

# The .. EXcellent Traveling Volume

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ISSUE NO. 4

A fanzine of M.A.R. Barker's World of Tekumel

# INTRODUCTION

On the one hand, I feel slightly apologetic that this issue took a little longer to appear than I had originally hoped. On the other, this is still the fourth issue to appear in less than a year and I consider that a triumph. When I released issue #1 in December 2014, I had no idea how well it would be received by the Tékumel community, let alone that I'd succeed in producing a new 'zine, on average, every three months. Now that that's a reality, I've begun to think about the future.

One of the questions I get asked regularly is “when are you going to offer subscriptions to *The Excellent Travelling Volume*?” My answer has always been, “Someday — but not just yet.” One of the reasons I've been reluctant to offer subscriptions is that I don't feel comfortable taking money in advance for issues I haven't yet written and whose release dates are nebulous at best. Furthermore, there's always the chance that I might one day decide that to put down my virtual pen and cease producing this 'zine. I already have enough trouble keeping on top of orders as it is. The thought of having to handle subscriptions and all that comes with it makes me feel decidedly anxious.

That's why I'm toying with the possibility of implementing a “standing order” list, which is to say, a list of people who believe they will want each and every issue I produce, however many that ultimately turns out to be. Finding a way to handle such a list is my current project and I'm hoping that, by the time issue #5 is released, I'll be able to announce its existence. In the meantime, an electronic announcement list for *The Excellent Travelling Volume* has been set up at <http://lists.totalpartykill.ca/listinfo.cgi/tetv-totalpartykill.ca>. Go to that webpage, follow the instructions, and you'll receive an email message announcing when a new issue is released.

Another question I get asked is “How much of the material I produce for the 'zine derives from your *Empire of the Petal Throne* campaign?” The answer is “Most of it.” Since earlier this year, I've been refereeing a weekly campaign involving the Sárku worshipping House of Worms clan of Sokátis. The characters have had adventures both in their home city and, lately, travelling outside it — first to Rû on the Salarvyáni border and then to the city of Khúm, in Salarvyá itself. In the course of our many sessions, I've had to create all sorts of things to throw at my players. Because my refereeing style is fairly freewheeling, the players can potentially take their characters anywhere, which means I have to be prepared — thus generating a lot of material, only a small portion of which sees print in this 'zine.

To my mind, this is how it should be. I'm generally not a fan of gaming material written for its own sake rather than to meet a specific need at the table. Tékumel already has a wealth of background material available for it — far more than most of us will ever be able to use in play. There's not (in my opinion) an urgent need for more information on Tsolyáni funerary customs or high fashion in Béy Sü. What is needed, though, is more material derived from play, material that reflects what happens when a bunch of friends get together and roll some dice while their characters defend the glory of the Petal Throne. That's what I hope you'll find in this — and every — issue of this 'zine.

James Maliszewski  
October 2015

# The EXcellent Traveling Volume



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# Yán Koryáni and Sa'á Abraqiyáni Characters (Additions and Changes)

My current *Empire of the Petal Throne* campaign takes place just as hostilities are starting to heat up between Tsolyánu and Yán Kór. For that reason, there are a number of Yán Koryáni NPCs, particularly soldiers and agents provocateurs, lurking in the background. In thinking about these NPCs, I devised some modifications and additions to the *EPT* character generation rules. What follows are the most noteworthy of these rules alterations, all of which are explained in reference to the appropriate sections in the *Empire of the Petal Throne* rulebook. While I created these changes to aid me in the creation of NPCs, they are nevertheless complete enough that they could be used to create Yán Koryáni and Sa'á Abraqiyáni player characters, should the referee wish to allow such in his campaign.

Though much of what follows is derived from information in *Swords & Glory, Volume 1: Tékumel Sourcebook* and other writings by Professor Barker, some of it (e.g. the Sa'á Abraqiyáni level titles) is my own invention and should not be considered an “official” addition or expansion of the Tékumel setting. It is nevertheless hoped that it will not only prove useful to *EPT* players and referees with an interest in generating Yán Koryáni and Sa'á Abraqiyáni characters, but also as a reminder that creating new material for one's personal Tékumel campaign is not “wrong” but, rather, to be encouraged.

## 310. ALIGNMENT

The alignments of Stability and Change are as meaningful in Yán Kór as they are in Tsolyánu, though, in general,

the priesthoods of Pavár's pantheon are much less wealthy, influential, and powerful. The same is true in Sa'á Abraqí, though the alignments are, if anything, even less socially significant, due to the prominence of the worship of a local deity known as the One of Light (see below).

## 320. CHOICE OF SEX

The institution of Aridáni is unnecessary in the lands of Yán Kór and Sa'á Abraqí, due to the matriarchal traditions of these two realms. In both lands, property is inherited through the female line and most clan matters (including the arranging of marriages) is done by the senior women of a given clan.

In Sa'á Abraqí, however, the king (or Ssáo) is always male but he is elected for life by a council of elder women from the most important clans. This sort of arrangement is fairly common in Sa'á Abraqí, with women exercising great influence “behind the scenes,” so to speak, while men handle day-to-day “administrative” matters. This is true both of political positions (e.g. the aforementioned Ssáo) and in the military, where it is uncommon to find women in charge. In this respect, Sa'á Abraqí occupies a middle place between the societies of Yán Kór and that of Tsolyánu, whose northern provinces are similarly matriarchal.

## 630. LEVELS OF EXPERIENCE

For Yán Koryáni characters, use the following level titles rather than the Tsolyáni ones listed on p. 27 of the *Empire of the Petal Throne* rulebook.

Level	Warriors	Priests	Magic-Users
1	Átl	Múcheg	Shádleg
2	Hásem	Eshmír	Ngétl
3	Uténg	Sómreg	Irzöleg
4	Nümür	Nájatl	Válsh
5	Shuggétl	Aghúsn	Járn
6	Ghitáa	Khirásh	Chigó'eg
7	Kérdh	Mnár	Shátl
8	Ochür	Shámatl	Nshétl
9	Ochürik	Trétleneg	Va'dír

Saá Allaḡiyáni characters use the following level titles:

Level	Warriors	Priests	Magic-Users
1	Kiráyu	Múchek	Dm'í
2	Cházham	Eshmír	Ulétl
3	Ténga	Sámrek	Meshqála
4	Númar	Tlákél	Dláksh
5	Chandámezhke	Dnésh	Paráya
6	Gadá'a	Khirázha	Gridásha
7	Kérdh	Shámadh	Zhagáka
8	Ochár	Hlénu	Chorú'u
9	Ocháriga	Jáidal	Vathür

## 800. THE "HIRILÁKTE" ARENAS

Arenas exist in Yán Kór but they are rarely used for gladiatorial combats after the fashion of Tsolyánu. Instead, they are used for athletic contests, games, and state ceremonials, as well as for mock battles between army units and temple guard contingents. They

are thus the sites of training exercises rather than popular entertainments. Sa'á Allaḡí uses its arenas similarly, as venues for the display of martial prowess, archery contests, dancing, wrestling, and other forms of athleticism, including battles with a type of quarterstaff called a Kichána.

## 900. STARTING THE GAME

In Yán Kór, the unit of currency is the heavy gold Chzá, which is worth 30 Tsolyáni Káitars, making it impractical for everyday purchases. The Chzá contains 100 silver Múrz. A Múrz is made up of 25 brass Ekhór. The Saá Alliqiyáni employ the exact same system, even to the point of calling their coins by nearly identical names. Starting player characters begin with 30–300 (1d100 x 3) Múrz with which to buy equipment from the list in this same section.

## 2100. THE GODS, COHORTS, AND DIVINE INTERVENTION

Like Tsolyánu, the people of Yán Kór worship the deities of Pavár's pantheon, albeit under local names. Hnálla is named either Ghól or Ghúl, depending on where one is in Yán Kór. However, he is deemed supreme and solitary, which is why there is no Yán Koryáni name for Drá, who is unknown in this land. Thúmis they call Dhárm, while Keténgku is Kútkaen. Avánthe goes by Gaghnát and Dilinála by Dlénéel. Belkhánu is generally worshipped as Búlkh (and has a magnificent shrine in the city of Ebér), but some eastern Yán Koryáni name him Fnéer-Khmíshu instead. Qón is revered as Ækôn. Finally, Lord Karakán is invoked as Krékku and his cohort, Chegárra, as Chkár. In the city of Aqésh (hex 4908), a variant of Karakán with sway over ships and the sea is adored under the plain title of “the Sea-God.”

Hrü'ü is treated largely as an abstract principle in Yán Kór and what little devotion he does elicit is under the name of Grü'óth. His cohort, Wurú, is called Orwá and is reputed to have a wife, a goddess known as Fyörg. Ksárul is known as Kshór and Grugánu as

Krúgh. Dlamélish the Yán Koryáni know as Tlóm and Hriháyal as Réith. Vimúhla is generally worshipped as Vumél, but the inhabitants of the Isle of Vrídu refer to him simply by the title “the Lord of Sacrifice.” Chiténg is invoked by the name Khtæen. Sáрку has two names in Yán Kór: Su'ürkh in the west and Su'ür (or even just Súr) in the east. Meanwhile, Durritámish is Kéreshm.

A deity known locally as Nmédz is also worshipped in Yán Kór. His most notable shrine is the city of Hlíkku (hex 5010), whose inhabitants are known as “the Mad Ones” because of their zealous devotion to this strange being, whom some outsiders believe to be a guise of either the One Other or the One Who Is. While the worship of these Pariah Deities is not widespread, it is also not proscribed as it is in Tsolyánu. Indeed, Baron Áld has offered toleration to devotees of Nmédz throughout Yán Kór to secure Hlíkku's loyalty and continued support of the new empire he has forged from the squabbling city-states of the north.

In Sa'á Allaqí, Pavár's twenty gods and cohorts are worshipped, much as they are in Yán Kór, though the names differ slightly, as one might expect. Among the aristocracy (and especially the royal clan), a manifestation of Hnálla (with admixtures of Thúmis and Karakán) known simply as the One of Light or the Lord of Light is revered above all other gods. This deity's Priests of Light, who maintain a sanctuary at hex 4734, are politically influential but quite secretive about their doctrines. They admit few to their rituals who are not of noble birth and even fewer are permitted to join their hierarchy.

## YÁN KORYÁNI NAMES

Even moreso than most of the Five Empires, Yán Kór is not culturally monolithic. This is particularly true when one compares the eastern and western parts of Baron Áld's dominion. Consequently, naming practices among the Yán Koryáni vary from region to region, though a few broad generalities can be made. All inhabitants of Yán Kór have at least one given name

(though many have two or more) and a lineage name. In the west, the lineage name always follows the given name, while in the east, it is not uncommon for the lineage name to come first. A few examples of personal and lineage names can be found on p. XX, but, as ever, players and referees are encouraged to come up with their own, using these as models.

Male Names	Female Names	Lineage Names
Chnúle	Charána	Beléth
Dáiche	Chu'átsa	Chárshu
Fésh	Gái	Churringa
Gánnu	Gyú	D'Bór
Ka'ám	Dreyyakanéya	Dzénth
Khárcha	Hu'myéék	Garútle
Ku'ársh	Itónma	Hchék
Mírudz	Kóya	Herídz
Mkél	Krúa	Hetrudákte
Niktanbó	Krugáka	Krío
Nyéel	Lajjára	Kriyór
Osúl	Mmír	Mchéttel
Qayél	Nikára	Mléktán
Qú'a	Ngámek	Mrér
Salésh	Qúya	Mrúdchek
Ssá	Sayétek	Nalokwéya
Sunúzhu	Shurúk	Shirikú
Vachén	Tikása	Véshqu
Vó'o	Tsáni	Vorúna
Vorúzhzha	Yurésa	Vasháya
Zhú	Zná'a	Zethú'u

## YÁN KORYÁNI CLANS

Like other of the Five Empires, clans play an important role in Yán Kór. In most respects, Yán Koryáni clans are little different than their counterparts in other lands. The most notable difference is that, like the clans of northern Tsolyáni, women are usually the clanmasters and elders. Another difference is that most clans tend to be fairly localized. Generally, a clan is associated with a single city or region rather than being found throughout the entirety of Yán Kór. There are exceptions – typically ancient clans of Engsvanyáli origin – but, by and large, knowing a Yán Koryáni's clan is a good way to know the city or region from which he hails.

The list below provides the names of several Yán Koryáni clans. Especially noteworthy ones are called out.

*Blue and Grey*

*Blue Sky*

*Bright River*

*Bright Sun*

*Deep Red Shadow*

*Ferocious Strike*

*Flying Dragon-Fish*

*Flying Spark*

*Green Might*

*High Clan of Ke'ér:* The ruling clan of the city Ke'ér (hex 5513), to which Baron Áld now belongs.

*Holy House:* Secretive ruling clan of the city of Krél (hex 5725); devoted to Kshór.

*Light Upon the Deeps*

*Ná-Chu'úl:* Another clan originating

in Krél (hex 5725), fame for the heavy infantry it sponsors in the service of Baron Áld.

*Pillar of Iron*

*Polished Shell*

*Rays of Red*

*Red and Green Banner*

*Red Forest*

*River of Yellow*

*Sails Unfurled*

*Sea Dragon*

*Second Moon*

*Silver Worm:* A clan from Aqésh (4908), whose members all serve Karakán under his guise as “the Sea-God” (see p. 4)

*Vrídu:* This clan is local to the Isle of Vrídu in the Pentrúrtra Deeps, from which it takes its name, and worships a unique aspect of Vimúhla known as “the Lord of Sacrifice.”

*Walking in Golden Water*

*Walks by Night:* A strange clan from the eastern part of Yán Kór, many of whose members exhibit batrachian features suggesting interbreeding with the non-human inhabitants of Lake Parunál.

## SA'Á ALLIQIYÁNI NAMES

Sa'á Allaqiyáni names follow a similar pattern to those in Yán Kór – a given name followed by a lineage name. Unlike the Yán Koryáni, however, the Sa'á Allaqiyáni are much more uniform in their naming practices. Given names, for example, are almost always singular and lineage names always follow given names. Listed below are a few examples to give players and referees an idea of what Sa'á Allaqiyáni names sound like.



Male Names	Female Names	Lineage Names
Birrukú	Chítla	Chabáku
Chársu	Díu	Hrútra
Danúkka	Hlátla	Jogér
Darkhúnnu	Káo	Ná'a
Kurudái	Lái	Na'arshir
Mnétao	Míu	Rígu
Múrga	Mrín	Ssiríyo
Shadhák	Neó	Tá Sü
Srishántra	Nyéma	Tolyánya
Varrútu	Ríko	Tsáqcha
Vrikétsu	Shanyá'a	Vrétkü
Zhu'únu	Vrísá	Vrishétru

## SAÁ ALLAQIYÁNI CLANS

The Sa'á Allaqiyáni have clans, just as do their Five Empires neighbours. These clans are a mix of localized and more widespread ones, with the latter being more common than in Yán Kór but not as common as in Tsolyánu. Clan leadership is matriarchal, just as it is in Yán Kór and many other northern nations. The list below provides examples of several clans in Sa'á Allaqí, with notable ones indicated with a brief note.

*Brilliant Orb*

*Broken Arrow*

*Exalted of Karslán:* The ruling clan of the city the Tsolyáni call Káitlan (hex 5132) but which the Sa'á Allaqiyáni call Karslán.

*Field of Glory*

*Lake of Blue*

*Lords of Light:* The current royal clan of the kingdom.

*Majesty of Orange*

*Rising Wings of Glory*

*Seven Teeth*

*Shield of Gold*

*Snow Capped Peak*

*Two Moons:* Originally from Pijéna, a little state to the northwest of Tsolyánu, this clan came here as mercenaries more than two centuries ago and has since established itself in Sa'á Allaqí. There is some distrust of the clan, as its members still devote themselves to their ancestral deity, She Who Is Not Seen, rather than the One of Light or one Pavár's pantheon.

*Wide River*

*Wondrous Sons of Trú:* Ruling clan of the city of Trú (hex 4932).

## PATRONS

Section 1110 of *Empire of the Petal Throne* provides two random tables for generating potential patrons to the player characters. These tables are excellent resources for providing the referee with the bare bones of an adventure, but some, especially neophytes, might wish for a little more “meat” to aid them in the task of constructing a scenario. As in previous issues, what follows are five fleshed-out patrons to be used in conjunction with the tables in *Empire of the Petal Throne*. Each includes not only game statistics for the patron but four different ways to use them. Future issues of *The Excellent Travelling Volume* will continue to provide additional patrons, all of which the referee can use as non-player characters in other contexts, if he so desires.



### ARMÉKH HIJÁSHTE

Level III Priest; STR 54, INT 75, CON 60, PSY 67, DEX 48, COM 54; To Hit +1; Damage +0; AC 5; HP 8; Original Skills: Jeweller-Goldsmith, Merchant, Orator, Scribe-Accountant, Wine-Maker; Professional Skills: *Cure Light Wounds*, *Detect Good/Evil*, *ESP*, *Produce Light*; Bonus Spells: *Locate Gold and Gems*; Languages: Engsvanyáli, Mu’ugalavyáni, Tsáqw, Tsolyáni, Yán Koryáni

Armékħ is a priest of Dlamélĭsh and a member of the Green Reed Clan. He is young and round-faced — some might call him plump. He is meticulously about his grooming, keeping his head shaved and his eyebrows artfully trimmed. His green priestly robes are simple but elegant. He accents this garb with expensive ear and finger rings. Armékħ’s voice is deep and sonorous, with a rich sing-song quality that makes puts people at ease around him, despite both his girth and imposing height (he stands a head and a half taller than most other Tsolyáni).

Armékħ is a member of the Order of Argent, a faction with the Temple of Dlamélĭsh that, among its other duties, sees to the financing of the temple’s more elaborate rituals. Armékħ has a head for numbers, in addition to being very good at coaxing the faithful into providing funds to the temple. Over the last year, the young priest has become a fixture among the aristocratic devotees of Change, some of whom have donated large sums of money and other goods to the Temple of Dlamélĭsh at his suggestion. One such devotee was Elulén híTurshína of the Jade Diadem clan, who gave Armékħ an Engsvanyáli statuette of Tyalméya (as Dlamélĭsh was known in those days). She asked him to sell it and to use the proceeds to enrich the temple. Before he could do so, however, Armékħ was waylaid by robbers and the statuette stolen. He now seeks others to help him find it.

1. The robbers were hired by a jealous rival within the Temple of Dlamélĭsh, who hopes to embarrass Armékħ and end his popularity among the local followers of the Green-Eyed Lady of Sins. The statuette is still in the possession of the rival, who plans to sell it to a buyer in another city, thereby enriching himself.

2. As 1, except that the rival intends to blackmail Armékh into using his influence within the Temple of Dlamélish to advance his own position. The rival plans to return the statuette to Armékh once he has done as the rival commands.
3. As 1, except the robbers were hired by Elulén's eldest son, Chatán, who feels his aged mother was foolish to have given away such a valuable heirloom to Armékh. Chatán plans to hold on to the statuette until his mother dies, after which he will suddenly "discover" it again. He has no concern about what happens to Armékh.
4. There are no robbers. Armékh is lying and plans to flee the city, taking the statuette with him to sell in a far-away city. With the proceeds, he intends to live out his days in luxury.



### SÓRZHUN HINÁSHOMAI

Level IV Lay Priest of Stability; STR 36, INT 70, CON 27, PSY 69, DEX 68, COM 82; To Hit +0; Damage +0; AC 9; HP 12; Original Skills: Hunter, Merchant, Musician, Paper-Ink Maker, Perfumer, Scholar, Scribe-Accountant, Slaver; Professional Skills: *Astrologer*, *Clairaudience*, *Clairvoyance*, *Control*

*of Self, Illusionist, Medium, Telekinesis*; Bonus Spells: *Plague, Vapour of Death*; Languages: Pecháni, Tsolyáni

Sórzhun is an older noble woman of the Golden Bough clan. Though no longer beautiful, she still possesses charisma and draws people to herself. She dresses as befits a lady of her station in Tsolyáni society. She is also a lay priestess of Durritlámish, though she her religious devotion is lukewarm at best. For the most part, Sórzhun sees the temple of the Black Angel of the Putrescent Hand as a means to an end, specifically the acquisition of spells to which she otherwise would not have access. If there were another means to become more magically potent, she would seek it out.

To that end, Sórzhun has quietly placed a sizable bounty — 15,000 Káitars — on the recovery of a copy of the book *Kízhaga Dlíttlúmri*, a magical text in Pecháni also known as “the Book of Five Fingers” (see Sec. 1700 in the *Empire of the Petal Throne* rulebook). She has a strict “no questions asked” policy regarding the book — she will not ask how and where potential sellers came by the book and, in return, they are not to ask her what she intends to do with it. Sórzhun is very discreet about her interest in the book, out of fear that the Temple of Durritlámish might get wind of it.

1. All is as it appears to be. Sórzhun will pay the characters without asking any questions and then uses the book in her own researches. Unless the characters choose to pry into her activities, there are no apparent consequences to their transaction.
2. As 1, except that the characters will be followed by agents of the Temple of Durritlámish, who are suspicious of Sórzhun's activities. These agents will not directly interfere with the characters, unless they have no

choice. in which case they will act to defend themselves without revealing their true identities. Should the characters somehow discover who they are, they will soon find more agents dispatched to deal with them — this time acting with overt violence.

3. As 2, except that the agents of the Temple of Durritlámish will kill Sórzhun and frame the characters for her murder, even going so far as to put local authorities onto their trail. The agents will then approach the characters and offer to “help” extricate them from their legal difficulties in exchange for their handing over the book to them. If the characters do so, the agents will fulfil their end of the bargain, though members of Sórzhun’s Golden Bough clan may contain to blame them for her death.
4. As 2, except that the agents are devotees of Ksárul, acting on the orders of a rival of Sórzhun, who wishes to obtain the book for himself.



## DASÉSHMU HIMRÁNU

Level II Warrior; STR 80, INT 48, CON 68, PSY 62, DEX 50, COM 49; To Hit +2; Damage +0; AC 2; HP 15; Original

Skills: Bricklayer, Mason, Smith-Armourer; Professional Skills: Axeman, Bola-Slinger, Mace/Flail User, Slinger, Spearman, Swordsman; Languages: Tsolyáni

Daséshmu is a member of the Black Stone clan. He is not especially handsome, but he nevertheless cuts a commanding figure in the armour of a guardsman of the Temple of Sárku. Despite this, Daséshmu is actually a very kind and soft-spoken individual. Once anyone speaks with him, it is quite apparent that his inward demeanour does not match his outward appearance. Indeed, he seems an extremely unlikely young man to serve the Five-Headed Lord of Worms in any capacity.

That is, in fact, Daséshmu’s problem. He has long doubted his devotion to Lord Sárku; he only joined the temple guard because his fathers expected him to do so, in accordance with clan tradition. His doubts became stronger on the eve of his promotion to the rank of Kási within the guard. Daséshmu did not want to become ever more tightly bound to the Temple of Sárku and so has decided to flee to another city on the other side of the Imperium to start a new life under an assume name. He asks the characters to escort him on his journey. He will pay all expenses for the trip, plus 10,000 Káitars (which he embezzled from the temple, though he does not tell the characters this).

1. The journey across Tsolyánu is uneventful and no one — neither clan nor temple — pursues Daséshmu.
2. Daséshmu’s clan has gotten wind of his plans and sends several of its young men to find him and bring him back to the clanhouse before he embarrasses them in the eyes of the Temple of Sárku.
3. The Temple of Sárku has discovered that it is missing not only one of its

guardsmen but also a significant sum of money from its treasury. The temple commandant has dispatched both guardsmen and lay priests to find Daséshmu — and anyone aiding him — and bring him back to the temple for interrogation and punishment.

- As 3, except that the Temple of Sárku knows whom Daséshmu hired and will pursue him and the characters to the ends of the Imperium to stop him. His only escape is to flee Tsolyánu completely.



## LIYÁSA HISARÉLKE

Level II Priest of Stability; STR 35, INT 43, CON 93, PSY 43, DEX 85, COM 88; To Hit +1; Damage +2; AC 3; HP 5; Original Skills: Glass-Blower, Poet, Potter, Scribe-Accountant; Professional Skills: *Cure Light Wounds, Detect Evil/Good, Produce Light*; Languages: Engsvanyáli, Livyáni, Liyáni, Mu'ugalavyáni, Tsolyáni

Liyása is a lay priestess of Belkhánu and a member of the Sea Blue clan. She is pretty and vivacious, in contrast to the rather dour reputation of her temple. She also owes her placement within the temple to her clan's power and influence. Though not stupid, Liyása is not a sterling intellect. Neither is she very psychically

adept, despite her strong desire to study magic and one day rise within the ranks because her own talents rather than through her clan connections.

To that end, Liyása wishes to sponsor an expedition into the Tsuru'úm in order to locate a shrine dedicated to the 28th Aspect of Belkhánu – Hayékka, “Cartographer of the Planes.” The young priestess claims that she came across a reference to this lost shrine in an Engsvanyáli chronicle she found in her temple's library. She hopes to find books, maps, and scrolls within the shrine that will not only impress her superiors with her initiative but also increase her powers by teaching her planar magic. Because of her clan's wealth, Liyása can offer each character who accompanies her a salary of 200 Káitars a day. She expects that this expedition will take at least a week to complete, perhaps more. In addition, she offers the characters the first pick of any magical items found outside the shrine itself.

- Everything is exactly as Liyása describes it. The shrine exists, is relatively easy to find (thanks to the information she gleaned from her sources), and contains the items she craves.
- As 1, except that the shrine is protected by demons who serve Belkhánu and who do not take kindly to anyone, even a priestess of the Lord of the Excellent Dead, attempting to plunder its treasures.
- As 2, except that, even if the demons are somehow defeated or banished, there are in fact no treasures to be found within it.
- There is no shrine whatsoever. Liyása's command of Engsvanyáli is poor at best. What she took to be a shrine is little more than a statue dedicated to Hayékka. The statue is valuable (perhaps upwards of 5000 Káitars), but it is old and fragile. Removing it from the Tsuru'úm intact might prove extremely difficult.



## TÁ SÀ KÉ

Level IV Warrior; STR 62, INT 67, CON 45, PSY 99, DEX 43, COM 68; To Hit +0; Damage -1; AC 5; HP 13; Original Skills: Assassin-Spy-Tracker, Bird-Trainer, Botanist, Merchant, Mountaineer, Rope and Net Maker; Professional Skills: Axeman, Bola-slinger, Mace/Flail User, Slinger, Spearman, Swordsman; Languages: Pygmy Folk, Tsolyáni, Yán Koryáni

Tá Sà Ké (not her actual name but rather a very rough approximation given to her by the Yán Koryáni) is one of the Ninínyal or Pygmy Folk. Her fur is black and she is of average height for one of her species (about three feet tall). She typically wears Chlén hide armour and a helmet at all times, since she has been threatened with violence in several Tsolyáni cities and towns during her travels. Nevertheless, she remains friendly toward humans.

Tá Sà Ké initially journeyed south to Tsolyánu as a mercenary, hoping to acquire some wealth with which to establish herself as a merchant trading in goods of interest to her own kind in Yán Kór. She was quite successful in this endeavour early on and quickly abandoned the soldiering life to become a travelling merchant. Tá Sà Ké deals primarily in beautiful and exotic animals, which she sells to Tsolyáni nobles and others of wealth. While this has proven a lucrative business, it has not been without its risks and travails.

Consequently, she approaches the characters to assist her.

1. Tá Sà Ké has lately been dealing in birds, particularly Khéshchal, which she captures from a dense forest nearby. Khéshchal fetch between 3000 and 4000 Káitars each. She is willing to split the proceeds of any birds she finds with the characters, provided they can protect her against a tribe of ten Dzór who also dwell in the forest and seem to view the birds as their pets. Though normally fairly pacific, these hairy giants are quite aggressive in protecting the Khéshchal.
2. As 1, except Tá Sà Ké deals in Küni rather than Khéshchal. They are similarly valuable (3-4000 K each) but require two months of training before they can be sold.
3. Tá Sà Ké has lately been dealing in Rényu, which she captures from a dense forest nearby. A Rényu commands 1000 or more Káitars each, after a three month period of training. Tá Sà Ké will split the proceeds of the sale of any Rényu caught, if the characters are willing to act as her bodyguards in this endeavour. A Tsolyáni hunter named Chághresh hiVordésa (a Level V warrior) and his three sons (all Level II warriors) are also trying to capture Rényu and are prepared to use violence against Tá Sà Ké to prevent her from “stealing” the beasts out from under them.
4. Tá Sà Ké is undertaking a “special order” from a Tsolyáni nobleman who wishes to capture a Sérudla. The nobleman (named Ghúru hiUséna) wishes to be the first Tsolyáni to domesticate one of these legendary beasts and is willing to pay 30,000 Káitars for the capture of a small (5 HD) specimen, 40,000 Káitars for a medium-sized (8 HD) one, and 50,000 Káitars for a large (12 HD) example. Tá Sà Ké is willing to split this fee with the characters if they assist her in acquiring a Sérudla alive and (relatively) unharmed to deliver to the nobleman.



# A Portion of the Underworld of Sokátis

Like most Tsolyáni cities, Sokátis has an extensive Tsuru'úm, or underworld, beneath it. This underworld consists of many different strata (or levels), each one the result of the custom of Ditlána by which a city is “renewed” roughly every half-millennium by razing its buildings, filling in their basements and cellars, and constructing new edifices atop the old ones. What follows is the description of but a small portion of the underworld of Sokátis, located below the Foreigners’ Quarter, a common starting point for new player characters. The portion described here connects to the portion detailed in issues #2 and #3, but is completely usable on its own. Future issues of *The Excellent Travelling Volume* will detail more of this map, as well as adding new maps that expand on this one, but referees are encouraged to add to it as they wish or simply to use what is presented here as inspiration in creating their own underworlds.

## 1. Guard Room

This small chamber connects to area 5 described on pp. 12–13 of issue #2. Standing guard here are two Yéleth, which will attack anyone who does not bear a silver symbol of either Hriháyal or Dlamélish.

**Yéleth** (AC 6 MV 9” HD 3 HP 14, 12)

## 2. Stairs

A set of blue-veined marble stairs descend gently into a corridor with two doors on the north and south. Resting on the ground in front of the door leading to area 4 is a small leather bag, inside of which can be found 332 copper Qirgáls and a single gem worth 100 Káitars.

## 3. Antechamber

The walls of this room are decorated with mosaics depicting the rise and

fall of kingdoms and empires – the inevitability of death and decay. Lurking within the room are seven Shédra, who attack anyone not bearing the symbols of Sárku or Durritlámish.

**Shédra** (AC 6 MV 9” HD 2 HP 5, 6, 7, 9 (x3), 11)

The room also contains a chest, inside of which can be found 3422 copper Qirgáls. The chest is locked but is not trapped.

## 4. Antechamber

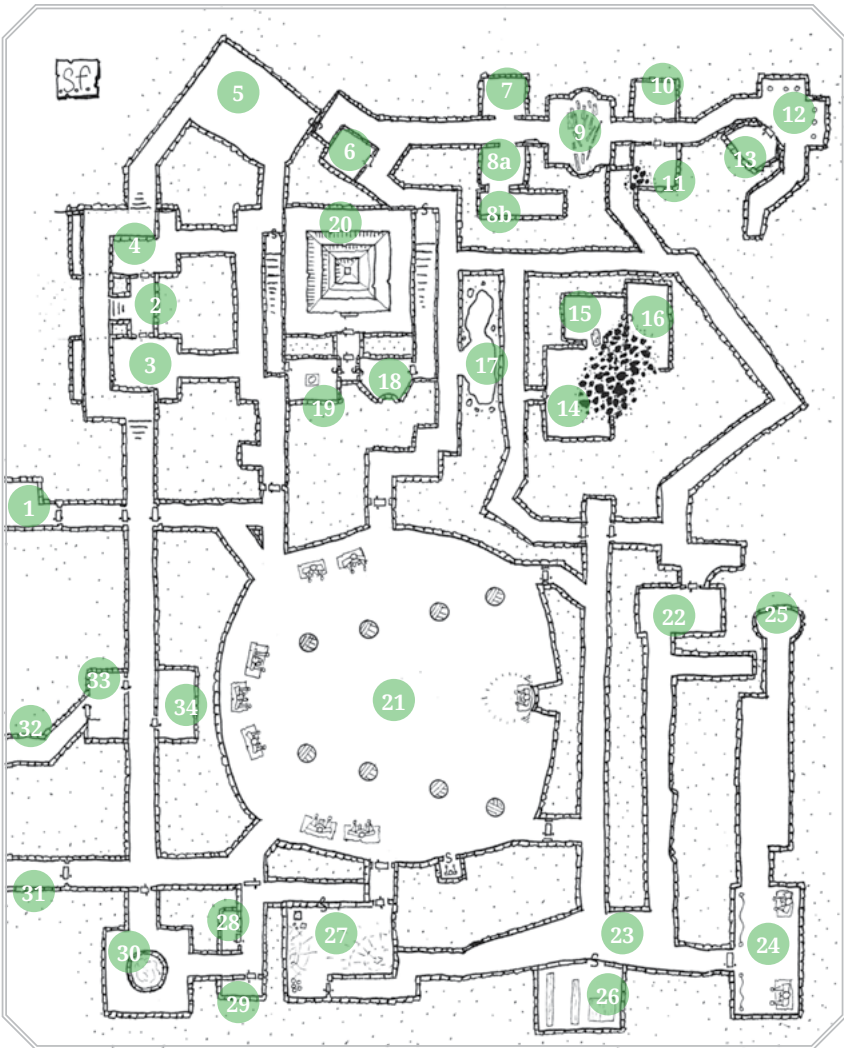
This chamber looks very similar to area 3 above. However, its mosaics have been smashed in several places, littering the floor with glass and stone tesserae.

## 5. Audience Chamber

This room was once richly appointed. The walls are covered in beautiful frescoes, now chipped and faded to such an extent that their subject matter cannot be ascertained. The ceiling is slightly vaulted and is inlaid with copper paint and amber gemstones. There were once more gemstones than currently remain, but the twelve that are still here are worth 20 (x3), 50 (x3), 100 (x3), 500, and 1000 (x2) Káitars. If held by anyone other than a worshiper of Sárku or Durritlámish, a curse is incurred. For every two gems held on his person, the character suffers a –1 penalty to attack rolls and saving throws. Until a *remove curse* spell is first cast, the gemstones crumble to dust if sold or given to someone else. If *remove curse* is cast, the gemstones retain their value and may freely be sold or given away.

## 6. Ossuary

The door to this room is locked. Inside are a half-dozen wooden chests and boxes that contain human bones. The bones have all been stripped of any flesh and bleached. If time is taken to sort



through the bones, a copper symbol of Sárku on a leather thong can be found. If worn, the symbol functions as the priest skill *protection from evil/good* once per day.

### 7. Preparation Room

This open area contains a single wooden table, two wooden barrels, and shelves on the walls. The table is stained with

brown, red, and yellow stains. The two barrels are sealed and contain embalming fluid (save versus poison at +2 if drunk). The shelves hold numerous metal instruments used in the process of preparing a body for burial. There is a 30% chance that this area contains 1d4 Level II priests of Sárku. If present, there will also be a body upon the wooden



table. The priests are not violent, unless attacked, but they will resent the intrusion of anyone not of their faith or that of Lord Sárku's cohort. They will defend themselves, using the metal instruments as weapons and calling to any surviving creatures in nearby rooms (see 8a and 12) for help.

### 8a. Reanimation Room

In general appearance, this room resembles area 7 across the hallway. The primary difference is that there are no wooden shelves and the sealed barrels hold not embalming fluid but a syrupy amber liquid that burns living beings who touch it for one die of damage. The liquid is an essential ingredient in some of the necromantic rituals performed in this room by lay priests devoted to Sárku an Durritlámish. Resting on the wooden table in the room is a single inanimate Shédra wearing a jewelled necklace worth 600 Káitars. If the necklace is removed, the Shédra springs to life and attacks.

**Shédra** (AC 6 MV 9" HD 2 HP 12)

### 8b. Cadaver Storage

This area contains six wooden slats (stacked two high), upon which cadavers intended to be reanimated are placed. At any given time, there are one die of cadavers here, stripped naked and meticulously cleaned before being placed on one of the slats.

### 9. Despoiled Shrine

This room is filled with broken masonry and splintered wood. It was formerly a shrine to the fifth Aspect of Sárku, known as Ku'ún the Corpse-Lord. Ku'ún's duty is to speak on behalf of the recently-deceased in the Judgment Hall of the Worm. A stone statue of Ku'ún lies shattered on the floor, its head, depicting the Corpse-Lord's severe, hawk-like visage, detached from his gaunt, wasted body wrapped in tattered cerements. Any

character who places the statue's head back atop its body receives the blessing of the Corpse-Lord: the ability to reverse one "judgment" made against him. In this case, a judgment is any impersonal or random action that adversely affects the character, such as a bad dice roll. While the referee is the final arbiter of what qualifies as a judgment in this case, he is encouraged to interpret it widely, particularly if the judgment involves a life-or-death situation.

### 10. Mummy Vault

There are 30 mummified bodies within this room. The bodies are those of devout followers of Sárku or Durritlámish who did not merit being reanimated. These bodies will eventually be transported to area 21 (see issue #5) and thence to the larger catacombs beneath that room.

### 11. Tomb of Khivásha hiNokór

The door to this chamber is sealed. There is no lock or other obvious means to open it, short of smashing the plaster facade that so clearly covers the door. Attempting to do so will alert the guardians in area 12, who will come to investigate and stop any would-be tomb robbers. Another possible entrance into the tomb is through the recently-collapsed southwestern wall of the tomb.

Beyond the door lies a gold sarcophagus worth 12,000 Káitars that contains the skeletal remains of Khivásha hiNokór, a high priest of Sárku who lived six centuries ago, during the reign of the Sárku worshipping emperor Durúmu. The sarcophagus is also sealed — but by magic. The only way to open it is through the application of a spell, such as *door control* or *dispel magic*. Khivásha's remains wear scraps of cloth that were once obviously fine robes of office. On his fingers are two jewelled rings, each worth 500 Káitars. There is also a gold

collar worth 2000 Káitars. Held in one of Khivásha's hands is an eye, with an indicator in Classical Tsolyáni showing 68 charges remaining. However, the eye is defective and will explode for four dice of damage if anyone attempts to make use of it.

### 12. Pillared Chamber

Six copper-plated pillars stand in this irregularly shaped room. The pillars are covered in sigils associated with the worship of Sárku and Durritámish. Standing guard in the room (or, more precisely, of area 13) are four Thúnru'u. These Eaters of Eyes serve the Temple of Sárku, but they have been instructed to attack anyone whom they do not already know – including devotees of Sárku and Durritámish.

**Thúnru'u** (AC 4 MV 12" HD 5 HP 15, 17, 19, 24)

### 13. Treasury

The door to this area is locked. The room beyond contains a small portion of the wealth of the Temple of Sárku, consisting of the following: 9625 silver Hlásh, 5 pieces of jewellery (worth 1000 (x2), 3000, 5000, and 9000 Káitars), an *eye of illuminating glory*, an *eye of opening the way*, and the *magical chest of the topaz god*. A Biridlú hangs on the ceiling of the chamber and drops down on the first person to enter who does not have a ward against (such as the priests of Sárku who regularly visit here).

**Biridlú** (AC 3 MV 6"/13" HD 4+1 HP 18)

### 14. Empty Tomb

The eastern wall of this room has collapsed, spilling rubble into it. There is evidence that the chamber once contained stone biers, but they were severely damaged in the collapse of the wall. Whatever else the room may have contained has since been removed.

### 15. Collapsed Tomb

Much like area 14 (see above), this room was once a tomb, but the collapse of a portion of the wall has severely damaged its integrity. Several sarcophagi have been shattered, spilling the bones of their occupants on the ground. All other contents were long ago stolen by tomb robbers. One sarcophagus remains sealed, due to its lid being constructed of heavy stone (it requires total Strength scores of 300 percentiles to lift). Inside the sarcophagus is a skeleton wearing metal plate armour decorated with images of death and decay. The skeleton also a *sword +1* (aligned with Change, Intelligence 61, Ego 67, hates priests of Stability, +1 damage against them).

### 16. Secret Tomb

There are two entrances to this hidden area. The first is by means of a secret door from area 15. The second is by shifting the rubble that fills areas 14 and 15. This latter method will take 6 turns of continuous work, however. The area itself holds the tomb of Uqétme hiVravodáyo, a member of the Domed Tomb clan who served as governor of Sokátis about a century ago. Because he was greatly despised because of his actions as governor — he brutally put down food riots, among other things — he asked that his tomb be hidden, lest it be despoiled.

Uqétme's sarcophagus is made of heavy stone (it requires total Strength scores of 200 percentiles to lift) and embellished with gems worth 5000 Káitars in total. Inside the sarcophagus is an *amulet of power over the undead* and a necklace worth 6000 Káitars.

### 17. Natural Cavern

The priests of Sárku have allowed a group of four Ngáyu to take up residence in this area, since the creatures have on occasion attacked interlopers.

**Ngáyu** (AC 4 MV 12" HD 4 HP 11, 15, 17, 19)

# The Shape-shifters – the Mihálbi

*Number Appearing:* 1–20

*Hit Dice:* 3+

*Armour Class:* 1

*Treasure:* F: 50

*Movement:* 15"

*Lair:* 50

*Treasure in Lair:* I: 50

During the Latter Times, this alien race occupied the region of Tékumel's northern continent that now bears their name: Mihállu, which lies to the north of Salarvyá. Some legends claim that the Mihálbi built "the Unstraightened City" on the Plains of Glass, but this is disputed by most scholars. Regardless of the truth, the Mihálbi are now nearly extinct and have no known enclaves of their own. Instead, it is believed that they inhabit one or more "pocket dimensions" from which they enter and leave Tékumel's plane as they wish. Individuals are still occasionally encountered.

In broad form, the Mihálbi are very similar to humans, although more slender. They have cat-like heads, however, with longish snouts, two eyes, and two upward pointing ears. They are almost hairless and have skin colourations that range from dull green to reddish brown: members of the warrior caste are of the former colour, and leaders of the latter. They possess four breasts, which suggests a mammalian heritage, and their hands have five fingers and a thumb. It is thought that they are hermaphroditic, but their reproductive processes are in fact unknown. The Mihálbi's greatest — and most widely known — talent is that of shape-shifting. Through a combination of body manipulation and the application of extra-planar energy, they can assume almost any form and maintain it for long periods of time. This shape must be of



approximately human size. If an imitated being has more than four limbs, the "extras" appear to be paralysed. Another method of penetrating their disguises is to look into their eyes, as they remain a glowing scarlet, whatever shape the creature adopts (but see below).

Mihálbi are highly attuned to other planes. Indeed, given the ease with which they open and use nexus points, they may even exist simultaneously on more than one plane at once. In spite of their humanoid appearance, these creatures are very alien and they may in fact be numbered among the demon races rather than terrestrial species, though, as with almost everything regarding the Mihálbi, this is vigorously disputed. Regardless of the truth, their motivations are such that they seem whimsical or even insane to "mono-planar" beings such as humankind. Consequently, they remain aloof from other species, and most people use the word "Mihálbi" to describe the completely human inhabitants of Mihállu.

Mihállí are potent magicians. Each member of the race can cast two bonus spells at minimum. For each additional hit die beyond 3, a Mihállí can cast an additional bonus spell. In addition, each one has a 40% chance of possessing 1–4 eyes, amulets, or scrolls. However, the most commonly encountered magic item

in their possession is the dreaded Ball of Immediate Eventuation. This item, which looks like a glowing ball of coloured light, can be used in a variety of different ways for both attack and defence. The strength of the Ball is revealed by its colour, as noted in the chart below:

POWER	COLOUR			
	Light Purple	Bright Silver	Bright Gold	Lambent, Translucent Blue
Energy Bolt	3 dice/20 feet	4 dice/30 feet	5 dice/40 feet	6 dice/50 feet
Defense Shield	1 turn	2 turns	3 turns	4 turns
Invisibility	2 turns	3 turns	4 turns	5 turns
Vapour of Death	+1	+0	-1	-2

As the chart above shows, the Ball of Immediate Eventuation has four powers, each of which uses a single charge of the Ball (roll percentiles for each Ball to determine its remaining charges). The energy bolt affects a single target, dealing the number of dice of damage indicated, with a successful saving throw (against eyes) resulting in only one die of damage. The defense shield stops all non-magical missiles for the number of turns indicated. It does not protect against eyes or spells, with the exceptions of *doomkill*, *the silver halo of soul stealing*, and *telekinesis*. Invisibility functions like the Group II bonus spell for the number of turns listed. Likewise, vapour of death is identical to the Group II bonus spell, except that it does not affect members of the Hlúss, Shén, or Ssú species. The chart indicates the bonus or penalty to the saving throw to avoid its effects.

The Ball of Immediate Eventuation operates according to alien principles, making it difficult for members of

other species to use one. In general, only priests or lay priests of Level XIV or higher can use one successfully. Anyone else who attempts to do so will find his mind overcome by extra-planar energies and go insane. There is no saving throw against this effect, but it can be reversed through the application of remove curse or similar spells.

Explorers and sages report that there are at least two sub-species of the Mihállí, both of which are quite rare. The first, known as the Vítru Mihállí, hail from the southern continent and are particularly adept at shape-changing, being able to mask even their scarlet eyes while in another form. The Vítru Mihállí are also reputed to be less antagonistic toward other species. The second sub-species, the Srámu Mihállí, come from the north — the Lorún lands or possibly even over the pole — and are particularly attuned to other-planar energies. They supposedly engage in regular commerce with demon races aligned with both Stability and Change.

# The Prismatic Fortress

“The Prismatic Fortress” is a keyed locale detailing a small Hlúss enclave somewhere in the mountainous wilds along the north or northeastern borders of Tsolyánu. Because of the nature of its inhabitants and their large numbers, it is probably not a locale for suitable for low-level characters, unless they are particularly well-equipped.

## BACKGROUND

As noted in the *Empire of the Petal Throne* rulebook, the Hlúss are one of Tékumel’s aboriginal species, pushed aside when mankind settled and terraformed the planet untold millennia ago. Since then, their numbers have dwindled and they now live in far-away and inhospitable places, such as the island of Hlússuyal in the Deeps of Chanayága to the south. Like their cousins, the Ssú, the Hlúss seethe with resentment against their conquerors and are always looking for the means to strike back against them. Overt military action is rarely employed, due to their low numbers, which is why the Hlúss prefer subtlety (such as the Zu’úr drug trade, as described in “The Hidden Shrine” adventure in issue #1 of *The Excellent Travelling Volume*).

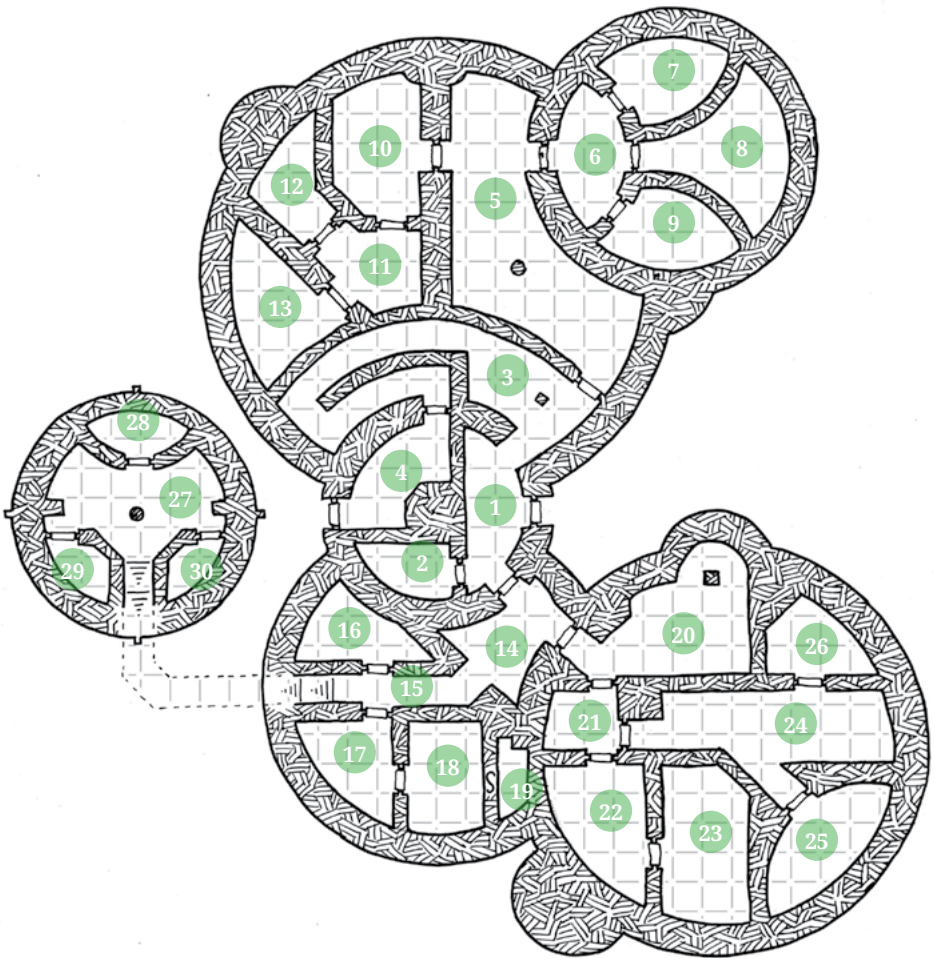
Occasionally, though, a rogue Hlúss Mother decides to act more boldly. One such Hlúss Mother recently took over an ancient abandoned structure located atop a mountain near the isolated Tsolyáni settlement of Ruthálu. The structure was a large but crumbling citadel from the Time of No Kings. Under the direction of their Mother, the Hlúss used their own bodily secretions to repair and reinforce it, in the process giving it an iridescent appearance that reflected the sunlight during the day. From this location, the Hlúss Mother

has slowly been building up her brood, with the intention of creating a potent enough force to launch a full-scale attack against the border areas of Tsolyánu — eventually.

Unfortunately, some of the inhabitants of Ruthálu took notice of the bright glinting atop a nearby mountain a decided to investigate. Finding themselves quickly outnumbered by the Hlúss, they were slain or captured to serve as hosts to incubate the next generation of the Spawn of the Old Ones. The elders of Ruthálu sent word of the disappearance of some of their men and women, but, so far, there has been no response from the local governor. This has led the elders to seek out others for help and this is the most obvious way for the player characters to set about investigating the Prismatic Fortress and its deadly inhabitants. The people of Ruthálu are poor and have little to offer in reward for the characters’ services, but they are free to keep any treasure they might find in the course of their activities.

## FORTRESS EXTERIOR

The outside of the fortress appears almost crystalline but closer examination reveals that it is actually stone, over which a thick layer of a translucent secretion has been applied. The secretion is sturdy and resists even the blows of steel weapons. The fortress has a peculiar shape, being a collection of hemispheres melded together. It looks like no other building in the area, suggesting it predates the rise of Tsolyánu by many centuries. Characters with the Scholar skill might recognise it as being not unlike some structures from the Time of No Kings after the fall of Éngsvan hla Gánga.



### 1. Entrance

Six Hlúss warriors stand guards in this room and attack anyone not of their species.

**Hlúss** (AC 4 MV 9" HD 2 HP 8, 9 (x2), 10, 11 (x2))

### 2. Weapons Room

This chamber contains enough spears and swords to outfit two dozen Hlúss warriors.

### 3. Weird Sculpture

This otherwise empty room contains a strange geometric sculpture made from the same crystalline material that coats the outside of the fortress. Anyone non-Hlúss looking at the sculpture for more than a few seconds must make a saving throw versus spells or suffer the effects of the Group I bonus spell *madness*.

Those who do save successfully save gain limited clairvoyance while in the



fortress. There is a 20% chance that such characters can see what is the next chamber they are about to enter. This effect lasts for 10 non-combat turns, after which it fades. Subsequent viewings of the weird sculpture can “refresh” the clairvoyance, but a new saving throw must be made each time.

#### 4. Guard Room

Four Hlúss guard the back entrance to the fortress.

**Hlúss** (AC 4 MV 9” HD 2 HP 4, 5 (x2), 8)

#### 5. Common Area

There is a 50% chance that 1–6 Hlúss warriors will be present in this open area. There is also a small hole in the floor of the chamber, through which a yellowish gas is emanating. The gas has a soporific effect on species other than Hlúss and Ssú, who must make a successful saving throw versus poison or fall asleep for 1–6 non-combat turns. The gas suffuses the entire room.

#### 6. Guard Room

Four Hlúss warriors and their commander stand guard here, keeping a watch over the prisoners in the adjoining areas. The commander has a key to open the nearby cells. There are two gems (worth 100 Káitars each) attached to his carapace.

**Hlúss** (AC 4 MV 9” HD 2 HP 3, 7, 8, 12)

**Hlúss Commander** (AC 3 MV 9” HD 4 HP 13)

#### 7. Empty Cell

This locked cell is currently empty.

#### 8. Cell

This locked area is occupied by two wounded and malnourished Tsolyáni, who are surviving members of the expedition from Ruthálu. They are Káshma hiArkóna and his brother Arái hiArkóna, who belong to the Green

Bough clan. They are both Level II warriors (HP 4 and 6 respectively) but have no weapons, armour, or other possessions at the present time. They wish nothing more than to flee the fortress and return to their homes, but will fight against the Hlúss if given equipment. They fear the Hlúss greatly, after seeing them cut down many other members of their expedition. They know little about the interior of the fortress or the whereabouts of their comrades within it.

#### 9. Empty Cell

This locked cell is currently empty.

#### 10. Sleeping Area

At any given time, there are 1–6 Hlúss sleeping here. To non-Hlúss, they appear simply inactive, as there is no other visible cue that they are in fact unconscious. Unless the characters are particularly quiet (or possess skills such Hunter or Assassin-Spy-Tracker), entering the room is 70% likely to awaken the Hlúss.

#### 11. Empty Chamber

There is a 25% chance of 1–6 Hlúss being in this area.

#### 12. Storage Area

This chamber contains a half-dozen crystalline “boxes” inside of which the Hlúss have stored supplies of various sorts. The containers are sturdy enough to withstand being dropped on the floor, but a solid blow from almost any weapon (whether Chlén hide or metal) shatters them, revealing their contents. Three of the containers hold a clear but viscous liquid that is nutritious but not particularly tasty (to humans anyway). The other three hold dried meat of indeterminate origin that will make humans sick for 1–6 non-combat turns after consuming it (–1 to all attack and saving throw rolls during that time).

**13. Refectory**

Eight Hlúss are presently here, eating the dried meat described in area 12 above. Each of these Hlúss has a gem attached to its carapace worth 50 Káitars.

**Hlúss** (AC 4 MV 9" HD 2 HP 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12)

**14. Checkpoint**

Four experienced Hlúss warriors guard this area, assisted by a Level IV magic-user. The warriors all have two gems attached to their carapaces (worth 100 Káitars each). The magic-user, in addition to its other spells, possesses an *eye of frigid breath*, with an indicator in Yán Koryáni and 7 charges remaining.

**Hlúss** (AC 3 MV 9" HD 3 HP 7, 12, 13, 14)

**Hlúss Magic-User** (AC 4 MV 9" HD 3-1 HP 10 Spells: *Clairaudience*, *Clairvoyance*, *Control of Self*, *Illusionist*, *Shadows*, *Telekinesis*, *Withering*)

**15. Stairs**

There is a set of stairs leading to a subterranean tunnel that connects this area to area 30.

**16. Hlúss Champions**

A Level VI Hlúss warrior dwells in this chamber, along with two Level IV warriors. They are fanatically devoted to the protection of the Hlúss Mother and, as such, will come out of this area to attack if they hear the sounds of combat nearby or anything else that might suggest intruders within the fortress. They all have four gems attached to their carapaces (each worth 500 Káitars). The Level VI warrior also possesses a *sword* +2 (non-aligned, no intelligence or ego).

**Hlúss Champion** (AC 2 MV 9" HD 7+1 HP 25)

**Hlúss** (AC 3 MV 9" HD 5+1 HP 16, 18)

**17. Empty Chamber**

There is a 50% chance of 1-6 Hlúss being in this area.

**18. Treasure Guardians**

Seven Hlúss warriors stand guard in this room. There is a secret door in the eastern wall that leads to area 19.

**Hlúss** (AC 4 MV 9" HD 2 HP 4 (x2), 5, 6, 7, 9, 10)

**19. Vault**

This hidden room contains the treasure the Hlúss have collected since establishing the fortress. Most of it is useless to them, but the Hlúss have stored it here in hopes that they can trade it to neutral Hláka in exchange for services they cannot perform themselves. The treasure consists of the following: 29, 322 copper Qirgáls, 10, 454 silver Hlásh, a *shield* +1, a *dagger* +2, and Duré'ep Tkásh Sneqsíva ("The Pessimistic Treatise of Total Inaction").

**20. Guard Room**

Four Hlúss stand guard here, commanded by a Level IV magic-user. The warriors all have a gem attached to their carapaces (worth 100 Káitars each). Also present in the room is a weird sculpture almost identical to the one in area 3. Its effects are identical, except that it is more potent. Saving throws to avoid its ill effects are made at -2 and those who successfully resist them have a 40% chance to gain clairvoyance.

**Hlúss** (AC 3 MV 9" HD 2 HP 6, 8, 9, 11)

**Hlúss Magic-User** (AC 4 MV 9" HD 3-1 HP 14 Spells: *Clairaudience*, *Clairvoyance*, *Control of Self*, *Illusionist*, *Plague*, *Sleep*, *Telekinesis*)

**21. Annex**

This area is empty most of the time. There is, however, a 30% chance that 1-6 Hlúss warriors might be here.



### 22. Dissection Chamber

Within this room is what looks to be a table made from the crystalline material found elsewhere in the fortress. Upon the table is a the dissected corpse of a man — another of the expedition from Ruthálu. If the characters spend any time examining the corpse, they will notice that it is almost entirely intact.

All that is missing is its brain, which has been very neatly removed from the skull and placed in a “jar” made of the crystalline material.

### 23. Magic-User’s Chamber

A Level V Hlúss magic-user and its three bodyguards dwell in this area. The magic-user has four gems (each worth



500 Káitars) attached to its carapace, while the three bodyguards all have two gems (each worth 100 Káitars). The magic-user also has an *amulet of finding treasure in the underworld* and the key to open the doors to areas 25 and 26.

**Hlúss** (AC 4 MV 9" HD 2 HP 8, 9, 10)

**Hlúss Magic-User** (AC 4 MV 9" HD 4+1 HP 19 Spells: *Astrologer, Clairaudience, Clairvoyance, Control of Self, Fear, Illusionist, Medium, Seeing Other Planes, Sleep, Telekinesis*)

#### 24. Guard Room

Eight Hlúss guards can be found here, keeping watch over the prisoners in areas 25 and 26.

**Hlúss** (AC 4 MV 9" HD 2 HP 3 (x3), 7, 8, 9 (x2), 12)

#### 25. Cell

This cell contains three humans from Ruthálu: Chékkán hiSánga, his wife Dhalái hiVazhú, and Su'ínu hiQolsúna, all members of the Blue Kirtle clan. They are all Level I warriors (HP 1, 2, and 6 respectively) and are injured. They know that most of their compatriots have been taken away to the chamber of the Hlúss Mother (area 27) and, as such, do not expect them to be alive. If given weapons, they will gladly fight against the Hlúss.

#### 26. Cell

A single person is in this cell: Sünúm hiBáktike of the Golden Dawn clan. He is a Level III priest of Hnálla, but he has been experimented upon by the Hlúss magic-user in area 23. He shows visible scars on his head, which have been sealed with a thin layer of the crystalline material found throughout the fortress. An elixir of Hlúss venom has been injected into his brain. For the moment, the venom has left him addled and confused, unable to speak or otherwise communicate. He can,

however, walk and do simple tasks. In three days, Sünúm will "recover" from his injuries and regain his wits, but the Hlúss Mother will be able to control him like a puppet from a distance of up to 1 mile away. This effect can be eliminated through the use of *neutralise poison*. Sünúm is the first human to have survived this procedure, but will not be the last if the Mother has her way.

#### 27. Chamber of the Hlúss Mother

This area is occupied by the dreaded Hlúss Mother, a monstrous Hlúss with magical abilities. She is protected by a dozen Hlúss, who will give their lives to save hers. Each of the guardian Hlúss has three gems (each worth 100 Káitars) embedded in its carapace. The Mother has an *eye of departing in safety*, which she will not hesitate to use if her life is in serious danger. It is set to take her to a cavern within the mountain on which the fortress sits.

**Hlúss** (AC 4 MV 9" HD 2 HP 2, 6 (x4), 7 (x3), 8 (x2), 9, 10)

**Hlúss Mother** (AC 1 MV 6" HD 10 HP 39 Spells: *Astrologer, Calm, Charm Creature, Clairaudience, Clairvoyance, Control of Body, Curse/Bless, Illusion, Medium, Nature Control, Petrefaction, Protection from Evil/Good, Telekinesis*)

#### 28–30. Incubation Chambers

Each of these chambers contains three humans from Ruthálu, all of whom have been injected with eggs by the Hlúss Mother. They are unconscious and their bodies are growing bloated as the eggs within them grow. In three weeks time, the eggs will hatch and they will be consumed by the ravenous Hlúss larvae within them. They can be rid of the eggs through the use of *cure disease*, if the spell is applied within the next two weeks. After that, they are doomed and nothing short of divine intervention can prevent their dying a horrible death.

# Tomes of Power

*Empire of the Petal Throne* provides twenty-four examples of magical books, but notes that “the referee is free to devise and add further titles as he sees fit.” What follows are fourteen more magical books for use with *EPT*.



## ALUÁZ DHÚKAN ÁM

“Driving Back the Hand of Night” is written in Thu’úsa, the secret language of the temples of Stability. Anyone other than a priest of the Tlomitlanyal who attempts to read the tome is immediately put to sleep for 1–6 non-combat turns, after which he awakes refreshed but with no desire to attempt to read the book. A priest of Stability who reads it can use it to cast a spell that erects a magical shell 1" in diameter and 1" high. This shell lasts 10 turns and admits only devotees of Stability within it. All within the shell are immune to weapons, magic, and telepathy. Casting the spell from the book takes 1 turn. The spell can be used as often as desired by the possessor of the book, but it may only cast once per day.

## CHAGHADÁRSH NE GHÚ’AKH KHÁNŪ

“The Pandects of the Tenebrous Dark” is written in the secret Tongue of the Lord of Worms, which is known only to the inner circles of the Temples of Sárku and Durritlámish. The book is usable only by a priest of either of the aforementioned gods of Level VI or higher. Indeed, such priests are the only ones who can even see the book, as a powerful illusion protects it that makes the tome appear as a more mundane object, such as black wooden box or a copper idol of Sárku. If seen and read by a person of the appropriate profession, level, and alignment, the book teaches the ritual for creating a Jággi (see issue #1 of *The Excellent Travelling Volume*), who serves as the reader’s companion (not slave!) for as long as he lives. This book can only be used once, after which it teleports away.

## GUPPÍSHSHA GDAKÉSHU ARIGGÁ’ANA

“The Book of the Great Goddess” is written in Salarvyáni and is dedicated to the goddess Shiringgáyi (see issue #3 of *The Excellent Travelling Volume*). The book is usable only by priests of Level IV or higher who are devoted to that deity. However, priests of Avánthe may also benefit from the book if they are of appropriate level and make a successful saving throw against paralysis/hypnosis. Failure indicates that the priest is paralysed for 1–4 days, after which he can never again touch the book, let alone attempt to read it. The book teaches the following spells: *control terrain*, *the hands of Krá the Mighty*, and *zoomorphy*. Once learned, these spells are identical to the spells of the same name described in the *EPT* rulebook. The book is usable by no one except those mentioned above.

## KRANUÓN TSAHLÁNO

“The Book of the Sage” is written in Engsvanyáli (though an early form of it, hence the use of the word *Kranuón* for “book” rather than the later “*Kranuóntio*.”) and is usable by any reader, regardless of profession or level. Characters who lack the Group III original skill, Scholar (see Sec. 420), gain it after reading this treatise. Those who already possess Scholar instead gain +10 percentiles to their Intelligence score (maximum 100, of course). The book can only be used once.

## KRANUÓNTIO MISHATLNÉA ÜROSHJANÁL

“The Book of Ebon Bindings” is a compendium of demonology, originally compiled during the time of Llyán of Tsámra. Though available in several different versions and languages, the Engsvanyáli recension is the most common and useful. The book is usable only by priests and lay priests of Level IX or higher. Reading it teaches the Group III bonus spell, *the Demon*, in addition to a form of protection from evil/good that functions against demons, including mighty demon lords such as *Origób*. Most extant versions of this blasphemous tome are redacted or otherwise incomplete. At the referee’s discretion, uncensored versions of this book might contain additional spells or knowledge unavailable in the commoner Engsvanyáli version.

## KRANUÓNTIO ÜROFLÁTIO MZHENGGÜ

“The Book of the Coming of the Lord” is written in Engsvanyáli and filled with beautifully painted miniature illustrations. When the reader presses a finger against a picture, it springs to life, providing a window into events of the past, such as the Fall of Gánga, the court of the Priestkings, etc. Anyone who does this has a 40% chance to be

drawn into the picture. If so drawn into the picture, a reader remains there for 5 non-combat turns, after which there is a 30% chance he will return to the present. If he does not return, another such roll is made every 5 non-combat turns. While in the past, anything that happens to the character actually happens, meaning that damage inflicted (or death) is real, as are any treasures gained, etc. The book can be used repeatedly, though there is a 20% chance the book will crumble to dust after each use.



## LIUNÓB MIJJÁIDLO SHIRUDANÚBA

“The Books of Seventy Shadows” is written in modern Livyáni and is usable only by priests of Level IV or higher who are devoted to the Livyáni Shadow Gods, *Qame’él*, the Shadowed One, *Vrusáemaz*, the Horned One of Secrets, *Kikumársha*, and the One of Fears. Interestingly, it can also be used by priests of *Ksáru* and *Grugánu*, provided they are Level V or higher. Even if these requirements are met, only a reader whose Intelligence score is 81 or higher can make sense of this esoteric tome. Reading it provides two benefits. First, it teaches the secret of creating 1–4 *Hrá*, which serve the reader until either they or he is slain. Second, it teaches a spell, usable only

three times, that enables the caster to deflect energy from ancient devices (e.g. eyes) into the Planes Beyond. This spell works only against devices of the Ancients, not spells. Once read, the tome becomes useless.

### MA'ÁLRA MLEKÉ DALÉ

“Deeds of the Great King” is written in Engsvanyáli and describes the reign of the Bednálljan ruler, Ssirandár I. Ssirandár was the son and successor of Nayári, who began the Sákbe road system that still exists today, in addition to many other accomplishments. Warriors of any level or alignment who read this book immediately gain the next professional skill they do not already possess. Furthermore, they gain +5 percentiles to both Strength and Constitution. Though the book is usable by nonhumans, neither priests nor lay priests gain any benefit from it. The tome is usable only once.

### NÔM VÖLÀ SHRÛTTA

“Entering the Deep Forest” is written in the extinct Ái Chè language once spoken in the far northeast of the continent (and rumoured to have been used by followers of the Pariah Deity known as the One Other). Nevertheless, any reader with a Psychic Ability score of 61 or higher can “read” the tome simply by tracing his fingertips across the convoluted Kázhra Vé Ngakóme script of Ái Chè. In doing so, the reader and 1–6 companions within a 1' circle are immediately transported to a heavily forested, misty Plane beyond Tékumel and the book that brought them there disappears. After exploring the Plane for a short time, those transported will discover the tower of Thómar, one of the legendary Undying Wizards. The tower has beds and food but nothing else of interest. There is a 30% chance

each week that Thómar will visit his tower and a 30% chance that he will agree to transport the reader and his companions back to Tékumel. Otherwise, they are trapped on this Plane, which holds little of interest other than the tower and large, dangerous beasts that dwell in the seemingly never-ending forest.

### SHOKKÁB

“Across the Water” is written in modern Livyáni and is usable by readers of any profession, level, or alignment. The book, by an unnamed Livyáni explorer, purports to provide details of the peoples and customs of the lands across the Gulf of Teriyál southwest of Livyánu. The book predates the founding of the Livyáni and Shén colonies in that part of the world, whose inhabitants have encountered nothing to lend credence to the book's many outrageous claims (e.g. a city filled entirely with Ru'ún). Regardless, the book does contain reasonably accurate maps of the terrain in this area, making it useful for any who visit the southern continent.

### TLÓM JÉ'E

“All Perish!” is written in Sunúz, the secret language of worshippers of the dread Pariah Deities. As such, mere possession of this book is a crime punishable by impalement in Tsolyánu and most other civilised lands. The tome teaches the reader five spells (each with a range of 6") that slay their targets instantly and irrevocably, though saving throws are permitted. The first spell affects 1–6 followers of Stability, the second affects 1–6 followers of Change, the third affects 1–6 undead, the fourth affects 1–6 nonhumans of any species, and the fifth affects 1–6 androids or automatons. Each spell can be used only once. Once read, the book is rendered



non-magical and subsequent readings, either by the first reader or anyone else do not confer the ability to cast the aforementioned spells.

### URUTLÉNIQ KHYBASHÁNKOI

“The Scroll of Wisdom” is written in Classical Tsolyáni and is dedicated to Thúmis, the Lord of Wisdom. A priest of Thúmis (of any level) who reads it learns a new spell, *the gate of the Grey Pentacle*. The spell creates a whirling, pearly-hued nexus point that can travel up to 15” away from the priest. Any human, intelligent nonhuman, undead being, or android touched by the spell is instantly transported away, unless resisted with a successful saving throw. The final destination of a transported target is as follows: 1–2: an airless Plane; 3: a Demon Plane; 4: another time and place on Téकुmel; 5–6: another location on Téकुmel but in the present time; 7–8: 1 mile in a random direction; 9–10: 1000 feet in a random direction. The nexus point created by the spell is 1” in diameter and moves at a rate of 1” per combat round. The spell lasts for 1 turn or until used against a single target. The “Scroll of Wisdom” disappears upon being read, but the reader retains knowledge of the spell, which is usable once per day. Priests devoted to other gods gain no benefit from it, nor do members of other professions.

### VE-KHRÚN-ALA GI-DYÉNGGA

“The Book of Dyéngga” is written in modern Yán Koryáni. This volume is not so much a book in its own right as it is a bibliography of Yán Koryáni treatises dealing with magic and sorcery. Its author served as archivist to the High Clan of Ke’ér and spent much of his life seeking out the titles — and, in some cases, the locations — of every tome of magic written in the tongue of his

native land (including those written in Tsáq̄w). If read by a priest or lay priest of Level IV or higher, the book provides the location of a Yán Koryáni magical book (e.g. “The Labyrinth of Mutable Desting”). The location provided is correct, though “The Book of Dyéngga” may not provide details on its current owners or guardians.



### WÁBA'S ALMANAC

This book is usable only by lay priests of Level VI or higher. Any reader of the appropriate profession and level who opens it is able to read it, as if it were written in his own language. Each page of the book provides the reader with the ritual needed to open a stable nexus point to a single destination in the Planes Beyond. The ritual can also be used in reverse, enabling the reader to open a nexus point back to Téकुmel. It can be used repeatedly. Most copies of the Almanac contain only 1–4 pages at most, though there are reputedly copies with more pages in the libraries of great wizards.

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