaller animals scurrying for safety. They are fond of bright objects, and leave such object littered around their domain. A few of their number have been captured; caged for the amusement for merchant princes, or unwilling pets to kings.

| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 8 | 6 | 6 | 8 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 12 | 13 (1) | 11 | |

| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------|---|
| Combat | 1 | Movement | 1 |
| Fortitude | 1 | Senses | 1 |
| Knowledge | — | Social | — |


| STRESS AND SOAK |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stress: Vigor 15, Resolve 9 ■ Soak: Armor —, Courage 1 |

| ATTACKS |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fist (M): Reach 2, 7 , 1H, Grappling ■ Thrown Rock (R): Reach 2, 4 , 1H, Knockdown, Shield 2 ■ Threaten (T): Range C, 3  mental, Stun |

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Brachiating:** The ape king can move through the trees with remarkable agility, swinging from branch to branch. An ape king may ignore all challenging terrain when moving through zones that include trees and may re-roll any d20 that does not generate a success when making a movement-related test while climbing or moving through trees. However, due to their size (the Monstrous Creature ability), there are few trees that can support their bulk.
- **Fear 1**
- **Monstrous Creature**

DOOM SPENDS

- **Bellowing Roar:** The roar of a ape king is terrifying to behold, and few creatures can stand firm in the face of such a dreadful noise. When it attempts a Threaten Action, spending 2 Doom grants the ape king the Bellowing Roar display, which inflicts 5  mental damage with the Area and Vicious 1 Qualities. The benefits of the Fear 1 ability have already been included

BOAR (MINION)

Large wild pigs, commonly called boars, are commonplace almost everywhere in the Hyborian kingdoms and northward. Typically, they are found in any moderately rural setting; scarcity may push them into the borders of civilizations. They are territorial and aggressive, and not easily intimidated by the presence of humans. Packs of them moving through settled lands is a dangerous occurrence, and requires skill hunters to diminish their herd.

| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 7 | 4 | 5 | 7 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 8 | 9 | 4 | |


| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------|---|
| Combat | 1 | Movement | 1 |
| Fortitude | 2 | Senses | 1 |
| Knowledge | — | Social | — |




STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 5, Resolve 4
- **Soak:** Armor —, Courage 1

ATTACKS

- **Goring Tusks (M):** Reach 1, 3 , Vicious

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Charge:** If the boar makes a Movement Minor Action and then uses its Standard Action to make a close combat attack, it counts as having Reach 3, and may re-roll any  rolled for damage.

BOAR, GIANT (TOUGHENED)

About twice the size of their smaller kin, giant boars are harder to find. They tend to stay in more remote zones, and carve out a personal fiefdom for their hunts, with brute force. Humans, or even larger beasts, who stumble into their domain will quickly have a fight on their hand, or a swift retreat.

ATTRIBUTES

| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| 6 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 8 | 11 | 3 | |


FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

| Combat | Movement | Senses | Social |
|-----------|-----------|--------|--------|
| 2 | 1 | 1 | — |
| Fortitude | Knowledge | | |
| 3 | — | | |


STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 11, Resolve 6
- **Soak:** Armor 6, Courage 2

ATTACKS

- **Goring Tusks (M):** Reach 1, 4 , Vicious 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Charge:** If the giant boar makes a Movement Minor Action and then uses its Standard Action to make a close combat attack, it counts as having Reach 3, and may re-roll any  rolled for damage.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Relentless:** Giant boars are stubborn creatures, dauntless and heedless of their well-being when enraged. If a giant boar suffers a Wound, the gamemaster may spend 1 Doom to ignore that Wound. The second and each subsequent time this ability is used during a scene, it costs 1 additional Doom in addition to the first Doom spend.

HYENA (MINION)

Scavengers of the remote places, these devious creatures often wait for others to bring down the kill before swooping in to lay claim to the spoils. Timid alone, but bold in numbers, they are the scourge of caravans and travelers in sun blasted realms. Each is roughly the size of a large spotted dog, with sharpened canines to rend their prey.

ATTRIBUTES

| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| 9 | 6 | 7 | 9 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 9 | 8 | 5 | |

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

| Combat | Movement | Senses | Social |
|-----------|-----------|--------|--------|
| 1 | 1 | 1 | — |
| Fortitude | Knowledge | | |
| — | — | | |

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 5, Resolve 3
- **Soak:** Armor —, Courage

ATTACKS

- **Bite (M):** Reach 1, 3 , Unforgiving 1
- **Cackling (T):** Range M, 1  mental, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Pack Hunter:** Hyenas are fearsome pack hunters: a were-hyena gains 1 bonus Momentum on any attack roll against a foe already attacked by an ally this round, and on Movement tests where the enemy can see one or more of its allies.

LION (TOUGHENED)

In family groups called prides, these majestic animals prowl the steamy savannah lowlands and verdant grasslands. Typically, they will avoid human contact. If hunger drives them to attack humans, they are aggressive hunters.




| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 9 | 4 | 7 | 8 |
| Agility | | Brawn | Coordination |
| 10 | | 10 | 5 |

| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------|---|
| Combat | 2 | Movement | 1 |
| Fortitude | 3 | Senses | 1 |
| Knowledge | — | Social | — |

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 17, Resolve 9
- **Soak:** Armor 2, Courage 1


ATTACKS

- **Bite (M):** Reach 1, 4 , Grappling, Unforgiving 2
- **Claws (M):** Reach 2, 5 , Vicious 1
- **Savage Growl (T):** Range M, 3  mental, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Keen Senses (Scent)**
- **Pack Hunter:** Lions are fearsome pack hunters. A lion gains 1 bonus Momentum on any attack roll against a foe already attacked by an ally this round, and on Movement tests where the enemy can see one or more of the lion's allies.
- **Pounce:** If a lion makes the Movement Minor Action before attempting a close combat attack, the lion may add the Knockdown Quality to its **Claws** attack. If the target is knocked prone, then the lion may spend 1 Momentum to make a **Bite** attack against the same target.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Bellowing Roar:** The roar of a lion is terrifying to behold, and few creatures can stand firm in the face of such a dreadful noise. By spending 2 Doom, when it attempts a Threaten Action, the lion gains the **Bellowing Roar** Display (Range M, 4  mental, Area, Vicious 1).



MAMMOTH (TOUGHENED)

Far larger than its kin, the elephant, the mammoth is an evolutionary throwback to the age when behemoths were commonplace in the world. Thick shaggy gray fur entirely covers the beast. Herds of mammoths are seen near the remote glaciers in the north, above the Arctic Circle. When there is a scarcity of food, they roam the northern wastes of Asgard, Vanaheim, and Hyperborea.




| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 8 | 4 | 6 | 9 |
| Agility | | Brawn | Coordination |
| 7 | | 15 (2) | 4 |

| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------|---|
| Combat | 2 | Movement | 1 |
| Fortitude | 3 | Senses | 1 |
| Knowledge | — | Social | — |

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 17, Resolve 9
- **Soak:** Armor 2, Courage 1

ATTACKS

- **Goring Tusks (M):** Reach 3, 9 , Vicious 1
- **Stomp (M):** Reach 1, 9 , Stun, Vicious 1, only against prone enemies
- **Belligerence (T):** Range M, 4  mental, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Fear 1**
- **Monstrous Creature**
- **Trample:** If a mammoth makes a Movement Minor Action before making a close combat attack, it gains the Knockdown Quality on its Goring Tusks attack. If a target is knocked prone, it may spend 1 Momentum to make a Stomp attack against the same target.

PANTHER (TOUGHENED)

These sleek hunters carefully and quietly, taking time to stalk their prey before leaping to attack. Their speed and strength can bring down much larger creatures. Common in the Hyborian kingdoms, panthers are especially prolific along the Bacharan coasts near Tortage.

ATTRIBUTES

| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| 10 | 4 | 6 | 9 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 10 | 9 | 5 | |




FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

| Combat | Movement | Senses | Social |
|-----------|-----------|--------|--------|
| 2 | 2 | 1 | — |
| Fortitude | Knowledge | | |
| — | — | | |

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 9, Resolve 9
- **Soak:** Armor —, Courage —

ATTACKS

- **Powerful Bite (M):** Reach 1, 4 , Unforgiving 2
- **Claws (M):** Reach 2, 4 , Vicious 1
- **Savage Growl (T):** Range M, 3  mental, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Keen Senses (Scent)**
- **Pounce:** If a panther makes the Movement Minor Action before attempting a close combat attack, the panther may add the Knockdown Quality to its **Claws** attack. If the target is knocked prone, then the panther may spend 1 Momentum to make a **Bite** attack against the same target.

RHINOCEROS (TOUGHENED)

These lumbering beasts commonly roam the Kosphef province in Stygia, and graze among the lush grasslands of Hyrkania. Ordinarily, such creatures avoid contact with humans. If they feel threatened, they will fight viciously, using their natural attacks to devastating effect. A few skilled beast masters have managed to capture these creatures and tame them to a degree that they are able to ride them as armored mounts in battle as four-legged battering rams. Such creatures are called “Devil’s Lances” by those who have seen them thunder across the battlefield.

ATTRIBUTES

| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| 8 | 4 | 6 | 9 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 5 | 12 | 4 | |



FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

| Combat | Movement | Senses | Social |
|-----------|-----------|--------|--------|
| 2 | 1 | 1 | — |
| Fortitude | Knowledge | | |
| — | — | | |

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 11, Resolve 4
- **Soak:** Armor 3 (Tough Hide) or 4 (Armored), Courage —

ATTACKS

- **Goring Horn (M):** Reach 2, 7 , Grappling, Unforgiving 3
- **Hooves (M):** Reach 1, 4 , Stun, Vicious 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Trample:** If a mammoth makes a Movement Minor Action before making a close combat attack, it gains the Knockdown Quality on its Goring Tusks attack. If a target is knocked prone, it may spend 1 Momentum to make a Hooves attack against the same target.

ARMORED MOUNTS (DEVIL’S LANCE)

- **Steed:** If used as a steed, they will have 1 additional point of armor and benefit from the direction of their rider (Conan corebook, page 137).

MONSTROUS FOES

These creatures are corrupted or made by magic, and are fearsome beyond any natural aspect. Only the bravest of heroes should think about facing one, as most mortal folks are no match for them at all.




CORRUPTED BEAR (TOUGHENED)

Desperate for a weapon to turn against King Conan and Aquilonia, Nemedian artificers experimented with cultivating a plague sparked by dark magic. All their precautions were for naught, they lost control of their creation; it quickly consumed its architects after sweeping into the flora and fauna of the borderlands. The hibernating bears proved particularly susceptible. When they emerged from the dens to feed, their fur and skin sloughed off, hanging on in fleshy ribbons. Intense, unyielding pain turned these creatures fiercely rabid. It sees all others as the source of its agony, and will do everything it can to kill it, and hopefully ends its pain.

| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 6 | 4 | 4 | 6 |
| Agility | | Brawn | Coordination |
| 9 | | 11 | 4 |

| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------|---|
| Combat | 1 | Movement | 1 |
| Fortitude | — | Senses | 2 |
| Knowledge | — | Social | — |

| STRESS AND SOAK | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| ■ Stress: Vigor 10, Resolve 8 | |
| ■ Soak: Armor —, Courage — | |

| ATTACKS | |
|---|--|
| ■ Bite (M): Reach 1, 5  , Piercing 1, Unforgiving 2 | |
| ■ Two Claws (M): Reach 2, 4  , Knockdown | |
| ■ Growl (T): Range C, 3  , mental, Vicious 1 | |

| SPECIAL ABILITIES | |
|--|--|
| ■ Fear 1 | |
| ■ Keen Senses (Scent) | |
| ■ Savage: A corrupted bear may use the Swift Strike Momentum spend for only 1 Momentum, so long as it uses a different attack for each Action. It has two distinct Claw attacks and a Bite attack, and it may use Swift Strike up to twice each turn, rather than once as is normally the case. | |



CORRUPTED WOLF (MINION)

Travelers who encounter such beings believe them to be corpses, reanimated to devour the living. The truth is that a malignant infection has burrowed into the wolf, rupturing its skin into a series of stinking open wounds. They still live, but in terrible pain, consumed with unremitting rage. They still prefer to form packs but will also attack solo. contrary to wisdom, they will engage against overwhelming odds against any other creatures it encounters. Only death will give these poor tormented creatures relief from its agonizing existence.

| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 8 | 5 | 5 | 7 |
| Agility | | Brawn | Coordination |
| 10 | | 9 | 5 |

| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------|---|
| Combat | 1 | Movement | 1 |
| Fortitude | — | Senses | 2 |
| Knowledge | — | Social | — |

| STRESS AND SOAK | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| ■ Stress: Vigor 8, Resolve 6 | |
| ■ Soak: Armor —, Courage — | |

| ATTACKS | |
|--|--|
| ■ Bite (M): Reach 1, 3  , Grappling, Unforgiving 1 | |
| ■ Snarling (T): Range C, 3  , mental, Stun | |

| SPECIAL ABILITIES | |
|--|--|
| ■ Keen Senses (Scent) | |
| ■ Pack Hunter: Wolves are fearsome pack hunters; a wolf gains one bonus Momentum on any attack roll against a foe already attacked by an ally this round, and on Movement tests where the enemy can see one or more of the wolf's allies. | |

DARK BEAST (TOUGHENED)


The origins of these creature remain conjecture. For hundreds of years, frontier villages in Nemedia reported seeing packs of what can only be described as demonic wolves. Though legends of skin-changers abound, they remain still but legends to most. Bodies and pelts of the slain creatures, put on poles for display before being consumed by the pyre, show they are not the dreaded werewolf, but something else. Perhaps they are wolves, town elders muse, cursed to become part human during the night. No answer seems

forthcoming, and those terrorized by the creatures are more concerned with slaying them than diving their genesis. They are squat part-wolf creatures, that run and leap in the woods on two legs, savagely attacking for sport and game.


| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 7 | 6 | 7 | 6 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 10 | 12 | 9 | |

| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------|---|
| Combat | 2 | Movement | 2 |
| Fortitude | 2 | Senses | 2 |
| Knowledge | — | Social | — |

| STRESS AND SOAK | |
|--|--|
| ■ Stress: Vigor 11, Resolve 9 | |
| ■ Soak: Armor 2 (Tough Hide), Courage — | |

| ATTACKS | |
|--|--|
| ■ Bite (M): Reach 1, 6  , Unforgiving 2 | |
| ■ Two Claws (M): Reach 2, 7  , Vicious 1 | |
| ■ Snarling Menace (T): Range C, 6  , mental, Vicious 1 | |

| SPECIAL ABILITIES | |
|--|--|
| ■ Fast Healing 5 | |
| ■ Fear 1 | |
| ■ Inhuman Awareness 1 | |
| ■ Inured to Disease | |
| ■ Inured to Poison | |
| ■ Keen Senses (Scent) | |
| ■ Night Vision | |
| ■ Savage: A dark beast may use the Swift Strike Momentum spend for the cost of only 1 Momentum, so long as it uses a different attack for each attack. It has two distinct Claw attacks and a Bite attack, and it may use Swift Strike up to twice each turn, rather than once as is normally the case. | |

| DOOM SPENDS | |
|---|--|
| ■ Bestial Howling: The howl of a dark beast is terrifying to hear, a fearsome noise that eclipses even the howling of dire wolves. When attempting a Threaten Action, the werewolf can spend 2 Doom and gain the Bestial Howling display, which inflicts 4  mental damage with the Area and Piercing 1 Qualities. The benefits of the Fear 1 ability have already been included. | |


DEMONIC PICT (NEMESIS)

Picts who dabble too deeply in sorcery can become puppet shells for the entities they were attempting to command. Tribesfolk who venture, against warnings from elders, into elder ruins or temples may find something waiting inside, eager to harness a mortal frame for some black campaign. Possession has combined and muted the attributes of each of the two beings, creating something that is wholly neither. Although nothing visibly distinguishes this Pict from its kin, any who come within close range sense, on a primal level, and recoil from the alien nature before them. These abominations are shunned by Picts, as this hybrid is unnatural, a dreadful fate to be avoided.

| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 9 | 5 | 9 | 11 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 10 | 10 | 9 | |


| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------|---|
| Combat | 1 | Movement | 2 |
| Fortitude | 1 | Senses | 1 |
| Knowledge | — | Social | — |

| STRESS AND SOAK | |
|--|--|
| ■ Stress: Vigor 10, Resolve 11 | |
| ■ Soak: Armor 1 (Leather), Courage 1 (Partially Insane) | |

| ATTACKS | |
|--|--|
| ■ Club (M): Reach 2, 7  , 2H, Knockdown, Stun, Vicious 1 | |

| SPECIAL ABILITIES | |
|---|--|
| ■ Scent: A demonic Pict may use its Senses Area of Expertise to track prey or threats and may re-roll 1d20 on all Senses tests made to detect a target by scent. | |

Additionally, a demonic Pict chief has one of the two following abilities:

- **Brutal General:** The demonic Pict knows every ambush spot in their domain. If at any point, the Demonic Pict can set an ambush, they gain 2 bonus Momentum on the test. The gamemaster is encouraged to use Doom spends to simulate the traps and tricks of this primitive, yet cunning foe.
- **Touch of Endless Cold (M):** Reach 1, 6 , Intense, Stun


FLESH EATERS (MINION)

Cimmerian elders believe these creatures to be the creation of humankind. Too deeply did their axes cut the wood around the swampy west-lands, too greedily did settlers let their oxen graze on the marsh's edge, too far did man settle near this pristine spot of nature. In retaliation, the earth fashioned its own protectors to drive them away. From the slime pools rose the flesh eaters, shaped as stout muscular humans with stone-hard skin, skin reflecting a deep greenish color. Broken roots and curled twigs pock the skin of these creations, showing they do indeed have some of the frozen swamps in them. To stand against them, the elders claim, is to face the wrath of the swamp itself.

| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 6 | 5 | 5 | 6 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 8 | 10 | 8 | |

| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------|---|
| Combat | 1 | Movement | 1 |
| Fortitude | 3 | Senses | — |
| Knowledge | — | Social | — |

| STRESS AND SOAK |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stress: Vigor 13, Resolve 13 ■ Soak: Armor 3 (Scales), Courage — |

| ATTACKS |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Claws (M): Reach 1, 4 , Grappling ■ Hideous Shrieking (T): Range C, 3  mental, Stun |

| SPECIAL ABILITIES |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Amphibious: Flesh eaters suffer no penalty to any Action when swimming, and can breathe as easily underwater as they can on land. ■ Fear 1 |



FROST CRAWLER (TOUGHENED)

Cimmerian hunters have not sighted these beings in a generation but remain vigilant for a return to their familiar haunts. Ancient sorcery has form joined an eel, a serpent, and man in unholy union. These beasts crawl through frigid streams, or slither in thick brush as a serpent on its belly, before lunging upward on an almost humanoid torso. Upright, it uses its spindle-like claws, and strikes with a row of needle teeth nested in the gash that serves as its mouth. Snow and ice seem not to still its blood as ordinary reptiles, they continue to actively hunt, no matter the season.

| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 9 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 11 | 11 | 10 | |

| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------|---|
| Combat | 1 | Movement | 1 |
| Fortitude | 1 | Senses | 1 |
| Knowledge | — | Social | — |

| STRESS AND SOAK |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stress: Vigor 15, Resolve 9 ■ Soak: Armor 2, Courage 1 |

| ATTACKS |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Bite (M): Reach 2, 5 , Grappling, Persistent 2 ■ Cold Claws (M): Reach 1, 4 , Grappling |

| SPECIAL ABILITIES |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Amphibious: Frost crawlers suffer no penalty to any Action when swimming, and can breathe as easily underwater as they can on land. ■ Fear 1 |

| DOOM SPENDS |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Summons: Frost crawlers operate in semi-organized hives. It can summon mobs of lesser frost crawlers to their aid. These lesser crawlers are Mobs of Minions, each with 8 Vigor, 5 Resolve, and an Armor Soak of 1 (Scales). The Mobs emerge from the brush or water, often at Extreme Range. The summoning takes the crawler one Standard Action, and one Mob of three Minions is summoned for every 2 Doom spent. |

HALF-GIANT (TOUGHENED)

The frozen northlands abound with tales of this unique breed of man and giant. Stories hold that before Ymir withdrew his children into the icy wastes, that some took mortal brides, or that Atali, the Frost Giant's Daughter bore children from favored warriors she found near-death on the battlefields. From these unions came children carrying the traits of both races. They stand taller than men, but not nearly as tall as giants, at roughly ten to twelve feet. Their skin is unnaturally white, and pale. If these creatures are more than legend, they are few. Accepted by neither race, they stay aloof and are hostile to others; ready to defend their independence and secrecy with battle. A common thread in the stories is their vindictive nature, they will pursue a foe that had wronged them to the bitter ends of the world.



ATTRIBUTES

| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| 9 | 7 | 9 | 10 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 7 | 11 | 8 | |

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

| Combat | 1 | Movement | 2 |
|-----------|---|----------|---|
| Fortitude | 2 | Senses | 1 |
| Knowledge | — | Social | — |

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 14, Resolve 10
- **Soak:** Armor 3 (Gigantic Armor), Courage 2 (Child of Ymir)

ATTACKS

- **Battleaxe (M):** Reach 3, 6, Unbalanced, Intense, Vicious 1
- **Massive Fists (M):** Reach 1, 4, 1H, Stun
- **Glacial Roar (T):** Range C, 3, mental, Area, Piercing 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Inhuman Brawn 1**
- **Inured to Cold**

“It was there, in the corner,” muttered the king, tossing his lion-maned head from side to side in his efforts to rise. “A man; at least he looked like a man, wrapped in rags like a mummy’s bandages, with a moldering cloak drawn about him, and a hood. All I could see was his eyes, as he crouched there in the shadows. I thought he was a shadow himself, until I saw his eyes. They were like black jewels.”

— The Hour of the Dragon




MALICIOUS SHADOW (TOUGHENED, UNDEAD)

Oaths taken centuries continue to bind the spirits of these once living servants of Acheron. Cloaked in moldering rags, tattered robes, rusted armor or broken helmets, the malicious shadows stand watch over the relics of the fallen empire until they can be banished by some means. In this imitation of life, they haunt broken temples and forgotten tombs, vigilant in defense of a cause centuries lost. Before the collapse of Acheron, these beings were created from the ranks of the faithful, used to carry out curses and assassinations in the dark. Only dimly do they remember their days of flesh and blood, or how to speak or move as the humans they once were.



| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 9 | 7 | 6 | 9 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 10 | 11 | 11 | |

| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|----------|-----------|--------|
| Combat | Movement | Fortitude | Senses |
| 2 | 3 | — | — |
| Knowledge | Social | — | — |

| STRESS AND SOAK | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stress: Vigor 11, Resolve 4 ■ Soak: Armor 3, Courage — | |

| ATTACKS | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Battleaxe (M): Reach 3, 6 , Unbalanced, Intense, Vicious 1 ■ Massive Fists (M): Reach 1, 4 , 1H, Stun ■ Glacial Roar (T): Range C, 3 , mental, Area, Piercing 1 | |

| SPECIAL ABILITIES | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fear 1 ■ Incorporeal 2 ■ Inured to Pain: This creature suffers no penalties from Injuries. ■ Night Vision ■ Undead ■ Unliving | |

| DOOM SPENDS | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Poltergeist: The malicious shadow can spend one or more Doom to attack with a storm of unseen force, hurling physical items through the air (Range M, 4 ). If a weapon is hurled, it inflicts that weapon's normal damage +4 . | |

MANTIS, GIANT (MINION)

Caught in one of great cataclysms that have rocked the world in a distant age was the humblest of beings: the praying mantis, a common nuisance garden nuisance. Some vein of wizardry grotesquely altered their physiology a troop of these insects, growing them to human size and leaving them a spiteful hatred of all other lifeforms. Their descendants stay near thin grasslands and sand dunes of Stygia. Their crude language is a series of hateful clicks and doleful chirps.

| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 8 | 3 | 5 | 3 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 7 | 6 | 4 | |

| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|----------|-----------|--------|
| Combat | Movement | Fortitude | Senses |
| 1 | 1 | — | — |
| Knowledge | Social | — | — |

| STRESS AND SOAK | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stress: Vigor 3, Resolve 2 ■ Soak: Armor 1 (Carapace), Courage — | |

| ATTACKS | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Bite (M): Reach 1, 5 , Toxic 2 | |

| SPECIAL ABILITIES | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Inured to Disease ■ Inured to Venom (species venom only) ■ Keen Senses (Scent) | |

| DOOM SPENDS | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Always More Where That Came From: For each Doom spent on reinforcements, two giant mantis can be summoned. ■ Venom: When a character takes damage from the vermin's toxin, the gamemaster may spend 1 Doom to inflict the Staggered Condition on that character. | |



MUTATED CROCODILE (TOUGHENED)

Years of exposure to polluted waters have painfully warped these creatures into abominations. They still resemble crocodiles in substance but are larger, eruptions of spiny protrusions all along their back. Perhaps by design, they have become guardians of these spoiled places, seldom leaving the corrupted zones. Ordinary crocodiles avoid them at all costs, while their infected brethren lurk close, forming cooperative hunting packs.



| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 9 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| Agility | | Brawn | Coordination |
| 10 | | 11 | 4 |

| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------|---|
| Combat | 2 | Movement | 2 |
| Fortitude | — | Senses | 3 |
| Knowledge | — | Social | — |

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 11, Resolve 4
- **Soak:** Armor 3, Courage —

ATTACKS

- **Snapping Jaw (M):** Reach 2, 5 , Grappling, Unforgiving 3
- **Bone Spur (M):** Reach 3, 3 , Unforgiving 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Pack Hunter:** These beings maintain a primitive psychic connection with one another, allowing them to operate in packs. A mutated crocodile gains 1 bonus Momentum on any attack roll against a foe already attacked by an ally this round, and on Movement tests where the enemy can see one or more the crocodile's allies.



SCALESKIN LIZARDMEN (MINION)

Scaleskin lizardmen might be descended from the serpent folk who bedeviled Kull from Atlantis, or they are perhaps a hybrid race brought into being from the sorcerous detritus of Stygian magicians in the Black Citadel. They live in colonies in sewers, sea caves, and in underwater ruins. They feed on human flesh and seek to settle where they can feed regularly. Locals may be aware of them, and possibly even seen one for a split second, but they are opportunistic and cautious, and pick off easy targets. Anyone straying alone near their dwelling on a dark moonless night may fall into their clutches. The bones and organs of their kills are offered to primitive gods and spirits that only they know. A crude temple will be the center of any place they live in any number.




| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 9 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Agility | | Brawn | Coordination |
| 8 | | 9 | 8 |

| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------|---|
| Combat | 1 | Movement | 1 |
| Fortitude | 1 | Senses | — |
| Knowledge | — | Social | — |

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 11, Resolve 11
- **Soak:** Armor 1 (Scales), Courage —

ATTACKS

- **Claws (M):** Reach 1, 4 , Grappling
- **Strange Coral Knives (M):** 3 , Hidden 1, Piercing 2
- **Hideous Hissing (T):** Range C, 3 , mental, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Amphibious:** Scaleskin lizardmen suffer no penalty to any Action when swimming, and can spend unlimited time underwater
- **Fear 1**
- **Pack Hunter:** Scaleskin lizardmen are fearsome pack hunters. They gain 1 bonus Momentum on any attack roll against a foe already attacked by an ally this round, and on Movement tests where the enemy can see one or more of its allies.

WERE-HYENA, GIANT SPOTTED (MINION)

The cackling spotted beasts, each the size of a small horse, can be found in the deserts and jungles of the world. An unknown agency has gifted them with prodigious size and strength, and perhaps a slight edge in cunning. Those who hear the congress of these packs swear the voices have a faint human quality.

| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 9 | 6 | 7 | 9 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 9 | 11 | 5 | |

| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------|---|
| Combat | 2 | Movement | 1 |
| Fortitude | — | Senses | 1 |
| Knowledge | — | Social | 1 |

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 6, Resolve 5
- **Soak:** Armor —, Courage 1

ATTACKS

- **Bite (M):** Reach 1, 5 , Unforgiving 1
- **Cackling (T):** Range M, 2  mental, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Feed Upon Fear**
- **Pack Hunter:** Were-hyenas are fearsome pack hunters: a were-hyena gains 1 bonus Momentum on any attack roll against a foe already attacked by an ally this round, and on Movement tests where the enemy can see one or more of its allies.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Laugh of the Hyena:** A were-hyena may spend 2 Doom to grant all were-hyenas in its pack the **Fear 1** special ability.

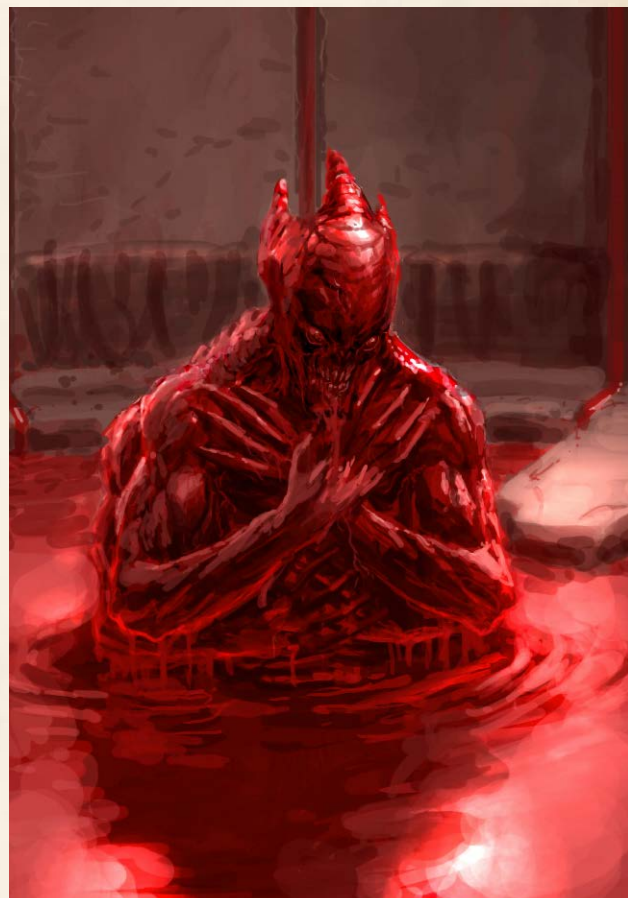


OTHERWORLDLY HORRORS

These are truly monstrous foes, easily major opponents, and the focus of perhaps an entire adventure or even a short campaign. Few will be encounter by chance, and most are accompanied by others of their ilk, as well as followers and fearsome servants, and generally found in their lairs where they have considerable resources at their disposal. Those few with no fixed abode are often summoned or called by the foulest of sorcery, and should be utilized with care.

BLOOD DEFILER DEMON (NEMESIS, HORROR)


These loathsome beings are conjured from deep pools of human blood. They forgo the wearing of any type of flesh; choosing to walk the mortal realms in mockery of a human shape composed entirely from warm clotted blood. Any who draw close to the demon will hear a constant beating as of a racing heart, and notice the blood constantly moves, coursing like an exposed vein.





| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 8 | 7 | 10 | 14 |
| Agility | | Brawn | Coordination |
| 11 | | 11 | 7 |

| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------|---|
| Combat | 2 | Movement | 1 |
| Fortitude | 2 | Senses | 3 |
| Knowledge | — | Social | — |

| STRESS AND SOAK | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| ■ Stress: Vigor 13, Resolve 16 | |
| ■ Soak: Armor 2, Courage 1 | |

| ATTACKS | |
|---|--|
| ■ Talons (M): Reach 2, 4  , 1H, Grappling, Piercing 2 | |

| SPECIAL ABILITIES | |
|--|--|
| ■ Shrieking Maw (M): Reach 1, 4  , Fearsome, Unforgiving 2 | |
| ■ Horrifying Presence (T): Range C, 8  , mental, Area, Vicious 2 | |
| ■ Fear 3 | |
| ■ Incorporeal 3 | |
| ■ Inured to Cold | |
| ■ Inured to Disease | |
| ■ Inured to Poison | |
| ■ Night Vision | |
| ■ Unnatural Agility 1 | |


GROL (MINION, HORROR)

Decades ago, the witch Zelata bound a powerful demon lord into the heart of an ancient tree. Every fifty years, this rite must be renewed, lest this wooden prison fail. As the spell weakens, the trapped evil stirs, sending echoes of itself reverberating throughout eastern Aquilonia. These vibrations coalesce into bloated imp-like humanoids, dripping ichor. They appear capable of rudimentary intelligence and exhibit immense hatred from any living they encounter. When a rash of mutilations and death become commonplace in Aquilonia's easternmost reaches, watchers know the time is coming near for Zelata to summon forth her strength again. Until the time of the rite, strong arms are needed to defeat these harbingers. Though each is not particularly powerful in and of itself, they are often encountered in large numbers, and are utterly fearless.

| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 8 | 4 | 3 | 5 |
| Agility | | Brawn | Coordination |
| 14 | | 11 | 9 |

| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------|---|
| Combat | 2 | Movement | 1 |
| Fortitude | 2 | Senses | 3 |
| Knowledge | — | Social | — |

| STRESS AND SOAK | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| ■ Stress: Vigor 5, Resolve 3 | |
| ■ Soak: Armor 1, Courage 5 | |

| ATTACKS | |
|---|--|
| ■ Talons (M): Reach 2, 4  , 1H, Grappling, Piercing 2 | |

INCUBUS (TOUGHENED, HORROR)

These demons wear the likeness of attractive young men and attempt to seduce bodies and souls of their targets. Once they have made a connection with their prey, they constantly subtly refine their appearance, and mannerisms to make themselves more irresistible. Despite their promises, any association with this otherworldly consort ends but one way: an attempt to drain the victim's life essence. If revealed, these demons appear as lithe men, large bat like wings extending from shoulder blades, and curved horns sprouting from sides of their skull.


| ATTRIBUTES | | | |
|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 11 | 11 | 12 | 12 |
| Agility | | Brawn | Coordination |
| 9 | | 7 | 9 |

| FIELDS OF EXPERTISE | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------|---|
| Combat | — | Movement | 1 |
| Fortitude | — | Senses | 3 |
| Knowledge | 3 | Social | 3 |

| STRESS AND SOAK | |
|-----------------|--|
| | |


- **Stress:** Vigor 7, Resolve 12
- **Soak:** Armor 1, Courage 1

ATTACKS

- **Crooked Dagger (M):** Reach 1, 5 , Hidden 1, Thrown, Unforgiving

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Feed Upon Desire:** Operates in similar fashion as the *Feed Upon Fear* special ability (**Conan** core-book, page 309). For every round ensnared person is within sight of the incubus, the gamemaster should add 1 Doom to their pool.
- **Flight**
- **Sorcery:** Most incubi know a smattering of sorcery and may have three or more spells of the gamemaster's choice.

- **Crooked Dagger (M):** Reach 1, 5 , Hidden 1, Thrown, Unforgiving

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Feed Upon Desire:** Operates in similar fashion as the *Feed Upon Fear* special ability (**Conan** core-book, page 309). For every round ensnared person is within sight of the succubus, the gamemaster should add 1 Doom to the pool.
- **Flight**
- **Sorcery:** Most succubi know a smattering of sorcery and may have three or more spells of the gamemaster's choice.

SUCCUBUS (TOUGHENED, HORROR)

These demons wear the likeness of beautiful young women. They attempt to seduce their targets body and soul. Once they have made a connection with their prey, they constantly subtly refine their appearance, and mannerisms to make themselves more irresistible. Despite their promises, any association with this otherworldly consort ends but one way: an attempt to drain their victim's life essence. If revealed, they appear as tall, slender women, large bat like wings extending from shoulder blades, and curved horns sprouting from sides of their skull.

ATTRIBUTES

| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| 11 | 11 | 12 | 12 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 9 | 7 | 9 | |

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

| Combat | Movement | Fortitude | Senses | Knowledge | Social |
|--------|----------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|
| — | 1 | — | 3 | 3 | 3 |

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 7, Resolve 12
- **Soak:** Armor 1, Courage 1

ATTACKS

ENEMIES OF RENOWN

Across the realm, there are formidable men and women that draw others to them. Through force of will, force of arms, or great magical power, these unique individuals draw in those around them, gathering a horde, army, or cult to which they give purpose. All these individuals are Nemesis foes and should be a challenge to any group of ill prepared player characters.

ATHYR-BAST THE SHADOW MASTER (NEMESIS)

Athyr-Bast is a high-ranking sorceress in the Black Ring. No one knows how old Athyr-Bast is. She has been a member of the Black Ring longer than any other member can recall, and it that time she has not appeared to age at all. Most assume it is due to a magical pact of some sort with shadow demons she can summon.

She appears as a tall lithe woman, with dark hair, often wearing revealing purple robes with gold trim. She generally wears her hair in a top knot with locks pulled down in front of her ears that frame her face. The ties she uses to hold her hair up, the rings she wears, and any necklace she chooses to adorn her plunging neckline are practically priceless. Known as the Shadow Master due to her ability to summon shadow creatures to do her bidding, Athyr-Bast is often underestimated due to her charms and looks, a mistake few recover from.

ATTRIBUTES

| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
|-----------|--------------|-------------|-----------|
| 13 | 12 | 13 | 13 |

| Agility | Brawn | Coordination |
|---------|-------|--------------|
| 11 | 9 | 10 |




FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

| Combat | 1 | Movement | 3 |
|-----------|---|----------|---|
| Fortitude | 2 | Senses | 2 |
| Knowledge | 3 | Social | 4 |

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 11, Resolve 15
- **Soak:** Armor 3 (Shadow Armor), Courage 5

ATTACKS

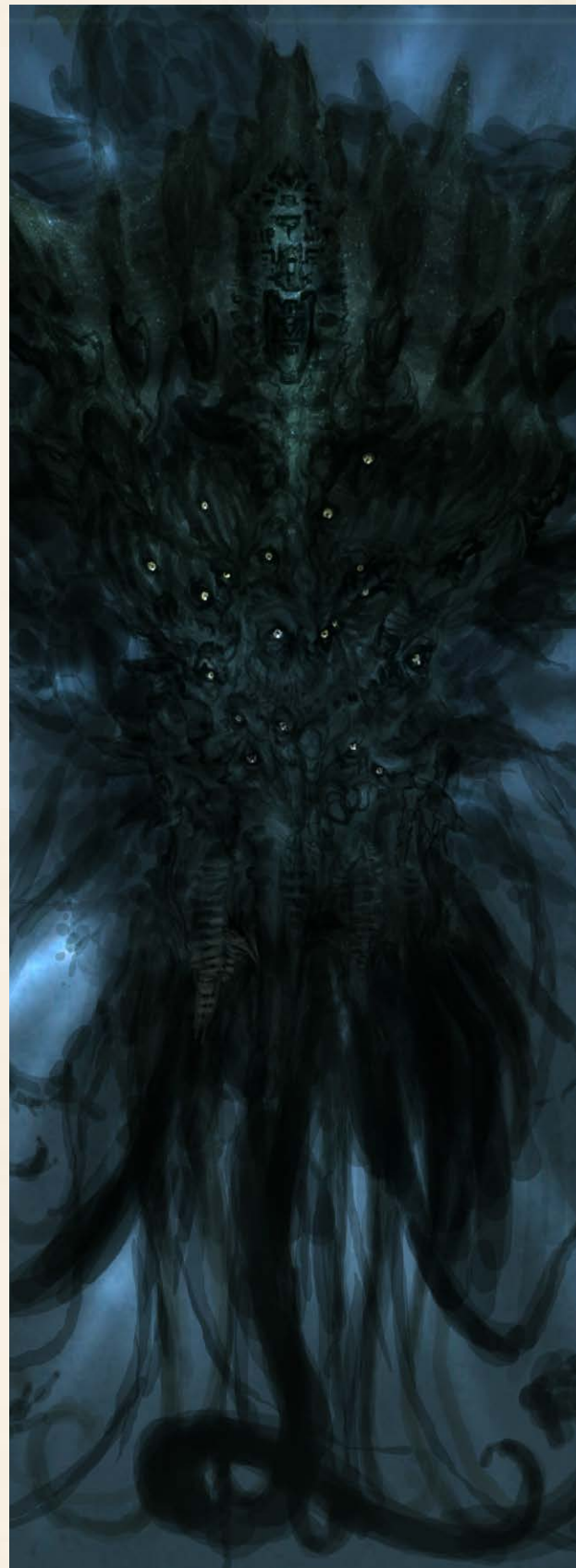
- **Dagger (M):** Reach 1, 3 , 1H, Hidden 1, Parrying, Thrown, Unforgiving 1
- **Shadow Touch (M):** Reach 1, 4 , Fearsome 2, Piercing 2, Intense
- **Dark Gaze (T):** Range C, 6  mental, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Always Prepared:** No matter how what garments Athyr-Bast wears, she is protected by shadows when physically attack, giving her an Armor Soak of 3. She is always armed with her **Shadow Touch**, even if bound.
- **Inured to Cold**
- **Night Vision**
- **Shadow Pact:** Athyr-Bast has made a pact with a shadow entity from another realm. She does not age and heals 1 Vigor or Resolve per turn.
- **Sorceress:** Athyr-Bast is a powerful sorceress and knows any spell the gamemaster requires, including *Dismember* and *Enslave* (**Conan** corebook, pages 177-179), and *Infernal Protections* (page XX).

DOOM SPENDS

- **Summon Shadow Imp Lord:** Athyr-Bast can spend 1 Doom to summon a shadow imp lord (see sidebar). She may only have one shadow imp lord summoned at a time. If destroyed, the shadow imp lord cannot be re-summoned until the next day.



SHADOW IMP LORD (NEMESIS, HORROR)

A horror made purely from living shadow, the shadow imp lord is never far from Athyr-Bast.

ATTRIBUTES

| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 10 | 6 | 11 | 12 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 14(1) | 12 | 7 | |



FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

| Combat | Movement | Fortitude | Senses | Knowledge | Social |
|--------|----------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|
| 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | — | — |

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 14, Resolve 14
- **Soak:** Armor 3, Courage 5

ATTACKS

- **Shadowy Claws (M):** Reach 2, 5 , 1H, Fearsome 1, Grappling
- **Shadow Visage (T):** Range C, 4 , mental, Area, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Doom Herald
- Fear 3
- Feed Upon Fear
- Flight
- Inhuman Agility
- Inured to Cold
- Inured to Disease
- Inured to Poison
- Night Vision

DOOM SPENDS

- **Summon Darkness:** The shadow imp lord can spend 1 Doom to make everything in Close Range dark.

LADY ZELANDRA (NEMESIS)

Deep within the Dragon's Spine in eastern Stygia lies the Palace of Cetriss. Carved from a canyon cliff face, the palace was once home to the sorcerer Cetriss, the creator of a rare breed of green lotus. This mystical flower helped Cetriss keep the forces of Acheron at bay for centuries. Now the palace is the home of Lady Zelandra.

Addicted to the mystical flower, Lady Zelandra hires fierce warriors to protect the palace and the lotuses within. Tall, with long cascading black hair and pale skin, Zelandra is a striking figure, dressed in cream-colored robes and bedecked in fine jewelry. She always wears a large ornate headpiece with gold chains that drape over her cheeks and are braided through her long hair. Her robes are always trimmed with the finest dyed fabrics and are usually accented with drapes and belts of large colored swathes. She usually carries a large staff with an ornate head.

When Zelandra is not enjoying the effects of the green lotus, she is plotting her next scheme of how to use the mystical flower to her advantage. The flower can cause madness, conflict, and addiction, so the palace itself it often mired in internal in fighting. Zelandra has also been known to work with serpent-folk and other followers of Set. They are often found within the palace.

ATTRIBUTES

| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
| 9 | 12 | 13 | 12 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 10 | 8 | 10 | |

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

| Combat | Movement | Fortitude | Senses | Knowledge | Social |
|--------|----------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|
| 1 | 1 | 4 | — | 2 | 3 |

STRESS AND SOAK


- **Stress:** Vigor 12, Resolve 16
- **Soak:** Armor 2 (Enchanted Robes), Courage 5

ATTACKS

- **Staff (M):** Reach 3, 4 , 2H, Knockdown
- **Kiss of the Lotus (T):** Range C, 5 , mental, Stun



SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Green Lotus:** Lady Zelandra carries six green lotus flowers on her at all times.
- **Pulsing Ruin:** Lady Zelandra can unleash the power of a green lotus flower around her, causing 4  mental damage with the Area and Persistent 2 Qualities, as the victims are overcome with visions of madness.
- **Lotus Burst:** As an action, Lady Zelandra can imbibe a green lotus flower to disappear, reappearing somewhere in her line of sight within Medium Range.
- **Sorceress:** Lady Zelandra is a practiced sorceress who knows a variety of spells determined by the gamemaster, including *Blast of the Elements* (page XX) and *Quicksand* (page XX).

DOOM SPENDS

- **Grasping Lotus Roots:** After Lady Zelandra casts *Quicksand*, she may spend 1 Doom to immediately cast *Blast of Elements*.
- **Lotus Blossom:** Lady Zelandra can imbibe a lotus flower and spend 1 Doom to perform a Second Wind as if 1 Fortune point had been spent.

NEFTUMMON (NEMESIS)

One of the Black Ring's fiercest warriors, Neftummon has made it his purpose to see the Onyx Chambers once again under their control. To that end he has begun moving forces below, often seeing to the work personally. The man is obsessed with the idea, and for now, his superiors have humored him. Should he see success then who knows what vile secrets will be returned to the Black Ring.

Born in the slums of Keshatta, Neftummon grew up fighting for survival, becoming a fierce and brutal warrior. He fought for gold or fame, never really caring much about the cause if it benefitted him. Catching the eye of the Black Ring was inevitable, and they offered him more money and power than he had ever seen in his life, if he devoted himself fully to the Black Ring, forever.

It was not a hard choice for the young warrior. The emptiness of fighting for nothing was soon replaced with the fervor of fighting for a cause. He rose quickly through the ranks of the Black Ring's warriors, and now is among one of their best.

Within the Onyx Chambers Neftummon discover his axe. Its blades shaped like wings, the axe is steeped in the corruption of the Onyx Chambers and has bonded with the fury and fire inside of Neftummon. It converts his passion into raging fires that he uses to destroy his enemies.

ATTRIBUTES

| Awareness | Intelligence | Personality | Willpower |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| 10 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| Agility | Brawn | Coordination | |
| 13 | 13 | 13 | |



FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

| Combat | 4 | Movement | 2 |
|-----------|---|----------|---|
| Fortitude | 3 | Senses | 2 |
| Knowledge | — | Social | 1 |


STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 16, Resolve 14
- **Soak:** Armor 4 (Enchanted Hauberk), Courage 4

ATTACKS

- **Fiery Winged Axe (M):** Reach 2, 4 , Unbalanced, Intense, Vicious
- **Hex of Molten Steal (T):** Range C, 5  mental, Stun, Incendiary

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Crush:** Neftummon can reroll 3  when making a melee attack.
- **Cleave:** Neftummon can add the Area Quality to his melee attacks. He cannot use **Cleave** in the same attack he uses **Flamestrike**.
- **Flamestrike:** Neftummon can add the Incendiary (3) Quality to his melee attacks. He cannot use **Flamestrike** in the same attack he uses **Cleave**.
- **Hungering Flame:** Neftummon recovers 1 point of lost Vigor or Resolve for each Effect rolled when rolling for damage with his **Fiery Winged Axe** attack.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Execute:** When he inflicts 1 or more Wounds with a melee strike, the gamemaster can spend 1 Doom to inflict 1 additional Wound.



THIS HYBORIAN AGE

“In writing about the western Hyborian nations I feel confined within the limits of known and inflexible boundaries and territories, but in fictionizing the rest of the world, I feel able to give my imagination freer play.”

— Robert E. Howard, letter to P. Schuyler Miller

AN AGE OF CONAN GAZETEER

This is the world of *Age of Conan*, a realm in which invented heroes and villains bleed and intrigue in, crafting their own tales as potent and heroic as any told in any other medium. Yet, it is not the Hyborian Age that players and gamemasters of *Conan: Adventures in an Age Undreamed Of* might know, and thus this chapter details those regions new and unfamiliar. Many of these descriptions differ from those in the **Conan** corebook and associated sourcebooks, while some are nearly the same.

The gamemaster may use these descriptions in a campaign set entirely within this version of the world depicted in *Age of Conan* or may utilize this material to flesh out the existing version of the Hyborian world. No two scholars agree upon everything, and unexplored areas may have radically different tales told of them, which would need to be proved by firsthand experience.

Either usage presents ample opportunities to enthrall and surprise even the most jaded of players and thus flesh out Conan's world to an even greater degree.

AQUILONIA

Aquilonia, the most advanced and powerful of the Hyborian kingdoms, is a richly beautiful land that was conquered by the Hyborians after the fall of Acheron 3,000 years ago. The fertile land and pleasant climate, matched with plenty of rivers, has given Aquilonia a wealth of farmland, forests, and game. The roads and the wilderness paths are patrolled and kept relatively clear of most rogues and dangerous animals.

While all those conditions sound like the makings of the most peaceful of lands, the fertile land and tame climate brings people, and these people rarely bring peace with them. Instead, they bring schemes of wealth, and plans of conquest, and all manner of iniquities with them. The people here do not need to struggle against the land or its climate to survive, but they do struggle with each other for control of Aquilonia's resources and wealth. The political situation in Aquilonia is rife with power struggles, wars, insurrections, usurpers, murders, and intrigues.

Indeed, the king of Aquilonia is a usurper; Conan of Cimmeria, a barbaric conqueror, rules the realm from his throne in Tarantia, a metropolis of blue and golden towers. King Conan tries to do well for the people, but his laws and edicts must filter down through an inscrutable mess of titled and landed feudal nobles, many of whom maintain a web of lifelong feuds and ancient grudges against each other as a matter of course. Many of these nobles resent having not only a commoner as king, but one who is also a foreigner, a barbarian. Fortunately for King Conan, that same web of feuds and grudges keeps the nobles from fully



WESTERN SEA

VANAHEIM

ASGARD

Eiglophian Mountains

House of Crom

Fields of the Dead

CIMMERIA

Conarch Village

Aztel's Approach

Connal's Valley

BORDER KINGDOMS

Korvela Bay

PICTISH WILDERNESS

BOSSONIAN MARCHES

AQUILONIA

NEMEDIA

Sanctum of Burning Souls

Wild Lands of Zelata

OPHIR

ZINGARA

ARGOS

SHEM

Tortage

Baracha Isles

White Shards Isle, Volcano

Isle of the Black Ones

Uttara Kuru?

WESTERN SEA

Splintershar Coastline

STYGIA

Black Ring Citadel

KUSH

Karnath

Zabhela

Shumballa

Khemi

Akhet

Asgalun

Luxur

Eruk

Kothian Hills

Korshemish

Shamar

Tarantia

Numalia

Tanasul

Galparan

Gunderland

Tauran

Velitrium

Shirka River

Thunder River

Black River

Alimane River

Poitain

Khorotas River

Messantia

Toragis

Valadelad

Kordava

Tor



DESERTS

HYPERBOREA

STEPPE

HYRKANIA

BRYTHUNIA

Pathenia

Pillars of Heaven

CORINTHIA

KHITAI

ZAMORA

TURAN

VILAYET SEA

Shadizar

Akif

Shahpur

Khrosha

STEPPE

Sultanapur

Aghrapur

Yaralet

Vezeq

Kambuja

KHORAJA

Shushan

Ardashir Coastline

Akbitana

Pashtun

Ft. Ghor

Khawarizm

Humir

Nippr

Kuthchemes

DESERTS

Khorusun

River Styx

Khopshef Province

Zamboula

Secunderam

Dragon's Spine

GHULISTAN

Purple Lotus Swamp

Sabatea

IRANISTAN

VENDHYA

Sukhmet

KESHAN

Kosala

DARFAR

Lake Zuad

mbalku

NOTES FROM THE SECRET SCRIBES

Interspersed throughout this chapter, and influencing many of the entries, are additional notes upon the world written by the so-called "Secret Scribes". Though surely learned and erudite, the Secret Scribes often took considerable liberties with known geography in their tales. The function behind such changes appears to have been in the interest in storytelling. Distances are often truncated to allowed heroes within their tales to leap from kingdom-to-kingdom without much toil, to faster continue their quests or find their foes. Remote places are filled in with incredible detail. Even well-known places, such as Tarantia, are reduced in scale in their writings, yet also expounded about with clever new personages and places such as the Commons, and Armsman Arena.

King Conan, as he read some confiscated or delivered accounts from the Scribes, was often struck by just how thorough the knowledge of his life the group possessed. Many times, Conan wondered if some sort of sorcery used to watch the passage of years. Practically every individual, whether a significant personage or someone met only in passing, turned up in their pages. Young Tina, the Zingaran hand maiden of Belesa, is mentioned, now grown to an adult, as working as a tavern wench in Tortage. Belesa, now a priestess of Mitra, also frequents this place, the Thirsty Dog Tavern.

Perhaps as astonishing the multitude of new places that fill the ledgers. The Dragonspine Mountains (page 67) tower over endless dunes in eastern Stygia. Near the spray of Thunder River (page 62), stands a place holy to the Picts called Xibaluku, an ancient temple once frequented by the Acheronians. Fort Ardashir protects the eastern edge of the city of Ardashir (page 69), overlooking the Vilayet Sea. The grasslands of Khitai erode in an uncharted desert waste of Kara Korum.

The scribes relate a series of short adventures involving the Asitambuke tribe of neighbouring Darfar. This tribe has recently staked claim to the swamp and regards it as sacred pasture. Led by Wub, of the god Damballah, these guardians attack and kill any found in trespass. Wub bears the mark of the chosen, her golden eyes are slitted in the manner of a snake.

Conan prides himself on knowledge of the world and can say with fair certainty no such places exist to his knowledge. Whatever their talents, these mysterious writers cannot conjure a city out of ink. Yet, such places are open to the wanderers living in the Scribes' pages. If they were to exist, they surely would be where they have so painstakingly created and placed them.

Yet here they are, to be believed or rejected, as one sees fit.

aligning against him. When one cabal of barons and princes moves against him, another group moves in his favor to make sure the former does not gain power over the latter. And thus, Conan rules uncomfortably, but rules still, over a constantly shifting mosaic of loyalties and duties.

But King Conan has more to deal with than unruly Aquilonian dissidents, the wealth and prosperity of Aquilonia makes his realm a target for foreign intrigues as well. Neighboring Nemedians hunger to slice off portions of Conan's kingdom, making alliances with border lords or bolstering the claims of exiled nobles. Ophir, Argos, and Zingara are also envious of Aquilonian supremacy and make their own inroads into Aquilonian affairs. The Cimmerians to the north, Conan's own people, live a life of hardship and make their own raids and forays into Aquilonian lands, eager to take back lands the Aquilonian lords have captured for their own — either recently or generations ago. To the west, Conan must contend with the Picts, who resent being pushed further and further west by needy Aquilonian lords looking for new lands and seeing the Picts as easier to deal with than stealing, say, a Nemedian lord's lands.

Poitain

Poitain is in the far southwestern corner of Aquilonia, a county known for its loyalty to King Conan. Ruled by Count Trocero, Poitain is one of the most important regions of Aquilonia. Famed for its knights and heavy cavalry, many Aquilonian nobles are fully aware of the devastation Poitain can cause if it is riled and set to war. Trocero battled Tarantia prior to the rise of King Conan, and Trocero supported the usurper Conan when he took the crown. The golden leopard is the symbol of this region. Poitain is particularly lush and fertile, recognized as such even in a land already known to be both lush and fertile already. Poitain can boast of game quantities few can match, and it possesses natural resources that range from mighty hardwood forests to various ore deposits. The terrain features gorgeous agricultural plains to vast forests on up to mountains. The Imirian Ravine is a notable location found within Poitain. This ravine falls within the barony of Imiris, within the feudal control of Poitain. Imiris is ruled by Baron Guilaim, who fully supports his feudal lord Count Trocero — and, by extension, King Conan.



Tarantia

Tarantia, the “most princely city of the world’s West,” is the capital of Aquilonia and the site of King Conan’s throne. It is a formidable and sprawling city on a plain in southeastern Aquilonia against the cliffs of the mighty Khorotas River. There is a wall around the city, with massive bronze gates. It is strategically placed and has been attacked many times over the years. The city is cleaner and safer than most Hyborian cities. The city is cared for by its people and is well-patrolled. The city is dazzling to see, with towers of blue and gold. The city is divided into several sections by walls, tiers, water, and societal distinctions.

Old Tarantia (The City District)

The city district of Old Tarantia is separated from the rest of the city by a massive bridge, the Bridge of Vilerus I. In this district, truly the oldest part of Tarantia, one can find docks and a massive gate connecting to the Road of Kings. At one time, this district was known as Tamar, but now it is just called Old Tarantia. More importantly, the royal palace is here, reaching with blue and gold towers into the sky, overlooking the whole of the old city, a showcase of Hyborian architecture. The Black Dragons, the elite bodyguard of the King, patrol the palace grounds constantly, and they often venture into the city district, so most criminals ply their trades elsewhere. For those who abide by the law, the city is a safe place. Even the businesses here are fair, making sure they do not fall afoul of any laws.

Do not be fooled, though. The old city may not have a lot of common criminals, but the politics and intrigue are dangerous to those who dabble or interfere. The nobles here are more than willing to sacrifice anyone or anything needed to gain an advantage in their political games. It is in this district one can find many a trade post, as well as other notable venues such as the Sailor’s Den, the Green Man Tavern, the Temple of Mitra, and the Outflow Tunnels. Also, there are routes to travel to Khemi, Conarch Village (page 63), the Noble District, and the Wild Lands of Zelata.

Tarantia’s Noble District

The wealthiest of Tarantia’s denizens live in the noble district of Tarantia, as well as Conan’s elite Black Dragon guards. Here, one can find the castle approach, a broad avenue leading to the bridge into Old Tarantia. Moving westward, this approach links to the market, Armsan’s Tavern, an abandoned freshwater system, and the cistern. Moving eastward, the castle approach links to the Black Dragon barracks, the East Gate, the Mausoleum, and the Catacombs. North of the castle approach is another Temple of Mitra, and the actual noble quarters, the estates of the noblemen of Tarantia. The North Gate is in the northern wall of this section.

See “Armsman’s Arena” (pages 72–73) in *Chapter 7: Raids & Ruins* for more about this secret location within the Noble District.



Tarantia's Common District

The slums of Tarantia, where the more common people congregate and live. Housing is less clean and more ramshackle, tumbled affairs. The houses crowd each other so much, that running from rooftop to rooftop is possible. This is the district where one can find the Iron Tower. The Iron Tower is a grim structure that stands amid a maze of narrow streets and crowded houses. Formerly a castle, this pile of heavy stone and black iron was the seat of government centuries ago, in a less civilized time. Now it stands in a location daintier persons avoid and is now used as a place to execute Aquilonia's political enemies, the most malicious and vile foes of King Conan. Not far from the Iron Tower is the Traitor's Common, which is the public execution area of Tarantia; hangings, beheadings, and torture are practiced here to an audience. The Iron Tower is about politics. The Traitor's Common is about law.



Wild Lands of Zelata

The Wild Lands of Zelata are nestled in a valley and are part of Aquilonia's eastern frontier. This valley was carved from the land by a flood thousands of years ago and washed the foulness from local Acheronian ruins, allowing the darkness to spread throughout the region. Like those who chose to live along Thunder River, this valley is a place for people who want to start anew and create for themselves a life away from the cities of Aquilonia or Nemedra. Because of their location near the border, these lands often find themselves the battleground sites of skirmishes between Aquilonia and Nemedra. Lately, a new threat has risen in the Wild Lands in the form of the "dark beasts": feral, razor-clawed monsters. Various villages in the region have gathered in the hamlet of Tesso as refugees from the ravages of the dark beasts.

Zelata is a witch who once counselled King Conan. She lives in the region and is a mysterious figure even to those who choose to make the Wild Lands their home. Many do not believe she exists, and those who do harbor distrust or fear in their hearts regarding her. She is a villain in the minds of the few who truly know of her, and they blame her for the dark beasts, thinking she sends them to keep people out of the valley.

The land is wounded by the ancient flood and by the ancient evils once contained in the ruins of Acheron but now spread out by the receding waters. Some notable locations include the Maze, some abandoned smugglers' tunnels, and the ominous Sanctum of the Burning Souls (following).

See "The Wild Lands of Zelata" (pages 84–85) in *Chapter 7: Raids & Ruins* for more on this location.

The Sanctum of the Burning Souls

The Sanctum of the Burning Souls can be found in the eastern edge of the Wild Lands of Zelata, a fearsome flood-ravaged ruin that is now the home for demonic spirits, and the place where many of the Black Ring congregate. These ruins, dark and twisted labyrinths of ancient stone, hold the remnants of Acheronian sorceries. The blood of innocents stains the cursed fountains that once ran red with the blood of sacrifices to Set and other darksome demons. The dark beasts began their reign of terror after Nemedra sent a force here to look for artifacts, but no one knows what they truly found. Thoth-amon is also interested in the secrets of this shadowed ruin and has sent some of his priests to investigate over the years, growing bolder with each failed attempt.

See "The Sanctum of the Burning Souls" (pages 84–86) in *Chapter 7: Raids & Ruins* for more about this location.

Thunder River

Thunder River is at the ends of civilization. It forms the western border to the Westemarck, a region of Aquilonia lying between the Bossonian Marches and the Thunder River. It was once the western border of Aquilonia as well, although Aquilonia has been pushing its border further west toward the Black River. This is frontier land and living here means feeling cut off from the main of civilization, having to fight the untamed terrain, and fending off the Picts, who resent the presence of the Hyborians.

The main fort here is Velitrium and is the site of most of the push toward the Black River through a region known as Conajohara. The Thunder River was so named for the long stretches of white-water rapids in northern Zingara and southern Aquilonia. These rapids often create fog throughout the Pictish Wilderness (page 66). Thunder River extends from the Eiglophian Mountains (page 63) in the north to the ocean in the south.

ATZEL'S APPROACH

Winter buries these mountain passes under a carpet of ice suffused snow; summer thaws just the outer lair of this hoary armor. The only ones willing to live in these desperate conditions have hearts as cold as the roaring wind. Their chief is an outlaw named Atzel, who has established a keep overlooking the only passages in or out of this desperate domain. The keep, leering like a vulture of stone, gives these marauders advantage on any who may seek this corridor. Stygians are a favored villain in the Scribes' epics, and several of their tales place a clutch of these desert sorcerers in this remote place, working to further the goals of Set even here.

BORDER KINGDOMS

Weary of constant war and the destruction it brings, King Conan has turned the Border Kingdom into an unusual proving ground. He has decreed that any lord, general, or captain harbouring dreams of conquest in that place may consecrate their claim by seizing and holding it. Once stabilized, the Border Kingdom will be marshalled into the great Aquilonian empire, with this new conqueror an honored noble. Together, with King Conan at their side, they will lead the united Border Kingdom against incursions from any neighboring foreign powers. In none of the Scribes' tales has this issue been settled; battle rages without end in sight.



CIMMERIA

Cimmeria is a bleak land characterized by forested hills, cold tundra, and frigid mountains filled with proud clans of men descended from the ancient Atlanteans. Rank upon rank upon endless rank of dark hills rise and fall in all directions, forested with moody trees that give the land a menacing appearance even in the bright of day. Rain clouds hover perennially over the sullen terrain, constantly threatening stinging rain, slick sleet, or freezing snow.

If the weather does not kill one, the land's other dangers might: hostile tribes of desperate savages and dangerous predators determined to find food. This realm is home to fierce barbarians who are grim survivors in a land that grinds up and spits out softer folk. Cimmerians do not brawl for sport or fun, for when a Cimmerian fights, they fight to kill. Killing is surviving and the Cimmerians are survivors. They are a solemn folk, not given to bravado or bragging. Indeed, bragging is seen as a challenge to prove oneself. They sing somber dirges and do not hope that the gods, spirits, or beasts will help them, and in fact hope to be free from such attention.

See also page 77 for more about Cimmeria.

Conall's Valley

In the shadow of Ben Morgh, where the grim grey god Crom lives, Conall's Valley cuts a path. This is the site of a valiant stand against the Vanir and was the home to several Cimmerian clans. The valley is also home to many ancient Atlantean ruins that were never completely concealed by the lush northern forests. But when the Vanir came, much of the valley was destroyed in the battles, and the Cimmerians fear that if the valley falls, the path toward conquering Cimmeria will be open. The Spider Caverns are located within this ravaged valley.

Conarch Village

This small settlement is secured at the bottom of a low valley, shaded beneath the arms of high mountains. Threading through its centre, bisecting the grass streets is a nameless stream, frigid year-round from the melted snow swept downwards from the heights above. Cast-off boards and a minor dirt causeway connect the two halves of the village.

Roughly three dozen sturdy frontier buildings comprise Conarch. Most are the simple one-level wood and earth homes favoured by these rugged northerners. The remaining are primitive workshops, cattle pens, and storage huts. Largest of the buildings is a long, single-leveled unpainted timber gathering hall, placed in no particular place of honor, sitting dark and shuttered until times of need. On the edge bordering the wilds, rises a stout palisaded wall, curved to provide unfettered view of the entire village. During the day, grim-visage watchmen pace the plank parapets in silence, watching for glint of metal or flash of movement. On moonless nights, they carry blazing brands before them alert for glint of metal or flash of movement from Northmen raiders or prowling Pictish bands.

The Scribes' heroes have many adventures here. Some come for pilgrimage, to be near the birth place of King Conan, others have devised numerous quests to move them along on their final destiny.

Eiglophian Mountains

The Eiglophian Mountains form the northern border of Cimmeria. North of these foreboding crags live the Æsir. There are few passes through these mountains, so most incursions are raids only. Travel through these mountains is dangerous even for experienced mountain-climbers. Howling winds bite with cold teeth to tear the body asunder. Snow leopards and ice worms hunt for the slim amount of prey available — they are immediately hostile when encountered.

Treacherous paths and secure-looking ice fields break away to dump the unwary into valleys and ravines to die upon impact or, perhaps worse, to be trapped until death. The few people who choose to live here are fully aware of the need for food, any food, and many have turned cannibal to survive. Cannibal Cave is one of the locations where these horrible people live. A Stygian sorceress hides out in an ice cave in these mountains, serving the nefarious Thoth-amon. Yakhmar's Cave is home to a giant ice worm known as Yakhmar. Mount Crom, or Ben Morgh, rises above these crags and death traps, where Crom is said to live and send forth his dooms.



The Field of the Dead

The Field of the Dead is a sacred burial ground of Cimmerian chieftains, located at the eastern end of Connall's Valley at the foot of Ben Morgh, where Crom dwells. The landscape here is rocky and is constantly beset by cold mists or rain. Dark heather grows here upon the burial mounds, making it a chilly, haunting place. Different parts of the Field of the Dead are claimed by different clans of Cimmerians.

Because Cimmerian chiefs are buried with armor, weapons, trophies, and treasure, the location is the goal of many treasure-hunters, so the Cimmerians regularly patrol the Field. Further, because of incursions by the Vanir, the specters of angry chieftains haunt the Field. Rumors also persist of werewolves stalking the area because of an ancient curse on one of the mounds, also unleashed by the Vanir.

Kylikki's Crypt, the home of an undead mage, is located here. The House of Crom, the remains of a temple created by the Atlanteans, is a hidden location found near Ben Morgh, and includes the Vile Nativity and the Threshold of Divinity. Toirdealbach's Tomb is the resting place of an ancient Atlantean named Toirdealbach; when the Vanir found her tomb, they cut off her fingers and sawed through her neck to get at the treasures she was buried with — and then they all died, with only one escaping long enough to tell of what he had seen before he too died.

Another location in the area is the Cradle of Decay, found in a stone valley with its own green mist. The Lacheis Plains are characterized by the Frost Swamp near the Field of the Dead, and the site known as Crom's Rock.

See "The House of Crom" (pages 76–79) in *Chapter 7: Raids & Ruins* for more on this grim, near-mythical location.

THE SECRET SCRIBES' GUIDE TO CIMMERIA

The Scribes must have skilled envoys to have mastered the terrain so deeply in unwelcoming Cimmera. The northern mountain range to the north is christened as the Eiglophian Mountains. This is but one of the names used by the generations of herders and clans who travel its' breadth. On the eastern branch of this range, the Scribes have placed Ben Morgh: the home of Crom. This place is held as most holy, but also most feared. None dare to venture too close to the forbidding mountain temple, wary of drawing Crom's gaze. More pragmatic travellers cite the rugged terrain and freezing winds as reason enough to avoid Ben Morgh.

The Fields of the Chiefs and its Gathering Stone is a consolidated adaptation of several mustering places throughout Cimmeria. Numerous fanciful Scribe epics deal with desperate battles here against an invented degenerate horde of cannibal-men, likely based on exaggerated accounts of Vanir raiders.



KAMBUJA

Many battlefields, stitched in ink, are dotted along the Khitan and Kambujan border. Notes in the margins relay news of an undying war between Khitai and Kambuja yet yield no sense of its origins. Illustrations show warriors astride great war elephants emerging from the jungle-locked city of Angkhor to clash with the swift-moving horse soldiers of Khitai. Pointed red lines designating command of the elephant-riders advances from Rinpoche of the Scarlet Circle in Angkhor.

KHITAI

Khitai, a land in the Far East, is little known to the Hyborians, but it is the most famous of the kingdoms of that far-flung region. Khitai, according to most peoples of the Hyborian Age, is the home of powerful sorceries and ancient secrets. The ruler of Khitai, Yah Chieng, the powerful God-emperor, is said to explore a power out of time and space. Khitai is known to be a land of wizards, especially the sorcerous cabal known as the Scarlet Circle, although, to be fair, the Khitans most likely to travel abroad are those sorcerers and wizards, so they are over-represented in the impression of Khitai held in the Hyborian kingdoms to the west. Khitan wizards tend to be bald and wear robes, often appearing rather austere. The Turanians and Vendhyans have more regular commerce with Khitai and are more likely to have met more typical members of Khitan society, rather than just wizards.

Behavior in Khitai is wrapped in complex ceremonies that appear inscrutable to westerners. Everyone in Khitai has a place in the social structure and everyone in Khitai follows certain codes of behavior appropriate to the culture and even the place in the social structure they inhabit. These codes, bizarre as some of them appear to outsiders, must always be followed, because the Khitans believe that those who best obey the codes will be rewarded by the gods. From this belief, Khitans always consider the winner of a contest of any sort to be in the right, for the gods obviously rewarded the winner; this, of course, gives Khitans an undeserved reputation for treachery, despite their seeming politeness (politeness is one of their codes of behavior).

Chosain Province

The Chosain Province, situated in the land of Khitai, is at once one of the most picturesque and tragic regions described by the Scribes. Rolling green hills, rows of rice fields, and regions of volcanic plugs evoke an environment alien to the traditional tales of Conan. This natural beauty is marred by a near-constant state of war. Leagues are claimed by the hard hand of battle, burnt into grey ruin; the corpses of shattered war machines rotting near the mass graves of fallen warriors.

THE SECRET SCRIBES' GUIDE TO KHITAI

At the edge of even the most detailed Hyborian maps, a simple eastward facing arrow points to the eastern land of Khitai, offering nothing more to the curious. Here, the Scribes show past this arrow a vast wall, shaped from the perimeter of a lumbering mountain range. Countless ramparts and castles dot this protective barrier, ready to push back foreign invasion. This mountain range runs north, ending in an icy wasteland, and marches determinedly southward, merging into the hanging cliffs of the Southern Sea.

Khitai is dotted with small nomadic villages, crooked streams and leagues of wide sweeping grasslands, ancient woods and bamboo thickets. The cities of Shu-Chen and Ruo-Chen holds most of the population as well as the temples and noble houses in service to a divine Emperor. In each of these places stands a Scarlet Citadel, a bastion of wizards.

Paikang is the largest of the cities. At its center, behind towering gates, guarded by sentries in elaborate armor is the Jade Citadel. In between the cobblestones that line the streets of this metropolis, squirms a foul black liquid, flowing up hills and between buildings, called by some force to this edifice of wizard craft. To touch this contaminant is like risking a draught of hemlock.

The Temple of Yun is on the outskirts of Paikang. This beautiful edifice of wood, lacquered bamboo and wicker is marred by the atrocities committed by its yellow-robed priests. To satisfy their mercurial deity, the keepers indulge in human sacrifice. Chained slaves drum furiously at on the holy nights, flanking the massive firepits, nearly a hundred paces wide on either side of the temple. The faithful rhythmically cavort, nearly naked, in ecstasy before the flames. Chosen slaves are murdered, cast dead into the fires with chants of praise. A few of the worshippers always hear the call on these nights; these walk willingly into the fire, believing their horrific immolation pleases Yun, God of the Underworld.

The Scribes were keenly aware of a young Conan's encounter with adventure in the Zamorian City of Thieves. In an act of mercy, Conan slew the otherworldly entity Yag-Kosha in the Tower of the Elephant. Yag-Kosha perished but with Conan's assistance took revenge against his tormentor Yara. This deed earned Conan the sobriquet of "Godslayer." At many points in their texts, they refer to the Cimmerian by this title. The newer batch of the Scribes' creations attempt to walk in the path of the Godslayer by sending many heroes off to adventure in Khitai.

See "The Pillars of Heaven" (pages 82-83) in *Chapter 7: Raids & Ruins* for more information about this dreaded location within Khitai's border.

Chosain has two major cities, Gun Hai to the north, and Gun Xiu in the south. Warlords hold dominion over both. Foreign mercenaries plied with jade and titles of land have become more numerous as the battles deplete the native ranks. The city of Shaulun was annexed by Gun Hai. The peaceful priests and scholars of Cheng-Ho, the moon goddess, were given the choice of service or death. Now, their learning is bent towards conjuring and destruction. Any able to hold a blade were drafted as auxiliaries.

A set of Scribes kept up a lively correspondence with one another for years, fleshing out this province and linking their stories together in a shared narrative. Featured in this epic were the Children of Jhil, also called the "Crowmen". Included were sketches of these winged beings, roosting in the volcanic lugs and caves.

A massive battle, one that would either save or destroy this land was brewing. No final resolution was reached before the Scribes were destroyed and their tomes shipped to Conan. The fate of Chosain Province remains undocumented.

KOSALA

The ancient Koslan civilization, as so many human empires, has spiralled down into a malignant decadence. Its people are olive skinned with finely chiselled features, over-fond of earthly pleasures. For all its failings, Kosala does not offer a soft underbelly for a potential invader to strike. Their cruelty of its people is not leisurely, but rather hard-edged, fuelled by religious fanaticism. Their god Yajur is jealous and vigilant against heresy. Any standing army in Kosala is an extension of its church. Legions of devout commoners, untrained but willing to die in service, will flock under the holy banner if the call is sounded. Bordering Vendhya, the two populations have mingled, creating a complex web of international families. Lucrative treaties between these countries further stabilize the peace these two governments.

PASTHUN

This island town is claimed by neither by Stygia or Shem. For many generations this autonomy served as a boon to its inhabitants. Freed from oppressive taxes, draft levies, or religious tithes, this small community of fishers and farmers contently lived their humbly days beneath the notice of empires. Lately, such freedom works against their interest. Locals have begun to vanish, snatched from the streets or from twilight expeditions. The next morning, overturned boats are spotted in the sluggish river, or bloodless bodies left in the dust of the road. With no government to plead assistance to, in desperation the elders of Pasthan consulted the famed Oracle of Derketo. The services of this Stygian seer drained the meager coffers of Pasthan, and the seekers were left with dire riddles involving an legendary arch-lich named Sekthep.

PATHENIA

The exact location of this forbidden city is never cited by the Scribes. It is listed only as slumbering within the black mountainous uplands of northern Khitai, beyond the Loulan Plateau. Gigantic snow-apes freely roam these inaccessible passes, hostile to any wayfarers. Another holy city, Yahlgan, is mentioned as being in Pathenia. An unnamed death god holds dominion there, keeping its secret for another tale.

PICTISH WILDERNESS

The scribes have kept a veil of secrecy about this primitive and wild country. They have kept more of less to its reduced dimensions. Once touching the western ocean to the towers of Acheron, this area is now but a thorn of harsh wilderness jutting into the more "civilized" countries it borders. Tribes, calling upon animals as their totems, raid their neighbors and war ceaselessly against one another.

A few of the Scribes' champions have journeyed into the Pictland reaches, daring to slay a cunning shaman or a coven of witches, inevitably calling the tribes together for greater mischief. Other heroes entered the wilderness, following rumors of ancient treasures, nesting in some forgotten place. These intrepid souls are cast in the roles of pioneers, trekking against hostile marches, and cutting fresh trails through dense forests. The heroes encounter legendary beasts such as sabretooth tigers, unquiet spirits capable of mimicking human speech, massive serpents, wingless dragons from prehistoric eons, and wolves the size of ponies.

By far, though, the Picts are the most dangerous foes. Painted hunting parties constantly edge across the borders, seeking plunder or blood while their magickers pry at the boundaries of reality, fearless of what may spill in. The fact that the Picts are merely responding to trespasses upon a land they have held for untold generations, defending their world against the Hyborian aggression and endless encroachment by Aquilonan settlers and colonists, seems to escape the notice of most Scribes.

STYGIA

Stygia is a decadent and sinister theocracy south of the Styx River. Dedicated to the cult of Set, the nation is notably xenophobic. They simply do not like or trust outsiders. The cults dominate Stygian society. The temples own the little arable land available, and the government bureaucracy is filled with priests. As with many religions, the theocracy of Stygia is conservative and close-minded, keeping minimal contact with the outside world. Their laws are restrictive and brutal.

Stygia is also a rich land filled with treasures hidden in their tombs and catacombs, which makes the nation a target for treasure-hunters, thieves, and foreign sorcerers. Stygia is strong in magic due to the influence of the cults, but they guard their secrets jealously. Other than in the harbor-city of Khemi, any foreigners found inside Stygian cities without invitation are killed.

Stygia's mysterious people are strictly organized in a class system dependent upon physical types. The royalty and nobility are relatively tall people with black hair and fair skin. The ruling aristocrats and powerful middle class are dusky-skinned, hawk-nosed people. The lowest classes are of hybrid stock, a mixture of Kushite, Shemite, and Stygian ancestry for the most part.

Khemi

Where the River Styx flows into the Western Sea sits black-walled Khemi, the major seaport and priestly capital of Stygia. Khemi is arguably the most powerful city in Stygia. The city, filled with black castles, is closed to the outside world, as is all Stygia, although they allow licensed traders to enter during the day. All other foreigners, save for slaves, must conduct their trade ship-to-ship in the harbor or on Akhet, a rocky island port in the larger harbor. Monster snakes, which are kept in the temples, are allowed to wander the streets at night, seeking to slake their hunger with any found wandering past curfew. Attacking, or even defending oneself from one of these serpents, is against the law, the perpetrator put to death immediately or through exquisite and prolonged public torture.

Akhet

Akhet is the rocky island port where most foreigners conduct trade. Also known as Tortoise Island, Akhet is the closest most people will come to Khemi, and their presence is tolerated so long as they do not cause trouble. Travelers, traders, and merchants from various nations can be found here.

Dragonspine Mountains

Scaled men, cold blooded, and forked of tongue are believed to have erected the city of Pteion, east of the river Styx, in another era. When their time faded, black-souled wizards were drawn to its remaining secrets, transforming the former city into a sorcerous stronghold. Again, time proved the master; the march of years broke mortal supremacy, leaving an abandoned shell, partially coated over by the drifting dunes. Clever travellers know a small, shaded oasis stands defiant amid the ruins. Southwest of the dead city rears up the Dragon's Spine. The regular columns of rounded summits resemble the spiny ridges of a monolithic beast, garnering its name. A network of caves and tunnels honeycomb the interior of the mountains. Hidden in one of these forgotten byways the rumoured Sepulcher of the Wyrn.

The Horn

The Horn is a section of Khemi that only the priesthood is allowed to enter. No other member of Stygian society may tread here. The priests maintain and enjoy the monuments, temples, and gardens of the Horn. The Black Castle of Khemi is an arcane structure built on top of the sheer cliffs of the Horn, the highest point of the peninsula.

Kheshatta

Kheshatta is known as the city of magicians. Located in southern Stygia on a caravan route to Kush, Kheshatta is the headquarters of the loathsome Black Ring. Kheshatta is ruled by the fearsome sorcerers and their followers. The priest of Set has no power here, and neither does the King of Stygia. The city is a treasure trove of dark and forbidden lore rescued or pilfered from the fall of Acheron and Pteion. Kheshatta sometimes has more foreigners inside its walls than other Stygian cities because the sorcerous masters of the city or even the King of Stygia issue permission for foreign scholars to study there.

Kheshatta is a city of deep intrigue, where the magicians vie against each other for status and power. Kheshatta, and the Black Ring, is ruled by Thoth-amon. The sorcerer's stronghold can be found here and explored. Scorpion Cave is a location known for the variety of scorpions, including giant ones and a man-scorpion abomination, live.

See "The Onyx Chambers" (pages 79–81) and "The Black Ring Citadel" (pages 74–76) in *Chapter 7: Raids & Ruins* for more about these locations in Kheshatta.

Khopshef Province

Khopshef province is east of Khemi and is a land of demon-haunted deserts and caravan trails. There are several oases and ruins that can be found in this hot land. The people here mine salt from the flats or deal with the caravans coming up from the south. The village of Bubshur is located within this province, where one can hear rumors of a great and ancient pyramid, the Pyramid of the Ancients. Near the Pyramid of the Ancients is the Treasury of the Ancients. Within the village of Bubshur is a house rumored to be infested by the undead. Within Khopshef Province are the Blessed Caves, which contain the Phoenix of the South. The Blessed Caves are home to Black Ring cultists and their demons. The Blessed Caves can only be reached by scaling a great rock.

Odji District

The Odji District is where slaves are bought and sold, where the light of day often cannot find the awning covered streets or hidden alleys. Odji is close to the harbor and few merchant traders are allowed here.



Purple Lotus Swamp

Scorching sand gives way to marshland in southern Stygia. Moisture creeps slowly back into the parched earth, advancing league after league until the soil is drowned, churning into a brackish black loam. Sickly tropical trees sprout up in dense thick groves, providing shaded warrens for innumerable serpents, crocodiles, and insect swarms. Questing roots have bored deep, creating deep wells hidden to the eye. The cracked bones of unwary adventures still lay at the bottom, silted over until disturbed. Blossoming atop such stagnant pools are bright purple flowers; the purple lotus can be found here and nowhere else in the world. This plant remains only reason man treads in such an inhospitable place. Based on the descriptions left by several of the Scribes, this lotus extract is as deadly as that encountered by Conan in his adventures.

SPLINTERSHAR COASTLINE

Years into their collective narrative, the Scribes elected for an alternative genesis. A full 10,000 miles from Tortage, a new crop of heroes was “born” upon the Splintershar Coastline. Crawling from the wreckage of a shattered ship, these adventurers washed ashore on a sparse rocky coast overlooking a maritime sepulcher. A thin haze of mists shrouds, but does not conceal, the corpses of hundreds of broken ships rotting in the cradle of shallow waters.

Splintered masts and sundered bows jut above the water, tumbled endless by a leaden current. Scavengers patrol the shore with lanterns, looking for any plunder washed up from the broken wooden corpses. Any who encounter these opportunists should not expect a kind hand and should expect to fight to protect their own meager treasures.

For more about this location, see *Conan: The Exiles Sourcebook*.

TORTAGE

Tortage lies off the coast of Zingara among the Barachan Isles. The island is mostly dense and humid jungle growing amid volcanic soil. A large volcano dominates the island. The island sports a beautiful but deadly beach — deadly because pirates and even Picts can be found there. The volcano is host to an ancient Acheronian ruin, and volcanic activity occasionally causes lost architecture to shoot up or become exposed. There is a swamp on the island known as the Swamp of the Dead where evil has tainted the land in unnatural ways. There is also a stone quarry on the island which where many shady characters dwell. Rumors of demons living among the broken stones persist. White Sands Isle is a small island near Tortage reachable by boat, and largely infested by wild animals, Picts, and alien ruins. The most famous aspect of Tortage Island is the port city of Tortage (see also page 89).



THE SECRET SCRIBES' GUIDE TO TORTAGE

Here is the beginning of nearly all the Scribes tales. Each of the journey starts from this pirate haven among the Barachan Islands. The scribes elected to make the rogues even bolder! There is no hidden cove, or decoy city to fool would-be invaders. There is but one Tortage in their tales, and this one cradled against a bleeding volcano. Pictish envoys from afar brave the sea and lurk in the jungle for some nefarious task. Otherwise, it serves ably as the true Tortage; a hive of amorality where anything has a price, and everyone has a dagger at their back.

See "Shipwrecked" (pages 70–72), "The Volcano" (pages 87–88), and "White Sands" (pages 89–90) in *Chapter 7: Raids & Ruins* for more about Tortage and these deadly locations.

Tortage City is a port-of-call filled with pirates, loot, and bloodshed. It is a safe city for pirates. A melting pot of all kinds of people, from all walks of life, the city of Tortage is under the control of a pirate lord named Strom. The deep harbor is capable of accepting ships of any size found during the epoch. The harbor is protected by reefs and other dangers lurking just beneath the surface of the waters. Navigators who do not know the path through these waters are likely to get snagged and never reach the harbor. Once in Tortage, the Thirsty Dog Inn is often a first point of call for visitors. Beneath the city is a complex system of underground passageways known as the Tortage Underhalls. These underhalls are a mix of people's cellars in the modern city and ancient Acheronian ruins upon which Tortage City is built.

TURAN

Turan is built upon the foundation of the Hyrkanian empire. Hyrkanian horsemen swept out of the east and found the Vilayet to their taste. Turan is a vast, wealthy empire, encompassing the Vilayet, although its exact borders are fluid, depending on what the king claims and/or can hold. Turanians are a proud people, and consider themselves honorable, trusting in civilized protocols. The men of Turan are typically bearded, wearing turbans, sashes, and loose-fitting trousers, their women often veiled and clad in fine silk. The warriors wear gold-spined helmets, sleeveless mail, and tiger-skin cloaks. Turanians are noted for their superb archery skills. For weapons, they favor curved blades, such as scimitars and tulwars. Their soldiers also carry ten-foot lances.

The top rung of the social ladder is the ruling class, which includes the clergy, the nobility, the administrators, and the military. The next rung on the social ladder are the producing classes: the farmers, the craftsmen, and the merchants. The

bottom rung are the slaves, who are omnipresent. Above them all rules the king, and those below him are basically his slaves. Turan is a meritocracy, however, and being born into a certain social class does not preclude movement. The military is often seen as a stepping-stone to advancement. Learn a craft, and one becomes a craftsman. Join the military and move up to the top rung. From there one can become an administrator. Gain enough wealth and marry well, and one can become a noble. Those are just examples, but if one earns a position, they generally are given the position — although politics plays its role, of course. Slaves can rise to be rulers, and rulers can fall to become slaves.

Trade is the soul of the Turanian economy. The heart of many Turanian cities is the open-air market, or *suk*.

Coast of Ardashir

The coast of Ardashir is part of Turan. The region encompasses Ardashir City and its accompanying fort. Ardashir lies along the coast of the Vilayet. Like the rest of Turan, the city is dominated architecturally by ornate pillars, domes, and castle walls to create an imposing appearance. Fort Ardashir houses a competent, powerful military force. See page 59 for more about the coast of Ardashir.

UTTARA KURU

This country, dismissed as a myth in most regions of the world, is a dim secret in the Scribes' cosmology. Only the faintest overview is given: "a land of ancient magics, misty mountains, dense coastal forest, and the haunting architecture of the city of Uttara Kurum." A footnote does offer this bit of clarification "The people of this kingdom are fanatically loyal in defense of their homeland. Ancient enemy of great Vendhya." No specifics on the city of Uttara Kurum or what makes its architecture notable is given.

THE SECRET SCRIBES' GUIDE TO THE COAST OF ARDASHIR

Newer tales feature the Ardashir coast, located on the sprawling grasslands between the Vilayet Sea and the far eastern kingdoms. The city of Ardashir holds many wonders. Its most prominent feature is the massive Fort Ardashir, which starts in city proper before advancing out in the Vilayet Bay. Built for beauty and function, this fortress boasts ornate pillars, and jewelled domes, among parapets and bulwarks. Even the installations of war reflect the vibrant culture flourishing in this nexus kingdom.

According to the Scribes, behind this façade lurks a secret. General Arman, the commandant of the fort and worthy of the city is ensorcelled. An ancient witch exploited the general's lust for power and order and has unnatural sway over her conspirator. One scribe chose to write a macabre novella featuring the loss of his hero to these two and their forces.

RAIDS & RUINS

*The Lion strode through the Halls of Hell;
Across his path grim shadows fell
Of many a mowing, nameless shape —
Monsters with dripping jaws agape.
The darkness shuddered with scream and yell
When the Lion stalked through the Halls of Hell.*

— Old Ballad

This is a catalog of the dark and terrible places visited by the questing heroes sent or guided by the Scribes or used as lairs by their villains. No mere gazetteer, this is a roster of some of the most deadly spots in the entirety of the Hyborian world and beyond its confines. Those that are not shrouded in mystery are cloaked in infamy. Each is presented in as ready-to-use a fashion as possible, with the gamemaster provided with the standard and less common means of entry, appropriate Momentum and Doom spends, and story seeds aplenty.

Not every creature mentioned within this section appears within these pages, or even the **Conan** corebook. In such cases, the gamemaster is encouraged to use whatever sourcebook provides the most suitable equivalent. *Horrors of the Hyborian Age*, for example, contains many such creatures and can satisfy most of these requirements.



A BEGINNING: SHIPWRECKED

Many of the Scribes' tales begin with a rite of passage for their heroes. No matter their birth or station, at some point, each starts their true adventures in the world by being shipwrecked. Troubled flashes of memory become focused with the same details: a bucking ship, a slaver's lash, wind and wave, then a plunge into raging waters. When they come to, they have washed like driftwood on a white sandy shore under a blistering sun.

A saintly man named Kalanthes helps them from the surf and before disappearing in the jungle, gives them a single, clear direction: "Seek Tortage." There a woman named Nadini might help recover lost memories.

From there, the stories diverge, but they all have this genesis.

SHIPWRECKED

Should the gamemaster and player characters want to follow this path, it too will start with the storm. All their gear is lost, and they wear only waterlogged rags. Their first weapons will be salvaged oars, rocks, and splintered wood. Disoriented and confused, they move from the beach into the jungle. It is oppressively hot they will need water and some type of sustenance to survive much longer. A

A NOTE TO THE GAMEMASTER

Age of Conan is filled with places for player character player characters to test their mettle. If they should venture into any of these places without preparation, or at the very least with their wits about them, death will surely be their reward. This is true, whether a trek through a hazardous wildland, or a descent into the sewers of a forgotten city.

Ideally, when embarking upon one of these adventures, the player characters should gather as much information as possible from whatever sources they can. In the Scribes' archives there is no shortage of cryptic old scholars offering clues in taverns, caravan drivers who had encountered strange things on the road, or ancient documents found after scouring the archives. In many cases, the Scribes wish these places to be visited and broken, their foul spells ended, and thus they maneuver heroes and anti-heroes alike into these destinations.

Any lead should give the player characters a sense of the caliber of challenge of threat they face, and what manner of prizes they can expect to win by their blood. A whelp wielding their first shaky blade, would not make it more than a few steps in the Halls of Crom. By contrast, a seasoned campaigner would fight little to challenge their mettle or coin to gain in the Underhalls of Tortage.

Of course, rather than dissuading an inexperienced band from attacking a place above their ability, the gamemaster may simply thrust them into the heat of battle, rather than providing a comfortable means of entry.

In *Age of Conan*, such focused experiences are called raids, usually short-term and bloody affairs focused on a particular environment, often with constraints to time. In some cases, these places are attacked again and again with a revolving roster of individuals, subsequent groups building on the successes of prior assaults.

The goal of the raid should be clear to all. Is it finally end the reign of the Woman Who Did Not Die, or to snatch the jewel of Atlantis from its hidden crypt? When is the raid considered a lost cause? Does three of the front-rank dead signal a retreat or does it only mean a realignment of available forces?

Perhaps more than anything else, the division of spoils should be clear. What share of the treasure will be theirs upon success? Even if the nimble thief filched the gem unnoticed during the fight with the giant serpent, are they obligated to place it in the party coffers at the end of the day? What penalty should there be for deceiving the rest of the party for personal gain?



primitive trail is cut through the jungle to the landward doors of Tortage, but is miles long, and seldom used. Swaths of it disappear for great lengths before being found again.

Crocodiles lounging on the beaches sniff eagerly for blood, apes that have learned to savor human flesh hunt the underbrush, and poisonous snakes roam the underbrush. Nature is not all they have to fear; some of the slavers have survived. The slave master Saddur (a Nemesis pirate captain, *Conan* corebook, page 319) is not one to let a storm quell his lust for life and power. If any from that hated crew possessed will enough to live on, it is surely that depraved criminal.

Any Survival skill possessed by the player characters is put to the utmost test in this sandy wasteland.

The gamemaster may choose to use this introductory scene and segue immediately into that described in "White Sands" (pages 89–90) and "The Volcano" (pages 87–88).

Momentum & Doom Spends

There is a big opportunity to use Momentum and Doom in this desperate situation. Small amounts of Momentum can be used in tandem with skills to procure salvaged items such as pottery shards, fishing hooks, scraps of clothing, broken timbers. More points could be used to repair items or procure better quality items.

Conversely Doom spends could be justified in causing flimsy or damaged items to break. Exposure, thirst, and heat, can also be cited as the mechanism to lower the costs

of Doom spends hampering the player characters, reducing cost by up to half until conditions improve.

Appropriate animals from the **Conan** corebook (pages 322–333) or other sources can be launched against these struggling heroes.

Two slaver pirates survive for every player character (**Conan** corebook, page 318). They managed to get in a rowboat with supplies as the ship floundered. Thus, they have been able to eat and drink and do not have the same penalties as the player characters.

Another potential complication is adding survivors other than the player characters and slavers; other slaves, perhaps injured, may have also made into the jungle and see the player characters as allies. Or perhaps, this was the last straw for these poor wretches; they have descended into raving madness that recognizes neither friend nor foe.

APPROACH TO TORTAGE

Saddur survived the storm and is anxious to recoup his losses. His crew of pirate slavers is scouring the jungle looking for any they can re-enslave. He has taken station at the gate wall that keeps the jungle from creeping up to the landward gate of Tortage. Saddur is charismatic and tries to use his cunning to convince the player characters that he will look after them and promises that they will be sold to kind families. When this ruse fails, he attempts to recapture the player characters with non-lethal blows to knock them out. If the fight is clearly going against him, he does not hesitate to resort to deadly force. If any of his slavers survive after his death, they quickly lose interest in the player characters, and try to make their way into Tortage to sign on with another captain.



ARMSMAN'S ARENA

Armsman's Tavern straddles just enough of the right corner of Tarantia's market area (see page 63) for royal surveyors to give it an address in the Noble District. Its location on the perimeter of such a prosperous quarter ("One privy in, one privy out" the proprietor is found of exclaiming) allows it to cater to people of varying social levels across Tarantia. It is well-built single-level building, simply but tastefully decorated. The selection of alcohol remains accessible, yet of high quality. It boasts ample crowds nearly every night, no matter the season.

With the proper hand signals and verbal cant, Luco the Bouncer will lead members of a select clientele to an open-air patio out back. Even though the city watch has been paid not to look too closely, Luco glances cautiously around before pressing down on a pressure plate on a false wall. It swings open, leading fifteen steps below. He ushers his guests down before closing the way. Several hours later, many of these same patrons reenter the tavern from a side alley. A few reappear drunker than even, others seem in a celebratory mood, flush with extra coin, and some are obviously angry or despondent.

This lower area is why the owner of the Armsman can afford a spacious villa located much further in the Noble District, and why his available daughters are courted by all manner of the powerful. The most well-known secret in all Tarantia is the existence of the fighting arena beneath his tavern. One of King Conan's more austere advisors once advocated for a full investigation of these claims. Conan shrugged, declaring that if the betting kept the nobles too preoccupied to meddle in royal affairs, he would mandate every tavern have a gladiator pit dug beneath its floorboards. As long as no one is held or forced to fight against their will, the Black Dragons have other priorities.

When the owner, simply known as "Armsman", first bought the property a quarter of a century ago, he believed this space to be an unused section of the sewer network. Research proved it to be part of the old Acheron empire, a blood sport arena catering to the bored and wealthy. Never one to shy away from history, Armsman immediately seized the opportunity and started the fights anew.

GETTING IN

Armsman is preoccupied enjoying his wealth and family to play much of a role in the tavern's day-to-day business. He serves on various citizen advisory councils and makes the right donations to keep the legitimate, and illegitimate, business flourishing in his absence. This leaves Luco as the head of operations. During a stay in Tarantia, the player characters hear plenty of talk about the "Armsman's fights", but getting access is more difficult.

Momentum Spends

- Player characters can use 1 Momentum to find someone-who-knows-someone who has been to the arena. Tracking them down could provide valuable information.
- Spending 5 Momentum might create an opportunity where a down-on-their-luck gambler allows one of the player characters to attend a fight in their stead (while disguised).

Doom Spends

- Spend 1 Doom to have Luco take an instant dislike to the most loutish of the player characters (gamemaster choice as to which). This individual will not be permitted inside until proper amends are made for this imagined slight.

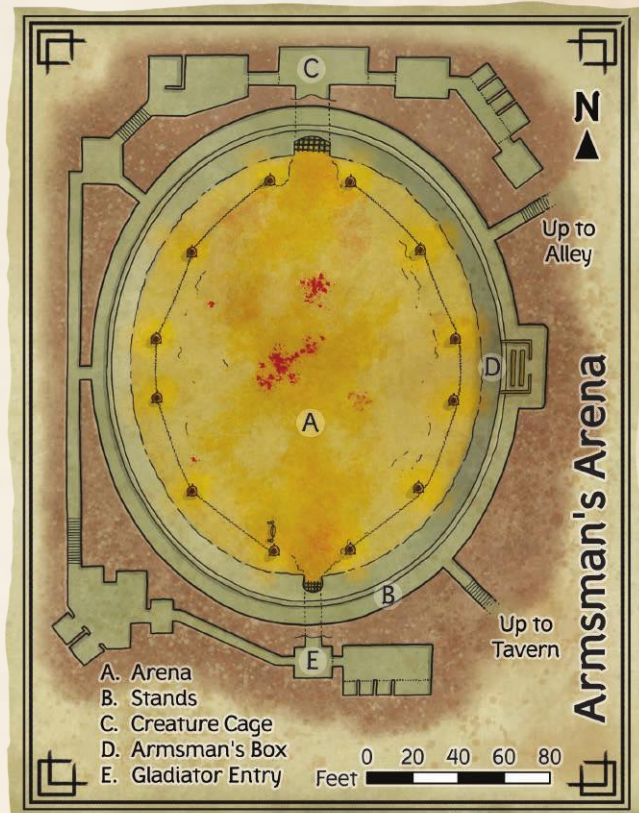


THE STANDS

The end of the first stairwell takes the player characters into the stands overlooking the massive fighting-pit. There are no benches: patrons stand along the rim to view the entertainments. On fight nights, several of Luco's men wander about to keep the peace and take bets. Another squad works below with the fighters or wrangling the creatures. A battery of ten-foot-high braziers, chained to one another, are placed around the edges of the pit throwing up enough illumination to keep the arena well-lit, while cloaking faces in the stands in shadow. To exit the stands requires use of another set of stairs on a different wall. One of Luco's men always stands sentry here. These stairs dump patrons into the coiled end of a side alley near the tavern.

THE PIT

The pit is a perfect oval, nine stories in circumference. A layer of dull gold sand covers the worn brick flooring beneath. Besides the lights, the only other item in the pit is a ceremonial gong. One of Luco's men sounds it at the beginning and end of each fight. At one end is the creatures holding pen, where the monstrous inhabitants are kept. Fighters enter from under an ancient barrel-vaulted ceiling on the other end.



FIGHT NIGHT

Luco continues Armsman's tradition of pitting individuals — or in some matches, small groups — against wild beasts. If the player characters want to participate directly in these fights, Luco may test their mettle with a small task or two before he lets them set foot in the arena.

Before the fight, the gamemaster should calculate any potential winnings ahead of time and go over the contract all fighters must adhere to. It states the terms of the fight and that medical will be provided to the fighter or fighters at end of match for a reasonable fee (2 Gold per injury). If any deaths result, Luco disposes of the bodies. Corpses raise too many questions, so under no circumstances will Luco allow the party to depart with a fallen comrade. Should the need arise, Luco is equivalent to a Nemesis bodyguard (**Conan** corebook, page 313). This twelve-man squad are equivalent to Minion bandits (**Conan** corebook, page 312) or could be Toughened, at the gamemaster's discretion.

In the way of opponents, the gamemaster can make selections of appropriate wild beasts (**Conan** corebook, pages 322–333). Depending on the flavor of the campaign, otherworldly beings could be added to the roster.

THE BLACK RING CITADEL

In elder days, the cult of the Black Ring sought to influence in every corner of the world. Failing, due to the rise of Mitra, and the coming of heroes such as Conan, they have all but retreated into their mountain citadel outside the Stygian trade city of Kheshatta (see page 67). These eldritch masters toil still in shuttered fastness, holding congress with the darker realms. Sudden storms break over the keep, scorching the earth with ebon bolts. Those down in the city stop their ears, knowing the thunder carries a malign voice echoing from an inhuman throat.

Lone pilgrims have been spotted on the approach to the citadel. Once the gates admit them, their identity is submerged beneath the hood of a heavy, dark robe. Of late, the gates have swung open more and more, not receiving, but disgorging troops of these acolytes back into the outside world, intent on some malicious campaign. Their self-imposed isolation is drawing to a close.

APPROACH & OUTER GATES

In its prime, the citadel had a trade road running from the heights straight into the city. That way has eroded in years past. Members of the citadel now trade discretely using an unseen network. This old road is still the only way to approach the citadel. It is in poor repair, overgrown, and trees have started to sprout out of the roadbed itself. The growth is stunted and will not provide significant cover approaching the city.


As travelers get closer, they see the citadel is starting its slide into decline. Neglect has weakened the place, but not ruined it. In another decade, it will start to come apart, but for now it lingers in a precarious balance. The gates are wide and strong. The walls tower above the tallest of folk, and are capped by narrow parapets. Getting past this point unseen will be the biggest challenge for the player characters. Stygian gargoyles, cast in the crude likeness of coiled serpents, leering hyenas, and malformed camels line the walls, and fill the statuary nooks. These monstrosities watch with dull glass eyes. These globes capture and reflect the expanse of the courtyard back into a central mirror deep inside the keep.



Momentum Spends

- Player characters can use 1 Momentum to deduce the purpose of the gargoyles.
- For 2 Momentum, the player characters can figure a path past these lifeless sentinels. Exploiting this weakness requires a Challenging (D2) Stealth test for each player character.
- Spending 3 Momentum allows the player characters to see that the mirrors direct to a door embedded in the rock floor. This allows immediate access to the lower passages.

Doom Spends

- Spend 1 Doom to have a section of the vines lash out, unseen, against a player character, causing 2  damage.
- Spend 2 Doom to have a section of the vines animate and attack (Conan corebook, page 340).
- Spend 3 Doom to have the entire area animate and attack with one malign plant per player character (Conan corebook, page 340).

INNER GATE & BAILEY


Ruin hovers much closer over the courtyard. Thick brambles, sprouting razor-edges coat the walls, snake out of weedy patches, spiraling around the center well. This water source, once used by incoming travelers and readers, is corrupted beyond repair. Foul miasmatic vapors linger, visibly polluting the air a thin sheen of sickly green. Past the well is the opening to the interior: a set of nearly unhinged double doors. Examining the well reveals a narrow circular stair cut along its rim. Approximately a dozen rough-hewed steps plunge downwards into the interior, allowing only one-person access at a time. These stairs lead to the dungeons.

Should the player characters have been careless in their approach, or made a racket, the bailey is where the acolytes of the Black Ring choose to focus their attack (page 38). If the player characters have thus far been circumspect, the acolytes on other side will be lost in meditation. A small overhang, which once contained statuary, allows a vantage point over which player characters can gaze into the interior. To accomplish this undetected requires a Challenging (D2) Athletics test for each of the player characters. The space is narrow; each additional player character increases Difficulty by one step. The bailey contains a mirror on a brass stand, that catches the reflections from the statues outside. A door opens in the top level of the citadel.

Momentum Spends

- Player characters can use 1 Momentum to reduce the Difficulty of an Awareness or Agility test to climb the overhang.
- For 1 Momentum, the player characters can use a section of the growth to their advantage in an attack; pulling a section down to temporarily entangle an opponent.
- Spending 2 Momentum allows the player characters to overhear the acolytes, either in meditation or preparing an assault upon them.

Doom Spends




- Spend 1 Doom to have a section of the vines lash out, unseen, against a player character who has gotten too close to the wall, causing 2  damage.
- Spend 2 Doom to have a section of the vines animate and attack any nearby player characters. (Conan corebook, page 340).
- Spend 4 Doom to have entire area animate and attack, one malign plant per player character (Conan corebook, page 340).
- Spend 2 Doom to have stone stairs crumble underfoot, causing a Challenging (D2) test for each player character.

CITADEL LEVELS


The wings of the citadel contains a series of once-functional rooms common in any keep. There are abandoned storerooms, dormitories, kitchens, throne rooms and armories. Ancient Stygian tapestries and artwork once lushly decorated these areas; now are in tatters. If the player characters have engaged in combat, they must fight their way down, confronted regularly by Black Ring acolytes.

Personalities such as Excorant the Golem Master, Yarekma the Soul Eater, and Sabazios the Insane are also in this wing (use suitable writeups from the **Conan** corebook or a desired sourcebook such as *Conan the Adventurer*). The second wing can be accessed by any of the usable passages. Ahazu-Zagam, an incubus and a succubus (pages 52–53), and other such as Seruah and Chatha the Demon Lord are found toiling in this area. The third wing is the lair of Athyr-Bast the Shadow Master (page 53), and a demon named Leviathus. The dungeon level is utilized by the acolytes, initiates and Black Ring summoners. In the cells, stretched along the rock walls, are held wayward members of the order, captured slaves ready for sacrifice, and perhaps, per the gamemasters' discretion, a summoning or two that went awry.

Momentum Spends

- Player characters can use 1 Momentum to reduce the Difficulty of an Awareness or Agility test for their surroundings.
- For 1 Momentum the player characters can topple a section of old artwork, or statuary, upon their foe(s), causing 2  or more damage, with +1  per additional Momentum spent (maximum 5 .
- Spending 1 Momentum allows the player characters to overhear conversation or the approach of foe(s).

Doom Spends

- Spend 1 Doom to have an additional acolyte hear the commotion and join fray. Add 1 Doom for every new acolyte summoned this way.
- Spend 2 Doom to have stone stairs, hall, or if in the dungeon, a rock section crumbles underfoot or topples, causing a Challenging (D2) Acrobatics test for each player character to avoid. Failure results in suffering 3  damage.

BLACK RING CITADEL STORY SEEDS

Acolyte, Returned

The player characters are contacted by an escaped former acolyte of the citadel. She tells them how she left her life in the city, called by the forces above. After a short apprenticeship, she became aware of a dire ritual taking place inside the citadel on an approaching date. Unwilling to sacrifice her people to make the necessary preparations for the ritual, she fled and went into hiding. She knows where these ingredients (and many other valuable things) are located and hopes they can be destroyed before the ritual concludes.

Supply Chain

One of the black market merchants supplying goods to the citadel has gone missing. One of his rivals, anxious to take over the operation, errs on the side of caution. He asks the player characters to investigate his former rival's fate before he steps into his former place in the supply chain.

THE HOUSE OF CROM

Spread beneath the eaves of the northern edge of Eiglophian Mountains in Cimmeria, just beyond the Fields of the Dead, rests the House of Crom. Banks of cold grey fog perpetually swirl around its dour gates. Wind from the mountains rage against the looming rocks, howling a shrill lament, ceaseless and terrible. This bleak scene so reminds the Cimmerians of their vision of the afterlife that they have named the environs after their grim god. Whether Crom resides in this bleak abode is for others to discover. The tribes of the cold wastes will not risk Crom's terrible wrath to satisfy idle curiosity. Their god does not seek worship, grant blessings, or suffer fools.

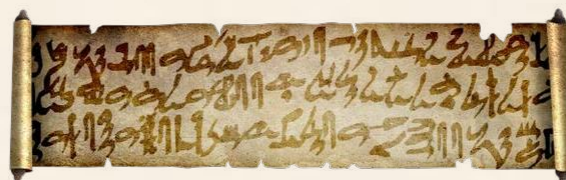
Part of this place was holy once, but it was never consecrated to Crom. It is a vestige of a time even older than Acheron. Its origins twist backwards into the fabled age of Atlantis. It was Queen Cao-Polyphyha who ordered her subjects construct a sky-reaching ziggurat. This ruler of mankind felt called to commune with their god Valka, seeking a greater purpose in her reign.

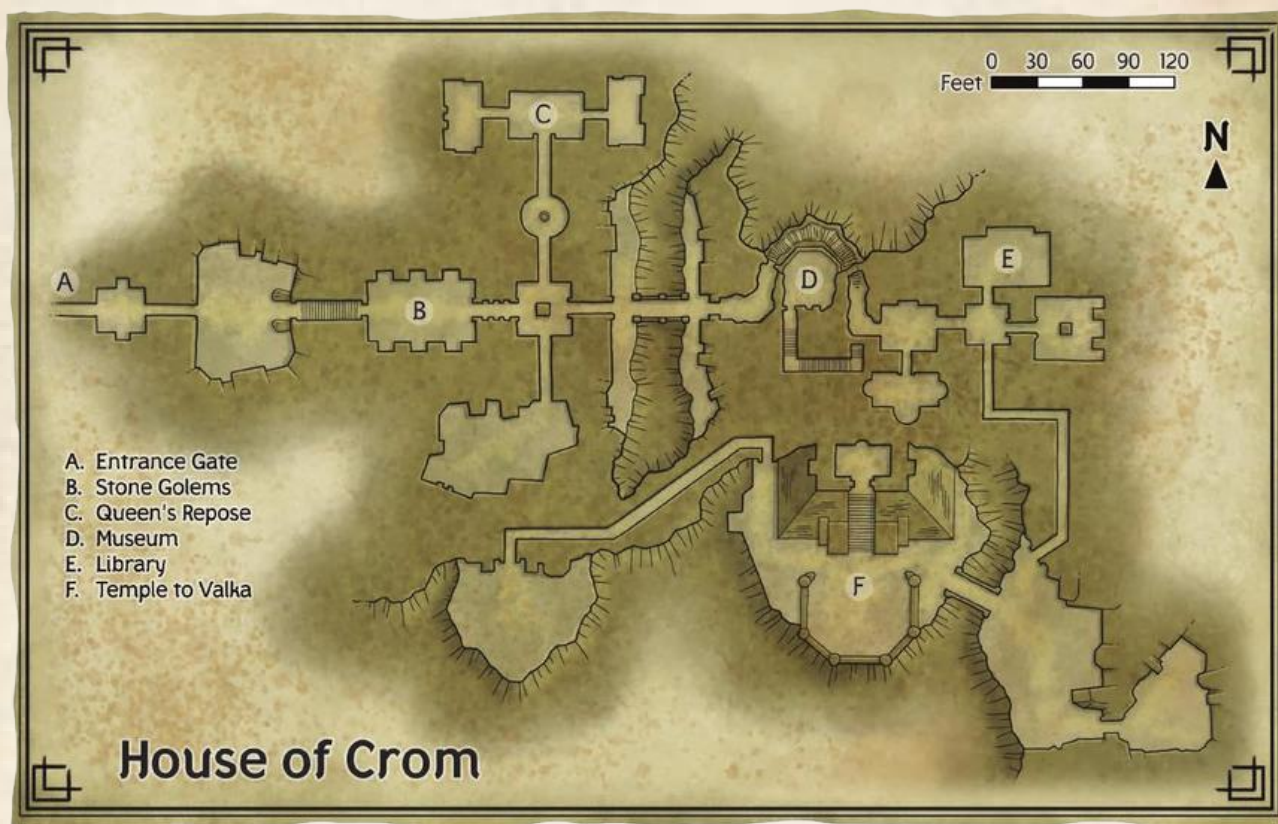
At the summit, on the appointed day, at the required hour, beneath the proper stars, her call echoed through the rent portal. An eldritch abomination, of otherworldly intent, answered. Before the passage of time bled the creature back into its own starless realm, it left the queen ravished, carrying its seed. The queen descended the dusky stairs, fully radiant with immaculate child.

Later, to preserve her sanity, she convinced herself, and her servants that she had indeed been visited by Valka himself, or one of his radiant angels. Surely, her unborn was destined to assume a throne among the powers of the world.

When her birthing convulsions dragged Atlantis down into the depths, she saw it as a sign heralding the beginning of the new order. As volcanic fire raked the face of the world, she and her attendants fled into hiding, settling in what became Cimmeria. They built in the mountainside a great manor, containing a temple, and a repository to house whatever knowledge they could salvage. Their labors complete, they gathered in birthing chamber to receive the awaited savior.

Thousands of years later, the doors remain sealed from within. Whatever dwells in the House of Crom has yet to emerge.





CIMMERAN APPROACH

Cimmeria is a place for the hardy and experienced travelers. Northlanders seldom tolerate outsiders, especially those looking to bringing their troubles (*Conan* corebook, pages 208–210). They need experienced guides, or the blessing of the local chieftains to pass freely. At the end of this place is the Field of the Dead, a place where the Cimmerians bury their dead beneath stone cairns. These graves are placed irregularly through the woods and clearings, rather than in the organized rows found in “civilized” graveyards. Cimmerians place little value on sentimental markers or leaving worldly goods atop the cairns.

Momentum Spends

- Player characters can use 1 Momentum to find a Cimmerian hunting trail which eases their difficult passage.
- For 2 Momentum the player characters may be able to remember enough of the Cimmerian tongue to make it past a young scout, more concerned with the cold than the borders.
- Spending 5 Momentum might buy enough good luck to win the favour of a local with influence over the local leader.

Doom Spends

- Spend 1 Doom to have a wolf pack start tracking the player characters. They trail relentlessly for hours, looking for an opportunity to pick off a straggler or attack at a weak point (*Conan* corebook, page 333).
- Spend 1 Doom to have a natural barrier (fallen trees, deep gully, steep hill, etc.) partially block the way forward. If not cleared, or scaled, this obstacle will significantly add to travel time
- Spend 3 Doom to have a Vanir raiding party (page 40) ambush the player characters.
- Spend 5 Doom to have the player characters disturb a marauding band of frost giants (*Conan* corebook, page 338).

THE HOUSE OF CROM

Rune-etched blocks of riven stone, twelve feet high and a slender five feet wide, form the doors into the mountain-side house. Opening them should require a difficult test of intelligence or strength as they were stoutly barred from the other side.

The hallways throughout are of perfectly chiseled stone. Only a handful show any sign of distress from its immense age. Several chambers are vast, going up several stories, showcasing the exquisite craftsmanship of the ancients.



Runes in Atlantean reveal the names of revered ancestors and retell the epic stories of Valka. Those skilled in Lore may be able to read an elaborate binding spell running the length of the house (Challenging, D2). Ceiling high statues of a stern bearded king holding glowing lamps in his hands adorn the walls of these larger chambers. Smaller versions of these ever-burning braziers are placed regularly through the house. They cast off an ethereal white phosphorous glow that never diminishes or grows.

Inside the mountain is cold; the machines that once heated the air malfunctioned without a caretaker about a decade ago. Ice clings to the walls, and exhalations of breath turn to mist. Player characters need to stay bundled or risk exposure or frostbite.

Ghosts infest this place. Those who beheld the prince began to slip into the gray realm. Nameless despair claimed these last survivors of Atlantis centuries ago. Their spirits continue to rise and walk about their routine. Some are aware of their state, others are locked in a delusional deathless embrace.

As the player characters advance, they must contend with five stone golems. Using ancient sorcery and engineering, the statues of the king animate, separate from the walls, and attack any non-Atlantean in the chamber. They are equivalent to golems (*Horrors of the Hyborian Age*, pages 52–53) Clever player characters will note that while destructive, these golems do nothing to deliberately damage the house. Such a weakness could be used against them when attacking or defending.

HOUSE OF CROM STORY SEEDS

A Disturbance Growing

A shaman or elder may sense the growing threat of the Little Prince. Not willing to risk their own people, or knowing they would refuse, they try to bribe or frighten the player characters into investigating, using false prophecies of their own doom.

What's in a Name?

A scholar has received drawn images of the exterior of the House of Crom from a traveller who once traversed the Fields of the Dead. Recognizing the ancient architecture, they are determined to discover its true history, and dispel the name "House of Crom" from history, forever. So zealous are they in this pursuit, they may accompany the player characters, at least to the front door.

QUEENS REPOSE

Mourning banners adorn this large chamber, the white light from the wall-braziers reflecting dully off the black silk. Queen Cao-Polyphya reposes on an elaborately carved wooden bier in the center. Unlit candles are placed at either side of her. She is a suitably powerful foe, such as a Nemesis level mummified sorcerer (**Conan** corebook, pages 339–340)

MUSEUM

These two rooms hold all that the relics the queen and her servants could carry with them from the cataclysm. Artifacts of the mundane and wondrous line the shelves and fill glass cases. The queen was fixated on her royal lineage, so many trappings of nobility would be present. Her other love was religion, items of holy significance would also be deemed worthy of survival by her. It is up to the gamemaster's discretion how many of these items, and in what condition, have survived the years, and the last decade of cold.

LIBRARY

This room contains dozens of volumes chronicling, in meticulous detail, the genealogy of Queen Cao-Polyphya's ancestry. Religious texts and astronomical texts round out the small collection. As stated above, the gamemaster should determine the scope and condition of these works.

THE LITTLE PRINCE

Once a temple to Valka, this corrupted space is home to the creature dubbed "the Little Prince". The runes running through the house and down into the roots of the mountain below successfully bound this creature into this space after its birth. Its true nature is for the gamemaster to decide, perhaps equivalent to a devil of the Outer Dark (**Conan** corebook, page 347). It has not fed since its banishment and needs to feed desperately.

Momentum Spends

- Use of 1 Momentum allows player characters to remove one of the braziers (these lights will fade within a week outside the house).
- Use of 2 Momentum allows player characters to successfully communicate with one of the wandering ghosts (**Conan** corebook, page 337).

Doom Spends

- The gamemaster can spend 1 Doom to invoke the rage of a wandering spirit against the player characters. An additional equivalent Doom spend could be used for a second spirit to join the attack.

- By spending 2 Doom, the gamemaster can have the unseen machines lighting the braziers suddenly malfunction, plunging them in darkness for a number of rounds.

ONYX CHAMBERS

Crawling beneath the streets of Kheshatta is a monstrous secret. The denizens of this Stygian trading post point to the Black Ring citadel on the remote mountain bluff overlooking the city as the place of ultimate evil and corruption in the world. Those who are forced to live daily in its shadow comfort themselves believing the worst of the sorcerous ills concocted by wizards and their ilk remain hidden behind fortress walls. Madness would result, if they became aware that the filth of this place has seeped beneath their very feet, flowing beneath their homes and temples.

The residue from untold years of dark arts and arcane experiments bled inexorably into the stone of the mountain, slithering into the natural caverns winding beneath the city. Facing collapse of their profit center, the artificers wrenched from deeper wells of the earth bands of onyx to shore up the flagging rock. These bloated veins bulge from the walls and floor, frozen capillaries of impenetrable darkness. It is from these black strands the Onyx Cavern is named.

In one ruler's reign, these caverns served as a glorified tomb for the honored dead. Another sovereign hid her treasures in a section of the complex so vast it has been lost to memory. At the close of the last century, the Black Ring turned their depths into arcane workshops. Depraved rites, hidden from sun or moon were practiced here. Scores of chained sacrifices were drug screaming into the caverns, never again seen. Several lifetimes have turned, and the caverns have gone quiet. Their existence has dimmed into persistent rumor.

Only the boldest of thieves would dare risk a venture into these chambers. A place such as this may have vast treasure, but it will not be empty of horrors.

THE WAY BELOW

Most of the outlets into the Onyx Caverns have been bolted over. The player characters need a knowledgeable local to guide them to one of the remaining few. These should be in remote or abandoned places, such as the ruins of a residence, the bend of a half-flooded river cave, or cracks at the bottom of a dried well.

Momentum Spends

- Player characters can use 1 Momentum to find someone-who-knows-someone who has seen something involving the Onyx Caverns. Tracking them down could provide valuable information.

- Player characters can use 3 Momentum to find someone who has directly seen something involving the Onyx Caverns. Tracking them down could lead to more revelations.
- Player characters can use 5 Momentum to find someone who is planning a raid on the caverns and needs help.

Doom Spends

- Spend 1 Doom to have a Black Ring informant overhear the player characters inquires and start following them as clandestinely as possible.
- Spend 3 Doom to have the city watch take an interest in the player characters. They try to isolate and interrogate them on their business. The penalty for plotting a heist is pain of death.

THE CROC WARRENS

Wherever the gamemaster chooses to place the opening, it won't be long before the ubiquitous Stygian crocodiles begin to show. Some dim instinct draws these reptilian beasts to the outskirts of the caverns. They nest wherever they can find warmth and water, hunting opportunistically.

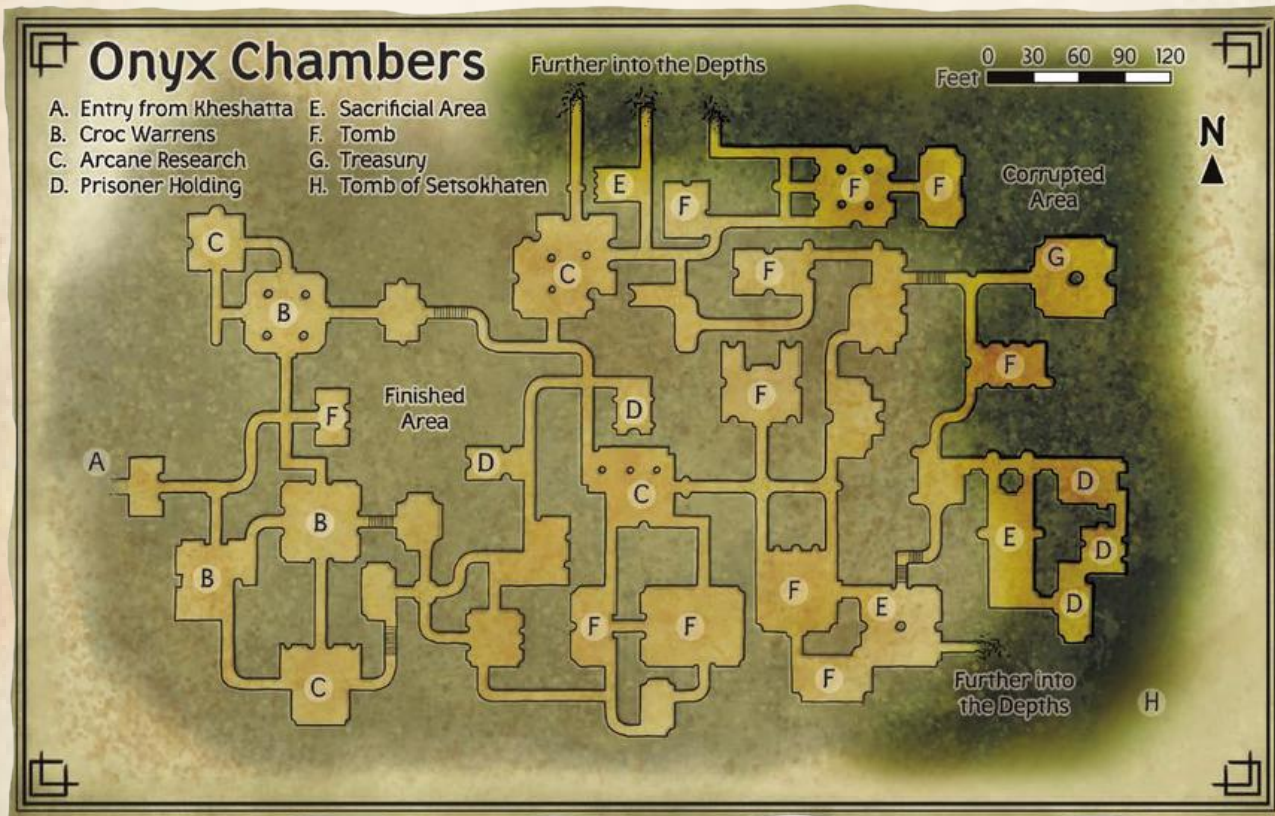
The closer the player characters get to the actual entrance, the more deformed the crocodiles become. The corruption has mutated their appearance; the deformities passing into their offspring. Their already tough skin has hardened, and spines jut from their bodies (*Conan* corebook, page 325) and mutated crocodiles (page 50).

Momentum Spends

- Player characters can use 1 Momentum to find a clearer path forward; cutting travel time.
- Player characters can use 2 Momentum to find an overhang that allows them to climb over a pit of crocodiles.

Doom Spends


- Spend 1 Doom to have a player character inadvertently destroy a clutch of crocodile eggs. The parent won't be far from this location.
- Spend 2 Doom to have a room suddenly flood with stagnant water, going up to neck of the shortest player characters, limiting movement and combat options.
- Spend 3 Doom to have a pack of crocodiles attack the player characters. Add more Doom to change them to mutated variety.




THE ONYX CAVERNS: THE FINISHED

The caverns go on for miles beneath Kheshatta. Not even the Black Ring mages have mapped the entirety of these passages. The artificers repaired the area beneath the city to prevent collapse but left the rest to ruin. The areas that they worked on are smoother and finished, with the onyx worked into frescos and artwork. They are unlit, unless the player characters bring light. They are similar to the appearance of rooms inside a castle keep. Four categories define these chambers: arcane research, prisoner holding and sacrifice, tomb, or treasury. Where possible, the builders eliminated passages in order to have the chambers simply open onto the next chamber.

Momentum Spends

- Player characters can use 1 Momentum to use a feature of the chamber (dais, ledge, wall outgrowth, etc.) to give them an extra  or +1d20 during a combat action.
- Player characters can use 2+ Momentum to denote a stash of arcane powders left in the room (Conan corebook, page 164). Their opponents are left stunned for one round, or may even be injured.

Doom Spends

- Spend 1 Doom to have a stray member of the Black Ring spot the player characters. They attempt to flee and has the advantage of knowing the place and having a head start (use the Minion cultist from the Conan corebook, page 313).
- Spend 2 Doom to have the player characters inadvertently trigger some arcane object. It may animate a skeleton in the room, blind or stun them, or cause 1  of damage.
- Spend 5 Doom to have this be the moment a cabal of the Black Ring has chosen to conduct a rite in the tunnels. There are two cultist Minions for each player character and a pair of leaders (Conan corebook, pages 313–314).

THE ONYX CAVERNS: THE CORRUPTED

Posing no danger to Kheshatta, these caverns were untouched by the artificers. They decay into ruin the further out the player characters get from the finished area, ultimately collapsing into passages choked with rubble. These lack the onyx strengthening bands, so the halls are buckled and cracked in strange arrays. The stone is discoloured, occasionally weeping a ugly brown perspiration. Most of the lost treasures are rumoured in be in this region. The greatest difficulty to the player characters here is navigation.

Momentum Spends

- Player characters can use 1 Momentum to use manage a fulcrum to clear a blocked passage.
- Player characters can use 2 Momentum to discover cache of supplies left by another tomb raider. It holds a lamp, oil, rope, and a wineskin. For another 1 Momentum, it may even contain a rough map and notes to the rest of the area.

Doom Spends

- Due to the precarious nature of this landscape, the gamemaster should pay only half the Doom cost for any of Hazards introduced here (Conan corebook, pages 272–274). These won't be human-made traps, but rather natural disasters.

SETSOKHATEN'S CRYPT

Few have ventured willingly into the Onyx Chambers, but the majority of those who have made this trek were looking for the tomb of Setsokhaten. This storied warrior was a Knight of Set, and turned back an invasion single handedly, if the legend is true. The long-sought entrance to his crypt is in the corrupted area, rather than in the Onyx Chamber proper, which is why the player characters will be the first to disturb him, if they find it (See page 56 of this sourcebook for stats and how to run him).

ONYX CAVERN STORY SEEDS

Kidnapped

One of the player characters is ambushed and taken prisoner by the Black Ring. Their companions must find a way into the chambers to spare them from a grisly end.

Most Deadly Game

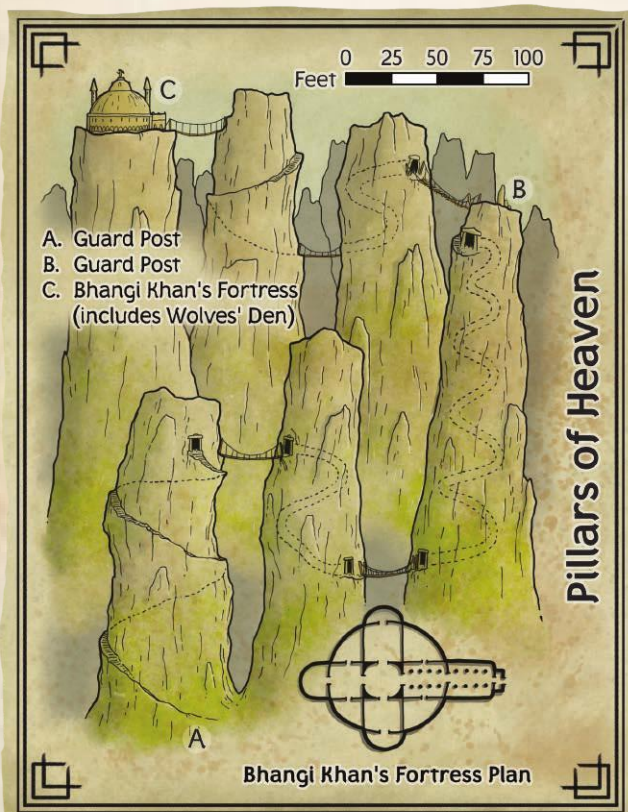
The player characters are approached by one of the warring factions of the Black Ring (there are many). The faction's leaders need access to the chambers to thwart Thoth-amon and seize power for themselves, but its secrets remain locked. They have approached strangers as they dare not reveal their intentions to the locals for fear that the sorcerer leader has ears everywhere.

THE PILLARS OF HEAVEN

In the far reaches of the northern grasslands of Khitai, the Pillars of Heaven loom. Ages ago, perhaps before the coming of the Lemurians, some forgotten civilization shaped these natural spires into an impressive palatial sprawl. While it's impossible to know how they looked in the era of their creation, even now a mere glimpse of these structures conjures feelings of awe and dread.

Wooden bridges, protected by palisade spikes, connect these "pillars" and their various tunnels, rooms, and platforms — many of which house grim stone visages carved by some forgotten race. The majority of the site is open-aired and plagued by howling winds. From these great heights, one can glimpse the northern grasslands in all their majesty, but it is best to watch one's step, as it is a long way down.

Perhaps it was this intimidating aura that inspired Bhangi Khan to seize the site for his stronghold. The "Wolf of the Steppes", as he is so named, needed a defensible position for his forces, and there is perhaps none better anywhere in Khitai. Other than building bridges to connect the highest reaches of the Pillars, the khan has spent little effort in fortifying the structure. Such a thing would be unnecessary, after all, as no army in the world could successfully lay siege to the site. But where an army would surely fail, a small group of gritty warriors and clever rogues might discover an unguarded entrance and set about the grim work of assassins.



THE WAY UP

Those wishing to infiltrate Bhangi Khan's base of operations have their work cut out for them. Not only is the way fiercely guarded, but the trail leading to the top is treacherous. Many portions of road have sloughed off the side, down to the canyon far below to mingle with shattered armor and bleached bones of the fallen. Some of these areas have been crudely reinforced and widened, but few areas allow even two horsemen to ride abreast. This, of course, makes accessing the Pillars of Heaven (without drawing notice) exceptionally difficult. For ways to lessen or increase the Difficulty, see *Momentum Spends* and *Doom Spends* (page 83).

AN ABANDONED TEMPLE

Much of the site is windswept and bare. Ancient walls and pillars, shaped by centuries of storms, remain strong, but all its original furnishes and decor have since disintegrated. Now, overtaken by Bhangi Khan's forces, it is littered with tables, benches, foodstuffs, and crude bedding. Not much care has been taken to bring order or decoration to the site where the men sleep, eat, and train. The khan reserves the best luxuries for his own quarters, which are buried deep in the complex.

THE WOLVES' DEN

The Wolves Den', as the name suggests, is home to a pack of wolves — but also their master and caretaker, Ming the Knife. When Bhangi Khan's foes refuse to turn tail or hold their tongues, this dark-haired Khitan beauty serves as his knife in the dark. Her father, before her, was known as Khitai's greatest assassin, but Ming's reputation as a ruthless killer — one who rewards her furred servants with hearty meals of the human type — has grown in unison with the khan's infamy.

While careful rogues and warriors should be able to navigate most areas of the Pillars of Heaven without being spotted, there is no way to gain access to Bhangi Khan's quarters without first passing through the Wolves' Den. Trespassers will know they've entered the Wolves' Den when they catch a whiff of wet fur, urine, and rotten meat. Though Ming maintains the area, the pen in which her wolves dwell is a packed mass of bones, blood, straw, and feces. Fortunately, the den is an open-air spread, making the smell bearable. Though the wolves are often relegated to their pen, Ming can open it with the press of lever. Her wolves relentlessly attack any who try to harm her.

Momentum Spends

- Player characters can use 1 Momentum to find a guide to help them skirt around the trail leading to the Pillars' entrance. This allows them to avoid scouts or returning soldiers who could potentially raise the alarm.
- Spending 5 Momentum affords the player characters an opportunity to ambush a number of Bhanghi Khan's guards equal to their own number. While there is still some risk involved, the player characters are at an advantage to quickly dispatch these soldiers so they may steal their armor, weapons, and gear, perhaps allowing them to usurp their identities and pass into the complex unnoticed. Use the bandits from the *Conan* corebook, page 312, and make them Toughened if desired.

Doom Spends

- Spend 1 Doom to have the pen in the Wolves' Den already open when the player characters arrive in that area.
- Spend 2 Doom to have one of the wooden bridges connecting the pillars unstable. The player characters must make Challenging (D2) Acrobatics tests to make it to the other side and/or leap across the gap.
- Spend 5 Doom to have some of the khan's guards, by blind luck, turn the corner to face the player characters as they try to sneak through a passageway.

BHANGI KKHAN

Bhanghi Khan is a name uttered in tones of dread. All the northern grasslands fear his horde, and now that he's taken the unassailable Pillars of Heaven for his stronghold, the sense of despair grows by the day. No army can hope to dislodge him from those ancient mountains, allowing him to assemble his men and raid wherever and whenever he likes.

Adding to this aura of fear, his nickname, "the Wolf of the Steppes", fuels an uncanny rumor: Bhanghi Khan's true form is that of a wolf. Though none have glimpsed this transformation and lived to tell of it, his appetite for raw red meat and his proclivity to roam the steps with his fur-clad horde only raises suspicions.

Whether the rumors are true, Bhanghi Khan has become a real threat for the myriad factions of Khitai. Many wish him dead, and the bounty on his head continues to grow. Should the player characters encounter him, he is a formidable Nemesis opponent, perhaps represented with the bodyguard from the *Conan* corebook (page 313), adept with scimitar and bow, with a coterie of dedicated warrior henchmen (Toughened bandits, as per the *Conan* corebook, page 312). If the rumors speak true, then he is also a werewolf and can transform into one (*Conan* corebook, pages 342–343).

STORY SEEDS

Assassins For Hire

Bhanghi Khan's marauders are a plague for the cities and people of the northern grasslands. It's only a matter of time before someone, perhaps a ruler of one of the major cities such as Pin Pin, employs desperate measures to stop the warlord. Laying siege to the Pillars of Heaven is virtually impossible, but a small group of capable warriors might be paid a handsome bounty to assassinate the khan where he dwells.

The Wolf Mother

Perhaps the Khan isn't the characters' target. It is feasible, considering all her assassinations, that Ming would invite a bounty upon her own head. Maybe the player characters lie in wait for her to leave the Pillars, so they may track and try to kill her before she accomplishes her next mission.

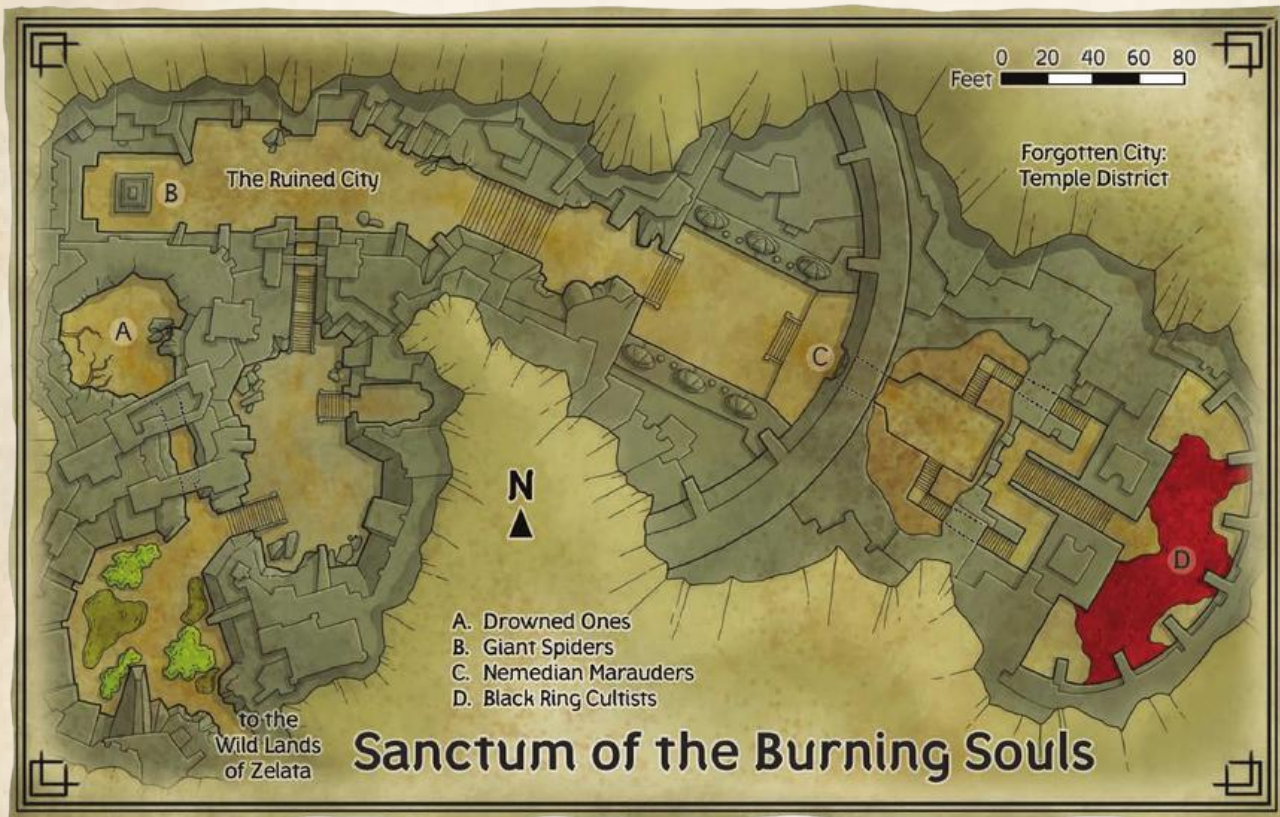
MING THE KNIFE

Ming the Knife is Bhanghi Khan's daughter and his right-hand assassin. Not only is this dark-haired beauty a peerless killer, but she's also an expert animal handler. An assassin is bound to make enemies, so Ming takes excellent care of her bodyguards: a monstrous pack of wolves who lair with her in the Pillars of Heaven. Any who hope to get to Bhanghi Khan must first go through Ming the Knife; and any who wish to get to Ming the Knife must first go through her wolves.

Ming is a Nemesis opponent, using the bodyguard writeup from the *Conan* corebook (page 313), with a pack of wolves, led by one alpha wolf (*Conan* corebook, page 333).

"Isn't it glorious, friend? The grass and the rolling hills like swells in an ocean of deepest green? And if this is an ocean, then we are the pirates that plunder it! Ride, wolves, and hear the war-cry of the gods in the thunder of our hoof-beats!"

— Bhanghi Khan, *Age of Conan*



THE SANCTUM OF THE BURNING SOULS

Three thousand years ago the dark wizards of Acheron were ascendant. Their theocratic empire encompassed the breadth of an area roughly corresponding to Aquilonia, Argos, Nemedias, western Koth, Ophir, and Corinthia. Skulls of Acheron's fallen enemies were piled high in grisly heaps in the central square of Python, the capital city serving as the black heart of this diseased realm. Decay from within and the barbarian invasions from without brought an end to this reign of evil. Relics and remnants of Acheron still pollute the Hyborian landscape.

WILD LANDS OF ZELATA

A traveler stepping off the trade roads on the eastern frontier of Aquilonia will quickly become lost. The landscape reverts into feral barrens of thick timbered forests inching ever upwards towards the rocky summit of the approaching mountains on the Nemedian border.

Game is plentiful. Humankind and their bows seldom enter this place. Howling wolf packs, lumbering bears, and hawks circling on the cold winds above are the only predators here. This place bears the name of one of its few human inhabitants, an old witch named Zelata.

Scant information is available on Zelata. She reportedly aided King Conan in regaining his throne several years in the past. Stories claim she wields great power, able to use magic to command the beasts and scry the future. Whatever the truth of the matter, Conan has issued an edict protecting Zelata and her lands from harm. Any found disturbing her peace could be sentenced to death or imprisoned for a lengthy term. This edict is more ceremonial than practical, as the remoteness of this region makes such deliberate incursions nearly impracticable.

Unless Zelata wishes to be found, she remains an unseen presence to any player characters simply passing through her lands. She has no interest in the player characters unless they begin setting the place aflame, or begin slaughtering, without cause, great numbers of her "children." The witch does have high regard for her woodland pets but sees hunting as a part of the normal cycle of life. Player characters casting spells or summoning demonic beings gain her notice immediately.

Momentum Spends

- Player characters can use 1 Momentum to cleave a path straight, with no impaired movement for several rounds.
- For 2 Momentum the approach of the player characters scares away an animal, or pack of animals, that has just brought down prey. They can use this to replenish their food stores.
- For 1 Momentum the player characters stumble upon a stretch of old road that allows them to cut their travel time significantly.
- Spending 3 Momentum might temporarily draw the compassion of Zelata. She may send her “children” in to help or aid them directly. This should be a one-time use, and only in the wildlands, as she does not venture into the city.



Doom Spends

- Spend 2 Doom to have a wolf pack start tracking the player characters. They trail relentlessly for hours, looking for an opportunity to pick off a straggler or attack at a weak point (Conan corebook, page 333).
- Spend 1 Doom to have a natural barrier (fallen trees, deep gully, steep hill, etc.) partially block the way forward. See Hazards in the Conan corebook pages 111–112 and 272–274. If not cleared, or scaled, this adds significantly to travel time
- Spend 1 Doom to have the player characters happen upon a bear cave nestled against rocky outcropping. They hear wheezing gasps and the thrashing about of a rabid animal inside. Caution might mean an easy escape, where blundering will guarantee the sick animal will turn its blind rage upon these new interlopers (Conan corebook, page 323). The gamemaster may spend 1 Doom to have it inflict disease (Conan corebook, page 127) or another Doom to add to its Courage or other Soak due to its rabid state.

THE RUINED CITY

The terrain becomes damp, and heavy, more marsh-like as the player characters approach the outskirts of the time-lost Acheronian city. This place was not simply forgotten and overgrown as so many outposts of Acheron were. At some point in the distant years, a great deluge swallowed this city entire, broke its foundation into pieces, and then receded, leaving the stone ruins to rot in a perpetual bog. The tree line thins, and those that grow here sprout from saturated ground, dripping with moisture, and are crowned with dingy, insect-infested moss. Blocks of stone are scattered in this area, lying in fetid ponds, or half-buried under root and vine.

Giant spiders breed here, living in the trees and amid the ruins. These creatures spin webs only where they burrow, always in darkened corners hidden from the sun. They will instinctively use the terrain to augment their natural camouflage. The spiders range in size and are denoted by the varying bands of coloring on their venomous sacs (Conan corebook, pages 330–331).

Also stalking these outlands are packs of creatures informally called “drowned ones”. These were once living residents of the city. Caught and submerged in the deluge, their spirits were extinguished. The accursed manner of their life left them ripe for possession by minor demonic spirits in death. Dozens of these revived beings shamble about, little more than a collection of bleached bones pocked with scraps of fossilized flesh. They attack any living they sense (automatically detecting any life within 10’ of them) with rusted, antiques weapons if they still clutch them, others will use jagged rocks, or attack with splintered fingers, or putrefied jaws. These drowned ones are equivalent to Minion skeletons (Conan corebook, page 342).

The spiders and the drowned ones have an unspoken truce. They ignore one another, going about their endless routines, unless one attempts to stand between them and their prey, in which case they fight one another to the death. Neither of these beings are capable of more than basic reasoning and cunning.

Momentum Spends

- Player characters can use 1 Momentum to cleave a path straight and true to a desired destination, with no impaired movement.
- Use of 1 Momentum allows the player characters to discover a cistern still carrying an offering of fresh water.
- Use of 2 Momentum allows the player characters to locate a domesticated horse that wandered off from a nearby farm and is looking for its home. The malnourished beast eagerly approaches the player characters looking for food and comfort (Conan corebook, page 326).

Doom Spends

- The gamemaster can spend 1 Doom to have a large spider attack drop from above, attacking the player characters. Each additional Doom spent adds two more spiders to initial group. Or the gamemaster can use Doom spends to unleash drowned ones.
- By spending 5 Doom, the player characters' movement triggers a massive mudslide: a Ranged (M) attack doing 5☞ with the Grappling, Intense, and Area Qualities. Unless extraordinary measures are taken, the player characters are separated in the aftermath by several zones.
- Spending 3 Doom causes the loose ground beneath the player characters to open into a small pit, then shifts back into place causing 2☞ of crushing damage and burying them entirely. They can work their way free but this will take a bit of time, during which they are vulnerable to any passers-by.

SANCTUM OF THE BURNING SOULS STORY SEEDS

A Statue Bound

The player characters are contacted by a mysterious figure calling himself "Melkar". He claims to be an inhabitant of this lost city, making him thousands of years old. His professed immortality is a curse for dark deeds, and he wishes for the peace of oblivion. He can only die if a statue bearing his likeness, still standing in this place, is destroyed. He has a pouch of gems to demonstrate his eagerness to fulfil this fate. Believe his tale or don't: he cares not, only that the player characters do what they will be paid paid so richly for.

Over the Mountains

Black garbed zealots seized travellers along the mountain passes. Among them is a minor nobleman's only son. He wants you to track the lad, and if possible, return him alive to the family manse. Should this be too difficult, the noble will settle for the return of the expensive jewellery emblazoned with the seal of his house, worn by his lost son, and a signet ring bearing that selfsame family seal.

If given a choice between the two, the noble expects all the jewels delivered in good order, with none missing.

FORGOTTEN CITY: TEMPLE DISTRICT

Damage from the deluge is lessened in this district. Its proximity to the mountain foothills served as a protective buffer against whatever unleashed the waters so long ago. A monolithic stone temple with a large stone altar, flanked on all sides by grand stone staircases, forms the bulk of this area. A smaller altar site, carved from the rock outside and open to the stars, survives close by. Statues depicting a succession of glowering bestial pharaohs wrapped in mummy-cloth line several avenues.

A band of Nemedian marauders have infiltrated this area. This group is comprised of former soldiers turned rogue, tired of poor pay and their harsh posting on the borderlands. They still maintain a loose semblance of military trappings, such as addressing each other by their former ranks of private, sergeant, lieutenant, or captain. They recently tracked a group of Black Ring cultists here, and seek to find their temple, sure it holds a king's ransom. They attempt to deceive player characters into believing they are still soldiers, and lie about their true intentions. If pressed, they may turn hostile, but side with the player characters over the cultists, spiders, and/or undead. There are 22 Minion soldiers (guards), and four Toughened officers (guard captains) remaining in this group (*Conan* corebook, page 317). About a dozen of them were lost in skirmishes with the cultists, drowned ones, and spiders.

A group of cultists from the Black Ring have been operating out of this area for the past several weeks, trying to pry loose any arcane secrets they can. They are on the verge of completing a ritual they believe will summon powerful allies to their cause. There are 80 cultists, split in two groups, about this area. One group is sanctifying the outdoor temple, and the other is starting to prepare to sacrifice their hostages. They have over 100 prisoners in coffles and cages waiting to go under the knife. The hostages come from small communities along the mountains, and also include several of the Nemedian marauders, taken prisoner.

Their Black Rings' limited understanding of the magic they attempt to use will be their undoing, however. This spell in fact summons none other than Princess Akivasha and her unholy retinue from the bowels of Stygia. Akivasha is incensed at being wrenched from her home and unleashes a blood defiler demon (page 51) to murder these interlopers. Akivasha herself is described in *Conan the Adventurer*, page 89.



THE VOLCANO

A short and merry life serves as the credo for many of buccaneers roosting in the pirate haven of Tortage. Given such reckless passion, it is fitting that this robbers' den shares their cliff-sheared island with an active volcano. Many lifetimes ago, the dormant giant awoke. Since then, magma tears continually weep across the rocky barrens, coalescing in ever-roiling pools, or cascading off the cliffside, its death-throes boiling the seas below.

A verdant jungle blooms thickly near the sweltering heat of the lava streams. Toppled ruins, shattered by creeping vine and the wear of ages, dot the landscape. These once formidable structures are stalked by brightly plumaged birds cawing to the sky in mimicry of human voices, small packs of chattering monkeys, or hulking apes, alert eyes watching trespassers. Around the tavern tables, many sailors speak of seeing painted men, Picts from the mainland, moving abroad, armed for war.

TERRAIN AROUND VOLCANO

Travelers exiting the jungle gate of Tortage find the way ahead extremely difficult. Never ones for civic planning, the pirates have let the jungle creep perilously close to the walls. Just a short distance, less than a quarter mile away, a tattered suspension bridge swings over a lava-cut chasm. Beyond this, the way narrows into a barely visible footrail. Further out, several more ill-defined paths snake off from this one, many ending suddenly, reclaimed by the jungle. The air here is still and hot; those in metal armor may appreciate the protection from the swarm of ravenous insects clouding their vision but will soon be miserable from the trapped heat.

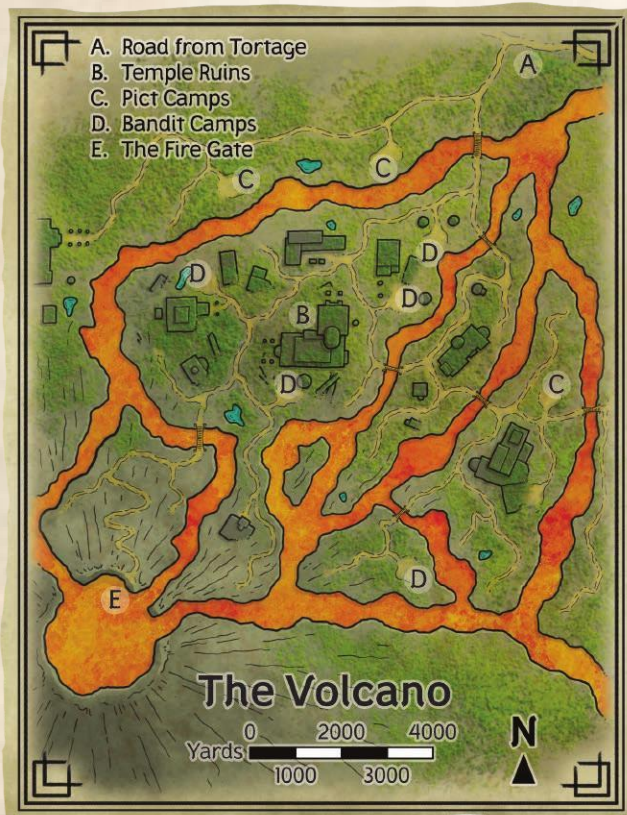
Momentum Spends

- Player characters can use 1 Momentum to establish a shaky path, with no impaired movement for several rounds.
- For 2 Momentum the player characters find a small pool of water. It reeks of sulphur, but is cool and drinkable, allowing them to refill their jugs.
- For 2 Momentum the player characters stumble upon an Acheronian temple ruin. Scratched on the wall, from previous explorers, is a crude map of the surrounding area. Those studying it find it a valuable tool in the journey ahead (bonuses per the discretion of the gamemaster, but likely +1d20 to Survival when pathfinding or exploring).
- Spending 3 Momentum may allow the player characters to stumble upon a recent campsite of Picts. Left behind in haste is food enough to fill their bellies, and enough tracks to perhaps give them an edge tracking these adversaries. Or did something else drive the Picts away... something now shuffling off in the distance?

Doom Spends

- Spend 1 Doom to have a venomous snake dart up from the brush, or strike while coiled around a branch at eye-level (Conan corebook, page 330).
- Spend 1 Doom to have a suspension bridge (there are several on the island) begin to snap and come apart! The player characters must act quickly to avoid a deadly fall, and most also figure out how to replace this loss. See Hazards, Conan corebook, pages 272–274, for more information.
- Spend 2 Doom to have a Pict war-band ambush the player characters when their guard is down. There are two Picts for every player (Conan corebook, page 320, or Conan the Scout, pages 84–88).
- Spend 2 Doom to have a threatened ape attack, using hurled stones (Conan corebook, page 322). If severely injured, the ape attempts to retreat.





THE RING OF FIRE

The closer the player characters come to the base of the volcano, the more likely they are to encounter Picts. Their shamans have been troubled with portents involving something they call a “Fire Gate”. Representatives of the various tribes are making pilgrimages to the rim to discern these meanings. A few of the elders have braved the passage, choosing to view the disturbance with their own eyes, rather than wait for reports. If warring bands of Picts come upon the other, a fight is likely to ensue between them.

The way to the top of the volcano is long and treacherous. On the ascent, bubbles of lava burst, and jets of noxious gas vents loudly from between jagged fissures. The temperature rises to nearly unbearable heights—the very air simmers and swims before them. Standing in this volatile area is dangerous. The gamemaster may rule that the environment is so harsh as to require constant Resistance tests at Daunting (D3) or Dire (D4) Difficulty of to remain conscious, or unimpaired.

Momentum Spend

- Player characters can use 1 Momentum to spot the passage of former travellers (possibly Picts) making the same climb. This aids them in any tracking or navigation rolls by allowing them to re-roll one failed d20.


VOLCANO STORY SEEDS

Hellfire


Bawdy theatre, besides drinking, is the most popular entertainment in Tortage. One of the declining theaters has decided its salvation is in a new interpretation of an old favorite. To make it competitive, they are advertising that the action will take place in a lavishly decorated Acheronian temple (actually, a thoroughly normal ruin decorated to look impressive). The player characters are commissioned to go into the jungle and return with whatever “horrifying” Acheronian (or other) relics they can find and return it to the playhouse.

Mates, One and All

Drunken boasting and a dare taken too far lead some of the pirate captains’ best mates out in the jungle at night. One of them is a surgeon, the other a skilled carpenter, the other fair hands on a heavy tide. Find these fools, in whatever brush they passed out in, and bring them back before the next tide, so that they can get back to raiding.

- A spend of 1 Momentum allows the player characters to use the terrain to their advantage, allowing them to gain +1  on a damage roll made on a single attack in the area, or +1d20 for any roll maneuvering or otherwise making one’s way through the terrain.
- Use of 2 Momentum allows shrewd player characters to lure an unwary foe next to a gas vent/magma bubble in time with its eruption. Treat this as the equivalent of the Dire hellish brimstone burning liquid (Conan corebook page 165).

Doom Spends

- The gamemaster can spend 1 Doom to have a magma bubble pop perilously close to a player character. Treat this as the equivalent of the Dire hellish brimstone burning liquid (Conan corebook page 165).
- By spending 2 Doom, the gamemaster can cause the rock beneath the player characters to shift, opening into a pit, causing 4  of crushing damage and dropping them into an adjacent zone.
- Spending 3 Doom sees the player characters stumbling upon a Pictish shaman (Conan the Scout, pages 85–86) in mid-trance. Frenzied from the vapours cast off from below, she attacks, followed by her cohorts (two Pictish warriors per player character). See Conan the Scout, pages 86 and 88 for their descriptions.

WHITE SANDS

Many a poor wayfarer has been lured to a grisly end by the cunning deceptions of White Sands Isle. Approaching by shore, an unsuspecting sailor, cupping hand over eyes against the glare of the sun, spies falling waves of clear blue water caressing pale surf before sliding softly back to sea. Beyond the strip of white dunes stand thickets of tangled emerald, alive with the movements and cries of brightly plumaged birds and other small prey. Stretching up to the unforgiving sun are rocky crags unmarred by road or trail. Surely water, fresh and sweet, the meat of easy game, and the cool shade of trees, are there waiting within to provide succor for the parched and hungry. These innocuous first glances, paired with a burning desire to place heel beneath land again, serve as poisonous lures. Those with patience to wait, or wits enough to question such a still corner of the turbulent world, will see what truly awaits visitors to White Sands.

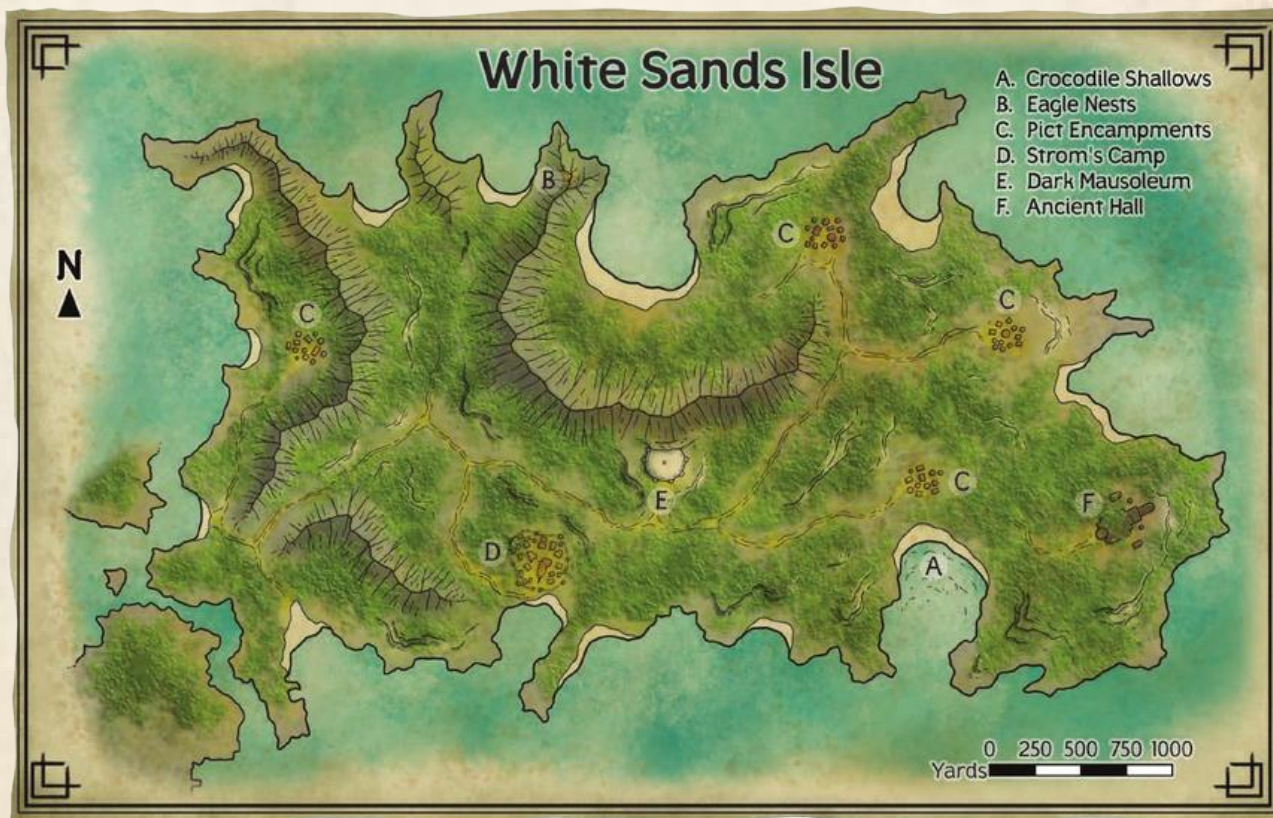
Packs of great crocodiles slumber the blistering heat, their bleached hides nearly mirroring the sand in which they burrow to mask their presence. Able to survive in the brackish saltwater and the fresh pools and lagoons dotting the island, these opportunistic killers appear as harmless driftwood, or cast-off timber, to those dragging small boats behind them. Too late, is their mistake discovered. Once one sets its jaws upon prey, and the scent of blood is carried

on breeze, a frenzied swarm, akin to the sharks of the deep, soon boils in the water.

Inside the jungle, innumerable serpents nest and slither. Most feast on the small vermin that in turn eat seeds, flowers, or nuts of the trees. A few have grown massive with age, stretching out twenty feet or longer. The old salts of Tortage swear these are the reincarnated souls of wicked captains marooned to die by mutinous crew in ages past now seeking revenge. Less fanciful tales are kept about the hulking gorillas and sleek tigers. These beasts are nothing more than hairy devils loosed from their hellish chambers to murder any foolish enough to stray into their jealously guarded domains.

Away from the waves, the terrain of Tortage is a puzzle of rock. Small cliffs, some sheer, others rife with vines and rife with twisted promontories. Soaring above their reach is a deadly avian breed. The massive eagles of White Sand Isle ride the endless thermal currents in a circling pattern before swooping to snatch three or four other birds or vermin in their talons. To devour their meal and feed their young, they roost at the pinnacles of these stony parapets. Their feathers and eggs would fetch quite a fee for anyone daring enough to hazard such a perilous climb.

As always, the most dangerous predators here stalk on two legs. Several tribes of Picts, sundered from their mainland brethren, have taken refuge here. They claim the local animals as totems spirits, or elemental gods made flesh.



Scouts in hide armor, or mottled masks, patrol the shore, gathering whatever bounty the tides see fit to bring them. Bloody sacrifice is made of waterlogged survivors. From the detritus of such shipwrecks, they have scavenged a motley assortment of trade goods. If one were to avoid their wrath and find themselves in one of their villages dotting the isle, they might be able to barter for wares exotic beyond belief.

Near the terminus of the southern lagoon and slightly inland, is rumored to be the encampment of the great pirate captain, Strom. An uneasy alliance with the Picts has kept their warriors at bay, while palisaded timber walls carve sanctuary from the wilds. It is here that Strom has reputedly cached his treasure, rum, and slaves. In the skeleton of a beached ship, he broods over plans to blockade Tortage itself and claim it for his own.


Piercing the center of the island is a primeval mausoleum, sprouting out of the hillside like a marble mushroom. Once its pillars and halls gleamed luminous white. Now, this relic of the olden world wears a black-grayish pallor, casting back a reflection the shade of moldering grave. Bodies of ancient kings and queens, whose names and dynasties have long since been forgotten rot in their elaborate tombs within, surrounded by treasure whos' luster has yet to ebb. The superstitious Picts avoid the mausoleum and make warding signs if their paths must intersect with this unholy place. Less wise are the grave robbers from Tortage and errant pirates, seeking this place for fortune. The few who have returned and spoken of it tell of an otherworldly fell presence echoing their steps and corrupting their thoughts.

On the far eastern edge of island, nearly buried beneath the canopy of the jungle is another alien piece of architecture engineered as some form of great hall or communal palace. It appears to have no connection to the mausoleum; rather, this towering hall appears to be from some parallel antiquity, cast

here by the convulsions of a forgotten cataclysm. The Picts refuse to even approach this location, and the sane revolt with fear before venturing too close, for inside, the Black Ones roam.

Usually, these monstrous beings remain content within, meditating upon their own incomprehensible machinations. The massive doors have swung open in recent days. Lately, even the most jaded citizen of Tortage has noticed the unusually large disappearance of children from street and home. What use would such innocents be to the Black Ones is a riddle too terrible to ponder.

Encounters

- Black Ones are described on page 77 of *Conan the Pirate*.
- The Toughened crocodile is in the *Conan corebook*, page 325.
- The devil of the Outer Dark (Nemesis, Horror) is on page 347 of the *Conan corebook*.
- Gorillas are equivalent to the Toughened ape in the *Conan corebook* (page 322), with Vigor 12, Resolve 8, and Brawn +2, giving them +1  to hand-to-hand damage.
- Great eagles (Toughened) are on pages 81–82 of *Horrors of the Hyborian Age*.
- The pirate (Minion) appears on page 319 the *Conan corebook*.
- The snake, giant constrictor (Toughened) is on page 329 of the *Conan corebook*.
- Jungle tigers are close to the saber-toothed tigers on page 332 of the *Conan corebook*. They lack the huge extended frontal teeth, adjusting Unforgiving Quality to 1.
- The vermin, venomous swarm (Minion) is on page 332 of the *Conan corebook*.



GUILDS & CLANS

It was a tall man in morion and gray chain-mail — one of the Adventurers, a class of warriors peculiar to Nemedea; men who had not attained to the wealth and position of knighthood, or had fallen from that estate; hard-bitten fighters, dedicating their lives to war and adventure. They constituted a class of their own, sometimes commanding troops, but themselves accountable to no man but the king.

— *The Hour of the Dragon*

Player characters are not isolated individuals and are traditionally bound together by the construct of the **group**, those actual players working together in the campaign. As such, players usually work with the gamemaster to determine in-game reasons for such disparate characters to work together and to continue to do so, even after circumstances might naturally break them apart. Above the group, however, are social organizations existing within the Hyborian world itself, organizations of fame and power, sometimes spanning vast areas with membership ranging from a handful to thousands.

Prior **Conan** sourcebooks have introduced these groups, such as cults as defined in *Nameless Cults*, sorcerous cabals in *The Book of Skelos*, mercenary companies in *Conan the Mercenary*, and brigand gangs *Conan the Brigand*. *Conan the Barbarian* and *Conan the Pirate* explore groups such as the village or war-band, and the pirate crew, as a construct by which gameplay and characters may be organized around. *Conan the Thief* describes life within a thief gang as well as the informal band of warriors called the Adventurers, and *Conan the King* introduces several other organizations, including Conan's own elite bodyguards, the Black Dragons.

Within these pages are two new types of organizations that follow similar lines: the **guild** and the **clan**. Each has a different role to play in an *Age of Conan*-based tabletop campaign and serves different functions. Player characters can be members of multiple guilds, though only one clan. Following are descriptions of each.

ONLINE VS. TABLETOP

One of the more challenging aspects of translating online play to tabletop is defined with the first two letters of the title of the genre—the two “MM” in MMO, standing for “Massively” and “Multiplayer”. While many online games can be played with a small group of players, sometimes even players who all know each other and are in the same physical space, massively multiplayer online roleplaying games host hundreds, even thousands of active players on each server simultaneously, a practical impossibility to model at the tabletop.

A core aspect of massively multiplayer online gameplay are **GUILDS**, sometimes called **CLANS**, player-led organizations that often exist above and beyond a single game and extend to multiple games. These alliances can be informal or highly structured, and most games provide support for players to organize and manage the guilds and clans, including offering events and other benefits for membership.

Due to the relative limitation in size of most tabletop groups and the impracticality of trying to coordinate tabletop players into any sort of organization, the nature and purpose of guild (and clan) membership has been refined for this sourcebook, made distinct into two separate types of in-world groups: guilds and clans.

The players and gamemaster may choose to introduce these elements to traditional Conan campaigns, as they are complimentary to other already existing social organizations described in prior Conan sourcebooks.

GUILDS

One of the more informal of the two social organizations is the guild, a group of people whose primary link is a social bond formed by membership, usually centered around a professional activity or a way of life. Many merchants and tradespeople in the more civilized of the Hyborian kingdoms are part of trade guilds, professional associations serving a variety of purposes, from quality standards, mentorship and training, price setting, mutual aid, and ensuring that competition between members is not ruinous. Though beneficial to many professions, these sorts of guilds are not of particular interest to player characters.

Another type of guild is a less formal one and not concerned with business or any trade, in fact, often quite the opposite. The sorts of guilds that player characters are likely to encounter and perhaps even become members are those that link activities that generally fall outside the realm of civilized society: alliances of pirates, bandits, warriors, or even sorcerers.

In game terms, a guild is an unofficial organization with a name, a process for joining, and its own standard of behavior. These may be highly informal and the difference between guilds is dramatic, and even the behavior of members of the same guild can be often completely at odds.

Members may turn on one another and be fierce rivals, while some guilds enforce rigid cooperation. Generally, the types of members a guild recruits and fosters are emblematic of its approach toward behavior: a guild made up of studious scholars or would-be devotee sorcerers is going to be much more rigorous about policing its own than a loose affiliation of rogues and cutthroats.

The following sections describe guilds in play and provide guidelines for how one might be created by the gamemaster or the player characters for their own use, as well as how to advance and improve them.

QUALITIES OF A GUILD

Each guild is defined by five qualities: **Name**, **Reputation**, **Size**, **Holdings**, and finally, **Code**.

Name

A guild must have a name that all agree upon. Some guilds have simple titles, such as the Nemedian group called the Adventurers, or Amalric's mercenary company of the Free Companions, but other guild names can be more elaborate or evocative, such as the Red Brotherhood or the Black Ring. If no obvious name presents itself, the gamemaster or players can use the Guild Names table, following. Pick or

GUILD NAMES

| Roll | Quality | Subject |
|------|------------|--|
| 1 | Red | Brotherhood/Sisterhood |
| 2 | Scarlet | Alliance |
| 3 | Black | Squadron |
| 4 | Gold | Company |
| 5 | Silver | Legion |
| 6 | Bronze | Brigade |
| 7 | Ivory | Animal (Lions, Vultures, Tigers, Ravens, etc.) |
| 8 | Steel | Sect |
| 9 | Iron | Chamber |
| 10 | Stone | Eye |
| 11 | Silk | Arm |
| 12 | Wild | Hand |
| 13 | Free | Blade(s) |
| 14 | Savage | Sword (or another weapon) |
| 15 | Shadow | Shadow |
| 16 | Dark | Dawn |
| 17 | Night | Night |
| 18 | Flame/Fire | Horizon |
| 19 | Storm | Sky |
| 20 | Hidden | Circle |

roll, as desired. To randomly determine a name, roll 1d20: on a roll of 1 – 10, roll 1d20 and use only the subject. On a roll of 11 – 20, roll 2d20 to derive a quality and a subject. Some elements are on both columns: ignore any duplicates.

As with all such tables, the gamemaster or players are encouraged to modify names to suit their tastes. The adventure title table generation system from the *Conan Gamemaster's Toolkit* can also be used for additional inspiration.

Reputation

A guild can range from being obscure and unknown to something famed across the Hyborian world and beyond. This is equivalent to Renown (*Conan* corebook, page 303).

When determining a guild's relative Reputation, assign it a value between –2 and 5. Players devising their own guilds must spend Fortune (see *Creating Your Own Guild*) to determine this value, beginning at 0.

The type of activities, obviously, will color the nature of this Reputation, so a guild based on outlawry or misdeeds is feared, while one performing bold or martial deeds is celebrated.

Size

The size of a guild is roughly the number of those living who would claim membership. At the bottom of this range are tiny groups with only a handful of members — such as a group consisting of only the player characters — while at

GUILD REPUTATION

| Reputation | Description | Notes |
|------------|--------------|---|
| –2 | Shunned | The guild is not spoken of in polite society, and even mentioning it is likely to invite rebuke. None but the most desperate and hated would seek to join such an organization. |
| –1 | Distrusted | The guild's name is thought poorly of, and membership may even be cause for trouble with the authorities, if any. |
| 0 | Unknown | The guild has yet to make any name for itself, and no one has heard of it, other than the members. |
| 1 | Recognized | The guild's fame is beginning to spread, but is mostly regional, and the name is not generally known to those outside of its field of activity. For example, a pirate guild would be known to the nearby navies, other pirates, and merchants, but not to the average city dweller. |
| 2 | Acknowledged | Many know of the guild and are aware of its activities, but nothing very specific. |
| 3 | Familiar | The guild is a commonly known fact of life and most informed folk know something about it, including its normal range of activities, famous exploits, and some rough details about its structure. |
| 4 | Well-known | Everyone knows about the guild, far beyond its normal range of activities. Notable members may even be celebrated or feared (as appropriate). It is not difficult to find those who might be willing to join, or who have been wronged by the guild. |
| 5 | Famous | The guild is known throughout the world, from the Far East to the southernmost kingdoms, all the way up to the frozen north. Its leader is known, famous members figure into local news, and tales of its activities have spread everywhere. |

GUILD SIZE

| Size | Description | Notes |
|------|-------------|---|
| 0 | Tiny | Up to six members, little more than a club or association. All members know one another well. |
| 1 | Growing | A group of six to 60 members, up to the crew of a moderate ship or sizeable gang. Members likely all know one another or at least have some familiarity with other member whereabouts. |
| 2 | Moderate | Between 60 and 200 members, either concentrated in a single area, such as a city, or spread across a region in small groups or cells. |
| 3 | Robust | From 200–500 members, a society made up of many reasonable groups. This might be a small fleet of pirate vessels, or a sizeable military company. |
| 4 | Populous | Between 500–1,000 members, the guild is represented throughout an entire country or in multiple countries. Guild members may run into each other unexpectedly in the most unlikely of places. |
| 5 | Ubiquitous | Over 1,000 strong, this guild's members are everywhere in some fashion. |

the upper end, the guild's membership is vast, such as with the Red Brotherhood, which spans two seas.

Generally, the larger the guild, the more likely it is that player characters can encounter other members, either seeking them out or by happenstance. Player characters may seek out fellow guild members, potentially asking them for assistance or information, with a successful roll of Society with the Difficulty set by the gamemaster. Depending on the nature of the organization, the gamemaster may allow rolls of Lore, Thievery, or even Sorcery instead of Society. Ultimately, though, the gamemaster should decide whether a nonplayer character member of a guild can be found in a given area.

Holdings

Most guilds are purely social organizations, existing purely in the realm of relationships, whether oaths, fealty, or some other bonds, but some own property and have a material presence in the world. This is represented by the guild's holdings. Like the player character Social Standing attribute,

this is a general guide to the relative "wealth" of the guild and what degree of property it controls.

Members can generally access the guild's holdings if they are in good standing with the guild but may have to convince its wardens or guardians to let them use it and pillaging or abusing the privilege inevitably invites a firm reprisal. They may also be subject to the standing of the player character guild members and the circumstances under which they require access.

Code

A guild's code is essentially the degree by which members adhere to the guild's purpose. This is entirely subjective, and not all guild members share the same devotion. However, this is a guide to the relative complexity of the guild's code. No numerical values are assigned each level of adherence to the guild's code: these descriptions are purely for reference.

Ultimately, the nature of any existing code and what behavior it encompasses is entirely up to the gamemaster or players to determine.

GUILD HOLDINGS

| Holdings | Description | Notes |
|----------|-------------|---|
| 0 | Penniless | The guild is entirely based on personal relationships and controls no property. |
| 1 | Poor | The guild may have a house it owns, or a servant or two, and perhaps several small caches of equipment, supplies, and Gold tucked away and available to members. |
| 2 | Rudimentary | A few small pieces of property serve as meeting places and caches of guild property, such as a wharf-side inn, a remote tower or hidden cave, or even a single ship whose crew is utterly devoted to the guild. |
| 3 | Respectable | The guild has at least one hoard related to its purpose, such as pirate treasure, thieves' gains, a sizeable occult library, or a fortified camp. |
| 4 | Substantial | The guild has many bolt-holes and hideouts across the Hyborian world, though this property is concealed or may not be technically "owned" by the guild. |
| 5 | Wealthy | The guild — or its members — have considerable wealth and access to property, from sailing ships to castles and occult libraries. |

GUILD CODE

| Adherence | Description |
|--------------|--|
| Ungoverned | The guild has no code to speak of, no standard of expected behavior or rules, and lacks even an oath for new members. |
| Disorganized | There are rudiments of a code or expected standard of behavior, but these are understood differently by members and applied haphazardly or based on personal advantage. |
| Traditional | Membership is relatively flat, though there may be some elected officers within the guild. There are no dues or formal rules, but some traditions exist to ensure that differences between members are addressed formally, even if just by a duel. Similarly, joining can be as simple as an oath or require success in a challenge, whether a duel or some other test. |
| Structured | There are some general guidelines of behavior one is expected to adhere to, but individual prerogative is still allowed. Membership has some general expected qualifications or some form of ritual application process to join. There may even be an internal hierarchy or means of advancement within the group. |
| Regimented | The guild has an extremely rigid and well-understood standard of behavior and requires all members to follow it scrupulously. Dissent or violation of the code is met with punishment or exile. Entry into this guild is highly restricted and members are vetted carefully, the code of conduct enforced rigorously by peers or even by an internal group within the guild. |

CREATING A GUILD

Player characters may wish to create a guild of their own. During character creation or at any other point in play, the gamemaster should make this option available. For each player character with the Guild Membership talent specific to that guild, the players have 1 point towards a budget by which they can define their guild, using the guidelines and tables provided prior. Thus, three player characters in a guild means the guild has 3 points to be defined by.

A guild with a budget of 0 has the following qualities:

- Reputation: Unknown
- Size: Tiny
- Holdings: Penniless
-

Name and code cost nothing to define. Reputation, being one of the most important attributes, is also one of the few that has a potentially negative value, so players choosing to give their guild a Reputation of Distrusted (-1) or Shunned (-2) can gain additional points by which to build their guild. Once a guild is established, buying additional Ranks for one's Guild costs 1,000 experience points multiplied by the new rank, and Gold equal to 10 x the desired rank. Both expenses can be shared between player characters and represents them recruiting and serving to expand the guild and its qualities. Such improvement is done between sessions after the upkeep and carousing phases.

CLANS

Among the Cimmerians, Picts, and Stygians, a common bond exists in the extended family embodied in their clan. Clans are not necessarily blood relations, but instead formed around perceived kinship such as an honored ancestor or leader whose legends form the founding principles of the clan. The structure of the clan binds its members not only to their family, but the broader idea of kinsfolk.

History and tradition are paramount in a clan and their relationships with other clans, and it colors how other clans view their members. That reputation can give an individual a certain amount of trust, but also hinder those who need trust between rival clans. With such a strong focus on kinship and tradition, it is not uncommon for clans to have long for strong alliances or hold deep seeded grudges and rivalries.

The honor of a clan can rest on whether they honor these commitments. Failure to honor the bond can result in generational blood feuds or rivalries. These rivalries are often ancient and often lost to time and legend. They can vary in intensity and are as often friendly as much as they are violent. They're commonly the result of an insult to the clan's honor, or a kinsman deeply wronged by the opposing clan.

NEW TALENT: GUILD MEMBERSHIP

Cost: 200 experience points

Prerequisite: None

Maximum Ranks: 1 (but can be taken multiple times, each time is a different guild)

You are a member of a guild and can draw on any benefits it allows, as well as any effects that the association may cause. This might mean a quick ally in an unfamiliar port, a safe berth if you need shelter, and sometimes even wise counsel if it is needed. The nature of the assistance varies dramatically by the code and nature of the guild, as well as the circumstances and the parties involved.

While anyone can claim to be a member of a guild, without this talent no one within that guild will recognize you as a member, unless gulled or otherwise deceived. If you claim to be a membership of a guild without the talent making you a member, you may suffer reprisals from other guild members.

When performing Insight, Persuade, or Society tests against other members of the guild, you may add +1d20 to your roll, up to the normal maximum.

You may leave the guild at any time by simply removing this talent, though the points are not refunded and you may still be viewed as a member by the guild's enemies.

NEW TALENT: CLAN MEMBER

Cost: 200 experience points

Prerequisite: None

Maximum Ranks: 1

Special: Must be selected at character creation

You are a member of a clan, a close-knit family unit existing below the tribal level but above that of the family, and this kinship is stronger than most familial bonds. This means that you have this group to turn to in times of need, and may include supplies, equipment, refuge, training, etc. but is highly limited to the home area of your homeland.

This also has the effect of having the potential for a successor to your name show up should your character die during gameplay. This "next of kin" character must have superficial similarities to your original character, including being from the same homeland and having the same Social Standing. They may be similar in appearance or quite different but should be alike enough that a familial resemblance is notable.

Attributes, caste, story, archetype, etc. can all be different, however. The mechanical benefit to this is that you can immediately take your fallen character's Renown, multiply it by 1,000, and apply that number of experience points to the new character's talents and/or skills. If the deceased character has a negative Renown, treat it as a positive for the purpose of this determination.

Clans are generally led by a chief who can draw the most direction connection shared ancestor. While the title will vary, rule their clan, and garner respect from their kin. Larger clans often form small councils to advise the clan leader, and these advisers are often honored clan members or heads families in the clan.

Clans tend to have control over a territory or land, and clan law dictates rules of behavior. Clan members, and those under the clan's rule — slaves, the bonded or oathsworn, and trade-folk — are beholden to these laws. Punishment for violating the local laws varies, but among clan members, extreme violations of law can result in banishment from clan lands. Those banished are outside the protection of clan law and can often be freely abused by those within clan. Facing that loss of status, many banished individuals flee to other lands.

While clans are more common among cultures in the wildlands of Cimmeria, they also exist in Stygia and the Black Kingdoms particularly, as well as other wilder and less civilized places in the Hyborian world. Clans extend into cities and towns throughout the region mixing into major trading hubs and cities bringing their feuds with them. A street war between two clans in Xuchotl, for example, can be as bloody as a raid in the Cimmerian wilderness.

TROUPE-STYLE CAMPAIGNS

The scope of adventuring guilds and clans means there's a lot of characters beyond the main player characters in the campaign. These campaigns are a prime opportunity for a troupe-style campaign where players can play multiple characters throughout the campaign meaning they try a variety of character types. Players might play bitter rivals for one session, and then completely different characters the next session. Once players have established a troupe of player characters, they might even change characters in the middle of the session as the story demands. The gamemaster can set up scenes that tell the drama of their clan or guild, allowing players to switch between characters for dramatic effect.



ADVENTURES & CAMPAIGNS

An involuntary shudder twitched Conan's broad shoulders. Human foes he did not fear, nor any death by steel or fire. But this was a black land of sorcery and nameless horror. Set the Old Serpent, men said, banished long ago from the Hyborian races, yet lurked in the shadows of the cryptic temples, and awful and mysterious were the deeds done in the nighted shrines.

— *The Hour of the Dragon*

Conan remains king, for now, but in this age of the earth, none are ever truly safe. In Aquilonia, the plots of scheming counselors and the machinations of deranged wizards remain ever on the verge of fruition. In other Hyborian kingdoms, nobles and generals ready their forces for the onslaught the rest of the world dreads. In Stygia, dark sorceries are worked in worship of the ancient and ravaging serpent god, Set. In Khitai and Turan, chaos threatens to overthrow ancient kingdoms, and reveal dreadful secrets best kept concealed.

This is the Hyborian Age.

This is the *Age of Conan*.

The following chapter contains a series of **deeds**. Some are small, the kind carried out by those just beginning a career of adventure. Others are kingdom-spanning or era-shaking actions. The kind to make one's name, crown them forever as a legend. Whatever a campaign requires, these adventure seeds are here to assist. They cover every kind of adventure and are easily adapted to suit any kind of **Conan** game. Whether the player characters are starting from the bottom and hacking their way to wealth and riches, or whether they're only interested in the wealth and riches, these are adventures the gamemaster can use at any stage of a **Conan** campaign.

Just pick the adventure to suit the desired tone and setting — if the player characters are new to a city or location, opt for one of the quicker **minor deeds** to quickly embroil the player characters in something nefarious. If, on the other hand, the player characters know every inch of the kingdoms of the Hyborian world, then clearly something more difficult is in order... that's what **major deeds** are for.

Some are deliberately and clearly drawn from quests in *Age of Conan*. Others are entirely original but capture the same thrill and excitement of the Hyborian Age, and of its different locales, each with their own unique flavor, sense of danger, and character. Some deeds possess connections to others, positing a campaign the player characters might be introduced to, should the gamemaster choose. Alternatively, they can be played as individual vignettes of life in the *Age of Conan*, keeping them entirely separate from one another, experienced as one-shots or short multi-part adventures.

MINOR DEEDS

Minor deeds are those resolvable in a single session, and usually involve only a single issue or problem to be solved. They rarely require extended travel, and while they may include a reversal of expectations or an unexpected twist or turn, they are generally not very complex.



FABIO'S PREDICAMENT

The scions of noble houses are always a prime target for those with an inclination to make money, and a preference for avoiding work wherever possible. Fabio is one such noble, and he's fallen foul of particularly cunning thug called Lorenzo. Lorenzo wants the stash of extremely valuable art which Lorenzo's father, the fabulously wealthy Aquilonian banker, Cosimo, is known to keep. Most of this art is impossible to transport, but Lorenzo isn't stupid — Cosimo possesses the original miniature illustrations done by the greatest portrait artist of the age, Leoranda da Tarantia, of King Conan and his new bride Zenobia, and he knows a buyer.

Rather than risk his own neck, Lorenzo kidnaps Fabio's innamorata, the sublimely beautiful Dorothea. Fabio is utterly smitten with Dorothea, and unable to confide in anyone about his love, as she is a mere market vendor, and unfit for someone of such noble rank. Or so he is certain his father will insist. Desperate to prevent anything happening to Dorothea, Fabio seeks out the player characters to assist him in planning a heist on his own father's residence. Of course, the residence of Cosimo Apothecari is no easy mark, and getting in and out is unlikely to prove easy. On top of that, the fact that the player characters aren't aware of Fabio's plan to leave them with nothing, in order to take their promised prize to Lorenzo, is sure to leave them in a less than gleeful mood.

Pursued by the forces of Cosimo, and the Aquilonian authorities, while needing to chase down Fabio to try and get something out of this messy business, things are already complicated enough. Throw in a kidnapped beauty, and the thwarted love of a young noble, and who knows how crazy things might get? Staying alert, and ready to run, are going to be vital traits for anyone hoping to survive such pandemonium.

FLAYING ZARATHUS

People with money want things. And the player characters are able to get those things, perhaps. Or at least, they are prepared to let people think they're in a position to get those things in order to get some of that money. It's not often that the player characters are tasked with procuring the flayed skin of a once legendary warlord, but, well, who wants to be choosy in this line of work? Especially when there's good gold involved. The problem is, as the player characters no doubt discover for themselves after quite the little hunt — Zarathus' wasn't flayed.

That particular rumor was spread with the hope of leading to Zarathus' men dispersing, instead of seeking vengeance. It worked, but it's left the player characters in a sticky position. What they *could* do, of course, is find a

flayed skin, concoct an elaborate provenance for it, and try and deceive their client that way. How they choose to do that is a different matter. Procuring a flayed human skin is unlikely to be a simple matter and finding a master forger to create a series of documents to convince the client — naturally, a person of extreme education and erudition — even harder. Then there's the small inconvenience of the fellow procurers who might, if they were to find out what the player characters were up to, feel the need to reveal such casuistry to the buyer. They might need to be dealt with too.

All in all, carrying out such a subtle operation might prove a great deal more complex than initially believed.

A BALLAD OF FRUSTRATION

It's not an easy life, being a bard or skald, travelling from place to place and surviving only on what last night's audience thought they were worth. It's even harder if the principle means of plying that trade (namely, musical instruments) were taken by a gang of thieves and cutthroats. Fortunately, the musicians managed to retain a small pouch



of gold, which they offer to anyone able to regain their instruments for them.

It seems a simple enough task; find some vagabonds, deliver a swift thrashing, and return to gain some gold, and maybe a small song written in the player characters' honor. Except, if (or when) they reclaim the instruments, they might discover why the musicians wanted them back quite so badly. Hidden inside them is an enormous stash of black lotus — enough to fundamentally shift the balance of power between gangs in the city the putative musicians were heading to.

Caught in the middle of an incipient gang war, with enough potentially deadly hallucinogen to poison a kingdom, the player characters are going to need to work out whose side they're on very quickly, before everyone decides they aren't on theirs.



THE ABANDONED ATLANTEAN HALLS

The player characters are cautiously approached by a Stygian, street urchin named Si-Khu, who they may already as a beggar and runner for the resistance. Si-Khu tells the players that Arias wishes to speak with him, and leads them to an encampment on the outskirts of the city. Arias is still nursing wounds from the torture he suffered under the Red Hands and asks the player characters to investigate rumors Strom's men are excavating Atlantean ruins deep on White Sands Isle.

The excavation site is a couple of hours' hiking through the jungle, avoiding potential Pict raiding parties or vicious wildlife. Upon arriving, the group discovers a site of slaughter, with trails of gore leading back into the ruins. Shouts and the sound of fighting emanate from deeper in the ruins, drawing the player characters' attention. If they investigate, they'll discover the dead attacking a group of Red Hands who've erected makeshift barricades to fend them off.

If the players save the Red Hands, a survivor named Renton is very forthcoming. He states that Strom sought an artifact and that his scribe's research let them here. When Strom removed the talisman from the pedestal on which it rested, the dead attacked them. Strom fled with his scribe, Bartholomew, while the rest were left to die.

Renton shows the group the chamber where the talisman was found, and Bartholomew's scattered research materials reveals drawings of a medallion emblazoned with a phoenix. Upon returning to Arias, he asks the players to take the information they've discovered to someone named Nadini.

THE GARDENS OF MITHRELLE

Resistance members are getting swept up in raids by the Red Hand. Rumors abound about how they cells are being infiltrated ranging from traitors to foul magic. Valeria and the remaining resistance leaders are desperate to identify how the Red Hand is locating cells in Tortage.

Shenti-Aku is a Mithrelle's bodyguard, and he's been seen taking the right eye from each captured cell leader, along with minor personal items. Anyone with magical knowledge knows these items are used to cast divination magic. Valeria wants infiltrate Mithrelle's estate and stop her from exposing the resistance.

Mithrelle's estate is a large manor house surrounded by walls and gardens. The grounds are well-guarded, but scattered throughout the garden are carnivorous plants that eat intruders foolish enough to scale the walls. Additionally, Mithrelle's foul magic transformed a slave into a vicious bat demon that patrols the night sky and is a dear pet to her.

The player characters find Mithrelle as she's just completed a ritual writing the resistance leaders' names on a scroll while in a magical trance. The bat demon it is present and watching from the rafters — if the player characters haven't defeated it earlier — and it attacks if they have harmed Mithrelle. When the player characters enter combat, guards throw themselves into harm's way to protect their mistress. While the group is tied up with the guards, Shenti-Aku spirits Mithrelle away to safety. If necessary, he faces the player characters himself.

Once victorious, the player characters discover that the guards have a strange mark on their chests. Anyone with magical knowledge (Sorcery Focus 1+) identifies it as the "Mark of Acheron". If Shenti-Aku is captured, he proudly reveals that his mistress controls Strom. The slaves being brought in are part of a great army she is building for her own master, Thoth-amon.

When the player characters report back to the resistance leaders, Nadini recognizes that the artifact Strom discovered is a piece of the "Phoenix Medallion". With it, he can break Mithrelle's hold over him.

LIBERATION OF TORTAGE

Strom, free from Mithrelle's control, ordered his soldiers to target Mithrelle's servants and locate her. The resistance leaders arrange a meeting in the wine cellar in the Temple of Mitra to discuss how to exploit this opportunity. A desperate Renton approaches the group to warn them that Mithrelle used the information from her divination spell to regain Strom's trust and soothe the conflict between them. Strom knows the meeting location and intends to wipe them out.

Not long after Renton warns the players, Strom's fury is witnessed as screams and smoke waft through the streets



near the temple. The group discovers the temple surrounded by the Red Hand, led by his second-in-command, Sakumbe. He's had his men seal the resistance leaders inside the temple and set fire to it. The group must defeat the Red Hands and free the resistance members from the burning temple.

After defeating or drawing off the Red Hands, the freed resistance leaders rally the locals. Chaos ensues as open fighting erupts between the Red Hands and the furious citizens of Tortage. As the city burns, Strom orders his treasury loaded onto his flagship so he can flee the city. Valeria asks the characters to board Strom's ship and kill him. When Strom is defeated, they recover a fragment of the Phoenix Medallion from Strom's body. Mithrelle is nowhere to be found, having abandoned Strom and fled Tortage.

GREAT DEEDS

The following great deeds may take several sessions to accomplish and might even yield rewards in the form of Renown if accomplished with adequate witnesses. Player characters who manage to achieve these goals should be lauded, and any of these could form the basis of a campaign in and of itself, either presented as-is or interwoven with minor deeds or other exploits.

THE PRICE OF MIRACLES

There are many cruel people in this epoch of human history. Conan's dominion might have tamed Aquilonia, but it has not done so in Turan. There, a sorceress controls a powerful mercenary army, using them as she pleases to disrupt trade routes, depose monarchs, and generally reshape the area as she sees fit. While her army oppresses the nearby communities, the sorceress herself practices darker manipulations. She draws people to her, binding them to her side with promises of relief from pain, or cures for their family's ailments. These unfortunates she keeps, sending as agents out into the world, to carry out her bidding, assassinating those she deems to present a threat to her plans.

The problem?

She's no sorceress. Her apparent infinite power is nothing of the sort; merely a collection of clever tricks and illusions, smoke and mirrors, petty enchantments and low tricks such as mesmerism. And hundreds have given their lives to her, in exchange for miracles that never came true. Someone needs to stop her, to end her brutal rule over the Turanian border, but her death isn't enough. She must be exposed, to ensure agents hidden throughout the continent don't die needlessly. Those who achieved such a thing would be remembered as more than merely adventurers; they'd be heroes.



MELANOR'S STAR

A man called Trajus watches a tower. He watches it carefully, never moving, never leaving it. He sleeps at the tower's foot, and, while many approach him, he seldom speaks. Or, at least, he seldom speaks to anyone who fails to impress him upon first approach. Those who do, however, are soon told a tale of strange beings at the top of the tower, and a priceless jewel. Trajus explains he was once a thief, and a good one, and he once attempted to rob this tower. He failed, but has dreamed, ever since, of the great gem he left behind. The star.

If, he says, you bring it to him, he'll share the prize with you. "Yes," he says, "of course you could take it away with you, but I know its secret. You don't. The tower is, of course, protected by a series of strange phantoms, and a serpent with teeth made from the jaw bones of men, but if you can defeat those, the gem can be taken."

But this is no simple gem. It contains the soul of Trajus' sister — an ancient goddess, just as Trajus is a forgotten god of thieves. Returning the gem to the grateful Trajus is enough to earn the player characters the advice, and thanks, of a god. That's quite the mighty deed.



THE BEAST IN THE DEEPS

In one of the enormous Stygian quarries, where the huge blocks of limestone are dug out, ready for use in another of the vast pyramids and temple complexes the nation is famed for, the player characters meet an exhausted laborer. His name is Malakani, and, despite being fatigued almost to the point of collapse, he keeps working, working until his hands bleed and his nails flake away from his fingers.

If asked why, he explains he refuses to be sacrificed to the great beast, waiting beneath. Those deemed too broken to dig any longer are thrown to the creature by the priests and their brutal guards. As to what the beast actually is, Malakani is vague in the extreme, though the hints he provides are sufficient to turn one's blood cold.

A reconnaissance of the monster's domain reveals blood stains, and skeletons... many skeletons. Venture into the darkness, and confront the creature; slay it, surrounded by the remnants of its years of slaughter, and the player characters' names will be whispered in every tavern in the continent. Fail, and join the procession of bones leading out of the beast's cave.

THE BRONZE SERPENT

The artist and wealthy patron, Eudameus, is famed for sending young men and women on pilgrimages to visit the most beautiful and splendid sites of the great nations. Now, however, he needs the player characters. They must take a golden wreath to lay before the magnificent bronze serpent, found in the depths of Stygia. He is too old to go himself, but he needs those used to difficult journeys, he claims.

The truth is that Eudameus' wealth is derived from selling young, beautiful people to the dark priesthood of Set, for Set values pulchritude in the souls of those he feasts upon. This time, however, Eudameus was sent a pointed request: only the strongest, most resilient of spirits would do. And so, here the player characters are, betrayed and about to have their hearts hacked from their chests as part of an obscene ritual.

Fighting their way clear and breaking the priesthood of Set in the process would be a truly mighty deed. Shattering the cursed Bronze Serpent to which these dark clerics sacrifice would be even mightier. And, should the player characters survive such an undertaking, enacting a bloody vengeance on Eudameus and preventing his bloody transactions from happening again would be enough to secure a legend. And Eudameus does possess a lot of gold, so the player characters wouldn't go unrewarded for such bravery, either.

ACHERON'S LONG REACH

A hotbed of intrigue and unrest, not much is needed to ignite the constant skirmishing that plagues the interior of Zingara. The Aquilonian province of Poitain serves as a barrier against the flames of discontentment that too often flare across the border, its frequent patrols and border forts always serving to keep their unruly neighbors in check until recently. As crops fail and diseased beasts stalk the wilds, common folk on both sides of the border talk of the dead stalking the streets. Aquilonia claims to know nothing of its source, while the Zingaran lords close to the border either blame each other or turn their hate-filled eyes northwards. With patrols disappearing and border forts being attacked regularly, it doesn't seem like long before the region slides into open warfare, perhaps dragging two entire nations with it.

The chaos has ensued in the wake of Ralleen, an agent of Thoth-amon who has been scouring the border between Aquilonia and Zingara for an ancient relic of Acheron. Although he's yet to find it, his divinations have awoken the artifact itself. Now, its energies are raising the dead, turning the fauna into raging, diseased beasts, and slowly poisoning the land. Can the player characters discover the source while preventing all-out warfare? Will they beat Ralleen to his prize?

DARK DOMINION

The fragmented baronies and holdings of the Border Kingdoms have been mired in blood and treachery for centuries, with no one single lord able to weld more than a few noble seats into something resembling a court for any length of time. A prince among chieftains has recently risen to power, however, and seems to be managing the unthinkable: forging the Border Kingdoms into a unified alliance that has the potential to grow into a power to be reckoned with.

It is common knowledge that Prince Arcarasis has pledged his fledgling kingdom as a vassal state of Aquilonia, once he has stabilized his power base. This shrewd move is designed to gather King Conan as an ally and bring growth and prosperity to the region once the bloodletting is done, many say. Rumors persist of a darkness hiding in the prince's court, however. An insidious taint that leaves an inky trail all the way to Arcarasis himself. Such rumors are the mere ravings of those he has bested, say his allies, the bitterness of jealous rivals and vanquished foes. Arcarasis' rapid rise to power is enough to give many pause for thought, whatever the truth.

The player characters begin as mercenaries or lordlings under Prince Arcarasis' banner, or perhaps agents of King Conan or a rival lord in the Border Kingdom. Tasked with uncovering the truth, they must navigate the fledgling kingdom's courtly intrigues and work their way in to the prince's inner circle to establish the truth. Thoth-amon has agents within the court and is certainly trying to manipulate events, but even he has not foreseen the true darkness hiding in plain sight. Can the player characters vanquish the demon manipulating events? Will they need to take the throne to stop the kingdom from crumbling?

RED HAND'S REVENGE

The last time the characters saw dry land, the burning embers of a tortured city were streaking the sky in violent crimson and yellow. The flagship of their former leader, Strom, had been ransacked and left to drift listlessly as gulls pecked at the pirate king's corpse. But through sheer luck or grim determination, not all the Red Hand perished during the uprising of Tortage. A handful of skiffs and carracks bearing the pirate band's flag escaped the slaughter. Now all they need is a strong new leader to step forward, gather the fragmented remnants, and once again forge the band into a name that other ship captains utter with fear.

Set shortly after the Red Hand's expulsion from Tortage, this great deed places the player characters into the power vacuum left behind following the death of Strom. Events can follow them as they gather the few remaining pirate ships together and recruit new members, all whilst contending

FROM THE SMALLEST OF ACORNS...

In *Age of Conan*, the deeds of a character can have far-reaching effects no matter how small they may seem initially. The great deeds presented here will ultimately not only have an impact on the Hyborian kingdoms involved but will also place the characters at the forefront of those events, much like the story arcs for the video game. With that said, it's worth bearing in mind that many minor deeds can combine to form a great deed, which can then itself spawn further minor events that lead towards further major accomplishments.

Take the freeing of Tortage, for example. The minor deeds that lead to this achievement serve as inspiration for *Red Hand's Revenge*, which then flips the narrative and places the player characters central to events following the pirate band's eviction from the city. Hopefully, a string of minor deeds following this can steer them to leading their own pirate band across the waters of the Western Sea.

The intrigues and enemies plaguing the throne of Aquilonia take center stage with the great deeds presented here, with many plots and threads eventually leading back to the archvillain, Thoth-amon. That isn't to say that he is directly pulling every string that plays on the narrative, however. Like a vulture waiting to pick over a carcass, one of his minions is at least circling the larger story elements, if not immediately involved. They but they aren't always the one responsible for the events that are unfolding. Using a different central villain but occasionally reminding the players of the sorcerer's intrigues serves to keep games fresh and the Hyborian world ever-evolving.

with internal power struggles from other would-be contenders for the Red Hand's makeshift crown, and external threats such as other pirate bands and mercenaries seeking to increase their own reputation by putting an end to the Red Hand for good.

If the player characters manage to see off the threats to their control of the Red Hand, where will they choose as their new base of operation? And what will they do when an emissary of Thoth-amon arrives seeking to reassert the sorcerer's dominion over their newly won Red Hand?





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