

VTF3-05

Firestorm

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK[®] Velverdyva Trade Route Meta-Regional Scenario

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Rumors of strange cultists, a rise in criminal activity and brutal gangs all hint of the deeper evils within Tusmit. The new political tensions between this land and neighboring Ket certainly aren't helping your quest to uncover the mysteries that have led you into the 'Baklunish West.' The border is becoming tight, but you've made it through. Now you just have to check in with a helpful contact at the Kettish-styled bathhouse here in Blashikdur, and you can be on your way further west. Simple, eh? Part Five in the "Three is the Evilest Number" Series. An adventure for APLs 8 through 14.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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Introduction

This is an RPGA® Network scenario for the Dungeons & Dragons® game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for each round of this scenario, but the actual playing time will be closer to three and a half hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and scoring after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

Preparation

First you should print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided will work as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

Read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Be sure to familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA scoring packet, and your sense of fun. It is also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures.

Instruct the players either to prepare their characters now, or wait until you read the introduction, depending on the requirements of the scenario as described in the introduction.

Keep in mind that you must have at least three players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. As well, you cannot have more than six players participating in the game.

Once you are ready to play, it is handy to instruct each player to place a nametag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players (and the DM) to keep track of who is playing which character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. That said, you as the DM can bar the use of even core rulebooks during certain times of play. For example, the players are not free to consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide* when

confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in gray boxes. It's strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text instead of reading it aloud. Some of this text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

Reporting

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM fill out a reporting form. After the form is filled out it should be given to the senior DM.

Living Greyhawk

This is a Living Greyhawk Adventure. As a Living Greyhawk adventure it is expected that players bring their own characters with them. If players do not have a Living Greyhawk character generated, get a copy of the current Living Greyhawk character generation guidelines, and a character sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Web site, and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a Living Greyhawk character, play can begin.

Along with the other materials that you are assumed to have in order to run a D&D game, it is also recommended that you have a copy of the Living Greyhawk *Gazetteer* and Living Greyhawk Campaign Sourcebook (LGCS).

Living Greyhawk Levels of Play

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportioned to the average character level of the PCs participating in the adventure. To determine the Average Party Level (APL):

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely being war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e. animal companions, familiars, paladin's mounts, etc) use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.

- Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.
- If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

By following these four steps, you will have determined the APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs will face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of the adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL this adventure is being played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Note: LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Three or four, or sometimes even five 1st-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If your group is APL 1 there are three things that you can do to help even the score.

- Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.
- Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dogs to attack must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a free action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

Time Units and Upkeep

This is a standard one-round Meta-regional adventure, set in Tusmit. Characters native to the Tuflik, Fals, and Volverdyva Trade Route Meta-region(characters with a home region of either Dyvers, Ekbir, Ket, Tusmit, Veluna, or Verbobonc) pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per Time Unit.

Mundane Animals Effect on APL	# of Animals			
	1	2	3	4
1/4 & 1/6	0	0	0	1
1/3 & 1/2	0	0	1	1
1	1	1	2	3
2	2	3	4	5
3	3	4	5	6
4	4	6	7	8
5	5	7	8	9
6	6	8	9	10
7	7	9	10	11

Adventure Background

Al'Akbar and The Baklunish West

Welcome Judges to the Baklunish West. For most of you, this is a new type of setting. In our Meta-Region, the nations of Ekbir, Tusmit and Ket consider this home. It is highly recommended that you read page 5 of the Living Greyhawk Gazetteer, as well as the specific nation entries in said book. Viewing the Regional web page of Tusmit is also a good idea. The majority of the Baklunish people follow a different pantheon than the people of the east. If you look hard enough, you can probably find a representative of most eastern religions somewhere with in the Baklunish West, but don't expect them to have much sway or influence. Major eastern gods such as Pelor, Rao, Boccob, Beory, Zilchus and Fharlanghn seem to have footholds wherever humans live, but the farther west you go, the rarer this becomes. In Ekbir, non-Baklunish faces are rather rare even inside of the major trade centers, but in Ket, the population itself would be hard to distinguish at times from west and east, if not for accent and manner of dress. This is due to the heavy mixing of blood with the east.

At the head of the Baklunish Pantheon (as far as the mortal worshipers see it) is the demigod Al'Akbar. No divine influence is greater to the modern customs of the west than his. In theory, Honor, Family, Generosity and Piety form the backbone of all Baklunish lives, and for most, they are known as the Four Feet of the Dragon (of the ancient customs), though others have a different definition of that. Amongst these, the other divine powers of the pantheon intermix into the customs of these people. For example, the comparatively new faith of

Al'Akbar has mixed into the culture of the faithful, the tenets of Guardianship, Faithfulness, Dignity and Duty. Even for those who do not revere Al'Akbar as their patron god, his tenets have become part of the customs.

A very important item to note is the difference between the two major sects of Al'Akbar. One is the Exalted Faith (LG,NG) and the other is the True Faith (LN). The people of the west worship one sect or the other, never both. You have a better chance seeing a Pholtus cleric marrying a St. Cuthbert cleric, than you do of seeing clerics of the Exalted and True Faiths sharing a meal. Yet it is the same demigod that they worship.

The Exalted Faith (LG, NG) dominates Ekbir and holds sway over southern Tusmit. Their clerics are called Qadi. Their holy symbols have the image of a red cup and a black talisman. They tend to be kind men, but still orderly and usually not much for nonsense. When referring to their god in general reference, they call him "The High Cleric". Outside of Ekbir, their clerics dress in red and black. Inside Ekbir, they revert back to the local color scheme as set down by tradition to show rank. They do this in a ritualistic fashion that includes a bathing.

The True Faith (LN) dominates all of Ket and the northern reaches of Tusmit. Their clerics are called Mullahs. Their holy symbols have the image black cup and a red talisman. They tend to be stern men, but never actually evil (though their inspired deeds seem that way at times to the east). These men are zealots to the exact wordings of the scriptures and interpret them in a way that enforces control on a population for its own sake, to save the population from itself. When referring to their god in general reference, they call him "The Restorer of Righteousness". Though sometimes the Mullahs like to think they do, the Mullahs do not control any of the governments in the west, though they do have a strong influence in Ket and Tusmit. They form the pool of Judges that interpret the law (as set by the secular government) at trials and seem to be a heavy fixture of most military and policing units. If a mullah is shaking his finger at you, chances are you're in trouble. For the majority of mullah's that don't hold a temporal authoritative office, they remain the ever watching moral watch dogs for the population, but even they must respect the proper order and policies of the government and its systems.

At a distance, the best way to tell the difference between a cleric of the two different sects, is that the Exalted Faith device is a red cup and a black talisman, and his clothing have a similar scheme. The True Faith's device is a black cup and a red talisman and his clothing has a similar

scheme.

It is written that a cleric of Istus said these words after observing a prolonged and heated argument between the opposing sects in a royal hall:

"Both were of the same stock, same tongue, wearing the same garments. Both held a holy book in his hand, authored by the same soul. As they argued, it was as if one was the echo of the other, but with a completely different meaning once the sound had stopped bouncing. Still they argued and their arms caused their robes to whirl about. It was then that I realized the true difference between them. The Qadi's robes were red on one side and black on the other, and the Mullah's robes were black on one side and red on the other."

Tusmit, Ket and Everything: Backstory

Growfest to Flocktime, 593CY.

The government of Tusmit has announced to the world its discovery of a new trade route through the Yatil Mountains that circumvents Ket. At a meeting, many diplomats from the VTF nations were killed or injured. Many suspect the Tusmit government for this treachery. Ket sent a second diplomat, the nephew of the Beygraf to speak directly with the Pasha of Tusmit. In another blow of treachery, the diplomat of Ket and most of his party was ambushed and brutally murdered by what are reported to be elite Tusmitter assassins during a stop-over in the Tusman hills. Though a formal investigation by both sides is yet to be completed, tension between these two states is very high. Some fear war could break out if a peaceful solution is not come to quickly. Whatever the outcome, these events are surely to be felt through out the Volverdyva Trade Route.

What does this mean for Ket Characters in this Scenario?

Ket has a distinctive accent in both Common and the Baklunish tongue. Dress and mannerisms are slightly different when compared to the typical Tusmitter. Unless a Ket PC passes a Disguise check (DC15) to purposely fake his nationality, the PC suffers a -4 circumstance penalty to all charisma-based social skill checks. When dealing in-depth with a Tusmitter authority figure, the Disguise check is harder (DC17). If the authority figure catches the person trying to misrepresent themselves, there is a 50% chance that PC is rounded up at the end of the Scenario for questioning at the cost of an additional TU (One Time Unit). Other than the penalties to skill checks listed above, there is no TU penalty from authorities for a Ketite who is open to begin with about his nationality. **Note:** Non-Human's from Ket have a +10 circumstance bonus to their Disguise checks for the above check only.

City of Blashikdur

From an easterner's perspective, this would be the northern capital of Tusmit. The city is located in the rural Sheikdom of Malimar, and is thus well within the sphere of influence of the True Faith sect. Lawlessness is not tolerated and the natives are not known for their welcoming of outsiders, but trade brings in enough of these outsiders to make them tolerated, (barely.)

The population of the city is approximately 10,000.

Like most Baklunish nations, northern Tusmit is very lawful and quick to arrest, (especially foreigners.) Though the other nations differ to both extremes, for Tusmit, as long as the PCs mind their manners and don't act like vigilantes, they will get by without visiting the stocks, or worse.

Unlike the Nation of Ekbir, Common is well known by the population of Tusmit (and Ekbir). Though Baklunish is used as the mother tongue, and for all official dealings and documents.

PCs who feel they can murder whomsoever they choose, even by accident, shall quickly find their neck and shoulders becoming distant relations when the Mullahs and city guards come investigating. Things like theft or breaking and entering are also not recommended activities within the north of Tusmit.

The Fading Land

One hundred miles northeast of Blashikdur resides a magical place of elemental confluence. When the elemental conditions are right, a gateway opens into a small pocket realm. A stream rushes by a rocky cliff wall, buffeted by mountain breezes. When the sunlight strikes this cliff wall at sunset, all four elements are present and a nearly-invisible gateway opens into this pocket realm.

These pocket realms exist throughout the Flanaess and are referred to collectively as Fading Lands. No two are alike. The Fading Land in Tusmit is a place where the four elements converge.

During the Scenario, the PCs are bound to hear talk of the Fading Lands, or eventually encounter it personally. When this happens, allow each PC a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC25) to know the above-listed information (paraphrase the text for them).

This particular Fading Land is roughly cubical, like the inside of a box. Two opposite walls are solid earth, and the other two opposite walls are flat planes of water. The floor and ceiling of this box are roiling sheets of lava.

Fortunately for travelers, the interior of the box is filled with misty air, so the Fading Land is habitable.

Recently, a powerful efreeti named Amir Rashad has made the Fading Land his domain. With the aid of a powerful Baklunish wizard named Tarqaan and gifts from their powerful dark master, he constructed two huge islands that float lazily through the empty space of the Fading Land. On one, he keeps his collection of slaves. The other island is his exquisitely decorated home.

The Plot

Crime has been on the rise in Tusmit, and one of the characters behind this crime spree is the Baklunish wizard Tarqaan. However, this activity is but the visible tip of the iceberg. Tarqaan is allied (if not master of) Amir Rashad (the efreeti).

After a selection process by Tarqaan to find a tribe backward enough, yet demandingly blood thirsty, the two put their plan in motion. Rashad appeared before the small village of Tusman hill people in an extravagant display of power. After all the smoke, mirrors and fireworks had faded, the warriors of the village became the new fanatical servants that the evil over-plot needed.

The superstitious hill men look upon the efreeti as a divine being and worship him accordingly. For these primitives, Tarqaan is but a servant of Rashad. Their new god is one of Fire. In a dark and horrific ritual of pledging, these hill men sacrificed the weak among the village to the fires. In return, they were granted the gifts of strength and power. Should they ever forsake their new master, those gifts will be removed. (Or so Rashad and Tarqaan told them.)

These hill men have forsaken their past, burned their own village, and proclaimed themselves the World Burners. Their only master is the Fire God and his proxy Tarqaan.

Tarqaan has used (in Rashad's name) the ruthless and fanatical Tusman Hill Men to commit murders, arson, and kidnappings. As part of their rewards, the efreeti has granted the Tusman Hill Men great strength. The World Burners are spreading chaos and fear throughout Tusmit.

In this adventure, the characters uncover the activities of the World Burners in the city of Blashikdur, learn of Amir Rashad, and take the fight to the efreeti hidden away in his Fading Land lair. Though they have an opportunity to interact with Tarqaan, he is well experienced in the games of misdirection and his name and connection to the actual goings-on is well disguised.

Cast of Characters

Several key characters are presented in this scenario, and they are outlined here. A brief history and role-playing notes are provided for each.

Fazud owns and runs a Kettish-styled bathhouse in Blashikdur. He is a long-term friend of Walker Salidius and has acquired information that a bath runner tends to

overhear. The Walker has arranged for Fazud to tell this information (and any breaking news) to the PCs when they stop over. For the moment he is disturbed by the crime wave gripping his city, and the growing anti-Ket sentiment of the population. Though Fazud is a Tusmiter, owning a Kettish styled bathhouse has brought on a certain amount of hostility.

Currently, Fazud is drowning and near death in one of his own baths when the characters arrive in his bathhouse. If they save him, Fazud may give the characters some valuable information about a conversation that he overheard. Fazud is a grossly overweight, nervous Baklunish man.

Tarqaan is a powerful wizard of pure Baklunish blood and proud of it, tracing his lineage back to the now defunct Baklunish Empire. Tarqaan is the servant of a far darker master (and a mistress) and a secret faithful of He of Eternal Darkness. Though the identity of his mistress is a secret, his goals are not. He wishes to create a degree of chaos in the lands of Tusmit specific to a certain styled outcome. Tarqaan operates according to this agenda: to sow discord throughout Tusmit, (specifically anti-Ket and to a lesser extent, anti-foreigner seeds.) His personal desires though, do not always mesh fully with those of his dark mistress. He originally made a false alliance in order to gain access and knowledge of the Fading Lands with another evil power of Tusmit (ignorant to his choice of divine patron), but now his heart and true loyalties have settled firmly with his dark mistress. It is from this web of connections, alliances and servitude that Tarqaan has become connected to the efreeti slavemaster Amir Rashad. To guard the valuable Fading Lands till it is time for its use, Rashad has set up a home within them, using the pocket plane as his lair and slave pens. Tarqaan devised the seduction of the World Burners in order to begin a crime spree throughout Tusmit that has gone unchecked for months. Although the characters might not meet Tarqaan in this scenario, it is possible that they may interact with him for a little while. He is a member of the Order of the Pure Blood (an order of mages within Tusmit), and is racist and arrogant towards the non-Baklunish in the extreme, though he attempts to hide it when disguise requires it. He also considers himself an artist of magical items, and produces wands of a very high quality. A severe weakness for one whom would be better served with anonymity.

Tarqaan is currently getting ready to move locations, due to word sent to him by his mistress that powerful entities have entered the city, searching him out.

Amir Rashad is an efreeti slavekeeper, well known among his kind for keeping and trading quality slaves. Amir Rashad has also been a servant of Tharizdun for

countless centuries. This has earned him the distrust and hate of many of his own kind. He is not welcome among the bronze cities of the efreeti and escaped a prison of sorts to join Tarqaan here on the prime plane. Even among evil, he is an outcast for his allegiances, as are most servants of He of Eternal Darkness.

Rashad is excited to be back in active service of his unholy liege again, particularly since it allows him to restart his slave-trading operations on Oerth. Amir Rashad knows the power of his ability to grant *wishes*, and often rewards his servants and allies with *wish* spells but does not do this lightly. He is more than aware of the consequences a carelessly used *wish* could bring about. The rewarding of these gifts are kept very ritualistic to better promote the mysticism of his connection to divine powers. This helps keep his simple-minded servants in awe.

Amir Rashad is the quintessential decadent noble, secure in his power and dismissive of those he considers beneath him (which is nearly everyone). He enjoys dressing in fine (magically treated) silks, and being surrounded by items of luxury. The only thing that Amir Rashad fears is his dark mistress in the service of the Cult of Tharizdun (who does not appear in this scenario).

The World Burners are a group of evil Hill Men from the Tusman Hills that have begun to worship Rashad and the idea of the 'Fire God' that the efreeti has presented to them. They currently serve Tarqaan, the Baklunish wizard in a covert role. Tarqaan originally took a select few of these Hill Men to the Fading Land located a few days outside of Blashikdur, where they met the terrifying Amir Rashad, Slavemaster of the Fading Land. From there, a heavily orchestrated pageant was put on, tricking these simple (but evil) folk into going back to their village and 'summoning' the efreeti and dedicating themselves to him, in the name of the 'Fire God'.

All the World Burners have been enhanced by Amir Rashad's *wish* spell, and they possess superhuman strength. They believe these enhancements to be gifts from the Fire God. The World Burners sow discord and mayhem under Tarqaan's orders, and take select slaves to the Fading Land to supplement Amir Rashad's slave pens. These men are ruthless brutes who know little about the greater order of evil they participate in. They believe Tarqaan to be a lesser servant of the Fire God, and Rashad to be the worldly proxy of that god. They know that Amir Rashad leads them in worship to some powerful and mysterious entity that they call the Fire God, but on occasion have heard Rashad refer to this power as the Dark God in private prayers. Due to the simple nature of the hill men, they have made some of their own half-baked interpretations of the mysticism of their new masters. This is encouraged by both the Amir and by

Tarqaan. The World Burners use the war cry of "Fire for the Fire God!" It should be noted that 'The Fire God' is completely made up, and Knowledge (religion) checks do not provide any information on such an entity. The Dark God, on the other hand, is Tharizdun.

Mufat is a good ranger that patrols the area around Blashikdur. He was investigating the strange presence of the armored hunting cats and the mysterious terror they have brought forth when he was captured and enslaved within the Fading Lands. Now, he works among the slaves in an attempt to free them. He is good-hearted and determined to liberate the slaves, and he happily allies with the characters. Mufat is an older man with a hoarse voice who looks ragged at the best of times. In his imprisonment, he is filthy.

The Dark Mistress is the boss of both Tarqaan and Amir Rashad. Her true identity is something both minions take to the grave with them. She is a separate entity from the other big evil power in Tusmit.

Adventure Summary

Encounter 1 A Kettish Bathhouse in Tusmit: This scenario begins right in the action, as the characters must storm a bathhouse in Blashikdur to destroy the World Burner cultists holed up there, and rescue the hostages they've taken.

Introduction: Once the first Encounter is wrapped up, the characters learn where they are, and why they've come to Tusmit.

Encounter 2 Information Gathering: By questioning the World Burners and/or the bathhouse owner, the characters might learn of a local wand merchant who is assisting the World Burners, and of slave deliveries in and around the Yatils. A towel map is also picked up.

Encounter 3 The Wand Merchant: If the characters follow up on the wand merchant, they meet Tarqaan's double, and possibly Tarqaan himself. Tarqaan doesn't fight the characters; instead, he gives them a few clues while trying to misdirect them, and flees, blowing up his entire shop if the characters become violent.

Encounter 4 Slave Wagon: When the characters head off to the Fading Lands, they arrive just before sunset. Waiting for entry are two World Burner thugs, and a cartload of new captives from Blashikdur. Although the characters probably defeat these foes quite easily, they are

suddenly assaulted by a group of trained fiendish dire tigers, sent by Tarqaan to soften up the characters.

Encounter 5 Into the Fading Land: At sunset, the characters can enter the Fading Land, and observe its strange construction. Two islands chase each other around the interior of this pocket realm, and one is approaching the ledge the characters arrived on.

Encounter 6 The Slave Island: The slave island swings up to the ledge the characters are on, allowing them access to the slave level. The slaves are unguarded, and can provide some valuable clues.

Encounter 7 Slavemaster of the Fading Land: When the characters decide to fight Amir Rashad in his home, they find he is entertaining some powerful guests. Too bad they slip the party during the ensuing battle.

Encounter 8 After defeating Rashad (or perhaps not), the PC's can explore the innards of the Rashad's floating island including the Altar room, the barracks and the engine room.

Conclusion: The characters have crushed the World Burners, defeated Amir Rashad, chased away the evil wizard Tarqaan, and liberated many slaves who have never known freedom. All is well in the world.

Reminder to the Players

The VTF 'Three is the Evilest Number' Series is a long and involved story arc (Dare I say, Epic?), stretching over many adventures and several years. Though it may not seem like it now, plot points, names, notes, writings and even seemingly happenstance occurrences could become very important sometime down the road. It is highly recommended by the Plot Coordinator that Players who have taken an interest in this story arc keep notes or perhaps even a journal, though it is of course, not mandatory. Two or even Ten Scenarios from now, you may thank your self.

- Chris Chesher, Meta Regional Plot Coordinator

Reminder to the Judge

A general note on representing the in-game word usage for NPCs when referring to the names of gods. Due to the reverence (and sometimes fear) of these most divine and powerful beings, the NPCs do not use the true name of the god in vain during idle conversation. Only when the god's power is truly being invoked (though not

necessarily by a spell) is the true name used. It's a firm believe that to use the gods' true name invokes that being's attention. The descriptive name used can also sometimes refer to which sect or view the worshipers have of their god, but this is not always the case. For instance, when the NPCs in this scenario wish to refer to Nerull, they say, "The Reaper", in an attempt to avoid his attention. Also, the NPCs in this Scenario refer to Zilchus as "The Money Changer", for the sect that is being referenced dealt with that aspect of the god more so, than those who would refer to him as "The Great Guildmaster". To say, "Fharlanghn Rules the Roads" is a blessing, invoking the god's power. To say "Zilchus be poor" is profanity.

A Note on the Scenario Layout

This adventure is not linear, and presents a number of layout wrinkles that a judge should be familiar with before attempting to run this scenario.

Unlike most Living Greyhawk adventures, this adventure starts *in media res* (basically meaning, starting right in the thick of things) before the introduction, almost as a flash-forward. The characters begin in Encounter 1 by rescuing a group of hostages in a bathhouse in Blashikdur, with little information on why they're here at all or why they're with their companions. Once this scene is all wrapped up, read the Introduction to the players, which explains what they're doing in Tusmit in the first place. If the players can roll with this style of introduction, that is good. But should the PCs have difficulties accepting their situation (such as lack of information and back-story they in theory are entitled to), feel free to ease their concerns by stopping and giving them some of the information from the Introduction section. However, it is important to remember that the Scenario starting point is still Encounter One, and not the Introduction. The first chance the PCs have to cast spells or take actions in standing outside the bathhouse.

After the Introduction, cut back to the Encounter 2, where the characters follow up on the clues about the World Burners' crime spree.

The clues from the World Burners point in two directions: to a wand merchant (actually, the mastermind Tarqaan), and to the Fading Land that is several days' (100 miles) travel away. If the characters follow up with the wand merchant, run Encounter 3, in which the characters meet Tarqaan. Then go on to Encounter 4 once the characters leave Blashikdur.

If, after questioning the World Burners, the characters instead proceed right to the Fading Land, then skip Encounter 3 and go on to Encounter 4.

After Encounter 4, the adventure proceeds in a more linear fashion, although the characters can go through Encounters 6 and 7 in any order.

Also, be advised that the preparedness of the villains in the final combat (Encounter 7) relies heavily on whether or not they were warned that the characters are coming. At several places, the characters may tip their hand, and alert Amir Rashad to their presence, which will make their confrontation with him more interesting.

Encounter One: A Kettish Bathhouse in Tusmit

You have arrived in the northern Tusmit city of Blashikdur while on your way to Ekbir. You had to take a detour on the journey to visit the owner of the Kettish-styled bathhouse in this city. The contact information was passed during a chance meeting with Walker Salidius near the Tusmit/Ket border.

Before you is the address that Walker Salidius mentioned in his letter. Somewhere inside should be the man named Fazud he suggested you speak with. Now if just all these soldiers would get out of your way. The officer in charge points at the entrance to the low, wide bathhouse a dozen paces away.

The officer spits out in common with a thick local accent, "The criminals ducked in there only a few minutes ago. I think there are three or four of them, maybe as many as five. They don't wear a lot of armor, typical of hill men, but each one is powerful enough to cut a man in half with those falchions. Their strength is superhuman, and they have a temperament like wild animals. I've already lost a number of good men to these 'World Burners.' Filthy cultists!"

"They've taken hostages too, mostly women and children. If you act quickly enough, you might save the hostages..." the officer becomes pained and lowers his voice.

"Yes, I said 'you'. I have few men left, and what I have is barely enough to keep the crowd safe, and the escape routes covered incase these World Burners make a run for it. I would not be asking strangers, nay, outsiders, like you if this were not such a severe case. Please, by the Fourth Scriptures of the Mufti, help us once this day" invokes the guard captain.

Wait for the PCs to accept. Some may have social differences and may need a little extra time to decide. Once things have been settled, read on.

“A Mullah went for more Guard, so they are on the way, but unless you can act fast, it could be too late for these innocent victims. If you can take any of these criminals alive, so much the better, but if you have to protect your own lives, or those of the hostages, show no mercy. In this one act, I shall protect you” vows the captain.

“Get in there, and quickly!”

Have all of the players immediately roll initiative. They are standing just outside the bathhouse, which is mapped out in detail in Appendix 3

As soon as a character enters the bathhouse and looks past the hanging curtain that blocks his view of the bathhouse interior, read:

This low structure looks to be a single large room. No movement is immediately apparent. Hanging curtains of fine make obscure much of the room. Oil lamps arranged neatly along the walls chase away the shadows. To your left is a single large bath, filled with gently steaming water. Ahead and to the right are three other smaller baths. They are also full; the two nearest are filled with water, and the farthest is murky with blood floating in the water. The occasional bit of air bubbles up through the red murk, while the other water tubs keep to their silent steam.

The blood-filled bath is mostly water, actually, but there is a lot of blood in the water, obscuring the characters' vision of what the pool contains. At the bottom of the pool is a man drowning to death; the bubbles are the last of his air escaping his lungs. Although the characters are probably very suspicious of the bloody bubbling pool, this man needs help very soon, or he'll die.

The drowning man is the bathhouse owner, a fat Baklunish man named Fazud. The World Burners stormed in here a few moments ago, and found Fazud here. They tied him to a heavy urn, cut him badly, and tossed him into the bath to bleed to death and/or drown. He currently has a mix of real and subdual damage and is staggered.

Fazud only has a handful of rounds left of holding his breath. Starting at the end of the round the characters rolled initiative, Fazud runs out of air and must start making Constitution checks each round or begin drowning. Fazud's Constitution score is 11. The first DC for Fazud is four plus the APL (DC 12 at APL 8, DC 14 at APL 10, DC 16 at APL 12, and DC 18 at APL 14); at higher APLs, he's already been drowning for longer,

and he has less time to live. Three rounds after failing his Constitution check, Fazud dies (see the Drowning Rule in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). The bubbles in the water cease at that time. Being staggered, Fazud has no strength to struggle or thrash in the water.

If the characters investigate the pool by jumping in or probing it with an object at least five feet long, they can identify something man-sized at the bottom. If a character feels around, he can tell it's a man tied tightly to a heavy bronze urn.

It's possible to give Fazud more time by either using appropriate magic (*cure* spells won't give him any more air, but spells like *endurance*, which improve his Constitution checks, will help him), or by underwater respiratory assistance (Heal check, DC 30).

There are several ways rescuers can get Fazud out of the water. They can either lift him out along with the heavy urn (Strength check, DC 10 plus the APL), cutting his bonds (the rope has 4 hit points; remember that slashing weapons do half damage underwater), or untying the knots (Use Rope check DC 10 plus the APL). The characters may find other ingenious ways to save the drowning Fazud. Use your discretion when considering the likelihood of success.

If he's rescued, Fazud is too busy gasping for breath and examining his wounds to provide the characters any assistance in this encounter.

One of the standing curtains hides stairs going down to a low-ceilinged basement. Once the characters pull back the curtain, a female scream echoes up from downstairs.

The basement is where the baths are heated. There is very little space for Medium-size characters to move around. In this cramped environment, the six World Burner cultists attack the characters. Refer to the map in Appendix 3 for this combat.

Creatures:

APL 8 (EL 9)

☛ **World Burner thugs (6)**, male human Bbn2/Rog1: hp 29 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 11)

☛ **World Burner thugs (6)**, male human Bbn3/Rog2: hp 44 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 12 (EL 13)

☛ **World Burner thugs (6)**, male human Bbn4/Rog3: hp 59 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 14 (EL 15)

🔪 **World Burner thugs (6)**, male human Bbn6/Rog3: hp 77 each; see Appendix 1.

Tactics: The World Burners are fearless combatants who fight to the death. All of the World Burners rage as soon as they see the characters. They then try to lure the characters into the narrow spaces between the hanging baths, and then move to flank them. At APL 12 and above, they charge whenever reasonable in order to make use of their Power Lunge feat.

Treasure:

Defeat the World Burner thugs.

APL 8: L: 463; C: 0; M: *wand of bull's strength*, 24 charges (value 180 gp per character), *wand of keen edge*, 12 charges (value 225 gp per character).

APL 10: L: 338; C: 0; M: *+1 chain shirt* (x6) (value 104 gp each per character), *wand of bull's strength*, 24 charges (value 180 gp per character), *wand of keen edge*, 12 charges (value 225 gp per character).

APL 12: L: 151; C: 0; M: *+1 chain shirt* (x6) (value 104 gp each per character), *+1 falchion* (x6) (value 198 gp each per character), *wand of bull's strength*, 24 charges (value 180 gp per character), *wand of keen edge*, 12 charges (value 225 gp per character).

APL 14: L: 151; C: 0; M: *+1 chain shirt* (x6) (value 104 gp each per character), *+1 falchion* (x6) (value 198 gp each per character), *+1 ring of protection* (x6) (value 166 gp each per character), *+1 amulet of natural armor* (x6) (value 166 gp each per character), *wand of bull's strength*, 24 charges (value 180 gp per character), *wand of keen edge*, 12 charges (value 225 gp per character).

Development: Once the World Burners are defeated, the characters can free the eight hostages that have been locked in the closet in the basement. The hostages are washerwomen and some children who were out in the street when the attack happened. There were no customers at the time. Once the hostages have been found and released, move on to the Introduction.

Introduction

West. Among your many adventures, all clues to the source of the mysterious contraband connected with the dreaded cult of Elemental Evil have pointed west. The nation of Ekbir could be that western source. It's been a long trip along the trade route and a stop over in Tusmit is the order of the day.

Just before entering Tusmit from Ket, a messenger caught up with you. The message was from Walker Salidius, suggesting that you stop in to see an old friend of his named Fazud. That the bathhouse

operator might have some information you would find interesting. The Ekbir border is only just across the Blashikmund River, so there is time to spend.

During your trek across Tusmit, you heard that crime has reached unprecedented levels in the nation. Many authority figures have given you a hard glance.

Your clandestine rendezvous in the beautiful land of Tusmit has led you to Blashikdur, a city in the north on the Blashikmund River. There, a gang of barbaric, superhuman tribesmen have been perpetrating a crime spree of unsurpassed brutality. This gang, called the "World Burners," has committed several acts of murder, arson, and kidnapping. Dozens are missing from the city of Blashikdur and the Sheikdom of Malimar, and hundreds have been killed by their crimes.

For adventurers of your skill and renown, acquiring permission to look into these matters from the Tusmit Authorities was fairly easy. Armed with a Permit granting free passage through the northern Sheikdoms, in an effort to discover the source of this trouble, you've set off in your investigation. Time is not on your side though, as other adventurers have gained similar permits, and all these documents expire within 14 days.

This text leads into Encounter One, which the characters have already played. Now is probably a good time for the characters to introduce themselves to each other.

Encounter Two: Information Gathering

Now that this group of World Burners has been defeated, the characters are free to follow up on the thugs' origins and further the investigation. There are several ways that the characters may gain clues, but a few of them are:

Questioning Fazud

If the characters saved Fazud's life, the fat man reveals the following, as he mops his sweaty brow:

"Many weeks ago, just after the attacks really started in earnest here in Blashikdur, I overheard one of my patrons, a well-known ranger named Mufat. I do not make a habit of eavesdropping on my customers, but his tale of mystery intrigued me greatly. The ranger was talking to one of his friends, a blessed Mullah here in Blashikdur, about a chaotic thing he had witnessed.

The ranger Mufat has been investigating the existence of strange four-legged beasts within the backcountry. Several fatal attacks have been linked to these beasts, but little information has been collected. The tracking of these beasts had led Mufat to a remote part of Tusmit, some 100 miles northeast.

Though never encountering the strange beasts, he did come across a cartload of people in chains being taken across the foothills of the Yatil Mountains. There were Tusman Hill Men driving the cart of prisoners, and Mufat assumed the Hill Men were slavers.

The cart was driven to a stream that flowed by a cliff face. There, the slavers waited a little while. Right at sunset, the Hill Men drove the cart right through the cliff face. The ranger tried to follow a few minutes later, but couldn't get through the rock wall. He waited for a few hours, but the slavers did not reappear, nor did their human cargo.

The ranger came back to Blashikdur to seek the help of the Mullah in question. It seems he is also a great hunter of strange beasts. I believe the two of them set off to investigate the matter further. I have not heard of either returning to the city. That was several weeks ago.

I do have this though. It's a towel that Mufat made a crude map on while explaining his experience to the Mullah. It should hold just enough markings to get you to the spot where the cart disappeared into the cliff face.

My newly perforated gut tells me the evil he has uncovered has to do with the disappearances and troubles we are having here in Blashikdur today."

The ranger's tale and the crude towel map was specific enough that Fazud can give the characters pretty clear directions to the site of the disappearance. Fazud himself though, has never been out that way before. Fazud can describe the ranger Mufat in very good detail. He's an older, scruffy-looking human with a hoarse voice. Fazud says the Mullah is named Hashem and though he does not know him, he can describe him to the PCs.

If Fazud is dead his spirit has no problem with being raised from the dead. He even has the money to pay for half of the cost. So should a PC take his body to a temple for raising, Fazud reimburses the PC after for half the cost. Fazud does not have any more money than that. He has spent most of his savings in other pursuits.

Information that characters can find without questioning the World Burners:

One of the World Burners has two wands in his possession, in addition to the other loot. Both are of

extraordinary manufacture, depicting intricate carvings of bulls, boars, and other beasts of great strength (on one), and carving of edged weapons slicing through rocks and logs (on the other). The wands are made of ipp wood, and the carvings are inlaid with mithral. Clearly, these items are very valuable, apart from their magical properties. If the characters want to track down the wand manufacturer, then a Gather Information check (DC 14 plus the APL) or a Bardic Knowledge check (DC 20) directs them to Tarqaan, a wizard on Galda Row. If the characters investigate this lead, go to Encounter 3.

Questioning the World Burners

The World Burners are highly fanatical with religious fervor and resistant to interrogation and are unwilling to say much. However, they will say that there are over thirty World Burners operating in Blashikdur and Malimar, and more in the rest of Tusmit. Any surviving World Burners talk about their numbers without any interrogation, as they're proud of all the trouble their gang is causing. They don't know the actual locations of the other cells though.

If any World Burners are interrogated magically, via *detect thoughts*, *speak with dead*, or the like, then (on a failed save), the World Burners give out much of the following information. Clever characters can also glean the following information from them on a successful Knowledge (religion) check (DC 12 plus the APL). This represents using the religious dogma they are spewing, against them, enraging them to say what they should not. Retries on this check are possible, but each topical failure raises the DC by 2.

- If any of the World Burners start spouting, their answers are vague and filled with chaotic dogma and invoking of the Fire God.
- The World Burners never reveal that they are working for Tarqaan.
- They reveal that they got their wands from a man above a shop on Galda Row (if the characters investigate this lead, go to Encounter 3).
- They say that these wands were gifts from the Fire God. It should be hard to tell if the World Burners are implying that they just stole the wands, or if they were supplied with the wands. Most importantly, they say that the ultimate mastermind behind their crime spree is a great Lord of Fire who lives in a magical place several days travel toward the Yatil Mountains.

- The World Burners deliver the people they capture to this magical place, and the Lord of Fire has granted them all their fantastic strength in the name of the Fire God.
- The World Burners don't know Amir Rashad's name, or that he's an efreeti, but they can describe him, but it is always exaggerated.
- The World Burners can give pretty good directions to the "magical place." That corresponds with the towel map. If the characters head there, go to Encounter 4.

If the characters are having real trouble in deciding what to do next, the Blashikdur Guard arrives, and the Mullah with them does his best to respectfully point the characters in the right direction (to follow the map). Remember that the Mullah is a spiritual leader of the people, not a temporal one. He does not have the authority to grant special legal powers to the PCs.

Encounter Three: The Wand Merchant

If the characters follow up on the wands, they encounter Tarqaan, a wizard and member of the Order of the Pure Blood, a group of Baklunish wizards reputed to be racists and Bakluni supremacists.

Tarqaan lives at the top of a three-story building on Galda Row, a crowded bazaar in Blashikdur with permanent shops that sell foodstuffs of all kinds (most notably the local fruit, *galdas*). The bottom floor is an open shop, which sells fruit, vegetables, and chickens. On one side of the shop is a bakery, and on the other side is a spice shop.

Before you is the address of the wand merchant responsible for crafting the captured devices. Instead of arcane apparatuses, around you are bins of fruits and vegetables. In the far corner, chicken coops hold the usual contents, with a cat staring down at them from the proper side of the fencing. A man stares at you with simple look on his face, and a touch of drool on his chin. "May I eyes be selling you some galda fruit?" say the man in a dimwitted version of a local accent.

The shopkeeper is a simple (as in slow-witted) Baklunish man, named Jahib the Dim. Jahib doesn't know much of anything, other than the following:

- A man lives upstairs, and the man's name is Tarqaan.
- Jahib thinks the man is an all-powerful mage.
- A lot of rough types visit the man lately from time to time, but they leave Jahib alone. Many other fancy type people come to purchase the carved sticks Tarqaan buys.
- Tarqaan doesn't like it when Jahib sells food to anyone who isn't Baklunish. Tarqaan says that those 'mongrels' don't deserve to share 'our' plates.
- Tarqaan rents the entire building from the city government/land lord. He then sub-lets the first floor for 'a really generous fee'.
- When business is not good for Jahib, the man upstairs gifts him extra money, just to keep his shop open. He's very kind to do it.
- Jahib lives in the back of the first floor, on a cot. He has no family.
- Jahib will happily go inform Tarqaan that he has visitors, if the characters want him to, though usually, people just ring the bell in front of the beaded door at the top of the outside stairs.
- The cat's name is Feathers. It's an alley cat that he lets stick around to do mousing. It doesn't always work out, for the cat likes to get into things it shouldn't. It comes and goes as it pleases.

An old cat prowls around the shop, looking hungrily at the chickens, but the chickens don't seem to mind, for they are devising their own secret plan to take over Tusmit. Jahib calls the cat Feathers, and says she hangs around his shop all the time as a semi-wanted guest. Good Mousers are hard to come by. In reality, the cat is Tarqaan's familiar, keeping an eye on things for her master. She immediately and empathetically lets him know about the characters and their questions, if they look like anyone other than ordinary townspeople shopping for food.

Feathers the Cat has Spell Resistance 21 and all the abilities of a 16th level familiar, including Scry.

The stairs to the second floor are on the side of this building, between Jahib's shop and the spice shop next door. The stairs lead right onto the street. All the doorways in this building aren't blocked off with doors, but with hanging curtains of purple beads.

Hanging in front of the purple beaded curtain is a sign written in Baklunish. Its reads [for those that read Baklunish], "Welcome to Tarqaan's Custom Wands. Please ring the bell before entering. NO SPELL CASTING ALLOWED IN OR NEAR THIS SHOP!"

The second story of the building is a large meeting room, but it's usually empty. Cushions and short tables take up the middle of the room, while a small display counter takes up the far end of the room. The World Burners come here for their orders and to get payment afterward.

Stairs go up on the other side of the room, blocked off by another purple bead curtain. Tarqaan's *simulacrum* is standing here behind the counter, tending shop. The real Tarqaan can hear the situation from the opening of the staircase. There are several magical contingencies placed about. They are detailed later.

The top floor of the building is where Tarqaan has a simple bed and, more importantly, his laboratory. In his laboratory, Tarqaan researches Baklunish lore, summons extraplanar creatures, and crafts wands. It's near the bustle of the city, but out of prying eyes, and he likes it here. Tarqaan eavesdrops on the goings on below through the open stairwell. There are several magical contingencies (described below) prepared in case powerful foes catch on. Tarqaan has come too far to be caught now. It's not so much the adventurers he fears, but the bigger fish that keep an eye on the adventurers.

Meeting Tarqaan's Twin

The characters may want to question Tarqaan, or to immediately confront him, just assuming that he's a villain. But all they are going to get to meet is his *simulacrum* clone.

Tarqaan is the mastermind behind the events related to this scenario, and much of the crime in Tusmit, but the characters probably won't find this out themselves. In fact, Tarqaan (or his clone) lies to the characters throughout their interview with him, but his substantial protections make discovery of his deception unlikely (see Tarqaan's Protections, below). By the time the characters arrive, Tarqaan knows all about the failure of his World Burner gang at the bathhouse (Tarqaan has eyes and ears all over this city).

If Tarqaan's cat familiar thinks characters seem like they just want to talk (don't have weapons drawn or act hostile), then Tarqaan's clone consumes a *potion of glibness* and is waiting for the PCs to arrive. He stands behind his counter at the far end of the second story room. He invites them all to sit on the floor cushions around a table. All the while the real Tarqaan listens and keeps in contact with the clone via *rary's telepathic bond*.

[Note, any reference to Clone, is a reference to the *simulacrum*].

Describe Tarqaan with:

The man before you has the golden-colored skin and piercing green eyes, common to the typical Baklunish. He wears a voluminous robe over well-made, but not expensive, breeches. It's hard to tell whether this man is middle-aged or truly old. He seems to have a slight stoop, as from some old back injury not quite healed. He folds his arms across his chest, and looks at you piercingly but patiently. "Are you here to purchase a wand? I do not remember having any ordered by you." Says the man.

Tarqaan is excited about providing the characters with a little misdirection. He avoids blatant lies, but if the characters can succeed at a Sense Motive against Tarqaan's Bluff (which is +11 normally, +41 after consuming the *potion of glibness*), then they can sense that he isn't telling the whole truth.

The characters probably talk to Tarqaan about his involvement with the World Burners. Tarqaan pretends to be a lonely old wizard, happy just making and selling high-quality wands, who got involved in a suspicious criminal enterprise without really understanding what he was getting into. Here is the information he feeds to the characters:

- Several months ago, Tarqaan met a man who introduced himself as Amir Rashad. (This is true.)
- Amir Rashad pretended to be a man via magical disguise, but Tarqaan knew he was, in fact, some sort of genie, due to his magical nature. (This is mostly true; Amir Rashad told Tarqaan he was an efreeti and Rashad had been sent to Tarqaan by a far more powerful source- He Who is Not Appearing in this Scenario)
- Amir Rashad told Tarqaan that he lived in a Fading Land, one of the pockets of extra-dimensional space scattered throughout the Flanaess. This pocket could be accessed by a gate a few days east and north of here. (This is not really true; Tarqaan got access to the Fading Land from his dark mistress, and invited Amir Rashad to set up there.)
- Tarqaan can provide the PCs with a map to the Fading Lands. He keeps in on of the desk drawers. It is a legitimate map, and complements the towel map.

- Amir Rashad asked Tarqaan to provide quality wands, and also to provide some information about the city to groups of Tusman Hill Men. Amir Rashad paid Tarqaan handsomely, but Tarqaan has since spent the money on supplies. (This is mostly false. Amir Rashad and Tarqaan set up the plan together, and Tarqaan was responsible for most of the ideas and planning.)
- Amir Rashad appears to worship some dark and unknown god. Tarqaan doesn't know much about religion (a lie), but he thinks it might be a Fire Demon Cult from long ago. If PC's come up with a guess or conclusion of their own, Tarqaan invents more information to back the theory up. Most likely the PCs are to guess the Elder Elemental Eye Fire cult. Allow the PCs a Knowledge (religion) check on the "Fire Demon Cult" and the other info given. The answer you give them is "Inconclusive". (This is mostly a lie. Tarqaan knows full well that Amir Rashad venerates Tharizdun, and he's trying to inflame the characters with misdirection.)
- Tarqaan suspects the Tusman Hill Men are up to no good, but he doesn't know for sure. He's just doing what he was paid to do. He doesn't get out much, so he's never heard of the "World Burners". Nor does he expect any of them to come back, nor does he have any idea where to find any of them. They just came a few times to pick up the wands that had been paid and ordered for them by Amir Rashad. (This is false. Tarqaan knows full well what the World Burners do, as he orchestrates their movements.)
- Tarqaan doesn't know anything about the bathhouse or Fazud. (This is true. It's just surprising coincidence that the World Burners ducked into the same bathhouse that the characters were investigating. They were actually after a different target, and when it no longer became viable, they switched to a Kettish target of opportunity).
- If any of the characters ask to buy wands, Tarqaan sells them what he has (check below for the wands Tarqaan has available to sell). Tarqaan *only* sells to human Baklunish characters; to others, he explains patronizingly that perhaps he doesn't have anything for them after all. See below for the Wands for Sale entry.
- If the characters want him to, Tarqaan agrees to have nothing more whatsoever to do with Amir

Rashad or the Tusman Hill Men. If the PCs insist on him leaving his shop for any reason, Tarqaan reacts as if the PCs are hostile. (This is a lie, he has no intention of stopping his plans or cooperating with the authorities)

- If at any time the characters become aggressive, try to surround him, draw weapons, or cast spells without telling Tarqaan what they're doing, Tarqaan immediately set into motion his escape plans (see below), then casts a *silent dimension doors* spell, and vanishes.

Offering to sell a wand

Tarqaan has the following wands for sale at the listed APLs. He keeps these wands in a bundle of silk and displays it to the PCs.

Tarqaan offers the PCs a wand with only 3 charges left on it as a bargain. It's a wand of Dispel Magic (CL10). What he doesn't tell them is it's cursed. It appears perfectly normal, but when activated, it does a targeted dispel on the user. In addition, the cursed wand loses all of its power in two weeks.

These are the same wands the PCs have the opportunity to steal after in the treasure summary. When the acid fog and fire starts, the silk bundle of wands should be within reach of the quick fingers of the PCs. But after a few rounds, the wands get eaten by the acid, just like everything else in the shop.

All APL: *cursed wand of dispel magic (CL10)* (3 charges) (400gp) (wand loses power in two weeks)

APL8: *wand of color spray (750gp)*

APL10: *wand of color spray (750gp), wand of mount (750gp)*

APL12: *wand of color spray (750gp), wand of mount (750gp), wand of true strike (750gp)*

APL14: *wand of color spray (750gp), wand of mount (750gp), wand of true strike (750gp), wand of gaseous form (11,250gp)*

The sale prices are if the PC just purchases a wand, then leaves peacefully.

If bad things start to go down (the escape)

Tarqaan has already shipped out his most important materials to his true base of operations. He was going to use this front for a little longer, but interference by outside forces has caused him to change his plans. He has booby-trapped his shop to self-destructive should he need to escape.

On the third floor, the real Tarqaan has set up ten vials of Alchemist Fire on thin wooden stands. In his hand is a *scroll of Acid Fog*. When things start to happen, he reads the scroll (centered on the room he's in) then uses his silent *Dimension Door* spell to escape. Before he does this, he utters (as a free action) the command word to activate a *Programmed Image* spell at the bottom of the stairs. The spell brings about likeness of four Hamatula (Baatezu) that spread about the stairs and take on a defensive stance. They do this for 16 rounds. In theory, this is to slow down and confuse the PCs, not actually stop them. The room upstairs only needs a round or two to become both engulfed in flames and melted by the *acid fog* spell.

On the second floor, the *Simulacrum* has similar plans. He tries to activate a Programmed Image that makes the walls and staircase leading to the top floor appear to be on fire. Heat can be felt and smoke can be smelled along with the appropriate sounds for things burning. Activating this is a free verbal action. The fake Tarqaan drops the silk bundle of wands he is holding it. If possible, he starts all this while standing in front of the display desk.

The display desk has several drawers. There is open drawer that holds nothing but a special booby trap. Just by opening the drawer, an *acid fog* spell is set off. As a move-equivalent action, the clone opens the drawer then uses his action to cast his silent *Dimension Door* spell.

If the *simulacrum* is ever captured and can not escape, it dummies up and tries to kill itself at first opportunity, as commanded by its master.

The PC's may thwart some of this plan. The following is the trapped desk, though the PCs do not have long before the acid fog upstairs weakens the floor and the burning material upstairs starts to fall through. It won't be long before the entire building is consumed in flames.

✦ **Acid Fog Trap** (desk drawer); no attack roll necessary, entire room-cloud (2d6 points of acid damage per round); No Save (as per spell); Search (DC 35); Disable Device (DC 35).

✦ **Programmed Image x2** (one per top floor and middle floor); As per spell; Caster Level 16; Verbal command word triggers; Duration: 16 rounds;

If the PCs seem like they are coming to fight, then Tarqaan won't stay to meet them. He activates the above escape plan as soon as the PCs arrive at the upstairs door. In this case, they may never even see Tarqaan at all.

Tarqaan's Protections

Tarqaan's statistics aren't provided in this scenario, since the characters aren't intended to fight him. Tarqaan is a very high level wizard, who enjoys the following advantages in his interactions with the characters:

- He wears a *ring of mind shielding* on a *hand of glory* hidden under his clothes. Both of these items are protected by *Nystul's undetectable aura*, so they don't detect as magical.
- The following spells are active for both Tarqaans (except the *invisibility*): *Nondetection*, *Endure Elements: Acid*, *Rary's Telepathic Bond*, *Freedom of Movement*, *Invisibility*.
- Due to a cleverly and carefully worded *wish* granted by Amir Rashad, Tarqaan is immune to spells of the Enchantment school. If affected, though, he can make a Bluff check (at +41) opposed by the caster's Sense Motive to make the caster think that he has been affected by the spell.
- At worst, Tarqaan (both he and his clone) has a *silent dimension door* spell memorized, which allows him to escape nearly any situation. The real Tarqaan has two such spells in memory.

Tarqaan's Chambers

If the characters are able to search Tarqaan's room upstairs, (by preventing more than 2 rounds of acid/fire damage) they do not find very much incriminating evidence. They do find several identical maps showing the route from Blashikdur to the entrance of the Fading Land, along with the notation "enter the rock wall only when the setting sun shines upon it." Tarqaan gives these maps out to the World Burners cells that take slaves to Amir Rashad.

Otherwise, not only is the contents of the top floor beyond recoverable, but most likely, the entire building is reduced to charred remains once the fire and acid damage gets through with it.

Developments:

The PCs have just had an encounter with a powerful mage that had some preparation time. Had it been in Tarqaan's best interest to stay and fight, the PCs would have had a very rough time.

The most likely outcome is that the entire building is on fire, and roof/flooring of both levels have collapsed due to acid damage, sending burning wreckage down to the bottom. Hopefully the PC's try some heroics and save anyone that might get trapped on the bottom floor.

Or, the PCs might have a few rounds to search the desk. If they search the desk without checking for traps, the listed trap goes off. After five rounds of the upstairs acid and fire, the roof collapses and the acid fog area of effect extends to the lower floor.

In summary, it is not wise for the PCs to stay in the building. After a few minutes, the authorities arrive, and a bucket brigade starts. With everyone's help, the fire is put out before it spreads to the surrounding buildings. The authorities take charge of the remains, question the PCs about what went on, and eventually release them.

Treasure:

Loot Tarqaan's shop. This must be done before the fire consumes the shop or it is all destroyed in the fire.

APL 8: L: 58; C: 80; M: *wand of color spray* (value 62 gp per character).

APL 10: L: 58; C: 80; M: *wand of color spray* (value 62 gp per character), *wand of mount* (value 62 gp per character).

APL 12: L: 58; C: 80; M: *wand of color spray* (value 62 gp per character), *wand of mount* (value 62 gp per character), *wand of true strike* (value 62 gp per character).

APL 14: L: 58; C: 80; M: *wand of color spray* (value 62 gp per character), *wand of mount* (value 62 gp per character), *wand of true strike* (value 62 gp per character), *wand of gaseous form* (value 937 gp per character).

Encounter Four: Slave Wagon

By this time, the characters should have directions to the mysterious magical portal, either from Fazud's towel, the World Burners, or Tarqaan. Should the PCs choose to follow the directions, the three or four days of travel are uneventful. It is approximately 100 miles through foothills and forested foothills. There are horse-friendly trails though.

Allow PC's with the Track feat a Wilderness Lore check each (DC 35) to detect the armored paw prints of the trained fiendish dire tigers that are in this area on special assignment with a handler. If the PC has not played VTF3-04 "Hunt Club", then describe the tracks as being from a huge sized four-legged creature, possibly a large cat but with strange attachments to the track marks (the special barding). If the PC has played VTF3-04 "Hunt Club", tell them that these markings match exactly to the numerous tracks made by the armored hunting cats (tigers and lions) found in that scenario. The tracks are several days old and seem to go in several directions as if patrolling.

The days of travel pass quickly, and soon you are approaching your destination. A lazy brook cuts

beneath a sheer wall of stone, and a light breeze brings the scent of mountain grasses. The orange light of the setting sun illuminates the area.

You aren't alone at this secluded spot. A wagon is also here, containing two Tusman Hill Men, like the World Burners you confronted beneath the bathhouse. A third man, seemingly much more noble and powerful, oversees them. He is obviously no Hill Man. The back of the wagon is filled with dejected humans, all tied together with heavy chains. The three kidnappers are within a few yards of the rock wall, with the horse-drawn wagon pointed at it. They seem to be waiting for something, but they aren't particularly alert, and don't seem to have noticed you.

The three slavers here are two low-ranking World Burners, and a janni who works with them. They're waiting for sunset, when the gate opens, so they can drive their wagon right through the cliff wall.

These three foes won't present much of a challenge, but the characters have to move quickly. The characters can easily approach through some tall grasses up to 100 feet from the wagon. If the characters want to approach closer, make opposed Move Silently/Listen and Hide/Spot checks to see if these guards notice them. Remember that these Spot and Listen checks are penalized by -1 per 10 feet between the slavers and the character(s). If the janni gets to act before the characters can dispatch him, he plane shifts away. He can *plane shift* directly into the Fading Land, and he'll warn Amir Rashad that there are intruders nearby.

If the characters approach openly, the World Burners attack them. No one else is supposed to be here with them or meet them here outside the Fading Land. The janni is twitchy and *plane shifts* away as soon as he thinks there's trouble.

All APLs (EL 5)

🔥 **World Burner thugs** (2), male human Bbn2/Rog1: hp 29 each; see Appendix 1.

🔥 **Janni slaver:** hp 35; see *Monster Manual* (genie). This janni is neutral evil.

Tactics: The janni flees as soon as able via *plane shift* into the Fading Land to warn Amir Rashad, but the World Burners fight to the death. The prisoners perk up when the World Burners attack, and they cheer on the characters.

Within five minutes after the characters have dealt with the World Burner slavers, Tarqaan's diabolical trap comes to fruition. He knew the PCs would probably be entering the Fading Land, and he wanted to soften them up a bit so Amir Rashad would have an easier time capturing

them. To do this, Tarqaan sent word to the local handler of a number of fiendish dire tigers to assault the characters. The creatures have been on the PC's trail for two days and have caught up with them now.

The spot check to notice the tigers approaching in the tall grass is (DC 10 plus APL). Any player who fails it is surprised by the tigers and may not act in the surprise round.

APL 8 (EL 10)

🐾 **Fiendish Dire Tiger:** hp 120; see Appendix One.

APL 10 (EL 12)

🐾 **Fiendish Dire Tigers (2):** hp 120, 122; see Appendix One.

APL 12 (EL 14)

🐾 **Fiendish Dire Tigers (4):** hp 120, 122, 121, 124; see Appendix One.

APL 14 (EL 16)

🐾 **Fiendish Dire Tigers, advanced (2):** hp 240, 241; see Appendix One.

Tactics: These tigers are vindictive and malicious creatures. Their SR 25 makes them rather fearless to magical attacks. Since these are not summoned monsters, the typical protection spells that PCs use are for naught. These are trained hunting beasts with plate barding crafted to look demonic. It's easy for an unknowing observer to mistake the creature for a beast from the deep pits of the abyss fiendish tiger it is. The tigers try to pick on the same target till they figure it dead. They use their scent ability to track down invisible PCs. They also try to jump in the air at any flying PC who may foolishly leave himself within reach. Of course, flight is a sure way to defeat these tigers. Should the tigers no longer have any viable PC targets on the ground, they then head straight for the prisoners trapped in the wagon and make short work of them.

When mapping out the combat terrain, create some sloped ridges on the rock wall of varying height. This allows the tigers to get up on them and jump at low flying PCs, or pounce down on PCs below.

Treasure: The spiked barding worn by the tigers is huge sized, with little room for refitting. It is shaped to look horrific. The inside of the barding is covered in marks of evil and Tharizdun's symbol of a dark spiral. Due to this, the barding is of no value for resale.

Loot the World Burner slavers.

All APLs: L: 104; C: 0; M: 0

Development: If the characters decide to just wait and watch the slavers from the tall grass, then the tigers appear anyway, and attack them. This alerts the slavers immediately. The World Burners rush in to help the tigers, and the janni *plane shifts* into the Fading Lands to warn Amir Rashad. The tigers do not attack the World Burners, for they know their smell as friendly.

Ten minutes after the tigers are dispatched, the setting sun illuminates the rock face, and the rock face shimmers for a moment. This indicates that the gate is open, but other than the initial shimmer, the gate isn't visible. For the next five minutes, anyone walking into the rock wall can pass right through it, and back out again if they choose. Once this five-minute window has passed, however, the gate won't open until the next sunset.

The locked wagon cage contains six rural peasant types. They have no gear and no weapons. They were attacked several days ago by a World Burner raid on their rural farmstead. They have no idea where they are, or how to get back home. They fear (and rightly so), that if they spend a night out here, it won't be the elements that get them, but one of the many monsters and beasts that lurk in these wild lands. Without the PC's to protect them, none of these commoners make it home. If left unguarded for more than 4 hours, they are wiped out by any number of wild monsters that lurk this close to the Yatils and Udgru Forest.

The only useful information the commoners have is that they overheard the World Burners and their leader talking about waiting for some sort of door to appear. They're sure that once this door appeared, the slavers were just going to drive the wagon straight into the wall it's now facing.

All the different Tracks

If the PC's take the hour (and thus miss the portal opening for that day), they can find the following tracks at the listed DCs. Or the PCs can search for these on their way home.

- Wagon Tracks (DC12); there are several sets of these, from different trips. They all come here, disappear into the wall, then later seem to reappear from the wall.
- Boot Tracks (DC16); these belong to the World Burners that accompanied the slave cargo. They lead off in the same direction as the wagon tracks, southwest.

- Giant Boot Tracks (DC10); These belong to the troop of fire giants that left the Fading Lands four days ago. The tracks head east, straight into the Yatil Mountains.
- Armored Paw Prints (DC20); These are from the last patrol of the hunt club and its fire giant handler. It prints are over a week old. They head west by southwest.

Encounter Five: Into the Fading Land

Note: The PC's are about to make an extra-dimensional transition. It has a noticeable feeling. Each time a PC shifts, he feels queasy for a few moments and his skin tingles for a bit. When this happens, a Knowledge (the planes) check (DC20) or a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC26) informs the PC that they have indeed shifted to some unknown plane. In addition, the PC knows that spells such as *teleport* can not be used to escape the plane. The only way back to Oerth is through a portal (such as the one they just used) or *plane shift* type magic.

When the characters arrive in the Fading Land, read:

You pass through the stone and behold a sight of wonder. This strange place is like a huge box or room, a mile or more in every direction.

You stand upon a ledge of rock, midway up a great jagged cliff of stone. In the distance you see opposite you another cliff of stone, and you see another ledge in the middle of that face, a mile or more away.

The walls far to your left and right are undulating sheets of water, which should rush downward, but seem to be suspended as vertical planes of water.

The ceiling far above you and the floor far below are churning seas of lava. The reddish light emanating from them illuminates this place, and you can feel their heat even this far away.

Out before you float two huge islands, hundreds of feet across, drifting slowly, suspended in the air. The islands are inverted ziggurats, like giant renditions of the symbol of the Dark God, Tharizdun. They seem to be moving in a large circle. One of the islands is drifting toward you, and the other is moving away.

The island moving toward you is covered with cages, large scraps of cloth, and a number of sad and broken-looking people. From this distance, they

appear to be human, but it's hard to tell under the ruddy light in this place.

The other island is much farther away from you, almost as far as the ledge on the other end of this huge place. You can see it is adorned with fine carpets, but you can tell little else. Large bird-like creatures drift about the empty space, seeming to pay you no mind.

Your ledge is about two hundred feet wide, and juts a hundred feet from the rock cliff behind you. The rock wall behind you is unbroken, with no sign of the gate that brought you to this unusual realm.

The Birds

The bird-like creatures are arrowhawks. They are neutral to all this and just mind their own business, staying away from everyone. If a PC or other creature gets too close, the beasts warn them off with an energy blast from 45ft. If pressed, the arrowhawks gather together into a clump and fight. However, if the PCs are holding out an offering of a fresh fish from the water walls, the arrowhawk is willing to listen for a short while after it has eaten the fish. Unfortunately, these birds only speak Auran. See the 'Gone Fishing' entry later for arranging deals via fish bribes.

Clever players have a chance to wrangle an arrowhawk with the cleric Air Domain, or other controlling magic. But if the PC's get greedy, and try to take more than one arrowhawk, the entire flock of 2 elder, 8 Adult and 4 Juveniles come to save the captured member. They don't give up until they have freed the distressed arrowhawk in question. The arrowhawks are not interested in making any deals to help the PCs unless they receive large amounts of fish, but a single controlled arrowhawk can be a big gain in transporting some of the PCs through the air.

The Islands Adrift

The two islands circle around this place slowly, at about the speed of a man walking. Each takes about two hours to make a complete circuit around this land. In the course of each island's travels, it moves near the entry ledge (within a few inches of it, actually), and then near one of the vertical sheets of water. After that, it swings out to the other ledge, which is much larger and has several trees, bushes, and a grain field growing upon it. The island then swings away to the other sheet of water, and then back to the entry ledge. The map of the Fading Land in Appendix 3 shows the structure of this extradimensional space.

Right now, the slave island is approaching the entry ledge, and Amir Rashad's island is approaching the farming ledge opposite the entry ledge. The carpet hangings that divide Amir Rashad's islands up into

“rooms” are over 20 feet tall, but it’s difficult to tell that from far away.

The slave island swings near the entry ledge about ten minutes after the characters arrive, and moves next to it for only a few minutes before moving back away again.

In another hour, Amir Rashad’s island swings close to the entry ledge.

Although this realm seems to defy gravity, in fact gravity is continually pulling toward “down,” which is the lava floor. Any character unfortunate enough to fall off the ledge falls for half a mile before landing in molten lava.

Although this place is extraplanar, time flows normally here and spells are not affected by any particular traits.

Does anyone really know what time it is?

Once PC’s are inside the Fading Lands, telling time becomes rather difficult. Unless the PCs cast a spell with a known time limit (in hours) right around the time they entered the Fading Lands or have some sort of accurate timing device, there are going to be hard pressed to know when dawn, noon or dusk comes. While such specific timing is not as important to arcane casters, clerics may very well miss prayer time and lose out on spell refreshing all together. One can not come an hour late to dusk prayers, otherwise, it would be called ‘after dusk’ prayer time. They usually only have a window of about 30 minutes to start prayers.

Encounter Six: The Slave Island

Covering the black stone skeleton of the floating inverted ziggurat, like square metal fruit, are iron-barred cages lined with cloth and thick rugs. Walkways lead through the interior of the structure connecting the cages and centering at the top. Huddled masses, yearning to be free, mope about from cage to cage. There are no signs of guards, however. In the bottom apex cage, flame dances around, never spreading up into the rest of the stone and iron mass.

Amir Rashad doesn’t guard his slaves in this small realm, because he doesn’t have to. The slaves aren’t even chained up. They can’t usually get off their island without falling into the lava far below, and when the slave pen “docks” with the entry ledge, any slaves foolish enough to get off don’t know the exact time when they can walk through the solid stone cliff and exit the Fading Land. If any slaves are left on the entry ledge when Amir Rashad’s island gets around to docking with it (which it does about every two hours), then he sends out his fire

giant troops to look for escapees. When found, he gleefully tortures them in full view of the other slaves, and then deposits them back in the slave pens as a lesson to others. The slaves are free to get off on the farming ledge, in order to harvest food, but they aren’t allowed to live there.

For the most part, the slaves are a demoralized lot, resigned to their imprisonment. Most of them have little to say to the characters, as they initially think that the characters work for Tarqaan and the efreeti. If the characters are able to convince them that this isn’t so, then the slaves are able to tell them about the nature of this place and their efreeti master. The slaves also reveal that one of the newer slaves has a plan for escape.

Any character that shows interest in the escape plan, or asks about a ranger in particular, is introduced to Mufat, a ranger that was captured a week or two ago. This is the same ranger that Fazud overheard in the bath. The mullah that went was captured along with him was sold off and never seen again.

Mufat is organizing an escape attempt. He knows that every sunset, the gate to the outside world opens. However, the gate is completely undetectable from this side, and it’s impossible to know when sunset is occurring on Oerth while trapped in here.

Mufat, however, has a very good internal clock, and he knows that sunset has just happened. He also noticed that the characters have just come through, so Mufat is sure his internal clock is correct. The islands don’t revolve in exact two-hour cycles, he’s realized, but a little bit less than two-hour cycles. In two day’s time, the slave island will connect with the entry ledge just before sunset, allowing all the slaves to pile off of the island and out of the Fading Land. However, Amir Rashad is certain to notice, and his retribution would be fearsome to see. If the characters haven’t already suggested it, Mufat asks them to defeat the slave master so the slaves can avoid recapture.

By asking some of the sharp-eyed slaves, the characters can glean a useful bit of information:

- ◆ Amir Rashad is entertaining two guests. The slaves guess that these guests are probably other slave traders who wish to purchase some of Amir Rashad’s slave stock. The two traders are a hooded, inhuman figure, and the other is an efreeti like Rashad. Similar types of magical creatures have come before.
- ◆ Amir Rashad usually has a troop of fire giants as his personal guard. But a few days ago, many of them were seen leaving via the portal ledge. It looked rather organized, so perhaps they were being sent on a mission. The slaves fear their return.

- ◆ Some of the slaves think they've still seen fire giants remaining on Amir Rashad's island, but their poor weakened eyes can not be sure.
- ◆ There are only about 40 slaves left. There were close to 100 about a week back (though it is so hard to judge the passage of time here), but the majority of them were taken to the other island and never seen again. It's assumed they were sold off as slaves.
- ◆ Amir Rashad holds court on the upper middle level of his island. It has an open ceiling. There are many strange artifacts, burning fire pits and bizarre luxury items.
- ◆ Below Amir Rashad's 'court' are several chambers. Most are empty or act as guest quarters. One secure area is a temple of sorts. No slave has ever entered there and returned to tell the tale.
- ◆ A handful of slaves (3-5) are on the island acting as servants to Rashad and his guests.

The slave island is a warren of bent iron cages covered with scraps of cloth. As long as they befriend the slaves, the characters are welcome to stay here in hiding as long as they want. The slaves drink water collected when the island passes near the water walls, eat food harvested from the farming ledge, and occasionally catch strange fish caught from the water walls, that they see the Arrowhawks catching and eating. (See the Gone Fishing section below if the PCs choose to try and catch fish.)

✦ **Mufat**, male human Rgr3; hp 21 (currently 8).

The Fire Cage

A shaft drops all the way down through the inverted ziggurat prison. Holes in the side of the shaft open up to the different levels of the prison. At the very bottom of the shaft is a glow of flame, about as intense as a campfire. Warm air rises up the shaft and occasionally the prisoners travel down to the lowest level and light sticks to carry off to light cooking fires elsewhere. It's odd that the fire seems to move around.

At the very bottom of the inverted ziggurat is a single cage. It has no rugs, only super-heated bars. It's a wonder they have not melted away. Inside the cage is an Azer named T'neal. What was once a raging bonfire of passion, is now reduced to a campfire of regret and despair.

T'neal has been a prisoner of Amir Rashad for some months now, almost from the time he moved into this Fading Land. The cage itself has magical properties

granted by its position in the prison. The shape of the island focuses its sinister powers here.

The extraplanar life force is being slowly drained from the Azer. The energy is being used to keep the prison island floating. Should T'neal ever be removed from this cell, the entire island shall start to descend into the lava floor below. This happens within 1d4 minutes and has the same effect as a dispelled *Fly* spell. A summoned creature entering the cage is effectively dispelled (in a painful manner) after one round.

T'neal is very weak from the draining, rather depressed about his situation and how it came about. With a little prodding, he starts to answer the questions of the PCs.

- His name is T'neal. He was the captain of a special military unit sent by his noble liege to investigate strange goings-on. This took place on his home plane of Fire. There was an ambush and most of his unit was killed. Though the rest tried to fight to the death, some were subdued, including himself. When he next awoke, he was here, in this cell that is feeding off his life force.
- It was Amir Rashid leading fiendish minions (devils and other evil outsiders) that captured him. T'neal would like very much to escape and have some revenge on his hated enemy, if only he could safely leave his cell.
- The last few times he tried to leave his cell (there is an opening in the top), he felt the energy drain stop once he was clear of the bars, but within a few minutes, the island started to sink. On a hunch, he reentered the cell and the island rose back to its regular height.
- T'neal has contemplated allowed the island to sink, but he is not aware of the nature of the lava floor or what lies beyond it. Though the heat is not a threat to him, there are other environmental considerations.
- T'neal is not afraid of death, and would have preferred to have died in combat instead of being captured. But he has come to the decision of awaiting his revenge. Perhaps with the help of the other slaves, he shall end the reign of Amir Rashad.
- When not captaining warbands on the elemental plane of fire, T'neal was a crafter of bronze art and other trade goods.
- As long as it ends with the destruction of Amir Rashad, T'neal goes along with any reasonable plan for escape. He wishes to escape into the prime plane and eventually make his way home. First though, he wishes to explore the prime plane a little. So offers of

spells that would send him back are not desired except as a last resort.

Tneal has no weapons and he is badly drained. He is considered under the effects of exhaustion. He certainly has the spirit to aid the PCs in a fight, but he knows he would be more of a liability. Also, his leaving the cage causes the island to sink. He won't leave until all the slaves are off the island and someone can help him from the bottom of the island to the cliff. He can't climb the shaft to the top of the island nearly quickly enough. It takes him 40 rounds of climbing, just to make it to the top of the island. He'd much prefer to just jump off the island from one of the lower levels and have someone who can fly pick him up.

✚**Tneal**, male Azer Wiz5/Ftr3; hp 40; Exhausted. No spells in memory.

Gone Fishing

As the floating prison nears a water wall, the slaves gather fish with large crude fishing poles firmly attached to the outermost cages. With lengths of thick rope ending in makeshift hooks or possibly anchors, the prisoners fish the vertical plane of water. Occasionally, an otherworldly fish the size of a man or sometimes a horse, leaps from the wall, only to drop back in with a splash. Below the island and the wall, those strange large birds flock, catching and consuming the occasional fish dropped by the prisoners.

These strange fish come in many different sizes, small to large. They are rather bizarre looking, so embellish to your hearts content. They are mostly harmless to the PC's (other than the odd nipped finger, but there are certain special fish listed later). They swim about the elemental layer, occasionally jumping out of it like real fish do. But the nature of elemental attraction usually just pulls them back in.

The prisoners have learned to fish quickly and cook even quicker. Once out of the water, after an hour, the fish start to rapidly break down and dissolve. Even if cooked, the remains rot into nothingness. Once eaten, they seem to provide some sort of nutritional value, but the prisoners guess a lot of it is just leaving their system. It's still worth it to have the feeling of a full belly. So while a bunch of prisoners go through the difficult task of catching the fish, the rest quickly prepare the fish caught. After a half an hour of fishing, everyone eats as fast as they can.

In context of the adventure, the strange fish can be used to bribe the arrowhawks into service. The amount of fish caught determines what the amount and kind of service granted. Outside of magical control, this is the only way to gain the assistance of the arrowhawks. Of course, the PCs still need a way to communicate with the birds. They only speak Auran.

If the PCs can first offer a small peace offering (any size of fish), they can start a simple dialogue with the arrowhawks. The birds explain that if the PCs can collect a reasonable size catch of fish in 30 minutes, then spend the next 30 minutes feeding it to them, the arrowhawks are willing to make some deals.

Here's how the system works:

During a 30min period, each the PCs can make a number of skill checks. There are three fishing pole apparatuses. Each pole is designed to be operated by two people. If a second person is needed, one of the prisoners fills in (stats listed below), though they are of average ability.

Once a fish has been gathered, it's then fed to the arrowhawks by throwing it to them over the side. Some large fish may have to be sliced. The size of the catch determines what favors the birds agree to.

- (1) There are three Fishing Stands, each requiring a team of two to operate. At the beginning of the fish-off, roll 1d6+1 per Stand. This determines the number of attempts that each Stand gets during the 30-minute period.
- (2) Before each attempt, the Stand's crew must choose to go after a Large, Medium or Small sized fish.
- (3) Once a target is chosen, the primary fisher of the Fishing Stand makes either a Wisdom or a Dexterity check (PC's choice). The PC may add to his check any **one** applicable skill rank, such as Craft (Fishing) or Wilderness Lore. The Judge may allow related skill ranks at a half rate, such as Profession (Sailor) or Knowledge (the planes). The DC depends on the fish size; Small (DC:10); Medium (DC:20); Large (DC:30); Should the player roll a natural 1 on this check while attempting to catch a Large fish, then that PC has hooked on to one of the rare sonic fish. Every round that the fish remains in contact with the fishing line, the PC takes 2d8 of sonic damage (no save), as it travels down the fishing line. This carries on till the fish is successfully reeled in (see below). At the beginning of any round, either of the two man crew can decide to Fish or Cut Bait as a free action, then move on to their next attempt.
- (4) Once a fish has been successfully caught, it needs to be reeled in. To do this, a grapple is started. Entering the grapple is automatic. Both PC's in the crew must maintain a successful hold for one round, at the same

time. Only then, can the primary crewmember attempt a pin. Once the pin is held for a full round, the fish is captured. If the fish can (as its action) break free of the grapple twice, it escapes the hook and back into the water (or over the ledge). See below for fish stats.

🐟 **Fisher, Slave:** male human Com1; Dex +1, Fishing +3; Grapple total +2;

🐟 **Mufat:** male human Rgr3; Dex+3, Wilderness Lore +6; Grapple total +5;

🐟 **Fish, Small:** Grapple total +4; Value=1;

🐟 **Fish, Medium:** Grapple total +10; Value =2

🐟 **Fish, Large:** Grapple total +20; Value= 6

What a Bird wants, is what a Bird needs

The amount of fish fed to the Arrowhawks during the 30 minute feeding frenzy determines the favors the arrowhawks are willing to grant. They are up front about that to the PCs during the 'negotiations'. Once the birds have fed, they send a messenger to tell the PCs what they are now willing to do. All favors are cumulative, not piece meal. No matter what, the arrowhawks will not assist the PCs in actual combat.

Value 20: Information; The birds tell the PCs the following items;

- That the efreeti has been here for about half a year (the birds keep track of monthly time equivalents). The two floating islands were brought here magically by a very powerful being (probably from the outer planes) about the same time. It looked large and shadowy.
- Many different beings have been transported in magically to see the efreeti. The birds haven't recognized most of the creatures.
- The garrison of fire giants that the efreeti usually keeps has shrunk. It is hard to tell, because all fire giants look alike to them, and the troops keep rotating from below deck, but they figure the current garrison could contain about (APL 8&10 one or two; APL 12&14 three or four.)
- There are no side entrances. The only way into the floating island is from the top.

Value 30: Catch me if you can; For the next eight hours, the arrowhawks agree to be below the PCs, wherever they are. Should any of the six appointed PCs fall, the arrowhawks expertly intercept them before they hit the lava floor. They then directly transport them to the closest safe spot. This is not a taxi service, though. The birds won't drop the PCs off anywhere the PC wants. The

arrowhawks are always successful in intercepting a falling PC as long as there are free arrowhawks to do it. It typically takes 1d6 rounds to return a PC to the nearest safe landing spot. Safe means that the PC will not fall again that round.

Value 35: The arrowhawks are willing to transport six designated passengers, once, to the landing spot of the passengers choosing, anywhere within the Fading Land.

Value 45: As above, but now it's a two way trip. The PC can arrange a signal for pick-up and within 2d6 rounds, an arrowhawk picks the PC up again unless, of course, the PC just jumps over the edge.

Value 70: Gold Service Pass; The arrowhawks are willing to transport everyone the PCs designate (even all the prisoners) and transport them to a designated location. It takes many trips to carry all of the slaves.

Encounter Seven: Slavemaster of the Fading Land

Closer now, details of the other floating island become clearer in the misty air of the Fading Land. Similar to the prison island, the shape is that of an inverted ziggurat, but that is where the similarities end. This island is nearly one-half larger than the prison island. This island is made out of solid black stone with no openings on the sides. The reasonably flat and wide top is covered in towering walls of exotic clothes, making open aired chambers.

The island is like a pyramid, but flipped so that the point is now towards the ground and the flat base is up.

As the characters are moving about the Fading Land, Amir Rashad is entertaining guests. These creatures, another efreeti and a mind flayer, are bargaining hard for trade contracts on Amir Rashad's slaves. Amir Rashad's fire giant bodyguard(s) is/are present as well. Mingled about, with serving trays and other such paraphernalia, are a handful of meek human slaves. Locked safely away at the very bottom of the island, are stricken Azers. These make up the entire population of Amir Rashad's island, and (other than the imprisoned Azers) they don't split up.

Once the characters decide to assault Amir Rashad on his home island, they have several ways they can get there. They might fly over to the island, or they might get off on one of the ledges, wait for Amir Rashad's island to swing around to the ledge, then board it. In any case,

Amir Rashad is expecting a fight if the janni in Encounter 4 was able to warn him of intruders, or if the characters betray their presence while in the Fading Land. (for example; By just waiting in the open on one of the ledges, or flying over his island to scout it, since his rooms aren't roofed).

Flowing silks and fine metal meshed cloths, twenty feet high, form chambers roughly 20 feet square. Black stone pillars form the corners of these chambers and mark the 10 feet wide passageways between the flowing walls. With no roof, the sky is open to the entire surface of the island.

In the center of the island is an 80 feet by 40 feet gathering hall formed from the cloth walls. In the center sits a being of great power and flame upon a black stone throne. Before him a similar flamed wreathed being and a cloaked humanoid gesture back and forth as if speaking, but no words are uttered. Mangy-looking human slaves stand ready with serving trays. Behind the throne, (a) fire giant(s) stand guard.

Three wide stairwells are the only openings downwards from this chamber. All of the stairs are large enough to fit the giant sized creatures.

Pits of roaring fire and odd works of art and other unknown artifacts decorate the chamber.

The efreeti and the mind flayer are using their telepathy to communicate, but Amir Rashad uses his loud speaking voice to taunt the PCs and to try and activate the magical distractions he has in place.

The first action that the two slave traders take is to *Plane Shift* away. Only if all their efforts to do this are thwarted, do they join the combat, and even then, only at minimal risk to themselves.

The Trickery

The power of *permanent image* has been taken advantage of by the Amir. He has created the image of what appears to be a portal to the Plane of Fire. The illusionary portal is situated among some artwork created to look like a magical portal apparatus he encountered during his travels. Guarding the 'portal' and the artwork supporting it, are three illusionary fire giants. They just stand at attention, looking and smelling real. There's even the sound of them breathing. The portal gives off heat and smells as one would expect from a portal to the plane of fire. The scene it shows is of a rock island among a lake of lava. The fire giants and the portal are the effects of two separate castings. The Caster Level for both is 18th.

The Map

The round 10 feet by 10 feet markers represent blazing fire pits. They are normal flames, but fed by the magic of the ziggurat.

The Statue markers represent the different bizarre artworks that decorate the rooms of the silk maze. They have little value outside the efreeti community and are rather heavy and fragile.

Letters represent the different NPCs. S= Slave; AR= Amir Rashad; E= Efreeti slave trader; M= Mind Flayer slave trader; G= Fire Giant; IG= Illusionary Fire Giant;

The Silk Walls

The walls are anchored at regular intervals to the ground. A person can squeeze under them with an Escape Artist check (DC15). Otherwise, they rip the silk, and it rips unnaturally loud.

The silk itself is magically treated for fire, and does not burn, but instead responds to fire similar to the *web* spell.

For cutting purposes, consider the silk a triple strength paper wall.

Just for Coming Out

- At all APLs, Amir Rashad and all his fire giant troops have *endure elements (cold)* cast on them. This is done every morning in a ritualistic fashion downstairs in the temple of Tharizdun. This spell is cast regardless of being aware of the PCs or not.
- Amir Rashad has a large key made completely of fire around his neck with a fire rope. The key cannot leave his person unless he gives it away or he dies. This magic key opens several of the doors downstairs. Holding the key does 1d6 points of fire damage, and risks setting combustibles aflame. If the key is taken through the Fading Lands portal, it disappears. Immersing the key in liquid extinguishes it thus destroying it. *Dispel magic* has no effect on the key.

The Tip Off

- If the characters have alerted Amir Rashad to their presence, then his group is difficult to surprise, and enjoys the following benefits, regardless of when the PCs choose to attack:
- At APL 12 and 14, Amir Rashad casts *bull's strength* on himself and *bull's strength* on his bodyguards when he is sure the party is about to attack.

- At APL 14, Amir Rashad casts *see invisibility* on himself.
- The *bull's strength* spells have not been pre-added to the stat blocks.

The slaves

These human slaves are so broken in spirit that they have little to offer the players in the form of assistance or information. It shall take months of kind and understanding mental health care, that only the mullahs can provide, before these poor souls are ready to talk about anything. It should also be noted that intentionally harming these people is an evil act. Dropping an area effect spell onto them, with clear knowledge that they are there, is such an act and should be noted in the play record of that character.

Tactics: If not directly threatened, Amir Rashad spends his first round making a big show of ordering his illusionary fire giants to protect the portal at all costs, telling them that it must not be damaged, and the intruders must not be allowed to pass through the portal. This is, of course, all an act to distract the PCs firepower. He uses his action to concentrate on the images of the fire giants, moving them into combat stances. The real fire giant guard enters melee if applicable, otherwise he guards his master. Amir Rashad uses subdual damage for his first landed blow, then moves on to real damage, with the intent of possibly collecting powerful slaves.

Both Rashad and the fire giant can fight from within the flame pits. PC's entering the area take 1d6 fire damage and risk setting themselves on fire (see pg. 86 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). 2d6 boulders are heating in the fires, all ready for the fire giants to pick them up and hurl them.

Amir Rashad fights to the death, he has come too far abandon what his master has graced him with.

If PC's should foolishly bunch up, Rashad doesn't hesitate to use his *wall of fire* spell-like ability in its circle form.

At the higher APLs, Rashad uses his Sorcerer spells as the opportunities arise.

All APLs (Non Combatants)

- **Efreeti slave trader:** hp 65; see *Monster Manual* (genie).
- **Mind Flayer slave trader:** hp 44; see *Monster Manual*.
- **Slaves (3):** Com1; HP 2.

APL 8 (EL 11)

• **Amir Rashad, efreeti:** hp 65; see *Monster Manual* (genie).

• **Fire Giant bodyguard:** hp 142; see *Monster Manual*. Active Spell: *endure elements (cold)* (CL 18th); *Permanent see invisibility* (CL18)

APL 10 (EL 13)

• **Amir Rashad, efreeti:** hp 65; see *Monster Manual* (genie).

• **Fire Giant bodyguard (2):** hp 142, 140; see *Monster Manual*. Active Spell: *endure elements (cold)* (CL 18th); *Permanent see invisibility* (CL18).

APL 12 (EL 15)

• **Amir Rashad:** male efreeti, Advanced(20HD)/ Sor2; hp 200; see Appendix One.

• **Fire Giant bodyguard(2):** hp 142, hp 142; see *Monster Manual*. Active Spell: *endure elements (cold)* (CL 18th); *Permanent see invisibility* (CL18)

APL 14 (EL 17)

• **Amir Rashad:** male efreeti, Advanced(20HD)/ Sor2; hp 200; see Appendix One.

• **Fire Giant bodyguard (4):** hp 142 each; see *Monster Manual*. Active Spell: *endure elements (cold)* (CL 18th); *Permanent see invisibility* (CL18)

Treasure: Found among the opulence of Amir Rashad's home are piles of rare incense, valuable tapestries, and carpets. Some of the artwork also has semi-valuable segments. All of them are slightly singed and many depict unsavory scenes, so their resale value is fairly low.

Loot Amir Rashad's home.

All APLs: L: 230 gp; C: 150 gp; M: 0

Encounter Eight: To Serve Tharizdun

The staircases up top lead to three different areas within the floating ziggurat. In theory, there would be many more, but the resources of the scenario do not allow the detailing of those multitude of places.

All three stairways are open and unblocked. Normally, fire giants and other minions would keep guard, but they are all away on assignment.

The Barracks

Everyone has seen a soldier's barracks sometime in their life. The one before you now makes you feel like the size of a child. A burnt smell lingers on all the oversized furniture.

The stairs on the right hand side eventually lead into a string of troop barracks designed for fire giants. Each bunkroom has space and bedding to house five fire giants, for a total space of fifty. It appears that only about half of that number have ever been here though. There are rooms for training, repair and preparing of food. All of the extra gear one would expect from a soldier's bunk has been packed up and taken with the missing giants.

The Found Temple of Tharizdun

The oversized stairs finish their long descent in front of an obsidian door. Writing rims the door and an indentation of a large key fills the center. There is no other visible means to open the door.

The writing is duplicated in both infernal and abyssal. It reads, *"Light must be snuffed, perfection decayed, order dissolved and minds fragmented. Obey our prophecy to free he who serves the Dark God."*

To pass through this door, the fire key from around Rashad's neck must be placed in the impression.

The room before you is dark and the air oppressive. Your clothes do nothing to stop the bone-soaking chill in the air. At the far end of the otherwise empty room is an ominous-looking altar.

The room has no light sources of its own, though nothing stops the PCs light sources. The room is 15 feet in height, and 40 feet by 60 feet in length and width. The only object of interest is the black obsidian altar dedicated to Tharizdun at the back of the room.

Anyone in the room is assaulted by a chill that they can feel all the way to their bones. The chill is similar in feel to that of a Nightshade. The chill does no damage, but no amount of clothing or warming up stops the feel of the chill. Spells that protect from cold stop most of the uncomfortable feeling, but some still lingers.

This is the chamber that Amir Rashad holds his unholy rituals of faith to Tharizdun in. Daily, he preaches the words of the Dark God to his fire giants, and anoints them with an *Endure Elements (Cold)* as a gift from Tharizdun.

The altar is covered in evil markings and the evidence of horrible acts. Upon close inspection, a sanctifying mark can be found on that altar. This mark was made when the altar was first dedicated (or rededicated in this case). The words are written in abyssal, and they read *"Praise the Dark God, for he shall be freed, and we of the New Cabal shall sit at the feet of his Proxy. Invoke this altar with the juices of his making, accept the fluids of the elements and the blackness that He of Eternal Darkness extrudes. Be marked with my name and grant this altar power through me, from him. My blood be that of a petitioner within his realm. Accept my name as proxy for his: Karli."*

The final name is written much larger and covered in the dry remains of blood and other no longer recognizable magical reagents.

The altar is the center of an unhallow spell, just like most altars of Tharizdun or the Elder Eye.

The Unhallowing(Dispel Magic)

This cavern has been consecrated to Tharizdun with an *unhallow* spell. Like all *unhallow* spells in this scenario, creatures who worship Tharizdun or the Elder Elemental Eye are immune to these effects. There is a targeted *dispel magic* that affects each creature individually entering the area. Roll a caster level check [1d20+10] versus each active magical effect on each creature. Spell effects from items use the base caster level required to craft as the target DC [DC 11 + caster level]. The actual Caster Level of the *unhallow* spell is 17. The *unhallow* affects the entire room (40ft by 60ft 140ft). Creatures summoned by the PCs into the area or who enter the area risk being dispelled. Creatures summoned by the bad guys are considered to be in the service (therefore worshipers) of the patron god.

Searching the Altar

On a successful Search check (DC25) of the altar the PCs find a hidden compartment. In the compartment is a small pile of ten electrum 'coins'. The only markings on them are the dark spiral on one side and the inverted pyramid on the other. The spiral side is ringed with the words "down spiral seeking decay" written in infernal. The pyramid side has the words "up the dark passage ergo payment" written in abyssal.

The 'coins' are warm to the touch and radiate moderate abjuration magic. The actual effect is undeterminable. The PC's are allowed to purchase the coins on the AR if they loot the coins from the Fading Lands.

Treasure: The coins are the only items of value here.

Loot the coins from the altar

All APLs: L: 0; C: 0; M: *Tharizdun's Currency* (160gp per character)

The engine room

The oversized spiral staircase does not end until what is most likely just above the very bottom (or tip) of the inverted pyramid. A 20 feet by 20 feet room is empty except for a stone spiral relief in the middle of the floor and a 4 feet high pillar. On the pillar is an indentation for a large key.

The spiral on the floor is actually a gate to room below. The Rashad's fire key opens the spiral portal. The spiral portal opens like an iris and is 3 feet wide.

Once the door is activated, the opening looks in from the roof on a sad sight. A 10 feet by 10 feet stone prison holds the remains of several Azer prisoners. The room is 20 feet high.

Anyone entering the prison chamber feels the sharp cold effect, similar to that of the altar room encounter. But this effect is much stronger. While in the room, all are effected by 2 temporary negative levels. This effect is like the spell effect of enervation, except that the levels return as soon as the PC leaves the prison chamber.

The chamber contains twelve Azers, but only three of them are still alive. The rest have had their life force completely drained, leaving only their shriveled husks. Of the three living Azers, they are not in much better shape. The room has been specially tuned to sap life force that comes from the Plane of Fire. Similar to T'neal on the prison island, these Azers have been keeping this island afloat. But not only that, they have been fueling all of the other functions of the sinister island that require magical power.

Should the three remaining Azers be removed, the island starts to sink within 1d4 minutes, just like the slave island. As well, the fire pits on the surface stop and all of the doors that the fire key activates freeze in their current state.

The Azers themselves can manage enough energy to speak, but any spell attempts to revive them only give them a moment's energy. In their current state, they are only warm to the touch, and PCs risk no flame damage.

The Azers have the following tidbits to croak out.

- ◆ They were members of T'neal's combat unit until they were taken captive.
- ◆ They feel shame for being taken alive, but have been waiting a chance to strike back.

- ◆ They have spent many months (about the same time as T'neal) in this chamber, occasionally being fed scraps by the fire giants.
- ◆ The chamber was filled with fire salamanders before the Azer were tossed in. The dying salamanders were taken away.
- ◆ The Azer have no desire to go back home. They know that they are terminally wounded and their honor has been destroyed for failing to revenge themselves during captivity.
- ◆ They ask the PCs to end their lives for them. If the PCs suggest that they crash the floating island in some sort of plan, they have no problem with that. In fact, it gives them a sense of pride, to strike a final blow at their enemy.

Even if freed, these Azers are too far-gone to save. Their very connection to their home plane has been tapped and corroded.

Conclusion

Saving the prisoners

Assuming the PC's defeat Rashad and his giants and don't mess with the Azers keeping the islands afloat, they should have plenty of time to rescue all the slaves by transferring them to the portal ledge, and then waiting for escape.

If the PC's decide to rescue the slavers or T'neal early (or in an over-complicated fashion), then use the information provided in the different encounters.

Saving T'neal, captain of the Azer

If T'neal can be rescued from the Fading Lands, he eventually settles on the border of Tusmit, along the Yatil mountains, in order to keep an eye on things. The forces of Rashad and his allies are T'neal's hated enemy.

Assuming the ranger Mufat is freed as well, he and T'neal become friends. T'neal states that he shall keep Mufat informed as to his whereabouts while on this plane.

To show his gratitude, T'neal agrees to craft a special lamp for the PC's that can summon forth worms of fire to serve the holder of the lamp.

Riding off into the Sunset

With the freed slaves in tow, you make your way back to the settled areas of Tusmit. The authorities thank you for looking into the matter, and promise to send agents to investigate everything soon enough.

With your business here in Tusmit over, it's time to get back to your original destination. Within view

is the Blashikmund River, the western extent of Tusmit. On the far shore is the Caliphate of Ekbir. It looks like a storm is setting in, one of many from the Dramidj Ocean. Hopefully, it's not a bad sign.

With the destruction Amir Rashad, the remaining World Burners scatter back into the Tusman Hills, and Tarqaan's plot has been ended for now.

Ekbir is the PC's next stop. Perhaps they can get to the bottom of all the evil contraband along the trade route.

The End

Experience Point Summary

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign experience award. Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Encounter One: A Kettish Bathhouse in Tusmit

Rescue Fazud before he dies:

APL 8	75 XP
APL 10	90 XP
APL 12	105 XP
APL 14	120 XP

Defeat the World Burners:

APL 8	270 XP
APL 10	330 XP
APL 12	390 XP
APL 14	450 XP

Encounter Four: Slave Wagon

Defeat the trained fiendish dire tigers:

APL 8	300 XP
APL 10	360 XP
APL 12	420 XP
APL 14	480 XP

Encounter Seven: Slavemaster of the Fading Land

Defeat the genie and company:

APL 8	330 XP
APL 10	390 XP
APL 12	450 XP
APL 14	510 XP

Story Award

Free the slaves from the Fading Land:

APL 8	75 XP
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APL 10	90 XP
APL 12	105 XP
APL 14	120 XP

Good roleplaying:

APL 8	75 XP
APL 10	90 XP
APL 12	105 XP
APL 14	120 XP

Total Possible Experience

APL 8	1,125 XP
APL 10	1,350 XP
APL 12	1,575 XP
APL 14	1,800 XP

Treasure Summary

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a "treasure" section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter's treasure.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (i.e., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason, they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer* or similar spell to determine what the item does and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before

the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate. Because this is a Regional scenario, characters may spend additional Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

L = Looted gear from enemy; C = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; M = Magic Items.

L: Looted gear from enemy

C: Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables

M: Magic Items (sell value)

Treasure Key:

L = Looted gear from enemy; C = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; M = Magic Items

Encounter One: A Kettish Bathhouse in Tusmit

Defeat the World Burner thugs.

APL 8: L: 463; C: 0; M: *wand of bull's strength*, 24 charges (value 180 gp per character), *wand of keen edge*, 12 charges (value 225 gp per character).

APL 10: L: 338; C: 0; M: *+1 chain shirt* (x6) (value 104 gp each per character), *wand of bull's strength*, 24 charges (value 180 gp per character), *wand of keen edge*, 12 charges (value 225 gp per character).

APL 12: L: 151; C: 0; M: *+1 chain shirt* (x6) (value 104 gp each per character), *+1 falchion* (x6) (value 198 gp each per character), *wand of bull's strength*, 24 charges (value 180 gp per character), *wand of keen edge*, 12 charges (value 225 gp per character).

APL 14: L: 151; C: 0; M: *+1 chain shirt* (x6) (value 104 gp each per character), *+1 falchion* (x6) (value 198 gp each per character), *+1 ring of protection* (x6) (value 166 gp each per character), *+1 amulet of natural armor* (x6) (value 166 gp each per character), *wand of bull's strength*, 24 charges (value 180 gp per character), *wand of keen edge*, 12 charges (value 225 gp per character).

Encounter Three: The Wand Merchant

Loot Tarqaan's home.

APL 8: L: 58; C: 80; M: *wand of color spray* (value 62 gp per character).

APL 10: L: 58; C: 80; M: *wand of color spray* (value 62 gp per character), *wand of mount* (value 62 gp per character).

APL 12: L: 58; C: 80; M: *wand of color spray* (value 62 gp per character), *wand of mount* (value 62 gp per character), *wand of true strike* (value 62 gp per character).

APL 14: L: 58; C: 80; M: *wand of color spray* (value 62 gp per character), *wand of mount* (value 62 gp per character), *wand of true strike* (value 62 gp per character), *wand of gaseous form* (value 937 gp per character).

Encounter Four: Slave Wagon

Loot the World Burner slavers.

All APLs: L: 104; C: 0; M: 0

Encounter Seven: Slavemaster of the Fading Land

Loot Amir Rashad's home.

All APLs: L: 230; C: 150; M: 0

Encounter Eight: To Serve Tharizdun

Loot the coins from the altar

All APLs: L: 0; C: 0; M: *Tharizdun's Currency* (160gp per character)

Maximum Possible Treasure

APL 8: 1,250 gp

APL 10: 2,100 gp

APL 12: 3,000 gp

APL 14: 6,000 gp

Appendix One: NPCs

Encounter One: A Kettish Bathhouse in Tusmit

APL 8 (EL 10)

☛ **World Burner Thugs, male human Bbn2/Rog1:** CR 3; Medium humanoid (human); HD 2d12+1d6+6; hp 29; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 17 (touch 13, flat-footed 17)[+3 Dex, +4 chain shirt]; Atk +12 melee (2d4+10/crit 15-20, *keen edge** masterwork falchion); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ rage 1/day, fast movement, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC); AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 24*, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +4, Jump +11, Listen +5, Spot +2, Tumble +10, Wilderness Lore +5 (one thug has Use Magic Device +1 instead of Spot +2); Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (falchion).

Possessions: masterwork chain shirt, masterwork falchion, masterwork dagger. One of the thugs (the one with the Use Magic Device skill) has a *wand of bull's strength* with 24 charges remaining and a *wand of keen edge* with 12 charges remaining.

Rage (Ex): HD 2d12+1d6+12; hp 35; AC 15 (touch 11, flat-footed 15); Atk +13 melee (2d4+13/crit 15-20, *keen edge** masterwork falchion); SV Fort +7, Will +4; Str 28*, Con 18; Jump +13.

Pre-Cast Spells: These thugs have all *wished* for their great strength. It can not be dispelled and is included in the above stat block. From wands– *bull's strength* +4* (3rd level caster) *keen edge** (5th level caster).

APL 10 (EL 12)

☛ **World Burner Thugs:** male human Bbn3/Rog2 CR 5; Medium humanoid (human); HD 3d12+2d6+10; hp 44; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 18 (touch 13, flat-footed 18)[+3 Dex, +5 magical chain shirt]; Atk +14 melee (2d4+10/crit 15-20, *keen edge** masterwork falchion); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ evasion, rage 1/day, fast movement, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked); AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 25*, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +5, Jump +12, Listen +7, Spot +8, Tumble +11, Wilderness Lore +6 (one thug has Use Magic Device +7 instead of Spot +8); Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (falchion).

Possessions: +1 chain shirt, masterwork falchion, masterwork dagger. One of the thugs (the one with the Use Magic Device skill) has a *wand of bull's strength* with 24 charges remaining and a *wand of keen edge* with 12 charges remaining.

Rage (Ex): HD 3d12+2d6+20; hp 54; AC 16 (touch 11, flat-footed 16); Atk +15 melee (2d4+13/crit 15-20, *keen edge** masterwork falchion); SV Fort +7, Will +5; Str 29*, Con 18; Jump +14.

Pre-Cast Spells: These thugs have all *wished* for their great strength. It can not be dispelled and is included in the above stat block. From wands– *bull's strength* +4* (3rd level caster) *keen edge** (5th level caster).

APL 12 (EL 14)

☛ **World Burner Thugs:** male human Bbn4/Rog3 CR 7; Medium humanoid (human); HD 4d12+3d6+14; hp 59; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 18 (touch 13, flat-footed 18)[+3 Dex, +5 magical chain shirt]; Atk +15/+10 melee (2d4+11/crit 15-20, *keen edge** +1 falchion); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ evasion, rage 2/day, fast movement, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked); AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +4; Str 25*, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +8, Jump +12, Listen +10, Spot +10, Tumble +13, Wilderness Lore +7 (one thug has Use Magic Device +9 instead of Spot +10); Iron Will, Power Attack, Power Lunge**, Weapon Focus (falchion).

Possessions: +1 chain shirt, +1 falchion, masterwork dagger. One of the thugs (the one with the Use Magic Device skill) has a *wand of bull's strength* with 24 charges remaining and a *wand of keen edge* with 12 charges remaining.

Rage (Ex): HD 4d12+3d6+28; hp 73; AC 16 (touch 11, flat-footed 16); Atk +17/+12 melee (2d4+14/crit 15-20, *keen edge** +1 falchion); SV Fort +9, Will +5; Str 29*, Con 18; Jump +14.

Pre-Cast Spells: These thugs have all *wished* for their great strength. It can not be dispelled and is included in the above stat block. From wands– *bull's strength* +4* (3rd level caster) *keen edge** (5th level caster).

** New Feat: See Appendix 2.

APL 14 (EL 16)

☛ **World Burner Thugs:** male human Bbn6/Rog3 CR 9; Medium humanoid (human); HD 6d12+3d6+18; hp 77; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 20 (touch 14, flat-footed 20)[+3 Dex, +5 magical chain shirt, +1 amulet of natural armor]; Atk +17/+12 melee (2d4+13/crit 12-20, *keen edge** +1 falchion); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ evasion, rage 2/day, fast movement, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked); AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +5; Str 26*, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +10, Jump +13, Listen +10, Spot +10, Tumble +15, Wilderness Lore +9 (one

thug has Use Magic Device +9 instead of Spot +10; Improved Critical (falchion), Iron Will, Power Attack, Power Lunge**, Weapon Focus (falchion).

Possessions: +1 chain shirt, +1 falchion, +1 ring of protection, +1 amulet of natural armor, masterwork dagger. One of the thugs (the one with the Use Magic Device skill) has a *wand of bull's strength* with 24 charges remaining and a *wand of keen edge* with 12 charges remaining.

Rage (Ex): HD 6d12+3d6+36; hp 95; AC 18 (touch 12, flat-footed 18); Atk +19/+14 melee (2d4+16/crit 12-20, *keen edge** +1 falchion); SV Fort +10, Will +7; Str 30*, Con 18; Jump +15.

Pre-Cast Spells: These thugs have all *wished* for their great strength. It can not be dispelled and is included in the above stat block. From wands– *bull's strength* +4* (3rd level caster) *keen edge** (5th level caster).

** New Feat: See Appendix 2.

Encounter Four: Slave Wagon

All APLs

🗡️**World Burner Thugs, male human Bbn2/Rogr1:** CR 3; Medium humanoid (human); HD 2d12+1d6+6; hp 29; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 17 (touch 13, flat-footed 17); Atk +9 melee (2d4+7/crit 18-20, masterwork falchion); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ rage 1/day, fast movement, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC); AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 20, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +4, Jump +9, Listen +5, Spot +2, Tumble +10, Wilderness Lore +5 (one thug has Use Magic Device +1 instead of Spot +2); Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (falchion).

Possessions: masterwork chain shirt, masterwork falchion, dagger.

Rage (Ex): HD 2d12+1d6+12; hp 35; AC 15 (touch 11, flat-footed 15); Atk +11 melee (2d4+10/crit 18-20, masterwork falchion); SV Fort +7, Will +4; Str 24, Con 18; Jump +11.

Pre-Cast Spells: These thugs have all *wished* for their great strength.

APL 8, 10, and 12

🗡️**Fiendish Dire Tiger:** CR 10; Huge Magical Beast; HD 16d8+48; hp 120; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23 (touch 9, flat-footed 22)[-2 size, +1 Dex, +6 natural, +8 Full Plate Barding]; Atk +18 melee (2d4+8, 2 claws) and +13 melee (2d6+4, bite); Face/Reach 10 ft by 20 ft/10 ft; SA pounce, improved grab, rake 2d4+4; SQ scent, darkvision 60 ft., cold resistance 20, fire resistance 20, DR 10/+3, SR 25; AL NE; SV Fort +13, Ref +12, Will +11; Str 27, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +0 (+4 in tall grass or heavy undergrowth), Jump +11, Listen +3, Move Silently +9, Spot +3, Swim +11.

Equipment: Spiked full plate barding

Smite Good (Su): Once per day the creature can make a normal attack to deal additional damage equal to its HD total (+16) against a good foe.

Pounce (Ex): If a fiendish dire tiger leaps upon a foe during the first round of combat, it can make a full attack even if it has already taken a move action.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the fiendish dire tiger must hit with its bite attack. If it gets a hold, it can rake.

Rake (Ex): A fiendish dire tiger can make two rake attacks (+18 melee) against a held creature with its hind legs for 2d4+4 damage each. If the fiendish dire tiger pounces on an opponent, it can also rake.

APL 14

🗡️**Fiendish Dire Tiger, Advanced (32HD):** CR 14; Huge Magical Beast; HD 32d8+96; hp 240; Init +2; Spd 30 ft AC 23 (touch 9, flat-footed 22)[-2 size, +1 Dex, +6 natural, +8 Full Plate Barding]; Atk +30 melee (2d4+8, 2 claws) and +25 melee (2d6+4, bite); Face/Reach 10 ft by 20 ft/10 ft; SA pounce, improved grab, rake 2d4+4; SQ scent, darkvision 60 ft., cold resistance 20, fire resistance 20, DR 10/+3, SR 25; AL NE; SV Fort +21, Ref +20, Will +19; Str 27, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +0 (+4 in tall grass or heavy undergrowth), Jump +11, Listen +3, Move Silently +9, Spot +3, Swim +11.

Equipment: Spiked full plate barding

Smite Good (Su): Once per day the creature can make a normal attack to deal additional damage equal to its HD total (maximum of +20) against a good foe.

Pounce (Ex): If a fiendish dire tiger leaps upon a foe during the first round of combat, it can make a full attack even if it has already taken a move action.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the fiendish dire tiger must hit with its bite attack. If it gets a hold, it can rake.

Rake (Ex): A fiendish dire tiger can make two rake attacks (+30 melee) against a held creature with its hind legs for 2d4+4 damage each. If the fiendish dire tiger pounces on an opponent, it can also rake.

Encounter Seven: Slavemaster of the Fading Land

APL 12 & APL 14

✶**Amir Rashad:** male efreeti, Advanced(20HD) /Sor2 CR 16; Huge Outsider (evil, fire, lawful); HD 20d8+80 (genie) and 2d4+4 (sorcerer); hp 200; Init +7; Spd 20 ft., fly 40 ft. (perfect); AC 19 (touch 10, flat-footed 17)[-2 size, +2 Dex, +9 natural]; Atk +29/+24/+19/+14 melee (2d6+15 and 1d6 fire, slam); Face/Reach 10 ft by 10 ft/15 ft; SA spell-like abilities, heat; SQ *plane shift*, telepathy, spells; AL LE; SV Fort +16, Ref +14, Will +17; STR 31, DEX 15, CON 18, INT 12, WIS 15, CHA 17.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +13, Concentration +22, Escape Artist +13, Intimidate +17, Listen +17, Move Silently +13, Sense Motive +11, Spellcraft +17, Spot +17; Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*produce flame* and *pyrotechnics*, 1/day—grant up to three *wishes* (to non-genies only), *detect magic*, *enlarge*, *gaseous form*, *invisibility*, *permanent image*, *polymorph self*, and *wall of fire*. These abilities are as the spells cast by an 18th-level sorcerer (save DC 13 + spell level).

Heat (Ex): An efreeti's red-hot body deals 1d6 points of addition fire damage whenever it hits in melee, or when grappling, each round it maintains a hold.

Fire Subtype (Ex): Fire immunity, double damage on cold except on a successful save.

Plane Shift (Sp): A genie can enter any of the elemental planes, the Astral Plane, or the Material Plane. This ability transports the genie and up to six other creatures, provided they all link hands with the genie. It is otherwise similar to the spell of the same name.

Telepathy (Su): A genie can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Spells Per Day (6/5; base DC 13 + spell level): 0—*detect magic*, *detect poison*, *open/close*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*; 1st—*endure elements*, *true strike*.

Pre-cast Spells: endure elements (cold)

Appendix 2: New Rules Items

POWER LUNGE [GENERAL], AS FOUND IN *SWORD AND FIST*

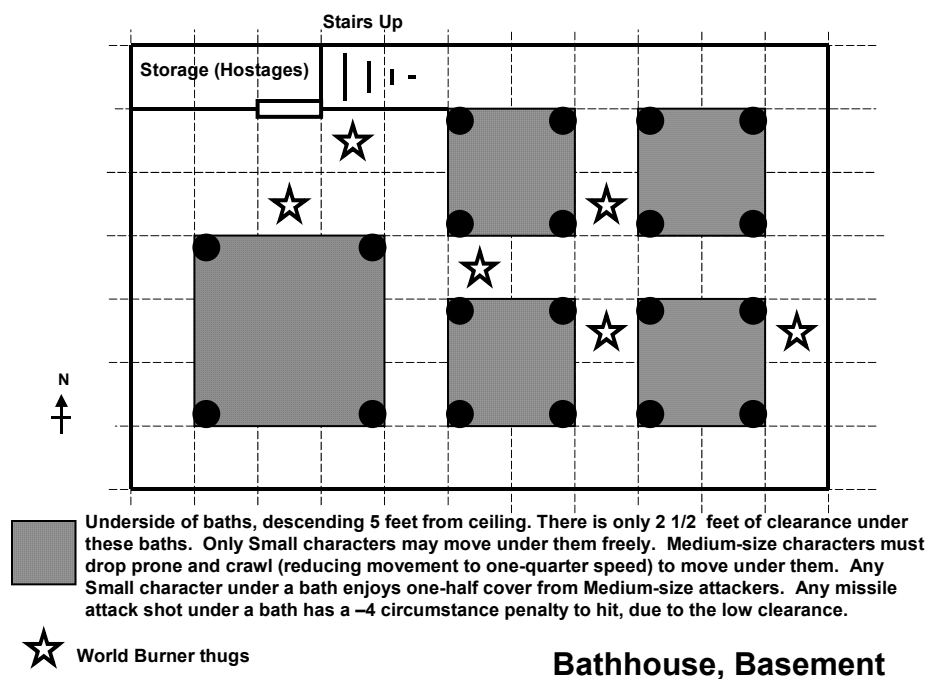
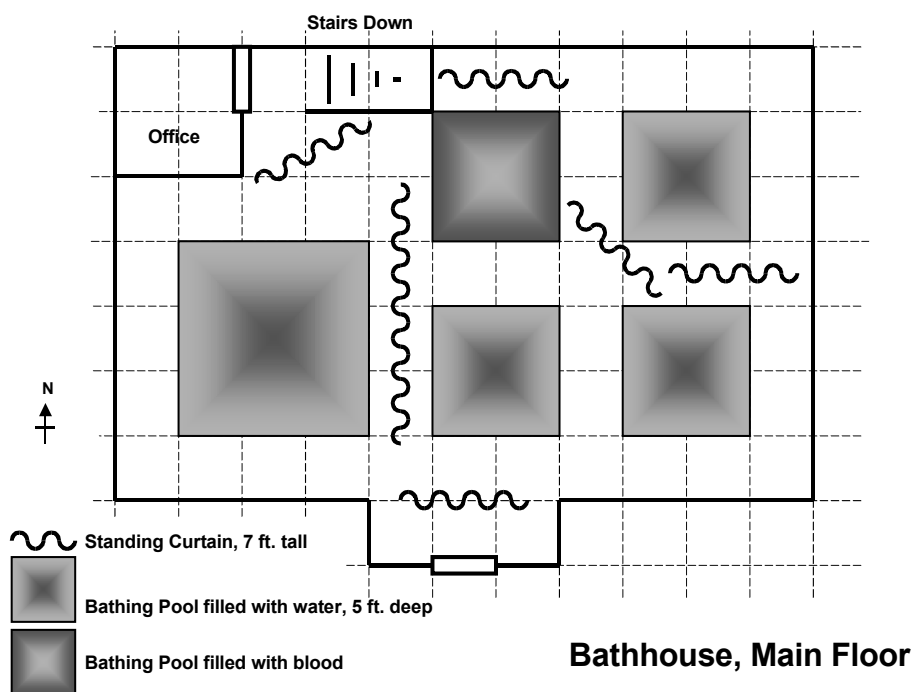
Your ferocious attack may catch opponents unprepared.

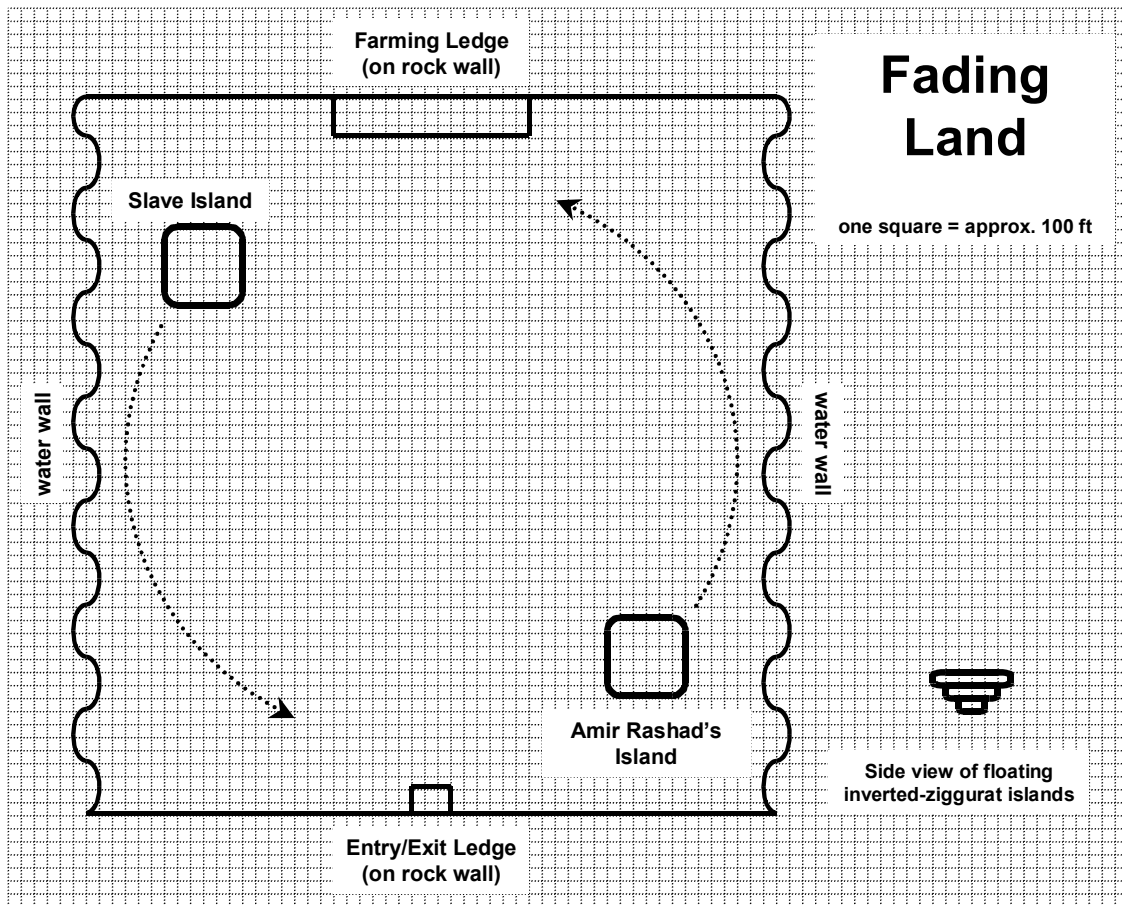
Prerequisites: Base Attack Bonus +3, Power Attack.

Benefit: A successful attack roll during a charge allows you to inflict double your normal Strength modifier in addition to the attack's damage regardless of whether you're using one- or two-handed weapons. You provoke an attack of opportunity from the opponent you charged.

Appendix Three: Maps

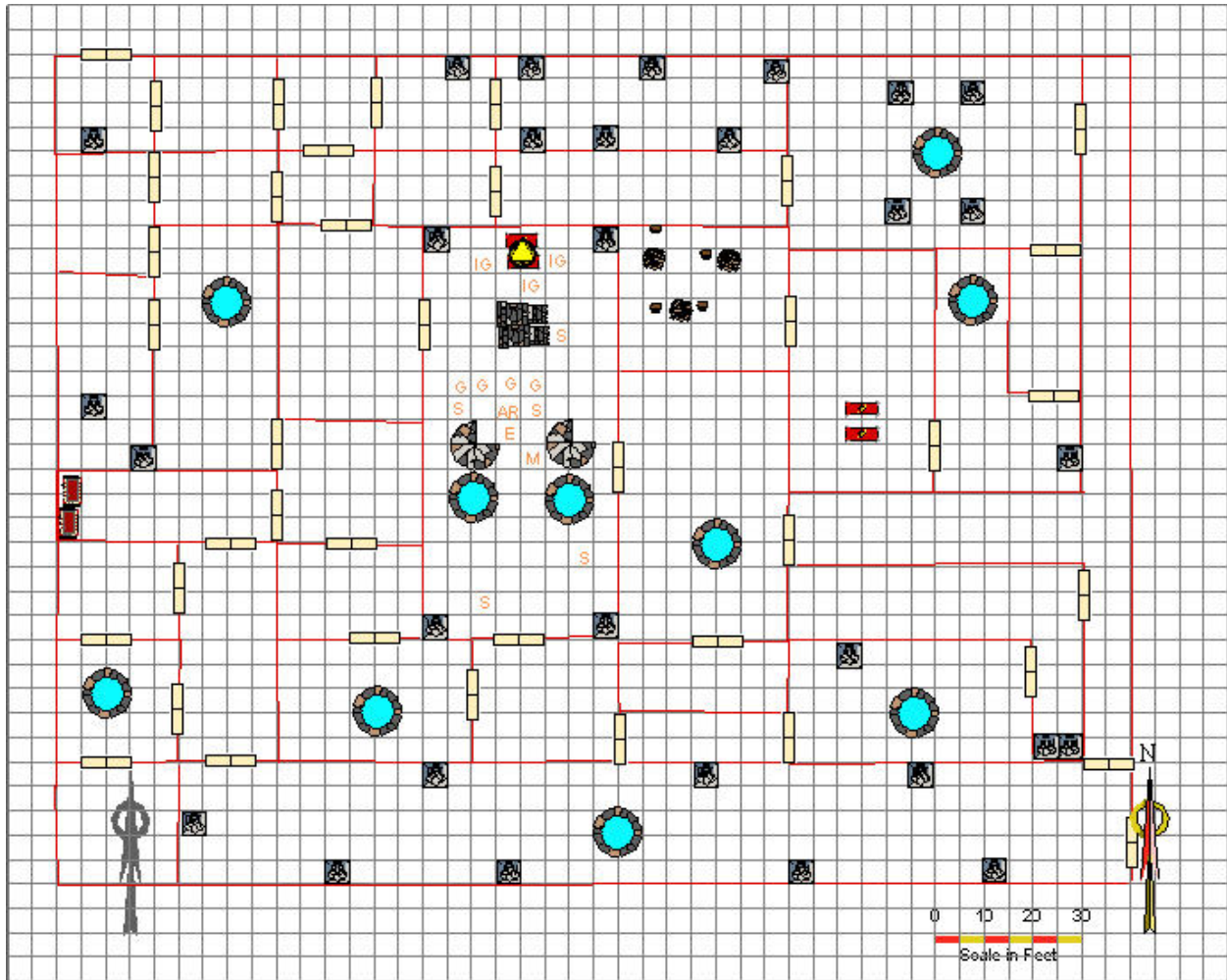
This appendix includes map of the upper and lower floors of the bathhouse in Encounter 1, and inside the Fading Lands for Encounters 5 through 7.





Surface level of Amir Rashad's Island

The round 10by10 markers represent blazing fire pits. They are normal flames, but fed by the magic of the ziggurat.



The Statue markers represent the different bizarre artworks that decorate the rooms of the silk maze. They have little value outside the efreeti community and are rather heavy and fragile.

Letters represent the different NPC. S= Slave; AR= Amir Rashad; E= Efreeti slave trader; M= Mind Flayer slave trader; G= Fire Giant; IG= Illusionary Fire Giant;