

Men and Gods
A Swashbuckling Adventures™/7th Sea™
Adventure in Three Parts
by
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Tips for Running

You will need a copy of AEG's *Player's Guide™*, *Game Master's Guide™*, and *Ships & Sea Battles™* to run this adventure. Copies of *The Crescent Empire™*, *Islands of Gold: The Midnight Archipelago™*, *The Explorer's Society™*, and *Cathay: Jewel of the East™* are also suggested.

Men and Gods can either be run as a series of short adventures or as the basis for a larger campaign. The locations visited during the course of the story are spread across Théah, and several weeks' travel time separates each setting. These gaps in the story are intentional, allowing GMs to customize the scenario to each individual's liking.

Men and Gods is intended for four to six characters of 10th to 12th level for *Swashbuckling Adventures™* or roughly Master level characters for *7th Sea™*. It is highly recommended that the heroes own or operate their own ship, as they will be travelling from one end of Théah to the other. Also, having at least one scholarly member of the Explorer's Society would be helpful.

Note: this adventure is dual-statted. Checks for the d20™ system are noted by (DC) and checks for the 7th Sea™ system by (TN).

Background

Fifty years ago, a Montaigne Explorer named Jacques Alistair de Venne set out on an expedition to an uncharted island at the northern end of the Midnight Archipelago. Local legends claimed that the island was the home of gods, and was the place where mankind was born. The locals referred to the island as the "Cradle of the Gods." On the island, de Venne found a strange stone building covered in hieroglyphics and runes, markings he suspected were Synchronic in origin. De Venne translated some of the Setine hieroglyphics from the site and was convinced that he had made a startling discovery. The Cradle of the Gods supposedly contained one part of a device deVenne referred to as "The Creator's Hand" which could supposedly imbue a man with superhuman powers, unlocking his "ultimate potential." Intent on retrieving the item, de Venne entered the building along with a handpicked crew. Only one man, an Eisen Shield Man named Johann Bergman, made it out of the ruins alive.

Bergman never spoke of what he found, but faithfully delivered de Venne's journal and a map to the island to the Explorer chapterhouse in Luthon. When the Council examined the journal, what they found in it shocked them. A rough sketch done by de Venne showed something unnerving. The sketch was supposedly copied from a mural inside the Cradle and appeared to be a blueprint... of a human being! The implications were earth shattering. So much so that de Venne's superiors suppressed the information.

The journal was locked away and forgotten about for five decades until an Avalon Explorer named Harlan Godfrey came across the dusty tome while researching survey reports about the Midnight Archipelago. After reading the book, Godfrey tried to convince the Society to sponsor another expedition. They refused, saying that such research would bring them into open conflict with the Inquisition. Undaunted, Godfrey began looking for outside sponsors. Unfortunately, he attracted the wrong kind of attention.

Umberto Caligari, nephew of Prince Vincenzo, heard about the map and journal and wanted them for his uncle. Such a thing would bring him great fame and power, perhaps enough to

overcome the family's hated rival, Prince Giovanni Villanova. When Godfrey refused to turn the documents over, Caligari tried to take them by force. Godfrey barely escaped with his life, and made his way to Marcina, the largest Castillian colony in the Archipelago.

Since arriving, he has tried to hire a ship and crew to help him locate the Cradle of the Gods and unlock its secrets for himself.

Act I – “I Have a Simple Task for You...”

The adventure begins in Marcina, the major Castillian colony in the Midnight Archipelago, in the town of Puerto Grande. If the heroes own their own ship, they can be in port for any number of legitimate reasons; Puerto Grande is the largest port town in the Castillian colonies, with several businesses looking to hire merchant captains to haul cargoes to and from the mainland. If the heroes do not have their own ship, they can be looking to hire on with any number of ships searching for crewmen.

Harlan Godfrey will try to approach the heroes while they are “enjoying the sights” of Puerto Grande. He introduces himself as a member of the Explorer’s Society, and inquires if the heroes may be interested in gainful employment. If they have their own ship, he tries to book passage to the northern end of the Midnight Archipelago; if not, he offers them jobs as porters and guards for his expedition. Harlan has a sizable amount of money in various denominations at his disposal (about 10,000 Guilders worth of gold and notes), and can offer more from the Society if the heroes can help him recover the artifact he’s after.

If pressed, he will show the heroes the map and journal, though he will be reluctant to let anyone study either at great length (he is very concerned about scaring any superstitious types off). Harlan will also mention Caligari and his ship, *The Chimera*, but only if the heroes are concerned about potential hostilities. Once he can get the players to agree to help him, he offers to pay for provisions for their ship, or hire a ship if they don’t have their own. The expedition should be able to leave three days after the meeting.

On the second day after the meeting, watchful characters will notice a new ship in harbor - *The Chimera*, a Vodacce galleon that belongs to Umberto Caligari, Vincenzo’s nephew. Should the heroes decide to investigate this “strange coincidence,” have them roll Gather Information (d20™) Panache + Socializing (7th Sea™) and consult the chart below. The better they roll, the more likely it is that they will run into one of the Vodacce’s more loose-lipped crewmen. Again, good role-playing is worth a Free Raise or two.

7 th Sea™	D20™	
10	10	“We’re headed north. The cap’n’s on ta sumpin’ big ‘ere. Real big.”
15	15	“The captain’s uncle himself ordered us out here. Whatever we’re after, the Prince wants it bad...”
20	18	“It’s one o’ dem Syrneth ruins. Somethin’ powerful strong. Somethin’ dangerous!”
25	20	“We’re chasin’ that Explorer fella, Godfrey. Captain Umberto’s got it out for him somethin’ fierce.”
30	25	“They call it ‘Cradle of the Gods’ or some such. Supposed to make a man into a god, or some such.”
35+	30	“Naw, the cap’n don’t have the map, but he knows who do. Some guy by the name of Godfrey. We aims to get it soon, though.”

If Harlan is with the players when they start asking around, the Vodacce crewmen will give up their information, then pause slightly, looking closely at the Explorer. After a brief pause, one of the Vodacce with note with a shout, “Hey, he’s that Explorer fella the cap’n was on about!” Give the heroes one chance to talk their way out of a fight. If they fail, or opt to fight straight away, they are

set on by Antonio and Armand (two of Caligari's henchmen) and two squads of Brutes. This should be a classic bar brawl or dock fight; the Vodacce will not resort to lethal force unless the characters do first.

Once the heroes deal with the Vodacce crew, they may or may not know about the threat to their ship, based on their earlier conversations. If they do, they have two options: stand and fight or get the hell out of there. If they decide to shove off, they get a six-hour jump on Caligari and a chance to avoid another fight. If they decide to stand and fight, or if they are caught unaware, Caligari sends Mario Scarrelli, two petty officers (Armand and Antonio, unless they are killed in the bar brawl), and two squads of Brutes (see below) to deal with the heroes. Scarrelli and his men will attempt to sneak on board and scuttle the ship, leaving the party stranded in Marcina.

The party should be able to beat the Vodacce back (even if taken by surprise), and Scarrelli will flee as soon as his side has reached 50% casualties. However, the raiders will do enough damage that Caligari should be able to get a 6 to 9-hour head start, unless the party can somehow foil the Vodacce attack before it happens.

NPCs: Armand and Antonio (Barroom brawl); Mario Scarrelli, Armand and Antonio (attack on the boat)

12 Vodacce Brutes (Bar brawl) (d20™)

Vodacce Sailor (Expert) 4: CR 3; SZ Medium (Humanoid); HD 4d6+4; hp 21; Init +2 (Dex); AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atks Small improvised weapons + 3 melee (1d4) OR unarmed +3 melee (1d3); SA none; SQ none; SV Fort +2, Reflex +3, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10; AL N; Skills: Balance +9, Bluff +2, Climb +7, Jump +6, Listen +4, Profession (Sailor) +6, Sense Motive +2, Speak Language (Vodacce {alternately, any one language from your campaign setting}), Spot +7; Feats: Improved Unarmed Strike, Improvised Weapon

2 Brute Squads (Threat 3, 6 men each) (Bar brawl) (7th Sea™)

TN to be hit: 20

Usual weapons: Small weapons (improvised weapons and unarmed)

Skills: Balance +2, Climbing +2, Leaping +2

Special: A Brute Squad from Vodacce always rolls a minimum of 3 dice, no matter how many Brutes are still standing.

12 Vodacce Brutes (Sabotage) (d20™)

Vodacce Pirate (Warrior) 4: CR 3; SZ Medium (Humanoid); HD 4d8+4; hp 24; Init +2 (Dex); AC 15 (+2 Dex, + 3 studded leather armor); Atks Cutlass + 5 melee (1d6+1); SA none; SQ none; SV Fort +5, Reflex +3, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 8; AL NE; Skills: Balance +4, Climb +4, Jump +4, Move Silently +5, Speak Language (Vodacce {alternately, any one language from your campaign setting}), Spot +2, Swim +3; Feats: Dodge, Mobility

2 Brute Squads (Threat 3, 6 men each) (Sabotage) (7th Sea™)

TN to be hit: 20

Usual weapons: Medium Weapons (cutlasses)

Skills: Balance +1, Climbing +1, Leaping +1, Stealth +1

Special: A Brute Squad from Vodacce always rolls a minimum of 3 dice, no matter how many Brutes are still standing.

Act II - Into the Cradle of the Gods

Once the heroes set sail, the island the heroes are seeking is eight days north-northwest of Marcina. It will require a Profession: Sailor check (DC 25) or a Wits + Navigation roll (TN 25) to locate the exact island. Add one day's time to the trip for every 5 by which the navigator missed the roll. It's important to note that if the heroes left port before Scarrelli's attack, it will only have enough provisions for 10 days. After that, the party needs to find another island and gather food and fresh water.

If Caligari got the jump on the party and has a head start, the heroes can cut their time by six hours for every Raise they call and make on the Navigation roll. At this point, a smart captain knows that it's wiser to avoid combat with Caligari. If the party can get ahead of the Vodacce, they can gather the Cradle and be gone before Caligari ever reaches the island. If they decide now is the time to fight, however, stats are included below in the Major NPCs section.

The island they seek is approximately eight miles long and about three and a half miles wide. An extinct volcano looms over the center of the island; heavy jungle starts at the shoreline and goes most of the way up the volcano's side. Most of the shoreline is either rocky breakers or sheer cliffs about thirty feet high. There are only two sections of actual beach on the island - one on the northwest end (roughly five miles from the site) and one on the southeastern tip. The northwestern beach is an ideal spot, while the waters off the southern beach are teeming with sirens.

On Godfrey's map, there is a hidden cove on the eastern side that can only be entered and exited during the high tide. To spot the cove without the map requires a Spot check (DC 30) or a Perception check (TN 40). With the map, the DC drops to 20 and the TN to 25. From this cove, they are only a mile and a half from the site of the Cradle of the Gods. (Caligari will miss the cove, instead sending longboats ashore about five miles from the site.)

Once the party makes the cove, a steep path leads up the cliff and into the jungle. Here the adventurers finally catch a break. It will take them about an hour and a half to hack through the jungle to the site. It will take about half that long to hurry back to the boat if they follow the same path out. The timing is important because they only have six hours to get to the Cradle and get back; otherwise the ship is stuck in the cove until the next high tide. Godfrey's map is very detailed, so the party's chance of getting lost is negligible.

The path to the Cradle leads up the side of the mountain, and into the volcanic bowl at the top. Resting in the bottom of the crater is an ancient edifice of worked stone (an observant character with the proper Knacks will notice that the stone is marble which is not indigenous to the island or the Archipelago). The jungle is starting to encroach on the structure, and creeper vines cover a great deal of the walls.

The building is square, roughly 25 yards to a side, and stands about 15 feet high, with a broad, flat roof. Under the vines, the walls are covered in strange glyphs. There is only one door leading into the building, a strange metal iris that is wedged open. De Venne's party opened the door during their visit, and it is now impossible to close. The vines and detritus that have blown into the door appear to go no further than five feet inside.

The entrance has the first of several traps awaiting the heroes. The secrets to the first two traps are annotated in de Venne's notebook, if the heroes remember to check. A series of mirrors along the doorframe and walls creates a light pattern across the floor exactly five feet from the doorway. This pattern extends 25 feet down the hall. Along each wall are banks of blood red gemstones. When the light pattern across the floor is disrupted, these gems radiate Bloodfire.

Bloodfire is an intense beam of light and heat that can cause severe damage to almost anything it touches. There are two ways to avoid this trap: disarming it or avoiding it. Disarming it involves using a mirror to reflect the beams of Bloodfire into the ceiling or wall so that they don't strike the

character. Avoiding the beams requires a Reflex save (DC 25) or a Sprinting roll (TN 30) and anyone failing the check takes 10d6 damage (d20™) or 6k6 Flesh Wounds (7th Sea™). Dracheneisen reduces the damage by the appropriate amount, and *El Fuego Adentro* sorcerers are immune. The trap resets automatically, so everyone crossing the trigger area needs to make a Sprint Check.

Once the heroes make it past the Bloodfire, they round a corner. Anyone who makes a Spot check (DC 15) or a Perception check (TN 15), notices a chest tucked into an alcove. The chest is an old sea locker, left here by de Venne's party on their initial trip through. An old lock, now rusted and pitted, binds it. It requires a Strength check (DC 20) or a Brawn check (TN 30), or break the lock. Picking the lock is more difficult; Open Lock, (DC 35) or Finesse + Lockpicking (TN 40) to open it this way.

Inside is a long chain of strange metal beads. A successful Arcana check (DC 20) or a Wits + Artifact Evaluation Check (TN 20) identifies it as a Synchron Tiller (see *Waves of Blood*™, pg. 79).

Normally, the beads have a bright, silvery luster to them, but these beads are dull and flat. Another Arcana roll or Artifact Evaluation Check (DC 10 and TN 15, respectively) reveals that the Tiller appears to need recharging. There are also four amber stones wrapped in oiled cloth. When the stones are unwrapped and grasped in the bare hand, they begin to glow. They offer twice the illumination of a torch or lantern, and never run out of fuel (well, they'll eventually run out of aether, but not for a hundred years or so). The stones can be used for two purposes - illumination or recharging the Tiller. It will take two stones to successfully recharge the Tiller, and once done, the stones will be inert forever.

As they round the next corner, sharp-eyed characters will note (Spot check, DC 15) or Perception Roll (TN 20) a faintly shimmering field in the middle of the hall. Further down the hall, they may also notice thin grooves in either wall. If they pass through the field very slowly, they can avoid triggering the trap (again, this is spelled out in de Venne's notes). If they fail to do so, four whirling discs shoot out of the grooves in the wall, flying at their heads. The disks zip past (or through) the heroes, turn and zip back, making two "attacks" before returning to their resting spot.

For d20™, each disc attacks twice, with a +12 to hit. Anyone struck takes 4d8 points of damage from the spinning blades. Any character who makes a successful Reflex save (DC 25) can take an attack of opportunity against the blades before they hit. The blades have AC 25, a hardness of 5, and 5 hit points.

In 7th Sea™, allow each character two Active Defense Rolls (Parrying or Footwork TN 30). Anyone who fails takes 4k4 damage per failed roll. If a character can make a Wits + Trap Lore (TN 25) when the trap is first sprung, he can figure out how to "disarm" the trap. A successful attack roll (TN 35) will knock the discs down, rendering them inert.

Once the party gets past the "flying Soldanos," they come to a steep ramp leading to another level below the one they're on. As the heroes start down the ramp, a half-dozen poles slide out of the wall. Each pole is topped with a strange glowing "blade" of energy. Before the heroes get to the bottom of the ramp, the aetheric blades begin twirling and slashing across the ramp, barring any progress. There are two routes past the blades. Heroes can roll under them (Wits + Rolling, TN 30) or swing over them with a rope or grappling gun (Wits + Swinging, TN 20). There are a few strange protrusions on the ceiling that a rope could be secured to (Finesse + Throwing, TN 35 to lasso one, or Finesse + Firearms, TN 25 with a grappling gun). Any character with an enchanted weapon or dracheneisen can attempt to rush through the arms using Wits + Parry, TN 40. Anyone failing to make their roll takes 4k4 Wounds.

The next level is a spiral ramp leading around the outside of a shaft. The shaft is 100 feet deep and 25 feet across, and the ramp is 2 feet wide. At the bottom of the shaft is a large pool of superheated mud. The mud counts as a Soft surface for falling purposes, but anyone falling into the

mud takes 2d6 points of heat damage (D20™) or 3k3 Wounds (7th Sea™) every Round until they get out. The mud is thin enough to swim through, though it will take two rounds to get to the edge. The ramp passes over itself every 20 feet, so a character who somehow falls off may try to catch himself on one of the lower levels, thus keeping himself from falling to the bottom of the pit. As long as the party moves slowly and carefully, falling shouldn't be an issue.

However, if they move with any speed, they risk falling (walking at a normal pace is Balance, 10, or Finesse + Balance, TN 15; running is Balance (DC 25) or Finesse + Balance (TN 30). Also, any combat on the spiral ramp uses Balance as the Defensive Knack by default. At the bottom of the ramp is a short hall ending in a dead-end.

This is the final barrier to the Cradle. The wall at the end of the hall is covered with tiny glowing stones arranged in semi-familiar patterns. Anyone making a Knowledge (Astronomy) check (DC 20) or a Wits + Astronomy Roll (TN 25), will recognize them as the constellations visible from this island. The pattern is circular, so that all of the constellations visible throughout the year are represented. Careful examination of the corridor will reveal thin grooves running along the floor and ceiling, from side to side. If the heroes can make an Intelligence check (DC 10) or a Wits + Trap Lore Roll (TN 15), they can figure out the purpose of the grooves.

A combination must be entered into the star chart. If the wrong combination is entered, the side walls slam shut, crushing the interlopers. A Reflex save (DC 25) or a Wits + Leaping (TN 30), will save a player's bacon. It is impossible to jam the walls in place; otherwise, said player begins his exciting new career as jelly. To open the lock properly, a player must touch the constellations visible from the island on that date in the order that they appear. This is a Knowledge (Astronomy) check (DC 30), or a Wits + Astronomy Roll (TN 35) to figure out. If the heroes spend at least an hour observing the stars above the island for at least two hours at night, they gain a +5 circumstance bonus (d20™) or 2 Free Raises (7th Sea™). If the heroes enter the wrong combination, they hear a loud hissing like air escaping, then the walls slam shut. If they escape, the walls will reopen in two minutes. If they fail, they are dead and don't care when the walls reopen. If they enter the correct combination, they hear a loud rumbling, and the map wall drops into the floor.

The room inside is a semispherical room about 30 feet in diameter and 15 feet high. A strange silver obelisk roughly eight tall stands in the center of the room. If the heroes approach within five feet of the obelisk, it starts to glow ominously, and the room is filled with an ever-increasing droning noise. After about a minute, when the room is too noisy to hear ANYTHING but the droning, beams of light lance out of the obelisk, projecting images on the walls. It will take the characters about three to five seconds to realize that they are looking at a map of Théah. The island they are on is glowing with a golden light. The glow suddenly takes the form of a bird and flies east, finally coming to rest in the southeastern peninsula of the area that is now the Crescent Empire. The bird image then shifts into the image of a man, and then into a glowing sphere. Once the sphere forms, the images fade. The droning stops and a small door on the side of the obelisk opens.

Inside the door is an amber disc about six inches in diameter and a half-inch thick. The disk is harder than any substance the characters have ever encountered, and is resistant to scratching or gouging. Strangely enough, it weighs less than a pound. Inside the disk is a silver bead. As soon as the disk is grasped in a human hand, the disk grows noticeably warm to the touch. The bead shoots to one side of the disk and stays there. If the person holding the disk moves it, the bead changes orientation so that it is always on the same side of the disk (pointing in the same direction). The characters should be able to figure out that they now have a compass that is currently pointing east, toward the Crescent Empire. Obviously, this compass was intended to lead them to the next point in their quest.

The next encounter depends on how much of a lead the heroes had over Caligari's men, if any. If Caligari had the lead all the way to the island, then he and his men enter the room now,

demanding the compass. If the heroes caught up, but failed to find the hidden grotto, then they encounter Caligari in the next room, while making their way up the spiral ramp. In the event that the heroes made it to the island first and found the grotto, they will run into Caligari's men outside the ruins. Regardless of the encounter point, Caligari demands that they turn over whatever it is they found. If they refuse, or claim to have found nothing, then Caligari orders his men to attack. The heroes can either fight (tough fight, but not unwinnable) or flee. For 7th Sea™, use the standard Chase Rules (*Game Master's Guide*™, page 169), using the chart below for random events. If they fight, Caligari will flee if the battle appears to be going poorly. Should the Vodacce win the fight, they will leave the heroes alive (Caligari loves to humiliate his enemies) and take the compass, heading for Zafara and "the final prize." If the heroes flee and manage to escape, then the Vodacce will have enough problems when they get back to their own boat. However it turns out, eventually the heroes should get back to their ship.

NPCs: Umberto Caligari, Mario Scarrelli, Jacques, Miguel (any NPCs killed in a previous encounter will not be present, of course).

12 Vodacce Brutes (Shore Party) (d20™)

Vodacce Pirate (Warrior) 4: CR 3; SZ Medium (Humanoid); HD 4d8+4; hp 24; Init +2 (Dex); AC 15 (+2 Dex, + 3 studded leather armor); Atks Cutlass + 5 melee (1d6+1) OR musket +6 ranged (1d10); SA none; SQ none; SV Fort +5, Reflex +3, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 8; AL NE; Skills: Balance +4, Climb +4, Jump +4, Move Silently +5, Speak Language (Vodacce {alternately, any one language from your campaign setting}), Spot +2, Swim +3; Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Firearms), Run

2 Brute Squads (Threat 3, 6 men each) (Shore Party) (7th Sea™)

TN to be hit: 20

Usual weapons: Medium Weapons (cutlasses) or Firearms (Muskets)

Skills: Balance +1, Climbing +1, Leaping +1, Stealth +1

Special: A Brute Squad from Vodacce always rolls a minimum of 3 dice, no matter how many Brutes are still standing.

Chase Table (Jungle) (7th Sea™)

1-2: A fallen tree blocks the path. Each party must make a Finesse + Leaping Roll (TN 15). Failure indicates that they stumble, adding or subtracting a Marker, depending on their side.

3-4: The path skirts a quicksand pit. The pursued must make Finesse + Balance (TN 20) or lose 1-5 Markers. The pursuer must make a Finesse + Balance (TN 20) or the pursued gains 1-5 Markers.

5-6: The chase leads over a log bridge crossing a stream. Each party must make a Finesse + Balance Roll (TN 15). If the pursued fails, remove all Markers. If the pursuer fails, the pursued escapes.

7-8: The pursued manages to duck through some creeper vines. The pursuer must make a Finesse + Rolling Check (TN 15) or the pursued gains 1-5 Markers.

9-0: The trail suddenly drops off. All parties must make a Finesse + Leaping check (TN 20) or fall 1 level, taking 1k1 damage and losing 1-5 Markers.

Act III – Zafara

Eventually, the party will arrive in Zafara in the Crescent Empire, home to Die Kreuzritter and the famous Hospital. It is the closest city to the spot marked on the Setine map, and the heroes will require supplies before they can trek across the desert. Furthermore, if Harlan Godfrey is still with

the party, he knows Zafara quite well, and can direct the party to someone to help them. Zafara is a sprawling port town, and the streets are packed with sailors, merchants, and shoppers. It is hot and humid with precious little breeze in the cramped streets. People in the streets are constantly barraging them, trying to sell them something or barter with them for something.

If Godfrey is present, he leads the party through the city to a house enclosed by a low brick wall. The garden is lush and green, and a small fountain bubbles in the middle of the courtyard. The house is well appointed, and obviously belongs to someone of means. This is the home of Adil ben Bakir, information broker and former member of the Explorer's Society. He and Harlan were friends some time ago, and he is still quite fond of the Avalon doctor. Adil is also the leading source of information in Zafara concerning "rare antiquities."

Role-play the encounter between the heroes and Adil however you like. If you want to use dice to decide the course of the encounter, Adil's stats are provided. If your heroes would rather role-play the exchange, feel free to haggle and cajole to your heart's content. Adil has recently come into possession of several maps of Surneth ruins throughout the Empire, and one in particular shows an abandoned temple in almost the exact spot that interests Dursey. Adil doesn't know that the maps were stolen from a local Vigilant of die Kreuzritter, and probably wouldn't care if he did. Normally, Adil would charge top price for this treasure. If the heroes can convince him of their noble intentions (or convince him that Caligari will not be so reasonable – Adil is mildly terrified of Caligari), Adil lets the map go for a reasonable price.

Once the negotiations have concluded, Adil excuses himself to retrieve the map. After a few moments, heroes hear (Listen check, DC 20, or Perception check, TN 20) the sounds of a scuffle. Let them wait as long as necessary before they figure out that Bakir is not returning.

Should they investigate the sounds of scuffling, they will find a man in covered head to toe in gray-green clothes standing over Adil's dead body. The assassin holds a bloody stiletto and a bundle of maps. This is Bernardo, the die Kreuzritter assassin charged with recovering the maps. Have the heroes roll Initiative. Bernardo's main goal is to slip out of sight so he can use his Nacht sorcery to slip into the shadows and escape. He will not fight to the death unless he has to, and will only speak Crescent languages while on this mission (he is so covered by clothing that it is impossible to tell that he isn't a Crescent himself).

If Bernardo escapes, or if the heroes don't make the Listen/Perception check or decide not to investigate, when they finally go looking for Adil, they find him dead in his study. He has a map tucked into one sleeve (the map Dursey needs – he hid it before Bernardo stabbed him). As soon as the heroes have the map, a servant girl walks in and sees them over her dead master's body. At this point, remind the heroes that they are outsiders (*yavanci*) here, and not likely to receive much in the way of justice from the locals.

The heroes should probably flee now because a mob of guards (1 Brute Squad per player) is on its way at a dead run. (Use the standard chase rules on pages 169-172 of the *Game Master's Guide*™.) If the heroes defeat the first wave, a second appears. And so on.

Once the heroes are five or more Phases ahead of the guard, a local street urchin appears in their path and leads them to safety. If the heroes mention the fact that they need a guide, the boy will lead them to his "good *yavanci* friend" Bernardo, a "Vodacce sailor-turned-guide who's just trying to make ends meet." By the time the heroes get to Bernardo, he will realize one of the maps is missing, and also have a good idea of where to find it. He will try to avoid brute force, however, offering to join the party and lead them across the treacherous desert and into the mountains. He can then get the map at his leisure and also make his way to the temple to see what befell the Vigilants that once guarded it. If the heroes don't try to hire a guide, Bernardo approaches them as they are leaving town. He will have several camels, laid out with provisions and water. He will try to convince the party that he "heard they were taking a trip" and that they might want to avoid any

problems with that “nice Vodacce captain that just pulled into port.” Bernardo knows enough of Godfrey to realize that he’s the one Umberto Caligari is seeking. If this fails, Bernardo will wish them well, then track them through the desert.

NPCs: Adil ben Bakir, Bernardo Felicini

Crescent Brutes (6 per character) (City Watch) (d20™)

Crescent Guard (Warrior) 3: CR 2; SZ Medium (Humanoid); HD 3d8+3; hp 20; Init +1 (Dex); AC 15 (+1 Dex, + 3 studded leather armor, +1 small wooden shield); Atks Scimitar +5 melee (1d6+2) OR light crossbow +4 ranged (1d8); SA none; SQ none; SV Fort +4, Reflex +2, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10; AL NE; Skills: Climb +6, Jump +6, Listen +4, Speak Language (Crescent {alternately, any one language from your campaign setting}), Spot +4; Feats: Alertness, Toughness

Crescent Brute Squads (1 Squad per Character) (Threat 2, 6 men each) (Shore Party) (7th Sea™)

TN to be hit: 15

Usual weapons: Medium Weapons (scimitars) or Medium (crossbows)

Skills: Climbing +1, Leaping +1, Sprinting +1

Special: A Brute Squad from the *Aldiz’ahali* tribe of the Crescent Empire may move from one level to another without penalty, as if on the same level. This movement is only for changing one level at a time and the benefit is lost if two or more levels are changed in a single phase.

Act IV – The House of the Sun

The heroes now have to spend two days crossing the desert until they get to the foothills of the Kutsal-dag Mountains. The sun is brutal, and the temperature soars to well over a hundred degrees. For d20™, see *DUNGEON MASTER’S Guide™* (page 86) for rules concerning extreme heat. For 7th Sea™, every half hour that they travel, the heroes must make a Resolve check (TN 10, +5 for every half hour after the first). Failure results in 1k1 Flesh Wounds of damage. These Flesh Wounds never result directly in a Dramatic Wound, but they do not go away until the hero has the opportunity to sit and rest for an hour. At the end of an hour’s rest, the afflicted character is fine.

If Bernardo is with them, he tries to engage various characters in conversation to learn why they have come to the Crescent Empire. If asked, he tells them that he was a sailor on a merchant vessel that docked in Zafara. He fell in love with a local girl and decided to stay behind. Alas, things didn’t work out, and now he makes his living as a guide. (This is all fabrication – Bernardo has a gift for languages and was sent to the Crescent Empire to serve die Kreuzritter as a Vigilant.)

Late in the afternoon of the second day, a sandstorm sweeps in from the north, pounding the party and preventing them from moving. Anyone attempting to move through the storm takes 2d4 subdual (d20™) or 6k2 (7th Sea™) damage each Round as the sand rips at them. Only by hunkering down and trying to avoid the wind can the heroes keep from getting ripped to shreds. Once they figure out that they need to stop, a strange sight greets them. A tall, slim man comes walking out of the gloom that surrounds them. He is wearing silk pants and an open robe, and seems completely unaffected by the storm around him. As he approaches the characters, he begins to whisper softly, moving his hands as if to calm the wind itself. Soon the storm begins to die down, leaving him standing amid the characters unmolested.

He introduces himself as Tikat Duvar, a monk living in the mountains nearby. He claims that the winds told him of travelers in peril, so he came to the rescue. He has a strange, otherworldly

quality about him, and he moves across the sand with preternatural ease. In fact, he makes no footprints as he walks (Spot check, DC 10, or Perception check, TN 10 to notice).

Duvar leads the heroes to his temple. Several guards work in the courtyard, practicing their dueling skills and maintaining the structure. Once Duvar returns, Rashid, his manservant, joins him. Rashid is a towering Crescent with a massive curved sword (a *dilmekiri*), which he never puts down. Twin dancing girls, Esmera and Jasheira, also joins them. Duvar summons servants to take the characters to private rooms where they can bathe (actual hot baths!) and change into clean clothing. Once the heroes are cleaned and changed, they will be summoned to join Duvar for dinner. He puts out a lavish spread for the heroes, and has the twins dance for their entertainment.

At this point, Tikat is trying to lull the heroes into a false sense of safety, so that he can find out if one of them has the key (the disk from the previous adventure). He will do whatever it takes to get the disc, but he would prefer to avoid violence. If asked, he admits that there is a shrine in the heart of the mountain, containing many strange hieroglyphics and a sarcophagus of unknown origins. He will not let the heroes have access to it, though, as it is a “holy site.” If one or more of the heroes shows an interest in the dancing girls (who will actively try to seduce anyone who appears susceptible), Duvar will dismiss them with his blessing and a wish that they enjoy “all the hospitality his humble abode can offer.” The heroes will be treated to baths, clean clothing, and the finest meal they’ve probably had in quite some time. If anyone tries to sneak away, Rashid will go follow, track him or her down, and return to the dining area with the guest in tow. He will not use violence unless necessary, but will respond to attacks with lethal force. If Duvar cannot convince the heroes to surrender the disk by the end of the evening, he will retire to his chambers, feigning exhaustion.

The next morning, he will approach the bearer of the key and bid that person follow him. Leading the player into the heart of the mountain, Duvar reveals the strange sarcophagus in the middle of the room. He explains that he has tried for years to open the sarcophagus but to no avail. He shows the heroes a depression on the surface of the sarcophagus, and explains that he believes this is where a key should go. He then demands the key. At this point, 30 of his personal guards make their way into the room, as well as Rashid and the twins. If the heroes refuse, his men will attack.

Once the heroes have the Brutes in hand (it shouldn't be that tough a fight, really...), Duvar uses his Rimâl sorcery to summon a huge scorpion formed from sand on the chamber floor. For d20™, Duvar can make a ranged touch attack against any one target each round. A successful hit causes 3d6 points of bashing damage and blinds the target for 1d4 rounds (Fortitude save, DC 20, to avoid blinding). In 7th Sea™, the scorpion storm is immune to attacks, rolls 5k4 to hit, and does 6k2 damage. It will last for 8 rounds, unless Duvar is slain or knocked out before then.

If the heroes have made the effort to stay together, then they are all here. If not, then only the ones that came with the key bearer are present. Additional Brute Squads will attack the rest, singly and in pairs. Once they defeat their attackers, they can follow the sounds of battle and sandstorms and rejoin their companions at a suitably dramatic point.

If the key is placed in the depression atop the sarcophagus, nothing happens at first. After a full minute, the key begins to glow briefly, then fades from sight (it has returned to the Midnight Archipelago). The sarcophagus opens, revealing a shiny silver (platinum-like) disk roughly twelve inches in diameter. Heroes will recognize the disk as the Creator’s Hand from the descriptions in DeVenne’s journal. The circumference of the devise is covered in strange, serpentine glyphs. The disk is about a half-inch thick around the outer edge, and four inches thick through the center. On either side of the disk is the impression of a human hand, slightly larger than average. A hole approximately two inches in diameter is centered in the palms of the hands. Several metal wire “claws” line the edge of the hole. The description of the Hand in the journal mentioned a glowing

gemstone used to power the device. A careful examination of the device and sarcophagus shows that there is no gemstone present. Someone has been here, and removed the power source.

Should anyone lift the Hand out of the sarcophagus (Duvar will not, instead waiting for a player to touch it to see if it is safe), that person is immediately overwhelmed by a strange vision. He can see himself racing down the mountain and across the desert, to the east. Soon he is flying over the Mirror Sea and past mysterious Cabora. He soars over a strange land of vast rolling plains and wondrous and mysterious cities. Then he is sailing through a lush forest kingdom and up the side of a majestic mountain. The trip ends abruptly, with the character hovering in the air over a humble temple nestled high in the mountains. Peasants work in the fields below, while simple priests go about their daily lives. The other half is here. There is no doubt. And a mysterious voice whispers a name in the viewer's head... "Khimal."

Once the heroes have the Creator's Hand, one of two things has happened. They have either defeated Tikat and his minions, or are about to flee from their host and his minions. Hopefully, they manage to escape and make their way back to Zafara. Umberto Caligari and his men are still in town, having been detained for questioning when they attempted to sabotage the heroes' ship. No harm has befallen the Explorer vessel, and the heroes can make way for their next destination... Cathay, Jewel of the East.

NPCs: Tikat Duvar, Rashid, Esmera, Jasheira, Bernardo (if desired, or if he joins the heroes)

30 Crescent Brutes (Temple Guardians) (d20™)

Crescent Guard (Warrior) 4: CR 3; SZ Medium (Humanoid); HD 4d8+4; hp 24; Init +1 (Dex); AC 15 (+1 Dex, +3 studded leather armor, +1 small wooden shield); Atks Falchion +6 melee (2d4+3); SA none; SQ none; SV Fort +5, Reflex +2, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10; AL NE; Skills: Climb +4, Hide +4, Jump +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Speak Language (Crescent {alternately, any one language from your campaign setting}), Spot +4; Feats: Alertness, Power Attack

5 Crescent Brute Squads (Threat 3, 6 men each) (Temple Guardians) (7th Sea™)

TN to be hit: 20

Usual weapons: Medium Weapons (scimitars) or Medium (crossbows)

Skills: Climbing +1, Leaping +1, Sprinting +1, Stealth +1

Special: A Brute Squad from the *Yilan'bazlik* tribe of the Crescent Empire gains one additional unkept die for all rolls (i.e., 5 Brutes would roll six dice, keeping a number equal to their Threat Rating)

Act V – Sanctuary

The party must now make their way from Zafara to Cathay. There are two separate paths, each offering unique challenges. The players can take the direct route, east across the Mirror Sea, past the island of Cabora and the huge blockade surrounding it, to the port city of Ji Long in the kingdom of Han Hua. From there, they have to find a way across Han Hau, through the forest kingdom of Koryo, and into the mountains of Khimal, a journey of about two to three months, barring any interruptions. A quicker route would be around Tashil and Tiakhar and then up the eastern coast of Cathay. This journey would be less than a month, but would involve passing through the waters of the Tiakhar pirates, reputed to be some of the fiercest raiders in the world. Either route promises to be an adventure.

Once the players make their way to Khimal, they have to find their way into the mountains and to the temple seen in the vision. The trek into the mountains is fraught with peril. Blizzards,

avalanches, and wandering yeti threaten the unprepared traveler.

The party awakens, more or less in one piece, in what appears to be the infirmary room of a temple. Monks in saffron colored robes move quietly about the room as a soft fragrant breeze wafts over their heads. There is a faint sound of wind chimes in the distance. The party is greeted by a young man with a warm smile who introduces himself as Lama Kenpo, the keeper of the sanctuary of the goddess Pahsang, She Who is Peaceful and Serene. He questions the party politely and gently but directly about why they have come to Khimal. Although he won't admit it until he's convinced of noble intentions, he has a fairly good idea why they are here. He tells them that his father found a man named deVenne wandering the mountains forty years ago and brought him to the temple.

Lama Kenpo will not introduce the heroes to deVenne unless they reveal the Creator's Hand. When they are finally introduced, deVenne appears to be a young Montaigne gentleman approximately 25 to 28 years of age, dressed in monk's robes. (He is, in fact, almost 90!) DeVenne has not aged a day since arriving in Khimal; in fact, he has lost a few years and is now in the prime of life – which is how he will stay until slain. He doesn't age or get sick. He tells the party that he eventually married a local woman and had two children – Luc (now age 22) who is headstrong, confrontational, and distrustful of strangers, and Pema (age 18) a beautiful young monk, who is her brother's opposite – open and warm, and perhaps too trusting. DeVenne's wife died of the "coughing sickness" when Pema was only two years old.

The adventurers know that he tried to destroy the key (from adventure one) and also the focus itself (adventure two), but failed. The creators had apparently planned for such eventualities. To prevent such a powerful item from falling into the wrong hands, deVenne brought one half of it to Khimal. The separate pieces of the source are useless the complete item is assembled. Unfortunately, deVenne didn't know about the failsafe (anyone holding the device can automatically locate the gem, and is drawn to it).

The heroes may tell deVenne what has been going on in Théah since his absence, especially about the Revolution. Young Luc, who has been listening at the door, bursts into the room and reveals that he found his father's journal some time ago. Now that he has access to both pieces of the focus, he is ready to make his move to restore the monarchy to Montaigne – with him as Empereur! With the help of Deki (a rogue guide) and a few dissenters in the ranks, Luc tries to seize the focus. A battle ensues in which Luc and his flunkies are defeated. It is a sad de Venne who reminds his son about the rules for such behavior – exile from the temple and the community. The dissenters are escorted to the boundary of the temple compound and the gates are closed on them forever.

12 Cathayan Brutes (Luc's Cohorts) (d20™)

Cathayan Bully Boys (Warrior) 5: CR 4; SZ Medium (Humanoid); HD 5d8+5; hp 32; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); AC 14 (+1 Dex, +3 hide); Atks Hand axe +7 melee (1d6+2); SA none; SQ none; SV Fort +5, Reflex +2, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8; AL NE; Skills: Climb +5, Hide +2, Jump +5, Listen +4, Move Silently +2, Speak Language (Crescent {alternately, any one language from your campaign setting}), Spot +4; Feats: Improved Initiative, Toughness

2 Cathayan Brute Squads (Threat 4, 6 men each) (Traitors) (7th Sea™)

TN to be hit: 25

Usual weapons: Medium Weapons (Axes)

Skills: Climbing +1, Leaping +1, Sprinting +1, Stealth +1

Special: A Brute Squad from the kingdom of Khimal is allowed one re-roll per scene.

Act VI – Betrayal

The heroes are treated to all the hospitality the monks can provide with profuse apologies for the uproar. Such behavior is completely antithetical to the monks' philosophy. Wounds suffered during combat are treated, and the heroes are sheltered from the fierce mountain storms. DeVenne is almost inconsolable about the loss of his son. (Opportunity to learn more about Cathay, perhaps do some research. The lamasery has a library that contains a number of volumes from Western Théah, at the GM's discretion.

Pema asks the heroes to help divert her father from his sorrow. At this point, more diplomatic characters may engage the Montaigne in conversation about the Synchron item. DeVenne explains what the focus can do and why it can never be used again. Using it, especially to form an army, will tear down the Barrier and bring about the end of the world. DeVenne proposes that the heroes take the object and drop it in the ocean somewhere very far away. Or throw it in a volcano. Anything. Just destroy it once and for all.

A week passes, during which the party gathers supplies for the journey down from the mountain. (Discussion about destroying the focus is encouraged.) The week-long interlude is also an opportunity for a player who might be attracted to Pema to spend time with her, and perhaps try to encourage her to leave the lamasery and return to western Théah with him. She is torn – she is definitely developing feelings for the hero, but there is her obligation to the temple and her love for her father.

Just as the party is saying their good-byes, the doors burst open and in strides Caligari and his men, accompanied by Cathayan mercenaries, a few guides, Deki and Luc deVenne. At sword's point, Caligari demands the source. DeVenne refuses. Caligari does not want to attack an unarmed man, but Luc has no problem and rushes at his father. DeVenne does not defend himself, and takes a fatal wound. Full combat ensues during which Caligari tries to take the Creator's Hand by force.

Once the Vodacce and his forces are defeated, the monks will take them into custody or bury the dead, whichever is appropriate.

NPCs: Umberto Caligari, Mario Scarrelli, Antonio, Armand, Luc, Deki, Pema

16 Cathayan Brutes (Mercenaries) (d20™)

Cathayan Bully Boys (Warrior) 5: CR 4; SZ Medium (Humanoid); HD 5d8+5; hp 29; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); AC 14 (+1 Dex, +3 hide); Atks Dao +8 melee (1d12+3); SA none; SQ none; SV Fort +5, Reflex +2, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8; AL N; Skills: Climb +5, Hide +2, Jump +5, Listen +4, Move Silently +2, Speak Language (Crescent {alternately, any one language from your campaign setting}), Spot +4; Feats: Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Dao)

2 Cathayan Brute Squads (Threat 4, 8 men each) (Mercenaries) (7th Sea™)

TN to be hit: 25

Usual weapons: Large Weapons (Dao)

Skills: Climbing +1, Leaping +1, Sprinting +1, Stealth +1

Special: A Brute Squad from the kingdom of Han Hua may include up to eight Brutes, instead of the standard six.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Harlan Godfrey (d20™)

Avalon Fighter 2/Wanderer 6/Archaeologist 4 : CR 12 ; SZ Medium (Humanoid) ; HD 4d4+8+6d8+16+2d10+4 ; hp 81 ; Init +2 (Dex) ; Spd 30 ft. ; AC 12 (Dex) ; Atks : Pistol +11 ranged (1d10) OR small sword +10 melee (1d6+1) ; SA none ; SQ Ancient Lore, Evasion, Extraordinary Luck, Font of Wisdom, Limitless, Knowledge, Tradesman, Uncanny Dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked), Ward of the Albatross ; SV Fort +8, Reflex +13, Will +11 ; St 13, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 19, Wis 16, Ch 15 ; AL NG ; Skills : Appraise +11, Climb +6, Decipher Script +10, Diplomacy +10, Disable Device +11, Gather Information +10, Handle Animal +6, Jump +6, Knowledge (Geography) +15, Knowledge (History) +19, Knowledge (Sidhe) +15, Knowledge (Syrneth) +15, Listen +15, Ride +6, Search +15, Sense Motive +13, Speak Language (Avalon, Crescent, Eisen, Montaigne, Théan, Vodacce {alternately, any six from your campaign setting}), Spot +15, Swim +4, Tumble +12, Use Magic Device +11 ; Feats : Alertness, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Firearms), Iron Will, Keen Senses, Lightning Reflexes, Membership (Explorer's Society), Skill Focus (Knowledge : History), Skill Focus (Knowledge : Syrneth)

Harlan Godfrey (Hero)(7th Sea™)

Brawn : 2, *Finesse* : 3, *Wits* : 5, *Resolve* : 3, *Panache* : 3

Reputation: 25

Background: Moment of Awe

Arcana: None

Advantages: Avalon (R/W), Eisen (R/W), Montaigne (R/W), Théan (R/W), Tikaret-baraji (Crescent), Vodacce (R/W); Keen Senses, Membership

Archaeologist: Artifact Evaluation 4, Occult 4, Research 4, Society Lore 3, Syrneth Lore 4, Trap Lore 3

Athlete: Climbing 2, Footwork 2, Leaping 2, Rolling 3, Sprinting 2, Swimming 1, Throwing 2

Courtier: Diplomacy 3, Dancing 2, Etiquette 3, Fashion 2, Oratory 2

Dirty Fighting: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 2, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 1, Eye Gouge 2

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 3, Parry (Fencing) 3

Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 3, Reload (Firearms) 3

Scholar: Astronomy 2, History 4, Mathematics 2, Natural Philosophy 3, Occult 4, Philosophy 2, Research 5

Harlan Godfrey is devoted to the search for knowledge. He has made a name for himself among the Explorer's Society as a dogged and determined archaeologist who rarely gives up a quest once he's started it. This fierce dedication has led him to trouble more than once, which is why Harlan is looking to hire adventurers to help him; the Society is hesitant to risk many assets on someone they consider "rash" or "reckless." Harlan is neither rash nor reckless, but he hates to fail. His zeal has only intensified since finding de Venne's journal, as he feels this could be the most important discovery of all time.

Harlan is a tall man (about six foot) in his mid-forties, with salt-and-pepper black hair and a neatly trimmed beard. His gray eyes sparkle when he is discussing one of his "intellectual" pursuits. He comes off as slightly bumbling and awkward when in social situations, but once he is "in the field," it becomes very apparent that Harlan is an expert adventurer.

Roleplaying Hints: You aren't much of a social beast. Crowds make you uncomfortable, and you tend to stammer and stutter when you have to speak publicly. You are jovial and easy-going the rest of the time, even when you are delving into a ruin filled with Syrneth death traps.

Umberto Caligari (d20™)

Vodacce Noble 2/Pirate 4/Swashbuckler 4/Ambrogia 3/Archaeologist 1 : CR 14 ; SZ Medium (Humanoid) ; HD 1d4+2+7d6+14+2d8+4+4d10+8; hp 107; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (+3 Dex, +2 Light Footed, +5 Roguish Style); Atks: Masterwork rapier +15/+10/+5 melee (1d6+1) and masterwork main gauche +15 melee (1d4) OR pistol +15 ranged (1d10); SA Dexterous, Dexterous Strike, Ride the Blade; SQ Ancient Lore, Commanding Presence +1, Focused Training, Friends in High Places, Light Footed, Limitless Knowledge, Roguish Style, Seasoned; SV Fort +8, Ref +18, Will +12; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 17; AL LE; Skills: Appraise +11, Balance +12, Bluff +7, Diplomacy +9, Gather Information +15, Knowledge (Geography) +13, Knowledge (History) +17, Knowledge (Syrneth) +17, Listen +11, Search +11, Sense Motive +6, Speak Language (Avalon, Castillian, Crescent, Eisen, Montaigne, Théan, Vodacce{alternately, any seven languages from your campaign setting}), Spot +11, Tumble +13; Feats: Alertness, Ambidexterity, Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Firearms), Iron Will, Left Handed, Lightning Reflexes (*Player's Handbook™*, page 83), Pirate Trick (Kick Up), Pommel Strike, Scholar, Skill Focus (Knowledge: Geography), Skill Focus (Knowledge: Syrneth), Two Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse (any applicable weapon, only in light or no armor), Weapon Focus (Main Gauche), Weapon Focus (Rapier)

Umberto Caligari (Villain) (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 2, *Finesse*: 3, *Wits*: 5, *Resolve*: 3, *Panache*: 4

Reputation: -30

Background: Rival (3 pts)

Arcana: Arrogant

Advantages: Avalon (R/W), Castille (R/W), Crescent (R/W), Eisen, Montaigne (R/W), Théan (R/W), Vodacce (R/W); Combat Reflexes, Noble, University

Archaeologist: Artifact Evaluation 2, Occult 3, Research 4, Society Lore 1, Syrneth Lore 4, Trap Lore 2

Athlete: Break Fall 2, Climbing 3, Footwork 3, Leaping 2, Rolling 2, Sprinting 2, Swimming 1, Swinging 2, Throwing 1

Captain: Ambush 3, Bribery 2, Cartography 2, Diplomacy 3, Gunnery 1, Strategy 2, Tactics 2

Courtier: Dancing 2, Diplomacy 3, Etiquette 4, Fashion 3, Oratory 3, Scheming 3, Sincerity 2

Dirty Fighting: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 2, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 2, Eye Gouge 1, Kick 2, Parry (Improvised Weapon) 4, Throw (Improvised Weapon) 2

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 3, Parry (Fencing) 3

Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 3

Knife: Attack (Knife) 2, Parry (Knife) 4, Throw (Knife) 2

Sailor: Balance 3, Climbing 3, Knotwork 1, Leaping 2, Navigation 1, Pilot 3, Rigging 2, Swimming 1

Scholar: Astronomy 3, History 3, Mathematics 2, Natural Philosophy 3, Occult 3, Philosophy 2, Research 4

Spy: Conceal 3, Disguise 1, Interrogation 3, Poison 2, Shadowing 1, Stealth 2

Ambrogia School (Journeyman): Feint (Fencing) 42, Pommel Strike (Fencing) 4, Riposte (Fencing) 4, Exploit Weakness (Ambrogia) 4

Umberto Caligari is one of the finest treasure hunters in Théah, and would make a fine member of the Explorer's Society, if not for the fact that he is fanatical in his support of his uncle Vincenzo. He has traveled the length and breadth of Théah looking for Syrneth artifacts, all for his uncle. His

dogged determination has put him at odds with the Explorers time and again, and Umberto has begun to hate the Society with a passion. While Caligari's main goal is the location of the Creator's Hand, he will take any opportunity to hurt an Explorer he encounters.

Umberto is of average height and weight. He is dark-haired and serious-looking, and tends to wear loose, comfortable clothing when on expeditions. If encountered in a social setting, Umberto is always dressed in the finest Vodacce fashions, as befitting the nephew of a Prince.

Roleplaying Hints: You have a strong idea of what the Creator's Hand really is, and you will stop at nothing to possess it. Your great-uncle will pay a king's ransom for the devise... after you've used it yourself, of course.

Mario Scarrelli (d20™)

Vodacce Pirate 6/Rogers 3/Boarding Marine 1: CR 10; SZ Medium (Humanoid); HD 3d8+6+7d10+14; hp 80; Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30ft.; AC 16 (+4 Dex, +2 Roguish Style, +5 Unarmored Defense Proficiency); Atks Masterwork cutlass +15/+10 melee (1d8+3) and belaying pin +11 melee (1d8+1) OR pistol +14 ranged (1d10); SA Amphibious Assault, Pirate Tricks; SQ Roguish Style, Seasoned, Sure Footed; SV Fort +12, Reflex +14, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 9, Cha 13; AL LE; Skills: Balance +12, Bluff +6, Climb +7, Intimidate +9, Jump +9, Profession (Sailor) +8, Sense Motive +4, Speak Language (Castillian, Théan, Vodacce {alternately, any three languages from your campaign setting}), Swim +9, Tumble +10; Feats: Ambidexterity, Improved Critical (Cutlass), Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Pirate Tricks (Against the Rails, Belay That, Sidearm), Quick Draw, Skill Focus (Profession: Sailor), Unarmored Defense Proficiency (Beginner), Weapon Expert (Cutlass), Weapon Focus (Cutlass), Weapon Specialization (Cutlass)

Mario Scarrelli (Villain) (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 3, *Finesse:* 4, *Wits:* 2, *Resolve:* 3, *Panache:* 3

Reputation: -20

Background: None

Arcana: None

Advantages: Castillian (ACQ), Théan (R/W), Vodacce (R/W), Pirate Tricks (Quick Draw, Side Arm)

Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 3, Leaping 3, Sprinting 2, Swimming 2, Swinging 2, Throwing 2

Captain: Gunnery 2, Incitation 2, Strategy 1, Tactics 1

Criminal: Ambush 3, Gambling 2, Shadowing 3, Stealth 2

Dirty Fighting: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 2, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 3, Throat Strike 2

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 2

Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 5

Sailor: Balance 5, Climbing 2, Knotwork 3, Rigging 2, Pilot 2, Navigation 2

Rogers School (Journeyman): Bind (Fencing) 4, Corps-à-corps 4, Disarm (Fencing) 4, Exploit Weakness (Rogers) 4

Mario Scarrelli is Umberto Caligari's First Mate and chief toady. He runs the daily operations abroad *The Chimera*, and usually leads any shore parties that Umberto sends out. He is loyal to Caligari, and will back his captain to the bitter end.

Scarrelli is a short, stocky man with greasy black hair and a scraggly beard. His nose has been broken numerous times, and he has a jagged scar across his forehead. He dresses like the stereotypical pirate, with lots of gaudy colors and no actual sense of fashion or taste.

Roleplaying Hints: You are the loyal henchman. Umberto Caligari's word is law. Your first duty is to protect Umberto. Never forget that.

Armand (d20™)

Montaigne Swashbuckler 5/Tout Prés 3: CR 8; SZ Medium (Humanoid); HD 5d6+3d8; hp 41; Init +3; AC 15 (+3 Dex, +2 Light Footed); Atks Masterwork rapier +8/+3 melee (1d6+1) and improvised weapon +10 melee (1d4) OR pistol +11 ranged (1d10); SA Dexterous, Dexterous Strike; SQ Light Footed, Protective Stance; SV Fort +4, Reflex +11, Will +5; Str 13, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 14; AL CN; Skills: Balance +13, Bluff +13, Climb +7, Jump +6, Sense Motive +12, Speak Language (Castillian, Eisen, Montaigne {alternately, any three languages from your campaign setting}), Tumble +13; Feats: Ambidexterity (only in light or no armor with a small improvised weapon in off hand), Corps-à-corps, Endurance, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Firearms), Expertise, Improvised Weapon, Two Weapon Fighting (only in light or no armor with a small improvised weapon in off hand), Weapon Finesse (any applicable weapon, only in light or no armor), Weapon Focus (Improvised Weapons), Weapon Specialization (Improvised Weapons)

Armand (Henchman) (7th Sea)

Brawn: 3, *Finesse*: 3, *Wits*: 4, *Resolve*: 2, *Panache*: 4

TN to be hit: 25

Attack Roll: 8k3

Damage Roll: 5k2

Criminal: Cheating 2, Gambling 1, Lockpicking 3,

Dirty Fighting: Ambush 3, Attack (Dirty Fighting) 3, Attack (Fencing) 5, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 1, Balance 3, Corps-à-corps 4, Double Parry (Fencing/Improvised Weapon) 4, Exploit Weakness (Tout Prés) 4, Footwork 5, Leaping 3, Parry (Improvised Weapon) 4, Shadowing 3, Stealth 2, Tagging (Improvised Weapon) 4

Notes: Speaks Montaigne, Vodacce. Tout Prés Journeyman.

Armand is *The Chimera's* boatswain ("bosun"). He tends to back Scarrelli up in a fight. He has a reputation as something of a pretty boy on the ship, and only his skill in a fight keeps him from getting more than the occasional jokes from the crew.

Medium build and average height, Jacques is blonde and blue-eyed, and considered by many of the ladies to be quite handsome. He dresses a bit "fancier" than is practical on the boat.

Roleplaying Notes: You are a misplaced noble. Well, not actually, but that's how you feel. It is so blindingly obvious that you are much better than the rabble that Captain Caligari has you leading. You are Theus' gift to His children, most especially the ladies. Act accordingly.

Antonio (d20™)

Castillian Pirate 2/Swashbuckler 4/Soldano 2: CR 8; SZ Medium (Humanoid); HD 4d6+4+2d8+2+2d10+2; hp 57; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); AC 13 (+3 Dex); Atks Masterwork rapier +11/+6 melee (1d6+2) and rapier + 10 melee (1d6+1) OR pistol +11 ranged (1d10); SA Dexterous, Dexterous Strike, The Unstoppable Blades, Whirling Blades; SQ Light Footed; SV Fort +5, Reflex +13, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8; AL NE; Skills: Balance +7, Bluff +8, Jump +6, Profession (Sailor) +4, Sense Motive +8, Speak Language (Castillian, Vodacce {alternately, any two languages from your campaign setting}),

Tumble +12; Feats: Ambidexterity*, Cleave*, Continuous Parry, Great Cleave*, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Firearms), Expertise, Improved Initiative, Parry, Pirate Trick (Death From Above!), Power Attack*, Two Weapon Fighting*, Weapon Finesse (any applicable weapon, only in light or no armor), Weapon Focus (Rapier)
*only with a rapier in each hand

Antonio (Henchman) (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 2, Finesse: 4, Wits: 3, Resolve: 4, Panache: 3

TN to be hit: 25

Attack Roll: 8k4 rapier or 6k4 pistol

Damage Roll: 4k2 rapier or 4k3 pistol

Skills: Ambush 3, Attack (Fencing) 4, Attack (Firearms) 2, Balance 3, Climbing 3, Double-parry (Fencing/Fencing) 2, Exploit Weakness (Soldano) 2, Footwork 4, Leaping 2, Parry (Fencing) 4, Shadowing 2, Stealth 2, Tagging (Fencing) 2, Whirl 2

Notes: Speaks Castillian, Montaigne, and Vodacce. Pirate Trick (Death From Above!). Soldano Apprentice.

Antonio leads the marines on *The Chimera*. He is an average sailor, but his skill as a Swordsman was what got him hired by Caligari.

The Castillian is about 5'10" and weighs around 170 pounds. He is slim and well muscled, and moves with the grace and precision of a professional duelist. He has dark hair and green eyes.

Roleplaying Hints: You are well on your way to being the best Swordsman around (at least in your eyes). When you find a worthy opponent, wave off your help. A true Swordsman fights honorably, man to man.

Adil ben Bakir, Information Broker (d20™)

Crescent Expert 10: CR 9, SZ Medium (Humanoid); HD 10d6; hp 45; Init +2 (Dex); AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atks Dagger +7/+2 melee (1d4); SA none; SQ none; SV Fort +3, Reflex +5, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 15; AL LN; Skills: Bluff +15, Diplomacy +15, Gather Information +15, Innuendo +16, Knowledge (Arcana) +13, Knowledge (Archaeology) +16, Knowledge (Geography) +18, Knowledge (History) +16, Knowledge (Law) +16, Knowledge (Syrneth) +16, Sense Motive +18, Speak Language (Avalon, Castillian, Crescent, Teodoran, Thean, Vodacce {alternately, any six languages from your campaign setting}); Feats: Skill Focus (Gather Information), Skill Focus (Knowledge: Geography), Skill Focus (Sense Motive)

Adil ben Bakir, Information Broker (Scoundrel)

Brawn: 2, Finesse: 2, Wits: 5, Resolve: 3, Panache: 3

Reputation: 30

Arcana: None

Advantages: Aldiz-baraji (R/W), Atlar-baraji (R/W), Montaigne (R/W), Teodoran (R/W), Thean (R/W), Tikaret-baraji (R/W), Vodacce(R/W); Ajedrez Master, Connections, Linguist, Membership (Explorer's Society - University

Archaeology: Artifact Evaluation 3, Occult 4, Research 5, Society Lore 2, Syrneth Lore 4, Trap Lore 3

Athlete: Climbing 1, Footwork 3, Sprinting 2, Throwing 1

Courtier: Dancing 2, Etiquette 3, Fashion 3, Gossip 4, Mooch 2, Oratory 2, Politics 3, Scheming

4, Seduction 3, Sincerity 2
Criminal: Cheating 3, Gambling 3, Shadowing 2, Stealth 2
Knife: Attack (Knife) 3, Parry (Knife) 3, Throw (Knife) 2
Scholar: History 4, Mathematics 3, Natural Philosophy 3, Occult 4, Philosophy 3, Research 3
Spy: Bribery 4, Conceal 3, Cryptography 4, Forgery 3, Shadowing 2, Sincerity 2, Stealth 2
Streetwise: Socializing 4, Street Navigation 3, Underworld Lore 4

Adil ben Bakir is a former member of the Explorer's Society. He worked with Harlan Godfrey on a few expeditions before returning to his home in Zafara. He has since turned himself into one of the most respected and sought-after information brokers in the Crescent Empire. His specialty is in Synchron ruins and artifacts. Recently, Adil came into possession of a set of maps that show the location of several dozen Synchron ruins, including an ancient structure high in the peaks of the *Kutsal-dag* Mountains. Adil isn't aware that his informants stole the maps from a member of the Kreuzritter, and that the Knights are even now moving to recover them.

Adil is a tall, rotund man with a jovial nature and a warm smile. He wears the long, flowing robes of his people, and keeps his thick gray beard neatly trimmed.

Roleplaying Notes: You tend to talk down to people, using little words and simple sentences so as not to confuse them. Only when you are talking to an equal do you truly express yourself. Then you tend to use the honorific *bey* (for example, Godfrey is "Harlan *bey*"). You are very passionate about archaeology, and let it show whenever you are discussing the topic.

Bernardo Felicini(d20™)

Vodacce 4/Mortis 4/ Nacht 2: CR 10; SZ Medium (Humanoid); HD 4d6+12+6d10+18; hp 86; Init +4 (Dex); AC 20 (+4 Dex, +6 Unarmored Defense Proficiency); Atks Masterwork stiletto +12/+7 melee (1d6+2) and masterwork stiletto +12 melee (1d6+1) OR masterwork stiletto +11 ranged (1d4+2); SA Aim for the Vitals, Ambush Attack +5, Attacking Through The Shadows, Death Attack, Fast Blade – Slow Opponent, Greater Sneak Attack (+3d10), Poison Use; SQ Conceal the Evidence, Inconspicuous, The Dark Paths; SV Fort +9, Reflex +10, Will +11; Str 15, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 15; AL LN; Skills: Balance +14, Bluff +15, Disable Device +9, Disguise +10, Escape Artist +10, Gather Information +12, Hide +15, Listen +6, Move Silently +15, Search +12, Speak Language (Castillian, Crescent, Montaigne, Thean, Ussuran, Vodacce {alternately, any five languages from your campaign setting}), Spot +9, Tumble +14; Feats: Ambidexterity (only with a small blade in each hand), Combat Reflexes, Gifted Liar, Greater Sneak Attack, Improved Sneak Attack, Membership (die Kreuzritter), Two Weapon Fighting (only with a small blade in each hand), Unarmored Defense Proficiency (Beginner), Weapon Expert (Stiletto), Weapon Focus (Stiletto), Weapon Specialization (Stiletto)

Bernardo Felicini (Villain)

Brawn: 3, *Finesse*: 4, *Wits*: 3, *Resolve*: 5, *Panache*: 3

Reputation: 18

Arcana: Careful

Advantages: *Aldiz-baraji*(R/W), *Avalon* (R/W), *Eisen* (R/W), *Thean* (R/W), *Tikaret- baraji* (R/W), *Vodacce* (R/W); *Combat Reflexes*, *Keen Senses*, *Membership* (die Kreuzritter), *Nacht Sorcery*

Athlete: *Break Fall* 3, *Climbing* 3, *Footwork* 4, *Leaping* 3, *Lifting* 2, *Sprinting* 2, *Swinging* 2, *Throwing* 1

Criminal: Ambush 4, Cheating 2, Gambling 2, Lockpicking 3, Pickpocket 2, Shadowing 3, Stealth 4

Dirty Fighting: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 3, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 2, Eye Gouge 1, Kick 2, Throat Strike 3, Throw (Improvised Weapon) 2

Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 3

Knife: Attack (Knife) 3, Parry (Knife) 3, Throw (Knife) 2

Spy: Bribery 3, Conceal 3, Cryptography 2, Forgery 3, Poison 2, Shadowing 3, Sincerity 4, Stealth 4

Mortis (Journeyman): Double Attack (Knife) 4, Double Parry (Knife) 4, Throw (Knife) 4, Exploit Weakness (Mortis) 4

Bernardo is one of the Black Crosses sworn to watch over the Surneth ruins in the Crescent Empire. When it was discovered that a group of thieves robbed and killed one of his brethren, stealing valuable maps to several ruins, Bernardo took it upon himself to retrieve the maps. He traced them to Adil ben Bakir, the information broker. After his attempt to retrieve the plans in Bakir's home fail, Bernardo falls back on his guise as a local guide to win his way into the party. He truly doesn't want to kill the heroes, but he honestly believes the ruins must be kept undisturbed by anyone.

Bernardo is a handsome, curly headed Vodacce of average height and weight. He is very light on his feet, and moves with surprising agility. When he is not "working," he has an easy-going personality and a ready smile. He's the kind of guy most people would want to hang out with... if he weren't trying to kill them.

Roleplaying Tips: Above all else, keep your secrets. The Order gains nothing from your foolishly exposing its existence to anyone. Remember, the heroes need a friend more than they need an enemy. Once you decide to infiltrate them, you have to convince them you are nothing but a humble guide.

Tikat Duvar

Crescent Monk 12: CR 12; SZ Medium (Humanoid); HD 12d8+36; hp 99; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); AC 29 (+3 Dex, +4 Dashing & Daring, +2 monk's bonus, +3 Wis, +7 Unarmored Defense Proficiency); Atks Unarmed +11/+8/+3 melee (1d12+1); SA *Ki* strike (+1), Sand Storms, Stunning Attack; SQ *Abundant Step*, Evasion, Improved Evasion, Leap of the Clouds, Purity of Body, Slow Fall (50ft.), Still Mind, Wholeness of Body; SV Fort +11, Reflex +11, Will +11; Str 15, Dex 16, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 18; AL LE; Skills: Balance +8, Bluff +11, Diplomacy +14, Escape Artist +13, Hide +8, Jump +12, Knowledge (Religion) +12, Knowledge (Surneth) +5, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Sense Motive +10, Speak Language (Castillian, Crescent, Théan {alternately, any three languages from your campaign setting}), Tumble +15; Feats: Appearance (Above Average), Dangerous Beauty, Dashing and Daring, Deflect Arrows, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Improved Unarmed Strike, Rimâl I, Rimâl II, Unarmored Defense Proficiency (Beginner)

Tikat Duvar (Villain) (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 4, *Finesse*: 4, *Wits*: 4, *Resolve*: 5, *Panache*: 4

Reputation: -40

Background: Moment of Awe

Arcana: Charismatic

Advantages: Rugzar-baraji (R/W), Tikaret-baraji (R/W), Castillian (R/W), Théan, Yilan-baraji (R/W); Appearance (Stunning), Dangerous Beauty, Pattern, Welded Steel Weapon, *Rimâl* (see below)

Athlete: Climbing 2, Footwork 5, Leaping 3, Rolling 2, Sprinting 2, Throwing 1
Courtier: Dancing 3, Diplomacy 4, Etiquette 3, Lip Reading 3, Scheming 3, Seduction 5, Sincerity 4
Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 4
Knife: Attack (Knife) 3, Parry (Knife) 2, Throw (Knife) 4
Performer: Acting 4, Dancing 3, Cold Read 3, Prestidigitation 4, Oratory 5, Singing 2, Storytelling 3
Scholar: Astronomy 2, History 3, Mathematics 3, Occult 3, Philosophy 3, Research 2

Tikat Duvar is the leader of the Guardians of the House of the Sun, a cult that occupies the Sryneth temple in the *Kutsal-dag* Mountains. Duvar found the site ten years ago, when he was visited by prophetic dreams that showed him a place of great power. Here his mastery of *Rimâl* would be supreme. He would become a god. Gathering a band of followers, Tikat Duvar made his way up the mountains and into the strange temple. He found the place guarded by a group of *yavanci* who called themselves “die Kreuzritter.” The strangers proved themselves to be fierce warriors, and slew many of Duvar’s followers. In a last-ditch effort to defend himself and his men, Duvar called on the power of the sand, using his gift of *Rimâl* to summon a storm to beat the *yavanci* back. The strangers were almost as surprised as Duvar when the swirling sands formed a giant scorpion that flayed the flesh from the *yavanci* bones.

As his men rejoiced, Duvar entered the site. There he found something amazing. Deep in the heart of the mountain, he found a chamber. The walls of the chamber were covered in glyphs and hieroglyphics, and a sarcophagus of strange metal rested in the center of the floor. Duvar began studying the hieroglyphics and was eventually able to decipher enough to understand that he was in a place of true power. If he could manage to unlock the secrets of this place, Tikat Duvar would become a sorcerer king, a god among men. He has spent the last five years studying the chamber, trying to break the seal of the sarcophagus. He is now convinced that a key exists. Having consulted one of the native mystics, a *Ruzgar’hala* wind talker, he believes the key is even now moving toward him. Soon, untold power shall be his.

Tikat is very tall and slim, with a lean build and graceful movements. He has dark, smooth skin and eyes that seem to smolder with intensity.

Rashid (d20™)

Crescent Fighter 6/Rogue 1/Sersemlik 3: CR 10; SZ Medium (Humanoid); HD 1d6+3+9d10+27; hp 95; Init +2 (Dex); AC 13 (+2 Dex, +12 Unarmored Defense Proficiency); Atks Pattern welded *dilmekiri* +19/+14 meke (1d12+5); SA One Handed Wielding, Sneak Attack +1d6; SQ none; SV Fort +11, Reflex +7, Will +3; Str 20, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8; AL NE; Skills: Balance +12, Bluff +3, Gather Information +4, Hide +6, Intimidate +15, Jump +10, Listen +3, Move Silently +6, Speak Language (Crescent, Castillian {alternately, any two languages from your campaign setting}), Spot +3, Tumble +12; Feats: Ambidexterity, Cleave, Improved Critical (*dilmekiri*), Power Attack, Sunder, Two Weapon Fighting, Unarmored Defense Proficiency (Beginner, Intermediate, Master), Weapon Expert (*dilmekiri*), Weapon Focus (*dilmekiri*), Weapon Specialization (*dilmekiri*)

Rashid (Henchman)(7th Sea™)

Brawn: 5, *Finesse:* 4, *Wits:* 2, *Resolve:* 4, *Panache:* 2
TN to be hit: 25
Attack Roll: 8k4+3 *dilmekiri*
Damage Roll: 8k3+3 *dilmekiri*

Skills: Attack (Heavy Weapon) 4, Attack (Pugilism) 4, Break Fall 3, Climbing 3, Exploit Weakness (Sersemlik) 4, Feint (Heavy Weapon) 4, Footwork 4, Leaping 4, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 4, Shadowing 3, Stealth 3, Tagging (Heavy Weapon) 4, Whirl 5
Notes: Speaks Tikaret-baraji and Yilan-baraji. Combat Reflexes, Pattern Welded Steel *Dilmekiri*. Sersemlik Journeyman.

Rashid has faithfully served Duvar for ten years. No one has ever heard him speak, but there is no physical evidence of his being a mute. He never leaves Tikat Duvar's side unless ordered to. He is very territorial, and will not hide his contempt for *yavanci*.

Rashid is huge, standing nearly 7 feet tall and weighing over 300 pounds, most of it muscles. He is bald, heavily scarred and tattooed, and more than a little frightening. He tends to stare at the person he considers to be the biggest threat with open hostility.

Roleplaying Tips: You live to serve Duvar. You are the greatest warrior your tribe has ever produced. No *yavanci* is your equal.

Esmera and Jasheira (d20™)

Crescent Rogue 5/Yael 3: CR 8; SZ Medium (Humanoid); HD 5d6+5+3d10+3; hp 51, 48; Init +4 (Dex); AC 14 (Dex); Atks Pattern welded scimitar +8/+3 melee (1d6+2) and scimitar +8 melee (1d6+1); SA Double Slashing Weapons, Sneak Attack +3d6, The Fighting Dancer (+11); SQ Evasion, Uncanny Dodge (Dex bonus to AC); SV Fort +5, Reflex +9, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 16; AL CE; Skills: Balance +12, Bluff +14, Escape Artist +10, Gather Information +11, Hide +12, Innuendo +10, Listen +11, Move Silently +12, Perform (Dancing) +16, Search +10, Sense Motive +13, Speak Language (Crescent {alternately, any one language from your campaign setting}), Tumble +15; Feats: Ambidexterity (only with two long blades or fencing weapons and light or no armor), Combat Reflexes, Dangerous Beauty, Lightning Reflexes (*Swashbuckling Adventures*, page 136), Skill Focus (Perform: Dancing), Two Weapon Fighting (only with two long blades or fencing weapons and light or no armor), Weapon Focus (scimitar)

Esmera and Jasheira (Henchmen)

Brawn: 2, *Finesse:* 4, *Wits:* 3, *Resolve:* 2, *Panache:* 3

TN to be hit: 30

Attack Rolls: 8k4+8 scimitar

Damage Rolls: 2k4+3 scimitar

Skills: Acting 2, Attack (Fencing) 4, Cold Read 3, Dancing 5, Disarm (Fencing) 4, Double-parry (Fencing/Fencing) 4, Exploit Weakness (Yael) 4, Feint (Fencing) 4, Footwork 3, Parry (Fencing) 4, Seduction 4, Shadowing 3, Stealth 3, Unobtrusive 3

Note: Speaks Tikaret-baraji and Yilan-baraji. Appearance (Stunning), Dangerous Beauty, Lightning Reflexes, Pattern Welded Scimitars. Yael Journeyman.

Tikat Duvar bought the twins Esmera and Jasheira from a band of nomads fifteen years ago. Since then, he has trained the two to be the perfect companions, and the perfect killers. Each of the twins is aware of the affect they have on members of the opposite sex, and are quite adept at using their feminine wiles to get what they want from men. And if seduction fails, then the girls can draw their scimitars and 'dance' for the nice gentlemen.

The twins are the very models of Crescent beauty and mystique. They move with a sensual ease that can easily capture a man's attention, and even in battle, they exude an aura of sexuality.

Roleplaying tips: Be coy, and demure, and provocative. Until it is time to strike. Then you are swift, sure and deadly.

Jacques Alistair de Venne (d20™)

Montaigne Fighter 3/Wanderer 6/Archaeologist 5/Syrneth Tinkerer 1/Valroux 5: CR 20; SZ Medium (Humanoid); HD 5d4+15+1d6+3+6d8+18+ 8d10+24; hp 161; Init +5 (Dex); AC 20 (+5 Dex, +5 Dashing and Daring); Atks Masterwork rapier +18/+13/+8 melee (1d6+6) and masterwork main gauche +18 melee (1d4+4); SA Raise the Stakes; SQ Ageless, Ancient Lore, Evasion, Extraordinary Lucky, Font of Wisdom, Great Knowledge, Immune to Disease, Limitless Knowledge, Lucky, Nimble, Repair Syrneth Devices, Tradesman, Uncanny Dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked), Ward of the Albatross; SV Fort +13, Reflex +20, Will +15; Str 18, Dex 20, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 20; AL LG; Skills: Appraise +10, Balance +15, Bluff +21, Climb +10, Craft (Syrneth devices) +19, Diplomacy +11, Gather Information +6, Jump +20, Knowledge (Archaeology) +21, Knowledge (Geography) +23, Knowledge (History) +23, Knowledge (Syrneth) +23, Listen +10, Profession (Archaeologist) +13, Search +10, Sense Motive +16, Speak Language (Avalon, Castillian, Crescent, Eisen, Han Hua, Khimal, Montaigne, Théan, Vodacce {alternately, any nine languages from your campaign setting}), Spot +10, Swim +8, Tumble +25; Feats: Alertness, Ambidexterity*, Continuous Parry, Daring and Dashing, Expertise*, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Legendary Traits (All), Lighting Reflexes (*Player's Handbook™*, page 83), Membership: Explorer's Society, Parry, Power Attack*, Skill Focus (Knowledge: History), Skill Focus (Knowledge: Syrneth), Two Weapon Fighting*, Weapon Focus (Main Gauche), Weapon Focus (Rapier), Weapon Specialization (Main Gauche), Weapon Specialization (Rapier)

*only when fighting with a fencing weapon in the primary hand and a light weapon in the off hand

NOTE: De Venne's stats reflect his use of the Syrneth device 50 years ago.

Jacques Alistair de Venne (Hero) (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 4, *Finesse:* 6, *Wits:* 5, *Resolve:* 3, *Panache:* 6

Reputation: 40

Arcana: none

Advantages: Aldiz-baraji (R/W), Avalon (R/W), Castillian (R/W), Eisen (R/W), Han Hua (R/W), Khimal (R/W), Montaigne(R/W), Théan (T/W), *Tikaret-baraji*, Vodacce (R/W); Appearance (Stunning), Legendary Trait (All), Linguist, Membership (Explorer's Society – The Mirror), University

Archaeologist: Artifact Evaluation 3, Occult 4, Research 4, Society Lore 3, Syrneth Lore 5, Trap Lore 3

Courtier: Dancing 4, Diplomacy 3, Etiquette 4, Fashion 3, Oratory 3, Sincerity 5

Scholar: Astronomy 2, History 5, Mathematics 2, Natural Philosophy 2, Occult 4, Philosophy 3, Research 4

Athlete: Break Fall 3, Climbing 2, Footwork 5, Leaping 4, Rolling 5, Sprinting 2, Swimming 2, Swinging 3, Side-step 2, Throwing 4

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 4

Knife: Attack (Knife) 3, Parry (Knife) 5

Pugilism: Attack (Pugilism) 3, Ear Clap 2, Footwork 5, Jab 3, Uppercut 2

Soft Martial Arts: Balance 3, Block (Soft Martial Arts) 3, Break Fall 3, Disarm (Unarmed) 3, Escape 4, Footwork 5, Grapple 3, Joint Lock 3, Yield 3

Staff: Attack (Staff) 3, Haymaker 3, Parry (Staff) 4

Valroux (Master): Double-parry (Fencing/Knife) 5, Feint (Fencing) 5, Tagging (Fencing) 5, Exploit Weakness (Valroux) 5

Syrneth Tinkerer (Apprentice): Domae 3, Drachen 1, Setine 3, Tesseran 2, Thalusiai 2

NOTE: De Venne's stats reflect his use of the Syrneth device 50 years ago.

Jacques Alistair de Venne was one of the greatest Explorers of the Society a half century ago. He trained under the best minds in Théah, excelling at history and languages. He formulated several theories on the nature of Syrneth technologies, and helped to identify at least two of the lost races. During his studies, he came across records of a Castillian survey team that had found a strange stone structure in the northern end of the Midnight Archipelago. The local natives avoided the island, claiming it was the home of their ancient gods, and doom would befall anyone who approached. Being the inquisitive sort, de Venne organized an expedition and set out immediately.

He found the stone structure described in Scene Two ("Cradle of the Gods"). Before he tried to enter the building, he spent several weeks translating the hieroglyphics on the outer walls, transcribing them into his journal. What he read convinced him that he may have made the most important discovery in the history of man. He unlocked the "cradle" and entered, cataloguing several of the traps that claimed the lives of many of his crews. In the center of the Syrneth ruin he found the key and began his quest for the Creator's Hand.

Once he and his associate Bergman found the Creator's Hand hidden in the mountains north of Zafara, de Venne used the device on himself. He was transformed into the perfect human specimen. Bergman refused to use the device, imploring Jacques to study it more. Such power must surely have a price. Heeding his friend's advice, de Venne began to study the device and the hieroglyphics in the chamber it was hidden in. Eventually, he discovered the true nature of the Creator's Hand (see description, above). He tried unsuccessfully to destroy the device. Finally, he managed to pry the gem that powered the artifact free from its center. Now the device could no longer be used. He and Bergman decided that Bergman would return to Théah to tell the world the de Venne had died on a fool's errand, and that they had been wrong about the Hand. De Venne returned the ruined machine to its resting place and disappeared into the mountains, travelling east to Cathay.

He eventually made his way to Khimal, where he came to live with the monks of the Temple of Pahsang. He married a local woman and has raised two children, Pema and Luc. Now he waits, knowing that some day, someone is going to come for the gem he is hiding.

Although he is nearly a hundred years old, Jacques appears to be in his mid-twenties. He is tall and slim, with shoulder-length blonde hair and bright blue eyes.

Pema de Venne (d20™)

Cathayan Monk 7/Wu Tsain 3: CR 10; SZ Medium (Humanoid); HD 3d6+3+7d8+7; hp 43; Init +3 (Dex); AC 17 (+3 Dex, +3 Wis, +1 monk's bonus); Atks Unarmed +10/+7/+4 melee (1d8+1); SA Stunning Attack; SQ Calm, Evasion, Leap of the Clouds, Purity of Body, Side Step, Slow Fall (30 ft.), Still Mind, Wholeness of Body; SV Fort +9, Reflex +13, Will +12; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 14; AL LG; Skills: Balance +14, Concentration +9, Diplomacy +8, Escape Artist +10, Heal +18, Jump +14, Knowledge (Archaeology) +5, Listen +13, Perform +9, Profession (Herbalist) +7, Speak Language (Han Hua, Khimal, Montaigne {alternately, any three languages from your campaign setting}), Tumble +14; Feats: Appearance (Above Average), Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows, Expertise, Healing Touch, Improved Trip, Lightning Reflexes (*Swashbuckling Adventures*, pg. 136), Tagging

Pema de Venne (Hero) (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 2, *Finesse:* 3, *Wits:* 4, *Resolve:* 2, *Wits:* 4

Reputation: 20

Arcana: none

Advantages: Han Hua (R/W), Khimal (R/W), Montaigne (R/W), Théan (R/W); Appearance (Stunning), Cold Climate Conditioning, Combat Reflexes, Lightning Reflexes

Acrobat: Break Fall 5, Balance 4, Footwork 4, Leaping 5, Rolling 3

Archaeology: Artifact Evaluation 1, Occult 3, Research 2, Society Lore 1, Synchrony Lore 1, Trap Lore 1

Cao Yao (Cathayan Healer): Acupuncture 4, Compounds 2, Diagnosis 4, First Aid 5, Masseur 3

Courtier: Diplomacy 2, Dancing 2, Etiquette 3, Fashion 1, Oratory 2

Feng Shui Shi: Chanting 3, Gardener 3, Meditation 4, Occult 3, Oratory 2, Philosophy 3

Scholar: Astronomy 1, History 3, Mathematics 1, Natural Philosophy 1, Occult 3, Philosophy 3, Research 2

Hard Martial Arts: Attack (Hard Martial Arts) 2, Balance 4, Block (Hard Martial Arts) 2, Break Fall 5, Corps-à-corps 2, Footwork 4, Jab 2, Kick 2, Leaping 5

Soft Martial Arts: Balance 4, Block (Soft Martial Arts) 5, Break Fall 5, Disarm (Unarmed) 3, Escape 4, Footwork 4, Grapple 3, Joint Lock 3, Leaping 5, Meditation 4, Side-step 3, Throws 2, Yield 4

Wu Tsain (Journeyman): Escape 4, Leaping 5, Tagging (Unarmed 4), Exploit Weakness (Wu Tsain) 4

Pema is de Venne's pride and joy. She has studied the healing ways and the art of Wu Tsain, as well as taking an interest in de Venne's love of archeology. She is honest and friendly with everyone she meets, and truly cares about anyone in her care. She worries about the darkness in her brother's soul, but isn't sure what she can do to help him.

Pema is stunningly beautiful, combining the best traits of her Théan father and Cathayan mother. She is taller than the average Khimali, but slender and graceful.

Luc de Venne (d20™)

Montaigne Fighter 5/Valroux 5: CR 10; SZ Medium (Humanoid); HD 10d10+20; hp 90; Init +3 (Dex); AC 19 (+3 Dex, +5 Unarmored Defense Proficiency, +1 main gauche); Atks Rapier +15/+8 melee (1d8+5) and main gauche +12 melee (1d4+3); SA Raise the Stakes; SQ Nimble; SV Fort +10, Reflex +5, Will +6; Str 16, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 12; AL NE; Skills: Balance +10, Bluff +15, Climb +9, Diplomacy +8, Escape Artist +10, Jump +16, Listen +7, Knowledge (Synchrony) +4, Sense Motive +6, Speak Language (Han Hua, Khimal, Montaigne {alternately, any three languages from your campaign setting}), Tumble +20; Feats: Appearance (Above Average), Ambidexterity*, Cleave*, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Exotic Shield Proficiency, Expertise, Power Attack*, Two Weapon Fighting*, Unarmored Defense Proficiency (Beginner), Weapon Expert (Rapier), Weapon Focus (Main Gauche), Weapon Focus (Rapier), Weapon Specialization (Main Gauche), Weapon Specialization (Rapier)
*only when fighting with a fencing weapon in the primary hand and a light weapon in the off hand

Luc de Venne (Villain) (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 4, *Finesse:* 4, *Wits:* 3, *Resolve:* 3, *Panache:* 3

Reputation: -20

Arcana: none

Advantages: Han Hua (R/W), Khimal (R/W), Montaigne (R/W); Appearance (Stunning), Cold Climate Conditioning, Combat Reflexes

Archaeology: Occult 1, Research 1, Society Lore 1, Synchrony Lore 1
Courtier: Diplomacy 2, Dancing 3, Etiquette 3, Fashion 1, Oratory 3, Politics 2, Seduction 3, Sincerity 3
Athlete: Climbing 2, Footwork 4, Leaping 4, Rolling 4, Sprinting 3, Throwing 3
Fencing: Attack (Fencing 5), Parry (Fencing) 3
Hard Martial Arts: Attack (Hard Martial Arts) 3, Balance 2, Block (Hard Martial Arts) 2, Footwork 4, Jab 3, Kick 3, Throat Strike 2
Knife: Attack (Knife) 3, Parry (Knife) 5, Throw (Knife) 4
Valroux (Master): Double-parry (Fencing/Knife) 5, Feint (Fencing) 5, Tagging (Fencing) 5, Exploit Weakness (Valroux) 5

Luc is the oldest child, but he realized a long time ago that Pema was the favorite. Soon after his mother's death, Luc watched from distance as Pema and Jacques grew closer. Luc struggled in vain to gain his father's notice. Slowly, the young de Venne began to resent his sister and hate his father and the quiet temple he raised his children in. Luc discovered his father's private diary and learned of the Creator's Hand. He hopes to gain control of the device so he, like his father, can become more than human. Then, he can return to Théan and carve out an empire to rule.

Luc is a shorter version of his father. He has the skin tone and almond shaped eyes of a Khimali, but he has his father's golden hair and blue eyes.

Deki (d20™)

Cathayan Fighter 5/Tie Xiong Kung 3: CR 8; SZ Medium (Humanoid); HD 8d10+24; hp 78; Init +7 (+2 Dex, +5 Improved Initiative); AC 20 (+2 Dex, +8 Unarmored Defense Proficiency); Atks Staff +13/+8 melee (1d6+6) OR unarmed +13/+8 melee (1d3+4); SA none; SQ none; SV Fort +10, Reflex +7, Will +4; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8; AL LE; Skills: Balance +7, Climb +11, Handle Animal +4, Jump +11, Ride +5, Speak Language (Han Hua, Khimal, {alternately, any two languages from your campaign setting}), Tumble +7, Wilderness Lore +5; Feats: Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Unarmored Defense Proficiency (Beginner, Intermediate)

Deki (Henchman) (7th Sea)

Brawn: 4, *Finesse*: 3, *Wits*: 1, *Resolve*: 3, *Panache*: 2

TN to be hit: 25

Attack Rolls: 6k3 staff or 7k4 unarmed

Damage Rolls: 6k2 or 4k1 unarmed

Skills: Attack (Hard Martial Arts) 4, Attack (Staff) 3, Balance 2, Climbing 3, Block (Hard Martial Arts) 3, Exploit Weakness (Tie Xiong Kung) 4, Footwork 4, Kick 4, Knife Hand 4, Leaping 3, Parry (Staff) 4, Ride 1, Rolling 2, Survival 2, Throat Strike 2

Note: Speaks Han Hua and Khimal, acquainted with Montaigne. Tie Xiong Kung Journeyman.

Errata from Cathay™: *Knife Hand*: Roll Finesse + Knife Hand; the TN to hit your enemy is raised by 15. If you hit, you do damage as a normal unarmed attack. If the enemy fails his Wound Check, he takes a Dramatic Wound, plus an additional Dramatic Wound for every 10 points he failed the wound check by, up to a maximum number of Dramatic Wounds equal to the attacker's Finesse.

Deki came to the Temple of Pahsang completely by accident. He was hiding from bandits he had

double-crossed when he got lost in a blizzard. He was found and rescued by a group of monks who brought him to shelter. Since then, he has lived in the temple, acting as an intermediary between the monks and the villagers living in the valley below. He taught Luc some fighting skills, and has taken the angry young man under his wing. Luc has told Deki of the Creator's Hand, and Deki has begun to feed Luc's desire to take the gem, by force if necessary, and find the rest of the device.

Deki is a short, stocky type with broad shoulders and thick arms. He is not a handsome man, and looks as though he's been in more than a few fights.

The Creator's Hand

The Creator's Hand, as de Venne named this device, is something of a mystery. It is unknown exactly which race built the device, though the Setine appear to have had some input in its creation. When fully assembled, the Hand is a silver platinum-like disk roughly a foot in diameter. The circumference of the device is covered in strange, serpentine glyphs. The disk is about a half-inch thick around the outer edge, and four inches thick through the center. On either side of the disk is the impression of a human hand, slightly larger than average. A glowing blue gemstone usually sits in the center of the hand impressions.

De Venne formulated his theory as to how the device operates by studying the hieroglyphics and the device itself. When the Hand is held by a human, hands in the impressions so that the gemstone touches both palms, the device taps into arcane powers to remove artificial blocks placed on the subject by the "Creators." The subject is surrounded by a blinding blue glow for sixty seconds as the machine "adjusts" the subject's physiology, making him or her into a superhuman being. The change is permanent and irreversible, and the device will only "rewrite" a person once; repeated use of the machine is impossible.

D20™: The subject gains the Feat: Legendary Trait six times, once for each attribute. Any minor "imperfections" (blemishes, poor eyesight, and the like) are instantly corrected, and the subject gains the Feats: Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, and Great Fortitude. If a Porté, Sorté, Lærdom, Zërstorung, or El Fuego Adentro mage uses the device, his effective caster level for any spells or spell-like sorcerous abilities is increased by 4. If a half-blooded sorcerer uses the device, his effective caster level doesn't change; instead, he gains the Feat: Full-Blooded. The device has no effect at all on Glamour mages, Pyeryem shapeshifters, or anyone with the Man of Will prestige class. The Sidhe and Matushka "protect" the would-be user from Syrnych "reprogramming," and Man of Will makes the character immune to the machine's influences.

The incredible powers of the machine do not come without a cost, though. The Creator's Hand draws its power from the Barrier, the mystic energy field that keeps the Syrnych from returning to this world. Every time the device is used, the Barrier is weakened. It is unknown exactly how many times the device can be used before the Barrier is weakened to the point where its masters can return. It may not happen for a thousand uses; the next person to use it may bring the Barrier crashing down. Also, during the "rewriting," the subject becomes much more susceptible to Syrnych influences. Any saves to resist mind altering magic (excluding the Sidhe's glamour effects) have their DCs increased by 5; magics used by an actually Syrnych would have their DCs increased by 10 or more! After all, what is the point in making a race of superior slaves, if they aren't controllable. Finally, anyone viewed from the Shadow Paths appears to have a strange, inhuman shadow over them. Any member of die Kreuzritter seeing this shadow would probably try to destroy the subject, as he is marked as a servant of those against whom the Order strives to protect the rest of Théah.

7th Sea™: The subject gains the Advantage: Legendary Trait six times, once for each Trait. Any minor "imperfections" (blemishes, poor eyesight, and the like) are instantly corrected. If a Porté, Sorté, Lærdom, Zërstorung, or El Fuego Adentro mage uses the device, his effective mastery level

is increased by one (A Journeyman's Mastery level for purposes of sorcerous effects is 3, while a Master's becomes 4). If a half-blooded sorcerer uses the device, his mastery level doesn't change; instead, he becomes a full-blooded sorcerer. Thus, a half-blooded Porté mage will become Full-Blooded, and a Twice-Blooded Sorte/Lærdom mage would become Full-Blooded in each. The device has no effect at all on Glamour mages, Pyeryem shapeshifters, or anyone with the Man of Will prestige class. The Sidhe and Matushka "protect" the would be user from Synchron "reprogramming," and Man of Will makes the character immune to the machine's influences.

The incredible powers of the machine do not come without a cost, though. The Creator's Hand draws its power from the Barrier, the mystic energy field that keeps the Synchron from returning to this world. Every time the device is used, the Barrier is weakened. It is unknown exactly how many times the device can be used before the Barrier is weakened to the point where its masters can return. It may not happen for a thousand uses; the next person to use it may bring the Barrier crashing down. Also, during the "rewriting," the subject becomes much more susceptible to Synchron influences. Any attempts to resist mind altering magic (excluding the Sidhe's glamour effects) have their TNs increased by 10; magics used by an actual Synchron would have their TNs increased by 20 or more! After all, what is the point in making a race of superior slaves, if they aren't controllable. Finally, anyone viewed from the Shadow Paths appears to have a strange, inhuman shadow over them. Any member of the Kreuzritter seeing this shadow would probably try to destroy the subject, as he is marked as a servant of those against whom the Order strives to protect the rest of Théah.

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