



THE CARNIVAL AL OF NAL SAGATH

BEASTS & BARBARIANS

HEROIC TALE #2

A SWORD AND SOBCERY SAVAGE WORLDS HEROIC TALE

BY UMBERTO PIGNATELLI

THE CARNIVAL OF NAL SAGATH

INTRODUCTION

Nal Sagath is a town standing on a hill in the middle of large swamp, in the western part of the Borderlands. A former Tricarnian outpost, it was conquered and razed by the Iron Empire during the wars, and later reconstructed on its very same foundations. What the people of Nal Sagath no longer know is that a colony of old, twisted creatures lives in the dark tunnels under the town. They are the descendants of a group of slaves who hid there to escape the fury of the conquerors. They call themselves Palemen, because their skin has become grayish after so many long years spent underground, and they live off the waste of the town and the strange fungi growing in the tunnels. The Palemen constantly spy on the townspeople through sewer grates and hidden passages. In particular, they are obsessed with Dalla, the beautiful blonde daughter of the innkeeper, and wonder how great it would be to have such a precious gem in their dark kingdom...

THE CARNIVAL

The heroes arrive in Nal Sagath during the Carnival. On this day, to celebrate their freedom from Tricarnian rule, the local people put on strange costumes and masks, play tricks of all kinds, and there is a general merry atmosphere. The party has some time to enjoy the feast and eat and drink at leisure.

The festival reaches its climax with a show reenacting the Princess's Liberation, in which the Fabulous Princess of Nal Sagath is first captured by the Four Ghosts and then freed by the courageous Mighty Hero. This year the role of the Splendid Princess is played by Dalla, the pretty daughter of Toros, the innkeeper, while Oggo, the dim-witted but very muscular smith's helper is the Mighty Hero.

The play is held in the main square of the town, filled with a large crowd for the occasion. The Princess is sitting on her throne, when four creatures, men wearing masks, burst out of the old temple, kidnap her and drag her back into the sanctuary, amid the spectators' amused and salacious remarks.

Then the Mighty Hero, ridiculously dressed, appears on the scene and marches to the temple to free the Princess, followed by the cheering population. When the Hero has just entered the temple, a scream of fear is heard from within – but the scream is not part of the play.

The heroes and other people, among which Toros, enter the sanctuary and find Oggo in a corner, trembling with fear. The corpses of the townsmen who were playing the Four Ghosts lie sprawled on the floor and there is no trace of Dalla.

With a Notice roll the heroes discover the following facts: the four men have been dead for hours (they were killed by crushing and cutting blows) and, despite being spooky, their masks are very different from the pale faces of the creatures that kidnapped Dalla.

There is nobody else in the temple, but in a corner heroes or Toros may spot (with a Notice roll for players) a piece of fabric from Dalla's costume. The impressions of several sets of bare feet are visible nearby and, at a closer inspection, the heroes discover that a portion of the wall can be moved, revealing a dark passage nobody knew about!

The footprints continue down the passage. Who will dare follow them and rescue Dalla from her kidnappers?

UNDER NAL SAGATH

We assume that the heroes accept the quest of looking for Dalla in the dark tunnels under the town.

No map is given to navigate the area but an abstract method is used instead. The heroes are following the footprints, so they make a group Tracking roll each twenty minutes. For each success they receive an Advancement Token, two with a raise. When they finally have 12 tokens they get to the Den of the Palemen (see below).

After each Tracking Round, the Game Master draws a card from the Action Deck and runs the encounter below. The encounters are described in brief, but the GM is free to expand them as he sees fit.

Deuce – Craving Tentacle. The heroes are in an underground channel, trying to advance in the dark water that comes to their waist. A long tentacle lashes out from a passage hidden in the water and coils itself around a character at random! The tentacle has Fighting d8, Strength d12+2, Parry 5 and Toughness 9. A hero grabbed by the tentacle is dragged underwater (Dark Light condition applies) and is subject to the Drowning rules.

Three – Old Tomb. The characters stumble upon an old tomb covered in webs and dust, clearly of Tricarnian origin. The large stone sarcophagus holds a mummified corpse, with two precious gems (250 Moons each) encased in its eyes. The corpse was once Jughal the Restless, and the gems are magical, keeping the undead abomination sleeping. Removing them causes Jughal to awake. He attacks the heroes, as they block his path to rule the world!

(M) Jughal the Restless (1)

Four – Rusty Gate. The heroes find a rusty gate blocking their path. Its lock can be opened with a Lockpicking (-2) or Strength (-4) roll, which can be a group roll. In case of failure the party must go back, losing two Advancement Tokens.

IN THE DEN OF THE PALEMEN

Five – White Rat. A randomly selected hero is attacked by a nasty white rat (Fighting d6, gains the Drop). The beast isn't strong enough to deal real damage. If the hero strikes the beast (Parry 5, Toughness 2), the rat lets out an angered squeak, calling its whole family, a big swarm of albino rats.

(M) Albino Rat Swarm (1 per 2 heroes)

Six – Sewer Lotus. The walls of this damp tunnel are full of strange, luminescent fungi, similar to putrid bubbles. With a Lotusmastery roll they can be recognized as the very dangerous Sewer Lotus or Putrid Lotus of the Melting Mind. If the heroes continue down the passage, they suffer the effects of a *fear* Power cast with Lotusmastery d10, due to the terrifying hallucinations caused by the fungal spores.

Seven – Strange Inscriptions. A room full of columns, each decorated with an inscription. With a Smarts roll, any hero who knows the ancient Keronian tongue understands that the inscriptions describe the various areas of the maze of tunnels. From now on, the group has +1 to the Tracking roll to navigate the dungeons.

Eight – Skeleton. The group finds the skeleton of a long-dead soldier. By examining his corroded armor and weapon, with a Knowledge (History) roll, he is recognized as an ancient Tricornian soldier. His bejeweled dagger (50 Moons) is still usable.

Nine – Deadly Fall. The corridor ends abruptly in a 15-yard drop! The hero leading the group must make a Notice roll or fall over the edge. Luckily, the heap of garbage on which he lands halves the damage.

Ten – Palemens Ambush! A group of Palemens ambushes the heroes. They hide in the shadow and attack from behind, trying to use Stealth to get the Drop. The Palemens start 12" away from the heroes.

(M) Palemens (1 per hero)

Jack – Steps of Danger. While the heroes are going down a slippery flight of stairs, a couple of Palemens let a big rock roll down the steps! The heroes must run as fast as they can to avoid the deadly boulder! It is a Chase, of Short duration. Both the heroes and the boulder use Agility as Chase skill. The boulder starts relatively slow (Agility d6), then it gains momentum (increase the Agility die by one step every round, up to d12). Run the chase as usual, considering that the boulder can hit a hero only if it is dealt a King-Joker action card. In this case it means the stone is trampling over the hero: the character must make an Agility (-4) roll or suffer 3d6 damage (this ignores Armor). Whatever successful or not the character is now considered out of the chase (the boulder surpassed him).

At the start of the sixth round the heroes come to a big room and can get out of the boulder's path.

Queen – Secret Passage. Let the heroes make a Notice roll. In case of success, they notice that the flames of their torches are flickering. With a second success on a Notice (-2) group roll, they discover a secret passage! They immediately gain two Advancement Tokens.

King – Maze of Tunnels. It is easy to get lost in that part of the tunnels. The party must succeed at a Dramatic Task (Smarts -2) or lose 1d4 (1d6 on Complications) Advancement Tokens.

Ace – Bronze Coffer. The party finds an ancient chest which might hold a large treasure! It can be opened with a Lock-picking roll, but it is also protected by a deadly trap, detectable with a Notice (-2) roll. In case of failure, a poisoned needle imbued with the *poison* Power (skill d8) pierces the skin of the character opening the coffer. The chest holds assorted Tricornian jewels and trinkets worth 200 Moons.

Joker – Mysterious Shadower. Someone is following the heroes from a distance (Stealth d6). It is Oggo, the dumb smith's helper who also wants to save Dalla. He is a Soldier Extra (Savage Worlds core rules) with the Brawny Edge and Smarts d4. If he joins the group, he becomes an Ally, managed by the players.

Previously Used Entries. If a card is dealt more than once, ignore the number and only consider the color. A red card means that the tracks of Dalla's kidnappers are easy to follow (+2 to the next Tracking roll), a black one means the opposite (-2 to the next Tracking roll).

IN THE DEN OF THE PALEMEN

You get to the end of the maze. A big, domed hall, crammed with piles of garbage discarded by the dwellers of Nal Sagath, is the lair of Dalla's pale kidnappers. Despite the trash, the main source of bad smell is a dark shaft in the middle of the room, which spews nauseating fumes. A great number of Palemens are gathered in the room, staring with lustful eyes at the terrorized girl. One of them, a burly fellow too hideous to be looked at, rises from his crude throne, rudely grabs her arm, and tries to kiss Dalla's soft skin.

"Now Kudd has wife too!" he mutters, while the others cheer him approvingly.

The room is circular, with a radius of 9" and two 3"-wide entrances. The heroes come through the southern one. Kudd's Throne stands in front of the northern entrance, hiding it. Place Kudd, Dalla, and the other Palemens within 9" of the throne.

The room is filled with garbage piles. Place up to ten piles (of sizes varying from 2" by 2" to 5" by 5") in the room. They

THE CARNIVAL OF NAL SAGATH

count as Difficult Ground, grant Light Cover, and provide props that can be used for Tricks.

Place the foul-smelling shaft in the center of the room (use a Medium Burst Template to represent it). If a Joker is dealt, a Craving Tentacle (see Under Nal Sagath, deuce entry) with Reach 5 lashes out and joins the fight, attacking the nearest target (PC or enemy) every turn until it is severed or manages to take a victim down into the depths of the sewer where it lives. This happens when the creature wins three consecutive grappling opposed rolls.

Kudd fights until three quarters of his mooks are dead, and then he tries to escape down the passage behind the throne.

(M) Kudd the Strong (1)

(M) Paleman (3 per hero)

END

Dalla wraps her arms around the hero with the highest Charisma (she develops a love interest in him) and Toros, her father, is very grateful toward the party. They can stay in his inn as honored guests as long as they want. The population is so friendly that the whole party gains +2 Charisma while in the town of Nal Sagath.

CREATURES AND NPC

ALBINO BATS SWARM

Swarms are treated like a single creature. They cover an area equal to a Medium Burst Template and every round they attack everyone in it. When a swarm is wounded, its size decreases to a Small Burst Template (see the Split Special Ability for smaller-size swarms). A further hit disperses it.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d12, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Notice d6.

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities

- **Bites:** A Swarm inflicts hundreds of tiny scratches to its victims every round, hitting automatically and causing 2d4 damage to everyone within the template. The damage is applied to the least armored location (victims in completely sealed suits are immune).
- **Split:** This swarm is clever enough to split into two smaller flocks (Small Burst Templates) should their foes split up. The Toughness of these smaller swarms is lowered by -2 (to 4 each) and their Agility is lowered by a die step.
- **Swarm:** Parry +2; as the swarm is made of dozens of creatures, cutting and piercing weapons inflict only half damage. Area-effect weapons work normally.

PALEMAN

A twisted, ghoulish humanoid with pale leathery skin and big red eyes.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Lockpicking d6, Notice d6, Stealth d8, Survival d8, Throwing d6.

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Gear: Club (Str+d6), throwing stones (Str+d4, Range: 3/6/12).

Special abilities:

- **Low Light Vision:** The Palemen ignore the Dark and Dim Light modifiers.
- **Tunnel Dwellers:** The Palemen have the Thief Edge, but only when in the tunnels under Nal Sagath.

JUGHAL THE RESTLESS

Jughal used to be a fearsome practitioner of dark magic, now he is a horrid undead abomination.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d4, Fighting d8, Intimidation d6.

Pace: 5; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9

Special abilities:

- **Claws:** Str+d6
- **Undead:** +2 to Toughness and to recovering from Shaken. He is immune to poison, disease, and called shots.
- **Fast Regeneration:** Jughal is allowed a Vigor roll each round to regenerate a Wound. This applies also if he is "killed". In addition he gains +2 to rolls to recovering from Shaken.
- **Weakness (Blood Gems):** The gems on Jughal's eyes prevent him from dying. When they are crushed (Toughness 5), the evil creature crumbles to dust.



KUDD THE STRONG

This hideous creature has a fat belly, long grayish hair and, despite his unhealthy look, he is very strong.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d4, Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Stealth d8, Survival d8.

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 7

Gear: Spiked mace (Str+d6, AP 1).

Special abilities:

- **Command:** He has a Command Edge over his tribesmen.
- **Low Light Vision:** Kudd ignores the Dark and Dim Light modifiers.
- **Size +1:** Kudd is bigger than an average man.
- **Tunnel Dweller:** Kudd has the Thief Edge, but only when in the tunnels under Nal Sagath.
- **Sweep:** Kudd can attack all adjacent targets at -2.