

BX15

Fourth of 5 Modules

THE CITY THAT BURNED

DESIGNED BY BILL BARSH



The giants are planning war. They are searching for something hidden deep in their past. Something that will unite the races and tribes. Something that has been hidden in history but waiting to be found.

The City that Burned is a BX RPG dungeon adventure for four to six characters of 7th to 9th level.



Pacesetter Games & Simulations
2699 Katie Lane
Milford, Michigan 48380

pacesettergames.com



The City That Burned

Contents

Adventure Introduction.....	4
Adventure Start	6
Temple of Fire	9
Map.....	15



Pacesetter Game & Simulations
2699 Katie Lane
Milford, Michigan 48380

pacesettergames.com

6004
First Printing, December 2019
©2019, Pacesetter Games & Simulations

Credits

Designer: Bill Barsh

Illustrations: Al Cook

Cartography: Raven Evermoor



The City That Burned

GM Introduction

The City That Burned is the fourth module in the **Return of the Giants** series produced by designed by Pacesetter Games & Simulations. This module is designed for four to six characters of 7th to 9th level and uses the BX RPG system. No particular character class is required though a balanced party is recommended. At least two fighter types would be helpful.

This module is set in the **Misty Isles** campaign setting produced by Pacesetter Games & Simulations. It is not necessary to use the Misty Isles setting and these modules can easily be adapted for most any campaign setting.

In **The City That Burned**, the Player Characters (PCs) will go up against a squad of fire giants and their minions as they search an ancient, crumbling city. Within the city lies a clue to the location of a long-lost giant palace that holds the key to uniting all the giant races. A small, and very secretive, sect of giants (from each evil race) is attempting to unite the giants in order to reclaim their dominance in the world. The giants have sent several squads of giants on missions to find various hidden temples in order to locate the ancient and all-but forgotten House of Narimemar. Narimemar was the last giant king who somehow managed to hold together the giant kingdom with the help of some very powerful and mysterious magic. It is this magic that these contemporary giants seek to control in order to unify the splintered races of giants and then wage war. The final module, **Myth of the Giant King**, includes the revelation of how the various giant races came to be and the magic used to control them.

GM Background

When the world was much younger giants ruled the lands. However, at that time there was a single race of the creatures. They ruled for a thousand years without threat. But eventually the kingdom fractured. Factions demanded more control, land or power. Decay had set in and the rule of the giants was threatened from within. As the kingdom began to fail, one of the ruling houses stepped forward and took command.

Somehow, the House of Narimemar gathered support and took control of the entire giant kingdom. For another 300 years the giants ruled, led by House Narimemar. Secretly, Narimemar had made a pact with powerful human arch



The City That Burned

mage. The mage, Rislavin, used his considerable powers to control the rival factions of giants. However, in order to unite the giant factions, Rislavin had to infuse each with varying elements of magic. Rislavin used these elements to control the giants and link each faction.

Catastrophe ensued when Rislavin finally perished and his spells failed with unforeseen effect. The giant factions, instead of simply shunning the magic that secretly bound them, became polarized as the elemental effects of the spells were released and consequently consumed them. It was the birth of the giant races that roam the world today. From a single race of giants came many others.

Immediately, the House of Narimemar failed and the giants became fractured and their kingdom collapsed. Narimemar, now crippled with age, and his kingdom in ruin, ordered the gates to his mountain keep sealed. Several giant clans attempted to enter the gates, but failed. It was then decided that a magical device, the *finding cube*, would be created so that later generations could find the House of Narimemar. Several loyal giants reasoned that at some time the kingdom could be reborn but the secrets held in the House of Narimemar would be needed.

Now, many centuries later, several giant kings have conspired to unite and again rule the world. They have decided to find the House of Narimemar and discover the secrets of the magic that gave the power to rule the world.

In **The City That Burned**, the Player Characters (PCs) discover an ancient city—now mostly in ruin due to volcanic activity. Within the city, the fire giants are searching for their part of the *finding cube*. The cube is located in a temple that is immune to the effects of the lava and earthquakes generated by the volcano.

Adventure Start: The City that Burned

Ages past, a city of men worshipped the fire giants of Mount Cinder, the semi-active volcano. This city, its name lost in time, was swallowed by the volcanic ash and lava. Now all that remains are the ruins of a what was the city center. Most of the structures collapsed with only outer walls, crumbling and shattered, standing today. Only the monolithic temple of the Hel – patron goddess of fire giants – remains standing and unaffected by time or destruction (location



The City That Burned

9). Within the temple lies the last piece of the finding cube.

A group of fire giants, led by Snarr, a fire giant prince, has entered the cavern of the Forgotten City and managed to enter the temple. They have just entered the temple when the PCs arrive at the gates (location 1). There are two possible ways to enter the sealed doors of the temple; using a special key (Snarr holds the only one) or speaking a magical phrase. The doors and temple are made of a red granite and nearly impervious to physical damage (a fire giant with a dozen mauls would take a full day to break down the doors). The door cannot be opened by other magical means; only the phrase will work. Carvings on the door (in fire giant) explain that only the key-holder or those who know the phrase may enter.

It just so happens that the phrase can be recovered if the PCs search the ruins and locate the (now long-dead) high priest's abode (location 8). There are other dangers within the city. Foremost is the aragotha (see **New Monster** section) which seeks to devour the brains of its victims.

1. Entrance

What you thought were the gates to the fire giant temple are not. The portals open to reveal a massive cavern and the partial remains of an ancient city. Buildings, of various size, have fallen into ruin. Paved streets are upheaved and split. Massive fungal growth, mostly in the form of 10-15-foot-tall, purple mushrooms, give off a luminescence – a hazy pink in color. The ceiling of the chamber disappears into darkness above, and by the echoing noises, it seems it must be several hundred feet high. Very few of the buildings that remain are more than two stories; the vast majority of the structures stand just 10 feet tall. In the distance you see, in several locations, a reddish glow. Waves of heat pulse through the chamber and you feel sweat building on your skin. A distant, yet high-pitched, chattering sound something like a flock of birds.

GM's Description: This chamber holds all that remains of a mountainside city. It was abandoned when a nearby volcano erupted and subsequently engulfed into the mountain. Several fissures bubble with lava, creating the reddish glow.



The City That Burned

Water drips from the ceiling but vaporizes as the chamber is extremely hot – approximately 95 degrees (f). This creates a high level of humidity which in turn forms a perfect environment for the large fungi. The chattering is caused by newly-hatched xxxxx. The beheaded remains of several hatchlings lie within 50' of the entrance – they fell from their nests and were found by the **Aragotha** (see **New Monster** section) that lives in the cavern.

2. A Disturbing Sight

Sprawled, still gripping his sword, a fire giant lies in the crumbling street. Even from a distance you can see multiple lacerations where sharp claws tore armor and flesh. Worse still, his head is missing, seemingly torn from his shoulders.

GM Description: The fire giants (now at location 9) were ambushed by the aragotha and fled to the temple. One of the giants, out of foolish bravery decided he was up to the challenge and battled the monster, only to be slain. The aragotha is now resting at a location determined by the GM. On the corpse, is a pouch (small sack) that contains 342 gp, 98 sp, and 10 small rubies worth 50 gp each. The giant wears a belt woven with several golden braids and inset with small rubies worth 750 gp. On inspection, the corpse is clearly several days old. Also, a strange purple dust covers the exposed skin. The dust are spores of the fire fungi and will erupt into an incendiary cloud if the giant is disturbed. The cloud envelopes a 20' sphere and inflicts 4d6 fire damage to all within the area (a save vs. spell results in half damage).



The City That Burned

3. Fountain of Youth

This walled courtyard is in remarkably good condition compared to the structures of the fallen city. Lush, green grass grows freely and stands about six inches tall. In the center of the courtyard, an ivory fountain still flows with crystalline water. The fountain, a five-foot diameter bowl is fed by an equally tall statuette of a young, slender girl holding a silver jug. Water pours from the jug and falls into the fountain. Lying within the basin are numerous gold coins.

GM Description: The fountain is indeed magical. If a gold coin is dropped into the basin, the statuette animates and speaks: Drink and be without fear and age. Any who drink from the fountain will gain complete immunity to fear and mind-based spells for 24 hours. However, the imbiber will begin to age 10 years per every six hours until the 24-hour duration expires. Elves age at a rate of 100 years per six hours, while all other demi-humans age at 50 years per six hours. Exactly 48 hours after consuming the magical water, the age effects reverse and PC subtracts 10 years from his current age (100 years for all demi-humans). A remove curse, limited wish, or wish spell will negate all the effects on a PC during the first 24 hours. The effects of the aging are that the PC suffers a 20% reduction in any action or a -1 on any die roll (penalty) per six hours. The statuette is a representation of the goddess Hesther; a cleric of that faith will immediately recognize the visage. If the statuette or fountain is defaced in any way, a curse shall befall all those in attendance and they will age to within one year of death, becoming feeble, decrepit, and unable to perform any action other than walk at 25% their normal rate. Only by seeking atonement in a shrine dedicated to Hesther can the curse be lifted – GM determines the cost (or quest required). Note, taking a coin from the fountain meets the desecration threshold.

4. Pit

GM's Description: While the street here appears solid, it is very unstable. Any PC treading across the marked area (see map) will trigger a collapse. The PC will fall approximately 20 feet into an ancient sewer (2d6 damage). There is wa-



The City That Burned

ter in the sewer, collected from that falling from above. The water is only one foot deep. The sewer system has collapsed in numerous places, and a PC can only travel 50 feet in any direction before coming across a complete blockage. The sewer tunnels are six-foot square chambers.

Trapped in the one of these pits (GM discretion) is a wight. It is nearly starved, having lived off whatever vermin it could catch. The wight will attack any PC that falls within the pit. The wight will only attack for 1d4 rounds then seek to escape if at all possible. If the wight is reduced to 10 hit points or less, it will flee immediately. This encounter only occurs once; disregard further encounters.

Wight AC 5; HD 3; HP 17; #AT 1; DMG 1d4 touch; SA Energy Drain; SD Greater undead; MV 90/30; INT 6; AL C; EXP 165; Thaco 17.

5. Mushroom Glade

Standing before you are enormous 10 to 15-foot-tall mushrooms. The fungi range in color from deep purple to a fiery red. They have thick stems and wide caps; the underside is white in color. Each radiates a slight luminescence based on the color of the individual mushroom. Together, the glade illuminates an area approximately 100 feet in all directions. The air is thick with the smell of a dank swamp. Insects flutter about in swarms but seem to show interest in your group.

GM Description: The mushroom glades are made up of fireconiods – a semi-intelligent species of mushroom. Fireconiods are found in the proximity of high heat sources such as volcanos or steam tunnels and always live underground. They require both heat and moisture to survive. So long as they are not disturbed, the fireconiods are benign. However, one of the glades was culled by the trespassing through the caverns – fire giants crave fireconiod on a stick. If the PCs stumble upon that patch (GM discretion), the fireconiods immediately attack. Each glade contains the following: 6 HD – 1d6, 4 HD 1d8, 2 HD – 2d8. The partial glade has half that number. Lying in one of the glades is the remains of a deep gnome – long since dead and now nothing but bones and ruined



The City That Burned

equipment. Lying among the remains, in a tattered pouch, are three rubies worth 100 gp each.

Fireconiod AC 7; HD varies; HP varies; #AT 1; DMG 1d6 flame jet per HD; SA flame jet 10'; SD Immune to fire; MV 30/10; INT 2; AL N; EXP varies; Thaco n/a.

6. Lava Pool

Searing heat comes in waves from the lava pool. The occasional bubble disturbs the lava, but otherwise there is no movement. Occasional drips of water, falling from the darkness above, evaporate 10 feet above the lava creating steam that rises and drifts through the enormous cavern.

GM Description: A fire elemental is hiding within one of the lava pools. It has been tasked, by one of the lords of the elemental plane of fire, to meet with fire giants in order to form a pact (for some other nefarious scheme). The elemental has searched this volcanic area for fire giants but has been unsuccessful and is now quite frustrated. It will emerge from the lava pool and attempt to communicate with the PCs – it only speaks its native tongue (plane of fire). If the PCs can direct the elemental to the fire giants, it will accompany them. It will not





The City That Burned

take part in any combat or activity with the PCs – it will just follow along. If and when the PCs encounter fire giants, the elemental will aid the fire giants if combat occurs. If the PCs refuse to help, or simply cannot communicate, with the fire elemental, it will hold out a large ruby as an offering. If any PC is foolish enough to approach, the elemental will attack. It is quite evil and spoiling for a fight. The ruby is worth 1,000 gp.

Elemental, Fire AC 2; HD 10; HP 70; #AT 1; DMG 1d12 strike; SA None; SD Immune to fire; MV 120/40; INT 5; AL N; EXP 2,300; Thaco 11.

7. Pack of Hounds

GM Description: The fire giants brought a pack of eight hell hounds but left them outside the temple. The hell hounds are hungry and have decided to forage for some food. They have detected the PCs and are lying in wait to ambush the unwary. When the PCs arrive, the hell hounds will attack from all sides, if at all possible. See map for ambush site.

Hell Hound AC 5; HD 5; HP 25 each; #AT 1; DMG 1d12 bite; SA Breath fire 10 hp damage; SD Immune to fire; MV 150/50; INT 4; AL C; EXP 300; Thaco 15.

8. High Priest of the Flame

One of the few two-story structures to remain standing, this building appears to point at varying heights – as if someone were mimicking a wall of flame. Dulled red paint clings to some sections of the wall interspersed with dark reds and bright yellows. A single door, painted bright yellow, appears to be the only point of entry.

GM Description: This building is the former residence of the last high priest of the temple of Hel. The entry door is locked (the key is lost). While the building appears to have two floors, it has only one but with 20' high ceilings. A thick



The City That Burned

layer of dust coats everything within and there is no artificial light. A six-foot-wide and 15' tall door appears to be the only entrance to this structure. The door is painted yellow but of varying hues to mimic the visage of a flame. No windows are evident.

The interior of the building has suffered from decay and little remains to identify. However, scrawled on one wall, in blood (dried and very old), is the term, "In Flame we Enter." The term, if spoken at the Temple of Flame doors, will open the portals.

9. Temple of Flame

The walls of this large structure are made of black granite with streaks of red throughout. Massive iron doors are the only portals and they are closed.

GM Description: Snarr and his cohort of fire giants are inside the temple; they have just entered and secured a piece of the finding cube. The PCs can enter the temple if they have discovered the magical phrase at location 8, or if they simply pound on the door (the fire giants will open the doors assuming it is one of their comrades). A *knock* spell will also open the portals. The interior of the temple is a single chamber. It is barren but for a large alter made of the same black granite. Snarr holds the piece of the finding cube and he will not yield it to the PCs voluntarily.

Snarr, Fire Giant (1) AC 4; HD 12; HP 80; #AT 1; DMG 5d6 sword / 3d6 thrown rock; SA Throw boulders 3d6; SD Immune to fire; MV 120/40; INT 12; AL C; EXP 2,700; Thaco 10. He has a *potion of extra healing* and a *potion of invisibility*. Snarr also carries bag (used like a belt pouch) that contains 300 gp.

Fire Giant (3) AC 4; HD 12; HP 65, 60, 52; #AT 1; DMG 5d6 sword / 3d6 thrown rock; SA Throw boulders 3d6; SD Immune to fire; MV 120/40; INT 12; AL C; EXP 2,700; Thaco 10. Each giant carries 10d12 gp.



The City That Burned

The Aragotha

The aragotha is the dominant predator in the city, though it also makes forays into the Deep when prey is lacking. As the PCs make their way through the city, the aragotha becomes aware of their presence. It will try and trail them, gathering a measure of their strength. At some point, when the PCs appear in danger or vulnerable, the aragotha will attack.

Aragotha AC 2; HD 12; HP 71; #AT 4; DMG 1d8 claw / 1d8 claw / 1d6 tail spike / 1d12 bite; SA Sonic blast 10' radius 6d6; SD +2 vs. magic saves; MV 120/40; INT 10; AL C; EXP 3,500; Thaco 10.

Ending the Adventure

This module will come to a close when the PCs have obtained the brass panel of the *finding cube* and have escaped the eighth layer of hell. At this point, the DM may run any of the other modules in this series. They do not need to be run in any particular order. When the PCs obtain all five plates they will be able to find the House of Narimemar, which is detailed in module **BX16, When Yesterday is Tomorrow**.

The Finding Cube

This magical box is approximately one foot square. The box has only five sides, or panels. When all five panels are connected, they will magically form an open-ended cube. A ray of light will emerge from the open end of the cube and point toward the House of Narimemar. Basically, the finding cube acts as a compass, though it only points to the House of Narimemar.

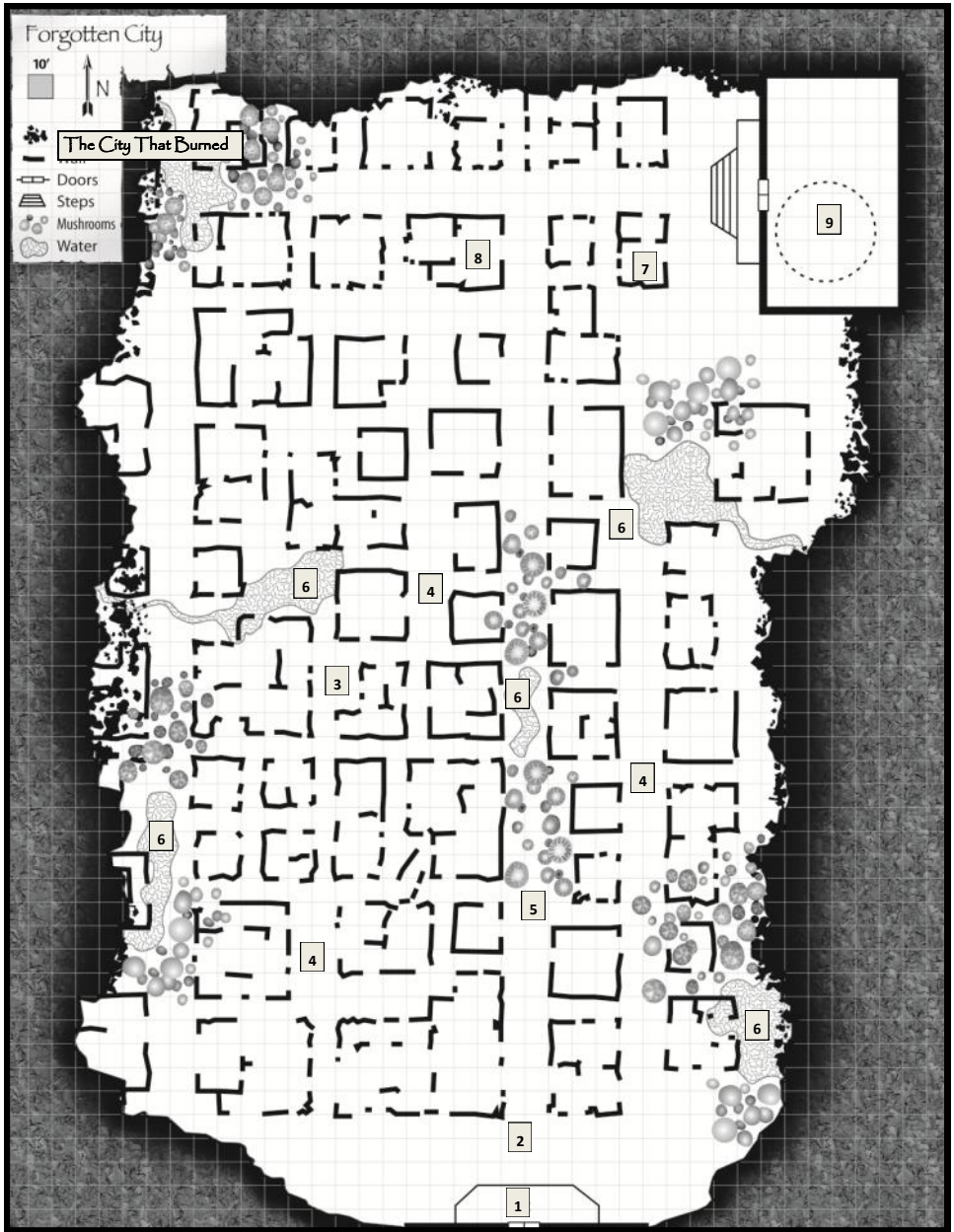
Additionally, when a panel is held, a map will appear on the reverse side depicting the location of the four other panels. Each panel is made of gold and silver and is worth 500 gp. If all five panels are assembled, the entire cube has a value of 5,000 gp.



The City That Burned



The City That Burned





Notes

Aragotha

Armor Class: 2

Hit Dice: 12

Movement: 150/50

Attacks: 4 (see below)

Damage: See below

Special Attacks: Sonic Blast

Special Defense: Special

Intelligence: 7 +1d4

No. Appearing: 1

Save As: F12

Morale: 10

Treasure Type: D

Alignment: Neutral

THACO: 10

Experience: 3,500

The City that Burned is completed under version 1.0 of the Open Game License and the System Reference Document by permission from Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Additional printings will incorporate final versions of the license and document.

Designation of Product Identity: The following items are hereby designated as Product Identity in accordance with Section 1(e) of the Open Game License (version 1.0): Any and all Pacesetter Games & Simulations logos and identifying marks and trade dress; all proper nouns, monster names, NPC names, geographic terms, capitalized terms, artwork, maps, symbols, descriptions, digital graphic art, and illustrations, as well as any Basic /Expert Dungeon Adventure logos and identifying marks and trade dress; all proper nouns, monster names, NPC names, geographic terms, capitalized terms, artwork, maps, symbols, descriptions, digital graphic art, and illustrations, except such elements that already appear in the System Reference Document.

Designation of Open Content: Subject to the Product Identity designation above, all NPC, creature, and trap statistic blocks are designated as Open Game Content, as well as spell names, weapon statistics, and other elements that are derived from the System Reference Document. No art or illustration is open content.

Some portions of this book which are delineated Open Game Content originate from the System Reference Document and are copyright 1999, 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. The remainder of these Open Game Content portions of this book are hereby added to Open Game Content and, if so used, should bear the copyright notice "The City that Burned". Copyright Pacesetter Games & Simulations 2019. Contact at pacesettergames.com."

BX15 The City that Burned is © 2019 Pacesetter Games & Simulations.

Dungeons & Dragons® and Wizards of the Coast® are Registered Trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc., and are used with Permission. Open Game Content may only be used under and in the terms of the Open Game License.

OPEN GAME LICENSE Version 1.0a

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.



The City That Burned

4. **Grant and Consideration:** In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.
5. **Representation of Authority to Contribute:** If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.
6. **Notice of License Copyright:** You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.
7. **Use of Product Identity:** You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.
8. **Identification:** If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.
9. **Updating the License:** Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.
10. **Copy of this License:** You **MUST** include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.
11. **Use of Contributor Credits:** You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.
12. **Inability to Comply:** If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.
13. **Termination:** This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.
14. **Reformation:** If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.
15. **COPYRIGHT NOTICE**
Open Game License v 1.0 Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.



Look for these exciting BX RPG products from **Pacesetter Games & Simulations**

BX1 The Screaming Temple — A temple has arisen in a single night. Now, Screams of horror are the only things that reach beyond its walls. A Quick Play™ Adventure for one or two game sessions. Designed for characters 2nd to 4th level.

BX2 The Haunted Tower — A ruined keep stands silently within the dark woods. Only a pair of crumbling gate towers remain intact. A sinister mystery is hidden within towers. An introductory adventure for characters of first level.

BX3 The Temple of Mercy — The Temple of Mercy was once a place of salvation. But a terrible cult defiled the temple and claimed it as their own. Years have passed and so has the cult. Now, a holy order seeks to re-establish the forgotten temple, but dangers lurk within its walls. Adventurers are needed! An adventure for characters first to third level.

BX4 Felhorde: Eruptor's Vengeance — A dead dragon leaves his treasure unguarded. Or so they say. A Quick Play™ Adventure for one or two game sessions. Designed for characters 2nd to 4th level.

BX5 The Thing in the Valley — A nameless evil has come to the valley. What is the creature's deadly purpose and will the PCs survive its terrible onslaught? An adventure for characters 3rd to 5th level.

