

GLORANTHAN ADVENTURES

ISSUE 2

RED SUN RISING

By NEWT NEWPORT



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Intrigue and Skulduggery in the Lunar Heartlands!

Welcome to a tale of the city of Serris played out in four stories. Three of the stories take place in the city itself and the fourth takes place at the very edge of Empire, in distant and dusty Pavis!

This story has a Light and Dark side. Such is the way when Illuminates are involved.

The Light side that shines so obviously in the day is the everyday struggle between the three Associations of Serris for political power. There are marriages to heal old wounds, sacred sandcastle building competitions, the funeral of a dead heir and the dispute over a placement of the tomb of a Hero King. All these are battle grounds of an ongoing war between the Noble families of Serris for control of the city.

The Dark side of the tale is more subtle and takes place in parallel. It tells of the conflict between the character's Dara Happan upbringing and their adult Lunar religion. This conflict is brought into focus by the crisis of the heir of the Five Trees of Bounty, Yanis, becoming a Lunar initiate. Now for such a high-ranking Dara Happan Noble of a staunchly traditional Association this is unthinkable. The Five Trees of Bounty has bowed to the reality of the political necessity by allowing some lower ranking nobles (of which the Heroes are some) become Lunars, but the Patriarch would rather ritually sacrifice his son to Yelm himself, than see him initiated into the cult of the Red Moon. But this is exactly what happens, and it sows the seeds of a crisis. It is part of a great Lunar plot to put Yanis on the Serrisan throne as the Red Sun, a magical ruler who would ultimately take full control of the city in the name of the Red Goddess. A plot that quickly comes unhinged in ways that even Lord Tarsic, the character's patron and master tactician of House Cadzez, could not believe.

Each adventure takes place a year or more apart, and Narrators can expand the narrative by adding smaller events in between the main set piece episodes that either continue unresolved situations from the episodes or reflect the politics and infighting between the three associations.

Serris the Builder

“In the God Time Serris the Builder, an obscure son of Lodril, built a city for his followers in the manner of Yelm, the Celestial Emperor. He liked to build. He built roads, houses, ziggurats, great water works and high mighty walls. His worshipers prospered in the Golden Age and helped others build works after the manner of their god.

Then one day Yelm fell from the Sky Dome, killed by the rebel Orlanthus who wielded the Sword Death and who wanted to be King of the Gods. Yelm plunged into the Underworld and Trolls and other monsters of Darkness erupted into the Dara Happan Empire. During this lesser Darkness the people of Serris were safe behind their tall stone walls. Serris himself walked abroad to try and fix the broken buildings that the troll invasion had caused, completely unaware that worse was to come.

A Greater Darkness fell upon Glorantha when the Unholy Trio cracked the Sky Dome and let the screaming hordes of Chaos into the world. The World Devourer and her spawn erupted from the Earth and ruined the city of Serris. The Empty Emperor enforced his will and twisted reign upon the survivors.

Serris, sensing his works undone and his children in pain, took the long hard journey home. Once there he defeated the World Devourer. He expelled the Empty Emperor and from out of ruin he brought the Glory! He summoned the surviving Masons and the Great Architect and enacted the Rebuilding Ritual. Behold the city walls arising from the earth, and shattered buildings rebuilt a new! Yelm rose in triumph in the Sky Dome, restored again as rightful ruler of the Universe.

So it has been every time our city has been shattered by invaders since then, be they the foul horse nomads, the godless Carmanian Knights or even the loving invasion of the Red Goddess herself. After each destruction the Priests of Serris has re-enacted the Rebuilding Ritual and the city has recreated itself just as Serris has intended.

Thus Serris endures!”

Anon. a common oral myth known to all of Serris.

Red Sun Rising

“According to the ancient accounts in the Rebuilding Ritual “every citizen of the city is a brick in its substance”. When the ritual is enacted the whole city turns out and chants along with the Upper Tier Priest who leads the ceremony. The Great Architect, the high priest of the Serris Cult, is key to the ceremony. It is his will that connects with the city god. If the Architect's vision of the city is impure and misdirected then those imperfections are present in the city when it is rebuilt. From carefully examining the plans of previous incarnations of the city, we detect that there are at least 23 variations in the present city from the Golden Design of the original city. When the city was rebuilt after the Seven Nights of Glory, it was the Seven Mothers

themselves who enacted the rebuilding ritual, mainly to create the New City outside the Old City walls. It was a compromise of the Golden Design which the Serrisian Priesthood found acceptable. The Mothers convinced them that it was a hidden part of the Golden Design, in the same way as the Red Moon was a hidden aspect of Yelm's great cosmic design, and therefore valid. How the long beards grumbled and quietly rebelled. Some commentators have noted that we have only the tiniest of footholds on the otherwise impenetrable Dara Happan Rock.

My researches have determined that it is possible to turn the ritual upon its head and turn it into a weapon against the Dara Happan conservatives, and complete the work of the initial invasion, winning over hearts and minds as well as the body. Rather than bricks and stone being shattered it needs to be the people of the city. They need to be shaken to a core and put into such a state of fear and disarray so that we could then easily put forward our own candidate who would be on the surface the saviour of the Dara Happan Peoples. In effect a *Red Sun*, an illuminate of both the Lunar Way and a noble initiate of Yelm, someone born to rule yet sympathetic to the Goddess. They would then reassure the citizens and completing our version of the Rebuilding Ritual, uniting them under their rule and bringing their hearts truly into the glory of the Goddess!"

Lord Tarsic, Master of Assassins of the Five Trees of Bounty Association, First Among Equals of the Friendly Moon Society.

What does this book contain?

Heroes of the Red Sun

These are the player characters of the story. They are members of the Five Trees of Bounty, low level Nobles and Freeman and women who the Patriarch for political reasons has allowed to join the Lunar Way. This chapter is for the players. It contains quick guidance on how to generate characters and basic information about the city, its culture and the Lunar religion. All in a very quick digestible format that even newcomers can easily pick up on.

The rest of this book is primarily aimed at the Narrator.

Mythology and History

This chapter details first details the mythical events that happened in the Godtime and then some of the historical events of the city. A rough timeline of the city is also given.

The City Guide

This chapter details the city of Serris, a minor Dara Happan city in an out of the way part of the Lunar heartlands that is the base for the first three adventures.

Cast List

A grouping of all the major recurring non-player characters in one place for ease of reference during play, and as a primer before reading the Episodes.

The Episodes

Escorting the Goddess (1620ST)

The heroes escort a Lunar friend to her marriage in a Solar Household, who belongs to the Boat of the Silver Hind association. This does not go without incident. As well as acting as the players' introduction to the gods and goddesses of the Lunar way, the players also meet in passing characters that are later to play a more integral part in the epic.

The Death of the Heir (1621ST)

Yanis, the heir of the Five Trees of Bounty Association, dies while on a tour of the Barbarian Wastes of Prax. During the period of mourning, the enemies of the Five Trees of Bounty take advantage, and come up with a horrific scheme to discredit the favoured of Yelm. Can the heroes solve the mystery and expose the scheme, preserving their Association's honour and status?

Ahec's Tomb (1624ST)

In the maze of legal cases brought by the Five Trees of Bounty's rival associations, after Yanis' death, is a case to move the tomb of Ahec. This tomb looks over the Great Market in the Old City and reputedly the spirit of Ahec helps the city's merchants deal with outside barbarians. The Seven Nights of Glory makes its move by putting forward the proposal that the tomb should be moved to the New Market in Moonie town. Can the players successfully put forward a case for the tomb to stay where it is? Can they discover the secret of the tomb?

Last Seen in Pavis (1625ST)

Yanis, the heir that is presumed dead is reported seen alive in the barbarian city of Pavis. Dodging agents of the Seven Nights of Glory, the Heroes must make their way to the furthest corner of the Lunar Empire and find out the truth of the matter. Question is will they like what they find?

HEROES OF THE RED SUN

Players' Information

Welcome to the Lunar Heartlands

“You live in a blessed place, safe within the Glowline, safe within the walls of your city, the Red Goddess protects you from the savages outside and the malcontents within.

Know that you are part of Yelm’s mighty Dara Happan Empire that has existed since the first sunrise over ten hundred thousand years ago! As such it is a fertile land, bathed constantly in Yelm’s warming sunlight and irrigated by the River Oslir which snakes past all the Dara Happan Cities.

You are also fortunate to live in the time that the Sedenya the Red Goddess has revealed herself to the world. She watches over us from the Red Moon. The Lunar Way teaches us “We are all us” and the Seven Mothers teach this to the barbarians at the edge of the empire and to the citizens within its border. When everyone knows this principle the Red Goddess will shed her warlike visage and transform into a peaceful White Goddess and all of Glorantha will be saved!”

Vania the Moonglow High Priestess of the Red Goddess in Serris

The City of Serris

You live in one of the most advanced cities in all of Glorantha, the Dara Happan City State of Serris. It has existed since the dawn of Time, when Lodril’s son Serris the Builder created it for his followers. He built in white stone, robust city streets, aqueducts, shored up the river Oslir so it ran straight and true and magnificent buildings for us to gather in the perfect administration.

Highlights of the city are:

- The Great Market, based upon Yelm’s sacred directions visit the North (Wisdom/White), South (Strength/Green), West (Sovereignty/Red) and East (Insight/Yellow) markets.
- The City Council House, were you can see the Golden Throne of Serris himself suspended over the council chamber.
- Sun Hill, where the great and the good live, in magnificent Villas modelled on the houses of the gods themselves.
- Riverside, visit the lively docks and sample local fish dishes in the nearby taverns.

- Bricksville, see Serris master builders at work.
- Temple District, where all the major Dara Happan Gods and Goddess have their temples.
- The Garden of Serris is a fantastic and relaxing place for citizens. Visit the collection of rare flora and fauna. Marvel at the Five Trees of Bounty themselves!
- The Great Celestine Arena is where Yelm’s sacred games are held.
- Moonie town, outside the old city walls. Take a dangerous and risky walk into the Maze, visit the Moon Mansions, debauch yourself at the Lunar Circus, and bathe in the red light of the Goddess at the Red Moon Temple.



Dara Happan Culture, Lunar Religion

The player characters are members of the Dara Happan culture and the Lunar religion.

“From before Time began the Dara Happans, worshippers of the Solar pantheon headed by Yelm the Emperor, ruled a vast Empire centred about a series of City States built on the fertile riverbank of the Oslir River in central Peloria. Their empire was held together by strong patriarchal traditions, which worked upwards from tight knit families and clans through Associations, which organised trade and social affairs in the cities, all the way up to the Dara Happan Emperor. They fought wars against their traditional enemies the Orlanthi Barbarians of Dragon Pass to the south, the wild and uncivilised horse Nomads of Pent to the east, and the godless Sorcerers of Carmania to the west. A Dara Happan Emperor rules by divine right observing laws passed through the God Bussarian from his father Yelm. He has the unbending support of his blood relatives, on his father’s side, and other families who owe his line favour from even before the Dawn of history. He listens to his betters and executes their orders as law, and expects the same treatment from those subservient to him.

400 years ago Lunar Empire replaced the Dara Happan Empire as rulers of Peloria when Sedenya the Red Goddess, born a mortal in Northern Peloria, completed a set of trials and gained immortality. Gradually she and her followers conquered the Empire, and reduced the Dara Happans to the status of one of many peoples in a culturally diverse empire all guided by the Lunar Way. The Lunar Way is all embracing and openly accepts different cultures, taking the best traditions and making it part of the Red Goddess’s creed. Even Chaos has its place in the Red Goddess’ scheme of the cosmos, when its destructive nature can be harnessed for the good of the empire. Such is the case with the Crimson Bat, a terrible chaos demon that devours the savage enemies of the empire. Although true Lunars, people who are initiated into one of the cults of the Lunar Way, are a relative minority even in the Lunar Heartlands, about 5% of the population, they are always the strong capable people in charge. Their individual power and ability to fit the situation allows them to successfully solve the complex dilemmas faced by the culturally diverse empire. Instead of exterminating peoples traditionally hostile to the Pelorians, the Lunar way has triumphed over the Carmanian, who now consider the Red Goddess the source of their sorcery, pacified the raiders of Pent, bringing some of them into the Lunar Way, and even taming the wild peoples of Dragon Pass by convincing them that the Sedenya is the true ruler of the Middle Air instead of Orlanth.”

The Dara Happan stereotype

- Yelm is the Gloranthan Sun in the sky and is the Celestial Emperor.
- A Patriarchal society, where women and children are very much second class citizens.
- Yelm worship for nobles, Lodril for commoners, Dendara if you are a woman.
- Cities have their own deities, Serris the Builder is Serris’s City God. Minor deities abound protecting districts and guiding specific professions.
- Ancient tradition is all important.
- A Hierarchal society. From Emperor, Nobles, Associations and Guilds.
- Fear of barbarians and outside disruptive influences, such as Orlanthus (Orlanth) the Storm God of Sartar.
- Ziggurats, mud brick flat roofed houses.
- Beards for men, the higher the social status more elaborately braided.
- Veils and non-revealing clothing for women.

Quick handle on Lunars

- Not a culture but a Philosophy/Religion.
- Only 5% of a ruling elite even in the Heartlands.
- Their magical practice provides a path to immortality.
- The Red Moon Goddess is the Red Moon that hangs over the capital city of Glamour. She is the daughter of Yelm who has revealed herself in Time.
- The Red Emperor is her immortal son and the rightful ruler of the Dara Happan Empire, having being endorsed by the last Solar Emperor and having passed the Emperor Tests.
- The Lunars assimilates conquered peoples, both physically by conquest and through magical domination.
- The Red Moon Goddess is at war with Orlanth over rulership of the Middle Air.
- Chaos is an accepted part of the world, and if it can be controlled part of the Lunar Way.
- Moon Boats that travel to the distant parts of the empire, Magical Colleges that help the Lunar Armies and Dart Wars that resolve disputes between Nobles.
- Red silk clothes and silver moon pendants.

The City Associations

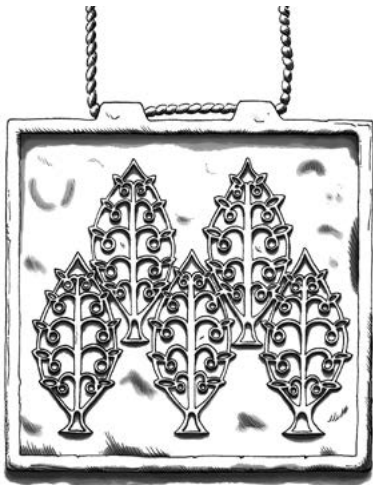
The main social unit of the Dara Happans is the family. The family, with their hereditary professions and businesses that stretch back into ancient history, are the building blocks for the larger social unit of the Association which provides social cohesion and administration at the same level as the Orlanthe Tribe. The central controlling unit of each association is a noble House, who control through blood ties various Temples and Guilds.

Note each Association has a Community Resource profile (see the Community chapter in *HeroQuest Glorantha*). This will change as the story arc progresses as the three associations struggle with each other for control of the city. Pay particular attention to the Five Trees, whose Morale, Wealth and Communication scores will go down unless the characters heroically intervene at the end of the episodes, 1,2 and 3 respectively.

The Five Trees of Bounty Association

The Five Trees of Bounty Association's history stretches back to the city's foundation in the God Time. It is named after the five magical trees that still stand as a symbol of fertility and wealth in The Garden of Serris. They fanatically believe that they are the personal beneficiaries of Serris's divine plan.

Their aim throughout the course of the story arc is to remain the top Association in the city.



Community Resources

Communication: 12W. The Five Trees are universally recognised as the ruling association of the city. They have thousands of years of obligations and debts due to them and they are master diplomats and strategists.

Magic: 18. Over recent times with the Boat of the Silver Hind taking control of the Serris Temple, the magical power of the Five Trees has diminished. This is part of the reason for the partial Lunarisation of the association, to

increase its Magic.

Morale: 9W. The Association is very confident of its abilities.

War: 12. Despite having some powerful individuals within it, the Five Trees does not control any large standing forces.

Wealth: 9w. As ruling Association it owns a large amount of the city and gains heavily from its trade via the cult of Achec with the 'Barbarians'.

The Seven Nights of Glory Association

A 'new' (400 years old) Lunar association. The name refers to the Seven Mothers and their siege of the city.

The association was formed over four hundred years ago from Lunar settlers. These people have always been treated as outsiders by the Dara Happans, to the point that most of them live outside the walls of the Old city in a new section of the city, which is called "Moonie Town" by its detractors.

The Five Trees of Bounty has allied with the Seven Nights of Glory within the last couple of generations. Allowing minor members of the Five Trees become Lunars is part of increasing the strength of that alliance.



Community Resources

Communication: 9W Diplomacy is one of the strong points of this Association and one of the main ways it maintains its tenuous position in the city.

Magic: 12W. The Association has the facilities of the powerful Temple of the Moon at its disposal, a strong teaching centre with many powerful magicians.

Morale: 18. The Association is reasonably confident of its abilities, but somewhat hamstrung at times by the many different groups that are members.

War: 12. Although nominally the Swift Moon Cavalry

reports of the Temple, it has stronger blood ties to the old Dara Happan families. The association would probably call upon outside help from the Lunar Army.

Wealth: 18 The Association gains trade from its willingness to deal with outsiders, but is effectively shut off from dealing with the Old City by Dara Happan prejudice.

The Boat of the Silver Hind Association

The Boat of the Silver Hind Association was formed in the God Time from survivors of the Anaxial's Great Flood, who arrived in the city after the cataclysm. Their rivals the Five Trees of Bounty have never allowed them to forget that they were the second association in the city, and rivalry between the two, sometimes friendly sometimes not, is a fact of Serrisian life. While being smaller than the Five Trees Association it doggedly holds onto power, its members fanatically pursuing perfection in their chosen endeavour, driven on by being the eternal underdog. This has seen them rise to many positions of great power in Serrisian society; as a result many of the priesthood of the cults of Lodril and Serris are members of this association. The Boat of the Silver Hind has taken a fanatical conservative view of outsiders, and almost completely rejects the Lunar Way, pure Solar Worship and pure Dara Happan Blood being prerequisites for membership.



Community Resources

Communication: 12. The association tends to gruffly bark orders at each other with little room for flexibility and initiative. This makes them slow to mobilise and hard to coordinate.

Magic: 9W. The Association controls the Temple of Serris and has strong links to the Temple of Yelm.

Morale: 18. They are reasonably confident of their abilities, being thousands of years old.

War: 12W. Through the Temple of Serris they control the

Serris Engineers. They also control several aggressive street gangs, such as the Brickside Boys.

Wealth: 9w. Temple and trade revenues pay the association's coffers handsomely.

Character creation

Follow the standard rules in HeroQuest: Glorantha , but assign these Keywords to the characters to bind them into the story.

- Cultural Keyword: Dara Happan
- Magic Keyword: Initiate of the Seven Mothers
- Community : The Five Trees of Bounty Association

These are the 'default' settings to play the adventures as written.

The main social unit of the Dara Happans is the family unit.

These family units, with their heredity professions and businesses that stretch back into ancient history, are the building blocks for the larger overarching social unit of the Association which provides social cohesion and administration at the same level as the Orlanthe Tribe.

The central controlling unit of each association is a noble House, who control through blood ties various Temples and Guilds.



MYTHOLOGY AND HISTORY

From The “Book of the Enduring Work” held in the temple of Serris

Serrisian Mythology

The Golden Age

Serris Builds the City

Serris son of Lodril and Oria loved to play in the earth, making shapes out of the thick rich loam. When Yelm created the race of men, it was Serris who taught them how to build cities and warehouses to store the harvest of the earth.

Being close to men Serris choose to leave his mother and father in the Underworld, and come live with his apprentices in Dara Happa.

He helped the other Gods create their great cities in Dara Happa, and when the work was done he decided to build his own. This city would be the strongest and most solidly built in all of Dara Happa.

After much searching he found a perfect spot near the body of Oslir the water dragon where the Five Trees of Bounty grew. In the days before the Godswar, these trees fed all his people. He forbid his apprentices to chop them down and they still grow in the Grand Garden of Serris.

The first thing he did was to build a firm foundation. Large stone blocks were laid into the firm solid earth. Even though the city had no residents he planned ahead and built a system of canals, water pumps and sewage tunnels to provide for the water needs of a large population.

He then set about building the Temples of the city, so that the Gods could be properly lodged when they visited. The Great tower of Yelm, which as was fitting, is the largest building in the city. The twin Temples to his parents, Lodril and Oria also acted as sources of parental guidance to his apprentices. Buserain visited often to marvel at the orderly construction of the city. Therefore it was only fit that he should receive a temple too.

Then he built the two buildings from where he could instruct his apprentices. First the Temple of Serris, its six tiers each home to one of the ranks of his apprentices. Then the Council building where the elders of the tribes would meet and Serris would guide them from his Golden suspended throne.

Then he built the houses of the people, laid out along straight correct roads reflecting the straight and proper lives they should lead.

Finally in one sweep of his hand he raised magnificent

white stone walls, encircling the city to protect his masterpiece and beloved apprentices from the dissent that was already fermenting outside.

The Storm Age

Storm rebels try to storm the city

So it came to pass that things that even great Yelm did not understand came into the world. These unknown things came before Yelm, and he understood them and they consented to his rule. However, the last unknown thing, Orlanthus did not consent to Yelm’s rule and instead rebelled against the Emperor of the Universe.

In savage fury the Storm gods led by Orlanthus tried to break the city walls of Serris, knowing that if they broke the strong sturdy walls they could break Yelm’s rule. They were thwarted. The thousand winds of Orlanthus could not humble Serris’ solid structures.

Orlanthus’s failure in this test of Yelm’s strength only made the city walls stronger against the rebels.

The Gods War

The Disintegration of Yelm

Yelm appointed his beloved son Murharzarm as the second Emperor of all Dara Happa. Murharzarm ruled the earthly lands of Dara Happa, while his father Yelm oversaw creation from the pure sky.

Still Orlanthus’ rebellion continued. Time after time he tested Yelm, seeking to usurp his divine rule. Yelm easily defeated the rebel god test after test.

So Orlanthus stooped low in his efforts. He stole the Sword of Death that was locked away deep in hell. Using this forbidden power he struck at Yelm’s beloved son. Murharzarm was powerless against this treacherous attack and was slain. The death of his son shocked Yelm to the core and before the celestial court he disintegrated. His physical form fell into the underworld, and his spirit, Antirius, dissipated into the sky dome.

The world was plunged into darkness. Without the absolute rule of Yelm Imperator the empire fell into quarrel and suffered the ruinous rule of false emperors.

Serris leaves the city

With the Empire under the rule of the bad Emperors, ruination began to set in. Serris left his city under the wise rule of his apprentices to repair many of his works that were already falling into disrepair.

Surviving the Flood

With Serris gone the people fell into wicked ways. Outsiders clamoured at the gates to get in on the good life that those within led. Unscrupulous merchants allowed them to live in the city for money displacing the old families with ancestral tenancy agreements. Their numbers grew like rabbits and the city became overcrowded and quarrelsome.

Antirius in his infinite wisdom decided to drown the world and start again. Anaxial built an Ark to save the animals and twelve righteous families. The house of the Five Trees of Bounty was on the Ark and survived the flood.

When they returned to the City they found a marvellous thing. The Five Trees of Bounty had survived the flood. They took this as a sign from God and rejoiced!

The Boat of the Silver Hind arrives

As the floodwaters were subsiding a large boat with the emblem of a Hind in Silver upon its sails came up to the gates of the city. Its people claimed to be survivors of the Flood. The people where sceptical. Had not all the righteous been on Anaxial's ark?

However one of the city elders named Garnah, was good at resolving quarrels, so he devised a series of tests to see if they people of the boat where worthy to come into the city. One by one the boat people took the tests,

and passed!! Hence they were welcomed into the city.

Garnah's tests are still used as the city's citizen tests even to this day.

The World Devourer

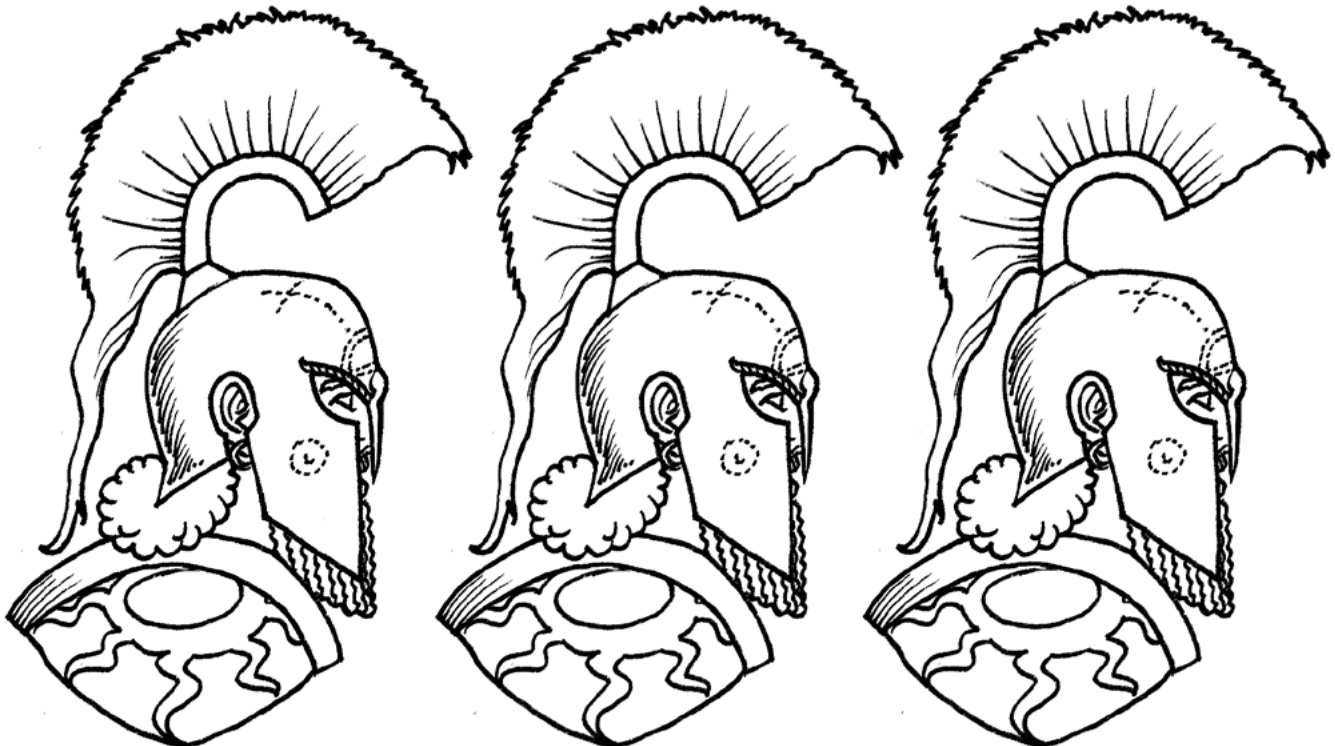
With Yelm's disintegration his Empire gradually fell into darkness and disorder. A succession of bad and false emperors paved the way for The Empty Emperor, who did not rule by right of passing the ten emperor tests and brought only falsehood and chaos to the empire.

One of the Empty Emperor's children was the monstrous World Devourer, born into the world to bring down Serris's works. At the height of the Empty Emperor's falsehood the World Devourer emerged from below the city and swallowed it whole.

Serris, hearing the screams of his faithful apprentices, returned from his attempts to repair his works abroad. Realising he had concerned himself with the troubles of others for too long, he swiftly built bridges over the rivers of melted flesh that crisscrossed his path home.

Taking his mighty mason's hammer he leapt upon the World Devourer and smashed it open wide, forced it to regurgitate the city and its inhabitants.

Badly broken into a thousand pieces the World Devourer escaped further punishment by hiding in deep holes it had made in the broken land around the city.



A short history of Serris

Timeline

Age of History	Thelyan	Lunar	Event
Dawn Age			Nomads invade the city and create the Sacred Chaparral
	371		City liberated by Second Council
	385		Nysalor born, popular cult in city
	450		Gbaji Wars, City sacked and occupied by Durlaz the Glutton
	444		The Three Kings period
Second age	480		Return of Dara Happan Rule. The new Dara Happan Emperor invokes Serris' Rebuilding ritual, to repair the damaged city.
			The wars against the Dragon Empire
			The city occupied by the Carmanians after a long and agonising siege.
Third Age	1246	Zero Wane 0/26	The Seven Nights of Glory: The Lunar army liberates the city from the Carmanian Warlords.
			Red and Solar Emperor walk hand in hand. Beginnings of Lunarisation of the city
	1280	First Wane 1/33	Dara Happan Revolt. Ritual invocation and actual intervention by the Red Emperor to bring the city to its knees.
	1285	1/38	The Red Emperor Rebuilds Serris; establishment of the New City.
	1304-1350	Second Wane	Uneventful, Serrisan masons travel to the newly conquered barbarian lands to the south to build monuments to the Emperor
	1391	Third Wane 3/32	Sheng Seleris' Horde invades the Empire. Serris successfully closes its gates, and survives due to the efforts of the Oslir River Pirates.
	1423-1463	Fourth Wane	The Years of Shame. Serris survives by paying tribute to Sheng, instead of the Emperor.
	1460	4/51	Sheng Seleris slain by the Red emperor and cast into Hell. Serris liberated from the Nomad Warlords who were dominating the city and its surrounding lands.
	1464-1510	Fifth Wane	The Associations rebuild their trade and prosperity. The Council of Elders severely limit resources sent to the campaigns in Tarsh, due to the city-rebuilding programme.
	1520-1565	Sixth Wane	Three Boat Filled War. The heads of the Associations are killed at a summit held upon three River Barges. This triggers a thirteen week long war between them, which is ended by the intervention of the Red Emperor. Increased tribute paid to the Emperor, who uses it to pay for the Army of Sartar, as a result.
	1579-1621	Seventh Wane	Now

reached the Patriarch's house. With grace and dignity the Patriarch came out to meet the monstrous general.

"I give you the same opportunity that I gave these four brutes. Either carry my bulk or add to it!" roared Durnaz at the Patriarch.

The Patriarch kept his dignity and head held high replied, "You can eat me, for my soul is pure. I am sure that my body will make a fine feast, but my soul will go and join my Lord Yelm in Heaven. But if I served you vile thing of darkness, I might save my skin but my immortal soul would be lost!"

"Very well. Kings go and get me the big pot and lots of wood. I'll quench this one's fire in a big pot of boiling water!!!" Durnaz told the four kings, smacking his teeth with glee!

So that was the end of the Patriarch of those days. Durnaz and his ghastly crew ruled the city for ten years, eating anyone who they found on the city streets at night.

When the eleventh year of Durnaz's rule over the city came, the guilt of the third King became too much.

"Oh woe the day that we agreed to carry that fat slob. I should have been eaten that day. He gets fatter every day, but he will never be as heavy as the guilt that I now carry on my back." The third king wailed, as Durnaz slumbered in the Patriarch's house during the day.

"What guilt is that?" said the first king, a hard hearted man who had allowed Durnaz to eat his own tribe to buy his survival.

"Why it is the guilt that he could not be as noble as the Patriarch of this city, whose good people we now let Durnaz eat! I know because I feel it too" replied the fourth king, who was a wise and sensitive soul, who had given up his freedom to save his people from Durnaz's feeding trough.

"Well if we don't do anything soon all the people in this place will be eaten and we'll have to carry the fatty to his next meal!" said the second king, a clever man who while negotiating with Durnaz to spare his life had convinced him to eat his enemies within his tribe as part of his surrender terms.

The second king looked cunning and then said to the others. "Worry not my regal fellows. I have a devious plan which will save our skins and those of this fair city".

After explaining his cunning plan to the other kings, the second king organised a great open-air feast in honour of Durnaz. He invited all the bad people of the city who had worked with Durnaz, allowing him to run the city and betraying their fellow city people to Durnaz's Pot tax, so that they could carry on living. Then he explained

to Durnaz that the feeding in Serris was nearly over, and that he had arranged one last feast.

So the hour of the feast arrived and Durnaz and his trolls hungrily devoured the guests whom the second king had invited. Then bloated and sated as the dawn arrived Durnaz turned to the four kings.

"Quick get my chair and take me back to my dark lair" Durnaz commanded.

"No, too long have we acted like slaves instead of the Kings we are" answered the third King bravely. With which he picked up one of the swords that the trolls had used to slice up their victims, and stabbed Durnaz through his foul bloated heart. Then he and the other kings fell upon the other trolls who were too stuffed with their meal to move or put up a fight.

This was how Serris was liberated from Durnaz and his hungry horde. I hope that you will take this tale as a warning little one, to have some manners and not eat your food like a troll!

The Reign Of The Three Kings

After the destruction of Durnaz's Hungry Horde, the three barbarian kings, Aulian, Ozda, and Achec, took over the running of the city.

The fabled first king Bozdal, left the city and suffered many adventures in his journey south back to his native lands, where he was promptly hung for the betrayal of his tribe to Durnaz.

Aulian, the Compassionate, renounced his Barbarian ways and became an initiate of Serris. He spent the rest of his days helping the earthy classes of the city rebuild the damage wrought by the trolls to its structure. In retirement he re-vitalised Serris's grand garden, where a small corner is still dedicated to him.

Ozda the Guilty and Achec the Clever took over running the city's two Associations. Ozda out of guilt of the doom that he had personally carried to Serris, took over the running of the Boat of the Silver Hind Association, which had been badly eaten into by Durnaz. Out of a sense of duty he built up the association and ruled in the name of the young Primus, until he came of age, stepping aside to become a respected advisor.

Achec the Clever realised that here was an opportunity to rule a bigger tribe than the one back home. Therefore after the city's liberation he sent word to his barbarian homeland that his brother was now his representative, and that he would rule them from Serris bringing them great prosperity. His countrymen accepted this, since Achec was a clever ruler who had successfully preserved them from the ravages of Gbaji's armies through their homeland. He gently deceived Ozda into taking control

The Feast of the Dead

Once again the strength of our walls and beliefs are tested. The godless Carmanian army has been camped outside our walls five whole years. Their siege engines and wizards of war gathered like an army of termites. They raised a temple without Gods within sight of the city gate, which they call a Church, to raise demons to slay our valiant defenders.

We waited, as the bodies of the dead piled up in the warehouses of Brickside, where the Patriarch had commanded them stored until the plain of fire was ours once more and we could commend their spirits to the sky with proper funeral rites.

However the dead were angry at our failure to drive off the Carmanian invaders. Their Wizards used foul sorcery to raise our own dead in the dead of the night. Walking, hungry our ancestors devoured their descendants. The newly dead swelled their ranks, and the undead became a horde that eventually reached the houses of the rich on Sun Hill. It was then that the Patriarch ordered the gates opened. The Carmanian's flooded in. More people were killed as they looted the city.

Their Warlord a cunning and intelligent man, traits that the Carmanian's falsely attribute to honour, realised that the killing must stop or else he would have nobody to rule. The army was controlled, and the wizards lay the dead to rest.

This is how the Carmanian's treacherously conquered our city using foul Sorcery.

Third Age

Zero Wane: The Seven Nights of Glory

At the dawning of the Lunar Empire, Serris was controlled by a Carmanian warlord whose foul sorceries had reduced the good citizens to a state of undeath. An army led by the Seven Mothers arrived at the city, resolved to conquer it in the space of seven nights.

On the first night, Yanafal Tarnils led a band of fine night warriors against the city. A Carmanian army of foul demons and zombies met him on the plain before the city walls. Although he failed to take the city the resulting battle saw the bulk of the enemy army killed.

On the second night, agents of Queen Deezola found secret ways into the underground wells that supply the city with water, and clogged them with the rotting bodies of the dead.

On the third night, Jakaleel the Witch attempted to control the Carmanian army of the dead. She failed but the ritual broke their master's control over them.

On the fourth night a magical ceremony was conducted in the name of Teelo Norri, which cast great clouds of darkness over the city and reduced the power of the earth to ash.

On the fifth night the superior mind of Iripi On Tor, found oblique angles to weaken the sturdy square walls of the city, by studying the sacred nonsense spewed from the mouths of babes.

On the sixth night She Who Waits climbed over the walls in plain sight, challenged the Carmanian Warlord to fair and single combat. After killing the Warlord she calmly walked out of the city, the gates opened by the awestruck defenders.

On the seventh night, the walls finally collapsed and the defenders opened the gates seeking mercy. Danfive Xaron was appointed the job saving the innocent from the depravity of the wicked. Of the former there was few, so his energies were focused towards the latter. Great was the clearing of human debris when the day dawned.

Thus in Seven nights of Glory, did the Goddess free the city from its Carmanian slavers.

THE CITY OF SERRIS

A Guide to the City of the God Serris the Builder

The god Serris the Builder, a son of Lodril, built the city during the Godtime. He gave it impressive walls, an efficient effluent removal system and outstanding street layout. The Garden of Serris is cited as one of the Lunar Empire’s wonders in the Golden Scrolls of Excellence.

It is a small Dara Happan city of about five thousand souls in the North of the Empire which has survived more or less intact over ten thousand years. Even the arrival of the Lunars, four hundred years ago, has scarcely affected life in the Old city, which is an impressive walled city with its own sewer and water system which runs along a tight grid system of streets and is a marvel of the Empire.

The city sits proudly on the banks of the River Oslir, just north of the Silver Shadow and the Imperial Capital Glamour. It is an ancient stronghold of Dara Happan culture. Although part of the Satrapy of Karasal [Guide to Glorantha p.312 - 314] it is fiercely independent. Seeing itself an independent City-state, it is in many ways still slowly adapting to the ‘new’ Lunar ways. Like the rest of the Dara Happa, Serris has accepted the Red Emperor as the legitimate Son of Yelm, but the city still has problems with the lunar concept of “We are all us”, keeping ‘Outsiders’ beyond the old city walls in the rambling mess of buildings that is ‘Moonie Town’.

The People

Lunar Census for Serris c1620 ST

A small city of 5000 souls

Old City

Dara Happan Serrisians 3000

Moonie Town

‘Outsiders’ 1500

Barbarians 500

Of which Lunars 100)

Dara Happan Serrisians are Pelorians who culturally live in Cities and worship the Yelmic Parthenon headed by Yelm the Sun Emperor. In Serris their principal deity is the city god also called Serris. Other popular deities are Lodril the Earth God, Dendara the Women’s Goddess.

Outsiders are a mixture of Dara Happan peoples from outside the city, who are not formally accepted as Serrisians, and settlers from other parts of the Empire. They are to be found living in the New City or as servants of the lowest rung in the Old City.

Barbarians are the subject peoples from outside of the Lunar Heartlands. Such as the savage and uncouth Tarshites, who are fortunate to live just inside the Glowline that marks the boundary of the Lunar Empire, but are still being civilised.

Lunars are members of the Lunar Way. They are a strange and diverse group. On one hand they are the ruling cosmopolitan elite who live in the opulent Moon Mansions who practice and study daily in the Lunar Temple Complex, on the other hand this cultural grouping includes the Smarthans a masked street gang who practice illumination through ecstatic dancing, drug taking and ritual murder as well as the cultured Imperial Judex.

The Guide

The Old City

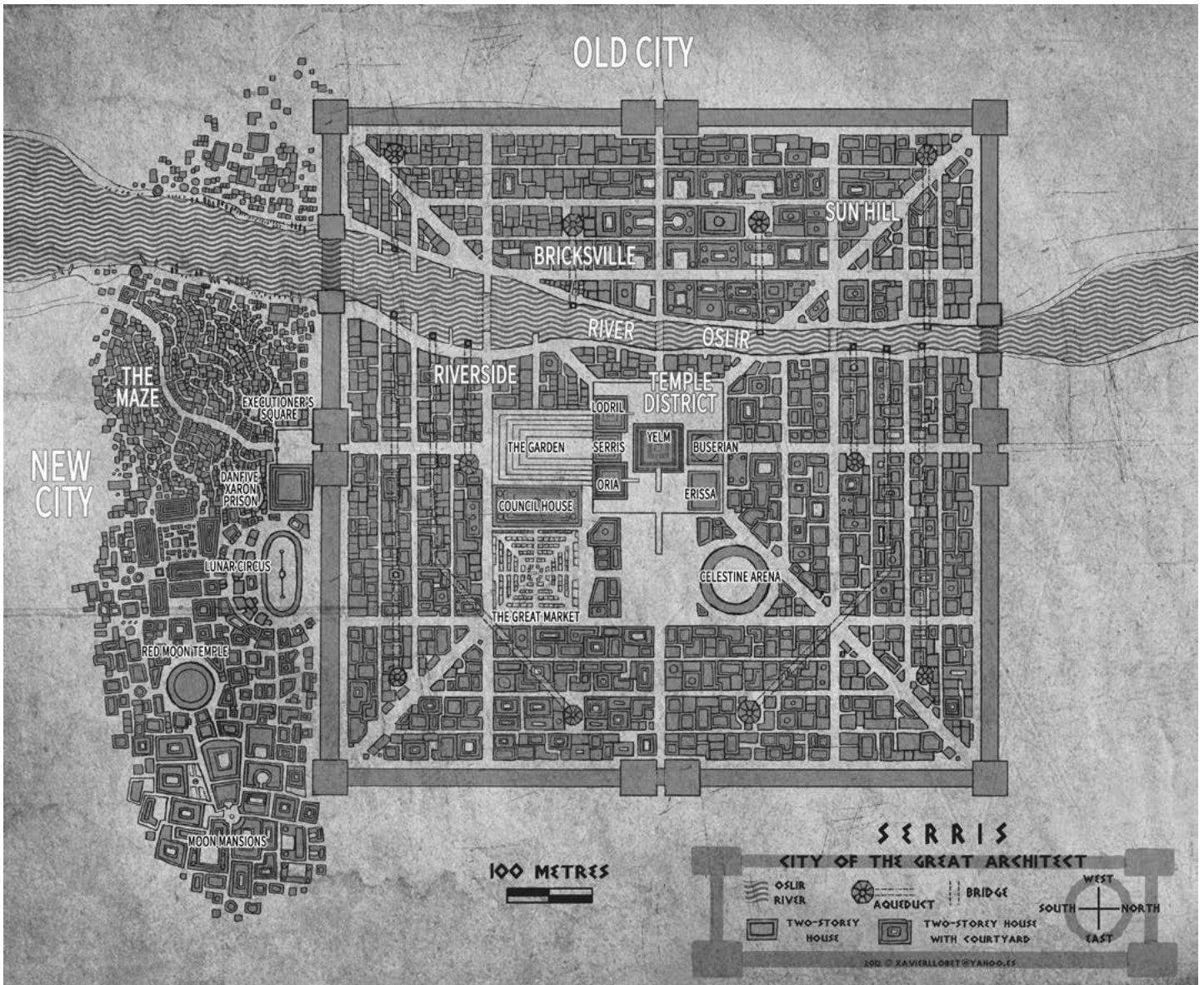
An ancient white stonewall built by Serris himself encloses the old Dara Happan city. Although the walls were breached by the Lunar army four hundred years ago, during the Seven Nights of Glory, the inhabitants of the Old City still practice a culture that has changed little since the city’s establishment during the God Time. As one of Serris’s great works his priesthood knows a ritual that rebuilds the wall after it has been breached or pulled down.

The City’s Water Works and Street Layout

The city’s water works are an acknowledged wonder of the Lunar Empire. Architects from the around the empire will visit the city to study them. The impressive system of canals, aqueducts, sewers and pumps moves water to and from the River through the blazing heat of the crowded city. Intertwined with the water system and weaving its way around the well-ordered buildings, is a clear and well-maintained city grid of streets and roads.

Serris conforms to the Yelmic sacred geometry of “the four directions” that Yelm faced while creating the Universe.

- North (Wisdom/White)
- South (Strength/Green)
- West (Sovereignty/Red)
- East (Insight/Yellow)



The Great Market

This is the commercial heart of the city. It is one hundred metres square, stone paved and is surrounded by a low stonewall. In the centre of the wall in each of the four directions, North, East, West and South, is a plain coloured stone gate. Around each of the gates is clustered an ordered rows of permanent stalls, each a market in itself. Each stall is owned by a family and strictly passed on through the male heir as per Dara Happan tradition.

The white North gate is the knowledge market. Here scholars of all disciplines buy scrolls and writing materials. Trainers and tutors offer their services. Old wise women give solutions to everyday problems for a few coins.

The biggest market which clusters around green South gate is the food market. Here the physical needs of the city are attended to. It is also the place where mercenaries sell their services to the highest bidder.

The crafters and tools market is a small but busy cluster around the red West gate. Here a man may buy the tools that give him sovereignty over his life.

Street diviners and the stalls which sell sacrifices to worshippers visiting the Temple of Lodril or Dendra, in nearby Temple Square, lies by the yellow East gate.

The City Council House

This is situated on the Avenue of Heroes, between the Great Market to the South, and Temple Square to the North. A magnificent rectangular five-story building, one hundred metres long by fifty metres wide, it is home to the City's ruling council. Built personally by the God Serris it's white stone gleams bright in the sunlight as if it was built yesterday. Inside, after a small marble floored antechamber, beyond double doors is the main council chamber. This vast room has row upon row of benches, arranged in tiers, with higher-ranking officials sitting closer to the top, while the lower ranks sit in the low benches. In the centre of the benches is the Speakers

Square. Here on this five metre square, the person who is addressing the house speaks to the amassed councillors.

Hanging above the square and above the highest tier of seats, suspended by gold chains is the Golden Throne of Serris. Only the living god Serris or the Emperor may sit on this throne without risking divine retribution.

Sun Hill

This city district is home of the rich Noble Dara-Happan families, who all have well defended villas with high walls to keep out the poor rabble. It is permanently lit by magic lanterns due to the High Priest of Lodril's fear of the Dark.

Riverside

This is the dock area of the city situated next to the Great Market. It houses an army of poor labourers. They carry the cargo from the numerous river barges to the Market. Due to the pitiful wages this attracts, the area is also a hub of illegal activity. The high and mighty of Sun Hill blames this on the foreign contact that the river brings.

Bricksville

This is a crowded and poor district. Here the lower ranks of the building trade live. Most residents are mud brick makers and building labourers. Within Bricksville there is a small group of master craftsmen and foremen, all members of the second to fifth tiers of the Cult of Serris. They are responsible for the leadership of the workers, carrying out many of the day-to-day rituals to sanctify and bless any work that the builders do. They live within a walled enclosure, for both protection and secrecy.

Temple District

The temple district is home to the Gods. Within this vast walled square are the giant houses of the Gods. The entry to the square is through a massive ancient gate, upon which stone demons perch. After a lesser lower square, there are 100 steps leading up to the upper square with the temples. All worshippers are required to crawl on their hands and knees up the stairs, as a sign of humility towards the Gods. Anyone who doesn't is ripped apart by one of the Gate Demons who become animated and swoop down from their perch.

The Tower of Yelm stands in the centre of the square, a sixty tier ziggurat with shrines within its vast interior to other minor gods of the Solar pantheon and resting places for the worshippers as they make their way up through the halls of Gods. Only the nobles may visit the actual temple on the top tiers of the ziggurat, and only the Emperor or Serris himself may stand on the upper balcony that overlooks the Square. It stands as a symbol of the Serrisian's connection with the Pure Sky.

No non-Solar is allowed within its sacred confines. Here a Serrisan will occasionally visit to contemplate the pure sky.

The Ziggurat of Lodril stands, a mere 20 tiers, in the shadow of his brother's. However this temple is more important in day-to-day city life, as Lodril is the patron of the Earth and the common man. It is therefore a busy hubbub of people coming and going, making sacrifices to Lodril to help them in some day-to-day task.

The Ziggurat of Oria, stands behind Yelm and is 15 tiers tall. The worshippers here are almost exclusively women, sacrificing for fertility and harmony in family life. It also acts as a sanctuary for women fleeing domestic violence.

The Ziggurat of Serris stands between that of his father, Lodril and his mother Oria, in the shadow of Yelm, six tiers high. It is the centre of Serris's builder cult.

The Temple of Buserian is a large blue domed temple. Inside the temple, is an accurate representation of the Sky Dome before the fall of Yelm. Worshippers look up in wonder while temple scribes record their details.

The Hospital of Erisa, is a large two story building. It is busy night and day dealing with the sick of the city. Although the rich make generous donations towards its upkeep, they are required by Yelmic law to have a private physician to look after their own wellbeing.

The Great Celestine Arena. This is white marble arena was built by Serris to host all of the Dara Happan games and entertainments. It seats about 3000 people, which is roughly the city's entire Dara Happan population. Unlike the Lunar Circus in the maze, all the chariot races, gladiatorial combats, fights against beasts and trials by combat that are held here are religiously significant and start with a reading from a priest. Because of its religious significance it is found in the temple district dominating the lower square.

Garden of Serris

This large walled public park backs onto Temple Square. Its only public entrance is in the temple of Serris.

It is a fantastic place, home to many types of plants that became extinct in the Serris region during the Gods War. It is rumoured that Aldryami guard their sacred groves, moved here by Serris himself to preserve their people.

One of the most famous plants in the garden is the Five Trees of Bounty, which stand in a cluster in the centre of the garden. These trees produce magical fruit that once sustained the people of the city during the Golden Age. However since the desolation during the Gods War it is said that the trees only produce magical fruit once every hundred years. These rare fruits are quickly harvested and reserved for consumption by the Patriarch of the

Five Trees of Bounty Association.

The New City, Moonie Town

In comparison to the well-ordered streets of the Old City, Moonie Town is a disorganised mess of urban planning. Here the foreigners live. Lunars from all parts of the Empire, bring with them a mess of customs and building styles and a bustling vibrancy to their daily business. The centre of the wall-less New City is the Temple of the Red Moon. Which as well as being the centre of Sedenya's worship, houses shrines to the majority of the Lunar deities.

The Lunar New Bazaar

The Bazaar is only a quarter of the size of the Great Market and is a confused mess of a place. It is housed in impressive four to six storey sandstone buildings which host a multitude of shops and cloth stalls. Here Lunars of all nationalities come to trade, as well as foreigners. The only nationality conspicuous by its absence is of course the Dara Happans. A temple to Eryties, a domed building, stands at the centre of this busy place.

The Maze

This is the name that outsiders and its poor inhabitants call this district. The Lunar elite have a large problem admitting that the diversity of Lunar cultures have formed this disorganised and disorientating area of the city, where the different building styles collide and combine and all sense of direction disappears in a warren of back alleys and shadowy side streets. Lunar mystics rub shoulders with veiled criminals, and the destitute and the poor end up in the Maze's poorly maintained streets.

Executioner's square

Executioners Square is a large paved square. It is the traditional place of public execution, where criminals are killed in a variety of appropriate ways under the stern gaze of Yelm the Judge. Tall spiked walls surround the square, and there are only two streets in and out, east and west. The west street leads into the Old City via Traitors Gate, a grim and imposing affair. Serris personally built the square when man strayed from Yelm's pure ways after Yelm's disintegration in the Gods Time. It was built outside the city to symbolise that criminals were not part of decent society and so that the land of the living should not be sullied with the death of the impure. Dara Happan traditionalists find irony in the fact that the square is now part of the New City saying that it shows the criminal nature of the Lunar Way.

The city prison, The House of Reform, is a more recent addition to the square built when the Lunars came to power four hundred years ago. It is also the temple to Danfive Xaron, whose priests are responsible for

instructing the inmates, who are also initiates of the cult, in Danfive Xaron's harsh redeeming philosophy.

Moon Mansions

In these spacious and clean streets are the suburban homes of the Lunar elite. Twenty or so villas centre on the Circle of the Maiden which is the central hub of this small district. The architecture of this area reflects the strong individuality of the inhabitants and the crime free nature of the streets their magical power. The elite see Moon Mansions as the end product of the Lunar social experiment.

The Red Moon Temple

A large circular pillared building with a red glass dome is the centre of this temple complex. The dome is magically consecrated to the Red Goddess so the red rays of the Red Moon shine through into the main hall with awesome effect. Shrines to the major Lunar Cults exist as annexes to the main domed temple and there are also large training halls for the lunar elite who worship here.

The Lunar Circus

Built outside the city in the first days of its lunar occupation, the circus attempts to compete with the Celestine Arena for the hearts and minds of the mob. In reality pious Dara Happans on the whole still attend the Arena as part of their religious rituals, but may occasionally visit the circus for the bright and varied entertainment on offer. As well as theatre and acrobats from all parts of the empire, the circus also hosts Dart wars and gladiatorial games which the local Lunar elite use to increase their rank and reputation.

Crime in the city

Crime in the Old City centres on old criminal organisations established over many thousands of years. Like most things in Dara Happan society they have their place in the social pyramid. They are linked to one of the Associations by a legitimate front organisation. For example the Fisherman's Guild in Riverside, is part of the Five Trees of Bounty Association. On their behalf they run the district and smuggle in foreign goods that protectionist Dara Happan trade law forbids. These crime gangs serve the role that they cater for man's imperfections while remaining tightly controlled by the preservers of Serrisan morality.

The gangs of the New city are a different proposition. Desperate and poor, excluded from the benefits and restrictions of Dara Happan society, but fuelled by the teachings of the Lunar way that anyone can better himself and become a god. Crime for these people does not give them a place in society, but instead fuels grand, often mystic, schemes for a better life. The Veiled

Smarthans of the Maze District live on a heady brew of narcotics and mysticism. They take life in the name of a secret Lunar God for entrance into paradise.

The gangs of both parts of the city are entwined in the political schemes of their Noble sponsors. Gang fighting is often a result of an argument that starts in the Council Chamber and spills out onto the street as much as over criminal matters.

The Law

Law is upheld on a district basis, with militia being raised from the local population by a Magistrate, a hereditary post held by the head of the most powerful local clan. Even in the New City the law system used is the local variant of traditional Dara Happan law. Most local militia are a part time volunteer force, which often enforce the political will of the Association they belong to rather than the letter of the law. Militia men are expected to provide their own equipment so the quality of arms varies on the affluence of the area.

The Magistrates answer to the High Priest of Yelm the Judge, who sits in judgment in the Tower of Yelm.

Lunar Law is up held by a smaller office housed in the Red Moon Temple complex. The Lunar Judex unlike his solar counterpart cannot call upon the Militias to help him uphold the Lunar Law, since they are part of the Dara Happan system. However he may press any Lunar Citizen into his service.

As well as the Militias there are three other small specialist law units, which have between ten and thirty members.

The Purifiers and the Street Beaters. These two lightly armoured but highly groups are attached to the Office of Public Works. They make sure the city's water systems and roads are clean and free of vagrants, disease and vermin.

The Market Militia is responsible for law and order in the great market, and consists of fifty men of excellent and robust health. They have a small office in the Great Market, with holding cells that can hold up to fifty criminals, before sentencing in the Great Court of the Temple of Yelm Imperator. They are empowered to serve on the spot fines and punishments for minor crimes and social disorder offences.

The Dan Fire Xaron Warders. Only as a last resort will the Lunar Judex call upon the Warders. The Serrisians have a saying about the use of the Warders, "The Goddess' Justice is subtle but pervasive, but her Order is swift and Bloody".

The Military

In theory every man capable of bearing arms can be drafted into an Army headed by the Cities Grand General. In reality this sacred law has not been enforced since the Seven Nights of Glory, when the Lunar Army disarmed the masses of Dara Happan men. The position of Grand General is now a purely political and social position, with the city relying on mercenaries for its immediate defence.

However the city is noted for providing three units to the Lunar Army.

1st & 2nd Bricklayers Foot. Two battalions of lower class footmen are raised from the poorer districts of the city, notably Brickside. They are famous for their road building and military fortifications.

Pyramid Engineers . A specialist unit of Engineers that often coordinates the Bricklayers.

Swift Moon Cavalry. After the Lunar conquest of the city, it was realised that the city had no native cavalry unit. This unit was formed as a response. When in residence in the city they run systematic sweeps of the immediate plains around the city. They are looking for bandits and the vile worshipers of the Empty Emperor. When away from the city they are typically employed against the Pentan Horse Nomads. Fiercely Lunar there is often friction with the other Serrisian units, who follow Solar regimental traditions.

Outside the City

The Serrisan view of Outsiders

Serrisians are an isolated people. Physically they are isolated, because of the location of their city in the Lunar Heartlands. They are also socially isolated because of the restrictive Dara Happan traditions, many of which are unique to the city because of the dominance of the Cult of Serris.

Events in history have only served to enforce their xenophobia towards outsiders. Invaders and wars have wrecked havoc in their beloved city. So many wonders have been lost over time from their world.

As a people Serrisians are a backward looking people. They seek a return to the Golden Age, and hope to do this by strict observation of the rules that their Priests teach them from a very early age. Outsiders do not observe the sacred laws of Yelm, and bring their own traditions with them that they try to foist upon right thinking people. They also have no place in the Serrisan's view of the Golden Age. At least not as free peoples. For example there was no Red Moon in the Golden Age; therefore the Red Moon is an obstacle that must be removed to return to bliss. Many Serrisians have given

up on things returning to the Golden Age, and their depression at this realisation has been externalised by resentment towards foreigners.

Of course there is a more practical way forward that only a handful of Serrisan's of Dara Happan stock ever take. Converting to the Lunar Way, gives the initiate a new progressive world view, where there is hope of paradise on earth under the guidance of Sedendya. However this conversion is rarely met with acceptance from family and friends, who almost always treat the convert as an outsider.

The City's Associations

The Five Trees of Bounty Association's history stretches back to the city's foundation in the God Time. It is named after the five magical trees that still stand as a symbol of fertility and wealth in The Garden of Serris. They fanatically believe that they are the personal beneficiaries of Serris's divine plan. They are mainly Solar worshipping Dara Happans, but the politically astute Patriarch has allowed lesser members of his household to become Lunars and adopts useful Lunar specialists of other homelands.

The Boat of the Silver Hind Association was formed in the God Time from survivors of the Anaxial's Great Flood, who arrived in the city after the cataclysm. Their rivals the Five Trees of Bounty have never allowed them to forget that they were the second association in the city, and rivalry between the two, sometimes friendly sometimes not, is a fact of Serrisian life. While being smaller than the Five Trees Association it doggedly holds onto power, its members fanatically pursuing perfection in their chosen endeavour, driven on by being the eternal underdog. This has seen them rise to many positions of great power in Serrisian society; as a result many of the priesthood of the cults of Lodril and Serris are members of this association. The Boat of the Silver Hind has taken a fanatical conservative view of outsiders, and almost completely rejects the Lunar Way, pure Solar Worship and pure Dara Happan Blood being prerequisites for membership.

The Seven Nights of Glory Association is named after the event that brought the Lunar's into the city. A purely lunar association made up mainly from immigrants from the rest of the empire, but also from Serrisians who find the Lunar way and find no place in their old solar association. A slowly growing Association whose main power base is in Moonie Town, were ninety nine percent of its members are forced to live by the xenophobic Dara Happans.

Religions

The Cult of Serris (Runes Earth, Mastery)

Serris is the founder god of the city. Serris is a son of Lodril, lord of the Lower Earth. Serris during the God Time oversaw the construction of the city, and his cults today are descendants of the original "Apprentices of Serris". Some of the grander buildings, such as the Tower of Yelm, the Great works of Water (sewer system) and the Garden of Serris were actually built by the God, as were the imposing walls that surround the Old City.

The cult is vital to the fabric of Serrisan society. No building in the old city, and much of the New city, happens without the cults approval. Many of the city council positions are taken by the high-ranking members of the cult.

The cult holds the four Yelmic directions sacred, each of which is associated with a power and a colour.

It organises itself into six tiers each facing aspects.

- The first tier is the "commons" (Lay Worshippers).
- Tier two are the Journeymen (Initiates).
- Tiers three are the Masons (Devotees).
- Tier four are the Architects (Priest-Craftsmen).
- Tier five houses the four Master Masons.
- Tier six is reserved for the Grand Architect.

Secret. The Rebuilding Ritual

When the city is damaged, Priests who know this secret lead the people of the city in "Rebuilding rituals" which speed up reconstruction work, and for the buildings actually built by the God magically rebuild. Thus the Old City walls that are hundreds of thousands of years old have been breached many times by invaders, look as new as when Serris built them.

The Four Directions

Devotees of Seris gain one of the affinities associated with the four directions that Yelm faced while creating the Universe.

- North (Wisdom/White)
- South (Strength/Green)
- West (Sovereignty/Red)
- East (Insight/Yellow)

These act as augments to mundane abilities, and may not be used as magical powers on their own. Followers of Serris may not learn the associated feats.

Master masons usually have two to three while the Great Architect has all four.

Once a power of a direction is learnt then the associated colour must be woven into the individual's robes, so all may see their wisdom.

Chaos in Serris: The Empty Emperor and the World Devourer

“Not all men accept the Divine Laws of Serris into their heart. Some find themselves tempted by the false ways of the *Empty Emperor* and worship its monster spawn the *World Devourer*. Seeking to pervert and destroy the divine order, small groups of worshippers gather in the deepest caves in the wilderness. Occasionally the whispers of the *World Devourer* will reach wicked men in Serris itself who will gather in secret cellars until the righteous light of Yelm the Judge pierces the veil of their dark world.

When Yelm fell from the sky and plunged into the Darkness of the Underworld. The *Empty Emperor* rose in his place as Emperor of all Dara Happa. Unfortunately this emperor was a false thing of Chaos who brought rack and ruin the Empire until it was disposed. It still whispers from cursed forgotten places i to the minds of good citizens bringing madness and disharmony. Occasionally a mad individual will gain enough power by listening to the God's blasphemous advice and become a hidden menace to those who walk in the sun. Only by plunging into the dark pits that such solo warlocks favour can the righteous bring them to the light and justice.

The *World Devourer* is a multi-limbed chaos goddess whose spawn crawl like vermin through forgotten tunnels beneath the streets of Serris. Kidnapping those who accidently fall into their claws and devouring them in the dark. The *World Devourer* cult which is made up of outcasts from Serris must be rooted out and cast in to the burning bright fires of Yelm, lest they undermine the very structure of the city.

As such worship is treason against life itself; the penalty is always the same, death by fire”

CAST LIST

Who's Who in the City of Seris

This section describes the cast of non-player characters who have a bearing on the story. Not all the non-player characters appear in the adventures as written but they are still noted, since their motives have an influence behind the scenes. The heads of the three associations are especially relevant here, since these powerful characters rule through a web of subordinates by tradition and design. During your version of the adventure circumstance may thrust them in centre stage. They are organised by the City Association they belong to.

The Five Trees of Bounty Association

HeroBand: The House of the Friendly Moon

This is a ready-made hero band that the players have the option of belonging to. The band is made up of nobles and members of the Association who are not going to inherit their families' wealth and authority so have been allowed to join the Lunar cult.

Patriarch Vorden (Fire, Mastery, Truth)

He is rarely seen head of the Five Trees of Bounty and the noble house Cadez who control the Association. A Yelm worshipper he is the absolute ruler of the Five Trees of Bounty and talks directly with the Celestial Emperor himself.

Appears in: He only appears directly at the beginning of Episode 4. Otherwise his word and authority is a constant presence when the Heroes go about the Association's business in his name.

Lord Tarsic (Lunar, Death, Harmony)

The Association's Master of Assassins who as a Nysalor Illuminate is the chief architect of a plan to put a Lunar on the Association Throne and by extension in charge of the city. While a member of the noble House Cadez he may never take up one of the positions of obvious power due to being of the line of Achec the Clever, a barbarian king who ruled the city after the Gbaji Wars in the Dawn Age.

Appears in: He acts as the Heroes' patron in Episodes 2, 3, 4 & 5 and makes a brief mysterious appearance in Episode 1.

Plantaos the Mediator (Darkness, Chaos, Communication)

He is one of the major protagonists in Episode 3 Achec's Tomb. This seemingly pleasant man with a dark secret may make minor appearances in his role as the Five Tree's negotiator and will be an ally of the Heroes right up until the point he betrays them in Episode 3.

Yangtos Tors, The Lunar Judex (Moon, Law, Man)

This stern middle aged man represents the Lunar Law in Serris. By Lunar Law he can call upon any Lunar to aid him in either his investigations or maintaining order. He has a small staff of scribes and deputies, but is otherwise dependant on his fellow Lunars to help him.

Appears in: He makes a brief appearance at the beginning of episode 1. Escorting the Goddess. The characters may through their actions in that adventure make a powerful ally or enemy of him. Canny characters may call upon him in later episodes in his role as Lunar Judex.

Zatrina Tors (Lunar, Illusion, Luck)

Privileged daughter of the local Lunar Judex, she has been brought up surrounded by Lunar Mystism as one of the Elite. While highly educated she is somewhat naive and ignorant of life in the city as a whole. Her charm and powerful self-belief in the Lunar Way carries her through life.

Appears in: Zatrina is the main protagonist in episode 1. Escorting the Goddess. Depending on how the Heroes treat her in that episode she may become a regular supporting character, something that may cause friction with her Solar Husband (if she got married).

Garneth the Tarshite (Lunar, Magic, Trade)

Garneth is a big hairy uncouth barbarian from Tarsh who has ended up in Serris by accident. He is a freeman, although down and out on the streets of Moonie Town when the characters first meet him in episode 1, but by the time they meet him again in episode 3 he has seemingly by accident become the head of the Hero cult dedicated to the Achec the Barbarian.

Appears in: As a minor character in episode 1, potentially in episode 2 and a main protagonist in episode 3 Achec's Tomb.

Gang: The Fisherman’s Guild

The fishman’s guild are one of the Three Tree’s street gangs, who import items of dubious repute past the conservative Dara Happan customs and excise. Their strength and numbers also keep the Brickside Boys, who serve the Boat of the Silver Hind, in check.

Appears in: Episode 2. Sandcastles and Gladiators.

Gang: The Crooked Cross

This enigmatic and elusive gang runs the Great Market. They work through proxies and intermediaries who are manipulated into doing the gang’s will. The characters are very very unlikely to meet a member in the flesh knowingly. If they do, something has gone very wrong and the gang has made a huge mistake.

Appears in: Episode 3 Achec’s Tomb.

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The Boat of the Silver Hind

Primus Gilgarn (Fire, Truth, Mastery)

A powerful and stern man in his early fifties. Gilgarn has risen through the ranks of petty household nobles, through devotion hard work and strict following of tradition. Although he takes no active part in the story, he is so far removed from the streets where the action take place, his power through the actions of his subordinates should be felt keenly.

Appears in: Never appears directly, instead works through intermediaries.

Handris, High Priest of Lodril(Fire, Truth, Stasis)

Gilgarn’s right hand man, who he consults on all matters of tradition and law. His obsession about repulsing external enemies has driven him mad. He has erected magical lanterns in the rich area of Sun Hill, so that it is never dark. He fears that too much acceptance of the Lunar Way will bring the city’s enemies to its very doorstep.

Appears in: Episode 2 Sandcastles and Gladiators.

Darias, son of the Primus and prospective husband of Zatrina Tors (Fire, Death, Movement)

A blond haired ideal of Dara Happan manhood. He practices sword fighting, but has not yet seen military service and he never will be since he destined to inherit the title of Primus. This is something that vexes him no end, since he wants to see the Empire and crush barbarians. His upcoming nuptials to Zatrina, a match ill-suited in his mind, also irritates him.

Appears in: Episode 1. Escorting the Goddess

Gang: The Solar Standard

A group of concerned Dara Happans who have picked up the cudgel and taken to the streets. There they seek to battle the enemies of their association, real and imaginary.

Appears in: Episode 4 Achec’s Tomb

Gang: The Brickside Boys

The hard working class lads of Brickside, who work hard and drink hard. Who take no lip, especially from the likes of the Fisherman’s Guild.

Appears in: Episode 2 Sandcastles and Gladiators.

The Seven Nights of Glory Association

The First Amongst Equals (Moon, Mastery, Illusion)

This mysterious figure is the head of the Seven Nights of Glory. The First's sex and identity is unknown. When the First rarely appears in public, it always wears a large red hooded robe, the cowl of which completely shades its face in darkness. Rumour says that those who have gazed upon the face of the First have gone insane.

The First always makes its wishes known through the Voice of the First, a sexless herald who reads from pre-written scrolls and interprets hand signals from the First.

The First lives in heavily guarded apartments in the Temple of the Red Moon. It is protected by a lunar elementals and spirits.

Possibilities of the First's identity

1. Demi God, who acts as the divine opposition and counter balance to Serris.
2. A single leader, trying to become a god.
3. The Lunar leaders who take it in turns to be the First on a revolving basis, tied into the Lunar Cycle.
4. The wife of the Patriarch of the Five Trees of Bounty. A secret alliance exists between the two associations dating back to the time of the Red Emperor & Dara Happan Emperor walking hand in hand.

Appears in: The First never directly takes part in any of the episodes and is like the other rulers remote working through intermediaries. Perhaps even more so.

Vania the Moonglow, High Priestess of the Red Goddess in Serris

In public Vania is very much the stereotypical Priestess of the Red Goddess. The happy smiling red robed woman who understands and sees everyone's point of view. She is the patron of many worthy causes, such as being the sponsor of the Maze Soup Kitchen and the Literacy for the Common Man campaign both of which she personally lends a hand.

This is partly due to her being a Devotee of Rulz, the visible face of the Red Goddess, but also due to the fact that this her public mask.

In private Vania is negative and is confrontational. She questions the motives and beliefs of those she is talking to. She wears a variety of wigs and clothes that confuse the onlooker to which faction or identity she supports. In the shadows of her private apartments she plots

assassinations of both characters and causes.

She is a Nysalor illuminate, which allows her to be at peace with her "light" and "dark" side.

Appears in: First appearance: episode 1. Escorting the Goddess and could be a constant ally if the characters impress her with their behaviour and knowledge of the Lunar Way.

Tresaran, High Priest of Etryies (Fire, Trade, Communication)

A good looking man in his forties, suave and well dressed, his devotion to the Goddess Etryies has led him to being changing his personality to fit that of his deity, becoming almost a physical representation of the Lunar Goddess of Trade in the city.

Appears in: He can be directly encountered in episode 3 Achec's Tomb, but the characters may come across him or more likely one of his minions in an earlier episode if matters of trade come into play. May be encountered in episode 2 The Death of the Heir since he is in the crowd at Yanis's funeral games.

Gang. The Prophets of Change

Rabble rousers and raconteurs, who seek to convince their fellow Dara Happan's that fuller acceptance of the Lunar way is the way to go.

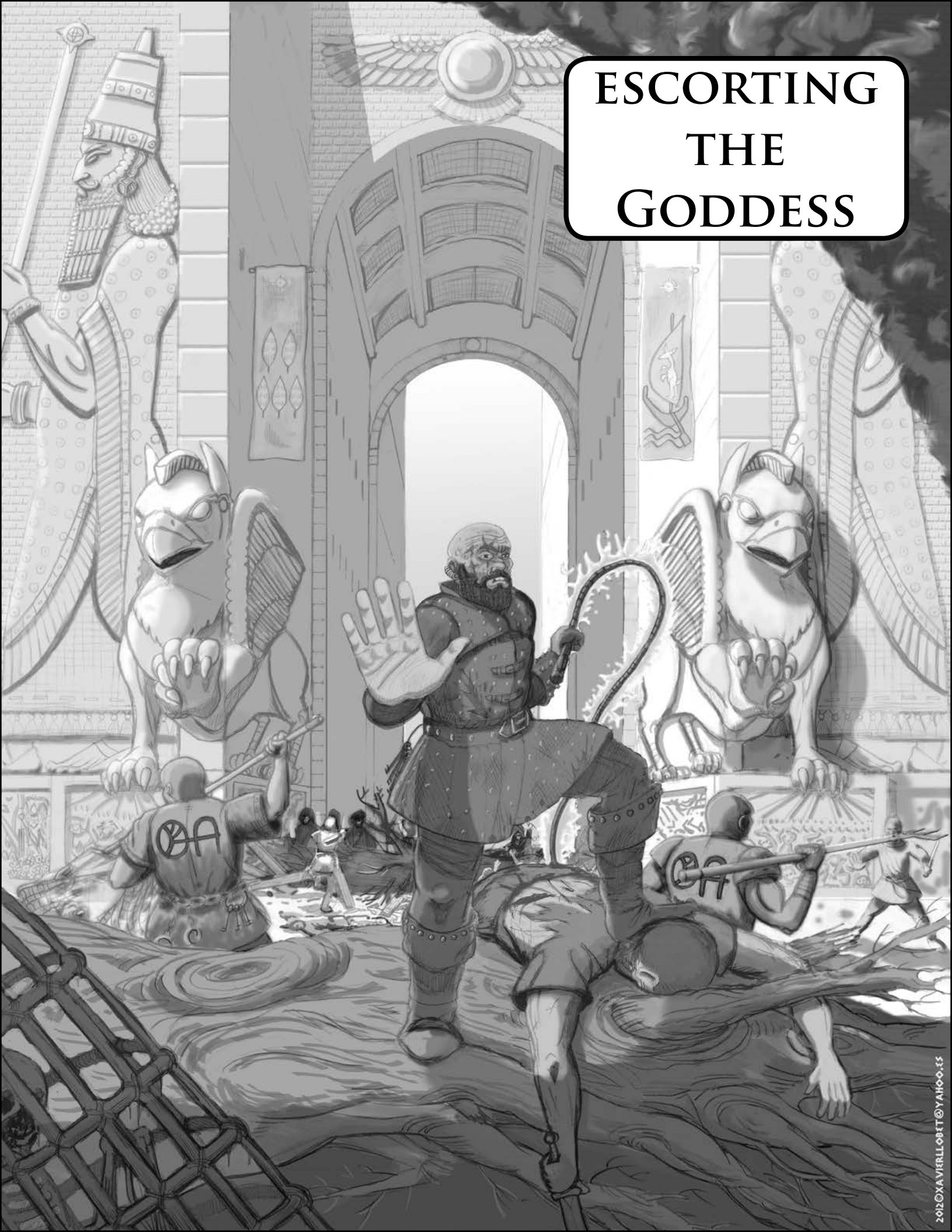
Appears in: The Prophets can be encountered in the markets and public places of Serris during any episode, however they come directly into play during episode 4 Achec' Tomb where they are directly supporting Tresaran's schemes.

Gang The Smarthans

These are probably the strangest of all the street gangs of the city. They stalk the streets of Moonie Town, in long multi-coloured robes, wielding scythes and scimitars, wearing strange wooden masks. Part mystic, part hazia fuelled cutthroats, the Smarthan's exist on the edge of madness.

Appears in: Episode 2 Sandcastles and Gladiators.

ESCORTING THE GODDESS



ESCORTING THE GODDESS

A Search For Truth During A Wedding Procession

Premise

Lenath Tors is a woman marked for death. Her marriage would bring together two feuding families, ending hundreds of years of clandestine warfare. The heroes must escort her through the crowded city avoiding assassins and other unique dangers of their civilisation.

Benchmark

This scenario is suitable for beginning characters.

Secrets

Lenath has been betrayed by her own brother; Markans, who does not want to see the feud end because he wants to get revenge for his own bride's death at the hands of their rivals. Although Markans does not want his sister dead, he is making full use of the fact that after a pre-dawn ceremony at the local Red Moon temple, Lenath must be at the house of her future father in law, who is a stanch Yelm worshiper, before Sun set. Thus anyone who is escorting her to her marriage is a fair target for the blades of Markans' household guard. Markans then intends to hold her in a secret location until the next day, which will wreck any chance of the marriage-taking place. Lenath's family will accuse the groom's family of the abduction, who in turn will blame (correctly) factions within Lenath's association.

Mythological info

The journey of Lenath from the Red Goddess' Temple, to the Groom's father's house across town, is ritually entangled with that of the Red Goddess's own journey from mortality to Godhood. This is the myth of how she as a young mortal girl was escorted by the Seven Mothers through the Otherworld in her quest to become immortal. Although the details of the Otherworld quest are not important here, the presence of the ritual representatives and their aid is. Therefore scene two to seven is associated with one of the Seven mothers. Successfully completing an action, or actions, in each of these scenes gives the Heroes a bonus to the contest in scene eight. This is the most important scene, convincing the brother to get out of the way and let Lenath get married, upon which success of the whole episode hangs. Lenath and the heroes who have volunteered to be her protectors gain a magical red glow, which intensifies each time that they gain a bonus.

This is not an exact acting out of the Seven Mothers HeroQuest, but what is important for the heroes to release is the fundamental relationship between the Red Goddess (represented by Lenath) and the Seven Mothers (represented by some of the heroes and the principal NPCs in scenes seven and eight). In this Lunar city it is common for Lunar Brides to undergo this "practice HeroQuest" (a run through of a full HeroQuest without entering the Hero Plane, and using mortal antagonists as stand ins for the Gods), as part of their wedding celebrations. Lenath herself may make reference to this herself if the heroes haven't realised what is happening, by scene 4.

"Hmnm this is a most unusual Escort of the Seven mothers. They usually only throw stones at the places the protectors need to protect the Goddess!!!"

She will then expand on this if the heroes ask.

After the Red Moon Priestess has made her speech at the Blessing ceremony in scene 1, hand the players a copy of Player Handout 1. Don't draw too much significance to it, but if asked why they are been given it, explain that it is there if they need to refer to it later.



least expected.

Like Sedenya our Red Goddess, Lenath her daughter will need protectors. Her own Seven mothers. Who here amongst her friends and family will step forward and take this role.”

At this point the Vania waits for the “Protectors” to step forward. The heroes should volunteer for this duty. If they don’t Yangtos looks in their direction and motions them hurriedly to step forward.

As they each step forward they should introduce themselves before the other celebrants.

After they have all introduced themselves, Lenath breaks in “Where’s Markans. Where’s my brother Markans? He promised he would be here to be one of my protectors.” Her father turns to her to console her and says “Markans still grieves for Vartella, his bride who was cut down in her sleep by a cowardly assassin. He blames the Boat of the Silver Hind association. He came to me last night to say that he couldn’t approve of this marriage while he still grieves. I respect that decision as our clan Patriarch, and while he is still in mourning I have ruled that it would be inappropriate for him to escort you to your wedding today.”

The Vania offers kindly advice to Lenath “Let the goddess through the action of time and her compassion heal the wound he has suffered. You have more than enough friends here to see you to your husband’s side.”

The discussion may go on a bit longer, especially if the Heroes jump in, but eventually the Priestess motions them to be silent.

She concludes the ceremony by saying.

“Walk into the new dawn, and you will find the Red Moon in the Sky shining in day as it does in night. Sedenya shines her radiance and power down on you her blessed children always”.

Aftermath

Heroes should have volunteered to be protectors of Lenath on her wedding day. Each protector glows dimly red when they are within five metres of Lenath and gain a basic +3 blessing to all use of their Lunar Magic keywords when used to protect her. Do not explain this to the players let them work it out.

After the ceremony has ended, the Heroes briefly retire to the temple’s chambers to change into their ritual robes. Each hero has clothing that identifies him or her as a follower of the Lunar way. It may be as simple red robes or an elaborate as dress uniform with lunar runes sown into the hem of the tunic. Any weapons or equipment that the heroes would justifiably carry, they

take with them. Point out to them the time of day is before dawn, and the cities traders are not even awake yet alone open for business. Also time is a factor here, since the heroes must quickly change and then join Lenath.

Secrets

The identity of the Red Robed Lunar initiate is Yanis, eldest son and heir of the Patriarch. He is there as a friend of Lenath, she is a cousin of his, and also due to his curiosity. While he has officiated at many Yelmic weddings, as a stand in for his father, he’s never been to a Lunar wedding before!! Of course if his father were to know he was here, there would be trouble. Hence the disguise.

It should be fairly difficult to make out his identity and remember who he is, since the heroes have only seen him a couple of times at court or social rituals that he has being present at. A complete victory using appropriate memory and/or socialising skills would place the name and the face, a minor victory would only bring the realisation that he’s someone from Patriarch Vorden’s court. If they realise who Yanis is, any success using Dara Happan Customs against a moderate resistance, brings the further realisation that Yanis, as one of the ruling class born to be initiated into the cult of Yelm Imperator, aspect of the Emperor followed by the ruling class, that his presence here is highly unusual and sullies his pure Yelmic soul!

Yanis is however in good hands, since Tarsic protects him from the attention of heroes. Warning them off with stern looks, and stern words if they get to close or enquire why the he is at the wedding.



Scene 2. The Hour Of Jakaleel

“Jakaleel the Witch is called “Spindle Hag” and was once a priestess of Zorak Zoran in the mountains of Jord. She is the source of the Lunes of the pantheon.”

Key points

Markans retainer let loose a small group of Lunes to drive off Lenath’s litter bearers. The heroes arrive just in time to bring them back into a state of sanity.

Setting: Moon Mansions

The Plaza of the Maiden, which is dedicated to the young and naive form of the goddess. It is a white marble circle situated in a rich and clean area of town, called Moon Mansions where the local Lunar dignitaries live, spinning their enlightened philosophy to create a clean, fresh and crime free environment.

The heroes stroll leisurely through the litter free streets, and ten-minute walk from the temple come to the plaza. When they get there they find Lenath alone in her wedding litter. Of Her four bearers, two have run off screaming while the other two stand dumb gibbering and drooling. Lenath is in a vague shock like state, but once brought out of it (easily done by focusing her attention), explains what happened. She and her bearers reached the square to meet the heroes and had been waiting when suddenly there was a sound of breaking glass, and a bright light. That’s all she remembers, until the heroes arrived. Still being in state of shock the heroes must take up their roles as Lenath’s protectors and find the missing bearers, and sort out the befuddled bearers.

Action

Lenath and bearers where attacked by a group of bound Lunes, Lunar elementals, bound in a magical jar which was thrown into the plaza by one of Markans’ retainers from a side street. The retainer has long vanished, but the heroes if they search the plaza will find the red glass shards of the binding jar. If they examine the Jar and successfully determine the magical properties (a simple contest with an appropriate magical ability vs a moderate resistance) on a complete victory they will understand that it is a blessed jar made of moon glass consecrated to hold five small Lunes, which are powerful enough to beguile the weak minded. If they fail it’s the fragments of a jam jar, obviously thrown away by some careless slave.

It is easy enough to find the other bearers, who have ended up a couple of streets away. They are in a same dumbfounded gibbering state, pretty much wandering around the same spot. If the heroes are still none the

wiser after examining he jar, and decide to detect the presence of any magic run simple contest vs a Hard resistance, since the Lunes try desperately to avoid detection.

Finally once the heroes have worked out that the bearers are possessed by Lunes run a final simple contest vs a Hard resistance to cast out the Lunes.

If they fail not all of the Lunes are driven off. The heroes must either carry the litter between them or get the help of the Priestess at the Red Moon Temple. Either way this slows them down in their progress towards their eventual goal. If any of the heroes involved in the contest fails then they are temporarily possessed by one of the Lunes. This results in an ‘interesting’ form of madness, to be mutually agreed between the Narrator and the affected player, of high resistance, for the rest of the adventure.

Each Lune appears as a shimmering silver haze in the air and has the ability to covertly possess a victim causing them madness.

Why didn’t the heroes check for physical reasons?

In Glorantha, madness and mental problems are caused by malicious sprits. Madness spirits, called Lunes are a particular speciality of the Red Goddess, and the power to control them was given to Jakaleel the Witch who discovered the dark side of the red moon, a spirit realm where such spirits reside.

Aftermath

Lenath enlists the heroes help, suspecting foul play and a rival association at work. She needs the players help to make it to her future Father in Law’s house. They also have until the Sun sets to get to her Husband’s house

Secret of the Lunar Way

Observant players should have learnt that as well as the compassionate harmonising and life-giving side to the Goddess, there is a dark side of madness and death to Sedenya.

Scene 3 Help The Hurt!!

“Queen Dee’zola was a ruler of lands on the Arcos River, and a priestess of Arachne Solara. She is called the “Binder Within” in the Lunar pantheon, and she is the source of the cult healing spell.”

Key points

Another hurdle put in their way. Just before dawn some of the Assassins (see scene 6) hired by Markans, have broken into an apartment block. Rather than killing their victims, they have broken bones, and thrown them out of windows and into street, for the passing Heroes to deal with.

Setting: The Maze

It is dawn when heroes and Lenath enter a large Public Square, which is surrounded by tall five story high apartment blocks. There is public water fountain in the centre of the square.

However instead of the noises of morning life, all that can be heard is the wailing of distraught mothers.

Action

The most obvious Contest is some form of “Healing the wounded”. What is at stake is not just the Heroes showing that they care for their community, but also the amount of time it takes to deal with them. Failure is where a slow group of heroes have an angry and belligerent Lenath storm off, carried by her litter bearers (possibly straight into the ambush in Scene 4).

Another contest is finding some clue as to who the assailants were. Its Easy enough to get descriptions that match numerous young thugs who prowl the streets, but a Very Hard task to find a dropped medallion which has a yellow wheel with three spokes (the symbol of the Yellow Wheel tri-pact assassins who Malkans has hired to do his dirty work : see Scene 5 below for more details). No more information should be passed to the players at this point, merely that the Tri-Pact are a very obscure group of assassins.

Aftermath

Once the wounded are dealt with Lenath is happy to continue their journey to Sun Hill. If the Red Moon Temple had to be called in, a significant delay would have been added to their journey (see Scene 9 for the consequences). If this is the second time today that the Red Moon Priestess has been called into help the heroes, she kindly smiles and optimistically tells them “Our mistakes, its only through our mistakes that we learn.”

Secret of the Lunar Way

The heroes as Imperial Citizens have a duty to help ordinary people of the empire, and preserve Lunar Harmony from the forces that would disrupt it.

Scene 4 Help from the poor

“Teelo Norroi was called “Young Life” and she was drawn apparently at random from the streets of Torang for the ritual. In the pantheon she is cupbearer to the Red Goddess, and also the source of the Fund for the Poor movement.”

Keypoints

Assassins prowl the maze like streets. Beggars come begging for alms. By being generous, the Heroes escape the ambush.

Setting

The marriage party is now passing through the poorer district. The houses here are in poor repair and its people lazily go about their business.

The heroes notice that the most industrious of the district’s inhabitants are its beggars. As they pass under a particularly grand but crumbling arch, a beggar thrusts his alms bowl forcibly out at the heroes.

“Today is a hard and desperate. Spare a coin or more, and you’ll not only help me but yourselves as well, avoid the harshness which the good lady brings today.”

Action

There is a clue to the nature of this scene. Under all the moss and crumbling stone on the arch is a relief dedicated to Teelo Norroi showing the young goddess cup held out in a begging gesture. Any hero who takes the time to look at the arch in detail will notice this.

In this scene an unpleasant side of Lenath’s otherwise pleasant an innocent nature suddenly emerges. Lenath has an aversion and hatred of the poor. This started off during her prosperous Lunar Noble upbringing, where her family had earned through hard work the riches and slaves that they enjoyed. It was further developed to the maniacal levels it is today as she entered adult, and learnt more about the Lunar Way which teaches that self-betterment and development is the key to spiritual enlightenment, and presents a system where the most able and capable people rise to the top of their fields, inspiring others through their excellence. She therefore sees poor people as lazy dropouts, who have actually chosen to be poor. One of her more unreasonable statements is “People chose to be slaves you know!”

Now the beggar who physically blocks their way, wants not one but two Lunars (silver coins the standard currency of the Empire).

Lenath will immediately demand that the heroes as her protectors remove the beggar from her way.

If the heroes insist on giving the beggar coin, an angry and argumentative Lenath jumps out of her Wedding Litter and physically stands in-between the heroes and the beggar. The party then gets the full “the poor are poor because they are lazy and don’t embrace the Lunar Way which would bring them out of poverty” rant from her. The Heroes then have to convince her that in fact it is a Lunar virtue to help the poor. This is mainly a role-playing exercise, but you may wish to abstract to a Simple Contest of what ever communication skill the hero is using (Sedenya Philosophy is a good choice) modified for good role-playing vs Lenath’s Hatred of Poor, which is an Exceptional Ability.

The heroes may not physically get Lenath out of the way. Any one who tries immediately glows red and feels weakened to the point of passing out. This is the magic of the ceremony in Scene 1 where the Heroes ritually agreed before the Goddess to protect Lenath.

If they give him not one but two lunars, the beggar grins and to Lenath’s disgust tries to hug the hero. He then gives them a quick bit of advice.

“Don’t go by the straight road today. Assassins hide javelins ready in the houses a couple of streets up the road. Take that back street over there, and you’ll completely bypass them.”

Grateful he hops up the street towards the local bar.

If the heroes decide to remove the beggar this is easily done. Then the party can then carry on their way up the road. straight into an ambush set by Markans men a couple of streets on. Use the stats for Markan’s men as given in Scene 6. The combat should be straightforward and the party should easily win. However it does delay their progress towards their final goal (see Scene 9 for consequences).

Aftermath

The party have left the poor district, either with a sulky annoyed Lenath by the back streets, or after ignoring the beggar via a brief skirmish with Markan’s men.

Lunar Secret learnt

The Lunar way includes even the dregs of society.

Scene 5 A little knowledge is deadly

“Irrippi Ontor was called the “Brown Man” in the old texts, and is known to have been an outlawed priest of Lhankor Mhy. He came from Yuthuppa and was a friend of Duke Yanafal.”

Key points

The heroes make a quick stop off at the house of Giberan a scholar, who has been investigating the death of Lenath’s brother’s bride. He has worked out it is the rival association’s fault, and believes there is enough legal evidence to take it to the Lunar court. Of course this would mean Lenath’s own wedding would be cancelled, as the two families settle their differences in the law courts.

Setting

It is late morning to Midday as the wedding party enter the relatively affluent temple district, Lenath sees the elderly gentleman in the street. She hails him, and he wishes her a good day on her wedding. He also offers her the hospitality of his house, which Lenath gladly accepts as Giberan is an old friend of the family. Besides he reveals slyly that he has news that will be of great interest to Markan that he should reveal to her. Giberan’s small townhouse is near the temple of Irrippi Ontor. His house keeper attends to the heroes, providing light meals to the hungry and healing balms to those that have been wounded in the scuffles that have occurred in previous scenes. Once they are refreshed, Giberan banishes his servants and the litter bearers. He is about to do the same to the heroes, when Lenath explains that they are close family friends and under oath to protect her.

Action

Giberan closes the door and draws the shutters. He lights some candles and quickly intones an incantation to Irrippi Ontor, to banish any evil spirits that may be eavesdropping on their conversation.

He then sits down and draws the heroes and Lenath close into his confidence.

“For several months I have been working for your brother Markans, on a small research project of some import to him. He came to me the day after the unfortunate death of his bride. He had some evidence, the blooded blade of the assassin. Now he had withheld this weapon from the official investigator, since he was dubious of the matter ever getting any justice. So instead he hired me to look into the matter. He did this because of my interest in the history of this fair city and its political groups through the

ages. It is it said truly that the past shapes the future. The dagger you see had distinctive writing on its hilt. Ancient writing mind you, that it took me a couple of weeks to decipher. I spent two more weeks separating fact from fiction about the ancient order of assassins that the writing referred to. Another couple of weeks were spent with the city chronicles at the temple, tracing the ancient links to the Yellow Wheel Tri-Pact. Then I found it. A reference written by the Historian Tatian in the 3rd Wane, which links the assassins to the Yellow Wheels.

“The Yellow Wheel Tri-pact are an ancient solar assassins group, who are made up of three ‘spokes’. ‘Deadly is knowledge’ is the intelligence group. Made up of spies and sages. Their main role is to provide good intelligence on the assassins’ targets.

‘Sharp is the tongue’ are the courtiers, charlatans, street blaggers who pave the way for acceptance of the Hands action. Say Malkar the Merchant was to become the assassins target they would typically spread around “Don’t you know Malkar the Merchant had more than one dark secret in his closet. Let me tell you good people about his skeletons”. Finally there is the ‘Hands that get bloody’. This is direct action part of the pact, the assassins themselves. Their symbol is a wheel with three spokes.”

I now have enough to start a case in the Lunar City Court. You don’t have to go through with your arranged marriage to that Yellow Wheel cur. Oh Markans will be pleased!! In fact I must take this to the Lunar Justice today and get the case proceedings started!”

Giberan is so enthused at this point that he starts gathering up his scrolls, which are gathered on the table, while simultaneously putting on his cloak. Lenath looks perturbed and weary. “What is wrong?” asks Giberan “Does this displease my Lady”. Lenath then explains “Bringing this case may not be in the best interest of the association. It would only satisfy the vengeance of my brother and only widen the rift between the Associations. I am tired and leave this to my Protectors to explain to you, it’s been a long tiring day already.” She looks wanly at the heroes.

At this stage the heroes should step in and debate the merits of not going to the Lunar justice with this information.

This should be at least in part a role-playing exercise, which you may wish to roll as a contest.

Contest: Debate-persuade the Scholar not to go to the brother or the authorities. Vs a Hard Resistance which represent’s Giberan’s Lunar Legal Proceedings augmented by his loyalty with Markans. If the heroes have somehow undermine Giberan’s loyalty to Markans before the contest the resistance becomes Moderate.

If the heroes are successful in putting their case to Gilbran, he will tell them the following;

“Then you should know that Markans seeks to see that this marriage unsuccessful from the start. He came to me a week ago and asked about the “Escorting the Goddess” ritual. It was over a casual drink that we sometimes enjoy. He told me then of his intention not to be one of Lenath’s protectors. I took his enquiries to mean that he was hoping that his absence wouldn’t weaken the ritual, but now I believe that he was looking to find weak points that he could exploit. When he got very drunk and maudlin he asked me what would happen if all the participants in the ritual were to die. I was shocked at this, and he quickly corrected himself, saying that he meant only the protectors, that of course he would never wish any harm on his dear beloved sister. I told him it would mean disaster for the wedding, since the Goddess would enter the Otherworld without guidance or protection. We then moved drunkenly onto other subjects of mutual interest.”

Aftermath

The Heroes now know that the brother is behind all the attempts to stop Lenath getting to her wedding. They now know that the Assassins will not target Lenath, but will attack those who are protecting her. They should realise that they cannot go to the authorities with this.

Lunar Secret learnt

Knowledge is a double edged sword in the hands of the wise.

fortune into such a bold venture. Lenath was to be left unharmed. If asked why did they emerge from the shadows? They reveal that as well as payment, Markans provided the assassins the means to break out several of their members doing time in the House of Redemption.

Also through careful questioning, the heroes will learn in a cruel twist of fate these were the same Assassins that killed Markan's bride. Markans knows this and takes the attitude "one does not blame the blade".

Lunar Secret

Even a criminal is not beyond redemption in the eyes of the Goddess.



Scene 7 The Mysterious Stranger

"She Who Waits" is a mysterious, unnamed personage in the myths whose identity was unknown to outsiders. She was probably a priestess of the Blue Moon"

Keypoints

Running down the back streets the heroes literally bump into a dark cloaked mysterious stranger.

Setting

The backsteets around the prison on the way up to Gold hill.

Action

The stranger means them no harm and only wants to go about his business quietly. If asked correctly he can give them knowledge of the upcoming scene (cryptically revealing that it is members of the brother's household who have been harassing them).

What the Stranger knows

The Stranger has been watching the Heroes all morning. He has taken a special interest in the wedding (see below for his reasons) since it is a significant event in the city's political life. He knows also that the Brother and his household is behind the attempts to stop Lenath reaching her fiancé's house. However he is strictly an observer and can only impart knowledge cryptically. He has correctly summarised that the only way to resolve the issue with the Markans is to reason with him, not fight.

"When Yarnfal Tarnis you meet this day, put down your swords I say!"

Aftermath

The heroes either are more enlightened about what they are facing, or be none the wiser. The stranger disappears into the city streets.

Lunar Secret

The Stranger is a member of the mysterious Lunar Secret Service (The Unspoken Word). He is in the city secretly observing the goings on, and then report to his superiors.

Scene 8. The Brother

“Yanafal Tarnils was called “Ram and Warrior” in the old rituals. He was an exiled nobleman from Yuthuppa who still ruled his lands. He later defeated his master, Humakt, in battle and became Wargod for the Lunar pantheon.”

Keypoints

The Wedding procession reaches the opulent Palace of the Primus of the Boat of the Silver Hind Association, the father of the groom Darias.

Outside the gate is Markans in full Imperial officer garb and thirty faithful warriors from the Swift Moon Calvary regiment in which he serves. All of them have the red and black striped war paint upon their faces. He steps forward and grimly addresses his sister.

“I am here today not in the spirit of Love and reconciliation, but in the spirit of War and Retribution. I call upon my God Yanafal Tarnils to bring honour to my dead bride, brought down by this household whose gates I now stand before. Sister I will not let you marry this man who has done me such harm! I will cut down any [at this point he glares at the Heroes] man or woman who tries to carry her across the threshold.

Do the characters kill the brother who bars their way with his warriors, or do they persuade him to let them past?

Action

Markans is pulling on strong sympathetic magic from his God, to uphold his honour and protect him from his enemies. The characters should be very aware of this because the very air around them is charged with magic of an intense one. Any attempt to get outside agents, such as the Primus’s men within the walls or the City Watch will fail.

Fighting Markans directly is a Very Hard proposition, he’s highly skilled warrior and a Devotee of Yanafal Tarnils backed up by thirty veterans of the city’s elite Cavalry unit. Add to this that Lenath is dead set against it. If the brother is harmed in any way, Lenath is so upset she calls off the marriage.

The only option is to try and persuade Markans to let them past. This should be an Extended Contest with the characters on one side and Markans on the other. Markan’s is using the magic of his god to justify him wrecking his sister’s wedding, and that’s where the characters, if they realise it, have the best chance of convincing him. The argument should be that the Red Goddess is more powerful and compassionate than the raging vengeful Yanafal Tarnils.

Each time one of the characters usse one of the Lunar

Secrets they have learnt during the journey to argue the case, give them a +6 bonus. Conversely each time they argue on mundane grounds, such as his duty to his family or for the love of his sister.

One option that the characters may consider is that another Yanafal Tarnils follower takes Markan’s place at the wedding. By now the players may have worked out that they are gaining the bonus for each of the Seven Mothers they complete the task for. If one of their number is a Yanafal Tarnils devotee they can take Markans place as a protector. This will provide a +6 bonus in the negotiation contest if they want. However it doesn’t change the fact that Markans and his men are physically blocking the party’s progress.

Aftermath

Either Markans has let them through or not. If they have failed to convince him it remains a deadlock with Markans and his war painted men outside the gate and a now distraught Lenath outside. Eventually when night falls she asks them to take her home. The marriage fails as a result.

If Markan’s snaps out of his magical rage, due to the heroes negotiation, he lets them past and quickly gets cleaned up himself before joining the marriage ceremony.

Scene 9 The Marriage

Keypoints

This scene ties up the whole of the adventure. It gives it an ending, and the players the opportunity to ask questions and clear up loose ends. Also sowing the seeds for the rest of the story arc, Yanis is there in his Solar guise, with his father the Patriarch.

Setting

Primus private temple to Yelm in the grounds of their estate.

Action

“You stand in the centre of a scented garden, on the lower tier of a small white stone ziggurat. Household servants painted in gold have taken Lenath’s Wedding Litter from her slaves and are carrying up the steps. At the summit is groom, Darias, and his father the Primus Gilgarn who is about to be Yelm’s representative in the wedding ritual that will make Lenath and Darias as one in the eyes of the Celestial Emperor.”

The wedding itself then unfolds. The Primus recites

solemn (and somewhat boring) vows and the bride and groom nervously nod their heads in agreement. Then here is a blossoming of sunlight around the summit of the ziggurat, as Yelm manifests in the world in a flourish of magic to bind the couple. Eventually the sun burst fades and gradually the rather stunned couple, still glowing with the Sun God's light, cautiously come down the steps to the assembled crowd of well-wishers clap and cheer.

Then there is a sumptuous feast, where the nobles sit at a far table served the best fare, and the less socially advanced members of the wedding crowd sit far removed on the "wedding picnic lawn" and help themselves to a piled high wedding buffet."

You and the players can wrap it up at this stage, enjoy the banquet and watch the sun go down before being ferried back home by one of the litters paid for by the High Priest of Lodril, Handris, who insists "that no one should walk home through the Dark".

If you still want a bit of action, or the players have questions about the adventure, the wedding banquet is a chance to talk to the great and the good.

Present are:

- **Lord Tarsic** who slyly introduces himself and questions them about their experiences. He is especially interested in the Assassins and the Stranger.
- **Yanis** who is not only very excited about his cousin getting married but also about the trip to the Provinces with his tutor Gren Targo.
- **Handris** High Priest of Lodril who is worried about the lawlessness that happened on the wedding procession.
- **Vania the Moonglow** who congratulates the characters for completing the mystic journey of "Escorting the Goddess". She clears up any questions they may have about the mythological connections of their journey to Laneth's wedding.

Conclusion

This episode is ultimately about three things.

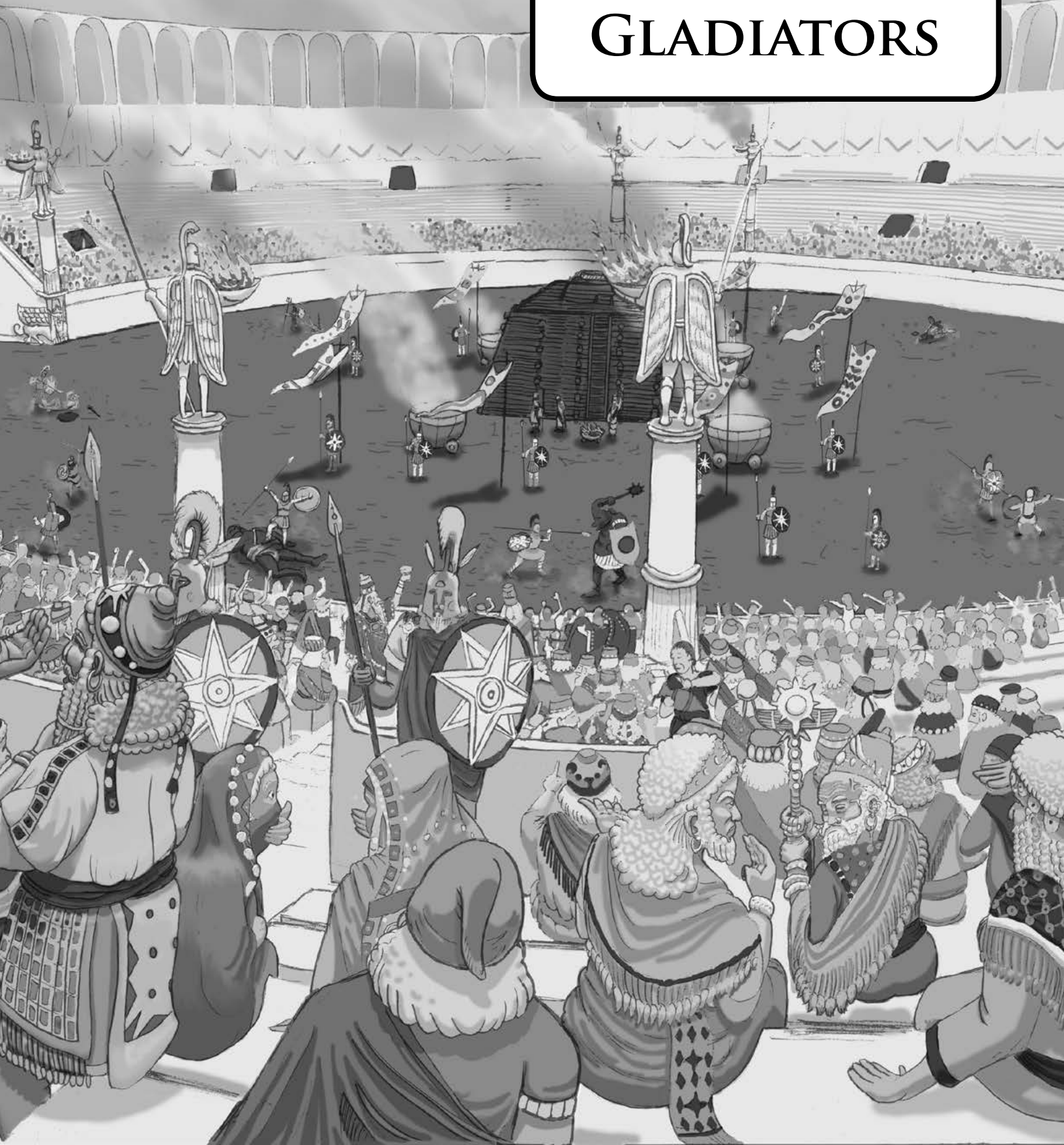
1. Understanding the Mythological relationships between the Red Goddess and her Seven Mothers supporters.
2. Building relationships with the Non Player characters that they meet along the way to Laneth's wedding.
3. Getting an understanding of the relationships between the three Associations that run the city.

How well the character's do at 1, leads to opportunities at the Red Moon Temple. Perhaps a good word from Vania with the Priesthood of the Lunar Cult that they want to become Devotees when the time is right? Or some special training in an aspect of Sedenyc Philosophy previously hidden to the characters.

Characters should get new relationships as a result of their interactions in this episode. Players should write the ones down that stuck them as interesting and strong, and should not flinch from including ones that are less than favourable. For example Markans is an important figure in the Swift Moon Calvary. Did the characters get on his right side or did they make an enemy of him? Even if he is less than favourable to the characters, his very annoyance with them can be used as positive by inventive players in subsequent episodes to drag the Swift Moon Cavalry into situations they possibly would not be deployed otherwise. A large part of this adventure is introducing the large ensemble cast that carries through the story arc.

War is brewing between the three Associations, and this adventure gives an insight into that. how on the surface the Five Trees and the Boat of the Silver Hind are close allies, but in reality it's a very different story. There are also hints of the secret alliance between the Five Trees and the Seven Nights of Glory.

SANDCASTLES AND GLADIATORS



SANDCASTLES AND GLADIATORS

An Unfortunate Death In Foreign Parts Brings Chaos To Serris

The Situation

Yanis, the heir to the Five Trees of Bounty Association, is killed while on a visit to the Big Rubble in the wastes of Prax. While his family prepare for his funeral, the Association's enemies prepare to take advantage of the situation.

The Heroes Involvement

As family retainers and Lunars the heroes are summoned to Lord Tarsic's house to minimise the trouble that the rival associations could create.

Secrets

Yanis has two body doubles, a pair of golden haired twins from a poor village out in the Desolation. Unfortunately Yanis' body was never recovered (see below), so one of the twins has been killed to provide a body for the Funeral pyre. The other twin has been sent home. Unfortunately this twin was intercepted by agents of the Boat of the Silver Hind association, and is due to be the pawn in their plans to humiliate the Five Trees in public.

Handris the High Priest of Lodril, and member of the ruling family of the Boat of the Silver Hind, knows about Yanis' body doubles. It was he that had his agents, led by Drango the Bloodied, capture the other twin and deliver his head. He is also having a captive troll displayed. The day after Yanis' funeral he intends to preach a sermon in the Great Market claiming that trolls killed Yanis. Then his followers will reveal the caged troll, with severed head of Yanis' body double. This way he intends to discredit Patriarch Vorden, since lying is a capital sin in Dara Happan society, and increase the Serrisan's anti-darkness fervour.

The real Yanis is not actually dead. Orges ambushed Yanis' party and he now happily lives amongst them. The local Lunar Governor failed to find any trace of him, not unusual in this savage part of the empire, and reported back that he was dead. After conducting divination rituals, which brought up naught, the family have accepted this and have started making preparations for the funeral. Yanis has attained a mystical transformation called Illumination that has given him the ability to hidden from his father's gods. He returns into the heroes' lives in the last adventure of the arc. For now to everyone, including the Gods, he is dead.

Scene 1. The Great Sandcastle competition

Keypoints

The Heroes supervise a group of children in the Great Sandcastle competition on behalf of their association, the Five Trees. During the competition they get a good look at their counterparts from the other associations and fend off their attempts to sabotage their castles. At the climax of the competition there is a minor earthquake, a sign of ill omen.

Setting

Read the following to the players.

“You stand in the great Celestine Arena, a vast marble building with seats for three thousand of your fellow Serrisian citizens open to Yelm's gaze. This is a place of profound religious significance where gladiators re-enact the mythic battles against the enemies of the empire to strengthen the people's resolve during dark times. Today as part of a day of games you have been chosen to take part in an important religious game.

The building of Yelm's tower in Sand. The lunar part of you wants to laugh out loud at the absurdity of it all. But the steadily filling stands and the grim looking long bearded priests of Serris on the podium suggest otherwise. Besides your Solar upbringing reminds you that this children's contest which starts the day of games re-enacts the very foundation of the Dara Happan Empire.

Three teams represent the three associations of the City. The Boat of the Silver Hind, a fiercely traditional Solar association, has a team comprised of pure bloodied Dara Happan children; three pure blondes from the ruling classes lording it over seven sandy coloured lower class brats from the slums who meekly line up behind their social superiors. Their 'carers' are six priests from the temple of Lodril who spend most of their time keeping the sand and the flies out of their exquisitely braided beards. The Seven Nights of Glory, a new Lunar association who hold sway in the New Town outside the old city walls, has a group of ten children of various races from throughout the Empire supervised by six priests from the Red Moon Temple who represent one of the Seven Mothers (the exception being She who Waits). This Lunar team is calm and relaxed. The adults playfully chat with the children who seem genuinely excited. Finally you look to your

own team, which represents the Five Trees of Bounty association, the oldest in the city which holds power most of the time. As you look at your motley crew of young children who look wistfully at the giant sandpit where they will build their 'Yelm's tower' with spades and buckets lined neatly by its edge. You are the 'carers' of this group and it is your job to see that the children make a sandcastle better than the others to preserve your associations honour and prestige.

A third tier administrator of the Temple of Serris rushes over to you quill and scroll in hand.

"Ladies, Gentlemen, I'm very sorry but we haven't any record of who you are? Could you please introduce yourself for the temple records?"

Go round the gaming table and get the players to introduce themselves in character.

The scribe scuttles off, as trumpets blare as a Sixth Tier Priest of Serris steps up to the podium and stands behind the amplifying horn.

"When Yelm received the rule of the universe, he looked upon it to set the new order. So that he could overlook everything, he raised beneath his feet a beautiful five-tiered ziggurat. Upon its sides where bright figures revealing the greatness of Yelm. Atop it was his golden throne, from which he could see across the whole world, and from which he delivered true justice. This place was called the Tower of Yelm. Standing atop the footstool, Yelm divided the world into quarters. For each way that he

looked he named the Direction, the Colour and the Power which lay there, and the Guardian of the camp there.

That which lay to the right of Yelm was called East, and the colour was Yellow and the Power was Insight, and the Guardian was named Indarthrad. His city was called the Amber camp.

That which lay to the right of Yelm was called South, and the colour was Green, and the Power was Strength and the Guardian was named Nemarshsar. His city was called the Bronze camp.

That which lay behind Yelm was called West, and the colour was Red, and the Power was Sovereignty, and the Guardian was named Vanarthurd. His city was called the Scarlet Camp.

That which lay behind Yelm was called North, and the colour was White, and the Power was Wisdom, and the Guardian was named Asharthcha. The city was called The Alabaster Camp.

Then all of the One Hundred Gods and Goddesses came to Emperor Yelm and made obeisance and gave him great treasures and gifts to adorn the realm."

The arena is hushed as the priest steps down from the podium. Suddenly there is a wail of horns. The children from the other teams rush forward into the sand pit.

The competition has begun.

1 Priest's speech taken from the Glorious Reascent of Yelm by Greg Stafford]



Scene 2. The House of Lord Tarsic

Keypoints

The heroes are summoned to the House of Vines, Lord Tarsic's house on Gold Hill. Here they learn of Yanis' death, and their role as troubleshooters in the days after the funeral.

Setting

Lord Tarsic's villa on Gold Hill, the House of Vines.

Action

Read the following to the players.

Summoned at dawn to Lord Tarsic's residence on Sun Hill, you quickly move through Old City Streets still damaged by yesterday's earthquake. You see the work gangs and builder priests of Serris work their magic upon cracked plaster and splintered marble, repairing the damage in seconds. You've heard the Celestine Arena has already been repaired by the 12th Tier Priests of Serris, calling upon their god who originally built it. Thus Serris endures.

You shortly arrive at the House of Vines, a small town house covered with lush green vines. Rumour has it these plants are magical, and part of a magical pact with a plant demon to protect the house from thieves. Even if this is true an efficient guard staff ensures that no one disturbs Lord Tarsic's retreat from the world and lives to tell the tale. Inside the house there is an air of comfortable opulence, and the heroes are shown by a servant, to a round marble room with luxuriously ornate chairs round the edges. Once seated and comfortable, light refreshments are courteously served by the servants.

A section of the curved wall slides open, in a movement that defies logic. Out of the shadowy opening steps a man in his thirties. He wears a fine yellow tunic, richly adorned with gold thread decoration, cut in the Dara Happan style, but he is clean shaven like a Lunar. Well groomed and athletic, he absently runs his fingers through his dark slick backed hair, as his piercing blue eyes scan you from a heavily frowning brow. He slips back the door that he has just stepped through shut, and once again it is indistinguishable from the rest of the curved wall. Smiling he makes the Lunar sign of friendship and welcome, and still standing starts to speak.

“Welcome to my home. I trust that the servants have tended to your physical needs and you have been made comfortable. I am Lord Tarsic, and I serve our Association in matters that require discretion and sensitivity. Those of crude manner would call me our House's “Master of Assassins”, but information gathering is my main concern. As Transis the Tactician once said “Why cut out the poison Tongue, when you

can gather words to poison your foes while they sleep.”

I'm sure that you heard of our Association's Patriarchal Heir, a youth called Yanis? As you know from yesterday's dramatic events the boy has been killed while travelling. Yanis was sent with his tutor, to see how the Empire works on the very edges of our civilisation, but alas he was killed by bandits while exploring some ruins in the town of Pavis.

Naturally our enemies in the Boat of the Silver Hind and the Seven Nights of Glory Associations will try to take advantage of the poor position Yanis's death puts us in. Losing such a strong heir will damage confidence in the Association and some members may switch their allegiance. Be well aware that our rivals will try to humiliate us publicly, and shift the balance of power in Serris in their favour.

Your job is to ensure that they do not achieve this and to minimise the damage if they do.

I know you are capable individuals and your Association calls upon you to defend it in this time of need.

Do you have any questions?”

Where should we start?

Well tomorrow is Yanis's funeral, so you could mingle with the crowds and make sure there isn't any trouble brewing. Then hit the streets, specifically the poor areas of Riverside and Brickside. They have large street gangs, who usually start trouble when this sort of opportunity arises. Fishman's Guild in Riverside, who are ours, and the Brickside boys in Brickside who belong to the Boat of the Silver Hind.

Is Yanis truly dead? How did he die?

Yes he's dead. Killed by bandits who prey on travellers in a ruin called The Big Rubble. His party was ambushed and slain to a man. We were lucky that the Local Governor found and delivered the body back to us. It wasn't a pretty sight, it's a marvel what the butcher's can do these days.

The Butcher?

Yes, surely you know that under Yelmic law only a butcher can handle and prepare a dead body? Some guy in Bricksville did the job, the Patriarch organised it.

Secret: This is a well placed lie. If the players follow it up it will lead them to Drango in Scene 7. Tarsic is aware of the body double but not of the fine detail. This was as he said organised through the Patriarch, with the help of the Primus of the Boat of the Silver Hind who owns Drango.

What was he doing in Pavis?

He was surveying the most distant parts of the Empire, seeing how it works on a greater scale.

What do we get out of this?

The undying support and gratitude of your association, which I don't have to remind you has many practical applications.

Lord Tarsic (Lunar,Death ,Harmony)

Most Serrisians are completely unaware of Tarsic's existence. If they have come across him they see just another Noble who has money from his Family who enjoys a comfortable opulent lifestyle without making waves in society. If they dig a bit deeper or have dealings with the darker side of House Cadez they might know he is Patriarch Vorden's Master of Assassins, whose role is to quietly eliminate threats and gather intelligence in the eternal power struggle between the three Associations. What they cannot hope to know that he is a secret Illuminate of the God Nysalor and a member of a secret Lunar society, the Friendly Moon Society. This operates in the shadows to bring about a fuller union between the City of Serris and the Lunar Way.

Secrets**Lunar or Dara Happan?**

Lord Tarsic likes to keep a firmly traditional Dara Happan household. In and about the house he always dresses in the Dara Happan manner. This helps him keep his Dara Happan neighbours calm and at ease, and him above suspicion. Lunar symbols, such as statues of the Goddess or mosaics of her life are completely absent from the house. The exception is the Round room that the heroes are shown to. Here Tarsic can meet with fellow Lunars as equals. Rumour has it that Lord Tarsic has another house in the Maze, called the Red House, where he enjoys all manner of debauched Lunar pleasures.

The House of Vines

The House of Vines is practically built of secrets. Careful observation of the house's structure would reveal a plethora of secret rooms and corridors. People come in but they never come out. Evidence of murder or simply that they leave via a secret network of tunnels? What other dark secrets lie locked in dark rooms within the spymaster's house?

Lord Tarsic's House Staff**The House Servants**

Tarsic prefers to keep Dara Happan custom rather than follow the Lunar custom of keeping slaves. He finds employing hereditary servants more loyal and trustworthy than slaves. His servants are supremely dedicated and well treated. Servants who show special talent are often inducted into one of Tarsic's spy rings. They obediently serve him, and are trained to listen and

remember conversations as well as being discretely proficient with a dagger.

The Guards

Tarsic's staff of ten guards is very low key, wearing leather armour in the Dara Happan style, carrying short swords. Hidden under their tunics are darts for ranged combat. However appearances are deceiving. They are part of Lord Tarsic's Spy network and so are adept at acrobatics, stealth and assassination techniques. Apart from the commanding officer the guards are switched regularly, since it is the final piece of their training before they go into the field as agents of Tarsic's Spy ring. If they can protect their master's physical person and keep his deepest secrets they pass. If not their fellow guards quietly dispose of them.

Aftermath

The heroes should be clear upon their task. Ensure that the rival associations do not try to take advantage over couple of days around Yanis' Funeral.

Scene3. Funeral Games

Key points

The heroes attend Yanis' Funeral on the Field of Ashes. Some may take part in the Funeral games. Others may learn through careful observation that the young man on the pyre is not Yanis.

Setting

The Celestine Arena looks just as new, all signs of the earth quake damage has been removed as well as the wear and tear of the years. The marble seats gleam in the mid day sun as the rich and poor of the Five Trees association fill the arena to pay their last respects to the dead heir of the association. All are dressed in their best clothes, shining in the face of death. You look up to the nobles' box and see sat alongside the Patriarch are representatives from the other associations; among them the Primus of the Boat of the Silver Hind.

In the centre of the arena on a funeral pyre surrounded by banners of the noble houses and braziers of sweet incense is the young body of the dead boy Yanis.

Patriarch Vorden in his role as priest of Yelm Emperor

steps up to the front of the Nobles' box and addresses the crowd.

“Let us remember Yelm’s loss as his son Murharzarm was slain by the outlaw Orlanthus. An act of outrage against the normal order of things which threw the whole cosmos into darkness and chaos. Like Yelm while I naturally feel immense grief for the loss of my son, I will soon rise triumphant again to lead you all into the glorious future!”

The crowd cheers with appreciation, as a troupe of dancers swirl into the arena and colour spews forth from the incense burners.

So Yanis’s Funeral games begin.

Action

There are a variety of things that the heroes can do at the funeral games.

The Gladiatorial fights. The more martially inclined heroes might decide to get involved in these small one on one fights to the death. Or they might be approached by representatives of the Patriarch who praise their skill in arms and formally ask on behalf of the association’s leader.



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Friendly Moon Society and his allegiance to the Five Trees Association.

Judex Yangtos, is worried that Lunar Law and Order will be upset during the uncertainty after Yanis's death. His main worry is that the street gangs will go on the rampage to further political objectives of their associations. He also doesn't rule out assassination attempts on powerful nobles on either side.

The clique sees the heroes as fellow Lunars and actively encourages them to join in the debate. On one hand it is quite intense and heated, but there is also an underlying feeling that the current situation is part of the Goddess's game so the participants are quite often playful in their responses. The heroes can deduce this if they make a successful simple contest using Sedenya Philosophy against a moderate resistance.

If the heroes decide to join in the game, they are invited to back to the Friendly Moon's town house for refreshments and a private ceremony to honour Yanis. (see Scene 4)

The Temple District Militia A loof and professional the guards of the Temple District, who sit in gleaming yellow armour and long flowing yellow robes, are a tough bunch to impress and to get to gossip. However if successfully persuaded they quietly express the fear that the slightly unhinged Handris, High Priest of Lodril, backed by Solar Standard will use the death of Yanis to step up his witch hunt against the enemies of Solar Religion. Since Handris is a traditionalist this also includes the Lunar Way.

Pyramid Engineers & Office of Public Works. This group of engineers and the civil servants responsible for the upkeep of the city's water system sit in a tight block directly overlooking the arena next to the refreshment stalls. They mainly gossip about the chaos caused by the earthquake and the hard work schedules that the overseers from the cult of Serris have them working.

South and West Market Stall owners. This group of merchants and traders from the Great Market are concerned about the ruffians from Bricksville disrupting their business.

The Priests of Achec. Only Hesros and Lern are here, sitting sulkily on their own near the merchants. Their high priest has recently died and they have yet to replace him. They have come out of obligation to the Patriarch.



They have no useful information or part to play in this episode; more details on them are found in episode 3 Achec's Tomb.

The dozen or so gang members of the **Fisherman's' Guild** sit amongst the mass of poor people from Riverside, in the cheap seats right by the arenas' edge. They are feeling mean and proud, determined not to let their rivals in the Brickside boys take any territory or liberties at the expense of their association. If the heroes do an especially good job at befriending them they will reveal that some of their brotherhood are already preparing a pre-emptive strike at the Boat of the Silver Hind. They will not say more except to laugh and say "at dawn brother, wait till Yelm Rise tomorrow".

Aftermath

There is a variety of leads that come out of this scene, and the players will want to go their own way.

Scene 4. A Private Gathering (Optional)

Key points

Tarsic and some of the other Lunar elite who knew Yanis have a private ceremony at the House of the Friendly Moon. More about the intrigue surrounding the heir and his death becomes apparent, if the heroes follow the party.

Setting

You stand on the Street of Heavenly Highs, a side street outside the huge walls of the Temple Square. Here in a street filled with the incense shops, you breathe in the sweet smells of perfumes that ooze out of the closed buildings. Incense designed to hide the gross smells of the common masses and elevate them to sense of celestial wonder.

Before you is an old flat roofed building, covered in red brick and statues of imps that hold up representations of the Red Moon. The double doors are opened, and beyond the red drapes that float down covering the entrance from casual observation drifts the sound of sweet music and loud conversation. Within this building is a world of freedom, closed to the common solar, open only to you in the Lunar Elite. This is a cool relaxing place. Here you can meet with your peers and equals, away from the harsh gaze of the uninitiated. For this ornate red brick building is the "House of the Friendly Moon Society".

Action

Inside the building is a large domed social room where the lunar clique and the heroes assemble. Slaves, mainly captured Orlanthi barbarians, serve wine and food. Tarsic says a few solemn words about Yanis.

"Let us raise a glass to Yanis the shining pupil. I was his guardian and teacher in the ways of the Red Moon, I shielded him from the disapproval of his father the Patriarch. He was our best hope in hundreds of years of finally bringing about the complete Lunarisation of this city. Imagine a Lunar Patriarch of the Five Trees of Bounty!!!"

But alas it was not to be. He and his father had a bitter argument about his interest in our religion. So I sent him off with his tutor to survey the very edges of the Empire until the old man's temper cooled down. What a mistake that was, cut down to pieces by bandits!

Now my friends it is up to us to pick up the pieces and maintain the great plan.

To Yanis!"

The others raise their glasses in response. The mood turns relaxed and through conversation with those present the heroes are able to learn the following.

Yanis had two body doubles. Nearly identical twins from a poor village in the Desolation. One was killed to provide the body on the funeral pyre, the other was sent home. They however do not know that the second twin was kidnapped by Handris' agents and delivered to Drango the Butcher.

Dranos the Butcher, a vassal of Primus of the Boat of the Silver Hind killed the double and prepared the body for the funeral in accordance with Yelmic law.

The Lunars fear that hardliners within the Temple of Lodril will take advantage of the situation, mainly through the large gang that they control in Bricksville, the Brickside boys.

Aftermath

The heroes should now know something more of the conspiracy around Yanis' death and the hopes and fears of the Lunar elite.

Scene 6 The Butchers (Optional)

Key points

Through observation at the funeral and/or the ‘vision’ of Garneth, the heroes have learnt of the other body double and that the twin, had been captured by the agents of the Boat of the Silver Hind. At the agent’s shop, a local butcher, they learn of the twin’s grisly fate.

Setting

The Butchers shop in Bricksville, in the late evening or early hours of the morning.

Action

If they carefully scout out the butcher’s shop they will find Drango cutting up the headless body of the second twin.

They can then wait until Drango leaves, follow him and examine the body parts he dumps in the river.

Or confront him.

Drango the Bloodied

In Yelmic law, only appointed people, “Butchers”, may cut the flesh of dead animals and occasionally when need arises dead people. His devotion to the Dara Happan god of Butchers, Ostkan a minor son of Lodril and Oria, gives him special Butcher’s magic that allows him to cut cleanly and avoid Dara Happan taboos due to bloodletting. He has three burly apprentices asleep in a room adjoining the butchery.

Aftermath

What the heroes learn.

From the dumped body parts.

Not a great deal unless they use magic, in which case a complete victory gives them the same info as below. Any other success gives vague hints of the identity of the victim. He was blonde, in late teens, of poor background but with an excellent diet and health.

From questioning Drango

This will be a hard exercise in role-playing. While acknowledging that the characters could probably wipe the floor with him, Drango is hardened to violence and not overly intimidated by the heroes. This will especially be the case if his assistants are backing him up.

If the heroes have him completely over a barrel and shoved into a corner (a Complete victory if you use a contest to resolve matters) he spills his guts.

- It was Yanis’ second body double, whom he kidnapped and killed.

- He was hired by Handris, but doesn’t know what he has in mind.
- However it better be soon for the body is already getting ripe.

If the heroes are only partially successful (a Minor Victory in contest terms).

- The body is Yanis’ second body double, but that’s all I’m telling you!
- He also points the finger at someone else. He saying that a hooded man who paid him a lot of money to chop off the head delivered the body.

Aftermath

At the minimum the heroes should now know about the second body double, and that it is currently headless. If they have been successful in this scene they will also know that Handris is behind the plot.

Scene 7 Gold Hill (optional)

Keypoints

Either following up leads from Scene 5 or the connection between the Solar Standard and Handris, the heroes decide to observe/pay him a visit.

Setting

Handris’ opulent but walled villa on the eternally lit Gold Hill.

Handris’ villa sits on the summit of Gold Hill. You can see it clear as day even from the darkened streets below the hill. For Handris has made it eternal day on Gold Hill, with magic street lights. The effect is especially strong on Handris’ own dwelling, for not only do extra strong braziers stand at the corners of his home, but it is also painted in gold paint that shines in the night.

The villa is more like a fort. It is a four story square building that he had purpose built when he became high priest of Lodril five years ago. It stands three metres clear on all sides of other buildings. There are two gates side by side in the east wall. One main gate for noble visitors and a smaller tradesman gate. All the windows are shuttered and stone statues of man headed lions sit on each corner of the tiled roof. Another pair of these statues sits either side of the gates. The gates are also guarded by at least six temple guards; in yellow flowing robes over full plate armour carrying heavy round shields with long spears. A detachment of five men constantly guard outside the building.

Action

Handris is on a personal crusade against the enemies of the solar religion; darkness, chaos, storm and trickery. As

a result he is extremely paranoid, and being fabulously wealthy has the money to make this paranoia physical.

Apart from a large dining hall and a reception chamber which uses to entertain guests, the rest of the villa is surprisingly sparse of decoration. There are no shadows or patches of darkness to hide in, since the whole interior is magically floodlit, by lots of magic lanterns. There are many gates which block the narrow passage ways which only certain servants who need to access the rooms behind will have. For example the kitchen staff will have the keys to the gate that bars the passage between the kitchen and the dining hall, while the Cellar master will have the gate key to the wine cellar. To add an extra level of difficulty, the locks are also magically enchanted to 'know' who is allowed through it. Therefore to get through the gates you not only have to physically pick them (a Hard Resistance) but also overcome their magic (Nearly Impossible). And these gates are everywhere. Even in places that defy logic.

This makes it easy for the guards, who are armed with long spears and armoured in plate and shield, to corner intruders. If the intruders are especially tough then the man lion statues come to life, and they will be faced with powerful and swift Earth Demons. There are 30 guards and 10 Earth Demons (6 on the outside and another 4 in the reception hall).

If the heroes get past all this they will find a sub basement, the stairs to which have ten gates only operable by Handris. There deep in the earth is Handris's bedchamber, next to a large ritual room. In a large warding square is the Troll in a covered cage. The head of Yanis's body double is in a magically locked chest under Handris' bed in a secret compartment. The Ritual chamber is guarded by four huge Fire Elementals who sit on the corners of the ward and attack anyone who enters the chamber who isn't Handris. This is why this chamber is known as the "Chamber of Fiery Death" amongst the servants.

Aftermath

This is intended to be a difficult scene, which the Heroes will probably not gain from. It is meant to bring home the power of Handris on his own turf.

If however against the odds they do overcome the horrors of Handris's villa, then it does significantly change the outcome of the scenario. They will be able to expose and discredit his plan, so Scene 9 will not happen. However the heroes will still need to deal with the gang war the following day.

Scene 8 Gang War

Key points

Gang fights between supporters of the Five Boats, the Solar Standard, and the local Five Bounty's Gang, and the Fisherman's Guild erupt. Dependent on how successful the heroes were in scene 5, this may or may not take them by surprise.

Setting

This scene occurs at dawn in the Great Market.

The bright new day dawns, and all around worshipfully gaze at Yelm rising, reflecting upon what the gods will bring them this day.

In Temple Square the priests make their morning dedications sung in magically amplified voices that fill the Old City, and echo round the New City. Yelm's are sung first then the other male deities in rank order, followed by the female deities next. The salutations to the dawn last about half an hour.

The heroes hear noise of a scuffle. Down the street they see members of the Brickside boys attacking other men, who upon closer inspection turn out to be members of the Five Trees with their clubs.

Other ruffians, rough dockworkers from Fisherman's Guild start pouring into the fight. In all there are about a hundred or so combatants on either side.



If left uncontested his rants sway the crowd, who eventually riot and eventually end up at the Patriarch's residence, The House of Blue Lilies, up on Sun Hill. The Swift Moon Cavalry and the DanFive Xaron will be forced to block their progress.?

How the Heroes resolve this scene is completely up to them.

They can challenge Handris's sermon, using the evidence they have gathered and expose his plot to discredit the Five Trees of Bounty Association. You may choose to run as a simple or extended group contest, depending on whether you and the players want to close the adventure sooner rather than later.

Or the Heroes can resort to manhandling the High Priest of Lodril in the City. This is the less wise course of action, since Handris is a tough fire magician and is well supported by his guards. He will also let loose the Troll, which immediately goes berserk under the sunlight and the sight of so many hoomans, to add to the melee. Ultimately Handris will withdraw to his villa at the first sign that he is losing. If the players fail to apprehend him, public opinion sways against the Five Trees. Also the heroes lose the support of the common man if they fail to make it clear their reasons for apprehending this much respected and loved public figure.



Conclusion

The fortunes of the Five Trees of Bounty Association rest upon the outcome of this episode.

If the heroes were successful in exposing Handris' scheme, their association holds it own in the uncertain times after Yanis' death.

If Handris made his point and the heroes were unable to counter it, the Boat of the Silver Hind soon gains enough political clout in the city to become the dominate association within a season. More worrying still the anti lunar element in the city becomes so strong that the House of the Friendly Moon is burnt to the ground by arsonists in the night, and the culprits are never caught.

Further adventures

The Troll. How did this dangerous creature get into the city? Who smuggled it in? An interesting twist is that it was the Fisherman's guild, who were paid through and intermediary. If the Troll is still alive, perhaps it would like to go home. The Temple of Lodril would love to have it burn under Yelm's burning rays, but is this the Lunar way?

Gang War. More unrest in the poor districts (eg Riverside and Bricksville). Depending on how well the heroes concluded the adventure there might still be dissent amongst the Gangs, which Lord Tarsic asks the Heroes to subdue.

Rumour control. The circumstances of Yanis' death are still not clear to the person on the street. There is a lot of speculation and discussion in venues open to public speakers, such as the Great Market. Heroes with good communication skill are asked to go and play down these rumours, while heroes with a strong arm are asked to put off the thugs who support the rabble-rousers.

Dealing with defection. While members of the Five Trees association respectfully keep quiet, many are still uneasy about the whole affair. Some factions are even thinking of joining one of the other two associations. The Guild of Incense Makers are considering joining the Seven Nights of Glory. They see the Five Trees' fortunes waning, and the new Lunar religion is growing as a market for their goods. The heroes are called in by Lord Tarsic to prevent this defection, and gently persuade the Guild to stay within the Five Trees. Agents of the Seven Nights act against the Heroes, adding intrigue and violence.

UPHOLD THE YELLOW STANDARD!!

By Newt Newport

The following is a transcription of a scroll passed out on the streets of Raibanth , by members of the Yellow Standard, a Dara Happan ‘morality’ league. While they balk at suggesting out and out rebellion and rejection of the Red Emperor as the true Emperor, they are harshly against the more dubious excesses of the Lunar Way and reject any foreign gods that the credo of ‘We are all Us’ makes accessible to Yelm’s people. They are quick to blame recent set backs at the slipping of standards amongst their kind and offer a friendly but stern re-education program to even the most fallen of Solars.

Remember brethren our culture and our traditions in the face of Lunar ‘modernisation’.

We are Dara Happan which means;

- Both genders dress modestly. Avoid the revealing and gaudy dress that are current modern fashions.
- Men have beards that are well groomed and neatly shaven. If you are the noble class the length of your beard and the amount of braiding denotes your status. Men of middle and working class have mid and short beards respectively. Women’s hair is similarly long and well groomed.
- Gold not silver jewelry. Why display the pale metal of the moon against your flesh when you can radiate the splendor of Yelm the Sun from your skin?
- Yellow and orange are the colours of the sun. Avoid Red the colour of the Red Moon!
- Live in the cities of your forbears. If you become rich invest in your local district. Do not purchase a large rural villa in the countryside. Yelm created the Dara Happan cities for us to live in. Move to the countryside and you forsake him!
- Know your place in society and make the most of it. Do not believe in modern thinking about ‘meritocracy’ or ‘social mobility’. These are untested ideas that will bring chaos into our society. Uphold the traditions of our Fathers and Matrons, which have endured since Yelm communicated them to the First Emperor of Dara Happa.

Above all remember your Gods

- If you are a noble you worship Yelm, the High Sun God and Celestial Emperor.
- If you are a woman you worship his faithful wife Dendara, Domestic Goddess and mistress of the home & urban spirits.
- If you are a young woman of feisty but chaste nature you may join the cult of Yelm’s daughter Yelorna, the Star Maiden.
- If you are a man who entertains a military career join the cult of Polaris the Pole Star.
- If you are a fierce warrior of near uncontrollable rage Shargash Yelm’s Berserker son is your way.
- If you are of the peasant class, Yelm’s earthy brother Lodril is your guide. Despite his lusty and rough ways he knows his place and his spear is always at Yelm’s service.

Reject the modern Gods that the Lunars bring into replace our Gods!.

We are the Yellow Standard. If you find yourself wavering or unsure of our god given Dara Happan customs, please feel free to drop into our friendship houses, which are to be found in all true Dara Happan cities. Look out for the Yellow Standard flying outside their doors.

ACHEC'S TOMB



ACHEC'S TOMB

Where To Place The Last Resting Place Of A Dead Hero?

The Situation

Achec was one of the Three Barbarian Kings (~400 ST) who ruled Serris. He was a cunning leader who skilfully manipulated the other kings, and the various surviving Dara Happan nobles, ruling the city during the chaotic post Gbaji war period. He 'retired' during the restoration of Dara Happan order, remaining an important advisor even in his old age to the young and inexperienced Patriarch of the Five Trees of Bounty Association.

Achec was buried in the Great Market, with the inscription on his tomb;

"Here is my Tomb. I am buried here in plain sight with all my considerable riches so I can continue to be of service to this fine city. Beware those who would violate my rest. Should any scoundrel should rob my tomb the whole city shall see the misfortune it brings."

Achec exists as a Guardian spirit over the market and through a small cult assists the naturally xenophobic Dara Happan merchant's trade with "barbarian" outsiders.

Currently the city is on the brink of social chaos. It is three years after the death of the heir of powerful Five Trees of Bounty, and its rivals attack it on all fronts hoping to replace it as the power in Serris. Legislative cases about buildings held by the association come thick and fast from their rivals, and as property changes hands moving out of families that have held them for hundreds of years, the Dara Happan social order in Serris starts to crumble.

Now factions within the city's council want to move the Tomb to another part of the city, thus breaking the Five Trees of Bounty's monopoly on trade with the Barbarians.

Scenario resources

This scenario is designed to be freeform, with the investigations of the players driving the plot. The information needed by the Narrator is divided into two sections;

1. People. The factions and their representatives, with detailed motivations and stats.
2. Running suggestions. Hints and tips on how to run the adventure. Includes a sample scene list.



Achec's Tomb

Achec's Tomb is just inside the East gate, standing in its own square. It is here that any business with non-Dara Happen outsiders is conducted, under the supervision of Achec's priests.

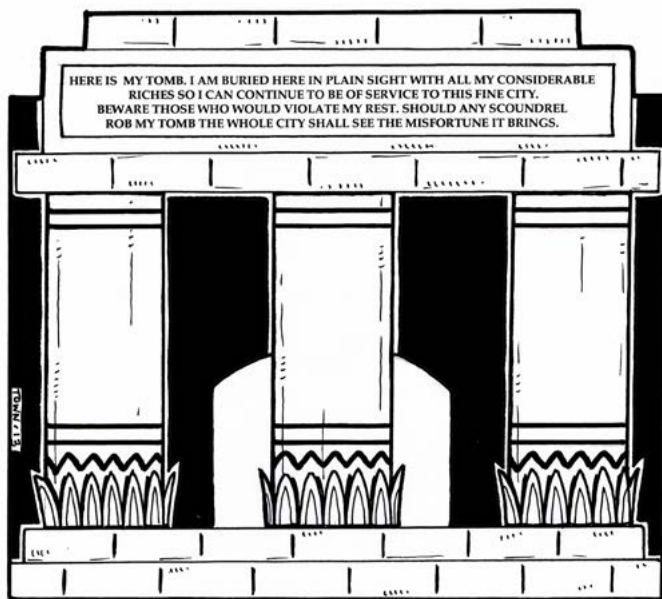
The tomb itself is a simple stone affair, with the inscription (see Situation) written on the face facing towards the East Gate. Although there is much speculation and rumours about a labyrinth of tunnels, laden with traps, guarding Achec's body, the reality is simpler. Underneath the stone mausoleum is a vertical shaft, 2m across 20m deep. At the bottom is a square room, 10m by 10m, and 5m high. In this on a stone plinth is a stone coffin containing the bones of Achec. If the coffin is opened all that is found is a note saying in Old Pelorian "You're in Trouble now!"

The Tomb's Secret –The Nysalor writings

Barely perceptible on the walls of the tomb, are what at first glance look like faint scratch marks. On closer inspection the scratches are a line of writing, a long forgotten code used by Nysalori worshippers to preserve their knowledge during the cult's extermination after the Gbaji wars. Here in code are myths and revelations, which can turn a man mad or give him the gift of Illumination. More relevant to the city's present predicament are details of the magic and HeroQuests that Achec used to hold the city together after its liberation from the Trolls.

Question, "When is a Ghost a God?"

Answer, "When the Ghost, is in fact a man who is alive but not to his friends and family, and from the wisdom of his death this man becomes a god."



People

The Cult of Serris

Serris is the founder god of the city. He is a son of Lodril, lord of the Lower Earth. He loved to play in the earth, making shapes out of the thick rich loam. When Yelm created the race of men, it was Serris who taught them how to build cities, and warehouses to store the harvest of the earth.

Serris oversaw the construction of the city during the God Time, and his followers today are descendants of the original "Apprentices of Serris". Some of the grander buildings, such as the Tower of Yelm, the Great works of Water (sewer system), as were the imposing walls that surround the Old City and the Garden of Serris were actually built by the God.

When the city is damaged his Priests lead the people of the city in "Rebuilding rituals". These speed up reconstruction work, and for the buildings actually built by the God magically rebuild themselves. Thus the Old City walls that are hundreds of thousands of years old, which have been breached many times by invaders, look as new as when Serris built them.

The cult is vital to the fabric of Serrisan society. No building in the old city, and much of the New city, happens without from the cult. The high-ranking members of the cult take many of the city council positions.

Faction 1. The Seven Nights of Glory Association

"If Achec was alive today he would be a Lunar!!"

Lunar smooth talkers who want to move Achec's tomb to the New Bazaar, so Achec can be its Guardian. Politically wimpy in the Old City, but tough in the Lunar district.

Tresaran. High Priest of Etyries

A powerful good looking man in his early forties Tresaran, is the epitome of new Lunar power. Drawn from noble Dara Happan stock, but ambitious enough to grasp power via the Lunar ideology. He is a good public orator and possesses great personal charisma. He is also on a crusade to open up the city to outside influences and remove the stranglehold that old traditional Dara Happan customs have on trade specifically and Serrisian culture as a whole. He believes that it is his destiny to achieve immortality at the side of his god. He believes that by moving the tomb to the New Bazaar it will allow him to access the Hero plane and enact whatever magic that Achec's followers use to deal with barbarians, on the whole city. Which will bring about his desired goal of

city wide social tolerance and acceptance.

The Prophets of Change.

The prophets like their master Tresaran are smooth talkers. They prophesy a new phase of city life, an opening of trade and relations with outsiders. All this is evitable, they preach, under the gaze of the Red Goddess and sanctioned by her father Yelm.

Unlike Tresaran they are not high born, but originate from a pool of losers in the New City. Inspired by Tresaran's words, they act as his agents spreading the word of his new way. Some of them are becoming very rich and powerful in their own right as a result.

Although accustomed to the harsh realities of life on the street, they prefer to persuade others to perform violent acts on their behalf. In their day-to-day work of inciting and educating the masses, they work together as small teams. One of them acts as the main speaker, while the others augment his arguments and look out for troublemakers.

Faction 2. The Boat of the Silver Hind Association

"If the Moonies want the tomb in their market, let them. Remove this outlandish piece of morbidity and you will restore the true power and glory of the Great Market. Achech was a Gbaji Necromancer and his tomb is a spell that blights our commerce"

A group of Dara Happan traditionalists who really want the tomb out of the Great Market since it is a source of magical power for their rivals the Five Trees of Bounty.

Zonathan, South Facing 5th Tier Architect- of Serris

Zonathan is a man in his middle ages. He has risen to power through sheer obstinacy, bloody mindedness and occasional explosive force. His enemies, those that are left alive after locking horns with him, often call him the Charging Bull. He has a keen intelligence that allows him to manipulate the old city's complex social hierarchy, but is renowned for his explosive temper. The object of his wrath is often beaten to a bloody pulp by his followers, The Solar Standard. He holds all the traditional Serrisian values of xenophobia to the extreme. In his active youth he was a follower of the war god Shargesh, but as the adult route to power opened up through inheritance, he joined the hierarchy of the Cult of Serris. Since becoming an Architect of Serris, he has learnt the insight of the South sacred direction, Strength. He is well versed in the stories and music of the culture that he so ardently defends.

The Yellow Standard

The Yellow Standard is a strange street gang. It is exclusively made up of men from all walks of life from the Boat of the Silver Hind association. They follow Zonathan's edicts about purging the impure from the streets of the Old City, but once the frenzy has fallen from their eyes are just regular men with loving families. Each member of the gang carries a heavy wooden stick or club, known as the Law Rod, when patrolling the streets.

Faction 3. The Five Trees of Bounty Association

"Sure the cult of the Achech is down on its luck at the moment, and its last High Priest dead. But give enough confidence to the new priest and you'll see the power of Achech's Trade with the Barbarians rise again. Besides you wouldn't want to play into the Moonies hands."

They are Dara Happan moderates, allied with cause of Achech's descendants and the Merchants of the Great Market, but also using the situation to get an advantage over the other two associations.

Achech's descendants are a strange bunch of successful misfits, whose barbarian blood prevents them from rising to the pinnacle of the Dara Happan society. However they have inherited the brains of their illustrious ancestor that has ensured Achech's survival under the brutal troll Durzaz. They seek the preservation their ancestor's tomb in its present location, partially out respect for Achech, and partially because of their magical power it grants them. They are faithful members of the Five Trees of Bounty Association since their ancestor was adopted by it and lead it until the Dara Happan restoration.

Lord Tarsic

Master of Blades for the Five Trees Association

Lord Tarsic is one of the many powerful advisers of the Patriarch of the Five Trees of Bounty association. Although his barbarian ancestor's blood prevents him from ever rising to the position of Patriarch himself, he is content with position of Master Assassin and head of Household intelligence and the games that it allows him to play. While a high-ranking member of the Lunar religion, he is equally at home at the many Solar rituals his position in the noble family requires him to attend. He believes that the Lunar faith encompasses the old traditions. On the matter of the tomb he is steadfast. It must stay in the Great Market, or disaster will befall both his family and his association.

The Crooked Cross

“Seven Merchants meet under a crooked cross.

Under the sight of a thief that was crucified.

Good riddance to bad rope makers one of them said.

From now on, we don’t have to pay the cost.”

An ancient poem inscribed on a western gate in the great market

Apart from the above badly rhyming poem little is publicly known about the secret society that is the Crooked Cross. They work together to increase their own profits.

When they became part of Five Trees of Bounty Association is unknown, but Lord Tarsic has had them as an important part of his network of spies since the beginning of his career.

It is known that the Crooked Cross, has covertly supported the rights of Women Traders in the predominantly Male Great market for the last two hundred years. Secretly paying court fees and exerting their influence to settle pitch disputes in the favour of widows who wish to continue their husband’s trade. Therefore it can be surmised that this old Dara Happan club of gentleman merchants has been beguiled by Lunar feminine charms since that time.

The society is discreet and polite. It undertakes its business quietly by its members whispering the right words in the right ears, rather than direct action. The authorities have never been able to work out how many members the society has or how they meet.

No stats are given for members of the Crooked Cross, since their involvement in the adventure is very hands off. They pass information onto the players via notes slipped into backpacks in the crowded market, or pay fines if the heroes get into trouble with the Market Militia. The heroes will never know that the trader they are talking to is a member or not. Unless they do some pretty intensive investigation, the Crooked Cross will remain a mystery. This is a story for another day.

Faction 4. The World Devourers

This is a secret society, whose member’s deal in power and insanity. It is ultimately tied to the Chaos Cult of Krasht. Their involvement in this affair is that they want the tomb to be desecrated to bring down Serris’s commercial institution.

The World Devourers are the antithesis of everything Serris and Dara Happan tradition stands for. Its members range from Nobles dabbling in forbidden pleasures, through to megalomaniacs who pursue advancement

in the cult for the power that it brings, to truly drooling and insane madmen who have spent too much time underground communing with Krasht. The cult deliberately does not have a structure, and at best works as groups of small cells. Krasht whispers in the dreams of those sympathetic to her, and lures them into an underworld meeting where initiation takes place.

The ultimate goal of the cult is the total undermining of Serris, on a cultural and physical level. They want to see buildings collapse and social traditions crumble. This is to enact Krasht’s revenge against Serris who defeated her in the Godtime.

Initially they intensify the disharmony that the issue of Ahec’s tomb is causing. If a riot looks like it is brewing a couple of World Devourers will step in and kick it off. Subtly and stealth will be the order of the day. However towards the end of the affair the cults oversteps itself and through its agent Plantaos, see below, attempts a full-scale break in of the tomb, disguised as members of the violent Solar Standard.

Plantaos the mediator

Plantaos is a Dara Happan noble from the Davargi family. Members of the Five Trees of Bounty they have a long history of being on good terms with other families no matter what association they belong to. They are known as the “Bridge Builders” being skilled negotiators. Plantaos carries on this tradition, acting as a mediator in disputes between nobles and the merchants of the Great Market. His smile is warm and his manner relaxed and calm.

However Plantaos has a very dark secret that stains his noble soul. In his childhood a powerful Uncle physically abused him. The family hushed up the affair, and abuse continued into Plantaos’ teenage years. Then the perverted Uncle made the mistake of initiating him into the ways of Krasht, at one of his secret parties. Finding that Krasht more spoke more clearly to him than his uncle, Plantaos gleefully made him his first sacrifice to the Devouring Mother, and in the dark place swore revenge on the society that had allowed his uncle to cause him so much pain.

Plantaos hides his secret well, but has made good use of it to recruit like-minded souls. He commands about 20 or so fanatics, all men of good public standing like himself who hide a heart of evil and indulge in lusts and passions forbidden by Dara Happan Law, in dark cellars close to the Devouring Mother. He has followers in all the other factions, who they are carefully playing off against each other, so their actions can be passed off as those of the faction they have infiltrated.

In fact it is Plantaos who is behind the whole dispute.

His followers in the Silver Sails convinced Tresaran that the Tomb would be better in the New Bazaar. Then his agents in The Yellow Standard convince Zonathan to back his rival in this matter. Finally to he has convinced Lord Tarsic that it would be in the Five Trees of Bounty's interest to bring the case in front of the City Council.

Other groups

The Cult of Achec

Achec's priesthood is a small group, historically numbering between two and ten. At present there are two initiates and one high priest, who in theory should live in the small shrine, a plain stone house, next to the tomb. In reality the two priests live in lavish houses on Sun Hill, while the High Priest, a madman, lives in squalor in the Shrine House.

Magic

Negotiation (Negotiate with Barbarian, Overcome Xenophobia, Dull Violent Spirits)

Guardian Sprit: Achec the Clever

Form Spirit

Blessing Deal with Barbarians, Awareness Spot bad deal, Defence Protection from Thieves

Garneth the Barbarian

High Priest of Achec

Garneth is a Lunarised Tarshite. He was initially an Orlanthe Hillsman, who was captured by Lunar forces. After his Lunarisation by the Seven Mothers, he decided to travel to Glamour to meet the Red Emperor. After a series of misadventures he found himself destitute in the Maze, the poor district of Serris's New City. It was there that the previous High Priest, an old man called Analaros, found him. Analaros was close to death, and was looking for a successor. He realised Garneth was the perfect choice, and brought him back to the Tomb. In the dead of night, he secretly opened the Tomb without telling the other priests, Then as High Priets had before he summoned up Achec to initiate his new High Priest. After returning to the shrine house he introduced Lern and Hesros to their new leader, and promptly died.

This is when the problems arose. The whole experience of his long journey to a strange land, his destitution on the streets of New City and his sudden rise in the cult of Achec has left poor Garneth quite mad. He bumbles about doing his duties, ignoring Lern and Hesros, making arbitrary proclamations on the Merchant negotiations he presides over. He has a key to the shrine, which is a mess since he doesn't clean up after himself. He periodically locks the shrine, paranoid that people are out to get him. Day by day he is looking more and more like the stereotypical longhaired, big bearded barbarian that Dara Happan mothers warn their wayward teenage children against.

However in moments of lucidity he realises the state



he is in and can heroform Achec, to give him guidance. For a short time co-possessed by the great hero, Garath appears totally normal and makes clever and witty conversation.

Lern

Priest of Achec

Lern is next in line to be High Priest and angry that he has been passed over. He is only in it for the money, and owns a large villa on Sun Hill where he lazes most of his days away. He can be encountered in the Great Market whenever one of the more profitable Barbarian traders turn up, and has an ‘understanding’ with Hesros which gives him a monopoly on the richest clients. Scheming and lazy, he is likely to hire assassins if Garneth threatens his sacred cash cow.

Hesros

Priest of Achec

Hardworking Hesros, can understand why Garnath was chosen, but can also understand why people are upset about it. He keeps a modest house on Sun Hill, inherited from his father also a former Priest of Achec, but spends most of his time dealing with the smaller Barbarian traders, almost as a public service. Upset that Garneth

has shut him out, and increasing suspicious of Lern.

Running notes

The emphasis in this episode is negotiation and backed up with investigation. The heroes are ultimately dealing with the movers and shakers of Serris, for whom reputation, oratory, and the subtle arts of persuasion are mightier than the sword.

Therefore the non-player character significant abilities reflect this emphasis on communication.

Although there is ample opportunity for violence to rear its ugly head, in the form of rioting citizens, the heroes should not be encouraged to wade into the slaughter. To do so would threaten the very pillars of civilisation they are trying to protect, and make them enemy number one in the city!

This scenario is designed to be freeform. The write-ups of the various factions involved in the affair of the tomb, give enough information to show how the NPCs will react to the actions of the players and the schemes they are enacting themselves.

The heroes involvement can either be accidental or by design. The accidental route sees the Heroes drawn into the machinations of the various factions as they are shopping in the Great Market. The deliberate route sees them hired by one of the representatives of the factions. Lord Tarsic is the obvious choice here since he does not have any physical representatives, due to the ghost like nature of the Crooked Cross.

The following scene outline gives an idea of how the scenario could be run.

Scene 1. Take the Debate to the people!

Key points

The heroes are in the Great Market. They encounter a Political rabble-rouser on his soapbox espousing the case for moving Achec’s tomb. Street gang members, in the employ of the Five Trees, heckle him. Then another gang backed by the Traditionalists joins the debate. Things get nasty from there.

Setting

The Great Market. Give only a rough overview, first impressions.

Action

- Witnessing the debate between the speaker, a Prophet of change, and the local traders.
- Spotting the Prophets partners
- The Yellow Standard turn up, and a riot starts



- The Market Militia round up everyone caught up in the riot

Aftermath

The heroes are either bundled up with the rest of the rioters, only to mysteriously released when the Crooked Cross pays them out, or they have had the sense to disappear before things get nasty.

Scene 2. The Offices of Power

Key points

As witnesses to the brawl, an impartial Lunar Justicar presents the Heroes to the City Council, who is currently debating the issue after it is put forward by Plantaos. The heroes get to see the viewpoints of all the factions, except the World Devourers, as each puts its case forward. They are then asked to introduce themselves and recall what they saw. After condemning the riot, the Cities Elders decide to consider the matter and reconvene in a week's time. At the end of the meeting Lord Tarsic approaches the heroes to hire them.

Scene 3. Information gathering

Key points

The Heroes revisit the Great Market, to examine the Tomb and talk to the present priest of Achec, Garneth the Mad (a Lunarised Tarshite). The other factions' agents hamper their investigations. The heroes may discover the World Eaters involvement in the plot.

Setting

The Great Market, describe in detail beyond the first impressions in scene 1.

Action

- Examine tomb
- Speak with Garneth
- Speak with other Achec Acolytes
- Speak with local traders
- Harassment at the hands of the agents of the other factions.

Aftermath

The Heroes have a clearer picture of what is going on, but are not yet in a position to act. They may follow up their investigations at the Great Market with attempted questioning of the various faction figureheads at their fortress like villas on Sun Hill.

Scene 4. A foul plot

Key points

The World Eaters put their plan into action. Under the cover of a civic riot in the market they break into the tomb. during the Festival of Lights Supremacy over Night,

Setting

The Festival of Lights. This feast that occurs in the Great Market after dark and is attended by the majority of the residents of the Old City. It is a celebration of the liberation of the city from Trolls during the Gbaji Wars by the Four Barbarian Kings (see Durlaz the Glutton). A small theatre group reacts the story, and then a feast that continues until the dawn.

Action

The theatre group has been infiltrated by the World Devourers, and the slayings of actors playing Durlaz and his trolls at the end of the play are real. After the shock has lifted, agitators in the crowd start a riot.

Meanwhile another group of World Devourers break into the Tomb.

Scene 5. These are my wishes

Key points

Achec himself manifests using Garneth as his host, and makes his wishes about the tomb made clear. During this scene the heroes have the opportunity to learn the secret of the tomb.

Conclusion

The scenario is concluded with the second city council meeting. There is a debate where the evidence is heard and the City Elders decide the matter. The heroes' conduct during the adventure is a deciding factor. If they behaved like undisciplined thugs the decision will go against them. The Architects of Serris start reassembling the tomb stone by stone in the New Bazaar. However if the other associations have been shown in a bad light and the heroes' actions honourable the tomb stays where it is. Special praise is lavished on the heroes if they expose Plantaos' schemes for what they are.

LAST SEEN
IN PAVIS



LAST SEEN IN PAVIS

The Search for the Lost Heir in Distant Lands

The heir of a respected Solar Noble family goes missing, presumed dead, on a Grand Tour of the barbarian lands of Prax. Five years later agents of the Lord in the City of Pavis, jewel of the Praxian wastes, report that his son has been seen in the shady lower class district of town. A party bound by honour and blood ties is hastily assembled under a veil of secrecy to find the answer to the age-old riddle.

“When is a ghost a man?”

Premise

The Heroes are Imperial Citizens (i.e. proper Lunars). They are also minor members of an ancient and fiercely traditional Dara Happan Association (a collection of organisations controlled by a powerful noble house). The Yelm worshipping Patriarch Vorden summons them. He is their clan’s Patriarch, a Noble of great repute.

Their mission is to find his wayward son, who has gone missing in the distant barbarian town of Pavis at the very edge of the Lunar Empire. Interest is heightened since he has been missing for some time and the very stability of the Association is threatened by the absence of the Count’s heir.

Relationships

The Heroes are all members of Patriarch Vorden’s Association, Five Trees of Bounty, which has a controlling stake in their home city. At least one of the party should be a minor relative of Vorden’s who out of political necessity has joined one of the Lunar Cults and embraced it. Other characters could be loyal family retainers who have joined the Lunar way since they find the traditional Yelmic ways too old fashioned and limiting for their modern tastes.

This is the major theme of the adventure; the struggle between what is good for their Association versus what is good for the Empire. The characters must choose at key points of the adventure whether to uphold the Traditional Yelmic values of straightforward Honour and Family or the Lunar Way of powerful individualism, which sometimes bends the rules to ensure the survival of the Empire.

Secrets

As a youth Lord Yanis, a bright and curious young man, spent much of his time loitering around the Temple of

the Red Goddess where his older cousins and Uncles, partially for political reasons, worshipped. Eventually, and much to the distaste of his father, he was initiated as a member of the Lunar cult of Nysalor. After the Patriarch discovered this Lord Tarsic, Vorden’s right hand man, sent Yanis on the Grand Tour of Prax, to allow time for the Patriarch to calm down.

Whilst on a treasure hunt in the Big Rubble, a huge ruined city next to Pavis, Ogres ambushed Lord Yanis, his tutor Gren Targo and a party of Ibex Moon Guides. All were slain, except Yanis and Gren. Gren escaped the ogres only to be slain by a gang of Broo and his head taken by their leader. The Ogres meanwhile took Yanis captive.

However charmed by the wickedly delightful conversation of the young man, the Ogres spared him and after a year initiated him into Cacodemon. Yanis is now for all intents and purposes an Ogre. Two Years ago Yanis crept back into the city and made contact with the Lunar head of the Secret service, also a Nysalor cultist, offering his services as an agent in the Rubble. This was gratefully received, and once a season Yanis slips into the city unnoticed and reports to the Lunar Agent the Merchant Thanos.

A year ago, Yanis, disguised as an Orlanthi warrior, complete with beard, turned up in Gimpy’s Bar. He offered his services as a guide to the Rubble to a group of troublesome but naive Sartarite adventurers, called the Wolfbrothers that had newly arrived in the city. The Lunar secret service worried that the Wolfbrothers, rebels from Sartar, would stir up rebellion in the town and ordered their disposal. Since they were greedy to obtain magical weapons from the treasure trove that is the Rubble, they were more than willing to let Yanis (aka Wolfrich) charge a nominal fee to be their guide.

It was during these negotiations that the Sergeant of the Watch Yorga, whilst quickly popping in to check in the

inn's beer wasn't off, saw Yanis. Due to Yanis' disguise he wasn't a hundred percent certain, but the next day he reported directly to the Governor of Pavis, Sor-eel the Short. Sor-eel was openly dismissive the Yorga's claims, but secretly informed both the Patriarch and the Patriarch's enemies of the sighting

The Cult of Nysalor

(Lunar Version)

Nysalor was a god created after time began, by the Second Council of Genertela, which had its base in the land of Dorastor (west of the present day Lunar Empire). To his peoples, the sun worshiping Darra Happans, he was a saviour bringing them peace and prosperity.

To his enemies, the Western Knights, the Trolls and the Orlanthi storm Barbarians he is known as "Gbaji the Deceiver" a great Chaos god who deliberately created plagues and then cured them to convert their people.

Arkat, a great western Hero, killed Nysalor after a long war, known as the Gbaji Wars. Despite many setbacks he achieved the power necessary to kill the living God by moving from one religion to another gaining their magic before joining another often opposed cult, even forsaking his humanity to become a troll in his zealous quest to destroy Nysalor. Arkat is not remembered well even amongst the people who followed him since he betrayed their religions in his quest for power.

Nysalor was a dead god until the Red Goddess came across his Shade during her quest for immortality, and absorbed his power of "Illumination", which is the ability to see the world free of divine associations and ties.

This cult is the Lunar version of the God's worship. Most people approach Nysalor as part of the veneration of the Lunar goddess. Only a handful of very powerful people, who have become illuminated approach the God directly. As a result The cult is very fragmented with no formal organisation. It is also even more contradictory than the usual Lunar religions, and although presented in the Theistic format, for ease of play, it does not entirely fit this mould.

Cult Skill

Tell Nysalor Riddle.

Magic

Since Nysalor is a dead god, he grants his followers no magic. The only power his followers gain is the ability of Illumination.

Secret: Illumination

"Illuminates" of the cult gain the following abilities

Able to tell Nysalor Riddles

Does not see chaos as automatically evil.

Able to join multiple cults, and then leave to join another quite contrary cult without being attacked by spirits of reprisal.

Not detected as Illuminates, by Divination or other such traditional means. However the various cults of Arkat have magic at their disposal to detect followers of Nysalor, and Illuminates always have a detect Illuminates skill which gives them a chance of detecting other Illuminates.

Due to the potential for misuse no player hero may ever reach Illuminate statues, and remain in play. Officially printed information on the nature of Illumination state that it is not even something that a player can chase after, for example by learning and mastering riddles.

Instead it is one of the great mysteries of Glorantha, something mystic and wonderful that the players are never meant to fully understand, yet have a great amount of fun trying.

Act 1 The Lunar Heartlands

Scene 1. The Garden of the Patriarch

Key Points

In this scene the Heroes learn of their mission to seek the missing heir of the Association, at the very edge of the empire.

Setting the Scene

"You are relaxing on the marble steps of the Temple of the Red Moon. Your studies of the mysteries of Sedenya complete for morning, you chat idly with your fellow Lunars, relaxing from the arduous studies with scimitar and pen within the cool shady stone interior of the Temple's testing rooms.

You observe the hustle and bustle of your Home City from the vantage point of the steps. City life has prospered here before time began, under the watchful sun disc of Yelm the Celestial Emperor, and would be relatively unchanged from those ancient days if the Red Goddess had not blessed the Empire with her presence. Her vitality adding to the might of the Dara Happan Empire, bringing Yelm's and her own light to the heathens beyond the empire's borders.

A young runner weaves deftly though the crowds below the Temple's steps who have gathered at the stall of an Etyries trader who merrily hawks his wares from far off corners of the empire.

He bounds up the last couple of steps, coming to a breathless stop just below where you are sitting. He wears a gold pendant embossed with five trees that identifies him as a servant of the Five Trees of Bounty Association, of which your families have faithful members for hundreds of years.

The messenger bows deeply, ensuring, as tradition demands that his head is never higher than yours as befits his station, and pants out his message.

“My Lords. Patriarch Vordon summons you to the Garden of Secrets at the House of Blue Lilies, in the Hour of Yelm’s complete rule of the Universe (Yelmic term for midday), on a matter of vital importance to our ancient Association. I am obligated under death to bring you to this place, and beg of you that you come with me now, so I can continue to live under the gaze of Yelm”

Sweating profusely in the bright midday heat he waits anxiously for your compliance.

You gather yourselves together and quickly follow the runner through the crowded streets of the city. Through the great bazaar, past the dusty slums of the poor, until you reach the rich houses of the nobles, steeped in calm luxury on the banks of the River Osir.

The House of Blue Lilies is Patriarch Vorden’s city

residence. A lavish mansion made of blue quartz, and black white veined marble built in the first days of the Dara Happan emperors. You are led though the house hastily, passing many servants, into the lush green garden where you are led into a private hedged garden.

In the centre of the Garden is a carved stone dais, with the constellations of the sky dome carved into ancient rock. In the centre of the dais is a gold leaf throne emblazoned with symbols of Yelm. An elderly man sits upon the throne, His blue eyes burn commandingly brighter in the midday heat. He thoughtfully strokes his elaborately braided beard, which flows almost seamlessly into a golden robe, fastened by gold jewellery. On his brow rests the coronet of an Association Patriarch.

Next to him stands a man you know only by terrible reputation. Lord Tarsic, whose agents go where the Patriarch’s sun does not shine, dealing punishment and stealing secrets under the blood red moon, whose power Tarsic bathes in. His eyes gleam in an athletic yet middle-aged body, fixing you in a concentrated stare as you arrange yourself in a semi circle on before the Patriarch.

The Patriarch gestures for you to introduce your self as tradition demands.”



Action

The Heroes must step forward and introduce themselves one by one. If any of them hesitates, Tarsic good-naturedly reminds them “announce yourself first so we may know that we are dealing with friends.” while the Patriarch sternly glares at the offending character. After the Heroes have introduced themselves, Tarsic takes a step back outside of the circular dais.

Gold robed attendants bring forth eight incense burners that they place around the edge of the dais. If any of the heroes move off the dais, one of the attendants moves forward gently and pushes them back towards the dais, while the Patriarch silently watches on.

The incense is then lit, giving off fiery sparks. The Patriarch reaches under his robe and draws out a golden sun mask that he puts on. He raises his arms towards Yelm, which is now directly above him in the sky dome. Sparks fly madly from the incense burners and a circle of bright light erupts from the edge of the dais, forming a solid wall of light around the heroes and the Patriarch. He looks upwards and talks to his god Yelm, seemingly ignoring the heroes.

“My Father, I have lost a son. I talk of my first-born Yanis. When he was born you gave him a bright future as our Association’s leader after me. As he grew he excelled at physical and scholarly pursuits, outranking his peers. But as a young man he strayed from our traditions, looking to the Red Goddess for inspiration. The fire did burn bright in my son Yanis, sometimes out of control. I thought that sending the boy to see the new territories, freshly conquered by our armies would quell his fires and teach him the value of our civilisation. But he was lost Five years ago at the tender age of seventeen in the desolate wastes of Prax, at the very edge of your rule. None of his party returned from a trip to the ruins of Old Pavis, and I mourned the loss of my son and heir.

But now five years later, in what would be his twenty third year; I get reports that my son has been seen. The Governor of Pavis, the shamed one, Sor-eel the Short wrote to me saying that one of his men had seen our Yanis in a cheap bar of ill repute in the slums of Pavis.

I consulted you my Lord, and asked you “How can a ghost be a man”

And you replied, “Send those who are close to the sun, but not of the sun”

I now must hold my noble tongue and let one who is from of the new way, who walks outside of the traditions that bind me, explain the action that must be taken”

Vorden sits down into the throne and the circle of light

sinks into the ground

Tarsic steps forward and sweepingly makes a crescent moon sigil in the air.

“I am half in darkness, half in light, I call on the Goddess to conceal that which is spoken in plain sight”

The air around them shimmers a magical red haze. Vorden and his attendants seem to move around in a slow sleepy daze unaware of Tarsic and the players. Tarsic steps conspiratorially closer to the players.

“Worry not for the Patriarch. He is fully aware that what I am about to relay to you must not come from his lips or be heard by his ears, for it would sully the pure truthful nature of his link with his people and his god. Besides too many of our Association’s enemies would divine what he knows and use it against us. These are perilous days we enter. Your help is greatly appreciated.

“Yanis his tutor Gren Targo and the Ibex Moon guides went missing in the Praxian city of Pavis without a trace five years ago. A full-blown search was conducted and even my own agents came up with nothing. However the city is a well known for harbouring enemies of the Empire, and is situated in some pretty rough and lawless territory. The family went into mourning, and we started grooming one of Yanis’ younger siblings for the position of Patriarch. It was a hard time for the Association as our enemies claimed that the gods were against us, and our mercantile ventures did indeed suffer as a result. Although more down to sabotage and speculative suspicion. Over the last five years I was able to pull back the Association from the brink of ruin as various opponents and traditional trade rivals, were persuaded to fall in with the fortune of the Five Trees Association, or suffered unexpected tragic accidents. Critics fell silent to the blades of my agents, or quickly saw the light and started singing our praises once again in the city streets.

However just as things have settled down word has arrived from Sor-eel the Short, Lunar Governor of the City of Pavis, that the boy, now a young adult has been seen in Gimpy’s, a rough pub in the Riverside District of Pavis. Sor-eel is distantly related to the Patriarch and this was in a routine letter of a social nature. Sor-eel reckons the man who reported it to him; a Lunar soldier who was involved in the initial search is stirring up old coals to make up for old failures. The Patriarch has consulted the oracle, who has told him there is truth in the soldier’s word, and that a group of those close, yet not of the Solar Tradition will be successful in finding the Son. You my friends fit that prophecy.

“You will make your travel arrangements in the city before nightfall, and then report to the Hill of Bboats on the edge of the city. Tell no one of your mission,

even your loved ones, . Say that you are going South to supervise our new trade mission in Tarsh for a couple of weeks. It is imperative that our rivals do not learn of your mission. When you reach the Hill one of the Moon boats* will take you south to the City of Pavis. Once there go to Sor-eel and find Sergent Yorga. Start your investigation of the truth there.

You must bring the boy back home, quietly without fuss. Trust no one. Do not question or mention their quest to any of the Patriarch’s household, for despite my best efforts I suspect our rivals have agents amongst the servants.

*A moon boat is ship that sails through the sky due to construction with magical moon reeds harvested from the Red Moon itself.

Any Questions?

What is the significance of the meeting place?

“The walled garden is symbolic of the Patriarch’s desire to keep the affair under a tight veil of secrecy. Such places are chosen instead of the dark cellars that other conspirators use, since they are still open to Yelm’s all knowing gaze.”

What can you tell me about Sor-eel the Short?

“A capable and talented man who was disgraced at home. But the Red Emperor in his wisdom appointed him governor of the Wastes of Prax. He rules from the city of New Pavis, yet still has contacts here at home, the Patriarch being one of them. Even from the edge of the empire, he still has influence here, and some say he is trying to buy enough favour to return to the Heartlands.”

What can you tell me about Pavis?

See box text about Pavis, and add the following. “Sor-eel keeps the peace amongst the natives and Sartarite exiles, while increasing the numbers our settlers. However it is a precarious situation and sometimes rebels stir up trouble.”

Who are our Association’s enemies?

“Two Associations vie with us for control of the city. The Boat of the Silver Hind, an association as old as ours, traditional enemies from the struggles that founded this city. The Seven Nights of Glory, a new association created on new traditions 600 years ago, Young upstarts who would upstage their elders and betters.”

Why all the fuss about Yanis?

“Because he is the one chosen by Yelm himself to guide our association. Also from my point of view the boy was far more capable than any of his younger siblings.”

Rewards for completing the mission?

Tarsic smiles slyly. “You would have the knowledge that your Association is safe from the scandal which would occur if our enemies exposed us. And of course the Patriarch is a rich man, with land to grant in and around the city”.

Ending the Meeting

Once the questions are over, Tarsic waves his hand in another sigil gesture and the magic is dispelled returning the Patriarch and attendants to real time. He nods to the Patriarch who nods back and silently removes himself back to the mansion with his servants. If the Heroes try to immediately follow him, then Tarsic gently restrains them by saying “one always follows the sun”.

The players may wish to quietly ask members of the Patriarch’s household about Yanis, after the meeting. Getting information is very difficult since the household has been sworn to silence on pain of death. Any Success and the questioner finds out that the young man was considering joining the Seven Mothers and applying for Lunar Citizenship, which his father greatly disapproved, being a staunchly traditional Yelm Imperator devotee. However on a Complete Failure, the Hero learns nothing and is severely reprimanded in private by Lord Tarsic. The babbling servant is executed in front of the heroes and the rest of the household.

Scene 2. Preparations for the trip to Pavis

Key Points

After the meeting the players prepare to leave for Pavis immediately.

Action

There are a number of actions that the Heroes may wish to take before leaving on the Moon Boat to Pavis.

The Temple of the Red Moon

Even if the heroes are only initiates or lay members of one of the Lunar cults, the priests of the temple tell them to come back at night, in the hours of the Goddess.

Then in a large circular ritual room, bathed in the red light of the Red Moon, which shines in directly through a glass domed ceiling, the High Priestess performs a divination; by calling upon the Goddess to give her a vision.

The Heroes, keeping a respectful distance from the Priestess (which is enforced by temple guards with red glowing scimitars if need be), see her gaze into a bowl of water, made of red moon rock (an actual part of the Red Moon itself!). Contemplating the reflection of the moon she goes into a deep trance for what seems like an age.

Eventually she begins to speak

“The son is lost. To the father he is dead. The mother knows otherwise. The mother has hidden plans, and unusual creatures to execute them. They are vital to the Empire, even if you personally find your allies distasteful. The father would not approve, but the mother knows best.”

With that she comes out of her trance, and withdraws with her attendants to her chambers. The Heroes are led out of the ritual room by the guards and an attendant. Any further questions are met with a polite “The Goddess has spoken, it should be clear to you. If not contemplate her words further” from the attendant.

The Ibex Moon Society

The Ibex Moon society is a politically neutral Heroband, facilitating travel for Lunars to far-flung parts of the empire. It has an office near the Red Moon Temple, a plain building adorned with maps of the Empire, and further afield. The players may choose to visit it to ask questions about Yanis’ disappearance. If they will do they get polite, but inconclusive answers. They consult their records; give precise dates for Yanis’ disappearance, but very little more.

Obtaining Equipment

The Heroes may equip themselves with any item that they reasonably may find in the markets of a bustling cosmopolitan city, within their wealth level. They will, of course, have to pay for any equipment out of their own pocket, Tarsic laughs if they suggest the Patriarch should fund their little shopping spree.

Act 2 New Pavis

Scene 3 Arrival in Pavis

Keypoints

The Moon boat, which has brought the heroes to Pavis, lands just inside the city’s north gate, and the heroes’ quest is temporally halted by Lunar bureaucracy.

Setting/Action

The heroes enter the city of New Pavis through its North gate. The late afternoon sun casts long shadows into the desert dirt. The gate is a sturdy stone tower heavily manned by twenty local auxiliaries and five Lunar regulars, who check the Heroes goods and travel documents as they enter. The guards point out they should go and register their presence as Lunar citizens in the city at the City Administration Building, and pay their respects at the temple of the Seven Mothers which is found next to it.

New Pavis

New Pavis is a small walled city, built by explorers from the Kingdom of Sartar. It stands beside the vast ruins the much bigger and older city of Pavis, now known as the Big Rubble. The lands of Prax, a desert wasteland, populated by warlike Animal Nomads, surround it. Outside its walls flows the River of Cradles, the only river to cut through the barren landscape.

It was once a haven for Orlanthe Rebels, but in 1610 the Lunar Empire conquered it with the aid of nearby Sun County and Sable Rider allies. Now the city is filled with a cosmopolitan mixture of Sartarite barbarian farmers, conservative Sun worshipers, Lunar bureaucrats, merchants and soldiers, animal nomads camping just outside the city walls and an odd assortment of adventuring freebooters.

Scene 4. Challenging the Moon

Key Points

A Sun Lord from Sun County, an enclave of Yelmatio worshipers nominally allied to the Lunar Empire, challenges the most impressive warrior in the party, to a ritualistic combat known as “Challenging the Moon”.

Setting the Scene

“Following the gate guard’s direction you head down the street into the heart of the city. It is a short walk through bustling streets to the central city square. Unlike your home city’s Plaza of the Elders the large sprawling square lacks order and instead of pitches based on age old trading rights, the stall owners have pitched their stalls where ever they can grab a spot in the bustling City Market which seems to have spontaneously sprung up here. Indeed you see sharp eyed Lunar soldiers policing the square everywhere, on the main staying a neutral distance away, but quickly stepping in to provide the firm guidance of the Lunar way in a heated dispute between a trader and his buyer.

You see Sartarite farmers, dressed in blue dyed tunics, adorned with Storm rune swirls, selling cloth and meat. A retinue of Newtlings, small and slender lizard men, quickly run across the market, carrying a catch of fresh fish towards, to barter with a smiling Merchant selling nets and hooks. As the heroes pass the merchant and newtlings begin to haggle.

Through the bustle of the Market, a Golden line of warriors enter square. Perfectly in step and in tight formation they move their way thorough the crowds, dispersing them, by pushing forward with spear and shield emblazoned with a golden bird of striking plumage. Then, without missing a beat of their regimental drummer, they fan out creating a 20ft

diameter circle, in front of the heroes.

With the market crowds held back by the Hoplites, their leader, a Gold armoured warrior his helmet crested with Yellow feathers and his large hoplite shield with a sun with face unsheathes his gold sword and points its tip at [name the party's strongest warrior] and issues the following challenge;

“I come on behalf of my father, Yelm the Emperor, to challenge the moon for an extra hour of the day”

Action

After issuing the challenge Lord Xithith steps forward into the circle his followers have created and expects the Lunar Champion that he has chosen to do the same. The non-lethal duel is to the first blood, meaning that none of the characters are harmed (except in their pride) as the result of this extended contest.

If the any of the Heroes not duelling attempt to cast magic to augment their champion, the Shining Bird Guardian squawks “Cheater, Cheater, that means we beat ya!!!!”, and the Lunar champion loses the Duel. Lord Xithith sheaths his sword “You fight without honour, I win by default. Let the bold truth of Yelm shine through the lies and deceit of Sedenya!!!!”



If any of the Heroes tries to physically interfere, the Phalanx tries to restrain them. Failing that the Shining Bird once again squawks as above and the duel ends.

If any of the Heroes tries to recognise the ritual being played out here, use Dara Happan or Lunar Religion against a Hard Resistance on any Success: read ‘Challenge the Moon’ box text to the heroes.

Aftermath

If the hero wins the duel, the sun already low in the sky dome rapidly sinks below the rim, and the Red Moon quickly asserts itself in the sky, glowing more intensely than usual. At this time the Red Moon is full. Also the Hero almost physically glows red, and has an additional Mastery added to any contest until the dawn. Celebrations amongst loyal Lunar citizens in the city seem to spontaneously erupt as the night progresses. If any body chooses to enact Lunar Rituals that evening they do so with an x2 effect modifier.

Conversely if the hero loses Yelm takes much longer to sink below the Sky Dome, and Lord Xithith glows yellow, lighting up the night even after Yelm has disappeared. The Red Moon is duller than usual, even though it is still full, Lunar Magic is at x.5 effect, and the Hero dueller is automatically loses a mastery on any contest he participates until dawn.

If the Lunar Champion has fought with honour Lord Xithith talks to them;

“You fought with honour and are a worthy opponent. Although misguidedly you follow the new ways of Sedenya, turning your back on the old traditions of your fathers, we both share a common heritage and tradition. If you need the aid of my sword and Phalanx, come seek me out on Sun Hill.”

A group of Lunar Garrison members with a Sergeant arrives shortly after the duel has been concluded. The Sun Dome Templars protect Lord Xithith and retreat from the square, while the Lunar soldiers move into position round the player characters and escort them through the crowds to the City Administration Building in the Public region of the city.

Sun County and the Sun Dome Templars

Yelmatio is the warrior son of Yelm, who avenged his father’s death in the Gods War. His followers organise themselves into military communities and Sun County, on the banks of the River Zola Fel south of Pavis, was established after the Sun Dome Templars helped the City of Pavis repel a Troll invasion in 875. Life there is very strictly traditional, women perform domestic duties while the men are members of the various organised militias.

In 1610 the Sun Dome Templars aided the Lunar invasion of Prax at the decisive Battle of Moonbroth. From this they retained the right for self-rule without Lunar interference.

In Pavis there has always been a strong Yelmalio presence due to the Templars aiding the City's founder, against the Animal Nomads, and being granted a district of the new city to call their own. Sun Town, centred on the Sun Dome Temple, is a fiercely distinct section of city as a result,.

Sun County people, have either light or dark blonde hair. Their women are strong rulers of the hearth, and their men are excellent fighters with the long spear and hoplite shield. This combination of strong discipline, enforced by strict adherence to tradition, allows the women to work together to keep their communities strong and well fed, while their men work cohesively fighting together in Phalanx formation.

Challenging the Moon Ritual

This Ritual combat was first practiced during the Second Wane of the Lunar Empire. It was used as a relatively peaceful method for the old Dara Happan families to challenge the authority of their new Lunar masters. Two champions, one Lunar, one Solar, would fight to the first blood without any aid from others. If a combatant's supporter tried to interfere then the duel was forfeited.

The gods acknowledge this duel.

If the champion for Yelm was victorious the day was one hour longer; whilst if the Lunar won night fell an hour earlier and the moon shined more brightly in the heavens. A more mundane result of winning the duel was often the settling of a political dispute.

Although no longer practiced in the Lunar Heartlands, it still is learnt amongst the Yelmalio worshippers of Sun County, near Pavis, as a way of testing the mettle of their new masters.

Lord Xithith

Yemalio Sun Lord and champion he is taciturn and logical in outlook. Highly proficient in Sword and Shield as well as fighting in a phalanx with his fellow Sun Dome warriors with long spear and shield. He commands the Shining Bird Phalanx of 20 Yelmalio Hoplites who are currently stationed in Sun Hill in Pavis.

Scene 5. An Evening with Sor-eel

Key Points

This scene revolves around intrigue. Regardless of the outcome of the duel with the Sun Lord, the city's Governor Sor-eel the Short, wants to both welcome fellow Lunar Citizens to the city and check out their reasons for visiting, ensuring that they don't unbalance the delicate political situation. Meanwhile the heroes will be trying to determine what Sor-eel knows about the missing Yanis.

Setting

The City Administration Building, a grand but functional building with a dining hall for guests, a public audience chamber, a suite of offices for the Imperial scribes and adjoining barracks for the Governor's guards.

Action

Sor-eel cordially greets the players on the steps of the City Administration Building, where he chats with the heroes as their servants and beasts are housed in the adjoining servants' quarters and stables. Sor-eel will not answer any questions about Yanis at this time, instead he deflects any such questions with, "Wait 'til this evening where we can discuss any business, in comfort, over a meal." He eventually leaves the players to be taken to their comfortable guest quarters by the household slaves, who will also attend to the player characters every need during their stay in the palace.

As they are led to their rooms they quickly escorted to the Scribe's office, where Buserian Scribes record the purpose and date of their visit. The walls of this office are filled with pigeonholes containing countless rolls of parchment. If the heroes show any interest in the scrolls the servant escorting them, casually waves in the vague direction of the pigeonholes and comments that everything that goes on in the city is on a scroll here, somewhere.

Dinner is a private banquet. The only other attendees are Sor-eel, as host, and Thanos, a local Etryies merchant, who joins later..

The heroes arrive at the banquet first, shortly followed by Sor-eel. With much pomp, four burly Rhino tribe nomad slaves carry the Governor in on a sedan, and gently lower it to the ground near the heroes. Sor-eel smoothly moves from the sedan to a throne at the head of a circular table inlaid with the Lunar rune, beckoning the heroes to take their seats as he does so. As soon as the Sor-eel settles in his throne, servants appear offering drinks to the heroes, Sor-eel encourages them to have as much as they wish, although he only moderately drinks himself. Then he begins to question them over their

reasons for coming to Pavis.

Just as Sor-eel finishes his questions, the merchant arrives. This was actually set up by Sor-eel so that he can get his initial questioning of the Heroes out the way without the merchant listening in. In contrast to Sor-eel's dignified temperate persona, Thanos is already half-drunk, crass and racist about the locals, whether animal nomads, Sartarite settlers, or Sun Dome templar. He considers the Sun Dome Templars, a group of "priggish bores who are no fun when it comes to the bargain". However this is all a ruse, between Sor-eel and Thanos to find out the maximum amount of information about the players.

Thanos is actually a very clever and shrewd businessman who believes that working with the locals, integrating their aims with Lunar goals is much better than the xenophobic viewpoints that he puts forward at the dinner.

The Conversation

The Narrator may wish to make the players roll a number of Simple Contests over the course of the banquet as the players attempt to work out what Sor-eel and Thanos know about the disappearance of Yanis. Appropriate skills are likely to be their social interaction skills, augmented by any communication and detect truth type magic, the heroes possess. If you really want to raise the tension and sense of drama run it as an Extended Contest, with each strike giving information away to whoever won the exchange.

Both men claim to know nothing more than what was revealed in Scene One, and discount even this as unreliable. Sor-eel's point of view is that he felt duty bound to report the sighting of Yanis to the Patriarch, to protect him from it emerging as a damaging rumour back home, but also to point out this it was completely unfounded.

Thanos simply states that the whole business occurred before his recent arrival in the city. This is a lie since Thanos was in the city when the sighting was made, but one that Thanos is likely to be able to hide using his lie convincingly skill. However if the players later question people, especially at the Etyries/Seven Mothers Temple this will come to light. In fact Thanos is Yanis's contact here in the city.

If the players ask to meet with the Sergeant, Sor-eel agrees to this and arranges it in the morning (see Scene 7).

After the Banquet both Thanos and Sor-eel leave the City Administration Building for their own private residences on Rich Hill.

What Sor-eel Wants

Sor-eel is simply concerned about the smooth running of the city. He wants to learn how much trouble the heroes intend to cause in his city.

What Sor-eel Knows

Little. In the long run Sor-eel wants to do a good job as governor and go home to the Lunar Heartlands. Yanis going missing in the Rubble is a blot on his service record, which he doesn't want opening up again.

What Thanos Wants

Why they are here, and how capable of exposing Yanis. Although he will take no action to stop the heroes, he needs to know for intelligence reasons and reporting to his masters.

What Thanos Knows

A great deal. He is Yanis's contact in the City, and fellow Nysalor cultist. He is aware that Yanis's methods are a little extreme, but he is a useful agent and his only informant about the goings on in the Rubble. He will try his hardest to protect this knowledge from the heroes.

Other Action

Although all the heroes must be at the Banquet their followers do not, and may have the opportunity to question Sor-eel's staff, especially his guards, who seem to be of the opinion that the sergeant is telling the truth, since he has a goddess given talent for it. Other tasty bits of city gossip may be gathered by the Heroes followers, which their masters may then elaborate into fact as they please.

Aftermath

Dependant on how well they did at the Banquet, the Heroes will have some idea of what Yanis is up to, mainly from subtle hints and what is not said. In the unlikely case of Thanos completely buckling on the subject of Yanis, the heroes will still have to progress with their investigations, since he does not know where Yanis is based in the Rubble.

Scene 6. The Scribes Office

Key Points

One or more of the heroes slip into the Scribes office. There they get a timely reminder of the precarious political situation the Patriarch faces.

Action

This scene sees the Heroes creeping around the City Administration building, which is dark and asleep, avoiding the regular patrolling guard, or solitary slave

doing cleaning duties. The heroes' efforts may be subject to a modifier depending how heroically they consumed the rich food and alcohol at the banquet. However at some stage they find their way barred by the heavy reinforced wooden door of the Scribes' office.

Breaking into the Scribes office is a three stage endeavour:

Contest 1 Opening the locked door, is a simple contest vs a Hard resistance. Success opens it without a sound and reveals a rather nasty blade trap built into the frame of the door, which can then be easily disabled.

Contest 2 Avoid Booby Traps

The next hazard is the numerous booby traps, mainly of the dart and sprung blade variety built into the room and the furniture, that are set by the scribes every night before they leave.

Contest 3 Find Information

Finally the characters need to work their way through the highly organised, yet densely crowded shelves of the office to find any useful information. The useful information comes in the form a copy of the letter that Sor-el sent to the Patriarch (which repeats letter for letter what they were told in the garden in scene one) and another to the Patriarchs enemies which repeats what he told the Patriarch and adds

“now would be a good time to circulate these rumours to destabilise the House of Vorden, any party sent to Pavis must be seen to fail. Although I cannot be involved in this matter I wish you well in your subterfuge, and trust you remember me to the Emperor.”

Scene 7 Questioning Sergeant Yorga

Key Points

The next morning the heroes question the Sergeant of the Watch who claims he saw Yanis.

Setting

The City Administration Building barracks.

Action

Sor-el is quite resistant to letting the Heroes question Yorga. At first he says that they will be wasting their time. Then if pushed further, he claims the man is on deep patrol in the Big Rubble for the next week. However if the players ask around the garrison, or perhaps more appropriately ask their followers to do this, then they can easily track down the Sergeant

When they question him Yorga is quite willing to explain what he saw and take the heroes to Gimpy's, with a squad of 10 soliders,. Suspicious Heroes who try and

detect any deception in Yorga, will find only a solid and sincere desire to do his duty.

Scene 8. Bad Blood at Gimpy's

Key Points

The Heroes either accompanied by the Sergeant or not, go down to Poor Side to the adventurer's tavern known as Gimpys. While investigating the whereabouts of Yanis, they bump into the Brothers of the Wolf-brothers, who are also looking for Yanis. Violence or negotiation ensues.

Setting

The Heroes depending on what has previously happened may be in the company of Lord Xithith and his Sun Dome Templar's or Sergeant Yorga and his squad. Not both! Yorga is guarded about bringing along the Sun Dome Templar's and Lord Xithith refuses to accompany Yorga's inferior troops.

The main action occurs in Poor Side, a densely populated district close to the city wall with the Rubble, inhabited mainly by Sartarite exiles from the Lunar invasions of the Kingdom of Sartar. The Heroes reception by the locals is cold, the local urchins throw stones and dung, before quickly disappearing into the maze of backstreets.

Gimpy's is a tavern built almost against the gargantuan Old city wall in the south of Poor side. The entrance is through a tunnel with access from the street. It is an “adventurers pub” run by a trio of freebooters who each lost a limb while adventuring in the Rubble. They used the proceeds of this last adventure to build/purchase this tavern.

Inside it is rough and ready, and when the players enter the tavern, it is quiet. The only people in the place are six barbarians [The Brothers of the Wolf-brothers] who look suspiciously at the characters as they enter the room. The barman, who is quietly cleaning glasses and tidying up last nights mess, looks at first surprised, but then hides it with a mask of indifference.

Action

He causally answers the heroes' questions as he sweeps up the floor. He knows the following

Yanis

“Oh gawd that stuck up little Lunar, pardon the good company I'm presently in. I remember him. Bloodthirsty little cur. Spent a good couple of days here with some bodyguards, paying gold coin to get some of the drunken street roughs to fight with blades. Laughing this strange high-pitched girly laugh makes me shudder just to think about it, when their blood was spilt on me clean

floor. You know a man bleeds more profusely when he's got ale in him. I ended up suggesting if he wanted to see some bloodshed, he should take himself off into the Rubble. And that's what he did. Heard he got mashed up by trolls."

Wolfbrothers

"What an unpleasant bunch of characters. Spent all day lounging about spending the last of their coin on beer, whinging on how hard done by they had been by the Lunars kicking them out of Sartar. My guess they got kicked out for being miserable layabouts. Some wily rubble runner got them to go into the Rubble one day, which was good news for me since they where flat broke by now, haven't been seen since. Probably ran into a trap set by some Rubble gang.

The Sighting of Yanis

"Stranger things have happened in these parts"

Brothers of the Wolfbrothers (BWB)

This small band of six fur clad storm barbarians are the older brothers of the missing Wolfbrothers who have come up from Sartar to find their missing kin.

So far they have learnt from the locals the events surrounding the night that Yanis offered to guide the WBs into the Rubble. The Zebra Riders, nomads who camp just outside the city wall in the Rubble, told them Yanis took the party up Tower Hill. The BWB are fairly certain that Yanis was the guide, since Tower Hill is none too far from the last known sighting of Yanis's party in the Rubble.

Of course finding all this out from them will be a task in itself with the Sartarites unwilling to talk to the Heroes who in their eyes are sworn enemies.

If any of the characters are paying attention, the BWB will noticeably stiffen at the barman's rather ungracious description of their younger siblings.

Aftermath

The players have either get the information of Yanis' location from the BWB by smooth talking or taking it from their cold dead fingers.

If the heroes completely miss the point, the barman points out the link between the WB and the BWB and that they visited the Zebra riders. Once at their camp, the nomads who are Lunar allies easily explain Yanis' location. If anyone asks why they never told Sor-eel's investigators, they shrug and explain they were never asked.

You will also have to consider what was the outcome of the "negotiations" with the BWB. The players may

convinced the BWB to accompany them into the Rubble. If the heroes fought them and left them alive, they will find themselves shadowed by the Orlanthei as they go into the Rubble.

Scene 9. Questioning Loyalties

Key Points

Lord Tarsic arrives by another moon boat in the city a day after the heroes arrived, and tries to convince them to abandon their search for Yanis in the interest of Imperial security.

Setting

This scene ideally happens at City Administration Building as the Heroes gather their equipment and followers before entering the Rubble. Tarsic suddenly appears, quietly sliding into their rooms in a dusty grey travelling cloak, explaining that he set off after the players a couple of days later and that he has information that he needs to impart with them in private.

If the heroes decide to be hotheads and go straight from Gimpy's into the Rubble, it occurs just outside the People's gate, in a more disturbing and powerful way. Lord Tarsic resplendent in Red Robe billowing in the desert wind emerges from a particularly grand columned ruin.

Action

Lord Tarsic will try and convince the players not pursue their quest to find Yanis. He uses every power of persuasion at his disposal, treating the heroes as equal Lunar citizens, favouring reason over intimidation, but pointing out that the very security of the Empire is at stake. He is open with the heroes and tells them the truth about Yanis that he has been working as an Imperial agent in the rubble since his "disappearance", luring enemies of the state, such as the Wolf Brothers, to their death and reporting back about the activities of various factions within the Rubble. Tarsic only learnt this the day after the Heroes departure from the Imperial Heartlands, and immediately set out after them, via a Moon boat.

This is a straight role-playing scene. The only rolls that are perhaps needed are the characters own Imperial Citizen vs. their Family Loyalty,

Aftermath

This scene is meant to bring into sharp relief the conflict between the characters' duty as Lunar citizens and their responsibility to their family to bring back the heir. If the players are already having doubts about Yanis's sanity then this encounter should further disturb them.

The Broo come in two waves. The first are the Rat headed Broo who act as skirmishers and scouts. The Rat pack will attempt to ambush the party from the surrounding ruins, then after a round or so of combat will run up the hill, to where the second wave, the Bull headed broos, are waiting. Any surviving Rat broo then retreat into the surrounding ruins to harass the players with slingshot fire. The Bull headed are less subtle and wade in quickly to engage the heroes in hand to hand combat and fight to the death.

Santos stays at a distance, aiming Mindblast spells at enemies as a proving a particular problem. He is wily and exceptionally intelligent. If the Heroes wipe out his gang he will disappear into the rubble, rather than face a direct confrontation with the Heroes.

The Brothers of the Wolf Brothers will charge straight in to fight the hated chaos foes.

Aftermath

The heroes should fight their way through this mini Chaos horde. If they have problems then Yanis and ogres come down from the Tower, which triggers off the alternative scene 10.

If the Heroes defeat Santos they will get to talk to Gren, Yanis's tutor, whose head was held by Santos. In the final moments before the magic that keeps his spirit tied to his severed head, he will tell the Heroes about his doubts about Yanis.

“Laugh he did. Yanis laughed as they cut me up. I cried for help, but all he did was laugh. From Patriarch Vordon are you? Well take my advice. Make sure that evil boy never becomes leader of our Association for ruin he would bring!”

Scene 11. The Bloody End

Key Points

The Heroes confront Yanis and his ogre allies in an underground temple of Cacodemon. This scene is all about combat and the horror of chaos.

Setting

Atop the hill amongst the shattered ruins in a broken flagstone square is the shattered granite shell of an ancient tower. Amongst the ruins two ogres who watch the slope of the hill guard a large 2m square trapdoor.

Opening the trapdoor leads down via a set of stone stairs into a hall with cells adjoining it. The hall has a large blood splattered table with iron studs in it (for tormenting trolls) and many torture instruments (also freshly stained)

Hidden in one of the cells, under the stone bed is a

tunnel down to a lower level of caves and tunnels crudely carved out of the rock. Some of these caves are the homes of the ogres, and are spartan affairs with crude bed mats. At the end of a series of long winding tunnels is a large cavern that houses the Temple of Cacodemon.

The Temple of Cacodemon is a place of terror and death. In the centre of a large cavern is a crude rock altar with runes to Cacodemon daubed in blood. Around it is a large ceremonial summoning circle also drawn out in blood. Half devoured bodies lie randomly scattered around the floor. Behind the altar rises a large column, which reaches 3m high up to the ceiling and is 2m wide, which upon initial inspection appears to be made up of bits of bodies. This is the temple's Fiend, a demon guardian under Yanis's control.

Cacodemon

Master of a horde of chaos demons, known as Fiends, Cacodemon is the remnant of the Devil, who was imprisoned under the Block in the wastes of Praz by Stormbull during the Godswar. It was driven onto the Hero plane by Nomad God Waha and the Trolls.

Cacodemon brings death and destruction to the mortal plane through the Fiends, who are summoned by Cacodemon's mortal cultists.

Cacodemon finds particular favour amongst the race of Ogres who believe that if they lead a particularly wicked and cruel life they will be reborn as Fiends in the next.

Feats

Hide Nature: This feat allows the user to avoid detection by magic and pass as a human.

Monster: This feat allows the caster to Vomit Acid and Summon fiend

Summon Fiend: The caster may summon one of Cacodemon's Fiends.

Secret: Become Fiend

Action

This scene is played as a mad dash through the underground chambers, further through the darkness to the heart of evil. Ogres ambush and harass the Heroes all the way. In the old prison chambers, they appear from the cells, wielding cruel hooks of torture. In the cavern system they come howling out of side tunnels, or leaping out of hidden pits in the floor. If the Brothers of the Wolfbrothers are still alive, any sort of subtlety goes out of the window as they charge down head long into the tunnels. Further poignancy is brought to their actions as one of them finds the equipment and gnawed bones of his younger sibling and picks up the skull “Alas poor

Wulfrich I knew him well". The Heroes may feel justified in using the BWB to draw off the Ogres at this point, making their passage to Temple of Cacodemon much smoother.

Yanis is in the Temple of Cacodemon. He is in his full ogre form, fangs visible, humanity twisted with bloodthirsty bestiality, drenched in blood from a fresh sacrifice. In this state he is almost completely beyond reason (It is Nearly Impossible to Remove Yanis's blood lust and only a clever application of calming magics and/or herbal sedatives has any chance), and after a short speech glorifying Cacodemon he attacks the heroes backed up by the Fiend

Lord Yanis

Patriarch Vorden's heir, Imperial Lunar Agent, Ogre, A slight man, in his early twenties, with blonde boyish good looks, hooked nose and cruel piercing eyes.

He is both an Nysalor Illuminate and Cacodemon Devotee. He fights with the twin Dirty Daggers of Disease (a magical artefacts from the Dawn found in the Rubble, both carry an unlimited amount of disease spirits) which he fights with flashy and dirty, cause the maximum pain while gaining the attention and adoration of the onlookers. He leads the Smiling Death Warband, a group of thirty Orges.

Ogres are a chaos race descended from Humans corrupted by Chaos in the Gods War. They appear as handsome humans, and blend in with human society, the only things that give them away being their enlarged canines and a taste for human flesh. Also they have an instinctive urge to worship Cacodemon, and are drawn towards that Deities shrines if they pass near them.

The Flesh Column Fiend

Guardian of the Cacodemon temple, It periodically leaves the temple with the ogres on raids of mass destruction and death, against fellow Rubble inhabitants. It appears as a column made of the body parts of many victims that writhes and twitches as constantly changes form. It may grow extra limbs/appendages to attack players and may do so without incurring a multiple attack penalty.

Aftermath

The heroes have either taken the moral high ground and killed Yanis. Or they may decide that this is not their decision to make and captured him alive.

Secrets

The Tower was originally built during the siege of Pavis by Praxian Animal nomads during the second age as a watchtower. Sentinels with magical instruments of far sight would scan the distant wastes for signs of nomad activity. It was also a place of imprisonment where nomad captives where held for interrogation. When the city fell it became a centre point of resistance, until it was torn down. Even then it was still significant as the Pavis city survivors, tunnelled out secret chambers underneath even used the towers underground prison. The tower was finally abandoned when the Trolls invaded.



Scene 12. The Lunar Way

Key Points

Upon meeting Lord Tarsic in Scene 8, or by successfully removing Yanis' blood lust in Scene 10, the Heroes get the opportunity to talk with Yanis and to try and persuade him to return to his father's home.

Setting

If the meeting is arranged by Lord Tarsic, it is on a low grassy knoll just inside the Rubble. Tarsic casts a magic circle around the knoll, which simmers red and conceals the meeting from the outside world (it is the same magic he cast in Scene 1).

In this circumstance Yanis is in his human form, as an attractive blonde man in his early twenties with piercing blue eyes, hawk nose and noble demeanor.

Otherwise it is in the horrid surroundings of the Temple to Cacodemon and Yanis is in his bloodthirsty full Ogre form.

Action

The Heroes must try and persuade Yanis to return to his father's home. This is mainly a role-playing scene, but how Yanis' decides can be abstracted to an extended contest using skills Persuasion skills and, Sedenya Philosophy if arguing that it is in the Empires' best interest or Dara Happan Tradition, if arguing from the point of view of what's best for his family.

If Lord Tarsic is there he argues on Yanis' side, augmenting Yanis's rolls.

Aftermath

The Heroes have either persuaded Yanis to return to his father, or are going to have some explaining to do to Patriarch Vorden, upon their return to the Lunar Heartlands. Of course they could try and bring him back by force. If Lord Tarsic is with them he sides with Yanis, otherwise the Fiend in the Temple strikes,

Conclusion

Key Points

The adventure can end in one of four ways

1. Yanis dies in bloody confrontation with the heroes who have decided for the good of either the Family or Empire or both he should die for his nasty fascination with Cacodemon.
2. Yanis has been peacefully convinced to return to the empire
3. Yanis has been subdued in combat and dragged in chains in front of his father.
4. Yanis is left in the Rubble, to continue working for the Imperial Secret Service.

The Heroes may or may not have killed Lord Tarsic in the process. If they have or have crossed him they may have to deal with his contacts in the Imperial Secret Service at some point in the future.

Explanation

Ending 1. Patriarch Vordon privately mourns his son, but otherwise the whole affair is covered up. The heroes are thanked and rewarded in private, but are secretly watched, to ensure that they never mention the affair to the Patriarch's enemies.

Ending 2. The Patriarch embraces his son, who returns to the fold, becoming in public the ideal Dara Happan heir to the throne. In private he continues his deprived Cacodemon practices.

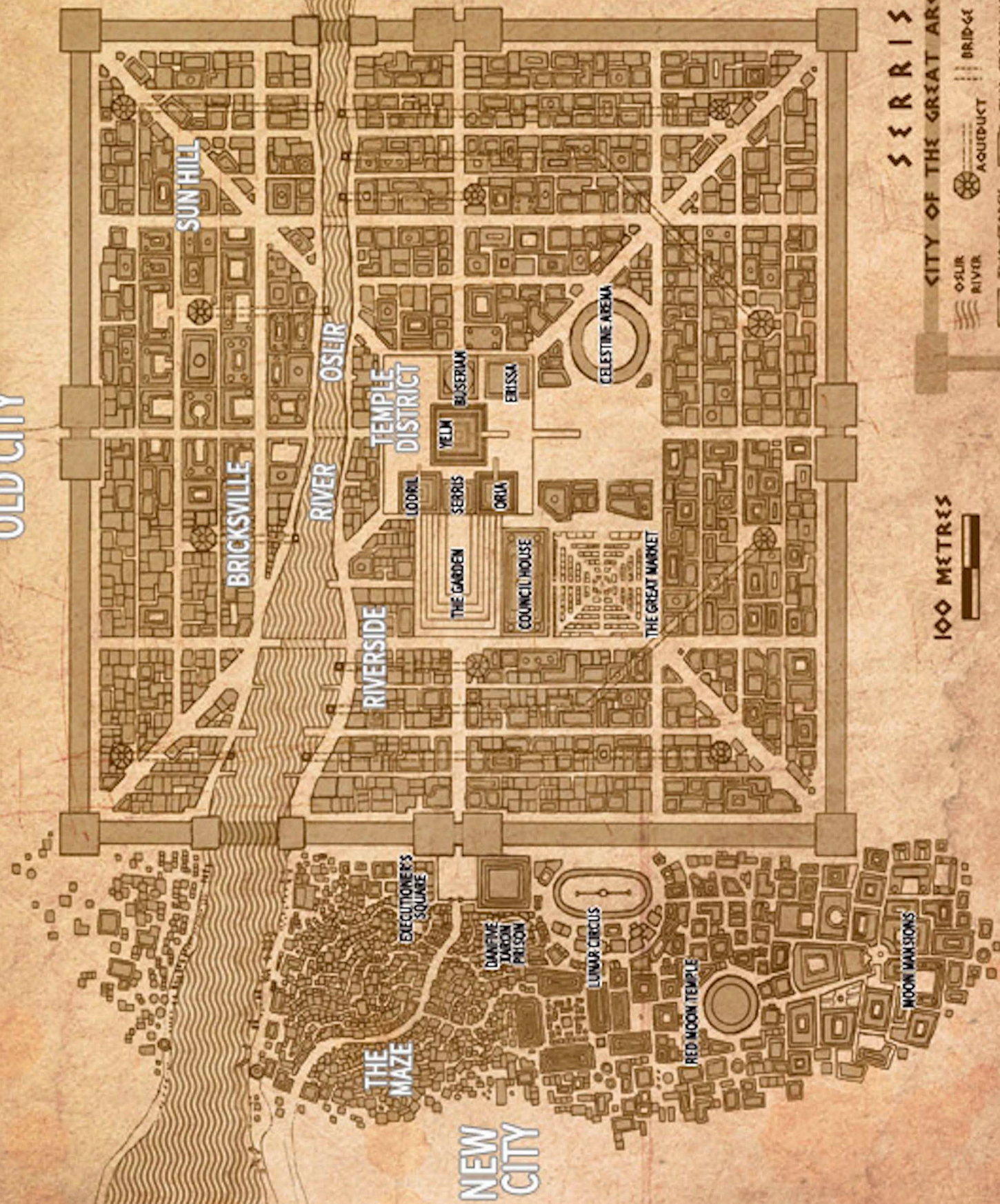
Ending 3. After a period of re-education, Yanis becomes the model son as above.

Ending 4. The heroes must deceive Vordon (difficulty 5w) that his son is dead. This may land them in extreme trouble if they fail, leading to exile if they fumble. However Lord Tarsic (an augment of +5) backs them up, so the Patriarch eventually accepts this, although he never fully trusts the Heroes again if they failed their roll.

Further Adventure.

The heroes may decide to explore Pavis and the Rubble further using the contacts that they have gained in this episode to lead to further adventures. Or they might decide to forsake the empire's edge and return home. This might lead to further intrigue depending on whether they returned Yanis or not, and their relationship with Lord Tarsic, who may decide to use the heroes for more missions in the name of the Empire's security

OLD CITY



100 METRES

S E R K I S

CITY OF THE GREAT ARCHITECT

- OSLER RIVER
- BRIDGE
- AQUEDUCT
- TWO-STORY HOUSE
- TWO-STORY HOUSE WITH COURTYARD

