

Empire of the Petal Throne

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100. Introduction

The book you hold in your hand contains a description of a fantasy world originally published in 1975. Its rules have been streamlined, but are essentially unchanged from that early date in role-playing games history. The mechanics of this book's rules find inspiration in the supremely popular *Dungeons and Dragons* (and even foreshadow Fifth Edition). The setting of Tékumel, as this world is called in the Tsolyáni language, is purely the invention of Professor M.A.R. Barker, lecturer of Urdu and South Asian Studies at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. Tékumel, together with its flora and fauna, monsters, peoples, elaborate social systems, mythologies – and especially its “sense of wonder” – was developed by Mr. Barker from the time he was just ten years old. Its materials were worked and reworked as he grew up, completed his degrees in Anthropology and Linguistics, and travelled to India, Pakistan, the Middle and Far East, and to Central America. Its details were freely inspired, over the decades of development, by the standards of fantasy greats such as R.E. Howard, Jack Vance, E.R. Burroughs, etc. Tékumel remained (and remains), however, very much Barker's own unique creation.

One may ask whether it is possible for players of *Dungeons and Dragons* (and other games of the genre) to enter into such an intensely personal creation. More to the point, can anyone besides Professor Barker himself referee adventures in the Tsolyáni Imperium? History has proven that it is indeed possible, and once one gets past the original alienness, it is easy for others to become immersed in the elaborate societies, politics, and adventures of Tsolyánu. Players in Barker's own *Empire of the Petal Throne* campaigns quickly learned to shiver at the mention of the sound of chiming and the odour of musty spiders (you may find out why below) as they did at the creaking of a vampire's coffin, or the distant bellowing of a minotaur in other, conventional, campaigns. The rules given below thus represent a familiar game structure played out within a distinctly non-European, science-fantasy, setting. All obstacles to pleasurable gaming, however, will disappear after a few readings, and special sections for referees occur throughout the text. Even after upwards of four decades of tabletop adventure role-playing, there has appeared no more coherent and compelling game environment than that of the *Empire of the Petal Throne*.

200. Tékumel and Tsolyánu

Tékumel is a planet of approximately the size of Earth, somewhat hotter, and also a third larger. It swings around a G-Type star together with four sister planets, and it has two small moons of its own. It was not always habitable for the races of humanspace, however; when human space explorers first discovered it, the planet was covered with a riotous growth of poisonous vegetation. It had an atmosphere that contained deadly trace elements, and – more to the point – it was inhabited by the most inimical of all intelligent nonhuman races, the fearsome Ssú and their genetic cousins, the Hlýss. The fauna, too, was venomously deadly, allied with the Ssú and hostile to Man and his nonhuman interstellar colleagues.

Extensive terraforming was required. To adapt the planet to man's needs, an ancient precursor relic was driven into the planet's core. This enigmatic device altered Tékumel's gravity, rotation and orbit around the star Tuléng. Human

technology then defeated the Ssú, the Hlýss, and the deadly flora and fauna of Tékumel. The planet was gradually turned into another Earth (now long-lost, far across the galaxy). The blood-purplish jungles were poisoned with chemicals and replaced with the familiar plants of the hundred worlds of humanspace. The oceans were emptied of most of their deadly inhabitants. The Ssú and the Hlýss survived in their below surface deeps, closely watched by human defensive technology. Tékumel was thus changed, altered beyond recognition, and eventually turned into a copy of most other humanspace planets. Various alien allies of humankind – the Pé Chói, the Shén, the Pygmy Folk, and others – came as traders and colonists and to establish commercial delegations upon Tékumel. Industry developed, natural resources were extracted (and much depleted), and trade goods flowed from and to the myriad stars of Humanspace. In their underground strongholds the Ssú and the Hlýss brooded and worked toward their eventual resurgence. Here and there patches of the old species survived, adapted, and awaited some event.

No records exist of the “Time of Darkness”. There is not even a dimmest remembrance of the upheavals beyond comprehension, of a time when the stars vanished, of volcanoes, earthquakes, and tidal waves rolling across the land. It is thought now that through some freak of space, some fault in the fabric of time itself, the solar system of Tékumel was cast into some great other-dimensional “hole in the sky”. The nights were deepest black because there were no longer stars; stresses in the spacetime fabric created unbearable strains within the sun of Tékumel and its planets. Human technology, great as it was, had no remedies, no way to return Tékumel’s sun to the universe it had known. The stars had gone out forever, and with them went all communication and commerce with the suns of humanspace. Now the planet, its sun, its moons, and its four uninhabited sister worlds flew on alone into a terrible alien darkness.

Most of human technology was destroyed or disrupted during the “Time of Darkness”. Cities fell, rivers left their banks, volcanic ash destroyed the settlers’ fields, and the system of food production and communication was gone. Mankind began to slip downwards into barbarism. Old machines took on a divine aura, and as they failed men lost the knowledge of their repair and were forced to adopt nontechnological ways of life in a difficult environment. Natural resources had been carelessly depleted, and the element iron was particularly hard to find. Other rare metals and earths had been exhausted and were imported from other stars; these, too, were no longer to be had. The wheels of technology require many types of natural resources and, deprived of them, production slowly ground to a stop.

In their subterranean fortresses, the Ssú and the Hlýss exulted. Patches of the old life began to take root again. Humankind and its allies began to retreat a little here, to give even greater ground there, until the world of the past slowly reappeared. Although it continued to dominate, by virtue of its greater numbers and more rapid breeding, humanity’s hold upon the environment grew ever more infirm. Darkness, not only of the skies but also of the mind, closed down over Tékumel forever.

The earliest records now preserved by human scholars date back only some 25,000 years (and the dating here is dubious at best) to the half-mythical Empire of Llyán of Tsámra, now lost entirely except for a few fragments of half-

remembered technology and an inscription or two. The empire was centred in the city of Tsámra, an important pre-Time of Darkness humanspace metropolis and spaceport. It was also a centre of Téकुमेलàni biological and medical research (dealing with the poisonous plants and animals of the planet, and with the deadly trace elements in the atmosphere). After the system's sudden disappearance into its pocket dimension, Tsámra fought off the attacks of the Hlýss and their Ssú forward troops, made alliance with the Shén, and together dealt with volcanic ash, sudden climate chaos, and population loss. Eventually, the adventurer Llyán conquered the Livyáni peninsula, and then drove northeast along the shores of the Chanayága Deeps all the way to Jakálla. At first, Llyán's power was based on legacy technology preserved from before the cataclysm. Slowly, however, these devices took on a psychic or sorcerous aspect. The first "magic" practiced on the planet was the magic of modified machines. Called "potencies", "apparatuses" or "devices of the ancients", they include Eyes, orbs, globes and effectuator vats. It was during this time that mutants were produced.

The earliest period from which records exist in any quantity is that of the Sky Lords of the Vales of Ninár. It is conjectured that the "chariots" upon which these conquerors flew into battle were really some type of remnant aircar stored away by the ancients. Unfortunately, there are no animals suitable for riding upon Téकुमेल; Man had passed beyond the need for living steeds by the time he reached the planet, and the horse of ancient Earth, the Ngékka of the Rigellian worlds, the Bazháq of Deneb, etc. had all been left behind in mankind's rush for the stars. With scores of these ancient aircars, the Sky Lords swept south along the Mssúma River, conquered the many cities of the Bednálljan Plain, and built a huge temple in the coastal city of Jakálla. Their capital city, Fasíltum, collected the plunder of twenty kingdoms. One treasure of conquest, the Ebon Cube, allowed the Sky Lords to create a pocket dimension within which to build and hide the legendary First Temple of Vimúhla.

Much more knowledge was lost during the many wars of the Sky Lords; intrigues and plots further weakened the fabric of human society, and eventually the Sky Lords Empire perished, some 2,000 years after their high-tech armies poured out of the northeast across the Bednálljan Plains. During their reign, however, one feature of Tsolyáni religious life was developed that continues: the pernicious worship of the tlokiriqáluyal, the "Five Evil Ones", and, in particular, the Fire-God, Vimúhla. Whether the Gods are real or whether they are simply powerful and inscrutable beings from Téकुमेल's new dimension is not known, but contact with the formidable Vimúhla was first established during the period of the Sky Lords, and various sects of the Red Robes spread across the land. There is certainly some creature that answers to the call of the flame, and thus the worship of Vimúhla persists to the present day.

The second period, as it is called, is that of the Fisherman Kings, the lords of the coastlands of what is now Salarvyá. Black chaos ruled after the downfall of the Sky Lords. A minor baron, one Gámulu by name, arose in what is now the Chaigári Protectorate. In a series of battles, he drove the Ssú back from their encroachments into the world of humankind. His son followed him and subdued the lands of Háida Pakála across the straights south of the Sharúna Lowlands. During this period, the little state of Pecháno arose, founded by a rebellious Salarvyáni general sent to protect Salarvyá's borders against the Ssú. The rest of

the world still lay under the rule of the Red Robes of Vimúhla, with their capital at Fasíltum. During this era the theology of the Rulers of the Shadow, desiring a quenching of Tuléng's light and the matter and life of Tékumel, was codified. The original All-Temple of the Tlokiriqáluyal still exists in far-scattered pieces upon the slopes of Avanthár. The Fisherman Kings never ruled much beyond present-day Salarvyá, although some coastal gains were indeed made – eventually halted by the terrible Hlutrgú, the nonhuman swampfolk dwelling in the marshes of what is now the Kaijá Protectorate.

The next period is that of the First Imperium: founded by a woman, daughter of a chief of a nomadic tribe living in the Dry Bay of Ssu'úm. Inducing the Clan-Master of the (now destroyed) city of Purdánim to marry her, she soon managed to slay her husband and spread her rule through what is now Tsolyánu and Mu'ugalavyá. She rose to power over the (literally severed) heads of several husbands, establishing a reign of terror which has been proverbial ever since. Her name, Nayári, the Queen of All, is still used to instil fear into the children of the Empire. When desert Fasíltum revolted, she put ten thousand of its inhabitants to the garrotte; when great Purdánim itself rebelled, her armies piled skulls in the square so that even today any terrible catastrophe is referred to as "Nayári's Hill". Yet from her bloody rule was born a period of great civilizational development, with spell sorcery elaborating immensely under the tutelage of the Masters of the Shadow. When at last she died, slain by one of her myriad lovers, her heirs, the Bednálljan Dynasty, ruled on for a thousand years in Purdánim and then moved southwards to a virgin city site: the present great capital of Béy Sý. Here was brought all of the tribute of a thousand lands for a thousand years, and thus did Nayári's descendants contribute much to theology, city-planning, architecture, and military science, belying their blood-drenched origins. [Bibliography: "Gupaggáli nga Shshi" (The Might of Our Ancestors), by Daggála Mukkrotórr, in Salarvyáni, available at the Temple of Shiringgáyi at Tsatsayágga; Nganjá pa Ssú (Flee, Ye Ssú) by Dráka Gríllpa, in Pecháni, accessible at the House of Skulls in Mechanéno; Kolumélan Ssána hiPathái (Nayári, the Queen of All), by Pagártra Nemáнду, translated from Engsvanyáli, preserved at the Imperial Archives in Béy Sý; "Bednállja lél Béy Sý" (Bednállja and Béy Sý), by the same author, also originally in Engsvanyáli, preserved in a private collection in Béy Sý.]

Thus began the Golden Age. Into this scene of magnificent pomp there entered a curious figure, that of a crippled, impoverished priest from one of the islands in the gulf to the south of Tsolyánu. Once again contact had been made with other-dimensional beings, this time with a veritable hierarchy of what may be termed "Gods" and with several less powerful beings called "Cohorts". The priest, called Pavár, discovered a means of communicating with these semi-divine beings and codified his findings into the religion that is still practiced throughout Tsolyánu, and in modified form in many other lands. Basically, he found, there are two groups of beings, inimical to one another for reasons impossible to fathom. The Tsolyáni classify these groups as either "Light" or "Dark", but there is more than abstract ethical differences between them and both pantheons define all existence as revolving around their conflict. There are, thus, the tloomítlanyal, the Five Good Gods, and the tlokiriqáluyal, the Five Evil Ones. Each of these deities has a "Cohort" allied to him or her but somewhat less powerful.

When Pavár died, he was entombed upon his native island. The religion he founded continued to spread, however. Eventually, the last kings of the Bednálljan Dynasty capitulated to Pavár's faith, and the spiritual capital of the empire was moved to Pavár's island home, there to flourish and develop such arts, sciences, and literature as had not been known since the Time of Darkness. After many centuries, the secular capital of the empire was transferred to the island as well, and this came to be called Éngsvan hla Gánga, also "The Kingdom of the Gods". The rule of the Priestkings began when the last Bednálljan monarch fled northward into what is now Yán Kór. At its peak of power, Engsvanyálu reached beyond modern Tsolyánu to Mu'ugalavyá, Salarvyá, Yán Kór, Livyánu, Ssá Allaqí and many smaller lands. The arts of enchantment were much developed during this period, again because of supernatural aid from the Gods and their Cohorts. The greatest works of sculpture (e.g., Maryá's "Woman of Tsámra") and art were produced, and the polytonal music of Tsolyánu was developed to heights of complexity undreamed of by previous dynasties. The great library at Tumíssa was established during this period, and visitors may still see there the glorious "Kranuóunti'o Chàrdokhérel" (the Book of the Priestkings), illustrated and illuminated in gold and set with precious stones, which details the proud history of Éngsvan hla Gánga. [Bibliography: "Shártokoi Guál Daimí" (A Priest There Was), by Dumán hiLangshá, in Tsolyáni, biography available at the Priestly College of Rerektánu in Jakálla; "Éngsvan hla Gánga, Kolumébarbardalikoi", (Éngsvan hla Gánga, The Mighty Empire), by several authors, in Tsolyáni, offered for reading at the Temple of Karakán in Béy Sý; and "Pogúrdikh hiKolumébarbardali" (The End of the Mighty Empire), by Kérulya hiKettúmrídal, in Tsolyáni, preserved in the Temple of Vimúhla at Tumíssa.]

What happened to destroy Éngsvan hla Gánga is not known. Some natural disaster (or a sorcery-related catastrophe) did indeed come about, sinking much of Pavár's island into the sea. The great cities seem to have fallen silent almost overnight, rifts appeared between the provinces of the empire, and internecine strife quickly rose up to shatter its social cohesion. Within a century or two, all communication broke down and all advanced civilizational production ceased. Enemies crossed the empire's border regions to raid and settle. Even the dreaded Ssú revived their former practice of encroaching on human lands. Records of this dark age are scarce and little more than legend: e.g., tales of the mighty warrior Hagárr of Paránta; the doings of the wizard Nyélmu and his descent into darkness; the adventures of Subadím the Sorcerer when he visited the Home of the Gods; the deeds of Chirené the dragon-headed hero of the N'lyss (although this may be a legend of an earlier age); the wondrous flight of Metállja of Salarvyá; heroic Pendárte of Khéiris; Qiyór the Many-Tongued; and scores of others – all of these folk-legends may be heard around the central fires of clan-houses and tribal hearths throughout the Five Empires today. [Reference: "Básrimyal hiMazák" (Men of Power), by Tlékku hiBeshyené, in Tsolyáni, collection maintained in the Monastery of the Grey Cloak in Dó Cháka.]

The beginnings of the Second Imperium are shrouded in darkness, for even the art of writing had become largely forgotten during the long years of chaos. At some point, however, the Tsolyáni penchant for formal rule and ritual seems to have crystallized once more. From the ashes of chaos a ruler arose and established himself upon the throne of Béy Sý, using as his insignia of power the

Great Seal of the Imperium (perhaps some ancient technological device – it cannot be counterfeited). This seal gives the empire its name – the Seal Imperium of Tsolyánu – and it is arguably more important than the person of the emperor himself, passing from ruler to ruler without a break.

At an early date, the custom of maintaining the emperor in total seclusion was adopted. This custom continues to this day: a new emperor, once selected by many trials and tests from among the offspring of his predecessor, is taken to the great fortress of Avanthár (in a mountain north of Béy Sý) where he dwells, inviolate, until his death. Within this mountain citadel his needs are met by a corps of deaf and dumb slaves, the Servitors of Silence, which provides the emperor with his physical wants. His political requirements, information and intelligence gathered from throughout the imperium, is provided by the much-feared Omnipotent Azure Legion.

In impregnable Avanthár, the emperor sits upon the Petal Throne, a gloriously carved seat in the form of a many-petalled flower, fashioned from a single block of translucent jade (hence, the Empire of the Petal Throne). To him are brought the best of the empire's goods, and to the emperor's private quarters are also brought the most lovely and accomplished daughters of the clan-chiefs of the nobility. These remain with him at his pleasure until they give birth, whereupon they are removed to the Temple of Avánthe at Béy Sý, where these women serve out their lives as priestesses of the Goddess. The offspring of these unions are brought up at Avanthár by the Omnipotent Azure Legion. Upon the death of a reigning emperor, all of his children are brought forth to compete for the throne via many types of tests. Physical prowess, intellectual brilliance, knowledge of arts and letters, abilities as a sorcerer, musical talent – all are judged, and the best performing candidates are then sailed down river to Béy Sý and the Temple of Hnálla, the Supreme Principle of Good. There one candidate is chosen by the God to ascend the Petal Throne. The others are sacrificed, with immense solemnity and ceremony.

At this writing, the Second Imperium has endured for 2,354 years, impervious to all disruptions. Even the War of 2,020, when the scarlet-clad legions of Mu'ugalavyá were within kilometres of attacking Avanthár itself, did not cause the sacred seclusion of the emperor, the Kólumel, to be broken. Only a single emperor (Hejjéka II, the Heretic) has ever come forth from Avanthár, but upon his death the custom was resumed by his brother and successors (he had no sons). The present Seal Emperor is the 61st of the dynasty; his reign has been thus far relatively calm (if one overlooks the murky circumstances surrounding his accession and the near revolt of the City of Fasiltum).

The government of the empire can be characterized as a form of authoritarian bureaucracy, always under the vigilant eyes of the Omnipotent Azure Legion. The power of the Kólumel is absolute and sternly applied, with the punishment of every crime or peculation being simply death, immediate and without great delay! Tsolyáni society is divided into three types of clans: plebeian, skilled, and noble. Clan rules govern all social life, from birth to marriage to manners to matters of property after one's death. Each city's clan-chiefs gather to select representatives to their councils in the Palace of the Realm, where all domestic imperial business is conducted.

The empire is knit-together by a now completely rebuilt network of excellent raised highways, the Sákbe Roads. Greater even than the Great Wall of China, these prizes of the empire are broad, built-up stone thoroughfares some twenty to thirty feet high, and often as much as seventy feet wide – studded with guard towers and garrisons at set distances, and further fortified close to the borders of the empire. These roads contain stepped pathways, the highest being for imperial officials, nobles, and vital messengers, the next highest being for troops, and the lowest being for caravans of goods, traders, and ordinary folk. Here again is an example of the Tsolyáni love of formal distinctions between classes.

Since the War of 2,020 there has been no major conflagration within the Five Empires. The Sákbe Roads (which the Priestkings extended through Mu'ugalavyá, Salarvyá, Yán Kór, Livyánu, and Ssá Allaqi) make it difficult for an invader to force his way into a target region without being surrounded in an easily attacked cul-de-sac. The ritual nature of warfare on Tékumel adds to this difficulty, because traditionally armies undertake “prestige duels” before battle is joined. The loser of these impossible to avoid duels generally concedes victory to the opposing side, rather than fight to the death with lowered morale. Ritualized warfare has also developed an alternative to major conflagrations (called Qádardálikoi in Tsolyáni), and this is the challenge duels of individual legions along the frontiers of two states (called Qadárnikoi, “Little War”, in Tsolyáni). A third substitute for major warfare is, of course, the sending of national champions to rival states’ Hirilákte arenas, where these gladiators may win honour for their nations or other masters (be they provinces, cities, clans, temples, or even wealthy individuals). Every major city has an arena, and safe passage is guaranteed for these ritual warriors. Gladiatorial combats are normally to the death, although fist-fighting can be arranged as a side event. Wizards and priests also come to engage in magical duels. The Tsolyáni imperium, thus, has only prosecuted real military action in Yán Kór, which action has the very limited goal of defeating and capturing the Baron Áld (whom the Tsolyáni regard as a criminal).

Normal Tsolyáni dress consists of a light tunic of Firyá cloth (an indigenous vegetable fibre), and kilt of the same material, sandals or light boots, and a headdress displaying marks of clan, rank, etc. Priests’ dress will be described in detail later, since each priesthood has a number of distinctive costumes. Magicians (really jack-priests, attached to a God or Cohort but not part of the temple hierarchy) wear an over-robe of Gýrdu-silk (a fabric made from a secretion of snails), again dyed with the colours of their rank, clan, and the deity they serve.

Warriors in the Tsolyáni Empire fall into various categories, but the usual garb is a helmet, breastplate, and grieves of Chlén-hide, all dyed azure blue with the herb Ksékkura. Since iron and steel are scarce, the hide of the Chlén beast (a great, slow-moving hippopotamus-like animal) is used for weapons and armour. Fresh Chlén-hide is subjected to various processes known only to the tanners’ clans, whereupon it becomes extremely pliable and can be moulded into almost any shape. It can be cut into the form of weapon-blades. It can be shaped into armour pieces. Another series of processes transforms this substance into something harder than bronze but slightly softer than iron. The majority of all

arms and armour on Tékumel is made of this material. Iron and steel items are available, of course, but they are prohibitively expensive.

Warriors of higher rank wear further armour: grieves, pauldrons (which often project outwardly in fantastic, even curious, designs), back plates, tassels, armoured skirts of Chlén-hide or metal, vambraces, bracers, etc. The lightness of Chlén-hide makes it possible to wear much elaborate armour of this kind without tiring. The armour of Imperial officers, in fact, is more decorative than useful, with towering crests of Chlén-hide, plumes of Khéshchal feathers, capes, and decorations of precious gems and metals.

Weapons include pikes, shields and side-arms, along with many varieties of swords and axes. Blunt weapons like maces and mauls are also familiar, and can use stone as well as Chlén-hide in their composition. Missile weapons include several types of bows, crossbows, catapults, onagers, ballistae and such-like. Shields take a number of fanciful forms, from the tiny round buckler of the Island of Vrá to the huge, body-covering oblong shield preferred by the inhabitants of Purdimál.

Within the Empire military organisation is based on the vigesimal system: a company consists of twenty men; twenty companies make up a cohort; twenty cohorts make up a legion. Legions normally specialise in one or another troop type. For example, the Legion of Sérqu, Sword of the Empire is largely composed of heavy infantry. The Legion of Mengáno the Jakállan specialises in artillery and siege engines. The Legion of Tlaléno the Steersman is comprised of naval forces, including ships and marines. Lastly, the Battalions of Vrishtára the Mole trains sappers, who are assigned to other legions as requirements demand. Operational forces, in fact, are made up of companies or cohorts from many legions so that a balanced complement of military roles may be assured. The Imperium keeps a track on all these companies and cohorts, ordering them as need arises, and posting them wherever the emperor finds them necessary.

There are several types of economic base for the support of a legion. The poorest and least trained are those raised by rural or provincial clans as a sign of prestige. Indeed, many such legions are nothing more than names in the Imperial rostrum. They would be called to actual service only in cases of serious need. The second type is the personal legion of a wealthy noble. Using his lands as his base, such a noble can call up troops, train them to the extent allowed by his purse, and enrol them in the Imperial troop list. The third legion type is that of the priestly temple forces. Using their vast lands and revenues, the temples organise a number of imperial legions, commanded by highly motivated, devoted professional officers. The final type is that of legions raised directly by the Petal Throne itself, using its immense tax revenues. These are the best trained of all Tsolyáni legions, officered by dedicated career soldiers and equipped with the finest weapons and armour. Of all imperial legions, the one directly commanded by the Omnipotent Azure Legion is the most elite.

It may be noted that every legion has access to the services of sorcerers and magicians. Priestly legions use their own temple personnel, and other legions contract for contingents of magic users from the temples. The tlókiriqáluyal offer offensive spell-casters. The tlomitlanyal offer defensive spell-casters. The former fire spells such Doomkill at the enemy. The latter magically shield the operational forces from similar enemy fire.

With no riding beasts available, all travel is done on foot or in one of the creaky, slow-moving carts pulled by domesticated Chlén. Trade is thus conducted mainly by caravans of slave-bearers, men trained to carry at a trot heavy burdens for thirty to forty miles per day.

A word about the lands bordering Tsolyánu is necessary. To the west the great empire of Mu'ugalavyá stands as the Petal Throne's greatest rival. The red-lacquered troops of the Four Palaces of the Square in Ssa'átis await orders from their princes. The princes of these palaces are powerful regional potentates who combine together to rule their empire in much the same way that Tsolyánu is ruled, except that the Mu'ugalavyáni have no central figurehead emperor. The god revered by most of the people of the west is ancient Vimúhla, the Fire God. The princes of that realm, however, revere a four-limbed creature named H́rsh. The temples of both gods exhort the palaces to retake lands lost to the Second Imperium; thus, veteran warriors of each nation stare across at one another from opposing Sákbe roads.

To the east and south, Salarvyá is similarly well-organised. The hairy, heavily-bearded Salarvyáni worship the same deities as the Tsolyáni, but they tend to favour the female goddess Shiringgáyi, a combination of Avánthe and Dlamélsh, and to hold other gods in somewhat less esteem. Salarvyá is governed by a king who sits in the Hall of the Dome in Tsatsayágga – barefaced and open, to the great scorn of the Tsolyáni. The King of Salarvyá is in constant danger, however, since if he becomes ill or shows signs of weakening, his nobles have the right and the duty to depose him and appoint another king from among their ranks. The title of king, therefore, is not much sought, especially since deposed monarchs are disposed of by use of the impaling stake (to the greater glory of Shiringgáyi). The feudal warriors of Salarvyá favour the colour black, the dye being obtained from a type of crustacean found along their seacoasts. The Salarvyáni are great traders and pirates, sailing far afield in their ships in search of plunder and other riches.

The fourth great empire lies across the Deeps of Chanayága to the south-west of Tsolyánu. Livyánu is a land of secrecy and sorcery. The country is thought to be ruled by the priests of Qame'él, their chief god (who corresponds perhaps to the Tsolyáni knowledge-god Thúmis). It is assumed that the powerful families of that land owe obedience to the priesthoods, for there is little evidence of the clan, lineage, and palace structures of Tsolyánu. In fact, there is little sign even of families. Livyánu is ancient and alien. Its people tattoo their entire bodies in intricate, brightly-coloured designs drawn from their religion. Both men and women pattern even their faces with tiny scenes of gods, demons and heroes – all indecipherable to the Tsolyáni (since Livyáni myths and legends are closely kept secrets). It is actually only surmised that Livyáni women tattoo their bodies from head-to-foot, for they remain in seclusion most of the time. When they do come forth from their temples, Livyáni females wear masks and are costumed in quite elaborate disguises representing the beasts, demons and gods of Livyánu's very complex, even curious, mythological traditions. Livyáni warriors wear yellow-dyed Chlén-hide armour covered for protection in etchings and tracteries of hieroglyphs, logograms, signs, and symbols. The Livyáni organise their legions in a decimal system, instead of the Tsolyáni twenties, and their units are officered by sorcerer-priests.

Other lands require perhaps less discussion at this point. Saá Allaquí is inhabited by short, stocky men who are excellent mountain and desert trackers. Their government is fragmented, a cluster of city-states, landed clans, and weird religions. Milumanayá is a desert and mountain land inhabited by nomadic tribes. The tribes conduct a kind of popular democracy, with every adult male able to add his voice in making decisions. This may be why the Milumanayáni never get much done and have never been known to organise successfully for more than a border raid or two. To the further north, Yán Kór is a hardy land of forthright, sturdy men, and even stronger women (for the newest empire is matriarchal in nature; clans are governed by women, and women appoint male war leaders). Lineages pass their heirlooms down from mother to daughter, rather than from father to son as in Tsolyánu. Most Yán Koryáni clans are endogamous, marrying within the clan. This keeps family property and heirlooms within clan control. If a girl elopes with a non-clan member, the usual result is violence.

The military organisation of these neighbouring lands differs widely from the disciplined Tsolyáni-like legions of the Salarvyáni and the Mu'ugalavyáni. The Yán Koryáni, for instance, muster as many men and women into their clan legions as they can. Their legions, thus, seem unstructured; they include heavy infantry, medium infantry, skirmishers, archers and light infantry of women and youths. The women and youths of Yán Kór train with weapons and tactics from childhood, so their operational forces are more capable than might appear.

Among Tékumel's nonhumans, the Pé Chói are closest to mankind. They take part in human civilisation and even warfare. Many sorcerous contingents of legions contain Pé Chói spell-casters, and they are renowned for their bravery in battle. The truculent, reptilian Shén are fearsome warriors, but their discipline is often unreliable (causing army commanders uncertainty as to whether Shén will follow orders or simply go berserk). The Demon Warriors travel through the Five Empires in egg groups of a score or more, picking up mercenary work wherever they can. The Pygmy Folk make excellent scouts, spies and sabotage agents for their human employers. They see in complete darkness, and can hear warriors speaking to one another from an unbelievable distance.

Among the neutral and hostile nonhuman species, the Páchi Léi care little for mankind's towns and cities; the Hláka fear injury too keenly to serve as flying reconnaissance; the Ahoggyá are too involved in their intricate rituals to do more than ignore military recruiters; the Hlýss and the Ssú avidly delve under the cities of mankind, ambushing the empire's citizens whenever possible; the Shunned Ones are similarly inimical, but generally remain in the underworld's lowest levels in search of ancient technology. None of this is warfare, per se, but these beings are not genetically disposed to conduct mass warfare as mankind does.

For the benefit of those about to adventure in Tsolyánu, a few words about the present political situation may be helpful. As of this writing, there are four major political forces or groupings:

The Military Party

The Military Party was until recently commanded by the great general, Kéttukal hiMraktiné. The general's service to the empire is unquestioned. He has defeated the Yán Koryáni three times in the last two years, fighting for the hilltops between Khirgár and the deep dunes of the Desert of Sighs. Before that, his rout of the Mu'ugalavyáni, who were making an attempt at Butrús, gave him a reputation of being a grandmaster of strategy. Earlier

still his victory over the Salarvyáni at Rý in Kerunán caused many to consider him a miracle-worker. Despite this, the general's loyalty to Tsolyánu is contested. He is accused of wanting to rule Kerunán (thanks to the machinations of the Royalist Party and Prince Rereshqála), and so has been exiled to the (distant from Kerunán) city of Chéne Hó in Dó Cháka. The Royalists fear his growing power. They know the Military Party desires conquest, to bring the empire's borders back to what they were in the Kingdom of the Gods. If successful in Yán Kór, for example, the Military Party would become ascendant in the court of Avanthár. The Royalist Party prefers to keep the legions busy with Qadárni battles in Milumanayá, Kilalámmu, and Cháigari. Qadardálikoi (Great War) is too centralising for them. They prefer greater autonomy for the great cities and provinces that they have hereditarily ruled since before the founding of the Second Imperium. Lady Elára of Fasíltum, the Disposer of Méku, the High Priest of the City of Sárku, and the Archon of the Old Ones of dark Purdimál all work against those who would further centralise the empire. A system similar to that in Salarvyá is what they desire. Defending the empire against their plots are such persons as fellow legion commanders, Lord Mirikitáni vuMakkocháqu; Lady Mríssa hiChagotlékka, Lord Sérqu hiChaishyáni, and others, who hold various courts between Chéne Hó and Khirgár. Prince Eselné is also close to the general.

The Priestly Party

The Priestly Party is divided, of course, between those clergy who serve the tlomítlanyal (the Five Good Gods) and those who worship the tlokiriqáluyal (the Five Evil Ones). They nevertheless share an interest in expanding the power of the temples; and so they are well-organised and their influence is strong. Their systems of secret communication, which even include telepaths and telekinecists, are the wonder of the empire. While Tsolyánu is a bicultural nation because of the universal and unending struggle between being and nonbeing, something more than just the Concordat binds the temples to one another, and apparently also links them to foreign temples in distant lands. The priests of Vimúhla, for example, have connections with the flame god's clergy in Mu'ugalavyá. This should not surprise, since the two share the same deity and philosophy of warfare. What does surprise, on the other hand, is a tenuous but visible connection between the tlomítlanyal and the Livyáni and their mysterious Shadow Gods. The acknowledged leader of the Priestly Party is Grand Adept Akhnállu hiTikéshmu of the Temple of Hnálla in Béy Sý. This wily old politician does not hesitate to cooperate with High Adept Miriggá hiDuluméssa of the Temple of Hry'ý (his opposite number) whenever there is mutual profit to be had. Their immediate goal is the ending of Military Party influence with the Emperor, and the reduction of the legions to mere tools of the priesthoods. Grand Adept Akhnállu, desiring, as he does, an imperial commitment to reconstituting Éngsvan hla Gánga through diplomacy or even conquest, wants the popular General Kéttukal to stay in polite exile in Chéne Hó; his co-religionist, High Adept Miriggá, wants Kéttukal to be assassinated and his legacy destroyed. Both men knew about the delicate intrigues which brought the general under suspicion. Both contributed to the intrigues, and neither would allow Kéttukal to resume his command as First General of the Empire.

The Royalist Party

The Royalist Party is so named because of its leaders' supposed hereditary descent from the ancient royal families of the Bednálljan Empire. The First

Emperor, Mirikitáne Tlakotáni, claimed lineage connections going back to the last Bednálljan emperor, Tarishánde XIII. In reality, these leaders are scions of noble families who ruled the twenty-something independent kingdoms that existed within the present borders of Tsolyánu during the Time of No Kings. Perhaps the Vriddi of Fasiltum are true and actual descendants of the Bednálljans; the others almost certainly are not. Regardless, they make up the main corps of provincial and metropolitan governors, palace bureaucrats, clan administrators, tax collectors and scribes. The Royalist Party is led by Lord Jijékmú hiSayúncha, Governor of Béy Sý, and young Lord Khámiyal hiSayúncha (the governor's nephew). These two are allied by intermarriage and political interest to the governors of the nation's other great cities and provinces. Lord Jijékmú is elderly and so only infrequently emerges from his palace; his energetic heir, Lord Khámiyal, makes incessant trips to Jakállá, Tumíssa, Khirgár, Úrmish, Thráya and Fasiltum to plan and to plot. The de facto young leader has, since the incident of 2351 in Yán Kór, made alliance with the Priestly Party. The Royalists wish to use the tlokiriqáluyal, especially its telepaths, assassins and sorcerers, in order to reverse the centralisation of power at Avanthár. The Royalists hate General Kéttukal for being a self-made man, and for slighting their powers and prerogatives throughout his entire career. Their fondest desire is, thus, to see his much loved First Legion of Ever-Present Glory given over to one of their number as commander. They even have named the man among themselves, one Lord Wesséku hiTánkolel (who claims descent from Queen Nayári). Taking control of the crack First Legion is a vital stepping stone, for – without it – Avanthár could not as easily put down rebellions and would have to negotiate greater local autonomy for places like Fasiltum.

The Imperialist Party

The Imperialist Party is comprised of the Tlakotáni family, various high status clans married into the Tlakotáni family, offshoot clans who have adopted the children of emperors (especially those who have renounced the throne) and personal aides of the emperor, Hirkáne Tlakotáni. These family and clans-members are the emperor's staunchest loyalists, committed to him by their isolation at Avanthár and their common desire to maintain the traditions of imperial power. These, after all, have held sway for two-and-a-half millennia. The party is governed by Lord Qorúma hiRi'inyússa, who acts as the High Princeps of the Omnipotent Azure Legion. He (along with Lord Murésh hiQolyélmu) commands the emperor's agents, spies, interrogators, judges, and strategists, who keep him appraised of events and help him in governing the empire. Lord Qorúma is assisted in his tasks by the supremely able Provost of the High Chancery, Lord Chaimíra hiSsánmirin. Together, these two members of the Golden Bough clan, each the exact same age, have overseen the upbringing of the five children of the emperor (especially Prince Mridóbu). Currently, they seek three things: 1) to stop the coming of Qadardálikoi with Yán Kór; 2) to put a halt to all infighting between the Royalists and the Military Party; 3) to maintain the status quo, neither committing to the resurrection of the Golden Age nor to abandoning recent conquests. They have instructed courtiers at Avanthár, Palace Chiefs in the Districts, and Imperial Court Magistrates under their influence to work toward these ends. As a result, people considered "hotheads" are alternately bought off or imprisoned. Prisons maintained for political opponents, those who merit the direct attention of the Petal Throne, include the Halls of Silent Waiting beneath

Avanthár, the Tólek Kána Pits, Tórunal Prison on an island off the coast of Jakálla, and others known only to the Omnipotent Azure Legion. Should an assassination attempt on Kéttukal succeed, and sponsors be unearthed, it would be a long time before they are allowed to die.

Essentially, the empire finds itself at a crossroads, with the above four power blocs representing four different solutions to its problem. The Military Party seeks resolution through conquest. The Priestly Party sees the way forward in re-establishing the vast theocratic Kingdom of the Gods. The Royalists insist that decentralisation is the key. Finally, the Imperial Party demands that the status quo be maintained at all costs. The empire has a problem because it is trying to do two things at once. Tsolyánu is called "the Second Imperium" for a reason. Its name communicates a commitment to avoid the excesses of the Priestkings. And yet, in recent centuries, the empire has swallowed up five whole provinces of neighbouring states (Káija, Kerunán, Chaigári, Dó Cháka and Pán Cháka) and seems bent upon returning to the glories of Éngsvan hla Gánga. Other nations have noticed the trend, and are secretly working together to forestall this.

The situation is further complicated by the fact that the present Seal Emperor is almost seventy years of age. This presages a power struggle, a second power struggle in ten years. According to custom, the sons of the Emperor are kept apart by the Omnipotent Azure Legion at Avanthár. Upon reaching maturity, however, recent custom has decreed that these young men be fostered out as apprentices to various clans, to noble families, to military outposts, and to priestly colleges. Upon the death of the Emperor, these young men (and even women, should his daughters elect to take part) engage in a fierce contest for the throne, called the Kólumèjalim. Presently the most likely candidates include Lord Eselné, now a protégé of the family of Kéttukal (were the Emperor to die, and Eselné to obtain the Petal Throne, Kéttukal's enemies in the Priestly Party and among the Royalists would pay). Other candidates include young Lord Dhich'uné, who has been studying with the Priests of Sárku and is now a level-IX adept in that sect; Lord Rereshqála, protégé of the Clan of Sea Blue (the most powerful clan of the Royalist Party); and Mridóbu, protégé of the Priest-Lord (i.e., Chamberlain) of Avanthár itself. One daughter of the Emperor has also declared aridáni status, which means the equal of men, with all the same rights, and should she wish to enter the contest for the throne, Lady Ma'ín's claim would be supported by the priestesses of Avánthe and Dlamélis. Although rule by a woman is rare, there are precedents: the 12th Seal Emperor was a woman whose reign was long and prosperous.

The complex situation detailed above makes future possibilities explosive indeed, perhaps more explosive than at any time in the history of the Empire of the Petal Throne.

To the west, the Mu'ugalavyáni watch Kéttukal's problems with interest, hoping that some event will enable them to regain their lost Cháka Protectorates. Their first choice would be to have the general disgraced, since that would lead to turmoil within the empire. An alternative course would be to assassinate the general, but for a scapegoat to point culpability in the direction of Tsolyánu's Priestly Party. While this might humble the Empire's more fanatic priests (lodged as they are in various deadly "secret societies"), any mishap establishing the true sponsorship of the murder could lead to an outright confrontation between the

two superpowers. The Four Palaces of the Square in Ssa'átis are thus undecided, and only monitor events in hopes of seizing some advantage.

To the east, the Salarvyáni wish to regain Kerunán and parts of Kaijá. The Tsolyáni have exploited Salarvyáni differences with the little state of Pecháno in the past, and now the Salarvyáni look for disaffection within these two provinces in hopes of seizing upon a weakness. With pirated gold they support the Royalist Party, whose plans for a more feudal national arrangement in Tsolyánu comport well with their desires. Regarding the present crisis, the Salarvyáni wish to see the disbanding of the crack First Legion (which defeated them at Rý), and a weakening of the empire's military in general. It is rumoured that the Salarvyáni overlord, King Griggatsétsa, has been in contact with Áld, the Baron of Yán Kór (formerly an area of city-states, now unified under his power). Secret plots are reportedly afoot to put pressure on the Second Imperium from the east and the north simultaneously.

Of the three main nonhuman species, only the Pé Chói are directly affected by what is happening with General Kéttukal. Pé Chói communities lie in the dense forests of Dó Cháka, less than a day's journey from the small hillside city of Chéne Hó. They are disturbed by the prospect of human conflict anywhere in their green world, and their leaders have approached the ruling clans of city and Protectorate with neutrality demands.

Unfortunately, the ruling lineages of Dó Cháka are already embroiled, for they are as much Mu'ugalavyáni as Tsolyáni. Their lords remember that only two or three centuries ago, the Chákas were a part of Mu'ugalavyá. These men have it in their heads that Tsolyáni rule, with its rapacious tax collection, can now be ended. They have guaranteed Kéttukal's safety, while at the same time offering his head to the Mu'ugalavyáni, the Yán Koryáni, and to the Temple of Sáрку (for purposes of benefiting Prince Dhich'uné).

While all three of these are a danger to the Empire of the Petal Throne, in the immediate term the greatest threat comes from the north. The reason this is the case has to do with the incident of 2351 in Yán Kór. Because of this event, the Baron of Yán Kór has good reason to hate the Seal Imperium and its general Kéttukal.

The background to the event three years ago lies ultimately in the party politics described above. Baron Áld, an immigrant from Sása Allaquí, served in the Tsolyáni army and was so gifted a commander that a previous emperor granted him the generalship of an entire legion. This angered the Royalists, who involved Áld in a dispute between the ancient nobility and the military (which did things like promoting foreign nobodies to important posts). The Royalists tricked Baron Áld into a terrible disgrace. Though he had long fought nobly for the empire, though he was a friend of then Prince Hirkáne and a mentor to young Kéttukal, he was imprisoned in the Tólek Kána Pits. By unknown means, Áld escaped and fled north to Yán Kór. There he soon attained high rank and power, inaugurating a process of unifying the many city-states along the Pentúrtra Deeps into one large nation.

Desiring no fifth empire in its vicinity, Tsolyánu sent military expedition after military expedition into Yán Kór, to shatter its unity and to capture its rogue leader. Each expedition, however, was repulsed. Three years ago, the Emperor Hirkáne Tlakotáni, new to the throne, ordered an especially ambitious campaign

plan. General Kéttukal hiMraktiné drew his former friend and elder mentor's attention to himself, while his lieutenant, General Qeqélmú hiViridáme, lead a sizeable detachment across the wastes and struck north, eventually finding himself before the walls of the distant citadel Ke'ér. This citadel was held by Áld's mistress, the Lady Yilrána. Qeqélmú ordered his subordinates to assault the fortress while he attempted to assist Kéttukal via a rear attack on Áld's reserves. Surrender was demanded of the noble and beautiful Yilrána, but – thinking that her worthy consort must certainly be nearby – she refused. The assault went forward, was successful, and Tsolyáni General Bazhán hiSayúncha repaid Yilrána's temerity by impaling her upon a stake before the shattered gates of the main keep. While there is certainly precedent for treating a recalcitrant defender in this way, to do such a thing to one of the noblest and most accomplished women of the entire north has been called into question in the few years since. General Bazhán paid for his cruelty; he was captured and slowly tortured to death by the Yán Koryáni. General Qeqélmú also died, but as a result of battlefield wounds unrelated to the sack of Ke'ér. The Baron Áld, finding his life's love horribly held aloft by the impaling pole, vowed then and there to obliterate everything Tsolyáni. In the three years since, the Baron has worked without pause toward this dark goal. He has made secret alliances with no-one knows what strange powers; all that can be said is that his coffers seem bottomless, his troop strength nears that of the Petal Throne, and he is rumoured to be acquiring some horrible, forbidden weapon of the ancients.

All of the above has the Tsolyáni scurrying to complete preparations for an invasion, and each day shiploads of provisions, men, and military goods travel northwards along the Mssúma River.

Should there be an invasion, the services of Kéttukal would be required. Especially if faced with some true horror of the ancients, the four political parties would suspend their intrigues and fight together against the threat of Yán Kór, allowing their nation's greatest general to lead them in that fight.

Lord General Kéttukal deserves some description as a person, so central is he to any *Empire of the Petal Throne* campaign. As previously mentioned, he is very popular. His hawk-featured visage is to be seen on a thousand memorial stelae, erected by tlomítlanyal-worshippers, in honour of his loyalty and service to the empire. Those dedicated to Vimúhla and Chiténg, despite their cultural animosity, burn paper cones with his name upon them, so impressed are they with his war-making. In terms of character, Kéttukal has been taciturn, even enigmatic, throughout his career. Action-wise, he has been a rough and ready soldier who, just beneath the stern surface, displays great depths of intelligence and sophistication. While his ancestry and clan membership are unexceptional, his recent marriage to a woman of impeccable reputation from the time-hallowed nobility of Vrá has provided him with the wealth and prestige to silence his Royalist critics. This, of course, only angers them further. In spite of his forty-odd years, he has the body of a young man, and his skill with weapons is proverbial. Despite having such attributes (which might tempt a lesser man to aspire to the throne) General Kéttukal has never entertained such an idea, and has taken his exile in Chéne Hó with good grace. When orders arrived for him to leave for Dó Cháka, his officers in the First Legion and his closest friends (generals of other powerful legions) insisted that they all march to Avanthár to

lay Kéttukal's case before the Emperor. The general turned to one of his veterans and ordered him to pick up a coal from the blazing fire-pit. The soldier did so without hesitation. General Kéttukal then said, "When a soldier is ordered, he obeys." He afterwards rose and departed for Chéne Hó.

The above must serve as a necessarily brief outline of the history, politics, military events, and religious struggles that characterise the setting of Tsolyánu, the Second Imperium. They are the background with which the remainder of this book deals. There is much more to be learned, of course, but the above provides a viable framework for all that follows.

It is time to explain the game mechanics to be employed to conduct high adventure scenarios in defence of the Petal Throne.

300. Character Types

Turning now to Character Types, suffice it to say that all player-characters in an *Empire of the Petal Throne* game are Tsolyáni, enjoy certain perquisites of lineage and clan, perhaps are mainly male (although Aridáni females risk themselves too in these troubled times), and suffer no disabilities that might interfere with action-filled adventure. Characters may be any one of three basic professions: Warrior, Infiltrator, or Sorcerer. Some players may also wish to enter the game as nonhuman intelligent beings, the three most commonly permitted being Shén (imposing warriors), Pé Chói (adept sorcerers), and Ninínyal (clever infiltrators). These three beings will be detailed below (cf. Sec. 960, ff.).

320. Tsolyánu's Biculturalism

For the sake of conflict and narrative ease, all characters are divided into either of Tsolyánu's two basic cultures: that serving the Good Gods and their Cohorts (the tlomítlanyal), and that serving their evil counterparts (the tlokiriqáluyal). The former are also called the Lords of Glory and the Gods of Stability. The latter are shudderingly referred to as the Rulers of the Shadow, the Five Evil Ones, the Old Gods and the Lords of Change. The standard choice is to have all player-characters belong to the majority culture, thus allowing their adversaries among the tlokiriqáluyal to act as evil (or evil-seeming) opponents. Only outcasts could conceivably call themselves neutral in the culture wars of the above cosmic principles.

The Shén, Pé Chói and Ninínyal naturally observe their own religious and cultural practices, which do not exactly correspond to that enumerated above.

In Tsolyánu, citizens belonging to the tlomítlanyal do not consort with those devoted to the tlokiriqáluyal. When forced into company with one another, they behave with a wary circumspection: correctly, with dignity, and watchfully. Player-character adventuring parties, therefore, are comprised entirely of either "good" or "evil" individuals. Additionally, Basic Talents, Original Abilities, Ritual Languages, Professional Abilities, Bonus Abilities, preferred armors and weapons, even gladiatorial equipment worn in the Hirilákte Arenas, are all affected by this singularly critical social divide.

Once a character's culture is chosen, changes to their spiritual and cultural orientation depend upon campaign developments. It is certainly possible for a tlomítlanyal-worshiper to convert to the worship of the Old Gods. This, however,

would be a wrenching choice to make because the convert would suffer expulsion from all in life he had ever known.

340. Determination of Character

Having discussed with the referee and the other players what types of characters that an *Empire of the Petal Throne* campaign will require; thereafter having made an initial choice of type (including species, if non-human), sex, profession and cultural orientation; the player must determine his or her player-character's basic talents, the bonuses and abilities these confer, and the original and professional interests, skills, and abilities that the player-character will bring into the game.

360. Basic Talents

Basic talents are the character's genetically and culturally provided physical, mental and even spiritual capabilities. There are six of them: Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Psychic Ability and Charisma.

These are arrived at by the player rolling 3d20, discarding the lowest resulting number, and averaging the remaining two. For example, three d20s are rolled and a 4, a 14, and an 18 result. The former is discarded and the latter two are averaged to achieve a basic talent of 16. This process is repeated six times, and only afterwards are the six accumulated numbers assigned to basic talents according the player's design concept. Let us assume that a player designing a character for the first time has determined that his character should be a sorcerer. This profession relies on Psychic Ability, Intelligence and Dexterity. The player has accumulated six values (16, 6, 9, 13, 15, 19) and assigns the 19 to Psychic Ability, the 16 to Intelligence and the 15 to Dexterity. He then assigns the 13 to Constitution, the 9 to Charisma and the 6 to Strength. Given this last, he decides to have his character be female, which would realistically explain the low Strength score.

As stated before, society's great cultural divide affects even basic talents; culture determines them to a certain degree. Strength, Constitution and Intelligence are the purview of the tlomítlanyal. Dexterity, Psychic Ability and Charisma are governed by the tlokìriqáluyal. Because the above character will default to the empire's tlomítlanyal-worshiping culture, her Strength, Constitution and Intelligence scores are increased by 1. Her Dexterity, Psychic Ability and Charisma scores are decreased by 1. All this results in the following basic talents: Strength 7, Dexterity 14, Constitution 14, Intelligence 17, Psychic Ability 18, Charisma 8. The Psychic Ability score is superior. The first basic talent the player would hope to raise through Increases to Basic Talents upon reaching a new level is Intelligence, for that shifts its modifiers to superior as well.

361. Strength

Strength denotes physical might or prowess, the ability to lift heavy weights, complete arduous tasks, strike hard, and tough out blows that stun.

Roll	Penalty or Bonus
1	-3 damage, -2 to hit, -1 saving throw vs physical stun

2 - 3	-2 damage, -1 to hit
4 - 7	-1 damage
8 - 13	no penalty or bonus
14 - 17	+1 damage
18 - 19	+2 damage, +1 to hit
20	+3 damage, +2 to hit, +1 saving throw vs physical stun

362. Dexterity

Dexterity denotes speed-of-movement, coordination, agility, balance, weapon aim and manipulation, and the ability to dodge the springing of traps.

Roll	Penalty or Bonus
1	-3 to hit, -2 damage, -1 saving throw vs traps
2 - 3	-2 to hit, -1 damage
4 - 7	-1 to hit
8 - 13	no penalty or bonus
14 - 17	+1 to hit
18 - 19	+2 to hit, +1 damage
20	+3 to hit, +2 damage, +1 saving throw vs traps

363. Constitution

Constitution denotes resistance against infection, disease and poison; also energy, healing rate and the chances of one's being restored to life by magic.

Roll	Penalty or Bonus
1	-3 hit points, -2 resistance, -1 saving throw vs poison
2 - 3	-2 hit points, -1 resistance
4 - 7	-1 hit points
8 - 13	no penalty or bonus
14 - 17	+1 hit points
18 - 19	+2 hit points, +1 resistance
20	+3 hit points, +2 resistance, +1 saving throw vs poison

364. Intelligence

Intelligence denotes quick learning, analysis, insight and critical thought; it also implies clear-sightedness, a love of discovery, and a certain amount of willpower.

Roll	Penalty or Bonus
1	-3 LoSS mental skills, -2 saving throw vs hypnosis, -1 damage

2 - 3	-2 LoSS mental skills, -1 saving throw vs hypnosis
4 - 7	-1 LoSS mental skills
8 - 13	no penalty or bonus
14 - 17	+1 LoSS mental skills
18 - 19	+2 LoSS mental skills, +1 saving throw vs hypnosis
20	+3 LoSS mental skills, +2 saving throw vs hypnosis, +1 damage

365. Psychic Ability

Psychic Ability comprises a sixth sense, paranormal attunement, magery, and a connection to the gods, cohorts, demons and others that infest Tékumel's dimension like larvae in a rotten log.

Roll	Penalty or Bonus
1	-3 LoSS spells, -2 saving throw vs spells, -1 reaction time roll
2 - 3	-2 LoSS spells, -1 saving throw vs spells
4 - 7	-1 LoSS spells
8 - 13	no penalty or bonus
14 - 17	+1 LoSS spells
18 - 19	+2 LoSS spells, +1 saving throw vs spells
20	+3 LoSS spells, +2 saving throw vs spells, +1 reaction time roll

366. Charisma

Charisma comprises sociability, confidence, and personal magnetism; but it also implies comeliness, hygiene, and fashion-sense. Its magnetism causes it to help those gifted with Charisma to avoid the rays of Eyes.

Roll	Penalty or Bonus
1	-3 NPC reaction rolls, -2 saving throw vs Eyes, +1 damage taken
2 - 3	-2 NPC reaction rolls, -1 saving throw vs Eyes
4 - 7	-1 NPC reaction rolls
8 - 13	no penalty or bonus
14 - 17	+1 NPC reaction rolls
18 - 19	+2 NPC reaction rolls, +1 saving throw vs Eyes
20	+3 NPC reaction rolls, +2 saving throw vs Eyes, -1 damage taken

Basic talents can be used for action attempts not covered by skills. An example of this could be: 1) using Strength to carry a wounded comrade in one's arms for miles; 2) fighting through a feeling of drunkenness by using Constitution as the failure threshold; 3) employing Intelligence to form logical conclusions.

400. Game Effects of Basic Talents

Basic talents, character level, and profession (along with die rolls) are the most pervasive determinants of success in *Empire of the Petal Throne*. This Second Edition of the game attempts to remain true to the rules light ethos of 1975, by keeping these three cornerstones prominently in place.

420. Hit Points and Death

Tsolyáni are fairly physiologically similar to one another. The average man stands five feet, six inches in height. The average woman stands an inch or twain shorter. The amount of damage absorbable by creatures this size is standard, so hit points are determined by two basic talents: Strength and Constitution.

Strength implies muscle mass; therefore, large muscles and sturdy frames absorb damage and must be the basis of hit points.

Constitution is the measure of every character's physical endurance, tough staying power and grit. It grants a bonus to hit points.

Hit points are calculated by taking the player-character's Strength, and adding any modifiers that Constitution affords. In the example returned to again and again in these rules, the young sorceress has a Strength of 7, a Constitution of 14. Adding the latter's +1 bonus to the former gives her a hit point total of 8, and this number is recorded onto her character sheet when the game begins. It must be taken into account very carefully.

Hit points do not increase as new levels are gained. Hit points represent a realistic amount of pure physical damage a human being can take when everyone is trying their utmost to survive by killing.

A player-character reduced to 0 hit points is unconscious. One reduced to -1 or more is dead.

440. Prime Requisite Talents

After finalizing their basic talents and calculating hit points, all players designate one talent as their Prime Requisite. This talent is used primarily as the defining attribute of their in-game personality. It is also employed as a stand-in for providential occurrences in the past that influence original skills and abilities, experience point bonuses, saving throws, spell damage and divine intervention. As with basic talents and hit points, the designation is recorded on the Character Sheet.

460. Experience Points and XP Bonuses

Because *Empire of the Petal Throne* is a pre-Tolkien science-fantasy and sword-and-sorcery game, its experience system attempts to reflect the vital role of mystery, discovery and alienation so important to the genre. Player-characters receive experience for unearthing plots, rediscovering lost knowledge and saving the empire from destruction. This certainly involves defeating foes, but success in combat is a means to the end of casting light upon dark conspiracies aimed at destroying not only Tsolyánu but all of mankind.

Each adventure scenario ends with a game of Twenty Questions. Player-characters who earn 20 points advance to the next level. An example of Twenty Questions, which can be used as a template for referees to devise their own XP

qualifiers, can be found in the appendix to the adventure included in these rules, *The Adventure of the Unknown Pyramid*.

In *Empire of the Petal Throne* no single prime requisite talent exists to qualify a character for accelerated experience point gains. The most important basic talents for Warriors are Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution; but Intelligence and Charisma are also important (for military leadership, for example). Any of these can be used to qualify a character for more rapid levelling. The most useful basic talents for Infiltrators are Intelligence, Charisma, and Dexterity; but the remaining three are important as well. An Infiltrator with high Psychic Ability who buys additional training in sorcery spells is a dangerous secret agent indeed. Finally, the most valuable basic talents for Sorcerers are Psychic Ability, Intelligence and Dexterity; but Charisma and Constitution have much worth too. Therefore, so long as a player can be seen role-playing his character's prime requisite – i.e., a Warrior using Constitution as his prime requisite acts tough and hardy – that character qualifies for a bonus. An excellent prime requisite score earns a +2 increase to earned experience points. A superior score earns a +1 increase. And having a prime requisite comport with either tlomítlanyal or tlókiriqáluyal culture earns an additional +1. Thus, a "good" Warrior whose prime requisite is Strength 18 earns +2 experience points per adventure (+1 for the superior score and +1 for Strength, which is under the power of his faith, the tlomítlanyal).

480. Increases in Basic Talents

After completely finishing a scenario or adventure in which a player-character achieved a new level of experience (cf. Sec. 440, ff.), that player must roll 1d20 to see whether his character has improved in a basic talent. Characters with the Physical Training skill roll against the appropriate column; all others roll against the level-I to level-IV column.

level-I to level-IV	level-V to level-VII	level-VIII to level-IX	level-X
20 = 2 pnts 18-19 = 1 pnt	19-20 = 2 pnts 15-18 = 1 pnt	18-20 = 2 pnts 12-17 = 1 pnt	17-20 = 2 pnts 09-16 = 1 pnt

The player and referee together determine which basic talent is increased. It should be one that was somehow important to the scenario or adventure just completed. As an example, the female tlomítlanyal character whose basic talents were described above, after fully completing an adventure in Béy Sý, rolls an 18 and qualifies for an increase to one of her basic talents. In agreement with the referee, the player decides to raise Intelligence 1 point, having argued that the young sorceress had to research the history of the Unknown Pyramid during the scenario. Her Intelligence 17 becomes Intelligence 18, and she now gains +2 LoSS in all mental skills and +1 saving throws vs hypnosis. This suits the player just fine, for there was a close encounter with a Yéleth during the foray into the Unknown Pyramid.

500. Skills, Abilities and Spells

While basic talents originally simulated all actions (from the most intuitive to the most complex) in table-top roleplaying games, it soon became clear that

a skill system was needed. *Empire of the Petal Throne* was the first fantasy game to introduce skills. This set of rules attempts to keep skills broad and pliable, but at the same time to include what has been learned about role-playing in the last fifty years. All skills start with general abilities, and this includes the entire initial list (see below). They afterwards become more and more complex, and thus available only at the higher levels. This is the mechanism used in the original game.

510. Original Skills and Abilities

Everyone has a background, including a number of interests developed during childhood and adolescence. Player-characters' basic talents, prime requisite, family, cultural orientation (tlomítlanyal vs tlókiriqáluyal), and starting location affect original skills; hence, they should be chosen on that basis.

Mssúma, Mother of Man

This broad set of traditions, skills and know-hows grows out of village life in the agricultural plains up and down the Mssúma River and is ingrained into every male from birth onward. It includes running, climbing, swimming, farming, hunting and butchering, leatherworking, woodworking, masonry, etc. – all at an elementary level.

Prime Requisite: Strength, Constitution, Intelligence

Brought up in Béy Sý

This broad set of traditions, skills and know-hows grow out of city life in the capital metropolis of Béy Sý, and are ingrained into every person from birth onward. It includes knowledge of the area, local politics, wall climbing, ledge balancing, bargaining, cooking, costume repair, entertaining, gambling, self-defense, etc. – all to a moderate level. This moderate level gains for the native a +1 increase in Likelihood of Skill Success.

Prime Requisite: Intelligence, Dexterity, Charisma

Fired-up from Fasíltum

This broad set of traditions, skills and know-hows grows out of city life in the desert metropolis of Fasíltum, and is ingrained into every male from birth onward. It includes running, climbing, hiking, dowsing, bow hunting and butchering, leatherworking, fletching, desert survival, etc. – all at an elementary level.

Prime Requisite: Dexterity, Psychic Ability, Charisma

Urban Jungle Jakálla

This broad set of traditions, skills and know-hows grows out of harbor life in the port of Jakálla, and is ingrained into every male from birth onward. It includes swimming, boating, crustacean-gathering, haggling, shadowing and evading, self-defense, etc. – all at an elementary level.

Prime Requisite: Intelligence, Charisma, Dexterity

Groupie of the Good Gods

This set of religious traditions, skills and know-hows grows out of an early love for the tlomítlanyal. It includes myths, rituals, and prayers to the Lords of Glory. A character with this original skill is more religious than most, and can recite the teachings of Pavár, knows temple and ritual procedures, and recognizes symbols important to Stability-worshippers.

Prime Requisite: Intelligence, Psychic Ability, Constitution

Evincer of the Evil Ones

This set of religious traditions, skills and know-hows grows out of an early lust for the *tlokiriqáluyal*. It includes myths, rituals, and prayers to the Masters of the Shadow. A character with this original skill is more religious than most, and can recite the teachings of Qiyór, knows temple and ritual procedures, and recognizes symbols important to Change-worshippers.

Prime Requisite: Psychic Ability, Intelligence, Charisma

Promising Epic Poet

This set of literary traditions, skills and know-hows grows out of an early devotion to the myths, legends and folktales of Tsolyánu. This includes reading and writing modern Tsolyáni, having memorized at least some of the epics, knowing how to chant-sing them, having some sense of acting, costuming, lighting, staging, etc.

Prime Requisite: Intelligence, Charisma, Constitution

Prospective Puppeteer

This set of entertainment traditions, skills and know-hows grows out of an early fascination with the manufacture, manipulation and performance of Tsolyáni puppet theatre. It includes woodcarving, painting, wig-making, miniature set and costume design, acting, prestidigitation, ventriloquism and optical illusions. Illusions become sorcerous at high level.

Prime Requisite: Dexterity, Intelligence, Psychic Ability

Glorified Gambler

This set of entertainment traditions, skills and know-hows grows out of an early addiction to Tsolyáni games of chance. It includes draughts, *kévuk*, *dénden*, *tsahlén*, *nárku*, betting on puppet shows, and wagering on what will happen next, etc.

Prime Requisite: Intelligence, Dexterity, Charisma

Hero of the Hunt

This set of outdoor traditions, skills and know-hows grows out of an early avidity for Tsolyáni bird/beast hunting. It includes hunting the many dangerous animals that pose a threat to humanity. Since many of these creatures are flying threats (such as *Gerednyá* and *Lri*), missile weapons are featured; but the basic hunting spear and butchering knife are also fundamental to the lifestyle.

Prime Requisite: Strength, Dexterity, Intelligence

Hooked on Hirilákte

This set of gladiatorial traditions, skills and know-hows grows out of an early devotion to arena circuses. It includes keeping up with current gladiators, trends in fighting, gambling techniques, etc. It also teaches one rhetoric, knowledge of powerful people, current events, and local rumors.

Prime Requisite: Charisma, Intelligence, Constitution

Aficionado of the Army

This set of martial traditions, skills and know-hows grows out of an early adoring of imperial legions and their soldiers. It includes keeping up with famous leaders, *Qadárni* battles, the *Kéttukal* plot, etc. It also teaches one history, knowledge of powerful people, current events, and rumors of war with *Yán Kór*.

Prime Requisite: Intelligence, Constitution, Charisma

Priestly College Pupil

This set of scholarly traditions, skills and know-hows grows out of having long been a student in the College of the Priesthoods. It includes languages, mathematics, astrology, engineering and alchemy. A character with this

original skill is more educated than most, and has a large vocabulary, can do sums, make gadgets, and concoct incendiaries, etc.

Prime Requisite: Intelligence, Constitution, Dexterity

The above original skills can be used as written, or adapted to better serve the specific campaign and player-characters in any *Empire of the Petal Throne* game. To arrive at their characters' original skills, players should choose or adapt between one and three of the above. This should be done in consultation with the referee, and should support the design scheme of the character and the adventuring group. Example: the young sorceress, whose Intelligence was increased to 18 after reaching level-II, had begun her career with three original skills: Mssúma, Mother of Man (adapted for female upbringing); Groupie of the Good Gods; and Priestly College Pupil. This latter allowed her to research the history of a landmark in her campaign setting – the Unknown Pyramid in north-central Béy Sý.

Original skills engage via the LoSS Table (cf. Sec. 435, ff.), with the difficulty of the task set by the referee. In the above case, the young sorceress searches for a description of the Unknown Pyramid in her Priestly College. She adds +1 to her mental skill (thanks to her Intelligence), and the referee sets the task at a third level of difficulty. Needing a 7 or lower, the sorceress rolls a 7 (a doubly fine success) and finds very pertinent information about it.

A skill success such as this, even early in the campaign, grants the referee an opportunity of planting campaign clues. In the above case: that the Unknown Pyramid, built as it is of dense black orbicular diorite, has a natural circle-and-dot pattern in each and every stone.

520. The Non-Player Character Reaction Table

All player-characters must navigate the worlds of family, clan, profession and culture during their rise to level-X. The following table sets forth the basic reactions that occur in Tsolyáni society. These, however, are modified by several factors.

The Tsolyáni are xenophobic. They dislike all foreigners for one reason or another. They call the Mu'ugalavyáni fools, the Yán Koryáni provincial upstarts, the Salarvyáni greedy pirates, and the Livyáni fanatical degenerates. On the table below all reactions should receive a -3 when dealing with foreigners.

The overall culture is male-dominated, both tlomítlanyal and tlokiriqáluyal, so aridáni women and women behaving other than as "good clan girls" receive a -1 reaction modifier.

As described previously, Tsolyánu is a bicultural nation. The tlomítlanyal despise the tlokiriqáluyal, and vice-versa. All reactions across this cultural divide receive a -6 modifier.

The professions are prejudiced against one another. Each reacts at -2 when dealing head-to-head with one of the other two.

Roll	Reaction
1	Violence: NPC becomes angry, attacks, offers a fight
2 - 3	Hostility: NPC rejects, refuses, may even plan treachery

4 - 7	Prejudice: dissatisfied, deceptive and angling for own advantage
8 - 13	Neutrality: demands more information, guarantees, further terms
14 - 17	Basic Agreement: satisfied, honest, offering to make sacrifices
18 - 19	Enthusiasm: NPC accepts, agrees, even adds to plan in material ways
20	Fanaticism: NPC becomes excited, defends the player-character, offers to risk own life

The table can be used to arrange skill training or other forms of NPC cooperation. Masters must be located and approached. They are generally busy people and a positive reaction is required for the referee to declare that a player-character has engaged one to teach him a skill. It is also used to simulate important milestone interactions. For example, our young level-II sorceress, previous to attaining her current level, had to search her priestly college for information about the Unknown Pyramid. The person she identified as a suitable translator of ancient languages seemed to be a tlomítlanyal worshiper (actually, he was secretly devoted to the Five Evil Gods). The roll to gain his translating help, which the referee kept secret, was at -6. Rolling an 18 (18-6=12: neutral response), the then level-I sorceress gained the translator's grudging assistance, but only after accepting harsh terms.

530. Awareness and Perception as a Function of Class/Level

Awareness and various sense perception rolls (hearing, seeing, finding or suchlike) occur frequently in role-playing games. In *Empire of the Petal Throne* the referee determines whether a player-character spots an ambush, notices a trap tripwire or senses the presence of sorcery by rolling under that character's levelx2 (if, and only if, the situation suits the character's Class). Warriors can be expected to have a tuned awareness in physical conflict situations. Infiltrators are keenly aware during penetration operations. Sorcerers radiate an awareness in ritual environments. Example: Chekkutáne Fa'asál Vriddi, while breaking into a Palace of the Realm, senses the presence of a guard on a die roll of 14 or less because he is level-VII. In "warrior" situations a negative modifier should be applied. In "sorcerer" situations an even greater negative modifier should be applied. This is true for Warriors as well; they are most out-of-their-depth in sorcerous situations. For Sorcerers, it is awareness on a battlefield that receives the greatest negative modifier.

Basic Talents and Skills do modify awareness rolls. Constitution modifies the awareness of Warriors. Intelligence modifies the awareness of Infiltrators. Psychic Ability modifies the awareness of Sorcerers. Skills may further alter the check threshold, by player-referee negotiation.

540. Specific Professional Skills and Abilities

After deciding upon a player-character's original skills, that character's player determines the character's specific professional skills. There is one skill list for warrior characters, one list for infiltrators, but two for sorcerers (one for tlomítlanyal theurgists, one for tlókiriqáluyal thaumaturges). During character

creation, players must choose skills from the appropriate list. Later, during skill acquisition after new levels of experience have been gained, players may choose skills from lists other than that of their character's specific profession. This must have referee approval, however. To find out which skills a character begins with, cross-reference the character's prime requisite talent to the table below:

Prime Requisite 11-14	Prime Requisite 15-17	Prime Requisite 18-19	Prime Requisite 20
2 of the first 3	3 of the first 4	4 of the first 5	5 of the first 6

The skills, and abilities (really), are arranged in linear order with the simpler skills at the top of the list and the most difficult skills at the bottom. This mechanic is employed throughout the game to realistically simulate a character's mastery of more demanding abilities as he or she gains levels. As an example, our female sorceress from the majority culture of Tsolyánu starts the game with a prime requisite (Psychic Ability 18) in the Prime Requisite 18-19 column. She is allotted "4 of the first 5" skills in the Abilities of Sorcerers Worshiping the Lords of Glory list. Knowing that his character is already a student, the player skips Research and takes Know Engsvanyáli, Detect Evil, Detect Thoughts and Telepathy. As levelling occurs, skills must be chosen in top-to-bottom order; that way a logical and believable progression occurs.

545. Languages in the *Empire of the Petal Throne*

Warriors and infiltrators have reason to learn modern languages, such as Mu'ugalavyáni and Yán Koryáni. Sorcerers typically learn the ecclesiastical tongue of their culture (whether tlomítlanyal or tlokiriqáluyal). The fire gods' temples, however, employ Classical Tsolyáni as their ritual language. They even employ its hieroglyphs as a symbol system important to their practice of improvisational sorcery. Their glyphs are termed "jodúkh" (targes). Other languages include Salarvyáni, Milumanayáni, Sáa Allaqiyáni, Pijenáni and many others.

Characters wishing to learn a language must roll a positive result on the NPC Reaction Table, agree to a payment of obligations or Káitars, and spend six months to a year gaining conversational ability. Fluency takes longer, and a deep knowledge requires travel to the nation where the language is spoken. Excellent Intelligence can shorten this time requirement by a season; superior intelligence by two months; above average, by one.

It is left to the discretion of the referee to determine whether skill rolls are required, and at what difficulty, when speaking a learned foreign language.

550. Abilities of Warriors

Warriors progress from students of their chosen weapon, to masters having patrons, allies and secret techniques that they teach to students of their own.

Physical Training

This skill trains the warrior in culturally appropriate sports and exercise regimens, for example the sport marotlán (a ball game). It modifies a warrior's chances of Section 480 Increases to Basic Talents success. After an adventure during which a warrior qualifies for a new level, his or her player rolls 1d20. Having this skill, that player gains benefits.

Basic Melee Techniques

This skill trains the warrior in the most common Tsolyáni weapons – the dagger, sword, spear and shield. The average size and shape of each of these is assumed. Training consists of warrior etiquette, stances, most useful attacks and defenses, distance, finishing moves, etc. At level-V these become more expert, gaining the warrior +1 to hit. At level-VIII, these become formidable indeed, gaining the warrior +1 to hit AND +1 to damage. Other benefits by agreement with the referee.

Basic Missile Techniques

This skill trains the warrior in the most common Tsolyáni ranged weapons – the thrown spear, bow, and crossbow. The specific type – javelin vs spear, light crossbow vs heavy – depends on local tradition. Training consists of warrior etiquette, weapon readying, accuracy, distance, tactics, etc. At level-V these become more expert, gaining the warrior +1 to hit. At level-VIII, these become formidable indeed, gaining the warrior +1 to hit AND +1 to damage. Other benefits, such as extended range, by agreement with the referee.

Armor and Weapons

This skill teaches the warrior all about the material equipment upon which his life depends. Obviously, each weapon and armor type is a different field of study, but at lower levels of experience the factors important to all useful weapons and armors are stressed. These include the quality and craftsmanship of the chlén-hide, bronze or steel from which they are made, the best clans, workshops and individual craftsmen to make great weapons/armor, etc. Benefits by referee agreement.

Martial Etiquette

This skill teaches the warrior all about honor, the warrior code-of-conduct, forms of address, barracks behavior, Hirilákte Arena duels, respect toward superiors, chivalry toward ladies, and comradery with allies, etc. It is primarily used to modify rolls governing NPC reactions, especially those in connection to the above list of situations. At level-I through level-V, this skill gives a +1 bonus to rolls on the Nonplayer Character Reaction Table (Sec. 520); at level-V through level-VII a +2 bonus to rolls is gained; at level-VIII and level-IX, a +3 bonus to rolls; and, finally, at level-X a +4 bonus to rolls. The referee should ensure that the warrior actually adheres to strict behavioral norms, or lose benefits.

Evaluate Foe(s)

This skill hones the warrior's tactical (and, later, strategic) awareness. At first, it develops alertness, threat recognition, reaction time and courage. At level-V through level-VII, it allows the player to ask questions of the referee, such as: "How many hit points does that Ssú have?" At level-VIII through level-IX, it permits questions of the referee that materially affect fight victory and defeat in skirmishes and even full-scale battles. With this skill, a roll against the LoSS Table is used to determine the success or failure of the evaluation.

Basic Talent(s): Constitution, Intelligence

LoSS: Detect Ambush – 08; Danger Sense – 06; Get the Jump (+1 to one's Reaction Time die) – 08; Resist Fear – 05

Advanced Melee Techniques

This skill trains the warrior in advanced or specialized Tsolyáni techniques/weapons – the dagger, long sword, spear/ pike and shields. The length, cross-section, and material can no longer be generalized. Training

consists of combat theory, stances, oblique attacks and defenses, distance, finishing moves, etc. At level-V these become more expert, gaining the warrior +1 to hit AND to damage. At level-VIII, these become truly formidable, gaining the warrior +2 to hit AND to damage. Other benefits by agreement with the referee.

Advanced Missile Techniques

This skill trains the warrior in advanced or specialized Tsolyáni ranged weapons – the thrown spear, bow, and crossbow. The specific type – javelin vs spear, light crossbow vs heavy – depends on local tradition. Training consists of quickdraws, rate-of-fire, accuracy, distance, tactics, etc. At level-V these become more expert, gaining the warrior +1 to hit and to damage. At level-VIII, these become truly formidable, gaining the warrior +2 to hit AND to damage. Other benefits, such as trick shots, by agreement with the referee.

Patron

This skill represents the warrior's ability to attract a high society man or woman to underwrite his continued mastery of his weapons. The usually, but not absolutely always, noble clan person employs the warrior in training clan-members, gifts high quality (even steel or enchanted) weapons, uses his or her contacts to arrange tutorials, demonstrations and duels, and generally "collects" the warrior like a prized Kýni-falcon.

The benefits to the warrior are experience, money, weapons, armors, social contacts, etc. The warrior also gains an increase in experience points, as per Section 610. A warrior with a prime requisite of 15 – 17 adds 5% to his acquired experience points; that of 18 – 19 adds 10%; that of 20 adds 15% instead of the default boost ruled in the section cited.

Comrades at Arms

This skill allows the warrior to call upon the loyalty, duty, and self-sacrifice of martial culture. The warrior may recruit one temporary exemplar of the above values; typically, a former comrade of the warrior, or a clan relation having tracking and scouting abilities. A comrade acts as a heavy infantry support, equipped with weapons and armor the equal of the warrior. A clan relation resembles a guide or spy, able to navigate through bad terrain, gain intelligence and set ambushes. Both subordinates have fighting skills. Once recruited, the subordinate serves the warrior to a single adventure's end. The Comrade has 15 hit points, armor class 3, and does 2-12 damage with each hit. A single Comrade may exist at any one time; and should a warrior's comrade be slain, the warrior loses one experience level instantly. Comrades can be fleshed out as NPCs with referee approval.

Basic Talent(s): Charisma

NPC Reaction Table: fifth column

Original Combat Technique

This skill represents the warrior, now a true master of his weapon, pioneering secret techniques. The exact weapon, sword or bow etc., must be specified. Additional weapons, or techniques with the same weapon, may be gained using Section 421. Skills Learned in Game. The warrior need not, however, visit a clan-chief or consult the Nonplayer Character Reaction Table. He hones his secret technique, instead. Techniques cost money and time to develop; however, this can vary. Once developed, this skill causes the rules in Section 731 Double Damage and Instant Death to change. This section states that critical hits occur when any combatant rolls exactly their success threshold number while using this skill (i.e., a warrior trying to roll 17 or under rolls exactly a 17). Since attacks rise above 20, all attack levels

above 20 add to the player's die result, making double damage more likely. An example of this would be: a level-VIII warrior, in combat with a bandit of lesser level, succeeds upon a 23 or less. His attack (using Original Combat Technique) is at +3 to the die roll. If he rolls 17-20 (four numbers instead of one!) the warrior does double damage plus modifiers. Original Combat Techniques also allows for instant kill attempts (cf. Sec. 731. ff.). They too occur add failure thresholds over 20 to the attack roll.

Second and third techniques with the same basic weapon gain different benefits, by referee agreement.

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence, Dexterity

LoSS: Six Months/ 1000 Káitars – 12; Four Months/ 500 Káitars – 08; Two Months/ 100 Káitars – 10

Control of Self

This skill trains the warrior in the superhuman control of his own body. The warrior's breath can be held indefinitely. His heartbeat can be stopped. An object can be held by the warrior for a long period with a steel-hard grip. A trance can be entered, allowing multiple attacks and precognitive parries. Total memory recall can be had. The senses blocked. Impossible tasks, of course, cannot be accomplished, but it is almost impossible for foes to defeat this control. Example: someone trying to tear away the grip of one under the influence of this skill would consult the Likelihood of Spell Success Table, using Strength instead of Psychic Ability as the modifier.

LoSS: Control Creature column

560. Abilities of Infiltrators

Infiltrators, called yagurétoKh in Tsolyáni, are imperial, provincial, clan or legion clandestine agents. They investigate, interrogate, pass unseen, employ coded communications, shadow and evade, and eventually build a network of people to help accomplish their masters' aims.

Literacy (Modern Tsolyáni)

This is the skill of reading and writing in the Imperial Monumental Script and in the cursive Visúmikh hiKóLumel script mandated currently for all official uses. This skill is especially geared to imitate standard bureaucratic prose. Its purpose is to open opportunities for cyphering, forgery and the creation of cover identity documents.

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence, Dexterity

LoSS: Standard column

Imperial Etiquette

This skill teaches the infiltrator all about imperial protocols, upper-class codes-of-conduct, forms of address, palace behavior, current events, important personalities, religious rivalries, political machinations, etc. It is primarily used to modify rolls governing NPC reactions, especially those in connection to the above list of situations. At level-I through level-IV, this skill gives a +1 bonus to rolls on the Nonplayer Character Reaction Table (Sec. 1020); at level-V through level-VII a +2 bonus to rolls is gained; at level-VIII and level-IX, a +3 bonus to rolls; and, finally, at level-X a +4 bonus to rolls.

Basic Talent: Intelligence, Charisma

LoSS: Routine column

Basic Stealth Techniques

This skill establishes the infiltrator's basic ability to track and shadow targets. At first, it develops awareness, surreptitiousness, and use of tactics and teams. At level-I through level-IV, it yields a +1 to shadowing. At level-V through level-VII, it grants a +2. At level-VIII and level-IX, it yields a +3. At level-X it grants a +4.

Basic Talent(s): Dexterity, Intelligence

LoSS: Demanding column

Tools and Devices

This skill teaches the infiltrator all about the material equipment upon which his life depends. Obviously, each tool and device type is a different field of study, but at middle levels of experience we're talking about climbing and clinging claws, lock and window tools, and trap disabling devices. Benefits by referee agreement.

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence

LoSS: Simple column

Assassination Techniques

This skill hones the infiltrator's killer instinct. At first it develops alertness, reaction time, decisiveness, and targets-of-opportunity. At level-V through level-VII, it allows the infiltrator's player to ask questions of the referee such as: "How many hit points does my target have?" At level-VIII through level-IX, it permits the rules in Section 731 Double Damage and Instant Death to be altered. This section states that critical hits occur when any combatant rolls exactly their success threshold number while using this skill (i.e., an infiltrator trying to roll 17 or under rolls exactly 17). Since skills can rise above 20, all skill levels above 20 add to the player's die result, making double damage far more likely. An example of this would be: a level-VIII yagurétoKh, murdering a low-level sorcerer, succeeds upon a 23 or less. His attack (using Assassination Techniques) is at +3 to the die roll. If he rolls 17-20 (four numbers instead of one!) the assassin does maximum damage plus rolled damage. At level-X this skill allows an instant kill upon scoring a natural 20 (cf. Sec. 731. ff.).

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence

LoSS: Formidable column

Detect/Disable Traps

This profession of infiltrator demands great situational awareness. At first, this skill builds alertness, trap recognition, reaction time, and commitment. At level-I through level-IV, it yields a +1 to trap detection and disabling. At level-V through level-VII, it grants a +2. At level-VIII and level-IX, it yields a +3 to trap detection and disabling. At level-X it grants a +4. The skill also allows a default detection of nearby secret doors, but at half the benefit. It lastly grants a +1 bonus to savings throws vs traps. Other benefits, such as underworld knowledge, by referee agreement.

Basic Talent(s): Dexterity, Intelligence

LoSS: Difficult column

Advanced Stealth Techniques

This skill hones the infiltrator's ability to pass unseen. At first, it develops suppleness, noise cancellation, and use of obstacles and shadows. Higher levels allow almost invisibility. This is done through climbing, clinging, light and shadow play, and ventriloquism. Even guarded palaces can be penetrated. At level-I through level-IV, it yields a +1 to stealth. At level-V through level-VII, it grants a +2. At level-VIII and level-IX, it yields a +3. At level-X it grants a +4. This skill also allows a default control of self (as per that skill) but at half the normal benefit.

Basic Talent(s): Dexterity, Intelligence

LoSS: Formidable column

Control of Self

This skill trains the infiltrator in the superhuman control of his own body. The agent's breath can be held indefinitely. His heartbeat can be stopped. An object can be held by the infiltrator for a long period with a steel-hard grip. A trance can be entered, allowing multiple attacks and precognitive parries. Total memory recall can be had. The senses blocked. Impossible tasks, of course, cannot be accomplished, but it is almost impossible for foes to defeat this control. Example: someone trying to tear away the grip of one under the influence of this skill would consult the Likelihood of Spell Success Table, using Strength instead of Psychic Ability as the modifier.

LoSS: Terrifying column

Preternatural Senses

The profession of infiltrator allows a character to sense danger and immanent violence when first seeing from a short distance, and when first entering, a place, group of people, or situation. Preternatural Senses channels through the infiltrator a god-like awareness, thereby allowing him or her to anticipate ambushes, recognize walking into traps, sense (even in darkness) the nearness of enemies, and even to detect invisible presences. An infiltrator with this ability simply cannot be surprised. It also grants a +1 saving throw vs Eyes.

LoSS: Formidable column (+2 for difficulty)

Secret Society

This skill represents the infiltrator's ability to gain admittance into a political or religious secret society (such as the Sword of Righteousness Society or the dreaded Ndálu Clan). This clandestine organization then underwrites the infiltrator's continued mastery of his art. The secret society employs the infiltrator in missions, trains him, gifts high quality (even steel or enchanted) tools and weapons, uses its contacts to arrange cover identities, gadgets, and even henchmen for operational use.

The benefits to the infiltrator are experience, money, weapons, devices, henchmen, etc. The infiltrator also gains an increase in experience points, as per Section 610. An infiltrator with a prime requisite of 15 – 17 adds a +1 to his acquired experience points; that of 18 – 19 adds +2; that of 20 adds a +3 instead of the default boost ruled in the section cited.

Other benefits by referee agreement.

LoSS: NPC Reaction Roll

Ultimate Disguise

All of the above skills combine to assist the infiltrator in developing totally impenetrable disguises. A target's own mother would take the infiltrator for her beloved child. The yagurétokh subtly alters his or her very features and voice to impersonate whomever they desire, so long as they have had time to observe their mark. Trickery, well-spoken lies, mind-affecting chemicals are all possible adjuncts to this ability.

LoSS: Impossible column

Master of the Skein of Destiny

This quasi-mystical ability simulates the infiltrator's mastery of chance and timely good luck. Often this causes the infiltrator to emerge from certain death scratch-free. The infiltrator gains a new basic talent called Skein of Destiny. This talent is determined by rolling 1d20 and recording the result on the infiltrator's character sheet. Anyone with an Excellent result gains 3

die rerolls per game session; one with a Superior result gains 2 rerolls; one with an Above Average result gains 1. Additionally, one with a result below average grants the referee 1 die reroll; an Inferior result, 2 referee die rolls; and an Execrable result, 3.

Basic Talent(s): Charisma

LoSS: Inhuman column

570. The Likelihood of Skill Success Table

The table immediately following is used to determine the success or failure of skills and abilities attempted under stressful conditions by all professions. Each of the skill categories below can be modified by either +2 (for a less powerful version of a skill falling within the category) or -2 (for a more powerful form of a skill falling within the category). The numbers in the table reflect an average, most common or moderately potent form of a skill. As an example, take the three versions of a single skill: identifying the weather, predicting tonight's temperature and anticipating rainfall in a week's time. The first receives a +2 bonus because it is a simple matter; the second receives no bonus or penalty; the final of the three receives a -2 penalty, the cause being that predicting whether it will rain in a week is clearly a more intimidating feat than the previous two examples.

The numbers in the table are also modified by the professional's basic talents and prime requisite. Intelligence grants between a +1 and a +3 to all mental abilities. Charisma grants between a +1 and a +3 to all communication, persuasion and similar skills. Game referees may exercise their judgement when assigning abilities to a one of the table categories. Impenetrable Disguise, for example, could be anything between Demanding and Impossible, depending on circumstances. The logic of the situation should guide referee judgements. Even better, modifiers should arise from group discussion about what is most realistic and reflective of the game's milieu.

Skill Type	Simple	Routine	Standard	Demanding	Difficult	Challenging	Formidable	Terrifying	Impossible	Inhuman
I	12	10	8	6	4	2	0	-2	-4	-6
II	13	11	9	7	5	3	1	-1	-3	-5
III	14	12	10	8	6	4	2	0	-2	-4
IV	15	13	11	9	7	5	3	1	-1	-3
V	16	14	12	10	8	6	4	2	0	-2
VI	17	15	13	11	9	7	5	3	1	-1
VII	18	16	14	12	10	8	6	4	2	0
VIII	19	17	15	13	11	9	7	5	3	1
IX	20	18	16	14	12	10	8	6	4	2
X	21	19	17	15	13	11	9	7	5	3

580. Acquisition of Additional Abilities

As players achieve new experience levels (actually, during the interval between adventures – which should realistically entail months of time), they might learn further Original and Professional Abilities. This may result from the

previous adventure itself, or result from characters pursuing education and training through the spending of cross-clan obligations and/or Káitars.

All characters must roll 1d20 to find out whether they acquire skills simply as a result of their activities during the previous scenario. Players who have fortunately increased a basic talent must choose a skill logically tied to that exact talent. Example: remember that the player of the previously discussed sorceress argued to his referee that his character's Intelligence should be increased, for the young magician engaged in strenuous research during the Adventure of the Unknown Pyramid. Rolling another 18 for skill acquisition, both player and referee rule that Research must be the skill to be added to the now level-II sorceress' character sheet.

Those who were not fortunate enough to gain a basic talent increase, but who qualify for an increase to skills, must negotiate with the referee and perhaps the group as a whole to select skills actually important to the previous adventure.

level-I to level-IV	level-V to level-VII	level-VIII to level-IX	level-X
20 = 2 skills 18-19 = 1 skill	19-20 = 2 skills 15-18 = 1 skill	18-20 = 2 skills 12-17 = 1 skill	17-20 = 2 skills 09-16 = 1 skill

All characters are invited to pursue further ability additions in the off-time between their periodic missions. This time is assumed to be weeks or months in duration, taken up with recuperation, research into campaign clues, the pursuit of education and training, and clan and professional duties. To be true to Tsolyánu, the duty of repayment for training is fulfilled by performing cross-clan obligations (i.e. completing assignments). For example, our previously mentioned sorceress, after the Adventure of the Unknown Pyramid, spends the winter in Béy Sý researching and training with a tutor, either an ancient language or a sorcery spell or both. Since she continues her lucky streak and qualifies for a bonus ability, she decides to learn the ancient language of Tsáqw, which she believes is somehow related to vanished Llyáni (a nearly mythical tongue). She engages a language tutor, and in return for her instruction must gather tsúral-buds from the east bank of the Mssúma River. This is a dangerous undertaking. She gathers the herbs. Her lessons are repaid.

600. Sorcery

The single most important difference between Tékumel's original universe and the dark dimension it now finds itself in is that "magic" operates. Magic works and affects absolutely everything. The outer dimensional darkness that the solar system fell into had never known energy or matter before the invasion of Tuléng and her planets, moons and asteroids. Tuléng's energy output seared the "flesh" of The Null. This perhaps explains why the first deity to manifest and to contact mankind was the fire god Vimúhla. The Darkness that was before the World, as the Tsolyáni call it, sought, however, a return to emptiness, to Non-Being (as Phil Barker termed it). It seeks it still. But there is a third power! Deep in the very centre of the planet lives the precursor device no one understands or controls. It hurtled the solar system into its new dimension, and it may itself be infected or simply dual in nature. Thus, four vectors of sorcery exist: 1) fire and war magic; 2) the magic of darkness and The Null; 3) the magic of matter and life; 4) the

cold magic that seeks total stasis in undeath. The Tsolyáni have yet to realise the immediately above, but it comprises the true nature of things.

610. Re-acquisition of Spells

Magic in *Empire of the Petal Throne* attempts to capture the atmosphere of "The Arabian Nights", classic sword-and-sorcery fiction, and even Lovecraftian horror. There are no spell slots or magic points. A high score in Psychic Ability implies a certain orientation toward life, just as high scores in Strength, Dexterity and Constitution suggest a different life direction. The sorcerer's existence is one of out-of-the-ordinary perceptions, eerie connection to the divine (and infernal), and rituals that shape reality in limited but profound ways. These rituals are the true focus of sorcerers' professions. In order to have, at the ready, spells useful when needed in an adventure, sorcerers must perform rituals and then enchant their effects into a physical item (a scroll, staff, ring, medallion, etc.) that is later triggered to release the spell. Once released at its target, a spell is gone. It must be prepared again, using all the time, costuming, material components, ceremony and laboratory adjuncts that were used to load its nexus the first time. Often, the physical item itself must be wholly replaced.

In other words, spells are not re-acquired at daybreak of the following day (as in other games).

Given this, Tékumel's devices of the ancients acquire importance.

The Acquisition of Bonus Sorcerous Abilities Table can be used to quickly determine how many days it takes to re-acquire spells. Each day of materials collection, study, meditation and ritual, a single d20 is rolled. The result can be modified upwards with the following skills: Groupie of the Good Gods, Pupil of the Priesthoods, Research, Know Engsvanyáli, Theurgy, Devices and Apparatus (or their equivalents in the skill-set of the tlokiriqáluyal); each of the aforementioned adds +1 to the die result.

Example: our level-II sorceress, in an interlude between forays into the Unknown Pyramid, tries to re-acquire her spell, Detect Thoughts, and to enchant nexuses for three castings of Detect Evil. Her player rolls 1d20+3, and hopes for high results. On the first day he scores a 17 (+3 = 20, which indicates two rituals completed); for the second day he rolls a 05; the third day's result is a 13; the fourth and fifth days see repeats of day three; finally, on the sixth day he scores a 16 (+3 = 19, which indicates another ritual completed). The sorceress decides, since her compatriots are getting impatient, to make due with two Detect Evil nexuses and one Detect Thoughts nexus. The referee explains that the sorceress had materials to-hand for her Detect Evil rituals, but needed three days to gather the components required for Detect Thoughts.

620. Abilities of Sorcerers Worshiping the Lords of Glory

Sorcerers arising out of Tsolyánu's majority tloomitlanyal-worshipping culture take Engsvanyáli as a language, learn how to rediscover lost sorcerous knowledge, and then embark upon a career of conducting largely beneficial to society rituals.

Know Engsvanyáli

The tongue of the Kingdom of the Gods is the language of ritual and magic among Tsolyánu's majority tloomitlanyal-worshipping population. Priests

speak, read and write this language, at least to some degree. There exist several dialects. Some are obscure. Others are intentionally kept secret (taught only to those initiated into select mysteries). One of these is called Thu'usa, an attempt to reconstruct long-vanished Llyáni. This initiation is reflected by level in *Empire of the Petal Throne*.

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence

LoSS: Demanding column

Research

Empire of the Petal Throne is a post-cataclysm, lost Age of High Magic, setting. Priests must, therefore, research into lost sorcerous knowledge as a constant component of their arcane practice. This includes obtaining access to restricted texts, searching ruins, exploring underworlds, and using laboratories for experiment. Travel to distant book and relic repositories, ruins and cities is vitally important to rediscovering the secrets of the Kingdom of the Gods. One of these is the Great Library of Tumissa, built in a volcano's caldera.

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence, Constitution

LoSS: Standard column

Detect Evil

The profession of priest allows a character to sense allied and/or opposed alignments when first seeing, and when first touching, a person, thing or magic item. Detect Evil channels through the priest the awareness of the Five Gods, thereby allowing him or her to debilitate illusionary threats, recognize summoned horrors, detect the presence of the invisible, sense (even in darkness) the presence of creations of the servants of the tlokiriqáluyal.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Sense and Detection column (+2 for lesser difficulty)

Detect Thoughts

This spell channels through the priest the Five Gods' ability to pierce an oppositely aligned individual's Control of Self, Remote Senses, Locate, Mind-Bar, and Soul Stealing. The caster may read minds shielded from others, sense the activity of remote sensing and locating, detect the presence of mind-bars and charmings, and even find the soul of one afflicted by The Silver Halo of Soul Sealing.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Sense and Detection column

Telepathy

This spell brings the priest into the Five Gods' omnipresence and allows mind-to-mind communication with another similarly aligned character or NPC. Telepathy seems to work best in the Béy Sý-Avanthár region, although – for some mysterious reason – the Petal Throne itself scrambles all mental energy radiating within its sacred precinct. It also operates best with priests trained in telepathy together, and employed from inside Temples of the Good Gods. Outside these or away from central Tsolyánu telepathy is less clear.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Sense and Detection column (-2 for greater difficulty)

Awe/Inspire Individual

This spell channels through the priest the Five Gods' power to awe and inspire. It cancels demoralization, fear, remote sensing and location, charm and sleep incantations. The priest's target may roll a saving throw if

desired, however. By taking a likelihood of spell success reduction of -2, the priest can employ this spell to compel her or his target to obey simple and straightforward orders (such as, "Don't move!"). Further reductions can add additional targets and/or increase the complexity of the compulsion.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability, Charisma

LoSS: Control Creatures column

Produce Light

This spell channels through the priest the Five Gods' radiance, causing a circle of light of a strength equal to daylight and also harmful to the minions of the tlokiriqáluyal. Each turn that a creature of "The Null" spends in the circle of light causes 1-3 points of damage. Biridlú, Chashkéri, Hli'ir, Marashyálu, Thunrú'u, Tsú'uru and demons are discomfited in this way. The undead Hurú'u and Qumqúm suffer even more (1d6). Automaton, androids and mutants created by the Masters of the Shadow, however, are unaffected. The servants of Vimúhla are also unaffected.

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence, Psychic Ability

LoSS: Minor Illusion column (+2 for lesser difficulty)

Protection from Evil

This spell channels through the priest the aegis of the Lords of Glory. A globe of very faintly scintillating force (that penetrates water, earth and stone, but not enchanted steel) prevents from crossing all illusions, creatures called by evil sorcery, shadows, vapors, plagues and walls. It slows down and makes less damaging (half rolled damage) cold and force spells, but – quite strangely – protects not at all against fire and undeath (i.e., Mrúr and flame jets pass right through). Spells functioning to affect good characters in subtle ways (such as paralysis, sleep or charm person) have half their usual likelihood of success. Example: an evil highly psychic level-VI sorcerer would usually have to roll below 20 to succeed, but would have to roll under 10 when targeting opponents within a globe of protection.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability, Intelligence

LoSS: Dispel Magic column (-2 for greater difficulty)

Cure Light Wounds

This spell channels through the priest the healing power of the Five Gods. It restores 25% of the wounded character's total hit points lost to injury if that character worships the tloomítlanyal. Neutrals (and – oddly – those who worship Vimúhla) have only 12% of total hit points lost to injury restored. Devotees of the Dark Gods never have any hit points restored, and worshipers of Durritlámish and their creations, the undead, take as a result of this spell 25% of their current hit points in further damage.

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence, Psychic Ability

LoSS: Minor Illusion column

Cure Serious Wounds

This spell channels through the priest the healing power of the Five Gods. It restores 50% of the wounded character's total hit points lost to injury if that character worships the tloomítlanyal. Neutrals (and – oddly – those who worship Vimúhla) have only 25% of total hit points lost to injury restored. Devotees of the Dark Gods never have any hit points restored, and worshipers of Durritlámish and their creations, the undead, take as a result of this spell 50% of their current hit points in further damage.

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence, Psychic Ability

LoSS: Major Illusion column

Remove Curse

This spell channels through the priest the restorative powers of the Five Gods. It disenchantments any in the thrall of some malign sorcery, even more-so when that sorcery was cast by a servant of the tlokiriqáluyal. Anyone afflicted by charming, demoralization, weakness, fear, madness, paralysis, quest or mind-bar spells is restored to his or her natural status. By taking a likelihood of spell success reduction of -04, the priest can employ this spell to reverse physical and permanent curses, such as diseases, petrifications, transformations, and invisibilities. Versus Dark Gods' magic, this reduction is halved (except Vimúhla). The Silver Halo of Soul Stealing, The Grey Hand, and divine interventions are proof against this powerful formula.

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence, Psychic Ability

LoSS: Produce Essences column

Revivification

This channels through the priest the immortality of the Five Gods of Good. It restores one deceased tloomitlanyal-worshipping human or friendly non-human to life. Only recently rediscovered, this spell suffers an automatic (10-caster level) likelihood of spell success reduction. Thus, even a quite psychic Level VII priest would be required to roll 14 or under to cast *Revivification* successfully. Additionally, so arduous is this ritual, its caster must rest 11-level days before casting any other spell. The newly revived being cannot engage in any strenuous activity for 7-12 days. This spell is effective only if employed within one week of an individual's death.

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence, Psychic Ability

LoSS: Control Entities column

640. Abilities of Sorcerers Worshipping the Rulers of the Shadow

Sorcerers arising out of Tsolyánu's minority tlokiriqáluyal-worshipping culture take Ancient Bednálljan as a language, learn how to reclaim lost sorcerous knowledge, and then embark upon a career of conducting essentially frightening sorcerous rituals.

Know Bednálljan

The tongue of the First Imperium is the language of ritual and sorcery among Tsolyánu's minority tlokiriqáluyal-worshipping population. All sorcerers speak, read and write this language, especially since Classical Tsolyáni is based upon it. There exist numerous dialects. Many are no longer extant. The most ancient one, appropriated by sorcerers devoted to Ksárul, is kept very strictly hidden (taught only to adepts initiated into secret societies). This initiation is reflected by level in *Empire of the Petal Throne*.

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence

LoSS: Standard column

Research

Empire of the Petal Throne is a post-cataclysm, lost Age of High Magic, setting. Adepts must, therefore, research into lost sorcerous knowledge as a constant component of their arcane development. This includes obtaining access to restricted texts, searching ruins, exploring underworlds, and calling upon demons for information. Travel to distant book and relic repositories, ruins and cities is vitally important to rediscovering the long-lost secrets of the First Imperium and/or the Empire of the Sky Lords.

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence, Charisma

LoSS: Standard column (+2 for lesser difficulty); NPC Reaction Roll

Alchemy

The dark magic of the tlokiriqáluyal has since the advent of the cult of Vimúhla employed alchemy. This dangerous art-and-science includes the comprehension of chemical compounds, mineral components, metals, elixirs, vapors, etc. These, such as iron filings used in summoning the undead, are vital to successful sorcery. They are used in every spell. Alchemical expertise also assists in the understanding of devices of the ancients.

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence, Dexterity

LoSS: Challenging column

Dark Sight

The profession of sorcerer allows a character to see in darkness as though it were dusk, in half-light as though it were day. Dark Sight channels through the caster the awareness of the tlokiriqáluyal, allowing him or her to see perfectly in utter blackness, to sense the presence of all nearby beings, to “feel” the proximity of invisible creatures, and to track (even in blinding light) the exact location and movement of creations of the servants of the tlomitlanyal.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Sense and Detection column (-2 for greater difficulty)

Protection from Good

This spell channels through the sorcerer the venom of the Five Lords of Change. A sphere of writhing black force (that penetrates water, earth and stone, but not enchanted steel) prevents from crossing all humans, creatures called by good magic, missiles, walls, energies and bright light. It slows down and makes less damaging (half rolled damage) fire and the undead, but – quite strangely – protects not at all against force and cold (i.e., The Hands of Krá the Mighty and freezing blasts pass straight through). Spells functioning to affect evil characters in subtle ways (such as paralysis, sleep or charm person) have half their usual likelihood of success. Example: a good highly psychic level-VI sorcerer would usually have to roll 20 or less to succeed, but would have to roll 10 or under when targeting opponents within a globe of protection.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Dispel Magic column

Familiar

This spell channels through the sorcerer the creativity, deceit, and malice of the Dark Gods. The caster may create one illusionary manifestation of The Null; typically, a simulacrum of the sorcerer, or a homunculus having thieving and combat abilities. A simulacrum acts as a clone of the sorcerer, knowing what she or he knows and even casting known spells. A homunculus resembles a large-eared gremlin, able to climb, claw and bite. Both familiars have infiltrator skills. Once created, the familiar serves its creator until destroyed. The familiar has 15 hit points (immunity to double damage and instant death), light armour, and does 1d6 damage with each hit. This ritual drains its celebrant, who may cast NO OTHER spell for 5-level days. A single familiar may exist at any one time; and should a magician's familiar be destroyed, the magician loses one experience level instantly. Familiars can be fleshed out as NPCs with referee approval.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Major Illusion column

Creatures

This spell channels through the sorcerer the creativity, deceit, and malice of the Old Ones. The caster may create three illusionary manifestations of The Null; typically, strange human-monster hybrids such as ape-mutants with beautiful female faces, handsome warriors (but with four arms), savage children with fangs, claws and wings. These are Level II beings, having 18 hit points (immunity to double damage and instant death), heavy armour, and doing 2d6 damage with each hit. Finally, so arduous is this ritual, its celebrant must rest 7-level days before casting ANY OTHER spell. Once created, these sorcerous beings will fight for their master and otherwise do his or her will. A week after arrival, they simply disappear.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Major Illusion column (+2 for lesser difficulty)

Control Nature

This spell channels through the ritualist the Five Evil Gods' essence, causing to be emitted a circle of control over all non-sentient beings within its radius (which equals 10xcaster level meters). Five broad categories of beings may be sorcerously enslaved: 1) vermin, 2) plants, 3) wild animals, 4) domesticated beasts, 5) water creatures. The incantation is difficult. Its LoSS threshold is decreased by -01 for every additional category of beings attempted to be controlled above one. Example: a somewhat psychic level-I sorcerer succeeds with a roll of 03 or less if she or he targets only one category of beings (say, the long grasses growing nearby). If two categories of beings are targeted (say, the long grasses AND the vermin close-at-hand) then his success threshold drops to 02. The sorcerer may also extend the spell's radius by 10-meter increments by accepting further -1 reductions in spell success likelihood. Control Nature's duration equals 10+caster level minutes.

Basic Talent: Psychic Ability, Charisma

LoSS: Control Creatures column

Control Underworld Denizens

This spell channels through the arcanist the dark forces of the Masters of Shadow, causing to be emitted a circle of control over all underworld beings within its radius (which equals 100xcaster level meters). Five broad categories of underworld denizens may be sorcerously enslaved: 1) vermin, 2) spores and funguses, 3) subterranean predators, 4) semi-sentient creatures, 5) ancient abominations. The binding is difficult. Its LoSS threshold is decreased by -02 for every additional category of denizens attempted to be controlled above one. Example: a quite psychic level-V sorcerer succeeds upon a roll of 10 or less if she or he targets only one category of beings (say, the Sagún colony prowling nearby). If two categories of beings are targeted (say, the Sagún AND the vermin close-at-hand) then the likelihood of spell success drops to 08. The sorcerer may also extend the spell's radius by 100-meter increments by accepting further -2 reductions in spell success likelihood. Control Underworld Denizens' duration equals 5+caster level minutes.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Control Monsters column (ritual required)

Control Undead

This spell channels through the necromancer the dusty quintessence of Durrilámish, causing to be emitted a circle of control over all undead within its radius (which equals 1000xcaster level meters). Five narrow sorts of undead may be necromantically enslaved: 1) Mrúr, 2) Shédra 3) Hurú'u, 4)

Vorodlá, and 5) Hrá. The binding is difficult. Its LoSS threshold is decreased by -3 for every additional category of undead attempted to be controlled above one. Example: a highly psychic level-X sorcerer succeeds with a roll of 13 or less if he or she targets only one category of undead (say, a Mrúr colony patrolling a barrier labyrinth). If two categories of undead are targeted (say, Mrúr AND their Hrá task-masters) then his success threshold drops to 10. The necromancer may also extend the spell's radius by 1000-meter increments by accepting further -3 reductions in spell success likelihood. Control Undead's duration equals caster level in minutes.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability, Intelligence

LoSS: Control Undead column (ritual required)

Regeneration

This spell channels through the sorcerer the cancerous regenerative substance of the Five Evil Gods. It restores 67% of the wounded character's total hit points lost to injury if that character worships the tlokiriqáluyal. Neutrals (and – oddly – those who worship Vimúhla) have only 30% of total hit points lost to injury restored. Devotees of the Good Gods never have any hit points regenerated, and worshippers of Durritlámish and their creations, the undead, take as a result of this spell 67% of their current hit points in further damage. Should a sorcerer attempting this incantation fail their likelihood of spell success roll, the erstwhile beneficiary of the spell must roll 2d6 (1=Strength, 2=Intelligence, 3=Dexterity, 4=Psychic Ability, 5=Constitution, 6=Charisma) and subtract 1 or 2 points from the indicated basic talent. This represents a permanent visible mutation. Example: in trying to regenerate lost hit points, a sorceress fails her spell success roll. She rolls two die and, to her dismay, watches as double sixes result. This means she must subtract two points from her Charisma basic talent. This perhaps affects her beauty and NPC reaction rolls.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability, Intelligence

LoSS: Major Illusion column (-2 for greater difficulty)

Revivification

This channels through the sorcerer the immortality of the Five Gods of Darkness. It restores one deceased tlokiriqáluyal-worshipping human or friendly non-human to life. Only recently rediscovered, this spell suffers an automatic (10-caster level) likelihood of spell success reduction. Thus, even a Superior psychic Level VII priest would only have a chance of successfully casting Revivification by rolling a 2 or less. Additionally, so arduous is this ritual, its caster must rest 11-level days before casting ANY OTHER spell. The newly revived being cannot engage in any strenuous activity for 7-12 days. This spell is effective only if employed within one week of an individual's death.

Basic Talents(s): Psychic Ability, Charisma

LoSS: Control Entities column

650. The Likelihood of Spell Success

The table immediately following is used to determine the success or failure of spells and rituals cast or completed by sorcerers. Each of the spell categories below can be modified by either +2 (for a less powerful version of a sorcery falling within the category) or -2 (for a more potent version of a sorcery falling within the category). The numbers in the table reflect an average, most common or moderately potent form of a sorcery. As an example, take the three sorceries *Produce Light*, *Wave of Shadows*, and *Illusionary Defenders*. The first receives a

+2 bonus because it is a relatively simple matter to create a steadily uniform radiance. The second receives no bonus or penalty; tricks of the eye and flickering walls of light-and-dark are common in market squares and temples. The final of the three receives a -2 penalty, the reason being that creating crude but forceful apparitions (able to deal actual damage) is clearly a more arcane endeavour than the previous examples.

The numbers in the table are also modified by the sorcerer's Psychic Ability and certain skills. Priestly College Pupil, Theurgy, and Thaumaturgy grant a wide-ranging bonus of +1 to all spells (except The Grey Hand). Devices and Apparatus and Encompass Devices of the Ancients grant a more narrow bonus of +1/+2 to the spells, Control Underworld Denizens and Control Automaton/Android. Game referees may exercise their judgement when assigning spells to one of the table categories. Shapechange Self/Other, for instance, could be either a Produce Substances or a Major Illusion (-2 for greater difficulty) incantation. The logic of the situation should guide referee judgements.

Spell Type	Sense and Detection	Minor Illusion	Dispel Magic	Major Illusion	Control Creatures	Control Monsters	Control Undead	Produce Essences	Produce Substances	Control Entities	Ancients Items
I	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	-1	-2
II	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	-1
III	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
IV	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
V	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
VI	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
VII	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4
VIII	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5
IX	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6
X	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7

660. Acquisition of Bonus Sorcerous Abilities

As sorcerer characters achieve new experience levels (again, during the time period spent between adventures), they could possibly uncover, or research, further magic-related abilities, besides those described on the two lists above. This abstracts in game terms the actions listed under Research, but also includes tutorials the sorcerer would have attended had he not been on adventure, knowledge rewards for completed missions, patron favors, inductions into higher circles and secret societies, or insights whispered to the magician by the gods or by demons. All sorcerers roll 1d20 after the end of an entire mission, scenario or adventure to determine if (during their time in Béy Sý, Jakállá, or other base of operations) they unearthed still further arcane secrets.

level-I to level-IV	level-V to level-VII	level-VIII to level-IX	level-X
20 = 2 spells 18-19 = 1 spell	19-20 = 3 spells 15-18 = 2 spells	18-20 = 4 spells 12-17 = 3 spells	17-20 = 5 spells 09-16 = 4 spells

There are three types of Bonus Sorcerous Abilities: Low LoSS, Mid LoSS, and High LoSS. The lists below begin with skills, and end with difficult “creation” spells. Mid LoSS Category Bonus Abilities cost two spells each (as per the table), so our example sorceress – were she so lucky as to witness a 20 result from her bonus abilities roll – could choose either two Low LoSS abilities or one Mid LoSS ability. Similarly, High LoSS abilities cost three spells each; thus, no magic user could hope to acquire one prior to reaching level-V. A level-X sorcerer, rolling a 17 when attempting a bonus ability gain, could choose one High LoSS ability and either one Mid LoSS ability or two Low LoSS abilities. Only at level-VIII does the chance of gaining one of these near 50%. This is realistic in Tsolyánu, but skills such as Priestly College Pupil, Research, Theurgy, Thaumaturgy, and Engsvanyáli (or Bednálljan, in the case of tlokiriqáluyal culture) each add +1 to the die roll in any acquisition attempt.

670. Low LoSS Category Bonus Abilities (sorcerers of both cultures)

The following incantations have been recovered from the wreckage of Engsvanyálu. During the Time of No Kings popular outrage toward sorcery was responsible for much lost wisdom, but, so useful and prevalent are many of the below spells, the following were hidden away in monasteries and retreats. The abilities listed, as always, are chosen from top to bottom.

Craft Writing Equipment

In post-cataclysm Tsolyánu, literacy is an extraordinary skill setting one apart from almost everyone else. The literate are expected to craft their own papers, inks and writing utensils whenever possible. These crafted pieces become higher quality as a character rises in level, eventually requiring rare and expensive ingredients. At level-VIII and level-IX, for example, one can make Tlésa paper, used for magical scrolls and the holiest of religious texts. At level-X, special inks that include as an ingredient pure human blood can be mixed in a laboratory and scriptorium. The secret of some inks, such as húrumon, is lost, but could be re-discovered.

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence, Dexterity

LoSS: Standard column

Theurgy (tlomitlanyal)

This skill represents a knowledge of Tsolyánu’s ancient and intricate religion. It centers on the ruling partnership of Karakán and Avánthe, but includes the twilight guardianship of Hnálla, the foresight of Thúmis, and the guidance of the spirit-soul by Belkhánu. It also includes the bizarre relationship of the Hlimékluyal, the Cohorts, to the Five Gods. The overwhelming through-line of all of the empire’s mythology is “the eternal battle between the Lords of Glory and the Masters of the Shadow”. As level increases, songs, ceremonies, rituals, initiations, mysteries, and even esoteric procedures and quasi-sorcerous transformations are mastered.

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence, Psychic Ability

LoSS: column one for most widely-known dogma; column ten for deepest secrets

Understanding Tongues

This spell channels through the sorcerer the gods’ omniscience. It allows its target to understand some modern or ancient human languages (written or spoken) for 1xcaster level turns. It translates tribal Tsolyáni back-country and mountain vernaculars, Classical Tsolyáni, Bednálljan, The Tongue of

the Priests of Ksáru, and Ancient N'lyssa. Oddly, it does not translate Livyáni, Duru'ób, Engsvanyáli, Tsáqw, Llyáni, or the tongue of the ancients. Why this should be so is a mystery to savants.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Sense and Detection column

Locate Object

All phenomena leave impressions in The Null. A sorcerer casting this spell senses the direction of any object's impression, as long as that object is within the spell's radius (which equals 100xcaster level in meters). If the object is in motion, the sorcerer senses the direction it is moving. This spell can locate a specific object, as long as it has been seen up close – within 30 feet – at least once. Alternatively, this spell can locate the nearest object of a particular kind, such as a religious symbol, a pyramid, a pit, a lever, or a sword. Locate Object is blocked solely by enchanted or pre-Time of Darkness steel.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability, Intelligence

LoSS: Sense and Detection column (+2 for lesser difficulty)

Dispel Magic

Tékumel's dimension differs from the universe of humanspace from whence the planet originally came in that magic exists. Not even the gods realise how unique this is; they have never known any other reality. Both the tloomítlanyal and the tlokiríqáluyal are magic, express magic, and can negate magic. This incantation represents a moderately powerful example of what in recent millennia (thanks the fall of the Kingdom of the Gods) have grown to be fairly common spells. This particular counter-spell interrupts a spell in process of being cast, cancels a spell just cast, or debilitates a spell with a permanent instantaneous effect. Dispel Magic can eliminate a Wave of Shadows while it is taking shape. It can restore courage to a warrior seized with Induce Panic. It can halve the damage of magically inflicted diseases.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Dispel Magic column (-2 vs moderate spells, -4 vs advanced spells)

Minor Curse

Up to three creatures of the sorcerer's choice that can be seen within range make saving throws vs spells. Whenever a creature failing this saving throw makes an attack roll or a saving throw before the spell ends, that creature adds the caster's level to their attack or saving throw roll. Example: the tloomítlanyal sorceress described previously encounters a Yéleth below the Unknown Pyramid in Béy Sý. She quickly casts Minor Curse, targeting the ancient android. Lucky as usual, she rolls a critical success on the LoSS Table (which doubles the spell's effect). The Yéleth on its turn attempts to use Hypnotism, but it must add 2 to its die roll. This causes failure, and the Yéleth, failing to hypnotise, retreats into the still darkness.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability, Charisma

LoSS: Dispel Magic column (+2 for lesser difficulty)

Preserve Corpse

This channels through the sorcerer the power of the gods over death. With it, any human corpse may be protected from decay. For its duration (7 to 12 days), the spell's target will not decompose and will not turn into an undead. The spell also effectively extends the time limit on Revivification since days spent under the influence of this spell do not count against that spell's one-week time limit.

Necromancers require special mention here. Those devoted to the god Sáрку may not learn this spell, but they themselves may be its target; those

in the thrall of the cohort Durritlámish may learn this spell, but may never be its target.

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence

LoSS: Dispel Magic column (-2 for greater difficulty, ritual required)

Induce Panic

This sorcery causes its target to be seized by overwhelming fear; its target runs away from the caster as fast as possible for 1xcaster level minutes, trying to round as many corners as possible in the process. This condition is negated by the following: Dispel Magic, Remove Curse and Awe/Inspire. No rational decisions may be made during panicked flight, not even to not leap to one's death (for example).

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Major Illusion column.

Neutralize Poison

This spell channels through the sorcerer the gods' distaste for Téकुmel's many native venoms and poisons. Feshénga, Gerednyá, Hlýss, Lrí, Nenyélu, Qáqtla, Qól, Teqéqmu, Vringálu and Zrné all have poisons that – if a saving throw is not made – kill in a matter of minutes. There are smaller creatures with similar venoms, such as the Aulléb-lizard. There are vegetal poisons, such as the Food of the Ssú, just as lethal. This spell completely and totally eliminates a venom, poison or toxin from the spell's target's body, restoring that poisoned person to a state of health (even if they failed their saving throw vs poison). This is the one spell that worshipers of the tlomitlanyal and worshipers of the tlókiriqáluyal cooperate on in terms of research and maintaining effectiveness.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Dispel Magic column

See Invisible

This spell channels through the sorcerer the gods' awareness, allowing the caster to see invisible creatures (such as the spectral Hurú'u). Interestingly, a magic user worshipping the tlomitlanyal sees the invisible creature as dark against rays of light emanating from the centre of Téकुmel; a magician of the tlókiriqáluyal sees the invisible creature as light against rays of darkness cascading down from the outer void. This spell can also be cast on others in the sorcerer's party; each -1 to Likelihood of Spell Success adds another able to see the invisible.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Sense and Detection column

Fealty's Hammer

For a number of combat rounds equal to the caster's level, this spell causes him upon whom it is cast to battle with divine intensity. The target's level is doubled for purposes of combat, and this doubling also effects damage, hit points (which are doubled), saving throws, and divine intervention. At the spell's completion, all values return to normal. Damage, however, remains the amount suffered while under the spell. Thus, a warrior normally having 18 hit points submits to the Fealty's Hammer. In combat his hit points seem to be 36, and the warrior takes twenty points of damage and keeps on fighting. When the spell expires, the warrior dies. A remedy for this is to seek healing before the conjuration's duration, which is measured in minutes, expires.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Minor Illusion column

Wave of Shadows

The sorcerer creates a flickering pattern of light and shadow that strobes in the air before the eyes of the spell's target(s). The wave of contrast washes about for 1xcaster level minutes, and then subsides. Every creature in the area who sees the pattern must attempt a saving throw vs hypnosis. Upon a failed save, the creature becomes enthralled. While bound by this conjuration, the creature is incapacitated. The spell is particularly effective against semi-intelligent beings such as Chnélhu, Dzór, Sérudla, and Sró (saving throw reduced by two). It is less effective against hypnotic creatures like Ssú, Chashkéri, Tsóggú, and Marashyálu (saving throw increased by two). It is ineffective against automatons, androids and the undead (saving throw automatically successful). Incapacitated creatures lose all action during their turns.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Minor Illusion column

Mirror Images

This spell channels through the sorcerer the creativity, multiplicity, and coldness of the gods. The caster creates three illusory duplicates of himself. Each duplicate exactly mirrors the sorcerer's physical appearance, even were that appearance to change. Each also behaves exactly as the caster behaves and speaks in exactly his voice. The caster need not direct the images' actions or words. They are Level III beings, having 20 hit points (immunity to double damage and instant death) and doing +1 damage in melee. Once created, these sorcerous beings defend their master and do his bidding, but their duration is completely random. The referee must roll 1d20 at the start of every encounter; results of 1 through 10 indicate that the duplicates instantly thereafter vanish. Such are the gods, "distant and cool from our ken."

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Major Illusion column (-2 for greater difficulty)

680. Mid LoSS Category Bonus Abilities (sorcerers of both cultures)

The following skills and spells are not universally taught within all priestly colleges; some have been rediscovered, or even reengineered, during the later centuries of the Time of no Kings, or even during the Second Imperium; some are found in manuals written millennia ago by legendary wizards such as Thómar the Ever-living or Subadím the Sorcerer.

Devices and Apparatus

This skill teaches the sorcerer all about the material equipment upon which his later career depends. Obviously, each device or apparatus is an entire field of study, but at high levels of experience the skill represents lores regarding Eyes, globes, lenses, effectuator vats, transfusors, and all kinds of other laboratory equipment. Benefits by referee agreement, but at high levels should include a +1/+2 bonus to the Control Underworld Denizens and Control Undead spells.

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence

LoSS: Challenging column

Thaumaturgy (tlokiriqáluyal)

This skill represents a knowledge of Tsolyánu's oldest and most complicated religion. It centers on the governing comradeship of Vimúhla and Chiténg, but includes the elder evil of Hry'y, the ancient secrets of Ksárul, and the

dissolution of Dlamélish. It also includes the strange relationship between Sárku and Durritlámish, and their connection to the rest of the gods. The overwhelming thrust of all tlokiriqáluyal mythology is "the forever war between the Rulers of the Shadow and the Stasis Lords". As level increases, songs, ceremonies, rituals, initiations, mysteries, and even esoteric procedures and quasi-sorcerous transformations are mastered.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability, Intelligence

LoSS: column one for most widely-known dogma; column ten for deepest secrets

Wizard's Senses

This spell channels through the sorcerer the gods' omnipresence, allowing the caster to see and hear through walls or other obstructions (but curious as it is, not through steel). Assuming the spell is not blocked, it is as though the sorcerer were standing in the target space, seeing (as long as there is light) and hearing everything that transpires. This spell can be detected by Detect Evil and dispelled by Dispel Magic. If the location is known to the caster, this spell's range is 1000xcaster level meters. If the caster desires to scout out unknown locations, the spell's range is 100xcaster level meters.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Sense and Detection column

Illusionary Defenders

This spell conjures out of the substance of the tlomitlanyal three level-V mannequins, shape of the hero Hrúgga armed in steel. Low intelligence, but still sentient, enemies receive saving throw rolls to debilitate (halve hit points, combat skill, and damage) these illusions, but at -2 to the test. Intelligent foes receive normal saves. Unintelligent animals, automatons and androids automatically debilitate Illusionary Defenders. Undead receive no saving throw. These little Hrúggas have 30 hit points, fight as though heavily armoured, and do warrior damage. The spell is prepared by fashioning three tiny mannequins of wood and chlén-hide. The spell is off-limits to tlokiriqáluyal sorcerers.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Major Illusion column (-2 for greater difficulty)

Eaters of Souls

This spell conjures out of the substance of the tlokiriqáluyal three level-V imps, hideous and gnarled and hard-as-stone. Low intelligence, but still sentient, enemies receive saving throw rolls to debilitate (halve hit points, combat skill, and damage) these illusions, but at -2 to the test. Intelligent foes receive normal saves. Unintelligent animals, automatons and androids automatically debilitate Eaters of Souls. Undead receive no saving throw. These little monsters have 25 hit points, fight as though medium armoured, and do infiltrator damage. The spell is prepared by fashioning three tiny mannequins of wood and chlén-hide. The spell is off-limits to tlomitlanyal sorcerers.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Major Illusion column (+2 for lesser difficulty)

Shield of Qón/Tkél

This spell crystalizes The Null into an invisible canopy of force that protects a circular area six feet in diameter, preventing all those within the canopy from suffering fast-moving kinetic, energetic or psychic damage. Included in these are missiles, slay beams, force drivers, telekinesis and anything similar. Slow-moving threats like physical creatures, armed foes, androids, automatons, undead, and demons materially manifested are prevented by

the shield from damaging those within if the individuals fail to make saving throws vs spells. Even should an enemy succeed at their save, 12-level combat rounds are required to enter the shielded area.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Create Essences column

Destroy Undead

This spell severs an undead (whose level is at least half that of the caster) from its sorcerous link to Durritlámish, god of Undeath. Those who have successfully cast this incantation report seeing a cord of coppery miasmic light – leading from the undead's tailbone down into the ground – snapping into two and shrivelling quickly away. The undead then collapses. Multiple targets may be chosen, but at a -2 Likelihood of Spell Success reduction for each above one.

Note that necromancers, as opposed to sorcerers working in the realm of decay and dissolution, may never learn this spell.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Dispel Magic column (-2 for greater difficulty)

Darkness/Light

This spell channels through the sorcerer the dual forces of The Null (a cold darkness) and the sun Tuléng (a searing light). Either can be chosen as the sorcerer desires. Each combat round that a worshiper of the tloomitlanyal (or allied or domesticated animal) spends within a circle of darkness causes 1d6 damage. Counter-intuitively, Vimúhla-worshippers also suffer darkness damage. Each combat round that a worshiper of the tlokiriqáluyal (or allied or bound creature) spends within a circle of light causes 1d6 damage. Biridlú, Chashkéri, Hli'ír, Marashyálu, Thunrú'u, Tsú'uru and demons are damaged in this way. The undead Hurú'u and Qumqúm suffer even more (2d6). Automaton, androids and mutants created by the Masters of the Shadow, however, only suffer 1-3 points of damage. Again, counter to what one might expect, the darkness appears as a disintegrating curtain of black that drops down from the outer void. The supposed sunlight rises up like a waving sheet of searing yellow-gold from the center of the planet. This spell lasts for 1xcaster level turns.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Create Essences column

Power-Word Stun

This psychical weapon afflicts its target with severe stunning trauma. Upon a successful casting, the target suffers (adjusted by level as per the table below) either complete paralysis, stress and lethargy, or demoralisation for 11-victim level turns. This shockwave is ineffective against the undead, but automaton and androids are as vulnerable as anyone else. Once inflicted, its victim has a chance of recovering. At the end of every turn, each victim tries to roll under his Constitution basic talent. Succeeding to do so raises that person one effect step, i.e., from paralysed to stressed and lethargic to demoralised to restored. Thus, fully restoring a player-character stunned to immobility would take three of these successes.

level-I to level-IV	level-V to level-VII	level-VIII to level-IX	level-X
20 = demoralised	19-20 = demor.	18-20 = demor.	17-20 = demor.
18-19 = lethargic	15-18 = lethargic	12-17 = lethargic	09-16 = lethargic
1-17 = paralysed	1-14 = paralysed	1-11 = paralysed	1-08 = paralysed

Victims subject to paralysis are not allowed to take action until the spell expires or they recover a step. Those subject to lethargy must take a 10-level failure threshold reduction to every action they attempt, and they attempt actions only every second combat round, until the spell expires or they recover a step. Those who are demoralized take a 5-level failure threshold reduction to all attempted actions until the spell expires or they recover. Dispel Magic and Remove Curse can also be employed to restore a victim of this spell.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Produce Essences column

Madness

This spell channels through the sorcerer the warping insanities of Tékumel's current dimension. Humans were not meant to know outer dimensional darkness. They cannot but be driven mad when confronted with The Null in all its depth and meaning. This incantation is permanent, unless its victim makes his saving throw vs spells. The spell does not operate on the undead, automatons, androids or creatures created by sorcery. It does, however, banish demons (why this is, remains unclear). A character affected by this spell is surrendered to the referee. Often the maddened character will seek union with The Null. He will attempt to enter the underworld, and to delve as deeply as possible as quickly as he can. Nonbeing results pretty quickly. Until a Remove Curse is applied, the affected character's madness reigns.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Control Creature column

The Hands of Krá the Mighty

This psychical weapon grapples its target with terrible strength, hence the reference to the Dragon Warrior, Krá the Mighty. Upon a successful casting, the target suffers either full damage (6d6), half damage (3d6) or no damage, adjusted by level as per the table below. This weapon is ineffective against armoured robots of the ancients, but automatons, androids and undead are affected. Once cast, the weapon has a chance of ricocheting to another victim. Each creature within thirty feet of this spell's initial target must also roll a saving throw vs spells, but each's roll is modified by its Dexterity basic talent.

level-I to level-IV	level-V to level-VII	level-VIII to level-IX	level-X
20 = no dmg 18-19 = half dmg 1-17 = full dmg	19-20 = no dmg 15-18 = half dmg 1-14 = full dmg	18-20 = no dmg 12-17 = half dmg 1-11 = full dmg	17-20 = no dmg 09-16 = half dmg 1-08 = full dmg

Only sorcerers worshipping the tlomítlanyal may learn this spell, and even they must have access to the Kranuóntio Tlatlúmyàduyal, the Book of the Five Fingers. This book is held in the Great Library of Tumissa by the clergy of the Temple of Karakán. A successful NPC Reaction Table roll and appropriate cross-clan obligations and treasures can gain for the good sorcerer access to this grimoire.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Produce Essences column

Cure Critical Wounds

This spell channels through the sorcerer the healing power of the gods. It restores 75% of the wounded character's total hit points lost to injury if that character belongs to the same culture (tlomítlanyal or tlókiriqáluyal) as

the caster. Neutrals (and – oddly – those who worship Vimúhla) have only 50% of total hit points lost to injury restored. Devotees of the opposite alignment never have any hit points restored, and worshippers of Durritlámish and their creations, the undead, take as a result of this spell 75% of their current hit points in further damage.

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence, Psychic Ability

LoSS: Major Illusion column

Cursed Glyph of Warding

Sorcerers having access to a scriptorium inscribe glyphs of retribution upon a book, scroll, wall or similar object bearing written information. The glyph casts when read by any creature, NPC, or player-character not authorised to read the object. The curse takes immediate effect upon all beings within a logical radius of the target attempting to access the warded object. The sorcerer responsible for inscribing Cursed Glyph and up to four other named-as-authorised persons may read the object; all others trigger the curse (whether they can read the glyph or not). Cursed Glyph can be neutralised with a Dispel Magic at any time. If triggered, the spell has one of the randomly determined effects that follow:

Roll 1d20.

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 1-5 | The Hands of Krá the Mighty affects all within ten feet |
| 6-10 | Power-Word Stun affects all within hearing |
| 11-13 | Inflict Disease affects all within thirty feet |
| 14-15 | Doomkill affects all within fifty feet |
| 16 | Vapour of Death affects all within the spell's range |
| 17 | A Wall of Fire engulfs all within range, and rotates around the glyph for one hour |
| 18 | All within range are Teleported to the underworld's lowest level |
| 19 | Mind-Bar affects all within ten feet with total amnesia |
| 20 | Summon Demon causes to emerge from the glyph 1 large and powerful demonic being, Kúhlagesh the Killer. Unless divine intervention occurs, all within range are ingested. |

LoSS: Produce Essences column

690. High LoSS Category Bonus Abilities (sorcerers of both cultures)

The following skills and spells are the most carefully guarded secrets of the priestly colleges. These are ancient magics, the stuff of the Golden Age and the chaos that immediately followed its fall. They include transformations, flights via teleportation, conjuring raw energies such as fire or chaos, and summoning demons and the long dead. It also includes the skill of studying and operating millennia-old devices of the ancients.

Player-characters could be required by the referee to travel to the location of a specific manual in order to learn one of the following. This location need not even lie within Tsolyánu. Fire spells are best sought in Mu'ugalavyá, summoning spells in Livyánu.

Encompass Devices of the Ancients

The profession of sorcerer eventually allows its practitioner to ascertain the uses, operation and condition of a device of the ancients when first seeing, and when first touching it. Encompass channels through the magic user the awareness of the knowledge gods, thereby allowing him to identify ancient devices, understand their operation, repair them to working condition, and

even modify them in useful ways. This spell allows one to alter the function of Eyes, modify aircars, re-energize Lightning Bringers (which can be found in hand-held sizes), analyze knowledge globes, information storage systems and calculators, and command automatons (i.e., a +1 bonus to the Control Automaton/ Android spell).

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence

LoSS: Ancient Abominations column

Mind-Bar

This crude, forceful rune puts its stamp upon the mind of its target. It bars the mind from certain thoughts, according to the casting sorcerer's desire. It can be used to reveal thoughts, plans, hatreds, or fears. It can be used to unearth past actions or to see and hear what the victim saw and heard some time in the past. Additionally, it bars its victim from revealing secrets, from speaking lies, or from feeling resentment toward someone. Mind-Bars are employed in Avanthár to guarantee loyalty to the Emperor. They are employed by the Emperor's tacticians, spies and assassins to control agents and to force quests upon them. Mind-Bar differs from Awe/Inspire and the many Control spells by being permanent. Once cast, the mind is altered in profound ways; only divine intervention, the grant of a demon, or the ray of an Eye (the Incomparable Eye of Command) may return the target mind to its former condition.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Control Creatures (-2 for greater difficulty)

Inflict Disease

This necromantic bane infects its target with the terrible disease, the Plague of the White Hand. Upon a successful casting, the target suffers either full damage (6d6), half damage (3d6) or no damage daily for 10-level days, adjusted by level as per the table below. This malady is ineffective against automatons and the undead, but androids are as vulnerable as anyone else. Once inflicted, the disease has a chance of spreading. Each person within thirty feet of the inflicted target must also roll a saving throw vs spells, but each's roll is modified by his Constitution basic talent.

level-I to level-IV	level-V to level-VII	level-VIII to level-IX	level-X
20 = no damage 18-19 = half dmg 1-17 = full dmg	19-20 = no dmg 15-18 = half dmg 1-14 = full dmg	18-20 = no dmg 12-17 = half dmg 1-11 = full dmg	17-20 = no dmg 09-16 = half dmg 1-08 = full dmg

Only sorcerers worshipping the tlokiriqáluyal may learn this spell, and even they must have access to the Púrohlan znaZhánul znaMssúma, the Book of the Dance of Death. This book is jealously guarded in the evil city of Purdimál by the clergy of the Temple of Hry'y, but a successful NPC Reaction Table roll and appropriate cross-clan obligations and treasures can gain for the evil sorcerer access to this grimoire.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Produce Essences column

Control Automaton/Android

This spell channels through the techno-sage the insane mental program of Ksárul, Ancient Lord of Secrets. It causes to be emitted a radius of control over all constructs, automatons and androids within its area of effect (which equals 10,000xcaster level meters). Five broad categories of machine-men

may be sorcerously bound: 1) Páyeth, 2) Yéleth, 3) Clockwork Automatons, 4) Ru'ún, 5) Sentient Machine-Life (Maidens of Ngá and Tgá'a Khméimra). Control Automaton/Android has a likelihood of spell success reduction of -4 for every additional category of construct attempted to be controlled above one. Example: a highly psychic level-X sorcerer succeeds with a roll of 10 or less if he targets only one category of construct (say, Páyeth brought forth by a foe's Eye of Calling Forth an Unconquerable Army). If two categories of constructs are targeted (say, the Páyeth AND their Ru'ún commander) then his success threshold drops to 06. The techno-sage may also extend the spell's radius by 10,000-meter increments by accepting further -4 reductions in spell success likelihood. Control Automaton's duration equals caster level in minutes.

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence, Dexterity

LoSS: Ancient Abominations column (ritual required)

Vapours

Vapours are fogs of magical moisture that roil forth in a target area visible to the spell caster. Seven types of vapours are known, each with its singular characteristics. This spell originates on the Qadárdalikoi battlefield, where the area of combat for national conflicts is two kilometers deep and wide; therefore, all vapours are two kilometers deep, two wide, and three meters tall. It takes 2d6 full turns for a vapour to spread out to its full extent. The seven vapour types are: Demoralisation, Sleep, Paralysis, Poison, Madness, Blindness and Death. These afflict, with the named condition, all those in its effect area coming into contact with the vapour. Vapours may be dispelled; they may also be dissipated by weather, as per the situation and referee discretion.

Perhaps because vapours have been used in great wars for millennia, the debility they cause their victims goes up as victim level increases. Once having failed to evade a vapour, its victim gets no saving throw vs poison, but rather must roll on the table below:

level-I to level-IV	level-V to level-VII	level-VIII to level-IX	level-X
17-20 = save 09-16 = partial effect 1-08 = full effect	18-20 = save 12-17 = partial effect 1-11 = full effect	19-20 = save 15-18 = partial effect 1-14 = full effect	20 = save 18-19 = partial effect 1-17 = full effect

All creatures subject to partial effect subtract 12-level from all skill and ability thresholds until the end of the next hour, whereupon they try to roll under their Constitution. If this is successful, the creatures recover. If not, subtractions continue, hour by hour, until they roll under Constitution. All creatures subject to full effect lose all actions until the end of the next hour, whereupon they also try to roll under Constitution. If this roll is successful the creatures then become partially affected. All creatures subject to death perish, but may be resurrected. Vapours have a duration of 6xcaster level turns, and disperse so slowly that – given space or exit paths – those endangered by vapours can easily evade them (vapours move outward in all directions from a central point and move downward when possible).

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Major Illusion column (-2 for greater difficulty)

Doomkill

This powerfully destructive sorcery is no fireball, nor lightning bolt. Utterly invisible, it suddenly manifests as an explosion of The Null, all of it, in the

target volume of space, annihilating all touched by the blast. The caster is required to have sight of his target area, and must roll Dexterity or less on 1d20 to have Doomkill conflagrate there. Assuming the spell strikes true, no one within its effect area (5xcaster level feet) receives a saving throw; instead, the following table is used:

prime requisite score 8-13	prime requisite score 14-17	prime requisite score 18-19	prime requisite score 20
20 = stun 18-19 = damage 1-17 = annihilation	19-20 = stun 15-18 = damage 1-14 = annihilation	18-20 = stun 12-17 = damage 1-11 = annihilation	17-20 = stun 09-16 = damage 1-08 = annihilation

Any player-character subject to stun is barred from any action at all for 11-level minutes. Any subject to damage instantly loses all hit points except 1d6 and is also stunned. Any subject to annihilation is vanished from mortal and physical existence, with no possibility of revivification.

If Dexterity or less is NOT rolled by the caster, any erstwhile targets are permitted saving throws vs spells. A natural 20 on this missed roll, however, indicates a catastrophic misfire. In that unfortunate case, the Doomkill manifests right on top of the caster and his party. No saving throw is allowed (or needed for the targets). Roll on the above table.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Produce Essences column (-2 for difficulty)

Walls

Walls are barriers of magical substance that move slowly away from a spell caster toward his opponent(s). There are seven types, each with its singular characteristics. This spell originates in the Hirilákte Arenas, where the field of combat for magical duels is ten meters wide; therefore, all walls are ten meters wide, three meters high, and one meter thick. The only place they are useful, outside a formal dueling space, is inside buildings or in the halls and passages of the underworld. The seven types of walls are: Fire, Ice, Stone, Wind, Tangle vines, Swords and Nullity. These burn, freeze, petrify, suffocate, puncture, slice or obliterate those coming into contact with them. Walls cannot be dispelled; they may only be destroyed by other walls, as per the situation and referee discretion.

Perhaps because walls have been used in magical duels for millennia, the destruction they cause increases as their victims' level increases. Once having failed to evade a wall, its target gets no saving throw vs spells, but rather must roll on the table below:

level-I to level-IV	level-V to level-VII	level-VIII to level-IX	level-X
17-20 = shock 09-16 = damage 1-08 = death	18-20 = shock 12-17 = damage 1-11 = death	19-20 = shock 15-18 = damage 1-14 = death	20 = shock 18-19 = damage 1-17 = death

Any creature subject to shock subtracts 10-level from all skill and ability thresholds until the end of the next combat round, whereupon it tries to roll under its Constitution. If this is successful the creature recovers. If not, the subtractions continue, round by round, until its player rolls under Con. Any creature subject to damage loses all hit points except 1d6, and is also shocked. Any creature subject to death has died, but may be resurrected. Walls have a duration of 11-caster level minutes, and move so slowly that

– given space or exit paths – those endangered by walls can easily evade them (walls move in perfectly straight lines and never turn).

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Major Illusion column (-2 for greater difficulty)

Teleport Self (with Others)

This spell instantly transports 2d6 beings to a predetermined place, which must be set with wards beforehand (to guide the magical travel). The spell has a maximum range of 1000xcaster level meters. If a natural 20 is rolled on the LoSS Table (and this is a miss) when the sorcerer casts this powerful incantation, then a catastrophic misfire may have occurred. Roll against the spell misfire table below, using the caster's Prime Requisite score to settle his odds of surviving.

prime requisite score 8-13	prime requisite score 14-17	prime requisite score 18-19	prime requisite score 20
20 = drain 18-19 = damage 1-17 = disintegration	19-20 = drain 15-18 = damage 1-14 = disintegration	18-20 = drain 12-17 = damage 1-11 = disintegration	17-20 = drain 09-16 = damage 1-08 = disintegration

A sorcerer subject to drain can engage in no strenuous activity for a full day, and cannot cast any sorcery for one week. One subject to damage instantly loses all hit points except 1d6 and is also drained. One subject to disintegration is cast into the illimitable dark that is Tékumel's dimension; he can never ever be revived.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Produce Substances column

Shapechange Self/Other

This spell channels through the sorcerer the gods' immanence in each and every form of life on Tékumel. The caster changes the shape of his actual body; he does not merely mask it with an illusion. The sorcerer may become a Kyni-bird, and fly with exactly the ability that those falcons have. He may become a Hú-bat, a Kúruku, a Chri-fly – anything! The transformation lasts for 1xcaster level hours, although the sorcerer may return at any time to his original shape. It is said that those who spend too much time in shape of another creature risk permanent transmogrification. Even at lower level, personality should be affected.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Produce Substances column

The Silver Halo of Soul Stealing

This spell launches an arrow-fast circlet of glittering energy through the air towards its target. The caster must roll his Dexterity or less on 1d20 to strike true; assuming he does, the halo vanishes into The Null, taking the accurately struck victim's spirit-soul with it. The effect of losing one's soul is as one might expect: the victim may not speak, respond to stimuli, act to defend himself, etc. The victim is rendered a soulless hulk, randomly but sluggishly moving to satisfy only the most physical and primordial urges and needs. Should a player-character ever be struck with this vicious spell, the referee takes control of its character sheet. Only those devoted to the tlokiriqáluyal may master this spell, and even they are often persecuted for doing so (for some believe the spell derives from The One Other). A book of spells known to contain this bane is the Duré'ep Tkásh Sneqsi'va, the Pessimistic Treatise of Total Inaction, kept at a monastery in Milumanayá.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Produce Essences column (-2 for greater difficulty)

Summon Demon

One large and terrible demonic being is conjured into the presence of the sorcerer foolish enough to employ this spell. What demons are exactly is unknown to the Tsolyáni; some argue that they are aspects of the gods; others, that they are minions; still others, that they are creations or mingled gleanings – the mystery remains. What is completely unmysterious is their power and their hunger for human souls. To reflect this, the sorcerer using this ability must not only make a LoSS roll to summon the demon, he must instantly thereafter make a binding roll (using the Demonic Binding Table below) to control it. A failed binding roll unleashes the demon upon caster, his party, and all others in the vicinity. This means ingestion, with no chance of ever being returned to life. A successful binding means instant death for the sorcerer's enemies (if that is his wish). It might alternatively mean the answer to a riddle, the knowledge of a lost incantation, the love of a lovely maiden, or the position of emperor.

level-VII	level-VIII	level-IX	level-X
20 = bound 18-19 = no effect 1-17 = ingestion	19-20 = bound 15-18 = no effect 1-14 = ingestion	18-20 = bound 12-17 = no effect 1-11 = ingestion	17-20 = bound 09-16 = no effect 1-08 = ingestion

While one might expect that only evil sorcerers may summon demons, the fact is that several of them answer also to the conjurings of tlomitlanyal worshipers. Human sacrifices, rare magical items, precious gems, gold and eternal servitude may increase the chance of a successful binding. This is left to referee discretion.

A whole campaign could be devised around a sorcerer researching the Summon Demon spell. He might have to sail all the way to the mysterious land of Livyánu to complete his quest.

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Control Entities column (lengthy ritual required)

Create Magic Item

A sorcerer equipped with a laboratory and either a scriptorium, a jewelry-making bench, a small forge, or other workstation may by employing this ability invest into some physical object various magical powers. The powers investable include spells such as Detect Evil, Produce Light, Control Undead, Control Underworld Denizen and Shapechange Self. They might include, as well, any spell the referee judges would work fine established in a physical nexus. Tsolyáni folklore bursts with tales of amulets, talismans, magic rods, golden rings, wizards' staffs, ensorcelled swords, cursed daggers, scrolls of spells and much more. To create a permanent magic item, however, takes time, treasure, and a toll-upon-the-caster. Part of the sorcerer's own vitality must be sacrificed to weld together the magical and the mundane. After a successful LoSS roll, the enchanter must subtract 1 point from his Strength, Constitution and Psychic Ability. These basic talents may be returned back to their former values only through Increases in Basic Talents (Sec. 418). The amount of treasure necessary to craft the invested item is arrived at by player and referee together. A golden ring, for example, requires an ounce or more of purest gold, plus costly sorcerous engraving substances. The total might equal 5000 Káitars in value. The time needed to smelt and cast the ring, shape it, engrave with hieroglyphs its surface, and to conduct the investment ritual, could exceed a week or more. A dagger could take

two months. A sword, two years. The time frame should be as cinematic but realistic as possible!

Basic Talent(s): Psychic Ability

LoSS: Produce Substances column (-2 for increased difficulty)

The Grey Hand

Even the greatest sorcerer now living, even the yellow thing, Fú Hsí, himself (who now advises the Baron of Yán Kór), would be hard pressed to discover the origins of this direst of spells. Alone of all the enchantments given to mankind, the Grey Hand allows no saving throw, no divine intervention either. The target of this horrible spell (who must be physically touched by the evil sorcerer attempting to apply its destructiveness), should that target not dodge away, is reduced instantly to about a kilogram of fine, gritty grey dust, like nothing ever seen on Tékumel. Some rumour that it is the soil of the Unending Grey. Whatever the case, the victim's soul is atomized totally and its body can never be restored. Only select elites among the sorcerers of the tlokiriqáluyal learn this ritual. The Grey Hand may only be found in the Púrohlan Znamrisha Kagékte, the Book of the Unnamed God. Guarded in the city of Ngála, this tome is available to view by those truly dedicated to evil.

Basic Talent(s): Intelligence, Psychic Ability

LoSS: Ancient Abomination column

700. Combat, Damage Done, Physical Stun and Armor

Combat is a fact of life in the dark world of the Second Imperium. The planet is alien and poisonous. There are numerous violent and vengeful races of nonhumans desirous of human blood. There are wars, skirmishes, ambushes, plots and the power-lust of sorcerers – all endangering the lives of poor player-characters. Everyone will have to kill at some point to survive.

The combat system in *Empire of the Petal Throne* remains true to its core culture, profession and level mechanic. Three combat tables are found below: Warriors use the first; Infiltrators use the second; Sorcerers use the third. The numbers throughout the tables are failure thresholds. A combatant, after adjusting his thresholds up or down according to opponent profession, Dexterity, Strength, Intelligence, skill, steel or enchanted weapons, spells, or even divine intervention, rolls 1d20 and hopes the result is equal to or lower than the adjusted threshold. If so, the combatant has landed a blow against his target and may calculate damage. The defender gets no defence roll. That function is subsumed in rolling against the defender's level. If the combatant rolls exactly his threshold number, i.e., in the case below a roll of exactly 13, then double damage/ instant death rules come into play. These are explained below.

As an example: a bandit, let us assume, has attacked the young female sorceress who has been of use to our discussion throughout these rules. The bandit's Dexterity gives him a +2 "to hit" bonus, and his Level 4 is opposed to the sorceress' Level 2. However, he suffers a -1 penalty when fighting sorcerers (an effect of Tsolyáni culture more than much else). Consulting the table below, the bandit warrior does damage if he rolls a 13 or less. Assuming neither bandit nor sorceress are armoured (see Sec. 550), a single 1d20 is rolled. The ruffian's result is a 07. He damages the young sorceress.

710. The Warrior Combat Table

	Defence L1	Defence L2	Defence L3	Defence L4	Defence L5	Defence L6	Defence L7	Defence L8	Defence L9	Defence L10
Attack L1	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Attack L2	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
Attack L3	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
Attack L4	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4
Attack L5	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5
Attack L6	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6
Attack L7	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7
Attack L8	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8
Attack L9	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9
Attack L10	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10

715. The Infiltrator Combat Table

	Defence L1	Defence L2	Defence L3	Defence L4	Defence L5	Defence L6	Defence L7	Defence L8	Defence L9	Defence L10
Attack L1	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	-1
Attack L2	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Attack L3	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Attack L4	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
Attack L5	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
Attack L6	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4
Attack L7	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5
Attack L8	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6
Attack L9	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7
Attack L10	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8

720. The Sorcerer Combat Table

	Defence L1	Defence L2	Defence L3	Defence L4	Defence L5	Defence L6	Defence L7	Defence L8	Defence L9	Defence L10
Attack L1	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	-1	-2	-3
Attack L2	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	-1	-2

Attack L3	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	-1
Attack L4	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Attack L5	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Attack L6	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
Attack L7	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
Attack L8	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4
Attack L9	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5
Attack L10	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6

730. Tsolyáni Taboos at Work

In the paragraph above, it was mentioned that attack failure thresholds change, either up or down, because of the professions of the combatants. In the example, the warrior bandit suffered a -1 penalty when attacking our sorceress. Explaining this is simple: in “rock-paper-scissors” fashion, each profession gains a +1 bonus against one of the other professions, but suffers a -1 penalty against the other of the three.

Warriors are superstitious. The eyes of sorcerers are enthralling. They get a -1 penalty when fighting sorcerers. Warriors despise infiltrators; they cut right into them. Warriors get a +1 bonus when battling infiltrators.

Infiltrators are smart and supple. They avoid damage when they can, and suffer, therefore, a -1 penalty when fighting warriors (who smell indecisiveness). Infiltrators see through tricks and dart forward before sorcerers can ready their spells. They get a +1 bonus when striking sorcerers.

Sorcerers are not meant for melee. The quickness of infiltrators puts them off their concentration. Spell-casters get a -1 penalty when slashing forth with a dagger at infiltrators. The slowness of warriors, however, gains for sorcerers the chance to mesmerise them. Sorcerers enjoy a +1 bonus in close struggle with warriors.

740. Damage Done

As with everything else, Profession, Culture, Level, Strength, Dexterity and even Charisma (in reverse) affect damage done. These affect the number of damage dice rolled, and bonus damage totals added to those rolls. Damage dice are always d6 in *Empire of the Petal Throne*.

The default damage table below details the damage done by warriors. The damage done by infiltrators is one level lower (i.e., a level-IV infiltrator does the damage of a level-III warrior). Likewise, the damage done by sorcerers is two levels lower. This replicates the fact that infiltrators and sorcerers are not damage dealers; they have different means of victory.

Those devoted to the tlomítlanyal add 1 damage to each damage done die when striking a tlokiriqáluyal worshiper. They also add 1 damage when landing a blow against a hostile nonhuman species (Ssú, Hlýss, Hlútrgu, etc.). They take 1 damage away from each damage die roll when attacking a woman, child, elderly person, and so on.

Those devoted to the tlokiriqáluyal add 2 damage to each damage done die when striking a tlomítlanyal worshiper. They add nothing to damage when in a fight with hostile nonhumans. Those in thrall to the Evil Ones subtract nothing while attacking women, children, or the elderly.

Each profession adds +1 damage to damage done against the profession over which it has advantage, and also subtracts -1 damage from any foe that is classed as a profession which has advantage over it.

Strength and Dexterity add a maximum of 5 damage points to damage done. Charisma subtracts 1 damage if the target's beauty is Excellent.

The daggers of sorcerers subtract 2 damage points because of their size. The pole-axes of warriors add 2 damage points for the same reason. Most weapons do the damage below.

When calculating damage done, refer to the table below to find the total number of d6 (plus adds) to roll for damage.

745. Physical Stun

Any time a player-character or enemy combatant rolls two or more d6 for their attack damage (this can happen as early as level-IV for human characters) and the dice result in doubles, the target of the attack may be physically stunned. He must immediately make a saving throw vs Physical Stun. If this saving throw is successful, the combat round proceeds normally. Failure forces an automatic loss of action for the target on this round and an automatic loss of initiative on the next one.

750. Damage Table

	Defence L1	Defence L2	Defence L3	Defence L4	Defence L5	Defence L6	Defence L7	Defence L8	Defence L9	Defence L10
Attack L1	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6-1	1d6-1	1d6-1	1d6-2	1d6-2	1d6-3
Attack L2	1d6+1	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6-1	1d6-1	1d6-1	1d6-2	1d6-2
Attack L3	1d6+2	1d6+1	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6-1	1d6-1	1d6-1	1d6-2
Attack L4	1d6+3	1d6+2	1d6+1	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6-1	1d6-1	1d6-1
Attack L5	2d6	1d6+3	1d6+2	1d6+1	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6-1	1d6-1
Attack L6	2d6+2	2d6	1d6+3	1d6+2	1d6+1	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6-1
Attack L7	2d6+3	2d6+2	2d6	1d6+3	1d6+2	1d6+1	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6
Attack L8	3d6	2d6+3	2d6+2	2d6	1d6+3	1d6+2	1d6+1	1d6	1d6	1d6
Attack L9	3d6+3	3d6	2d6+3	2d6+2	2d6	1d6+3	1d6+2	1d6+1	1d6	1d6
Attack L10	4d6	3d6+3	3d6	2d6+3	2d6+2	2d6	1d6+3	1d6+2	1d6+1	1d6

760. Armour

Armour in *Empire of the Petal Throne* is handled differently than most other role-playing games. There is no "armour class"; failure thresholds are determined by level and abilities alone. Nor is there armour absorption of damage; in the real world, armour deflects even the sharpest of blades. In these rules, the effects of armour are subsumed by the damage roll itself. Our dastardly

bandit in the above example rolls 1d6+2 damage done to the innocent sorceress he has struck. The roll is a 1. The referee rules that the bandit's blade got partially deflected by the sorceress' chlén-hide clan tabard. The 3 points of damage she takes is subtracted from her 8 Hit Points. She cries out for mercy.

Armour in these rules comes in just three varieties: heavy, medium, and light. Warriors wear heavy armour. Infiltrators wear medium armour. Sorcerers wear light armor. Armour affects combat only in the case of differences in armour protection, as expressed by the table below:

	Light Armor	Medium Armor	Heavy Armor
Light Armor	no effect	no effect	no effect
Medium Armor	+1d20/attack	no effect	no effect
Heavy Armor	+2d20/attack	+1d20/attack	no effect

Thus, had the bandit in the above example been wearing heavy armor, he would have rolled 3d20 attack dice instead of 1d20. This simulates the fact that the sorceress would have had fewer openings to lunge for, and the bandit would have counted on his armor to protect him (and moved less tentatively as a result). Adding attack d20s is armor's only effect; this adding increases hit and double damage/ instant death chances – it does not garner additional damage dice rolls under ordinary circumstances. Thus, if the above bandit, rolling 3d20 because of his armour, had rolled 13 or under on all three dice, he still would have done only 1d6+2 damage to the sorceress.

770. Surprise and Reaction Time

When an encounter occurs between two hostile parties, the highest level character in each party combats the other for surprise. In other words, each rolls as though attacking the other. Whoever achieves a critical success gains for his group surprise over the other force. Surprise grants to its beneficiary party a free combat round, during which the enemy party may do nothing. Thus, the surprise winning group may immediately flee, organise for skirmish, or instantly attack its foes. Once the actions of the surprise combat round are completed, the surprise winning group has the right to act before its enemy on the first regular combat round. Only after this is completed does the surprised party get to strike back. A two-action advantage argues mightily for attempting to achieve surprise. Certain skills make achieving surprise easier; these include melee and missile techniques, stealth techniques, evaluate foe, and preternatural senses. Conversely, various creatures are impossible to surprise (the Ru'ún, for one). How these bonuses and penalties affect the awarding of surprise is left to logic and referee discretion. A pulp partial realism should govern all.

Most encounters will not be characterised by surprise. Reaction time is in ordinary cases calculated individually, using profession, level and physical speed to do so. Assuming a skirmish between parties roughly equal in power, warriors (who are trained to act decisively) act before infiltrators, who act before sorcerers. Higher level opponents can negate this professional advantage, i.e., a level-VI sorcerer acts before a level-I warrior, but the initiative generally belongs to warriors when blades are drawn. After profession and level have been compared, the Dexterity basic talent can be used – especially to break ties. Once

all participants in combat have been given their reaction time order, combat proceeds.

780. Binding and Disarming

Tsolyáni weapons are rife with hooks and barbs perfect for binding into an opponent's blade. The technique of disarming one's enemy is nearly universal in its practice throughout the Five Empires. To simulate this, any combatant has the option to trade 6 damage points for a successful disarm. Any disarmed combatant loses one full combat round while he rearms. Example: in the combat described previously, a bandit had wounded our young sorceress for 3 damage points. If he had rolled a total of 6 damage points, instead of 3, he could have opted to disarm the young woman. If he chose to do so, he would trade 6 damage for an essentially free combat round. During this free round, he could drop his weapon and grapple the sorceress, eventually taking her prisoner (unharmd). Tactics such as this are very EPT!

790. Double Damage and Instant Death

As previously described, any character or non-player-character rolling their exact failure threshold number on a d20 attack or ability try has scored "double damage" or a doubly fine success (in the case of an ability attempt). If the result occurs during combat, the lucky player rolls normal damage twice, totals results, and subtracts the damage done from his opponent's hit points. Immediately after, should the player choose, he may try for instant death. The player is not obliged to do this; perhaps the strategy is to subdue the foe. To achieve a killing blow, a supplementary 1d20 roll is made; if the result is within two digits of the original failure threshold, then the opponent, even if a large creature like a Sérudla, is killed outright. In the example of the bandit and the sorceress, the bandit's failure threshold was 13. In that encounter, had the bandit rolled a 13 instead of a 7, he would have had the option of attempting an instant kill. Assuming the bandit to be so cruel, his player would roll another 1d20. Should this second roll result in an 11, 12 or 13, the sorceress would instantly die (from a hit to a vital organ). The instant kill operates on large Sérudla just as well as small sorceresses; they have vulnerable spots too.

800. Saving Throws and Divine Intervention

Viewed objectively, saving throws are a kind of casual divine intervention. Just as there are six basic talents, there are six saving throws. They are Physical Stun, Poison, Hypnosis, Spells, Traps and Eyes (or other, similar, ancient beam weapons). Although each basic talent modifies a different one of these, saving throws are not some kind of resistance powered by basic talents. Nor are they skills or abilities. They are more akin to luck, or gods' grace, than anything else. For that reason, saving throw rules are set forth alongside divine intervention, and are somewhat similar in nature.

While similar, saving throws differ from divine intervention in that players do nothing conscious; their body simply evades misfortune or does not. There is no time for thought, or prayer, or ceremony. Saving throws therefore are really hard to make. They should be. The default setting for all saving throws is one-half of a character's level (rounded up). This default is modified by culture, basic

talents, profession, certain skills and abilities (such as the Minor Curse spell) and even roleplaying.

The tlomítlanyal gain a +1 advantage on Physical Stun, Poison, and Traps. The tlókiriqáluyal gain +1 on Hypnosis, Spells and Eyes.

Each basic talent provides up to a +2 bonus (or -2 penalty) to the saving throw listed under Basic Talents: Bonus or Penalty.

Warriors enjoy a +2 bonus on Physical Stun and Poison. Infiltrators enjoy a +2 bonus on Traps and Eyes. Sorcerers enjoy a +2 bonus on Hypnosis and Spells.

Certain skills and abilities grant their practitioner a +1 bonus to a saving throw. Detect/Disarm Traps, for example, grants such a bonus, as does Detect Evil. Other saving throw bonuses can be asked for by player-characters and given by the referee as circumstances dictate.

Finally, players that play their characters in accordance with the religious beliefs and values of Tsolyánu gain a +1 to all saving throws.

Example: our level-II female sorceress has a default saving throw in all six categories of 1. This is modified by her culture (+1 to Physical Stun, Poison and Traps), basic talents (Intelligence grants +1 vs hypnosis, Psychic Ability grants +1 vs spells), profession (being a sorcerer gives a +2 vs hypnosis and spells), Detect Thoughts (grants a +1 vs hypnosis), and roleplaying awards our player with a +1 across the board. The young sorceress' saving throws are thus: Physical Stun 3, Poison 3, Hypnosis 6, Spells 5, Traps 3, and Eyes 2.

Divine Intervention does occur in Tsolyánu. There are recorded instances of miracles witnessed by many, investigated by high priests, and accepted by the population as a whole. As real as the gods are, however, their intervention in human affairs is exceedingly subtle and rare. Divine Intervention must, therefore, be the sole province of the entire player group and the referee. Example: should an adventuring party, having been true to their culture and their religion, suffer a series of catastrophic die rolls likely to lead to many player-character deaths, the referee ought probably to subtly alter the encounter to ensure survival. The enemies could be suddenly driven away. The Omnipotent Azure Legion could, in cavalry fashion, arrive to save the day. There are as many possibilities as there are encounter circumstances.

Should the above adventuring party, however, have acted previously in some manner contrary to its culture and religion, the referee ought certainly to punish it for its apostasy. Worshipers of the tlomítlanyal who murder innocents and steal their stuff deserve a divine rebuff. Enemy reinforcements can arrive, just when a battle was presumably won. The Omnipotent Azure Legion could suddenly appear with imperial warrants of arrest (Off to the Tólek Kána Pits!).

Saving throws and divine intervention should be used by the entire role-play group to enhance story satisfaction.

900. Combat Foes of Player-Characters

Having explained the many rules of combat, it remains to describe, and to set forth special rules and statistics regarding, the most probable opponents that *Empire of the Petal Throne* players are likely to have their characters face.

910. Hostile Non-Humans

The following creatures are unremitting foes of mankind. They are listed in descending order of hostility; and they all have, at their command, intelligence, organisation, technology and sorcery. It should be remembered that while human civilisation collapsed during the Time of Darkness, and again during the Time of No Kings, the civilisation of the original native species of Tékumel never did. Their sorcery is as powerful as that of the Kingdom of the Gods. Their ancient devices work now as they were designed to work many millennia ago. Mankind yearns to steal their treasures, but thefts are rare and costly.

The Ssú

Infiltrator

The Enemies of Man are the original dominant sapient species of the planet Tékumel. When humanspace first set out to conquer the large world, there lived over one billion Ssú – all organised into hive-like cities dug deep underground. The Enemies of Man fought to defend their world from mankind and his interstellar allies, but in the end they were defeated. They retreated to their remote subterranean fortresses and waged economic, informational, sorcerous and spiritual warfare on the hated invaders. They continue in this today. The Ssú have a long history, perhaps millions of years. In that time, the entire crust of the globe's surface had been honey combed with thoroughfares, passages, waypoints and fortresses. Through these now travel the slender six-limbed creatures. They surface to make lightning fast attacks and kidnappings (for their experiments). They can speak the tongues of men and certain non-humans; their own language sounds like sweet bell-like chiming. They are genetically related to the Hlýss and the Chýrstalli (plus other off-shoot species). Ssú are the raiding troops of the concerted indigenous species effort against mankind. Ruthless, they employ shapechanged forward troops to lure, and then poison gases to capture, humans for the placement of mind-controlling lifeforms into their brains.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Ssú L3	13 1d6+3	10 1d6+2	07 1d6+1	04 1d6
Ssú L4	16 2d6-2	13 2d6-3	10 1d6+3	07 1d6+2
Ssú L6	19 2d6	16 2d6-1	13 2d6-2	10 2d6-3

Modifiers: Enchanted steel swords (low intelligence; enemy: mankind; spell: slow). Original Combat Technique applies to Ssú attacks; Ssú Instant Death sorcerers, but gas others; 1d6 gas grenades are available to all small Ssú parties encountered. Those not making their saving throws vs poison lose combat rounds as per the spell Power Word Stun. **Armour:** Light. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**3**; Psn-**3**; Hyp-**4**; Spls-**4**; Trps-**5**; Eyes-**5**. **Hit Points:** **15**.

The Hlýss

Sorcerer

The Spawn of the Old Ones are larger than their genetic cousins, the Ssú. They stand about the same height as men, and command Ssú and other dangers to mankind in well-coordinated raids. Like the Ssú, the Hlýss have a hive mentality. They act in perfect coordination, and mind-meld to cast absolutely fearsome sorceries (only the Livyáni among mankind have been able to duplicate this ability). Every Hlýss in command on a raid has bonus spells and magical devices like Eyes. They also have an innate capability of hypnotising humans. Shén, Pé Chói and Ninínyal are immune to this dazing effect. This hypnosis can only occur under certain circumstances, stillness and darkness, away from interference, etc. (unless poison gases are used),

but once established hypnosis really opens up the victim's mind to serious tampering. It is thought that certain people in Béy Sý are secretly in mental bondage to the Hlýss; otherwise, how to explain their uncanny ability to evade human ambushes. Should an unfortunate player-character ever find himself staring into the large eyes of an Hlýss, he must make a saving throw vs hypnosis or become a thrall to enemy hostility. Most likely, the character will serve as a conduit for Hlýss spying without his ever realising it (that, or mind-controlling life-forms will have been implanted into his brain).

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Hlýss L5	13 1d6+3	10 1d6+2	07 1d6+1	04 1d6
Hlýss L6	16 2d6-2	13 2d6-3	10 1d6+3	07 1d6+2
Hlýss L8	19 2d6	16 2d6-1	13 2d6-2	10 2d6-3

Modifiers: Enchanted steel swords (low intelligence; enemy: mankind; spell: Minor Curse). Hlýss stand behind Ssú, casting Minor Curse, followed by Hypnotism. **Armour:** Medium. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**4**; Psn-**4**; Hyp-**8**; Spls-**8**; Trps-**6**; Eyes-**6**. **Hit Points:** **18**.

The Hyahyú'u

Warrior

The Nighthounds are the wolves of Tékumel. They roam the wastes hunting for prey. Like their cousins (the Ssú, the Hlýss and the Chyrstállí), they are six-legged. Unlike them, the Nighthounds stalk horizontally on all six, rather than upright on four. In packs they prowl the outskirts of human villages, towns, cities. Out in the most distant provinces, citizens sometimes stake a child in order to propitiate the Hyahyú'u. In the mountains to the east of Fasiltum this is done. No imperial command could cause the giving up of this practice; the tribesmen fear the Nighthounds more than they fear the Emperor. Outdoorsmen having much experience of the original inhabitants of the planet suspect that Nighthounds are actually Hlýss (physiologically flipped from upright to horizontal; psychologically flipped from sapient to atavistic). The truth of whether Hyahyú'u are animalistic Hlýss has been divined of the gods, but no reply has been vouchsafed.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Nighthound L8	19 3d6	15 2d6	11 1d6	07 1d3
Nighthound L9	21 4d6	17 3d6	13 2d6	09 1d6
Nighthound L11	23 5d6	19 4d6	15 3d6	11 2d6

Modifiers: Grapple, claws and bite. Nighthounds stalk human prey; they make pouncing leaps at their targets (often arcing quite high). **Armour:** Medium. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**10**; Psn-**10**; Hyp-**8**; Spls-**8**; Trps-**12**; Eyes-**12**. **Hit Points:** **20**.

The Chyrstállí

Warrior

These largest cousins of the Ssú stand eight feet tall, and have a reputation for weird, madcap behaviour. Chyrstállí never behave as expected, and humans have learned to fear them like no other indigenous species. They sometimes play tricks, at other times dance about, at other times appear to try to communicate with their human foes. Encounters always end in savage, almost insane, violence and mayhem. Chyrstállí seem never to feel pain; they have been known to keep fighting even when decapitated. A severed Chyrstállí head will remain alive for days, until it dries out. These

giants, therefore, never experience physical stun, morale failure, or even death at reaching -1 Hit Points. They fight until hacked apart, burned, or both. Instant Death signifies only that the Chyrstállí cannot act any further in a combat. This may be for reasons of decapitation, destruction of its sense organs, or some quirky decision to simply cease and be still. As an example, assume our rakish bandit, after kidnapping a young sorceress, encounters a Chyrstállí while secreting away the young woman in some underworld culvert. The Chyrstállí is level-V, so the bandit scores a hit only by rolling an 11 or less. The bandit rolls exactly 11, and follows this up with a second 11. Instant Death! The referee states that the bandit did no actual damage, but that on getting hit the Chyrstállí froze and became completely motionless. Months later, snaking through the same corridor, the bandit sees that the Chyrstállí is still there.

Some say that the Chyrstállí are the soul of Tékumel, fey and strange; in this they are correct.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Chyrstállí L12	25 8d6	20 4d6	15 2d6	10 1d6

Modifiers: Claws, bite, plus improvised weapon. Chyrstállí act at random each combat round. Referees discretion as to actions. **Armour:** Heavy. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**20**; Psn-**14**; Hyp-**10**; Spls-**10**; Trps-**12**; Eyes-**12**. **Hit Points:** **25**.

The Lrí

Infiltrator

The smallest of the cousin-species related to the Ssú are the Lrí, simply an owl-sized flying version of the former. Lrí are semi-intelligent, can speak and reason in simple fashion, and serve as advanced reconnaissance for all Ssú raiding forces. They differ from their larger cousins by not only having wings, but also by having a poison-tipped tail (like a scorpion's). Any player stung by this appendage must make a saving throw vs poison or die within one turn. Theirs is a particularly virulent and painful poison (all survivors of their venom are incapacitated for 20-Constution full hours). As fast, flying creatures, Lrí defend as level-VI combatants; player-characters must roll against the level-VI column when attacking these mobile scouts. Lrí often avoid melee, their main task being to sight the enemies of their genetic cousins, who – through hive mind – can see what Lrí see. Humans know of their danger, and use Kýni and Shánu'u (when that can be arranged) to ward against them.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Lrí L3	10 1d6	09 1d6	08 1d6	07 1d6

Modifiers: Claws, bite and poison sting. Lrí swoop silently down for a by-passing sting, then stay aloft (waiting for the death). **Armour:** None. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**2**; Psn-**3**; Hyp-**4**; Spls-**4**; Trps-**2**; Eyes-**4**. **Hit Points:** **06**.

The Shunned Ones (Greater)

Sorcerer

The Vlëshgayal are rarely seen in the underworlds beneath the older cities of Tsolyánu; but the siren song of ancient secrets, from time to time, draws them to the empire's buried ruins. Shunned Ones' raiding cabals include Lesser Shunned Ones (more numerous but less eldritch, see below) and Hli'ír (long, hound-like wights of semi-solid Null-force that can cause insanity). Generally, they prefer to avoid combat. If endangered by a human party, however, the Shunned Ones respond with an alien and unfathomable style of sorcery. Anyone unfortunate enough to be

specifically targeted by Shunned Ones, unless well-defended, are plunged into madness. Those targeted by Shunned Ones' sorcery do not roll saving throws vs spells; they roll on the following table:

level-I to level-IV	level-V to level-VII	level-VIII and level-IX	level-X
20 = no effect 18-19 = confused 1-17 = insane	19-20 = no effect 15-18 = confused 1-14 = insane	18-20 = no effect 12-17 = confused 1-11 = insane	17-20 = no effect 09-16 = confused 1-08 = insane

Any character subject to confusion subtracts 10-level from all skill and ability thresholds until the end of the next combat round, whereupon it tries to roll under its Intelligence. If this is successful the character recovers. If not, the subtractions continue, round by round, until its player rolls under Intelligence. Any character subject to insanity has its character sheet placed in the care of the referee. Only a powerful Remove Curse or the intervention of the tlomitlanyal could possibly restore a character whose mind has been lost to the Shunned Ones.

What makes the threat of insanity less virulent is the fact that Shunned Ones emit a terrible and repellent stench that all humans can smell from over fifty meters away.

Shunned Ones live in completely domed and sealed cities, crouched in the foothills of Yán Kór. Tall and ragged-looking, these semi-spectral wights cloak their extremely long limbs and torsos in voluminous robes that seem to flutter to a dark, outer-dimensional wind all their own. Luckily, they cannot be away from their sealed cities for long.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Vlëshgayal L09	16 8d6	16 4d6	16 2d6	16 1d6

Modifiers: Terrible Eye of Raging Power, narrow swords of steel. Shunned Ones stand back as Lesser Vlëshgayal engage the enemy; they then hurl slay beams and spells. **Armour:** Light. **Saving Throws:** Stun-4; Psn-4; Hyp-8; Spls-8; Trps-6; Eyes-6. **Hit Points: 12.**

The Shunned Ones (Lesser)

Infiltrator

These inimical beings are rarely seen in the underworlds beneath the older cities of Tsolyánu, but the siren song of ancient secrets, from time to time, draws them near to the abodes of men. When encountered, these scouts and shock troops use high-quality steel swords with straight, narrow blades. These strangely science-fantasy swords deliver an electric shock; this shock knockbacks the target 20-Strength feet; it also does 1d6 additional damage. Physical stun, as a consequence, occurs more often in combat with Lesser Vlëshgayal and should be described by referees as the jolting their electric poniards cause. Lesser Shunned Ones wear none of the flowing robes of their taller superiors; instead, they don simple straps and carry long narrow shields. Their stench is the equal of that of their larger masters, but Lesser Shunned Ones often range as scouts far ahead of their main cabal (and so player-characters can achieve an even greater distance from the insanity-causing Greater Shunned Ones by fleeing these vanguard units).

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Vlëshganiyal L2	10 1d6	07 1d6	04 1d6	01 1d6
Vlëshganiyal L3	11 1d6+1	08 1d6	05 1d6	02 1d6

Vlëshganiyal L5	12 1d6+2	09 1d6+1	06 1d6	03 1d6
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Modifiers: Slender, straight swords of steel. The swords carry a strong electric current that shocks those struck by them. **Armour:** Medium. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**2**; Psn-**2**; Hyp-**4**; Spls-**4**; Trps-**3**; Eyes-**3**. **Hit Points:** **08**.

The Hli'ir

Warrior

These unendurable creatures are the hounds of the Shunned Ones. They appear as shadowy horizontal wights whose hindquarters disappear into The Null. While many have broken away from Vlëshgayal society, most appear in the raiding cabals of the Greater Shunned Ones. The sorcerers who lead these raids into the lowest levels of the catacombs underlying the cities of men sense remotely via the organs of their Hli'ir. This is done with spells the Vlëshgayal maintain over time. Aside from scouting, the Hli'ir kill with zeal all that they encounter. Their hideous countenances and globular yellow eyes cause insanity in those in combat with them. Use the rules for Shunned Ones (Greater) sorcery above. Their favoured prey are high level sorcerers; Hli'ir use a paranormal sense to hunt creatures of magical power and follow them via The Null (much like the Locate Object spell) until they can waylay and consume them. The Shunned Ones (Greater) hunted the Undying Wizards all through the Time of No Kings; rumour has it that they continue in this today.

Hli'ir cause the truly wise to have nightmares. Like other spectral beings, they can move through solid walls and obstructions. It takes two turns to get through a typical stone wall, however. The Amulet of Safety Amidst Putrefaction wards against the Hli'ir.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Hli'ir L8	16 4d6	16 3d6	16 2d6	16 1d6

Modifiers: Insanity causing innate spell; claws and bite. Hli'ir follow and stalk their prey. They then spring upon them from surprising directions. **Armour:** Light. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**4**; Psn-**4**; Hyp-**8**; Spls-**8**; Trps-**6**; Eyes-**6**. **Hit Points:** **15**.

920. The Undead

The following creatures are ancient creations of the tlokìriqáluyal. Ever since the reign of the third emperor, Trákonel the Blazing Light, the creation of undead has been proscribed. Were the Rulers of the Shadow to be discovered manufacturing these necrotic dangers, the religion's evil high priests would be seized by the emperor's legions and impaled. Only in the forbidden city of Sárku might new undead find life-in-death. For the rest of Tsolyánu, their manufacture is the stuff of hearthside legends and Hirilákte Arena dramas.

The Mrúr

Warrior

These undead represent a range of basically dry, leathery or skeletal former human beings who now hunt through the underworlds, seeking to end the lives of worshipers of the tloomítlanyal. They are found most often in arid regions (Khírgár across to, and beyond, Fasíltum); their greatest numbers are found in the forbidden city of Sárku. It is the divine energy of the Cohort Durrítlámish that animates the Mrúr. Some claim to have seen a coppery, miasmatic filament of necrotic energy emerging from the tailbone of Mrúr and disappearing into the ground between their feet. Some Mrúr have the power to regenerate, and reknit their scattered parts after being reduced

to negative hit points. Others do not. Some are chiselled and engraved with hieroglyphics, sigils, and runes. Others are bare bones. After so many years of existence, mobs of Mrúr contain many types, and also Shédra and Hrá as well. Combat against Mrúr is harrowing, for the undead are not subject to physical stun, double damage, or instant death. They cannot be surprised. They can never lose a combat round action because of hostile mind-affecting magic; they are essentially mindless. Mrúr obey simple programming: "Guard this area" or "Search and destroy". Only certain of the worshipers of the tlokiriqáluyal and various spells can cause Mrúr to countermand these programs. They fear nothing, but are bound by their dark masters to retreat from fire (mainly because they are highly flammable and incineration destroys them permanently).

Rare varieties of Mrúr are more leathery than skeletal, and have a fully functioning intelligence.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Mrúr L2	10 2d6	08 1d6+3	05 1d6	01 1d3
Mrúr L4	14 3d6	11 2d6+3	07 2d6	02 1d6+3
Mrúr L8	18 4d6	14 3d6	09 2d6	04 1d6

Modifiers: Defends at half each's listed level, but gets 2d20 attack dice per combat round.

Armour: Medium. **Saving Throws:** Stun--; Psn--; Hyp--; Spls-**4**; Trps-**3**; Eyes-**3** (double, then double again for higher two levels). **Hit Points:** **15/17/21**.

The Shédra

Infiltrator

These undead represent a variety of fleshy, bloated, meat-bearing former humans who now ghoulishly wander the underworlds of the empire's more tropical cities looking for man-flesh to eat. Beneath Butrús, Úrmish, Thráya and Jakálla can Shédra be found. Like the Mrúr, these Eaters of the Dead are centuries, even millennia, old (their swollen, rotting gangrenous flesh remains attached to their bones thanks to the power of Durritlámish). They have strong sharp talons and imposing fangs for the rendering of their meat each night. They are not mindless, although their thought is limited to low cunning and relentless greed for food. At times this greed causes them to emerge from the underworld to make a meal of some lonely citizen of the empire. Rare varieties of Shédra are less bloated, less gangrenous: these can sometimes pass for the living. Even rarer specimens are life-like and fully intelligent. Many are the horror stories told around clan-hearths of their unnatural night-time doings.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Shédra L3	10 2d6	08 1d6+3	05 1d6	01 1d3
Shédra L6	14 3d6	11 2d6+3	07 2d6	02 1d6+3
Shédra L9	18 4d6	14 3d6+3	09 3d6	04 2d6+3

Modifiers: Defends at half each's listed level, but gets 3d20 attack dice per combat round.

Shédra use no weapons; they attack with claw and bite. They leap over people to reach magic users or **Armour:** Medium. **Saving Throws:** Stun--; Psn--; Hyp--; Spls-**6**; Trps-**5**; Eyes-**5** (double, then double again for higher two levels). **Hit Points:** **15/20/25**.

The Hrá

Warrior or Sorcerer

In their composition these reanimated undead are part corpse, part android or vat-creature. The Hrá are in no way extrusions of Lord Durritlámish (as are the Mrúr and the Shédra); instead, they are the creations of a very particular clergy of the tlokiriqáluyal – the Ancient Lord of Secrets, Ksárul. Being the special property of that clandestine religion (secret even to the others of the Masters of the Shadow), Hrá are generally found only in its sanctums or upon its missions. They are encountered beneath the Béy Sý-to-Avanthár axis, high in the mountains of Milumanayá, under the cave-city of Hmakuyál, but mostly below the city of Purdimál. There is a connection between the Hrá and the Old Ones of that evil place. They look alike. The monsters of the Sleeping God have full intelligence, and wield swords and lances with skill. They cannot stand light, however; so they may only be deployed during deep night. At night they range above ground, hunting for fresh human blood. Common clansfolk refer to Hrá as the “Blood Drinkers”. When the young disappear from a village, the cause is put down to a Blood Drinker prowling the area. The Lords of Glory train “corpse takers” to track down these abominations. They are very difficult to terminate. They have to be killed, then subjected to a ritual (using a potency, the Amulet of the Good God), or else they come back to life. Not even fire prevents their regeneration. Corpse takers who have brought down a Hrá, but have failed to ritually negate them, always wind up dead (a shrivelled husk, drained of every drop of blood). It is believed, therefore, that the Hrá have engineered into them some kind of uncanny tracking sense. The secret temple confirms nothing upon this point, so this ability is conjectured only. What is not conjectured is the imperially established fact that Hrá sometimes achieve independence from their masters among the servants of Ksárul. Free Hrá are immensely dangerous: immortal, they attract other creatures and even men as worshipers. The ancient entity Ruvádis, the Wearer of Eyes (actual human eyes, which it enchanted and threaded to its great black cloak), is thought to have been a Hrá. It cost the Sea-King of Jakálla an entire legion to bring low Ruvádis.

Player-characters most commonly encounter Blood Drinkers guarding sorcerers of the tlokiriqáluyal, mainly those with a special devotion to Ksárul or Grugánu. Physically, the Hrá are notable for their height. They stand six feet, six inches tall, and in form and facial structure are quite beautiful (until one catches a glimpse of fang). Some say the tlokiriqáluyal came up with Hrá ages ago in response to the threat of the Chyrstállí. They match the latter, caprice for caprice.

In Béy Sý, two Hrá guard the night-time approaches to the Temple of Hry'ý on the east bank of the Mssúma River.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Hrá L8	10 5d6	08 4d6+3	05 4d6	01 3d6
Hrá L9	14 6d6	11 5d6+3	07 5d6	02 4d6+3
Hrá L11	18 8d6	14 7d6+3	09 7d6	04 6d6+3

Modifiers: Hrá dress in black slit-sided kilts. They bring lances to bear first, then swords.

Armour: Medium. **Saving Throws:** Stun--; Psn--; Hyp--; Spls-**4**; Trps-**5**; Eyes-**3** (double, then double again for higher two levels). **Hit Points:** **20/25/30**.

Like Hrá, the Voródlá are reanimated undead that are part corpse, part winged android, and wholly vat-creature. They are not true undead, in the sense that Mrúr are; they are a kind of flesh golem made possible by long forbidden secrets. In the Time of No Kings, they guarded the holy citadels and sorcerous retreats of the Sleeping God. In more recent millennia, their manufacture has been outlawed. What Voródlá remain in the world seem to be concentrated around lost cities. There are sightings in the mountains of Milumanayá, in the strange cave-city of Hmakuyál, in gloomy Ngála, and especially in Yagáin (ancient) Purdánim. There is some connection between the Voródlá and the Old Ones of Purdimál as well: they are hairless and handsome (like the Hrá, like the Old Ones). It may be that the Old Ones are vat-creatures too. The priests of Ksárul say nothing, admit to nothing. Certainly, there are priests of Ksárul who have seen and have even been served by Voródlá – still, they offer nothing about them. Observation records that the Flying Undead are smaller in scale than men, and have smallish wings. These wings shouldn't allow flight, and the Voródlá don't even beat their wings rapidly to stay aloft. It is concluded, therefore, that Voródlá fly only via the action of levitation spells (the secrets of these are now lost – or are they?).

Voródlá are semi-intelligent, can understand human speech, but do not themselves use words. Like Hrá, they are bloodsuckers. Unlike Hrá, they may be destroyed permanently by burning. In fact, they must be, for they regenerate 0.5xlevel damage points per combat round.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Voródlá L4	11 2d6	08 1d6+3	04 1d6	-01 1d3
Voródlá L5	12 2d6+3	09 2d6	05 1d6+3	00 1d6
Voródlá L7	14 3d6	11 2d6+3	07 2d6	02 1d6+3

Modifiers: Attacks with claw and bite. **Armour:** Light. **Saving Throws:** Stun--; Psn--; Hyp--; Spls-**4**; Trps-**3**; Eyes-**3** (double, then double again for higher two levels). **Hit Points:** **12**.

The Hurú'u

Sorcerer

These spectral undead are created when a sacrificial victim of one of Lord Sárku's rites is guided into darkness (i.e., returned to nothingness) to the point where even its bones are made void. As spectres, the Hurú'u are very difficult to see in the dark. They appear as a kind of concentrated or twisted blackness, against the background blackness of the underworlds through which they roam. Normal weapons cannot touch them; only enchanted high-quality steel bites into their flesh (composed as it is from The Null). A warrior wielding an enchanted sword still suffers a 10-level failure threshold reduction to hit a Hurú'u, unless that warrior has been enveloped. Hurú'u attack by enveloping their foes within their dark etheric masses, subjecting foes to cold and life-draining energies. They also emit a constant incredibly loud howling shriek that the stony walls of the underworlds amplify and reverberate, so much so that humans have at times been temporarily deafened (Pé Chói are always deafened, as are the Ssú and all their allied species). Having no treasure, there is little reason to confront these ghostly presences. Those who do and are enveloped must make a saving throw vs spells or instantly lose one character-level. Example: our level-II sorceress

gets cornered in the underworld beneath Béy Sý by a Hurú'u. It envelops her. She rolls a 16 for her saving throw vs spells – a failure. The sorceress loses one level of experience, and all benefits gained upon reaching level-II. All player-characters losing their final experience levels die, very slowly dissolving, and eventually becoming a Hurú'u.

Characters enveloped by Hurú'u may attempt to free themselves and to flee the spectre. This is done by simultaneous Strength rolls. The character and the Hurú'u attempt to roll under Strength. Whoever rolls under their Strength but over their opponent's roll wins the contest. Characters failing this remain enveloped.

Being incorporeal, Hurú'u move through physical obstructions, albeit at a slow pace.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Hurú'u L4	16 3d6	16 2d6	16 1d6	16 1d3

Modifiers: Deafness-causing roar; envelopment. Hurú'u patrol ceaselessly the labyrinths that protect the shrines of Sárku and Durritlámish. **Armour:** None. **Saving Throws:** Stun --; Psn --; Hyp--; Spls-**6**; Trps-**6**; Eyes-**6**. **Strength:** 17. **Hit Points:** **15**.

The Qumqúm

Warrior

These undead wraiths, created during the Wrath of the Gods Period, exist in small numbers today. They are related to the Hurú'u, but retain a human shape. They sometimes don black robes and cloaks in order to accomplish tasks set by Lord Sárku. If unclothed, Qumqúm are as difficult to see in the dark catacombs as are the Hurú'u. Like the latter, the man-shaped wraiths emit a constant incredibly loud thundering roar, one that the stony walls of the underworlds amplify and reverberate, so much so that humans have at times been temporarily deafened (Pé Chói are always deafened, as are the Ssú and all their allied species). Should player-characters foolishly choose to confront Qumqúm, it should be understood that normal weapons cannot touch them. They can be harmed only by high-quality enchanted steel. All who feel the bite, however, of the wraiths' weapons (for they carry spectral pole-axes in their hands) suffer the instant loss of two experience levels. Even if a player-character makes his saving throw vs spells, one experience level is lost. Only a critical success will save a person struck by a Qumqúm from losing any experience level. Also, hit points equal to the exact level-numbers lost are immediately added to the Qumqúm's hit points. Example: a Qumqúm strikes a level-VII warrior. The warrior instantly becomes level-V, and the wraith gains 7+6=13 hit points. Any who have all their levels drained away die and become progeny Qumqúm (as opposed to the original Qumqúm created seven millennia ago).

Being incorporeal, Qumqúm move through physical obstructions.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Qumqúm L8	20 5d6	20 4d6	20 3d6	20 2d6

Modifiers: Deafness-causing roar; poleaxe. Qumqúm patrol ceaselessly the labyrinths that protect shrines to Sárku and Durritlámish. **Armour:** None. **Saving Throws:** Stun--; Psn--; Hyp--; Spls-**8**; Trps-**8**; Eyes-**8**. **Strength:** 17. **Hit Points:** **20**.

930. Ancient Abominations

The term “the ancients” appears throughout *Empire of the Petal Throne*. The Tsolyáni use the term very imprecisely, attaching it to creatures, items and events that have nothing to do with the high technology civilisation that governed the solar system before its disappearance into the pocket dimension in which now it finds itself. It can refer to things three-thousand years old. It can refer to things thirty-thousand years old. At this point in time, it is impossible for most citizens of the Second Imperium to distinguish.

It is all, “the ancients”, and currently there two equally powerful attitudes toward things from the distant past – fear and envy.

The Chnéhlu

Warrior

The Ape-Mutants were once cunning and powerful soldiers brought into existence by the exquisite balance of essences of the ancients’ effectuator vats. After the sudden shift to outer-dimensional darkness, the Chnéhlu retrogressed; they became the forceful, bestial, half-human monsters that they are today. Despised and feared, the Ape-Mutants live by preying upon human society from its verges – dense forests, difficult badlands, and the underworlds beneath the oldest cities. Once they were taller than men; now they merely equal their height. They have the countenances of men, except their jaws are prognathous, their brows beetling. Chnéhlu have fangs. Their skins and eyes are midnight black. Their bodies: powerfully muscled. It is said that they operate metallurgy machines deep below ground, for their swords are of high-quality steel. These they use to slaughter tloomitlanyal and tlokirigáluyal alike. Chnéhlu absolutely relish the taste of human flesh. Very rarely an evil sorcerer will employ controlled Chnéhlu as slaves or mercenary guards. This is a dangerous vanity, for the Ape-Mutants have resentments to assuage.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Chnéhlu L3	15 1d6+3	14 1d6+3	13 1d6	12 1d6
Chnéhlu L4	16 2d6	15 2d6	14 1d6+3	13 1d6+3
Chnéhlu L6	19 2d6+3	18 2d6+3	17 2d6	16 2d6

Modifiers: High quality new steel swords. Chnéhlu act semi-intelligent, but in fact are smart and sure. They eat human flesh, preferring young women and children. **Armour:** Medium.

Saving Throws: Stun-**4**; Psn-**4**; Hyp-**3**; Spls-**3**; Trps-**5**; Eyes-**5**. **Hit Points:** **20**.

The Qól

Infiltrator

The Serpent-Headed Ones, like the Hrá and the Vorodlá, were created in the distant past by sorcerers and savants delving into forbidden secrets of life-creation, and using technologies still surviving from before the Time of Darkness. This mutant species is manlike, but lithe and having a flat serpent head (complete with vertical slit pupils, forked tongue and slender fangs filled with venom). Also filled with venom are the talons of their three-fingered hands. Apart from their warped head and hands, the Qól are very manlike. They stand about four feet in height, have long arms, and do not use tools of any kind. The Qól rely on their poison to kill; they never combat their prey, instead sneaking close during the night and striking with talons envenomed. They then retreat and await the inevitable. Any player-

character struck by a Qól must make a saving throw vs poison or die within two turns. Qól often shadow invaders of the underworld (the tsuru'úm) and report the whereabouts of tlomitlanyal worshipers to the most powerful denizens of the catacombs they can find (such as Hrá). If emboldened to attack a group of player-characters on its own, Qól will try to poison its members one at a time. They use extreme caution. They are expert at silent movement, stealth, and surprise slashes with their poisonous talons. Their patience is proverbial.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Qól L1	08 1d6-3	06 1d6-3	04 1d6-3	02 1d6-3
Qól L2	09 1d6-2	07 1d6-2	05 1d6-2	03 1d6-2
Qól L4	11 1d6-1	09 1d6-1	07 1d6-1	05 1d6-1

Modifiers: Surprise slashes with talons. Qól attempt to steel up to a player-character party. This requires an opposed check of their stealth vs the PCs' awareness. Detect Evil warns of their presence. **Armour:** Light. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**2**; Psn-**3**; Hyp-**2**; Spls-**3**; Trps-**5**; Eyes-**5**. **Hit Points:** **08**.

The Sérudla

Warrior

These creatures are rather like centaurs with draconic heads and bodies, covered as they are with pearly iridescent scales. The Pale Murderer walks upon six legs (as do many of the planet's fauna); but forbidden secrets of the ancients have twisted the creature, giving it an upright torso, shoulders, arms, neck. Its withers, back, and flank extend about eight feet in length, after which the Sérudla has an eight-foot tail. "Eight" is also the number of feet in height the Pale Murderer has. It is a symmetrical, if a composite and a strange, creature. Sérudla were manufactured to be night watchmen for the warlords of the Time of Darkness, who controlled the final miraculous machines belonging to the ultra-tech world destroyed by Tékumel's sudden shift into the pocket universe it now finds itself in. They are active at dusk and night. They forge halberds of wood and bog iron; these they use upon anyone who ventures near their abodes (if the trespassers displease). Their most feared weapon, however, is their poisonous spittle. This Sérudla acid strikes foes at distance, with accuracy. Any being bathed in the venom of a Pale Murderer must make a saving throw vs poison or die within one full turn. Use the NPC Reaction Table to establish a Sérudla's attitude in an encounter with player-characters.

They are not uniformly hostile.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Sérudla L8	17 8d6	12 4d6	07 2d6	02 1d6

Modifiers: Poison spit-venom at a distance; halberds; then claws and bite. Sérudla have gold lust. They collect much gold and hoard it in caves and ruins. **Armour:** Heavy. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**8**; Psn-**8**; Hyp-**16**; Spls-**16**; Trps-**4**; Eyes-**4**. **Hit Points:** **32**.

The Thúnru'u

Sorcerer

These sorcerers' familiars are conjured into existence by ancient atrocities requiring the blood sacrifice of beautiful children. Though worshipers of any of the so-called Dark Trinity (Hry'ý, Ksáru and Dlamélis) may enter into these rites, due obeisance must be made to Ksáru, to whom the Thúnru'u owe their existence. The ritual may only be performed on the first of the

five intercalary nights of the Tsolyáni year. Only then. Once completed, the victims are transmogrified into hard-muscled homunculi whose skulls have eerie back-sweeping frills, whose hands are grotesquely large, and whose square jaws gape wide (revealing leaden teeth). Thúnru'u serve their dark masters faithfully and without fail (they are immune to Awe/Inspire, Control and Mind-Bar spells). They have the particular advantage of not registering as evil in the presence of Detect Evil, nor are they blocked by the Protection from Evil spell. Thúnru'u act as a store of energy and brain-capacity for the encompassing of powerful spells. They can store 1xlevel spells, in similar fashion to scrolls. An evil sorcerer who involves Thúnru'u in his spell-casting also suffers but one-half the exhaustion normally experienced when casting difficult sorceries (for instance, the Creatures or Revivification spells). Their final advantage is that they fight and are skilled as infiltrators, even though Thúnru'u always share their master's level. Example: the Thúnru'u servant of a level-XI sorceress assassinates its master's rival. The Infiltrator Combat Table is used, at level-XI, and the skill Assassination Techniques affects double damage and instant death.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Thúnru'u L10	19 4d6	16 4d6	13 4d6	10 4d6

Modifiers: Dagger; claw and bite. The few Thúnru'u hunt ceaselessly through the labyrinths that underlie many older cities. **Armour:** Medium. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**5**; Psn-**7**; Hyp-**9**; Spls-**8**; Trps-**8**; Eyes-**8**. **Hit Points:** **13**.

The Biridlú

Warrior

These mantle-like creatures are either Time of Darkness era effectuator vat creations, or they are alien life forms that somehow came to Tékumel with its humanspace invaders. Although not undead, they appear to be immortal (there are Biridlú in imperial menageries that predate the empire itself). It is concluded that they must be colony creatures made up of millions of tiny animalcules – too small to see – similar to Ngóros. Their composition has mystified the great sorcerers of the past; there is little impetus, therefore, for modern scholars to attempt the puzzle. All that is known is that where there was one Biridlú there will eventually be two (so they must multiply in some fashion). The creatures regenerate weapon damage quickly and are only dispatched through use of acid or a hot fire. The only materials sharp enough to cut their "flesh" are high quality steel and the metals scrounged from pre-Time of Darkness ruins. Biridlú attack by dropping down upon an underworld intruder from above, having kept hidden in the darkness of the ceiling for days beyond reckoning. They then wrap their powerful muscles around their target and constrict him – breaking bones and choking him to death. Damage cannot be calculated via a d6 roll; rather, it is assigned according to how many combat rounds a victim has been enfolded within the Biridlú. Example: our level-II sorceress, were she to be enfolded by a Biridlú beneath Béy Sý, would suffer 4 damage the first combat round, 8 the second. As mentioned before, Biridlú regenerate damage, at 6 points per combat round, so it is mandatory that several player-characters attack at once.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Biridlú L5	16 4-8-12-16	13 3-6-9-12	10 2-4-6-8	07 1-2-3-4

Modifiers: Enfolding. Birdlú cling to darkened ceilings in the underworlds. From there they drop down on intruders. **Armour:** Medium. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**5**; Psn-**7**; Hyp--; Spls-**8**; Trps--; Eyes-**2**. **Hit Points:** **25**.

The Chashkéri

Infiltrator

These conjurings of Bednálljan sorcerers engaged in the eternal struggle of the Lords of Glory and the Masters of Shadow resemble long-eared canines of spectral substance. Partially incorporeal, the Chashkéri have the innate ability to phase into substance, then out to essence, then into substance at the snap of a finger. This very short distance teleportation through The Null makes them hard to hit. Only Ru'ún can track them. Other creatures swing at nothing, while the Hounds of Qón attack from unlooked for angles. The Chashkéri are the only “good” underworld creatures; they harrow the minions of the tlokiríqáluyal. Default player-characters (who are part of the empire’s majority culture) will find them helpful in a fight. When in combat with a Chashkéri, an opponent of the sorcerous creature subtracts 10-level from his attack’s failure threshold, and adds the same amount to the hound of Qón’s attack failure threshold.

As an example, assume our fourth level warrior-bandit attacks a Chashkéri. The bandit’s attack failure threshold would normally be 12, but the rule above brings it down to 6 (10-4=6; 12-6=6). Likewise, the Hound of Qón attacks at 18 (12+6=18).

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Chashkéri L4	10 1d6	09 1d6	08 1d6	07 1d6

Modifiers: Claws and bite. Chashkéri teleport into attack range, then teleport out of range (as far as forty feet away). **Armour:** None. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**4**; Psn-**5**; Hyp-**5**; Spls-**4**; Trps-**6**; Eyes-**6**. **Hit Points:** **07**.

The Marashyálu

Sorcerer

These vicious creatures are vampires, of sorts. They drain their victim of all fluids, blood, plasma, water, etc. To accomplish this draining, Marashyálu require time and solitude. They are finicky drinkers. They thirst for fluids found in humans and other mammals. They refuse Pé Chói, Shén and other nonhumans not to their taste. Although no one now alive in Tsolyánu knows it, the truth is that Marashyálu are minor demons conjured from the Night before the World. They are supernatural, not technological. Their release into Téकुmel is now permanent. To survive, the Marashyálu adopt guises, illusory semblances, near perfect in detail, of children, of elders of the clan, of beautiful maidens, or of handsome youths. They walk among the living. Marashyálu then employ a kind of hypnosis (or charming or mind-control) to lure the target of their thirst to some lonely spot. Resisting a vampire is difficult: saving throws vs Hypnosis are at -2 with them. Once hypnotised the victim essentially submits, enters a torpor, and is drained – first of blood and plasma, then of other fluids. This takes many hours. Death results in two turns, however. Being comprised of the stuff of magic, the Marashyálu are immune to double damage and instant death. No vital organs have they. Should they be recognised for what they are and physically attacked, Marashyálu will cast Control Human on as many foes as possible. Trying a feat like this is difficult for vampires, so saving throws vs Spells are normal in this case. If further frustrated, they will shape-change, adopt the guise of a Hú-bat, and escape. As with other demons, the Glyph of Ever-Present Defence drives Marashyálu away.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Marashyálu L5	16 1d6+2	13 1d6	10 1d6-1	07 1d6-2

Modifiers: NPC Reaction Rolls, *Hypnosis*, *Control Human*. Marashyálu live in the underworld for darkness but can operate under Tuléng when need forces them. **Armour:** Light. **Saving Throws:** Stun--; Psn--; Hyp--; Spls-**8**; Trps-**8**; Eyes-**6**. **Hit Points:** **25**.

The Sagún

Warrior

This eight-foot tall anthropoid fungus-creature was developed over lengthy periods of time by ancient techno-sages attempting to adapt native flora to their nightmarish needs. Millennia later, Sagún are deployed by worshipers of the tlokiriqáluyal as killer-guardians. They guard not only treasure rooms but also sleeping chambers. They can be programmed to produce poisons harmless to chosen individuals. These individuals give the Sagún a taste of their blood; they are afterwards immune to its venomous thorns and to its spores. Such was the depth of the ancients' genetic tailoring disciplines. In combat, the Sagún strikes with woody needle-sharp thorns (poisoned with a venom akin to the Food of the Ssú). The Sagún also spews forth a cloud of poison spores. The referee rolls 1d20 each combat round. If the result is equal to or below the character level of the Sagún's foe, the fungus emits spores. These cannot help but be inhaled by everyone in a ten-foot radius. The spores are harmless to those the Sagún has been tasked to guard, but are deadly to all others. A saving throw vs poison is required; otherwise, a spore germinates inside the inhaler's lungs and kills him in 1xCon full turns. Those struck by the creature's thorny claws also require a saving throw vs poison. Those failing their saving throws have only 1xCon combat rounds to receive a Neutralize Poison spell before dying. Sagún are non-sentient lifeforms.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Sagún L10	19 4d6	16 3d6	13 2d6	10 1d6

Modifiers: Thorn-claws; poison; spores. Sagún appear only in areas maintained by the tlokiriqáluyal. **Armour:** None. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**5**; Psn-**5**; Hyp-**10**; Spls-**9**; Trps-**4**; Eyes-**4**. **Hit Points:** **23**.

940. Ancient Automata

The creatures described below are either androids or automatons. Androids appear human; they have skin, muscle and bone. What they do not have is blood, lungs or other human organs. They do not, as humans do, reproduce; instead, they replicate and replace their own cells through a means now lost to human understanding. Legend has it that certain manuals exist that describe how to manufacture androids. If so, the Sleeping God keeps them away from prying eyes. Automatons are robots. The pre-Time of Darkness ancients marshalled them for many uses. Those that have survived twenty-five millennia are soldiers and assassins, killers without remorse.

The Páyeth

Warrior

These robotic war-fighters were once equipped with slay beams, but now hold in their hands swords and shields. Legend and more recent report describe them as tall, handsome young men, all identical, all having an up-turned, stylised chin. Their once black irises are now grey. Unlike their more intelligent brethren, the Ru'ún, the Páyeth are simple-minded, knowing only how to cut and thrust. Any time one rolls a natural 6 on a damage dice, it

means the Páyeth has disarmed its opponent. It never accepts surrender, however; it always follows the manoeuvre with another strike. One can see pre-Time of Darkness soldiers' combat dress by looking closely at a Páyeth. They seem to have worn close-fitting boots, leggings, a tight long-sleeved jersey (ending in gloves and a tight-about-the-neck Roman collar), and a skull cap. Different squads of Páyeth survive at different levels of repair and readiness. Those detailed here are fairly worn out, their level and equipage are nothing special. Páyeth that emerge from *The Eye of Calling Forth an Unconquerable Army* have twice the levels of those below:

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Páyeth L2	15 2d6-1	12 1d6+1	09 1d6	06 1d3
Páyeth L3	16 2d6	13 2d6-2	10 1d6+1	07 1d6
Páyeth L5	18 2d6+3	15 2d6	12 2d6-3	09 1d6+1

Modifiers: High quality steel sword, round shield. Páyeth behave with surface chivalry, but cut throats at first opportunity. **Armour:** Heavy. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**5**; Psn--; Hyp--; Spls-**3**; Trps-**5**; Eyes-**6**. **Hit Points:** **30**.

The Yéleth

Infiltrator

These android clandestine agents and assassins appear as flesh and bone, with flawless bronze-coppery skin tone and straight black hair. Priestesses of the tlokiriqáluyal aspire to their broad cheekbones, large eyes (greyish, with age), sculpted shoulders and fine hands. Those hands wield weapons of death with incredible skill and intelligence. Their intelligence also casts a powerful hypnosis (or charming or mind-control) that allows Yéleth to draw men into their power. The charmed provide disguises, identity papers, coin and more – all allowing the Yéleth to complete its mission. Its mission often is the murder of some high official. The Angel of Doom, therefore, can at times be encountered while about some task. Usually, the Yéleth ignores those unconnected with its objectives, but if it has use of a party of Tsolyáni males, then it will attempt to seduce, implore, charm and finally mind-hex the party. What occurs after that is left to the imagination of the referee or fellow players or both.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Yéleth L3	16 3d6-1	12 2d6+1	08 2d6-3	04 1d6
Yéleth L4	18 3d6	14 3d6-2	10 2d6+1	06 2d6-2
Yéleth L6	20 3d6+3	15 3d6	10 3d6-3	05 2d6+2

Modifiers: High quality steel poniard, other weapons. Yéleth behave as though seductress-types, but are cold and calculating. **Armour:** Medium. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**4**; Psn-**6**; Hyp--; Spls-**4**; Trps-**7**; Eyes-**8**. **Hit Points:** **20**.

The Ru'ún

Warrior

The Demons of Bronze, like the lesser Páyeth, are robotic war-fighters that were originally equipped with slay beams. Now, however, they are forced to wield swords and lances, which they do with superhuman speed, power and control. Standing six-and-a-half feet tall, the Ru'ún achieve initiative against any with shorter reach. Their radar-like senses award them 2d20 attack dice a combat round, regardless of the armour worn by their

opponent. They have an active defensive array that fires thin arcs of lightning at their adversary on his attack round (when attacking Ru'ún). This hits automatically, does 3 points of damage, and forces a Physical Stun saving throw. The bronze war masters' senses also apprehend spectres, foes turned invisible through the operation of spells or Eyes, and enemies teleporting through The Null. They are impossible to surprise. Highly intelligent, the Ru'ún speak Tsolyáni and other languages, but are totally faithful to their orders. If encountered down in some underworld guarding the property of a pre-Time of Darkness king or techno-sage, the Ru'ún will remain at his post, however much characters cajole it to lay duty aside. These beings are called demons not only because of their sword-fighting, but also because of their insanity. Having remained still for many millennia, Ru'ún sometimes lose their minds. Legends recount the destruction visited upon the surface world when a Demon of Bronze emerges from the tsuru'úm to slay and slay and slay. Only a rare potency and certain Eyes give a man power to influence a Ru'ún. It is said that the empire would like to command one, and enlist it in the hunt for the Mihállí who now infiltrate imperial circles.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Ru'ún L12	20 8d6	20 6d6	20 4d6	20 2d6

Modifiers: High quality steel two-handed sword, other weapons. Ru'ún will speak to those who violate the underworld before dispatching them **Armour:** Super-Heavy. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**8**; Psn --; Hyp--; Spls-**8**; Trps-**9**; Eyes-**10**. **Hit Points: 40**.

750. Dangerous Near-Humans

The following are two very dissimilar near-humans, who separately are quite dangerous to mankind. Each has a close relationship with the citizens of a city in Tsolyánu, but – beyond that – they feel no compunction about murdering men and women, even children.

The Hehegánu

Sorcerer

The Old Ones are enigmatic creatures, the descendants of aliens purposely hybridised with man and then evolved toward a special destiny: to be food for the tlokiriqáluyal. Perfect sacrifices, their slaughter at the altar increases the chances of divine intervention by a significant margin. Sorcerous rituals that include the shedding of Old Ones' blood have their likelihood of spell success significantly increased as well. Only below the city of Purdimál (the Black Toad of the Empire) are Hehegánu safe, protected by customs dating back to the reign of Queen Nayári, by the wards of Undying Wizards, and by the Petal Throne itself. The Old Ones almost exactly resemble men, except that they are bald, lighter skinned, and have elongated skulls. They do not consider themselves allied with humanity and have independent relations with non-humans. They trade with Hlýss, Ssú and Chyrstállí, for example. They raid with them as well. They have further alliances with the Marashyálu and the Tsú'uru (ancient experiments like themselves). They worship the Goddess of the Pale Bone. This worship is spreading among the citizenry of Purdimál as well. Currently small parties of Old Ones can be encountered in underworlds across Tsolyánu. They appear to be questing for something. Very highly psychic, they seem aware of some approaching cataclysm, and are risking capture in order to prepare themselves for its eventuation.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Hehéganu L3	15 1d6+3	14 1d6	13 1d6	12 1d6
Hehéganu L4	16 2d6	15 1d6+3	14 1d6	13 1d6
Hehéganu L6	19 3d6	18 2d6+3	17 2d6	16 1d6+3

Modifiers: The Old Ones use the weapons of men; however, they prefer bronze to iron or steel. **Armour:** Light. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**3**; Psn-**3**; Hyp-**4**; Spls-**4**; Trps-**3**; Eyes-**5**. **Hit Points:** **11**.

The N'lyss

Warrior

The Warriors of the Scarlet Halls are not the product of ancient powers far better left alone; they are the result of a famous ritual performed long ages ago by the flame wizards of Fasiltum. This ritual conjured an army of giant warriors from somewhere within The Null. The warriors stood six feet, three inches tall (on average), and they appeared wearing wide pectoral collars engraved with sentient hieroglyphic bosses. These hieroglyphs gave every warrior wearing them his tribal role, his name and even his personality. Five millennia later, the N'lyss are still around, having been settled in the hinterlands near the City of Chiming Skulls. Many N'lyss serve the Vriddi Clan (the rulers of Fasiltum). They can be found wherever the Vriddi are, including the Island of Vrídu off the coast of Yán Kór. The N'lyss, however, do not, as the Vriddi do, worship Vimúhla. They worship The Beast without a Tail. Being conjured entities, these warriors do not suffer physical stun, double damage, or instant death to the extent that normal human beings do. They have twice the strength of normal men, and can battle Chyrstáli upon an equal footing. They can be encountered in many of the ancient underworlds beneath the cities of Tsolyánu, either in service to a shrine of the evil war gods or hunting for sentient hieroglyphic pectoral collars lost by kinsmen in previous battles. Interestingly, the N'lyss do not touch metals of any sort. Metal is anathema to them. The weapons of the N'lyss are wood and stone. They are adept at quarterstaves. N'lyss use stone hand-weapons, shaped from a form of jade. They alone, of all the cultures that have tried to do it, have tamed Sérudla. These monsters fight alongside N'lyss. They are best given a wide birth.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
N'lyss L7	17 3d6+2	16 2d6+3	15 2d6	14 2d6
N'lyss L8	18 3d6+3	17 3d6	16 2d6+3	15 2d6
N'lyss L10	20 4d6	19 3d6+3	18 3d6	17 2d6+3

Modifiers: High quality Serésh-wood quarterstaff; jade dagger or axe-blade. Like Chnéhlu, N'lyss eat human flesh, preferring young women and children. They hire out as mercenaries and guard the Vriddi. **Armour:** Medium. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**9**; Psn-**11**; Hyp-**5**; Spls-**3**; Trps-**7**; Eyes-**6**. **Hit Points:** **25**.

960. Treacherous Allies

The following are three supposedly allied-to-mankind non-humans; their allegiance, however, is purely pragmatic. They kill men with zeal, when they can get away with it.

The Shén

Warrior

The Demonic Warriors were originally a species of war-like creatures, seven feet tall, gleaming black scales, a raptor's beak and bite, who were brought to Tékumel to fight the Ssú. Their dragon-like appearance now includes an array of slender spines that Shén erect or relax, depending on the proximity of violence. An easy match for either the Chrystáli, the Hrá or the N'ýss, a Shén lives for bloodshed. It excites Shén like blood in the water excites the shark of ancient Earth. In fact, referees must, at the start of each combat round involving a Shén, roll 1d20. If the roll equals or is below the Shén's 20-Int, the fantastically scaled and plated creature enters a berserker state, attacking all within reach of its sword for 2xCon combat rounds. During an insensate episode, the berserker's tail whips and snaps, and it attacks at +3 to its failure threshold/ -3 to his level on defence. Non-player characters are required to pass a morale check when facing a berserk Shén. The black beak of the Shén has been known to snap down upon its enemy's shoulder or forehead when insensate. The Shén live in the hot jungles south of the sorcerous land of Livyánu, but mercenaries wander through all four of the other empires in search of combat. Shén are also regular participants in the circuses of the Hirilákte Arena. They usually win.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Shén L8	22 4d6+3	19 3d6	15 3d6	10 3d6
Shén L9	23 5d6	20 4d6+3	16 4d6	11 3d6
Shén L11	25 6d6	22 5d6+3	18 4d6	13 3d6+3

Modifiers: Axe-sword [Shén Steel: +2 to hit, +2 damage; Enemy – Ssú, Hlýss], Dagger [Shén Steel: +2 to hit, +2 damage; Enemy – Ssú, Hlýss]. Like Chnéhlu, Shén eat human flesh, preferring Livyáni meat for some reason. They hire out as mercenaries and guard the Tlakotáni. **Armour:** Heavy. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**12**; Psn-**12**; Hyp-**7**; Spls-**6**; Trps-**10**; Eyes-**11**. **Hit Points:** **30**.

The Pygmy Folk

Infiltrator

The Ninínyal (the very little ones) travel the length and breadth of Tsolyánu in pursuit of trade. They buy and sell everything, from clanhouse items to the most dangerous secret information. They are gem-cutters, jewellery crafters, tinkers, engineers and inventors. Pygmy Folk, in fact, are the only intelligent species on the planet psychologically disposed toward innovation and change. All others are stolidly conservative. Curious and impulsive, the Pygmy Folk are known for getting themselves into trouble. The Tsolyáni, of course, exaggerate this, claiming that the Ninínyal are capricious and cruel in their humour. Some of this is deserved. The Pygmy Folk do seem to use their superhuman hearing and night vision for painful ends. They are small, nimble, able to squeeze through apertures the breadth of an outstretched hand, and therefore are incomparable spies and eavesdroppers. Certainly all the temples and the Omnipotent Azure Legion instantly approach the Pygmy Folk whenever witnesses to some mysterious event are required. They have a knack for being in the right place at the right time. An example: it was they who captured the Tsolyáni general Bazhán hiSayúncha, after the sack of Ke'ér, and delivered him to Yilrána's lover for torture and death. Their name comes from the fact that they stand only about three feet tall. The Pygmy Folk are also digitigrade in format, four-fingered, and have a beak (which many animals have on Tékumel).

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Nininyal L3	15 1d6	14 1d3	13 1d3	12 1d3
Nininyal L4	16 1d6+1	15 1d6	14 1d3	13 1d3
Nininyal L6	19 1d6+2	18 1d6+1	17 1d6	16 1d3

Modifiers: The Pygmy Folk prefer crossbows having poison-tipped bolts to melee weapons. They also use assassins' items. **Armour:** Light. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**2**; Psn-**4**; Hyp-**5**; Spls-**5**; Trps-**7**; Eyes-**8**. **Hit Points:** **06**.

The Pé Chói

Sorcerer

The Pé Chói live the nearest to Tsolyánu; their lands lie beneath the eaves of the Cháka Forests separating the Tsolyáni Imperium from Mu'ugalavyá. They are mankind's best friends, taking part in human society most easily and remaining within its lands longer than any other species seems able to do. They also make the easiest nonhuman species to role-play, speaking human languages well and gesturing with their four "hands" in endearingly man-like fashion. In terms of profession, the Pé Chói make fine magicians, since several of their innate abilities are psychic in nature. They can be found throughout the empire, but especially in the cities of Chéne Hó and cosmopolitan Tumíssa. There, they impress human sorcerers with the ease with which Pé Chói spell-casters work magic; they don't seem to engage in ritual at all; effects manifest instantly, innately. Pé Chói detect invisible foes without having to prepare a nexus or perform ceremony. They even sense the nearby presence of traps and secret doors. They see visible foes hidden by total (or even sorcerous) darkness. They detect the thoughts of nearby creatures, even through solid walls (but not the steel walls of the ancients). These spells grant Pé Chói an incredible empathy, which allows them to diagnose illnesses and treat diseases more skilfully than humans in similar circumstances. Lastly, Pé Chói engage in telepathy with other Pé Chói as easily as humans engage in speech. It is, therefore, dangerous to ambush one of the Listeners.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Pé Chói L3	10 1d6	06 1d6	03 1d6	01 1d6
Pé Chói L4	11 1d6+3	07 1d6	04 1d6	02 1d6
Pé Chói L6	13 2d6	09 2d6-3	06 1d6	04 1d6

Modifiers: The Pé Chói prefer slender triangular-bladed thrusting swords, which even their magic-users wield. **Armour:** Medium. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**2**; Psn-**5**; Hyp-**6**; Spls-**7**; Trps-**3**; Eyes-**4**. **Hit Points:** **17**.

970. The Ahoggyá

Warrior

This ancient race was once a proud interstellar species. Now the Ahoggyá generally remain close to their swampy colonies in southern Salarvyá. They also are said to concentrate across straights in Háida Pakála. Physically, the Knobbed Ones are four-armed and four-legged creatures with a knobbly, bristly barrel body. They stand about five feet high, but are tremendously broad and strong. Their four mighty arms extend out equidistantly from under a domed, thickly armoured carapace on top of the "torso". Their four

stout legs jut out, permanently bent-kneed – one beneath each arm (at the bottom of the barrel-like trunk). The Ahoggyá has eight eyes, two between each set of arms/ legs. It has only one mouth, but three other organs (the functions of which have mystified all scholars). These interesting creatures prefer to be left alone, so absorbed are they in their uninterrupted sequence of ceremonies at home. At times, however, certain Ahoggyá leave their swamps and live for a time among the Salarvyáni or the Tsolyáni. The use of Ahoggyá shock troops in battle is a mainstay of all the militaries of the Five Empires. Behaviour-wise, the Knobbed Ones tend to be gruff, rude and boisterous. They completely ignore social etiquette, deferential displays and sensitivity around women. For this reason, Ahoggyá are not allowed in Tsolyáni towns and cities, but must remain in the Foreigners' Quarter or in camps outside settlement walls.

Drawn by an instinct they refuse to explain, the Ahoggyá always seek a fight with Shén. The latter, it might be noted, have no equivalent instinct; but they love battle and so the blood flows.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Ahoggyá L8	22 4d6+3	19 3d6	15 3d6	10 3d6
Ahoggyá L9	23 5d6	20 4d6+3	16 4d6	11 3d6
Ahoggyá L11	25 6d6	22 5d6+3	18 4d6	13 3d6+3

Modifiers: Sword of bog-iron, dagger. The Ahoggyá must roll a willpower roll or attack any Shén in sight. They hire out as mercenaries. **Armour:** Heavy. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**14**; Psn-**14**; Hyp-**8**; Spls-**4**; Trps-**5**; Eyes-**5**. **Hit Points:** **35**.

980. The Tlokiriqáluyal

Worshippers of the Rulers of the Shadow are perhaps the most constant adversary in any game of *Empire of the Petal Throne*. It is not simply that they live in the more northern, high-country, herding-economy areas of Tsolyánu that makes them “the other”. Nor is it that they once ruled the Bednálljan Empire, an imperium twice the size of the current nation. Those who spend the most alert hours of the most active years of their lives communing with entities that seek a return to “the Darkness that was before the World” carry a taint, a change. They are no longer one-hundred percent entirely human.

The Young Hothead

Warrior or Infiltrator

Devoted and passionate youths, programmed from infancy to believe in the final victory of The Null, are a constant danger to the peace and property of the empire. Every now and again, they raise the banner of religious war and run amok. Heads are broken. The legions quickly take to the streets. Leaders are rounded up. Clans and lineages get involved. After much time, the most devoted are publicly impaled, while the more practical are given some prison time and then released to their clans. The tlokiriqáluyal control the basic talent of Charisma (which includes Comeliness). Their worshippers are slender of build but strong, coppery brown of skin, with black eyes and straight, fine, shining black hair. They do not grow beards and have little body hair. They have symmetrical, high cheekbones and aquiline noses. They exude an aura of dangerousness. They are uncontrollable. They live in their high citadels, and only emerge to hunt, fight and seduce. Vendetta, revenge and counter-revenge rule their lives. Their virtues are stealth,

reckless elan, bloodlust, and stoicism under torment. Their pledge – be it a guarantee, a promise, or a threat – is a certainty. From birth to death, their lives are a succession of murders, captivities, wild flights, and daring rescues. Once having crossed a young hothead, a player-character has a rival for the rest of his days.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Hothead L1	13 1d6+2	10 1d6+1	07 1d6	04 1d6-1
Hothead L2	14 1d6+3	11 1d6+2	14 1d6+1	05 1d6
Hothead L4	16 2d6-2	13 1d6+3	10 1d6+2	07 1d6+1

Modifiers: High-quality chlén-hide sword; shield; dagger. Generally, in civilian gear, not in armour. **Armour:** None. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**5**; Psn-**5**; Hyp-**2**; Spls-**2**; Trps-**4**; Eyes-**4**. **Hit Points:** **17**.

990. Savage Beasts

The hills and plains of Tsolyánu are filled with life, some of which are large and dangerous predators.

The Dnéhlu

Infiltrator

These distant cousins of the Chnéhlu are the size of baboons, and behave in much the same manner. They roam in troops of ten to fifty, and search of a meal. Dnéhlu, however, have a scavenger's eye for the vulnerable, and will conduct harrying attacks on isolated humans, or small groups of them reduced by ill-fortune and unable to decisively defend themselves. Dnéhlu lack sentience, but are clever enough to throw stones. Their males weigh over a hundred pounds and can heft a dangerous stone. At close range, Dnéhlu have an infectious bite. Those struck must make a saving throw vs Poison or suffer wracking illness. The Dnéhlu are to be encountered near, but not extremely near, to cities.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Dnéhlu L1	12 1d6	09 1d6	06 1d6	03 1d6

Modifiers: darting, circling, harrying attacks that wear down a target. Bite and evade. Bite and evade. **Armour:** Light. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**7**; Psn-**7**; Hyp-**2**; Spls-**2**; Trps-**4**; Eyes-**4**. **Hit Points:** **15**.

The Feshénga

Warrior

These fish-scale, serpent-looking, beasts with a hooked beak-like maw are about the size of a mountain lion. They fill the same niche. They often hunt in small groups. Feshénga climb trees, stalk prey, coil and spring. Double damage indicates that the creature has raked its prey with its many claws. Beyond their spring and rake, Feshénga are assisted in hunting their prey by having a venomous bite. Any player-character struck by Feshénga must make a saving throw vs poison or die within 2d6 turns. Feshénga are to be encountered mainly in mountains and forests.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Feshénga L3	15 3d6	12 2d6+3	09 2d6	06 1d6+3

Modifiers: springing attack from a coiled position. Bites, then evades. **Armour:** Medium. **Saving Throws:** Stun-**7**; Psn-**7**; Hyp-**2**; Spls-**2**; Trps-**4**; Eyes-**4**. **Hit Points:** **30**.

The Zrné

Warrior

These beasts have six legs, a tough hide impervious to ordinary missiles, and a maw filled with poisonous needle-pointed teeth. They are about the size of a Grizzly Bear, but are as single-minded as a shark when it comes to taking their prey. They are solitary hunters. They trail and stalk until they worry their quarry into making a mistake; then they charge like a freight train. Few can withstand them; those suffering the bite of a Zrné must make a saving throw vs Poison (-2 failure – due to strength of poison – threshold) or die in 1d6 combat rounds. Zrné are to be encountered in the arid hills and mountains of Tsolyánu.

	Defender L1-L4	Defender L5-L7	Defender L8-L9	Defender L10
Zrné L6	18 4d6	15 3d6	12 2d6	09 1d6

Modifiers: charging attacks that terminate in a massive bite. **Armour:** Heavy. **Saving Throws:** Stun-7; Psn-7; Hyp-2; Spls-2; Trps-4; Eyes-4. **Hit Points:** 40.



Having covered combat, the basic statistics of the NPC enemies most likely to be met by characters – in general – in *Empire of the Petal Throne*, it is needful for this edition to assist referees further by providing encounter groups, specific fully detailed Non-Player Characters. These have all talents, saving throws, skills, spells, combat attributes, and important equipment, magic items, Eyes, etc. fully and realistically described.

1010. The Livyáni Legation

Masked always, Lady Shahtáhmasèb may be encountered at a feast, down in the tsuru'úm below Báy Sý, or exploring its Cities of the Dead.

Masked, costumed, tattooed (all in black), Lady Shahtáhmasèb of Livyánu is slim but imposing. She can always use sacrificial victims, especially if they are also agents of the emperor. Her aim is to destroy Tsolyánu, but not by hawking the drug zu'úr (documents implicating her were planted by the Military Party). Her actual plan is to conduct a ritual within the Unknown Pyramid. The purpose of this ritual is to summon the Goddess of the Pale Bone, to destroy Tirikélu, the Petal Throne, itself. She has leagued with the chamángmàkoi Méngan hiTirrúne for this. If met at a feast, the beautiful sorceress will attempt to lure player-characters into some remote culvert far from witnesses. If met at night around or within the Unknown Pyramid, she will have her Faceless Adepts ensorcel the player-characters. If met exploring the Cities of the Dead, her Chnéhlu will sort things out.

Lady Shahtáhmaseb													
Type: Sorcerer							Level: XV						
Culture: Tlokiriqáluyal							Hit Points: 18 (sorcerously doubled)						
 <i>Basic Talents</i>													
<i>Score</i>		<i>Bonuses</i>											
Strength	09												
Dexterity	14	+1 to hit											
Constitution	11												
Intelligence	22	+4 Mental Skills, +3 ST vs Hypnosis, +2 Damage											
Psychic Ability	27	+4 LoSS Spells, +3 ST vs Spells, +2 Reaction Time											
Charisma	18	+2 NPC Reaction, +1 ST Physical Stun											
 <i>Saving Throws and Combat</i>													
<i>Physical Stun</i>		<i>Poison</i>		<i>Hypnosis</i>		<i>Spells</i>		<i>Traps</i>		<i>Eyes</i>			
10		09		18		18		11		12			
VS an Sorcerer:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X			
<i>Small Scimitar</i>	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14			
VS a Warrior:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X			
<i>Small Scimitar</i>	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15			
VS a Infiltrator:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X			
<i>Small Scimitar</i>	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13			
DAMAGE:	6d6+5	6d6+2	5d6+5	5d6+4	5d6+2	4d6+5	4d6+4	4d6+3	4d6+2	3d6+2			
 <i>Light Armor</i>													
Equipment: <i>Demonic Mask</i> [Summon Demon: no incantation required; one use only; automatic LoSS and Binding success]; <i>Cloak of Darkness</i> [Invisibility (in a dark environment); no limit on uses; one combat round preparation; automatic LoSS success]; <i>Small Scimitar</i> [enchanted steel; Advanced Melee Techniques; Original Combat Technique; Enemy – non-Livýáni]; an <i>Eye of Ruling as a King in Glory</i> .													

Shahtámmasèb's Thúnru'u

This rare child-sized homunculus differs from those created in Tsolyánu by having larger, slanted almond-shaped milky-white eyes (almost like the eyes of Ssú). It is important to stress that a Thúnru'u is an independent, fully functional lifeform. It has intelligence and personality; the below has a wry sense of humour.

Shahtámmasèb's Thúnru'u										
Type: Infiltrator					Level: XV (sorcerous)					
Culture: Tlokiriqáluyal					Hit Points: 16					
Basic Talents		Score		Bonuses						
Strength		14		+1 damage						
Dexterity		18		+2 to hit, +1 damage						
Constitution		18		+2 hit points, +1 resistance						
Intelligence		12								
Psychic Ability		12								
Charisma		04		-1 NPC Reaction Rolls						
Saving Throws and Combat										
Physical Stun		Poison		Hypnosis		Spells		Traps		Eyes
10		9		10		11		12		13
VS an Infiltrator:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Claw and Bite	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12
VS a Sorcerer:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Claw and Bite	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13
VS a Warrior:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Claw and Bite	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11
DAMAGE:	6d6+2	6d6	5d6+3	5d6+2	5d6	4d6+3	4d6+2	4d6+1	4d6	3d6
Medium Armor										
Skills: All Infiltrator skills except Tsolyáni Literacy, Imperial Etiquette, Secret Society and Master of Disguise.										
Spells Inscribed: Thúnru'u are able to store spells, in similar fashion to scrolls and other one-use nexuses. Currently, Lady Shahtámmasèb's familiar stores the following spells: Telepathy x2, Dispel Magic x3, Mirror Images, Shapechange Self/Other x2.										

Chnéhlu Bodyguards 1 – 3

These Chnéhlu from the Tlászte Heights have lighter coloured fur than their Tsolyáni cousins. They are also more intelligent and less belligerent towards human beings. It appears that, in Livyánu, the species was never pushed to the margins.

Lady Shahtámmasèb treats them no differently than she would any other person.

Chnéhlu Bodyguards 1-3										
Type: Warrior					Level: V					
Culture: Tlokiriqáluyal					Hit Points: 23					
Basic Talents		Score		Bonuses						
Strength		19		+2 damage, +1 to hit						
Dexterity		15		+1 to hit						
Constitution		20		+3 hit points, +2 resistance, +1 ST vs Poison						
Intelligence		09								
Psychic Ability		06		-1 LoSS spells						
Charisma		07		-1 NPC Reaction Rolls						
Saving Throws and Combat										
Physical Stun		Poison		Hypnosis		Spells		Traps		Eyes
5		5		5		5		5		5
VS a Warrior:		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX X
Steel Chopper		18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10 09
VS a Infiltrator:		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX X
Steel Chopper		19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11 10
VS a Sorcerer:		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX X
Steel Chopper		17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	09 08
DAMAGE:		2d6	2d6-1	2d6-2	1d6+3	1d6+2	1d6+2	1d6+2	1d6+2	1d6+1 1d6
Medium Armor										
Skills: Basic Stealth Techniques, Basic Melee Techniques.										
Equipment: Steel swords and helmets, short kilts, sleeveless vests.										

Faceless Adepts 1 – 3

Lady Shahtámmasèb's three sorcerous apprentices go masked, bone white without feature, with strange flanges radiating outward like a crosswise crest. They are members of the Diodáz, the paranormal police. They mind-

meld with their mistress when she needs magnified sorcerous power. They also have skill at preparing sacrifices for the summoning of demons. Purely supportive in function, the Faceless Adepts do not employ flashy sorceries to defeat foes; they paralyse their targets or put them to sleep.

Faceless Adepts 1-3										
Type: Sorcerer				Level: IX						
Culture: Tlokiriqáluyal				Hit Points: 15						
Basic Talents		<i>Score</i>	<i>Bonuses</i>							
Strength		12								
Dexterity		13								
Constitution		14	+1 hit points							
Intelligence		15	+1 Mental Skills							
Psychic Ability		16	+1 LoSS Spells							
Charisma		17	+1 NPC Reaction							
Saving Throws and Combat										
<i>Physical Stun</i>	<i>Poison</i>		<i>Hypnosis</i>		<i>Spells</i>		<i>Traps</i>	<i>Eyes</i>		
5	5		9		9		6	6		
VS an Sorcerer:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
<i>Dagger</i>	14	13	12	11	10	09	08	07	06	05
VS a Warrior:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
<i>Dagger</i>	15	14	13	12	11	10	09	08	07	06
VS a Infiltrator:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
<i>Dagger</i>	13	12	11	10	09	08	07	06	05	04
DAMAGE:	2d6+3	2d6+2	2d6	1d6+3	1d6+2	1d6+1	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6
<i>Light Armor</i>										
Skills: Medical Skills, Psychic Magic, Ritual Magic.										
Equipment: <i>Steel Dagger</i> , <i>Medium Rod</i> [spell nexus: Sleep, Paralyse Other, Control Person], <i>Amulet of the Horned One</i> [eliminates Morale Checks].										

Bondsmen 1 – 6

Bondsmen are Livyáni males, apparently attached to Lady Shahtámmasèb through her temple back in the Livyáni capital of Tsámra. Clothed in merely a loincloth, Bondsmen have sunken chests, large eyes, and elongated skulls and fingers. They never speak; possibly they have had Mind-Bars applied before the start of the mission to Tsolyánu. The Bondsmen go about unarmed, for all appearances merely labourers.

If they are attacked, they use steel chisels or fight unarmed, fanatically.

Livyáni Bondsmen 1-6										
Type: Warrior					Level: III					
Culture: Tlokiriqáluyal					Hit Points: 16					
Basic Talents		<i>Score</i>		<i>Bonuses</i>						
Strength		16		+1 damage						
Dexterity		14		+1 to hit						
Constitution		12								
Intelligence		12								
Psychic Ability		10								
Charisma		08								
Saving Throws and Combat										
<i>Physical Stun</i>		<i>Poison</i>		<i>Hypnosis</i>		<i>Spells</i>		<i>Traps</i>		<i>Eyes</i>
3		3		2		2		3		3
VS a Warrior:		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX X
<i>Chlén-hide Knife</i>		09	08	07	06	05	04	03	02	01 00
VS a Infiltrator:		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX X
<i>Chlén-hide Knife</i>		10	09	08	07	06	05	04	03	02 01
VS a Sorcerer:		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX X
<i>Chlén-hide Knife</i>		08	07	06	05	04	03	02	01	00 -01
DAMAGE:		1d6+3	1d6+2	1d6+1	1d6+1	1d6+1	1d6+1	1d6+2	1d6+2	1d6+1 1d6
<i>Medium Armor</i>										
Skills: Original Skills pertaining to labouring work.										
Equipment: Tools, digging implements ropes.										

All together, the Livyáni Legation would most likely be encountered far out amid the canyons and plateaus of the various cities of the dead that stretch away to the east of Béy Sý. The city was the second most important metropolis in the Kingdom of the Gods. There is every likelihood of artefacts of the ancients out there. If encountered, the Chnéhlu approach first, hoping to pause the player-characters long enough for the Faceless Adepts and the Thúnru'u to get close.

Lady Shahtámmasèb is able to operate through her familiar. The goal will be to subdue the characters, for interrogation and for use as sacrifices. Assume the sorceress has access to all spells listed in these rules. Higher level characters will draw Lady Shahtámmasèb's Eye of Ruling as a King in Glory.

As for player-character tactics, obviously killing the Thúnru'u is first priority. The Faceless Adepts are more mind-meld assistants than powerful sorcerers in and of themselves.

This is a highly dangerous foe. Possibly the best strategy is for characters to flee, and then report to the Omnipresent Azure Legion. This could lead to more involvement with the legion.

1020. The Prince's Procurers

Since the arrival of twenty-five year old Prince Dhich'uné, having stewed in the forbidden city of Sárku with its priests for a full nine years, there have been a series of kidnappings of high clan celebrities (all in their early adulthood, all having high comeliness). At the skull prince's behest, the young and beautiful are being "recruited" into the Legion of Tkél (Tólek Kána Pits prison guards), but after abduction are invited to his evocation ceremonies – as sacrifices.

The prince's procurers are encountered in Béy Sý, at night, especially near palaces where riotous feasts are occurring.

Prince Dhich'uné Tlakotáni

After nearly a decade spent in the necrotic City of Sárku, Prince Dhich'uné has returned to the capital. He has sponsored the Legion of Tkél, and lives in the fortress adjacent to the Tólek Kána Pits.

The abductor heir enjoys accompanying his hired Legion of Tkél guards as they hunt for fresh victims. He disguises himself as a middle-class thug, but his steel gives him away.

Prince Dhich'uné Tlakotáni										
Type: Sorcerer				Level: IX						
Culture: Tlokiriqáluyal				Hit Points: 12						
Basic Talents		Score		Bonuses						
Strength		11								
Dexterity		12								
Constitution		15		+1 hit points						
Intelligence		18		+2 Mental Skills, +1 ST Hypnosis						
Psychic Ability		20		+3 LoSS Spells, +2 ST Spells, +1 Reaction Time						
Charisma		07		-1 NPC Reaction Roll						
Saving Throws and Combat										
Physical Stun		Poison		Hypnosis		Spells		Traps		Eyes
6		7		11		12		6		7
VS an Sorcerer:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Magic Dagger	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	09	08
VS a Warrior:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Magic Dagger	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	09
VS a Infiltrator:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Magic Dagger	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	09	08	07
DAMAGE:	3d6	2d6+3	2d6+2	2d6	1d6+3	1d6+2	1d6+1	1d6	1d6	1d6
Light Armor										
Skills: Know Bednálljan; Research; Thaumaturgy; Dark Sight; Protection from Good; Control Underworld Denizens; Control Undead; Eaters of Souls; Destroy Undead; Summon Demon.										
Equipment: Enchanted Steel Dagger [+3 to hit; +3 damage; Enemy: All Living], Medium Rod [spell nexus: Cause Panic x2, Control Undead, Control Entity], Amulet of the Amber Bulwark [Control Undead: unlimited duration; one combat round preparation].										

Priestess Jnáika hiTurushán

This young and beautiful seductress is used as a kind of succubus/ incubus to lure the equally young and beautiful to their doom. She appears to be a priestess of Dilinála, but secretly worships the Five Evil Ones. Only arrived in Béy Sý from Jakálla, she has taken up residence at the Temple of Nayári on the east bank of the Mssúma.

Miss Jnáika hiTurushán											
Type: Sorcerer				Level: VI							
Culture: Tlokiriqáluyal				Hit Points: 08							
Basic Talents		Score		Bonuses							
Strength		08									
Dexterity		15									
Constitution		11									
Intelligence		17		+1 Mental Skills							
Psychic Ability		15		+2 LoSS Spells, +1 ST Spells							
Charisma		18		+2 NPC Reaction Roll, +1 ST vs Physical Stun							
Saving Throws and Combat											
Physical Stun		Poison		Hypnosis		Spells		Traps		Eyes	
5		5		8		9		4		7	
VS an Sorcerer:		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Magic Dagger		13	12	11	10	09	08	07	06	05	04
VS a Warrior:		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Magic Dagger		14	13	12	11	10	09	08	07	06	05
VS a Infiltrator:		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Magic Dagger		12	11	10	09	08	07	06	05	04	03
DAMAGE:		1d6+1	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6-1	1d6-1	1d6-1	1d6-2	1d6-2
Light Armor											
Skills: Know Bednálljan; Research; Thaumaturgy; Dark Sight; Protection from Good; Control Underworld Denizens; Control Undead; Destroy Undead.											
Equipage: disguises; costumes; a bronze stiletto.											

Prince Dchich'uné's Men 1 – 6

These off-duty Legion of Tkél soldiers disguise themselves when procuring recruits for their legion, or celebrants for the prince's curious rites practiced in the Ultimate Labyrinth below the Tólek Kána Pits. They work together to immobilize their victims.

Prince Dchich'uné's Men 1-6											
Type: Warrior			Level: V								
Culture: Tlokiriqáluyal			Hit Points: 15								
Basic Talents		Score	Bonuses								
Strength	15	+1 damage									
Dexterity	12										
Constitution	13										
Intelligence	09										
Psychic Ability	08										
Charisma	13										
Saving Throws and Combat											
Physical Stun	Poison	Hypnosis			Spells		Traps		Eyes		
5	5	3			3		4		4		
VS a Warrior:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	
Flanged Mace	15	14	13	12	11	10	09	08	07	06	
VS a Infiltrator:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	
Flanged Mace	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	09	08	07	
VS a Sorcerer:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	
Flanged Mace	14	13	12	11	10	09	08	07	06	05	
DAMAGE:	2d6+1	2d6	1d6+3	1d6+2	1d6+1	1d6+1	1d6+1	1d6+1	1d6	1d6	
Medium Armor											
Skills: Basic Stealth Techniques, Basic Melee Techniques.											
Equipage: bludgeoning weapons, nets, ropes.											

Priestess Jnáika will approach any player-character with a Charisma of 18 or higher. She takes her time, teases and provokes, until an assignation in a secret place can be arranged. This place might be a little-used colonnade in the Governor's Palace, her seamstress' vacant clanhouse apartment, rooms in a traveler's hostel, or the boathouses near her residence. Whatever the locale, a well-prepared and previously practiced ambush will unfold. The not-so-innocent Jnáika seeks to keep her involvement a secret, so she acts as surprised and terrified by the ambush as any teenager would.

1030. Secret Society Assassins

At present in Béy Sý, a rumour swirls that a device of the ancients, deep in the lowest level of the city's netherworld, has been discovered. This appeals to the people of the city, for they desire it that "The Soul of the World" be as old

The discovery has also caused jealousy. Several temple secret societies are vying with one another to find and interrogate the discoverer of the depot, and one clandestine action team has mistakenly identified the player-characters as those by whom the discovery was made.

This member of the dreaded Ndálu Clan (a secret faction of the Temple of Ksárul that seeks the destruction of the tlomítlanyal) leads a clandestine action team of specialists and clanless hired thugs.

Lady Dzái hiDuluméssa

Lady Dzái hiDuluméssa										
Type: Sorcerer					Level: XXV					
Culture: Tokirikáľuyal					Hit Points: 20 (sorcerously doubled)					
Basic Talents										
Strength	12									
Dexterity	16	+1 to hit								
Constitution	16	+1 hit points								
Intelligence	24	+4 Mental Skills, +3 ST vs Hypnosis, +2 Damage								
Psychic Ability	28	+5 LoSS Spells, +4 ST vs Spells, +3 Reaction Time								
Charisma	20	+3 NPC Reaction, +1 ST Physical Stun, -1 damage taken								
Saving Throws and Combat										
Physical Stun	Poison	Hypnosis			Spells			Traps		Eyes
15	14	20			23			15		17
VS an Sorcerer:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
<i>Small Scimitar</i>	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22
VS a Warrior:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
<i>Small Scimitar</i>	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23
VS a Infiltrator:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
<i>Small Scimitar</i>	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	24
DAMAGE:	6d6+5	6d6+2	5d6+5	5d6+4	5d6+2	4d6+5	4d6+4	4d6+3	4d6+2	3d6+2
<i>Light Armor</i>										
Equipment: Amulet of the Five-Fold Vedhóru [Dispel Magic, no preparation required, no use limit]; Moon Boots [rapid travel if moons are in the sky]; Small Scimitar [enchanted steel; Advanced Melee Techniques; Original Combat Technique].										

Rannáluyáni Tracker

This primitive tribesman from the furthest mountains of Rannálu, south of the Plains of Glass, has a yellowish – rather than the usual coppery – under tone to his skin. He wears only a loincloth, and his spine is tattooed with a vertical column of tiny shamanic pictographs.

Rannáluyáni Tracker										
Type: Infiltrator	Level: VI									
Culture: Tlokiriqáluyal	Hit Points: 13									
<hr/>										
Basic Talents		<i>Score</i>	<i>Bonuses</i>							
Strength	11									
Dexterity	18	+2 to hit, +1 damage								
Constitution	18	+2 hit points, +1 resistance								
Intelligence	10									
Psychic Ability	14	+1 LoSS Spells								
Charisma	08									
<hr/>										
Saving Throws and Combat										
<i>Physical Stun</i>	<i>Poison</i>	<i>Hypnosis</i>			<i>Spells</i>		<i>Traps</i>		<i>Eyes</i>	
4	4	5			5		7		6	
VS an Infiltrator:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
<i>Short Spear</i>	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	09	08	07
VS a Sorcerer:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
<i>Short Spear</i>	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	09	08
VS a Warrior:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
<i>Short Spear</i>	15	14	13	12	11	10	09	08	07	06
DAMAGE:	2d6+1	2d6	2d6-1	2d6-2	1d6+3	1d6+2	1d6+2	1d6+2	1d6+2	1d6+1
<hr/>										
<i>No Armor</i>										
Skills: Advanced Stealth Techniques, Basic Melee Techniques, Detect Good, Locate Object.										
Equipment: a stone-tipped spear, flint knife, fetish and fetch.										

Nakóme Hirelings 1 – 6

These nobodies are disposable killers and thieves that Hóru hiFershéna utilises to keep the Ndálu Clan safe from suspicion. Most are Tsolyáni, but a one or two are foreigners. Their desperation for some advantage causes them to not require morale checks.

Nakóme Hirelings 1-6										
Type: Warrior			Level: III							
Culture: Tlokiriqáluyal			Hit Points: 14							
Basic Talents			<i>Score</i>		<i>Bonuses</i>					
Strength			14		+1 damage					
Dexterity			14		+1 to hit					
Constitution			12							
Intelligence			10							
Psychic Ability			09							
Charisma			11							
Saving Throws and Combat										
<i>Physical Stun</i>		<i>Poison</i>		<i>Hypnosis</i>		<i>Spells</i>		<i>Traps</i>		<i>Eyes</i>
3		3		2		2		2		2
VS a Warrior:		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX X
<i>Wooden Knout</i>		11	10	09	08	07	06	05	04	03 02
VS a Infiltrator:		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX X
<i>Wooden Knout</i>		12	11	10	09	08	07	06	05	04 03
VS a Sorcerer:		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX X
<i>Wooden Knout</i>		10	09	08	07	06	05	04	03	02 01
DAMAGE:		1d6+2	1d6+1	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6-1	1d6-1	1d6-1 1d6-2
<i>Medium Armor</i>										
Skills: Basic Stealth Techniques, Basic Melee Techniques.										
Equipment: a motley assortment of weapons, kilts, sleeveless vests, no clan markings.										

1040. Mihállí Shape-Changeers

Ever since the Sack of Ke'ér and the murder of Lady Yilrána, the Baron of Yán Kór has been seeking a means of Tsolyánu's destruction. One of his gambits has been to command (somehow) the services of beings until now thought to be creatures of legend only.

These are the Mihállí, tall, vaguely cat-headed aliens able to shape-change at will. Their disguise is almost impossible to detect; only a Mihállí's ruby red eyes sometimes shine through to give the changeling away. This ability is combined

with that of teleportation. These two powers make the Mihállí monsters virtually impossible to arrest. They are thus able to assist the trade of zu'úr. They are also free to, wherever they see an advantage, infiltrate, garner information, set ruses and misdirection, and to assassinate.

Shape-changed Mihállí have arrived in Báy Sý to assassinate the imperial princess, Ma'ín Krytháin. Fú Hsí is perhaps there too! Why an imperial princess, who is not expected to vie for the throne, should be deemed a priority target for Tsolyánu's enemies is unknown. So far, the princess has been dismissed as being spoiled and shallow. Her recent conversion from the worship of the tlomitlanyal to a more open-minded stance perhaps indicates depths hitherto unknown . . .

Miháli Leader

This creature wears the semblance of the con-man, potion peddler and man about town known by everyone as simply Chekrásh. He never reveals his lineage or clan. Instead of raising suspicions, this odd behaviour convinces high and low that Chekrásh is merely burying some past shame. Chekrásh acts as a physician for the imperial heirs.

[illegible]

Migór hiKhanúma											
Type: Infiltrator					Level: VIII						
Culture: Tlokiriqáluyal					Hit Points: 13						
Basic Talents		<i>Score</i>		<i>Bonuses</i>							
Strength		12		+1 damage							
Dexterity		17		+1 to hit							
Constitution		17		+1 hit points							
Intelligence		14		+1 Mental Skills							
Psychic Ability		04									
Charisma		19		+3 NPC Reaction, +2 ST vs Physical Stun, -1 damage							
Saving Throws and Combat											
<i>Physical Stun</i>		<i>Poison</i>		<i>Hypnosis</i>		<i>Spells</i>		<i>Traps</i>		<i>Eyes</i>	
4		5		6		6		7		8	
VS an Infiltrator:		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
<i>Short Sword</i>		19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10
VS a Sorcerer:		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
<i>Short Sword</i>		20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11
VS a Warrior:		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
<i>Short Sword</i>		18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	09
DAMAGE:		d6+4	d6+3	d6+2	d6+1	d6	1d6+3	1d6+2	1d6+1	1d6	1d6
<i>Medium Armor</i>											
Skills: Assassination Techniques, Advanced Stealth Techniques, Advanced Melee Techniques.											
Equipment: <i>Enchanted Steel Short Sword</i> [+1 to hit], <i>Bronze Coronet</i> [other-dimensional hide-out].											

Tsolyáni Traitor

The much vaunted adoration of Tsolyánu's population toward their emperor is a falsehood. Instead, disaffection simmers just beneath the surface. The above is the younger brother of Lord Srikolun hiKhanúma, who was sent to the impaler not long ago for losing a Qadárni battle with Yán Kór. Migór now deals zu'úr as a means of revenging his family against the nation that wasted his brother's life.

Mihállí Assassins 1 – 3

These three have taken the shapes of Chekrásh's two apprentices and his boy servant. They and their leader reside in the apparent charlatan's abode located at the far western terminus of the walled gardens that stretch north and west of the Governor's Palace in Béy Sý. The dwelling is an old tower, the Spire of Tigán Mssá.

Its placement makes it the perfect spot for one who tends to the ills of the imperial heirs.

Doctor Chekrásh, his two apprentices, and his boy servant have been taken care of by the Mihállí.

Mihállí Assassins											
Type: Infiltrator					Level: VII						
Culture: Tlokiriqáluyal					Hit Points: 19 (sorcerously increased)						
Basic Talents		Score		Bonuses							
Strength		12									
Dexterity		18		+2 to hit, +1 damage							
Constitution		14		+1 hit points							
Intelligence		21		+4 Mental Skills							
Psychic Ability		22		+4 LoSS Spells, +3 ST Spells, +2 Reaction Time							
Charisma		10									
Saving Throws and Combat											
Physical Stun		Poison		Hypnosis		Spells		Traps		Eyes	
4		4		8		8		5		5	
VS an Infiltrator:		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Short Sword		19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10
VS a Sorcerer:		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Short Sword		20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11
VS a Warrior:		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Short Sword		18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	09
DAMAGE:		2d6+4	2d6+3	2d6+2	2d6+1	2d6	1d6+3	1d6+2	1d6+1	1d6	1d6
Light Armor											
Skills: Shapechange Self/Other [no preparation needed], Teleport Self/Other [no preparation needed], Create Darkness.											
Equipage: Steel Poniard, Amulet of the Onel [banishes demons].											

Player-characters could be led by referee clues to follow Princess Ma'ín, as Migór, Chekrásh and his followers head out of the Governor's Palace, during one of the city's massive feasts, toward the doctor's residence tower. Out in the dark and overgrown pleasure gardens, the princess' friends will suddenly turn into foes (without dropping their disguises).

The assassins are high level, so player-characters (who are equipped for festivities, not fighting) had better be powerful.

1050. The Princess and the Pauper

The Imperial Princess, Ma'ín Krytháin (which means, "the exquisite") has become the Belle of Béy Sý. She arrived from Avanthár two years ago, when she was just sixteen. She immediately declared herself Aridáni. She has, since that declaration, held court by sponsoring gladiatorial games, grand hunts out upon the Berenánga Plain, great feasts at Governor Jijékmú's Palace, and various other quests and initiatives.

Recently, two actions of hers have got the populace whispering about the Princess Ma'ín – her religious conversion, and Lady Shahtámmasèb.

While player-characters are probably not influential enough to be around Princess Ma'ín as Princess Ma'ín, they could be around Tlayésa as Princess Ma'ín, or around Princess Ma'ín as Tlayésa. The princess, when under cover, behaves with none of the Tlakotáni hauteur and entitlement.

The Princess Ma'ín Krytháin

Princess Ma'in										
Type: Sorcerer-Infiltrator	Level: VI									
Culture: Tlokiriqáluyal	Hit Points: 09									
<i>Basic Talents</i>	<i>Score</i>	<i>Bonuses</i>								
Strength	09									
Dexterity	15	+1 to hit								
Constitution	12									
Intelligence	14	+1 Mental Skills								
Psychic Ability	12									
Charisma	20	+3 NPC Reaction, +2 ST vs Physical Stun, -1 damage								
<i>Saving Throws and Combat</i>										
<i>Physical Stun</i>	<i>Poison</i>	<i>Hypnosis</i>	<i>Spells</i>	<i>Traps</i>	<i>Eyes</i>					
6	4	5	5	4	3					
VS an Sorcerer:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
<i>Dagger</i>	15	14	13	12	11	10	09	08	07	06
VS a Warrior:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
<i>Dagger</i>	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	09	08	07
VS a Infiltrator:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
<i>Dagger</i>	14	13	12	11	10	09	08	07	06	05
DAMAGE:	2d6+3	2d6+2	2d6	1d6+3	1d6+2	1d6+1	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6
<i>Medium Armor</i>										
Skills: all Infiltrator skills. Detect Evil, Detect Thoughts, Awe/Inspire, Telepathy.										
Equipment: <i>Steel Dagger</i> [+3 damage], <i>Medium Rod</i> [spell nexus: Sleep, Paralyse Other, Control Person], <i>Amulet of the Good God</i> [wards against evil].										

[illegible]

The Pauper Tlayésha

Tlayésha, a freed slave girl from Yán Kór City, has absolutely identical looks to the Princess Ma'ín Krytháin. Since being offered the role of acting in the place of a princess, she has learned much.

1060. General Wesséku hiTánkolel and his Retinue

As stated in Section 200, Lords Jijékmú hiSayúncha, Chiringgá hiTishkólun and Srýqu hiTánkolel have selected General Lord Wesséku hiTánkolel (close clan relation of the latter Royalist Party leader) to command the First Legion of Ever-Present Glory. The Royalists want the First Legion for themselves. They expect a promotion order from Avanthár any time now.

Wesséku has set up a headquarters in Béy Sý, in the urban clan-palace of the Clan of Sea Blue. Secretly, he has made arrangements with Pit-Master Lord Arkháne hiPurúshqe, a clan-brother, to have his enemies immured in the Tólek Kána Pits.

Thus, any serious confrontation between player-characters and General Wesséku and his hangers-on will result in imprisonment and the torments of the Pits.

General Lord Wesséku hiTánkolel

General Lord Wesséku hiTánkolel											
Type: Warrior					Level: XIII						
Culture: Tlomítlanyal					Hit Points: 15						
Basic Talents		Score		Bonuses							
Strength		13		+2 hit points							
Dexterity		12									
Constitution		18									
Intelligence		12									
Psychic Ability		08		+1 NPC Reaction Roll							
Charisma		16									
Saving Throws and Combat											
Physical Stun		Poison		Hypnosis		Spells		Traps		Eyes	
11		10		7		7		9		7	
VS a Warrior:		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Sphere		21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12
VS an Infiltrator:		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Sphere		22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13
VS a Sorcerer:		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Sphere		20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11
DAMAGE:		5d6+3	5d6+2	5d6+1	5d6	4d6+3	4d6+2	4d6	3d6+3	3d6	2d6
Light Armor											
Skills: all Warrior skills except Control of Self.											
Equipment: Steel Broadsword [+1 to hit].											

For the General's dozens of hangers-on, use any mid-level Warriors and Infiltrators from this section. These bully-boys are arrogant in their expectation of Wesséku's promotion. They pick fights with everyone!

1070. Rioters in the Streets

As the player-characters make their way across Béy Sý, perhaps moving up the steps from the Great Square of the Empire to the Market Plaza of Ashonétl Viriddá and thence to the Hirilákte Arena, a powerful Marashyálu (disguised in an exact semblance of General Lord Kéttukal hiMraktiné, but purposely translucent and ghostly, with a bleeding head-wound) wields a gory mace and strikes at all within reach. The false Kéttukal thunders on about his cruel assassination at the hands of his enemies. Immediately, the tlomítlanyal worshipers in the crowd lose control and start attacking the market's tlokíriqáluyal devotees, who congregate near the Palace of Ever-Glorious War.

The Apparition of Kéttukal

This Marashyálu differs from others in that it does not whimper, but rather it thunders.

General Lord Kéttukal hiMraktiné's Ghost										
Type: Infiltrator					Level: VI					
Culture: Tlokiriqáluyal					Hit Points: 15					
Basic Talents		Score		Bonuses						
Strength		13								
Dexterity		13								
Constitution		14	+1 hit points							
Intelligence		14	+1 LoSS Mental Skills							
Psychic Ability		15	+1 LoSS Spells							
Charisma		15	+1 NPC Reaction Rolls							
Saving Throws and Combat										
Physical Stun		Poison		Hypnosis		Spells		Traps		Eyes
3		3		7		6		4		6
VS an Infiltrator:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Short Spear	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	09	08	07
VS a Sorcerer:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Short Spear	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	09	08
VS a Warrior:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Short Spear	15	14	13	12	11	10	09	08	07	06
DAMAGE:	2d6+1	2d6	2d6-1	2d6-2	1d6+3	1d6+2	1d6+2	1d6+2	1d6+2	1d6+1
No Armor										
Skills: Basic Melee Techniques, Preternatural Senses, Ultimate Disguise.										
Equipage: a steel flanged mace.										

Since the player-characters are tloomítlanyal worshipers, they may join in the assault, or they may try to expose the ruse by destroying the Kéttukal look-alike. In this case, of course, it is possible that some fanatic fans of the general will attempt to do them harm. For opponents in this deadly riot, just use a mixture of Non-Player Characters from this section.

Should the player-characters succeed in killing the apparition of General Lord Kéttukal hiMraktiné, the Marashyálu will revert to its native appearance and all violence of tloomítlanyal versus tlokiriqáluyal will cease. Former combatants will together view the monster.

Any harm done to members of the tlokiriqáluyal will be remembered, noted into clan records, and investigated. Eventually, challenges to duels will come in to the player-characters. Welcome to the jungle!

1080. The Chamángmàkoi

This brilliant and charismatic student of the arcane was not long ago a worshiper of the tloomítlanyal. Certain contradictions in the theology of his culture drove his intellect into forbidden realms: first, he sought instruction from the Dark Trinity; finally, he knelt at the feet of those who secretly worship what are called the Pariah Gods.

The young genius, originally named Mengán hiTirrúne, now beginning to be called the Mind-Master of Béy Sý, has left his former world behind to live in the tsuru'úm beneath the Unknown Pyramid. His powers are great, and certain of the "underpeople" have accepted him. The free-roving Hrá, called Hróun the Harvester of Eyes, holds converse with him. The family of Marashyálu vampires lodged in the Scriptorium of Aruchúè the Calligrapher open their doors to him. The Hlyss sorcerers driving a slant tunnel in the direction of Avanthár leave chéshnayalu (a word meaning "mysteries") for his inspection.

Somehow, the Livyáni Legate, the Lady Shahtámasèb, has come to hear of the Mind-Master. She too is interested in the Unknown Pyramid. She has made approaches to Mengán.

They now work in unison.

The Mind-Master of Béy Sý.

[illegible]

The young mentalist will endeavor to penetrate the player-characters' action team, should they begin to involve themselves in the activities of his new Livyáni friends. He will use his mentalist powers to influence them into directing their efforts at the Mu'ugalavyáni.

1090. Mu'ugalavyáni Spies

Tsolyánu's nearest and most powerful international rival will naturally have a spy network in Báy Sý. This complex is centred upon the person of Lady Alyána Desátl, a courtesan and exotic dancer of international fame. Rumour has it that her mother was a renegade Livyáni priestess from Heméktu, who literally swam across the water to Kéiris for the experience of freedom in Mu'ugalavyá.

Alyána, having learned dance and artistic styles from her talented mother, introduced these into Mu'ugalavyáni and Tsolyáni high society when she became a courtesan. Her attendance at feasts is mandatory for many society-minded nobles in the capitol. From her vantage, she keeps a sharp eye out for information useful to Ssa'átis.

The Famous Courtesan

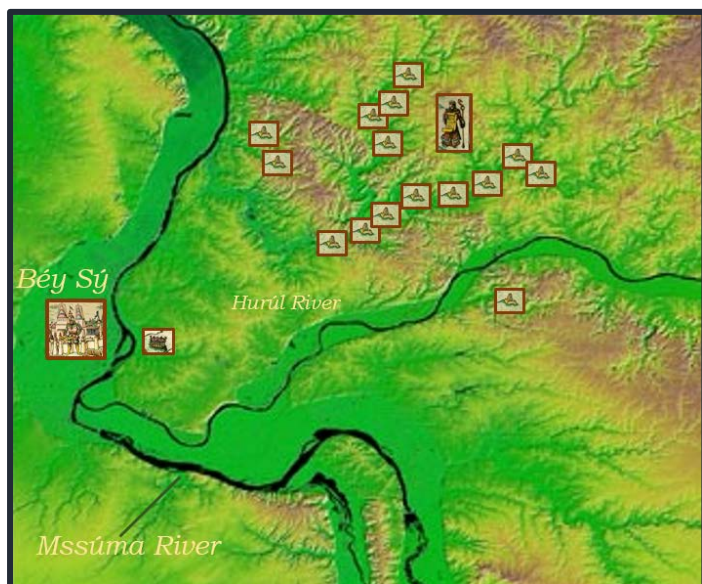
Lady Alyána Desátí									
Type: Infiltrator					Level: VIII				
Culture: Tokiriqáluyal					Hit Points: 11				
Basic Talents									
	<i>Score</i>		<i>Bonuses</i>						
Strength	09								
Dexterity	20		+2 to hit, +1 damage						
Constitution	18		+2 hit points						
Intelligence	16		+1 mental skills						
Psychic Ability	13								
Charisma	19		+2 NPC Reaction Roll, +1 ST Physical Stun						
Saving Throws and Combat									
<i>Physical Stun</i>	<i>Poison</i>		<i>Hypnosis</i>		<i>Spells</i>		<i>Traps</i>		<i>Evils</i>
6	5		6		6		7		8
VS an Infiltrator:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX X
<i>Dagger</i>	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	09 08
VS a Sorcerer:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX X
<i>Dagger</i>	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10 09
VS a Warrior:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX X
<i>Dagger</i>	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	09	08 07
DAMAGE:	2d6+2	2d6	1d6+3	1d6+2	1d6+1	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6 1d6-1
<i>Medium Armor</i>									
Skills: all Infiltrator skills.									
Equipment: bronze dagger, the costumes and make-up kits of an actress (or disguise artist).									

Lady Alyána resides in an urban clanhouse rented to her by a mercantile clan with main branches in Jakálla and Kéiris. She employs three bodyguards, a major-domo, a dresser, a percussionist, an instrumentalist, an epic-singer and half-a-dozen slaves. Her bodyguards are actually veteran agents of the Legion of the Mourners in Sable (the Mu'ugalavyáni secret police). Their attributes may be taken from any of the roughly level-VIII non-player characters written up in the previous section.

1100. The Terrain of Conflict

The nine groups of beings described above, and the thirty-five creature-types described earlier, all operate within the environs of a single city – Béy Sý. The word “single”, however, must be immediately qualified. The city is divided in several ways; Béy Sý has light and dark sides. The city’s purpose is to govern the Second Imperium, but its duties are divided out to Avanthár as well. The city was founded by people spiritually attuned to the tlokìriqáluyal, but over the last several millennia their resources have been slowly taken away and divided up among devotees of the Good Gods. Currently, the issue is access to aquifers and ancient orchards. The city bustles and tussles above-ground, and principally during the day; but there is movement below-ground (in the tsuru’úm and below the Cities of the Dead), and too often at night and for fell purposes. On the west bank of the Mssúma River stands the city of the living; on the east bank rise the Cities of the Dead. To the north and to the east reside the tlokìriqáluyal. In the center and to the south and southwest live the tloomítlanyal. The legion barracks of tloomítlanyal-worshipping legions face off against those that house warriors who worship the fire god of the ancients – terrain in conflict.

Béy Sý, although no one remembers this fact, is the place where the precursor device was drilled into the exact center of the planet by the terraformers of that now lost galactic humanspace empire.



1110. Béy Sý, the Soul of the World

The capitol of the Second Imperium of Tsolyánu, Béy Sý, was built seven-thousand years ago. It was built near the confluence of two or three major rivers, and at the center of the southern Bednálljan Plain. Nearby limestone and bluish slate quarries make it a handsome city of clean, sedate colours. There are a total of fifteen distinct levels to its underworld. Truly, its tsuru’úm is the material avatar or embodiment of non-being, of The Null.

1120. The Palace of Pirundáyu the Architect

The governor's palace, with its dual donjons, elevated colonnade, and extensive pleasure gardens, is considered an example of Tsolyáni civilisation at its highest point of achievement.

The Colossus of Hejjéka IV

The nearly thirty-dáiba high statue of the Restorer of Dignities stands just down slope from the governor's palace, looking out toward Pà-Setlkolúm Harbour and the broad muddy Mssúma River.

The Double Donjon of Kérdu Hnáu Téktis

This dual tower comprises a larger, public or administrative tower, of about seven stories (not counting the lofty roof-comb) in height – which rises to the west – and a narrower private tower (again seven stories high) – which rises to the east. The private tower overlooks the Mssúma River and has a high colonnade attached to it.

1130. The City within Pátyel's Walls

There are two ancient pyramids within the city itself; in a sense, the initial city arose around them and culturally they are extremely important. The younger of the two, the burial monument of Bednálljan emperor Ssirandár III (the city's founder) is larger, measuring 100 dháiba in height and about a third longer to each base side. This pyramid shines bluish-white, with a gold capstone and gold monumental bas relief inscriptions in Classical Tsolyáni on the south face. These can be read from over ten tsán away. Paired with this towering shape stands, in many ways, its opposite. Next to Emperor Ssirandár's edifice rises the Unknown Pyramid, a three-sided structure having slightly less height, but having a broader base. This gloomy construction is built entirely of black, orbicular diorite – a dense granite with naturally occurring white circle-and-dot patterns throughout every stone. Its capstone is comprised of an unknown metal, possibly a mix of lead and silver.

The age of the Unknown Pyramid has never been established; it may even predate the Time of Darkness. Its vicinity is haunted by the ghost of a boy, said to be the Engsvanyáli child emperor, Bashdis Mssá X.

These two towering mountains of stone separate, in a sense, the areas of Báy Sý inhabited by its more ancient tlokiriqáluyal-worshiping minority population and its less ancient tloomitlanyal-worshiping majority population. Clans belonging to the culture of the Old Gods exist behind these monuments, separated from their counterparts by the Governor's Palace, the main administrative buildings, the temple district, and Lake Tsámkolel. They cling to their properties inside the old city, and also outside the old city, northwards, upon either side of the Sákbe Road leading to Avanthár and clustered about Asométl Port.

The Plaza of the Iron Fist

This northernmost section of the Temple Governorate stretches from the Tri-Towers of Mriyantla Chomúa to the Unknown Pyramid. Here rises the temple of the fire gods, Vimúhla and Chiténg. The holy places, shrines, and temples of the other tlokiriqáluyal, however, are maintained on the east bank of the Mssúma River (the temples of Hry'ý, Sárku, and Dlamélish), or exist underground in the tsuru'úm. Certainly the secret temple of Ksáru exists upon some deep level of the underworld (Or, does it? Nothing is a certainty with the Sleeping God). The Hlimékluyal of the Five Evil Ones build their shrines near to those of their masters. The holy place of the goddess Hriháyal, cohort of Dlamélish, for example, is thought to exist somewhere within the Temple Complex of Queen Chayatlésa IV.

The Plaza of Mirikitáni

This east-central section of the Temple Governorate stretches from the Hirilákte Arena to the wharves on the Mssúma. Here are located votaries, shrines, temples and priestly academies dedicated to the tloomítlanyal. The Five Gods are worshipped as a whole, with most men taking the war gods Karakán and Chegárra as their titular deities and most women taking either Avánthe or Dilinála as their especial divinity. When life-events suggest it, the other gods are given offerings: Hnálla when national catastrophe looms and threatens; Thúmis when illness strikes; and Belkhánu when a relative has died, etc. The temple that sees the greatest foot-traffic is Chegárra's, probably because the Emperor in Avanthár is believed by people to be an actual avatar of the Hero of Victories. These towering buildings are arrayed along the Avenue of the Eternal Empire, which runs from the wharves, past the Hirilákte Arena and to the Gate of Western Glory.

1140. The Arena of the Glory of the Tlakotáni

Although a location within the old city, the Hirilákte Arena deserves special mention. In *Empire of the Petal Throne*, the gladiatorial arena serves exactly the same purpose as taverns do in more traditional fantasy role-playing games, such as Dungeons and Dragons. It's a place where people of different social classes can mix, trade rumours, and initiate adventures without drawing the disapproval of their status-conscious peers. It is also a place where player-characters can duel foreign champions, resolve vendettas and build a reputation.

The Glory of the Tlakotáni Arena is mainly used for gladiatorial contests and public spectacles such as Qadárni battle reenactments, feshénga slayings, executions of captured Ssú, magical duels, and dramas based on popular themes and mythology. A ten-dháiba tall statue of Karakán/ Vimúhla stands on a pedistal outside the entrance. The arena itself is a rectangular stadium measuring 150 dháiba by 100 dháiba; its outer walls measure 25 dháiba in height. The floor of the arena is sand. The colosseum hosts an average of 65,000 spectators each day of its operation.

1150. The City outside Pátyel's Walls

The majority tloomítlanyal dedicated clans of Béy Sý have completely taken over everything outside the old city. The entire outer ring of the metropolis, within the walls of Emperor Hejjéka V (built only seven centuries ago), is dominated by their palaces, clanhouses and workshops. Temples and shrines to the war gods Karakán and Chegárra, and to the goddess Avánthe, abound.

In a sense, Béy Sý replicates Tsolyánu – with the culture of the Five Evil Ones centered in its northern highlands, and the culture of the Good Gods strong throughout its central plains and southern coastal flats.

1160. The Foreigners' Quarter

Despite being the diplomatic center of the most powerful state of the Five Empires, Béy Sý expresses its culture's xenophobia by having a large, stoutly fortified foreigner's quarter. This governorate of the city is somewhat like a Jewish ghetto in medieval Europe. It is walled on all sides, guarded by Tsolyáni military men, sometimes monitored by the Emperor's spies and interrogators, and every once in a while scanned by his telepaths.

The Foreigner's Quarter is the location of the barracks of the Legion of the Splendor of Shényu. Nearby are temples of the two Shén gods (The One of Eggs and The One who Rends), shrines to lesser Shén deities, and Shén workshops for the making of weapons. There are also enclaves for other intelligent non-

human species (such as Ninínyal and Pé Chói), human shops and residences, and many hostels for travellers. One of these is the House of Unmarried Repose. This manse is known for having an Ahoggyá as its major domo.

The Foreigner's Quarter is thus a diverse and interesting place.

1170. The Suburbs and the East Bank

Completely outside Béy Sý's walls to the south there spreads an area of slums and ramshackle housing. This area hosts the city's poorest populations, those who work the mines and quarries, who butcher animals, who tan leather, and who perform the least desirable jobs in society.

Across the Mssúma River, there are even less desirable suburbs housing people who work the swamps and wetlands up and down the river, who weave baskets and mats from swamp reeds, who fish the river, who work in the city's sewers, who guard the Cities of the Dead, or who work with dead bodies.

Also on the east bank are the Temple of Hry'y, the Temple of Sárku, and the Temple Complex of Queen Chayetlésa IV (which is devoted to women and the Fête of Boats, but also to the goddess Dlamélish).

1180. The Tólek Kána Pits

These are the imperium's most horrific prisons. There is an above-ground fortress, which includes cells for high status prisoners, barracks for the Legion of Tkél (prison guards), and apartments for Prince Dhich'uné and his court. Then there are the pits themselves, which lie below-ground. Beneath the pits lurks the famous Ultimate Labyrinth. This is a section of the underworld with special, some say profoundly sorcerous, properties.

1190. Avanthár

About a day's journey upriver rises the volcano and, carved from its heart, the fortress-palace of the God-Emperor of Tsolyánu. In the center of this edifice stands Tirikélu, the Petal Throne.

1200. The Underworld

Scattered across Tsolyánu are innumerable ancient ruins. They are the key to unlocking the empire's mysterious past. In addition to surface ruins, there are – beneath almost all of the older Tsolyáni cities – the underworld. Each metropolis raises towers high into the sky, but each also buries labyrinths deep into its foundations. The name in modern Tsolyáni given to these multi-layered labyrinths is "tsuru'úm". A word with a bite to it. Each tsuru'úm is a malevolent universe all of its own, obeying its own customs, its own essences, its own substances. Each is connected to all the others; the underworld below Béy Sý is connected to that of Avanthár and of Fasíltum. The tsuru'úm of all of Tsolyánu is its antithesis, its sunless twin. The surface world represents "being". The underworld represents "non-being". The attraction of non-being affects the Tsolyáni soul; whenever the mood overwhelms a citizen (whether due to loss or loneliness or the fatalism that lurks behind the eyes of all Tsolyáni), he or she does not swallow poison or open an artery. The suicide descends calmly into the tsuru'úm. He or she is never seen among the "being" again. He or she has become one with The Null, the Darkness that was before the World.

The above is an inescapable consequence of Tékel's most fundamental fact of existence: it shouldn't exist; the entire solar system is an invasive presence in what had been an empty but somehow sentient universe.

In recognition of this, the empire's citizens (especially those devoted to the *tlokiriqáluyal*) spend a certain amount of time "spreading darkness". At some point summonses arrive, and for the next year they repair, build, expand, and make more complex, the *tsuru'úm*. Wards and amulets keep them safe while in service of "ditlána". Mind-bars wipe all memory of it once their time is overwith. Citizens are, without fail, glad of this.

While the *tsuru'úm* beneath *Béy Sý* is not as old as that of *Jakálla*, *Fasíltum* or *Purdimál*, the metropolis' role as capitol of both the Golden Age (the high water mark of spell sorcery) and the Second Imperium make it just as extensive and complex. There are mazes, traps, deadfalls and springdoor pits. There are stairs, ramps, shafts and even elevators connecting levels. There are even vast machine architectures that move whole chambers from one place to another, from one level to another. What follows is a sample of the kinds of sites to be found in the City of the Dead, and in the underworld deep below the streets of *Béy Sý*.

1210. The Mirror-Maze of *Metállja*

This open-to-the-sky labyrinth, designed by a legendary wizard, covers a ground area two-hundred *dháiba* to a side (just under three hundred yards). It is a fabulous place, able to increase the Psychic Ability of those who venture into it and solve its riddle. Anyone reaching the central chamber is granted a free roll on the Increases in Basic Talents Table (Section 480). Any basic talent gain takes effect instantly; the character need not wait for the period between completed adventures.

1220. The Obelisk of *Sarvodáya Di'éla*

This twenty *dháiba* tall (roughly twenty meters) obelisk grants all within three meters of its base the following two skills: Devices and Apparatuses and Encompass Devices of the Ancients. No one has broken the code of its *Bednálljan* hieroglyphs. While it does not give total mastery of the above skills, it does allow strange insights. For example, a player-character could bring an Eye found in the underworld to the base of the obelisk, and the referee would be obliged to reveal the type of Eye it is. The obelisk stands on the east bank of the *Mssúma*, near the gates of the Temple of *Hry'ý*.

1230. The Quest-Ship of *Hrúgga*

Stories of the superhero *Hrúgga's* quest-ship, which took him to the exact center of the planet, are contradictory. Certain epics don't mention it at all; other song cycles describe it at length. In actual fact, the so-called ship is a wheel-like architecture of underworld chambers that rotate around and down, like a ferris wheel, to the absolute lowest level of *Béy Sý's* underworld. Its chambers have a window facing away from the center of rotation, and while descending everyone inside may view passing vistas. One such vista is of the pocket dimension within a pocket dimension called The Garden of Weeping Souls.

1240. The Observatory of *Qiyór*

This tower stands on the one of the heights of the *Berenánga* Hills, amid the gorges hosting various tombs of *Béy Sý's* Cities of the Dead. Though in ruins, its aspect grants a +2 increase to the failure threshold of Theurgy, Thaumatology or any other skill rolls involving astrology (as limited as astrology is in *Tékumel's* starless universe). Continued study over three rises in experience level grants a permanent one-point increase to Psychic Ability; over five, a two-point increase; over six, a three-point increase. The referee must ensure that a thorough study

over time occurs throughout these level rises, in order to qualify for the increases to basic talent.

It was in the observatory that Qiyór operated the Orb of All-Seeing, came into contact with the Visage of Votorkún, and died.

1250. The Vanishing Vault of Thómar the Ever-living

This underworld set of sleeping chambers, dining hall, and library belongs to the undying wizard Thómar, who claims to be the same great mage from the legends. The vaults are called "vanishing" because they are there one minute but gone the next. An action team might find sanctuary in them on one mission into the tsuru'úm, and not find the vaults on the next. They appear and disappear, in and out of Tékumel's dimension.

1260. The Garden of Weeping Souls

This location, whose heavy bronze portal (cast in a single baroquely ornate expanse of metal) is located near a hairpin turn in the Ulitimate Labyrinth's lowest level. Its location makes it an impossibility, because its bronze portal should open onto the adjacent corridor. Instead, it opens into a vast chamber as large as the total area occupied by the city of Béy Sý itself. In the middle of this immensely domed chamber stands the palace of Nyélmu, one of the greatest sorcerers ever to have offended the gods. Stories relate that the legendary magic user is insane and deadly, but there are those who have entered his realm and have won their freedom through the performance of his quests.

1270. The Reflecting Pool of Subadím the Sorcerer

This deeply buried grotto contains a shallow pool of crystal clear water. All who gaze at their own reflection therein can "save" their character level, basic talents, and even hit points so that, later, they may return and restore these eight values to their previous numbers. In other words, a party could register their various values prior to attempting an assault upon a Qumqúm, then return to the Reflecting Pool to have their lost experience levels restored.

1280. The Combat Course of Pendárte

This large chamber of automated training apparatused has malfunctioned and now attempts to kill all who enter and train there. The experience, however, gains one vital experiences that can be used to qualify for abilities as skills that otherwise would have to wait for combat.

1290. The Scriptorium of Aruchu'é the Calligrapher

This fortified library of the Kingdom of the Gods is now occupied by a large clan of Marashyálu. They trade sacrificial victims for passages and pages of long-lost wisdom.

1300. Devices of the Ancients

Aside from gold, precious gems and other stores of value one may uncover in the underworld, the City of the Dead, or in Béy Sý itself, there are also devices of the ancients. From the point of view of most Tsolyáni in AS2354, this means Eyes, energy nodes, machines of the ancients, automatons, enchanted staves and rods, funerary totems, enhanced weapons, scrolls, rings, and so on. But it also means vat creatures, undead beings, and things brought to Tékumel from alien worlds and elder dimensions. It additionally includes horrors that have been

indirectly created by the sorceries of the past— mutants and genetic hybrids, the descendants of experiments, and so on. Lastly, it means ways in which twenty-fourth century people have figured out how to use, manipulate, or master the products of the past, such as an evil priest's use of ancient grimoires to summon and compel a Yéleth. In this section, we will examine the more physical types of devices of the ancients — specifically Eyes, amulets, rings, rods, staves, bracers and limited-charge enchanted items.

Modern-day Tsolyáni enjoy a semblance of stability, but they have suffered great cataclysms in the past. In the popular imagination, these disasters were almost always caused by sorcery in one way or another. A deep dark age preceded the present civilization, and before that the Wrath of the Gods Era nearly shattered the First Imperium. A series of shorter-lived societies rose and fell before that, including the Sky Lords of Ninár (who conquered the Mssúma River watershed mounted upon aircars). The greatest catastrophe of all was the Time of Darkness, which ended the heaven-like Time of the Ancients. In each case, magic-seeming technologies or magic itself wreaked havoc upon the world. Thus, the Tsolyáni relate to sorcery and magic devices with a mixture of desire, mistrust and hatred.

The Kingdom of the Gods, which ruled just before the most recent interregnum, saw the high water mark of spell sorcery. Its secrets are now lost. Those who hearken back to that fantastic civilization try to piece together its wisdom by studying its relics. Priests of the Five Gods find, confiscate, steal and buy devices of bygone ages whenever opportunity arises, and they use their gleanings to advance society's understanding of magic. They would like to return the glories of Engsvanyálu to mankind. On the other side of the nation's bi-cultural divide, priests of the Five Evil Gods patrol the underworld and guard against the raids of their counterparts among the so-called "good" deities. They were against the widespread use of sorcery in the first place. They remain opposed to it today. Whether supportive of or opposed to mankind's exploitation of sorcery, its results are all around. Somewhat knowledgeable persons group ancient devices or apparatus into five or six categories, which roughly indicate the kinds of powers a device is likely to express.

The Empire of the Petal Throne is a barbaric, baroque "post-Golden Age" and "post-cataclysm" recovery civilization in which remnants from various more developed societies in the past play a vital role in absolutely everything that goes on. Without these artifacts of far more glorious eras, the complexity and scale of Tsolyánu could not be maintained. Men of action, such as player-characters in a faithful to 1975 version of the game, find, use and dispose of artifacts of bygone ages with even greater regularity than ordinary citizens. Having loosed the last charge of an Eye, for example, a character might sell it to a wandering priest, who would then have it fashioned into his staff-of-office. Once there, it would add to that religious officer's prestige and might also boost his basic talents (either through latent magical energy or a simple placebo effect). The following eras characterise the remnants of the past:

Kürshtlaqólkoi

Mysteries dating back to the most recent dark age, which resulted from the sudden collapse of the Kingdom of the Gods. Relics from this age include widely varying magic items originally enchanted by powerful sorcerers operating under chaotic and unregulated conditions. At the same time, there is a crude and forceful quality that nearly all the enchanted devices of this age share. It was in this epoch that other-dimensional entities were routinely trapped into physical vessels. *The Crystal Claw of Kúrutesh* is

reputedly an example of a dark and dangerous spirit-vessel from this time, although some claim that this device is nothing less than an alternative to the Petal Throne.

Mitlaqólkoi

Mysteries dating back to the Kingdom of the Gods. Artifacts from this three-thousand year period exhibit powers ranging from the ridiculous to the divine. Nothing unites them, except that in the game world present every single one is in some way cursed. After using a mystery from this long age, roll on the Devices of the Ancients Danger Table.

Kshamúrikh hiMítlanyal

Mysteries dating back to the Wrath of the Gods centuries are of two characters: heavy and overelaborate wizards' apparatuses designed to mimic through magic the technologies of the ancients, or heroic and straightforward adjuncts whose powers have an aggregate ability to defeat darkness.

Yagaíshanikh

Mysteries dating back to everything from the First Imperium to the Sky Lords are of four basic types: 1) scavenged devices of the ancients; 2) artifices comprised of repairing and joining different devices of the ancients; 3) relics smoothly incorporating the technology of the ancients (or in successful mimicry of such); 4) newly fashioned enchanted items that produce through sorcery powers once unleashed by devices of the ancients.

Chústlaqólkoi

Mysteries dating back ten-thousand years or more to the Time of Darkness. No spell magic existed at this time, and all supernatural powers were "supernatural" because men had lost the understanding of the machines of the ancients. The most common of these are the "eyes".

1320. Eyes and Pre-Time of Darkness Devices

The most frequently encountered devices of the ancients are Eyes. Their name derives from their appearance; they are small, roughly ovoid or eye-shaped gems of pseudo-stone with an iris-like lens or aperture on one side and a triggering pimple on the other. To activate an Eye, one aims the device at a target or area of ground and presses the triggering nodule. Some form of energy instantly fires out from the iris, somewhat but not entirely similar to a laser. The energy beam creates an effect upon its target, be it physical damage, or psychological trauma or the disclosure of invisible entities.

Eyes have 1d20 charges, which the referee should note down and keep a track of (but keep secret from the owner).

The Eyes listed hereafter are arranged in similar fashion to Bonus Abilities of Socerers. The first twelve are common. The second twelve are uncommon. The third twelve are rare.

The Eye of Illuminating Glory

This is the most common Eye known in the Five Empires. Other Eyes, when no longer functioning, can often be partially repaired so that they cast light; this explains the number of illuminatory devices. The Eye, when activated, casts a broad beam of white light (with an output of about 1000 lumens). Each charge lasts for two hours. The wavelength of the light is disorienting for Ssú, Hlyss and their related species, so they suffer a -1 penalty to their attack and action rolls when bathed in this white light.

The Eye of Apprehending the Proximity of the Hated Ssú

This was in the distant past a very common Eye, but has been disappearing from circulation recently. So vital to life is the foreknowledge of Ssú, Hlyss, Chrystállí and other kindred species, however, that other detection Eyes

are often altered to perform this Eye's function. The temples have learned to do this. Any player-character triggering this Eye instantly senses the presence (and direction) of Ssú, Hlýss, Chrystáli, and Lrí within 100xlevel meters. This sensation lasts for 1xlevel turns per charge.

The Eye of Detecting Evil/Good

This more-or-less common Eye reveals to its operator whether the item or person targeted is of the "Good" or "Evil" alignment. Its primary purpose is to reveal the taint of "The Null". Since many people who worship the Five Evil Ones do so in secret, this Eye can reveal their true alignment. It also is a means of revealing the presence of Marashyálu and other changelings (like the newly appearing Miháli). The Eye of Detecting Evil/Good can also be used to learn the alignment of an object, if that object has intelligence and ego (i.e., if it contains an entity of some sort). It cannot be employed to sense traps or vague dangers through solid walls, however.

The Eye of Perceiving the Thoughts of Others

This more-or-less common Eye casts an invisible beam upon its target, the thoughts of which are then audible to the operator. It does not translate a foreign language into intelligible Tsolyáni, however. The player-character triggering this device, therefore, must know the language of his target for any information to be gained. It should be noted that the silver masks that priests of Ksáruł wear (along with their square motorboard headresses) and the masks that priests of Hry'ý wear grant a saving throw against this mind reading. The effect last for 1xlevel combat rounds per charge.

The Eye of Establishing a Ward against Intrusion

This common Eye, when triggered inside a room or chamber, sets up a link with its operator and establishes an energy perimeter that (when violated by any creature larger than a Chrí-fly) jolts the operator into consciousness and alertness. The device can protect a multi-room area simply by walking it through the adjoining rooms and corridors while the triggering nodule is pressed. The Eye produces no sound when the perimeter is breached; the operator simply becomes suddenly alert and knows exactly where in the protected space a violation has been made. The ward cannot be moved. It lasts for 4xoperator level hours.

The Eye of Apparent Transformation

This common Eye, when triggered at a person or object, masks alignment in such a way that an Evil person or object appears Good, or a Good person or object appears Evil. It deceives the Eye of Detecting Good/Evil; it fools the Detect Evil psychic ability of sorcerers worshiping the tlomitlanyal. If an item created during the Time of No Kings contains an other-dimensional entity, it masks the alignment of that entity. The duration of the masking effect is 1xoperator level weeks.

The Eye of Joyful Sitting amongst Friends

This common Eye is important to the functioning of Tsolyáni society. With it, the tlomitlanyal and the tlókiriqáluyal can negotiate and come to mutual agreement on matters where their interests align, but their prejudices do not. The energy emitted by this device fans out into a cone, able to target three to six individuals at a distance of three meters. All subject its effects react to all others present without the many negative modifiers described in Section 520. The Eye's effects last 1xoperator level in hours.

The Incomparable Eye of Understanding

This common Eye renders certain spoken languages (or written texts read correctly aloud) for 1xcaster level turns. It allows its operator to understand all modern Khishan languages, but only a few ancient tongues. The ancient languages Livyáni, Duru'ób, Engsvanyáli, Tsáqw, Llyáni, and the tongue of the ancients are translated. Tribal Tsolyáni back-country and mountain vernaculars, Classical Tsolyáni, Bednálljan, The Tongue of the Priests of

Ksáruł, and Ancient N'lyssa are not rendered. Why this should be so is a mystery to savants.

The Eye of Ameliorating Injuries

This common Eye heals physical wounds and injuries. It restores 25% of a wounded character's total hit points regardless of alignment. It restores damage taken by androids, automatons, undead, demons and illusions at the following rates: androids – 50%; automatons – 25%; undead – 12%; demons – 6%; illusions – 3%. Players must keep track of the number of times this Eye is used upon themselves. Once it has been triggered upon a character a number of times equal to his Constitution, his transformation is complete. He is an android.

The Eye of Triumphant Defense against Attack

This more-or-less common Eye doubles the operator's level when defending against a physical attack. In other words, a level-IV combatant becomes a level-VIII combatant, but only in terms of defence. On the combatant's own turn he remains a level-IV attacker. A second effect of this Eye is to reduce damage taken. Characters of level-I through level-IV subtract 4 points from their damage total each combat round; characters of level-V to level-VII subtract 3 points; level-VIII and level-IX subtract 2 points; finally, level-X subtracts 1 point.

The Eye of Bestowing a Misfortune

This somewhat common device subjects its target(s) to a series of penalties in general ability attempts, skill and spell success checks, attack rolls and critical chances. In a single combat round 1d20 targets can be cursed with misfortune; that malefic condition then has a duration based upon the level of the operator. Its several effects are as follows: when a target tries to accomplish a default action not covered by a specific skill, the character must roll 3d20 and take the highest roll (causing more misses); when trying to succeed at a specific skill or spell, the character must roll 2d20 and take the higher roll (causing more failures); at the beginning of each combat round, the character must make a saving throw vs spells or be Physically Stunned; in each of the aforementioned cases, the character may experience no doubly fine successes.

	Operator L1-L4	Operator L5-L7	Operator L8-L9	Operator L10
Duration	1 Turn	3 Turns	6 Turns	10 Turns

A player-character affected by this device can be returned to full ability through the use of a Remove Curse spell.

The Eye of All-Seeing Wonder

This fairly common Eye projects a cone-like beam, which reveals invisible creatures, spectral beings, illusionary creatures, illusion disguises, etc. It cancels outright the spells *Wave of Shadows* and *Mirror Images*. It also penetrates the invisibility of Hurú'u and Qumqúm and the illusory disguises of the Ssú, Mihállí and Marashyálu, but does not negate the powers of the Hlyss, the Yéleth, or the Alluring Maiden of Ngá (for these are a result of mind control). Lastly, this Eye debilitates the conjurations of the following spells: Familiar, Creatures, Illusionary Defenders, Eaters of Souls, and Demons. The effects of this last for one turn per charge.

The Eye of Being an Unimpeachable Shield against Foes

This uncommon device of the ancients creates a similar effect to that of the spell, Protection from Evil. A globe of very faintly scintillating force (that penetrates water, earth and stone, but not enchanted steel) prevents from crossing all illusions, creatures called by evil sorcery, shadows, vapors, plagues and walls. It slows down and makes less damaging (half rolled damage) cold and force spells, but – quite strangely – protects not at all

against fire and undeath (i.e., Mrûr and flame jets pass right through). Spells functioning to affect good characters in subtle ways (such as paralysis, sleep or charm person) have half their usual likelihood of success. Example: an evil highly psychic level-VI sorcerer would usually have to roll below 20 to succeed, but would have to roll under 10 when targeting opponents within a shield raised by this Eye.

The Eye of Hastening/Retarding Destiny

This uncommon Eye has two settings: Hastening/Retarding. It either slows down its target, or speeds its target up. A hastened target is granted two combat actions per combat round. A retarded target requires two minutes to accomplish one combat action. Example: our dastardly level-IV bandit ambushes a sorcerer snooping around the culvert where the bandit keeps his young female paramour (our level-II sorceress). The sorcerer unleashes an Eye of "Retarding" Destiny upon the bandit. Rolling a failing 11 saving throw vs Eyes, the bandit's time frame slows down relative to the sorcerer. He gets no return attack because he moves in slow motion. The sorcerer easily evades his weapon and rescues our sorceress; he then escapes with her (appearing, to the bandit, to move at incredible speed). The effect of this device lasts 1xoperator level combat rounds.

The Eye of Excoriation

This uncommon weapon fires a heat beam that burns its target. It does 4d6 damage if its target fails to make his saving throw vs Eyes; it does 2d6 damage if the saving throw is made. Only by rolling a doubly fine success on the saving throw can all damage be avoided. The spells Vapours and Walls (except the Wall of Wind) negate the Eye of Excoriation, absorbing its heat beam before it reaches its target. In a single combat round 1d20 targets can be struck with this beam (providing they are grouped together and not behind cover).

The Eye of the Indigo Tower

This very uncommon Eye robs its target of its sense perceptions – one at a time. The blue-violet beam must remain trained on the target. At the end of twelve seconds the target is blinded; at the end of twenty-four seconds the target is deafened as well; at the end of thirty-six seconds the target loses his sense of smell; at forty-eight seconds he no longer can taste; at sixty seconds he is robbed of his sense of feeling. With no sensory input, a target becomes inert. It should be noted that creatures not having organic sense perceptions – automatons and the undead – are immune to effects of this Eye.

A Remove Curse spell will return a victim of this device to his former self.

The Ineluctable Eye of Healing

This uncommon ancient device reverses physical injuries. It restores 100% of a wounded character's total hit points regardless of alignment. It restores damage taken by androids, automatons, undead, illusions and demons at the following rates: androids – 100%; automatons – 50%; undead – 25%; demons – 12%; illusions – 6%. Players must keep track of the number of times this Eye is used upon themselves. Once it has been triggered upon a character a number of times equal to ½ his Constitution, his transformation is complete. He is an android.

The Peerless Eye of Petrification

This uncommon potency calcifies its target, turning it into ancients-invented pseudo-stone eventually. Upon failing its saving throw vs Eyes, the target of the Peerless Eye loses all actions. At the end of each combat round thereafter, the target must try to roll under his Constitution. If he does this three times, the effect of the Eye ends. If he fails his recovery roll three times, the target becomes pseudo-stone through and through. Consecutive

successes and failures are unnecessary; the referee simply keeps track until either the effect dissipates or it petrifies the target.

The Eye of Becoming Unapprehensible to Vision

This uncommon device of the ancients renders its target invisible to human (or similar non-human) sight and sense. It essentially causes light to bend around its target, making it appear to onlookers as though no one were in the space occupied. It does not affect hearing, smell or touch, and there are other ways of detecting a person (Detect Evil, Detect Thoughts, sonar or radar, for example). The target of this Eye can move and fight as usual; he will not become visible for doing so.

The Eye of Opening the Way

This uncommon infiltrator's device automatically locates secret doors and traps. It limns them in an indigo light. A character using this Eye in a *tsuru'úm* is granted a +3 to his skill at unlocking and opening secret doors, and to his skill at disarming traps. The gimrack does not open or disarm these things; it merely "x-rays" their mechanisms; it merely grants a bonus. The Eye of Opening the Way has a thirty meter range, which is quite useful. It does not work on items welded of ancient steel.

The Eye of Indefinable Apprehension

This uncommon warlord's adjunct influences the psyche of its target(s). It causes the same effect as the spell *Induce Panic*. Its target runs away from the caster as fast as possible for 1xoperator level minutes, trying to round as many corners as possible in the process. This condition is negated by the following: *Dispel Magic*, *Remove Curse* and *Awe/Inspire*. No rational decisions may be made during panicked flight, not even to not leap to one's death (for example).

The Eye of Regeneration

This uncommon artifice restores 100% of the wounded character's total hit points lost to injury if that character worships the *tlokiríqáluyal*. Neutrals (and – oddly – those who worship *Vimúhla*) have only 50% of total hit points lost to injury restored. Devotees of the Good Gods never have any hit points regenerated, and worshippers of *Durritlámish* and their creations, the undead, take as a result of this spell 100% of their current hit points in further damage. Each time this device is triggered, the operator rolls on the *Devices of the Ancients Danger* table.

The Eye of Confusion

This uncommon affair emits a fan-like or cone-like beam. All targets struck by this beam have their minds overwhelmed by confusion. The effects are determined by each individual target's Prime Requisite talent, however. Those with a Prime Requisite of 11 – 14 make a combat attack against the being nearest to them, whether friend or foe; those with requisites ranging from 15 – 17 run at full speed in a completely random direction (determined by the possible escape routes and 2d6); those having primes of 18 or 19 lose their action for the combat round; and those enjoying a prime requisite of 20 or above may observe, decide and act normally. At the beginning of the next combat round, all affected by this Eye must roll under their Prime Requisite or continue their confused behaviour.

The Eye of Confusion has a range of about thirty meters.

The Eye of Infrangeable Navigation

This uncommon Eye allows its user to find the shortest, most direct physical route to a specific fixed location that the operator is familiar with. If the operator names a destination in another plane of existence (for example, *Tékumel's* original universe), a destination that moves (such as a boat upon the *Mssúma*), or a destination that isn't specific (such as "a *Sérudla's* lair"), the Eye fails to have an effect. For the duration, as long as the operator is on the same plane of existence as the destination, he knows how far it is

and in what direction it lies. While he is traveling there, whenever he is presented with a choice of paths along the way, the operator automatically determines which path is the shortest and most direct route (but not necessarily the safest route) to the destination. The Eye's finding effect endures for 1xoperator level hours.

The Excellent Ruby Eye

This rare device gives its operator the power to "freeze" its target, meaning to set its target outside of time. The flow of time for the victim of this amazing potency completely stops at the instant of his being struck. He becomes hard as steel, cold to the touch, and impervious to damage. No physical, heat, or any other form of damage can affect the time-frozen victim of the Excellent Ruby Eye. Conversely, the victim cannot see, sense, feel emotion, think, act or pray after being struck with the Eye's ruby beam (and failing to make his saving throw vs Eyes). Only a second strike of the Excellent Eye releases its target, starting the flow of time again. No spell, salvo, or divine intervention will work to do this.

There are only half-a-dozen of these formidable devices of the ancients in existence. They may be identified by the Eye's deep ruby-coloured iris; no other Eye has its like.

The Eye of Calling Forth an Unconquerable Army

This rare Eye contains within it, as though within a pocket dimension of its own, a number of fully functioning automaton-soldiers. These Páyeth, their name in modern Tsolyáni, have the attributes of those described in Section 940. They are armed with spear and shield. Their armour classification is heavy. They have greater movement speed than human beings. Triggering the Eye of Calling Forth at an area of ground large enough to host anywhere between 5 and 100 men, 5d20 are rolled, and the resulting number is the number of Páyeth that materialise. These automatons instantly know where the operator's enemies are. They immediately advance and engage all foes of the operator until they (or the Páyeth themselves) are dead. Afterwards, the Páyeth return into the Eye.

There are perhaps twenty-five of these devices known in the region of the Five Empires.

The Eye of Commanding the Sagún

This rare Eye, once triggered upon a Sagún, allows the operator to place a sorcerous imperative upon it. This forces the fungus to carry out whatever command is imparted until the task is either accomplished or is impossible to achieve. A Sagún may not, however, be forced to simply destroy itself. Any target of the Commanding Eye who acts contrary to its imperative suffers Physical Stun (mental breakdown) until it changes its course of action. The compulsion can be cancelled easily enough, by simply triggering the Eye at the Sagún a second time and ordering the fungal intellect to act as it did previous to being struck the first time. The command can be cancelled far less easily by making the task impossible, or through the agency of a Livyáni archmage, Undying Wizard or the god Ksárul. The spell Command Underworld Denizen does not countermand this device.

There are a score of these ancient items throughout the Five Empires. At least one is operated by the God-Emperor of Tsolyánu.

The Eye of Ethereal Stridation

This rare Eye, for as long as its nodule is depressed, allows the operator to become ethereal, along with his equipment. For the duration of the Eye's triggering, the user is in a place called the ethereal plane, which overlaps the normal, physical, material plane. When the triggering nodule is released the operator returns to material existence. An ethereal creature is invisible, insubstantial, and capable of moving in any direction, even up or down, albeit at half normal speed. As an insubstantial creature, the operator can move through solid objects, including living creatures. The operator can

see and hear the material plane, but everything looks gray and ephemeral. Sight and hearing onto the material plane are limited to 60 feet. A character under the effect of this Eye cannot attack material creatures, and spells he casts while ethereal affect only other ethereal things (such as Huru'ú and Qumqúm). Certain material creatures or objects have attacks or effects that work on the ethereal plane. Treat other ethereal creatures and ethereal objects as if they were material. If the operator ends the Eye's effect and materialises while inside a material object (such as a solid wall), he is shunted off to the nearest open space and takes 1d6 points of damage per five feet so travelled.

There are fifteen of these rarities in the region of the Five Empires.

The Eye of Impelling Truth

This rare device causes all characters and creatures within its emanation area (or anything entering its area of effect) to speak only the absolute truth. Each potentially affected creature is allowed a saving throw vs Hypnosis to avoid being impelled to utter only truth. Affected creatures are aware of their situation. Therefore, they may avoid answering questions to which they would normally respond with a lie, or they may be evasive, as long as they remain within the boundaries of the truth. Creatures who leave the area are free to speak as they choose.

There are close to fifty of these items throughout the Five Empires, in the possession of the temples for the most part.

The Eye of Inimitable Psychic Nullity

This rare ancient device releases a person or object from a temporary or semi-permanent enchantment. It also cancels spells as they are being cast (but before their effects take hold). Thus, a sword with a temporary curse laid upon it can have that curse lifted, but an ancient permanent "to hit" bonus cannot be voided. A wall, vapour or energy spell can be negated in flight or transit to its target, but a person killed by a wall, vapour or bolt of energy cannot be returned to life (simply because it was a magic spell that killed him).

There are only a handful of these Eyes in the Five Empires.

The Eye of Ruling as a King in Glory

This mechanism causes low level common folk (of any number, so long as they are within line-of-sight of the Eye of Ruling) to listen carefully to, heed, and sacrifice their own interests for those of the owner. The Eye does not affect player-characters or NPCs of level-III and higher. The Eye does not affect androids, automatons or undead. It does influence semi-intelligent beings such as Sérudla, Chnéhlu and Dzór. The effects of this device remain until a target spends one full day out of the line-of-sight of the Eye. Destroying the Eye also ends its influence upon all affected.

The Horrid Eye of Withering

This rare ancient apparatus fires forth a thin beam of purple-black light that affects one or more limbs of its target. The beam must be maintained upon the target for a time (1d6 combat rounds), but at the end of that period the victim's affected limbs are withered, grey and useless. A warrior cannot move for purposes of combat. An infiltrator cannot dodge or sneak. A magic user cannot gesture and make arcane signs with hands and fingers. Rules-wise, the character becomes a level-0 professional for purposes of making any roll, be it general default ability, skill, spell, attack or saving throw. If the character's legs are affected, movement is reduced to a simple crawl. A withered limb can be restored to health by the spells Remove Curse and Revivification.

The Insurmountable Eye of Imparting a Geas

This rare Eye, once triggered upon a target, allows the operator to place a sorcerous imperative upon it. This forces the target to carry out whatever command is imparted until the task is either accomplished or is impossible

to achieve. A target may not, however, be forced to simply kill themselves. Any victim of the Insurmountable Eye who acts contrary to their instructions suffers Physical Stun (and may attempt a saving throw) until they change their course of action. The compulsion can be cancelled easily enough, by simply triggering the Eye at the target a second time and ordering it to act as it did previous to the geas. The command can be cancelled less easily by making the task impossible, or through the agency of a demon, cohort or god. A Remove Curse spell will not remove this device's strictures upon its target's psyche.

There are a score of these ancient items throughout the Five Empires. At least two are operated by the Emperor of Tsolyánu.

The Puissant Eye of Planar Binding

This rare magico-technological wonder binds powerful entities coalesced from The Null to fulfil their obligations (enumerated during the summoning ritual). The Summon Demon ritual must be performed in full ceremony, then the summoned demon must be targeted with the Eye. If the demon fails its saving throw vs Eyes, it is completely bound (a binding roll need not be made by the sorcerer). The bound demon must execute its powers to the direction of the sorcerer. The sorcerer must, however, be careful not to ask of the demon powers and abilities foreign to its substance/essence. To do so voids the binding. In this disastrous case, the operator of the Eye and all nearby beings are ingested by the demon.

The binding lasts until the task set by the sorcerer is accomplished, or is impossible. There are fewer than twenty of these wonders in the entire Five Empires.

The Terrible Eye of Raging Power

This rare weapon fires an electrical torrent that burns its target. It does 6d6 damage to targets grouped within a three meter area if its targets fail to make their saving throws vs Eyes; it does 3d6 damage if the saving throws are made. Only by rolling a doubly fine successes on saving throws can all damage be avoided. The spells Vapours and Walls (except the Wall of Wind) DO NOT negate The Terrible Eye of Raging Power, because the branching bolt of lightning arcs around these barriers. In a single combat round 2d20 targets can be struck with this beam (providing they are grouped together in separate clusters). Solid obstructions do not protect against this much sought-after Eye.

There are about thirty of these weapon-Eyes known to exist in the Five Empires, most belonging to generals of major military formations.

The Thoroughly Useful Eye

This rarest of all Eyes (there are only six known in all the Five Empires) has the power of recharging other Eyes. The iris of the Thoroughly Useful Eye is able to dock with the iris of any other; its triggering nodule is depressed and the device is left to do its work. Perhaps this work took less time in the days of the ancients, but in AS2354 it takes a full twenty-four hours to get a single charge back. Since Eyes can store one-hundred charges, it can take months to fully recharge one. The Thoroughly Useful Eye itself requires no recharging; it doesn't operate by expending charges; it operates by drawing power from the outer-dimensional darkness that is Tékumel's dimension.

The God-Emperor of Tsolyánu, Hirkáne Tlakotáni, Emperor Tu'úmnish Ssa'amýssa of Mu'ugalavyá, the Baron Áld of Yán Kór, and the Mad King of Salarvyá control these devices; and the remaining two are thought to be in Livyánu.

The preceding list is not exhaustive. There are Eyes with other powers and effects. The following short list contains technological devices of the most ancient sort.

The Chariot of the Gods

This large appliance is an actual flying vehicle of the humanspace empire that governed Tékumel before the Time of Darkness. There are many sizes and styles, from a four-person sedan to a space-cruiser requiring a twenty person crew. Exceedingly ancient, there are only a few rumoured to be in existence. All operate through anti-gravity propulsors, the smallest moving at several hundred kilometers per hour, the largest at many many thousand kilometers per hour. Only player-characters exceeding level-XX are likely to encounter such a device. One is owned and flown by the legendary wizard, Sarvodáya Di'éla. Since she is currently under cover in Béy Sý, a streak of white-gold plasma can sometimes be seen in the twilight sky.

The Lighting Bringer

This large appliance is an actual pre-Time of Darkness slay beam weapon, emitting an angry red-orange blare of vapoizing plasma. There are several calibres of this weapon, from the size of a heavy machine-gun to the size of an artillery piece. Speaking only of those Lightning Bringers that player-characters might operate, they do 12d6 damage to targets standing one behind the other along the direction of fire. No saving throw vs Eyes is allowed, for the beam travels too quickly. The spell Vapours does not negate The Lightning Bringer; its beam burns a tunnel through even dense smoke. The spells Wall of Stone, Ice and Nullity block a Lightning Bringer's beam, however. In a single combat round 1d6 targets can be struck with this weapon (providing they are grouped together). Other than sorcerous walls, only solid obstructions protect against this very rare device. Fasíltum, the City of Chiming Skulls, has two 15d6 damage Lightning Bringers; they are the pride of the Vriddi.

The Little House of Tranquil Dwelling

The actual existence of this most ancient artefact remains unconfirmed. It is described in one of the very few fragments of the Llyáni language that sages study to try to build an understanding of that language and therefore of the language of the ancients. In the fragment, the Tranquil House is described as a small cube of mirror-like substance originally found on a far world. It was brought to Tékumel. The House provides its operator with an other-dimensional refuge; once entered, the operator (and the house itself) exists hidden within a secret dimension. No being, except perhaps a god, can detect or affect the House. Returning the House to the plane-of-being from which it originated is simple enough; its operator presses its trigger a second time. Legends originating in the Time of No Kings, and still popular today, affirm that the House is real, and exists on one of the lowest levels of the underworld beneath one of the world's oldest cities. Neither the city nor the location beneath it is specified.

1340. Techno-Sorcerous Creations: Sky Lords – First Imperium

The following list describes the kinds of magic items available during these long-lost eons. All of the following have one thing in common. They are gleanings of the Time of Darkness; they are as much science-fiction as they are fantasy in their operation. Besides the below, this period also saw the first developments in pure "spell" sorcery and in weapon and armour enchantments.

The Alluring Maiden of Ngá

The Hymn of Ngá-Invergé describes this female android assassin in glowing terms. The Maiden is reported in various legends to have performed murder for Queen Kurusénla of the Sky Lords, Nayári the Empress of All, Queen Chayetlésa of Engsvanyálu, and Empress Sháira Sú of Tsolyánu. Beautiful and intelligent, the Maiden seduces her way into her target's intimacy and thereafter slays him without hesitation or remorse. It is possible that Elára

Ferriya hiVriddi now controls the Alluring Maiden of Ngá. This may be why she has been frozen with the Excellent Ruby Eye and placed in the Halls of Silent Waiting beneath Avanthár. There is, of course, only one of these very ancient androids.

The Bridge of Noble Passage

This device appears to be the model of a baroquely carved and decorated foot bridge. If thrown toward an expanse it instantly expands/transforms into a usable bridge that spans any gap under four meters across. Its report in legend seems to indicate that the Bridge of Noble Passage once extended further, but the millennia have had their effect upon the item. There may be two of these in existence.

The Carpet of Conflagration

This seemingly Hmá-wool carpet of rich red, black and gold colours, and ancient Vimúhla iconography, turns into an annihilating length of molten lava upon command of its owner. Whoever possesses the carpet must be a devoted worshiper of the Fire Gods, or else the device will destroy him. The carpet's command word is Hré-Niríu, and is embroidered on the carpet in ancient Irzhák (the language of the Sky Lords). After the command word is intoned, the carpet's attack vector must be verbally directed. Its strike does the same thing as demonic ingestion, and the Summon Demon table may be used.

The Clockwork Automaton of Qiyór

This fighting robot created by that legendary wizard of the Sky Lords is an attempt at recreating the Ru'ún. Unfortunately, the Clockwork has not the power source of the Ru'ún, nor the intelligence. Some Clockworks need to be rewound once a week, others, once a day. It takes about three turns to rewind one of Qiyór's automatons. Legends state that the Sky Lords' army marshalled ten of these constructs, but one has been recently destroyed in Milumanayá. Another is the personal bodyguard of Emperor Tu'úmnish Ssa'amýssa of Mu'ugalavyá.

The Fists of Fire

When hurled at a target, these two meteoric iron human fists (the size of a baseball) transform into fireballs that do 12d6 damage to any target not making a saving throw vs Traps. Their heat does 6d6 to any target that does make its saving throw. Only by scoring a doubly fine success can all damage be avoided. Legend states that further attunement to this device unleashes even greater destructive power, eventually reaching two meters in diameter and doing enough damage to breach a fortress wall. There are nine of these scattered across the planet.

The Bracers of Chirené

The mythological demon-king of the N'lyss possessed these bracers. They double their wearer's Strength basic talent, thus increasing damage and "to hit" chances. Chirené was slain by the Warriors of the Scarlet (which the wizard Metállja summoned to battle the N'lyss), and his wristguards have been appearing and disappearing ever since. The great hero Hrugga wore them at Lù-Ishatúr.

The Glyph of Ruling the Ru'ún

This plaque of metal (of ancient and now unknown composition) inscribed with a cursive Llyáni hieroglyph is meant to be thrown in the direction of a Ru'ún. Detecting any demon of bronze, it slams into the automaton and adheres, taking instant control of its mind and soul. The mighty creature is afterwards the slave of the glyph's owner. As with all slaves, the Ru'ún will attempt to free itself of the Glyph.

The Labyrinth of Elongated Shadows

This silver disk molded to depict the demon Qu'ú is whisked, frisbee-like, at the feet or in the midsts of opponents. It instantly teleports 1d6 nearby

beings (those who fail to make a saving throw vs Traps) into itself. Anyone of level-VI or less is automatically ingested. Targets who are level-VII to level-X roll on the table below.

level-VII	level-VIII	level-IX	level-X
20 = no effect 18-19 = drained 1-17 = ingestion	19-20 = no effect 15-18 = drained 1-14 = ingestion	18-20 = no effect 12-17 = drained 1-11 = ingestion	17-20 = no effect 09-16 = drained 1-08 = ingestion

A drained individual is conscious, but can not fight or engage in any strenuous action for three full days. Those not ingested return the very same combat round that they disappeared. They will report, however, that they were in the labyrinth for what felt like a lifetime.

The Scimitar of Ch'aký the Dismemberer

This ancient high-quality steel sword with a curved blade self-sharpens to almost mono-molecular fineness with each charge. Whereas normal swords require a natural Double Damage result to be rolled in order to deliver extra damage, the Scimitar causes double damage with every strike. Its owner, thus, is permitted to roll for Instant Death with every successful attack. This sharpness lasts for 3d20 days, then another charge must be expended. The engineer Ch'aký forged this blade for Queen Kurusénla of the Sky Lords. The wizard Vu'é, a Livyáni name, wielded the Scimitar for a time, but then he ran afoul of the armies of the undead (who care nothing about having a limb or two hacked off).

There is only one such weapon in all the world.

The Silver Serpent of Nayári

This famous queen of the Bednálljan Dynasty used this device to rid herself of unwanted lovers, co-rulers and others. It is a tiny silver serpent some six inches in length. It bites with deadly effect (11-level upon all saving throws vs Poison). It is highly intelligent and slithers through crevices, plumbing and other accessways to reach its target. Like the Alluring Maiden of Ngá, owners must have a clear and accurate picture in their minds of where their target is; they must state the name of their target while picturing his face; then a strong homing sense leads the serpent to its victim. Once having bitten its target, the serpent returns to its place of release. The Brood-Mother of the Livyáni Temple of Vrusáemaz now owns this treasure.

The Skullcap of Girigámish

This device is the invention, or adaptation, of an ancient sorcerer of the Bednálljan Empire. It is a simple glossy black skullcap with a widow's peak and a nodule of some sort located there (when worn, above the pituitary gland). The skullcap confers immunity from all mind reading, control and barring. Detect Thoughts, Telepathy, Detect Evil and even Mind Bar are all impossible against one wearing the Skullcap of Girigámish. Several of these were made, but they were made for the Priests Supreme of the Sleeping God. It is not known whether any remain in functioning condition. The Skullcap perfectly fits every wearer, no matter his size.

The Trumpet of Metállja

This small but heavy trumpet conjures out of The Null an army of illusionary soldiers, the Warriors of the Scarlet. They are essentially the same race as the N'lyss (six feet, two inches tall, tribal in their attire and appearance), but worship The Beast without a Tail in mannner opposite to the way N'lyss worship that demon prince. Use statistics found in Section 750, except the Warriors in Scarlet are completely immune to Double Damage and Instant Death. N'lyss, having existed on Tékumel for so many millennia, no longer have that immunity. The N'lyss and the Warriors are sworn enemies, and will go berserk in each other's presence. The trumpet gates into existence a number of warriors equal to its operator's level times 100.

1360. The Wonders of Engsvanyálu

Three thousand years into the reign of the Bednálljans a religious upheaval occurred that shook the First Imperium to its core. The prophet Pavár revealed that there were not five gods, as everyone had previously assumed, but instead there were twenty. These twenty divided evenly and mirrored one-another. There were four gods of the physical, four of the emotional, four of the intellectual and four of the spiritual or afterlife. There were four who represented a synthesis of the physical, emotional, intellectual and the spiritual.

The revolution was successful, and this religion is still practiced all across the continent. At its peak of power, the Kingdom of the Gods employed so much sorcery that negative effects began to manifest. The Priests Supreme risked all to reverse these effects, but were destroyed.

Éngsvan hla Gánga, the Kingdom of the Gods, collapsed.

The Cloak of Invisibility

This cloak appears to be woven of highest quality Gýdru-silk, a deep greyish black in colour. Wearing this magic item increases the failure threshold of all attempts to move past opponents silently and unnoticed. This increase is at +2. Additionally it muffles the sound of the wearer. The Invisibility Cloak grants its wearer the ability to create a small circle of darkness, ten feet in diameter, radiating outward from it. This darkness can be created once a night. Its duration is two turns. The Cloak also grants its wearer the ability to become invisible. This can be done once a day. Its duration is two combat rounds.

There are said to be three of these cloaks, in the possession of the Ndálu Clan, the Cusp of Night Society, and the Black-Y Society.

The Execration Orb of Eyló'a

This beautiful red orb, small enough to hold in one's hand, must have its target named before it is cast at it. If this is correctly done, the orb explodes upon reaching within three feet of the named target. The explosion does 6d6 damage to all within fifteen feet. The orb afterwards grows back into existence in its owner's hand; which process takes three full turns. A spell of Dispel Magic forces the orb to disappear, and to grow back over the span of three turns as though it had been exploded. The orb has no counters; it is endlessly useful.

The Globe of Distant Discernment

All phenomena leave impressions in The Null. A sorcerer consulting this item, a crystal ball that uses nullity impressions to locate and communicate visual images of its target back to its operator, can see and hear a target of his choosing. The target must be within the globe's radius (which equals 1000xoperator level in kilometers). This spell can locate a specific person, as long as that individual has been seen up close – within 30 feet – at least once. Alternatively, this spell can locate the nearest person of a particular kind, such as a priest, a virgin, a peasant, a Shén, or an android. A Globe of Distant Discernment is blocked by enchanted or pre-Time of Darkness steel.

The Lens of Scintillation

This glass-like set of two lenses fits over a human being's eyes. The lenses adhere magically and will not come off until commanded to do so by the character to which they are attuned. The lenses are able to see "through" stone in order to locate precious metals, especially gold. The lens' range of vision is 100xoperator level in meters. Thus, a player-character applying a Lens of Scintillation to his eyes on (for example) the third level of the under world, could see up into the second level, or down into the fourth level. A

level-X viewer could see all the way down to the deepest levels. There are rumoured to be about ten of these in existence; the Salarvyáni are keen to collect them.

The Ladder of Mríddu the Magician

This jewelery ladder of gold lengths and rungs easily fits into a character's hand, but when the universally known magic phrase "Otuléngba!" is spoken it becomes a sturdy metal ladder of any required length (up to a maximum of fifteen meters). Repeating the triggering word causes the ladder to grow hand-sized again. The ladder can hold the weight of ten men, and adheres to the surface being climbed. There are said to be three of these miracles somewhere in the area of Tsolyánu.

The Mallet of Inimitable Fealty

This ceremonial symbol of authority derives from the throne room of the Priest-Kings themselves. It is a warhammer of pre-Time of Darkness steel enchanted to the maximum possible (+4 to hit, +4 damage), but its primary purpose is not military, but rather is political. Any victim struck by the Mallet of Inimitable Fealty becomes totally dedicated (body, mind and soul) to the weapon's wielder. A saving throw vs Spells is allowed, but at -4 because of the power of the Engsvanyáli enchantment. Once affected, nothing can be done about the victim's new devotion. It can't be dispelled. The victim can be made to forget things, to be sent upon quests, even to commit suicide. This is a very powerful item, but it disappeared in the chaos of the collapse of Éngsvan hla Gánga.

The Mighty Wall of Thúmis

This small bronze rectangular lozenge, the size of one's thumbnail, grows into a massive, impenetrable wall of solid bronze of any shape and size (up to a maximum of fifteen meters length). It can be made into a round circle enclosing and protecting 1d6 characters. It can be made into a small dome for the same purpose. It can seal off an underworld corridor. The command word is "Thúmis" repeated three times. There are said to be about fifteen of these. One is in the possession of the Monastery of the Grey Mist-Cloak in Dó Cháka.

The Music Box of Lady Nettükirés

This music player has the sorcerous effect of mesmerising all who hear it, except its operator. All within a hearing range of fifteen meters cease all actions and listen to the music. This mesmerisation lasts for 10-listener level combat rounds after the Music Box of Lady Nettükirés has stopped its performance. This magic item works with Tékumel's native animal species, beasts such as Feshénga, semi-intelligent creatures such as Sérudla, hostile non-humans such as Ssú, humans, non-human allies of Man like the Shén (but never the Ahoggyá for some reason), and even androids, automatons and the undead.

Legend reports that there are perhaps five of these devices in existence around the world.

The Speaker to Heaven

This statue of the prophet Pavár hallows the ground around it, making it impassible for undead, demons, and creatures created by ancient sorcery. Within its ten-foot protected sphere, the Speaker makes casting good spells 1xoperator level easier. Example: our level-II sorceress would be granted a +2 (her experience level) on her spellcasting were she to conduct her incantations within ten feet of this treasure of the Kingdom of the Gods. It is said that more than fifty of these enchanted items exist, most owned by the temples of the Good Gods.

The Speculum of Retribution

Also called "The Mirror-Bright Shield of Repelling Hexagrams", this polished steel buckler, triangular in shape, if faced toward a sorcerer casting a spell

at its wielder, has a good chance of rebounding the hostile incantation back upon its caster. Against the incoming sorcery, the Speculum's wielder gets a doubled saving throw; success indicates reflection.

The reflected spell strikes its original caster, or (if a circle of effect spell) is centered upon its own caster. Unlike the intended target, the spell caster originally intoning the cantation gets no saving throw vs his own spell. It's a feature of the Speculum that this is so.

There are three of these surviving in the Five Empires region of Tékumel.

The Spell Scrolls of Aruchu'é the Calligrapher

These scrolls are written upon indestructable parchment. They have lasted for five thousand years, those that still exist. Because they often have spells no longer extant, they are priceless. Once one is read aloud by a character who knows the Engsvanyáli language, it slowly vanishes in a soft blue glow of light. In reading one of these scrolls aloud, with understanding and with ceremonial intonation, its spell is cast upon a target of the reader's choosing (if within eyesight). As an example of a spell available in that golden age of spell sorcery that was Engsvanyálu, consider *Aerial Excellence*, a sorcery that permits the caster and caster level - 5 companions to fly for one hour at a speed approaching one-hundred Tsán per hour.

The Wands Pu'ésmany

These fighting rods grant their user +4 to hit, +4 damage. They also negate an enemy's advantage in wearing armour. They do 1d6 damage per attack success; and have within them a malign entity, which causes their owner to grow more criminal and murderous over time. The mechanics of this are left to the referee. An easy way of handling it is to have the wands' owner roll a saving throw vs Hypnosis every time he is faced with conflict, or with not getting his way. Failure means he attempts to murder his opponent with the wands. This attempt might be immediate, an instant flare-up and attack. It also might be an obsession, one statisfied after some preparation and planning. There is only one of these sets of dual-wield weapons in existence.

1380. Enchantments of the Age of Heroes

"The Golden Age" of spell sorcery, which actually began before the founding of Éngsvan hla Gánga, ended with the sudden violent (and very much mysterious) collapse of the Kingdom of the Gods. Chaos reigned for close to a thousand years, and during that millennium wizard-heroes and wizard-kings used the salvage of Engsvanyálu to war upon one another, to enslave, and to establish personal immortality.

The Time of No Kings was a second Time of Darkness. Every aspect of life fell into ruin.

The enchanted treasures of this age reflect its savagery.

The Avulsor of the Spirit-Soul

This circlet of pure silver is the nexus for an infinitely reuseable Silver Halo of Soul Stealing spell. The Avulsor has the additional property of returning to its owner's hand after being thrown, so it may be used once per combat round. To use it, the operator must aim it and throw it in a spinning flight toward its target. This requires a normal attack roll. If the attack scores a hit, the halo spell triggers and the target's spirit-soul is removed. The target does not get a saving throw vs spells; he already received a defense against the Avulsor as a missile weapon. The Avulsor is deflected by a Protection from Evil spell, but will in that case collaterally target another living creature not within its radius of protection.

The Azure Scarab

This palm-sized sculpture of a Dlaqó-beetle (similar to the Egyptian scarab of ancient Earth), shaped from a single benitoite stone, is able to move, crawl and communicate mind-to-mind with its owner. It even eats, and requires magic items (scrolls are fine) upon which to feed. The scarab is essentially a small extrusion of the god Ksárul into Tékumel. In game terms, its owner has the right to ask the referee any question he wants to, and the referee is bound by this relic to give accurate answers. The thoughts and motivations hidden by non-player characters can be learned. The best way into a well-guarded palace can be had. The weakness of an opponent the owner faces in mortal combat can be quickly discovered. Anything.

The curse of the Azure Scarab, however, is that it overtakes its owner's personality. At the beginning of each week, the scarab's owner must roll a saving throw vs Hypnosis. Failure forces the player to give the character to the referee. The referee then decides how long the character is gone upon one of the scarab's quests, and if he ever comes back.

There is but one Azure Scarab.

The Gloves of Changéla

This pair of elbow-length leather gloves alters to fit any wearer, and even changes in terms of detailing so as to compliment either a male or a female person. Changéla's gloves grant their wearer the power of dimensionally foreshortened reach. Wearing these, a magician is able to sorcerously extend his or her arms a full four meters. This takes no preparation; the wearer is simply able to touch, grab, lift or slap from a room's length away. There is only one of these items.

The Boots of Changéla

This pair of calf-length leather boots alters to fit any wearer, and even changes in terms of detailing so as to compliment either a male or a female person. Changéla's boots grant their wearer the power of dimensionally foreshortened travel to globally distant locations upon Tékumel. This is not teleportation. Wearing these, a circumference-run of the entire planet could be accomplished in two days; therefore, anyplace in the Five Empires, from a starting point in Béy Sý, could be gained in a mere twelve hours; any within Tsolyánu, in six.

There is one place that these boots will not take their wearer, and that is Kutteláno. The wizard Changéla was ingested there by none other than the king of all demons, Origób. His entire city was sunk into the sea, just off of Point Dásht, near Mu'ugalavyá.

Lady Shahtámasèb currently owns this footwear.

The Crystal Claw of Kúrutesh

This half-meter long sceptre of green jade is the one and only Tirikélu sliver ever cut from its parent, the Petal Throne. The head of the sceptre appears to be a six-taloned claw, but could actually be a distorted replica of petals as they appear on Tirikélu. The distortion is important. The Petal Throne is in some way tied to Stability and the tlomitlanyal. The Crystal Claw is allied to Change, to Non-being, to the tlókiriqáluyal. Any worshipper of the former who lays hands on the Claw suffers 2d6 psychic damage, is automatically stunned, and loses three experience levels. Any worshipper of the latter is able to request Divine Intervention once per week.

Referees should be aware that the Crystal Claw of Kúrutesh is one of the most sought-after artefacts upon the entire planet. No player-character could hope to retain possession of it.

Fú Hsí is questing for it.

The Cup of Subadím the Sorcerer

This cup is exceedingly small and ordinary looking. By all appearances made of wood, the Engsvanyáli word for "heal" (mi'itik) is carved into its bowl. In saying this word, the cup's operator causes it to fill with a liquid that, once drunk, slowly and evenly – over the next 20-drinker level hours – heals 3d6

points of physical damage. The person being healed cannot undertake any strenuous activity during the healing period, but can certainly walk and heft light burdens. There is said to be only one of these items, and some claim Súbadim carries it still.

The Emerald of Hagárr of Paránta

This dark green gemstone sorcerously doubles its wearer's Charisma basic talent. While worn, the operator behaves twice as diplomatically, socially, and confidently as usual (i.e., with enormous personal magnetism). Others of his species find themselves attracted by his comeliness, fashion-sense, and manner. Even foes become less likely to strike with Eyes, or to deal full damage during melee encounters. Charisma scores in the twenties have the following bonuses: 21 = +4 NPC Reaction, +3 ST vs Eyes, -2 damage; 22 – 23 = +5 NPC Reaction, +4 ST vs Eyes, -3 damage; 24 – 26 = +6 NPC Reaction, +5 ST vs Eyes, -4 damage; 27 – 30 = +7 NPC Reaction, +6 ST vs Eyes, -5 damage. A Charisma scores in the thirties can be adduced from the above. There is only one of these wonders.

The Hammer of Pendárte of Khéiris

This famous weapon grants a +3 to hit bonus and +3 damage, and may be thrown with full confidence that the hammer will boomerang back into the wielder's hands. Thus, it may be thrown once per combat round, with no having to fetch it in-between.

Although rumour places this relic somewhere in Yán Kór, it actually lies beneath the vast underworld of Ch'óchi in Mu'ugalavyá.

The Life-Giving Bowl of the God-King of Purdánim

This broad bowl of exquisitely carved lapis lazuli (in the style of the Court of Báshdis Mssá I, possibly by the famous Márya) grants its operator powers of reincarnation. The user fills the bowl with pure water, then – in similar fashion to using a discernment globe – conjures the image of a target man or woman present in the same location. The target must be a human being, not an intelligent non-human, not a Hehegánu, not a N'lyss, and also not a Livyáni! Although the victim is granted a saving throw vs Spells, eventually the bowl's user will be able to exchange souls with him. Legend reports the God-King of Purdánim, during that dark era after Engsvanyálu's collapse, used this bowl to transfer himself into younger bodies every time he began to feel his youth slipping away from him.

The life-giver must still be located beneath Yagáin Purdánim, for no one has explored its underworld in four thousand years.

The Muniments of Excellence

These stone tablets have incantations chiselled into them, for there were several types created during the Time of No Kings. The language is Classical Engsvanyáli. If one can read the muniment, then it affects the reader and disappears in a gold-white flash of light. The effect of any muniment is to dramatically increase character level with regard to a single set of skills and abilities. For example, one muniment doubles the level of a warrior, but in regard to melee combat only. Another doubles the level of an infiltrator, in regard to moving silently and passing unseen only. A third doubles the level of a sorcerer when performing telepathy of various kinds only. The effect of a muniment lasts a number of days equal to the reader's level.

The Polychrest of the Third Octant

This palm-sized diamond-shaped plaque of white gold appears to have a small circle surrounded by eight rays, as though depicting Tuléng. Actually, these rays are settings. The circle can be dialed to rest at one of these eight small triangular stops. Each setting grants the user total control over one aspect of reality, thus: 1) men; 2) women; 3) the user himself; 4) the user's possessions; 5) other persons' possessions; 6) the user's enemies; 7) the user's ancestors; and 8) the user's gods, demons, or entity-possessed

magical possessions. The Polychrest is an uncharged device, but drains its user of one Psychic Ability basic talent point each time it is used.

There is only one of these marvels, and legends are ambivalent about the item.

The Ring-Gates of Ch'óchi

These two identical coronet-sized golden rings are a dimensional door. Who enters the first instantly exits the second, no matter how far apart the two are located upon Tékumel. Squeezing through them can be a problem for a warrior of Strength basic talent 14 or greater.

There are five of these items somewhere on the planet.

The Wondrous Enhancer of Jewels

Some say that this device was a magico-technological item from an earlier age, an automatic gem polisher and facet cutter. In actual fact it is an entity possessed item whose housed spirit casts powerful shape-changing, illusion and other magics to increase the value of jewels placed within its aperture. Operators may multiply the value in Káitars (or cross-clan obligations) of a gem targeted by this wonder by 5d20. After any use where a gem is raised in value by a multiple of more than 30, the Enhancer must rest for 10-gem type days (gem type values: diamond – 01; ruby – 02; emerald – 03; pearl – 04; sapphire – 05; beryl – 06; citrine – 07; garnet – 08; jade – 09; topaz – 10). Only one of these items is to be found on Tékumel.

1400. Player-Characters' Magical Items

The above relics of by-gone ages are incredibly ancient, rare, and unlikely to be in the possession of player-characters. In fact, it's entirely possible that no rational adventurer would even desire to possess one of the above (because its possession would draw powerful and violent forces to that person).

What follows below, in contrast, is a list of twelve minor enchanted items contemporary sorcerers routinely create.

The Amulet of the Good God

The most common magical item in Tsolyánu is the Amulet of the Good God. It is one of the first more than one-use enchantments sorcerers worshipping the tlomitlanyal are taught to make. Its powers derive from a synthesis of three spells: Detect Evil, Awe/Inspire Individual, and Destroy Undead. The amulet gives its wearer a danger sense, protects them against fear, causes them to have a +2 bonus on all actions (during a life-threatening encounter only), and to be able to turn the undead and to fully destroy the Hrá. While not having charges, per se, amulets such as these may only be used 5d20 times before their energies are exhausted.

The Talisman of the Evil Ones

The second most common magical item in Tsolyánu is the Talisman of the Evil Ones. It is one of the first greater than single-use enchanted items that sorcerers allied to the tlókiriqáluyal are trained to manufacture. Its powers derive from a synthesis of three spells: Detect Good, Mind Bar, and Control Undead. The talisman gives its wearer danger sense, protects them against fear, causes them to be granted a +2 bonus on all actions (during life-threatening encounters), and to be able to control the undead. While not having charges, per se, talismans may only be used 5d20 times before their energies are exhausted.

The Wand/Rod/Sceptre/Staff of Spell-Storing

Priests and sorcerers often carry rods and staffs, less often wands, sceptres or other wooden accessories. Through the performance of the Create Magic Item ceremony, these can be made to store spells. The number of spells a rod or staff is able to hold equals the average of the enchanter's Intelligence and Psychic Ability and level. High LoSS spells (including Revivification, the

Glyph of Warding and Remove Curse) take up three times as much "space" as simple, Low LoSS spells. Mid LoSS spells (including Mirror Images, Cure Serious Wounds and Protection from Evil) take up two times as much space as simple spells. Thus, a level-VI sorceress with an Intelligence of 15 and a Psychic Ability of 15 would have space for twelve spells ($36 \div 3 = 12$) in the staff or rod she created. She could store four High LoSS spells, six Mid LoSS spells or twelve Low LoSS spells. Any combination of spells would be fine for her, so long as the total did not exceed twelve.

The Scroll of Spell-Storing

Modern scrolls are individual pieces of fine parchment or Tlésa paper with one or more incantations placed in nexus within them. Those usable by the typical tlomítlanyal-worshiping player-character are written in Engsvanyáli, the language of good magic, and are at most a few decades old. They are created via the Create Magic Item ability, the Craft Writing Equipment ability, the necessary material requirements, and knowledge of the spells to be set down. To cast a spell from a scroll, the user need not know the spell(s) contained in nexus beforehand; one need only be able to read and speak Engsvanyáli correctly, and have average or above Intelligence and Psychic Ability. Thus, a warrior or infiltrator can cast a spell read aloud from a scroll so long as the above conditions are met. Like magic users, they are required to succeed at a LoSS test (warriors suffering a -2 to this test, and infiltrators a -1). Scrolls exist of various qualities, the finer granting a bonus to LoSS chances, and not a few are cursed with the Glyph of Warding spell.

Outside of the tlomítlanyal dedicated culture of Béy Sý, scrolls in other languages are to be found. Those who revere the tlókiriqáluyal write their scrolls in Bednálljan or Classical Tsolyáni. Mu'ugalavyáni fire wizards write theirs in the closely similar Classical Mu'ugalavyáni. The Salarvyáni write theirs in Bednálljan Salarvyáni. The Yán Koryáni compose their scrolls in the little known language of Tsáqw. The Livyáni take care that no outsider ever has access to their magical texts (although, see below).

Should a sorcerer, reading aloud a scroll containing an unfamiliar spell, score a doubly fine success on his LoSS roll, then he may choose to cast the spell once at double power, or twice at normal power.

The Ritual Dagger

The straight, two-edged, iron dagger represents the four quadrants of the cosmos: thrusting tip, hammering pommel, right razor edge, left razor edge all correspond symbolically (and the whole dagger, much in the way that Hnálla represents a synthesis of Karakán, Avánthe, Thúmis and Blekhánu) to the totality of Tèkumel's pocket dimension. A permanently enchanted ritual dagger combines three weak versions of Revivification, Remove Curse and Dispel Magic. These three combine in the dagger to protect its attuned wearer against the Silver Halo of Soul Stealing, the Grey Hand and sorcery plague (or similar effects of Eyes and magical items).

It is the mark of a master magician that he wear a Ritual Dagger. Once a magician has died, his dagger is no longer magical, but the weapon itself can be re-enchanted by another sorcerer.

The Gem of Enthrallment

Clear gems of several colours and qualities, from quartz to diamond, serve as nexuses for various lighting and morale sustaining incantations. Often they combine the spells Produce Light, Wave of Shadows and Awe/Inspire Individual. The effect of these sorceries is such that the crystal emits light of the same colour as the gem, develops a many-coloured display, and also builds up the wielder's courage while breaking down the morale of enemy combatants in the crystal's effect area. Enemies failing their saving throws vs Hypnosis are "enthralled"; they lose their action, or act last and at a -1 penalty if they are attacked (or forced to act) while bathed in the light.

Both of Tsolyánu's cultures produce these gems. The tlokìriqáluyal tend to enchant amethyst, black diamond, etc.

The Ring of Power

Magical rings are, like amulets, one of the most commonly enchanted items in Tsolyánu. During the Empire of the Gods, rings were fashioned which increased the range, accuracy, duration and power of a spell. The secret of their fashioning is lost, but a few survive. During the Bednálljan Empire, it is as possible for a ring to duplicate a spell, causing that sorcery to double in effect or to remain available for a second casting. Currently, rings can only hold nexuses for spells; they are no different from other spell-storing items and devices. For the last thousand years, the spell that has most frequently been enchanted into golden rings is Mind-Bar. The ring-wearing sorcerer holds his clawed hands over his victim's forehead as he casts mind blasting magic from the ring.

The Shield of Invulnerability

Shields are enchanted by armourers with a warding spell that makes their wielder defend as though he were twice his experience level. Thus, a level-VI warrior with an enchanted shield defends as though level-XII.

The Sword of Righteousness

High quality steel swords are permanently enchanted by the secret arts of the weapon smith to gain bonuses "to hit" and in damage. These generally range from +1 to +4. Very rare blades, however, seem to have more than mere bonuses about them. These blades, such as the Sword of the Empress Sháira Sú, influence their owner's very personality. The mentioned sword, for example, makes its wielder hate-filled toward the tlokìriqáluyal.

The Armour of Defense

Breastplates are enchanted by armourers with a warding spell that makes their wielder defend as though he were twice his experience level. Thus, a level-VI warrior with an enchanted cuirass defends as though level-XII. This is not stackable with a Shield of Invulnerability.

The Glyph of Present Defense

This ancient hieroglyph has been associated with defense since the days of the Sky Lords Empire. It increases its wearer's saving throws against spells and hypnosis, doubling these. Example: our level-II sorceress, wearing the Glyph of Present Defense, would have a saving throw vs spells of 10 and a saving throw vs hypnosis of 12.

The Triangle of Being Repelled Forever

This amulet guards against the hostility of demons, banishing them back to The Null (from whence they came). In the face of the Triangle, a demon will vaunt and rage for 10-wearer level combat rounds, but then will depart to its own dimension.

1500. Surviving Wisdom of Ages Past

Magic is important to any *Empire of the Petal Throne* campaign, but it does not have the same roll that it does in Dungeons and Dragons. In the latter game, characters collect magical arms, armour and other fine apurtenances, in dizzying numbers. In the present game, personality development, plot arcs, and solving mysteries that safeguard the empire are more important.

Given the above, it is almost inevitable that player-characters at some time in their missions for the Imperium come into contact with one or more of the following. These are all sources of ability, skill and spell knowledge surviving from the Golden Age and the Age of Heroes. In studying them, player-characters gain attributes setting them apart from normal folk.

They become heroes.

The Kranuóntio Qiyór

This treatise on ritual magic, as opposed to the arts of the psychic or mystic, is the foundational text which all sorcerers dedicated to the tlomitlanyal study to master basic spellcraft. It lays out the system of urban, technically sophisticated, literate ceremony and ritual that results in effects taking hold in the mundane world. It explains the five phases of sorcerous ritual: 1) the preparation phase; 2) the energy-raising phase; 3) the effects-shaping phase; 4) the cosmic balancing phase; 5) the dismissal phase. Most magic users have studied this book to reach level-I. At level-IV, a good magician who has made examining this book a priority gains a +1 bonus to all magic skill-related LoSS tests. This includes, by the way, a bonus on Acquisition of Additional Abilities rolls AND on Acquisition of Bonus Sorcerous Abilities rolls. At level-VII, consistent study grants a +1 to LoSS rolls in the casting of the following spells: Detect Evil, Produce Light, Protection from Evil, and Dispel Magic. At level-IX, it grants a +1 to LoSS rolls in the following spells: See Invisible, Wizard's Senses, Illusionary Defenders, Shield of Qón, and Power-Word Stun. At level-X, it grants a +1 to LoSS rolls in the following spells: Vapours, Walls, Doomkill, Teleport Self (with Others), Shapechange Self/ Other, and Create Magic Item. The tome's author can not be the original Qiyór, a legend of the Sky Lords. It must be the pseudonym of some mage of the Time of No Kings.

Most editions of this book are written in what purports to be the tongue of the Golden Age, Engsvanyálu.

The Chëshnaq khyChëshnayálu

This treatise on psychic phenomena and mysticism, as opposed to the arts of the ritual sorcerer, is the foundational text upon which all mind-masters study and meditate. It explores, through a set of interconnected parables, the mind-expanding worlds of dream, astral projection, telepathy, kinetic manipulation, and divination. Most magic users have at least perused this writing in reaching level-I. At level-IV, a mystic of either culture who has thought deeply upon this book is granted a +1 bonus to all saving throws vs Hypnosis. The level-IV psychic is also granted a +1 saving throw vs Eyes (those that deceive or control the mind, such as the Eye of Perceiving the Thoughts of Others). At level-VII, consistent study grants a +1 to LoSS rolls in the casting of the following spells: Detect Thoughts, Telepathy, Induce Panic, and Mind Bar. At level-IX, it grants a +1 to LoSS rolls in the following spells: Control Nature, Control Underworld Denizen, Control Undead, and Control Automaton/Android. At level-X, it grants a +4 to the Demon Binding roll of the Summon Demon ritual.

Most editions of this book are written in Classical Tsolyáni, in the script that is a simplification of Bednálljan.

The Chégudàlikh hiKeténgku

This treatise on healing magic, as opposed to the arts of the psychic or the ritualist, is an important text which all sorcerers dedicated to the healing arts study. It explains the Nraméskh tradition, a medical theory that recognizes three *currents*: *dóm* (air), *hlóm* (fire), and *zhém* (blood) subsidiary to *sharsün* (life). Dóm governs breathing, graceful movement, calmness, and steady eyes and hands. Hlóm governs reflexes, metabolism, good digestion, and athletic endurance. Zhém governs endurance, strength, recovery speed, and drives (including pride and insistence upon right action). There is thus a relationship between the three currents and bodily health and function. Breath Control, Choking, Clumsiness, Grace and similar abilities require deep study of a patient's inhalation and exhalation of air. Diet, Debility from thirst or hunger, Nausea, Quickness, and Sluggishness necessitate contemplation of the flow of fire through a patient's top-to-toes energy trails. Debility from loss, Emotionality, Frailty, Might, Vigour, and Cleansing Diseases demands dedication to studying the circulation of blood from heart to lungs to loins and elsewhere along a

patient's arteries and veins. At level-IV, a good magician who has made this book a life-guide gains the warrior ability Physical Training. At level-VII, consistent study grants a +1 to LoSS rolls in the casting of the following spells: Cure Light Wounds, Cure Serious Wounds, Neutralize Poison, and Preserve Corpse. At level-IX, it grants a +1 to LoSS rolls in the following spells: Cure Critical Wounds, Remove Curse, Shapechange Self/Other, and Revivification. At level-X, it grants its devotee the infiltrator skills Control of Self and Master of the Skein of Destiny.

Most copies of the book are written in modern Tsolyáni. This is because many good magicians don't actually know Engsvanyáli.

The Karétio Shòshchysé

This treatise on evil ritual, as opposed to "good" high magic, is the primary text which all sorcerers dedicated to the tlokiriqáluyal study to master basic spellcraft. It lays out the system of urban, technically sophisticated, literate ritual and ceremony that invites Non-being in disintegrating the realm of Being. Like its counterpart (above), the book explains the five phases of sorcerous ritual: 1) the preparation phase; 2) the energy-raising phase; 3) the effects-shaping phase; 4) the cosmic balancing phase; 5) the dismissal phase. Most evil magicians have studied this book to reach level-I. At level-IV, a sorcerer who has made studying this book a priority gains a +1 bonus to all magic-related LoSS skill tests. This includes, by the way, a bonus on Acquisition of Additional Abilities rolls AND on Acquisition of Bonus Sorcerous Abilities rolls. At level-VII, consistent study grants a +1 to LoSS rolls in the casting of the following spells: Dark Sight, Minor Curse, Wave of Shadows, and Darkness. At level-IX, it grants a +1 to LoSS rolls in the following spells: See Invisible, Wizard's Senses, Eaters of Souls, Shield of Tkél, Madness, and The Hands of Krá the Mighty. At level-X, it grants a +1 to LoSS rolls in the following spells: Inflict Disease, Vapours, Walls, Doomkill, Teleport Self (with Others), Shapechange Self/ Other, Summon Demon and Create Magic Item.

Most editions of this book are written, counter to expectation, in the Engsvanyáli language.

The Púrohlan znaZhánul znaMssúma

This book is one of the "proscribed". During the reign of the third emperor, Trákonel I, manufacture of the undead became illegal. It remains illegal to this day. In the forbidden city of Sárku, however, adepts (such as the young Tsolyáni prince, Dhich'uné) practice, in secret, necromancy and other outlawed arts. They copy this book and place it in the Master of Decay's temples throughout the land. Thus, an imperial action team might come across one in some underworld shrine to Sárku or Durrítlámish. Should a good sorcerer make a thorough study of this book, after advancing three experience levels he will become skeptical of the truth of tloomítlanyal ideology. He will begin to question his faith. He may thereafter choose (as a new Ability or Bonus Spell Acquisition) one of the following conjurations: Alchemy, Dark Sight, Familiar, or Creatures (Mrúr or Shédra only). After advancing five experience levels while studying this book, he may choose: Control Undead, Preserve Corpse, Drinkers of Blood (Hrá, instead of the Eaters of Souls). Advancing six levels while studying this book allows the Acquisition of the following spells: Inflict Disease, The Silver Halo of Soul Stealing, and Summon Demon (whose essence/ substance are of the gods of the undead). It also causes the student to change culture and become an open devotee of the tlokiriqáluyal (although not Vimúhla, fire god of the ancients).

This book is written in Bednálljan.

The Korúnkoi hiSsyúsayal

This is a modern translation of an Engsvanyáli swordmaster's treatise on combat with blades. It focuses on three things: 1) the physics of swords,

their mass distribution and pivot points; 2) the geometry of human anatomy (and the anatomy of Ssú, Hlýss, Shén and Pé Chói); 3) the psychology that produces victory. Most warriors have either directly or indirectly learned its most basic lessons in reaching level-I. At level-IV, a warrior who has made its exercises a regular part of his martial training is granted a +1 bonus to the following: Basic Melee Techniques, Weapons, and Evaluate Foe. Upon reaching level-VII it confers a +1 bonus to Advanced Weapon Techniques and Original Combat Technique. At level-IX, it so develops its practitioner's positioning that any damage taken is reduced by -2. At level-X, this damage reduction is -4. Any adjustments arising from different weapon types, such as spears, or different body-types, such as the four arms of the Pé Chói, is left to referee discretion.

Other martial instruction manuals cover spears, impact weapons, shield and sword fighting, and archery.

The Dímlalikh tlaSsúgayal

This book is an enormously ancient work. It explores the entire indigenous alliance of species fighting mankind, based – so the author claims – upon Livyáni originals. It details the physiology, lack of emotion, hive mentality, goal-setting, strategy and tactics of The Enemies of Man. These enemies include the Ssú, the Hlýss, the Chrystállí, the Lrí and the Hyahyú'u. At level-IV, a thorough study of this manual grants a +1 bonus to melee attacks vs the Ssú, the Hlýss, and the Chrystállí. At level-VII, this bonus rises to +2, and a +1 bonus to missile attacks is added (as is the Lrí and the Hyahyú'u). Upon reaching level-IX, the disciplined practice of its exercises raises the preceding skills by another +1, while adding (surplus to normal professional skill acquisition) the specific professional ability, Assassination Techniques (vs the Ssú, the Hlýss, and the Chrystállí) to the character's list of skills and abilities. At level-X, all the previously listed skills receive yet another +1 bonus.

This text is now lost, but Prince Eselné has sponsored an Initiative, what might be termed a quest, for its recovery.

The Korúnkoi hiYagurésayal

This book is a fairly recent work. It explores the various skills of the secret agent, based – so the author claims – upon Bednálljan originals. It details the skills of silent movement, camouflage, opening locked doors and chests, climbing vertical walls, finding and disarming traps, and picking pockets. At level-IV, a thorough study of this manual grants a +1 bonus to these skills. At level-VII, this bonus rises to +2, and a +1 bonus to shadowing targets and hearing distant noises is added. Upon reaching level-IX, a disciplined practice of its maneuvers raises the preceding skills by another +1, while adding (in surplus to the normal professional skill acquisition) the specific professional ability, Assassination Techniques, to the character's list of skills and abilities. At level-10, all the previously listed skills receive yet another +1 bonus.

The Mo'óm Té'ep Srásy

The sages of Tsolyánu are completely unaware that this book even exists. It is contained in a vacuum-sealed casing cast from the high quality steel of the ancients. To discover this book, however, would change the world, for it is an entire text written in Llyáni, the language spoken in Livyánu just after the Time of Darkness. This feature is more important than the powers it grants, which are to program, repair and maintain Ru'ún, and to adjust the functioning of Eyes. The text would command an immense sum in sale to the Imperium or the temples, but the Livyáni would also take an interest (since they assert that anything Llyáni is theirs by definition). They would send their deadliest agents to retrieve it.

Using this book to gain an understanding of Llyáni, for the first time in about twenty-five thousand years, could be the work of a lifetime. The skills

relating to ancient automatons could be arrived at in 21-Intelligence years, if robot parts were at hand.

The Púrohlan znaMrishsha Kagékte

This is another of the "proscribed". As indicated earlier, the great emperor Trákonel I outlawed the manufacture of the undead; he also prohibited any religious thought opposed to orthodoxy. The Book of the Unknown God is a relic similar to The Unknown Pyramid in Béy Sý. Each of these monuments to alternative religion grants to those who explore their mysteries the power to cancel the magic of the tlomítlanyal and the sorcery of the tlókiriqáluyal. After three full experience level gains, a student of this book is able to cast an area of anti-magic around himself that is 1xcaster level meters wide and deep. Within that diameter, no simple Specific Professional or Low LoSS Bonus Sorcerous abilities/skills can have an effect. After five experience levels of gain, the student creates an area in which neither simple/ Low LoSS nor mid-complexity/ Mid LoSS abilities/skills can have an effect. After six gains in level while studying this text, the student is able to negate ALL sorcery within this area of effect. This apostate ability can be thought of as raising an "Anti-Magic Sphere". Its practice eventually leads a student to heresy. The student realises that there are not twenty divine principles, but only three.

This book is written in Bednálljan. There are thought to be perhaps two of these books in existence.

The Li'ób Mif-Fánsa Mis-Srábchi'i Mik-Kikumárshachi

This book is a treatise upon the astronomy and astrology of Tékumel's dark universe. It is a Livyáni text (the Livyáni are recognised masters of astrology – a basis of their sorcery). For them, the planet Tékumel represents a synthesis of all of life's constituent categories. The other members of the star system then represent the physical, the emotional, the intellectual and the spiritual. These are the four main categories of human existence. The two moons represent the interplay of Being and Non-Being. The final of the eight cosmic bodies represents something outside of the above, something neither existant nor non-existent. Taken together, these eight features of the night sky entail all of reality. Dedicated to the god Kikumársha, its study grants many benefits. After three full experience level gains, during which the owner studies this book, a +1 to either Theurgy and/or Thaumatology is granted. After five experience level gains spent studying this book, a +2 to all saving throws is granted. After six advances in level, a +3 to all rolls having to do with interactions with demons is granted. This means a +3 to the summoning roll AND to the binding roll.

This book is in the possession of Lady Shahtámmasèb; it is important to her intentions regarding the Petal Throne and its destruction via demonic action.

The Dorún Duqálu Tóru'una

Few are they who know of the existence of this tome. Not even the author of The Book of Ebon Bindings is certain of it. The Dorún Duqálu Tóru'una is made from thin brass pages, upon each of which dance hieroglyphs of flickering bluish flame. So perilous is this darkly sorcerous writing that its use causes instant divine intervention. The Black Angel of the god Ksáruł instantly appears and snatches the book away. This occurs because the Dorún, upon successful reading (aloud and with correct pronunciation), automatically summons the demon Origób and automatically binds that mighty prince to the reader's will. The reader may ask any wish to be granted, so long as it involves destruction, death, and despair. It takes three experience level gains of deciphering and study to prepare the summoning ritual. It takes five experience level gains to conjure Origób's servitor demon lords. It takes a full six experience level gains of

commitment to completely master the book. Once done, however, the calling forth of the unnamed is automatic.

The Dorún Duqálu Tóru'una is written in a form of Bednálljan called the Tongue of the Priests of Ksáru.

It is rumored to have been written by great and evil Nyélmu himself and may reside with its author.

1600. Lost Wisdom of Ages Past

The great city of Béy Sý was founded at its present locale not because its location is centered in the Bednálljan Plain and is situated between two important navigable rivers (although these facts are true). The city was cited to guard The Unknown Pyramid, which caps "The Shaft Which Pierces the World". This shaft is the means by which galactic humanspace placed the precursor device into the exact center of the planet. From there the device, a relic from the First Ones of the Universe, regulated the gravity of the planet, and also its orbit around Tuléng (along with the orbits of Téकुमेल's moons). The shaft is occupied by none other than the hero Hrugga, who maintains the great iron obelisk held tightly in place by the pyramid itself.

The precursor device was manipulated by the Hlýss, the Ssú, the Mind Moles and other hostile intelligences to transfer Téकुमेल and its star system into the pocket dimension it now finds itself in. The device is older than the universe of humanspace; it seeks to sustain the planetary system in its present dimension and to expand its power.

Unfortunately, the precursor device is itself "infected" by a second ancient relic intelligence (which humanspace used to control it). This infectious agent was dormant until ten thousand years ago, the date of Hrugga's legendary quest into the planet's core.

Neither of these godlike sentient machines understood the dimension into which they cast the planetary system. The pocket dimension was itself a kind of ancient being. It had known existence, but not matter or energy. The invasion of Téकुमेल into its "flesh" was like a wound. The pocket dimension seeks to return itself to its former condition.

Thus, three actual cosmic principles exist: The Null, who is the source of the tlokiríqáluyal; the precursor device, who awoke later and is the source of the tlomitlanyal; the relic intelligence, who seeks neither Non-Being nor Being and is the source of all gods and demons of the Undead.

A fourth principal might be said to exist, for The Null also suffered a schism because of the manifest power of Tuléng. Some aspect of The Null embraced the sun's power, bonded with it, and now manifests as all solar and fire gods. This is why Vimúhla was the first deity worshipped by humanity once the fall into outer dimensional darkness occurred.

None of the above is known to any Tsolyáni. In fact, the races that have the best understanding of the above are the Hlýss and the Ssú (and the Livyáni, who are hybrids of humanity and the Hlýss).

Tirikélu, the Petal Throne, is actually a lineament of the precursor device; it is that part of it that has reached the surface.

1700. The Unknown Pyramid

The Unknown Pyramid is a scenario that involves player-characters in the many intrigues gripping the Tsolyáni empire in AS 2354. For purposes of showing prospective referees the kinds of plot twists and "reveals" that characterise the setting, four mid-to-upper level characters are employed. These four characters

belong to players in the author's campaign, and all the events described below took place just as narrated.

In the margins, referees will notice the actual die rolls involved in specific events. This particular scenario required two or three play sessions to complete, a total of perhaps seven hours of around-the-table time.

The players characters are: 1) the sorceress Nrinéla hiJarásh; 2) her clan cousin Nríga hiJarásh; 3) the two warriors Ekúne Arúsa and Béshmulu. Nrinéla's clan cousin is an infiltrator. The first two are nobles, the third is middle class, the last is a peasant farmer brought into the military because of his great strength. The scenario's opening phase unfolds as follows:

The campaign starts in the setting's capital city, **Béy Sý**, after a day-long gladiatorial display and the start of a major feast. During the city governor's repast, which celebrates the arrival of the last of the imperial princes and a mysterious foreign ambassador, the highest level character, Nrinéla hiJarásh, is described as seeking some alone-time up upon a high open air colonnade of the palace.

INT rolls: level-VIII/
Routine column/
+2 for basic talent

Up there too, the sorceress spots one of her childhood friends, the Lady Ke'él hiKétkolel. The friend is standing on the edge, looking out across the Mssúma River – toward the City of the Dead. The time is twilight. The luminous indigo sky reminds Nrinéla of the god Hnálla's shield, protecting the world against **The Null**, the Darkness that was before the World.

CHA rolls: level-VIII/Standard
column/ +3 for
basic talent

The friend is in a dark mood because her lover, young Lord Shrakán hiQolyélmu (a hero since an arena bout in Tsámra), has gone missing. Upon a successful **empathy roll**, Lady Ke'él is revealed to have a strange glint in her eye. Self-destructive and doomed. Ke'él explains that her lover is gone. Murdered. Swallowed up by The Null. She is certain it has to do with his arena victory in Livyánu's capital city, Tsámra. The mysterious foreign ambassador, Lady Shahtámmasèb, is responsible.

Under the sun, there are borders, the Sákbe Roads, says Ke'él; in the tsuru'úm, in the underworld, there are none, and Livyánu flows right into Tsolyánu without interruption. Nrinéla gives Ke'él her solitude, but **hears** a distant sound like a cookie snapping or a thick eggshell breaking. Returning back, she no longer sees Ke'él. Rushing to the colonnade's edge, she spies her friend down below. Ke'él has committed suicide.

CON rolls: level-VIII/Demanding
column/ +2 for
basic talent

Soon after, near the body, Nrinéla thinks about her friend's final words. The sunlit world and the world of darkness, divided by the surface of the planet. The first builds towers into the sky. The second builds towers down into the earth. The sunless world. The world of **the Tlokiriqáluyal** (the Five Evil Gods).

Nrinéla's government contact Lord Murésh hiQolyélmu implores Nrinéla to take her mind off of the event. He orders her to take his place in scrying a Mu'ugalavyáni trade ship found completely abandoned a few Tsán (miles) south of the city.

On the road south Nrinéla continues thinking about things. **The Tlomítlanyal**, the Five Good Gods, forever fighting the encroaching Night. Night wins in the end, concludes Nrinéla.

Next to her, the second player character, the archer and tracker Ekúne Arúsa, strides.

The ship is Mu'ugalavyáni in origin, chartered by the Clan of the Red Stone, Khéiris. The logbook seems to indicate transportation of twenty-four persons, a drama troupe and its costumes, props, etc. No one is on board. Ekúne **finds tracks**: someone has taken care to disguise the crew and others leaving the ship. Suddenly, all tracks stop, as if the entire group was whisked away into the air.

CON rolls: level-V/
Demanding
column/ +2 basic
talent bonus

An image of the Livyáni Legation's aircar **enters Nrinéla's mind**.

INT roll:
level-VIII/
Simple
column/ +2
basic talent
bonus

Saving
Throw vs
Spells

Saving
Throw vs
Traps

Nríga: -1
HP

When Nrinéla and Ekúne return to Béy Sý, Nríga and Béshmulu are waiting for them. They have abducted a Livyáni. In the sorcerer's basement laboratory, there is bound to a stone workbench/altar one of the **mystery ship's crew**. Under torture, the foreigner reveals nothing, only curses each and every one of the 9,999,750 days of Tékumel's invasion of The Null. The enemy dies under torture.

During the gruesome procedure, Nrinéla picks up clear images of the **Unknown Pyramid** from the crewman's mind.

To destroy evidence, the foreigner is immersed in acid. Ekúne notices a **brain mole** attempting to escape the stange man's braincase. Brain moles are Ssú lifeforms, placed in human brains to control them. The mole dies in the acid.

With potential enemies in the Livyáni, the Mu'ugalavyáni, the crewman's race, and the Ssú, Nrinéla recruits for a delve into the Unknown Pyramid Ekúne, Béshmulu and Nríga. The latter **arranges disguises** for everyone, and the four eventually make their way into the Tlokìriqáluyal-held areas of the Béy Sý in the late hours of the sixth day of Langála (equivalent to late June).

The player-charaters arrive at the Unknown Pyramid, only to discover that its heavy portal stone has been located and lowered. As the party begins climbing the five-yard slant surface of the very deeply black orbicular diorite surface, three **Chnéhlu** appear from the above landing. They peer over the edge of the landing and begin to softly hoot, their mouths watering. Nrinéla burns one of her spell nexuses; she casts **Awe/Inspire Other**. The mutants instantly become attentive as Nrinéla orders them away. They attempt to **resist the compulsion**, but then turn aside and disappear down the black three-sided pyramid's slope. The mutants belong to Lady Shahtámmasëb, so Béshmulu observes.

On entering the Unknown Pyramid the party finds itself in a broad stone chamber with two exits, one to the far right, one to the far left. Although the open air is only a few yards away, the place is alien and oppressive. In this first chamber are three large benches or altars of iron. They must be worth the value of an empire. Each is exactly four feet high, two feet wide, and eight feet long. Nrinéla can't imagine what they are for. Nríga inspects them closely. He can't tell for an absolute certainty, but he thinks the slabs go down into the pyramid. They don't rest on the floor's surface. Pyramids are supposed to be tombs, or temples, or both, but this place has no wall decorations, none, not even a bit of graffiti from some previous explorer. **Ekúne finds** disturbances in the almost non-existent dust on the floor (this pyramid had been hermetically sealed!). The Chnéhlu and or their masters have been back and forth through this chamber.

The party takes the right-side passage. Almost halfway along the length of the corridor, a chamber (similar in dimension to the entry one), opens in the outside direction. In this second chamber are three more immense iron slabs, identical to those in the chamber near the entrance. There are also food supplies, braziers, and sleeping mats in Mu'ugalavyáni style (nine laid out, one rolled up as though not expected to be used). **Nrinéla wonders** if it might belong to the foreigner she ordered immersed in acid.

Perhaps Nríga is so blown away by the immense amount of iron (a very rare material on Tékumel), that he loses focus. Whatever the reason, he does not notice the deadfall near the passageway's terminus and barely avoids being crushed. Luckily quite ahead of the others of the party, **Nríga feels** mechanisms trigger beneath his feet and **dives** forward into a corner chamber. He bloodies his chin and elbows, but the massive stone block, so large as to completely close the corridor behind him, comes to rest without taking lives. So heavy is its fall that it cracks the pyramid, a fine jagged line scrawls across the floor and adjacent wall.

INT rolls: level-VIII/
Standard column/
+2 basic talent
bonus

INT rolls: level-VI/
Standard column/
+2 for basic talent

PSY roll: level-VIII/
Control Creature
column/ +2 basic
talent bonus

INT roll: level-VII/
Routine column/
no talent bonus

CON rolls: level-V/
Difficult column/
+2 basic talent
bonus

INT rolls: level-VIII/
Simple column/ +2
basic talent bonus

DEX roll: level-VI/
Demanding
column/ +2 basic
talent bonus

Nrīga lights a candle and sees another corridor leading away from the corner chamber he is in. It seems to connect with the left-side doorway in the entrance chamber, judging by the geometry. He also **detects signs** of much traffic, and wonders at two stout pieces of timber over near the other doorway.

INT rolls: level-VI/
Standard column/
+2 for basic talent

Meanwhile, **Nrinéla** and the others have also figured out that the left-hand corridor must also end in the chamber from which they are now cut off. Nrinéla and her clan cousin both move, the first back through the entry chamber, and the second **over a pit trap** (using the timbers) toward one another along the left-hand passageway.

DEX roll: level-VI/
Simple column/ +2
basic talent bonus

The party regroups along the pyramid's left-hand passageway. To the outside is a third chamber. This one does not have one wide opening, but three narrow ones. Suddenly, **a muted-by-stone roar** (coming from who knows where, under the party's feet, upon a lower level of the tsuru'um) **sends shivers** up everyone's spine. The party slips into the side-chamber, only to be confronted with a strange scene of carnage.

Saving Throws vs
Physical Stun

Like its twin across the way the chamber has three rectangles of iron. These, however, have been employed. The whole room has been. There are supplies, chests, fuel, and ritual components. Some supplies appear to be medical. There are Firyá-cloth swabs, scented oils, shaving razors, and surgical implements shaped like spoons. Fine body hair, oils and soiled swabs are thrown into big reed baskets. A large glass urn lies shattered in pieces between two of the iron altars, nearby **a single torn human eye**. Saline solution lies pooled on the floor. Other fluids, including blood, stain and smear across the top of all three iron benches. A horrified inspection of the human eye is interrupted by the boom of stone on stone. Quickly the lanterns are put out.

Various
search
rolls

Bellowing down the corridor charges a giant (6½ feet tall) **humanoid creature**. A blue light hovers around this man-shaped thing with beautiful physique and handsome face. It runs for its life and appears not to notice the party. Behind it, pursuing it, is a swarm of large **scarabs** with razor-sharp mandibles. Already a few of these scarabs are attached to the creature's cloak (the creature's only clothing, save a harness of straps). To Nrinéla's horror, the creature's cloak **identifies** it as **Hrún the Harvester of Eyes**. Legendary in Béy Sý. The cloak is covered with human eyes, each sewn on and operating as though alive. One of these emits the bluish light. Two others are being devoured by scarabs. Several others look straight at Nrinéla and her crouching comrades. As Hrún passes one of the chamber's openings, he spins completely around and flings the contents of a leather sack he holds back at the scarabs. The sack's contents are small, luminous, oyster-like orbs. They glisten in the bluish light as they arc through space. They burst like ripe grapes when they crash to the corridor's floor. All are **human eyes**, dozens of them. The swarm of scarabs descends upon the eyes, allowing the legendary Hrún to escape. After relishing their treats, the scarabs disperse toward the pyramid's entrance.

INT rolls: level-VIII/
Demanding
column/ +2 basic
talent bonus

Nrinéla and her companions emerge from their hiding to try to discover where the people (who had invaded the pyramid before them) disappeared to.

INT rolls: level-VIII
through level-V/
Standard column/
+2 basic talent
bonus

They estimate the total number of human eyes removed by the surgical spoons they found – 47 eyes apparently raided by Hrún, 1 eye damaged in the raid.

Twenty-four people bereft of their eyes, the exact number missing from the ghost-ship!

Realizing there are not nine further unknown (possibly Mu'ugalavyáni) invaders of The Unknown Pyramid (but instead over thirty, including twenty-four who clearly are intended as sacrifices of some sort), the party makes sure that the immortal Hrún is gone. They then explore the items in

Levelling up
Item!

Various
search
rolls

No rolls
needed

the ritual preparation chamber. They find twelve gold bars, twelve steel coronets, and twelve Tlésa-paper scrolls with some unknown language phrase repeated on each one. Nrinéla and Nríga confer over the writing; it's nothing they have ever seen before. It reminds them of Engsvanyáli. Perhaps a sort-of "proto-" form of it. The sorceress takes the Tlésa sheets and stores them in her backpack. The others take four gold bars each.

The party leaves the chamber and heads away from the entrance.

Advancing over the timbers (above the pit trap, a compliment to the deadfall across the way) and into the triangular room, the party discovers the secret door through which Hrún fled to safeguard his **Cloak of Many Eyes** from the ravenous scarabs. It is easy to discover, for Hrún has broken it with his panicked passage. Entering where he exited, Nrinéla encounters **another wonder**.

Down through the centre of this central chamber of the pyramid, the light of her torch plays off the surface of a triangular pillar, two of her arm's lengths to each of its three sides. The pillar is made of solid iron, and it disappears through the upper reaches of the pyramid, and it disappears through the floor . . . It connects, surmises the brilliant Nrinéla, the pyramid's capstone with something below; it is a immense **obelisk of iron**, suspended, or gripped, by The Unknown Pyramid.

Beyond the length of obelisk, which – by the way – has none of the usual carvings that obelisks ordinarily have, the team discovers a narrow stair leading down. Its angle is exactly the angle of the pyramid's radiantly polished black outer surface. Carefully down this stair creeps the imperial aligned party.

On the level of the tsuru'úm below, the party discovers a **circular corridor** made of alternating bands of gypsum and loadstone. Weirdly black and white. The corridor is twelve feet wide. Its height is eight or nine feet. It is guarded by a **stone juggernaut**, which gets power from the banded walls whose arrangement amplifies energies drawn into them via the iron obelisk. The juggernaut is carved into the likeness of a three-head hydra whose heads (Nrinéla later concludes) represent Static Being, Changing Being and Non-Being.

The party must individually make a Dexterity roll, followed by a Strength roll, to avoid the juggernaut.

Around the corridor yawns another smashed secret door. Avoiding the juggernaut and entering this opening, Nrinéla and her party finally encounter the mysterious group that set the Chnéhlu guards, laid out the sleeping mats, conducted surgeries upon twenty-four innocents, and prepared for some variety of elder ritual (whose object she barely fathoms). Ten humans, or demi-humans, lie sprawled across the floor, only one of them still alive. The first that the party inspects resembles the foreigner Nríga abducted for interrogation and death. Five others like him lay jumbled near an ancient stone altar and the equipment used to move it. Three others wear white Vringálu-hide flanged masks; these are the Faceless Adepts in the company of Lady Shahtámasëb. They debarked the aircar that brought the Livyáni Legation to Béy Sý's Hirilákte Arena.

"Why then are all of the personal effects on the floor above distinctly Mu'ugalavyáni in style," wonders perhaps one of the player-characters.

Another should scoff at such naiveté.

The one other invader is a Tsolyáni male, about Nrinéla's age, dressed in a simple scholar's costume without clan-markings or other identifiers. This collaborator with a known enemy is still alive, although the mind-blast that killed everyone else has addled his brains. He clutches a wooden book-box in his arms and mutters a mantra to himself (in no tongue that Nrinéla knows).

INT roll: level-VIII/
Simple column/ +2
basic talent bonus

DEX rolls: level-VIII
through level-V/
Challenging
column/ various
bonuses

STR rolls: level-VIII
through level-V/
Demanding
column/ various
bonuses

INT roll: level-VIII/
Impossible
column/ +2 basic
talent bonus

See the
Excellent
Ruby Eye

The priestess, whose sorcery is mainly devoted to healing, bends down to inspect the traitor, only to discover that she recognises him. He is Méngan hiTirrúne, the most brilliant man of magic to be produced by the nation since the Time of No Kings. He disappeared several years ago. Yet here he is!

"What do you do here, Méngan?" gasps Nrinéla. Only then does she take in the rest of the scene. In the centre of the chamber is a deep pit. On the pit's father lip are two mixed-sex groups of youths – unmoving, **frozen out-of-time**, with their eyes removed and replaced by large deeply red rubies.

Nrinéla's attention is then directed by Ekúne up toward the high ceiling. She turns her gaze.

In the centre of the chamber's ceiling, directly above the pit (around which's lip a few scarabs still cluster), the iron obelisk descends a few feet. Its terminus is not another capstone. **A Propulsor!** The ceiling is concave just around the obelisk, and the concave area is circled by an engraved sorcerous diagram. There is also in this cavity a kind of large throne (but upside-down, built into the hollow). Seated (again, upside-down) on this large throne sits a large man, broad shouldered and narrow-hipped. A **Paragon** of male Tsolyáni handsomeness. He pays no attention to Nrinéla or her three comrades. He jams his fingers into a crack in the pyramid that zig-zags its way right up to the obelisk. It seems to have moved the obelisk. It has definitely broken the magical twelve-tangent circle.

Nrinéla's sharp eyes follow the crack. It winds across the ceiling to what, above, would be the northern wall or face of the pyramid. This is the area damaged by the deadfall stone whose drop Nríga triggered.

So Méngan hiTirrúne and the Livyáni were to evoke who-knew-what but were attacked by Hrún. Before the Blood Drinker had completed his raid, Nríga accidentally activated the deadfall, which cracked the pyramid and severed the sorcerous diagram. This released the scarabs, who went after Hrún's collection of human eyes.

Did it also release this tall Paragon (with large almond-shaped eyes and forward-jutting chin) up on the ceiling, attempting to move the obelisk back into place?

The party might never know, for into the chamber stalks those **three Chnéhlu**, now free of the sorceress' spell and certain of her deserving.

The action enters combat rounds.

Empire of the Petal Throne uses 1-minute combat rounds; each combat roll is just that – a die throw to indicate overall success over an entire sixty seconds of time. Most combats are chaotic. In this fight, three Chnéhlu square off against only one human equal to themselves in strength and fighting ability. There are weapon strikes, half-swording, grapples, etc. The combat lasts three rounds before the beautiful male **Paragon** repairing the pyramid intervenes and kills the Chnéhlu. No figures need be used, because figures and combat mats make little sense with 1 minute combat rounds. There is simply too much movement.

The male Paragon, having struck down the Chnéhlu, grabs the ancient book box that Méngan hiTirrúne clutches and shoves it into Nrinéla's hands. He then lifts the Mind Master into his arms, and drops into the pit. The sorceress and her party rushes to look; the pit is absolutely bottomless. Into the endless black a forceful bluish beam of energy pierces. Its origin is the propulsor of the great solid iron obelisk.

Overwhelmed by the mystery, the party desires to get away (but injured characters are in no condition to brave the juggernaut corridor). Eventually it is assumed a **sorcerously healed** party escapes the Unknown Pyramid.

Nrinéla, Béshmulu, Ekúne and Nríga wend their way home, but are followed. Shén assassins attack the next night. Nrinéla discovers that Shén

INT roll: level-VIII/
Simple column/ +2
basic talent bonus

Saving Throws vs
Physical Stun

INT roll: level-VIII/
Routine column/
+2 basic talent
bonus

COMBAT rolls:
level-VIII through
level-V/ vs level-V
opponents

PSY roll: level-VIII/
Major Illusion
column/ +3 basic
talent bonus

Various
mental
rolls

See
Section
930.

No rolls
needed

associates, Pygmy Folk infiltrators, have stolen the ancient magical tome. After a talk with her sorcery tutor, Nrinéla is visited by Hrún the Harvester of Eyes. It is he who has stolen her book, not whomever sent the Shén. He promises to return the book to her in exchange for fresh human eyes, eyes of men she has seduced. As instructed, the party goes to the Tower of Tigán Mssá (the abode of Nrinéla's master). He has four simulacra that the party may operate in order to penetrate the inner circle around the Livyáni Legate, Lady Shahtáhmasèb. They do this, and offer to recover the magical book together. Confronting Hrún in his lair, it is revealed (through his many eyes) that Lady Shahtáhmasèb wore the guise of Méngan hiTorrúne down in the Unknown Pyramid and that not only is she not Livyáni, she is not a human being – she's a Hlýss Dowager!

Lady Shahtáhmasèb gates into her presence the great Tsolyáni culture hero Hrúgga. This is the male Paragon who repaired the pyramid and killed the Chnéhlu several nights before. Hrúgga destroys Hrún the Harvester of Eyes, obliterates the Nshé and other Hrún devotees, and then turns toward the player-character party to kill them. Realising that Hrúgga is sorcerously made mad, she and her fellow simulacra combine to release the hero from his madness. He immediately turns on Lady Shahtáhmasèb. The Hlýss near-Queen quickly seizes up the magical tome and reads out its incantation, not correctly however. The king of all demons, Origób, manifests and eats Lady Shahtáhmsèb in a single horrendous motion.

In the campaigns playtesting *Empire of the Petal Throne*, 2nd Edition Revised, the author has employed Lady Shahtáhmasèb several times.