

ALQ1
Sourcebox

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons[®]
3rd Edition

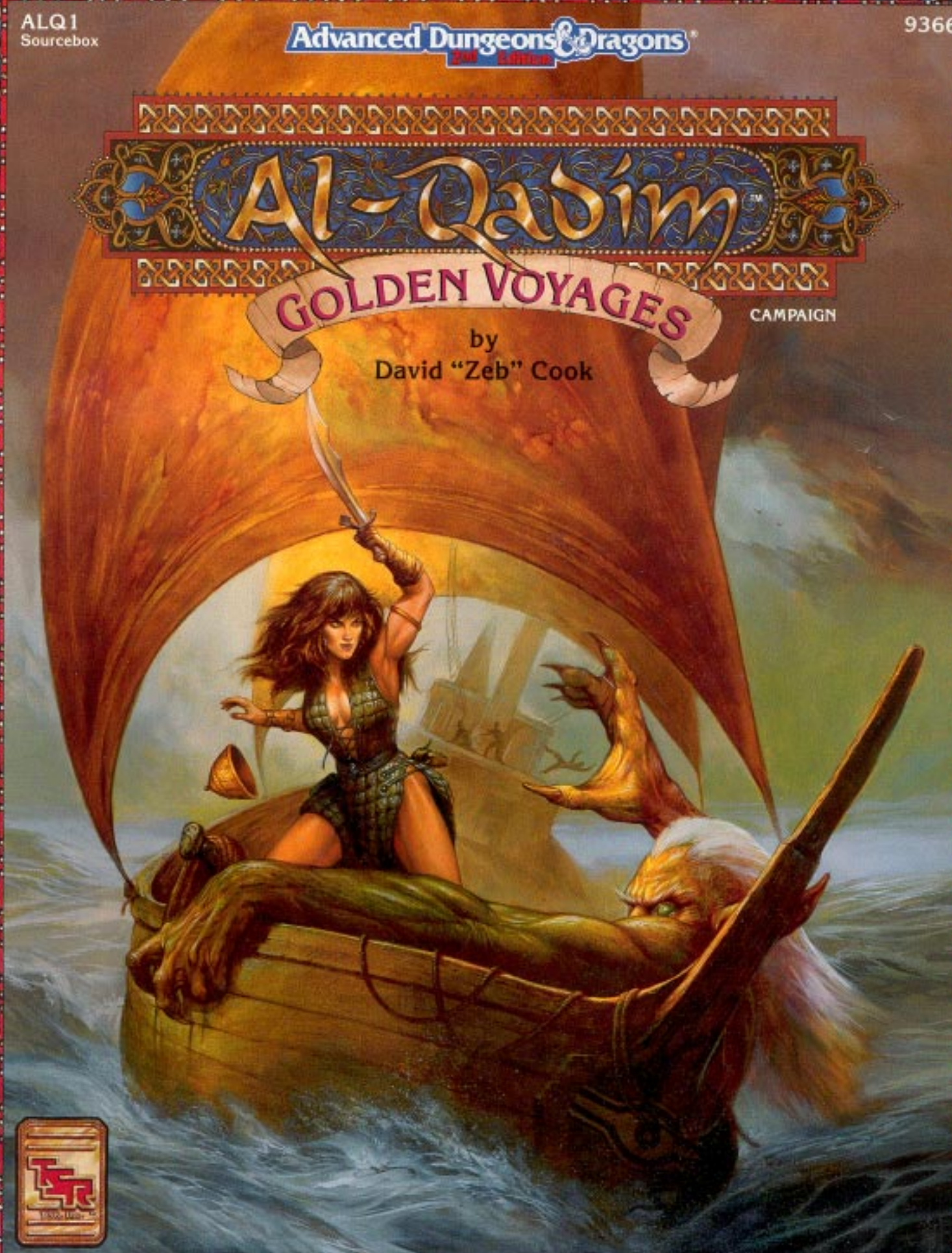
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Al-Qadim™

GOLDEN VOYAGES

CAMPAIGN

by
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Book 1

Home Port: Wherein The Tale Begins


And who seeketh fame without toil and strife, The impossible seeketh and wasteth life.

The First Voyage of Sinbad the Seaman

Praise be Zakhara, jewel of the sun, pillar of the rock, prince of all nations, sire of all wisdom, center of the firmament, whose sands are more dazzling than gold, whose springs are sweeter than the honey of bees, whose oceans are deeper than the void of Basim. Revered be the Loregiver, mother of all knowledge, confounder of genies, deceiver of gods, she whose Fate is that which was given her. Honored be the Grand Caliph, blood of First Caliph, worthy of the gods, giant among men, scourge of the unbeliever, confidant of the genie-races. (And praised be, too, the genies of the four quarters and the genies of the four elements, that they may find pleasure in this tale.)

It has reached me, O wise readers, that once there were, somewhere within the great cities of pearl, a seaman and his companions. . . .





From the suqs of Jumlat to the arid deserts of the High Desert are men who call themselves brave and free, but who is more brave or free than the daring wanderers of the ocean waves? Not the spiritless townsman hiding behind his walls, not the soldier resting comfortably in his barracks, not even the desert raider who stands safely on dry ground; none accepts more risks or dares greater rewards than the bold captain on the deck of his ship, or so by the wisdom of Fate it is told in the great ports—and who will argue with the wisdom of Fate?

Golden Voyages is a special adventure set for player characters using the AL-QADIM™ rulebook and is set in Zakhara, the Land of Fate. Reminiscent of the great adventures of Sinbad (stories and movies), the action ranges from the docks of the Pearl Cities to the unexplored and wondrous islands south of the Crowded Sea. As they sail from place to place, the player characters have the chance to experience a series of wildly different adventures.

Golden Voyages is made up of many different parts to help you run campaigns on the Crowded Sea. Unlike other adventures where each encounter leads to the next, the adventures in *Golden Voyages* are more properly called “mini-adventures.” What PCs encounter on one island will not directly affect their encounters on another. To give these mini-adventures continuity, they occur within a larger framing adventure. The framing adventure provides the characters with reasons (beyond mere curiosity) to sail from island to island.

The classic example of this technique is the 1,001 Arabian Nights. The tale is told of a great caliph who with every dawn executes his current courtesan. To keep her head, his latest choice, a woman named Sherazade, starts a tale every night, leaving it unfinished at the dawn. Naturally the caliph spares her to hear the end of the story. The next night she continues the tale and sometimes starts another, always making sure to leave it unfinished at dawn. In this way she saves her head and, for us, provides the story around which all other stories are told.

Each part included in this sourcebox is described below. Look through the different parts to satisfy your curiosity, then read this booklet, **Home Port**, first. With the background and starting material provided here, you should be ready to begin your campaign.

What You Get

The Golden Voyage sourcebox is made of many different booklets and pieces. It is not necessary to read all of these sections before beginning play. However, you should have a good idea of what is in each booklet to ease the task of finding information once play begins.

Home Port. This is the booklet you are reading now. **Home Port** includes an outline of the *Golden Voyages* campaign, the framing story encounters (beginning in the Pearl Cities), descriptions of the possible Great Treasure (the object of this adventure), expanded rules on ships and sailing, and background on the ways of Zakharan sailors. The last part of this booklet (additional rules and background) is meant to be used throughout all game sessions since it deals with situations that could arise at any time.

The Crowded Sea: al-Sartan. This booklet describes the islands that form the Sartan archipelago. It includes descriptions of topography, tribes, and *The Great and Dread God*, an adventure set in these islands.

The Crowded Sea: Nada al-Hazan. This booklet covers the Nada al-Hazan (Strait of Sorrow) chain, including the trading port of Bandar al-Sa’adat. Two adventures, *A Night in Town* and *The Isle of Sadness*, are set in these islands.

The Crowded Sea: The Djinni’s Claws. The fourth booklet details the deadly archipelago known as the Djinni’s Claws. Several small adventures, *Servitude*, *Broken Talons*, and *Shark Food* are set in these islands.

The Crowded Sea: The Steaming Isles. The last text booklet is about the fog-shrouded and volcanic Steaming Isles, and the perils and treasures found there. *Praise be the Loregiver* is set on these islands.



Maps and Player Handouts. This booklet contains sixteen pages of maps used in the adventures, useful DM aids, deck plans, and player handouts for *Golden Voyages*. Several of these handouts can be used throughout a Zakharan campaign, particularly the deck plans and trade route maps. Carefully remove the staples from this booklet to separate the sheets.

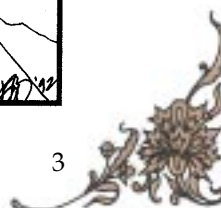
Monstrous Compendium Pages. These sheets describe new monsters to complement those given in the *AL-QADIM*[™] appendix of the *Monstrous Compendium*.



DM's Screen. This three panel screen, custom designed for a Zakharan campaign, contains tables useful to all AD&D® campaigns, along with charts and tables taken from the *AL-QADIM* rules.

Crowded Sea Map. This poster-size map presents the islands of the Crowded Sea at the same scale as those maps in the *Land of Fate* boxed set. This map connects directly south of the Pearl Cities mapsheet.

Adventure Stages

Golden Voyages may be quite different from any other modules you have played if those modules are completely detailed descriptions of an ancient ruin, dungeon, palace, or other specific location filled with monsters and treasures waiting for you to arrive. *Golden Voyages* is also quite different from adventures that have carefully developed plots with a definite sequence of steps and events. Although *Golden Voyages* has a beginning, middle, and end, very little about it is definite. There are several different ways the adventure can begin, depending on you and your player characters. During the middle section, when the characters are sailing about, there is no set order for the encounters. What the player characters encounter depends on where they sail. Like the beginning, there are several choices for ways to end the adventure. All these things are shaped by the interaction between the DM and his players.





The *Golden Voyages* adventure is divided into three main parts: the beginning, set in Gana of the Pearl Cities; the middle, among the islands of the Crowded Sea; and the end, which returns the player characters to Gana once more. The possible adventures for each part are outlined here.

Beginning. Your goal here is to make the characters want to explore the Crowded Sea. The opening adventures all provide reasons for boarding ship—from the noble to the practical. In *The Map in the Bazaar*, the motivation is basic greed. The player characters obtain an “authentic” treasure map from a mysterious old merchant in an equally mysterious marketplace. Why they have the map and where it will lead are questions the characters can only answer by sailing south among the lost islands of the Crowded Sea.

The Quest appeals to the desire for fame and glory. Each year the Sultan of Gana challenges one and all to return with a great wonder and present it to his court. Hints of a great wonder far to the south will carry the player characters on a long voyage far from home.

For those of less noble intention, *The Rogue Geas’d* provides a direct motivation to set sail. Caught in the act, one of the player characters is magically compelled to undertake a search to the far south. The only question that remains is whether his friends will accompany him.

Finally, there is the straight-forward *90 Days or Else*. Here, the characters have managed to sink themselves into debt. They can either let themselves be sold into slavery or find some way to come up with the money—quick. Spurred on by tales of quick riches to the south, (hopefully) the player characters opt to set sail.

By the end of this part, the player characters should be ready to set sail in search of the Great Treasure.

Middle. The adventures of the middle section occur once the characters have sailed into the Crowded Sea. Each adventure stands by itself; you may use some or all of them. This stage of the adventure revolves around finding the Great Treasure necessary for the characters to resolve their situations back in Gana.

Finding the Great Treasure is no simple task, however. It could be in any of four locations that you choose. However, the location isn’t fixed (i.e., even you will not know for sure) until the characters have visited a few of the islands and gained some clues. Only by visiting several island chains will the characters narrow the location of the Great Treasure down to a single place.

Location determines whether a given adventure will occur. If the player characters sail to Sartan, they will most certainly meet *The Great and Dread God*, which might be the hiding place of the Great Treasure. If at anytime they drop anchor at Bandar al-Sa’adat, use *A Night in Town*, where they can learn clues about the Great Treasure. Farther down the chain, at *The Isle of Sadness*, waits another potential hiding place of the Great Treasure.

The Djinni’s Claws provides the characters with several opportunities to gain more clues in *Broken Talons*, and a chance to gain a necessary magical device through Servitude. The adventure *Shark Food* hides the third possible location of the Great Treasure.

The last chain, the Steaming Isles, presents the greatest challenge to the player characters, in the adventure *Praise Be the Loregiver*. It is not the deadliest adventure, but it is the most difficult for good characters to resolve. On these islands the PCs may find the hiding place of the Great Treasure or more items and clues useful to their search.

Finale. If the characters are successful and return to Gana with their prize, they have succeeded in their mission. Although there are no further prepared encounters, DMs who want to keep the adventure going can prepare their own obstacles for the group. Perhaps jealous courtiers steal the Great Treasure before the characters can present it, or maybe a rival of the Fire Wizard (from *The Rogue Geas’d*) believes the PCs are henchmen of his enemy. However, the characters should have an opportunity to regain all before the final scene.



The Great Treasure

The heart of *Golden Voyages* is the search for the Great Treasure, whether it be to satisfy an angry wizard, impress the Sultan of Gana, or pay off a rapacious creditor. As such, the treasure must be tantalizing to your player characters, a lure they cannot resist, and yet at the same time it must not disrupt your campaign. Alas, not every campaign is the same. A treasure that is irresistible to another group may not appeal to your players in the slightest. The trick is to find the treasure that best suits your audience.

Therefore, there is no *single* Great Treasure. Instead, several different rewards are suggested here, suited to a variety of different tastes. Read through the list and choose the one you like most (and you think would work best for your players). If you do not see any you like, create your own Great Treasure. Remember two things if you take this course: first, a treasure need not be an item of great wealth or power—wonder can be just as effective; second, the player characters are not meant to keep their treasure—it is meant to be given to the Sultan, mage, or creditor.

Do not let the player characters keep items of great magical power or wealth. These will unbalance your campaign as time goes by, making things difficult for yourself. However, since contrived excuses to get items out of their characters' hands only irritates players, try to avoid having the Great Treasure arbitrarily stolen, lost, taxed, or confiscated. Your best defense is to not give the player characters something you will have to take away in the near future, or to make sure they understand that they must surrender the item at the end of the adventure (to the Sultan or whomever). In the latter case, be sure the group knows they will gain some reward for handing over the Great Treasure.

One of the following Great Treasures should appeal to your player characters. To help decide which might be best, the items are organized according to different styles of play. A brief description is given for each style to help decide where your players best fall.

Great Treasures: Power Gamers

Power gamers are mainly concerned with gaining personal might, defeating terrible monsters, and getting fabulous treasure. Treasures most apt to appeal are those which enhance ability scores, make characters less vulnerable, or increase personal combat abilities.

The Blade of Mastery. This treasure is a small jambiyah with a most unique blade, ethereal and cloaked in blue flame. The weapon cannot be used in combat, since the phantom blade causes no damage, though it leaves a fading tracery of blue fire like a slash or cut. However, any character "cut" by the blade gains 1 point to his prime requisite (or one of his prime requisites if his class has multiple requirements, or an extra Hit Die for monsters), even in excess of racial maximums. This works only once per character (or creature).

Examining the blade does not reveal its power; however, anyone who tests the sharpness of its edge will cut themselves, thereby gaining the benefit. A player will be aware his character has improved—become stronger, smarter, etc.—when this occurs.

The Seal of Fate. This treasure appears to be nothing more than a small seal with deeply carved letters. When pressed against one's palm, the seal magically marks the character with its imprint. This mark is invisible, though it radiates magic and can be seen by *detect invisibility* and the hakima's truth-seeing powers. The mark can be placed on each character only once.

The imprinted Seal of Fate mark allows a character to attempt to alter his fate—the player can reroll any attack, damage caused or suffered, saving throw, proficiency check, chance to learn a spell, system shock, or resurrection survival roll. The decision to reroll must be made immediately, before any other results are known. Each time this power is used, there is a 60% chance the mark will vanish forever. Once it has vanished, the character can never profit from the seal again.





Great Treasures: Warlords

Warlords are players who want power for their characters – power to affect the campaign world around them. They want to become the movers and shakers in your campaign world. Lands, castles, mighty armies, exotic followers, writs from the Grand Caliph, ranks, and titles all appeal to these players.

The Voice of the Great Lion. This treasure is nothing more than a crinkled and ancient scroll, tattered at the edges and bound with a faded golden cord. The scroll must be unrolled carefully to prevent its destruction. The surface is covered with intricate and highly artistic script, written in an old dialect of Midani. The first few lines are nonmagical and can be easily read. It reads:

Let be known to all the decision of the Great Lion, Worthy of the Gods, Confidant of Genies, He who sits on the Enlightened Throne, for he decrees Krak al- ___ and the lands accorded it by custom be awarded to the bearer. Let he of the court who contests this judgment read and hear the proof of the Great Lion from our master's own lips.

The remainder of the scroll is a magical script. A read magic spell does not identify the scroll but the caster knows the text will disappear forever once read. When the magical script is read aloud, a glowing figure of the First Caliph appears before the caster. It repeats the judgment given above and then remains for one hour, conversing and answering questions with those present, just as if the First Caliph was still alive. This would be a great wonder to bring back to the Sultan's court, indeed.

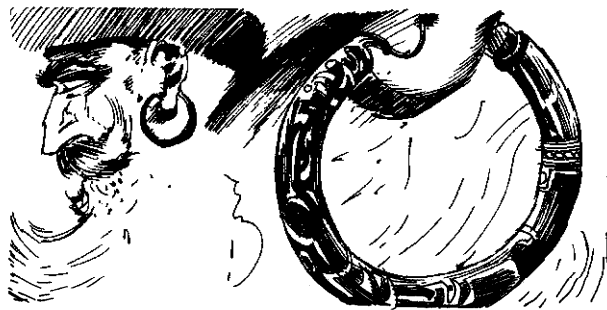
The fortress mentioned, Krak al- ___, is a small

stronghold at the headwaters of Al-Sabaya, the river that eventually flows to Gana. Its size and the lands which surround it (no more than a few miles) are left vague. It should be no bigger than you can manage while large enough to make the players feel like their characters have found a permanent home. The Sultan of Gana, marvelled and amazed by the appearance of the First Caliph, will gladly honor the mysterious bequest, provided the characters swear fealty to him.

The Spear of the Wandering Legion. The ancient tale of the Wandering Legion dates back to the time of the First Caliph, and it goes something like this:

It has come to me, O virtuous ones, that in those days, when the Wise and Exalted One was spreading the Word of the Loregiver, there rose a company of apostate warriors against his rule, but the Beloved of the Desert was strengthened and restored by the Word of the Law, and their treachery was laid low. Then the Master of the Great Throne, infinite as his wisdom truly was, showed great mercy and spared their lives. "Blessed be the Word and the Law for truly it is greater than we. None shall we follow who does not cleave to the Law," proclaimed the vanquished warriors. This they swore upon a spear of silver, saying, "Let he who is just carry this spear as the sign; then we will come to serve." Then each man wandered by a different track into the desert and was never seen by man again.

The Spear is an intricately etched shaft of slim silver that radiates magic. If struck upon the ground three times by a servant of the Grand Caliph (any properly recognized official of him or his appointed caliphs and sultans), 100 to 300 (1d3•100) 3rd-level farisan arrive to serve the wielder. They do not simply appear, but must reach the summoner by normal means. (Once summoned, the Spear need not be kept.) These men (and a few women) are all descendants of the original soldiers, the legacy secretly passed on from father to child. The warriors are fanatically loyal, but only to those who recognize and uphold the Law. Otherwise they instantly leave. The soldiers can only be summoned once.



Great Treasures: Role-Players

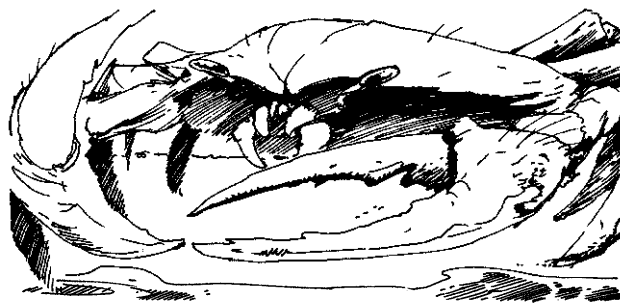
Role-players are interested in the personality of their characters and how they get along with others. They are less interested in defeating monsters than in meeting and dealing with people. Role-players often prefer treasures that make their characters unique and distinctive from others.

The Earring of Prince Mamoon. This is a hoop of jet coral, pierced with intricate calligraphy. These earrings were fashioned by Mamoon, a prince of the mariqab, who created them for the students of his *marqab*, a school of mystic learning in Gana. Over the centuries the sha'ir of this small and elite school have achieved renown for their skill and learning.

Presenting one of these earrings allows characters to join the *marqab*. Members (of any class or race) can reside at the *marqab* without charge. The sha'ir of the school will assist with spells, seeking answers to questions, and other non-adventuring activities. The sha'ir will not research new spells or create magical items for the characters, but he will sell potions and scrolls at discounted prices (a mere five times the xp cost of the item). After one month of study, player character sha'irs gain +5 to their chances of locating spells.

The Judgment of Abd Hikmat. This treasure is a simple scroll covered with nonmagical script. It is the judgment of a long-dead but still greatly respected qadi, Abd Hikmat (literally "slave of wisdom," a name of honor) concerning rights to the pearl banks of Jumlat and Gana. In it, the qadi rules Jumlat has abused the Law and awards the greater portion of the pearl beds to Gana.

As treasures go, the judgment is completely useless to the player characters. For the court of Gana the judgment is a treasure, indeed, since it would do much to bolster their claim to the pearl banks. (Jumlah, too, would pay dearly for this "worthless scrap of paper," since they would love to see it disappear.) If the characters return with the scroll, Vizier Al'ia bint-Hazir will provide an appropriately handsome (but not extensive) reward. A warrior might receive a *sword* +2, a sha'ir a *ring of spell-storing*. Characters can also claim a great favor from the Sultan sometime in the future, provided the request is judiciously exercised.





Great Treasures: Story-Tellers

Story-tellers want a good tale when everything is said and done. The tale can be filled with grand heroics, high drama, or low comedy, so long as it makes a good story. Story-tellers prefer treasures that inspire a sense of wonder and amazement or reveal secrets about the background of your campaign world.

The Crab God's Shell. This treasure is deceptively simple—all the characters need do is find and bring back a huge, red-brown bowl that was once the armored shell of the great crab god, Kar'r'rga. With such a wonder, the Sultan would build a marvelous fountain for his garden. (What the players may not realize is that they do not have to kill the hideous and powerful crab-god of Jazayir Al-Sartan, since this is a near impossible task. Unknown to them, Kar'r'rga periodically molts its shell as it grows.)

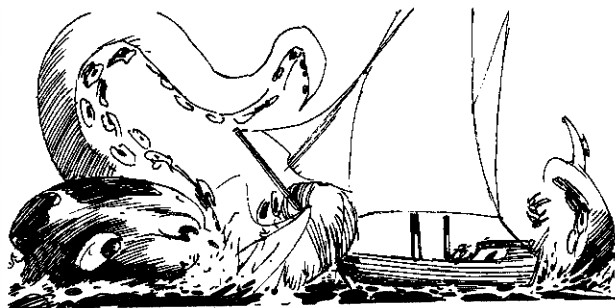
The Book of Lore. This fabled tome is said to contain all knowledge within its slim pages. Bound in





red leather unlike any known creature, the book contains a deceptively small number of pages. However, no matter how many pages are turned, one more remains. Each page is covered with crimped calligraphy of great beauty. If a week is spent studying this volume, the reader can thereafter attempt the equivalent of a *legend lore* spell once per week, based on what he has read in the *Book of Lore*. (In addition, characters able to use *legend lore* treat all casting times as one less when using their memorized spells—known objects are treated as if they were in hand, etc.) Should multiple party members attempt gain information on the same subject, those beyond the first add 2% to the chance of success. Once read, it is not necessary to retain the book; it gives no further benefit.

The *Book of Lore* would add greatly to the prestige of any court that possessed it, for scholars from all lands would come to consult it.



Great Treasures: Puzzle-Solvers

Puzzle-solvers want a challenge for their wits and are happiest when they have solved some particularly thorny problem – a trap, a magical item, a half-completed map, or whatever. Good treasures for such a group are those that are a puzzle in themselves, a new challenge for the players to solve.

Umar al-Rubban's Suwar. This ragged looking bundle of sheets is the long-lost collection of charts and *daftar* of Umar al-Rubban (the captain), perhaps the finest sailor of the Crowded Sea in recent memory. He disappeared many years ago, taking his secrets with him. These charts reveal much about his exploration of the Crowded Sea, provided the characters can figure

out what they are. Umar protected the charts with a *secret page* spell. (Note: Since this is the Great Treasure, *dispel magic* will not damage the contents of the page.) Once deciphered, player characters using his charts or copies thereof gain a +3 bonus to all navigation checks. More importantly, Umar carefully recorded the currents of the Crowded Sea (as noted on the Current Map). Those sailing these currents increase their ship's base speed per hour by 1. Following the currents and winds does not have any effect on running from pirates or sea battles. In these cases, use the ship's normal (or emergency) movement rate.

Any character able to write can copy Umar's charts in a single week. Once copied, the original charts need not be kept. Indeed, the Sultan of Gana would welcome these charts, for they would surely draw sailors and add luster to the Sultan's small university. (Likewise, several waterfront merchants would welcome these charts for purely economic reasons.)

The Oracle of the Hakima. This treasure is particularly unique for it has no apparent value. Upon reaching their goal, the player characters find a single sheet written with a script that glows like fire: *He who is least among the greatest, foolish among the learned, waits where others would lead – this one shall Fate proclaim.* The script has nothing to do with the player characters or their adventures; rather, it is the answer to a question the Sultan of Gana posed of a great oracle. He has grown concerned about his increasing age and so seeks to know which of his children he should name as his successor. If the scroll is brought to him, he instantly comprehends its significance, though not necessarily its answer. For him the sheet (and its bearers) represents a great treasure.

Opening Adventures

All opening encounters presume the player characters are starting from the city of Gana on the Pearl Coast. The adventure can begin in any other coastal city of the Golden Gulf, if you desire. Note



that if you do change the location, you will not be able to use The Quest encounter or anything else that relates to the Great Task of the Pearl. Since this is such a wonderful excuse to send characters on an adventure, it would be a shame not to exploit it in your campaign.

When choosing an opening encounter, remember that more than one can be used with a given group. Different player characters can have different motivations. Some may choose to undertake the Great Task of the Pearl as described in The Quest and purchase *The Map in the Bazaar* to help them on their way. The party's thief (if there is one) may accidentally pick the wrong pocket, leading to *The Rogue Geas'd*—or he may get lucky and escape the fire mage's wrath. A good plan is to have several of the encounters ready, just so you are sure to get your hooks into the group.

All encounters begin with the same background setting. The pearl season of Gana has just come to a close and the pearl boats have sailed back to port for the last time. For three days the city has been riotous with celebration of the Festival of the Pearl. The bazaars and suqs are filled with buyers haggling with captains over pouches of pearls, foreign merchants squatting behind rows of exotic wares, mystics twirling and drumming in entranced passion, beggars entreating coin-laden divers to be merciful in the eyes of the Law (“... a few coins for this most unfortunate, miserable wretch not worthy of your attention, but may the gods surely bestow great blessings on you; oh, thank you most noble one, thank you—a few coins for this...”), while entertainers and thieves of all sorts ply their trade among the wondering crowd. It is a gay time, yet business is not completely forgotten. Deals are concluded, loans collected, and fortunes lost behind the facade of pleasure.

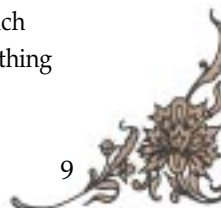
The Map in The Bazaar


As the player characters are winding their way down a particularly crowded street, a thronging procession, a spontaneous parade—perhaps for the current Great

Warrior of the Pearl or a reigning pearl captain of the day—sweeps down the avenue. The flooding revelers are like a wave that washes over the human sand before them, sweeping everyone into their current or out of their path. If the player characters allow themselves to be carried along, the group is quickly separated by the tide of revelers. Thieves in the crowd will naturally take advantage of the situation (pick pockets 65%).

The only way to avoid the rush is to instantly duck down the nearest alley. It seems hundreds of people are trying the same tactic, pushing the characters before them. The stream forces the group down more alleys and byways before it mysteriously vanishes as quickly as it formed, abandoning the characters at the mouth of a tattered and smoky bazaar. Old toothless men grin in predatory ways and silently wave their hands over dusty wares that have never been touched. Eyes peer from the edges of shuttered windows. Whispers follow the characters like seeds sprouting in their wake. Figures cross their path only to disappear as soon as a corner is turned. The way is unnaturally silent for a day of festival. No amount of wandering leads the characters out of this strange neighborhood, one that even natives of Gana do not recognize.

Near the center of the market, the characters finally hear a clear human voice. “Come look, come look at my wonders, great wonders brought from far places. Trust Old Kerim, he knows what you search for.” The speaker, a pock-marked ancient whose eyes are so swollen he can barely see, does not notice the player characters until they present themselves. Even then, he barely acknowledges their presence, talking always to a mythical third person. (“Perhaps they will look with favor on poor Kerim.”) His words are rambling and indirect. Hakima characters (if high enough in level) can tell that Kerim is enchanted, but not in what way. Likewise (for those who can detect such things), he appears to be disguised, although nothing can penetrate it.





In response to all queries about his wares, Kerim offers the group only one thing—a faded scroll. It is a map, he earnestly informs the player characters. If asked what it is a map of, the answer changes every time. According to Kerim, it can show the voyage of the soul, light the way to the lost land of the Loregiver, set a man among the stars, guide a man through the greatest halls of power, grant immortality on any brave enough to use it, lift the veil of toil from the weary, or show a man his own doom.

Naturally Kerim offers to sell it, asking at first an exorbitant sum. (Just how exorbitant depends on how rich the characters are.) Fortunately, he can be driven down to a reasonable price with the customary formulas of protest and complaint. No matter how little is paid for the scroll, Kerim grumbles about being robbed (still to his strange third person), but seems satisfied. If attacked, Kerim, the map, even the stall vanish in colored smoked.

Once the scroll is purchased, give the PCs the **Suwar Map** and **Clue #1** from the Map Booklet. Once they have the map, the characters find their way back to the main avenues without difficulty. If the characters refuse the map (and you really want them to have it), they wander lost through this strange neighborhood, encountering Kerim around unfamiliar corners again and again. Sooner or later they will buy the map.

The Quest

The final act of the Festival of the Pearl is the Proclamation from the Towers. For this event, the Sultan's criers take up positions in the towers of the temples throughout the city to announce the yearly Task of the Great Pearl. The announcement begins with a long and poetic recounting of the exploits of the Great Warriors of the Pearl who have come before. Many of these must have been truly wondrous—the embassy from the court of the marids, the bottled city of Ibn Mutamin, the performance of the great poet Khalid al-Zayir, and the most recent

winner, who brought back the head of a sahaugin queen. When the echoes of this litany, chanted in unison by a hundred voices from a hundred towers, finally dies out over the city, the magically amplified voice of Sultan Yusef bin Ahamad al-Wadi booms out from the sky.

“Know, my children, that you have done well this year, for Gana grows greater than before. Never has the enemy stood before our gates or threatened our shores—but Gana needs to remain strong. Therefore, let the boldest of my children seek a wonder for all to see. I will greatly honor he who succeeds and returns with this wonder, conferring upon him the title Great Warrior of the Pearl. By this deed shall all the world know Gana the Pearl is great and mighty still!

Thus is announced the yearly Task of the Great Pearl. Everyone in the city knows about it, so characters will have no difficulty getting the background information they need to start. Entice the players with grand descriptions of the rewards possible for those characters who succeed—riches, honors, fame, station, followers, etc.—whatever is likely to interest your group. Of course, all these rewards are presented through the grapevine. Only the least of them can be confirmed directly.

If the characters decide to accept the challenge, they must present themselves to the Sultan and announce their intention. Only those who have undertaken this formality are considered viable candidates for the task. Wealth, station, even allegiance make no difference—any person may approach the Sultan this day. (Of course, precautions exist to protect the Sultan from hidden enemies.)

The ceremony attracts a large, curious audience. Upon leaving the palace, the player characters are assaulted by a horde of fakirs, sages, and rogues—all offering the secret to some Great Treasure. Most of these are frauds, but if the player characters buy information' give them **Clue #1** from the Map Booklet.





The Rogue Geas'd

This encounter can only be used if one of the player characters is a rogue—preferably a sa'luk, beggar-thief, or barber—and is of larcenous intent. The encounter occurs when the scoundrel attempts something illegal—a pick-pocketing, perhaps. Play this out as a normal encounter. Allow the character all normal die rolls for his attempt, but no matter what the outcome (unless it is just too strained) the rogue is accosted by his victim, who is no ordinary citizen. The poor rogue has the unfortunate luck to choose Husam Ibn Aasim al-Zalim, elemental mage of the Brotherhood of Fire, as his target.

Ibn Aasim reacts with fearful speed and magisterial authority. Although his dress is clearly beneath one of his station (as if the mage were attempting to remain incognito), the mage has no qualms about displaying his full power. With a single sweep of his arms the marketplace almost magically clears and the area around the mage explodes into a hundred brilliant motes of light. The rogue and those accompanying him (if they are in the immediate area) are automatically blinded—surprised by the wizard's quick actions. The brilliance of the *sundazzle* spell catches them defenseless. If necessary, Ibn Aasim follows this with a *wall of fire* to isolate the rogue from any protectors.

Once secured from further attacks, Ibn Aasim pauses to survey his captive. Finally, in a voice that shivers with merciless humor, Husam Ibn Aasim al-Zalim says, "Because it would not be meet to mar the festivities of the wise and illustrious Sultan of Gana, I will not deprive you of your miserable and wretched

life. However, for this gift of generosity you must do a service for me. Find me that thing which I desire or suffer the penalties! Do you accept?" If the answer is yes, the character feels a tingle of magic as Ibn Aasim casts a *geas*. Should the character refuse, Ibn Aasim casts a *magic missile*, causing 5d4+5 points of damage, and then repeats the question.

After the *geas* is cast, there is the soft drop of a parchment and then mocking silence. Ibn Aasim has teleported away before the city guardsmen arrive. The only sign of his presence is the dropped parchment, **Clue # 1** from the Map Booklet.

For this encounter, Ibn Aasim will not fight. If for some reason he cannot avoid a battle, he will teleport away instead. Statistics for Ibn Aasim can be found on the loose sheet, **Ending the Adventure**.

90 Days or Else

This encounter is best used on those characters who have property or aspire to it. It is assumed the characters are looking for a ship, but any other large property could be substituted instead.

Word has gotten around that the PCs are inspecting ships with an eye toward purchase (or lease on a very long term). It is not likely the group has tried to keep their search secret, but even if they had, secrets of this nature are hard to keep. As a result, the player characters are approached by a heavy-set, well-dressed, and appropriately circumspect merchant who has a "mean and humble ship to sell, not worthy of your consideration, but if you wish to see it, I am honored to show it to you."

If the characters accept the offer, the merchant, Fayiz, shows them a sound boom on the waterfront which they can inspect at their leisure. Fayiz has appropriate paperwork to prove ownership, a claim supported by those on the docks. He will drive as hard a bargain as he can get away with, although he will accept the lowest haggling price listed.

If the player characters do not have the cash required but still want to make the purchase, it is not





difficult to find a reputable moneylender and secure a loan—provided the characters have good reputations and the apparent means to make good on a loan. For security, the moneylender can require the player characters accept a *geas* that promises the loan will be repaid (plus 10% interest) in the course of a year.

A few days after the characters buy the boom, the new owners are visited by Diyab al-Jaradi, a moneylender. He has come to collect on his loan. “What loan?” the PCs will ask at this point. As Diyab explains, the previous owner of their fine boom, Fayiz, borrowed a sum of money and used the boom as collateral. Now Fayiz has disappeared (he skipped town after getting money from both the moneylender and the player characters). According to a twisted provision of law in Gana, the holder of the collateral (i.e., the PCs) is responsible for repayment of the debt. Diyab wants his money now. He is not interested in the boom—he wants cash. If the characters do not pay, Diyab threatens to have them arrested. (Those arrested must “voluntarily” commit themselves to slavery until, by their labor, the debt is repaid.)

With the characters owing one, and possibly two, large sums of money, they had better negotiate a method of repayment. Diyab, knowing he gets less if a deal is not made, will accept the following: the player characters formally declare themselves Diyab’s slaves, a condition to last until such time as the player characters purchase their freedom by providing cash (or treasure) worth the top price of the boom plus 50%. In exchange, Diyab will allow the PCs to use the boom for a reasonable amount of time—as long as the Sultan allows for the Task of the Great Pearl—to repay the loan. As sign of his trust, Diyab will send only one person to oversee and protect his property.

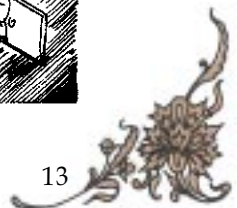
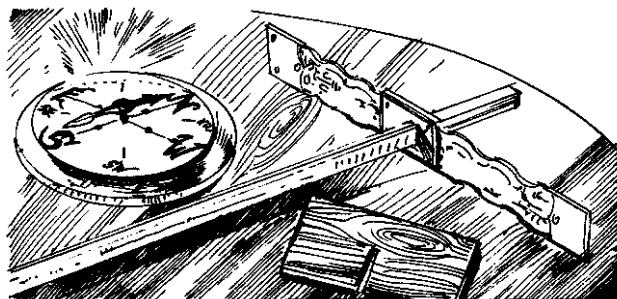
If the terms are agreeable, the contract is presented to the local *qadi* for approval and registration in the city records. If you feel it is necessary to keep the characters honest, have Diyab insist upon a *geas* that matches the contract’s terms. After the contract is sealed, Diyab introduces the characters to their

overseer—Mauj, a reef giant of the pearl banks. (Complete details of reef giants can be found in the *Monstrous Compendium*, *AL-QADIM*[™] appendix; Mauj’s description is found on the loose sheet, **NPC Crewmen**.) Mauj is aloof but friendly, although he makes it clear that any injury, disrespect, or treachery to him or Diyab, their master, will make Mauj—and his brothers, sisters, and parents—very angry. Stress to the player characters that they really do not want a far-flung community of reef giants hunting them for vengeance. Just to be sure he can report any rebellion by Diyab’s slaves, Mauj wears a *ring of recall* that can instantly transport him back to Gana.

If the player characters treat Mauj correctly, he is actually beneficial. With his guidance, all navigation checks gain a +1 and he will fight in defense of the ship. He will not accompany the party ashore unless there is a strong likelihood they plan to escape.

Any remaining crew the ship needs must be hired by the PCs either with cash (should they have any) or by negotiated shares of any profit made.

Once all arrangements have been made, let the player characters fret for a little over how they will raise the capital they need. If the characters decide to sail for the Crowded Sea on their own, provide only minimal guidance, since they are headed in the right direction anyway. Otherwise, the PCs can purchase **Clue #1** in a waterfront market, learn it through their own researches, or hear it as a bit of useful gossip. If absolutely necessary, Mauj can offer the clue. Try to avoid this alternative if possible, though.



The Ships

Although the Land of Fate is best known for its vast desert expanses and fearless horsemen, Zakharans are no strangers to the blue ocean's waves. Indeed, Zakharans of the southern shores proudly proclaim each other the greatest mariners that ever were and ever shall be.

And who can dispute them?

Do not the *bahriyin* (seamen) of Jumlah ply the Bahr al-Izdiham like flocks of geese? Who but the *baghlas* of Huzuz sail the Bahr al-Ajami to the distant lands of spirits and camphor? Do not the corsairs of Hawa rule the Bahr al-Kibar and raid *ajami* shores? Can any other people make these claims? Do they build ships of such grace and speed? Only foolish *ajami* do not see the skill and wisdom of Zakhara's shipbuilders.

Principles of Ship-Building

Although there are no proofs, no studies of the matter, any Zakharan sailor will tell you part of their secret lies in their ships. Well-traveled *bahriyin* have seen the tubby scows of the northerners. With their nailed sides, these ships would be easily broken on the many reefs and shoals of the Crowded Sea. The barges of the distant eastern lands, with their flat bottoms and awkward sails, would never survive the fierce genie-inspired storms that rage without warning across the oceans.

Building ships in Zakhara is not an easy task. Foremost of these difficulties is that the Land of Fate is a land without wood. True, there are fruits, palms, and other fine trees, but the Zakharan shores lack great forests ripe with lumber for ship-building. Wood must be brought from the islands of the Crowded Sea and distant Afyal. The favored timber is teak, renowned for its durability, but palm wood is also used. The lack of wood has also meant there are few large shipyards. Most vessels are built by a single ship-builder and his crew, working on the beach when the lumber is





available. Many dhows sport distinctive touches that identify the builder, a signature in wood.

To deal with such problems as reefs, bad winds, and fierce storms, Zakharan hulls are made from planks sewn, not nailed, together. Holes are drilled through each plank and the ship is literally stitched together with coconut fiber rope. The holes and seams are then caulked with pitch and more fiber to prevent leakage. The result is a lighter, more flexible hull than that built with nails and pegs—a feature useful when blown onto a hidden reef or forced to beach before a coming storm. Of course, sewn hulls tend to leak more and Zakharan ships must stop often to recaulk and repair. Nor are the light hulls sturdy in rough, deep seas, but then the Crowded Sea and the Golden Gulf are shallow and marked by many islands.

The most distinctive feature of any Zakharan ship is its lateen sail, a style not used in the northern or eastern lands. Triangular in shape, the lateen is easily identifiable on the horizon from the square sails of other lands. In some ships the lateen is not a true triangle, having the front corner cut away to leave a luff. Large ships, such as the baghla, carry two sails—one on the main mast and a second from the mizzen. The triangular shape of the lateen allows the sail to be larger than a normal square sail and lets the ship sail closer to the wind (“windward”), which makes sailing much simpler.

The rudder on a dhow may be mounted either on a square stern or along the side of the ship (when the stern is not square). Only larger ships are built with a square stern; for the smaller vessels the stern is pointed and the rudder mounted on the side. The square sterns may be an innovation taken from the northerners, whose cogs and caravels sometimes reach Quwwat—but no true Zakharan ship-builder will ever admit to it.

The Baghla

The largest of the dhows are the great baghlas (or baggalahs). They are also the rarest and most expensive ships to ply the Crowded Sea. Most sail from Tajar,

Jumlat, or Huzuz, where the great merchants dwell, but the caliphs of every petty state aspire to have one or two baghlas of their own traveling the trade routes. Not only can these ships carry great amounts of cargo, but they also reflect the power and influence of those who own them. Owning a baghla means more than just possessing a large ship; it is a symbol of membership in the elite ranks of the rich and powerful.

Baghlas range in size from 150 to 200 feet in length with an average beam of 25 to 30 feet. Only one deck runs the length of the ship. It is set, as in all dhows, low in the hull so that the hold below deck is quite small and cramped. Most cargo is carried on the main deck, especially since the hold tends to leak. At the stern, which is often elaborately carved, is a small poop deck set over a number of cabins. The square stern has a rudder mounted at its center. The quarters beneath the poop deck are most often reserved for important passengers and dependent women. The captain and his mate, like the rest of the crew, sleep on deck under the open sky.



A baghla can carry cargo tonnage equal to its length, madly packed and crammed onto every square inch of deck until the crew must virtually walk and sleep atop their freight. Its passenger capacity is astonishing. Up to 400 souls can be pressed aboard a single ship although such loading threatens the sea-worthiness of the vessel. The ship requires a crew of 30 to 40 men. Any less makes handling the sails near impossible.

The baghla has a base move of 4 and an emergency speed (main, mizzen, and a topsail) of 5. Its seaworthiness is 50% when checking for foundering from storms and whirlpools, but rises to 60% if the check is for breaking up on a reef or shoal.

The Boom

Although nearly equal in size to the baghla, the boom is a far more common, and thus less prized, ship. The boom is the standard workhorse of the great merchant families, gathering cargoes from distant lands for sale in the suqs of Huzuz and beyond.





Booms range in size from 100 to 150 feet long, with an average beam of 25 feet. While cut on the same lines as smaller dhows, the boom is easily identified by its jutting stem. This is used to fasten a foresail in those instances where extra cloth is needed. The stern is square with a central rudder, but the boom lacks the cabins and poop deck of the baghla. Instead, the aft portion is covered by a small roof that provides shelter for the captain, his mate, and any important cargo. It is also used as a sleeping platform during the night.

Like all smaller dhows, the boom has but a single deck set low in the hull. Cargo is carried on deck and ships are often packed to incredible levels. The cargo capacity of the typical boom varies between 100 and 125 tons. Up to 300 passengers can be crowded aboard a single vessel, although this leaves no space to even turn around.

Booms require a crew of 25 to 30 men, necessary to raise and lower the great yardarm and perform other tasks. The ship has a base speed of 3 and an emergency speed of 5 when the main, mizzen, top, and foresail are used. Rigging for full emergency speed takes at least an hour, during which the mainsail must be lowered to fix the top- and foresails. If only the main and mizzen are used, the boom has an emergency speed of 4. In storms and open sea, the boom has a seaworthiness of 45%, while along coasts and reefs this rises to 60%.

The Sambuk

Of all the ocean traders, the sambuk is the one most frequently encountered. Smaller and cheaper than a boom, it is the standard ship used by medium and small merchants. Although the hull follows the same general lines as the boom, the sambuk can be identified by its distinctive “wings” that sweep off the square stem. It is also generally smaller in size. Sambuks range from 50 to 100 feet in length, with the average hull being an even 75 feet long.

The sambuk sports a single deck, although many have a slightly higher poop deck for the captain and his mate. The small space beneath the poop deck is

used only for cargo—the ship has no cabins and everyone sleeps on deck. Cargo is lashed on deck and left exposed to the elements.

Speed and seaworthiness of the sambuk are given in the *Arabian Adventures* rulebook.

The Zarug

The zarug is the largest of the everyday coasters, ships most often used for medium- to short-range voyages. It typically can be found hauling cargo and travelers between the cities of the Golden Gulf. It is also the favored ship of the various bands of coastal pirates, primarily for its speed and capacity.

The zarug is similar in appearance to the sambuk, except that the stern tapers to a point where it sports a distinctive, nearly vertical rudder. This is worked by a complicated steering gear, another feature of the zarug.

The zarug is well built, but not intended for deep-sea travel. Thus, it has two seaworthiness ratings. When sailing within sight of shore, where the waters are typically less violent (and a small ship can find shelter quickly), the zarug has a seaworthiness rating of 50%. However, when venturing onto open waters (which are prone to high waves and sudden changes in weather) the zarug’s seaworthiness is reduced to 30%.

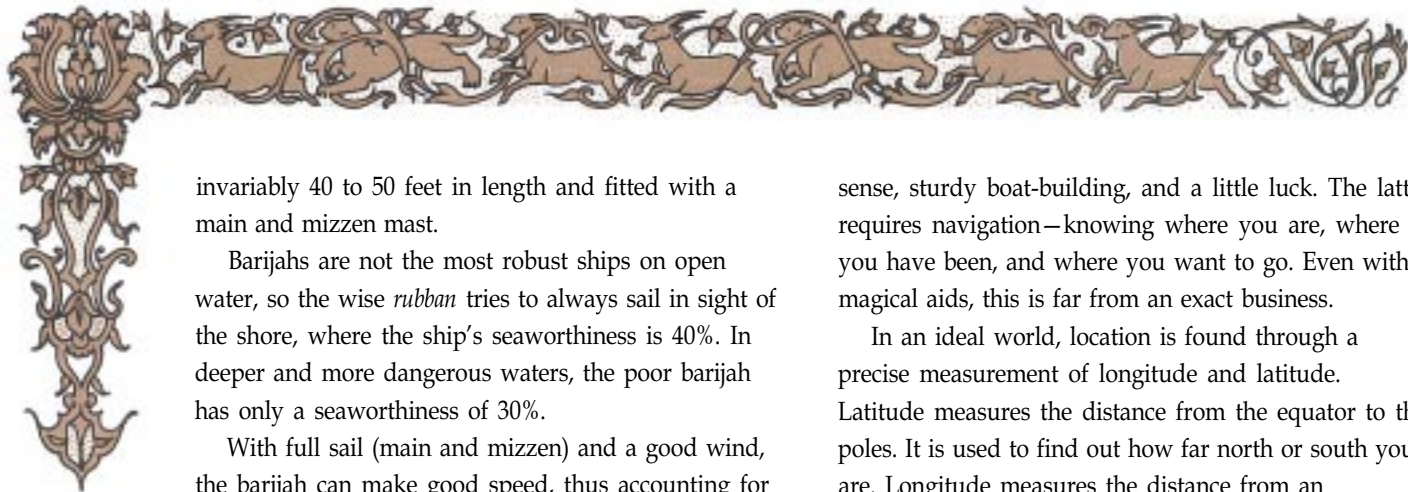
The zarug requires a crew of 15 to 20 men and has a carrying capacity of 60 tons, as given in the *Arabian Adventures* rulebook.

The Barijah

The barijah is the smallest merchant vessel found in Zakhara. It is primarily used by fishermen, pearl divers, and traders who carry goods to the small villages on the coasts of the Land of Fate.

Barijahs vary greatly in appearance; some have a side-mounted rudder while others are square-sterned. The exact details vary from builder to builder, according to local custom. The only distinctive common feature is the raised platform at the back, which serves as the captain’s bed. Barijah are





invariably 40 to 50 feet in length and fitted with a main and mizzen mast.

Barijahs are not the most robust ships on open water, so the wise *rubban* tries to always sail in sight of the shore, where the ship's seaworthiness is 40%. In deeper and more dangerous waters, the poor barijah has only a seaworthiness of 30%.

With full sail (main and mizzen) and a good wind, the barijah can make good speed, thus accounting for its popularity. The crew of 10 and its cargo capacity of 40 tons are as listed in the *Arabian Adventures* rulebook.

Ship Costs

Item	Cost (gp)		
	A	N	B
Baghla	50,000	40,000	30,000
Barijah	7,500	5,000	3,750
Boom	25,000	20,000	15,000
Sambuk	15,000	10,000	7,500
Zarug	12,000	8,000	6,000

The Lore of The Sea

To run a successful Sinbad-style campaign, it helps to know something about sailing techniques and the hazards of the ocean, both real and fanciful. The entries in this section provide advice and facts on dealing with the wonders and perils of sea voyages.

The material here is not going to make anyone into a sailor. It presents a simplified view of the business of sailing, where ease of play and fun are more important than grim accuracy. Furthermore, nautical science in Zakhara is far from today's standards, and it is further complicated by the use of magic.

Navigation

The two greatest concerns of every sailor are to keep his ship afloat and to get from here to there. The former can usually be accomplished through common

sense, sturdy boat-building, and a little luck. The latter requires navigation—knowing where you are, where you have been, and where you want to go. Even with magical aids, this is far from an exact business.

In an ideal world, location is found through a precise measurement of longitude and latitude. Latitude measures the distance from the equator to the poles. It is used to find out how far north or south you are. Longitude measures the distance from an imaginary point (Greenwich, England in the real world) and is used to determine a location east or west of this line.

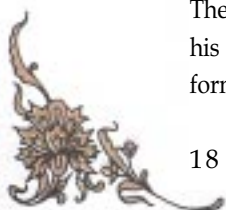
In the PCs' magical age and time, only half this formula—a ship's latitude—can be measured with any accuracy. This is done by measuring the height of the sun or pole star over the horizon and comparing it to the navigator's knowledge or tables prepared for this use.

Longitude (east/west position) is another matter, for there is no simple method of reckoning it. Calculating longitude requires accurate reckonings of speed and time, neither of which are available to Zakharan sailors. While the question of timekeeping might be solved through magical means, measuring the distance sailed along a particular heading is near impossible due to the vagaries of winds, ocean currents, and constantly changing headings. Here the navigator shows his true skill, for he must estimate ship speeds and distances traveled every day. This, combined with a knowledge of landmarks, seasonal winds, and ocean currents, allows the navigator to estimate a ship's latitude.

Fixing Location

To determine a ship's position requires a check against the navigation proficiency. Only the highest proficiency score of those navigating is used. Success and failure for different conditions are given below.

Along a well-known coast— *Success.* The navigator has sighted a familiar landmark, fixing the ship's position anywhere within 10 miles of its true location. *Failure.* No landmark sighted.





Along an unfamiliar Coast— Success. The navigator has sighted a landmark seen once or described to him, fixing the position within 15 miles. *Failure.* No landmark sighted. If the roll is a 20, the navigator has mistakenly sighted on something that is not the desired landmark and is now up to 100 miles off course.

Along an uncharted coast— Success. The navigator has successfully fixed the ship's latitude within 30 miles of its true location. Furthermore, he has sighted a prominent landmark that can be noted on his charts for future voyages. *Failure.* The latitude sighting is up to 50 miles off the ship's true position and no prominent landmark is sighted.

On the open sea— Success. The navigator fixes the ship's latitude within 50 miles of its true location and guesses the longitude somewhere within 100 miles. *Failure.* The navigator guesses the latitude within 100 miles of the true location but cannot fix longitude at all.

Tools of The Trade


Many navigators rely on nothing more than their eyes, fingers, and wits. However, there are a number of simple tools (and a few expensive magical ones) that can improve a navigator's accuracy. All require a minimal amount of training to use and understand before any benefits can be gained.

Daftar

The most treasured of navigational instruments are *daftar*, the instructions and tables compiled by generations of navigators. Daftar record a wide variety of information composed into sailing instructions from one city or land to another. Daftar are not maps but logbooks and tables. For example, one might read instructions in a daftar as follows:

When the winter monsoons come, sail three days to the point of the Great Elephant, then set your ship so the





Guiding Star rises half a hand over the mast. Sail for two days, and on the third the didban (lookout) will sight to the left a line of cliffs, half sunk beneath the horizon. One day after sighting these, bear directly toward the Star of the Word....

Sailing instructions such as these rely on many observations—the time of year, the height of the sun or stars above the horizon, distant landmarks and their position on the horizon, annual migrations of fish and birds, and prevailing currents. Although they lack pinpoint accuracy, a navigator who follows a good set of daftar gains a +2 to his navigation proficiency score.

Daftar can seldom be bought and are often jealously guarded by their owners. The secrets of a daftar are most often shared as a great gift, repayment for a favor, or a trade of information.

Rahmani

Another equally valuable tool of the navigator is a *rahmani*, or book of charts. These collections of maps note coastlines, landmarks and rhumb lines, and provide annotated sailing instructions. With a set of rahmani, a navigator gains a +2 for those waters depicted. This bonus cannot be combined with that for the daftar, however.

Like the daftar, rahmani are not bought or sold. The information is shared as part of the tradition of hospitality among Zakharan seamen.

Cross Staff

A common tool of navigators is a simple device known as a *cross staff*. The cross staff measures the height of the noonday sun over the horizon, or the height of the pole star at midnight. With this information, a navigator can get a more accurate fix on a ship's latitude than by just using one's fingers to judge. Navigators using a cross staff gain a +1 on their proficiency score, but only for checks made at noon or midnight.

Compass

Although Zakharan navigators are familiar with magnetic compasses, these devices remain primitive and unscientific. It is commonly believed that the needle is possessed by a gen, thus accounting for its strange behavior. *Compasses* have only a fair accuracy, particularly aboard the moving deck of a ship. Furthermore, navigators do not have a full understanding of magnetic declination (the angle of difference between the magnetic pole and the pole star), limiting the instrument's usefulness. Navigators using a compass gain a +1 on their checks.

There is also an extremely rare and expensive magical compass (which really does contain a trapped gen in the needle). This compass points not to the magnetic north, but to the pole star at all times. It is far more accurate than a normal compass, giving the fortunate navigator a +2 on his proficiency score. However, confusion is sometimes created when magical and nonmagical compasses are compared, since the two show different headings for north and south.

Kamal

This simple device is the most commonly used navigation tool of the Zakharans. It is nothing more than a rectangle of wood with a rope through the center. The cord is knotted at different lengths. Each knot represents a specific port. By taking a sighting on the pole star at evening, the navigator can determine if the ship is sailing north, south, or at the same latitude as any port knotted on the string. Using this device gives a +1 to navigation checks, but only for those made in the evening.

A *kamal* can be bought at most large seaports, or one can be made with a minimum of skill, although many are elaborately carved. As opposed to their possessiveness about daftar and rahmani, navigators like to show off their kamals, comparing knots and artistic workmanship.



Tool Prices

Item	Cost (gp)		
	A	N	B
Compass	100	75	60
Cross staff	25	17	10
Kamal	.5	.3	.1

Asking for Directions

Of course, rudimentary science is not the only means for determining where a ship is and where it is going. After all, this is the Land of Fate, the land of geniekind—why not just call up a marid and ask for directions?

Marids Lie.

There is an old Zakharan saying that, “A man who trusts a genie should only ask for little things.” Now, there is no certainty that a marid or any other of the geniekind would deceive a storm-tossed sailor. There are tales of seamen rescued from certain drowning by ancient marids, or even being lavishly entertained in undersea palaces. There are many, many more tales of capricious marids raising deadly tempests, sinking ships, or conjuring deceptions to lure unwary sailors. Dealing with geniekind is just plain dangerous. If it is necessary to call upon a marid, characters should be well-prepared to bestow generous and wondrous gifts upon any marid who deigns answer their call. A pleased genie is likely to provide simple aid, an insulted one most certainly will not.

The dangers of dealing with marids are particularly demonstrated in open water far from land. Like the jann of the deepest desert, the marids view the great expanses of ocean as their realm. Sailors and their boats are at best brief visitors, at worst trespassers. Invaders of the marid homeland may be dealt with harshly or completely ignored. Since it is impossible for a captain to be certain of his reception, the wise *rubban* sticks to coastal waters wherever possible.

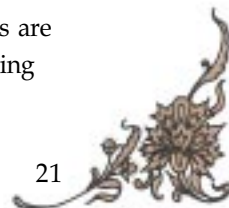
A sha’ir may have the brilliant idea to use his gen to provide directions, sending the little genie off to seek out instructions from the more powerful spirits. This is no guarantee of success. Gens are not the brightest creatures among geniekind, the maridans being particularly flighty on such matters as precise directions. Secondly, the gens do not seek out their answers in this world but travel to their elemental plane. Thus, they cannot “see” the actual route but must rely on accounts of other genies. Finally, marids, the source of most sea-going directions, do not navigate like ships. Landmarks cited are more frequently far beneath the waves and therefore of little use to the average navigator. “Sail three days until you find the city of Rilah” does not help when Rilah sank beneath the waves centuries ago.

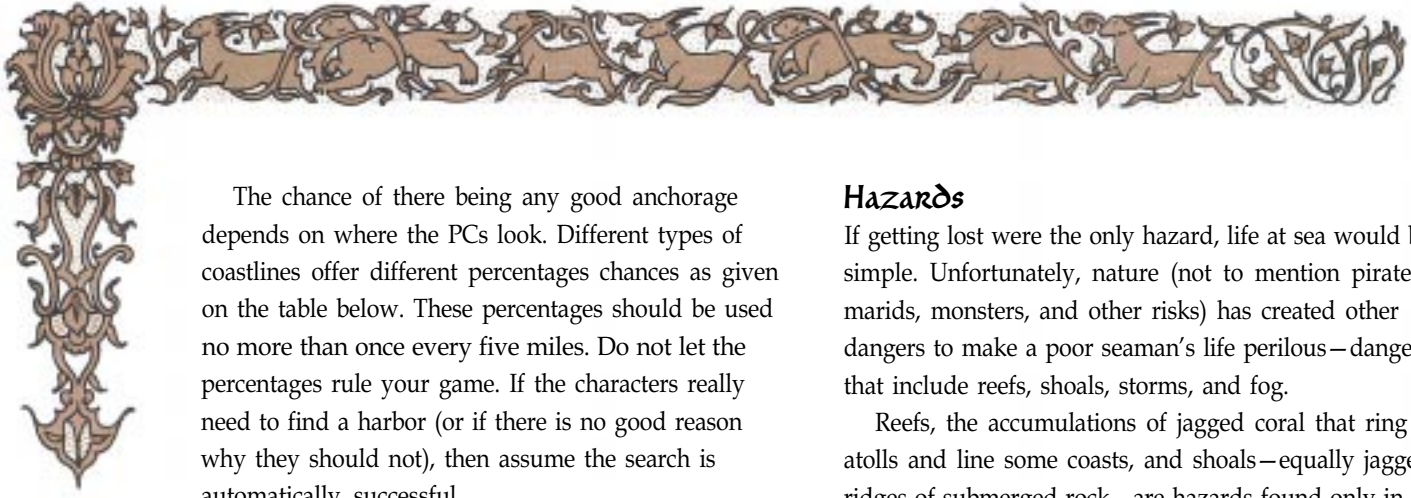
Harbors

Although it is possible and often necessary to sail throughout the entire night, many *rubban* prefer to drop anchor during the hours of darkness. This is particularly true when sailing through unknown coastal waters. Darkness can hide dangerous reefs, jagged rocks, or monstrous terrors that would be easily avoided in daylight.

Then there are storms which can arise suddenly during day or night from which a ship must seek shelter. At other times, ships must stop for fresh water or beach to make repairs. All of these require the vessel to find a safe harbor.

Many harbors are already located on the Crowded Sea map, primarily those of ports or places referenced in the adventures. However, there are many, many more safe anchorages than are shown. Most of these are small—a lagoon sheltered by a reef, a river mouth, or a sandy bar where a ship can be safely beached—and some are subject to the vagaries of tide and weather. Finding a safe harbor is a matter of both skill and luck—skill in knowing which coastlines are most apt to provide shelter, luck in actually finding one.





The chance of there being any good anchorage depends on where the PCs look. Different types of coastlines offer different percentages chances as given on the table below. These percentages should be used no more than once every five miles. Do not let the percentages rule your game. If the characters really need to find a harbor (or if there is no good reason why they should not), then assume the search is automatically successful.

Shoreline	% chance/anchorage*
Coastal cliff	5%
Rocky coast	30%
Sandy beach	60%
Mangrove swamp	70%
Atoll	75%

* Add 10% if the coastline includes a river mouth or delta.

Once an anchorage is found, it is up to the player characters to make note of it. If the navigator marks the position on his charts and notes landmarks, the anchorage can be found again with no difficulty (provided the ship sails back to the same area). If bad charts or no charts are kept, the process of finding an anchorage must be repeated each time. Later success may result in the same or a different anchorage for the player characters.

Most anchorages are little more than shallow lagoons protected from the ocean waves by a line of reefs or a thin spit of land. Few are proper bays with well-sheltered entrances. Those found at river mouths are commonly fresh-water channels deep enough for the ship to take shelter. None have even the slightest port facilities such as a village, much less docks or shipyards.

Hazards

If getting lost were the only hazard, life at sea would be simple. Unfortunately, nature (not to mention pirates, marids, monsters, and other risks) has created other dangers to make a poor seaman's life perilous—dangers that include reefs, shoals, storms, and fog.

Reefs, the accumulations of jagged coral that ring atolls and line some coasts, and shoals—equally jagged ridges of submerged rock—are hazards found only in shallow seas. They are normally easy to avoid. Waves breaking over these formations usually give warning of their presence. On calm oceans, they can be seen beneath the surface and sailed around. Nonetheless, wise navigators note the presence of these hazards as protection against the unforeseen. Night, fog, or a storm can conceal the presence jagged stone or grinding coral just beneath the waves.

If a ship foolishly or unfortunately strikes one of these submerged obstacles, a seaworthiness check must be made. If the check fails, the ship has run aground. A second check must be made immediately and once every hour thereafter to see if the ship is holed by the waves constantly pounding it against the coral. If the second check fails, the ship begins to sink as water floods into the hold. Three men assigned to the task can bail the water from a single hole, keeping the vessel afloat. If the vessel is allowed to flood, the next seaworthiness check automatically fails and the ship breaks up.

Getting the ship off the reef (or shoals or even a sandbar) usually means waiting for high tide, which arrives in 2-24 (2d12) hours.

The weather is the other great hazard of the sea. To determine weather conditions each day, use Table 79: Weather Conditions, from the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. When rolling for a new weather condition, apply the following modifiers to the die roll and alter certain results accordingly. Unless the player characters must leave in a hurry, assume all voyages begin with a favorable wind.



Weather was: Modifier Condition Change

Becalmed	-2	Gale/Hurricane = Storm
Light breeze	-1	Hurricane = Storm
Favorable	0	No change
Strong winds	0	Becalmed = Light breeze
Storm	+1	Becalmed = Light breeze
Gale	+2	Becalmed/Lt. breeze = Favorable
Hurricane	+3	Becalmed/Lt. breeze/Favorable = Strong winds

For example, it is summer and the characters are on the deep ocean. Yesterday the crew had a rough day battling a storm. At the start of the new day, the DM secretly rolls 2d6 for the weather condition, adding one to the die roll because of the previous storm. The DM rolls a 10, which becomes an 11 (10+1=11). The storm has increased to a terrifying gale, buffeting the ship with its mighty winds. Another day passes and the vessel is still afloat, so the DM makes another check, this time with a +2 modifier. He rolls a 3, modified to 5. The table indicates light breeze. However, since the previous day's weather was gale, the light breeze result becomes favorable winds.

If a ship fails a seaworthiness check due to a storm, gale or hurricane, it does not automatically sink. (This is to give player characters a chance to continue the adventure.) Instead, the ship has suffered major damage and needs repairs before the voyage can continue. Strong winds may shred the sails, a mast may snap in a hurricane, or a gale may drive the ship onto a dangerous reef or shoal. The DM should choose damage appropriate to the situation. Should a second check be required and failed, then the ship will sink.

Finally, there is fog, the bane of seamen. Fog can only occur when the weather is light wind or becalmed, and even then only on a roll of 6 on 1d6. Fog does not occur in summer. In fog, navigation checks are impossible. If close to shore, the ship may ground on a sandbar, scrape across a sunken reef, or smash into rocky shoals. Use fog and its dangers to create some tension for your player characters.

Pirates

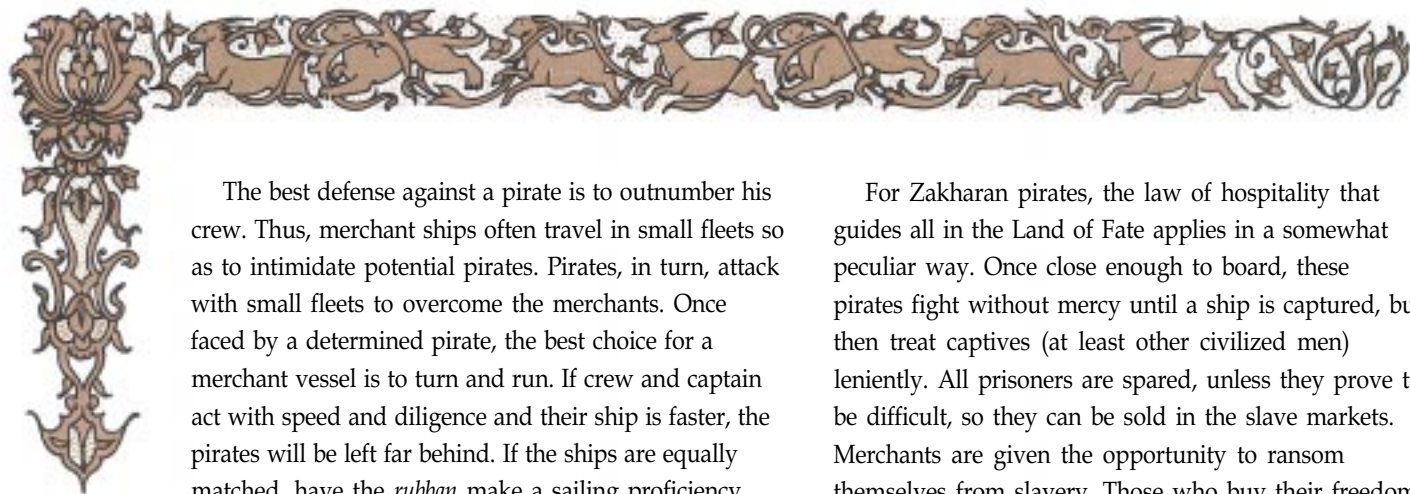
As on all waters, the most sinister threat comes not from reefs or unpredictable weather, but from man. Enlightened though the Zakharans may be, the inlets and channels of the Crowded Sea provide shelter to many a brotherhood of cutthroats and fiends. Pirates range from a lone zaruq of scoundrels to organized fleets of five or more fine booms. Further south, there are opportunistic islanders with war canoes, equally willing to trade with or plunder passing ships.

Pirates of the Crowded Sea do not follow the same traditions and customs of pirates elsewhere (particularly in the barbaric oceans of the north). Zakharan traditions affect even their behavior. For example, they consider themselves subjects of the Grand Caliph who have been given claim over his vast oceans. Should the Grand Caliph ever sail their waters, they will give him all respect he is due. All others, however, enter pirate waters at their own risk. Pirates are not immune to the traditions of hospitality either. Thus, it is possible to meet with pirates and survive the encounter mostly intact.

The pirates of a given ship or fleet are commonly brought together by some common bond. They may all be ex-slaves of a harsh master, inhabitants of the same village, or former mamluks. They do not consider each other thieves or cutthroats but honorable men (of sorts) carrying out a trade. It just so happens that their trade is to take from others. Zakharan pirates consider themselves part of the civilized people of the Land of Fate.

Few Zakharan pirates are easily identified as such. Raiding is an honorable profession in many ports, provided the raider practices his trade elsewhere. Pirates do not fly distinctive flags, conduct their trade in pirate towns, or form anything like a "brotherhood of the sea." On the waters, a pirate ship looks no different from any other—except, perhaps, for the larger than normal number of men she carries on deck. As a consequence, most captains are wary of any ship encountered at sea.





The best defense against a pirate is to outnumber his crew. Thus, merchant ships often travel in small fleets so as to intimidate potential pirates. Pirates, in turn, attack with small fleets to overcome the merchants. Once faced by a determined pirate, the best choice for a merchant vessel is to turn and run. If crew and captain act with speed and diligence and their ship is faster, the pirates will be left far behind. If the ships are equally matched, have the *rubban* make a sailing proficiency check. If he succeeds, the pirates are evaded. If he fails, something unfortunate has happened—the ship has lost the wind, the captain called for a change of direction at the wrong time, etc.—and the pirates close for boarding. If the pirate ship is faster, the *rubban* must make a sailing proficiency check, subtracting the difference in speed between the two ships from his ability rating. If the check is successful, the captain has performed a brilliant maneuver and escaped; otherwise, the pirates close for boarding.

No matter where they occur, pirate attacks follow a pattern. Outside boarding range, most of the pirate crew remains out of sight so as not to arouse suspicion. Powerful magic that might damage the merchant ship is avoided, since a sunken cargo is worthless to most pirates. Zakharan pirates (as opposed to barbarians from the islands) even prefer to avoid missile weapons since these might encourage a crew to resist. Arrows and spells are used against select targets to cow the crew into surrendering.

Once close enough, the pirates attempt to grapple and board the merchant ship. To role-play these battles, the DM can set out the appropriate deck plans from the Map Booklet. (Permission is granted to photocopy them for personal use.) The pirates block wind to the merchant ship, making maneuvering impossible, and then grapple with 3d6 worth of irons (smaller ships may have fewer grapples). If not under missile fire or spells, at this point Zakharan pirates typically demand surrender (islanders are much more unpredictable in this respect), promising mercy. PCs cannot call on their crew to fight (unless fanatically loyal).

For Zakharan pirates, the law of hospitality that guides all in the Land of Fate applies in a somewhat peculiar way. Once close enough to board, these pirates fight without mercy until a ship is captured, but then treat captives (at least other civilized men) leniently. All prisoners are spared, unless they prove to be difficult, so they can be sold in the slave markets. Merchants are given the opportunity to ransom themselves from slavery. Those who buy their freedom are typically released to the care of sympathetic merchants in a civilized port. Any characters of noteworthy ability may be offered a place among the pirates, and truly charismatic individuals may even be freed without concessions.

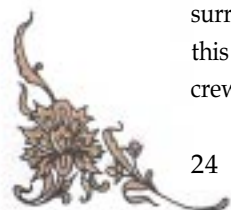
This behavior does not make Zakharan pirates foolish. Their reputation for merciful treatment of captives makes most merchants more willing to surrender when faced by pirates. For the PCs, this means that their crew will automatically surrender to Zakharan pirates unless they are either fanatically loyal or include marines hired to defend the ship. Loss of cargo can be endured, death cannot.

Repairs

All ships need repair from time to time. Even the most skillful *rubban*, having avoided reefs, shoals, pirates, and sea monsters, must still beach his craft every few months. There are always leaks to patch, barnacles to scrape, and preservative oil to rub into the hull. To perform repairs and maintenance, the ship must be beached at any sandy coastline anchorage.

Typical maintenance can take as much or as little time as the DM wants—it is not important to the adventure. The only time PCs should be concerned is when the ship needs major repairs, be it from running aground, pirate attack, or bad luck in a storm. At this point they will probably want to repair it as quickly as possible. Normal repairs require a safe anchorage and supplies, although emergency repairs can be made at sea.

To make repairs to the hull, the ship must be careened, which requires unloading the cargo and





dragging the ship onto a sandy beach. Mast and rudder repairs can be performed in a quiet lagoon with the crew diving over the side to do the work in the latter case. If there is wood present—coconut, teak, or other suitable lumber—the repair process takes 2d10 days or as long as the DM wants. There is always one skilled carpenter among the crew to supervise the work. While the repairs are being done, the DM should allow the PCs opportunity to explore their landfall and even have adventures while the crew works. Repairs are always assumed to be successful unless the DM has some reason for them to fail.

Repairs at sea are a harder task, but no less successful. Only the most foolish *rubban* does not carry a small supply of lumber, oakum, and other ship-building materials just for these disasters. A holed hull can be temporarily repaired by the crew in 2d6 hours using canvas and rope. The ship will still leak slowly and should make for safe port immediately. Repairs at sea require 1d3 + 1 days, during which the ship can only drift. Thereafter, the ship can only move at half normal speed and suffers a -10% modifier to its seaworthiness until proper repairs are made.

Castaways

By the end of this adventure, there is a good chance the player characters will have gone down with the ship—once, twice, or even more times. They may be proverbial Jonahs, able to sink their own ships with the slightest glance. Since drowning at sea is hardly heroic, what's to be done?

The first thing is, then, don't let them drown. It makes for a very bad end to your adventure. Let them swallow water and flounder about, force them to strip off their heavy gear, but in the end allow them to survive. Just like in innumerable Sinbad movies, give the player characters a mast to cling to or hunk of shattered deck to use as a raft.

Once the characters are safe from drowning, make them suffer—but quickly. Role-playing days adrift at sea is dull. In your best monotone, describe the endless

hours of rolling swells, the ceaselessly scorching sun, and the gnawing thirst. While you do this, hopefully your characters are using their wits and their abilities to reach some shore. If the ship sank close to a coast, they may sight and be able to swim to land. Farther out, the characters may still be able to use spells, magical items (provided they have any), or sheer muscle to reach a known shore. Those with navigation should still be able to roughly determine location and direction even without a ship beneath them. To speed things along or save the truly unfortunate, the characters can be rescued by a passing ship. It is even conceivable that a sympathetic marid or djinn might rescue the characters (although it will deposit them on some strange and distant shore) in exchange for some service.

Getting a New Ship


Once characters find themselves stranded on a strange shore, one of their first concerns will probably be to locate a new ship. After all, this adventure revolves around sailing, not sitting stranded on a lonely beach. Thus, replacing a sunken vessel should always be possible, though not necessarily easy. The different options for refloating the PCs are described below.

Passage. This is the easiest method, but it does not leave the characters in control. If there is civilization and they have money, they can arrange passage on a ship. Not coincidentally, the ship sails where the PCs want to go, provided their destination is a large Zakharan port.

Even if the PCs do not have money (as is most often the case with shipwrecked sailors), they can still work for their passage. Player characters can hire on as crewmen, cooks, marines, assistant merchants, or whatever else seems reasonable. The voyage will not be as pleasant, but it will get them where they want to go.

In uncivilized lands, player characters can still arrange passage, though not over long distances. In this case, they convince a local chieftain to ferry them to the nearest Zakharan trading colony.





Buy. The player characters can always buy a new ship, provided there are two things present—money and shipbuilders. If the PCs are stranded on a civilized coast with lots of cash, no problem; they find a suitable (though perhaps not perfect) vessel after only a few days.

More likely the characters will not have any money. (It all sank with their previous vessel.) In this case, the group must either choose another tack or find a way to make money. The need to raise money can lead to adventures, although you may have to prepare these yourself. If you do not want the player characters striking off on unrelated adventures, present them with one of the other options for getting a ship.

Build. Theoretically, any character with shipwright skill and materials could build a new vessel. This takes time and helpers. Building a new vessel takes 3 to 8 months (1d6+2), depending on the size. Other player characters, dragooned as common laborers, provide a suitable work crew.

However, most player characters are likely to be in a greater hurry than this. In one week, a group of PCs can rough together a serviceable raft, again provided there are materials and someone with carpentry skill. If no one is trained in working with wood, a crude raft (half-normal speed) can be cobbled together in the same amount of time.

Hospitality. An extremely unlikely but intriguing method of getting the characters a ship is to give them one. Of course, this cannot be done by just anyone. Only the grandest of the grand, the most noble of caliphs, the most devout of Zakharans would ever express hospitality in such a manner.

Furthermore, not everyone can be the recipient of such a gift. Only a PC of the highest station, the purest of the pure, the paragon of Zakharan virtues would be offered such a gift. Such a character must be of station greater or at least equal to the host. His current condition need not matter, for the giver can see the PC's true virtue. Naturally, the relationship must be amicable between the two.

Should, even through all these conditions, one of the characters somehow reach a point where such a gift is appropriate, do not just hand over a ship. The presentation must be fraught with effusions of praise for the recipient and humble apologies for the status of the gift. Remember that the NPC is gaining great honor by giving such a magnificent gift. (The degree of honor is linked to the size of the ship and the means of the host. It is of little account for a great caliph to give away a mean barijah, but a gift of a newly-built boom would be something special.) The NPC, of course, cannot admit to any ulterior motives and should constantly insist that his present is a mean thing, almost insulting to the PC. The player character should then respond with expressions of wonder and praise to show he recognizes the inherent superiority of his host.

The player character would do well to note the name and position of his benefactor. There will come a time, perhaps years in the future, when the PC will find the roles reversed. Gifts beget gifts, and woe to the player character who forgets this basic principle. (Woe, too, to the DM who forgets to exploit such an adventure hook in later campaign sessions.)

Rescue. Finally, if all else fails, the player characters can be rescued. This is the only way off a true desert isle. After days, or perhaps weeks, of waiting, one of the PCs spots a passing ship. Signal fires, flags, and shouts will bring about rescue. The captain will treat the PCs with the hospitality shown all shipwrecked mariners by taking them to the next friendly port. There he will leave them with a little money, some clothes, and perhaps some gear to get by.

Crews

It is said, and wisely so, that a fine ship has wings but only a fine crew can make it fly. Without the hands to raise the yardarm and handle the sails, the best ship can do little more than bob on the water. Success on the voyage may be determined by Fate, but the wise merchant can hedge his bets by choosing captain and



crew carefully. After all, are not their fates linked to that of the ship they sail upon?

Crew Positions

Unlike some other lands, the sailors of Zakhara are blissfully free of encumbering guild organizations or elaborate chains of command. Indeed, upon any merchant vessel (or pirate ship) there are only a few positions of any significance.

Nakhuda. The most important person on any vessel is the *nakhuda* (pl. *nawakhid*) or owner. The *nakhuda* is not necessarily the captain of the ship; he is, however, the person who holds the papers on it. The *nakhuda* has final say on when the ship sails, where it sails to, and what cargoes it will pick up – including any passengers.

While the *nakhuda* has final say due to ownership, he is not considered a normal part of the crew. He is not expected to issue orders while sailing or see to the day-to-day operations of the ship. The *nakhuda* does his work in ports where he sells and buys cargoes in the *suqs* and bazaars.

The *nakhuda* is not required to sail with his ship, but if he does not, an agent is appointed to handle his affairs. The first choice for agent is normally the captain. At other times, a younger member of the family may be sent to oversee the business—a nephew handling his uncle’s business, for example.

Rubban. Of course, almost as important as the *nakhuda* is the *rubban*, or captain of the ship. The *rubban* is responsible for the safety and success of the voyage. The *rubban* is expected to select a crew, navigate the ship, maintain the vessel, and get it safely from one port to the next. Each *rubban* has his own *rahmani* (book of charts) or relies on knowledge locked in his head. While at sea, the *rubban* normally has full authority. The wise *nakhuda* does not openly challenge the orders of his *rubban* since this would cause the man to lose face. Instead, he expresses his fears, concerns, and desires concerning the voyage in private with the *rubban*.


It is quite possible for the *nakhuda* and the *rubban* to be one and the same person, particularly on smaller ships. If this is the case (or if the *rubban* has been appointed as the *nakhuda*’s representative), the *rubban* oversees the ship at sea, then, upon arriving in port, lets his mate tend the vessel while he goes to the bazaar to sell the cargo and buy a new one. Indeed, the mate may even be told to sail along the coast to another port where the *rubban* will meet him with a new cargo.

Rubbaniyah. Aside from the *nakhuda* and *rubban*, no other positions are invariably required on any vessel. A ship may have anywhere from zero to three other officers, *rubbaniyah*. The *rubban* may have a mate, *mudabbir al-Markab*, to help him, especially in ports. Otherwise, the only other post of note is the *ishtiyam*, a pilot or navigator. The *ishtiyam* is most often taken on when the *rubban* is sailing into unfamiliar waters, such as on a long voyage to the lands across the *Bajr al-Ajami*. A *rubban* may also hire an *ishtiyam* as a hedge, an extra safety factor on a voyage.

Bahriyin. The majority of every crew is composed of ordinary sailors, known as *bahriyin* or *bananiyah*. These are the men who do the actual labor on the ships. In most ports they load and unload cargoes, although the great cities have organized companies of porters to perform this task. At sea, they handle the sails, raising and lowering the yardarm or swinging it around the mast when coming about. For the most part though, life at sea is dull. The men sleep, eat, chat, and make ropes. The ship’s carpenter, if there is one, may build small boats to sell at the next port, using lumber brought on board for such a purpose.

Sailing is not a difficult life, although it is far from safe. Aside from the threat of shipwreck and storm, there is the ever-present risk of pirates. When sailing in pirate-infested waters, most ships carry extra men to serve as marines in case of pirate attack. Most of these are *askar* and corsairs. However, a few may be *naffatun*, artilleryists trained to handle the fearsome throwers of





Greek fire. These weapons are found on the largest ships or those carrying the most precious of cargoes. Greek fire projectors are hardly the rig of the common merchant!

The single most important position of the regular crew is the cook. Because of his work, the cook always gains attention. There are all manner of cooks. Some can work wonders with the barest of provisions—dried shark meat and dates, for example. Others seem to know only one recipe, and a bad one at that—perhaps a brownish paste that looks and tastes the same regardless of ingredients. A good cook makes for a good crew and a tolerable voyage. A bad cook is agony, best replaced at the first possible convenience. Not every ship has a cook. Some have more than one. Each man may be expected to feed himself, or the job of cook may be rotated among the crew, but the quality of the food and temperament of the cook are always subjects of conversation.

Hiring a Crew

Zakharan crewmen can be hired in nearly any port in the Land of Fate. There are always those willing to risk unknown dangers for a chance at a fortune—for that is exactly what they may gain.

Every member of the crew, from the nakhuda to the lowest bahriyan, is paid in part with a share of the profits. Thus, every crewman has a stake in the success of the voyage; the more cargo and treasure brought back, the greater each person's share. Of course, shares are not distributed equally. The nakhuda earns the lion's portion, the rubban next, and finally the remaining crewmen. Each man also receives a small but regular wage to ensure some pay even in the face of disaster. Most important of all, however, is that every man on board ship is given space for his own sea chest, stocked with whatever goods the man can afford. Arriving at a new port, the men become petty merchants, selling their own wares in the markets along the waterfront. Thus, even the meanest of seamen can earn a tidy profit through sharp dealing.

Because each man acts as his own merchant, the crew are not bound to the captain, once in port. It is each man's choice to decide whether he will stay in port or sail on with the ship. The coming and going of crewmen is common. For example, Musalam may work as a crewman from Huzuz to Gana, stay in Gana, and catch a different ship back. Seamen come to know favored captains and vice versa. Only when the ship reaches realms beyond the Land of Fate does this constant turnover slow down.

Zakharan crews can be of virtually any race. Halflings work well with sails and climbing masts, dwarves are hearty on the line and strong with an oar, and elves are reputed to be fine navigators. Other non-humans can be found mostly among the pirates of the Crowded Sea. Nakhuda, rubban, and rubbaniyah are sometimes independent women, and there are even reports of all-female crews, although these are always in exotic and far away places.

Role-Playing The Crew

As befits the Sinbad-style theme of *Golden Voyages*, player characters should seldom (if ever) become concerned about their crew. Most of the men needed to work the ship are like extras in a movie—seen but never heard. Speaking parts should be reserved for the nakhuda, rubban, rubbaniyah, and (of all the common seamen) the cook. When ordinary seamen do make an appearance, it should be to deliver no more than a line or two—"Praise be Fate, land!" or "These waters are evil, esteemed one. No ship has ever—AIIIEEEE!" (just as the poor sailor is snatched from the deck by a sea serpent).

One important role these crewmen have is to die—suddenly, horribly, and visibly. Every ship is intentionally provided with a more sailors than it really needs. If the sambuk needs a crew of 15, the rubban hires 17 or 18 men. The additional men are disposable extras you should use for moments of high drama. A giant squid rises from the deep, wraps a tentacle around a writhing seaman, then disappears



below the waves. Another, maddened by the curious cries wafting from that fog-shrouded land, utters a horrifying scream and hurls himself overboard, never to be seen again. A third, while exploring a jungle island, is felled by a spear flung by an unseen hand. These deaths serve to launch action and warn of danger or mystery. At port, the rubban automatically takes on new crew to replace those lost. He will insist, of course, that the men are necessary to handle the many duties aboard ship, never aware that he is replacing expendables.

The cook is an exception to this situation. Blessed or cursed with the task of sustaining sailors' stomachs, each cook has a distinct personality. Sometimes it is one of comic relief, other times the sublime treasure of gastronomic skill, on yet a third occasion, irritable and sullen grumpiness—whatever it is, the cook always forms a memorable part of the crew. As such, they should be role-played fully, perhaps as a running joke or pleasing comfort for the PCs.

Crews are just that—crews. They do not take part in land adventures, work as bodyguards, or fight if they do not have to. If attacked by pirates, most crewmen (except marines) simply surrender, figuring their chances of living are better that way. In port, the crewmen stay near the ship or tend to their own affairs.

Mutiny

Morale and possible mutiny of the crew should only become a concern in two instances. The first is if it is specifically dictated by the adventure. Otherwise, mutiny should be a concern only if the player characters are callously abusive of the crew. This includes whippings, sending them ahead into danger, denying shares, etc. The crew is marvelously tolerant of hardships that all suffer equally. If everyone is starving or dying of thirst, then none in the crew complain more than would be fit.

If crewmen are treated badly, they will grumble and cast dark, significant looks at their tormentors in classic movie style. The rubbaniyah may warn the PCs

of potential trouble. If that has no effect, the leader of the malcontents will challenge the rubban. Refusing the challenge is tantamount to surrender, so the rubban must accept the duel. (If he is old and feeble, a persuasive speech will allow him to elect a PC champion.) If the rubban wins, the crew returns to their posts grumbling. Unless conditions improve, they leave at the next port. If the rubban improves conditions, the men resume their previous loyalty.

Cargos


Zakharans are not a people inclined to go to sea for pleasure or even war. When a Zakharan sets sail, he almost always travels with one goal in mind—profit. Along the way he may have adventures, explore new lands, or even conquer pirate havens, but these are all the result of his efforts to find markets where he can sell and buy his cargo.

Unless under dire circumstances, ships on the Crowded Sea do not sail without a full cargo. Some sail from Afyal and the southern islands, bearing teak to Huzuz. Others sail from the Pearl Cities with cargoes of precious stones, brassware, and frankincense. A ship that returns empty is considered a failure.

Filling a ship, even a small one, is usually more expensive than a single merchant can afford. The nakhuda buys as much cargo as he can afford, typically half the ship's capacity, and offers the rest to others. These merchants buy and sell their own cargoes, paying for deck space by sharing the expenses of the voyage and paying a small portion of their profits to the nakhuda. Each merchant accompanies his cargo, or at least sends along a representative. Thus, every ship includes captain, officers, crew, and merchants.

It is not necessary to determine the cargo of every ship the characters might sail upon. However, there are instances when this information is useful—when another ship is captured or pirates attack, for example. To determine a ship's cargo, use Table 1: Cargo Manifest. Make one roll for every 5 tons of cargo capacity that the ship has (for large ships you may





want to raise this to 10 or 20 tons per roll). Note that some cargoes do not actually weigh or require that amount of tonnage—this method is a generalization about all cargoes.

In addition to the Cargo Manifest Table, the Map Booklet includes the Trade Route map for all the Land of Fate. This shows the major shipping lanes throughout the Crowded Sea and the goods produced by different areas. While other trade items can be found in the same area, those listed are the principle exports for that city or region.

The cargoes here are not given a price. All except passengers and exotica should cost between 1,000 gp and 5,000 gp. This is purposely left vague to give you complete control over how much money the characters must spend (or might earn). Suggested prices or items are given for exotic cargoes, while passenger fares should be negotiated if necessary. You should always set the price for any cargo where you think it is most appropriate.

Not every cargo is available in every port. If the player characters insist on purchasing cargoes or it becomes important to the adventure, figure there is a 30% chance that any given trade good will be available, 70% if the desired cargo is produced in that region (see the Trading Route Map in the Map Booklet). Choose from the list that best matches the place where the characters are trying to make their purchase. If the players seek exotica or passengers, handle these situations on a case-by-case basis. Remember that merchants are forever suspicious of deceit. Certainly if a ship, rubban, or crew has an evil reputation, any merchant or passenger would think twice before trustingly walking on board or handing over valuable merchandise.

In the end, the intent of providing lists of cargo is not to turn the player characters into importers and exporters. They should set their sights on adventure, not trade. The cargo manifests are useful in those instances where you need a little local color or a peek into the daily details of life.

Glossary

The words below appear in Arabian Adventures, the *Land of Fate* boxed set, and *Golden Voyages*.

- Aba* (or *abba*). Robe resembling a modern-world “graduation gown,” worn primarily by Al-Badia (nomads).
- Agal*. Cord or group of cords designed to hold a keffiyeh, or headcloth, snugly to the head.
- Alim*. Learned man, scholar, sage, or wizard.
- Amir*. Ruler (or *emir*). *Amir* is also a title assumed by paladins who are 10th level or higher.
- Anjar* (pl. *anajir*). Grapple-type anchor.
- Bahriyin*. Seamen.
- Balanj*. Ship’s cabin.
- Bananiyah*. Sailors.
- Bander*. Port (as in Sams Bandar).
- Barchan*. Crescent-shaped dune, commonly at the desert’s edge. The “horns” point away from prevailing winds.
- Barijah*. Small, 40-foot dhow that commonly serves fishermen, pearlery, merchants, and shore-dwelling pirates.
- Bawara*. Heavy anchor for sandy or muddy bottoms.
- Beam*. The width of a ship from gunwale to gunwale.
- Blood price*. *Diyyah*; payment to settle a blood feud or conflict involving the loss of life or honor.
- Caftan*. Flowing, ankle-length overgarment, often cinched at the waist with a sash.
- Casbah*. Castle or keep.
- Chador*. A modest or moralist woman’s full-body robe with a hood, plus a veil or cloth “mask” that may conceal even the wearer’s eyes.
- Daftar*. Sailing instructions often used for navigation in place of charts.
- Daqal*. Mast.
- Dhabb* (also *dhubb*). Large, edible lizard; “fish of the desert.”
- Dhow*. A ship, particularly of Zakharan manufacture.
- Didban*. The ship’s look-out.
- Dirah*. The territory of a given desert tribe, usually about 200 square miles.
- Dishdashah*. Simple tunic, usually worn by farmers and poor merchants.
- Diwan*. Court or council of a ruler.
- Diyyah*. See *blood price*.
- Dolman*. Loose, floor-length robe with sleeves.
- Dusur*. Oakum or cordage for caulking seams in a ship’s hull.



Fez. Round felt hat, like a cone with a flat top. A tassel roughly as tall as the hat dangles from the top.

Gassi. Rocky path between two seif dunes.

Hamman. Bathhouse.

Haram. Holy site.

Harim. Women's quarters; female counterpart to *selama*. Also refers to the women who spend time in those quarters.

Harrat. Field of volcanic debris.

Imam. Priest, usually one who is 8th level or higher.

Ins. Midani term to identify the enlightened races of humans, elves, dwarves, and the like.

Ishtiyam. Ship's pilot or navigator.

Jalla. Camel dung; useful for fuel and many other purposes.

Jama. Pulley block.

Jambiya. Curved, double-edged dagger commonly employed by desert dwellers.

Jazirat. Island.

Jellaba. Heavy "winter aba," worn over the traditional aba and usually made of wool or felt.

Jummah. Ship's hold.

Kamal. Simple navigation tool consisting of a card and knotted line.

Kashabat. Wooden scaffold that serves as beacon and watchtower.

Katar. Short, easily-concealed weapon, sometimes called a "punch dagger."

Kavir. Salt/mud flat; a dangerous terrain in which a salt crust lies directly over a sea of black, slimy mud.

Keffiyeh. Headcloth.

Khabb. Gale, typhoon.

Kham. A point in the compass—there are 32 different compass points for navigation.

Khayt. Stitch, as in the stitched hull of a ship.

Koumiss. Drink of fermented mare's milk, very potent.

Lamellar. Type of scale mail made of overlapping metal plates (lamellas), connected by metal links.

Leben. A sour milk; staple of the Al-Badian diet.

Markab (pl. *marikab*). A ship.

Mizen. Mizzenmast of a ship.

Mudabbir al-Markab. Ship's mate.

Naffatun. Artillerists who man the fire throwers.

Najhuda (pl. *nawakhid*) The ship's owner, but not necessarily the captain.

Nargil. Coconut.

Oculus. Eye decoration painted on the bow of a ship.

Qadi. Judge.

Qal'at. Fortress; a fortified keep, manor, or palace.

Qinbar. Coir (coconut fiber) cordage for making ropes.

Qutb al-gah. The pole star.

Rahmani. A book of sailing charts.

Ra'is. "Head," a title of respect, often used for those who hold civil posts.

Raqi. Title of honor bestowed upon wizards who are 10th level or higher.

Rubban. Captain.

Rubbaniyah. Ship's officers.

Sufinah. Ship.

Sahil. Coast.

Saj. Teakwood.

Saluqi. Desert greyhound.

Sambuk. The most common boat in the Land of Fate, aside from the barijah.

Seif. Also called a "sword dune," it is the largest of all dune types. It runs parallel to the desert winds, has a sharp peak, is very rugged, and can extend for hundreds of miles.

Selama (*selamlik*). Men's quarters; counterpart to *harim*.

Sherbet. Zakharan sweet fruit drink.

Shira. A ship's sail.

Sinn. Toothed anchor.

Star dune. Twisted mass of sand resembling a starfish.

Suq. Covered marketplace, typically at a city's center.

Suwar. Sailing charts of maps.

Tiger's claws. Also called *bagh nakh*, this weapon resembles a set of brass knuckles with spikes.

Tufenk. Little more than a long blowpipe, the tufenk is used to project Greek fire across a short distance.

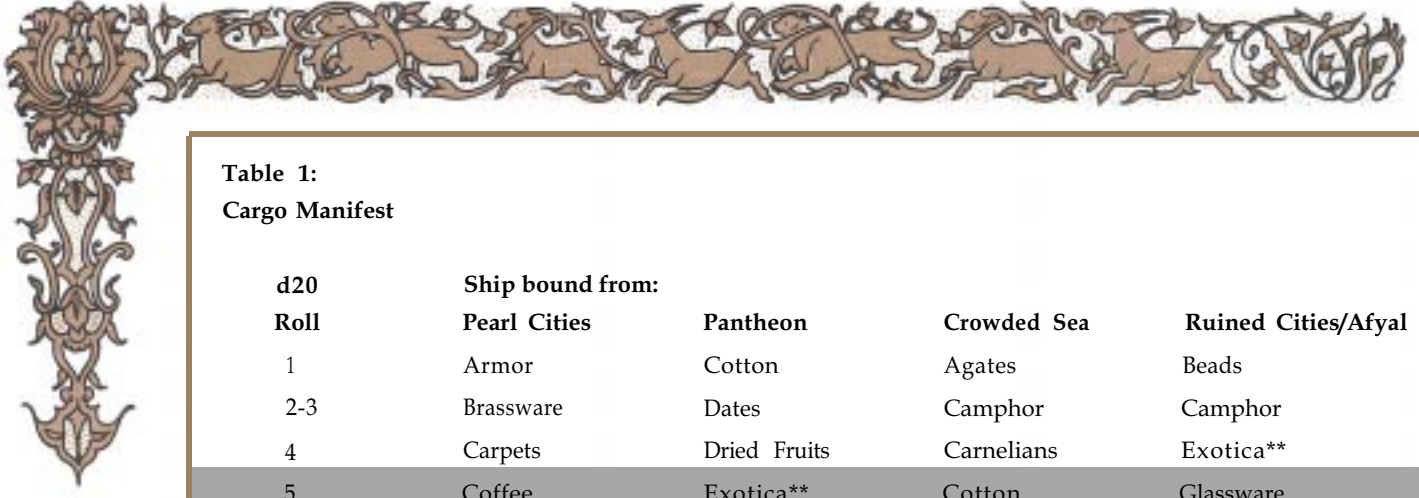
Ulama. Plural of *alim*.

Wadi. Seasonal watercourse that floods but once or twice a year, and is otherwise dry and solid.

Whaleback dune. Dune resembling a colossal beached whale. It runs parallel to prevailing winds.

Zaruq. Small ship, slightly larger than a barijah.





**Table 1:
Cargo Manifest**

d20 Roll	Ship bound from:			
	Pearl Cities	Pantheon	Crowded Sea	Ruined Cities/Afyal
1	Armor	Cotton	Agates	Beads
2-3	Brassware	Dates	Camphor	Camphor
4	Carpets	Dried Fruits	Carnelians	Exotica**
5	Coffee	Exotica**	Cotton	Glassware
6	Coral	Glassware	Exotica**	Honey
7-8	Rates	Grain	Feathers	Iron
9	Dried Fruits	Horses	Ivory	Ivory
10-11	Dyes	Linen	Herbs	Lead
12	Exotica**	Oil	Musk	Herbs
13-14	Frankincense	Passengers*	Passengers*	Musk
15-16	Horses	Porcelain	Silk	Passengers*
17-18	Myrrh	Salt	Slaves	Rice
19	Passengers*	Slaves	Spice	Spice
20	Weapons	Wool	Teak	Teak

d6 Roll	*Passengers	**Exotica
1	Adventurers (1d6)	Antiquities (1,000-6,000 gp)
2	Mamluks (2d8)	Gems (2,000-12,000 gp)
3	Noblemen (1d3)	Gold (1,000-10,000 gp)
4	Pilgrims (2d10)	Silver (1,000-4,000 gp)
5	Official (1+1d6 servants)	Pearls (1,000-8,000 gp)
6	Travelers (1d6)	Misc. Magical Item (1-2)

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Book 2

AL-SARTAN

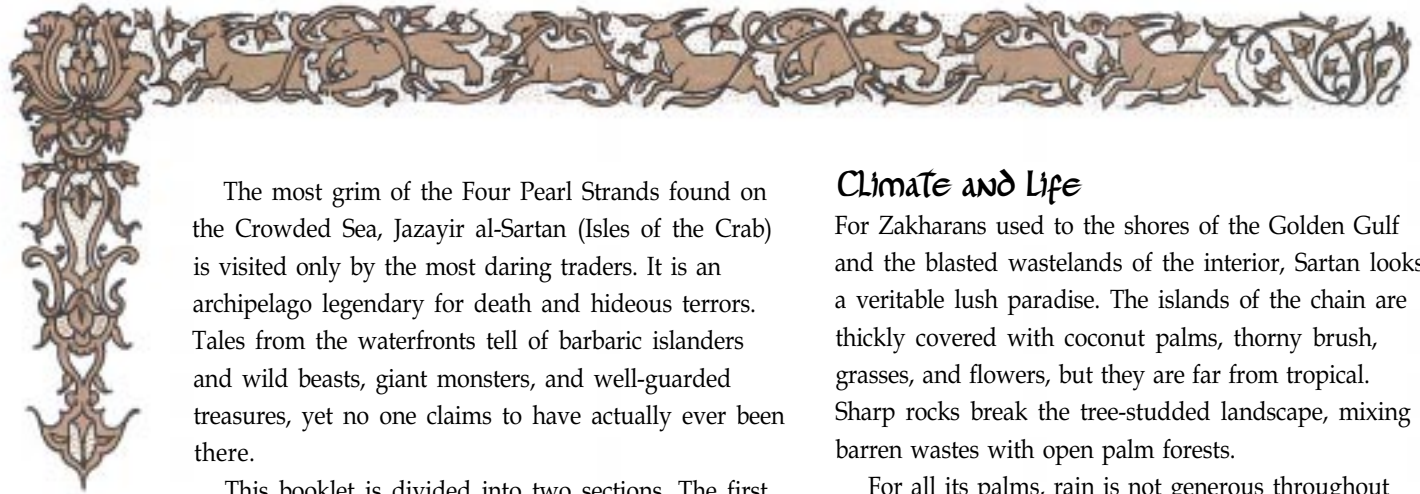
... and what ship soever cometh to these climes there riseth to her a monster out of the sea and swalloweth her up with all and everything on board her.

The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad the Seaman

O wise readers, know that before the time of the Law, before the words of the Blessed Loregiver appeared once more to men, before the First of all Lions sat on the Righteous Throne, before men were civilized, the world was wild and men did not know the Law. Men worshipped unrighteous gods. Then said the First Caliph, "Let all people know the word of the true gods," and the heathen heard him and were enlightened. Thus did they foreswear their unrighteous gods and learn the teachings of the Law. But there were those who hardened their hearts against the Law, saying, "We will not abandon our masters." Against these the First Caliph made the Pact of the Sword, and so the unrighteous and their gods were driven from the Land of Fate.

This happened or maybe it did not; the time is long past and much is forgotten. . . .





The most grim of the Four Pearl Strands found on the Crowded Sea, Jazayir al-Sartan (Isles of the Crab) is visited only by the most daring traders. It is an archipelago legendary for death and hideous terrors. Tales from the waterfronts tell of barbaric islanders and wild beasts, giant monsters, and well-guarded treasures, yet no one claims to have actually ever been there.

This booklet is divided into two sections. The first provides a brief look at life on the islands of Sartan, including geography, creatures, and important places. Information on towns and villages is formatted as in the *Land of Fate* boxed set—describing local rulers, important personages, and unique characteristics of the towns. Other sites of interest or mystery are described as needed.

The second half of this booklet features an adventure set among these islands, *The Great and Dread God*.

The Islands of al-Sartan

The islands of al-Sartan are divided into four major groups—Jazirat al-Sadaf (Island of the Shell); Jazayir al-Alfar (Islands of the Claws), of which there are a northern and southern chain; and Jazirat al-Qraidis (Shrimp Island). Sadaf and Alfar earned their names once mariners had sailed round the outward shores sufficiently to guess their shapes. Qraidis, known for its fishing banks populated with shrimp, was named long ago by the sailors who went there to cast their nets. It is the only island of the archipelago that has seen any Zakharan settlement, although even then only on the seaward side.

Between the arms of the crab lies Batihat al-Saji (Lagoon of the Brave), dotted with the Uyun al-Sartan (Eyes of the Crab). These waters are shunned by the fishermen of Qraidis, who tell stories of a hideous monster that lurks in the waters.

Climate and Life

For Zakharans used to the shores of the Golden Gulf and the blasted wastelands of the interior, Sartan looks a veritable lush paradise. The islands of the chain are thickly covered with coconut palms, thorny brush, grasses, and flowers, but they are far from tropical. Sharp rocks break the tree-studded landscape, mixing barren wastes with open palm forests.

For all its palms, rain is not generous throughout Sartan. Most of it falls during the long monsoon season. During this time, the islands can be awash in rain. The monsoons are preceded and followed by a short, mild season. The rains relent to brief daily showers, almost invariably coming in the early afternoon. Opposite the time of the great monsoons is the dry season. Rains are intermittent and the sun blazes down, shrivelling much of the land. The palm fronds wither and grasses brown.

Wildlife on the islands is limited in both size and scope. The two most significant “normal” animals are goats and wild boars. Beyond this, the islands sport a wide range of birds, lizards, insects, rats, and small monkeys. Possible natural and unnatural creatures are listed on Table 2.

Table 2: Suggested Creatures on al-Sartan

Ant, giant	Nymph
Baboon	Pahari
Boar, wild	Ogre
Crab, giant	Rat (all)
Eagle, wild	Scorpion (all)
Eagle, giant	Serpent, winged
Lizard, giant	Shark
Lizard, minotaur	Snake, poisonous
Makshi	Vulture (all)
Naga, water	Zaratan





Jazirat al-Qraidis

This large island is dominated by a mountain ridge that rises abruptly from the sea. So steep are the slopes that, in some areas, scraggly vegetation can barely cling to rocky cliffs that plunge precipitously straight into the sea. Three jagged peaks, 9,000 feet above sea level, loom over all else on the island. The narrow strand of beach around the island is thickly covered with plantains, coconut, and oil palms, cultivated in many places by the islanders. The steep slopes of the mountains, home to wandering flocks of wild goats, are jagged outcroppings of dry rock and twisted scrub.

Qraidis is the only island of the Sartan chain settled by Zakharans, and then only along the seaward side. The coast is strung with a line of scattered settlements looking out toward the Crowded Sea. The villagers earn a poor living by trading in plantains, dried shrimp, and the products of the versatile coconut palm—coconut husk ropes, lumber, oil, and copra cake (dried coconut meat). Reddish palm oil is shipped in jars to the kitchens of the Pearl Cities. Goats are raised for milk, although passing ships often welcome the chance to obtain fresh goat meat.

Sams Bandar

Ruler: Najib al-Samsi, Amil al-Qraidis, (h/m/F/a/5) is a gaunt, balding man so heavily weathered that his age is impossible to determine. Titular ruler of the entire island, Najib spends most of his time commanding a modest fishing boat on the shrimp beds.

The Court: Once a week or so Najib convenes his “court” to gossip and settle any disputes. Those in attendance are his fellow captains and friends, particularly Qadi Yezeed (d/m/P/p/3) who, though infuriatingly slow of speech, knows intimately the bloodlines and feuds of all the islanders.

Population: 103, although it might be 104 or 102 soon, depending on whether Juleidah gives birth before or after Old Nura finally dies.

Distinguishing Features of Populace or Town: The reek of shrimp drying in the sun, mingled with the

equally strong odor of palm oil, permeates the houses, clothes, and even the breath of the villagers.

Major Products: Dried shrimp, fermented shrimp paste, copra, dried plantains, coconut husk rope, coconut lumber, palm oil.

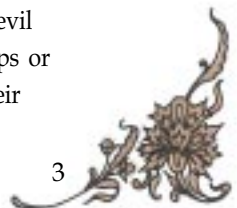
Armed Forces: 15 militiamen in times of need.


Other Important Individuals: Shipwrecked characters and captains with a ship in need of repair would do well to look up Safana the ship-wright. This middle-aged widow learned her trade helping her late husband build fishing boats. After his death, she was the only one with the skills to maintain the Qraidis fishing fleet. Over the years she has become quite adept at her work, and today her shipbuilding proficiency is 17 on smaller vessels, 14 when working with booms or greater.

Noted Features of the Town: Even though it is the largest village on Qraidis, Sams Bandar is a shabby collection of houses. From the sea, the village appears to tumble down the mountainside in a ramshackle cascade of mud-brick and wood. Running the length of the beach are frames covered with drying shrimp and coconut meat. A rickety wharf thrusts out into the water and there is a small, usually deserted bazaar of tattered awnings near the beach. Indeed, the entire village seems deserted most of the time since the villagers are either at sea or working the small palm plantations that surround the village.

For all its small size, Sams Bandar can outfit adventurers with most necessary supplies, although only goat-hide armor is available.

Local Lore and Legends: The fishermen of Sams Bandar know remarkably little about the Sartan chain. What little they do know, they speak of with great respect. They are particularly fearful of the Batihat al-Saji on the opposite side of the island. No local will steer his boat into those waters. Just what frightens them is not clear since the majority who venture into the lagoon are never seen again. Some claim an evil mage throws flaming death from the mountaintops or that a giant beneath the surface pulls ships to their





doom. Others deny both of these and instead claim to have seen a great red-shelled crab rise out of the waves—but, of course, only at a great distance. Whatever haunts the lagoon, if anything, has been sufficient to keep the villagers at bay.

Jazayir al-Alfar

These two island chains are distinguished as the north and south claws, or sometimes as the greater and lesser. The islands that form the arms are uncharted by Zakharan sailors. The channels here are a treacherous maze of hidden reefs, mangrove swamps, and contrary currents. Without a knowledgeable pilot (who only can be hired from the not-always-friendly locals), any ship venturing into the channels runs a 50% risk of running aground each day. If the sailors are lucky, they only hit a sandbar. Woe to those who drive their ship onto the reefs. If grounding does occur, assume the ship has struck whatever type of sunken hazard is nearest to it on the map.

The treacherous waters aside, the al-Alfar are populated by natives. The northern chain is the home of the Tarangu, a halfling tribe; the southern, the dark-skinned, human Haifami. Both are fierce and warlike, rumored to be cannibals. The latter is not true—that honor is reserved for the malevolent Gurum of Sadaf. It is true, however, that the Tarangu and Haifami have no love of strangers, particularly those speaking Midani. Both tribes are the frequent target of slavers since neither is counted among the Enlightened. They have learned not to welcome the great ships that appear off their shores. They are barely hospitable to each other either, although the two tribes have been known to unite from time to time against the evil Gurum.

The Tarangu

Ruler: Indeema (hg/f/P/k/12), a fat, heavily tanned and freckled matron, is respected by the tribe for her patience and fair-handedness. She is a priest of the crab god that lives in the lagoon, and she supervises sacrifices made to appease the beast.

Description: The halflings of the north live a semi-nomadic life and primarily live off the fruits of land. They are not great fishermen. Their canoes are small and simple, just sufficient to carry them from island to island. They tend widely scattered groves of coconut palms and plantains, supplementing their diet with land crabs, snails, fish, and the occasional wild boar.

Although all of one tribe, the Tarangu spread themselves throughout their chain as a number of family groups. A family has 2d6 x 10 members and tends a series of traditional groves that range over several islands. Groves can be identified by a carved marker pole set somewhere nearby. Each family uses a different carving style.

The marker pole also indicates the presence of the family's settlement. The Tarangu do not build permanent houses on the ground, but establish finely wrought nests, roofed and floored with palm fronds, in the tops of a cluster of specially planted palms. Coconut husk ropes connect the palms, allowing the halflings to easily get around without having to touch ground. (Although halflings are normally considered earth-dwellers, underground warrens are not practical here. Monsoons would flood any warrens, and rats and vermin would infest the holes. Thus, the halflings have adjusted their culture to life in the palms.)

Approximately once a month, the Tarangu make offerings to Kar'r'rga, the great crab god. The offerings are left along the lagoon-side beaches during the new moon and consist of coconut meat, plantains, other fruits, wild boar, and captives, if they have any. These offerings are eaten by the giant crabs of the lagoon, along with nibbling rats and birds. In rare instances, Kar'r'rga itself will come ashore to take an offering. Still, Kar'r'rga occasionally takes tribe members, perhaps as punishment for some crime or sin.

Armed Forces: The Tarangu do not seek out battle, but fight valiantly at the least threat. To defend themselves, up to 75% of a family can take up arms, including young children. For raiding (mostly against the Gurum), no more than 30% of the family—the



ablest males and females—will take part. They battle equally well on ground or among the palm fronds. Their preferred weapons are copper-tipped spears, clubs, and hurled coconuts when in the trees. (A blow from a coconut does damage equal to a club.)

Relations with PCs: The Tarangu are not apt to welcome the player characters with open arms, given the tribe's past experiences with Zakharan slavers. Should the player characters land on their shores, the first defense is to disappear into the coconut forest. Thus, the characters will find marker poles, obviously-tended clusters of coconuts and plantains, and strange tree-top villages, but all will be deserted. If the characters threaten to damage either groves or nests, the Tarangu will attack and then fade into the palms. They repeat this process until their enemy is destroyed or retreats.

The characters can make friendly or forced contact. If the PCs cause no damage to Tarangu property and leave gifts at the base of a marker pole, the Tarangu will eventually come out to trade. Short of trading, the PCs might capture, heal, and release a Tarangu warrior. After this, characters can deal with the Tarangu

Forced contact only comes about if the characters capture a tribe member and hold him or her hostage. The tribe will fearfully open negotiations at this point, remaining well armed and dealing from a distance.

The Haifami

Ruler: Chief Shafiya (h/m/F/mb/8) is a tall, young man of great vigor and good looks. Third son of the previous headman, he has risen to power through undeniable displays of bravery and martial skill.

Court: The Chief convenes no regular court, informally ruling over the Haifami from his Great House. On those occasions when momentous decisions are made, Shafiya is sometimes assisted (or opposed) by the six village headmen under his rule.

Description: The Haifami are a large and powerful tribe, spread between a half-dozen small villages on the same number of islands. The Haifami are black people, tall and lean. They typically dress in a single long

cloth made of coconut fiber, although white cotton sarongs are popular with those who can get them from traders. Men and women alike wear a long cloth wrapped around their brows and heads as protection against the heat. Important individuals embellish this wrap with brilliant decorations—dyed cloth, feathers, coral, and pierced silver coins.

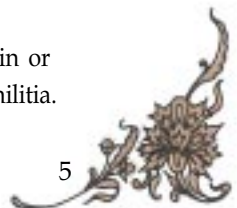
The villages range from 50 to 200 souls (5d4•10). Each is a permanent site, located along the coast, usually at a small bay. The houses are built of palm lumber and fronds, raised slightly off the ground to protect from rats, snakes, and spiders. Mud-brick tiles, glazed green and blue, decorate the sides. Each village is enclosed by a stockade built from square-hewn coconut trunks. Outside the stockade are fields for a few vegetable crops and pens for the large flocks the Haifami raise.

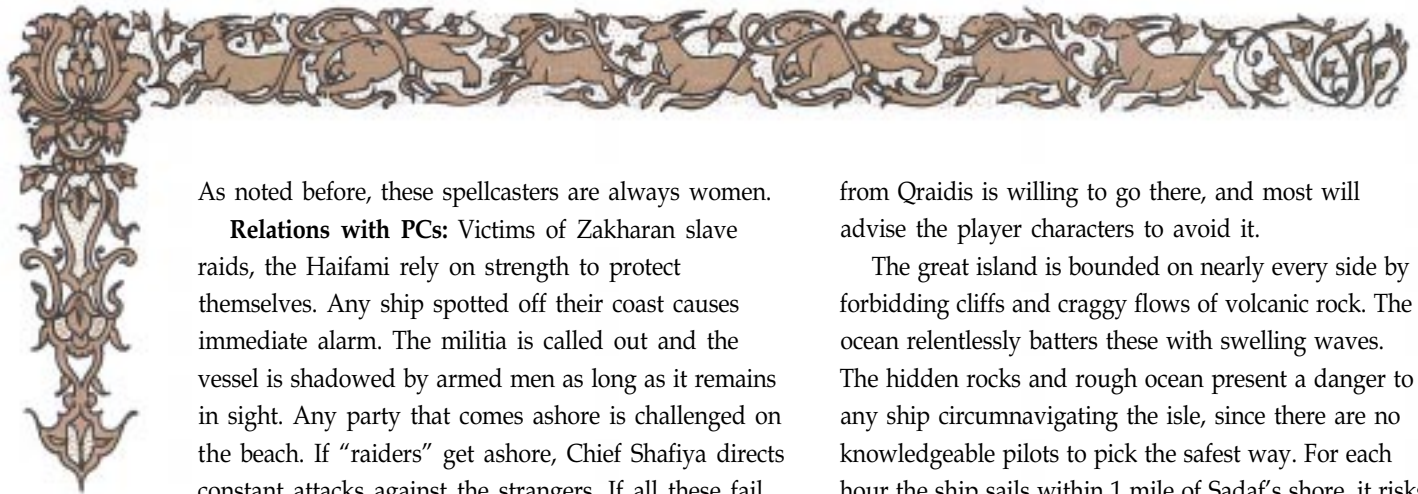
The main source of Haifami food and trade comes from the sea. Using sturdy outrigger canoes, the Haifami are not afraid to venture far out onto the ocean or into the Batihat al-Saji. Such trips are always made with a village sea-mage. Sea-mages are always women, members of a special tribal society. Although the Haifami fish the lagoon, even they will not set foot on the Uyun al-Sartan. Those islands are sacred to the servants of the crab god Kar'rga.

Armed Forces: Under Chief Shafiya's guidance, each village keeps a ready store of weapons. All men from age twelve and up are drilled in their use. Thus, each village can raise a militia equal to 50% of the total village population. A network of watchtowers and alarms allows any militia to fully assemble after one turn. Each member of the militia is armed with a set of spears and a fancifully-decorated shield carved from a giant crab shell.

In addition to defending the village, the chief can call on the tribe to assemble its forces under his personal command. In this way, Shafiya can raise 2d100•10 warriors.

These warriors are backed by magic. One kahin or sea mage (level 1d4+1) backs up every twenty militia.





As noted before, these spellcasters are always women.

Relations with PCs: Victims of Zakharan slave raids, the Haifami rely on strength to protect themselves. Any ship spotted off their coast causes immediate alarm. The militia is called out and the vessel is shadowed by armed men as long as it remains in sight. Any party that comes ashore is challenged on the beach. If “raiders” get ashore, Chief Shafiya directs constant attacks against the strangers. If all these fail and the stockades do not hold, the Haifami take to their boats and seek shelter on the lagoon. All the kahin then pray for the intercession of their god.

Chief Shafiya recognizes the value of trade, thus giving the PCs a chance to deal peacefully with the tribe. If the group comes ashore in a nonthreatening manner (probably just a small party), the Haifami will warily meet with the group. Relations will be cool at best until the player characters prove themselves and their intentions.

Uyun al-Sartan

These small strings of islands are unsettled by sentient life, but they are far from uninhabited. This rocky string of islets is the hatchery of the many giant crabs that infest the lagoon. To the few Zakharans brave enough to venture here, the crabs are known as “the children of Sartan.” Landing on these islands would be foolhardy, for the hatchlings are hungry and carnivorous. Within one turn of landing, every person ashore will be swarmed by tens, even hundreds, of small hatchlings. These little beasts, far too many to kill, cause 6d6 points of damage each round. A ring of fire will hold them at bay, otherwise two new hatchlings rush in to fill the space left by any the characters kill.

Jazirat al-Sadaf

Sadaf is the largest island of the Sartan chain—and the most forbidding. The inhabitants of the rest of the Sartan chain only speak ill of Sadaf. It is the home of monsters, cannibals, and worse. No native or settler

from Qraidis is willing to go there, and most will advise the player characters to avoid it.

The great island is bounded on nearly every side by forbidding cliffs and craggy flows of volcanic rock. The ocean relentlessly batters these with swelling waves. The hidden rocks and rough ocean present a danger to any ship circumnavigating the isle, since there are no knowledgeable pilots to pick the safest way. For each hour the ship sails within 1 mile of Sadaf’s shore, it risks a 70% chance of striking a submerged rock (resulting in a seaworthiness check). If the ship breaks up, characters must swim through the stormy sea and then along the shore until they find a place to drag themselves ashore. This effort leaves all characters completely exhausted, unable to do more until they rest.

Once ashore, the characters are no safer, for Sadaf is the home to many dangerous creatures. Monsters abound on the island. Fortunately for the other tribes of the Sartan islands, the rugged shoreline and fierce seas prevent most of these creatures from reaching other shores.

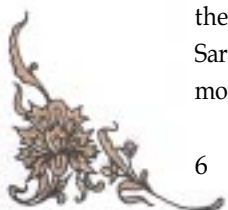
Like Qraidis, Sadaf is marked by towering peaks with steep slopes where scraggly vegetation clings. As such, the island provides a mean existence for the only sentient tribe group living there, the Gurum. This savage tribe is one of the main reasons the Sartan islands have gained such an evil reputation.

The Gurum

Ruler: Yaaz Gut-Breaker is a powerfully-built ogre mage with polished azure skin and fiery red eyes. The formidable Yaaz is not as cultured as those ogre magi sometimes encountered closer to civilization, but what he lacks in urbanity he makes up for in sheer savagery.

Court: The heads of the four families who advise Yaaz do so at their own risk, for any dissent is quelled by brutal death. This has resulted in a superficial approval of all his actions. In secret, each family head searches for the means to eliminate Yaaz and seize his position.

Description: The Gurum are a tribe of mixed ogres and ogre magi who live in scattered dwellings all over





the island. Each small settlement—typically a small cave—holds a single family which may have twenty or more members. Although all one tribe, each family is independent and often at odds with all others. The most frequent cause of trouble are disputes over hunting territory, usually resulting in bloody skirmishes and long-standing feuds.

The Gurum are divided into three castes. Foremost are the powerful but few ogre magi. Long ago, these powerful creatures arrived on Sadaf to find it already populated by ogres. With their greater abilities, the ogre magi quickly conquered and dominated the normal ogres. Today, four small families can still claim pure ogre mage heritage. Most chiefs of the Gurum are drawn from these four families.

Second in the caste structure are the pure ogres. These are old families that never interbred with the invading ogre magi. Nonetheless, they have benefitted from contact and are generally more educated and advanced than “wild” ogres. The old families remember the old traditions and are responsible for the sacrifices made to the crab god Kar’r’ga of the Batihat al-Saji. They surround these sacrifices with mysteries to protect their position.

The least of all are the ogrima, a mixture of ogre and ogre mage blood. Both ogres and ogre magi consider them tainted, either physically weak or spiritually corrupt. They are, however, the majority, growing more numerous every day. The ogrima refuse to accept their station and grow ever more restless under the domination of the other two castes.

The Gurum are fierce raiders of their neighbors and build good-sized, if crude, boats for this purpose. In these raids, they seek slaves and meat for the cooking pots. The Tarangu, who lack a strong defense, are their preferred target. Enemies killed in battle are taken back to be eaten; those captured serve as slaves until they too are eaten by the brutal Gurum.

Armed Forces: The Gurum have rarely fought as a single force—which is good for their neighbors. Instead, each family can field 2d6 warriors to raid or

defend. Of any family encountered, roll 1d10 to determine family type: 1-2 ogre magi, 3-5 ogre, 6-10 ogrima. Except for ogre mage families, all warriors will be the same race. In ogre mage families, 1d3 of the warriors will be ogre magi. All others will be ogrima under their command.

Ogre magi wear padded cotton robes and fight with fine swords. Ogrima wear no armor and typically use two-handed swords with one hand. Ogre families rely on traditional weapons—a thick club or copper-tipped spear.

Relations with PCs: Unless the player characters are superior in strength and firepower—and make a brutally clear display of their power—the Gurum will attempt to enslave them. Even if the PCs can dissuade any immediate attacks, they must be wary against sneak attacks and treachery. Dealing with the Gurum is not safe or advisable.





Batihah al-Saji

At the heart of the Sartan chain is the Batihat al-Saji, the source of so much veneration, fear, and mystery. The gently waving blue waters are deceptively calm, concealing terrifying death below. More than one bold rubban has sailed his boom into the lagoon in search of pearls rumored to line its bottom, never to sail out again.

Anyone who sails out upon the waters of the lagoon will marvel at the richness of the warm sea beneath them. The sea teems with firm-fleshed fish, brilliant walls of coral, gaping giant clams, and the scuttling forms of giant crabs. The barnacle-crusting hulks of sunken ships are barely visible in the shallow areas.

At the deepest part of the lagoon is a shimmering pearl of great size. This is a vortex to Kar'r'rga's plane, Pandemonium. Fortunately for the unwary, the vortex can only be opened by the proper command. Through this vortex, Kar'r'rga sometimes projects his avatar, who rises out of the lagoon in a form familiar to the Tarangu, Gurum, and Haifami—a horseshoe crab-headed giant of terrifying power. The avatar normally appears on moonless nights to collect the offerings gathered by his servants, but he will rise to sink seamen who have not paid him proper obeisance or who endanger his servants. Consequently, great treasures now lie sunken on the lagoon bottom.

Adventure: The Great and Dread God

For this adventure, it is assumed the characters begin in the mean village of Sams Bandar. The reason why the characters have come to Sams Bandar is not important; this adventure is situated entirely within these islands and is not directly tied to the characters' reasons for being on Qraidis.

Most likely the characters have come in search of the Great Treasure, either in the form of another clue or the treasure itself. This adventure gives the group

the opportunity to explore the lagoon and surrounding islands for the treasure they seek, and it eventually (and coincidentally) leads to their goal. Just which item the characters seek depends on the clues they have accumulated to this point.

Starting The Adventure

Dawn, casting its fire across the silvery sea, signals the start of another sultry day. For days the seaward winds have been listless, becalming large ships. Even before the sun has risen, the shrimp fleet laboriously rows to the schools, bringing in only a meager catch. By mid-morning the ships return and the catch is divided; by noon the crews have dispersed into the cooling shade of mud-walled houses. There they sip tea and trade idle gossip.

The mid-day peace is disrupted by a ululating cry from the rickety wharf. At first sluggish, the villagers gradually move with increasing panic. Invaders are coming to destroy all Sams Bandar! Cannibals are coming to feast on the women and children! It is the retribution of the gods for untold sins!

Amidst this confusion, Amil Najib finds the player characters and with a complete lack of dignity throws himself at their feet. "You, whose hearts must surely be brave, protect us from the evil that Fate has allotted us! Take your arms and save our worthless city, in the name of the Loregiver's mercy, and you will be rewarded handsomely!" Najib continues on in this vein until the player characters agree to investigate. Unless the group demands a specific reward, Najib continues with grandiose promises of reward. If the characters demand amounts, Najib is suddenly less munificent. Sams Bandar has little to offer aside from dried shrimp and weathered barijahs. The amil offers as little as possible; however, he will go as high as a newly built zarug, loaded with a cargo of dried shrimp and copra cake. (This is quite a good deal, considering the poverty of the village.)

Once the two groups come to terms, Najib explains that a host of savage tribesmen have landed their



canoes just down the coast and are now marching on Sams Bandar. It is up to the player characters to drive the invaders away. The hideous cannibals will arrive within hours.

The Emissary

The group of “hideous cannibals” is actually a delegation from the Haifami, led by Chief Shafiya himself. They are numerous—50 all told—and well armed, but the tribesmen’s intentions are more or less peaceful, nonetheless.

When the player characters investigate, the delegation is about an hour’s distance out of town and making its way in stately march toward Sams Bandar. If the PCs openly approach, the procession halts a safe distance away (out of bowshot) while a single runner hurries to meet them. If the player characters charge the procession or attack the runner, the Haifami will attack. The Haifami will fight to kill the player characters, overwhelming the group with a rain of spears. If successful, they will swoop down on Sams Bandar to raid and pillage. Chief Shafiya, angered by his reception, is in no mood to show mercy or ask for aid as he once intended.

If ambushed, the Haifami flee a safe distance, reorganize, and attack Sams Bandar under cover of darkness. If strong resistance is met during this raid, the Haifami withdraw to their canoes and go home.

The runner hails the party in ragged Midani, offering greetings from the great chieftain of the Haifami. He continues by inquiring if they are great and powerful men from the village of ships (Sams Bandar). If not, he wonders how one might meet such men. If yes, the runner then announces that Shafiya has come from his own lands to have audience with the group.

After some back-and-forth haggling over how the meeting is conducted (which you can skip or role-play as you wish), the player characters finally get to meet Chief Shafiya.

Shafiya’s Story

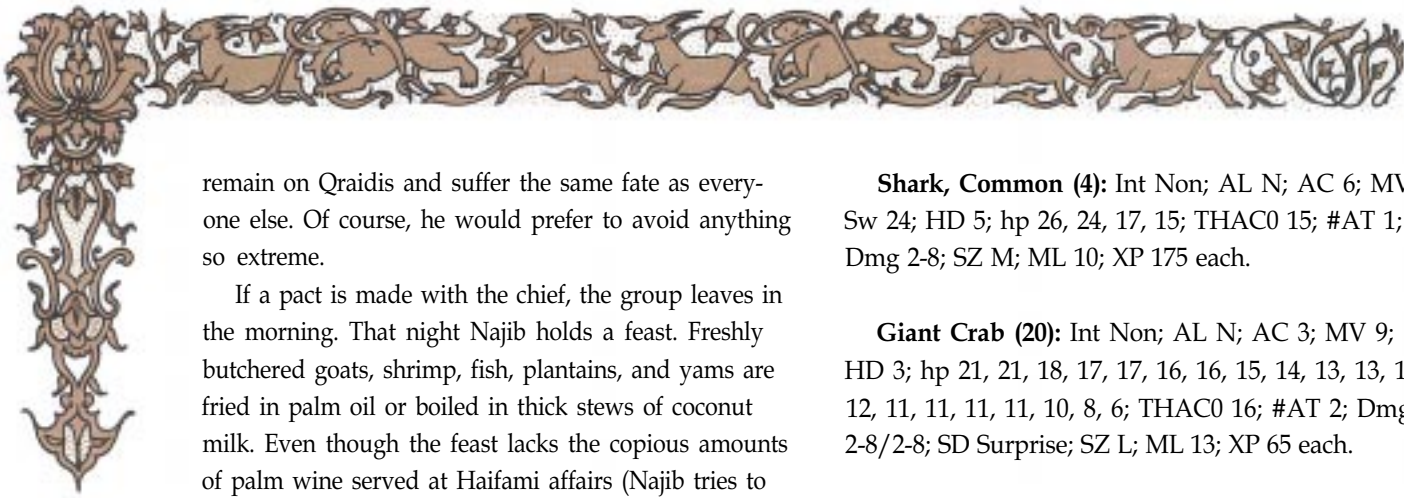
I am Chief Shafiya of the great Haifami, masters of the many islands. I greet you in peace, and my warriors greet you. . . .

With this the chief, speaking through his interpreter, leisurely explains his mission. Although outwardly polite, Shafiya considers all Zakharans (including the PCs) untrustworthy and evil. He has come only because ill times have befallen the Haifami, forcing this bold contact. According to the chief, a terrible threat hangs over all the islands of Sartan, Haifami and Zakharan alike. The god of the waters (Kar’r’rga) has been driven mad by the dark magic of the Gurum. Unless the god is healed, Kar’r’rga will lay waste to all the shores of Sartan. By the words of all his seers, Shafiya has been instructed to seek out the non-believers. Only such people as these can heal the great Kar’r’rga. If this is done, there will be many years of peace between the Haifami and the Zakharans of the big island. If help is refused, Shafiya is prepared to go to war until it is given.

If the characters (who seem to be the most able unbelievers around) agree to help, Shafiya promises life-long friendship. From his descriptions, the characters learn that a great crab-headed giant has been ravaging all the villages closest to the lagoon shores. Shafiya suspects the Gurum because: 1) they are responsible for much of the other evil in the area; 2) they have been seen in the company of Kar’r’rga on the god’s raids; and 3) his wise women told him so. Therefore, it seems to him that the way to solve the problem is for the characters to go to Jazirat al-Sadaf and find the secret that makes Kar’r’rga mad. Beyond that, he does not really know what to do.

Once the characters have heard Shafiya’s tale, they can confer among themselves and with the amil, if they desire. Najib, quite naturally, wants them to go with Shafiya; if the PCs refuse, the amil and his people have to bear the brunt of the chief’s wrath. The amil may even attempt treachery such as setting the PCs’ ship afire, thereby forcing the group to





remain on Qraidis and suffer the same fate as everyone else. Of course, he would prefer to avoid anything so extreme.

If a pact is made with the chief, the group leaves in the morning. That night Najib holds a feast. Freshly butchered goats, shrimp, fish, plantains, and yams are fried in palm oil or boiled in thick stews of coconut milk. Even though the feast lacks the copious amounts of palm wine served at Haifami affairs (Najib tries to adhere to the Law), Chief Shafiya is pleased by the feast.

The Journey

The next day the Haifami leave, taking the player characters with them. The PCs' ship and crew remain at Sams Bandar, where they will beach the ship to scrape and caulk the hull.

Because the Haifami boats are small, the player characters must travel in several different vessels. They take the group around the coast and wend their way through the many reefs and hazards that block the inner channels of the southern island chain. Each day, any character with navigation proficiency can attempt to chart the channels by making a successful proficiency check. Once accomplished, the character can add the waters traversed that day to his charts, thus avoiding the perils of reefs when sailing through the passage.

The trip takes two weeks before the party finally arrives at the village of Mgaiswalu. Each night of travel, the oarsmen pull to the nearest shore, and the group camps on the beach, dining on fresh fish, coconut, and fruit. There is little else to do. All in all, it is not a bad life.

Depending on your mood, the trip is either uneventful or marked by a few random but not overly extreme encounters. Possible events include a group of sharks overturning a canoe containing a player character, an attack by a horde of giant crabs, or a visit from a pair of curious and beguiling *pahari* seeking mates.

Shark, Common (4): Int Non; AL N; AC 6; MV Sw 24; HD 5; hp 26, 24, 17, 15; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SZ M; ML 10; XP 175 each.

Giant Crab (20): Int Non; AL N; AC 3; MV 9; HD 3; hp 21, 21, 18, 17, 17, 16, 16, 15, 14, 13, 13, 12, 12, 11, 11, 11, 11, 10, 8, 6; THAC0 16; #AT 2; Dmg 2-8/2-8; SD Surprise; SZ L; ML 13; XP 65 each.

Pahari (2): Int Very-Gen; AL CG; AC 7; MV 12, Sw 18/24; HD 4; hp 24, 19; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SA 8th level sea mage; SZ M; ML 10; XP 3,000 each (see *Monstrous Compendium Al-Qadim* appendix for complete details).

Mgaiswalu

On the day the group is due to arrive at Mgaiswalu, the Haifami oarsmen are in good spirits, looking forward to the end of a long journey. However, a dark stain of smoke over their destination dashes their fine mood. Something terrible has happened to the Haifami village.

Chief Shafiya is no fool and quickly orders the canoes beached and hidden out of sight of the village. From here the approach will be overland. His fifty men are divided into three groups—ten to remain and guard the canoes, thirty to accompany him, and ten more to go scout the way ahead. The player characters, as outsiders, are not given orders, but the chief clearly expects them to pitch in and do their part. He does not trust them enough to involve the group in his battle plans, such as they are.

After an hour of cautious advance through the coconut groves, Mgaiswalu—or what remains of it—comes into sight. (The village map is in the Map Booklet.) The village, once protected by a stout stockade, is broken and shattered. Dead men, women, and children are scattered across the ground and through the wreckage of the Haifami lodges. Much of the village is in ashes and fires still smolder throughout. From the forest side, there is no sign of the



attackers—suggest to the PCs that perhaps they are all gone.

Only after the group is well into the village does everyone discover the attackers have not disappeared. Near the beach are the boats of strangers, but no one is in sight. As the group moves forward to investigate, they are attacked by a band of Gurum warriors who charge from a thick tangle of trees along the beach.

The attackers are a large band of ogres, ogrima, and ogre magi. Chief Shafiya and his warriors are too busy fighting unspecified Gurum to help the player characters. Stress how desperate the fighting is for the Haifami, but point out that their own situation is such that they cannot provide aid.

Only after the Gurum have engaged the player characters does a second threat appear, this time from the sea. Rising out of the water are a pair of sartani (see the new monster sheets included). These fearsome giants lumber ashore and join the attack on the PCs. The sartani have been summoned and are under the control of the Gurum. Farther out on the water is a small boat, manned by ogres and one ogre magi. The ogre magi has used a magical shell (specially granted him by Kar'r'rga) to control the two monsters. If this ogre magi is killed, the sartani break off their attack and return docilely to the sea. Otherwise the crab-headed giants fight blindly to the death. If both ogre magi leading the land attack are killed quickly, the remaining ogres and ogrima fighting the player characters will retreat quickly, leaving the sartani to finish the job.

The fate of Mgaiswalu depends on the success of the player characters. If the PCs defeat their enemies, Chief Shafiya and his men are equally successful. If the PCs die, the chief dies; if the group flees, so do the surviving Haifami. The losses taken by the warriors are proportionally equal to the damage suffered by the PCs. Thus, if each player character has lost 50% of his hit points, 50% of the warriors are dead.

Ogres (5): Int Low; AL CE; AC 5; MV 9; HD 4+1; hp 18, 18, 15, 15, 7; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-10 (or by weapon); SA +2 to damage; SZ L; ML 11; XP 175 each.

Ogrima (6): Int Low-Av; AL C/LE; AC 5; MV 9; HD 4+3; hp 26, 25, 21, 19, 18, 16; THAC0 15; #AT 1; D 1-10; SA Spells; SD Regenerate 1/turn; SZ L; ML 12; XP 420 each.

Ogre Mage (2): Int Average; AL LE; AC 4; MV 9; Fl 15(B); HD 5+2; hp 34, 16; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1-12; SA Spells; SZ L; ML 13; XP 420 each.

Sartani (2): Int Low; AL CN; AC 2; MV 15; HD 8; hp 49, 47; THAC0 13; #AT 1; D 3-18; SA special; SD special; SZ H; ML 15; XP 2,000 each.

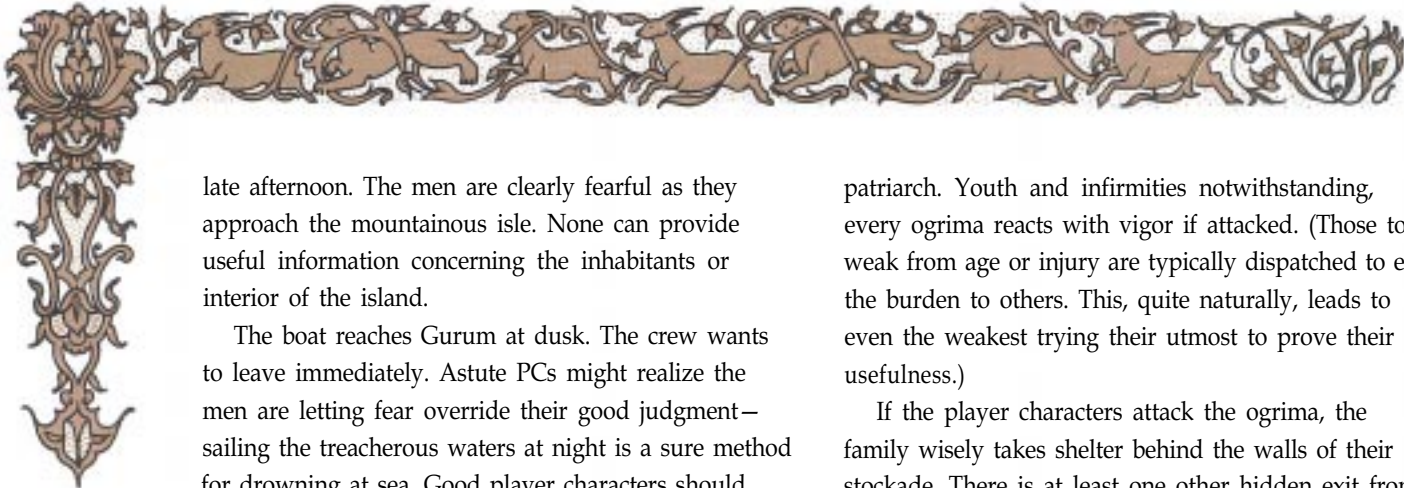
Aftermath

Once the battle is won (if it is won), the Haifami regroup and assess their losses. Chief Shafiya survives, but this village, part of his tribe, is a complete loss. At sea, the ogre boat turns and heads for Sadaf. If the PCs did not notice the ogre mage on the vessel (and the mystical shell he held), Chief Shafiya did and tells them now. It is clear the Gurum are involved with Kar'r'rga's rage. The chief insists the PCs must go to Sadaf, find the source of this strange magic, and destroy it, thereby releasing their god from his madness. For this task, Shafiya provides a single boat and the oarsmen needed to get the group there. He will not send any more, since it would risk his position as leader of the tribe. If the PCs refuse, he restates his intention to ravage Qraidis. The chief does not turn away any reasonable request for aid—provisions, healing, perhaps even a minor potion or two. After this, the PCs are on their own.

Among The Gurum

The voyage to Sadaf requires less than a day, but the boatmen provided by Chief Shafiya delay arrival until





late afternoon. The men are clearly fearful as they approach the mountainous isle. None can provide useful information concerning the inhabitants or interior of the island.

The boat reaches Gurum at dusk. The crew wants to leave immediately. Astute PCs might realize the men are letting fear override their good judgment—sailing the treacherous waters at night is a sure method for drowning at sea. Good player characters should press the sailors to remain overnight—under the protection of the PCs, of course.

Although your players may suspect you are setting their characters up by forcing the sailors on the group, nothing happens that night. Nothing, that is, beyond weird howls from the mountains, shuffling shapes at the edge of darkness, and startled squawks of bizarre nightbirds. (Play on the group's paranoia to keep the PCs from getting a good rest this night.)

With the earliest dawn, the sailors hurriedly leave, promising to return at some pre-arranged time. As the characters break camp and move out, their best tracker (or any character if there are no trackers) discovers fresh tracks just beyond the beach. Anyone with tracking proficiency can tell these tracks are fresh, made only last night. Judging from the number of footprints, it must have been one creature watching the camp for some time last night.

Tracking

If any character can track, the group can try to follow the trail. If the necessary check is successful, the trail leads to a small fortified cave about three miles from the landing site. This is the cave of the Yazhad, an ogrima family. The entrance, easily spotted by the thin trickle of smoke that curls out of the cave mouth, is protected by a fortified wall of rock and palm logs. An oversized gate is the only apparent entrance.

Six ogrima of various ages live in the cave. The youngest is a juvenile, the oldest a near-crippled

patriarch. Youth and infirmities notwithstanding, every ogrima reacts with vigor if attacked. (Those too weak from age or injury are typically dispatched to ease the burden to others. This, quite naturally, leads to even the weakest trying their utmost to prove their usefulness.)

If the player characters attack the ogrima, the family wisely takes shelter behind the walls of their stockade. There is at least one other hidden exit from their cave; thus, they cannot be trapped inside. If the PCs attempt a siege, the family warriors simply slip out and attack the group by surprise from behind.

A much wiser course for the player characters is to negotiate with the ogrima. For results of this, see "Attitudes," below.

Wandering

If the characters do not or cannot follow the tracks, they will have to explore the island blindly. Use the Beachhead map (in the Map Booklet) for this. As the characters venture from their camp, they eventually come across trails leading to different Gurum families. These lead to the homes (mostly caves with stockades around the outside) of ogres, ogrima, and ogre magi. The race and number of the occupants is noted on the map. The reception at each place depends on the type of family encountered.

To succeed in finding out why Kar'r'rga is behaving so strangely and how to correct it, the player characters must gain information and allies among the Gurum. This requires a careful combination of diplomacy and force. Some of the families can be persuaded to aid the characters, although for their own ends; others want nothing to do with humans. All, no matter how willing, are ogre-blood, not impressed by wisdom and talk. Any negotiation is going to require some show of force by the player characters.

Attitudes

The three family types in the area—ogre, ogre magi, and ogrima—have distinctly different attitudes and



aims. Each requires a different approach and not all are amenable to negotiation. When the player characters discover a Gurum family, use the general attitude description given below to help resolve the encounter. In all cases, blatant attacks will be met with equally blatant force.

To understand the attitudes, it is necessary to know the source of Kar'r'rga's strange behavior. Part of it is natural to that being—the crab god is chaotic neutral and hence highly unpredictable. The being's natural tendencies, however, have been aggravated by a pact made between it and Mus, a leader of the ogre magi. This creature has promised Kar'r'rga domination of the entire island chain in exchange for preeminent power among mortals. Perhaps pleased by the offer, Kar'r'rga has granted Mus magical shells that allow him to summon and control the sartani. If the creatures are within a one-mile radius, they arrive in 2d12 rounds. Control can be maintained without concentration once they appear. It is the attacks of these creatures that have been interpreted as signs of Kar'r'rga's madness.

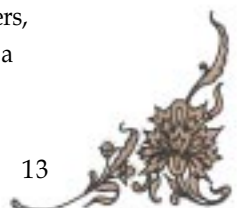
Ogre. As traditional keepers of the faith and intermediaries between Kar'r'rga and the Gurum, the ogre families are particularly incensed by the usurpation of their role. That, combined with a demonstration that the player characters are stronger, should be sufficient to open negotiations with the PCs. The group must take care not to overplay any force lest the ogres become incensed and seek immediate revenge.


The ogres know who has the shell and may even guide the player characters there (if the group is lucky). At the least, the ogres will not sound the alarm that intruders are on Sadaf. Unlike the other groups, the ogres want to see the shell destroyed and the balance restored, since this assures them of continued power among the Gurum. For all their faults, the ogres have a sense of honor—if the player characters succeed, the ogres will ensure the group's safe exit from Sadaf.

Ogrima. Lowest of the Gurum, the more astute ogrima families will see the player characters as a quick route to power. However, the ogrima will only help if they believe the PCs are powerful enough to defeat the ogre magi. A test will be needed. Being brutally practical, the ogrima send the player characters to wipe out a nearby rival family. (On the map, choose the closest ogre or ogre mage family. This is the desired target.) If the characters do the job and bring back proof satisfactory to the ogrima (bloody proof), the ogrima will aid the characters. Several of their number will lead the characters to the holder of the shell. They may even assist in defeating the ogre magi, though not at great peril to themselves.

The ogrima have other plans, which is why they are saving themselves. They see the shell (and the power it wields) as the means of seizing control of the Gurum. The ogrima have no interest in conquering all of the Sartan chain—yet. They only want to crush the other branches of their tribe and become the new leading caste. To achieve this, the ogrima will wait until the PCs succeed or at least seriously weaken the hated ogre magi. Then they will make their move to seize the shell. This most likely means betraying the player characters, but the ogrima have no moral qualms about that at all.

Ogre Mage. The ogre magi, although a minority, have the wisdom to know their strength comes from cooperation and from items like the mystical shell of Kar'r'rga. The ogre magi are also cunning and will quickly realize the PCs represent a threat, especially if they are allied with other Gurum. Therefore, any ogre mage family will pretend to ally with the player characters with little resistance. The new "allies" will lead the player characters to the household of Mus, source of the sought-after shells. Once the PCs are engaged with Karac, their "allies" will attack from the rear with the aim of trapping the PCs between the two groups. The ogre magi are not interested in prisoners, especially since the deaths of the PCs would make a suitable display to the other Gurum families.





Ogre, Leader: Int Average; AL CE; AC 3; MV 9; HD 7; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6+3, or by weapon; SA +2 w/weapon; SZ L; ML 11; XP 420 each.

Ogre: Int Low; AL CE; AC 5; MV 9; HD 4+1; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-10 (or by weapon); SA +2 to damage; SZ L; ML 12; XP 175 each.

Ogrima: Int Low-Av; AL C/LE; AC 5; MV 9; HD 4+3; THAC0 15; #AT 1; D 1-10; SA Spells; SD Regenerate 1/turn; SZ L; ML 12; XP 420 each.

Ogre Mage: Int Average; AL LE; AC 4; MV 9, FI 15(B); HD 5+2; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1-12; SA Spells; SZ L; ML 13; XP 420 each.

Mus

Eventually the player characters should find their way to Mus's household, whether they are led there or stumble across it. Unlike the previous caves, this place has the appearance of a small compound. Rough walls of jagged rock have been rudely stacked and reinforced with logs. Beyond the low walls are the thatched roofs of several tumble-down houses (though quite lavish by Gurum standards). The whole thing is perched at the edge of a sea-cliff overlooking the lagoon. There is only one direction from which a party can approach on foot. This hardly concerns the ogre magi of the household, however, since they can fly to attack or escape.

The household is occupied by six ogre magi—the greatest being Mus, the rest his extended family. One is always on guard, although there is a 25% chance the player characters (if they exercise caution) can reach the outer wall undetected. From here they can overhear Mus discuss his plans to unleash a horde of sartani on the unprepared islanders. If the group is seen, the guard instantly vanishes and the alarm is raised.

Should the characters approach with the mistaken belief that Mus might be reasonable, or they just accidentally stumble across the compound without

realizing the ogre mage is their goal, Mus will pretend to negotiate with the group. Meanwhile his kin, invisible and flying around, will slip out of the compound and surround the party. After 1d3+2 rounds, Mus attacks. His hidden kin strike from all sides (starting with cone of cold spells).

To avoid an ambush, the player characters must strike decisively before the ogre magi have time to prepare. A sudden attack prevents the monsters from acting as a coordinated group, although they can still be formidable foes. While his kin hold off the attackers, Mus rushes to one of the huts and grabs a pouchful of the mystical shells he has prepared. If the battle is going badly, Mus leaps from the cliff edge and swoops toward the sea below. As he flies away, the ogre mage uses one of the shells to summon a sartani. The giant rises from the water and Mus lands on its shoulder. Slowly striding toward the center of the lagoon, the sartani (and Mus) disappear beneath the waves.

Once the battle ends, the characters can search the compound. Among the crude furnishings, they find a golden-plated shield, studded with garnets, opals, and pearls worth perhaps 5,000 gp. Hidden carefully in one of the dwellings is a cutlass of the *Golden Gulf*, a vial containing two applications of *oil of great devotion*, and two potions of extra-healing. A number of empty vials nearby indicates that several other potions may have been used in the course of the battle. There is no indication what these were.

Ogre Mage (6): Int Average; AL LE; AC 4; MV 9, FI 15(B); HD 5+2; hp 36, 33, 30, 29, 25, 20; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1-12; SA Spells; SZ L; ML 14; XP 420 each.

Pursuit

If Mus escapes, make sure the player characters see his somewhat spectacular departure. His threat to unleash the sartani should still be ringing in their ears. If for some reason they did not hear it, the ogre mage taunts



them with it now, his words barely audible on the wind. This should be enough to motivate the characters to act.

Even if Mus is dead, you still want the characters to sail to the center of the lagoon (if only to find the Great Treasure or clue). As the group pokes through the compound, have a hakima (or the wisest character of the lot) find crude writings that describe Mus's plan. From it they learn one important thing must still be undone. To gain his power, Mus has opened a portal to some other realm, releasing with it the sartani and perhaps worse things. Unless this portal is closed, the islands will be overrun with hideous monsters. It does not take much work to discover the portal is located on the sea floor at the center of the lagoon.

The site can be reached by ship or flying carpet. Chief Shafiya will reluctantly provide a canoe, although you should make the player characters work to persuade him, especially if the other boatmen never came back. Otherwise, the characters can hurriedly return to Qraidis and sail their own ship into the shallow waters, but this can be hazardous. Once in the lagoon, the characters need only steer toward the center.

The group will have no trouble realizing when they are close. The opened vortex releases massive energies that churn and roil the water for a thousand yards around. The heart of this maelstrom is a giant oyster sitting on the bottom of the lagoon. Resting in its open shell is a pearl of oily blackness that throbs and shudders. The violent energies that churn the sea thread out from this like the tip of a tornado. This creature is the open gate, and forcing the oyster's valves shut will once more close the vortex.

Getting to the giant oyster is the problem. PCs should rely on their own resources and skill, but if absolutely necessary Chief Shafiya can provide necklaces enchanted with a spell that allows wearers to breath underwater for 24 hours. The shell rests on the shallow bottom 200 feet below. The roily waters make a direct dive impossible. The ship can get no closer

than 3,000 feet away. From here, player characters will have to travel underwater, daring all hazards on the way.

The way to the shell is littered with jagged coral reefs and the half-encrusted hulls of sunken ships, a veritable mariner's graveyard. This jumble provides excellent cover to player characters and enemies alike. Far from the vortex, the currents are noticeable but not strong. At 500 yards, the characters must stay within 100 feet of the bottom or they must make a Strength check to avoid being caught up in the whirling waters. At 100 yards, the limit is 50 feet. At 50 yards, player characters must make a Strength check to avoid being pulled in (only one check per character is required). Within 10 yards of the giant oyster, any character in contact with the maelstrom is automatically sucked in.

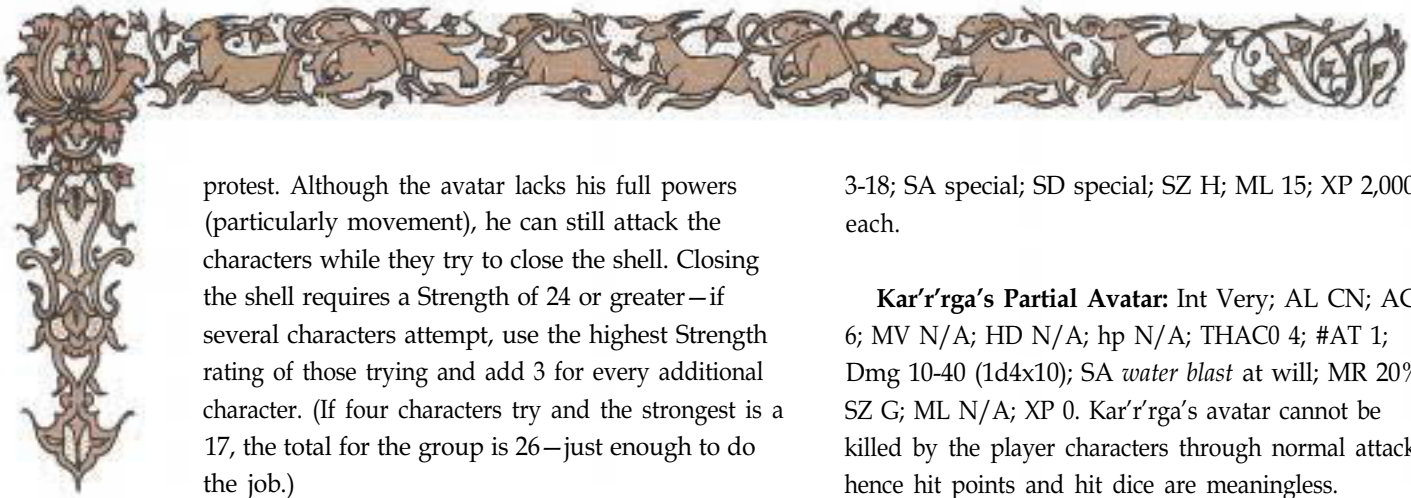
Those drawn into the maelstrom suffer 1d10 points of damage from turbulent waters and are ejected to the surface at a random point on the outer edge.

The greatest hazard is Mus—if he is still alive. Aware that the player characters are pursuing him (he is not a fool), the ogre mage summons six sartani to defend the vortex while he beseeches Kar'r'rga for more aid. The sartani are in their own element and will attack from all directions, including above. These creatures fight to the death without any guidance from Mus.

By the time the PCs defeat the sartani, Kar'r'rga has answered Mus's plea. Describe to the PCs the terrifying sight of an enormous sartani, easily twice the size of all others, emerging from the constricted opening of the vortex. Already the fearsome crab head and pincered arms of the creature have formed and are waving free. The eyes glare with malevolent evil. It is the gathering avatar of Kar'r'rga, come to claim his own.

At this point the player characters must act quickly and decisively. The fearsome avatar has not fully passed through the vortex. Thus, if the shell is closed, Kar'r'rga's earthly form will instantly dissipate. Kar'r'rga is not going to let this happen without





protest. Although the avatar lacks his full powers (particularly movement), he can still attack the characters while they try to close the shell. Closing the shell requires a Strength of 24 or greater—if several characters attempt, use the highest Strength rating of those trying and add 3 for every additional character. (If four characters try and the strongest is a 17, the total for the group is 26—just enough to do the job.)

The Great Treasure

Once the shell closes, Kar'r'rga's partial form vanishes with a howl. The maelstrom subsides and the waters gradually clear. As this happens, the group notices that one of the reefs is actually an ancient hull completely encrusted in coral. The fight shattered one side, and there among the wreckage is an undamaged chest. This chest contains either the Great Treasure (if the treasure is the shell of Kar'r'rga, it can be taken from the dissipated avatar) or another clue (see the Map Booklet for the possible clues). In addition the chest contains pearls worth 5,000 gp and two *rings of free action*.

Sartani (6): Int Low; AL CN; AC 2; MV 15; HD 8; hp 45, 43, 40, 33, 29, 28; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg

3-18; SA special; SD special; SZ H; ML 15; XP 2,000 each.

Kar'r'rga's Partial Avatar: Int Very; AL CN; AC-6; MV N/A; HD N/A; hp N/A; THAC0 4; #AT 1; Dmg 10-40 (1d4x10); SA *water blast* at will; MR 20%; SZ G; ML N/A; XP 0. Kar'r'rga's avatar cannot be killed by the player characters through normal attacks, hence hit points and hit dice are meaningless.

Aftermath

If the characters defeat Kar'r'rga's avatar, thus setting everything right once more, they are hailed by the Haifami as great heroes and saviors. After several days of obligatory feasting, Chief Shafiya returns the group to Sams Bandar with five tons worth of cargo as gifts (copra, exotic baskets, crab-shell shields, etc.). This cargo will fetch from 250 to 1,000 gp per ton, depending on the haggling skills of the characters.

The player characters can also conclude a treaty of friendship and peace between the Haifami and the Zakharans of Sams Bandar. Chief Shafiya, while not converting to the ways of the Loregiver, will allow missionaries to come among his tribe—provided the people of Sams Bandar restrict the activities of slavers against the tribe.

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Book 3

Nada al-Hazan

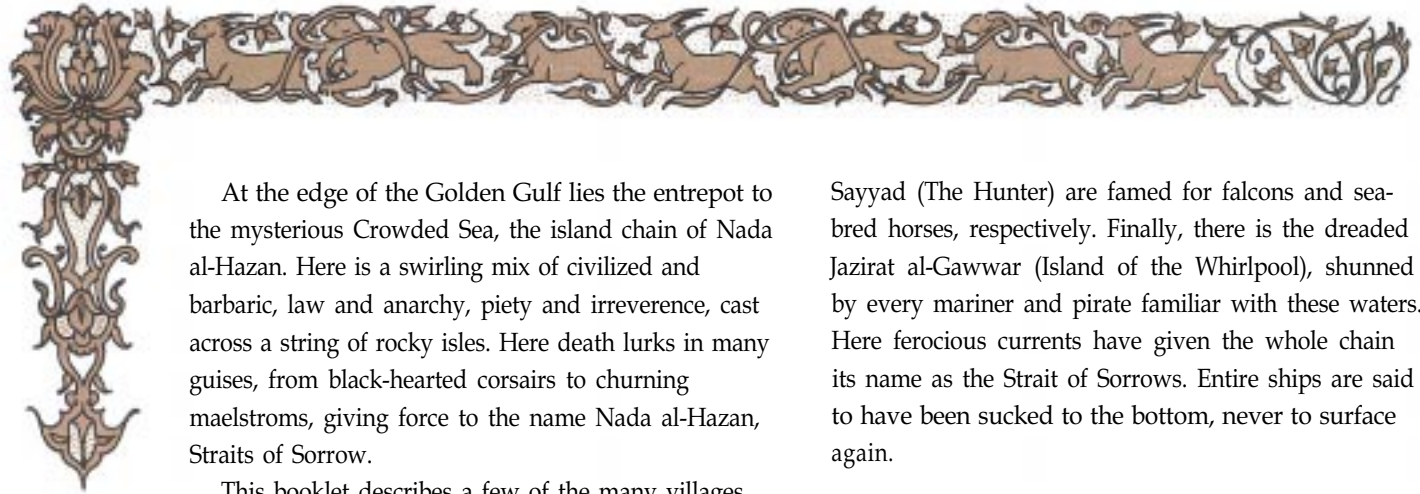
*... O my son, Thou hast indeed been miraculously preserved!
Were not the term of Thy life a long one, Thou hadst not
escaped from these straits ...*

The First Voyage of Sinbad the Seaman

Know, you who would be wise, that our station is given us by the wisdom of the gods, and who can be wiser than the gods? Once there was a sultan who, while standing in his tower, heard the rattling bowl of a beggar far below, and said to himself, "Fate has treated this man cruelly. Who will say my kingdom is just if I ignore the injustices of Fate?" And he spoke to his wizer, saying, "Go to the beggar who cries at my gate and say to him, 'Your sultan has listened to your laments against the cruelty of Fate and found it just.' Then give to him this purse of gold so that he is no longer poor. Thus I can correct the injustice of Fate." When the wizer returned, having carried out the command, the sultan asked of him what transpired. The wizer, bowing low, said, "O generous sultan, I did as you commanded, but no sooner had I presented the beggar with the purse but a loose tile fell from the roof and struck him dead. At first I was moved to rail against Fate, but then I thought on it and knew the truth. Great sultan, know that our lives are as given us. Whenever you see a piece of meat in a man's hand, say, 'By Fate he deserves this,' and when you see a beggar in rags, say, 'He deserves no more than this.' So Fate has chosen."

Believe him who tells his story first, and bring him grapes to quench his thirst. . . .





At the edge of the Golden Gulf lies the entrepot to the mysterious Crowded Sea, the island chain of Nada al-Hazan. Here is a swirling mix of civilized and barbaric, law and anarchy, piety and irreverence, cast across a string of rocky isles. Here death lurks in many guises, from black-hearted corsairs to churning maelstroms, giving force to the name Nada al-Hazan, Straits of Sorrow.

This booklet describes a few of the many villages and outposts found throughout the half-civilized islands of Nada al-Hazan, in particular the town of Bandar al-Sa'adat (Port of Luck). The end of this booklet contains two adventures. The first, *A Night in Town*, is set in vibrant Bandar al-Sa'adat. This is likely to be the first stop for most player characters, and in this adventure the group has the opportunity to gain clues needed to propel them farther into the Crowded Sea in search of the Great Treasure.

The second adventure, *The Isle of Sadness*, is another site where clues or the Great Treasure itself might lie. This adventure is structured more for role-playing than heroic battle, and the player characters must grapple with the riddles of a people who live by the Thousand Shades of Sorrow.

The Strait of Sorrow

Nada al-Hazan is a chain of relatively well-explored and moderately settled islands that rise in bare rocky prominences above the sea. Well known to mariners of the Crowded Sea, the chain is sometimes known as the Silver Road since it is an important way station of the sea lanes. Although composed of a hundred uncharted rocks and islets, the chain is normally divided into the Masud Jazayir (Fortunate Isles), of which Bandar al-Sa'adat is the center. The islands continue down the chain, gradually becoming less and less settled. Closest to civilization is al-Zabdiyat (the Bowl), now claimed by a mysterious sha'ir. Then comes Tawil (Long), a place noted only for its bleakness. Dirs (Jaw-tooth) and al-

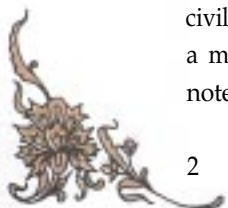
Sayyad (The Hunter) are famed for falcons and sea-bred horses, respectively. Finally, there is the dreaded Jazirat al-Gawwar (Island of the Whirlpool), shunned by every mariner and pirate familiar with these waters. Here ferocious currents have given the whole chain its name as the Strait of Sorrows. Entire ships are said to have been sucked to the bottom, never to surface again.

Climate and Life

The unfathomable vagaries of current and wind have rendered most of Nada al-Hazan dry and treeless. The majority of the islets are covered with thorny scrub and straw-like grasses; only the largest islands are capable of supporting sparsely wooded vales primarily of tamarisk, date, and coconut. These line the infrequent streams that wash down the jagged slopes. A few waterways end in silt-laden mangrove swamps, slowly thrusting themselves farther into the sea.

Table 3:
Suggested Creatures on the Nada al-Hazan

Ant, giant	Hawk, any
Ant Lion, giant	Hieracosphinx
Antelope	Hornet, any
Baboon	Naga, dark
Bat, any	Nymph
Beetle, fire	Orpsu
Centipede, any	Rat, any
Cockatrice	Rhaumbusun
Dogs, wild	Roc
Dragonne	Scorpion, any
Eagle, all	Snake, any
Elemental	Spider, huge
Goat	Tempest
Hag, sea	Turtle, giant sea
Harpy	Vulture, any





Birds and pestiferous insects, giant and small, are the most common creatures of the islands. It is claimed that a pair of rocs nest at the southern tip of the chain, occasionally snatching crewmen from passing ships. However, it is the small creatures who dominate the land. The types vary widely from island to island. On al-Zabdiyat, goats that escaped from pirate villages have nearly deforested the entire isle. Parts of the Masud Jaziyar are noted for an abundance of rats and spiders. Serpents, ranging from small and harmless to great poisonous monsters, are found on Tawil, along with a species of rock ape unique to the island. These primates live in colonies on the steep slopes, well away from the giant ophidians. As noted before, Jazirat al-Sayyad is the source of a particularly fine wild horse, sea-bred with the stallions of the foam, while the falcons of Dirs are worthy gifts to the sultans of the Golden Gulf.

Possible animals and monsters for encounters are listed on Table 3. Although there is a wide range of choices, no island supports all this life. On each island, only a selected few creatures should be encountered.

Masud Jazayir

Clustered west of the northern tip of the Nada al-Hazan chain is a group of islands known as the Masud Jazayir. The islands are the farthest outpost of Zakharan colonization in the Crowded Sea. The isles are low and rolling, marked by small streams from natural springs that wend down fertile vales. With such temptations, the Masud Jazayir has quickly become the vanguard of Zakharan expansion. Small coastal settlements dot these islands. With careful irrigation, the islands yield a wide variety of produce from orchard and field—almonds, sesame seeds, dates, sugar cane, grapes, pomegranates, citrons, figs, and cotton. Goats, sheep, and a few cattle are raised for local use.

The settlements have not brought with them all the features of Zakharan life, however. Many of the islanders descend from outlaws, rebels, and malcontents seeking to escape the relatively rigid law

of the mainland city-states. The concept of the Law as presented by the Loregiver is respected—in theory. Ask a man who owns his land and he will freely answer, “The Grand Caliph, for truth—and if he comes I will give it to him.” Thus the Law is flexed and bent to suit individual strains of the islanders. Actions barely tolerated in other lands—money-lending, blood feuds, excessive speech, public displays of celebration, even occasional “honest” piracy (i.e., not against your neighbors or anyone who can make trouble)—are somewhat the norm for the islanders. Moralists priests find the Masudi to be abhorrent degenerates or rebellious troublemakers; the Masudi consider those of the Pantheon, in particular, to be pinch-faced toads.



Bandar al-Sa’adat

Ruler: *Ra’is* Mahmud Ben Aziz (he/m/T/mr/11) rules al-Sa’adat with a relaxed yet unquestioned grip. Given the morality of the region, the qadi’s decisions are often convenient—some would say corrupt—but Mahmud knows just who to keep happy in the town. Mahmud would deny any wrong-doing on his part—it’s just that he approaches justice as another business, selling the law to those who can pay.

The Court: Since Mahmud has many interests, he cannot attend to every little matter of town administration. He has created several posts to handle the day-to-day affairs. Naturally, he would only entrust these to family members. There is his brother Karim Ben Aziz (he/m/F/a/8), captain of the marketplace guard (whose guardsmen are all sons, nephews, and cousins of the Aziz); his widowed daughter Halima (he/f/T/mr/5), town bookkeeper; and Aasim (e/m/W/sh/7), his brother-in-law, who inspects all cargoes at the wharf. Like Mahmud, these officials view their posts as a business meant to enrich the Aziz family.

Population: An average of 800, although this number varies greatly with the coming and going of the trading seasons.





Distinguishing Features of the Populace: Two features mark an outlander from the citizens of al-Sa'adat. The obvious one is speech. The Masudi have a passionate love of words and, thus, never approach any conversation directly and to the point. "How are you?" becomes "Hail, my brother, on this gracious day that Fate has created and sent to entertain us, including myself, least of all beings, while surely you must be richer than I to be out on this fine day?" Haggling for them is more than just business—it is a chance to show off one's artistic skill.

The second distinguishing feature, while not as overt, is a trait of personality. For the Masudi of al-Sa'adat, all life is business and all business is pleasure. Making deals is more than a way of making money—it is a reason for existence. Furthermore, a sharp deal or a hard bargain can earn a man fame and reputation. The Masudi judge according to the cleverness of one's haggling.

Major Products: Trade goods of all types.

Armed Forces: The citizens can be mustered into an effective militia of 100 soldiers. They are practiced at defending the port from sporadic pirate raids. The militia is backed by a cadre of assorted wizards (lvl 3-6), eight in all, who work for the merchants of al-Sa'adat and the eight priests of the small temples in town.

Other Important Individuals: Al-Sa'adat is a way point for many travelers and adventurers of the Crowded Sea. Thus, there is always a good chance that someone of fame or notoriety may be temporarily residing here. Of permanent and semi-permanent residents, the most infamous is certainly Ghunayya of the Rose Petal (h/f/F/c/12), the pirate queen. Captain of a ship sometimes called the *Djinni's Flower*, sometimes the *Floating Rose*, Ghunayya is a semi-legitimate privateer who does not raid indiscriminately. Instead, she sells her skills as a pirate to cities and nations throughout Zakhara. Armed with the appropriate letters of marque, she raids the ships of her employers' rivals, dumps the cargoes in al-Sa'adat's

marketplace, and keeps 50% of the profits. The rest is magically shipped out to her employers. By wisely spreading her wealth throughout the town, she has become a "respectable" citizen—at least so long as she is successful.

Noted Features of the Town: It is said of al-Sa'adat, like it is said of many places, that here is a market where a man can buy anything. The claim is more true here than most; gems, gold, silver, and magic—all pass through the port's stalls. Is there nothing that cannot be bought or sold by the merchants of al-Sa'adat? One local legend maintains that here the gods themselves come in disguise to trade for the souls of the living. Another maintains that Anwar the Fool bought the secret of Shulifan, the Caliphate of Gold, from a merchant here. Was he swindled? Perhaps, but no one has ever seen Anwar begging in the streets since.

Bandar al-Sa'adat, the Crossroad of Trade, is the center of the ungoverned Masud frontier and the meeting point of two major trade routes. From the east come ships bearing the iron and silver of Harab, and spices from Bariya; from the south come exotic treasures from wild and unexplored lands. It is to Bandar Sa'adat, the gateway to civilized lands, that the sailors converge to refit and celebrate.

Because of this, the large and powerful merchants of the Pearl Cities and great Huzuz herself have set up shop here to buy up the choicest items brought in the ships. Each major merchant house maintains its own caravansary (a combination traveler's inn and warehouse) for visiting captains. The caravansaries are stout, well-protected compounds, a scattering of small forts rising above the rest of al-Sa'adat.

The town's shoreline is lined with piers, wharfs, and quays. Those owned by the town are fine, solid affairs of stone, with cranes and porters in abundance. Berthing fees, paid to the Ben Aziz, are high: 2-5% of the cargoes' value. Farther to the edges the piers become rickety affairs, and the berthing fees drop accordingly.



Typically a ship owner will deal with the same merchant house from year to year, berthing with regularity at the same pier unless angered or lured away by offers of better deals. Once sold, the goods are carried back by ships that sail only from al-Sa'adat to the Golden Gulf and back again, a practice known as "trading the short road" among the merchant community.

Indeed, many of the captains who ply the Crowded Sea never once carry their cargoes to the Golden Gulf. Instead, they off-load all their goods in al-Sa'adat. Although most of a ship's goods are hauled to the caravansary, a few items always manage to reach the Swallows' Bazaar (named after the birds that roost under the nearby eaves). As a result, the town has a thriving marketplace. Though Bandar al-Sa'adat has the appearance of an outlying backwater, this facade conceals vast fortunes of both legal and questionable means.

AL-Zabdiyyat

Visible from the shores of the Masuds are the very tips of the mountains that form the walls of the ill-famed al-Zabdiyyat, a pair of crescent islands at the mouth of the Strait of Woe. These islands are rarely visited by honest folk, and they are usually avoided by sailors, for the round, storm-free lagoon is now the abode of Khadiga (h/f/W/sh/15) and her pet, Shipwrecker, a giant sea snake. Since the two arrived several decades ago, the few other islanders have fled or disappeared. The sha'ir, through inhuman messengers, has made it clear that no one is to disturb "her" islands. At first a few ships ignored the ban; they were never seen again. Since then there have been more than a few strange sinkings and attacks against vessels which stray too close to her shores.

Of the few reports heard from those who have visited the island and survived, all concur upon a single point. According to survivors, a great domed and towered mausoleum of the clearest crystal rises from the very center of the great lagoon. Why is

Khadiga building it? No one knows for sure, but some say it is for herself. Others suggest it is meant to honor a dead lover.

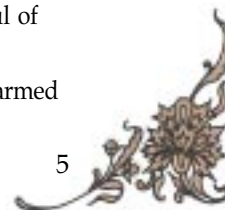
If this gossip weren't enough, other mysteries seem to swirl around the reclusive Khadiga. Each year, near the Festival of Fasting, strangers arrive in Bandar al-Sa'adat. Sometimes they are human, sometimes they are clearly not. With each visit, the discreetly asked questions are always the same: "Has anyone seen the woman of al-Zabdiyyat? Have they bought anything from her? Has she asked for this curious item or these rare goods?" The strangers are no more open than Khadiga herself, sometimes artfully, sometimes threateningly, turning aside all questions. It is a mystery within a mystery.


Dirs

When in the *Samardaz* the poet Kalil said, "How the falcon speaks in words of flight . . .," surely he was writing of the regal birds of Dirs. The rocky slopes of this island have been the nesting home of an exceptional breed of hunting bird for centuries. The falcons of Dirs have been presented to sultans and caliphs, even shipped as gifts to the kings beyond the Land of Fate.

Given the wonder and value of the birds, it would be reasonable to expect Dirs to be well settled—or at least with one small thriving village of falconers and merchants to capture, train, and sell the birds. This is not the case. Dirs is a desolate wasteland, a bitter tangle of cliffs and rock, sun-burnt grasses and twisted trees. No civilized settlement is found here, not even a single hut, for the falcons of Dirs have special protectors.

Dirs is the domain of *maskhi* (see the *Monstrous Compendium: AL-QADIM™* appendix), a shape-shifting race that calls Dirs their home. These creatures want little to do with the outside world. Since the *maskhi* can assume falcon form, they are highly distrustful of falconers. Indeed, there are tales of bird-catchers snaring their prey only to discover an angry and armed





little maskhi in their nets. Rather than continually endure snares and the resultant humiliation (and possible death), the maskhi find it much simpler to keep Dirs free of strangers.

Landing on Dirs, a group is likely to be faced by an emissary of the maskhi. In accordance with the traditions of their people, the emissary courteously warns the strangers from staying on Dirs. If the characters remain, they are subject to incessant ambushes by concealed maskhi.

It is not impossible to befriend the maskhi, though it is hard. If the strangers show both courage and gentleness (refusing to fight an ambush or voluntarily surrendering to the emissary), they can gradually befriend these strange people. Only those who have gained the trust of the maskhi can hope to snare the falcons, since the little people otherwise assume bird form and warn off the intended prey.

In Bandar al-Sa'adat there is one family of bird-catchers whom the maskhi do trust—the Ben Nabil. Once a year the grandfather, father, and son of the family make the voyage to Dirs, snare a few birds, and bring them back for training. Because their few catches bring in vast sums, the Ben Nabil jealously guard their secrets, particularly of their relations with the maskhi. The Ben Nabil are not above sabotaging the efforts of others to reach Dirs.

Jazirat al-Sayyad

This long island (sometimes called the Sea Anvil for its shape and jagged shores) is considered deadly water by most mariners. Wild currents curl around its cliff-lined shore and threaten to sweep ships into any of a thousand rocks that wait like jagged teeth beneath the waves. Huge stormy swells threaten to sweep ships against the gray cliffs. Most of the shoreline is a jagged wall with few safe places to land. The beaches can only be reached by threading the treacherous maze of rocks and steering close to the gray cliff walls.

Nonetheless, there are mariners who will try, for there is valuable trade to be had. Jazirat al-Sayyad is

the source of the magnificent Sayyad bloodline of horses. The breed is noted for its speed, grace, and fiery temperament. Sayyads are referred to as “sea-bred,” for it is rumored that the island’s mares are mated to magical stallions that rise out of the ocean foam. It is also said that only a true horseman can master a full-blooded Sayyad. Since there are more horse riders than true horsemen, Sayyads are normally sold on the mainland to sire other Zakharan horses. Half-, even quarter-Sayyads, retain much of the fire and fine qualities of their sires.

The horses of Sayyad are watched over by most unusual herdsmen—tasked herdsmen genies. These servants were bound long ago by *Alim Zangi*, a great sha'ir, when he cunningly tricked them into accepting his service. At first the genies railed against Zangi and their task, but over the centuries they have come to accept and even enjoy watching over their charges. They take great pride in the fame the Sayyad breed has achieved. Thus, they have become quite particular about who buys their steeds (for they do sell them).

Buying even a single stallion (for that is all they sell at a time) from the genies of al-Sayyad is much more complicated than just simply haggling for a fair price. The genies care nothing for money, but demand extraordinary payments. Such costs are meant to test the character of the buyer. Suitable buyers must demonstrate honesty, compassion, wisdom, knowledge of horses, and nobility. The genies assume that those who possess these qualities will treat their precious stallions well.

The purchase deed, since it invariably involves a task, changes with each transaction. Even those who have dealt with the genies before must undergo the same critical examination each time they return. The herdsmen have no faith in the reliability of humans—they are too short-lived to be dependable. (Not that herdsmen genies are the image of reliability.)

Payments demanded by the genies include the answers to riddles, winning near-impossible races, or punishing previous buyers who have mistreated their



precious purchases. The genies consider every Sayyad stallion “theirs,” even those they have sold. More than once they have demanded and received a great price only to tell the buyer he can claim the horse of so-and-so who is no longer worthy to own it. (Of course, it is then up to the new purchaser to collect his goods.)

Jazirat al-Gawwar

At the very southern end of Nada al-Hazan lies the treacherous namesake of the entire island chain, a ferocious and unpredictable whirlpool several leagues across. It is known by many names—al-Gawwar, al-Hazan, the Marid’s Mouth, and Maut Ahmar. If it had a fixed position, the maelstrom would be an easily avoided threat, but this whirlpool seems to operate with a malevolent intelligence. It has been sighted in scores of different locations, sometimes churning at the center of a fierce storm, other times unexpectedly shattering the surface of a placid sea. The only thing certain (and that only reasonably so) is that the Marid’s Mouth always appears close to the shoreline of Jazirat al-Gawwar. Thus, this island is named after its evil companion.

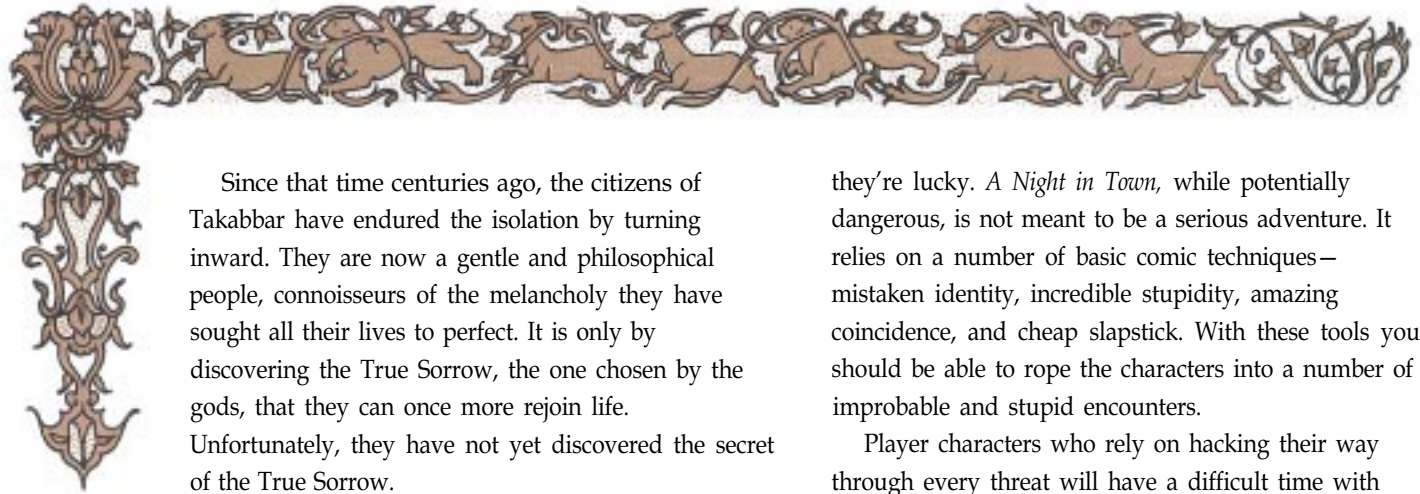
Not surprisingly, Jazirat al-Gawwar remains a mysterious and unexplored place—at least by ship. It is said that wizards travel there by means of their sorcerous powers. If this were true (which it is not), they have been very tight-lipped about what they have found. There are many rumors about the island, but characters cannot gain any solid facts before arriving. Rumors the characters can learn are:

- Jazirat al-Gawwar is just an uninhabited rock. After all, who could ever live there?
- The whole island is overrun by evil creatures, but the gods created the Marid’s Mouth to keep the beasts on their island.
- The island is a secret fortress of the Brotherhood of the True Flame.
- The island is the stronghold of the Wordless Ones, a sect of holy slayers.
- It is the last outpost of the lost wicked kingdoms of Nog and Kadar. Their dark wizards summon up the whirlpool to destroy all who venture too close to their land.
- Jazirat al-Gawwar was granted to the genies by the First Caliph in exchange for the secrets of the ship so that we could rule the seas as we rule the land.

Of course, none of these rumors is completely true. Jazirat is inhabited, but not by monsters, evil wizards, dead civilizations, or genies. It is the home of the Forbidden, a people cursed by the gods to remain in isolation. Thus they have been hidden for four centuries, all memory of who they once erased with time from the records of the civilized world.

Their story is thus: Once there was a city, Takabbar. It was small but rich and urbane, and the people were proud of their accomplishments. Alas, but it was their blasphemy to deny the existence of the True Gods—indeed the existence of any gods—when the word of the Loregiver was brought to them. Incensed by the pride of these humans, the True Gods hurled their small city skyward. They allowed it finally to come to rest here, and then set al-Gawwar off-shore to prevent any from ever discovering the Forbidden. It was then decreed that, since the citizens of Takabbar had denied the gods, thereafter would the gods ever deny them. All knowledge and signs of the greater powers were wiped from the minds of the Takabbari. Only one god, Hakiyah, the Voice of Mercy, took pity on them. She decreed that their isolation would end on the day they understood the True Sorrow. As a sign of her promise, she set the Tower of the Test on the hill at the center of town. There the imprisoned of Takabbar could face the challenge that would release them from the prison of Jazirat al-Gawwar.





Since that time centuries ago, the citizens of Takabbar have endured the isolation by turning inward. They are now a gentle and philosophical people, connoisseurs of the melancholy they have sought all their lives to perfect. It is only by discovering the True Sorrow, the one chosen by the gods, that they can once more rejoin life. Unfortunately, they have not yet discovered the secret of the True Sorrow.

For Takabbar, sadness is not just an emotion—it is the course of life. Where the desert rider knows a hundred different forms of sand, from the sand that swirls into the soft-sided dune to old and hard-packed sand that hints at water beneath, so a Takabbari can distinguish the fine shades of sorrow. There is the sadness felt when the sun sets, declaring another day of failure, and the sorrow of a meal past and lost to the memory of the palate.

Were any to reach the city, they would find Takabbar a curious place—a lingering outpost of another age. The citizens speak in the stilted ways of Old Midani, the splendid buildings have not changed in four hundred years, and the people wear clothes out of fashion for centuries. Deprived of contact with the outside world, Takabbar has stagnated—a museum of what once was.

Even more curious, although perhaps not immediately noticeable, is Takabbar's complete lack of religion. There are no priests, no temples, nor any understanding of these. It is knowledge that has been banished from their minds—and that is the True Sorrow—not to know the beauty of the Loregiver.

Adventure: A Night in Town

This adventure can occur anytime the characters have dropped anchor in Bandar al-Sa'adat, the great crossroad of trade. It is an opportunity for the characters to relax, have a little fun, possibly get themselves killed, and gain an important clue if

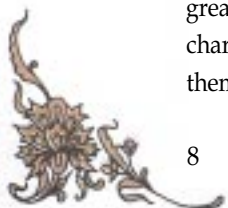
they're lucky. *A Night in Town*, while potentially dangerous, is not meant to be a serious adventure. It relies on a number of basic comic techniques—mistaken identity, incredible stupidity, amazing coincidence, and cheap slapstick. With these tools you should be able to rope the characters into a number of improbable and stupid encounters.

Player characters who rely on hacking their way through every threat will have a difficult time with this adventure. Quick wits, a glib tongue, and fast feet are likely to be of much greater use. As DM, try to discourage any impulsive desires to solve things with a sword. There are plenty of chances for that in other adventures.

Getting Ready

A Night in Town has as its central problem a case of mistaken identity. One of the player characters is assumed to be a notorious thief. It is more than just a matter of “sort of looks like”—the mix-up occurs because the player character looks **exactly** like the thief; the two could be identical twins. No magic or monsters are involved in this—it is just a complete and amazingly-convenient coincidence.

Before starting the adventure, you need to select one PC to be the unfortunate double. **Do not pick randomly!** Instead, choose your victim based on three things. First, consider the personalities of your players (not player characters)—those who are least likely to quickly figure out what is going on and yet react quickly (and comically) are good choices. Second, consider the personality of the player characters—the ideal PC victim's outlook on life should be as different from the NPC thief as is possible. Choose a PC who is generally upright, moral, and would never commit a crime—perhaps a priest or straight-laced sha'ir. Don't use a player character thief as your foil—one thief impersonating another is not nearly as funny as a hapless fighter pretending to be a thief. Third, try to choose the most distinctive looking PC you can who still meets the other criteria. (The choice can be male





or female.) Is one of your choices six-foot three, red-haired, and speaks with a squeaky voice? There could never be two of him, could there?

The Cast of Characters

The action of this adventure revolves around personalities and role-playing. Thus, it is necessary to have a large cast with varying motives and ambitions. Since characters are not expected to fight these NPCs, most have few statistics and more about their motives and goals.

Firuz/Zumurrud the Accursed

10th-level Thief (Sa'luk)

Race and Sex: as needed

Neutral Evil

Str 16	Int 13	HP 39
Dex 15	Wis 16	THAC0: 16
Con 12	Cha 15	AC: 8

PP OL FT MS HS DN CW RL Backstab

6 0 7 0 3 5 8 0 6 5 2 5 7 0 2 0 • 4

Wpn Proficiencies: Cutlass, katar, tiger's claws, staff

Non-Wpn Proficiencies: Appraising, awareness, disguise, reading lips

Equipment: Normal clothing and equipment as needed, sword +2, dagger (katar) of quickness, 3 potions of dreaming, scarab of deception

The double for this adventure is one master thief, a sa'luk named Firuz (if the victim is male) or Zumurrud (if female), also called "the Accursed" or "the Clever", according to victims and admirers respectively.

Physically, Firuz is a perfect match of the chosen PC, including visible scars and voice. The clothing is completely different, Firuz dressing in a style completely opposite to that of the chosen PC—flashy vs. conservative, for example. The two characters have hair the same length but styled differently.

Firuz is a quick thinker with a silver tongue. Although the confusion created by the mistaken identity will throw him at first, he quickly works out what is happening and tries to use it to his advantage.

Karbuqa, a confederate of Firuz/Zumurrud

5th/6th-level Half-elven Male Fighter/Thief (Sa'luk)

AC 7, hp 22, THAC0 16, Dmg 1d8

Karbuqa is Firuz's most trusted follower who typically aids the master thief on his escapades, mostly by doing legwork and providing muscle. Karbuqa is engagingly dim—slow on the uptake as it were. He is a born follower, eager to please and easy to anger. Less of a thief and more a fighter, Karbuqa is most cheerful (and bloodthirsty) in a fight. His final endearing quality is a certain dull-witted stubbornness. Once Karbuqa seizes upon an idea, it is virtually impossible to change his mind. In this adventure, he cannot be convinced the PC is not Firuz.

Karbuqa is a short, burly man, bald and clean shaven. His wide pop-eyes and heavy jowls make his sweaty face unforgettably distinctive.

For several days, Karbuqa has been in Bandar al-Sa'adat, awaiting the arrival of Firuz. Following orders sent ahead, the burly assistant has been casing the Ben Ayyub caravansary, learning the layout, number of guards, and general routine of the place. In addition, messages from Firuz have instructed him to collect a strange assortment of items—two perfect white doves, a jelibah of outlandish colors, a basket of snakes, and two blown-out eggshells. Karbuqa has no idea what Firuz intends to do with these items and is understandably curious.

At their first meeting, Karbuqa instantly assumes the PC is Firuz and the rest of the party are the "gang." Thereafter, he ranges from curiosity about the "plan," eager offers to help, and sullen paranoia that he is being cut out of the loot.





Kilij and Maneira

Two 6th-level Male and Female Halfling Thieves (Holy Slayers)

Both AC 6, hp 23, 18, THAC0 18, Dmg 1d3+1

Kilij and Maneira are members of the Gilded Palm, a matched team of assassins. They have currently been “lent” to Umm Ayyub, head of the Ben Ayyub merchant house. Unknown to the rest of the world, the caravansary of Ben Ayyub currently houses a unique holy relic of Jisan the Bountiful—a golden coin was bestowed by the deity. Kilij and Maneira have learned that the master thief Firuz (whom they have never seen) plans to steal this coin, and it is their task to find him and prevent the theft.

The halfling slayers have two obstacles. First, neither knows Firuz; hence, they will mix-up the victim PC with the true thief. Second, the pair was cursed with the Evil Eye during their last job, which is something they have not yet realized. This curse is likely to save the PCs’ lives. Although Kilij and Maneira are as efficient and cold-blooded as they come, the curse foils all their perfect plans. Their hearts are stone, their plans cruel, but they have all the success of bumbling killers.

Jawali

8th-level Male Dwarf Fighter (Faris)

AC 6, hp 34, THAC0 13, Dmg 1d8

It is unfortunate for Firuz (and the PC victim) that Jawali is in town just at this time. Once Jawali was responsible for the security of the temple treasure in Jumlat. Alas, but the Temple of Najm in Jumlat was robbed during Jawali’s watch. The faris got a good look at the thief and eventually matched a name to the face—Firuz. Since then, Jawali has been tracking the thief from city to city and crime to crime, determined to seize Firuz and drag him back to Jumlat for justice.

Jawali is a fierce, barely social dwarf. He never smiles and never forgets the stain on his honor. Every day, from morning to night, he is obsessed by the thought of catching Firuz. At the coffee house and

baths he always has the table or pool to himself, muttering his dire plans. On sighting Firuz, all Jawali’s careful schemes of revenge vanish as the faris leaps up, brandishing his weapon, and tries to knock the thief unconscious, all the while shrieking about justice for Najm. Do not explain his actions to the PCs—just why they are being attacked is one of the mysteries of the whole night.

Alix

Ajami Merchant-woman

Alix, blond hair going gray, is a small merchant and one of the few ajami in Bandar al-Sa’adat. She has heard rumors (like everyone but the player characters) that Firuz is in the port. Armed with only a general description, she wants to contact the thief for a commissioned job—to steal the coin of Jisan from Ben Ayyub. Confident her description is good, Alix tries to hire the person she thinks is Firuz without ever asking a direct question or saying directly what she wants. Hooded and veiled, she strikes up mysterious conversations, offering jobs and trying to haggle prices, assuming the pseudo-Firuz understands her intentions. This is an opportunity for much misunderstanding and talking at cross-purposes.

The Market Guard

Eight 1st-level Male Half Fighters (Aakar)

All AC 8, hp 5, THAC0 20, Dmg 1d8

Karim, Captain of the Marketplace Guard, has heard there may be a dangerous thief in town, and he has a description that roughly matches Firuz—and several other people. As a precaution, he has ordered his men (family, every one) to round up any suspicious-looking strangers. Fortunately, Karim’s men are more accident-prone than skilled. When running the guard, describe how they pursue any suspect with shouts and confusion. They bang into each other, trip, tackle the wrong person, slip on melons, and narrowly miss their goal at nearly every turn. The guard gives you many excuses for slapstick interludes.



Other Devices

In addition to the characters briefly described above, there are a number of running gags you can use. (A running gag is a joke or incident you repeat several times—with variations—until it becomes an anticipated joke for the group.)

- Whenever an NPC meets the PC look-alike, the NPC says, “Firuz, you’re not as tall as the stories make you out to be,” or something like that.
- At the height of the chase, a black cat (or other ill-omened creature) appears. All action stops as every NPC eyes the creature with superstitious fear.
- In the bazaar, pursuers crash into a stack of melons. Each time the cursing merchant finishes rebuilding his display, it is destroyed again.
- Anytime Alix appears, the characters hear mysterious theme music. (There’s no reason for this at all, but don’t tell them that.)

Keeping NPCs Alive

This adventure will fall apart if you allow the PCs to kill the NPCs listed above. Therefore, you need ways to keep them alive. First and foremost, discourage fighting—keep reminding sword-happy characters that they could be arrested and executed by the ra’is of Bandar al-Sa’adat. The threat of official wrath is real and characters will quickly discover not all the city guards are bumbling fools.

Of course fights will be unavoidable, but even then unnecessary death can be avoided. The first reaction of nearly every NPC to danger is flight. With the exception of Jawali, no one is willing to fight to the death or serious injury. When fighting, encourage the use of non-deadly force—allow PCs to knock out, trip, entangle, or blind opponents. Finally, if things go very bad, the NPCs will surrender—abjectly and completely.

Goal

Throughout all this confusion and mix-up, the player characters need a goal—something for them to strive for and set their sights on. Otherwise, all the gags and

jokes given here have no purpose and will quickly grow tiresome and annoying. On this night, the player characters must try to find the next clue they need to track down the Great Treasure.

It is likely that the PCs begin the adventure with this intention, using previous clues they have obtained. If not, then one of the PCs receives a mysterious message before the action begins. “Come to the coffee house of Buri at the edge of the bazaar if you seek to gain.” The message is from Alix and concerns her commission, but the PCs can give it any interpretation they want. Once the adventure begins, allow mistaken assumptions and broad hints to keep the characters probing.


The incentive to deal with all the NPCs is that one of them does possess a clue to the Great Treasure, although he or she does not realize its importance. Choose one NPC to possess this knowledge. (For example, Ra’is Mahmud could answer their question as a reward for sorting everything out in the end.)

Since neither side knows what the other is looking for, conversations should be full of double-entendres and mistaken assumptions. Since the clue is not particularly valuable to the NPC who knows it, once the PCs straighten things out they can learn what they need to know without difficulty. Use the rules for giving clues found in the Map Booklet.

Situations

An adventure like this does not structure itself well to the normal keyed encounter or even to one that defines a series of incidents. Too many things are dependent on the actions and reactions of the player characters. Therefore, instead of trying to dictate the course of events, the encounters here provide descriptions of a likely place for an encounter, the NPCs present and what their opening actions will be, and a few desirable (or amusing) outcomes. None of the situations leads directly from one to the next, allowing you to spring whichever one you think works best at a given moment.





Naturally, this method calls for a fair amount of improvisation on your part. For those uncomfortable with this method of role-playing, the best advice is just to relax and let things happen. For this adventure, there is no coincidence too improbable, no outcome too ridiculous.

The Coffee House of Buri

Buried behind a rickety line of heaped fruit, tucked next to Usamah the Carpet Dealer's stall, is the Coffee House of Buri. The small establishment is carpeted and furnished with worn cushions. A number of customers are enjoying small cups of heavily-spiced and sweetened coffee, as is the style in Bandar al-Sa'adat.

Among these customers sits Alix, her face and hair completely concealed. She is waiting for Firuz to arrive. By sheer chance, Karbuqa is also here, since Buri's is the place where he is to meet with his boss, Firuz—an amazing coincidence, that.

When the group enters, both Alix and Karbuqa notice the pseudo-Firuz PC. After they take cushions, Alix cautiously watches and then approaches. She assumes anyone with the PC is part of his gang. Meanwhile, Karbuqa is doing a double take. At first he impulsively moves to greet Firuz, but when the PC doesn't notice him, the lug assumes his boss is playing dumb, and so will he. Only when he can get a private word to Firuz does he approach—perhaps when everyone is leaving.

At this point have the two NPCs confuse the characters.

Double-Takes

This situation occurs during the day when the victim PC is by himself or can be separated from the rest of the group. As the character rounds the corner of the market, he bumps into a heavily veiled man—the real Firuz. There are quick, startled apologies, but Firuz is mostly amazed by meeting himself. He hurries away, but instantly sees an opportunity. Trailing the character, he stages a small theft, making sure he is

seen in the process. The cries of the brass merchant bring the Marketplace Guard and the chase begins. Firuz wastes no time, easily leading his pursuers to a point where they come face-to-face with the unsuspecting PC. That character can either flee madly through the market or face arrest.

If the other PCs are in the area and the true Firuz knows who they are, he deliberately falls in with them, pretending to be the victim PC. He hopes the group will unwittingly vouch for him, but if they are arrested as his “gang,” so much the better. He escapes any arrest.

For any chase that breaks out, give the characters all the opportunities of any good movie chase. There are convenient baskets and large jars to hide in, carts to overturn, ropes to swash and buckle from, and lots of dead-end alleys. In all cases, be sure to allow some means for the characters to escape—preferably one that is colorful and comic—grabbing a sheet and sprinting through the women's (or men's) bath, hiding inside a rolled rug, leaping into a stall to impersonate the merchant owner, or climbing the end of the fakir's rope to reach a rooftop.

The Night Market

This situation begins at night when the group is passing through the nearly empty bazaar. If the PC has not yet been fingered as Firuz by somebody, Karbuqa does so now, loudly and foolishly accosting the player character. He wants to know about the “job” and why he has collected the things Firuz ordered.

Karbuqa's talk instantly alerts three others—Jawali, Kilij, and Maneira. Kilij and Maneira carefully stalk the player characters. Just as they leap to silently strike, Jawali barrels through them, screaming oaths and whirling his huge sword. The halflings are sent sprawling, but it should be clear that Jawali is not helping the player characters. Allow a crazed three-way melee to erupt and have the slayers and Jawali get into an argument about just who gets to kill Firuz. Karbuqa immediately flees.



The Arrest

In the dark of night, just when the PCs think all is peaceful, Karim and his guardsmen burst in on the player characters and arrest the unfortunate Firuz double. Any who protest are assumed to be his accomplices. PCs who profess ignorance are released. Respectful PCs can accompany the guard and appear at the *diwan* to state their case before Ra'is Mahmud Ben Aziz. While the PCs are arguing for their companion's life, the Marketplace Guard brings in a new captive—the real Firuz—to the amazement of everyone present. Just to make matters worse (and in the tradition of most farces), all the other NPCs in the adventure have been gathered at the diwan. Firuz and the PC are dressed identically (if this is possible). The ra'is has a simple solution to the question of who is who—kill them both.

There is a quick scuffle, during which the characters and the doubles can escape. However, guards block the exit from the palace, so everyone must find some way over the walls. Run the PCs through a merry chase in the grand tradition of farces (and cartoons). Make up any number of rooms, doorways, halls, stairs, urns, and pillars for people to dash into, hide behind, pop out of, and leap from. The PCs should meet every NPC at least once, if not several times, and even encounter them from several directions at once.

The PCs, barely a step ahead of Ra'is Mahmud's guards, sprint down a hallway and through the first door they see. With a sigh of relief, they watch the guards rush by, only to have their calm shattered by the shrieks of women. They are in Mahmud's harim! The guards wheel and charge toward the door. Thinking fast, the group sprints through the outraged harim and yanks open another door, only to find themselves staring at the backs of Kilij and Maneira. *Now what?*

This pandemonium is finally resolved when all characters are captured again and brought before the ra'is. At his side is Latifa Bint Husam, Mahmud's sister

and trusted hakima. With her powers, she is able to discern which Firuz is which and bring the confusion to an end.

Epilogue

As a final twist, just after the characters cast off from Bandar al-Sa'adat's wharf, there is sudden burst of shouting and cursing on the shore which is apparently directed at them. What has happened? Straining their ears, the group hears the cry, "Stop them! Stop them! Firuz has escaped from the palace and that may be him escaping!"

Adventure: The Isle of Sadness

This adventure is set on the isle of Jazirat al-Gawwar, home of the long-lost and forgotten city of Takabbar. It is a possible hiding place for the Great Treasure, or where one might gain a clue to the treasure's true location.

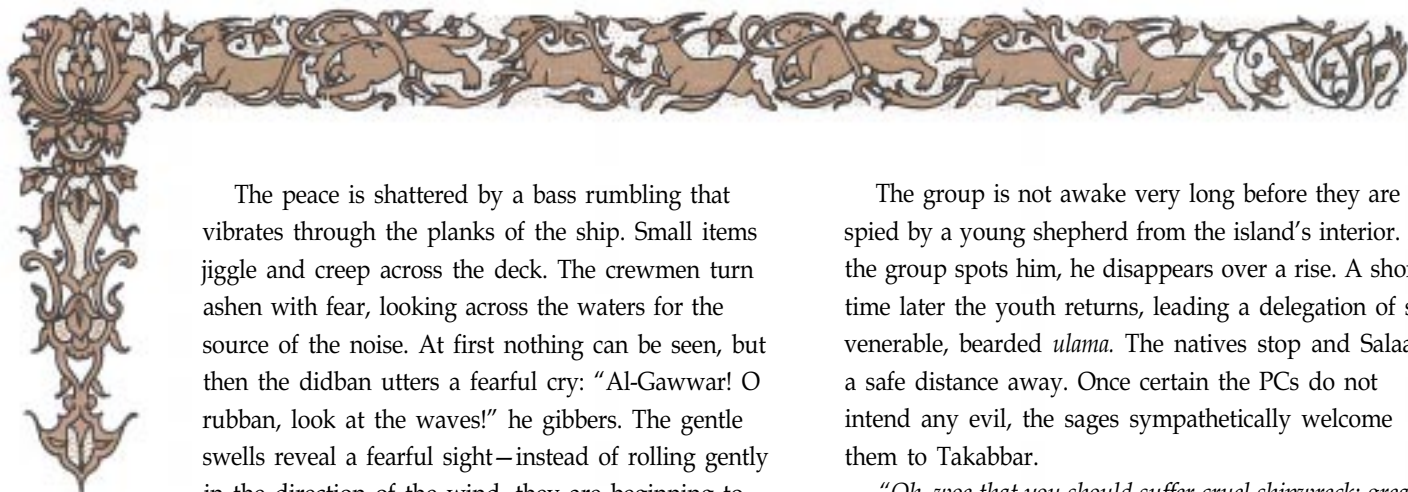
This adventure is very different from all others. Properly played, the characters need never draw a weapon once. At no time are their lives in danger, nor are there great rewards to be won by wresting treasure from monsters. Instead, *The Isle of Sadness* presents a simple puzzle—how to get off the island of Jazirat al-Gawwar. No amount of force or magic will succeed—only wit can save the characters.

Into The Deep

This adventure begins with the characters making for the coast of Jazirat al-Gawwar. Perhaps they are following a clue that leads them here, and perhaps they have just wandered too close to this ill-fated shore. The reasons for their arrival are not important, only that they have come within range of al-Gawwar.

The day is beautifully calm and peaceful, with an ocean serene and gently swelling in the steady wind. It is a fine day for sailing.





The peace is shattered by a bass rumbling that vibrates through the planks of the ship. Small items jiggle and creep across the deck. The crewmen turn ashen with fear, looking across the waters for the source of the noise. At first nothing can be seen, but then the didban utters a fearful cry: “Al-Gawwar! O rubban, look at the waves!” he gibbers. The gentle swells reveal a fearful sight—instead of rolling gently in the direction of the wind, they are beginning to twist and swirl into the opening maw of a great whirlpool.

At this point, no amount of sail or oars can save the ship, but certainly let the characters try. In a few minutes the eddy speeds up and widens, the center pulling toward the bottom. The ship is carried helplessly in an ever-quickening circle toward the center. Describe the helpless turns of the ship—faster and faster, deeper and deeper—until the very bottom of the ocean, hundreds of feet below, appears. By now the ship is spinning so fast that everyone blacks out under the intense strain. The last image the characters see is of a gigantic, fantastic face on the sea floor, sucking in the ocean.

Awakening

The characters do not die. Instead, describe that they feel weak, warm, and wet. Grit and salt rub their cheeks, sand crumbles between their fingers. Gradually, they regain consciousness to find themselves half in the surf of a sunlit beach. They may be bruised and battered, but none of the PCs are seriously hurt. The rest of the crew, alas, is not so fortunate. Only those NPCs you choose have survived (a favorite henchman, for example); all other crewmen are missing or their drowned bodies are nearby, rolling in the surf. Of the ship, only scattered wreckage remains. Again, you can allow them to find a chest of favorite possessions. (This shipwreck is not meant to strip characters of all their hard-earned friends and treasures, although losing a few won't hurt).

The group is not awake very long before they are spied by a young shepherd from the island's interior. As the group spots him, he disappears over a rise. A short time later the youth returns, leading a delegation of six venerable, bearded *ulama*. The natives stop and Salaam a safe distance away. Once certain the PCs do not intend any evil, the sages sympathetically welcome them to Takabbar.

“Oh, woe that you should suffer cruel shipwreck; great our sorrow for your fortune now sunk beneath the waves; and alas we feel the pain you feel that all should happen most cruelly on this fine day. Great is our sorrow to see you fallen so and it is with sadness that we welcome you to homes. Know that what little we have shall be yours, so that your melancholy may be eased.”

Each character is treated courteously, and arrangements are made for them to reside together as guests of the ra'is of Takabbar.

In Takabbar

Once taken in, the PCs are shown every kindness. This will probably leave your players crazed with paranoid suspicion, but the truth of the matter is that their characters are in absolutely no danger from the Takabbari. The citizens are kind, gracious, gentle, and generous. They do not carry weapons since there are no enemies to fight on their island. (This does not mean they cannot defend themselves, however.) Their ways are odd and stilted, but this is hardly cause for alarm.

At this point, allow the player characters the run of Takabbar and Jazirat al-Gawwar. Obviously they cannot barge into other people's homes, but the characters are not guarded or under arrest in any way. In their explorations, the characters may notice many things, by inquiry or through a successful Wisdom check if you so choose.

- At the very center of the city stands a four-sided tower surrounded by a wall with four gates. The tower does not appear inhabited, and no one is ever seen coming or going from it.





- There are no temples, mosques, or places of worship in the city (or anywhere on the island). Likewise, the player characters see no priests of any type.

- Although on an island, the Takabbari have no port, waterfront docks, or even fishing boats. As a group, they exhibit a morbid fear of the water.

- The people never mention the gods, the Loregiver, or the Law of the Loregiver. If asked about a particular god, they are confused.

- The Takabbari know nothing about recent events in the world (say, for the last 400 years). If the PCs get into a discussion with an *alim* about the Land of Fate, he describes a land that existed 400 years ago.

- Everyone in the city is perpetually sad, sorrowful, regretful, melancholy, remorseful, rueful, mournful, plaintive, cheerless, bleak, drear, somber, grave, grieving, or despondent. They have more definitions of sorrow than are known to exist. The Takabbari do not find this unusual and expect the PCs to feel the same.

- The Takabbari know nothing of the Great Treasure (or clue), although they suggest it might be found in the Tower of the Test.

Takabbar The Prison

Sooner or later, the PCs will express the desire to leave. With heavy hearts and long faces, their host mournfully informs them that this is impossible. A powerful magic surrounds the island, making escape impossible except by the Test, but no one has ever succeeded at that. The PCs must remain here, he tells them, for the rest of their lives.

Pressed to explain, the host tells what he knows: Long ago, the city was placed here for a crime they do not remember. Freedom is a simple matter that anyone might achieve. All one need do is discover the True Sorrow and go to the Tower of the Test. Those who survive this test (whatever it is) are released from the island. That's all there is to it.

Few player characters will accept his word without question and may try other means to escape. *Teleport* and other traveling spells do not function. Flying

carpets lose power about 1 mile from shore and can barely glide back to the beach. Planar travel is possible, but the astral and ethereal realms surrounding this island are guarded by hideous monsters. No direct aid will be forthcoming from the gods. The Takabbari have no ships, shipwrights, or sailors. Even should the characters build a vessel, they will be caught within the waters of al-Gawwar and regurgitated once more onto the shore.

The Tower of The Test

The only sure way off Jazirat al-Gawwar is through the Tower of the Test. Anyone can pass through the gates in the outer wall—getting out again may be another matter entirely.

Beyond the walls, the PCs find a sweet-scented and cool garden surrounding the tower. Four doors, one on each side, open into the tower. Aside from the birds and insects, nothing is found in the garden.

Beyond the doors is a single room with a circular staircase rising from the center. However, before the characters can mount the stairs, they must get past the guardian genie that confronts them. One stands before each doorway.

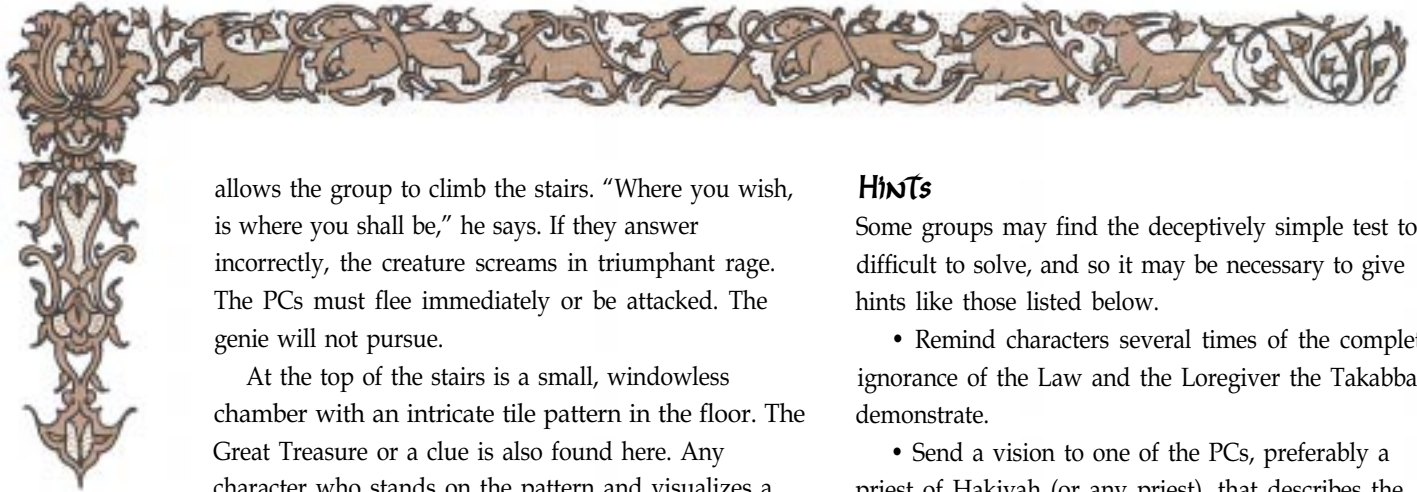
Upon passing through the doorway, the guardian genie salaams to the PCs and says, "Greetings, O brave mortals. I am the Voice of the Test. Answer me and you may pass unharmed; fail and you risk my wrath. Will you take the Test, impudent mortals?"

If the characters refuse, they must leave the Tower and garden immediately or be attacked by the guardian genie. If they should defeat him, one of the other three will move to attack until all are slain. (Should the characters leave and return, all four genies are in place once more.)

If the characters accept, the genie continues, "Brave are your hearts, mortals! Answer for my master this—what is the True Sorrow?"

The answer is, "Not to know the beauty of the Loregiver and the Law" (or words to that effect). If given, the genie steps aside with a grand salaam and





allows the group to climb the stairs. "Where you wish, is where you shall be," he says. If they answer incorrectly, the creature screams in triumphant rage. The PCs must flee immediately or be attacked. The genie will not pursue.

At the top of the stairs is a small, windowless chamber with an intricate tile pattern in the floor. The Great Treasure or a clue is also found here. Any character who stands on the pattern and visualizes a place he has been will be instantly transported there. This can even include the deck of their previously sunk ship—which is restored unharmed a safe distance off the coast of Jazirat al-Gawwar. The characters have succeeded.

Guardian Genie (4): Int High; AL L; AC -3; MV 15; HD 14; hp 88, 70, 60, 53; THAC0 7; #AT 4; Dmg 1d10• 4; SA Special; SD Special; SZ L; ML 18; XP 13,000 each.

HINTS

Some groups may find the deceptively simple test too difficult to solve, and so it may be necessary to give hints like those listed below.

- Remind characters several times of the complete ignorance of the Law and the Loregiver the Takabbari's demonstrate.

- Send a vision to one of the PCs, preferably a priest of Hakiyah (or any priest), that describes the crime these people committed long ago. Repeat this each night as necessary, gradually increasing the amount of detail revealed.

- Have the genie say in his test, "Their crime is not yours, unfortunate man, but I am tasked to ask anyway. What, by the doctors of law, is the True Sorrow of the Unenlightened?"

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Book 4

The Djinni's Claws

... Tall and big of bulk, as if he were a great date tree, with eyes like coals of fire and eye-teeth like boar's tusks, and a vast big gape like the mouth of a well.

The Third Voyage of Sinbad the Seaman

May the gods give you wisdom always to see the dangers of your path, for there are perils beyond the realm of men. Learn now the ways to deal with genie-kind. When traveling in the waste or on the ocean stream, you may see a stranger climb from a well or rise from the sea. The wise man cries out, "Peace, O father, be with you, for I would know— are you ins or are you djinn?" For if the stranger is of the genie-kind, it may then smile upon the wise man, saying,

*"Had not your greeting
Come before your speaking,
I would tear you limb from limb
And snap your bones and pick them clean!"*

And then the wise man knows the stranger is a genie, for this is the way of their kind, and he is thankful to the gods for granting him the wisdom to speak respectfully to children of the four empty quarters.

This way lies the Road of Burning, this way lies the Road of Drowning,
this way lies the Road of No Returning. . . .





Beyond the wave-lapped shores of civilization and the storm-guarded Rim of the World lie lands beyond the ken of *ins*. These are the realms of otherworldly creatures, the borders between our world and theirs. Foolish is the sultan who presumes to rule such lands!

The Djinni's Claws is one of these places. Though most commonly believe it is named for the shape of the islands as they appear on charts, old salts who have been there know the island is aptly named for better reasons. It is said that when the gods gave the world to the *ins*, the genies were displeased. To appease the great genies, lands far from the petty disturbances of the *ins* were ceded to the genies, one to each quarter. The noble genies accepted these Lands of the Four Quarters as appeasement for the judgment of the gods. Are the Djinni's Claws one of the Lands of the Four Quarters? Perhaps, or perhaps the lands of the tales never existed.

This booklet describes the wild and completely unsettled islands of the Djinni's Claws. The first section provides a brief overview of the land, creatures, and wonders found throughout the islands. Without the presence of *ins*, there are no cities, towns, villages, or tribes to describe. The second part of the booklet contains three adventures set in the Djinni's Claws: *Broken Talons*, *Shark Food*, and *Servitude*.

The Islands of The Djinni's Claws

Barely explored and completely unsettled, this chain has few individually named islands. On most charts it is only divided into three sections—Yadd al-Djinni (Hand of the Djinni), al-Zira (the Arm), and Kalb Bahriy Sahr (Shark Reef). Sometimes a single island, Kaff (Palm), is separated from the others. All others remain unnamed if they appear at all on any charts.

Climate and Life

South of the arid belt that shapes most of Zakhara, the Djinni's Claws are islands of thick jungle and abundant

wildlife. Exotic plants such as giant tree ferns, orchids of rampant bloom, ironwood, sealing wax palms, strangling fig vines, draping mosses, and charnel-scented fungi thrive in the hot, constant wetness. The slopes of the mountainous islands are heavily forested. Trees reach to heights of one hundred feet or more, forming a thick canopy overhead. The forest floor lies in perpetual shadow where little by little strange and sometimes gigantic fungi grow. Not all plant life here is benign. Some has adapted to prey on the animals of the islands.

Animal life is no less diverse, with thousands of different species and sizes running free. Insects, lizards, and colorful birds proliferate. Larger animals exist, too, ranging from leopards to the dreaded su-monsters. Table 4 below lists creatures suitable for encounter tables in the Djinni's Claws.

Table 4:
Suggested Creatures on the Djinni's Claws

Ankheg	Hornet, any
Ant, swarm	Lamprey, land
Ape, carnivorous	Leech, any
Bat, any	Maskhi
Beetle, rhinoceros	Mold, any
Beetle, boring	Pahari
Boar, warthog	Plant, carnivorous
Burbur	Rakshasa, any
Cat, leopard	Roc
Centipede, any	Rom
Crocodile, any	Sakina
Dragonfly, giant	Scorpion, any
Fungus, any	Serpent lord
Giant, jungle	Serpent, winged
Gen, maridan	Spider, any
Genie, Marid	Toad, giant
Goblin spider	Zaratan





Kaff

Northernmost of the islands in the Djinni's Claws, Kaff is considered the safest island of the group by mariners who ply these waters. Several breaks through the reef surrounding the island are charted, as are a few stream mouths that can be used as anchorages from storms. Ships in need of repair, provisions, fresh water, and shelter put in to Kaff from time to time.

The island, however, has an evil reputation that has nothing to do with the terrors associated with the rest of the chain. Those features that make it an attractive provisioning point, combined with its location at the edge of the southern trade route, have also made Kaff a haven for pirates. The pirates of Kaff are not like the established and semi-civilized corsairs of the north, for the Kaffia are ghouls, lacedons, and ghastrs. In old and leaking ships, these grim pirates raid passing vessels, seeking not treasures but bodies for their carrion desires. Most often they strike by night, but these undead have no aversion to daylight. During the day they lurk in the dense forest along the sea's edge, preying on sailors gathering supplies. When encountered during daylight hours, they conceal their awful visages beneath dark hoods.

Yadd al-Djinni

The tangled sweep of rocks and jungle that forms Yadd al-Djinni—so named for the finger-like islands that spread from the shores of Kaff—are unexplored and uninhabited, at least by ins. The slender isles that make up Yadd al-Djinni are inhabited by a host of grim and dread monsters. Rare elsewhere, su-monsters abound here. It is said that the unclean dead, perhaps an off-shoot of the pirates of Kaff, also lurk in the dark jungles of Yadd al-Djinni.

AL-Zira

The large islands of the Arm are the most feared of all the Djinni's Claws chain, for they are believed to be the property of the marids. There are several legends to

support this claim, the most popular being the Tale of Iftikhar.

In the days of the First Caliph (honor be upon him), the Word of the Loregiver (blessed is the Word) spread across the sands from brilliant Huzuz to Makabba, and this was good. But when the great mamluk Iftikhar al-Dawla, Pride of the State, Bearer of the Law, reached the shores of the Golden Gulf, the blue waves laughed at him. Searching along the coast, Iftikhar finally spied an old fisherman tending his boat. Loudly did Iftikhar hail the fisherman, "O worthy ancient, grant me passage across the sea so that the wisdom of the Loregiver may be known to all men."

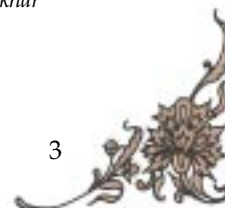
The old fisherman answered, "Courteous is your greeting as the wise man should be, and across the mad-waved sea I will guide you. But the word of the gods interests me not. By what means will you reward this humble servant?"

So great was Iftikhar's need that he did not strike down the man. "My service and my life are bound already. I have naught to give but what my lord has given me," the great general cried out. "Speak and say what you would have of him."

Then the fisherman pointed across the waves. "See across the waters those islands of green? These my children and their children after them shall have as granted from your lord. Then shall I carry you across the waters."

And Iftikhar knew the heart of his lord, the First Caliph, and said, "As it is said, so shall it be, my lord will grant those islands unto your children and your children's children."

Then before the eyes of the Pride of the State, the old fisherman rose up to become a giant. Taller than the palm was he; blacker than the Cave of al-Kamil was he. "See, O mortal man of flesh, that I am a lord of the Fourth Quarter, and these islands shall be held by my children when your children are dust." With that he swept Iftikhar across the waves in a single breath. And so have these islands belonged to the marids ever since.





Whether the tale is true or not, the islands of al-Zira are notorious for the genies found there. Marids dwell in the warm, colorful coral lagoons. Djinni soar with the brilliant birds of the forest. Dao survey the world from craggy mountain peaks. Only the efreet are absent from the islands, perhaps because it lacks the fiery pits needed for their comfort.

This is not to say that genies are common here; even at their most frequent, they are still rare. Rare or not, the genies still regard al-Zira as theirs. Ins who venture into the lagoons or ashore are subject to the whims of these powerful spirits. Courteously greeted and gifted, the genies may prove to be kind and generous hosts. Rudely offended, they become violent foes, and woe to the sha'ir who has imprisoned genies in the past, for he will find no forgiveness here!

Kalb Bahriy Sahr

The last notable feature of the Djinni's Claws is the great reef that guards the southeastern approach to the islands. Part reef and part a wild tangle of rocky islands, there are no accurate charts showing the passages and channels through the dangerous, submerged wall, nor are there any friendly natives to guide a ship through. Given that few sailors would dare the dangers of the Djinni's Claws anyway, Shark Reef could easily be ignored were it not for the fierce storms that rise in the channel that lies off the reef. The surging waves and powerful winds swirl counterclockwise through the channel, breaking vessels against the jagged coral of Shark Reef.

The reef gains its name for reasons obvious to any who have sailed in sight of its surging breakers. Silver-gray fins slice through the water near the islands and shoals—the waters are infested with sharks of all types and sizes. While they live on the thousands of fish that make their homes among the coral, the sharks of Kalb Bahriy Sahr will unhesitatingly attack any being foolish enough to swim in their water.

Adventure: Broken Talons

This adventure is one of three set among the islands of the Djinni's Claws and is intended for use should the characters set shore on the island of Kaff. In the adventure, the characters may also find one of the clues or the Great Treasure itself.

Set on the florid, jungled isle of Kaff where macabre perils lurk in the dark green, this adventure is best played with a strong feeling for the menace and atmosphere. DMs familiar with the old *Weird Tales* stories of decadent sinister empires, lost cities, horrid villains, and beautiful victims should consider these pulp fantasies a guide to the proper atmosphere. Other inspirations for the right tone and feel include old jungle movies, Sinbad adventure movies, and the lurid medieval theories of monsters found in distant lands.

While the action of this adventure is fairly simple, it will seem much more elaborate if careful attention is paid to setting and description. For example, when the characters begin the trek up the mountain slope, it is not merely a steep climb. Instead, the characters find themselves "on an odyssey across sweltering verdant slopes, scrabbling over the crumbling and broken rock of that ancient, decaying peak." The more grotesque color you add to this adventure, the more memorable it will become.

Characters

This adventure has more than a single plot going for it. In addition to the main task of finding a way to escape from the trap of Alim Baybars, there is the matter of finding the Great Treasure (or its clue), a potential love affair with the slave-princess Shajar, and the envious evil of Melisende. Finally, there is the encounter with Old Riyas, the roc, who must be convinced to aid the player characters.

These characters have different motives and means at their disposal. These are described below.





Alim Baybars

14th/12th-level Male Elven Fighter/Wizard
(Corsair/Ajami Necromancer)

AL LE; AC 7; MV 12; hp 50; THAC0 7; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8 (•2); SZ M; ML 15

Spells: *Chill touch* (•2), *color spray*, *fire burst**, *detect undead*, *spectral hand* (•2), *stinking cloud*, *web* (•2), *hold undead*, *spirit armor**, *vampiric touch* (•2), *alacrity**, *enervation* (•2), *contagion*, *ice storm*, *Evard's black tentacles*, *animate dead* (•2), *summon shadow* (•2), *avoidance*, *death spell* (•2)

Magical Items: *Ring of mind shielding*, *wand of fire*, +3 *caftan of protection*, *crystal ball*, *ring of regeneration*

* This spell is found in the *Tome of Magic*.

This hateful ancient is an oddity among Zakharans, for he has purposefully traveled to other lands in search of magical training. Consumed by the desire for power over the dead, Baybars in his youth voyaged to heathen lands and learned the secrets of the necromancers. Now, centuries later, he practices his craft in isolation, drawing upon unfortunate sailors for the living material he needs. Baybars is the creator of the ghoul pirates that haunt Kaff's shores, although he has no direct power over them now.

It is at Baybars's direction that the player characters are trapped on Kaff, for he intends to use the group for upcoming experiments. He is striving to speed and improve the process of becoming a lich, and he needs living subjects for some of the deadly experiments he intends to perform. Confident that they will be unable to escape or breach his hideout, the wizard allows them to roam the island. The task of watching over the PCs has been assigned to his cruel-hearted daughter, Melisende, while he prepares for the experiments to come.

Years on this forsaken jungle isle, combined with his diabolic researches, have been cruel to Baybars. Humid air mingled with the exotic fumes of sinister

compounds and leering orchids have ruined his face and health, leaving only a thin, wracked frame, consumed by and filled with the evil it has been subjected to. Yet, in a perverse way, he is still a Zakharan. Honor, particularly the bond of salt, means much to him. It is a weakness the characters may turn to their advantage.

Melisende

8th/6th-level Female Half-elf Fighter/Wizard (Mercenary Barbarian/Elemental Flame)

AL CE; AC 5 MV 12; hp 32; THAC0 13; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8+2; SZ M; ML 10


Spells: *avert evil eye*, *magic missile* (•2), *burning hands*, *strength*, *sundazzle*, *fireball*, *sunscorch*

Magical Items: *Bracers of defense* AC 5, *sword* +1, *wand of magic missiles*

The child of Baybars's liaison among the westerners, Melisende (named by her non-Zakharan mother) could have been an unearthly beauty if circumstances had been different. Unfortunately, her perfection is flawed, for though she is physically stunning, Melisende's heart beats cold and her thoughts run cruel. The half-elf maiden lacks the inner light of compassion and love that would bring radiance to her being.

It is not a lack that Melisende notices. She is what she is and will never change. She is vicious, self-indulgent, manipulative, and emotionally diabolical. She conceals her black heart behind a cunning mask of courtesy. Self-confident to the point of arrogance, Melisende has always been fiercely independent, refusing to heed anyone save her father. The daughter hates her father and would gladly kill him—if she thought she could gain his power. At the same time, she is in fear of that power. Her fear of his anger is all that keeps her under his control. Should he weaken, she will readily defy him. Baybars knows her feelings and she knows he knows; neither finds the sentiments of the other unusual.





Melisende views the PCs as toys for her amusement. She knows they will eventually die under her father's experiments, but until then they are hers. Since she considers herself the superior, the half-elf will be wounded more than can be imagined by any romance between Shajar and a player character.

Shajar

4th-level Human Female Cleric (*Hakima*)

AL CG; AC 10; MV 12; hp 25; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; SZ M; ML 13

Spells: *Cure light wounds*, *protection from evil*, *sacred guardian**, *augury*, *detect charm*

Magical Items: None

Shajar, slave of the Ben Baybars, is the antithesis of every wicked quality of her masters. She is beautiful, kind, resourceful, and moral where they are wicked and degenerate. Although Melisende may have greater physical beauty, Shajar possesses the inner light the cruel half-elf lacks. Perhaps because of this, she has been subjected to Melisende's continual wrath and contempt.

Shajar is not a weak, shrinking violet, however. The daughter of a desert chieftain, she learned a few martial skills at his side. While wisdom and insight made her destined for leadership of the tribe, Fate cursed her to fall into the hands of slavers, who then sold her to a sultan of the Pearl Coast. For years she dwelled in his harim, artfully preserving her honor and dignity all the time. Finally the sultan, perhaps vexed at her pride, loaded her on a ship as a gift to one of the petty princelings of Harab. Somewhere off Nada al-Hazan, the ship fell prey to corsairs, who were in turn the prey of the ghoulish pirates of Kaff. Baybars, not immune to physical charm, claimed her from that hideous crew and installed Shajar as his household slave. Then he seemed to forget about her. For months the situation has remained unchanged. Shajar has desperate plans though, should Baybars turn his gaze on her.

Melisende has no love of Shajar. The slave's goodness, clearly higher station, and beauty infuriate her. Unable to cruelly kill the princess (since Shajar is under the gaze of Baybars), the half-elf delights in inflicting cruel torments on Shajar. All these the slave bears in stoic silence, secretly planning for the day when she can rid the world of her wicked masters.

Old Riyas

Zakharan great roc: Int Low; AL N; AC 2; MV 3, Fl 24 (C); HD 24; hp 100; THAC0 1; #AT 2 or 1; Dmg 4d6 (•2) or 6d6; SA Surprise, Snaring; SZ G; ML 13; XP 15,000.

Lording on the mountain top, high over all the petty concerns of the "little creatures," is the aged and weakening roc known as Old Riyas. Time has weakened the majestic roc. His wings do not beat as strong, his talons are not as sharp, nor are his eyes as keen as they were in his youth. Where once he soared over the waves, plucking whales from the ocean for a meal, Old Riyas now spends most of his days sleeping in his nest, satisfied with the smaller morsels found near the shores of Kaff.

As a great roc, Riyas is not unintelligent. If approached carefully and respectfully, he will converse with the player characters. He is interested in food, the sensation of soaring through the air, and the safety of his nest. During conversations, the roc eyes the PCs hungrily, constantly alluding to tasty morsels he might eat.

Riyas knows a little of Baybars, and the necromancer has harmed the roc in the past. Indeed, the great roc has a fearful respect for Baybars's power. (He will not attack the necromancer directly.) Still, if appropriately bribed (with an ox or similar large quantity of meat), Riyas can be persuaded to aid the player characters indirectly. With great reluctance the roc can even lift the PCs' trapped ship safely over the coral wall built by the *coelenites* (see the monster pages in this sourcebox).



Romance

Part of this adventure revolves around romantic entanglements between PCs and NPCs. While you have no control over the PC reactions, you must role-play the romantic reactions of Melisende and Shajar.

The first task is to select an object of affection for each. They may be attracted to the same or different men (female characters are not in the running for this). Do not automatically assume it is the PC with the highest Charisma; rather, there is a more or less “blank slate” where each character has a chance. Of course, high and low Charisma characters may have better or worse odds. Make a list for each eligible character. Each time a PC does something complimentary, nice, brave, kind, or thoughtful, add a positive note to his list. Likewise, thoughtless, suspicious, hostile, rude, and hurtful acts will count against the character. After awhile, there is likely to be only one character worthy of each woman’s affections.

Once the choices have been made, you must begin the difficult role-playing. Remember that neither woman is going to be fawning, weak, submissive, or docile! Both Shajar and Melisende are proud and strong-willed. They will show their intentions through deeds.

In Shajar’s case, this means she will take risks to warn and possibly protect the man she has chosen. During the adventure, she whispers warnings about the evils of the Ben Baybars and assists in plans for escape. She will not be abandoned or played the fool, nor is she likely to tolerate a character who tries to two-time her. She wants to be treated as a woman and an equal, and she will accept no less. Once free from danger, she will make it clear that her intentions toward the PC are serious.

Melisende cannot love—it is not in her nature. For her the romance satisfies her desire for affection and adoration. She is more brazen about her feelings and more manipulative. She will contrive situations that put her close to the object of her affection, preferably alone. At the same time, she will attempt to persuade

the PC to betray the rest of the group, for by corrupting the character she gains power over him. The ultimate corruption is to turn her paramour against her father and eliminate the hated necromancer. However, once the deed is done, she is likely to turn on the PC since Melisende has no intention of sharing power with anyone.

Should the half-elf be snubbed or lose to Shajar for the affections of the same man, love transforms to feral rage. In her depraved and cunning mind, Melisende will seek out some means of destroying one or both of her enemies, preferably under the knives and arcane experiments of her father.

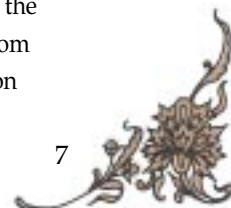
Arrival

The adventure begins any time the player characters’ ship drops anchor in a seemingly safe lagoon on the coast of Kaff. Unknown to all aboard, the captain has chosen a harbor not far from the stronghold of Baybars. The necromancer and his daughter have watched the arrival of the ship, and dark plans have already been set in motion.

For the rest of the day, nothing overt happens, although the DM should make a Wisdom check for those who go ashore. Characters who succeed at the check get the disturbing feeling that they are being watched—and indeed they are, for Baybars scries them at regular intervals with his *crystal ball*.

During the first night, have any character on watch aboard ship make a check to hear noise. (Ignore this check for characters camped on shore.) If the check is failed, nothing happens. However, if the PC succeeds, he notices a faint grinding noise—not on the ship, but around it. Lights shone from deck reveal nothing; to gain more information the characters must use the ship’s boat to venture into the darkness.

Just outside the range of light, a hundred or more coelenites are building a solid coral ring around the ship, trapping it in the lagoon. They work under the magical control of Baybars. The ring is formed from their calcite bodies, interlocked and growing upon





each other. Once each coelenite is in place, the colony abandons its shell and flows back into the sea where it will grow a new coral husk in a few days.

Already, with the ebbing tide the coral is dangerously close to the bottom of the ship. Attempts to move the ship will hole it, requiring a seaworthiness check and near-immediate repairs. Even then the low tide prevents the ship from using the channel originally found to enter the lagoon. By dawn the brand new reef will rise out of the water to form a bowl around the ship, making escape impossible. From there the coral creatures close on the vessel, gradually encrusting the sides, deck, and eventually the entire ship with their calcite shells.

Players can attempt to bash through the coral wall, clearing five square feet per turn above the surface and three square feet underwater. As they do this, new coelenites rush to fill the gap. It should quickly become clear to the PCs that escape by this means is impossible.

Dawn

Assuming Baybars's trap has been successful, Melisende hails the beleaguered ship from shore. "Quickly, come quickly!" she urges. "You are in great danger!" Through shouts, gestures, and charm, Melisende attempts to convince the characters she is their ally. The danger, she explains, is the coelenites, for eventually they will turn their attention on the player characters. (A complete falsehood, for Baybars wants the PCs unhurt, but a little tweak of his control over the creatures can certainly make the threat seem real.)

Once the PCs and crew come ashore, the half-elf guides them to her father's house, urging haste so as to avoid questions. It is a fine walled compound of polished stone, set in the depths of the jungle. Throughout are curious relics (not magical items) of distant lands—statuary, furniture, and small knick-knacks. Invisible servants tend to most needs of those who live here. The building is resplendent of wealth and magical power.

Once inside, Melisende assumes an air of false relief (for they were never in any danger). She then introduces herself to those characters of rank (PC and NPC alike), such as the captain, merchants, and any other figures of authority. This should include some or all of the PCs. The rest of the crew huddle fearfully, watching the jungle beyond the compound's walls. They do nothing significant for the remainder of the adventure, except perhaps die dramatically.

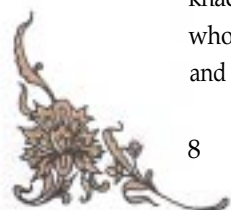
Melisende describes her and her father as exiles from Hudid of the Pantheon. She explains any ignorance of that city by saying she was only a little child when it happened. Those singled out are invited to join her and her father for luncheon in the garden.

Luncheon

The luncheon—small birds stewed with coconut, exotic fruits, and palm wine—is set out in the garden by Shajar, who takes great interest in the player characters. Baybars plays the role of the urbane host, polite and gracious. It is clear his body is wracked with pain, but he refuses any clerical aid. The father supports the daughter's story of exile and seems interested in news from Zakhara.

At the end of the meal, Baybars formally offers salt to his guests, establishing the bond of guest and host. The PCs are welcome to explore the island, but Baybars warns them of the fearsome ghuls that lurk in the trees and the deadly roc that lives atop the mountain.

If the PCs volunteer to repay their host's kindness now or at any time during the next three days, Baybars makes a show of reluctance but ultimately takes them up on it. His spell research has been thwarted by lack of an ingredient he is too feeble to get: the freshly cut talon of a roc. There is such a creature living atop the mountain—an old and perhaps not too dangerous one. If the PCs were to secure this thing for him, Baybars would be forever in the debt of such mighty heroes.





Guests

The player characters have three days to rest and explore. If they return to the ship, they find the hull firmly encrusted in coelenites. Escape appears even more impossible than before. Attempts to smash the coral grip on the ship only seem to increase the building frenzy of the coelenites. To the player characters it will seem like there is a frustratingly endless supply of the creatures. Because of their colonial nature, there is.

Otherwise, the PCs can explore the island as they wish, though Melisende will often accompany them. Use the jungle encounter tables to create encounters for the characters or create your own encounters involving ghouls, ghuls, ghastrs, or su-monsters. The statistics for these creatures are provided below.

Although the characters are not guarded, they are never allowed to roam without observation. Either Baybars or Melisende keeps an eye on the group through the elf's *crystal ball*. Furthermore, they cannot go everywhere, for Baybars's secret laboratory is sealed with a *wizard lock* against them.

If on the morning of the third day the PCs have not volunteered to climb the mountain and obtain a roc's talon, Baybars now requests this service of them. The bond of salt has formally ended and now the PCs must provide Baybars with a service if they wish to remain.

Ghast: Int Very; AL CE; AC 4; MV 15; HD 4; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1-4 (•2)/1-8; SA Special; SD Special; SZ M; ML 14; XP 650 each.

Ghoul: Int Low; AL CE; AC 6; MV 9; HD 2; THAC0 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1-3 (•2)/1-6; SA Paralyzation; SD Special; SZ M; ML 12; XP 175 each.

Ghul, Great: Int High; AL NE; AC 0; MV 18/CI 12; HD 4; THAC0 15; #AT 3; D 1d6 (•)/2d6; SA Spells, shapeshifting; SD +1 weapon to hit, spell immunities; SZ M; ML 9; XP 1,400 each.

Su-Monster: Int Average; AL CE; AC 6; MV 9; HD 5+5; THAC0 15; #AT 5; Dmg 1d4 (• 4)/2d4; SA Psionic, lurk; SD Psionic; SZ M; ML 8; XP 650 each.

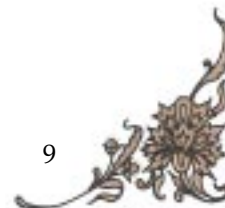
To The Mountain Top

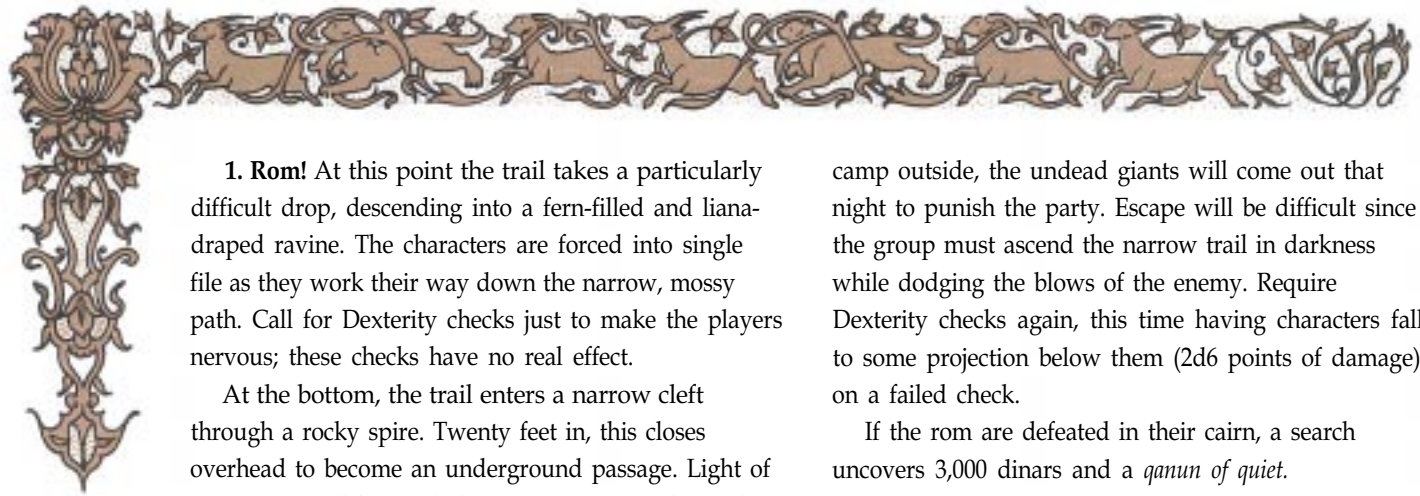
Eventually, you want the player characters to undertake the climb up the jagged mountain slopes to the nest of Old Riyas. When the characters agree to go, Melisende volunteers to accompany them as guide and an extra sword. Although it would be impolite, characters can decline her request, perhaps by using the argument that it would be wrong for a guest to place their hostess in danger. While such an argument means nothing to Melisende, her father cannot refute it. If left behind, the half-elf will shadow the characters on their journey.

Before leaving, Baybars provides the characters with gifts: three potions (*climbing*, *flying*, and *giant strength*) and a scroll with three universal spells of 1st-4th levels (DM's choice). With these he hopes to make the task easier for his agents and lull any suspicions they might have. A farewell meal is served and any ordinary provisions desired are provided.

Once on the trail, Shajar takes the bold move of fleeing the compound to follow the player characters. She will not reveal herself for at least a day, and only then when she is sure all is safe. Thus, if Melisende is with the group, the princess remains in hiding until she can speak with her chosen character alone. If possible, she will join the party, warning them that Baybars intends them some great harm. Just what he plans she does not know, but she describes him as a cruel and wicked sorcerer trained in the hideous arts of distant lands.

The journey to the peak takes three days if the player characters follow the rough trail, and double this if they strike their own path through the jungle. Use the "Riyas' Mountain Map" from the Map Booklet for this part of the adventure. The numbered encounters are described below.





1. Rom! At this point the trail takes a particularly difficult drop, descending into a fern-filled and liana-draped ravine. The characters are forced into single file as they work their way down the narrow, mossy path. Call for Dexterity checks just to make the players nervous; these checks have no real effect.

At the bottom, the trail enters a narrow cleft through a rocky spire. Twenty feet in, this closes overhead to become an underground passage. Light of some type will be needed to continue since the trail does not lead straight to an exit. (If Melisende is along, she assures the PCs this is the path.) Rounding a bend in the darkness, the group encounters two rom. The trail plunges through the center of one of their cairns, so overgrown that its true form is concealed.

The rom are not pleased to have intruders in their domain, so if the PCs wish to avoid a fight, they must react quickly and politely. If the giants are greeted with gracious and poetic words (a good task for a rawun) and apologies offered for the intrusion, they will not attack. Should the speaker demonstrate great eloquence (DM's decision), the rom insist the PCs remain for a time as their guests. Refusal is, of course, an insult. The group will have to remain for at least a night, during which time the rom demonstrate their skill at poetics and music.

The food served to their guests is icy cold, even the roast that is the centerpiece. It is also enchanted. With the first bite taken, a saving throw must be made. If it is failed, the victim is compelled to remain with the rom one day for each morsel devoured. Those eating will evidence an increasing desire to stay and enjoy the wonders of the rom. If forced to leave the cairn, those enchanted are wracked by unbearable pains when exposed to sunlight. They scream in utter agony (certain to attract other things) and are utterly incapable of the slightest action. This effect lasts an equal time to the enchantment (i.e., days equal to the number of bites eaten), but can be lifted by a remove curse.

If the rom attack, their first concern is to drive the PCs out of their cairn. Should the group foolishly

camp outside, the undead giants will come out that night to punish the party. Escape will be difficult since the group must ascend the narrow trail in darkness while dodging the blows of the enemy. Require Dexterity checks again, this time having characters fall to some projection below them (2d6 points of damage) on a failed check.

If the rom are defeated in their cairn, a search uncovers 3,000 dinars and a *qanun of quiet*.

Rom (2): Int Low; AL LE: AC 1; MV 12; HD 15+1; hp 78, 58; THAC0 2; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10+8; SA Strength drain, fear; SD +2 weapon or better to hit, spell immunities; SZ H; ML 19; XP 10,000 each.

2. The Nest. (Note: This encounter requires the rules for psionic abilities described in *The Complete Psionics Handbook*. If you are unfamiliar with this supplement, you may want to skip this encounter, although the creatures can still attack physically.)

As the characters are struggling up the slopes, the trail dwindles and finally disappears, leaving no choice but to hack through the jungle. The progress is slow and sweaty.

It is while wielding their swords against the tangling vines that the group breaks into a clear area beneath a canopy of trees. Mold and moss-encrusted mounds carpet the jungle floor. If probed, these reveal crumbling, spongy skeletons, mostly of animals, but some are clearly ins—perhaps elves or humans.

The group has entered the nest of a small clan of su-monsters. Three adults and two young are currently nested in the tree-tops overhead. Believing the party is a threat, the adults clamber down the trunks (staying out of sight) until within range with their psionic attacks. Once close enough, they unleash their mental attacks. While the PCs are recovering, the creatures use their *enhancement* power to continue their psionic attacks while leaping from the trees onto the party. Meanwhile, the two young will venture down from the trees to use *mind thrust* from a safe distance.





The adult su-monsters, frenzied by the invasion of their nest area, fight to the death. If the adults are defeated, their last dying act will be to screech out a warning for the young to flee. The orphaned monsters will spring for the woods. Unless tracked and cornered, they will not return.

The su-monsters have treasure hidden in their nests, 200 feet above the ground. If a means is found to reach these, the characters find gems worth 2,900 dinars and two moldering scrolls. The first has only three readable spells remaining: *banish dazzle*, *flame of justice*, and *sunwarp*. The second is a scroll of *protection from genies*.

3. The Crag. Near the top of the peak, still several hundred feet from the apex, the land changes as characters near the mountain treeline. The damp fades and the florid growth of the jungle gives way to drier plants. Eventually even these yield to stunted, wind-blown scrub. Cold winds, freezing compared to the tropical standards below, sweep over the barren ground.

Just short of the top and the roc's nest, a wall of rock rises in front of the player characters. The peak of the mountain is a single towering crag. The walls, cracked and sheer, rise three hundred feet from the base of the massive slope.

Obviously, to reach the top the characters must climb the cliff face. Since it is doubtful the player characters have full climbing gear, the task may be doubly difficult. Characters will have to rely on thieves and ingenuity to reach the summit—and, of course, once on top there is no easy escape for the group.

If Melisende is with the party, at this point she refuses to go any further. There is no need to watch the characters from this point on; they are not going anywhere. She will wait for them here.

Shajar Appears

If Shajar has not revealed herself, she does so now to accuse Melisende of treachery. Naturally the half-elf

denies any wrongdoing, branding Shajar's accusations as the desperate ploy of a thankless and duplicitous slave. Although Melisende has the means to destroy (or harm) Shajar, she restrains her evil fury since it would reveal the truth. Shajar, knowing she alone cannot beat the half-elf, is relying on the support of the characters. One of the pair is telling the truth, which means the PCs must decide whom to believe.

Old Riyas

At the top of the mountain, Old Riyas dozes atop his massive nest. To reach him, the player characters must clamber through the tangled trees (uprooted whole) that form his nest. The process will take at least an hour and may require the use of ropes and spikes. During this time, Riyas wakes and smells his visitors. Peering about with his weak eyesight, the roc spots his small visitors scrambling through the branches. "Ins," he sniffs in Midani, "tell me now why I should not eat you?"


Once again, courtesy and kind words are far superior to rash action. The wisest course is to tell the truth. Upon hearing the tale, Riyas is quite amused, for he and the wizard Baybars go back quite a time. The necromancer has coveted Riyas's claws for a long time, and the PCs are not the first group the wizard has sent to fetch them.

If the characters can get the roc talking, it turns out he knows much more about Baybars than the PCs. The roc warns them of what fate is likely to befall them. "Even with my weak, old eyes I have seen the horrors wicked Baybars has created. At night sometimes, they try to scramble up the sides of my aerie."

Should the PCs describe the predicament of their ship, Riyas comments that he has never heard of creatures like those detailed anywhere among these islands. He doubts they are really beings native to the waters off Kaff. "Perhaps they have been brought here to trap fools such as you."

It should be clear that Riyas is not the dangerous enemy Baybars made him out to be. Indeed, the





creature seems almost to pity the characters their plight. At this point the characters can try to make a deal with the roc to secure their rescue. (He will want a prodigious but obtainable quantity of meat as his payment—for example, a freshly killed whale.) Their likely first request—the roc fly them to safety elsewhere—is automatically refused. Riyas is not up to traveling that far. Nor will he attack Baybars himself. However, he can be persuaded to use his mighty talons to break free their ship and even carry it over the reef beyond the range of the coelenites. It is then up to the PCs to free the crew.

Clues and Treasures

Hidden among the tangle of Riyas's nest is the Great Treasure the player characters seek, or at least a clue to its location. If the finder humbly requests the item from Riyas and offers a valuable gift in return, the roc will give it as a gracious gift. Otherwise the group may be forced to slay the beast to obtain it.

The Return

If the characters have not tumbled to Baybars's plot by the time they rejoin Melisende, she is not about to tell them. Shajar, if still around, will try to give one last desperate warning, but it is up to the player characters to take the hint. The journey back through the jungle takes one day less, and although they must pass through the same encounter areas as before, nothing happens to slow their return.

If they bring the roc's talon to Baybars, he is most thankful and arranges for his invisible servants to prepare a grand feast to celebrate. Shajar appears at the feast. "The food is poisoned!" she screams, but her warning is too late (unless a PC has specifically said he was not eating or drinking). Enraged, Baybars uses a *death spell* on the princess and then gloats to the others that they have all been duped. Within mere minutes they will be helpless against him!

The characters have three rounds to defeat Baybars and Melisende before the drug takes effect. After the

third round, each character who consumed the drug must make a saving throw vs. death (-2 on the die roll) or fall unconscious. Those who drop cannot be wakened. If all the PCs are defeated, those not slain in battle wake some time later and find themselves strapped to tables, just as Baybars begins his hideous experiments. If the two fiends are defeated, unconscious characters wake on the banquet room floor a day later, weak but unharmed.

If the player characters have foreknowledge of Baybars's treachery, they can confront the unprepared wizard upon their return since the old necromancer was relying on surprise. Baybars is only able to call 2d6 ghouls—former crew members among them—to his aid. Once the necromancer and his daughter are dealt with, the PCs can find their crew. Alas, but half have already met terrible fates at Baybars's hands. They are now ghouls among the pirates of Kaff.

With Baybars dead, the coelenites are no longer under control and the ship can be freed from the reef.

Adventure: Servitude

This adventure gives PCs the opportunity to interact with genies, which may or may not be a good thing. The actions revolves around an oath given by the player characters and their attempts to escape it. This is an adventure where negotiation and role-playing are far more important than combat or magical skills.

The crux of this adventure is an oath the characters are compelled to swear. For this adventure to succeed, players must be the type willing to have their characters honor an oath. This is a very Zakharan attitude (and should be encouraged). If necessary, remind players that in Zakhara, one's word is one's bond. Indeed, this is a great virtue to strive for. Ideally, the player characters will strive for this ideal and faithfully discharge their promise.



Of course, this is a lot to hope for from some characters, so it may be necessary to add some incentive to be supremely virtuous in the face of adversity. There are several carrots and sticks that can be used to motivate the characters to toe the line. On the positive side, let the players know that honorable characters stand to gain esteem in the eyes of the Denizens of the Four Quarters. In later dealings, the genies may remember so-and-so as one who, even though a mere mortal, knows proper respect. To a lesser extent, the characters may gain renown in human lands. Their crew (should any survive) will spread tales of the PCs' virtues.

Should a stick be necessary, there are several that can be applied. First, any characters who break their oath will suffer bad relations with all genies in the future—something which ought to give the sha'ir pause. Dishonorable characters may fall under the curse of the *evil eye* or some other curse of the marid's contriving. Slightly more extreme, the marid can hold the crew and ship hostage as assurances of the PCs' good faith. He can easily sink their ship and eliminate their crew, leaving the group stranded and at his mercy. If these are not sufficient, there is the threat of death at the marid's hands although, depending on your group, this may not be any threat.

Trespassers

The adventure begins whenever the player characters sail into one of the lagoons along the coast of al-Zira. If the PCs show no inclination of visiting this shore, they can either be forced to run for shelter from a coming storm or the adventure can be moved to a more convenient location.

Through the skill of the navigator, the ship reaches a fine-looking anchorage. A twisting channel leads through the glittering coral reef, ripe with swarms of fat and brilliantly-colored fish. Fresh water tumbles down a mountainous slope to splash into the crystal blue deep-water lagoon. Two long spits of land form sheltering arms from ocean-sent storms. These same

shores are ripe with fresh fruit for the stomach and beautiful flowers for the soul's ease.

It is indeed a beautiful lagoon, peaceful and free of danger—until the ship drops anchor. It is the group's misfortune that the anchor plunges to the bottom and disturbs the peace of Mazdaghani, a noble marid. Ire roused, the genie rises to the surface, a dark blue stain that rushes upward from the bottom until he emerges from the lagoon. He stands ten feet above the deck and faces down those who disturbed him. In one hand he holds the offending anchor.

"Impudent mortals who sail as if this water is their own," the marid thunders, "know that it is the palace of al-Mazdaghani, atabeg of al-Zira, whom you have disturbed with your rude tools. Name now why you should not be destroyed?"


At this point, al-Mazdaghani expects the PCs to prostrate themselves and beg forgiveness as several other members of the crew are already doing. (Knowing player characters, pride is likely to prevent them from behaving completely servile.) If they do, he is placated somewhat; if they do not, his anger increases.

In either case, the marid demands the PCs serve him from 100 to 1,000 days as atonement for their insult—the length of service depends on his anger. He threatens crew and ship until the PCs swear an oath to serve him. To show his magnanimous generosity, al-Mazdaghani announces, "By your own words you are bound to me for the term named, but I am not heartless. Should any one of you best me in wrestling before your time is done, then I will grant freedom to you all." Of course, even the strongest character cannot out-wrestle a being made of water.

Once the oath is made, the marid sets them to their tasks. Enchanting the group with *water breathing*, he takes them to his palace at the bottom of the ocean and makes them household servants (after relieving them of their goods). The marid does not send them on dangerous adventures.

As servants of al-Mazdaghani, the PCs carry platters of food through coral-built halls, fetch their master's





slippers, sew his garments, and occasionally greet guests. They are not guarded, but the only place to escape to is al-Zira. As an additional precaution, the atabeg has sucked their ship through a whirlpool into the elemental plane of Water.

Of course, the PCs may attempt a number of things in their attempts to escape the oath. Some of these, such as *teleport* or *word of recall*, are quite practical for someone without honor. The atabeg views failed attempts as amusing proofs of his power. Those who flee and return with reinforcements are treacherous dogs and deserve no quarter.

Atabeg al-Mazdaghani, Noble Marid: Int Genius; AL C; AC -2; MV 12, Fl 21 (B), Sw 30; HD 16; hp 76; THAC0 5; #AT 2; Dmg 4d8 (•2); SA Spells, water blast; SD Spells, immunities; MR 50%; SZ H; ML 18; XP 17,000.

The Efreeti

One day, the PCs are ordered to make preparations on the shore for the arrival of Bey Gumushtekin, a noble efreeti. This includes setting up a pavilion and refreshments for the guest. The heroes are working at this task when a chariot of brass and smoke thunders across the waves to where they wait. The driver is a fiery efreeti, dressed in harsh black and silver. Role-play him as swaggering, arrogant, fiery-tempered, and bloodthirsty, for he is Bey Gumushtekin. The efreeti treats the PCs with contempt, ordering them to tend to his flame-snorting steeds. Should any PC show fortitude, however, the efreeti is intrigued by "his brother's" servant and demands to know more about that PC. On hearing his tale, the efreeti is greatly amused. "I can give you the secret to free yourself from al-Mazdaghani," he boasts to torment the PCs. If the characters plead and negotiate, he agrees to help, provided they first convince Ataman al-Hajar, who dwells in the deepest cave beneath the island, to give up a bowl of lava from the core of the earth.

The Dao

Al-Hajar can be reached through any of the caves found on the island, provided the searcher is brave enough to go deep into the darkness. You can create any underground encounters you desire before the PCs reach their goal. In the deepest pit, the characters meet Ataman al-Hajar, a short yet massive noble dao. He reclines on a bed of shattered stone, directing the toil of a horde of xorn and earth elementals. Role-play al-Hajar as disdainful, hard-hearted, and irritable. He is barely polite while listening to the PCs' request. Make the group grovel for his attention. "Your petty troubles are no concern of mine," he sneeringly tells the PCs. Should they offer to pay, al-Hajar is vastly amused. He points to the treasures around him and demands to know what they could possibly offer him. If the PCs persist, al-Hajar finally demands a cool, steady breeze from "his uncle," Malik al-Samawat, who dwells on the highest mountain of al-Zira. He believes his request is impossible, thus getting the PCs out of his way.

The Djinni

The highest peak of al-Zira is a bare, wind-swept crag just below the line of permanent snow, its tip wreathed in clouds. This is the home of Malik al-Samawat. Again, you can create any random encounters you wish for characters ascending to the summit. At the top, the characters find al-Samawat reclining in the airy garden of his palace (a field of golden clouds). Role-play the djinni as particularly haughty, stuck-up, and distractible. A long-winded story will cause him to lose interest, so the PCs will do best to keep to the point. If they can manage to appeal to his fancy (with a witty recounting of their travails or the prospect of something wonderful), al-Samawat agrees to help, but only if they release a number of his "children" — air elementals held prisoner by al-Mazdaghani.

Payments

Once the player characters have learned what each genie seeks, they can begin the process of obtaining



their freedom. The air sprites held by al-Mazdaghani are bottled in a jar he keeps under a pillow in his private chamber. Someone must enter his chamber and steal the jar. The only time the chamber is not locked is when al-Mazdaghani is sleeping inside. The lock is extremely intricate (-50% to pick). Use the "Mazdaghani's Room" map in the Map Booklet to resolve any attempts at theft.

Once the jar is given to al-Samawat, the djinni releases the air elementals. True to his word, he orders each to spend one day of the week cooling the cavern of al-Hajar.

Now the characters must make their way back to al-Hajar. The dao, feeling the cool breezes, is satisfied that they have upheld their part of the bargain. So he orders his xorn to fill a magical bowl with magma from the core of the earth. Magma placed in the bowl never cools, yet the bowl never becomes hot to the touch. It takes two persons to carry the bowl.

When the bowl is brought to the beach, Gumushtekin appears to claim it. True to his word, the efreeti hands over a vial of magical oil. "Rub this into the skin of your strongest wrestler and you may win," he proclaims.

When the characters are ready, they can challenge al-Mazdaghani to a wrestling match. The oil increases the character's Strength to 19. For this fight, the marid has a Strength of 21. Furthermore, when the marid grapples the character, the PC suddenly bursts into searing flame. The character is unhurt, but now every round the marid spends in contact, the genie suffers an additional 2d6 points of damage. If the PC can cause 50 points of damage or pin the marid before being pinned (or killed) himself, he wins the match. The flames last for two turns. There is only enough oil for a single application.

Victory or Defeat

If the PC defeats al-Mazdaghani, the marid is bound by his word and releases the PCs from their oath. As a peace gift, he grants each PC a magical item of the

DM's choosing. The items should be chosen from this list: +1 leather armor of swimming, tortoise shield, potion of sweet water, potion of water breathing, a scroll with sea magic or water elemental spells, a scroll of protection from water, a ring of free action, or a ring of water walking.

If the characters lose, they will have to finish their service, all the while listening to the taunts of their master. The other noble genies will do nothing more to help them.

Adventure: Shark Food

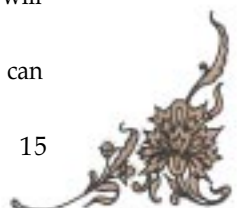
This very short encounter occurs when the characters are sailing near Shark Reef on the southeast side of the Djinni's Claws. In it the characters encounter the ghoulish pirates of Kaff while on the high seas. This is a wonderful opportunity for those players itching for the chance to let their characters slice and dice something. The only problem is, they better not slice and dice everything, because there is a good chance they will need the ghoulish ship before the encounter comes to an end.


Ship Ahoy!

The encounter begins when the didban cries out, "O rubban, ship off our port beam!" Sure enough, a sail can be seen just over the horizon, though it is too far to determine any other details of the vessel.

As the ship nears, PCs can see it is a large boom running with full sail. The ship flies no flag, but this is no surprise, for only royal vessels are flagged at all. Merchants are merchants and see no need to announce their home port. If anyone on the ship possesses a telescopic magical device, using it now reveals the true identity of the crew—ghoulish pirates. So forewarned, the pirates can be easily outrun.

Without magical aid, the identity of the pirates will not be discovered until too late. The boom has positioned itself to the wind such that the PC ship can





no longer outrun it. After only a few minutes, the boom closes on the PCs' ship and grappling hooks fly. Sharks begin to gather, instinctively sensing the chance for a meal.

The pirates do not fight to take treasure or the player characters' vessel as a prize. They attack for food in the form of the crew and player characters. The living crew fights valiantly, but without PC aid they will quickly be overcome.

Even while the deck battle is going on, a second assault is building under the sea. Lacedons—marine ghouls—are cutting open the belly of the PCs' ship. The first warning the characters have of this is a thumping sound from beneath the deck. After 1d4+4 rounds, the ship is holed. Make a seaworthiness check to see if the damage is severe. If the check is failed, the ship begins taking on dangerous amounts of water. Pumps can be manned only by taking men off the deck. Each round thereafter, an additional check must be made with a -10% (cumulative) applied to the seaworthiness. After three failed checks, lacedons begin clambering through the hole. From this point on, saving the PC ship is hopeless. It will remain afloat for 3d10 rounds.

The only safety lies in capturing the pirate boom. Once this is done, the rubban or nakhuda frantically supervises the transferring of cargo. Meanwhile, the

PCs have the unpleasant task of diving over the side into shark-infested water to keep any lacedons at bay.

The pirate boom, though filthy and disgusting, is in excellent condition. Ownership is claimed by the previous nakhuda. It is even possible for the nakhuda to have come out ahead, if his previous ship was smaller than the captured boom.

Ghasts (6): Int Very; AL CE; AC 4; MV 15; HD 4; hp 24, 23, 18, 17, 16, 14; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1-4/1-4/1-8; SA Special; SD Special; SZ M; ML 14; XP 650 each.

Ghouls (20): Int Low; AL CE; AC 6; MV 9; HD 2; hp 9 • 20; THAC0 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA Paralyzation; SD Special; SZ M; ML 12; XP 175 each.

Lacedons (8): Int Low; AL CE; AC 6; MV Sw 9; HD 2; hp 16, 13, 10, 8, 8, 7, 7, 6; THAC0 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA Paralyzation; SD Special; SZ M; ML 12; XP 175 each.

Sharks, Common (12): Int Non; AL N; AC 6; MV Sw 24; HD 3-8; THAC0 3-4 HD: 17, 5-6 HD: 15, 7-8 HD: 13; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5, 2-8, or 3-12; SZ M; ML 10; XP 3 HD: 65, 4 HD: 120, 5 HD: 175, 6 HD: 270, 7 HD: 420.

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Book 5

The Steaming Isles

...for know that the wind hath gotten the mastery of us and hath driven us into the uttermost of the seas of the world.


The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad the Seaman

In the time of the First Caliph, blessed be his memory, there came to our master's diwan an ancient alim. "What is the truth of the Law, O learned sages?" he cried. "When the word of the Loregiver is spread throughout her children, who will say that this word is true or that false? Who shall be the lion of faith?" And his cry was heard throughout the halls of our most wise master. Each of the assembled ulama declared himself unworthy of the task, though each would not refuse the wishes of Fate, for each secretly in his heart believed he alone understood the Law. At last, despairing that the great synod would ever reach harmony, the Great Lion, showing the wisdom of his line, proclaimed, "Unto me did the winds reveal the secret of the Law, and into my hands were placed the words of the Law. Although I am only the poorest of Fate's children, we have no fate but what Fate has granted us. I shall be the lion of the faith, and from my hand shall flow the Law of the Loregiver."

But not all the ulama were pleased by their lord's judgment. Generous was the Great Lion with his children, but when they refused to yield their heresies, he could no longer abide them. Confronted by his righteous wrath, each faced the choice of repentance or exile.

May everyone who is sitting here be well and happy all through the year. . . .





Most mysterious of all the mysterious archipelagos in the Crowded Sea is a string of twisted islands known as the Steaming Isles. It is said that here, hidden behind walls of fog and lit by the infernal fires of the jann, is a land of lost empires and princes redolent in jewel-draped caftans. No one ever admits to having been there, no daftar includes instructions for plying the waters of the Steaming Isles, and no chart shows its coastline. Just how islands that no one admits seeing, let alone visiting, came to be named or figure in the lore of the Crowded Sea is one of those mysteries lost to time and memory.

Nonetheless, they do exist, and on a lonely night after perhaps too much strong drink, an old sailor may confide that he of all people has actually seen the fog-shrouded shores of the Steaming Isles. The tales are told with a hint of awe and terror and seem too fanciful to be true. But surely one seaman would not lie to another?

Tales of The Steaming Isles

So great is the mystery surrounding the islands of the Steaming Isles that more than one tale is commonly told about what they are and what lurks behind their veil of mystery. These are given here, as if told by a storyteller, for introduction into the campaign.

The Children of Nog

Let the man who knows his fate call me a liar; otherwise, listen to the tale I have for you. In the long ago and in the far away, before men knew what we know now, there were the great lands of Nog and Kadar. They were mighty, but they were also evil, for they had heard and rejected the Law. The gods were sorrowed when they saw this, for the people of these lands were once their children.

"We must punish these wicked folk who have turned their backs upon us," argued some of the gods, for their anger was great.

"These are our children, for did we not plant their seed here?" spoke the others. "Since when does the Law allow the father to slay his child? Let us send to them a warning so that they can return once more to our household."

Thus it was agreed, and a minor power assumed the disguise of mortal flesh. In this way he traveled from city to city, warning the foolish of Nog and Kadar that the gods were angry with them, but the people ridiculed him and cast stones his way.

With this, the gods could abide no more. The greater powers again debated. "How can we slay our blood? Is this not against the Law?" Finally, the wisest of them said, "Let us appoint the Lords of the Four Quarters to be our generals that they may carry out our will." The other powers heard this with favor and so it was agreed.

So did the gods say unto their kin, the genies, "Go you now into the land of ins and punish them for forgetting us." Thus were genies released into the world and great Nog and Kadar humbled.

But not everyone perished, for one of their own walked among the unbelievers. "Take your followers and flee," the power warned, "for this land must be cleansed." So heeding the warning of his brothers, the minor power took his followers (for Fate had not been unkind to him) and boarded ships to cross the sea, loading their holds with marvelous treasures. Never again were these ships seen, but it is said that the children of their children still reign, supported in great luxury, somewhere in the Crowded Sea on an isle hid by the gods from the eyes of ins.

How The Jackal Gained His Freedom

In the islands of the Crowded Sea (it is said, and shame to the one who claims that I lie) there float a group of islands not owned by ins, where the order of the world is inverted. Here ins live mute and animals rule. Why this is so happened a long time ago.

When the world was created from the Great Ocean, Fate, which rules all things, summoned her children



and cast lots for each division of being—god, genie, ins, and animal. First to come forward was the pasha of the gods. For him Fate drew the expanses beyond mortal ken, and it pleased that pasha greatly.

“Brothers, they have taken the greatest,” said the jackal, lord of the animals, to his cousins.

Next rose the four wiziars of the genies, and it was their lot to inhabit the elemental realms.

“No warmth, no water for us,” bemoaned the jackal loudly so all could hear.

Third was called fourth the sultan of the ins. Of that which remained, Fate’s lot decreed the ins masters of the mortal realm.

Now the jackal turned to the other animals and said, “Brothers, there are no more lots to be cast and only the worst remains for us.” And indeed Fate assigned to the animals the lowest lot of all, to serve the ins in all things.

So the jackal said to his brothers, “Do not despair, for I will gain us a proper birthright.” Then, to the sultan of the ins, he said, “Uncle, though you are wise, your children are few. Still, Fate has generously given you the whole of the land to rule. We, who are to be your servants, are many and have no land. Should it be said that the master treats his slaves thusly? Grant us a little land that others will know you are virtuous.”

And the sultan of the ins thought about this and finally agreed. “There are some islands in the ocean my children can never see. These you may have for your service.”

And the jackal went back and told his brothers and they were pleased, but the jackal promised more. Returning once again to the diwan of the ins, he made as in mourning, entering the court wailing and moaning.

“Why grieve you so?” asked the sultan of the ins.

“Uncle, may virtue shine upon you,” the jackal answered. “I showed my brothers your generous lands and they were greatly pleased to run freely through the forests. But quickly they fell squabbling as to who

would rule what island. Uncle, your servants are foolish, without speech or learning. You have given them a great gift, but they have not the mind to understand it. How much greater would you be if your servants could defend and nourish the gift you have given them. Grant them wisdom so that they may understand your true generosity.”

And again the sultan of the ins pondered this until finally he reached a decision. “Truly jackal, you are right. Greater will I be if the animals govern themselves. Let my servants have the wisdom they need.”

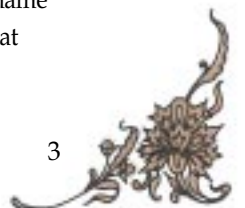
Then the jackal rose up with a great smile. “Foolish ins, you have given away the greatest of your gifts and never need we serve you again!” By the sultan’s own words, the animals were freed of their servitude. Thus have they roamed wild, and man has had to work hard ever since.



And on one set of distant isles, the animals are more than wild, for over these lands they rule and men must serve their whims.

The Tale of Jamila The Virtuous

In the days after the Lion of Faith—whose blessing should fall on us all—first received the law, his mind was unsettled and sorely afraid. Emirs and maliks bent their knee to him and touched their foreheads to the stone, yet still he was worried. Unto his harim were given the most beautiful of consorts, each one whom he wed, yet still his thoughts found no peace.

Of these women was one, Jamila bint-Susan, whose eyes were limned with ocher’s beauty, whose voice was as gentle as the moon’s silver, and whose wisdom was greater than the highest wiziir in all the Great Lion’s diwan. Sensing the disarray in her lord’s mind, she asked, “What is this thing that troubles you, gentle sovereign of my heart? Do not the great and wise yield to your will? Is not the Law of the Loregiver honored from martial Qudra to distant Afyal? Is not your name uttered with respect by all Enlightened men? What troubles you, O my husband?”





"My power is only what Fate has given me, my honor only what the gods decree, yet for these I care nothing. I fear that the Loregiver's words, may her blessing be on us all, will be blown away like the dune before the wind, once I am gone. No one among my wiziers can I trust to maintain the words of the Loregiver. You, whose wisdom reaches beyond the walls of my harim, whose body knows no treachery or guile; tell me, Jamila of my heart, how shall the law be sustained once I am dust?"

Jamila thought no more than the beat of a hummingbird's wing before she gave her answer. "First grant unto me an island in the farthest sea that I may hold for all time. Then, O husband, find three ulama, the wisest of your wise who do not know corruption, and bring them before me dressed in white robes for a wedding. Then shall I give you an answer."



Though he did not understand her plan, the Righteous One did as she requested and sent for his three greatest teachers of the law, ordering that each be dressed to wed.

When the teachers were assembled, Jamila said, "O my love, now you must divorce me so that I will bring no shame on your line." Though it saddened the Venerated One's heart and he did not understand her plan, the First Caliph did as she bid.

When the time for the audience came, all the evil gossips of the caliph's diwan could scarcely contain themselves, for Jamila came among them in the finery of a bride. Prostrating herself before the First Caliph, she said, "Noble lord, I beseech you one last time, let me choose one of these teachers as my husband and your troubled mind will be at ease." The Great Lion gave his consent with reluctance, for it meant Jamila would no longer grace his harim.

When the three were presented, the first wore robes of white and gold and was cloaked in dignity. The First Caliph could only marvel at the richness of the scholar's finery. Surely there can be no sage greater, he thought, but Jamila turned him down. The second alim was called forth, and he wore clothes of patches and rags. Such humility and poverty must mark this man as greater than the first, the First Caliph reasoned, but Jamila did not choose this one either.

Finally the third alim came forward, dressed in clothes of mourning. "Why do you shame my court?" the First Caliph demanded, wrath that his commands had been ignored.

The alim stood before his lord unafraid. "O brilliant master, my clothes express the sorrow that I should take a temporal wife, for am I not already wedded to the Law?" answered the sage.

Then spoke Jamila, "This man, noble caliph, shall be my husband, for there is none so faithful as he. Know that so long as we and our children live, the words of the Loregiver shall be sustained in the land. Should our line perish, then the word of Loregiver is in peril." No sooner had she spoken than a great djinni



appeared at her command and swept the pair away. Where they went is known only to the First Caliph, blessed is his memory, and perhaps a capricious djinni.

Now my tale is done, so put the lights out and all go home.

The Steaming Isles

Unlike so many other islands throughout the Crowded Sea, with their romantic or prosaic names, their carefully charted coasts, and scattered settlements—all which give shape and form a place in man’s imagination—the Steaming Isles are void of any marker. To the outside world, the islands do not exist. They float unnamed and undescribed.

Still, the islands are not completely without epithet. They are known to those who live there. Farthest east is Nimr (Tiger). Moving west from there are Sunn (Swallow), Hayyat (Snake), Gazal (Gazelle), Baz (Hawk), and Jaqal (Jackal). Beyond these large islands are a number of small islands that have no names.

Climate and Life

Southernmost of the four island chains, the Steaming Isles are not as hot or jungled as their neighbor, the Djinni’s Claws. Their slightly greater distance from the equator, combined with the cooling ocean current that flows along the southern rim of the islands, relieves the islands from the torrid heat of the sun. However, the islands are heavy with humidity. Thick fog settles over the land at night and persists through the morning, usually cleared by a mid-day rain.

The result is a sub-tropical rain forest. The islands are thickly covered with green; cedar, pine, teak, mahogany, walnut, coffee, and the like are found on the higher slopes, while the shores are covered with palms of betel, coconut, banana, and mangrove. Bamboo grows throughout. Were these islands settled, they would be an important supplier of wood for the nations of Zakhara.

Leaves and branches drip with moisture and moss. Mold, mildew, and fungi work to quickly spread rot. Characters quickly discover that their equipment needs constant attention. Wood, leather, paper, and food are particularly susceptible to mildew and rot, but even metal must be regularly oiled against the damaging effects of rust.

Of creatures, there are many, more varied than might be imagined. It seems as if every beast of the forest can be found here. Indeed this is true, for these islands are special, as explained below.

Another unique feature of the Steaming Isles is the complete lack of “monsters.” The only creatures that live here are natural animals, although these are exceptional enough. Any strange or fantastic creatures encountered are merely “passing through.”

The Creatures of The Steaming Isles

In every tale there is some truth, and the stories told above are no exception—it is just that in some there is more truth than others. The tale of the jackal told how the animals gained a land for themselves and the knowledge to rule it. This was not fanciful imagining and the Steaming Isles are proof of that, for here nearly every animal is intelligent and can talk in clear and crisp Midani.

The Steaming Isles were given to the animals in some prehistoric age—theirs to rule. With it the animals were given the powers of speech and comprehension, although this capacity varies from creature to creature. Their kingdom models the finest of the Enlightened lands, and their society is organized according to the those actions encouraged and discouraged by the Law. As with ins society, there are those highly faithful to the law and those at its darker fringes.

At the same time, the animals are still animals. There is no change in their physical appearance or general habits. Tigers still pad about the jungle on all fours and hunt other animals for their food. The animals do not build palaces, wear clothes, or fashion

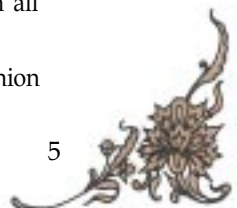
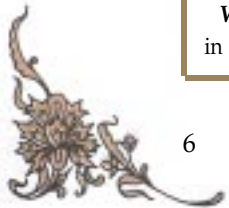




Table 5: Creatures Wise and Foolish

- Ant.** The numerous ants always say “we,” not “I.” They have no interest in conversation unrelated to their task.
- Ass.** This animal prides itself on being the most knowledgeable in the ways of men. It often speaks in riddles and is seldom direct.
- Bat.** Nervous and suspicious, the bat constantly bemoans its low esteem among humans. It is not to be fully trusted.
- Bear.** Slow of speech, the bear easily fixes on an idea and does not let go. Bears are soldiers of the pashas.
- Beetle.** Far wiser than they appear, the beetles know much that is secret. They are despised by most other animals, making them cantankerous and irritating.
- Black Rhinoceros.** Loyal to the Law, the laconic rhino cares naught for the affairs of the pasha. The little birds on its back are incessant, prattling gossips.
- Butterfly.** Hopelessly simple, the butterflies don’t know anything useful but can easily be tricked. They talk mostly of the surroundings and the weather.
- Crocodile.** The crocodiles are dangerously irritable and impulsive, with little ambition and no concern for the Law. Conversations with them eventually come to the subjects of sunning and their next meal.
- Elephant.** One of the friendliest creatures to men, the elephant preaches the Law and urges hard work as a virtue.
- Fox.** Clever but easily alarmed, the foxes are messengers and gossips of the islands. They ask many questions, always wanting to know more.
- Frog.** Complacently self-important in their ponds, frogs don’t know much but are free with their advice.
- Gazelle.** Earnest yet always fearful, the gazelles constantly urge caution. They avoid dealing with ins, but quickly become submissive if trapped. The gazelle’s believe in the Law but are not good at following it.
- Hawk.** Arrogant and proud, the hawks are the stern judges of the islands. They have little use for violators of the Law and are intolerant of hypocrisy.
- Jackal.** The cleverest of the animals and the best at reaching compromises, but those dealing with a jackal must be wary of humiliating tricks. The jackals give lip service to the Law, believing they can outwit even the gods.
- Leopard.** A seemingly sleepy being with little interest in anything, the leopard is actually a sharp observer and esteemed scholar of the Law. It is curious about strangers, unfailingly correct in its hospitality, and cold-blooded about hunting its meals.
- Monkey.** Although among the wisest of animals, the monkeys are incapable of treating any subject seriously, nor are their attention spans long. Monkeys constantly change the subject and greatly enjoy word games with guests.
- Parrot.** Talkative and friendly, the parrots are worldly in the ways of their fellow animals. They return kindness with kindness and do not view ins as the enemy. Parrots serve as heralds in the diwans of the pashas.
- Possum.** Quiet, efficient, and docile, the possums hold the position of household servants and chamberlains of the pashas. They know many secrets and can be tricked into revealing more than they should.
- Rat.** Despised by the others, rats exaggerate their own importance. They will fall in with any ins willing to believe their tales, but should not be trusted.
- Snail.** Slow-moving and deliberate, snails are the great theoretical scholars and hair-splitters of the Law. They love a good argument in their own slow way. Any question asked of them gets a long, theological answer.
- Snake.** The snake attained his position as pasha through threat and terror. Most of the other animals fear him. The snake likes to pretend that he is only a humble servant of the Padishah while concocting plots to gain more power.
- Swallow.** This bird revels in the arts and strives for beauty in all things. Practical governing is not for it. The diwan of Pasha Sunn is filled with wiziars who actually run the government.
- Tiger.** The tigers are fearsome warriors and clever scholars, particularly adept at finding ways to twist the meaning of the Law to suit their savage natures.
- Water buffalo.** Staunch and conservative, the water buffalo opposes any change to the status quo. He is a great believer in hard work and silent suffering.





weapons. There are no libraries filled with books written by monkeys. The history of their islands and the knowledge of the Law is passed by word from generation to generation. In addition, the sages of the City of the Faithful serve the animals as *ulama* and advisors in tricky matters of the Law.

As noted, the animals are organized along human lines, including castes and nobility. Each island is ruled by a shah of the same species as that island's name. The five shahs are Shah Nimr (Tiger), Shah Sunn (Swallow), Shah Hayyat (Snake), Shah Gazal (Gazelle), and Shah Baz (Hawk). Ruling over all the animals is Padishah Jaqal (Jackal). (The jackals are held in great respect, for it was their ancestor who obtained the gifts of land and enlightenment.)

To aid in role-playing the different animals, a listing is given on Table 5: Creatures Wise and Foolish. The entries describe the general station, behavior, and role-playing cues for most of the animal types found throughout the Steaming Isles.

Life of The Shahs

The animals of the Steaming Isles have modeled their society after that of gods, genies, and men—and yet they remain animals. They do not settle in towns, build houses, raise armies, or assess taxes. These are habits peculiar to the ins, foreign to the wild kingdom. What the animals have recreated are the trappings of majesty and the veneer of the Enlightened lands. Thus, the animals are ruled by shahs from feral diwans filled with savage courtiers and wiziers, harims fecund with orchids, and marqabs where beastly scholars debate fine points of the Law.

Of course, without architecture, the diwan, harim, and marqab exist more as concepts than structures. The diwan of each shah is a space outside his lair, den, or nest where the other animals congregate. By custom, no animal attacks another here, even if beyond the diwan they are hunter and prey. By equal custom, though, no animal may linger here unless invited by the shah. Breaking these customs is a

Forbidden Action. In general, the animals are the very models of propriety at court.

At the diwan, the shah personally listens to the complaints and requests of his people according to the Law (which requires the leader be approachable by his people). To an outsider, the court business seems most fantastic. For example, a magpie may seek payment from the djinn for the damage her nest suffered in a wind storm, while Ra'is Monkey, speaking for his tribe, points out that the great baobab's fruit is not yet ripe, so "could the great shah speak with the tree and point out its error?" Such requests are neither frivolous nor impossible for the shahs of the animals, however, for they possess insights to worlds beyond those of human sultans. Every complaint is heard with respect, and action is taken whenever possible.

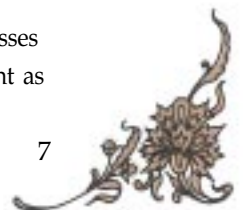
Beyond the limits of the diwan, the animals are very much animals. Player characters may be stalked by a tiger or teased by monkeys in the branches. The beasts will not talk to the characters without reason, but once revealed, the PCs can converse freely. Ins of all types are viewed with great suspicion—only those of the City of the Faithful have gained any measure of trust from the animals.

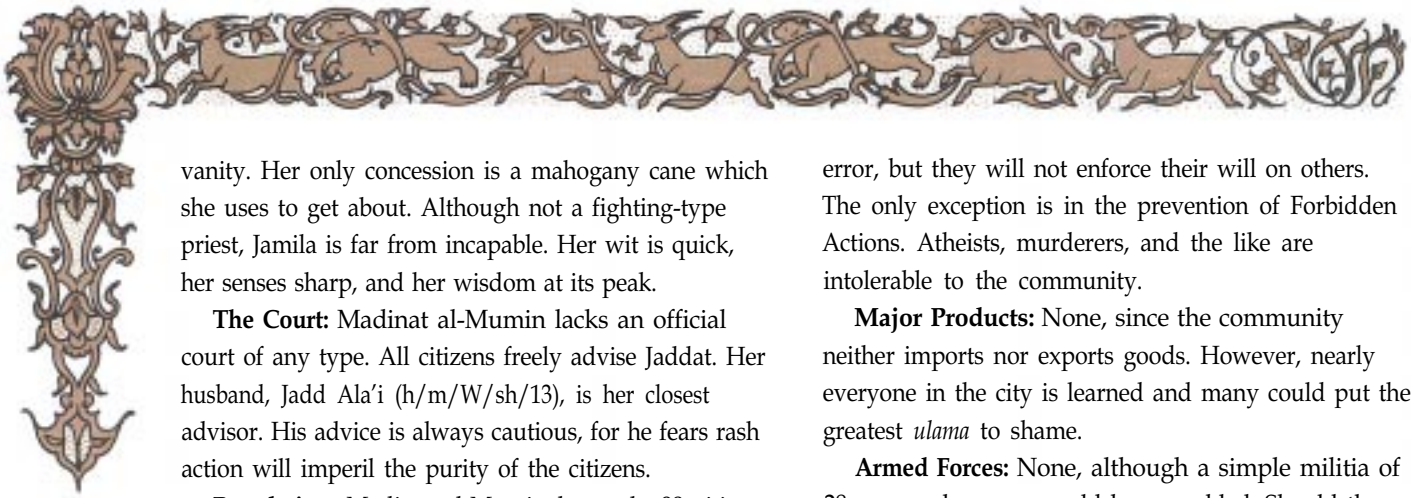
The City of The Faithful

Remarkable talking animals are not the only inhabitants of the Steaming Isles. One small settlement of ins can be found beyond the fog-shrouded wall—the City of the Faithful. Herein can be found the core of truth to the Tale of Jamila the Virtuous, for this is the very city she and her *alim* husband founded.

Madīnat al-Mumin

Ruler: Jaddat Jamila, "Grandmother" Jamila, (h/f/P/m/15) is a direct descendant of Jamila the Virtuous, co-founder of this colony. Perhaps seventy or eighty years old, Jaddat (as she is called by all) is a lean, withered woman with thin gray hair. She dresses in simple whites and blacks, spurning all adornment as





vanity. Her only concession is a mahogany cane which she uses to get about. Although not a fighting-type priest, Jamila is far from incapable. Her wit is quick, her senses sharp, and her wisdom at its peak.

The Court: Madinat al-Mumin lacks an official court of any type. All citizens freely advise Jaddat. Her husband, Jadd Ala'i (h/m/W/sh/13), is her closest advisor. His advice is always cautious, for he fears rash action will imperil the purity of the citizens.

Population: Madinat al-Mumin has only 98 citizens of all ages.

Distinguishing Features of the Populace: By far and away, the most notable aspect of Madinat al-Mumin is their curious dialect. It is an ancient form of Midani, a language unchanged since the days of the First Caliph. Those first hearing this tongue must make a Wisdom check to recognize meaning, although repeated attempts can be made. (Clerics of the Faith gain a +1 to their check since the words are similar to the writings of ulama from the Time of Enlightenment.) Much of their conversation is laced with allusions and quotes from the Law. After a week characters become accustomed to the dialect and no longer need to make checks except, perhaps, for truly obscure topics.

The second noticeable feature of the populace is their dress. While simple, restrained, and not ostentatious, everyone seems to dress well in clean, crisp cotton. There are no ragged beggars, half-naked children, or richly attired merchants. No one, not even Jaddat Jamila, dresses above the rest.

Less immediately noticeable, but of greater impact, is the sincere piety of everyone living here. The people are not just respectful of the Law, they breathe the Law. The Loregiver's words permeate every fiber of their existence. Fortunately for the PCs, the citizens of Madinat al-Mumin do not demand the same piety of outsiders (since they have never had to deal with outsiders before). Instead, they look on those less devout with patronizing tolerance, flawed but trying the best they can. They seek to enlighten and correct

error, but they will not enforce their will on others. The only exception is in the prevention of Forbidden Actions. Atheists, murderers, and the like are intolerable to the community.

Major Products: None, since the community neither imports nor exports goods. However, nearly everyone in the city is learned and many could put the greatest *ulama* to shame.

Armed Forces: None, although a simple militia of 28 men and women could be assembled. Should the community be hard pressed, the citizens can call upon Fate. Because of the unique nature of this community, their attempt automatically succeeds.

Other Important Individuals: Beyond Jadd and Jaddat, everyone in the city is treated as an equal. The only distinction of station exists between themselves and any outsiders (who are automatically of lower station). Great age confers more honor than youth, but this is a natural consequence. Other individuals include Samia (he/f/T/r/9), who knows the lineage of every person in town; Rashad (h/m/P/k/10), whom the animals trust; and Amsha bint Jamila (h/f/F/f/8), a master of the sword.

Noted Features of the Town: While "city" may seem too grand a name for the size of this settlement, Madinat al-Mumin is far from a simple rural backwater. Here there are no squalid shacks, rambling slums, or ill-tended outbuildings. Everything is gleaming white-washed walls and smooth, crisp lines. The few buildings here are works of marvelous architecture, the greatest being the palace that dominates the hill overlooking all. The workmanship is worthy of any palace artisan, far surpassing that of the standard village craftsman, and it would grace the grounds of any sultan's domain.

As mentioned above, the few houses of the village are dominated by a vast palace, far larger than should ever be required for such a small community. It is the residence of Jadd and Jaddat, but even then only a small portion of it is in regular use. As the people are willing to explain, the palace was built when Madinat



al-Mumin was founded by Jamila the Virtuous and her husband.

According to the tale, the djinni who brought them here, in order to gain revenge for the service he was forced to perform, arranged for the construction of the palace when commanded to raise a dwelling for the couple. While his mistress intended only a simple house (for that was all she needed), the djinni oversaw the building of the palace. The genie hoped to tempt the virtue of his masters and thus bring about their fall. Jamila refused temptation, however, by only using the smallest portion of the great building, a tradition maintained to this day. The rest of the palace is empty—unfurnished and hollow—kept spotless by invisible genie servants. The animals of the isles can sometimes be found debating with hushed voices in the distant halls.

The History of Madinat al-Mumin

Characters familiar with the tale of Jamila the Virtuous and who suspect there is more to the story than just words are quite correct, for Madinat al-Mumin was founded by Jamila the Virtuous and her husband. However, two people do not a city make, nor even a small village like al-Mumin.

The islands were not deserted when the pair arrived, and that is where the rest of the people came from. Living here for untold eons before Jamila arrived were the descendants of settlers from Nog and Kadar. Were these the faithful followers of the god sent among mortals or merely settlers blown far off course? No one knows, for the records have been long lost. Nonetheless, Jamila and her husband guided them to the true understanding of Enlightenment and the villagers have been faithful to the Law ever since.

The reason for this great faith, according to the townspeople, is to protect the Law of the Loregiver from destruction. It is their sincere belief that so long as they faithfully adhere to the Law, it can never be forgotten in the Land of Fate. Should this village fail in its duty or be destroyed, the safety of the Law through-

out all Zakhara is imperiled. It is a great burden that the villagers approach with great seriousness.

Although this may sound like a fanciful tale to the player characters, it is not. Everything the citizens have explained is quite true—Madinat al-Mumin is the cosmological linchpin of the Law. Through reasons only sensed but not comprehended by mortals, the Law of the Loregiver is guaranteed to survive for as long as these villagers carefully uphold it.

However, if the villagers fail or disappear from the face of the world, the Law does not instantly collapse. It will continue on, perhaps forever, but there is no assurance. Heresies could spread like sand before the blowing wind, corrupting and perverting the Law. Conquering nations could sweep it from the land. Sin and evil could end it all.

Adventure: Praises Be The Loregiver

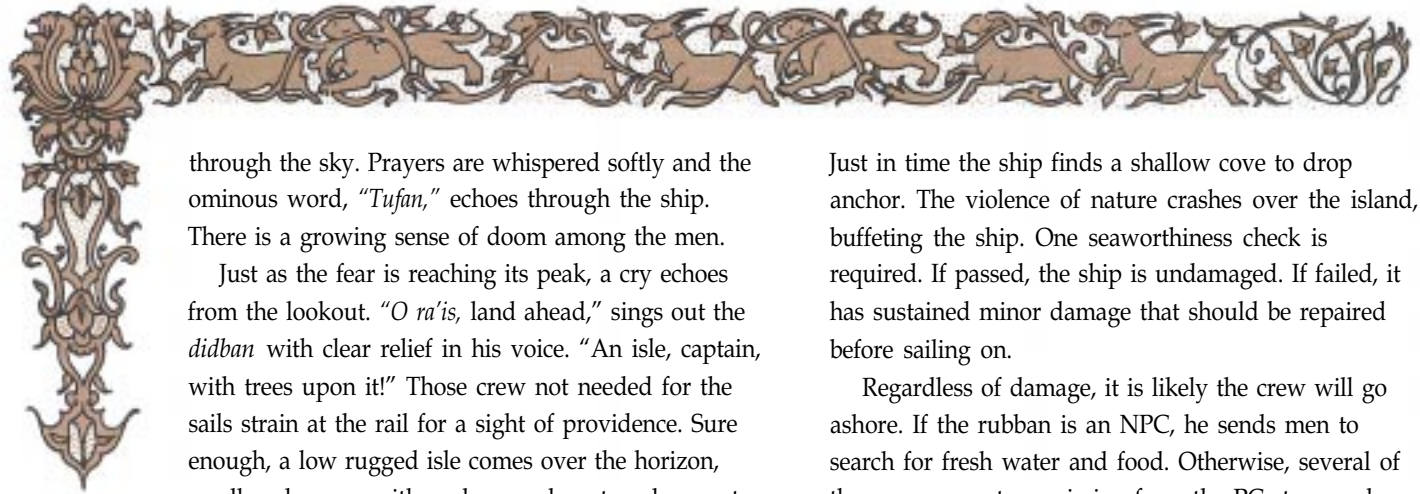
This adventure begins well before the characters ever arrive at the shores of the Steaming Isles. There is more than just fog to keep these islands safe; there are unique terrors of the sea that must be braved before safe landfall can occur.

The Leviathan

This encounter begins at some point when the characters are sailing on the open sea, out of sight of land. Ideally, the encounter occurs after several days of such voyaging, when the group is beginning to feel desperate for some welcome shore.

It is late in the day, near evening, and the rubban (if an NPC) has been concerned for the last several hours. A storm front, sweeping in from the horizon, threatens their safety. Although he tries not to show his fears, the old salts of the crew know perfectly well what distresses their captain. As the hours pass, even the dullest of sailors can sense the shifting weather. The winds become fierce and gusty, rain falls in driven fits, and the waves toss and surge. Dark clouds roll





through the sky. Prayers are whispered softly and the ominous word, “*Tufan*,” echoes through the ship. There is a growing sense of doom among the men.

Just as the fear is reaching its peak, a cry echoes from the lookout. “*O ra’is*, land ahead,” sings out the *didban* with clear relief in his voice. “An isle, captain, with trees upon it!” Those crew not needed for the sails strain at the rail for a sight of providence. Sure enough, a low rugged isle comes over the horizon, small and green, with perhaps a decent anchorage to ride out the coming storm.

If the ship remains at sea, it is hit by a fierce squall. Winds and waves batter the vessel at gale strength, requiring two seaworthiness checks.

If the first is failed, a mighty wave heels the ship over until water floods over the deck! Almost immediately the bilge begins flooding. The vessel, instead of righting itself, cracks its masts into the water and begins to sink. Within minutes the entire ship will go turtle and eventually slip under the waves. The characters have no more than three rounds to grab anything they want, including some type of makeshift raft.

If the first check is passed, a second must be made. If this is failed, there is a thunderous crack followed by a scream. The mainmast has shattered, clubbing a crewman overboard in the process. In the wildly churning waves and wind-blasted rain, rescue is impossible. The great sail crashes to the deck, smashing more of this ship. (Have any PCs on deck make Dexterity checks, just to make them nervous.) The crew works frantically to heave the tangled mast and sail over the side. Another crewman disappears overboard in the process, but the storm passes. The ship is crippled without a mast, but saved. The ship must be put ashore for repairs, but the mysterious island has vanished. Was the ship blown off course or was it never there?

Landfall

If the vessel does seek anchorage, make it a race between the advancing squall and the nearing shore.

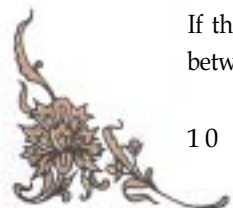
Just in time the ship finds a shallow cove to drop anchor. The violence of nature crashes over the island, buffeting the ship. One seaworthiness check is required. If passed, the ship is undamaged. If failed, it has sustained minor damage that should be repaired before sailing on.

Regardless of damage, it is likely the crew will go ashore. If the *rubban* is an NPC, he sends men to search for fresh water and food. Otherwise, several of the crew request permission from the PCs to go ashore, ostensibly for food and water. The shore is shingly stone, great gray-black patches of slate that are hard underfoot. There is no beach; the soil gradually builds up farther inland, until there is a thickness able to support plants and trees over the hard surface. It is an unusual island.

It is also not an island, but the back of a great *zaratan*, larger than any ever reported. Deep in slumber, the beast makes no notice of the tiny creatures on its back, unless—

Unless they do something foolish to rouse it. A grand bonfire would eventually warm its thick hide enough to cause pain, and digging for water will quickly yield black blood. Should the beast become disturbed, it raises its submerged head out of the waters with a thunderous roar. (Save vs. spells or be deafened for 1d6 rounds.) The entire island quakes and shudders for several rounds and then suddenly begins to submerge. Sea water sucks over the wooded shell, creating a vortex dangerous to ship. Worse still, the ship’s anchor is wedged into the sunken lip of the *zaratan*’s shell. As the creature dives, the hawser strains so much that the ship tilts dangerously toward the bow. Wood and rope groan under the strain.

Action must be taken quickly to save the ship. Although the hawser will snap before the ship is dragged under, waiting for that to happen is too late. By then the ship will be unable escape the suction of the creature’s descent. The hawser must be cut immediately, sacrificing an anchor to do so. It takes 17 points of damage to chop through the knotty, corded





cable. Those at the task must save vs. breath weapon to avoid being struck by the wildly recoiling hawsers. The thick cable does 2d6 points of damage if the save is failed.

Once the rope is cut, the ship can sail to safety, again with prompt action. For dramatic effect, make the escape perilous by describing the looming head of the zaratan that breaches the surface only tens of yards from the ship. It lets out a final shriek, makes toward the vessel, and dives away at the last second. It is never seen again. If the characters used spells on it, let them have the satisfaction of thinking they drove the mighty beast away.

Night

If the characters do nothing to rouse the zaratan and you still want to use the encounter anyway, then the beast rouses from its sleep sometime during the night. It is hungry and ready to feed. The crew first becomes aware of their peril when the watch (perhaps the PCs) hails out that the ship is drifting. The anchor has come loose and the ship is moving slowly along an increasing current. Within seconds the seamen are surprised to see a black cave ahead into which the sea flows. This is no cave but the gaping maw of the zaratan. As before, quick and decisive action is needed to save the ship from being crunched between the jaws of the enormous monster.

Lodestone

Having survived the encounter with the zaratan, the ship presses closer to the Steaming Isles, only to encounter a more insidious hazard. There is a reason why the ships of Zakhara use no nails, and the PCs are about to discover it.

Located at the bottom of the ocean, which is a mere 400 feet deep at this point, is a vast deposit of lodestone—powerful magnetic rock. As the ship passes over this region, every item with ferrous content is irresistibly drawn toward the bottom.

The first warning the player characters have of this

effect is a strange weakness that seems to strike those carrying significant amounts of iron or steel. Their every effort is tiresome as if their armor, swords, shields, or whatever suddenly weighed double. Still, there seems to be no particular cause, since some people (those without metal) seem immune to the weakening disease.

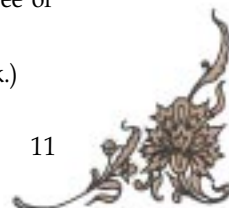
After the characters have had a chance to ponder this strange malady, new mysteries puzzle them. Small items (all of iron or steel) disappear and change location. Set a dagger on the table in one place and a short time later it inexplicably falls to the floor. Maybe it was the pitching and yawing of the ship, but the water is unusually calm. Next, the same items begin to slide and slip across the deck of their own accord. Was it the waves? Characters seem to drop items when they are actually being gently pulled from casual grip.


By the time the characters see obvious evidence of the effect, it is almost too late. Suddenly swords, iron pots, braziers— every iron and steel item on board— seem to spring to life. With a single crash they leap from shelves, launch from hooks, and crash to the floor, remaining rigidly pressed in place. Characters holding such items must make a Strength check to avoid being unexpectedly pulled from their feet. Those in metal armor must make the check at -3 each time they attempt to move.

Gradually the attraction increases until moving any metal item is the equivalent of lifting 200 pounds (plus the weight of the object). At this stage several things will have to be adjudicated.

If the ship is carrying a considerable amount of metal, the entire vessel is in peril. An immediate seaworthiness check must be made or she sinks. Even if passed, all motion stops as the attraction becomes too great to break. Iron and steel must go overboard if the crew hopes to escape.

If the ship carries a moderate quantity of iron and steel, movement of the vessel slows to half until free of the area. (This is a good opportunity for ghoulish pirates—using wooden clubs, of course—to attack.)





If a character is wearing considerable amounts of iron or steel, that character suffers 1d8 points of crushing damage each round if the metal is a rigid shell (like plate), or 2d6 points of damage for flexible metals (like chain mail).

Metal cast overboard is instantly drawn to the bottom. A metal item the size of a standard sword results in sufficient attraction to drag down a swimming man unless he lets go of it.

If forward motion of the ship is maintained, the vessel moves past the epicenter in about one hour. Thereafter the effects gradually reverse until, by the end of six hours, all is almost normal again. However, there is a 75% chance that any iron or steel item has been magnetized. Weapons become hard to use, metal arrowheads fail to fly true; both result in a -2 on the chance to hit. The weak effect passes after several days. Worse still, from the mariner's point of view, is that the ship's compass (if it has one) is ruined.

Into The Fog

After surviving all these perils, the characters finally site the fog-draped coast of the Steaming Isles. During the night, as the characters near the islands, a thick fog settles over the ship. Sailing through it is dangerous but unavoidable, so NPC rubbans will move at the ship's slowest pace. Visibility ranges from 100 yards on rare instances to less than 20 feet. As the ship nears shore, lookouts hear the sound of breakers smashing against the rocks.

A navigation check must be made to steer the vessel clear of certain doom. If successful, the pilot somehow avoids breaking up on rocks, turning into cliffs, or foundering on hidden reefs. The fog parts just enough to reveal a small gap in the rocky coast that leads to a sheltered bay—the perfect anchorage.

If the check is failed, the foolish pilot drives the ship onto the rocks. A seaworthiness check is made and, if failed, the ship breaks up immediately. Characters will be swept, exhausted and battered, onto the shore. If the check succeeds, the ship is stuck on

the rocks. It must be towed free quickly, probably by a boatload of oarsmen (although a sha'ir might persuade a marid to rescue the vessel). Every fifteen minutes a new check must be made to see if the ship stays whole. If freed, it will float but needs repairs. Again, finding safe harbor involves navigation checks.

Landfall Again

The characters and crew have come ashore on one of the Steaming Isles. Select one most appropriate to their direction of travel. Like all the islands, it is filled with both plant and animal life. It is also, by no coincidence, the same island which contains the village of Madinat al-Mumin. (The DM may want to locate this town on his map, now that its location is fixed.)

Whether ashore or onboard, things seem normal and peaceful enough at first. However, before too long the crew becomes unsettled and afraid. Men sent into the forest eye it with superstitious fear. No one will admit any reason under open questioning (since this would insult their own courage), but artful and gentle probing reveals the cause. The forest, the crew says, is alive with evil. They can hear the murmur of half-spoken words from the high branches, the whisper of dark deeds from the moldering forest floor, and articulate screams that float in from the distance. Little things like tools constantly disappear. They swear by all the gods that something *is* watching them.

At this point the crew must be handled carefully, for their fears could push them to the point of mutiny. Mocking these fears and calling them cowards causes a great loss of honor. Ordering them into the forest without precautions brings surly defiance and eventually bloodshed.

Of course, someone is watching the PCs and crew—the intelligent animals of the Steaming Isles. By day, the parrots and snakes report on their every move. At night, the leopards prowl the edges of the camp with sanguine curiosity. The monkeys steal whatever they can, day or night.



Conflict

Things could go on like this forever, but they almost certainly will not. One of the two events is likely to occur before the player characters leave the island (assuming, of course, the characters do not foolishly provoke a mutiny).

First, the PCs will go exploring and, in the process, discover Madinat al-Mumin. If this happens, the adventure continues with "Audience with Jaddat."

Second, the player characters or the rest of the crew get hungry. (Tempt the group with descriptions of the ample, fat game.) Someone stalks a nice, fat, and unusually tame gazelle, kills it, butchers it, and roasts it for a great feast. This does not go over well with the rest of the animals. In this case, press on with "The Crime."

If for some reason the player characters are particularly circumspect and remarkably indifferent to exploration, the citizens of Madinat al-Mumin discover them. Out of hospitality, the leaders of the crew (assuming here these are player characters) are invited back to the village as befits proper hospitality.

Audience with The Jaddat

The entrance of the player characters into Madinat al-Mumin causes quite a stir, for outsiders have never been seen here in the last 400 or so years. Every citizen of the village turns out to see the newcomers, taking care not to gape or stare too openly. Anything unusual—strange race, appearance, dress, or item—provokes considerable comment, but no one addresses the PCs about it. Finally, Samia and Amsha introduce themselves (if they are not already accompanying the PCs) and invite them to rest in the house of their grandmother ("Jaddat"). Both are unfailingly polite and truthful, qualities befitting anyone striving for virtue. Neither offers more in the way of explanation.

The pair leads the PCs through the town and up the slopes of the hill ("Purity") to the gleaming palace at the top. They pass through the gates and doors without formalities, through empty halls and

overgrown gardens, until they come to Jaddat's chamber. Here the group is presented to Jaddat and her husband.

Jaddat is immediately concerned by the arrival of foreigners. Up to now, all has progressed smoothly in Madinat al-Mumin simply because no outsider has ever found the place. By the customs of hospitality (important to the Law), the characters must be received graciously and treated well, but Jaddat wishes they were elsewhere. What effect will the characters have on the purity of the villagers?

The best solution to this problem, Jaddat decides, is to keep a close watch on the PCs. Therefore, she offers them rooms at her palace and a feast that night. No attempt is made to force the group or restrain them, but there is always a townsman around to keep an eye on the party.

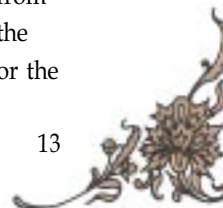
The feast is entirely vegetarian, but questions about that and anything else relating to the community are carefully dodged. Cosmological beliefs might be discussed with learned clerics, but not with just anyone. If satisfied the PCs are good (not necessarily perfect), Jaddat relaxes her vigilance, although she does warn the group to treat the animals of the island with great respect.

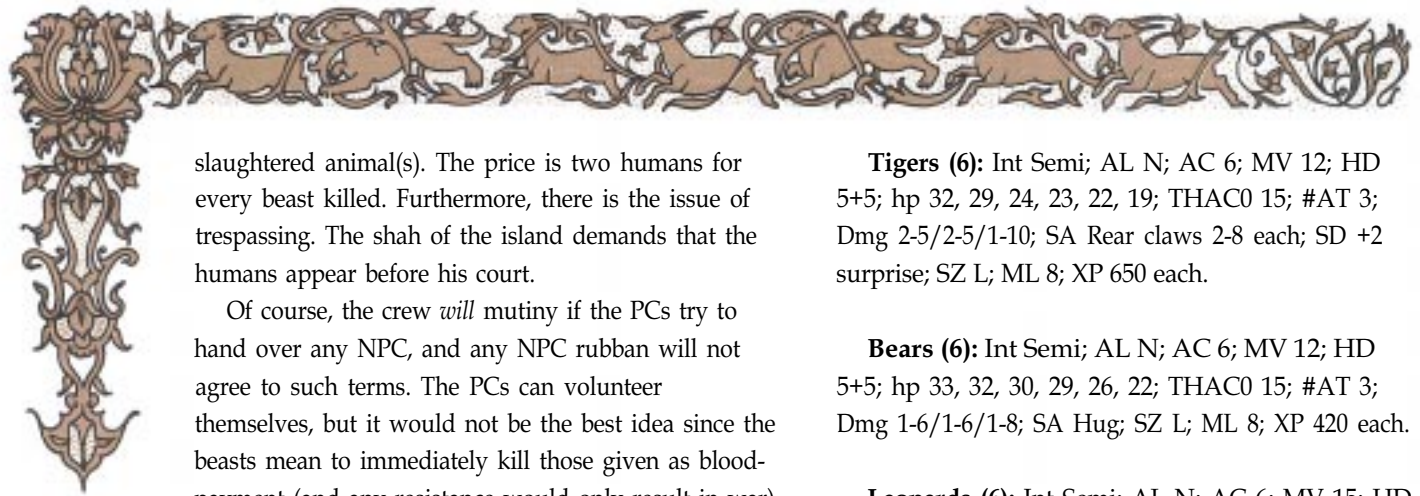
Although the characters are tolerated in the town, they should never feel completely welcome. With each departure there is always a sense of great relief on the parts of Jaddat and Jadd.

The Crime

If the PCs do not go hunting, the crew does in their absence and manages to roast a gazelle for dinner. The feast is wonderful, but it is tantamount to a Forbidden Action in the eyes of the animals.

The next morning, the peace of camp is broken by frightened screaming. A delegation from the animals—six bears, six leopards, and six tigers—have come to demand justice. If the characters refrain from attacking, the oldest tiger will speak. He accuses the humans of murder and demands blood-payment for the





slaughtered animal(s). The price is two humans for every beast killed. Furthermore, there is the issue of trespassing. The shah of the island demands that the humans appear before his court.

Of course, the crew *will* mutiny if the PCs try to hand over any NPC, and any NPC rubban will not agree to such terms. The PCs can volunteer themselves, but it would not be the best idea since the beasts mean to immediately kill those given as blood-payment (and any resistance would only result in war).

Outright attacks are also foolish, for the PCs face the might of the entire wild kingdom. True, the group, through spells, weapons, and surprise, might defeat the delegation now facing them, but knowledge of their deed spreads almost instantaneously. Not only will they face more of the great predators, but every creature large and small will work against them. Parrots and other birds dive bomb unexpectedly, snakes strike from the bushes, sharks fill the bay, and monkeys pelt coconuts and rocks from the tree tops—a true “gorilla” warfare! Again, the characters may be strong and well-protected, but the majority of the crewmen make easy targets for such attacks.

A far better idea is to negotiate. The PCs can request an audience with the shah, pleading ignorance and mercy. The creatures are dealing from a position of strength, so the PCs should be appropriately polite and humble. Arrogant demands and a lack of respect for proper protocol are no way to talk one’s self out of this mess. If importuned correctly, the tiger relays their request to a parrot and then orders the beasts to withdraw until an answer comes from the shah. The bears, leopards, and tigers fade into the jungle, just lurking beyond sight. No one is allowed to go inland from the camp.

After this visit, the crew is in utter terror. Not one of them will move from the beach, and if the ship is in any shape to leave, they want to go—tight now. Clearly this is the work of evil genies or horrid monsters come to trick them. The island is accursed and unholy. From here on the PCs are definitely on their own.

Tigers (6): Int Semi; AL N; AC 6; MV 12; HD 5+5; hp 32, 29, 24, 23, 22, 19; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 2-5/2-5/1-10; SA Rear claws 2-8 each; SD +2 surprise; SZ L; ML 8; XP 650 each.

Bears (6): Int Semi; AL N; AC 6; MV 12; HD 5+5; hp 33, 32, 30, 29, 26, 22; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 1-6/1-6/1-8; SA Hug; SZ L; ML 8; XP 420 each.

Leopards (6): Int Semi; AL N; AC 6; MV 15; HD 3+2; hp 20, 20, 18, 17, 11, 10; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1d3 (2)/1d6; SA Rear claws 1d4+1 each; SD -2 to be surprised; SZ M; ML 10; XP 175 each.

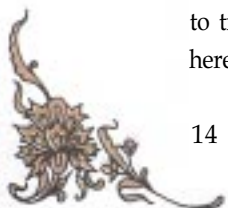
Audience with The Shah

If the PCs have made the request, the shah of the island eventually grants them a hearing. The shah, be it snake, hawk, tiger, gazelle, or swallow, is curious about these intruders. The audience is set to occur without delay. The old tiger reappears at the edge of the camp, flanked by a leopard and a bear, to escort the humans to the diwan of Shah X.

If the PCs are not masters of the ship, it is at this point the NPCs show their true spirit—abject fear. Neither the nakhuda or the rubban will go. “I have no skill at speaking, no knowledge of the law,” each claims. Someone else must go. The task is clearly up to the player characters. Every PC can go unless he or she has been particularly offensive or hostile. Politeness counts.

The trip through the jungle is almost like a procession down the main avenue of some great city. Animals of all kinds perch and hang from the trees, peer from the bushes, or caper alongside the escort that flanks the humans. Voices whisper and comment on the exotic strangers passing by. A few monkeys may jeer and hoot, but most of the animals are merely curious.

The diwan of the shah is one that suits that particular animal. Shah Sunn holds court in a brilliant glade, her throne a nest in a flame-of-the-forest tree.





Shah Nimr's is a bamboo thicket where the tiger sprawls in the hot afternoon shade. Shah Hayyat rules from the edge of a swamp, his sinuous form curled around a moss-draped branch. Shah Gazal stands atop a small mound in the center of a grassy plain, his harim clustered in the distance. Shah Baz surveys his kingdom from an aerie at the top of a rocky crag where the wind howls continually. Padishah Jaqal rolls in the dust before his den, prowling as he speaks.

The audience is a great affair for the animals. In addition to the Shah (or Padishah) there will be a variety of other creatures present. Some are wizards to their lord, others petitioners with business of the day. Make the player characters wait for their chance to speak while the Shah hears other, trivial matters. A groundhog complains that a fox has stolen its den, two monkeys argue over the ownership of a fruit tree, a nightingale seeks divorce from her unfaithful spouse. Each addresses the shah with the same respect a Zakharan would give any ruler of the Land of Fate, and each judgment is carefully debated and considered according to the tenets of the Law. Impress on the characters the gravity of the court; this is no parody of human mores.

When the PCs are finally heard, force the players to role-play the audience. Encourage them to prepare speeches, impassioned arguments, debate fine points of the Law, or whatever it will take to make a good impression. *Do not let players get away with just making die rolls (like proficiency checks) for success or failure.* The audience is the heart of this adventure and it should be as challenging and fraught with peril as any savage battle of sword and spell.

After the characters have made their impassioned plea, make a judgment. How good was their defense? Were they insulting to the shah? Did they offer anything (other than lives) in exchange? (The beasts have no interest in money, but might accept interesting goods instead of blood.) A price must be paid by the crewmen (including the NPCs), but it does not necessarily have to be death. Possible outcomes include:

- Servitude to the family of the slain animal(s).
- An oath of vegetarianism from the entire crew.
- An oath to treat all animals as equals from the player characters—no riding horses, etc.

As a final precaution, the shah insists on an oath of secrecy about the island from every member of the crew. The animals are perfectly aware that humans would invade their land in great numbers, were its location known.

Because these animals are specially gifted from the time of creation, oaths made to them have two special effects. First, they have all the binding force of a *geas* spell. Second, all beasts throughout Zakhara (but not necessarily the world) sense the characters are marked by the oath.

Complications

If the characters and the shah cannot come to terms, then it is war between the two kingdoms, beast and ins. To the animals' minds, the enemy includes the innocent citizens of Madinat al-Mumin and the player characters are told as such. Since the laws of hospitality and peace still hold, the PCs are escorted back to their camp unharmed. Of course, should they foolishly attack the shah (tantamount to an assassination attempt) or their escort, the peace is broken and reprisals are immediate.

On hearing what the PCs have done, Jaddat is mortified. If the characters do not know yet, she explains the true importance of the settlement and berates them for the doom they have brought upon the Law of the Loregiver. Victory by the small settlement against the great numbers of animals is impossible. Peace must be made at any cost and the player characters (as the offenders) must pay the price. The characters may find themselves in a much harder spot than ever before. How this role-playing dilemma is resolved is left to the DM, since the solution is likely to involve noble self-sacrifice on the part of his players. No scenario can dictate that since it must come from the heart.



If the characters refuse to face the consequences of their deeds, they fall forever and irrevocably under the influence of the Evil Eye. Clerics lose 4th level and greater spellcasting abilities and all granted powers until things are set right once more. The sleep of all is tormented by dreams of the great crime they have committed against the Law. If the Madinat is destroyed, there is no hope for the PCs, save becoming the greatest and most devout *ulama* since the time of the First Caliph.

The Great Treasure

The shah and his wiziars are the source of the Great Treasure (or its clue) in this adventure. Like all things ins, it is of no importance to them. They will give it up, but they will want something of equal value in return, and they will only deal with those respectful to them. Graciousness and cultivation are prized in this land.

Of course, what animals value is far different from ins. Payments similar to those already described are what they require, particularly service. Take this opportunity to remind arrogant player characters of humility—make them spend a month helping sparrows build nests or standing watch over a herd of gazelles. Have fun.

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Book 6

Map Booklet

Man at sea is an insect on a splinter, now engulfed, now scared to death.

Caliph Umar ibn-al-Khattab (634-644)

Credits

Design: Zeb Cook

Editing: Bill Slavicsek

Cover Painting: Jeff Easley

Illustrations: Karl Waller

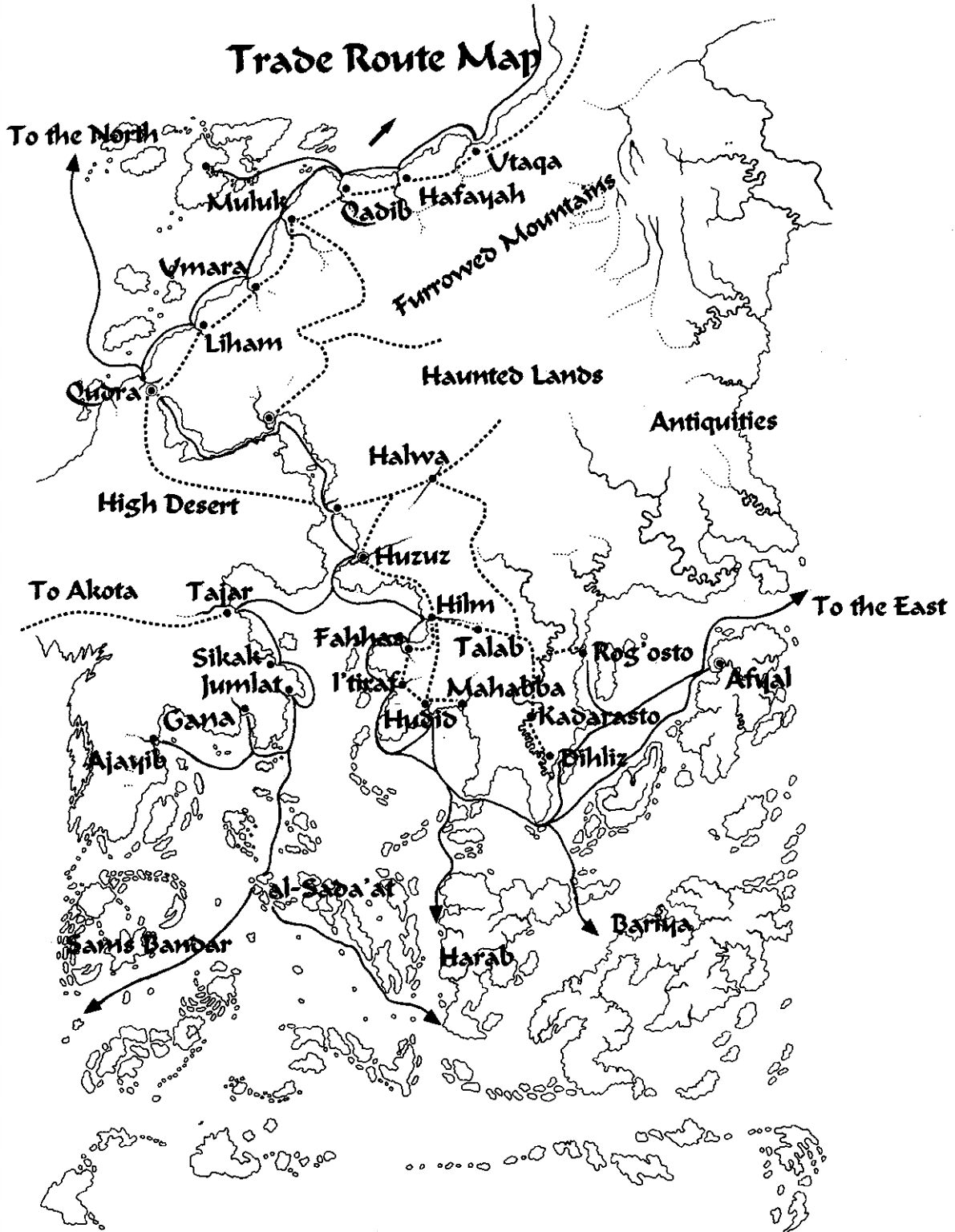
Cartography: Dave Sutherland III

Special Thanks: Wolfgang Bauer, Jeff Grubb, David LeMuele

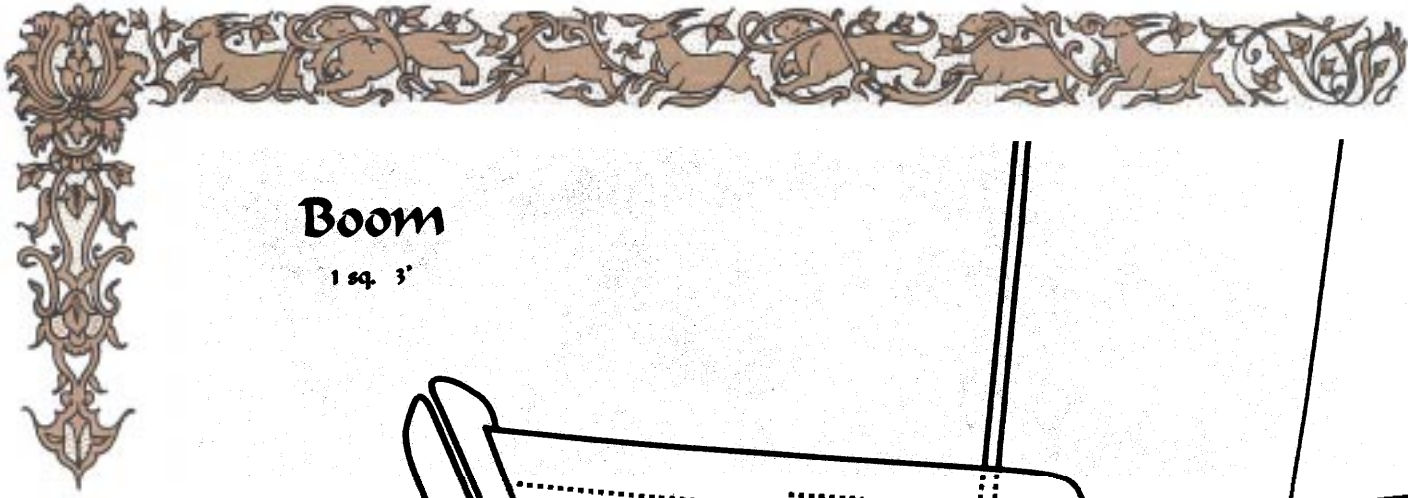




Trade Route Map

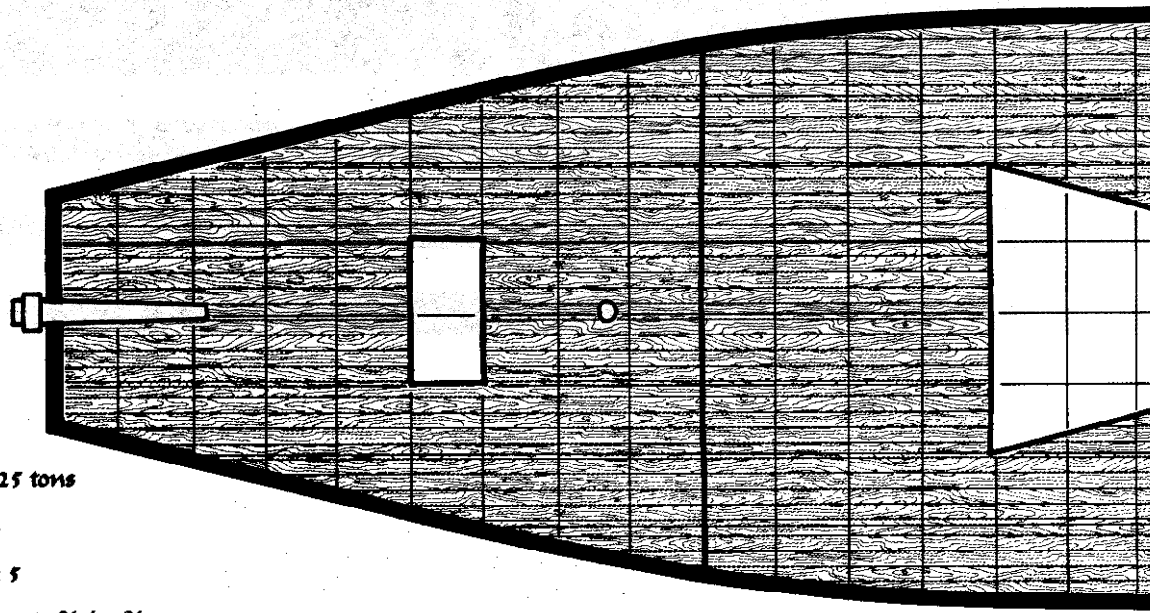
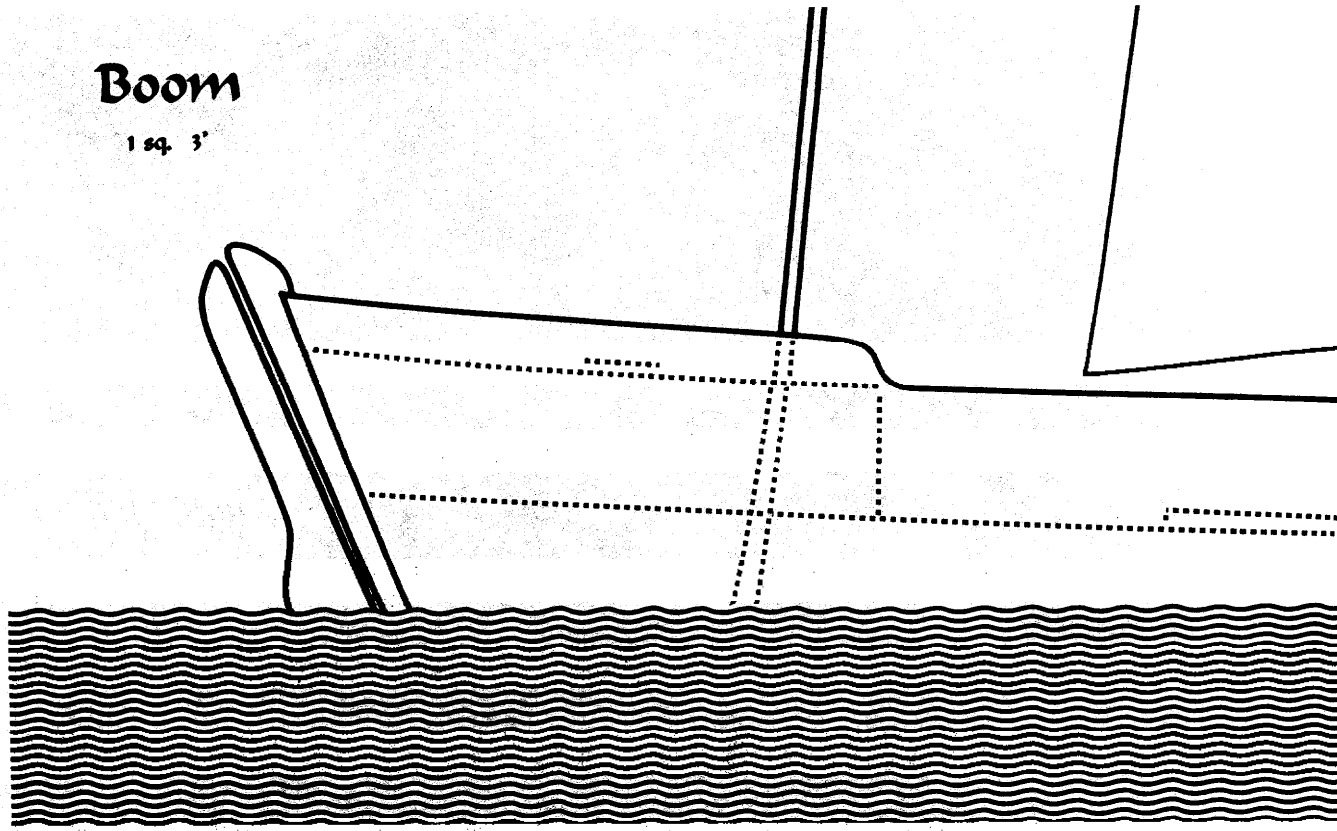






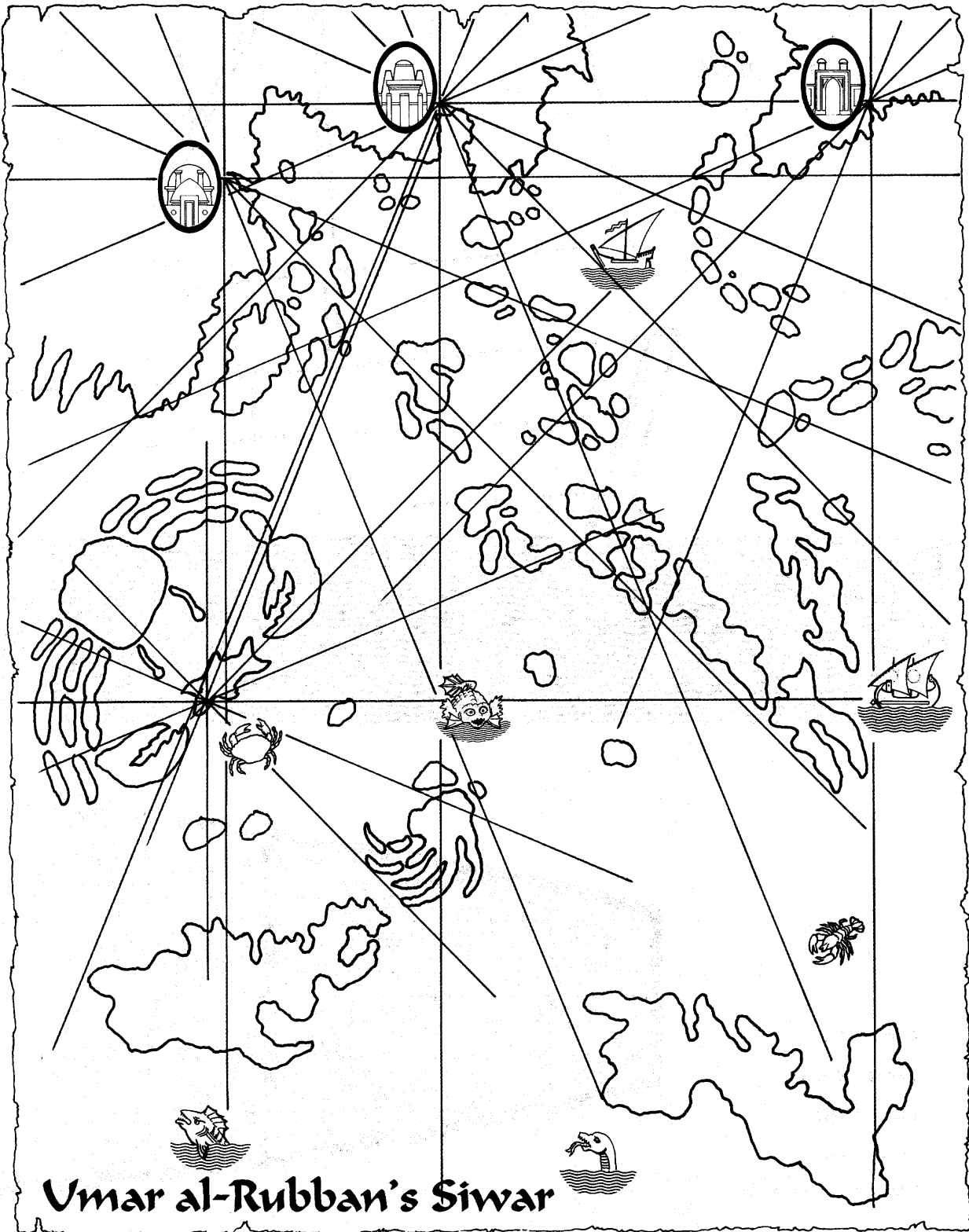
Boom

1 sq. 3'



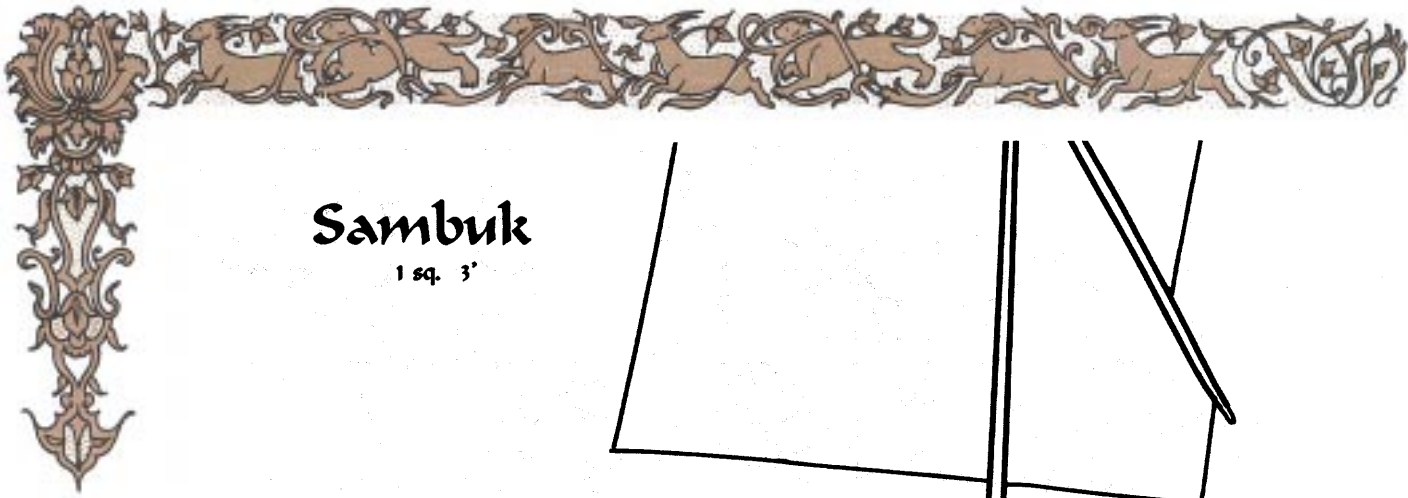
Crew: 25-30
Cargo: 100-125 tons
Base Move: 3
Emergency: 5
Seaworthiness: 45%/60%





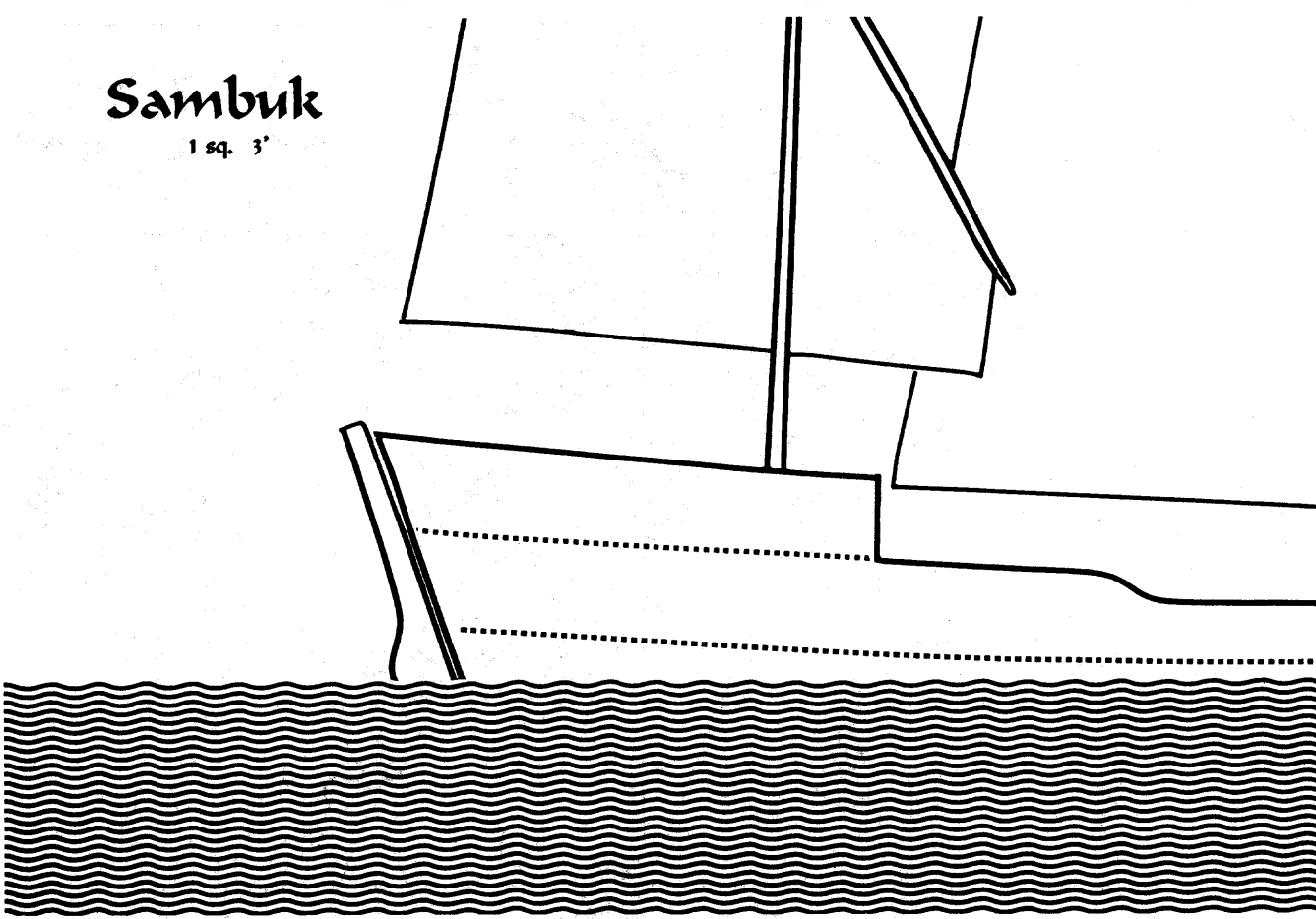
Umar al-Rubban's Siwar



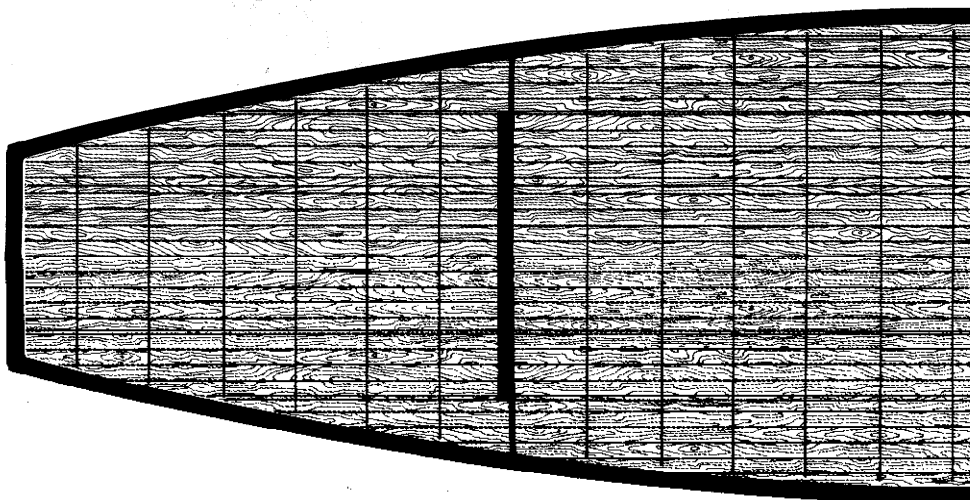


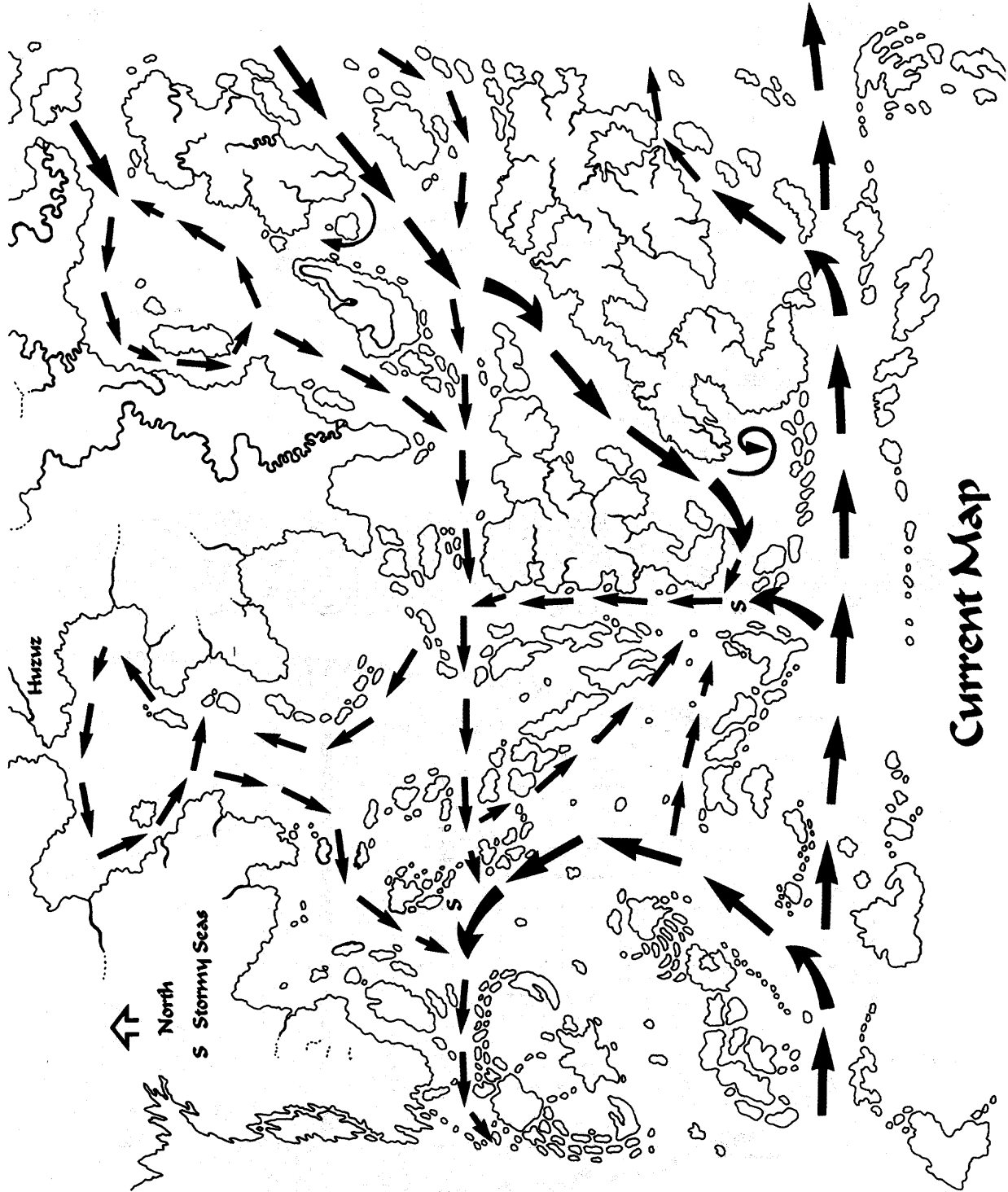
Sambuk

1 sq. 3'



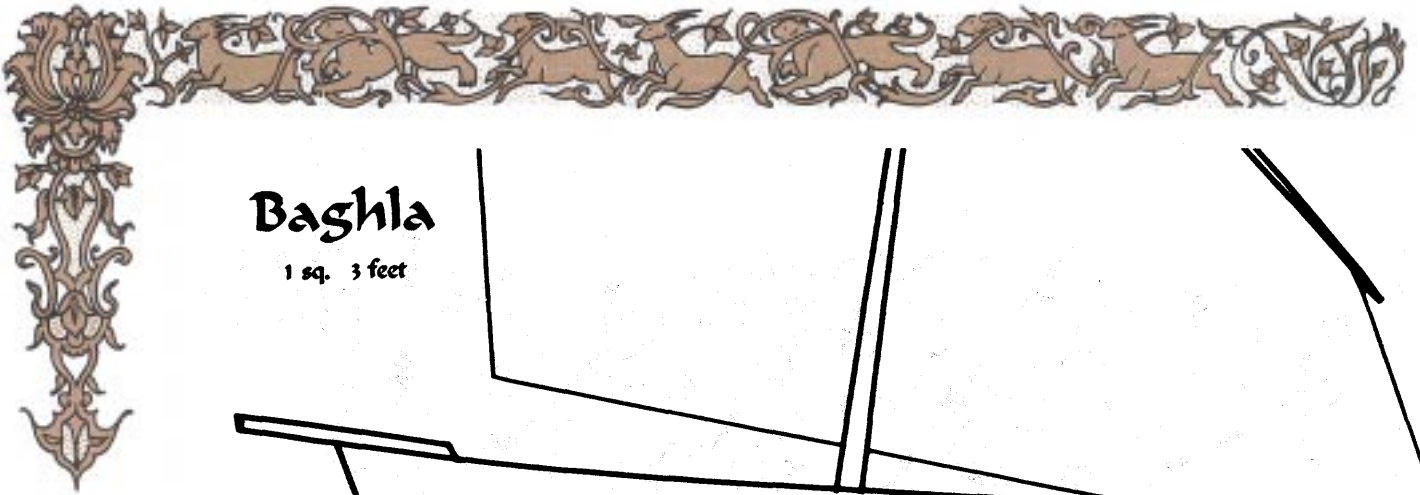
- Crew: 15-20
- Cargo: 90 tons
- Base Move: 3
- Emergency: 5
- Seaworthiness: 40%





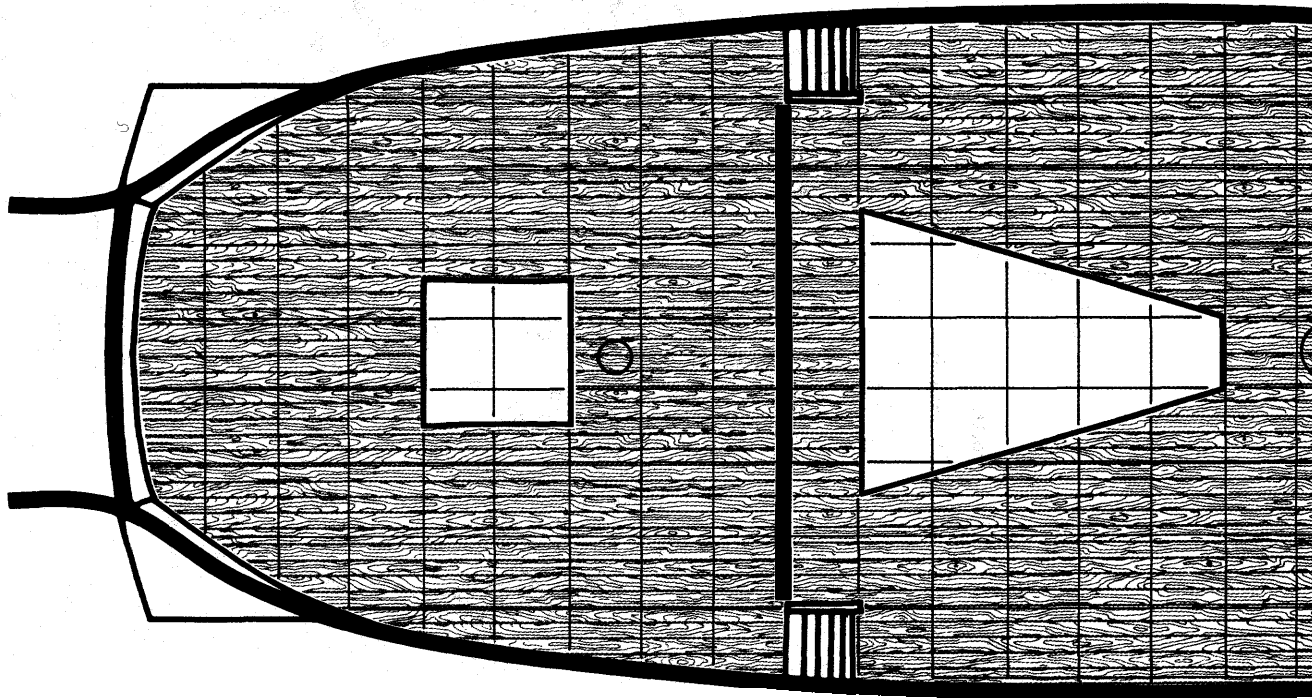
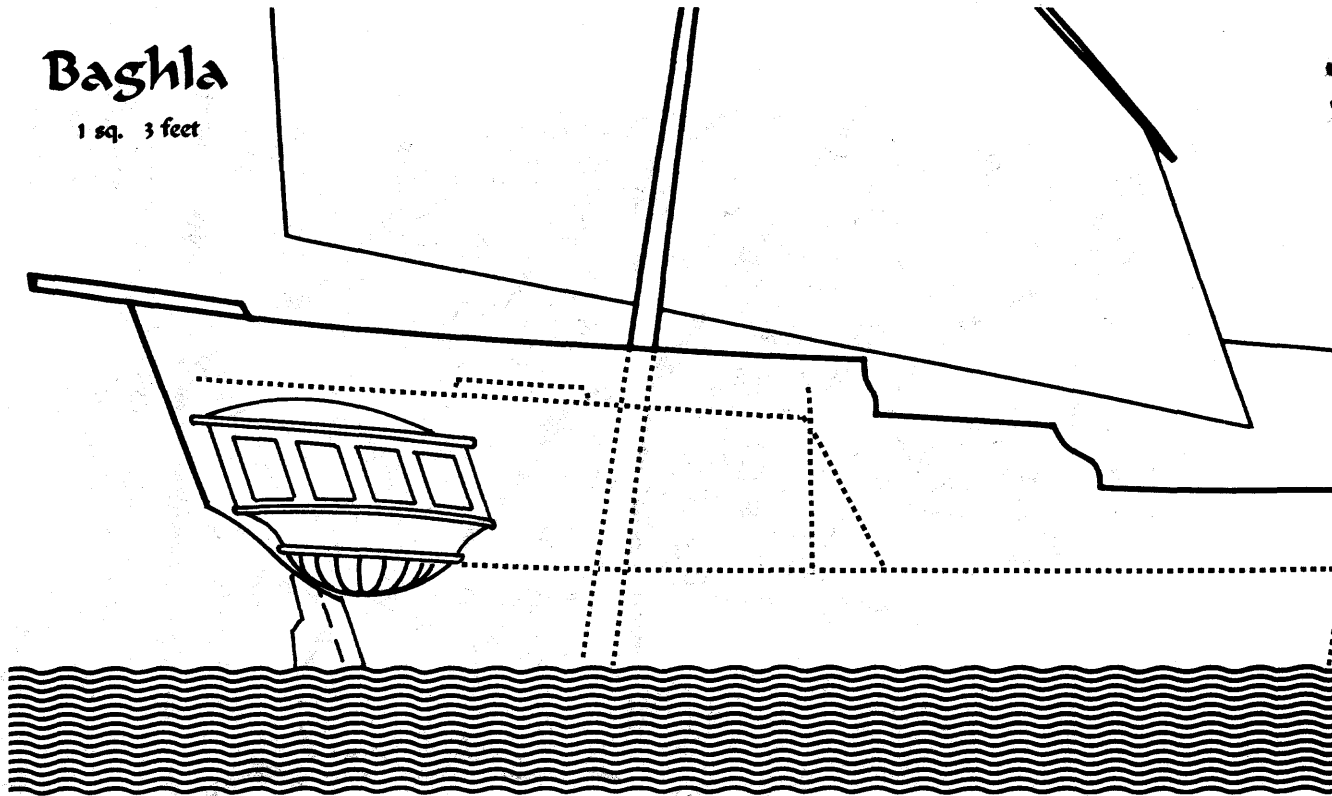
Current Map





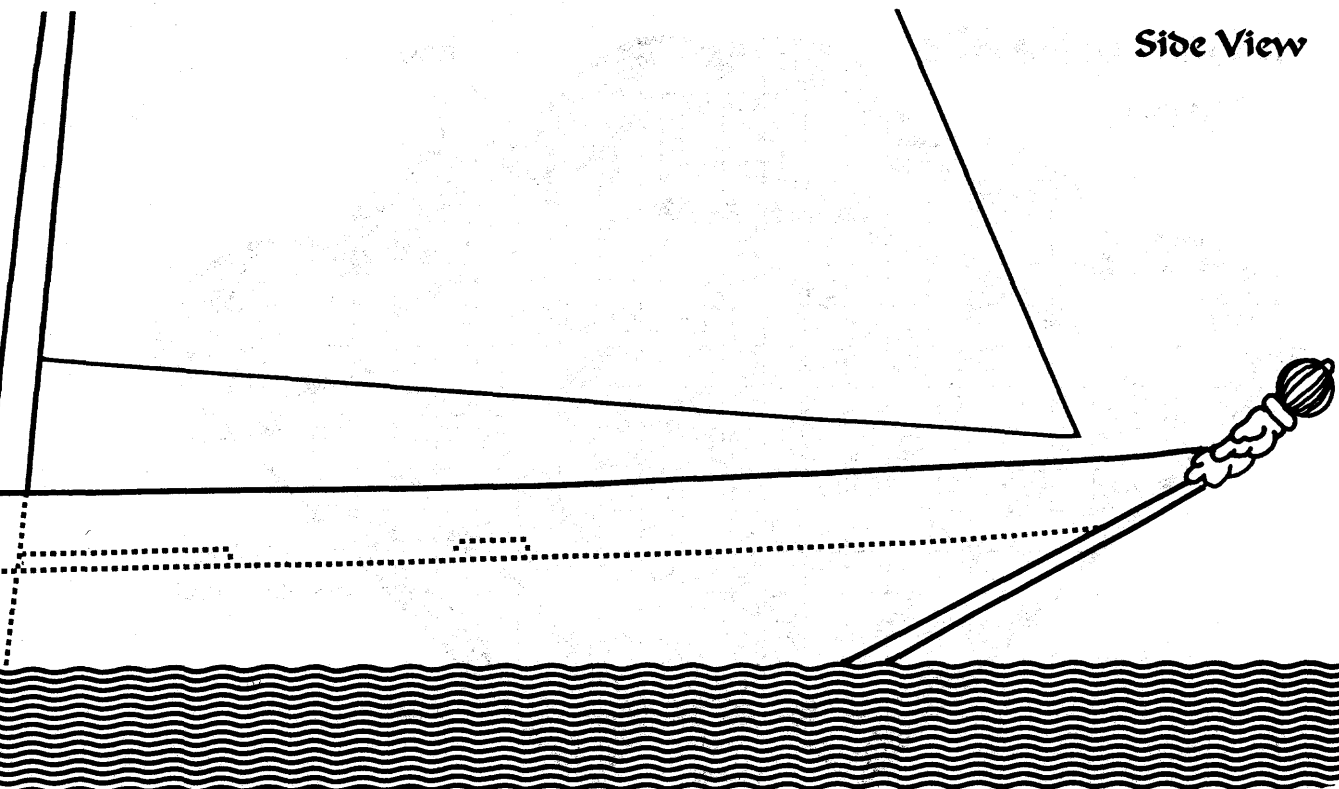
Baghla

1 sq. 3 feet

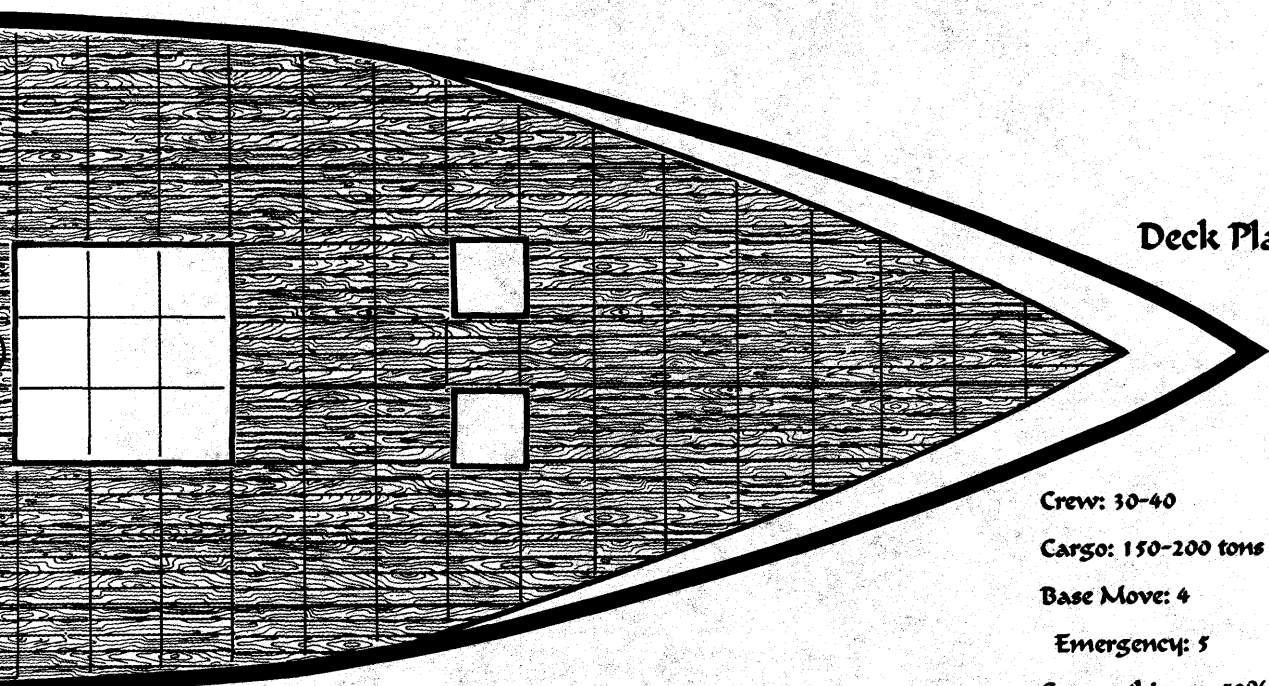




Side View



Deck Plan

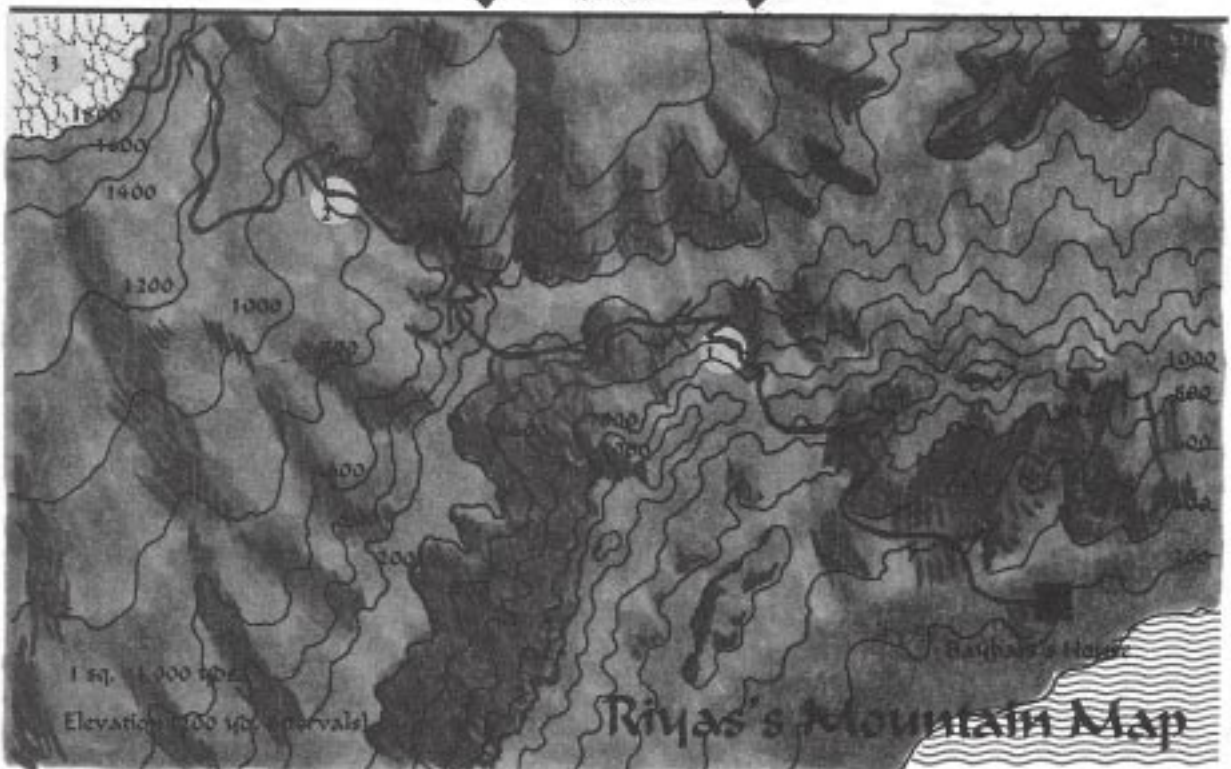
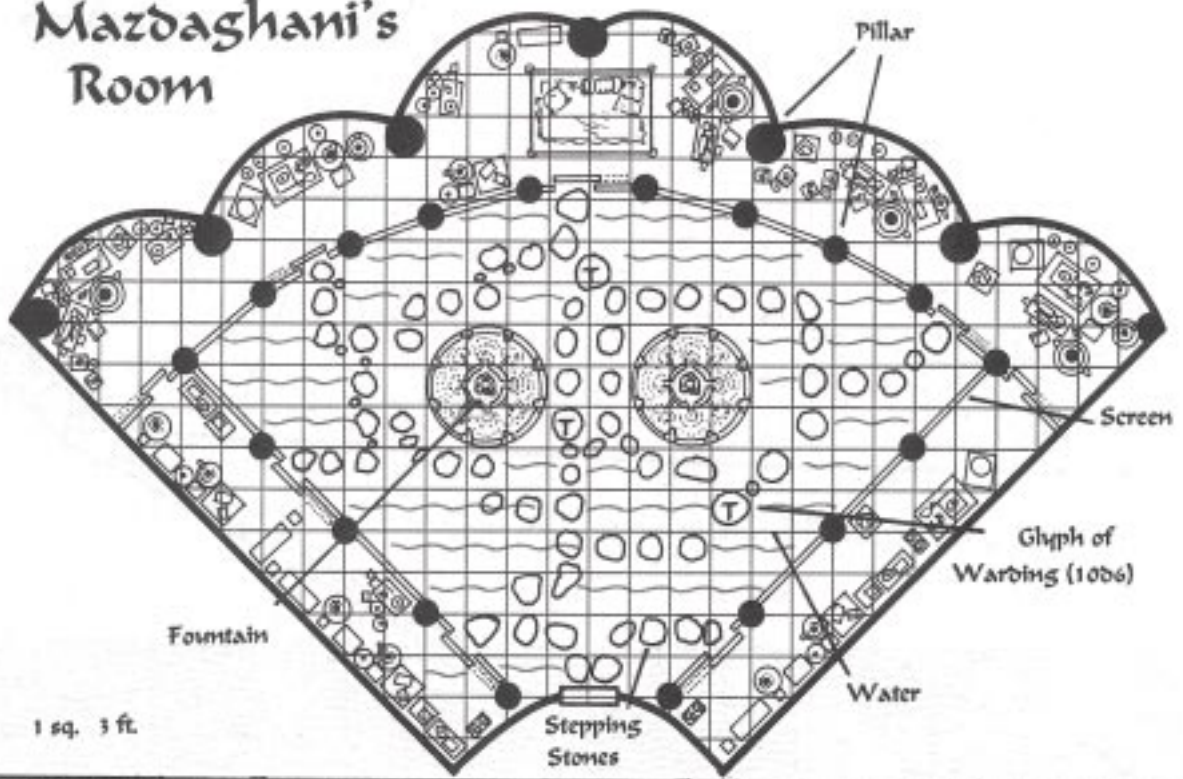


Crew: 30-40
Cargo: 150-200 tons
Base Move: 4
Emergency: 5
Seaworthiness: 50%/60%



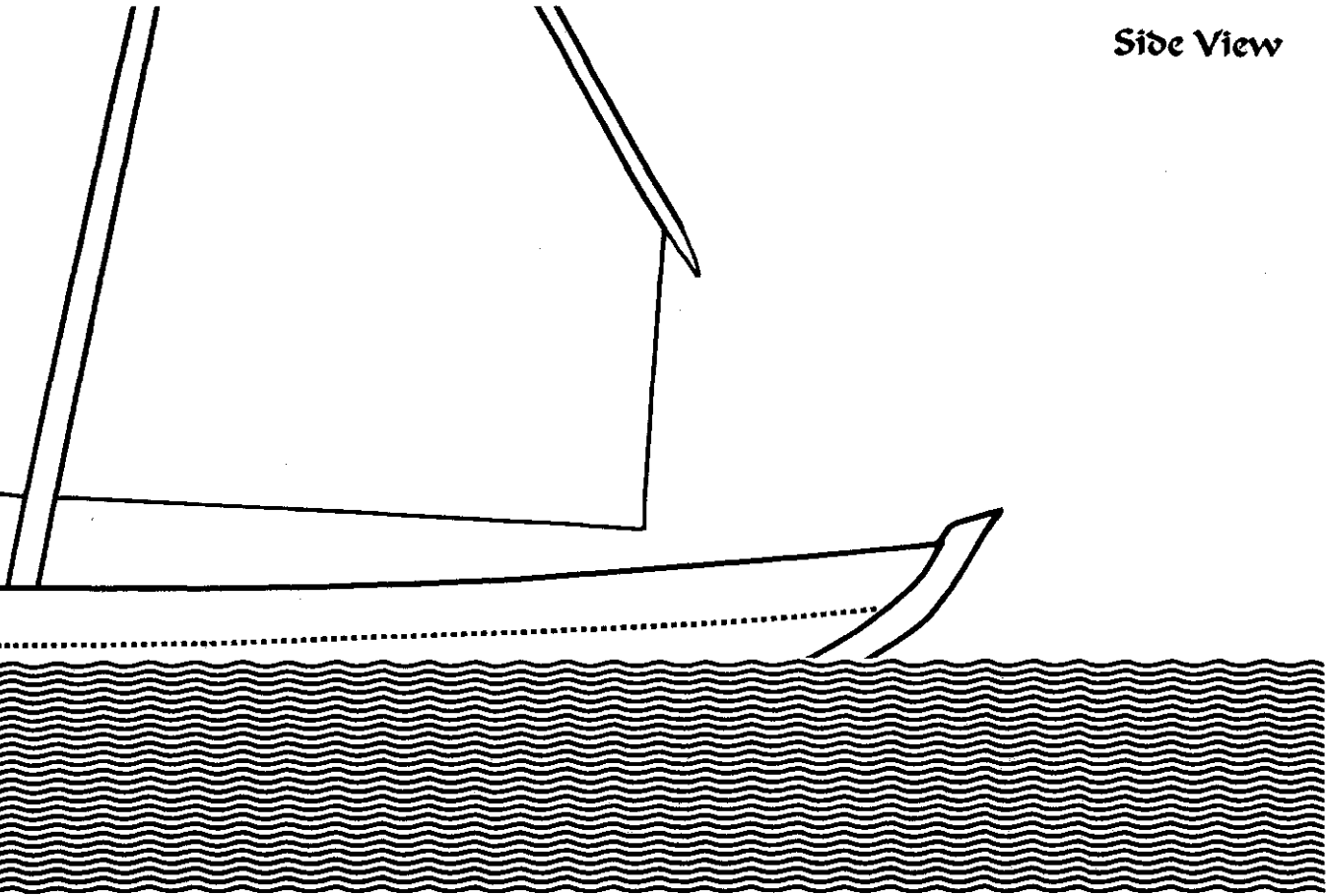


Mazdaghani's Room

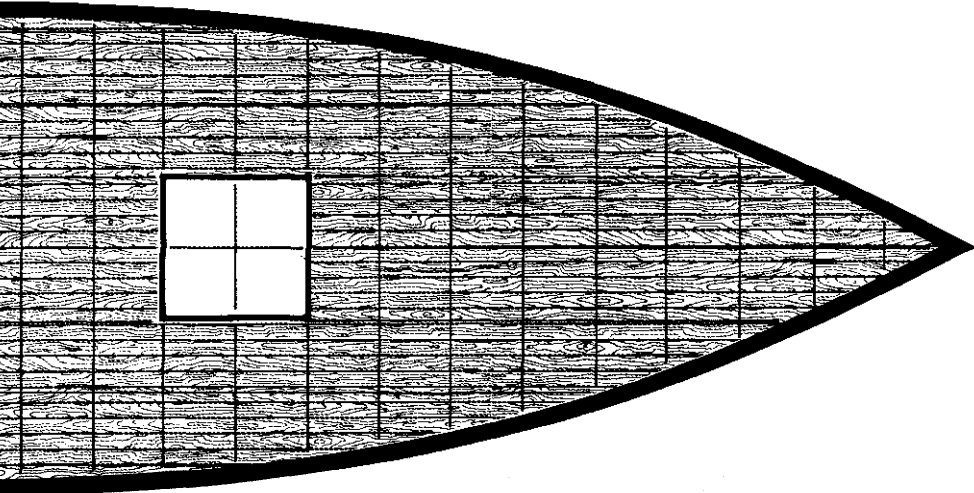




Side View



Deck Plan





Clues

For the characters to find the Great Treasure, they must follow the trail of clues you give them. As noted in *Book One: Homeport*, there is no set order to these, with the exception of the very first. Instead, each clue notes where it will send the player characters. You get to choose where their adventures will take them next, based on which problems you want them to face and perhaps what treasures you want them to find.

The clues here are meant to be copied and given to the player characters at the appropriate time. When discovered, they usually take the form of a scroll or other document, although a wise sage may also tell the PCs the clue.

The First Clue

"It is said there are many wonders throughout the land, some great and some small. Who can know all of these? Perhaps a bold explorer or merchant who trades with the edge of the world.

"It is said that such a merchant can be found in Bandar al-Sa'adat. Indeed, wisdom and folly have visited this one, for he knows a great secret yet does not see its true worth. Go to al-Sa'adat and seek among the merchants there."

To Send The PCs to al-Sartan

"There was or there was not, in the time of the Fifth Caliph, a great ship commanded by the bold Umar al-Rubban. For many years he voyaged between the islands of the Crowded Sea, risking his life against hideous monsters, to find strange peoples and wondrous cargos. Many a delight he brought back to the marbled palaces of Huzuz and great was his fame among the bahriyin.

"But as the proverb says, 'Fate is not kind forever,' and so it was that Umar set out on one last voyage from which his ship never returned. It was to have been the greatest of all adventures, to find the most fantastic of all wonders. He sailed southwest from Huzuz toward a group of islands never charted, where shrimps and great crabs were plentiful. Perhaps there he met his doom, or perhaps he lives still."

To Send The PCs To Takkabar

"It has come to me that at the tip of the Strait of Sorrow there lies a most mysterious island, guarded by a fierce maelstrom of evil intent. No sailor has ever put ashore there, no wizard ever scried that land. Who knows what wonders and riches might lie on those shores?"

To Send The PCs To Kaff

"Genies make delights beyond imagining, but care for them not, leaving them strewn for others to find. Why, there are even tales of beasts with wonders worthy of the Grand Caliph yet who understand not the value of the thing they possess. The wise man would sail for the islands of the djinn, for perhaps there he will find what he seeks."

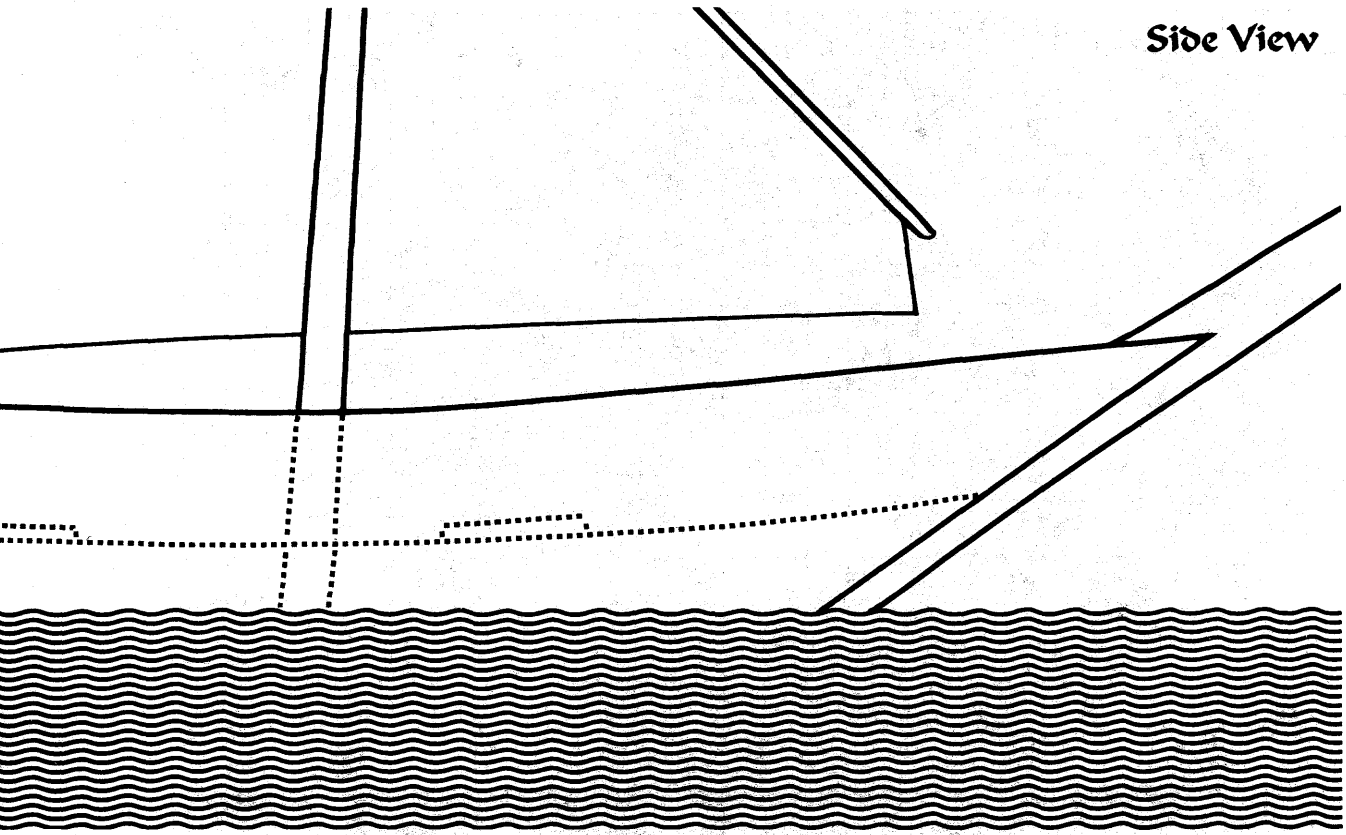
To Send The PCs To The Steaming Isles

"Treasures beyond value cannot be found within the world man knows, for has not man recorded all of his knowledge? So goes the argument of the great alim al-Nasir. By his reasoning then, man cannot find more knowledge among the lands of men, but instead must seek out the lands of animals—as are rumored to be far to the south beyond the lands of men—to advance the state of his civilization.

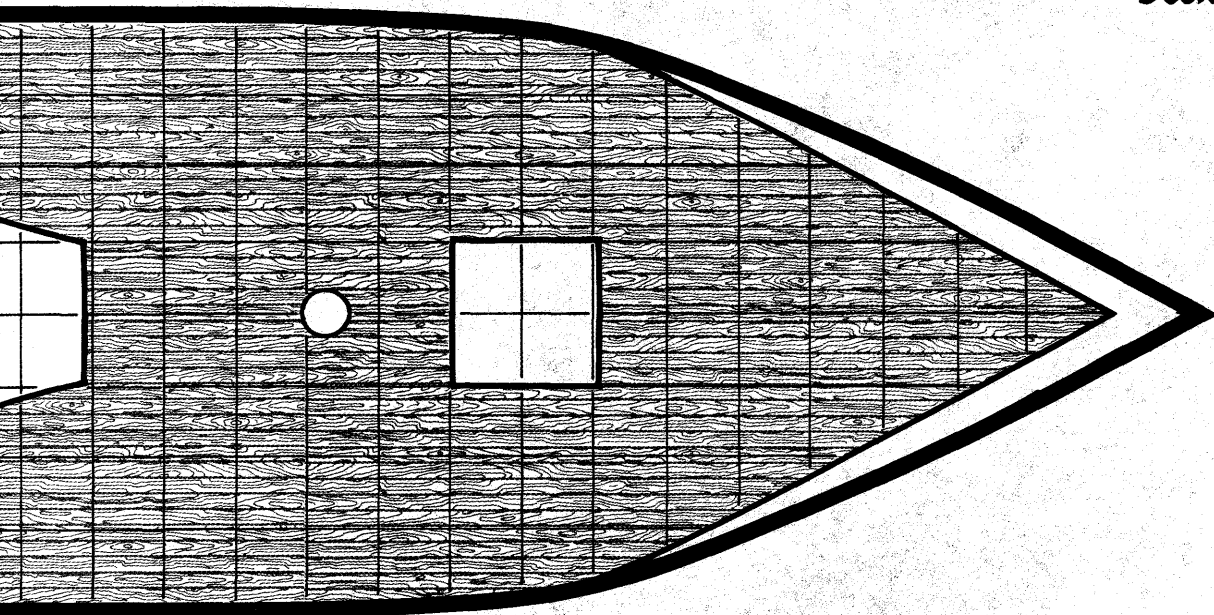
"Clearly, now my students will see why the reasoning of al-Nasir is false, for surely the animals given by the gods to serve cannot be greater than men . . ."

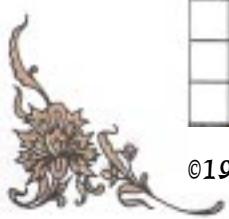
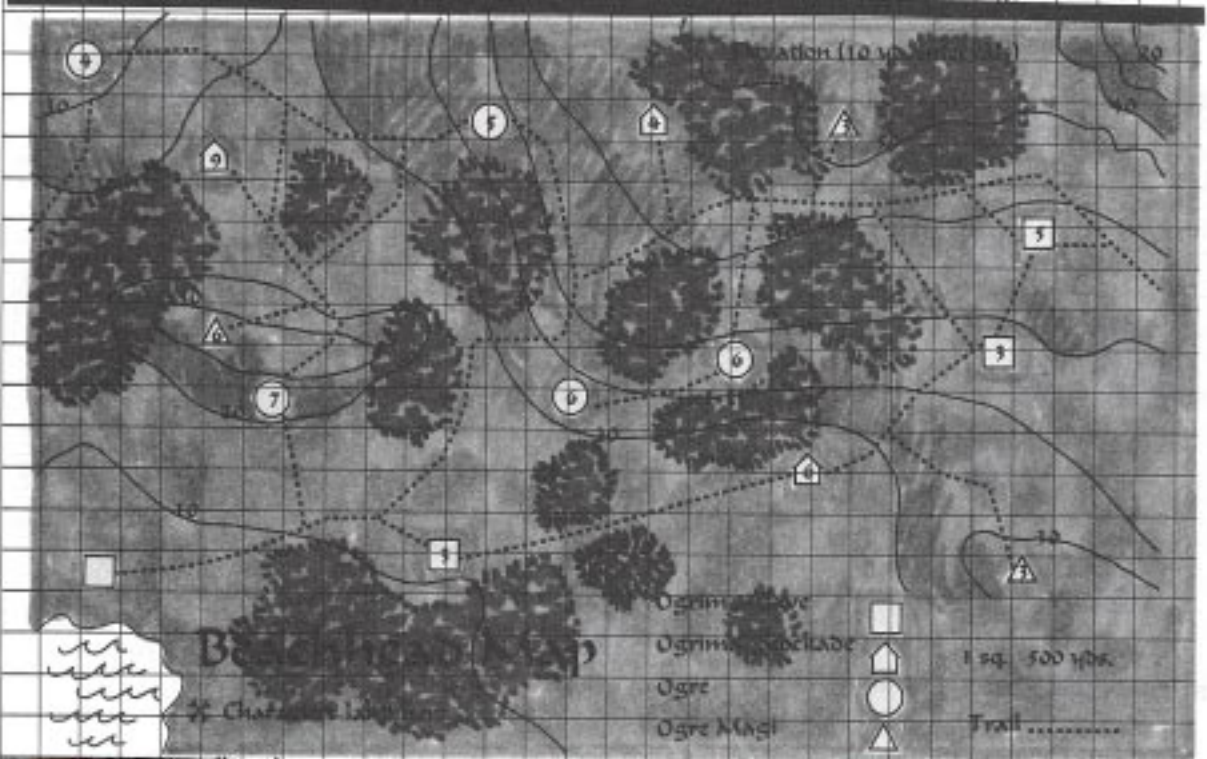
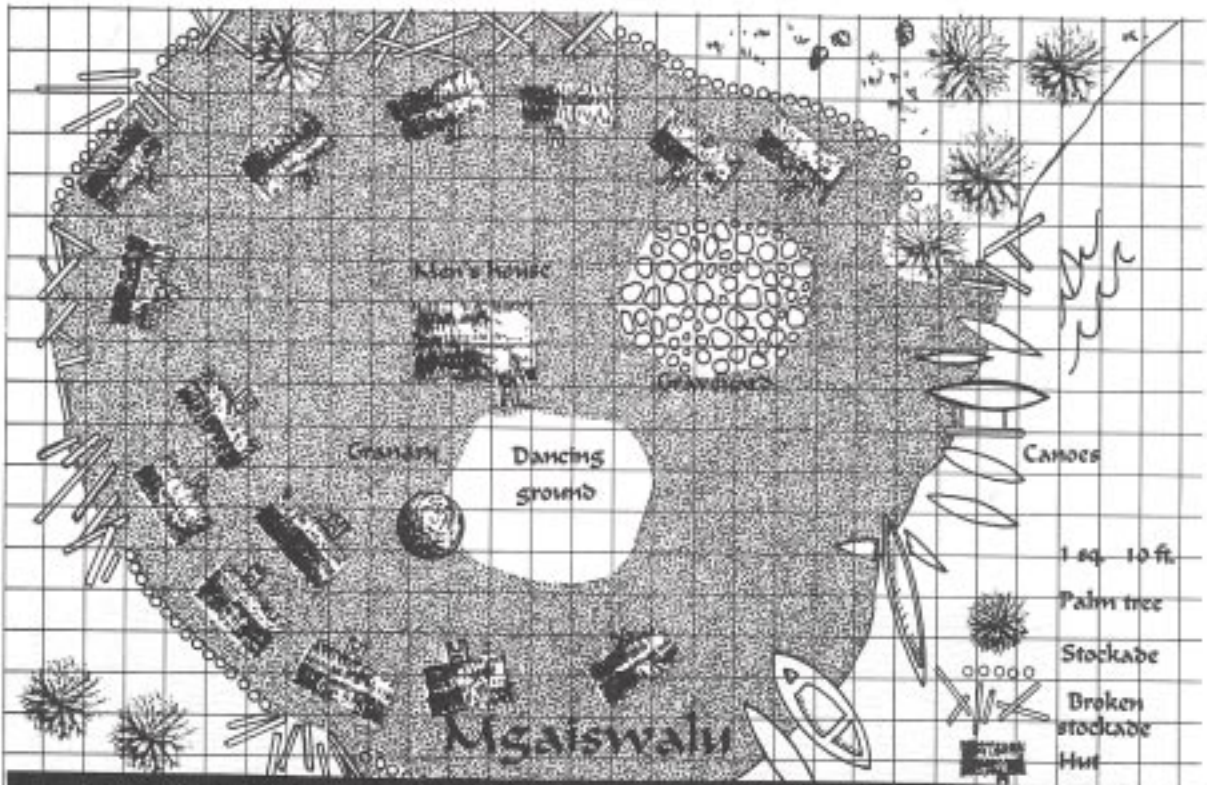


Side View



Deck Plan







To The North

Paper
Ajami magic
Grain
Wool

Qudra

Slaves
Mamluks
Armor

Liham

Coffee
Pottery
Salt

Umara

Carpets
Cloth
Cheese
Dye

Muluk

Dye
Cloth

Qadib

Sages
Cloth
Dye
Magic

Hafayah

Cloth
Rice
Agates

Utaqa

Mercenaries

Tajar

Carpets
Wool
Metalwork
Swords
Horses
Livestock
Spices

High Desert

Wool
Dates
Metalwork
Carpets

To The East

Silk
Spices
Exotica

Antiquities

Gems
Exotica

Harab

Feathers
Teak
Spices
Musk

Bariya

Feathers
Teak
Spices

al-Sada'at

Ships

Sams Bandar

Coconut
Shrimp

Fahhas

Fruit
Livestock
Pottery
Porcelain

I'tiraf

Glass
Sages
Cotton

Gana

Pearls
Shells
Aromatics
Myrrh
Frankincense
Coral

Ajayib

Coffee
Fruit
Frankincense
Myrrh
Aromatics
Dyes

To The Eastern Lands

Salt
Wood

Furrowed Mountains

Gems
Slaves
Hyal
Coal
Iron
Steel
Wool
Pottery
Armor
Weapons

Haunted Lands

Livestock
Carpets
Wool
Antiquities
Dates

Halwa

Livestock
Slaves
Salt
Wool

Huzuz

Pilgrims
Cloth

Hilm

Grain
Livestock
Horses
Pilgrims

Talab

Slaves
Cloth
Herbs
Healers
Wool

Hudid

Glass
Books
Sages
Scribes

Mahabba

Wood
Cotton

Sikak

Fish
Boats
Rope
Salt

Jumlat

Pearls
Shells
Dye
Coral

Afyal

Wood
Gold
Silver
Gems
Ivory
Elephants
Silk

Dihliz

Rice
Antiquities

Kadarasto

Rice
Cotton
Antiquities

Rog'osto

Sages
Art
Crystal

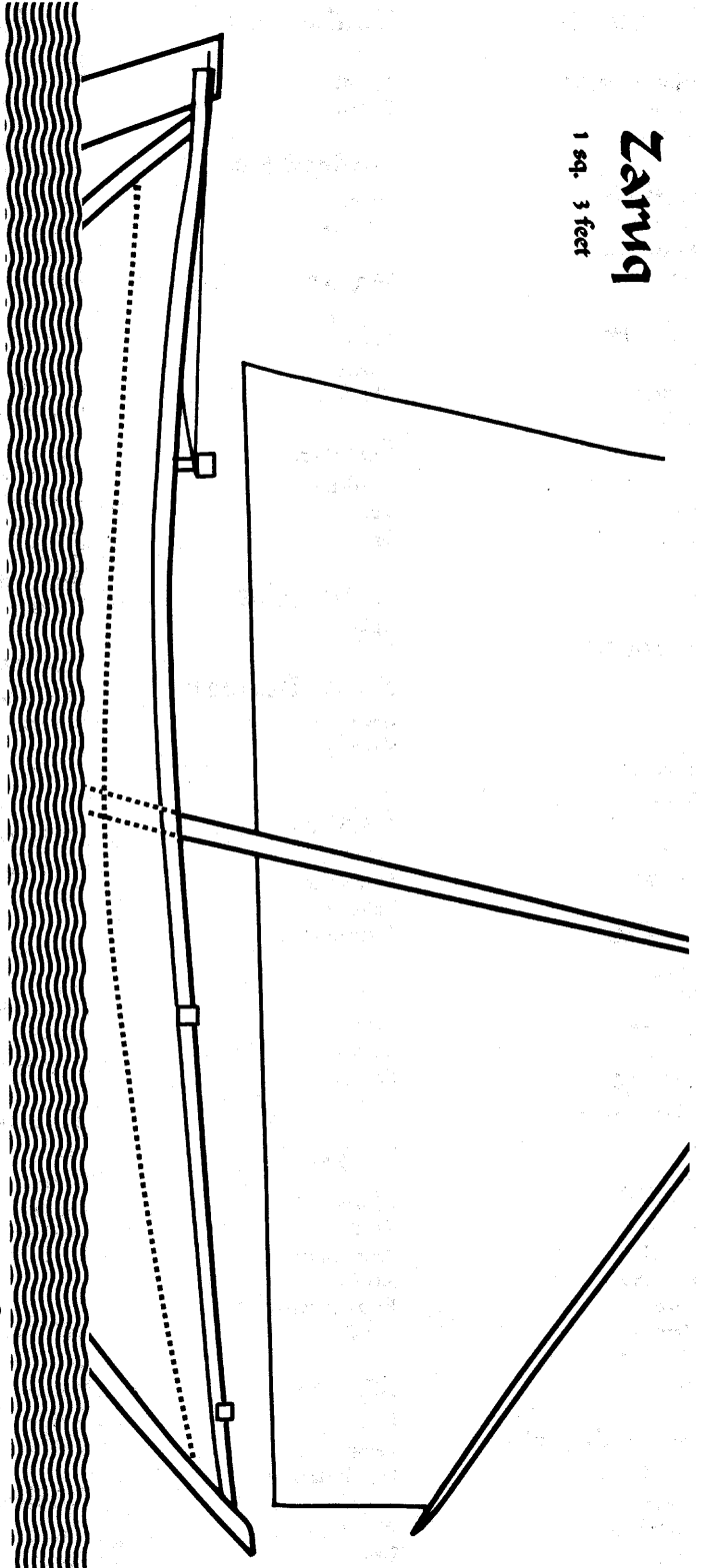
To Akota

Gold
Slaves
Wool
Exotica

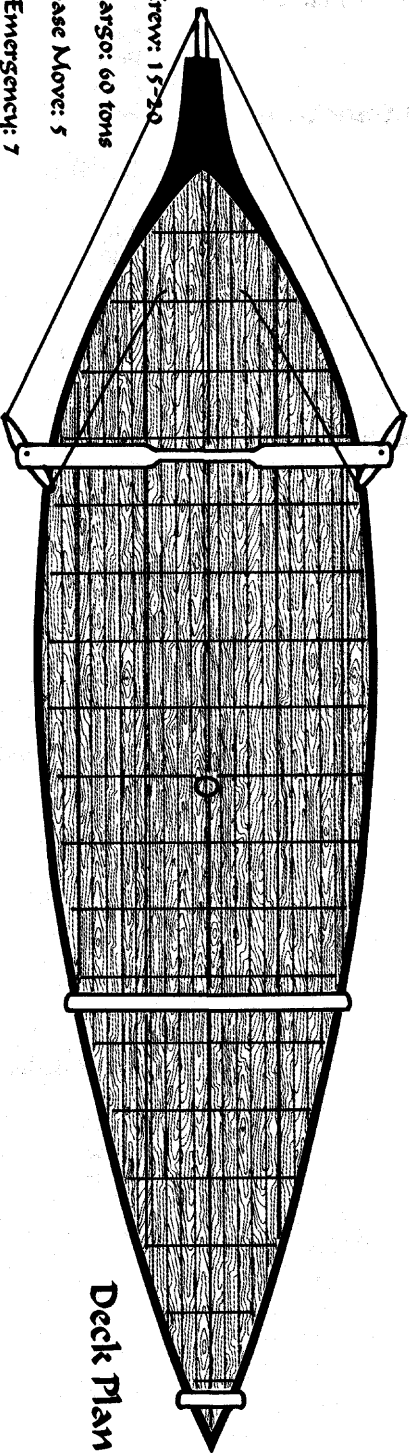


Zarniq

1 sq. 3 feet



Side View



Deck Plan

Crew: 15-20
Cargo: 60 tons
Base Mover: 5
Emergency: 7
Seaworthiness: 50% / 30%



CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Shallow ocean and tropical islands
FREQUENCY:	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Diurnal
DIET:	Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Low (5-6)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic neutral
NO. APPEARING:	1-3
ARMOR CLASS:	2
MOVEMENT:	15, Sw 12
HIT DICE:	8
THACO:	13
NO. OF ATTACKS:	2
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	3d6/3d6
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Crush
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Immunities (see below)
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	H (14' - 20')
MORALE:	Champion (15)
LEVEL/XP VALUE:	2,000

Sartani are terrifying creatures, part giant and part enormous crab. Their legs and torsos are those of a muscular giant, but their heads and hands are those of an enormous crab, including eyestalks and mandibles. A partial carapace of shell extends down the chest, back, and shoulders, gradually blending with unprotected flesh. Thick, sodden strands of hair sprout from gaps and cracks in the shell, having all the appearance of wet seaweed. The creatures' bodies range from dull red to greasy blue in color, the shell normally mottled with a lighter shade. The sartani are not known to wear clothes or fashion implements of any sort, probably because their pincerlike hands make delicate work impossible.

Combat: Sartani are ferocious fighters of single-minded purpose, once urged into battle. They fight without any subtlety, wading directly into the thickest part of any line and attacking the nearest enemy. Few take the time to assess the threat posed by their foe, hence sartani are easily lured into attacking the front rank of any group while spellcasters and archers whittle them down.

The physical attacks of the sartani are fearsome, however. They never fight with weapons, instead delivering powerful blows and rending attacks with their clawed hands. These do 3-18 points of damage per blow. As one strikes, it attempts to snap its giant pincers around the unfortunate target. If the attack roll is a 19 or 20, the sartani has clasped the victim with its giant claw. Thereafter it maintains its grasp, automatically squeezing each round for 3d10 points of damage. The held victim cannot attack with weapons or spells, but he can attempt a bend bars/lift gates check to break the monsters hold, one attempt at the start of every round. Those not held can assist, provided someone keeps the sartani engaged in melee. Each person aiding can add half his bend bars/lift gates percentage to the total roll.

The sartani have an overall armor class of 2; however, should only the shell-covered parts of their body be exposed, they have an AC of -2. Because they possess both gills and lungs, sartani are equally at home in water or on land. They are immune to water-based attacks, and their hard shell affords some protection from flame-based attacks such that they gain a +2 on all saving throws vs. fire and suffer -1 point of damage per die (though never less

than one). However, being the creatures of warm tropical oceans, sartani are particularly vulnerable to cold. They save against cold-based attacks at -1 and suffer an additional point of damage per die. A *cone of cold* causes damage and slows the creature to half-normal speed if the saving throw is failed. This frost rigidity lasts for 2d4 rounds or until the creature can completely immerse itself in the warm sea for one round.

Habitat/Society: The world is blessed in that the sartani are extremely rare, almost unique. So infrequently are they seen that there is no reliable record of their existence among the many scholarly bestiaries of the Zakharan sages, a group who has cataloged nearly every creature in existence. Several legends exist that describe creatures similar to the sartani. The best known of these describes the crab-headed giants as the children of a crab god, sent to prepare the land for the crab god's arrival. This tale predates the spread of the Law, and it is considered an example of heretical thought by the strictest of the Enlightened.

Other common explanations for such hybrids—experiments of mad wizards and crossbreeding—have been discounted in this case. This is mostly because no one can imagine any purpose or rationale for creating such creatures.

It is assumed the sartani are intelligent, for they act with purpose. Above the waves their mandibles make a staccato clacking that is their language. It is assumed this same tapping of shells allows them to communicate underwater. (Among the tribesmen, drummers often try to imitate this clacking for dancers; this is known as "crab-style" drumming.)

Sartani are most frequently sighted (of their infrequent appearances) in the shallow waters of the Crowded-Sea, particularly around the islands of al-Sartan. Such sightings lend support to the theory that the sartani are servants of the crab-headed god Kar'r'gra, who is worshipped on those isles. It may also be, however, that the sartani have always been there and the cult of Kar'r'gra grew around them.

Whatever their source, the sartani are most often sighted singly, walking on the bottom of, or sometimes swimming through, the ocean. When encountered in groups it is a fearsome time, for that signals a coming raid on some coastal village. Such attacks are extremely destructive, for the creatures fight until all resisters have been slain or fled. Only then do they feast on their kills before returning to the ocean. For those along the coasts of al-Sartan, it is a common practice to flee into the forest with the arrival of a sartani warband, leaving goods and property behind.

Although they are known to wantonly destroy houses and property, the creatures do not collect treasure. Their raids ashore seem only to be for food as they ignore all manner of valuables scattered across the ground. It is not believed that they make lairs or undersea homes, but live as nomads beneath the waves. The crab-headed giants are considered boorish and coarse by other intelligent sea-dwellers, and they are only rarely invited to the courts of the marids or other sea lords. Inexplicably, the *pahari* and sartani get along quite well and maintain cordial (though not overly friendly) contact with each other.

Ecology: In the sea, the sartani play the role of great predators and scavengers. They are not picky about their food and will devour anything from sharks to beached whales. Unconfirmed reports describe them as attacking passing ships by cracking open the hull with their claws to extract the helpless seamen within.

Roughly once a year the sartani molts his head shell. These massive carapaces are highly prized by natives. The material is extremely strong yet easily worked. Most shells are transformed into shields, but a few suits of sartani shell armor (AC 3) have been sold to sailors. Other uses for the giant shells include granary roofs, mortar bowls for pounding cassava, and even altars for the temples to Kar'r'gra.



CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any land
FREQUENCY:	Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Tribal
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Low-average (5-12)
TREASURE:	M (Q, B, S)
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic or lawful evil
NO. APPEARING:	2-8
ARMOR CLASS:	5
MOVEMENT:	9
HIT DICE:	4+3
THAC0:	15
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1d10
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Spells
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Regenerate
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	L (8' - 9')
MORALE:	Steady (12)
LEVEL/XP VALUE:	Common: 420 Chieftain: 650 Clan chief: 975

Found only in the lands where both ogre and ogre mage dwell, the ogrima is a half-breed resulting from the intermingling of blood between the other two races, although by now the ogrima qualify as a separate race. Thus, the ogrima have inherited a combination of the best and worst features of their parents.

An ogrima stands eight- to nine-feet tall and has skin colored a sickly bluish-green or yellow. Its head is covered with thick, greasy hair from which juts a nascent horn, and one's eyes may range from bright blue to dark red. Their fingers end in cracked and thick nails, wicked looking but ineffective in combat. Likewise, their mouths are filled with jutting and broken fangs more fearsome than useful.

Ogrima typically dress in brilliant colors, although they are forced to rely mostly on ill-matched clothing and gear taken as booty.

Combat: Although far from being the brilliant tacticians the ogre magi are, the ogrima are not combatants to be underestimated. They possess the strength of ogres, but have more cunning than that race. Worse still, they have limited spell and regenerative abilities.

Ogrima favor large weapons—two-handed swords and clubs—wielded with a single hand, causing 1d10 points of damage. However, they are wise enough to mix melee and missile weapons, and most ogrima carry a stout bow built for their size and strength. Their arrows do 1d8+1 points of damage and ranges are treated as if fired from a longbow. Aware of the danger of spells, a common ogrima tactic is for one archer to hang back and target any suspected spellcasters while the rest move into melee.

In addition to weapons, the ogrima can *levitate*, *blur*, and *chill* touch three times per day (having not quite mastered the ogre mage's ability to fly, become invisible, or cast a *cone of cold*). Once per day they can *change self*, although their great size tends to limit the effectiveness of this illusion.

Defensively, the ogrima tend to eschew armor, relying on their own natural armor and their ability to regenerate 1 hit point per turn to carry them through. Those few that wear armor are typically chieftains or particularly aggressive warriors who have stolen or captured an ill-fitted assemblage of pieces.

Ogrima Chieftains: The frequency of powerful chieftains among the ogrima varies according to the overall alignment of the tribe. Lawful evil tribes have recognized the merits of discipline and organization. Among such tribes, there is normally one chieftain for every twenty ogrima and a clan chief for every fifty. Among the chaotic tribes, there are chieftains for every thirty ogrima and there are no clan chiefs.

Chieftains are AC 4, HD 5+1, and they do 1d12 points of damage per attack. The clan chief is AC 3, HD 6+1, and he does 1d12+2 points of damage per attack.

In some regions, ogrima tribes are led by ogre magi.

Habitat/Society: Ogrima are hunters and scavengers, favoring the same terrain as their cousins the ogres. Both ogres and ogre magi consider the ogrima to be social outcasts and treat them accordingly. This has hardly done anything to improve the evil temper the ogrima inherited from their parents. Consequently, the ogrima are a foul and irritable race, quick to anger and attack, yet easily cowed by displays of might and terror.

The ogrima are basically social—more so than the ogres. Their skills with tools and crafts are greater, which allows them to prepare dwellings more like the fortified compounds of the ogre magi. Each compound is the work and property of an extended ogrima family. Careful preparations are made to defend the home against attackers, and family compounds are typically crude wooden stockades or caves with entrances fortified by rocks and wooden walls. Several exits are sure to exist, and a guard is always on watch.

Aside from good *ins* who may or may not be a problem, the ogrima must always be watchful against raids by their own cousins, the ogres and ogre magi. Ogres seek to destroy the more skilled but inferior-ranked ogrima, thus removing any threat. Ogre magi prefer the ogrima over the ogres as slaves. The ogrima are more difficult to enslave, but have greater understanding and resources that the ogre magi favor.

The standard ogrima tribe is organized into different families, 3d4 families total. These families may be spread over a broad range of land, but the tribe centers around the chieftain's or clan chief's compound. Each family builds its own compound, independent of the other families. Beyond this, cooperation amidst the tribe depends on alignment. Among the lawful evil tribes, these compounds are closely grouped, allowing families of the tribe to quickly unite against any danger. The more chaotic-minded tribes have compounds that are more widespread, mutual defense being of less concern to these families.

A single compound contains 3d6 family members of all ages and sexes. In terms of ability or role, there is no difference between male and female ogrima. Both are expected to fight and hunt for the family as needed. The young are minded by those too elderly to go out. The extremely aged, crippled, and deformed are ruthlessly left out in the wilderness to die.

In particularly dangerous times, an ogrima tribe may submit itself to an ogre magi chieftain, but the majority of chieftains are drawn from their own blood. The clan chieftain can only be an ogrima of the family line; only large tribes without fear of their neighbors choose clan chieftains, it seems.

Ogrima blood runs true from generation to generation, hence there is no longer a need for interbreeding between ogres and ogre magi (although it can happen). Indeed, reverse discrimination is practiced. Ogres and ogre magi who mate into an ogrima clan are treated with great contempt.

Ecology: Ogrima are hunters and scavengers. Their diet is mainly carnivorous, supplemented by a smattering of wild fruits. The tribes tend to move frequently, for they are prone to over-hunting any given area they settle in. As such, the ogrima are the bane of rangers, druids, and those who make their living from the wild.



Coelenite

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Coral lagoon
FREQUENCY:	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:	Colony
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Scavenger
INTELLIGENCE:	Low (Colony)/Average (Mass mind)
TREASURE:	R, U
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral
NO. APPEARING:	1-100
ARMOR CLASS:	3
MOVEMENT:	3, Sw 15
HIT DICE:	3
THACO:	20
NO. OF ATTACKS:	2
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	2d6/2d6
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Special
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Special
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Special
SIZE:	M (4'-6')
MORALE:	Fearless (20)
LEVEL/XP VALUE:	270

This bizarre lifeform can either be considered as hundreds of creatures or just one, depending on what one is looking at, for the coelenite is a colony creature. At its most basic form, a coelenite is a single-celled organism that lives in the ocean. Like its cousin, the coral, the coelenite gathers together with other single-celled coelenites and grows a hard calcite shell.

A single-celled creature hardly seems a fearsome opponent, but it is in part this property that makes it so feared. The coelenite earns the attention of adventurers because of its unique properties as a colony. When enough of the single-celled creatures band together, they achieve a rudimentary intelligence. Adding more, they become sentient.

In this form, the creature is referred to as a coelenite colony. The secreted calcite is modified and altered, grown with a purpose until a body is formed from the hard mineral, assuming a humanoid shape. (The most reliable reports describe the coelenite colony as a coral-encrusted man.) The approximation is only crude, however. There are no visible sensory organs and the coelenite colony's manual dexterity is quite poor.

Each coelenite colony is patterned and colored diversely. Some are covered with whorled, brain-like patterns. Others are frilled with fan-like plumage. Colors range from dull browns to brilliant yellows and reds.

Combat: Coelenite colonies are slow but dangerous foes. Most often they attack other creatures in the water, but they have been known to venture aboard ships for brief periods of time. Out of water they move slowly and suffer a +2 on their initiative rolls. Their attacks are slow and stiff (hence their poor THACO). This is offset by their hard and rasping exoskeletons that can cause fearsome wounds. They swing their arms like clubs, each awkward limb causing 2-12 points of damage from the sharp coral edges.

Depending on the method used to fight them, coelenites are either nearly impossible or ridiculously simple to kill. Edged and missile weapons do 1 point of damage per hit (plus Strength and magic bonuses). Blunt weapons do 1-2 points of damage.

Magic has even more peculiar results. First, coelenites are never allowed a saving throw. Spells that affect a single individual or

organism (a *finger of death*, for example) are completely useless against the coelenite. Magic which affects a small area of the colony (such as a *magic missile*) does only 1 point of damage. Damage spells that effect 50% but not all of a colony (*shocking grasp*, *burning hands*), cause half-normal damage. Area-effect spells that encompass the entire creature (a *fireball*, for example) instantly slay the colony. In addition, without a central, single mind, coelenites are immune to all enchantment/charm and illusion/phantasm spells. *ESP* only reveals the teeming presence of life, but no specific thoughts the colony may possess.

When a coelenite's hit points are reduced to 0 through melee, the creature does not actually die. Instead, it has suffered sufficient damage to destroy the colony's exoskeleton. Often the surviving single-cell creatures seep out of the coral to reunite and create a new body somewhere else.

Because they are essentially a walking coral, the coelenite colony can only remain out of the water for a short time. At the end of every five rounds, the creature suffers 1d6 points of damage. Thus, one of the most effective ways to destroy a coelenite colony is to trap it on shore.

Coelenite colonies slain by area-effect magic or just dried out in the sun leave behind an empty, rigid husk, locked into whatever its last pose was. These are extremely hard and resist destruction the same as the coelenite colony itself.

Habit/Society: Although they possess a simple intelligence, coelenite colonies are solitary creatures. Each colony has a nest that it stuffs with food—mostly decomposing fish. There the colony rests, filtering the nutrient rich water throughout its cells. While most of its prey is small, colonies are attracted by noise and action. Swimmers in particular draw its attention. A coelenite colony has been known to seize a floundering sailor and drag him down to its nest.

Ecology: The abandoned husks of a coelenite colony are the source of many useful items to islanders. The sharp husk is used to stud clubs, is crushed as a grinding grit, sometimes even is used as a building material. Traders in exotics have sold dead coelenite husks as "foreign" statuary. A superb specimen may fetch 1,000 gp. There even have been unconfirmed reports that colonies have been enslaved by powerful wizards and marids.

Mass Colonies

On rare occasions, when the collection of coelenite colonies exceeds fifty, an even higher consciousness is achieved—a mass mind. When this happens, the coelenite colonies and the mass mind overall gain several additional powers.

Foremost of these is a noticeable increase in the intelligence of the mass colony mind. The activities of the separate colonies are directed by a single intelligence. The mass mind is Average Intelligence, able to conceive and use stratagems for battle. Unlike many creatures, this intelligence does not have a fixed "brain" but is the combination of the intelligences of all the colonies. Communication between the different colonies is telepathic, though it only seems a jumble of raw data to any person with the power to eavesdrop. If 50% of the colonies are destroyed, the mass mind will disintegrate and each colony will become independent once more.

One of the preferred tactics of the mass mind is to attack larger targets and build traps to catch more food. The mass mind considers its nest to be an entire lagoon. When large prey enters (such as a ship), coelenite colonies are ordered into position and then the shells are abandoned by their single-celled builders. The actual organism flows back into the sea to grow a new body. The shells left behind are used to form a wall to block the exit or even encase the prey.



NPC Crewmen

Usamah is both nakhuda and rubban of his vessel, a point of great pride for him. He is fussy about his ship and worries constantly. He has *leather armor +2*, a *figurine of wondrous power (marble elephant)*, a *scroll of protection from fire*, and a high map of the Crowded Sea.

The mysterious and taciturn owner of an ill-kept ship, **Khalil** seems unconcerned for the safety or comfort of all who sail with him. His rubban is brutal, his destinations dangerous, but he asks few questions. He is well equipped for danger, always carrying a *jambiya +2*, a *scroll with domination*, *rope tick*, *polymorph self*, and *seeming*, *scrolls of protection from fire* and *protection from undead*, a *ring of mind shielding*, a *ring of water walking*, a *scarab of deception*, *oil of horridness*, a *potion of water-breathing*, and a *pearl of the sirines*. His gen is a maridan.

Though a dwarf and a female in a profession more commonly practiced by male humans and elves, **Bint al-Jawzi** is a formidable captain. She has great energy combined with an innate understanding of the sea. Some claim she is the offspring of a marid; Bint al-Jawzi neither confirms nor denies this. She laughs uproariously at the suggestion, but always ends with a glint that suggests it just might be true.

Al-Jawzi prefers hard work to magic. Her personal magic consists of a solid *footman's mace +4* and *scarab of protection (cloaked wizardry)*.

Young and inexperienced, **Hasan ibn al-Din** has become a captain by the workings of Fate. He needs much seasoning before he will be a master mariner. Nonetheless, he is eager, hard working, and wise enough to learn from the experienced sailors on his vessel. He has a passion for adventure, but little mind for trade. He owns a *great scimitar +2*, *leather armor +3*, a *potion of fire resistance*, and a *scroll of protection from possession*.

Standing 15 feet tall (short for his race), **Mauj** looks the part of a terrifying monster when in truth he is an intelligent and wise being. The reef giant works with the money-lenders of Gana as their enforcer, a task at which is quite good. Few who have been visited by Mauj fail to pay their debts. Mauj is not cruel, but neither is he charitable. He prefers to solve problems without bloodshed, but he is perfectly capable of carrying out any threat. The reef giant has AC 0, THAC0 5, #AT 1, Dmg 1d10, SA whirlpool, SD immune to water-based attacks, SZ H, ML 15.

Name	Race	Class	Level	Str	Dex	Con	Int	Wis	Cha	HP
Nawakhid										
Usamah	H(m)	F(c)	8	15	14	12	12	11	9	46
Khalil	HE(m)	W(s)	15	15	15	14	14	11	10	33
Rubbaniyah										
Bint Al-Jawzi	D(f)	T(mr)	10	7	11	15	10	15	12	44
Hasan ibn al-Din	H(m)	F(c)	7	18(90)	13	9	9	13	10	42
Mauj (reef giant)	*(m)	-	18+1 HD	22	-	-	-	-	-	76
Bahriyin										
Alexius	H	-	0	12	12	10	14	9	7	6
Anwar	HE	M/sh	2	8	7	5	15	12	9	5
Ayyub	Hf	-	0	7	15	12	10	9	4	2
Batit	H	-	0	12	13	12	9	9	12	6
Buri	Gn	-	0	7	16	13	10	9	8	2
Essafah	H	F/a	2	15	6	12	8	12	8	7
Hatim	H	F/f	2	11	13	11	8	14	13	10
Hulegu	H	F/mb	1	15	13	11	11	9	9	9
Ismail	D	F/a	2	14	12	12	8	7	5	11
Jamal	H	F/a	2	13	7	13	9	8	8	15
Jubayr	E	P/my	1	6	12	14	10	16	7	2
Karbuqa	H	M/em	1	8	12	7	16	6	7	1
Kitbuga	D	F/mb	1	14	4	10	8	8	11	5
Mahmud	H	B/r	1	10	14	11	16	14	15	5
Musa	H	F/c	2	15	15	11	10	9	14	4
Najib	H	T/mr	2	7	9	12	9	8	8	10
Rashad	HE	F/a	1	13	12	9	14	13	13	4
Shama	Gn	T/mr	1	6	12	7	9	10	11	5
Shirkuh	E	-	0	10	10	14	8	16	13	5
Umar	HE	M/T s/hs	1	11	14	11	16	9	14	2
Wasil	Hf	F/c	1	12	9	13	9	8	8	9

Ending The Adventure

Once the player characters have obtained the Great Treasure, their adventures in *Golden Voyages* come to an end. However, the PCs need a conclusion once they return to Gana (or whatever port they sailed from) to let them know they have done well.

Each of the four possible beginnings of the adventure has a corresponding end scene. These are not full-fledged encounters, but skeletons for the DM to flesh out through role-playing.

The Map in the Bazaar: Conclusion

Upon return to Gana, it seems as if nothing has changed. No one hails the characters in the street to hear of their exploits, and the rawuns of the coffee houses do not sing their glories.

Just as the players characters are feeling their lowest (and are carrying the Great Treasure they have fought so hard for), a surge of people comes down the street. The characters are forced down an alley, and the surge pushes them on and on until the group becomes thoroughly lost.

Lost, that is, until they come to a small, quiet street that looks familiar. As the characters stand in the street, they hear a peculiar voice crying, "Wonders bought, good prices paid—trust Old Kerim."

Kerim inquires if the characters have found something they might want to sell. Once he has the Great Treasure in his hands, Kerim transforms into a towering, flaming efreeti. The landscape changes to the City of Brass wreathed in flame. "Success, success at last!" the efreeti triumphs. "You have served me well, mortals, though you knew it not. As reward I grant you passage home and a single wish. Only state your desire and call out Kerim's name, and so shall it be." Then, in a burst of brimstone and fire, the PCs find themselves again on a back street in Gana.

The party as a group has one *wish* to be used any time. All members must agree on the use of the wish.

The Quest: Conclusion

Upon their return to Gana, the player characters must wait until the appointed day, seven months from the announcement that set them on their way. On that day, two others also wait to see the sultan. One is accompanied by an immense covered cage resounding with the growls and trumpets of some fantastic beast; the other carries a small carved chest.

The chest-bearer is called first. He presents a rose whose bloom never withers, whose scent never fades. The sultan murmurs politely but is not impressed.

The cage is called second. With a great flourish, the dashing corsair unveils a fabulous man-beast with the torso of a human and the head of an elephant, which makes an impassioned plea for its freedom. The courtiers and the sultan are impressed.

Then the characters present their treasure (make the players give a speech). Afterward, the sultan makes his choice. Choose the characters if you want to reward them (only one member of the group can win); otherwise, the man-beast wins. The award raises the recipient's station to three greater than his level. His companions increase their station by one. A pearl worth 1,000 to 5,000 gp is presented

to each character, and they are honored for a week by the people of Gana.

The Rogue Geas'd: Conclusion

Almost as soon as the characters arrive in port, their ship is met by a strange visitor—Husam ibn Aasim al-Zalim. Through his sorcerous powers he has learned of their arrival and has come to collect his property. However, for their reward, ibn Aasim intends to kill the characters because they know too much about his activities.

Husam ibn Aasim al-Zalim (15th-level flame mage): AL LE; AC 2; MV 12; hp 28; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+2; SZ M; ML 13.

Spells: *Avert evil eye, charm person, fire truth, magic missile (x2), banish dazzle, blind, fire arrows, sundazzle, wizard lock, fireball (x3), hold person, sunscorch, polymorph other, sunfire (x3), wall of fire, cloudkill, conjure elemental, teleport, wall of force, wall of iron, disintegrate, flameproof, delayed blast fireball.*

Magical Items: *jambiya +2, bracers of defense AC 2, potion of gaseous form, oil of elemental invulnerability (water), ring of feather falling, wand of size alteration.*

90 Days or Else: Conclusion

Barely have the player characters returned to port before the moneylender Diyab is at their door, demanding his money. If the PCs offer the Great Treasure as payment, Diyab assumes it is fakery. Make the PCs prove the worth of the item and then argue about its monetary value. Only after they have sweated a while should the moneylender relent.

Multiple Endings

It is possible that the player characters are beholden to more than one NPC. With only one Great Treasure, this becomes a problem they must solve. For example a thief may need the Great Treasure to satisfy ibn Aasim while the rest of the party hopes to claim the sultan's favor with it. Do not give the players easy solutions to these difficulties, but use the complications to create side encounters and adventures in Gana of your own creating. Who knows, their woes could be the springboard for a whole new series of adventures!











Table 1: Sha'ir Spell Chances

Level of Sha'ir	Level of Spell Sought								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	55/45/15	45/35/05	-/25/-	-/15/-	-/05/-	-/-/-	-/-/-	-/-/-	-/-/-
2	60/50/20	50/40/10	-/30/-	-/20/-	-/10/-	-/-/-	-/-/-	-/-/-	-/-/-
3	65/55/25	55/45/15	-/35/05	-/25/-	-/15/-	-/05/-	-/-/-	-/-/-	-/-/-
4	70/60/30	60/50/20	-/40/10	-/30/-	-/20/-	-/-/-	-/-/-	-/-/-	-/-/-
5	75/65/35	65/55/25	-/45/15	-/35/05	-/25/-	-/15/-	-/05/-	-/-/-	-/-/-
6	80/70/40	70/60/30	-/50/20	-/40/10	-/30/-	-/20/-	-/10/-	-/-/-	-/-/-
7	85/75/45	75/65/35	-/55/25	-/45/15	-/35/05	-/25/-	-/15/-	-/05/-	-/-/-
8	89/80/50	80/70/40	-/60/30	-/50/20	-/40/10	-/30/-	-/20/-	-/10/-	-/-/-
9	89/85/55	85/75/45	-/65/35	-/55/25	-/45/15	-/35/05	-/25/-	-/15/-	-/05/-
10	89/89/60	89/80/50	-/70/40	-/60/30	-/50/20	-/40/10	-/30/-	-/20/-	-/10/-
11	89/89/65	89/85/55	-/75/45	-/65/35	-/55/25	-/45/15	-/35/05	-/25/-	-/15/-
12	89/89/70	89/89/60	-/80/50	-/70/40	-/60/30	-/50/20	-/40/10	-/30/-	-/20/-
13	89/89/75	89/89/65	-/85/55	-/75/45	-/65/35	-/55/25	-/45/15	-/35/05	-/25/-
14	89/89/80	89/89/70	-/89/60	-/80/50	-/70/40	-/60/30	-/50/20	-/40/10	-/30/-
15	89/89/85	89/89/75	-/89/65	-/85/55	-/75/45	-/65/35	-/55/25	-/45/15	-/35/05
16	89/89/89	89/89/80	-/89/70	-/89/60	-/80/50	-/70/40	-/60/30	-/50/20	-/40/10
17	89/89/89	89/89/85	-/89/75	-/89/65	-/85/55	-/75/45	-/65/35	-/55/25	-/45/15
18	89/89/89	89/89/89	-/89/80	-/89/70	-/89/60	-/80/50	-/70/40	-/60/30	-/50/20
19	89/89/89	89/89/89	-/89/89	-/89/75	-/89/65	-/85/55	-/75/45	-/65/35	-/55/25
20	89/89/89	89/89/89	-/89/89	-/89/80	-/89/70	-/89/60	-/80/50	-/70/40	-/60/30

In each column, the first number applies to general knowledge spells; the third number applies to priest spells and wizard spells not listed in Appendix A of *Arabian Adventures*; the middle number applies in all other cases.

Table 2: Combat Modifiers

Situation	Attack Roll Modifier	Roll Modifier
Attacker on higher ground	+1	
Defender invisible	-4	
Defender off balance	+2	
Defender sleeping or held		Automatic
Defender stunned or prone	+4	
Defender surprised	+1	
Missile fire, long range	-5	
Missile fire, medium range	-2	
Rear attack	+2	

Table 3: Standard Modifiers to Initiative

Specific Situation	Modifier
Hasted	-2
Slowed	+2
On higher ground	-1
Set to receive a charge	-2
Wading or on slippery footing	+2
Wading in deep water	+4
Foreign environment	+6
Hindered	+3
Waiting	+1

Table 4: Cover and Concealment Modifiers

Target Hidden	Cover	Concealment
25%	-2	-1
50%	-4	-2
75%	-7	-3
90%	-10	-4

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Table 5: Calculated THAC0s

Group	Level 1																			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Priest	20	20	20	18	18	18	16	16	16	14	14	14	12	12	12	10	10	10	8	8
Rogue	20	20	19	19	18	18	17	17	16	16	15	15	14	14	13	13	12	12	11	11
Warrior	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Wizard	20	20	20	19	19	19	18	18	18	17	17	17	16	16	16	15	15	15	14	14

Table 6: Creature THAC0s

½ or less	Hit Dice																
	1-1	1+	2+	3+	4+	5+	6+	7+	8+	9+	10+	11+	12+	13+	14+	15+	16+
20	20	19	19	17	17	15	15	13	13	11	11	9	9	7	7	5	5

The THAC0 of creatures continues to decrease by 2 points per 2 Hit Dice beyond 16.

**Table 7:
Armor Class Ratings and Penalties**

Type of Armor	AC	Penalty
None	10	0
Shield only	9	0
Leather armor	8	0
Padded armor	8	0
Leather + shield	7	0
Padded + shield	7	0
Ring mail	7	0
Studded leather	7	0
Ring mail + shield	6	-1
Studded leather + shield	6	-1
Brigandine	6	-1
Hide armor	6	-1
Lamellar armor	6	-1
Scale mail	6	-1
Brigandine + shield	5	-2
Hide + shield	5	-2
Lamellar + shield	5	-2
Scale mail + shield	5	-2
Chain mail	5	-2
Chain mail + shield	4	-3
Banded mail	4	-3
Bronze plate mail	4	-3
Splint mail	4	-3
Banded mail + shield	3	-4
Bronze plate mail + shield	3	-4
Splint mail + shield	3	-4
Plate mail	3	4
Plate mail + shield	2	-5
Field plate	2	-5
Field plate + shield	1	-6
Full plate	1	-6

Table 8: Character Saving Throws

Character Group and Experience Level	Attack to Be Saved Against					
	Paralyzation, Poison, or Death Magic	Rod, Staff, or Wand	Petrification or Polymorph*	Breath Weapon**	Spell†	
Priests	1-3	10	14	13	16	15
	4-6	9	13	12	15	14
	7-9	7	11	10	13	12
	10-12	6	10	9	12	11
	13-15	5	9	8	11	10
Rogues	16-18	4	8	7	10	9
	19+	2	6	5	8	7
	1-4	13	14	12	16	15
	5-8	12	12	11	15	13
	9-12	11	10	10	14	11
Warriors	13-16	10	8	9	13	9
	17-20	9	6	8	12	7
	21+	8	4	7	11	5
	0	16	18	17	20	19
	1-2	14	16	15	17	17
Wizards	3-4	13	15	14	16	16
	5-6	11	13	12	13	14
	7-8	10	12	11	12	13
	9-10	8	10	9	9	11
	11-12	7	9	8	8	10
Wizards	13-14	5	7	6	5	8
	15-16	4	6	5	4	7
	17+	3	5	4	4	6
	1-5	14	11	13	15	12
	6-10	13	9	11	13	10
Wizards	11-15	11	7	9	11	8
	16-20	10	5	7	9	6
	21+	8	3	5	7	4

* Excluding *polymorph* wand attacks.

** Excluding those that cause petrification or polymorph.

† Excluding those for which another saving throw type is specified, such as death, petrification, polymorph, etc.

Intelligent monsters (animal intelligence or above) make all saves at a level equal to their Hit Dice. Nonintelligent monsters save vs. poison and death at a level equal to their Hit Dice and save vs. all else at a level equal to half their Dice. Count an additional Hit Die for every four added hit points (or fraction thereof). Most monsters save as Warriors. Those with special abilities that resemble another group can use whichever saving number is more advantageous.

Table 9: Zakharan Weapons

Item	Damage		Speed		
	S-M	L	Factor	Size	Type*
Axe, battle	1d8	1d8	7	M	S
Axe, hand or throwing	1d6	1d4	4	M	S
Blowgun	1d3	1d2	5	S	P
Bow, composite long	—	—	7	L	—
Bow, composite short	—	—	6	M	—
Bow, long	—	—	8	L	—
Bow, short	—	—	7	M	—
Arrow, flight	1d6	1d6	—	S	P
Club	1d6	1d3	4	M	B
Crossbow, heavy	—	—	10	M	—
Crossbow, light	—	—	7	M	—
Quarrel, heavy	1d4+1	1d6+1	—	S	P
Quarrel, light	1d4	1d4	—	S	P
Dagger or dirk	1d4	1d3	2	S	P
Dart	1d3	1d2	2	S	P
Elephant goad (ankus)	1d4	1d4	6	M	P/B
Flail, footman's	1d6+1	2d4	7	M	B
Flail, horseman's	1d4+1	1d4+1	6	M	B
Jambiya	1d4	1d4	3	S	P/S
Javelin	1d6	1d6	4	M	P
Katar (punch dagger)	1d3+1	1d3	2	S	P
Knife	1d3	1d2	2	S	P/S
Lance, light horse**	1d6	1d8	6	L	P
Lance, medium horse**	1d6+1	1d6	7	L	P
Mace, footman's	1d6+1	1d6	7	M	B
Mace, horseman's	1d6	1d4	6	M	B
Morning star	2d4	1d6+1	7	M	B
Pick, footman's	1d6+1	2d4	7	M	P
Pick, horseman's	1d4+1	1d4	5	M	P
Polearm, awl pike	1d6	1d12	13	L	P
Polearm, glaive†	1d6	1d10	8	L	S
Polearm, halberd	1d10	2d6	9	L	P/S
Quarterstaff	1d6	1d6	4	L	B
Razor	1d2	1d2	2	S	S
Scourge	1d4	1d2	5	L	—
Scythe	1 d 1 0 + 2	2 d 6	8	L	S
Sickle	1d4+1	1d4	4	S	S
Sling	—	—	6	S	—
Bullet	1d4+1	1d6+1	—	S	B
Stone	1d4	1d4	—	S	B
Spear	1d6	1d8	6	M	P
Staff sling	—	—	11	M	—
Swords:					
Bastard, one-handed	1d8	1d12	6	M	S
Bastard, two-handed	2d4	2d8	8	M	S
Cutlass	1d6	1d8	5	M	S
Khopesh	2d4	1d6	9	M	S
Long	1d8	1d12	5	M	S
Scimitar	1d8	1d8	5	M	S
Scimitar, great	2d8	4d4	9	L	S
Short	1d6	1d8	3	S	P
Two-handed	1d10	3d6	10	L	S
Tiger claws (bagh nakh)	1d2	1d2	2	S	P
Tufenk	††	††	9	L	††
Warhammer	1d4+1	1d4	4	M	B
Whip	1d2	1	8	M	—

Table 10: Missile Weapon Ranges

Weapon	ROF**	Range*		
		S	M	L
Axe, hand or throwing	1	1	2	3
Blowgun	2/1	1	2	3
Bow, composite long				
& flight arrow	2/1	6	1 2	1 2
Bow, composite short				
& flight arrow	2/1	5	10	18
Bow, long				
& flight arrow	2/1	7	14	21
Bow, short	2/1	5	10	15
Club	1	1	2	3
Crossbow, heavy	1/2	8	16	24
Crossbow, light	1	6	12	18
Dagger	2/1	1	2	3
Dart	3/1	1	2	4
Hammer	1	1	2	3
Javelin	1	2	4	6
Knife	2/1	1	2	3
Sling bullet	1	5	10	20
Sling stone	1	4	8	16
Spear	1	1	2	3
Staff sling bullet	2/1	—	3-6	9
Staff sling stone	2/1	—	3-6	9

* Range is given in tens of yards. Each range category (Short, Medium, or Long) includes attacks from distances equal to or less than the given range. Thus, a heavy crossbow fired at a target 136 yards away uses the medium-range modifier. **The modifiers for range are -2 for medium range and -5 for long range.**

** "ROF" is the rate of fire (i.e., how many shots that weapon can fire off in one round). This is independent of the number of melee attacks a character can make in a round.

Weapons Footnotes

* "Type" is divided into bludgeoning (B), piercing (P), and slashing (S).

** This weapon inflicts double damage when used while on a charging mount.

† This weapon inflicts double damage against charging creatures of L or greater size.

†† See weapon description, page 96, *Arabian Adventures*.



Al-Sartan



Jazirat
al-Sadaf



Batihah
al-Saji

Uyun
al-Sartan



Uyun
al-Sartan



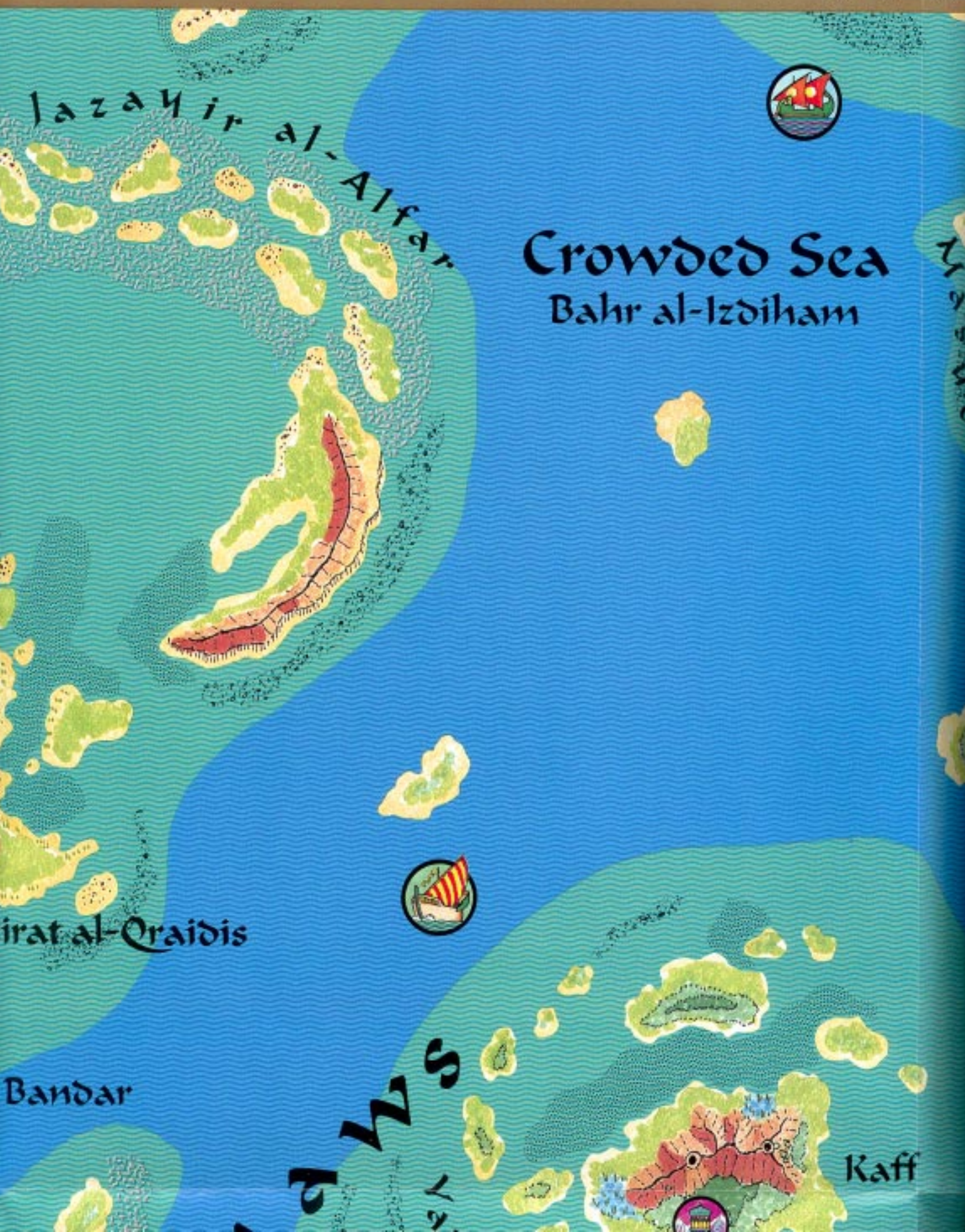
Mgaiswalu

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al-Alfar



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Jazayir al-Alfat

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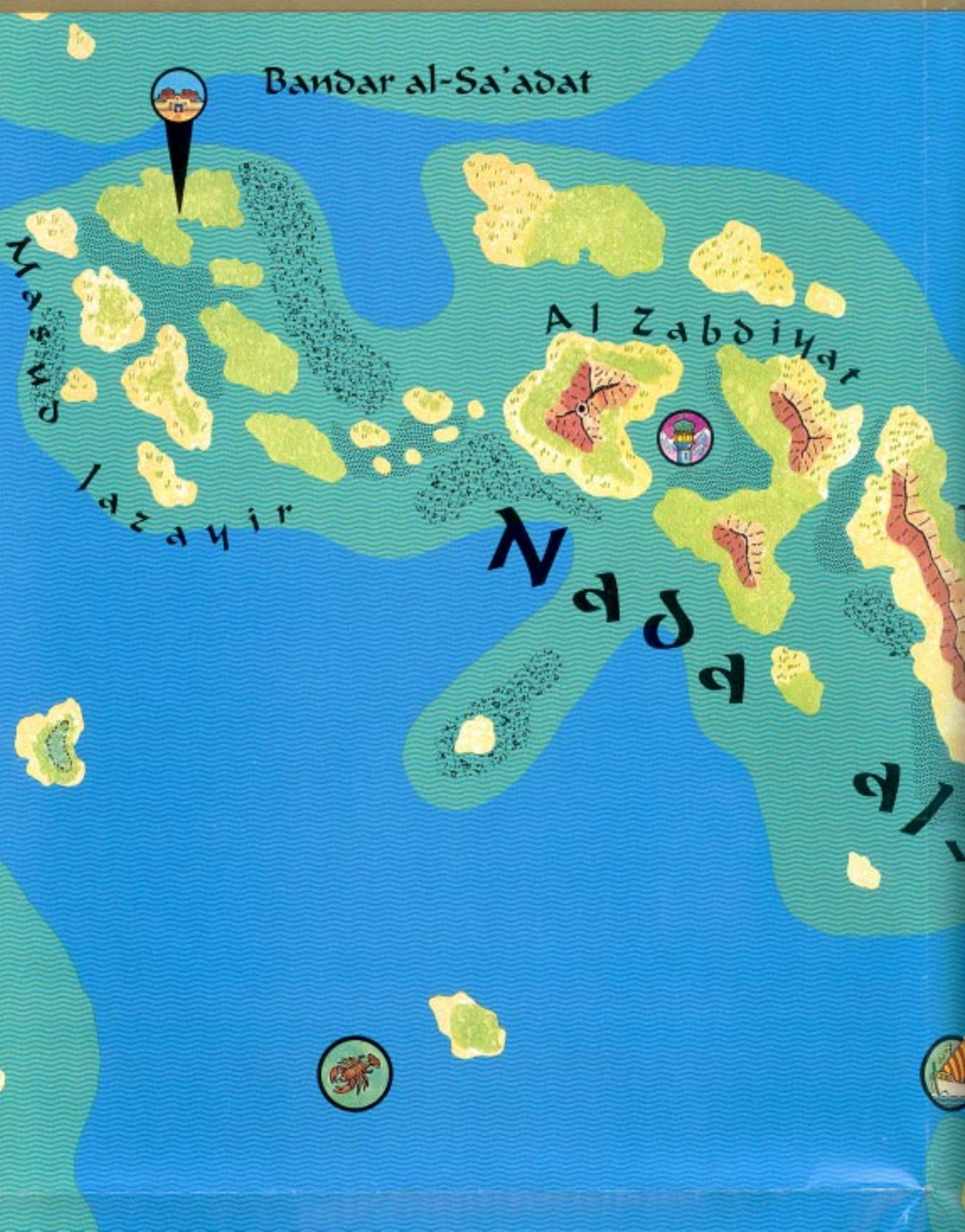
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Jazayir al-Qraidis

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Yaman

Kaff



Bandar al-Sa'adat



Al Zabbidiyat

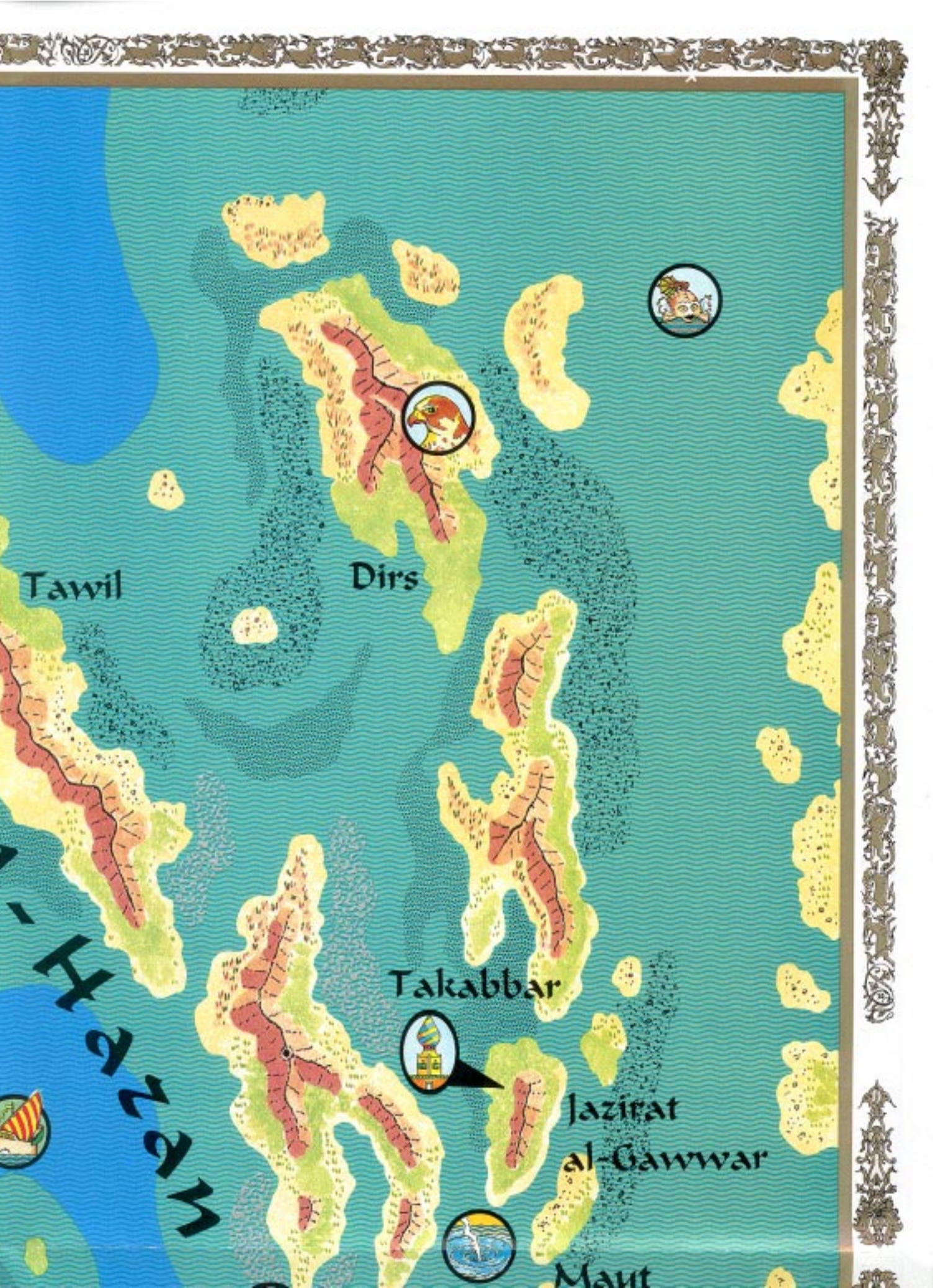


Masad

Jazahir

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Tawil

Dirs

Takabbar

Jazirat
al-Gawwar

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A I



1 inch equals 10 miles

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	Marsh
	Swamp

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The Steamia

Hayyat

Gazal

Baz

Ja

 Shallow Ocean	 Rocky Coast	 Coastal Cliff	 Coral Reef	 City	 Village
 Deep Sea	 Sandy Coast	 Sand Bank	 Rocky Shoal	 Town	 Sovereign Town





Jazirat
al-Sayyad

Maut
Ahmar

Singing
Isles

Sunn

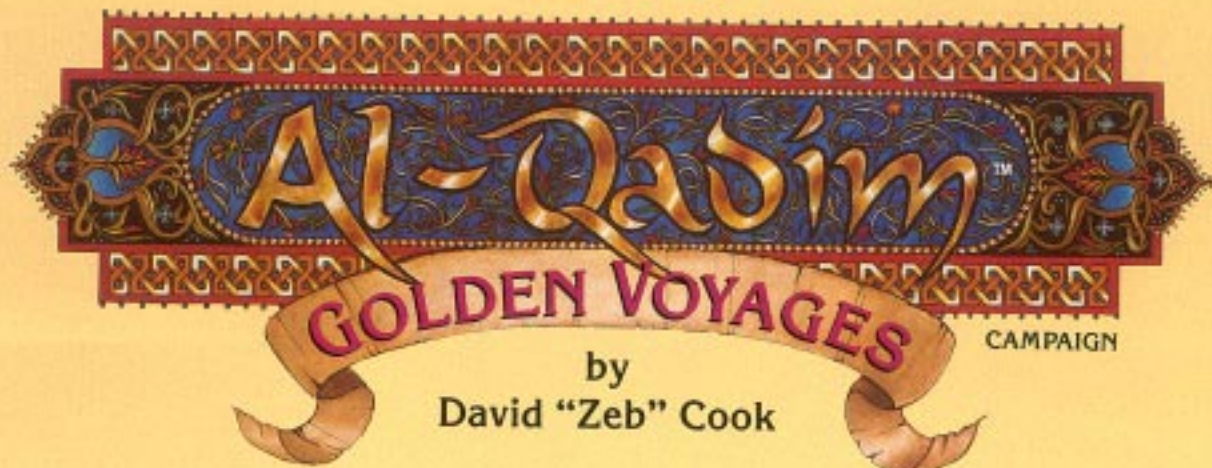
Jaqal

Nimr



	Village
	Sorcerers Tower





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