

SWORDS OF THE PETAL THRONE

BETA FRAGMENT 0.3

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CREATING YOUR CLAN

Most role-playing games start with the hero you create. In Tsolyánu, however, your individual hero is only half the story. Your character's clan is of crucial importance to their life. It is a combination caste, social role, and vastly extended family that shapes everything about your hero. Thus, the first thing to do is decide what kind of clan your hero calls their own.

You'll want to check with the GM first to see if he or she has decided on a particular list of clans to be involved in the campaign, or if all the PCs should come from a single clan. Such a choice can simplify things during play, albeit at the cost of the interesting tensions that can come about when players all have their own family ambitions to pursue.

WHAT A CLAN DOES

Your clan provides everything for you. It gives your family a place to live in the clanhouse, provides their food and clothing, arranges for your education, represents you in legal matters, and even pays the fines you incur if feasible. Most clans have clanhouses spread through multiple cities of the empire, all of which can be trusted to provide shelter and help when you need it. Your clan is your family.

As a good clan-member, you are expected to deserve that care. You work for your clan, either in a business run by it, an enterprise it sponsors, or in working for the government or another clan and sending back most of your earnings. In theory, you could reject these responsibilities and seek your own fortune, but those forsaken by their clan are the *nakome*, the clanless, and they are utterly without aid or legal protection. Most Tsolyánu consider clanlessness a fate worse than death, as at least an executed clanmate can hope for a decent funeral.

Your character is probably a young or undistinguished member of the clan, one with promise but without many accomplishments. As an adventurer, you can choose your own path to glory and wealth and the clan will back you as long as you keep showing good results. Constant use of clan assets and family contacts with nothing to show for it is likely to annoy them, however, and you need to keep in mind the needs and interests of your family as you seek your own fame.

CHOOSING A CLAN NAME

Most clans have a short name referring to some totemic object or past glory. The table to the right gives a number of typical words involved in clan names, and you can roll or choose from it for inspiration if needed.

Many clan names are formed as "<Adjective> <Noun>". Others are in the form of "<Adjective> <Noun> of <Verb-ing>" or some similar compound form. The names might have a slight relation to a particular role or profession followed by the clan, or they may be a purely aesthetic phrase.

Clan names often have a touch of poetic allusion about them or a "noble"-sounding ring, though particularly low-status clans might lack even that dignity. Thus, the Relievers of Life are a clan of assassins charged with performing their duties for coin and a just cause, while the humble clan of the Wicker Image cleans the latrines of the mighty, sweeps the streets, and cleanses the corpses of the dead.

Art slot

d20	ADJECTIVE	NOUNS	MORE NOUNS
1	Azure	Bough	Bone
2	Black	Cloak	Circle
3	Blue	Crystal	Collar
4	Bronze	Dawn	Diadem
5	Closed	Flame	Door
6	Gentle	Gem	Fist
7	Golden	Girdle	Forest
8	Green	Jade	Hill
9	Iron	Kirtle	House
10	Open	Mantle	Joy
11	Red	Moon	Lance
12	Rising	Mountain	Peaks
13	Sable	Pinnacle	Scroll
14	Scarlet	Plume	Sea
15	Shining	Sphere	Sky
16	Silver	Staff	Stone
17	Swift	Sun	Sword
18	Towering	Tomb	Thunder
19	White	Water	Tower
20	Yellow	Worm	Wall

DETERMINE CLAN STATUS AND PROFESSION

Your clan may be an honored and respected one, or it may be thought a pack of ruffians scarcely better than clanless *nakome*. Roll or choose from the table to the right to find out where your extended family stands in the esteem of the Empire.

While higher-status clans are usually wealthier than low-status ones, this is not a certainty. A proud and noble old clan may find its coffers exhausted by a failed political gambit, and a scorned clan of slavers or prostitutes might be rich from their unsavory work. You'll determine the wealth of your clan shortly.

Your clan may have one or more prevalent professions among its members, or it might send them to work wherever their talents take them. You may pick or roll as often as you wish from the table below, or decide that your clan is more general in its interests.

d10 YOUR CLAN'S STATUS

- 1-2** *Very Low.* Most consider your clan fit only for menial labor and unpleasant, degrading duties.
- 3-4** *Low.* Your clan is humble and of no concern to the great, but they do treat you with a minimum of respect.
- 5-7** *Medium.* A solid and honorable clan, of little importance to government but treated respectfully by the great.
- 8-9** *High.* Your clanmates staff much of the upper reaches of local government, and no one dares insult you lightly.
- 10** *Very High.* Your clan is envied and honored, even its least lineages having important roles and social functions.

COMMON PROFESSIONS

d8	VERY LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	VERY HIGH
1	Farming	Entertainment	Crafts of costly nature	Landowning	Bankers and financiers
2	Hauling and carting	Farming	Farming	Important merchants	Idle decadence
3	Leathers and tanning	Common craft	Lesser civil officials	Major officials	Generals and officers
4	Slave-taking and selling	Minor tradesmen	Lower priesthood	Priesthood	Great Imperial officials
5	Unskilled labor	Servants and minions	Scribing	Scholarship	Landowning
6	Cleaning and sweeping	Tomb guarding	Building	Scribing	City governors
7	Cooks and kitcheners	Sailing or fishing	Sailing or fishing	Physicians	Noble courtiers
8	Vices and crimes	Soldiering	Soldiering	Soldiering	Greater priesthood

Art slot

DETERMINE THE CLAN'S FAVORITE DEITY

Many clans have no patron deity. Their members pray and offer sacrifices to whichever of the Ten Gods and their Ten Cohorts are useful to their immediate need. While a pragmatic course that makes few enemies, it also means they have few particularly friendly temples and few religious ties with other pious clans.

Other clans or lineages have a patron god, usually one somehow affiliated with their work. Those who worship a god almost always worship their divine Cohort as well, and may indeed give the Cohort even more attention if their favor is particularly appropriate to the clan's needs.

Members of the clan are not expected to be fanatical about this devotion, but they must at least pretend to sincerity. Temples and priests of the God or Cohort will be friendly to members of the clan. They may not perform favors out of hand, but they will at least listen to requests. Conversely, that God's enemies and rivals will be inclined to make trouble for those of the clan.

You may roll on the table below to find your clan's favorite divinity, or choose one or more that seem appropriate to you. You might choose more than one, or none at all if your clan is cosmopolitan.

NOBLE AND IGNOBLE DEEDS

Tsolyáni culture doesn't recognize absolute standards of good and evil. The closest equivalent is that of "noble" or "ignoble" acts. Noble

acts are those that please your clan's gods and fulfill your social role correctly. Ignoble deeds are those that offend your patron deities or defy the social role you occupy.

Thus, a Chiteng-worshipping judicial torturer serves his god and his role by inflicting agonies upon those interrogated by an Imperial official. A magistrate from a clan that serves Thúmis might detest such torture as offensive to his god, but grudgingly permit it as a necessary part of his role as a judge of the empire. To outside observers, both people are behaving nobly, for they are acting as their roles and relationships require.

This does not mean that noble persons have to *like* each other. The magistrate may agree that the torturer acts nobly and is deserving of respect for his integrity, but he would take all steps possible to avoid inflicting torture, and would stop it if it all possible. If out from under the eye of the law, the two might even attack each other if feelings run particularly hot. Two rival temples that are the soul of courtesy in the streets of the city might fight a murderous war in the Underworld the next night.

Keep the rest of the party in mind when selecting patron deities. Your GM might require you all to serve gods of Stability or gods of Change to cut down on the degree of conflict that's likely to arise within the party. If not, make sure your PC is not so zealous as to be unable to cooperate with their fellows of a different creed.

D12 DEITY AND THEIR COHORT		NOBLE AND IGNOBLE BEHAVIORS
1	<i>All the Gods of Stability</i>	Do be brave, loyal, obedient to authority, honest, industrious, temperate, and wise. Don't be selfish, treacherous, deceitful, cowardly, willfully ignorant, or lazy.
2	<i>Hnálla and Drá</i>	Do be sober, truthful, upholding of authority, industrious, temperate, and honest. Don't overindulge in passions or pleasures, don't harm social structures, don't lie.
3	<i>Karakán and Chegárta</i>	Do be courageous, skilled at war, judicious in rule, temperate in victory, and ambitious. Don't be cowardly, insubordinate, careless with those in your charge, or lazy in self-betterment.
4	<i>Thúmis and Keténgku</i>	Do be wise, well-educated, eager to share your knowledge, patient, conciliatory, and helpful. Don't hoard your knowledge, refuse to use it to help, seek violence, or shed blood lightly.
5	<i>Avánthe and Dilinála</i>	Do honor women, nourish your clan, and protect the weak with your strength or wealth. Don't abuse women, waste the products of earth, use violence carelessly, or fail your kin.
6	<i>Belkhánu and Qón</i>	Do smite the undead, fight Dark mystical forces, aid travelers, and be trustworthy. Don't pervert a natural and timely death or defile the tombs of Stability-worshippers.
7	<i>All the Gods of Change</i>	Do exploit institutions for your own benefit, satisfy your urges, and usurp your superiors. Don't do uncompensated kindnesses, be weak of spirit or body, or sacrifice for others.
8	<i>Hrü'ü and Wurú</i>	Do destroy social institutions in a self-advancing way and seek personal glory at all costs. Don't expose weaknesses to others, don't be predictable, shun habits and regular customs.
9	<i>Vimúhla and Chiténg</i>	Do kill in battle, torture the weak, fight with glorious courage, burn things, and plunder. Don't show mercy, don't admit fear, don't be physically or mentally weak, don't be cowardly.
10	<i>Ksárul and Grugánu</i>	Do be wise, cunning, be full of schemes, uncover secrets, and seek ambitions ruthlessly. Don't tell anything you know without some profit in it, don't be idle, don't be stupid.
11	<i>Dlamélish and Hriháyal</i>	Do be hedonistic, use others for your pleasure, sample new experiences, and be selfish. Don't neglect any possible pleasure, don't be temperate, don't be chaste.
12	<i>Sárku and Durritlámish</i>	Do become undead, honor them, gain wealth, and destroy those who'd profane undeath. Don't allow your consciousness to end, don't value life, don't forget offenses.

CLAN WEALTH AND ESTEEM CHECKS

Your clan provides everything your PC needs for their work and home life. Food, shelter in the clanhouse or an owned outbuilding, clothing, medical care, a job in clan enterprises, education suitable for your role, even the provision of a spouse from another lineage in the clan. A clan can only afford to give so much largesse to its members, however, and that's where its Wealth rating comes in.

A clan's Wealth rating describes how many golden *káitars* it can afford to spend on any particular request by a member. If something costs more than this, then the clan simply doesn't have the money or resources to spare for it. The PC might still be able to convince the clan elders to go ahead and purchase or arrange it, but it will require special effort and persuasion on their part, and isn't the sort of thing that can be resolved with a quick roll.

If the object or service is relatively minor then asking for something from your clan might take no longer than a quick request to a clan elder or quartermaster. If substantial goods or services are wanted, it might take several days to make the arrangements.

Requests must be reasonable and related to the clan's best interests. Asking for a new shirt or for a new sword before going out adventuring is one thing, but asking for the clan to buy you a private villa in the forest outside the city is another entirely. Significant purchases must be justified as being in the clan's interests.

You're expected to take care of what the clan gives you and return expensive items when you're finished using them. Things that press the limits of a clan's Wealth rating will require a particularly good explanation as to why you need them. The clan won't outfit your friends, either; they expect you to use the goods or services and not hand them off to an associate. Loss of valuable clan property might cost you the goodwill of your clan elders.

Expense requests of less than a tenth your clan's Wealth rating are automatically granted without an Esteem check, and you can assume your PC walks around with that much in pocket money at any one time if you lack other personal funds.

Even if the purchase is reasonable and within the clan's means, however, there's no guarantee that a significant expense will be approved by the clan elders or the lineage's quartermaster. To succeed in persuading your kindred to loan you that shiny new suit of *chlén*-hide armor, you're going to need to make an Esteem check, and trust in your clan-mates' respect for you to convince them of your need for the thing.

To determine your clan's Wealth rating, roll on the table below. If you'd prefer not to risk a wild result, you may instead treat it as if you'd rolled a three on the die.

Art slot

ESTEEM CHECKS

Whenever you ask for something extra beyond your daily necessities, you need to make an **Esteem check**. To make this check, you roll 2d6 and add your character's Esteem score. If you equal or exceed a difficulty of 7, you will get what you asked for if the clan's Wealth rating can afford it.

Esteem checks can be made for more than goods and services. Access to a clan's contacts and special relationships might also be usable with an Esteem check, representing your hero's ability to convince the elders that they really do need to call in some favors with this person. Without the approval of the clan, these contacts are unlikely to respond well to a PC's requests. They know that their relationship is with your *clan*, not with you. If you do want to deal with them without involving the clan elders, you're going to need to cut your own deal with the contact, which may cost you more than your private purse can afford.

If you have points of Favor from past services to your clan, you can spend one to reroll a failed Esteem check. If that roll fails too, you'll still get *something*, even if it might not be exactly what you were looking for. You can only spend one Favor point on an Esteem check.

Your clan may love you, but they're busy, and they have a lot of other requests to consider. You can only make one Esteem check per game session, unless events in it drag out more than an in-game week or so. If your request is turned down, you'll have to wait at least a week to try again, if not longer.

YOUR CLAN'S WEALTH RATING IN GOLD KÁITARS

d6	VERY LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	VERY HIGH
1	1 <i>hlásh</i>	1 <i>káitar</i>	Roll as if Low	Roll as if Medium	Roll as if High
2	1 <i>káitar</i>	5 <i>káitars</i>	10 <i>káitars</i>	100 <i>káitars</i>	500 <i>káitars</i>
3	2 <i>káitars</i>	10 <i>káitars</i>	25 <i>káitars</i>	200 <i>káitars</i>	1,000 <i>káitars</i>
4	10 <i>káitars</i>	25 <i>káitars</i>	50 <i>káitars</i>	300 <i>káitars</i>	2,000 <i>káitars</i>
5	25 <i>káitars</i>	50 <i>káitars</i>	200 <i>káitars</i>	500 <i>káitars</i>	3,000 <i>káitars</i>
6	Roll as if Low	Roll as if Medium	Roll as if High	1,000 <i>káitars</i>	5,000 <i>káitars</i>

CLAN CONTACTS AND SPECIAL ASSETS

Material goods are only one of the things that your clan provides to you. Perhaps more importantly still, your clan provides access to important people and useful contacts that they're often willing to use on your behalf. Invoking a contact requires an Esteem check, with a difficulty varying with the importance of the contact.

The exact result of a successful contact request is up to the GM. The contact may sweep away a problem with a wave of their august hand if it's something they could reasonably correct, but they might simply give the PC instructions on how to fix their problems on their own. What help a contact provides will always be useful to the situation, but it won't always fix it completely, especially if the problem isn't exactly in their sphere of influence.

The number of contacts your clan has depends on their status. Rich and noble clans are tempted to rely on their own wealth and members, while lowly folk are keenly aware of the need for patrons and protectors.

Very low status clans can roll or choose three contacts. **Low** status clans can roll or pick two, and Medium, High, and Very High status clans can roll one. For each contact, roll or choose once on the contact list and roll once on the influence table below to find out how important or skilled they are. If you roll or pick the same contact twice, either reroll or bump up their influence by a level.

Contacts are helpful, but they're not munificent. They won't give money or gear to you, though they might briefly loan them.

To help keep things straight, you should assign a name to each contact and a sentence worth of description about them. The GM may add more details or let them build up during play.

CLAN ASSETS

Aside from their contacts, clans also have certain special perks related to past successes or old alliances. You may roll once on the clan asset table to find out what special advantage your clan has. Unless an Esteem check is specified for an asset, you can use it whenever it is appropriate during play.

Assets are assumed to be available wherever the clan has a representative clanhouse. Thus, you might travel halfway across the empire, but if the local village has a clanhouse, you can rely on it also having access to the asset.

d6 THE CONTACT'S INFLUENCE

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 1-3 | Minor. They're a minor figure in their organization or have only modest levels of personal prowess. They can only provide information and minor favors, but are easy to contact, requiring an Esteem check at difficulty 7. |
| 4-5 | Major. They're an important person in their profession or organization. Aside from minor favors, they can also extend any help that their organization normally could offer without breaking its own rules. They're more difficult to contact, however, with their check at difficulty 9. |
| 6 | Chief. They run their organization or its local branch, or are a famed practitioner of their art in the area. They can break major rules to help you provided it's not too obviously egregious. Powerful as they are, they have many demands on their time. Contacting them is at difficulty 11. |

Art slot

d100 CONTACT

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 1-4 | Assassin clan elder |
| 5-8 | Bandit leader or robber chief |
| 9-12 | Explorer of far regions |
| 13-16 | Fence of illicit goods or criminal fixer |
| 17-20 | Foreign diplomat from one of the Five Empires |
| 21-24 | Historian of secret adventure-relevant archives |
| 25-28 | Imperial administrative official |
| 29-32 | Imperial tax collector |
| 33-36 | Judge or police officer |
| 37-40 | Landowner with many far-flung residences |
| 41-44 | Lay priest magician-tutor |
| 45-48 | Lay priest practitioner of forbidden magics |
| 49-52 | Master of a clan-related skill or profession |
| 53-56 | Military officer in an Imperial legion |
| 57-60 | Musician or entertainer favored by nobility |
| 61-64 | Noble or socialite of the elite |
| 65-68 | Nonhuman elder revered by his people |
| 69-72 | Notable courtesan or madame |
| 73-76 | Omnipotent Azure Legion spymaster |
| 77-80 | Priest from a temple associated with the clan |
| 81-84 | Prosperous merchant in a related trade |
| 85-88 | Skilled smuggler of goods and people |
| 89-92 | Temple administrator with treasury access |
| 93-96 | Tomb police captain |
| 97-00 | Veteran Underworld delver |

D100 CLAN ASSET

1-4	Armory	Your clan has a lot of spare <i>chlén</i> -hide armor and weapons around. Requests for such gear require no Esteem check if they're within the normal Wealth limits. Pick one free weapon at the game's start.
5-8	Assassin's Deference	An solemn pact obliges members of the assassin clans to warn your clan's members seven days before they execute any contract against them or their close companions.
9-12	Clan Privilege	Your clan has an ancient privilege. Pick a crime: murder, theft, assault, or trespass. Once per session, you can make a difficulty 7 Esteem check for you and your friends to go legally unpunished for it.
13-16	Fast Travel	Your clan has ties with carters and sailors. You and your friends can get passage to most civilized destinations, though the faster you want to get there, the less comfortable and safe the journey.
17-20	Foreign Ties	Pick one of the other Five Empires or another nation of your choice. Your clan has branches in its cities and you can speak the language fluently.
21-24	Generous Clan	Your clan trusts your judgment of allies. The fruits of Esteem checks can be given or loaned to friends, though you still stand responsible for its return if the goods are costly.
25-28	Good Business	Your clan has a business related to their main trade, if any, or one you choose if it's a generalist clan. Getting related goods and services requires no Esteem check if they're within normal Wealth limits.
29-32	Magical Artifact	Roll a random major magic item. Your clan will let you borrow it with a good explanation and an Esteem check against difficulty 9. It must be returned within a week. Don't lose it.
33-36	Mercantile Associates	Your clan has many merchants among its members or deals regularly with traders. Personal purchases from your own purse cost 10% less if you let the clan negotiate them over a few days.
37-40	Military Ties	When around an Imperial legion, you can make an Esteem check to find a friendly low-level officer useful to your purpose. They'll get you introductions or minor favors, but won't risk their position.
41-44	Modest Tribute	Your clan is less demanding than most others of the fruits of your private enterprise. You need give them only 60% of your earned or plundered coin and gems, instead of 80%.
45-48	No Questions Asked	The clan quartermasters trust you. If you increase the Esteem check difficulty by 2, you don't have to provide any explanation at all for why you want something.
49-52	Noble Reputation	Your clan is known for their nobility of conduct. You can make an Esteem check at difficulty 9 to convince someone you're telling the truth or make them trust that an action was nobly correct.
53-56	Occult Library	Your clan has an old library of magical texts that allows study of common spells.
57-60	Past Glory	A former deed or reputation of your clan is remembered by some. Pick one social group: criminals, officials, merchants, soldiers, or priests. Your clan status is treated as if one step higher with them.
61-64	Private Lodgings	Your clan has a very large clanhouse or multiple outdwelling. You have private lodgings suitable to their wealth and your Esteem, ranging from a private apartment to a personal villa.
65-68	Private Reserve	Your clan has a special bankroll for its favored children. If your Esteem is 3 or better, treat the clan's Wealth rating as doubled for your purposes.
69-72	Ready Shamtla	Your clan has a special reserve for paying <i>shamtla</i> , and will pay anything up to ten times its Wealth rating without chastising the PC, barring their extreme stupidity or repeated major claims.
73-76	Reliable Service	Pick one profession related to your clan's activities, or any one profession if they're generalists. There's no need for an Esteem check to get related services if they're within normal Wealth limits.
77-80	Safe Houses	On a successful Esteem check at difficulty 7, you've been told of a clan house or bolthole in the area. There's not much of value in it, but it's well-concealed and outsiders don't know about it.
81-84	Smuggler Ties	You can sneak people and goods in and out of places where there's a clanhouse of your clan. This only risks failing if there's a special watchfulness for the thing or persons you're smuggling.
85-88	Steel Armor	Your clan will loan you a set of steel armor of your choice for indefinite use. If you lose it, you automatically lose two points of Esteem.
89-92	Steel Weapons	Your clan will loan you a steel weapon of your choice for indefinite use. If you lose it, you automatically lose two points of Esteem.
93-96	Suborned Quarter	Your clan has a small city neighborhood or outlying village where they are in total control. Police and officials come there only at extreme provocation, so minor offenders are safe there.
97-00	Underworld Passage	The clan controls a relatively secure passage into the Underworld, and you and your friends may use it.

CREATING YOUR LINEAGE

Now that your clan's properly defined, there's just one more step before it's time to roll up your hero. You need to make your hero's clan *lineage*.

Every clan is divided into a dozen or more lineages, each one descended from some glorious clan ancestor. While you belong to your clan, you spend most of your time with your lineage, and it's your lineage that takes care of most of your immediate needs.

Just like clans, lineages have status too. Some are low-status, assigned the menial labor or tedious parts of a clan's duties and viewed as "poor relations" by the rest of the clan. Most are of medium status, respected by their peers but not sought out for leadership positions. Two or three lineages are high-status. Clan elders are chosen from their senior members, and they chart the course for the clan as a whole.

Outsiders don't usually follow the fine points of lineage standing within other clans. They treat you by your clan's status, not your lineage status. Thus, even the lowliest lineage of the illustrious Cloak of Azure Gems can expect to get more deferential treatment than the highest lineage of the humble Scarlet Mantle could claim.

First, pick a name for your lineage from the table on the opposite page. This will be the surname for any PCs from that lineage, prefixed by *hi*. Thus, if your lineage name is Kaikama, the PC's last name would be "hiKaikama".

Next, roll or pick from the lineage status table to the right. Low-status lineages will grant a PC an extra skill during character creation, though their Esteem will start lower, while high-status lineages will cost a PC a skill pick, but increase their Esteem.

Now roll or pick for a clan contact that's specific to your lineage. This person is actually a clanmate, relative by marriage, or old friend

D8 LINEAGE STATUS

- 1-3** *Low.* Your lineage is toward the bottom of the clan's internal rankings. Your family gets the dirty jobs the clan might have and is the first to sacrifice when the clan needs to tighten its belt. It's taught you self-reliance, but it's harder to get help from the clan. Your starting Esteem is lowered by 1.
- 4-7** *Medium.* Your lineage is among the rank and file of the clan. You don't have anyone sitting on the council of elders, but they at least try to keep you happy when it's practical for the clan.
- 8** *High.* Your lineage is among those who actually run the clan, with several senior members on the council of elders. One of them might even be Chief Elder. While the smoothness of your life has let you cut some corners in self-development, your starting Esteem is raised by 1.

of the lineage, so it's easier for you to convince them to help. Their contact difficulty is decreased by one, so minor contacts are difficulty 6, major ones are difficulty 8, and chief ones are difficulty 10.

Lastly, roll for a clan asset that's specific to your lineage. This benefit is one your lineage has worked to develop over the years, and only you and your kindred can take advantage of it.

Your clan and lineage are now ready. If your current hero perishes, you can roll up a new one from this clan and lineage, or fashion a brand-new clan to receive the benefits of your unflinching valor. Improvements and gains in status your current hero gives to their clan can thus benefit new generations of bold adventurers.

CREATING THE RISING RED PINNACLE CLAN

The player starts by picking out a name for his clan, settling on the Rising Red Pinnacle as a suitably imposing name. He considers rolling a random status and profession, but decides to make them a high-status clan with a focus in soldiering.

He looks over the list of gods and decides that both Karakán and Vimúhla fit the martial interests of the Rising Red Pinnacle. While one is a god of Stability and the other a god of Change, a clan of many soldiers of different temperaments might find reason to worship them and their Cohorts both. He decides that this worship is usual in the clan, but not exclusive; he wants to leave room open should a future PC want to be a priest of a different god.

Now it's time to determine the clan's Wealth rating. He could take an automatic 3 on the roll for 200 *káitars*, but he decides to risk it, and rolls a six-sided die to see how wealthy they are. Unfortunately he rolls a 1. Some recent reverse or terrible decision has impoverished the clan, so he has to roll on the medium column. He rolls a 2, so it turns out his clan can spare only 10 *káitars* to fulfill requests made by its members.

As a high-status clan, the Rising Red Pinnacle only has one special contact. They've been trusting to their gold and their own illustrious members, and haven't developed the network

of patronage that a lesser clan might. The player decides to pick the contact, choosing a military official in the Imperial legions. He then rolls to find out how important the official is, and gets a 4, meaning the officer is fairly important in the army, but not a legion commander himself. The player dubs him Kardasha hiTelsu from the table opposite, and decides that the Rising Red Pinnacle clan saved his career some time ago. As a major contact, he requires an Esteem check at difficulty 9 to gain his help.

A clan asset is rolled next, and a 23 results in "Generous Clan". Evidently, the Rising Red Pinnacle is so desperate for help that they'll let their clanmates buy friends with clan resources. It would be better, perhaps, if they had more to buy them with.

Lastly, the player whips up the lineage that his PC will belong to. He finds that it's the Teshkuma lineage, and decides that it's a medium-ranked lineage, without special bonuses or penalties.

The lineage's special contact is rolled as Todukai hiTeshkuma, a cousin gone bad who went into smuggling. While scandalous, he's a Major contact, and can be called on with a difficulty 8 Esteem check, as it's easier to call on lineage contacts.

Finally, the lineage's special asset is rolled as "Smuggler Ties". It looks like the Teshkuma lineage might not be the most noble lot in the clan. The GM will doubtless remember this....

TSOLYÁNI NAMES AND PRONUNCIATION

d100	MALE NAMES	MALE NAMES	FEMALE NAMES	FEMALE NAMES	LINEAGE NAMES
1-4	Ajjnai	Kettukal	Aleya	Mikusa	Arusa
5-8	Arkutu	Kureshu	Arelí	Misa	Chankolu
9-12	Arodai	Kurshetl	Arimai	Mnela	Chaq
13-16	Ashoretl	Langsha	Atin	Ninue	Chayet
17-20	Ashqo	Lazhato	Balane	Notaza	Dalisa
21-24	Autsulto	Morusai	Bara	Nrainue	Detlkolu
25-28	Bazhan	Mursun	Behiye	Osue	Drantike
29-32	Chamang	Nalukkan	Chaikura	Prazhuri	Guruma
33-36	Deshetl	Neqo	Chentsuni	Qilain	Haisonar
37-40	Dresu	Neshkiruma	Dashiluna	Rayana	Mraktine
41-44	Durumu	Nriga	Dhali	Sayi	Mrekka
45-48	Ek'ne	Nu'unka	Dijaya	Senertha	Nezar
49-52	Epengar	Orun	Dirula	Shaira	Nikuma
53-56	Firu	Sanjesh	Dleli	Shanu	Pagartra
57-60	Gyesmu	Sikun	Elara	Sriyesa	Pelmu
61-64	Haikon	Ssiyor	Falyai	Su'esa	Quru
65-68	Hehejallu	Sunun	Hale	Ta'ana	Sayuncha
69-72	Hejjeka	Targholel	Iluntsa	Talia	Srunayan
73-76	Heshqu	Tariktanme	Jalesa	Terutra	Teshkuma
77-80	Horkhunén	Todukai	Janule	Thiala	Tikasa
81-84	Horukel	Tontiken	Jashana	Tlayesha	Tlakan
85-88	Hrishmuna	Trasune	Kalusu	Tsana	Tlelsu
89-92	Jagetl	Tulkesh	Layeth	Vayuma	Vraisuna
93-96	Jugar	Turisan	Lelai	Vishaya	Vrayussa
97-00	Kardasha	Yamashan	Linatla	Ziya	Yeker

PRONOUNCING TSOLYÁNI WORDS

Tsolyáni is a highly-developed language with a complete dictionary and grammar to it. You're unlikely to need that kind of detail for your own campaign, so here are a few simplified rules.

Accent marks show which syllable to stress. Thus, *Tsolyánu* is pronounced "tsol-YA-noo". If unmarked, put the stress on the second syllable.

Most consonants are pronounced as they are in English. **kh** is pronounced as "loch", **ts** is pronounced as "fits", and **hl** is pronounced as the Welsh "ll" in "Llewellyn".

I is always pronounced as "machine" or "marine".

E is always pronounced as "they", "obey", or "say".

A is always pronounced as "papa", "spa", or "father".

U is always pronounced as "flute", "Zulu", or "rule".

O is always pronounced as "no", "go", or "vote".

Ü is always pronounced as the German "über" or "lügen".

The apostrophe in the middle of words like Hrü' ü is a glottal stop, like the brief pause in the middle of pronouncing "bottle".

For reference, here are some common word pronunciations.

- Tsolyánu is "tsol-YAH-noo"
- Tsolyáni is "tsol-YAH-nee"
- Tékelmel is "TEH-koo-meyl"
- Chléen is "chleyn"
- Shamtla is "SHAM-tla"

When in doubt, remember that it's not as if anybody else at the table is likely to be able to tell if you're pronouncing it wrong. Just pronounce it any way that seems logical to you and roll with it.

In the same vein, if you need a new Tsolyáni name then just make one up that sounds good. The names and words on the table above give you a general idea of what names are supposed to look like, so you can take bits and pieces from them to make up one of your own that suits your ear.

CREATING YOUR CHARACTER

With your clan established, it's time to roll up the actual hero you'll be sending into the perils of Tsolyánu. Your adventurer is someone discontented with the ordinary course of their life, a man or woman determined to work out their Skein of Destiny in greater glories than their dutiful clan-service would grant them.

Such adventurers are not unknown in Tsolyánu. Every clan has a certain number of kindred who won't settle for the simple life of duty and slow progress that they would otherwise have. These malcontents want glory, gold, revenge, forbidden knowledge, or the splendid exercise of rule. They want what the world won't lightly give them.

For these men and women, the clan makes allowances. Most of them are doomed to die, of course, perishing on the blades of their foes, devoured by monsters in the Underworld, slain by beasts in the wilderness, or impaled on a judicial stake after playing one political game too many. Still, some of them will succeed gloriously, and the wealth and renown they bring to their clan-mates is worth the inevitable losses. Of course, a few of them may be so clumsy as to drag their clan into their own confused downfall, and such unfortunates must hope to survive not only their enemies, but the fury of their own relations.

MAKING YOUR HERO

To create a new player character, just follow the steps on the pages in this section. By the time you get to the end, you'll have a bold young man or woman ready to face the dangers of the Underworld and the hidden treachery of more human foes.

First, roll your attributes. These scores will determine your hero's basic aptitudes and talents. Optionally, you can assign an array of scores instead if you prefer not to risk the dictates of chance.

Next, choose a background. This is the profession you were trained to follow, one that you may well have left behind as you set out for adventure. Your background gives you a few basic skills and the expected capabilities of someone in that trade.

Next, pick a class. Your class is your adventuring profession, the role you fill in the group and the talents you bring that make your hero useful in the Underworld or in the mazes of urban politics. If your hero is capable of wielding magic, you'd pick the Sorcerer class. If their talents lie in other directions, you'd pick the Adventurer class.

Next, equip your hero with their starting gear and money. How much you'll be able to choose will depend on the Wealth of your clan. Costly treasures such as steel weapons, expensive harness, real state, or splendid clothing might be too expensive for any starting character, and await your successful plundering.

Lastly, record your character's final details. Roll their starting hit points, note down any magical arts known to your sorcerer, record their armor class and their weapon and attack information, and pick an immediate goal that they wish to pursue. If they're devotees of a particular deity, you should note that down as well.

When making your character, take care to coordinate with the GM and other players. Your PC needs to be a sort who'll play well with others in the group, as dissent within a party is a swift path to a lonely death in the darkness of the Underworld.

Art slot

PLAYING A FEMALE CHARACTER

Tsolyánu is a frankly chauvinistic society, unlike their matriarchal rivals of Yán Kór to the north. Men occupy all public positions of authority. Ordinary women are protected by their clans and immune to legal suits and other civic responsibilities, but they are not expected to have a public voice or a place in the great institutions of the empire.

Not all women are satisfied with this shelter. Those who wish to participate in public life may declare themselves to be *Aridani* by a simple public declaration. *Aridani* women have all the rights and responsibilities of a man, whether that means enlisting in a legion, becoming the leader of a temple, taking multiple spouses, or being enslaved for non-payment of debts. Perhaps fifteen to twenty percent of the women of the empire are *Aridani*, and they are considered normal and respectable members of society.

Most female player characters will be *Aridani*. While their "good clan-girl" sisters can expect a quiet life of family and work, *Aridani* player characters can aspire to grander ambitions. Of course, they can also suffer far more unfortunate fates....

ROLLING YOUR ATTRIBUTES

Your character's native abilities are defined by six **attributes**, each of which is measured on a scale from 3 to 18. A score of 3 means your character is very weak in that attribute, and their talent in it is barely adequate for an adventuring life. A score of 18 is the peak of natural human ability in the attribute. Most ordinary people have scores of 10 or 11 in their attributes.

To generate your attributes roll 3d6 six times and assign them to the attributes below as you wish. You may replace any one attribute with a score of 14, so your character is guaranteed to be good at something. Optionally, if you prefer not to roll your attributes, you can assign the following scores as you wish: 14, 13, 11, 10, 8, 6.

Once you've rolled or assigned your attributes, you need to mark down your **attribute modifiers**. These modifiers are added or subtracted to die rolls related to that particular attribute. Your Charisma modifier, for example, would be applied to your attempts at persuasion or charm, while your Strength modifier would apply to a mighty swing of an axe.

ATTRIBUTE SCORE	ATTRIBUTE MODIFIER
3	-2
4-7	-1
8-13	No Modifier
14-17	+1
18	+2

There are six attributes possessed by every character.

Strength is the measure of your hero's physical prowess and muscular might. Its modifier is applied to melee attack and damage rolls and it influences how much gear you can carry.

Intelligence is your character's power of reason and memory and their ability to command their knowledge. Its modifier is most often applied when attempting feats of knowledge and intellect.

Wisdom is both your character's perceptiveness and acuity and their ability to make prudent exercise of their judgment. Intelligence provides the knowledge, but wisdom helps the hero decide how it should be used. Its modifier applies to perception checks and the noticing of subtle details.

Dexterity represents the character's hand-eye coordination, agility, and fleet-footedness. Its modifier is applied to ranged attack rolls and damage and the character's armor class, making them harder to hurt in a fight, or easier if the character is lamentably slow.

Constitution is the character's hardness and capacity to endure pain and injury. Its modifier is applied to your character's hit points at each level, making them harder or easier to put down in a fight.

Charisma combines both physical beauty and force of character. Heroes with low Charisma may be ugly or unimpressive, while high Charisma aids attempts at charming others or persuading them of your point of view.

If your total attribute modifiers sum to less than zero, your GM may permit you to reroll your scores. Still, even the least promising hero can find glory if you choose their course wisely in play.

Art slot

CHOOSING A BACKGROUND

Next, choose a general background for your character to represent the kind of life they led before they took up an adventuring career. The background should complement your clan; it's unlikely that a very high-class clan would be producing much in the way of herds-men and tribal shamans. Even so, it's possible that an idle dilettante might have picked up much the same set of skills.

Each background has three associated skills. Your hero gains these skills at level-0 expertise, representing a modest but adequate competence in them. They also gain Culture/Tsolyánu skill at level-0, and know the Tsolyáni language. If your character hails from a different land, they can replace this culture skill accordingly.

Your character was competent and well-trained in their past profession. Tasks that would be ordinary duties for them can be performed automatically, and won't require skill checks or other complications. You might be able to attempt certain feats that those with other backgrounds couldn't hope to accomplish at all.

If none of these backgrounds quite suit, you can describe your own and pick any three skills that seem to fit the role.

Artisan: You were a crafter and artisan, a maker of goods for the great markets of the empire or the common use of your clan-mates. You should pick a particular craft: leatherworking, metalworking, architecture, shipbuilding, or so forth. Note that metal is scarce and precious on Tékumel, and so hardened *chlén*-hide and costly bronze take the place of most ironmongery on our world. You have been trained in the skills of Business, Profession/Your Craft, and Persuade.

Assassin: You murdered people for pay. You may belong to a formal assassin clan, one that takes jobs at specific rates of pay and for specific noble reasons, or you may be a criminal freelancer with far less social esteem. Your skills are Combat/Exotic, Stealth, and Security.

Carter: You traveled the massive stone *sakbe* roads that snake between the cities of Tsolyánu, leading huge carts pulled by the great *chlén*-beasts. You've seen more of the world than most and are accustomed to hardy self-reliance. Your skills are Athletics, Profession/Carter, and Navigation.

City Guard: You were a hired guard, either part of a town's city watch, a tomb-guard protecting the necropoli of the dead, or a simple strong arm hired to protect people and belongings. You know how to keep people safe from urban perils and you are familiar with the city's laws. Your skills are Combat/Any, Profession/Guard, and Perception.

Clan-Girl: A role specific to women in Tsolyánu, the cloistered life of a simple clan-girl is straitened but comfortable. You learned the cooking, tailoring, and physicking duties of a good clan-girl and the subtle arts of persuasion and influence that helped you get your way in the absence of more formal authority. Since then, you've probably declared yourself *Aridani* in order to get enough freedom to have an adventurer's life. Your skills are Medicine, Persuade, and Profession/Domestic.

Entertainer: You amuse and beguile those with enough coin to make it worth your while. While many forms of entertainment are considered low-class and fit only for the lesser clans to practice, others such as epic poetry or classical Tsolyánu music are

highly esteemed. Your skills are Artist/Your Specialty, Profession/Entertainer, and Stealth.

Farmer: Your toil in the fields is the backbone of Tsolyánu's prosperity. The vast majority of the people of Tékumel are farmers, coaxing *dna*-grain and other comestibles out of the black earth. Farmers are rarely among the great, but it is a respected role. Your skills are Athletics, Profession/Farmer, and Survival.

Herder: You tended herds of gigantic *chlén*-beasts or flocks of bleating *hma*. You learned how to keep your animals healthy, how to judge good ones from bad, and how to keep vigilant against the many predators of Tékumel. Your skills are Athletics, Profession/Herder, and Perception.

Hermit: An isolated existence is uncommon in Tsolyánu, and one that intentionally rejects the companionship of clan-mates is almost incomprehensible. Still, some ascetics or wretched *nakome* exiles seek the solitude of the deep forest for their own reasons. Your skills are Athletics, Stealth, and Survival.

Hunter: The wild tribes of the hills and deep forest are made up largely of hunters, as are those clans that bring in game for city tables. Hunting on Tékumel is a dangerous pastime, as the wild beasts of the deep wilderness are far more perilous than Terran fauna. Your skills are Combat/Any, Stealth, and Survival.

Laborer: Simple unskilled laborers have a hard life in Tsolyánu, but the massive constructions favored by the great provide a modest means of survival. Most laborers are forced to be flexible in their talents if they're to find their daily bread. Your skills are Athletics, Combat/Any, and any one skill of your choice.

Legionary: You were a dutiful soldier in an imperial legion. A high-ranked clansman might have been an officer, while less glorious clan-member likely carried a halberd in the common ranks. You've since left the service, either released from your term or granted a long leave. Desertion is also a possibility, but deserters can expect the impaling stake if they're caught. Your skills are Athletics, Combat/Any, and Leadership.

Merchant: Whether a petty trader in the market or the scion of a great merchant clan, you learned how to buy and sell goods at a profit. Your skills are Business, Perception, and Persuade.

Noble: You filled some ornamental position at court or merely whiled away your days in the indolent pleasures of the great. While only high or very high clans might afford a noble's lifestyle, you were still expected to be a decorous example of the virtues of your clan... albeit some clans have very decadent ideas of decorum. Your skills are Culture/Any, Persuade, and Leadership.

Official: You were a bureaucrat for the empire or your clan, shuffling papers and resolving disputes in your particular corner of government. You've since left the service, but you still know your way around your former colleagues and petitioners. Your skills are Bureaucracy, Culture/Any, and Persuade.

Physician: The medical arts of Tékumel come in both magical and mundane varieties. While magical cures are much favored by those who can afford them, there are some sicknesses that the temples cannot cure, and many sick who could not afford them anyway. A physician knows many highly-effective herbal and chemical cures, and can even dare surgery if a patron is sufficiently desperate. Your skills are Medicine, Perception, and Scholar.

Art slot

Priest: You were or are a priest to one of the Ten Gods or their Ten Cohorts, and should pick one of them as your patron. You may or may not have had the natural capacity for spellcasting that makes for a sorcerer; if you were a more mundane cleric you should pick the Adventurer class for your character, while sorcerous adepts should pick the Sorcerer class. Your skills are Priestcraft/Your God, Scholar, and Persuade.

Prostitute: Both men and women can be found in this trade, one held largely in contempt by the rest of society. Such casual scorn doesn't keep artful courtesans from becoming very wealthy, however, and the priests and priestesses of the goddess Hriháyal are accorded respect for the carnal service they offer in their deity's name. Your skills are Culture/Any, Persuade, and any one skill of your choice. Priests of Hriháyal should choose Priestcraft/Hriháyal for this.

Sailor: The wide seas of Tékmel are dangerous, with terrible beasts prowling the waters far from shore. Sailors are a hardened lot, accustomed to such danger and far travel. Your skills are Athletics, Culture/Any and Profession/Sailor.

Scholar: Tsolyánu is a cultured and educated land, and many temples and organizations sponsor the studies of scholars. Others are independent researchers reliant on the wealth of their clan and repaying their expenditures in the glory of their discoveries. While most have no magical talent, they often know much of the more intellectual aspects of sorcery. Your skills are Language, Scholar, and Occult.

Scribe: Illiteracy is common among the lower classes, and even the literate elite often prefer to have their letters penned in the expert and beautiful hand of the professional scribe. Some make

their living providing such services to the wealthy, while others serve their clan or sell their services as letter-writers. Your skills are Language, Culture/Any, and Profession/Scribe.

Shaman: The wild tribes do not have the benefit of temple studies and formal schools for occult training. Those tribals who have the knack for sorcery or an excellent talent as performers might become shamans, educated by a mentor in the basics of their profession. Proper sorcerers sneer at their coarse arts, but some tribes have preserved arts and sorceries unknown to the great libraries of the temples. Your skills are Culture/Any, Occult, and Artist/Any.

Slave: You were a slave for a long while before being redeemed by your clan. Indeed, it's possible you still are a slave, though such a lot would cut you off from any help or aid from your clan. Escaped slaves from foreign lands can hope to return home to their kinsmen, but a slave sentenced to that lot in Tsolyánu is *nakome*, clanless until and unless their people redeem them. Your skills are Athletics, Stealth, and any one skill of your choice.

Thief: You were a thief, either as the traditional profession of your clan or as an enterprising freelancer. While a base and contemptible profession to most Tsolyánu, some low clans do eke out a living on it, dodging the hostility of the law and maintaining a code of silence before the authorities. Your skills are Athletics, Stealth, and Security.

Vagabond: You are a wanderer, either an explorer of far lands, an incurable roamer, or someone unwelcome in their old clanhouse. The rich can afford to travel in style, but other men and women are forced to be more creative in finding their daily food. Your skills are Navigation, Stealth, and Survival.

SKILLS

These skills are some of the most common likely to be possessed by adventurers. Backgrounds grant some of them, while class training provides additional levels in others. As a character gains experience, they can improve their skills or add training in new ones.

Some skills require a specialization, such as Artist or Combat. A character must pick a specialization each time these skills are gained, but they can pick a different specialization each time and raise their proficiency in them separately.

Artist (Specialized): Skill at song, dance, painting, poetry, musicianship, sculpting, or other gracious arts. A practitioner must choose a specialization to indicate their particular field.

Athletics: Running, climbing, swimming, jumping, and other exercises of raw athletic ability are governed by this skill.

Bureaucracy: Navigating the obscure and voluminous paperwork of large organizations and knowing what papers to file to get legal permission for otherwise dubiously-permissible acts.

Business: Operating a business, making trades, investigating account-books, and knowing the important merchants of an area all fall under this skill.

Combat (Specialized): The use of violence is ruled by this skill. A specialization must be chosen each time it is taken: melee weapons, ranged weapons, or exotic weapons. The latter covers the more sophisticated forms of unarmed combat and the use of the odd weapons of the assassin clans. You may add your Combat skill to all hit rolls made with the relevant weapons.

Culture (Specialized): Expertise in navigating society is a crucial skill in Tsolyánu. This skill requires a specialization in either a nation, such as Tsolyánu or Livyanu, or a general class of people: military, temple, criminal, sailors, merchants, and so forth. In the former case, you are automatically fluent in that nation's native language. Aside from helping you avoid misunderstandings and identify important people in that society, it can also be used to locate useful contacts in it, albeit such personages usually expect payment for any favors.

Language: Each level of Language teaches you a number of new languages equal to the skill level plus one. Thus, a level-0 skill teaches you one more language, level-1 teaches you an additional two, and so forth. Every major nation has its own language, as do nonhumans, while scholars often learn the ancient tongues of lost empires and vanished peoples. The latter is treated as the single language of Ancient Script, though forbidden or spectacularly rare languages may require special training.

Leadership: This skill aids in leading groups of people and convincing them to obey your instructions in the face of discouraging circumstances.

Medicine: A physician's skills in tending wounds, curing sicknesses, and neutralizing the many toxic perils of this world.

Navigation: The skill is equally applicable to land and ocean travel, allowing the possessor to reach far destinations without losing time or becoming lost.

Occult: A theoretical understanding of the magical arts of Tékumel. This does not involve the special training and talent required to cast spells, but can answer questions about magic, magical beasts, and extra-planar demons.

Perception: Noticing small details and hidden objects, either casually or through intense search. Wisdom is usually paired with it in skill checks.

Persuade: Convincing others of the truth of your words and the wisdom of your counsel.

Priestcraft (Specialization): The practical work of a priest of a particular god, including the elaborate rituals required for their service. A specific deity must be chosen for this skill, but it can be applied at a -1 penalty to that deity's companion God or Cohort, as the theology is related. It also provides information on the demons that serve those particular deities.

Profession: Any profession not adequately represented in this skill list can be taken as a separate skill; Farmer, Sailor, Lawyer, Leatherworker, Architect, or so forth. The skill may then be rolled to accomplish any sort of task that the profession normally handles.

Scholar: History, mathematics, geography, and other pure academic topics fall under this heading. It does not involve magical matters or theology, however.

Security: Picking locks, identifying wards both magical and mundane, disarming traps, forging identification, and other security-related tasks are under this skill.

Stealth: Sneaking, hiding, disguising oneself, and other forms of surreptitiousness are rolled with Stealth.

Survival: Hunting game, enduring inclement weather, surviving in the wild or in the squalor of a clanless slum, or related feats of subsistence come under Survival.

SKILL LEVELS AND SKILL CHECKS

Skills are measured in levels, from 0 to 4 or even higher. A level-0 skill represents basic training to a competent level. Level-1 is suitable for a talented professional and level-2 for a veteran expert. Level-3 skill implies someone who's among the best in the city at that skill, while level-4 is the province of brilliant masters of the trade. Your hero will start out with skills at level-0 or level-1, but can gain further expertise as they advance in experience.

When a character tries to accomplish a difficult feat with a skill, they need to make a **skill check**. To do so, you roll 2d6 and add your skill level and the attribute modifier of their most relevant attribute. Thus, convincing a tomb-policeman to take a bribe and let you into a crypt would involve Persuasion and Charisma, while heaving up a heavy stone would be Athletics and Strength. If you equal or beat the check's difficulty, it succeeds. If not, something goes wrong or you fail outright.

If you have no relevant skill at all, even at level-0, you take a -1 penalty to the skill check. In some cases you may not be able to attempt the check at all without a relevant skill.

If your background is such that the task would be routine for someone in your profession, the GM may choose to waive the check entirely. Competent herdsmen aren't going to fail to calm an unhappy *chlén*, and capable physicians won't fail to set a broken arm.

CHOOSING A CHARACTER CLASS

Your hero has some set of skills that are particularly useful for an adventuring party. Even if your background was not one that is usually redolent of heroic deeds, somewhere along the line you've picked up a set of talents that gives you some hope of success as an adventurer. These skills are represented by your *class*.

There are two classes in this game: Adventurer and Sorcerer. Sorcerers are those heroes who have the innate magical aptitude necessary to wield the arts of spellcasting and magical shaping. Adventurers include all other heroes, ones who focus on bladework, stealth, suasion, and other strictly terrestrial talents.

Tékumel's magical forces are treacherous and poorly-understood. The modern temples only have access to the scraps and fragments of prior knowledge, the shards of wisdom that have filtered down from Engsvan hla Ganga, the First Imperium, and even earlier days. Mastering these fragmentary enlightenments is excruciatingly difficult and not a little dangerous.

Because of this, it is not generally possible for a sorcerer to be very talented at anything other than their magical studies. Maintaining their control over the mysterious powers of the outer realms absorbs all the time that other heroes might use to train their mundane talents and martial skills. Thus, in Tékumel, you will not find the kind of warrior-wizards that are unremarkable in other settings.

Choose wisely, then. Your hero can hope to attain magnificence in the human arts of warfare or cunning, or they may become a master of the energies of the Planes Beyond, but they cannot become both. Whichever class you choose will be yours until the end of your hero's tale.

CLASS ABILITIES AND SCORES

Each class has an *attack bonus*. Adventurers gradually improve in this, striking more accurately. Sorcerers improve a little once they see some actual combat, but they don't gain more past second level.

Hit points are a measure of a hero's hardiness and ability to survive injury. A new Adventurer rolls 1d8 for their maximum hit points, while Sorcerers roll 1d4. Heroes add their Constitution modifier to this score, but it can never be less than 1, even with a penalty.

Experience needed measures the amount of experience necessary before the hero's skills and abilities improve.

Saving throws indicate the difficulty of resisting dark magic, poisons, diseases, mental influences, explosions, the magical Eyes of the ancients, and other hazards. When a saving throw is required, the hero must roll 1d20 and equal or exceed the appropriate saving throw's number.

Class skills are those skills that are easiest for the hero to master. Many training packages require you to pick skills from this list, and raising these skills with experience is easier than other talents.

Training packages describe a general focus for your character's abilities. An Adventurer might be a Warrior, for example, expert in battle and bloodshed, while other might be a Thief, gifted in stealth and sudden abstraction. Training packages grant a hero additional skills, ones you can add to the ones your background gave you.

Class knacks are those specific talents your hero possesses, ones that set you apart from others of your kind. At first level, you can pick one of these knacks. You may pick another at fourth, seventh, and tenth level.

BACKGROUND SKILLS AND CLASS SKILLS

Both backgrounds and classes give you skills. The first time you get a skill from any source, you get it at level-0. The second time you get a skill, it rises to level-1. You cannot pick or receive a skill more than twice when creating your character. Further degrees of mastery will have to wait for more experience.

Some training packages tell you to pick "any class skill". This means you can add any skill that appears on your class skill list. If you already have the skill from your background or from your training package, it becomes level-1. You can't use these free picks to choose a skill a third time.

Training packages also tell you to pick "any one skill". You can choose any skill for this pick, even one not part of your class list.

Some skills require you to pick specializations. Thus, if the "Culture/Any" is a class skill, you would have to pick a particular Culture specialization when you choose it, such as Culture/Tsolyánu or Culture/Temple. If you choose Combat as a skill, you would need to pick Combat/Melee, Combat/Ranged, or Combat/Exotic. You can pick several specializations from the same skill if you wish, thus mastering several different fields within it.

Art slot

THE ADVENTURER

Every society has its hard-eyed malcontents, the men and women brash enough to abandon the safety of home and familiar duty. These souls seek out something better, whether it be the gold of dead empires, the blood of hated foes, or the glory of a position that common life would surely deny them. These souls are Adventurers, and those that live past their first red troubles soon learn how to keep their Skein of Destiny uncut.

Most clans are resigned to the occasional adventurer among their clan-mates. It is unfortunate when some promising young woman or clever young man decides to throw over the sedate life of a good clan-member in favor of wild adventure, but these things will happen. So long as the clan receives the lion's share of the gold and favors that these adventurers earn, the elders are content to support them as far as it proves convenient to the clan.

The wider society of Tsolyánu tends to take the same view of these men and women. They are odd, not entirely trustworthy, and perhaps prone to a wild excess of ambition, but they also dare deeds and perform feats that are very useful to society. Bringing ancient relics out of the Underworld, smiting the inimical foes of humankind, and unearthing lost lore of the former ages are all very helpful pursuits. If an adventurer should succeed in such deeds, then the garlands of public esteem and the gracious nods of the great will be theirs.

These things will be theirs, and perhaps more besides. Who can forget that the first Emperor of Tsolyánu was no more than a bold man with the right ancient relics in hand and the support of a daring clan? His glorious lineage has ruled over the empire for more than two thousand years, all springing from the deeds of a single ambitious warrior. And do not the ancient histories speak of other empires, other kingdoms, and other glorious institutions founded by men and women we could only call adventurers?

Of course, the great majority of adventurers find only a lonely grave. Some are eaten by the hideous monsters of the Underworld or the fell beasts of the wilds. Others fall under the swords of bandits and rebels. No few perish when they make the wrong move at court, only to find an impaling stake awaiting their sudden error. The perils are great for those who take up this life, but in their hope of success lies wealth and glory beyond measure.

Art slot

ADVENTURER CLASS SKILLS

Adventurers treat all skills as class skills except for the skills of Occult and Priestcraft.

SAVING THROWS

LEVEL	ATTACK BONUS	HIT POINTS	XP NEEDED	PHYSICAL EFFECT	MENTAL EFFECT	EVASION	MAGIC	LUCK
1	+1	1d8	0	12	12	13	14	13
2	+2	2d8	2,000	11	11	12	13	12
3	+3	3d8	4,000	11	11	12	13	12
4	+4	4d8	8,000	10	10	11	12	11
5	+5	5d8	16,000	10	10	11	12	11
6	+6	6d8	32,000	9	9	10	11	10
7	+7	7d8	64,000	9	9	10	11	10
8	+8	8d8	128,000	8	8	9	10	9
9	+9	9d8	256,000	8	8	9	10	9
10	+10	10d8	512,000	6	6	7	8	7

TRAINING PACKAGES

Adventurers have an extremely broad range of potential backgrounds and forms of training, but several basic types appear most commonly in the ranks of the bold. You may choose one of the training packages below to describe the nature of your hero's talents, or you may make one of your own. If you design your own package, pick any four class skills, and one more skill of any kind. Even if you select the same skill more than once, you cannot increase starting skill levels above level-1.

WARRIOR

You fight, and you fight well. Whether a veteran legionary skilled in halberd and pike, or a scarred street thug who applies "persuasion" for his clan, your main value as an adventurer is in your strong right arm. You gain the following skills: Any two Combat specialties, Athletics, Perception, and any one skill of your choice.

THIEF

You may be an ignoble robber of ill-guarded clanhouses, a wilderness bandit despised by all, or a veteran plunderer of the Underworld, skilled in slipping past monstrous foes and disarming the traps of the ancients. Whatever the particulars, you have a quiet step and a light hand to lend to your companions' efforts. You gain the following skills: Any Combat specialty, Stealth, Security, Perception, and any one skill of your choice.

NEGOTIATOR

Many important things in Tsolyánu cannot be acquired with blade or theft, but only with a smoothly-chosen word. You have a gift for dealing with others and navigating the snares of foreign societies. Your silver tongue can get your friends such help as coin could never buy, though you may not be entirely trustworthy yourself. You gain the following skills: Persuade, any two Culture specializations, Language, and any one skill of your choice.

EXPERT

You perform a particular skill, and you do so very well. You might be an expert craftsman, a skilled professional, a sagacious scholar, or anyone else characterized by excellent performance of a particular art. Perhaps your art is useful to an adventuring party, or it may be you are just tired of your former life, and yearn for new excitement. You gain the following skills: Any Profession specialization, any Culture specialization, any two class skills, and any one skill of your choice.

WANDERER

You may be a tribal from the wild hills or forsaken wilderness of the empire, one who earned their place in a low-status clan by their cunning and usefulness. You might be a roaming clan-member with duties that take you to far-flung places. You could even be an escaped slave or some other clanless wretch without help from law or the protection of anyone but your companions. You know the wild places between cities, however, and your skill in navigating perilous terrain can aid your party well. You gain the following skills: Any one Combat specialization, Navigation, Perception, Survival, and any one skill of your choice.

CLASS KNACKS

An adventurer may pick one of the knacks below at first, fourth, seventh, and tenth level. A knack may only be taken once.

Broad Skills: You develop your talents quickly. You may pick an extra two skills of any type, and you gain one additional skill point each time you advance an experience level.

Demon-Guarded: A ritual oath to a demon of your patron deity has won you its protection in battle. Your natural armor class is 3, but you are forbidden from wearing armor of any kind, albeit you may use a shield. If you don armor, you must spend a week in penitent ritual and prayer before you can use this knack again.

Furious Assault: You can attack with the berserk fury of a zealot of Vimúhla or a fearless warrior of Karakán. Once per fight, you can automatically succeed on a hit roll and inflict maximum damage. The next enemy attack made against you in that fight will automatically hit in turn, however, for normal damage.

Magical Nullifier: You are one of the very few magical nullifiers found among humans. Against spells and magical effects cast by creatures, roll 1d6; on a 3 or more, you resist the effect, beneficial or hostile as it may be. Standing enchantments and permanent effects are strong enough to overcome this.

Nine Lives: You have a remarkable degree of luck. If you are ever killed, blind chance somehow delivers you alive out of danger, albeit perhaps badly hurt. You lose this knack but may pick a new one to replace it the next time you gain a level. You can never pick this knack again, however.

Polished Skill: Choose one skill; you have so long practiced this art that you never risk abject failure the way others do. Instead of rolling 2d6 for its skill checks, you roll 1d8+4. You may take this knack more than once for different skills.

Resilient Soul: You are uncommonly hard to kill. You gain a bonus of +1 to your maximum hit points each level, including those earned before you took this knack. You may also reroll the first failed saving throw you suffer each day.

Self-Development: Through fierce effort, your highest attribute may be increased to 18. If several tie for highest, pick one of them.

Unarmed Adept: You know the secret martial practice of Dedaratl hand-strikes taught by the temple of Thúmis, or the mysterious kicks and sweeps known to Ksáru's art of Hu'on. Your unarmed attacks do 1d8 damage on a hit. If striking an unarmored human, roll damage twice and take the better result.

Versatile Expert: You are very talented at your many trades. The first time you fail a skill check in a day, you may reroll it. You must accept the second result, however.

Well-Connected: You know all manner of people. All Esteem checks to get favors from people are a -1 difficulty and you may pick one Minor Contact of your own each level. If you pick a contact you have already made, Minor contacts become Major, and Major become Chief as you help them rise in their organizations.

Unique Combat Style: You've learned how to rely on unusual techniques in combat. You may use an attribute of your choice to modify all attack and damage rolls, instead of the attribute that usually applies to a given weapon. Thus, a scholar might pick Intelligence, and use her remarkable cunning and powers of prediction to aid her two-handed sword strikes instead of Strength.

THE SORCERER

The arts of the arcane have been practiced on Tékumel for tens of thousands of years. Ever since the world was thrust into the endless night of its dimensional pocket, the skin of reality has been thin enough to let strange forces bleed through into the mundane world. Sorcerers are those men and women born with the innate ability to manipulate these forces.

It is a hard and demanding road to become a properly-trained sorcerer. The arts of magic on Tékumel are not crisp, logical paths of well-understood arcane principles and simple exertions of reason. They are mysteries, and arts, and expressions of nameless talent. They are built of the confused fragments of countless vanished bodies of lore, the scraps of former enlightenment stitched together into a patched cloak of learning. The greatest modern sorcerer is but a dim lamp compared to the peerless magi of the ancient days, when more was understood of Tékumel's unseen ways.

Sorcerers do not often develop new magics, not unless they scorn their own lives and souls. To merely die in an accident of magical research is a kind fate compared to the kind of undying horror that awaits most experimenters. Instead, they sweat and stare over ancient books and venerable tomes, trying to piece together enough wisdom to replicate a magical feat perfected in an earlier day.

The resulting spells are potent, but often somewhat peculiar. They were designed for the world of the ancient past, when conditions were somewhat different and the needs were not the same as in modern Tsolyánu. Every sorcerer treats their magic with caution. It is a scorpion in their service, and only the greatest or the most foolish wizards use it casually.

Unsurprisingly, sorcerers are a prized addition to any adventuring band. Their magical powers and learning in ancient matters are vital to the survival of a group in the Underworld. Still, sorcerers must spend so much time in study and maintenance of their powers that they have no time for more martial pursuits. They are often forced to rely on bodyguards or trusted companions to screen them from the perils around them, for a sorcerer caught alone must perish swiftly.

Those that survive to a maturity of wisdom can perform marvels, however, and grant their companions aid beyond that which mortal hands could offer.

Art slot

SORCERER CLASS SKILLS

Sorcerer class skills are Bureaucracy, Culture/Any, Language, Medicine, Occult, Priestcraft/Any, and Scholar.

SAVING THROWS

LEVEL	ATTACK BONUS	HIT POINTS	POWER POINTS	XP NEEDED	PHYSICAL EFFECT	MENTAL EFFECT	EVASION	MAGIC	LUCK
1	+0	1d4	1*	0	16	13	15	12	14
2	+1	2d4	3	2,000	15	12	14	11	13
3	+1	3d4	5	4,000	15	12	14	11	13
4	+1	4d4	7	8,000	14	11	13	10	12
5	+1	5d4	9	16,000	14	11	13	10	12
6	+1	6d4	11	32,000	13	10	12	9	11
7	+1	7d4	13	64,000	13	10	12	9	11
8	+1	8d4	15	128,000	12	9	11	8	10
9	+1	9d4	17	256,000	12	9	11	8	10
10	+1	10d4	19	512,000	10	7	9	6	8

* These are the sorcerer's total power points at that level, plus the better of their Intelligence or Charisma modifiers times their level.

TRAINING PACKAGES

Almost all sorcerers in Tsolyánu are trained through one of the temples. Only the temples have the institutional expertise to carefully cultivate the arcane potential of a student without exposing them to potentially lethal dangers. Independent students do exist among the rich and reckless, but the kind of learning one gets from hired wizards may or may not be survivable. If you make your own training package, you may pick three class skills plus one more skill of any kind.

ADMINISTRATIVE PRIEST

You served in the administrative branch of your temple, aiding in the management of its lands, tenants, business deals, and personnel. While unromantic, the administrative priests of a temple are usually the ones who become its Patriarchs and Matriarchs, and who have the most control over its resources. You gain the following skills: Priestcraft/Your God, Business, Bureaucracy, and one skill of any kind.

RITUAL PRIEST

Ritual priests are responsible for the endless round of ceremonies, rites, and devotions that every temple is constantly performing. These rituals are so complicated and demanding that only a trained specialist can be expected to perform them correctly. The correct performance of these rites is vital for a temple's divine favor, and so the ritual priests must be kept appeased by their brethren. You gain the following skills: Priestcraft/Your God, Artist/Any, Athletics, and one skill of any kind.

SCHOLAR PRIEST

Scholar priests are those most likely to be magical adepts, but even those without that gift spend their lives in intent study and theological disputations. Their doctrinal determinations can shape the course of temple history. You gain the following skills: Priestcraft/Your God, Scholar, Occult, and one skill of your choice.

LAY PRIEST

Some priests are too absorbed in clan duties or worldly matters to serve out their days at a temple. These "lay priests" are still respected as priests of their god, and may still learn their temple's secret arts and prevail upon its hospitality, but they are given no additional help by the temple. They may choose to join a temple later if they want more from it, but for now they trade help for freedom. You gain the following skills: Priestcraft/Your God, any two class skills, and any one skill of your choice.

OUTSIDER

Some sorcerers develop entirely outside the temple system. Some of these are shamans of the wild tribes, reliant on ancient traditions passed down from mentor to pupil. Others are wealthy students who hire adepts to teach them the rudiments of the art. Both of these pursuits are dangerous, the latter especially so, as not every "Grand Adept of the Powers" is competent to conjure a candleflame, let alone teach a naive student. Those who survive might live to prosper, all the same. You gain the following skills: Occult, Language, any one class skill, and any one skill of your choice.

CLASS KNACKS

A sorcerer may pick one of the knacks below at first, fourth, seventh, and tenth level. A knack may only be taken once.

Armored Sorcerer: You've learned how to cast while cumbered with heavy vestments. You can cast ritual spells in light or medium armor, though you still can't use shields while casting them.

Charming Pupil: You've made contacts with skilled mentors and trainers. Your tuition for learning mysteries is only half normal price, and you can always find a tutor for a universal spell if it's at all plausible.

Dissonant Soul: Your spiritual vibrations are slightly dissonant, granting you a +2 on all Magic saving throws and inflicting a -2 penalty on all saves against your spells.

Efficient Preparation: You may prepare one extra spell each day above the maximum usually allowed to you.

Encyclopedic Erudition: Once per game session, ask the GM any question related to sorcerers, magic or magical effects. If there's any way your PC would know the answer, the GM gives you about a sentence's worth of a reply. If no answer is plausible, then this ability is not expended.

Font of Power: Your spirit-soul is strong. You gain an extra power point for every two character levels you have, rounded up.

Hardy Sorcerer: Your hit dice become 1d6 instead of 1d4. When you choose this knack, you may reroll your hit points and take the new result if it's better.

Martial Ritualist: You're accustomed to hand-to-hand combat, and may cast ritual spells while within reach of melee foes. Each melee foe gets an automatic hit on you as you cast, however, though it doesn't disrupt the spell.

Perfected Ritual: At first level and each level thereafter, pick one ritual spell you know. All mysteries of that spell may be cast even when you're next to melee foes, as you've practiced evasive techniques while casting it.

Perfectionist Student: Spells you learn from tomes and books are cast perfectly, without the need for a living tutor to perfect and refine your technique.

Sorcerous Bolts: You've learned to fashion small trinkets to focus your ambient magical energies into bolts of eldritch force. These bolts have a range of thirty meters, do 1d8 damage, use Occult for your combat skill, and use the better of your Intelligence or Charisma modifiers for hit and damage rolls. If your trinket is lost, it takes a week to build a new one.

Voracious Student: You learn an extra first-level mystery at the start of the game, and may pick one more universal mystery to learn each time you gain a level.

POWER POINTS

A sorcerer's capacity for channeling the extra-dimensional powers of Tekumel are measured in **power points**. A first-level sorcerer has a number of power points equal to 1 plus the better of their Charisma or Intelligence modifiers. As they gain levels, their base power points will increase, each time adding the better of their modifiers to the total. Thus, a fifth-level sorcerer with an Intelligence modifier of +1 would have a total of 14 power points. When these points are exhausted by spellcasting, the sorcerer must rest to regain them.

EQUIPPING THE PC

A valiant hero needs the necessary tools of their adventuring trade. How many of those tools they can afford depends on the Wealth of their sponsoring clan and any particular clan or lineage assets they might have.

A hero can pick gear equal to three times the clan's Wealth rating from the lists on the following pages. This represents a long period of requisitions from the clan quartermasters and the cashing in of former favors. The gear belongs to the clan, and should your hero perish their companions are expected to return the equipment. Unless the hero has the "Generous Clan" clan asset, the elders also don't want them sharing this gear with their friends, and being discovered playing free with the clan's property might cost the offending character Esteem.

A player also starts with a personal purse containing one tenth of the clan's Wealth rating in gold *káitars*. This is the character's own money, and they may spend it as they please and use the resulting goods as they see fit.

ENCUMBRANCE

There's a limit to how much gear a hero can carry. Those who pack too much on their back will find themselves slowed in combat and burdened in a chase.

Encumbrance is measured in items. An item is just that: a sword, a shield, a lantern, a sack of coins, a suit of armor, or so forth. Particularly bulky or heavy items might count as more than one.

Heroes can carry a number of readied items equal to half their Strength score, rounded down. Readied items are sheathed at the

belt, worn on the wrist, or otherwise close to hand. They may be drawn or produced as part of the action that uses them. Thus, a readied sword may be drawn and swung all as one action. Worn armor counts as a readied item.

Heroes can carry a number of stowed items equal to their Strength score. These items are packed away carefully for easy carrying, and require an action to dig free before they can be used.

Heroes can burden themselves at need. An extra two readied or four stowed items can be carried at the cost of becoming Lightly Encumbered, decreasing their base movement rate to 15 meters per round. A further two readied or four stowed items can be added to become Heavily Encumbered, cutting base movement to 10 meters per round.

Small objects can be wrapped together in bundles to make them easier to carry. One such package counts as one item, though it takes an extra round of unwrapping to get it free. Most such small items can be packed in bundles of three. Very small items add no encumbrance when carried in ordinary amounts.

Art slot

FINAL TOUCHES

Your hero is almost ready to face the world. All that remains is to note down a few more numbers on your character sheet and decide on their immediate goal as an adventurer.

ROLL YOUR HIT POINTS

Your hit points measure your hero's luck, stamina, physical health, and will to live. Injuries deplete these hit points, and a hero reduced to zero will die quickly if medical aid isn't close to hand.

If you're playing an Adventurer, roll 1d8 and add your Constitution modifier to find your maximum hit points, though even a penalty can't lower this total below one. Sorcerers roll 1d4 instead, though they also apply their Constitution modifier.

Don't worry if you've rolled a poor score. If you can survive long enough to reach the next level of experience, you'll get to reroll all your hit point dice and take the new score if it's higher. Aside from that, your hero's survival will depend much more on your own good judgment than a difference of a few hit points.

RECORD YOUR HERO'S ARMOR CLASS

Your armor class measures how hard it is to hurt you in a fight. An armor class of 9 is the worst possible, that of an unarmored person of ordinary nimbleness. Armor lowers your base armor class, and your Dexterity modifier applies to it as well as a bonus or penalty. Thus, a hero in heavy *chlén*-hide armor with a Dexterity score of 6 would have an armor class of 4; their base of 3 from the armor, with a penalty of 1 for their natural clumsiness.

A hero who carries a shield improves their armor class by 1 point, though they cannot then use a two-handed weapon or carry things in their shield hand.

RECORD ATTACK BONUS AND WEAPON INFO

To make an attack, your hero rolls 1d20 and adds their total attack bonus and their target's armor class. If the total is 20 or better, the attack strikes home, and the weapon's damage dice are rolled and the relevant attribute modifier applied. The damage is then subtracted from the target's hit points.

You can speed up play by recording this information now on your sheet. For each weapon your hero carries, note down its relevant attribute, its damage dice, and the total attack bonus you have when you swing or shoot it. For most melee weapons, this attack bonus is equal to your Strength modifier, plus your relevant Combat skill, plus 1 more if you're an Adventurer. Ranged weapons usually use Dexterity in place of Strength.

If for some reason you find yourself using a weapon for which you have no Combat skill at all, you suffer a -2 penalty on all hit rolls with it.

Damage with a weapon is equal to its damage die plus its attribute modifier: Strength for most melee, Dexterity for most ranged.

APPLY LINEAGE BONUSES AND PENALTIES

If your hero comes from a low-status lineage, your difficulties and hardships have developed your talents. You get two free bonus skill picks of any skill you choose, but suffer a -1 penalty to your starting Esteem, potentially lowering it below zero and making it a penalty on attempts to get resources from your clan.

Heroes that come from a medium-status lineage have seen enough trouble to learn a little from it. They may pick a bonus skill from their class skill list.

If your character hails from a high-status lineage, then the respect of your peers gains you a +1 bonus to your Esteem, but have been sheltered from the complications that would have forced you to develop yourself further. You get no bonus skill picks.

ASSIGN SORCERERS THEIR MAGIC

A sorcerer fuels their spells with power points. A first-level sorcerer starts with 1 power point, plus the higher of their Intelligence or Charisma modifiers. If someone somehow manages to become a sorcerer with negative modifiers for both attributes, they are advised to meditate deeply on their life choices. Expended power points are regained with a night's good rest.

A novice sorcerer may also pick three first-level mysteries from the *Sorcery and Spellcasting* section of the book. These are the spells they have mastered during their education. Further training will require them to find willing tutors or a fellow sorcerer in the party who is inclined to share their knowledge. Sorcerers may choose spells exclusive to their own temple, if any, but they may not choose spells reserved to another god's priesthood.

Sorcerers should also record their possession of a sorcerer's satchel as a free starting benefit. This satchel contains the various implements and tokens they need to cast their ritual spells. If lost, ritual spells cannot be cast until it is replaced.

PICK A FAVORED GOD OR COHORT

If your hero is a priest, then this choice is somewhat foreordained. Priests are expected to reserve their worship for their patrons alone, though reverence between Gods and their Cohorts is also permissible to their priests. Ordinary men and women have more liberty, if their clan isn't already pledged to a particular patron.

Your choice of god will help determine what kind of behavior is noble or ignoble for your PC. The things a follower of Avánthe should do are not the same as a follower of Vimúhla, and page XX details some of these differences. When choosing a god, it's often best if everyone in the party worships either a god of Stability or a god of Change in order to cut down on intra-party disputes.

You don't need to choose a patron god if you don't wish one. In that case, noble deeds for you are only those that suit your social position and role, and ignoble deeds are those that defy your place in society.

CHOOSE A GOAL

The last step is to choose a goal for your PC. You need this to help motivate your character once they go into play, the better to give them a purpose and an ambition in the world. This goal might be something simple as "Obtain oceans of gold" or it might have to do with your clan, such as "Raise my lineage's status". It can be anything that you would find entertaining to play out.

Goals can change during play, or be ignored for a time to pursue the ambitions of other PCs in the party. Their purpose is to get the group moving. If that's happening, then the goals are doing what they should.

EQUIPMENT AND COINAGE

COINS AND THEIR EXCHANGE RATE

1 gold <i>káitar</i>	=	20 silver <i>hlásh</i>
1 silver <i>hlásh</i>	=	20 copper <i>qirgáls</i>

The gold *káitar* is the standard of the empire, a small golden disc weighing about 3 grams, somewhat smaller than an American dime. It exchanges for 20 silver *hlásh*, and each *hlásh* for 20 copper *qirgáls*. A pouch of a thousand coins counts as one encumbrance item. All costs on the tables are in *káitars* unless noted otherwise.

ARMOR	AC	COST	ENC.	
None	9	-	0	Clothing or skin
Light	7	20	1	Quilted or thin leather
Medium	5	100	2	<i>Chlén</i> -mail or strips
Heavy	3	300	3	Thick <i>chlén</i> -hide plate
Shield	-1 bonus	25	1	Fills one hand

Armor is made largely from sheets of hardened *chlén*-hide peeled from the great beasts. Such shaving doesn't hurt the animals, and they'll grow back the outer hide in time. When properly treated, *chlén*-hide is almost as tough as bronze, and is often used in place of metal given the scarcity of iron and other metals on Tékelmel. While *chlén*-hide is tough, it's also significantly lighter than bronze.

Armor comes in three varieties: light, medium, and heavy. Given the ease of shaping *chlén*-hide, its products tends to be intricately decorated, carved, sculpted, and dyed in brilliant colors.

WEAPON	DMG	ATTR.	COST	ENC.
Axe, Great*	1d10	Str/Con	20	2
Axe, Hand	1d6	Str	10	1
Bow, Long*	1d8	Dex	30	2
Bow, Short*	1d6	Dex	15	2
Club	1d4	Str/Con	0	1
Crossbow*#	1d10	Dex	100	2
Dagger, Belt Knife	1d2	Str/Dex	4	0
Dagger, Fighting	1d4	Str/Dex	8	1
Halberd*	1d10	Str	25	2
Mace	1d6	Str/Con	10	1
Mace, Great*	1d8	Str/Con	15	2
Sling	1d4	Dex	2	1
Spear, Javelin	1d6	Str/Dex	8	1
Spear, Long	1d8	Str	10	1
Spear, Pike*	1d10	Str	20	2
Sword, Great*	1d10	Str	30	2
Sword, Long	1d8	Str	15	1
Sword, Short	1d6	Str/Dex	10	1
Unarmed Attack	1d2	Str/Dex	-	-

Most weapons are also made of *chlén*-hide, which can take an excellent edge with proper shaping. Weapons are listed with their damage die, the attribute to use when rolling attacks and damage, their cost in *káitars*, and their encumbrance.

Where more than one attribute is listed, the wielder can use whichever one is better. Thrown weapons have a maximum range of 20 meters, while short bows have a range of 50 meters and longbows a range of 100 meters.

Art slot

* weapons require two hands for use.

crossbows ignore *chlén*-hide armor and shields when attacking, but require a full round to reload.

GOODS, FOODSTUFFS AND CLOTHING				SERVICES AND HIRELINGS	COST
ITEM	COST	ITEM	COST		
Arrows, 20	10	Meat, hma, 1 kg	2 hl.	Artisan, common skill, per day	1
Artisan's tools	10	Meat, poultry, 1 kg	1 hl.	Artisan, rare skill, per day	5
Backpack	25	Metal, bronze, 100 gm	6 hl.	Bribe to overlook capital crime	500
Bed-mat	1	Metal, copper, 100 gm	4 hl.	Bribe to overlook minor crime	5
Beer, Hengka, bottle	2 hl.	Metal, gold, 100 gm.	40	Bribe to overlook significant crime	50
Beer, Faoz, bottle	5 hl.	Metal, silver, 100 gm	2	City litter, 2 people, per day	10
Blanket	5	Metal, steel, 100 gm	3,000	Courtesan, Common	2 hl.
Boots, good leather	15	Painting kit	10	Courtesan, Excellent	20
Brandy, Datsu	8	Papyrus, 1m roll	10 hl.	Courtesan, Famous	150
Brandy, Mash	10	Parchment, 1m roll	1	Entertainer, elite	30
Camp cooking kit	5	Physician's kit	80	Entertainer, low-class	1
Chalk, 1 kg bag	2 hl.	Pole, 3.1m	1	Fine banquet, per person	10
Chumetl, bottle	1 hl	Quarrels, 20	10	Inter-city litter, per day	30
Cloak, heavy	15	Rations, 1 week	7	Laborer, unskilled, per day	1 hl.
Clothes, High	100	Rice, 1 kg	8 q.	Lodging, fine, per day	5
Clothes, Laborer	1	Rope, 10m	5	Lodging, moderate, per day	1
Clothes, Low	15	Sack, cloth	5	Lodging, noble, per day	100
Clothes, Medium	30	Salt, 1 kg	10 q.	Lodging, poor, per day	1 hl.
Clothes, Noble	5,000	Sandals, cheap	2 hl.	Meal, excellent	5 hl.
Clothes, Slave	1 hl.	Sandals, fine	5	Meal, lower-class	10 q.
Clothes, Very High	400	Shoes, Leather	5	Meal, noble	25
Deck of cards	5	Sorcerer's satchel*	100	Porter slave, per day	1
Dmi-sugar, 1 kg	1 hl.	Spike, <i>chlén</i> -hide	1	Rental, estate, per month	1,000
Dna-grain, 1 kg	5 q.	Spirits, A'ash, bottle	3	Rental, hut, per month	1
Firewood, one night	1 hl.	Stretcher, folded	10	Rental, medium house, per month	20
Fish, 1 kg	1 hl.	Tent, 2-person	10	Rental, small house, per month	6
Flint and steel	5	Tool, saw or hammer	7	Rental, small mansion, per month	250
Fruit, 1 kg	10 q.	Torch, 2 hour burn	2 hl.	Scholar, per topic or question	10
Headdress, good	30	Tunic, gemmed	1,000	Ship cargo, per 100 miles and 100 kg	15
Headdress, noble	150	Tunic, middle-class	10	Ship passage, 100 miles/person in cabin	125
Hygiene kit	3	Tunic, upper-class	30	Ship passage, 100 miles/person on deck	25
Kilt, exquisite	90	Vegetables, 1 kg	6 q.	Spellcasting, major	1,000
Kilt, middle-class	2	Vest, middle-class	3	Spellcasting, minor	100
Kilt, upper-class	10	Water bottle, small	2		
Lantern oil, 2 hours	1	Waterskin, leather	4		
Lantern, bronze	10	Wide collar, good	20		
Litter, 1 person	50	Wide collar, noble	400		
Litter, 2 person	75	Wine, Ngalu, bottle	5		
Loincloth	1 hl.	Wound binding kit	5		
Mantle, gemmed	1,000	Writing Kit	5		

Small items can be bundled as one item, usually three at a time

Clothing has no encumbrance when worn, but is 1 otherwise

* Novice sorcerers start the game with one, but may need to replace it if it is lost during an adventure.

SORCERY AND SPELLCASTING

The arts of magic are ancient on Tékumel. For thousands of years, the temples of the Ten Gods and Ten Cohorts have taught the mysteries of the arcane arts to those with the requisite gifts, passing on the fragmentary secrets that they have inherited from the unfathomably distant past. It is a hard and demanding road for those who would follow it, but the rewards of success are beyond mere mortal imagination.

RITUAL AND PSYCHIC SPELLS

There are two basic forms of magic on Tékumel: ritual magic and psychic magic. Both forms draw from the extra-planar energies of far realms, siphoning the force through the “thin skin” of Tékumel’s dimensional pocket to enact changes in the mundane world. The use of such magic requires more than intelligence and discipline, for the would-be sorcerer must also be gifted with the natural potential for manipulating these powers. Most humans lack this talent, and of those who do possess it, most never learn to use it.

Ritual spells require proper implements, ingredients, vocalizations, and gesticulations. Psychic spells require nothing more than a moment’s concentration in the proper mental configurations. Ritual spells are largely those effects that affect the outside world in some dramatic or unnatural way, while psychic spells focus on more subtle, internal changes of mind or body. Every competent sorcerer is capable of learning and using spells of both forms of magic.

REQUIREMENTS FOR SPELLCASTING

To cast a ritual spell requires that the sorcerer have both hands free and be able to utter the appropriate incantations. Any protection heavier than light armor is too cumbersome to allow for the casting of ritual spells. Psychic spells are shaped entirely from the caster’s internal energies, and need no gestures or utterances to use. Psychic spells may be cast in any form of non-metallic armor.

Metal is gravely deleterious to spellcasting, as it wicks away the other-planar energies of a spell. Any wizard carrying or wearing so much as a knife’s worth of metal is unable to cast a spell. Most sorcerers are thus obliged to trust their coin-purse to a slave or a companion, or arrange warrants on money held at a clanhouse. Such is this sensitivity that even metal connected to the wizard at the end of a cord will drain away a spell’s energies. Specially-consecrated metal ritual implements do not cause this effect, but such items are defiled and ruined if used for combat or other impure ends.

While sorcerers lack the leisure to develop much in the way of martial talents, there is no mystical bar on their use of normal armor and weaponry in battle. While it is impossible to cast ritual spells in a melee, psychic magic functions normally, and a sturdy *chlén*-hide breastplate can spare a wizard a great disordering of his serenity.

LEARNING SPELLS

The learning of spells is a difficult and demanding process, usually requiring at least a week of careful study under another sorcerer who knows the spell, or two weeks if practiced from a suitable tome. While it is possible to learn the rudiments of a spell’s effects from a book, such imperfect learning is potentially dangerous.

A spell is not usually a mere single effect, but a whole corpus of arcane knowledge and careful study. As the adept masters more of the secrets of the ancient past, more potent effects can be wrung from the spell’s basic principles. A spell’s effects are thus divided into *mysteries*, the first one being learned when the spell is first learned.

The power of a mystery is measured in levels, with level 1 mysteries being the simplest and level 5 mysteries being the most powerful contained within this book. Greater enchantments exist, though only the mightiest of wizards can hope to master them. A sorcerer may learn mysteries of a level equal to half their character level, rounded up.

Thus, a first level sorcerer can learn first level mysteries, while a ninth level sorcerer can learn fifth level mysteries.

To learn a spell and its mysteries, the sorcerer must acquire them from a knowledgeable tutor and be of a experience level capable of casting them.

Thus, if a spell has a 3rd level mystery, the student must be a 5th level wizard

to master it. The mysteries of a spell must be learned in order; the wizard can’t skip lesser effects to master only the greatest. The table above indicates the usual price for learning a mystery, assuming a friendly temple or tutor can be found to teach it. In the absence of such contacts, the PCs may have to go to greater lengths to find someone willing to instruct them in the mysteries. Friendly sorcerers in the same party may teach each other the mysteries of the spells they know if the characters are on good terms.

Most spells in this book are “universal” spells available from any temple or sufficiently-skilled lay priest tutor. Anyone with sufficient talent may learn these spells if they can find someone to teach them. Other spells, however are restricted to certain temples. Some might

MYSTERY LEVEL	COST IN KÁITARS
1	500
2	1,000
3	2,000
4	4,000
5	8,000

SPELLBOOKS

Tsolyáni wizards do not have “spellbooks” the way wizards in some other settings have them. Every wizard knows the spells they know and can prepare them without reference to any physical artifact. Still, certain advanced magi have been known to inscribe books of spells for the introductory teaching of their pupils or as a legacy to their heirs.

These books are never offered on the open market, as learning a spell without the aid of a living tutor results in dangerously imperfect knowledge. Any such trade would have to happen away from the watchful eye of the temples and the wary vigilance of imperial law. Books that contain the secrets of a restricted temple spell would be priceless to the right wildly-reckless buyer, though a temple’s hierarchs would think nothing of igniting a century-long struggle to assassinate every possessor of a stolen temple spell. Those who do acquire such forbidden knowledge would be wise to keep it extremely well-concealed.

Art slot

be taught to priests of both a God and their Cohort, while the deepest secrets are exclusive to a single divinity, and are not shared even with their paired God or Cohort.

These temple spells are ferociously guarded by the clergy. They are only ever taught to proven and zealous priests of the god, and tomes containing their secrets are under constant vigilance. Assuming a sorcerer is a priest or lay priest of the temple and they have at least level-1 skill in the appropriate Priestcraft specialization for the god, they can attempt to find a sorcerer-priest willing to teach them the spell and its subsequent mysteries. This may require the use of clan contacts or special favors, and the training price for learning the spell will be at least twice as costly as a universal spell.

Should an outsider learn such a spell, or a renegade leave the temple after learning it without suitable mind-bars placed on their knowledge, they can expect only a relentless succession of assassins. Any who would dare profane a god's deep mysteries must conceal their knowledge with utmost care.

Every competent tutor may be expected to issue a "License of Mastery" to the pupil once they master the spell, thus allowing them to prove their competence to others. Licenses from a competent teacher are always mystically encoded to their rightful bearer, and appear as garbled gibberish if their true owner is not touching them.

PREPARING SPELLS

While a sorcerer can know any number of spells, only so many of them can be available for their use at any one time. Each spell requires its own ritual purifications, auspicious meditations, small rites of propitiation, and incompatible spiritual states. A wizard with only a few spells is not overly limited by this, but an Grand Adept of the Powers must be more discerning.

Every wizard can prepare a number of spells equal to their character level plus twice their Occult skill level. Thus, a 1st level wizard with Occult at level-1 would be able to prepare three spells from those they know. This preparation includes all the more known mysteries of these spells as well. For example, a wizard who chooses to prepare the Translocation of Gross Matter would be able to use any mysteries from that spell known to him.

These spells can be chosen from among any they know; there is no obligation to prepare so many petty spells and so many great enchantments. The sorcerer may then use these spells whenever they have the requisite magical energy available for the casting. While the rituals and meditations of preparation are cumbersome, they are not particularly difficult to change. A sorcerer can change their prepared spell selection with twenty-four hours of ritual and focus.

CASTING SPELLS

To cast a spell, whether ritual or psychic, the sorcerer must have enough mental strength and magical power left to control the extra-planar energies involved. This ability is measured in power points. Power points are expended in spellcasting and refreshed after a proper night's rest in comfortable and well-nourished peace.

Provided the caster is not hindered by metal and has whatever small ritual implements that are necessary, they can cast any prepared spell's mystery they know and for which they have the requisite power points. Unless specified otherwise, a spell requires only one round's action to cast. Ritual spells cannot be cast if an enemy is within melee range; it's too easy for a foe to disrupt the precise gestures and motions necessary to the spell. Psychic spells can be freely cast in melee and never require ingredients or implements.

The cost of the mystery in power points depends on its level as given in the adjacent table. Thus, if the sorcerer is invoking a 3rd level mystery, it would cost 5 power points.

If the caster has learned the spell from a book rather than a living tutor, their knowledge is dangerously incomplete.

MYSTERY LEVEL	POWER COST
1	1
2	3
3	5
4	7
5	9

They must make an Int/Occult skill check at a difficulty equal to 7 plus the spell's level. On a failure, the spell doesn't go off and the power points are wasted. On a roll of 2 or 3, the spell does go off, but it's targeted at the caster. Such imperfect spells can be perfected by learning their details from a proper tutor at half the usual price.

RESISTING SPELLS

Many spells allow a target to make a saving throw versus Magic to resist the effect or to lessen it. If a spell allows a save, a victim is always allowed to make it unless they are completely helpless and restrained. Success means that they realize that someone was trying to do something to them, though they may not know what it was.

SPILLS OF TSOLYÁNU

The list below numbers some of the more common spells available in the temples of Tsolyánu. Most of them are universally available, but some are accessible only by priests of the appropriate gods. For such spells, the first two letters of the god's name are noted in the "Known To" column. Priests of a god's Cohort also gain access to these temple-specific spells.

Unless specified otherwise, spells have a range of thirty meters and a duration of ten minutes per level of the caster. Spells cannot be targeted at people or places the caster cannot see with their unaided vision.

SPELL	MYSTERY LEVELS	KNOWN TO	THE SPELL'S GENERAL EFFECT
<i>Absterion of Disenchantment</i>	3, 5	Universal	<i>Banish an undesired enchantment on a target</i>
<i>Alleviation of Bodily Impurity</i>	1	Universal	<i>Cure lethal poisons, albeit not lesser toxins</i>
<i>Ascertainment of Cognition</i>	1, 2, 3	Universal	<i>Read minds and communicate telepathically</i>
<i>Blade of Inexorable Dissection</i>	2, 3	Ka Vi	<i>Summon a sword of red energy to wield</i>
<i>Domination of the Subtle Intellect</i>	2, 3, 5	Universal	<i>Influence and control an intelligent mind</i>
<i>Domination of the Zoic Intellect</i>	2, 4	Universal	<i>Enslave a bestial intellect</i>
<i>Doomkill</i>	3, 5	Hn Ka Vi	<i>Invoke a blast of lethal flame and light, at some risk</i>
<i>Elicitation of the Silent Working</i>	1, 3, 5	Universal	<i>Psychometry of objects and finding substances</i>
<i>Encystation of Warding</i>	3	Universal	<i>Bubble the sorcerer in a protective barrier</i>
<i>Execration of Percussive Reproach</i>	5	Universal	<i>Cause an object to explode when touched by a foe</i>
<i>Glorious Revivification of the Flesh</i>	5	Be Sa Av Ks	<i>Restore an intact corpse to life, with risk of failure</i>
<i>Illustrious Inscription of Pent Wisdom</i>	5	Universal	<i>Inscribe a parchment with a suspended spell</i>
<i>Impassible Control of Self</i>	1, 3	Universal	<i>Ignore pain and shield one's thoughts</i>
<i>Incantation of Soporiferousness</i>	2, 4	Universal	<i>Put targets into a deep sleep</i>
<i>Inexorable Alleviation of Harms</i>	2, 3	Av Dl Ks Th	<i>Cure all but a few toxins in a person or group</i>
<i>Loyal Phantasms of Jugar</i>	1, 2, 4	Universal	<i>Conjure phantom walls and warriors to serve</i>
<i>The Melioration of Wounds</i>	1, 3, 5	Universal	<i>Cure injuries or maimings, but not congenital flaws</i>
<i>The Mighty Acceleration of Blows</i>	3, 5	Be Hn Ka Vi	<i>Quicken action in combat, albeit not spellcasting</i>
<i>The Mind-Bar of Impenetrable Silence</i>	4	Universal	<i>Force a target to keep silent about a particular topic</i>
<i>The Missile of Metallja</i>	2, 4	Ks Th	<i>Psychic force blasts a living or undead foe</i>
<i>The Munificent Bestowal of Favor</i>	3	Universal	<i>Bless an ally with increased hardihood and might</i>
<i>Munificent Corporeal Nutrification</i>	2, 3, 5	Universal	<i>Nourish a target with food and drink</i>
<i>The Perception of the Energies</i>	1, 2, 3	Universal	<i>Detect magical residue and enchanted objects</i>
<i>The Progress of Azure Aeriality</i>	2, 3, 4	Av Be Dl Hn Hr Ks Th	<i>Levitate your person or fly with deeper mysteries</i>
<i>The Puissant Clairvoyant Eye</i>	1, 3, 5	Universal	<i>See and hear through solid barriers</i>
<i>Rescript of Discreet Exactitude</i>	1, 2, 3	Universal	<i>Write something perceptible only for the bearer</i>
<i>Retrograde Translation of Form</i>	4	Universal	<i>Teleport to a nearby prior location</i>
<i>The Scathing Lash of Terrorization</i>	1, 3, 5	Universal	<i>Terrify a foe, or kill with fear and deeper mysteries</i>
<i>Seal Upon the Powers</i>	5	Universal	<i>Create a bubble impervious to ritual spells</i>
<i>The Silver Halo of Soul-Stealing</i>	4	Be Hr	<i>Tear away a foe's soul and leave them an inert husk</i>
<i>Sphere of Impermeable Quiescence</i>	5	Universal	<i>Create a bubble impervious to psychic spells</i>
<i>The Sphere of Light and Darkness</i>	1, 2, 5	Universal	<i>Call a glowing or darkness-casting sphere to hand</i>
<i>The Terrible Encroaching Vallation</i>	4	All have their versions	<i>Conjure an eldritch wall that slowly advances</i>
<i>Transient Reanimation of the Body</i>	3	Universal	<i>Temporarily revivify a corpse to semi-life</i>
<i>Translocation of Gross Matter</i>	1, 2, 3	Universal	<i>Telekinetically move objects at a distance</i>
<i>The Vapor of Death</i>	2, 5	Hr Ks Sa Vi	<i>Cast a sphere of toxic vapors that rushes forward</i>
<i>The Veil of Exquisite Invisibility</i>	2, 3, 4	Universal	<i>Turn invisible with varying degrees of perfection</i>

ABSTERSION OF DISENCHANTMENT

Ritual

This enchantment banishes unwanted magical effects on a person or place. While the lesser variants aren't strong enough to destroy magical Eyes or other artifacts, more potent mysteries can do so.

First Mystery (Level 3): A standing enchantment on a person or place may be disrupted. If the caster is of higher level than the one who emplaced the magic, the disenchantment is automatic. If not, both roll Int/Occult checks, and the higher roll wins. Magic of the ancients is almost always higher-level than a modern disenchanter, and difficulty 11 or more to dispel. A caster suffers a cumulative -1 penalty each time they try to dispel an enchantment that has resisted their efforts before. This spell cannot undo enchanted objects.

Second Mystery (Level 5): This potent variant can destroy most enchanted items if targeted accordingly, and grants the caster a +2 skill check bonus when dispelling stronger magic.

ALLEVIATION OF BODILY IMPURITY

Ritual

As with most healing spells on Tekumel, this enchantment is powerful but somewhat unreliable. Whenever it is cast on a target, the wizard must roll 1d6. On a 1, the poison's particular manifestation in this target cannot be alleviated by this spell.

First Mystery (Level 1): This spell will cure lethal toxins in a single target, but not non-lethal intoxication or other lesser drugs.

Second Mystery (Level 3): This mystery will revive a person slain by poison provided they have died recently, within one minute per caster level. The victim must make a successful Constitution/Athletics skill check to revive, at a difficulty of 9 minus the caster's Medicine skill. On a failure, they remain dead, and this spell will not help them.

ASCERTAINMENT OF COGNITION

Psychic

While less sophisticated than the psychic bonds practiced by some temples, this enchantment is commonly available to inquisitive sorcerers who seek to pry into others' thoughts.

First Mystery (Level 1): The caster may read surface thoughts for the duration of the spell. A target gets a saving throw versus Magic to resist, though they won't notice the magic even if they save.

Second Mystery (Level 2): As the first mystery, but the caster may discern whether they're feeling hostile or friendly toward them.

Third Mystery (Level 3): As the first mystery, but the caster can communicate telepathically with the target if they're willing. There is no range maximum on this effect, and it lasts for one hour per level of the caster.

BLADE OF INEXORABLE DISSECTION

Ritual

A spell reserved to the priests of Karakán and Vimúhla and to those of their Cohorts, this spell conjures a magical blade of light to smite the foes of their adepts. The blade lasts for one hour per level of the caster.

First Mystery (Level 2): A sword of tangible crimson light is conjured by the spell. It may be used by the caster or another, and strikes as a magical sword with +2 for hit and damage.

Second Mystery (Level 3): The weapon appears as a two-handed sword inflicting +3 on hit and damage rolls and allowing the wielder to roll all damage dice twice, taking the better result.

DOMINATION OF THE SUBTLE INTELLECT

Psychic

An intelligent target's mind operates on different principles than the brute instincts of a beast. This spell of domination provides simple control with its most fundamental mysteries, but advances to more complex commands.

First Mystery (Level 2): An intelligent target may save versus Mental Effect to resist this spell; if failed, they fall under the sorcerer's command. Only three types of commands may be given to them; to fight someone, to remain still, or to flee.

Second Mystery (Level 3): As the first mystery, but the spell affects 1d8 targets within 3 meters of the target point.

Third Mystery (Level 5): As the first mystery, but a single target can be controlled more specifically, making them perform other actions, remember or forget specific, specified memories, confess what they know of a topic, or so forth. This control lasts only for ten minutes per level of the sorcerer, but memory edits are permanent and cannot be reversed by conventional magic.

DOMINATION OF THE ZOIC INTELLECT

Psychic

Commanding bestial intellects is a relatively simple trick compared to the binding of intelligent minds, and allows for more flexibility in its application.

First Mystery (Level 2): A single unintelligent non-magical animal must save versus Mental Effect at a -2 penalty or become the caster's thrall. It will obey mental commands for ten minutes, including suicidal ones. The spell won't affect intelligent creatures, undead, demons, or entities created by sorcery.

Second Mystery (Level 4): As the first mystery, but the spell now also affects bestially-minded constructs and unintelligent creatures bred by magic.

DOOMKILL

Ritual

A cherished secret of the temples of Hnálla, Karakán, and Vimúhla, this spell brings down a blasting, incinerating light on the chosen target. Unfortunately, the ritual is somewhat unpredictable in its targeting, and there is a risk the caster himself may be at its focus.

First Mystery (Level 3): An explosion of fire and light consumes all within 5 meters of the target point, inflicting 1d10 damage per level of the caster, with a Magic saving throw to take half damage. The spell is somewhat imprecise, however, and each time it is cast the sorcerer must roll 1d10. On a 1, it goes off in his hand, making him the ground zero of the effect.

Second Mystery (Level 5): The spell is focused into a single searing column. Only one victim is affected by the damage, but in addition, if they fail their Magic saving throw they are burnt to ashes along with all of their possessions. The same misfire roll applies as with the earlier version.

ELICITATION OF THE SILENT WORKING

Psychic

The arts of psychometry and the divining of desired substances are taught by this popular spell.

First Mystery (Level 1): The caster gets a brief glimpse of the last person to use an object they touch. The target can save versus Magic to resist being shown, and if successful, the caster can't attempt it again.

Second Mystery (Level 3): The caster holds a small amount of a substance in hand and is led to the nearest mass of that substance within 15 meters. The substance must be simple, like gold or water or grain, and not a complex object.

Third Mystery (Level 5): As second mystery, but the caster need only think of the substance being sought and need not have a sample to hand.

ENCYSTATION OF WARDING

Ritual

Sorcerers lack the martial talents of more physical adventurers, and so this spell is useful in protecting them from the blades of their foes. Slow-moving objects and people can pass through the cyst, however, and fight the wizard inside with short weapons and their bare hands. If not so accosted, this spell allows casting ritual spells while within reach of a melee foe.

First Mystery (Level 3): The caster encysts themselves in a protective bubble that extends a half-meter from their person. Swift-moving non-magical weapons and attacks cannot penetrate the ward, but spells can do so from either direction. An assailant who spends one round pushing slowly through the ward can attack the wizard, albeit only with short daggers or unarmed attacks.

EXECRATION OF PERCUSSIVE REPROACH

Ritual

A magical trap left for enemies of a sorcerer, this spell turns an ordinary object into the pin of a magical grenade. When the object is touched or moved by the desired class of target, it immediately bursts with concussive force. The spell lasts indefinitely once cast, though two such objects cannot be closer than five meters from each other.

First Mystery (Level 5): The spell curses a single object to explode violently when touched by members of a particular class: worshipers of a specific deity, creatures of a particular race, or any other general type. The explosion does 1d6 damage per caster level to the execrated person who touches or disturbs the item, even with an implement or a gloved hand, affecting all within one meter of the object. If the object is moved or disturbed by someone else first, the spell fades away without effect.

GLORIOUS REVIVIFICATION OF THE FLESH

Ritual

A prized art of the temples of Belkhánu, Sárku, Avánthe, and Ksáru, this spell can revive the recently dead. It cannot restore those who have perished from old age or disease, however, and there is a chance that the body will not be strong enough to survive.

First Mystery (Level 5): The sorcerer can revive a corpse dead for no more than a day per level, though time spent under the effect of the Transient Reanimation of the Body doesn't apply. The corpse must have all its limbs present, and the target must make a successful Constitution/Athletics skill check at a difficulty of 11 minus the caster's Medicine skill. On a failure, this spell cannot restore them to life. Those revived are weak and helpless for a week afterwards, and the caster too is unable to wield magic during this time.

ILLUSTRIOUS INSCRIPTION OF PENT WISDOM

Ritual

Skilled sorcerers can learn the art of imbuing parchment with the power of a mystery known to them. Restricted temple spells are sometimes found on such scrolls, as it is impossible for a wizard to "reverse engineer" the spell itself from this imbued token.

First Mystery (Level 5): The caster inscribes a spell upon parchment, imbuing the paper with the extradimensional force necessary to trigger the spell when the words are read. Anyone who can read the scroll can use it. Making such a parchment is dangerous, however; each time it is done, the caster must make an Int/Occult skill check against a difficulty of 9 plus the spell level. On a failure, the parchment is useless, and a second check must be made against the same difficulty. If that, too, is a failure, the caster suffers 1d10 damage per spell level and cannot cast spells for a week thereafter for each level of the spell to be inscribed. Raw materials for a scroll cost 100 *káitars* for a first level mystery, doubled for each level greater.

IMPASSIBLE CONTROL OF SELF

Psychic

The sorcerer controls their own responses of pain and exhaustion, dismissing them for as long as the spell lasts.

First Mystery (Level 1): The caster becomes immune to pain and cannot have their surface thoughts read, though the concentration required prevents great exertions.

Second Mystery (Level 3): As the first mystery. Also, the caster need not breathe and will automatically stabilize at zero hit points if not torn to pieces. This version requires no special concentration to maintain.

INCANTATION OF SOPORIFEROUSNESS

Ritual

A deep enchanted sleep falls upon the subject of this spell, leaving it impossible to awaken them with anything short of rough shaking.

First Mystery (Level 2): A single humanoid target no larger than a tall human must save versus Magic or fall into an enchanted slumber for ten minutes.

Second Mystery (Level 4): As the first mystery, but the spell affects all valid targets within a 3 meter radius of the target point.

INEXORABLE ALLEVIATION OF HARMS

Ritual

This spell is a more potent version of alleviation taught only to the priests of Avánthe, Dlamélis, Ksáru, and Thúmis. As with its simpler version, casters must roll 1d6 when using it. On a 1, the spell is useless in this particular case. A poison that resists this spell will resist the simpler alleviation as well, and vice-versa.

First Mystery (Level 2): The spell cures all lethal toxins, alcohol intoxication, and the effects of recreational drugs save for the deadly *zu'ur*. Up to two targets within three meters of each other can be cured at once.

Second Mystery (Level 3): As the first mystery, but up to five targets within five meters of each other can be cured.

LOYAL PHANTASMS OF JUGAR

Ritual

The phantom shapes called up by this spell are remarkably lifelike and realistic, though they have different degrees of solidity depending on the power of the mystery being employed.

First Mystery (Level 1): An illusion of a wall is created in front of the caster, up to twenty meters square. It can be made to match any ordinary wall, but vanishes if touched.

Second Mystery (Level 2): The caster can summon up to four obedient apparitions around them, each one human-sized or smaller. These apparitions act like the creatures or people they seem to be and make noises to match. They cannot touch or harm anything and cannot move more than five meters from the caster.

Third Mystery (Level 4): These phantasms are partly real, and are treated as ordinary human warriors equipped with long swords or the like. They follow the caster but will only obey orders to attack creatures within 20 meters, and will vanish once brought to zero hit points.

THE MELIORATION OF WOUNDS

Ritual

A common healing spell for injuries and wounds, this enchantment shares the slight unreliability common to Tekumel's healing spells. It can also do nothing to cure congenital conditions.

First Mystery (Level 1): The spell cures 1d6 plus the caster's Occult skill in hit points. If a 1 is rolled on the die, no damage is healed and any remaining injuries cannot be healed by this spell.

Second Mystery (Level 3): As the first mystery, but it heals 1d12 damage plus twice the caster's Occult skill, failing to work as noted on a roll of 1 or 2.

Third Mystery (Level 5): The spell can now heal a maimed limb or organ. When cast, roll 1d6; on a 1, it fails, and it and similar magic cannot heal the loss.

THE MIGHTY ACCELERATION OF BLOWS

Psychic

A secret spell of the temples of Belkhánu, Hnálla, Karakán, and Vimúhla, this spell quickens a single target with remarkable speed.

First Mystery (Level 3): The target is seized with tremendous haste, allowing two actions per round instead of one. Sorcerers can only cast one spell per round, however.

Second Mystery (Level 5): As the first mystery, but up to three actions per round are granted. The target must make a Physical Effect saving throw at the end of each round in which they take all three actions. On a failure, they must end the effect immediately, or else they will fall unconscious at the end of the next round for 1d6 minutes.

THE MIND-BAR OF IMPENETRABLE SILENCE

Psychic

This enchantment is an important part of all temples' inner practice, by which they seal away the secrets of those who leave the temple. Such release is considered preferable to having an unwilling adept in the temple, but holders of secret temple spells are required to suffer the more exacting, demanding form of the mind-bar.

First Mystery (Level 4): The sorcerer chooses a particular specific topic, whereupon the subject cannot speak of it, write of it, or otherwise communicate it to others. The subject gets a Mental Effect saving throw to resist, but otherwise the mind-bar lasts until it is disenchanting. If the victim is helpless and has been treated with numerous very painful and debilitating preparations for a week beforehand, the mind-bar is permanent and cannot be reversed by known magics. Such treatment forces

the subject to make a Physical Effect saving throw; on a failure, they permanently lose 1d3 Constitution points from the trauma.

THE MISSILE OF METALLJA

Psychic

As an art known to the priests of Ksáru and Thúmis, the adept casts forth a shimmering bolt of psychic force that blasts the minds of the living and the undead. Creatures smote by the Missile of Metallja may be left unconscious rather than dead if reduced to zero hit points, at the discretion of the caster. This spell has no effect on constructs and inanimate objects.

First Mystery (Level 2): A bolt of psychic force strikes the target for 1d8 damage per two levels of the caster, rounded up.

Second Mystery (Level 4): A spray of psychic bolts launches at 1d6 targets of the caster's choice.

THE MUNIFICENT BESTOWAL OF FAVOR

Ritual

A chosen ally is imbued with a sudden rush of additional vigor and skill in battle. While potent, the spell is exhausting, and cannot be applied to the same target twice in one day.

First Mystery (Level 3): An allied target is granted 1d20 additional hit points which may exceed their natural maximum. They also gain a +2 bonus to all hit and damage rolls. Any damage is subtracted from their temporary hit points first.

MUNIFICENT CORPOREAL NUTRIFICATION

Ritual

A favorite spell of far-faring wizards who can't rely on a ready supply of provisions, the art of Munificent Corporeal Nutrification can sustain a user for a long period. The third mystery can feed even more, but the magical food created this way contains subtle poisons that can harm a user if they live on nothing else for more than a month.

First Mystery (Level 2): A single target is nourished for the day as if with sufficient food and drink.

Second Mystery (Level 3): Up to a dozen targets can be nourished in this way.

Third Mystery (Level 5): A feast is conjured sufficient to feed five people per caster level. The food remains for a day and a night before vanishing. Note that lengthy and exclusive use of this spell to nourish humans can have unfortunate consequences.

THE PERCEPTION OF THE ENERGIES

Ritual

A staple of sorcerous education, the Perception of the Energies allows a wizard to discern the presence of magical forces while the spell lasts.

First Mystery (Level 1): The caster can detect magical auras around objects within 5 meters.

Second Mystery (Level 2): As above, but the caster can also tell if the magic is fundamentally dangerous to handle or not.

Third Mystery (Level 3): The caster can discern whether a spell has been cast within 5 meters within the past hour. They can also determine its level, and will recognize it if they know it.

THE PROGRESS OF AZURE AERIALITY

Psychic

A spell exclusive to the temples of Avánthe, Belkhánu, Dlamélis, Hnálla, Hrú'ü, Ksáru, and Thúmis, this spell allows varying forms of flight for the learned wizard.

First Mystery (Level 1): The caster may levitate up to 10 meter per round and shift 1 meter horizontally per round. They cannot cast ritual spells while levitating.

Second Mystery (Level 3): The caster may fly freely at a movement rate of 20 meters per round.

Third Mystery (Level 4): The caster may extend the flight effect to up to 5 companions, but they must end each round within 20 meters of the caster or they will fall.

THE PUISSANT CLAIRVOYANT EYE

Psychic

Psychic focus allows the caster to peer through solid objects, though none of the mysteries can penetrate metal. Fortunately, metal is rare enough on Tekumel that only the most precious vaults will have such safeguards.

First Mystery (Level 1): See and hear through a barrier, up to 10 meters. The other side must be lit to see anything.

Second Mystery (Level 3): As the first mystery, but even darkened areas can be clearly perceived.

Third Mystery (Level 5): This version blocks the first two mysteries in a 20-meter radius for one week per level of the caster.

RESCRIPT OF DISCREET EXACTITUDE

Ritual

Many temples use the first version of this spell to create identification documents and licenses for their adepts. The spell is permanent so long as the document is not severely damaged.

First Mystery (Level 1): The caster may write a document that is only legible when held by the chosen bearer, who must have been met by the caster.

Second Mystery (Level 2): As the first mystery, except the document appears as gibberish and cannot be read except by the chosen recipient.

Third Mystery (Level 3): As the second mystery, but the document can appear as any ordinary text, and will reveal its true meaning only to the intended recipient.

RETROGRADE TRANSLATION OF FORM

Ritual

Teleportation is an extremely difficult magical art on Tekumel, and all but the mightiest wizards are obliged to travel by mundane means. Short-range translation is possible with this spell, however.

First Mystery (Level 4): The caster and all allies touching them are translocated to any location within 100 meters that the caster has occupied within the past day.

THE SCATHING LASH OF TERRORIZATION

Psychic

Nightmarish waves of psychic horror are unleashed upon the single misfortunate target of this spell. More powerful mysteries can even kill the unlucky wretch. This spell has no effect on constructs, and the third mystery cannot kill undead.

First Mystery (Level 1): The target must save versus Mental Effect or flee in terror for 1d6 minutes.

Second Mystery (Level 3): As the first mystery, but the effect strikes all within a 3 meter radius of the target point.

Third Mystery (Level 5): The caster targets a single foe and rolls d6 for every level they have. If the total is more than the target's maximum hit points, they die of sheer fright. If less, no damage is done, but the victim must still save as per the first mystery.

SEAL UPON THE POWERS

Ritual

A protective enchantment against hostile ritual magic, the Seal Upon the Powers prevents the casting wizard from casting ritual magic as well. The sphere lasts for one minute per caster level.

First Mystery (Level 5): A sphere of magical nullity swells in a 10-meter radius around the caster. No ritual spell effects can enter the sphere or be cast within it until it collapses. The sphere does not move once cast.

THE SILVER HALO OF SOUL-STEALING

Ritual

A dread enchantment known only to the temples of Belkhánu and Hrí'ü, the Silver Halo of Soul-Stealing tears away a body's animating soul and leaves it a mere shell.

First Mystery (Level 4): A ring of silver light is cast at a target, which must make a saving throw versus Magic. If it fails, its soul is torn away and cast into the Unending Gray, leaving its body a mindless husk that will obey any command it is given and will do nothing without such commands. Of common enchantments, only a spell of Revivification can revive the victim.

SPHERE OF IMPERMEABLE QUIESCENCE

Psychic

This spell functions exactly as does the Seal Upon the Powers, but it applies only to psychic magic and spellcasting, and lasts for one minute per caster level.

First Mystery (Level 5): A bubble of psychic quiescence appears in a 10-meter radius around the caster. No psychic spell can enter the sphere or be cast within it until it fades away. The sphere does not move once cast.

THE SPHERE OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS

Ritual

A practical spell for useful lighting and defensive gloom, the effects of this spell last for one hour per caster level.

First Mystery (Level 1): A ball of light appears in hand, casting light out to 5 meters. If it is dropped or put down, it vanishes.

Second Mystery (Level 2): As the first mystery, but the sphere casts inky darkness over all within range. The caster cannot see through their own darkness, but may drop the sphere without it vanishing for one further round per caster level.

Third Mystery (Level 5): As either of the first two mysteries, and the sphere can be cast to burst at a target within 20 meters, forcing all within 5 meters of its target to save versus Magic or be blinded for 1d4 rounds. Blinded victims suffer -4 to melee attacks and find ranged attacks impossible.

THE TERRIBLE ENCROACHING VALLATION

Ritual

Every temple has their own version of this spell, summoning a different fearsome wall of perilous substances or malevolent powers. Priests of a god's Cohort have their own secret walls, but may learn the version below for convenience's sake.

First Mystery (Level 4): A magical barrier is conjured, the type depending on the caster's patron deity or their Cohort's patron God. The wall is 10 meters wide and 2 meters high, appears before the caster, and moves forward at a rate of 2 meters per round until it dissipates or contacts an impassible barrier or pit. Those struck by a Vallation suffer 1d6 damage per level of the

caster, with a save versus Magic for half damage. Vallations block all non-magical attacks and is a sovereign barrier against Doom-kill, the Missile of Metallja, The Silver Halo of Soul-Stealing, and the Vapor of Death. Avánthé's Vallation is churning water, Belkhánu's is terrible wind, Dlamélish's is of poisonous serpents, against which a victim must also save versus Physical Effect or die within 1d6 rounds, Hnálla's is of life-snuffing calm, Hrü'ü's is of grinding ice, Karakán's is of whirling swords, Ksárul's is of lethal indigo fog, Sárku's is of churning bone-laden grave-earth, Thúmis' is of deathly gray mist, and Vimulha's is of blazing flame that may ignite all near it as well.

TRANSIENT REANIMATION OF THE BODY

Ritual

This art is practiced only by the priests of Hrü'ü and Sárku, but is most useful in stirring a dead comrade until they can be brought back for attempted revivification. It can also be used to question one recently dead, though the subject is in no way forced to answer questions, and is surpassingly difficult to press with pains or threats.

First Mystery (Level 3): A fallen human is returned to a semblance of half-life by this spell, reviving the corpse at its full hit points and giving it the power of movement and speech. It may act and fight as it did in life, albeit at a -2 to hit rolls, but it cannot be healed and if reduced to zero hit points again will be destroyed. It knows all it did in life, though it cannot cast spells. At the end of the week it dies once again and cannot be affected by this spell once more, though it may be Revivified as normal. The caster cannot cast ritual spells while the revenant remains animated, though psychic spells are allowed.

TRANSLOCATION OF GROSS MATTER

Psychic

Psychic force is used to lift and manipulate matter at a distance with this spell, with more potent mysteries able to use it as a weapon. Objects being held or used by a living creature can only be manipulated if the owner does not resist, as the psychic interference otherwise makes it impossible.

First Mystery (Level 1): The caster can lift small objects of no more than a kilogram from afar, manipulating them slowly as if with one hand.

Second Mystery (Level 2): As the first mystery, but the object may weigh as much as an armored man. Living targets can only be manipulated if unresisting.

Third Mystery (Level 3): The object can be moved quickly enough to attack, striking for 1d6 damage with Intelligence modifying the hit and damage roll. Sharp or dangerous objects roll 1d10 for damage.

THE VAPOR OF DEATH

Ritual

A suffocating, corrosive sphere of churning gas may be called upon by the priests of Hrü'ü, Ksárul, Sárku, or Vimúhla. Each temple has their own subtle difference in vapors, but the end result is inevitably death for those before it.

First Mystery (Level 2): A sphere of churning vapors two meters in diameter appears before the wizard and moves forward at a rate of ten meters per round. All living creatures within the path suffer 1d6 damage per two levels of the caster, rounded up. The sphere vanishes in one round per two levels of the caster.

Second Mystery (Level 5): As above, but the victims must also save versus Magic or Physical Effect, whichever is easier for them, or else perish on the spot.

THE VEIL OF EXQUISITE INVISIBILITY

Ritual

A most useful spell for the discreet wizard, this enchantment renders the caster unseen. The simpler version is imperfect in open daylight, but the deeper mysteries are more reliable.

First Mystery (Level 2): The caster shifts slightly out of phase with the world, becoming invisible in dim light, but not full daylight. Anyone striking at an invisible foe suffers -4 on melee attacks and can't make ranged attacks against them.

Second Mystery (Level 3): As the first mystery, but the caster is invisible even in daylight. This perfected veil is more fragile, however, and if the caster moves violently or casts a ritual spell, it is torn and ends immediately.

Third Mystery (Level 4): As the second mystery, but all chosen people and objects within 3 meters are affected, and the cloak of invisibility does not move from its original point. This version lasts for one hour per level of the caster, and is often used to conceal objects.

DEEPER MYSTERIES

The spells given here are but a sampling of the magical knowledge available to the temples of the empire. Inspiration for additional spells may be found in many sources, not least the *Swords & Glory Tekumel Player's Handbook*, which contains a lengthy list of magics known to each of the Gods and their Cohorts. When converting from that system, you can halve the listed spell level to get a general idea of the appropriate level for this system.

Unique mysteries for existing spells also can be found in lost libraries and hidden vaults. These mysteries can usually be mastered by anyone who's compassed the first mystery of the spell, and may provide unique effects to an adept.

Creating new mysteries is prohibitively difficult for all but the very greatest of sorcerers. Modern magi have only a dim understanding of extra-planar powers, and the consequences of a mistake risk not merely failure, but eternal damnation.

Only the greatest or most reckless wizards embrace such a peril. The wiser ones prefer to search the lost ruins and hidden shrines of the Underworld, salvaging the proven enchantments of the distant past. Of course, without a living tutor to teach the spells they learn from these old books, the resulting mysteries are more than a little perilous to employ.

Put a map of Tsolyánu here for a splash

TSOLYÁNU

Tékumel is a lost world of the far future. It is a languid resort-world plunged into the starless night of a dimensional pocket over thirty thousand years before its present age. Numberless nations have risen and fallen into dust in its past aeons, but the magnificent rule of the Petal Throne shall surely endure forever.

A JEWEL IN THE SKY

Tsolyánu Tékumel was first colonized by humans in the fathomless past, tens of thousands of years before its fall into darkness. It was a stinking world of slime and foul growths and vicious, technologically-advanced natives, but it lay along an important stellar navigation route, and the rulers of ancient Earth decreed that it be taken for humanity.

The shaggy, four-legged Ssú and the scorpion-bodied Hlüss were driven back with fire and slaughter despite their ferocious resistance. The native flora was torn out with great engines and more suitable plants were put in their place. For a century this terraforming work progressed, until the native life was beaten back into reservations.

Tékumel became a garden-world for humanity, a place for pleasures and idle decadence fed by the trade of seven stellar empires. Great works were accomplished and massive delvings were made around the ancient terraforming engines that maintained Tékumel's hot, damp, and satisfactory climate. A vast network of underground tubeways connected the continents and the cities of humanity.

Other species friendly to humankind came to live on Tékumel as well, along with hidden outposts of inimical races and indifferent, inhuman things. The Ssú and Hlüss seethed in their tiny reservations, their old wonders broken and their kind kept as mere curiosities by their world's new masters.

THE FALL INTO DARKNESS

Approximately thirty-five thousand years ago, more than seven hundred human worlds were thrust into pocket dimensions by a hostile force, Tékumel among them. In a moment, the system and its sun were plunged into a starless void. The catastrophe collapsed human society on the world, ushering in the Time of Darkness.

There are no records of this time, only scraps of story and myth. The works of these ancients are long lost from the surface, save for a few enigmatic structures and hulks of imperishable, unworkable metal. Yet deep below the earth, at the very lowest strata of the Underworld, there remain the metal corridors and decaying tubeways of the former times, some of which still function.

The hostile aliens took advantage of this catastrophe to attack the disorganized humans. The crystalline Hókun were said to have ruled humanity as gods for a time, and the amphibian Hlutrgú scourged the coastal cities. By the time humanity had thrown back its alien tormentors, little of their former technology remained.

THE EARLY EMPIRES

After five thousand years of chaos, the gigantic N'lüss barbarians swept down from the northern mountains to conquer the land. These "Dragon Warriors" were said to fly on dragons with brazen wings and tongues of flame, though whether these were living beasts

or preserved aircars of the ancients, no sage can say. They worshiped the awful god Vimúhla, Lord of Fire, the All-Consuming One, and they made the weak southerners into burnt offerings to him.

The empire of the Dragon Warriors decayed in the southern heat, with N'lüss rulers marrying into southlander clans and slumping into a quarrelsome patchwork of city-states. They were driven from their thrones by the lordling Gámulu, first of the Fisherman Kings. Gámulu's newfound empire was almost destroyed by an uprising of Ssú who were only barely driven back into their underground lairs after a generation of war. After his death, Gámulu's sons built the swift black ships that kept the coastal lands under their rule, and so earned the name by which the sages call them.

Gámulu's dynasty died of a woman, the incomparable Queen Nayári. Once a mere concubine taken from a desert tribe, her ruthless cunning and invincible ambition made her mistress of all the south. She had the last of the Fisherman Kings slain by his own courtiers in their attempt to curry her favor. She repaid the traitors by casting them into the sea, there to enjoy an "ocean of treasure".

Nayári perished at last from the poisoned lips of a lover, but her dynasty thrived as the First Imperium, the magnificent Bednálljan Empire. It endured for three thousand years in decadence and red splendor, raising mighty works and delving deep shrines.

It was a crippled scholar who sealed Bednállja's doom when the humble priest Pavar made the first contact with the Gods of Stability. He inscribed scrolls with the truths of the Five Gods of Stability and the Five Gods of Change who are even today worshiped in Tsolyánu, and over the next few centuries the priests of these new gods came to rule. They established the theocratic empire of Éngsvan hla Gán-ga and forged the Concordat of the Temples that enforced a public peace among the various hostile clergy.

Wondrous feats of magic were accomplished in this age by its many gifted priests, but all ended in a day and a night. The seas rose and drowned the empire's capital, and great catastrophes shook its further regions. The Time of No Kings that followed lasted for thousands of years as the shaken people of Tékumel strove to rebuild.

THE GLORIOUS PRESENT DAY

The founder of the present Second Empire is known only by his clan name, "the Tlakotáni", yet it was by his strength and his possession of certain great artifacts of the ancients that he brought the land of Tsolyánu under his hand. For more than two thousand years the people have prospered under the rule of the Tlakotáni dynasty, and are presently blessed by the Emperor Hirkane Tlakotáni, the Stone Upon Which the Universe Rests.

Other lands have not had the joy of the Second Empire's rule. To the north, the empire wars with the state of Yán Kór and its great general, Baron Áld. To the east, the old nation of Salarvyyá seethes with the feuding of its seven great families, and its black-bearded traders can be found bringing their wares from afar. In the west, stern old Mu'ugalavyyá maintains its rigid traditions while constantly seeking to usurp Tsolyánu's preeminence and seize its lands. And beyond Mu'ugalavyyá lies strange Livyánu, a land ruled by the priests of its Shadow Gods and their cryptic servitors.

TSOLYÁNI CLANS AND SOCIETY

Societies in this part of the world of Tékumel are very different from those in the modern-day West. Rather than being founded on the importance of the individual, the crucial social unit in Tsolyánu is the extended clan. All but the wretched *nakome*, the clanless, belong to a clan and count it as their most critical social bond.

WHAT CLANS ARE

Clans are extended families that include thousands of members spread over vast distances. A clan of ten thousand members is considered on the small side. Larger clans might have houses in almost every significant town or village in the empire, and branches even in foreign lands. In Tsolyánu, you belong to the clan and lineage of your father.

Clans are divided into a dozen or more lineages, each one descended from some exceptional figure or mythic ancestor. These lineages have different statuses and roles within the clan; low lineages might tend to manual labor, while high lineages might manage the clan's affairs and oversee the work of their lesser brethren. Most marriages are within the same clan, to a lineage of roughly the same status.

Daily life in a clan revolves around its "clanhouse", the locus of its affairs in a town or village. Important clan members may have their own private residences, but the majority of a clan's members live within the rambling and high-built walls of their clanhouse, short on privacy but long on the company of their kindred. Clanhouses serve as workshops for those clans dedicated to a particular profession, and have usually been built upward and downward over the course of centuries, if not millennia. Some clanhouses have depths that even their current occupants have forgotten.

Some clans are dedicated to particular professional roles, such as blacksmiths, or carters, or farmers, or some other trade. There are even clans dedicated to assassination, bound by ancient customs and warily respected as necessary to society. Not all clans are ded-

icated to a particular trade, however, and many set their members to whatever work they seem suited to performing.

Clans are led by a council of local elders made up of important figures from the higher lineages. One among them is chosen as Chief Elder, the spokesman to the local government and the representative to rare great councils called by the clan. Such elders are commonly men, but *Aridani* women may also serve as Chief Elder.

WHAT CLANS DO

Clans are mother and father to their members. The clan provides food, housing, medical care, religious services, jobs, marriage partners, and everything else a clan member might require. A family eats the morning *dna*-grain porridge provided by their clan and goes to work in a clan workshop. The father asks an elder of his lineage for a new tunic to replace one worn out, and the mother asks a high-lineage clan sister for help getting her son admitted as an acolyte at a prestigious temple. Whatever they need, the clan provides.

In return, they are expected to work for the clan. The money they earn with their labor goes mostly to clan coffers, though a small part can be retained for personal purchases. They are expected to do as the elders of their lineage tell them to do, whether that means taking a particular job, enlisting in a temple, or participating in a religious rite important to the clan.

Refusal is theoretically an option, but no one wants to get a bad reputation among their clanmates. Clans have ways of dealing with troublemakers, and the law is largely silent about intra-clan affairs. Truly spectacular truculence or egregious stupidity might even result in the offender being expelled from the clan, a fate worse than death for most Tsolyáni. Without a clan, they are *nakome*, filth without help or protection by the law.

Whenever a person needs something, whether it is a service, a favor, money, or material goods, they ask their clan for it. A clanmate in good standing will usually get it, if the clan can afford it and they have a reasonable need for it. The clan will pay for necessary services or provide them through a fellow clanmate, and they'll loan tools, weapons, and other goods as needed. Promising sorts may be given the seed money for a business enterprise, or have their education financed with hopes of their future success. Failure to succeed with these resources, or to waste them in loss, will inevitably result in less support next time.

WHAT CLANS WANT

Every clan wants prosperity and social success. Noble behavior by its members, business success, alliances forged with more powerful clans, and membership in important Imperial offices and local temples are all roads to power and influence. The greater the clan, the greater the status of its members, whatever their lineage.

It's thus in the clan's interest to make sure that each of its members are provided with the education and resources they need to succeed. Such promising sorts as the player characters are have doubtless been given special consideration by their clanmates, and that consideration must be repaid with success. It's usually up to the PC to decide how best to gain glory and gold, but the higher the rise, the more likely it is that their clanmates will have special requests for them, some of which may be easier to fulfill than others.

CLAN TRIBUTE

The life described here holds true for the vast majority of Tsolyáni men and women. A player character, however, is not an ordinary clansman or clanswoman. They have potential far beyond that of a common clan laborer, and if they can avoid the blades of the Ssú and the perils of the impaling post, they can hope for glory and wealth unimaginable to ordinary souls.

A hero might succeed in hauling home sacks of ancient Bednálljan gold and wondrous relics of sunken Éngsvan hla Gánga, but much of their wealth is going to be going to their clan. Most clans will expect an adventurer to render up 80% of their earnings in gold and jewels. While they will not outright confiscate magical artifacts, it is expected that the hero will "loan" them as their local clan elders direct.

This tribute is not wasted, however. The more wealth and influence a hero brings to their clan, the higher they rise in its esteem. A sufficiently successful hero can raise their lineage from lowly to great, and even lift their entire clan's standing if their deeds are mighty enough. Their clanmates will be eager to aid such heroes, and their favors will be extended gladly.

LAW IN TSOLYÁNU

Tsolyáni law is harsh, but direct. There is only one law throughout the empire, and what is permitted in decadent Jakálla is also allowed in swampy Penom. All are expected to know the law.

When one person offends against another, the first step is usually for the victim or their clan to demand *shamtla*, “blood money”. This may be just a gold *káitar* or two for an insult in the streets, or it may be thousands of *káitars* for the death of a clanmate. Custom sets the price for a given crime, though those of the high clans can commit minor offenses against lowly sorts with impunity. A carter of the humble Open Hand clan might be called a dung-eating lover of *chlén* by one of the illustrious Sea Blue, but could only cast down his eyes and beg the great one’s pardon. For a very low clan, even a death might only be recompensed with a hundred *káitars*, with the offender counting it generous for such a wretch.

Shamtla is never permitted for crimes against the empire. Offenses against Imperial officials, damage or theft of Imperial property, and treason against Imperial authorities is always punished at trial.

If the offender refuses to give *shamtla* for an offense, the aggrieved may choose to bring the matter before the local court. The magistrate there makes a decision after examining the case and listening to the pleading of the parties and their lawyers. The usual result is a fine and enforced payment of *shamtla*, but the magistrate is free to give any punishment that seems fitting. Crimes of violence, great frauds, and other serious matters are often punished with maiming, long imprisonment, confiscation of goods, or judicial impalement.

In theory, the law is indifferent to the social status of those involved. In practice, wealthy and powerful clans can be expected to protect their members, either with bribery, social pressure, or targeted “encouragement” of the magistrate. If a clan member is too stupid or too troublesome, however, the clan may stand back and let the empire have its way with the wretch’s mistakes.

Those who cannot get *shamtla* and who are denied by the courts have two final means of recourse. In the first, a warrior may challenge an offender to a judicial duel according to the precepts of the Manifesto of Noble Deliverance. The terms of the fight and whether it is to be to the death are agreed before-hand, and the two parties meet in public to resolve the matter. Those who cannot reasonably be expected to fight the complainant may decline without shame, but a warrior of equal mettle would draw suspicions of cowardice.

The last resort is that of hiring a member of the assassin clans. These clans offer services ranging from beatings to murder at a fixed rate, though they are expected to investigate the matter and refuse ignoble commissions. Assassins caught in the act risk punishment if their clan will not redeem them, but they are otherwise tolerated as a necessary recourse for the desperate wronged.

SHAMTLA COSTS FOR OFFENSES

Insulting public words, true or not	1–3 <i>káitars</i>
Theft or willfully negligent ruin of goods	x10–x15 of worth
Assault or minor physical injury*	100 <i>káitars</i>
Maiming, rape, or other serious injury*	250 <i>káitars</i>
Murder of a low or medium clan member	2–10 thousand
Murder of a high or very high clan member	20–100 thousand

* Against high or very high clans, increase this by x10 or x100.

Art slot

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND ADVENTURERS

Police in a city or large town are under the authority of the local military, with small towns having perhaps ten soldiers to guard the peace and a huge metropolis having as many as eight thousand. In villages the peace-keepers are no more than the village headman and a few deputies, and all serious criminal matters must be sent to the nearest town for resolution.

Policemen go about in patrols of several men, usually armed with staves or other implements of correction. Spears and other lethal weapons are available when greater force is needed. Offenders are brought to the local police station, where they are kept in the cells until their trial. Treatment depends much on the offender’s rank and the inducements given the warders.

Those condemned to long imprisonment are carried off to Imperial prisons, ones gloomy, deep, and distant. Other judicial sentences are carried out nearby. The impaling-stakes along the main thoroughfares often bear evidence of crime’s sad consequences.

Adventurers are well-advised not to get into fights with the local police. Offenses against Imperial officials cannot be smoothed over with *shamtla*, and the courts are harsh with such offenders. It would cost a clan much to rescue a member who got into such trouble, and even if they did, the culprit would be expected to make their effort worth the *káitars* spent.

The Underworld, however, is a lawless zone. Anything that happens beneath the city streets is beyond the purview of the police, and they will neither investigate nor punish things that happen there. Those who go below are advised to look to their own safety.

RELIGION AND THE GODS

The Tsolyáni are both a pious and pragmatic people. The ten Gods and their ten Cohorts have been worshiped in this land since Engsvanyáli times and the rule of the Priest-Kings. While Tsolyánu is not the theocratic empire that Éngsvan hla Gánga once was, its people know the worth of a pious word and a clever priest.

THE COMING OF THE GODS

The gods of modern Tsolyánu were unknown in the days before the Dragon Warriors. Whatever deities were worshiped in those ancient days have been lost to modern scholars, but the savage N'lüss were undoubtedly the first to make contact with the god Vimúhla, the All-Consuming Flame. In the age that followed, Ksárul, the Doomed Prince of the Blue Room, was contacted during the time of the Fisherman Kings, and those two gods alone were prevalent throughout the days of the Bednálljan empire. The decadent and bloody character of the First Imperium might well have been colored by these divinities and their worship.

With the coming of the priest Pavar and his contact with the gods of Stability, the pantheon expanded to its current state. The theocratic empire his teachings birthed became known as Éngsvan hla Gánga, and its Priest-Kings ruled over a land controlled by its temples and shrines.

It was also in Engsvanyáli times that the Concordat of the Temples was made, after bloody and savage conflicts between the priests of rival deities. The Concordat enforced public peace and harmony among the temples, forbidding them from open violence or injury to each other and enforcing it with the combined strength of the other temples and the authority of the Priest-King. The Concordat applies only actions in civilized lands, however; deeds performed in the wilderness or the Underworld do not fall under it. Many a brutal battle has erupted in the darkness of a buried shrine or in some distant jungle grove between priests who would greet each other courteously in a city's streets.

THE NATURE OF THE GODS

The gods of Tékumel are beings as far beyond humanity as a human is beyond a creeping *dri-ant*. The names and titles that humanity has assigned them are simply the best conceptions that human scholars have been able to form of these beings, not absolute truths that the gods are bound to acknowledge.

The gods have desires as other creatures have desires. They have things they crave and things they hate, and long, mysterious plots against each other. The priests of a god offer up rituals and sacrifices to please their patrons, but the gods do not *need* these offerings. They persist of their own, unfathomable and strange. Some great heroes and mighty sorcerers are even said to have spoken directly with the gods, though this may be a poetic figure of speech.

Philosophers have divided the gods into two pantheons, one that cherishes Stability, and another that pursues Change. This is not to be understood as "good" and "evil", but as two different values that each have their place in human experience. Lay believers may give special reverence to the god their clan especially favors, but they respect or fear all the gods, and will give offerings or prayers to whichever deity serves their immediate need. Only priests are expected to be more restricted in their reverences.

Art slot

PRIESTS AND TEMPLES

Every temple is dedicated to a particular god and has its own staff of clergy. The least of these are the acolytes dedicated to a god, who might hope to be raised to full priest after six months of training in the faith's particulars. Those who wish to leave the temple's direct service thereafter become "lay priests", free to choose their own path. Such lay priests can still use a temple's library and learn its secrets, but get no special favors or treatment from the priests.

Those who remain in the temple's service then join one of three branches. Ritual priests are responsible for carrying out the endless round of intricate ritual performances. They number among them singers, dancers, orators, and masters of ritual minutiae. Scholarly priests study theology, history, and such arts as are pleasing to the god of the temple. Administrative priests are responsible for managing the temple's lands and personnel, and favor practicality and good accounting skills over wild zealotry.

Those who fail to progress in their development are dispatched to the countryside to serve as village priests, or set into minor roles in urban temples. Those who excel at their duties may hope someday to join a temple's ruling council, or even to become the Patriarch or Matriarch of a temple.

Temples fund their efforts through the land they own, offerings from clans associated with their deity, sacrifices from people seeking special favors from their god, and payment for magical services.

Temples often have students that have no intention of joining the priesthood. Wealthy clans affiliated with Stability will send promising youths to learn at the shrines of Thúmis or Keténgku, while those of Change favor Ksárul and Grugánu. Deep magical secrets and esoteric doctrines are not taught to those not sworn to a priesthood, but grounding in reading, writing and arithmetic are easily obtained. Clever pupils might also be taught further topics suitable to a person of culture and learning.

THE GODS OF STABILITY

Five Gods and their five Cohorts make up the Gods of Stability. While gentler than their counterparts of Change, they are not necessarily “good” gods. They have their own purposes, and their wisdom is unfathomable by human minds.

- **Hnálla**, the Supreme Principle of Stability, the Master of Light, seeks perfect order and unchanging perfection in the universe. He rewards those who maintain the cosmic order, and favors those who are industrious, pious, and of sober character. His divine Cohort is mystical **Drá**, the Uncaring, the Singer of the Hymns of the Gods. Drá dwells in the perfection of order, indifferent to the world around him, and his priests seek to emulate that profound peace.
- **Karakán**, the Lord of War, Master of Heroes, is patron to all those who fight to end chaos and disorder. All those who fight to banish the Dark and bring the Light seek his blessing, and he loves valor, courage, and strength. His Cohort is **Chegárta**, the Hero-King, the lordly general and patron of armies. Those who seek to rule justly and to banish social disorder pray for Chegárta's aid.
- **Thúmis**, the Lord of Wisdom, Knower of Arts, and Sage of the Gods is patron of perfect knowledge and the understanding of the right way towards Hnálla's perfect order. He aids those who study and learn. His cohort **Keténgku**, the Many-Eyed, is the patron of Knowledge Applied and those who use their knowledge to act or create things for the betterment of their own society.

THE GODS OF CHANGE

While it may seem that the gods of Change would be despised as evil deities and bringers of ruin, Tsolyáni society has a more pragmatic view of them. Each serves a necessary purpose and provides useful aid to their followers, and those that seek to banish them from society will find them soon returning... and greatly displeased.

- **Hrü'ü**, the Supreme Principle of Change, the Master of Negation and Non-Being, seeks the cosmic Dark of non-being and inchoate chaos so that new creation may arise in turn. He favors those who seek to upset society and seek their own glory without concern for others. His Cohort **Wurú**, the Many-Legged Serpent of Gloom aids those who break traditions and fight the servants of Stability.
- **Vimúhla**, the Lord of Fire, the Power of Destruction and Red Ruin, pursues the destruction of all things through cleansing fire. He burns what is old and decayed and gives his blessing to those who fight heroically for Change. His Cohort is dread **Chiténg**, the Reaper of Cities, patron of the armies of Change and lover of cruelty and suffering in all its forms. He is served by torturers and those who delight in atrocity.
- **Ksárul** is the Ancient Lord of Secrets, the Doomed Prince of the Blue Room. Despite being trapped in the hidden Blue Room for ages past, Ksárul aids those who seek knowledge for their own power, and who keep secrets that profit them. He is the god of schemes and dark plans. His cohort **Grugánu** is the Knower of Spells and Reader of the Incantations of the Dark. He seeks all the secrets of sorcery for his master, and may share that wisdom with worthy priests.

- **Avánthe**, Mistress of Heaven, Maid of Beauty, Mother of Devotion is the goddess of natural harmony and the right cycles of the world. She is patron of growing things and aids women in all circumstances. Her cohort **Dilinála**, the Lovely Maiden of the Turquoise Crown, the Solace to the Wary, is the goddess of femininity in of itself, without reference to male and female. She is virgin, mother, and aged elder, much honored by *Aridani* women and those who seek to attain their own ends without male aid or permission. She accepts no male priests, nor allows them in her rituals.
- **Belkhánu**, Lord of the Excellent Dead, Master of the Paradises of Teretané, is responsible for the journeying of souls onward to their due destinations, and by extension all those who travel far. He despises Sárku and the abomination of his undead. His Cohort **Qón** is the Ancient One of Pleasures and the Guardian of the Gates of Hell Against Those Who Would Come Forth. He is a bestial god who defends the souls of the dead and those who are attacked by the Dark, giving them strength and courage to withstand their perils.

The clergy of these gods work together to maintain the due order and stability of the empire. Some zealots among them want more than this, and strive to extirpate the Dark forces of Change even when such correction must bring much suffering to the people. Such plans are conducted secretly, as open warfare is against the Concordat, but these fanatics are willing to do anything to expel the Dark, no matter how many others must die for the cause.

- **Sárku**, Five-Headed Lord of Worms, Master of the Undead, and Demon Lord of Decay is prince of death and deathly half-life. He promises cognition and the survival of the intellect to the end of days and the ultimate victory of the Dark. His grim Cohort **Durritlámish** is the dreadful Black Angel of the Putrescent Hand, He of the Rotted Face. He aids the undead and those who serve them, and is worshiped by those who guard graves and necropoli.
- **Dlamélish** is the Green-Eyed Lady of Fleshly Joys, Mistress of Demons, and Obsidian Princess of the Damned. She seeks perfect sensory awareness of the eternal Now, the delight of unceasing Change and perceived experience. She cares nothing for the good of others, but only her experiences. Her Cohort is **Hriháyal**, the Dancing Maiden of Temptation, Harlot of the Five Worlds, and Mistress of the Thirty-Two Unspeakable Acts. She presides as the goddess of carnal pleasures, sexual excess, and the cruel chances of gambling, and her worshipers are those who give pleasure with their bodies or their skills.

As dramatic as the great purposes of these gods may be, most of their temples are run by pragmatic priests. They are part of the traditions and customs of a place, and the human sacrifices of Vimúhla, the orgies of Hriháyal, and the ritual torments of Chiténg are simply necessary things for the maintenance of cosmic order. Slaves, war prisoners and criminals are the ones who usually suffer by their hungers, and the magic of their priests and the services they provide give them a respected, if feared, place in Tsolyáni society.

TSOLYÁNI CUSTOMS AND BELIEFS

Tsolyánu is a land very different from the conventional European-flavored fantasy of most role-playing games. It's not necessary to master every subtle facet of the culture, though there is a tremendous amount of detail available in other documents for those with an interest in it. Instead, there are a few basic differences to keep in mind when building adventures and playing out encounters in Tsolyáni society.

NOBLE AND IGNOBLE BEHAVIOR

Perhaps the most important difference between Tsolyánu and the average fantasy society is that the Tsolyáni have no absolute conception of "good" or "evil". There is no universal source of moral truth that their society recognizes. Instead, behavior is divided into "noble" and "ignoble" categories.

Noble behavior is that behavior which is appropriate to your social position and situation. Much like the Hindu conception of *dharma*, noble behavior is what sustains your role in society and furthers your correct purpose.

Noble behavior differs for each person. A dung-carter acts nobly by gathering night soil and carrying it to the fields. A priest of *Vímúhla* acts nobly by immolating a human sacrifice to his god. An assassin acts nobly by carrying out a murder in careful and judicious fashion, and a priest of *Hrü'ü* acts nobly in seeking the dissolution of all social structures. Each has a role and they meant to fill it.

It is possible to hate a person who acts nobly, but not to despise them. Even enemies who are directly opposed to their goals and behavior must recognize that they are acting as they were meant to act, and can respect that fidelity. At its best, such rivals view each other as worthy villains, to be defeated but also to be respected.

Ignoble behavior is the opposite of this. It is acting in a way that is unacceptable for your role, defying your purpose and denying your responsibilities. A priest of *Chiténg* who has pity on a tortured victim acts ignobly, as does a lay devotee of *Hnálla* who gets drunk or loses his temper. A persistently or extravagantly ignoble person is worthy only of contempt, though they may be a useful ally, because they cannot be trusted to be what they ought to be.

A person who changes their role also changes their definitions of noble and ignoble behavior. Provided the change is performed in an open and customary fashion, there is no shame in it. The key matter for Tsolyáni judgment is whether or not a person has integrity in the role they have adopted. Those who do not cannot be respected.

WOMEN AND ARIDANI IN SOCIETY

In Tsolyánu, women are second-class citizens. A "good clan-girl" is chattel of her family, first under the charge of her father, and then under the hand of her husband. She can expect no inheritance beyond a few trinkets, and she cannot represent herself in a court of law. She cannot hold Imperial office and is expected to busy herself with the work of her clan and the raising of her children. She cannot be held responsible for *shamtla* or other legal suits, and any complaints must be directed against her clan.

Many women are content with this life, knowing or desiring nothing more than this. She may know nothing of the northern nation of *Yán Kór* and its matriarchal ways, and may want nothing to do with the active and brutal life of her menfolk, who must fight and

toil and stand responsible for their actions in court as she would not. She is respected by her kindred and honored as a good and worthy woman of her clan, and that is enough.

Others want more. For these women, society has the role of the *Aridani*, one liberated from the strictures of her sex. To become an *Aridani*, a woman need only announce it in public. Immediately upon making this announcement, the woman is accorded all the rights and duties of a male. She may enlist in an army legion, hold Imperial office, choose one or more men for husbands, and manage her own financial affairs. Later, she may put down this role by another public declaration if she prefers a clan-girl's life. Perhaps 15% or 20% of all women are *Aridani*.

While this role appeals to some women, it is not without its drawbacks. An *Aridani* is subject to legal proceedings and duel challenges as a man is, and may be sold into slavery just as a man is if she accrues debts or crimes sufficient for such a fate.

SEXUALITY AND MARRIAGE

Tsolyáni society is profoundly disinterested in the sexual orientation of its members. Preferring partners of one's own sex is hardly worth a mention, and more exotic tastes are at most a quirk, if not a trait to be cultivated by devotees of *Hriháyal*. The gods of Stability prefer temperance and modesty among their worshipers, but the sin of excess is in indulging too much, and not in how you indulge.

Most clanmembers are expected to marry, though those who prefer not to are usually left unbothered unless the clan is in need of them for a marriage alliance. Those who have no children can still expect for their old age to be cared for by the clan and to have a reliable place at the table in their clanhouse.

Adultery is permitted to men and *Aridani* women, barring a specific clause in the marriage contract, but is not allowed to other women. An offended husband may demand *shamtla* from his wife's lover, or

GOOD VERSUS EVIL

The amorality of Tsolyáni society sometimes can be difficult to manage in play. Most player characters who encounter a high priest throwing people into a bonfire will promptly try to hew the evildoer in twain without a second thought, and will expect the rest of society to applaud that action.

Tsolyáni society doesn't allow that. So long as the priest is sacrificing slaves or war prisoners and otherwise acting within the law, there's no legitimate way to stop him. Devotees of a rival religion may consider the sacrifice disgusting and foul, but they can't openly act against it.

Of course, this just means that the PCs are going to have to oppose it *sneakily*. Attacks in the Underworld know no law, for one, and cunning political games can cripple the plans of wrongdoers. Selective wilderness encounters can also help.

As the GM, let the players operate in a moral way they're comfortable with. Some may be perfectly happy playing PCs who only care about the nobility or ignobility of their actions, but if a group wants to do things in conventionally heroic fashion, let them find ways to do so.

Art slot

challenge them to a duel. In practice, many husbands turn a blind eye to their wife's affairs with equals or social superiors.

Polygamy is a source of status in Tsolyánu. A clansman able to afford multiple wives or be given them by his clan gains standing, as do *Aridani* who have their own polyandrous household of several husbands. Occasional tension can arise between these spouses, but those wealthy enough to keep multiple mates can usually also afford to give each of them some private space of their own.

SLAVERY

Slavery is a normal part of Tsolyáni society, with a little more than ten percent of the population consisting of slaves. Most slaves are debtors who incurred debts that their clan couldn't or wouldn't pay. Others are prisoners of war who declined the honor of being sacrificed to the gods, or criminals sentenced to slavery.

Slaves are *nakome*, clanless. They are chattel, and their owner may do whatever they please with them. Most owners keep them adequately fed and tended, as slaves are expensive, but they are otherwise considered little better than livestock. Some household slaves are treated with greater regard due to long service, beguiling sexual charm, or special education they might have. Wealthy clans commonly have slave tutors for their children, giving them a basic education before sending them off to the temples for more. It is forbidden to arm slaves, as too many revolts have shown the inevitable dangers of it.

Slaves may be allowed to purchase their freedom, but this is solely at the discretion of their owner, and their possessions may be taken at any time. The children of female slaves belong to the owner as well, and may be freed or kept as chattel as they decide. The most truculent or unbroken slaves are consigned to rural plantations, where some escape to become bandits and reavers in the wilds.

GETTING AHEAD IN TSOLYÁNU

Now that Tsolyáni culture's been sketched for you, how is a self-respecting adventurer supposed to get ahead in the world? What goals might a PC have, and how are they to accomplish them?

Wealth is a wellspring of power in all nations, and Tsolyánu is no exception. Even though the bulk of a hero's plunder is going to go to their clan, they can be expected to respect and heed the person providing that wealth. The more money you bring your clan, the more respected your lineage will become, and the more willing that others will be to perform services for you. Better housing, better treatment, and more willingness to let you use clan resources and contacts will follow.

Favors are also a crucial means for getting ahead. Helping out an Imperial official might not come with an explicit paycheck in *káitars*, but having an important official owe you something is better still. You can call in these favors to get legal charges dropped, permission given for otherwise-forbidden activities, the borrowed use of military troops or assets, or access to concealed records and secrets. The right friends in the right places smooth any path.

Glory has its own subtle use as well, and mighty deeds done for their own sake. A particularly noble and splendid adventurer who has succeeded at many great deeds will be sought out by officials and important clan elders to do the sort of jobs that lesser figures can't hope to accomplish. Glory is an advertisement to all around you that you are an impressively capable person who should be entrusted with demanding tasks.

Alliances make up the last leg of the throne of success. Favors come and go, but alliances of marriage or shared enterprise last. Making the right friends with the right clans can give you access to their favors and contacts, expanding your reach. Don't hesitate to forge bonds with those above you— or with those usefully below.

NON-HUMANS IN TSOLYÁNU

Tsolyánu is populated primarily by humans, but a number of non-human races also arrived on the planet during the initial years of colonization. While some of these are unalterably inimical to humankind, others have been able to coexist peacefully with the planet's new rulers, or even become part of Tsolyáni society.

Ahoggyá are considered rude, coarse, barbarous sorts who have no interest in religion or human customs. They make excellent mercenaries, however, and have a niche as bodyguards and strong arms for those with enough money to interest them.

Hláka serve as scouts, messengers, and mercenaries in Tsolyánu, but are considered somewhat scatterbrained and cowardly. They also have a profound hatred of slavery and can be expected to interfere with it whenever they get the chance. Hláka slaves inevitably pine away and die in short order.

Mihalli are so rare as to be thought legendary in some places, albeit their natural shapeshifting gifts doubtless encourage this. Their purposes are inscrutable; friendliness one moment may be followed by murderous violence the next, all in service of an end only they can understand.

Páchi Lei are oddly-shaped by human measure, but they have a remarkably human love for conversation, intrigue, and social interaction. With their courtesy, wit, and reliability, some say they're "better humans than humans". It is not uncommon for a Páchi Lei to achieve a place of distinction in a temple, army legion, or the Imperial administration.

Pé Chói are also much given to human ways, even going so far as to mimic human clothing and habits. Their natural psychic gifts make them excellent sorcerers, and they are found in human temples as scholars and arcanists. They keep their own culture well-veiled.

Pygmy Folk are found more often in Yán Kór than in the south, and much prefer to dwell among their own kind in burrow-towns. Those who come south are usually friendly to humans, but are known for their greed, occasional cruelty, and ferocious fighting instinct when pressed.

Shen are found almost exclusively as mercenaries, as only the promise of war and gold is enough to make them tolerate the "bitter chill" of Tsolyánu. They are renowned as fearsome warriors with little interest in scholarship or human niceties. They hate Ahoggyá because of an instance where the four-armed aliens cooked and ate a number of Shen war prisoners, as is ordinary for their kind.

Swamp Folk are more often met in Mu'ugalavyá, but some make their way to Tsolyánu as sailors, a trade at which they excel. They are friendly and courteous enough when among humans, but cherish their ancient customs among their own kind.

Tinalíya reside mostly in Livyánu to the west, but their insatiable curiosity and desire to see the world bring some far east to Tsolyánu. They are exceedingly intelligent and learned, but their extreme literal-mindedness sometimes makes for awkward misunderstandings.

Non-humans within Tsolyánu's borders are expected to obey Tsolyánu's laws, but are at the same time allowed the protection of the empire's justice. Non-human communities within the borders serve as analogs to human clans, though some non-humans show enough promise to win entry into a human clan, particularly if they've achieved some standing in a temple, an army legion, or local government.

The inimical races, of course, can expect only a swift spear should they be seen in Tsolyánu. There is no such thing as a peaceful Ssú or a Shunned One diplomat. There is only an implacable threat.

Art slot

THE FIVE EMPIRES AND THE NEIGHBORING LANDS

While glorious Tsolyánu naturally holds pride of place among the nations of the northern continent, there are four other great domains that vie with the Empire of the Petal Throne. Their affairs are those of great nations; never entirely friendly, never wholly enemies, always concerned for immediate advantage over their rivals.

Aside from the Five Empires, there are also other lands that lay claim to some portion of the continent. Some of these are barbarous domains that scarcely merit the name of nation, while others are almost as advanced in their culture and customs as the enlightened folk of Tsolyánu.

MU'UGALAVYÁ

The great rival of Tsolyánu, Mu'ugalavyá is a western land of rigid customs, austere decorum, and the unquestioned rule of the Four Palaces of the Square. Each palace is in the charge of a Prince, and these oligarchs rule the four provinces of Mu'ugalavyá with a firm and orderly hand. Their red-armored legions have dueled Tsolyánu forces for centuries, though the western border is currently only suffering deniable incursions by Mu'ugalavyáni skirmish parties.

The Mu'ugalavyáni are a pious folk who favor Vimúhla and their own beast-headed god Hrsh. They are notorious for their humorless rigidity and bureaucratic ways, though the strict correctness of their behavior is undeniably noble.

LIVYÁNU

Southwest of Tsolyánu, across the sea, the exotic land of Livyánu is ruled by the priests of their Shadow Gods, strange deities unknown in other parts of the world. Their rites are hidden from outsiders, though most believe them to involve interplanar summonings and the service of extradimensional demons.

Livyánu is a land of sorcery without peer, and the priests of its temples are renowned for their talents. The people of Livyánu tattoo their faces in delicate patterns that appear to have some religious meaning. They are a courteous but secretive lot, and those who deal with them conduct their business and come away knowing little more than they knew on arriving.

YÁN KÓR

Yán Kór is the great enemy of Tsolyánu at the moment, reaching to the north from the border to the sub-polar wastes. They were a scattered land of quarreling city-states until the former Tsolyáni general "Baron" Áld united them under his banner, seeking revenge on Tsolyánu for its betrayal of his forces and execution of his beloved.

The Yán Kóryani are matriarchal in their ways, with clan descent traced through the female and women having the chief positions of authority in their society. The northern border has been red with the bloodshed they've wrought, and few can guess when it will end.

SALARVYYÁ

East of Tsolyánu the divided empire of Salarvyyá holds the coast. Seven great clans dominate the nation's government, yet the king's clan is but a little stronger than the others, and the king's rule is respected only so far as it is convenient. It is unfortunate, too, that the present king is quite mad, and the true leadership of the nation rests chiefly on his son.

Salarvyyáni politics is dominated by the sparring of the great clans, each one struggling to increase its power and add to its number of client clans. Tsolyáni consider them a pack of feudal quarrelers who could pick a fight in an empty room, but must acknowledge the skill of their merchants.

OTHER LANDS

It would weary the reader to list out the half a hundred other principalities, kingdoms, tribal lands, and decayed demi-empires that clutter the northern continent. These lands range from the gigantic barbarian N'lüss tribesmen of the northwestern mountains, to the backward and brutal Ghatoni clans and their reptilian war-beasts, to the peaceful islanders of the Nyémesel Isles.

Still less is known of the mysterious southern continent and its torrid lands, or the enigmatic domains on the far side of the globe. Who can guess what wonders might be found in far lands, what miracles could still exist from ages long since past?

NON-HUMAN ENCLAVES

There are few true nations of non-humans, as their numbers are usually too few to manage more than enclaves and small refuges. Still, a few races have managed to carve out their own nations.

Shényu is a land of the Shen, south of Livyánu, along with several other petty Shen statelets. The climate is murderously hot, and the human slaves the Shen sometimes take often perish, but the gems and mercenaries that Shényu sends forth buy more as needed.

Far to the southeast, beyond Salarvyyá, lies a nation of Ahoggyá known as Onmu Tle Hlektis, a seemingly disorganized realm far too swampy and far too full of Ahoggyá for anyone else to want to meddle with it. Other enclaves exist along the Salarvyyáni coast.

Hláka have no real nation of their own, but many of their eyries are found in the mountains east of Tsolyánu, near the Salarvyyáni border.

North of Salarvyyá, there remains a domain ruled by the Gray Ssú, and to enter it is death for men. None know its name as the Ssú call it. Other great lairs of the creatures are found deep beneath the earth, or hidden in remote wilderness where they can plot against the human intruders.

Of the other inimical races, the vile Hlüss sail their alien ships from the shores of the island called Hlüssuyal, where mad pirates sometimes go to seek their treasures. The stinking Shunned Ones keep to the poisonous air of their domed cities on the blasted plains of Yán Kór and the less often they come forth, the better it is. The wretched toad-like Hlutrgú lair chiefly in the fens of the Kaija Protectorate in Tsolyánu, and their depredations and furious raids have been a plague on their neighbors for centuries. Only their tremendously fast reproduction and the natural defenses of the swamps have kept the Tsolyáni from exterminating them long ago.

The other non-human races tend to live in protectorates and enclaves within the human empires. Relations are usually good with their human overlords; non-humans are sometimes viewed as odd or annoying by their human neighbors, but there is little hostility on species grounds. Enmity comes more often due to hostility between human nations, when troops from the enclaves find themselves called to fight on behalf of their human lords.

JAKÁLLA, THE GLORY OF THE SOUTH

Greatest and most splendid of the cities of southern Tsolyánu, Jakállá is home to tens of thousands of laborers, craftsmen, artisans, and priests. Hundreds of different clans have clanhouses within its walls, and more still can be found in the outlying suburbs and farming villages that feed the city's insatiable appetite. Every service that a city of Tsolyánu might provide can be found within the winding streets and narrow lanes of steaming Jakállá.

The city was once the capital of the mighty First Imperium, and was old when the first Tlakotáni ascended to the Petal Throne. The ancient rebuilding ritual of *ditlana* has been performed over and over again, with surface structures within the city's walls razed down and built over by fresh constructions. This construction has left Jakállá's Underworld one of the most elaborate and far-reaching in all the empire.

And yet there is more than the work of the First and Second Empires beneath the city. Jakállá is so old that even the ancient traces of the world's first lords can be found deep below, beneath the squared stones and blocky inscriptions of Bednálljan kings and the delicate traceries of Engsvanyáli lords. Deep below, at the very bottom of the world, the gray metal halls of the ancients trace a crumbling path amid their lost wonders, and their sleeping tubeway-cars await the coming of their first passengers in a hundred ages.

The Bednálljan kings and queens left their pyramidal tombs in the necropolis outside the city walls. The dark temple of Sárku has squatted for many aeons amid the tombs, and numberless are the devoted men and women who have been granted a semblance of

eternal life by Sárku's dark blessings. They dwell within the silence of their tombs, perceiving the world with cold patience and awaiting the coming of the Dark's final victory.

GMs who choose to begin their campaign in Jakállá will find it provides everything they need for a rousing run of adventures, schemes, sudden perils, and swift treachery. The particular interests of any given band of adventurers can easily be satisfied by the prospects within these age-old walls.

The Underworld is an easy source of gold and death alike. It can be difficult to find unblocked passages in the city, but careful investigation or the whispered words of old clanmates might lead the heroes to a mouldering door and an age-worn stair. The temples also know secret routes into the Underground, the better to lead expeditions to lost shrines where certain rites must be performed.

The necropolis and its tombs offer a more immediate source of plunder, as even old tombs are often reused by Sárku's priesthood and with their new deposits are the grave-goods of the dead or undead. The tomb-police are unkind to interlopers, however.

Political games can be lethal in Jakállá's torrid clime, as every clan struggles to get the better of each other. Business opportunities, the favor of higher clans, the decision of judges, and the whim of the governor himself must all be cultivated by careful words, useful blackmail, and the correct application of gold.

Those adventurers who tire of city life can set forth from Jakállá's harbor to seek their fortune in far lands. And if they should never return, is that not too a fortune for an adventurous soul?

Put a keyed map of Jakállá here

POINTS OF INTEREST IN JAKÁLLA

Most of the buildings in Jakálla are stores, workshops, or clanhouses for the hundreds of clans represented in the city. The remainder are largely temples to the Gods and their Cohorts, all of whom have their own splendid shrines within the city. All, that is, save for the temple of Sárku which crouches in the necropolis outside.

The locations below are merely some of the points most likely to be of interest to adventurers. If you're using Jakálla as a starting point for your own campaign, let the players look over the map and pick out appropriate buildings as the clanhouses of their own clans.

- 1) **The Palace of the Ever-Living Lord.** The residence of Governor Chirinngá. Winning a moment of the governor's attention requires great influence or greater favors, but his word can permit or enact almost anything a petitioner may desire in the city.
- 2) **The Palace of the Realm.** The courts, government offices, and official business of the city is conducted here. Messengers are sometimes needed to bring papers here despite the hostile attentions of rivals.
- 3) **The Tower of Bones.** This grim prison holds grave offenders against the empire, some of which may be guilty, and others of which may merely be unfortunate. Many powerful clans have members here, and would pay much to get them out alive.
- 4) **House of the Green Kirtle.** Foreigners and visitors of respectable standing are welcome within this comfortable resthouse, provided they comport themselves with nobility, dignity, and a good purse.
- 5) **Tower of the Red Dome.** The grasping owner will give sleeping space and a bad meal to anyone with a few coppers, though the company leaves much to be desired. Many find work here that respectable persons would not accept.
- 6) **The Temple of Thúmis, Lord of Wisdom.** Those in need of sagacious answers come here to pay the priests for their wisdom. Spells of healing and succor are also sold to the wealthy, though those dedicated to Change prefer to get them from the clergy of Grugánu, the Knower of Spells.
- 7) **Prison of Little Ease.** Wretched debtors and *nakome* clanless are cast here to rot until the slavers find time to buy the least decayed of them. The security is not of the best, which is fortunate for those adventurers who find themselves tossed in.
- 8) **Siridlánu Slave Market.** Many are the unfortunate debtors and Yán Kóryani prisoners sold here. Some of them promise to reveal precious secrets to those who free them; many lie.
- 9) **Communal Clan House.** All the clans in the city have offices here, using it for their meetings and the gatherings of trade councils. Precious documents and secret pledges are often kept here, where only the clan elders can see them.
- 10) **The Hirilákte Arena.** Judicial duels are customarily settled on its sands, along with other displays of gladiatorial might. Much coin trades hands in bets here, and some victories are "discouraged" by the bookies.

- 11) **Pyramid Temple of the Ancient Unnamed One.** None use this abandoned temple, and the elder priests of the city do not discuss it. Some say treasure remains within, and the magical artifices that were responsible for its sudden abandonment. Others say that only death lies beneath it.
- 12) **Armory of Bushétrá the Smith.** Good *chlén*-hide weapons and armor can be had here, and some say that Bushétrá even has steelwork made by his father in former days. Such talkers deplore his selfishness, and say he fears to admit it lest his clan confiscate it for its own benefit.
- 13) **The House of the Pleasant Hour.** Every fleshly delight can be had here under the auspices of the priestesses and priests of Hriháyal and their expertly-trained slaves and clan-courtesans. The throes of delight loosen many lips, and the workers here often come into possession of secrets they can't act on without help.
- 14) **Tower of Ruvádis, the Wearer of Eyes.** While not so great as the Undying Wizards of legend, Ruvádis is wise in many secrets, and sometimes hires adventurers to aid his ends.
- 15) **The Ruined Tower of Mnéttukeng the Sorcerer.** City legend says that Mnéttukeng was dragged down by demons a generation ago, and that his tower has in its cellars a passage deep into the Underworld, to where he kept his greatest treasures.

THE CITY OF THE DEAD

The locations here are all in Jakálla's necropolis, where the honored dead of every clan are buried. Tomb-police in service to Sárku patrol it vigilantly against robbers, though some of the less fanatical can be paid to look away. They rarely venture below into the Underworld, but robbers who come out with loot must be quick to dodge them.

- 16) **Pyramid Tomb of the Lost King.** His name was effaced by his wife, Queen Laráyn, and scholars merely guess that he lies here. These same sages will only whisper of why she blotted out his name.
- 17) **Pyramid Tomb of Queen Laráyn.** Builder of the House of the Pleasant Hour, she was a devout devotee of Dlamélish, the Lady of Sins. Indeed, she went so far as to dwell in her temple.
- 18) **Ruined Heap of the Temple of Hyáshra.** A long-neglected Aspect of the goddess Hriháyal, there are supposedly at least two entrances to Jakálla's Underworld located beneath the tumbled ruins.
- 19) **Temple of Sárku.** The tomb-police that patrol the necropolis work from this grim shrine, ever going forth to foil the efforts of tomb-robbers. Their work is complicated by a number of low clans dedicated chiefly to the plundering of the Underworld, and who bitterly resent adventuring interlopers.
- 20) **Pyramid Tomb of Girandú.** An ancient Bednálljan king, Girandú ruled in Jakálla for a generation before building the new capital at Béy Sú. His tomb is said to be full of diabolical architectural tricks to confound robbers.

MAJOR CLANS OF JAKÁLLA

If a GM chooses to start a campaign in Jakálla, it can be useful to know a few of the more prevalent clans within its walls. The list below is by no means exhaustive, but it covers some of those clans most likely to be suitable for player characters, or fit to be their rivals.

None of these clans are exclusive to the city, and all of them have clanhouses in other cities throughout the empire. As with all clans, relatives from more distant cities are welcome to stay with them while they are in Jakálla. A permanent change of residence usually hinges on the newcomer proving themselves a useful addition to the clan in Jakálla, and not some fumbling liability that a remote city is trying to fob off on their Jakállan kin.

Some clans have a special dedication to a particular god or gods. Others have lineages within the clan that are devoted to a particular deity. Members of those clans or lineages are not required to be zealous followers of that god, but they need to be at least nominally dedicated and participate in the rituals of that faith. At least they can expect a warmer reception from priests of that religion when they have need of favors or aid, even if this comes at the price of subtle hostility from those opposed to their creed. In the Underworld or wilderness, this hostility may be rather less than subtle.

Art slot

VERY HIGH CLANS

<i>Sea Blue</i>	Heirs of the Bednálljan kings and queens, their pride is undimmed and sometimes unbearable.
<i>Golden Bough</i>	High officials, administrators and military officers. They trace descent from Engsvanyáli governors.
<i>Jade Diadem</i>	City administrators and wealthy landowners devoted to Dlamélish and Hriháyal.

HIGH CLANS

<i>White Crystal</i>	High and mid-level bureaucrats and officials, with no specific religious affiliation. Respectable and stolid.
<i>Rising Sun</i>	Minor nobility and wealthy merchants lead this clan, too interested in practicalities to be very religious.
<i>Staff of Beneficence</i>	Physicians, apothecaries, and scholars are the pride of this clan, mostly devoted to Thúmis and Keténgku.
<i>High Pinnacle</i>	Medium-level military personnel and bureaucrats, with no common religious affiliation.

MEDIUM CLANS

<i>Green Malachite</i>	Sailors, fishermen, and farmers belong to this clan. Most worship the gods of Stability, but not all do.
<i>Ripened Sheaf</i>	An affluent clan of craftsmen and farmers found in almost every village in this region. No religious ties.
<i>Glory of the Worm</i>	Zealous followers of Sárku and Durritlámish, they are mostly landowners, farmers, and orchard-keepers.
<i>First Moon</i>	Merchants and crafters dominate this clan, with a few priests and merchants. It has no fixed religious ties.
<i>Iron Fist</i>	Smiths, armorers, and some warriors who usually serve either Vimúhla, Karákan, or their Cohorts.
<i>Weeping Stone</i>	Superb crafters of liquors and potables of all kind, interested in trade more than religious matters.
<i>Broken Reed</i>	Mostly small farmers and petty craftsmen, struggling to maintain its status. It has no allied temples.

LOW CLANS

<i>Open Sepulchre</i>	Tomb-policemen, embalmers, and mourners who serve both Sárku and Belkhánu and their Cohorts.
<i>Green Reed</i>	Humble farmers and village crafters. The Jakállan clanhouse is mostly for diplomacy and hiring help.
<i>Woven Whip</i>	Tanners and workers of leather and <i>chlén</i> -hide. Lowly, but with substantial resources to buy aid.
<i>Green Opal</i>	Dyers and clothiers with some warriors as well. Most worship Dlamélish and Hriháyal for business reasons.

VERY LOW CLANS

<i>Bright Sword</i>	Musicians, pimps, innkeepers and poets comprise this clan, scorned but useful as they are. No religious ties.
<i>Collar of Bronze</i>	A clan of professional slavers, despised by other clans but wealthy from their trade. No religious customs.
<i>Scarlet Planet of Knives</i>	Low-class sellswords, hunters, and butchers of flesh, mostly devoted to Karákan and his Cohort.
<i>Emerald Circlet</i>	A base clan of prostitutes, dancers, and entertainers who mostly serve Dlamélish and Hriháyal.

JAKÁLLAN TROUBLES

Jakálla shares many of the customary perils of a big city, but it can be helpful to have a quick generation chart for brewing up problems for the PCs to handle. The GM can use the chart below to roll out a rough conflict outline, which they can then detail out into some-

thing more specific for a gaming session. To use the table, roll a d12 and two d8s, reading across the entries. As with all random GM tables, you should feel free to edit results that don't make sense, or else use them as inspiration for deciding why they *do* make sense.

CONFLICTS IN JAKÁLLA

d12	d8	THE BASIC PROBLEM IS...	d8	THINGS IMPORTANT TO THE CONFLICT
CLAN CONFLICT 1-3	1	A PC's clan lineage has lost the Thing and needs it back	1	An extremely advantageous marriage
	2	A rival clan has claimed the Thing by brute force	2	A formerly-held building or monument
	3	A clan elder lost the Thing and needs discreet help	3	Magical key to a vital clan store room
	4	The Thing is being used to blackmail a clan elder	4	Genealogy proving ties to a greater clan
	5	The clan needs the Thing or a PC will suffer without it	5	Map to a clan cache in the Underworld
	6	The clan could have the Thing if the PCs dare win it	6	Blackmail material on someone important
	7	A patron clan wants the Thing or a substitute PC service	7	A sublime work of the clan's main trade
	8	The PCs are entrusted with a Thing; rivals seek it	8	Wealth entrusted to them by a clanmate
ECONOMIC CONFLICT 4-6	1	This Thing is plaguing the clan's main business	1	A plague of Hlutrgú raiders gone inland
	2	The PCs are asked to use the Thing against a rival clan	2	The violence of a rival clan's thugs
	3	An elder needs the Thing fixed without his fault revealed	3	Loss of a vital clan secret now needed
	4	The Thing snowballed from the clan's original plan	4	Bandits paid off by a rival clan
	5	The Thing lies between the clan and a great opportunity	5	The public scorn of a high clan noble
	6	The Thing was actually meant to hurt another clan	6	The only copy of a terrible contract
	7	A clan elder actually wants the Thing to be a problem	7	A faked treasure that risks discovery
	8	The elders somehow blame a PC for the Thing	8	Dangerous relics of former days
EXOTIC CONFLICT 7-9	1	The PCs discover the Thing just before it's too late	1	Monsters from the Underworld
	2	A PC clanhouse is being assailed by the Thing	2	A furiously offended undead
	3	A PC clan is being blamed unfairly for the Thing	3	A sorcerer's need for a specific ingredient
	4	The Thing is happening, but could be turned to profit	4	A temple ritual gone badly awry
	5	The Thing is happening to a rival clan at the same time	5	A malfunctioning relic of the ancients
	6	The Thing is a key to wealth for one who enlists it	6	A demon from a distant plane of reality
	7	The Thing was a petty annoyance until it erupted now	7	A shady supplier of "parts" for sorcerers
	8	A clan elder somehow needs the Thing to stay around	8	An incompetent sorcerer's fumbling
RELIGIOUS CONFLICT 10-12	1	A clanmate priest needs the Thing or they'll be expelled	1	Ancient tome of theological disputation
	2	A PC clan needs to produce the Thing for their patrons	2	Winning argument in temple dogma fight
	3	The Thing is faked; the real one must be found quickly	3	Proof of temple ownership of land
	4	The Thing needs a lost or rare part to be completed	4	Taxes or fees due to the temple
	5	The Thing is needed but held by a hostile temple	5	Forbidden magic devised by a renegade priest
	6	The Thing is lost somewhere in the Underworld	6	Scroll of secret dogma allowed only to priests
	7	A rival clan has seized the Thing to keep it from the clan	7	Map to a hidden Underworld shrine
	8	A rival clan demands a criminal favor for the Thing	8	Relic crucial to an important temple rite