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Dungeons & Dragons®

series

HOLLOW WORLD

Official Game
Adventure

The Milenian Scepter

by Anthony Herring



For 4 to 6 characters, levels 6 to 8

HOLLOW WORLD®

An Official DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Game Adventure

THE MILENIAN SCEPTER

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Introduction

Excerpt from *Prophecies of Phaistos*, as written by the scribe Hestios of Corisa:

"Though I am of sound mind, the history flowing from my writing quill may seem like the gibberings of a madman. Alas, it is all true. The sun has been gone for nearly a full sleep now. It simply ceased to be. Madness indeed!"

"Since the death of the glorious sun, magic has not functioned. Though I am isolated here at the Shrine of Glory, the blind eyes of Phaistos have seen all. Chaos tears at the Empire. Riots. Murder. Insanity. We are a people of the sun. Darkness is death to us! Can this truly be the end of the world? I pray that the words of Phaistos, as I write them here, are not in vain, to be read by no one."

"Yestersleep, I awoke to find the ancient oracle already busy painting the cliff walls from high atop his rickety scaffolding. Stealing my heart, I carefully made my way up to him. The beauty of his art, and his stately depictions of the Immortal Halav (praise him!) always fill me with awe . . . but I would much rather view them from the ground."

"I fixed my gaze upon the oracle, not daring to look down, and sat beside him. His dead eyes turned to meet my stare. In a stony voice he said, 'Tomorrow we shall awake in darkness, the sun no longer with us.' With the shock of his prophecy, and the vertigo gnawing at me, I nearly fell. My ink pot smashed on the stones below, echoing through the gorge like a death knell."

"'Calm yourself, Hestios,' he said. 'You must have a steady hand, for what good are my words if they cannot be read?'

"I took another ink pot from my pouch, and began. 'The darkness shall last for only one sleep,' said Phaistos. 'But this is long enough for it to breed a great evil. The Empire nears a juncture in time, with one path leading to everlasting night, and the other to glorious light. The Immortal Halav has chosen his mortal heroes. Only they can find the path. Soon, they will come to me. I must use all of my power to divine the answers they seek . . .'"

DM™ Notes

The *Milenian Scepter* is a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® adventure set in the Milenian Empire of the HOLLOW WORLD® campaign setting. You need the D&D® Rules Cyclopedia and the HOLLOW WORLD® boxed set to play. Although not required, the *Wrath of the Immortals* boxed set and the accessory *HWR3, Milenian Empire* have much information useful for running this adventure.

The *Milenian Scepter* is an adventure designed for a party of four to six player characters (PCs) of levels 6-8. All of the following information is for the DUNGEON MASTER™. Players should stop reading now.

Preparing for the Adventure

Although the plot of the adventure is fairly straightforward, it involves many NPCs with their own goals and motivations. Be sure to read all of the text before starting play.

You should also read the chapters about the Milenian Empire in the *Dungeon Master's Sourcebook* and the *Player's Guide* of the HOLLOW WORLD boxed set. If you own the *Milenian Empire* accessory, it is wise to read this again also to get a good "feel" for the Empire, which resembles Classical Greece.

Milenian Special Compensation

As described in the HOLLOW WORLD *Player's Guide*, Milenians gain a special compensation because they do not have much armor to choose from. This compensation takes the form of a +2 bonus to hit and a +1 bonus to damage rolls with all spear-type weapons (javelin, pike, spear, and trident).

Throughout this book, the special compensation bonuses are given in the "Special Attack" game statistics of NPCs using spear-type weapons. However, you may ignore this special bonus if you wish.

Ability Checks

Sometimes the PCs must attempt an ability check to see whether or not they successfully perform a difficult action. Allow the player to roll 1d20 and compare the result to his or her

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character's appropriate ability (Strength, Intelligence, etc.). If the roll is equal to or less than the ability score, the PC succeeds at the action. Rolling greater than the ability score means failure.

Non-Player Characters

Game statistics and background information for the most important non-player characters can be found in the "NPC Roster" at the end of this book. Statistics for monsters and NPCs are given throughout the text, when the creature or character is first mentioned.

How to Read This Book

The plot of the adventure is presented in a series of chapters, which are described briefly in the following Adventure Summary. Each one of the chapters is broken down into the following sections.

Boxed Text: At the start of each chapter is an excerpt from the book called *Prophecies of Phaistos*. The book is written by a scribe named Hestios. Phaistos is the oracle at the Shrine of Glory, which is a holy place of an Immortal named Halav. This boxed text is written in italics, and is meant for the DM only.

Some chapters also include boxed text in normal type. This text usually describes a location or event from the PCs' point of view, and is meant to be read aloud by the DM.

How They Get Here: This section details ways the PCs will arrive at the location that is the setting of the chapter.

The Scene: A physical description of the chapter's setting.

Events: Encounters and occurrences that might take place while the PCs are here.

Where Next?: This section summarizes the chapter's clues and where they lead.

Staging Hints: This section contains suggestions for staging the scene with regard to mood, dramatic effects, and pacing.

Remember that this is not a rigid structure. The events and encounters presented in a given chapter might occur in a different order. Even the chapters themselves might happen in a different sequence than described here. Give the

players as much freedom as possible to steer the adventure in their own direction. If they run into a dead end, use your creativity to devise new clues or non-player characters to guide them back on track. Above all, have fun!

Adventure Overview

Recently, due to the events detailed in the *Wrath of the Immortals* boxed set, the sun of the Hollow World was extinguished for one full sleep (day) late in the year of AC 1,009. Magic throughout the world also ceased to function during this time. These two events marked the beginning of a series of drastic changes in the Milenian Empire.

During the Sleep of Darkness (as it was called), chaos reigned in the Empire. Having lived all of their lives in a world of eternal sunlight, the populace was gripped with fear and a dread that doomsday was upon them. Mobs roamed the streets, burning, killing, and pillaging. An emergency session of the Senate was held. On his way to the Senate, Emperor Adronius was slain by the mob.

A Zargosian sorcerer named Caracanomnos (KA-ra-kah-NOM-nos) appeared before the Senate and brazenly proclaimed that he and the Followers of Zargos had taken away the sun. (In truth, they have no power over the sun.)

Zargosians are an evil order of clerics and sorcerers who honor Zargos. Unknown to them, however, Zargos is actually the Immortal Nyx. Her goal is to place Caracanomnos as Emperor and ultimately bring about the total destruction of the sun, plunging the Hollow World into eternal night.

Caracanomnos claimed that the sun would only be returned if he were elected Emperor. Out of fear, and with Emperor Adronius dead, the Senate agreed to the sorcerer's demand—Caracanomnos was hastily elected Emperor. On the following sleep, the sun returned, not because of Caracanomnos's influence, but due to events which unfolded during the *Wrath of the Immortals* campaign. Unaware of the truth, none questioned the sorcerer's control over their world . . . at least not right away.

Emperor Adronius's body was recovered by loyal soldiers and given into the custody of Sena-

tor Tibernos, a man who opposes Emperor Caracanomnos. The Senator secretly took the body to an archmage named Xanthipon so that the corpse might be magically preserved. Senator Tibernos has taken such care of the body because he knows of a legendary artifact that has the power to restore the dead to life—the *Milenian Scepter*. With Emperor Adronius alive, the election of Caracanomnos becomes void. But first, the fabled *Milenian Scepter* must be found.

Adventure Summary

The adventure takes place early in the circle (year) of AC 1,010. Caracanomnos has not been Emperor for very long. The adventure begins in Corisa, the capital city of the Milenian Empire.

The following chapter summaries are presented in the order in which they appear in this book. Although this is the most likely way the adventure will unfold, it is possible to play them in a different sequence.

Chapter 1, Dark Times: In Corisa, the PCs learn how Emperor Caracanomnos came to power, and see his evil influence over the city. They encounter a philosopher speaking publicly against the Emperor. Fearing retribution, angry citizens name the philosopher a traitor and proceed to stone him. If rescued, he relates information about the Followers of Zargos.

They also encounter a rat catcher named Kleom, who is being chased by a rampaging monstrosity (an experimental creature) which has escaped from the Academy of the Arcane. The PCs learn that Kleom is familiar with the city's sewers. This information will be useful later, when the PCs must find an entrance into the crypt beneath the Acropolis.

Word of the PCs' deeds reaches the ears of Senator Tibernos. He arranges a meeting with them, which takes place in the next chapter.

Chapter 2, A Secret Meeting: The Senator meets with the PCs secretly and explains that Emperor Adronius's body has been preserved. If the PCs can recover the *Milenian Scepter*, Adronius can be revived, and the Caracanomnos can be deposed. The PCs must go to the Shrine of Glory and speak with the oracle to learn where the scepter is and how it functions.

Chapter 3, Daughter of Zargos: Spies lurk

everywhere. News of the PCs journey reaches Emperor Caracanomnos, who sends one of his agents, the mighty warrior Vix, to slay them. Vix is said to be the mortal daughter of the Immortal Zargos.

Chapter 4, Eyes into the Future: At the Shrine of Glory, the PCs rescue the oracle from a creature sent to kill him. From the oracle the adventurers learn that the scepter may be found in a forgotten crypt deep beneath the Acropolis. Unfortunately for them, Emperor Caracanomnos resides in the Acropolis, and has converted it into a temple honoring Zargos. Getting in could be difficult. However, if the PCs met the rat catcher named Kleom (in Chapter 1), they might remember that he is very familiar with the sewers beneath the city. Perhaps he knows a secret way into the crypt?

Chapter 5, The Griffon Riders: On the way back to Corisa, the PCs encounter a group of Griffon Riders, who remain loyal to the dead Emperor. The rebels are willing to fly the PCs quickly back to the city.

Chapter 6, Guardian of the Scepter: In the crypt below the Acropolis, the scepter is guarded by a magical warrior. The PCs must use both their wits and their swords to defeat him and obtain the *Milenian Scepter*.

Chapter 7, At the Tower of Xanthipon: Once they get the scepter, they must take it to the Emperor's body, which is at Xanthipon's tower. Here, the PCs meet the archmage and Senator Tibernos. However, Emperor Caracanomnos has tracked them. He arrives for a climactic battle high atop the Tower of Xanthipon.

Chapter 8, The Games: If the PCs should fail to get the scepter or lose it to Caracanomnos in Chapter 7, there is still a chance for victory. The champion of each event during The Games (an athletic festival) may traditionally make a single request of the Emperor. If the PCs manage to win an event, they can demand that Emperor Caracanomnos extinguish the sun, knowing from the oracle that the Emperor cannot do so. With the threat of losing the sun no longer hanging over them, the people rise up to overthrow Emperor Caracanomnos.

Chapter 1: Dark Times

Excerpt from *Prophecies of Phaistos*, as written by the scribe Hestios of Corisa:

"Just as Phaistos prophesied, the Sleep of Darkness came and went. That was many sleeps ago. It seems nothing has changed here at the shrine, but Phaistos assures me that things are much different at Corisa, the city of my birth. Emperor Adronius is dead, and in his place a sorcerer of Zargos has been elected. How could the Senators be so blind? Has the evil past of the Followers of Zargos been forgotten?"

"Earlier, the oracle spoke to me of the chosen heroes of Halav. 'They have come to Corisa,' he said, 'where their destiny awaits. In the city, the people still mourn the death of Emperor Adronius, and silently curse the oppression levied upon them by his successor. Few are brave enough to speak their hearts. Those who do are persecuted out of fear and ignorance. It is just such a brave man the heroes shall meet; a man who shall lead them upon the first step toward their destiny . . .'"

"The oracle's words fill me with a longing to return to Corisa. I fear for my family. Yet, I realize my duty is here, for the prophecies of Phaistos must be recorded so that all may know of the courage and sacrifice of the heroes of Halav."

How They Get Here

If the player characters are natives of the Hollow World, there are several ways you can motivate them to come to the Milenian Empire, and to the city of Corisa in particular.

The Games: The adventurers might come to Corisa to watch (or even participate) in a week-long festival called simply "The Games." The best athletes of the Empire gather to compete in many different events: archery, boxing, chariot racing, diskos throwing, horse racing, javelin throwing, jumping, the pankration (a combination of boxing and wrestling), the pentathlon

(diskos, javelin, jumping, running, and wrestling), and wrestling. The grand champion of each event may make a request of the Emperor, usually for money or valuables.

Pursuing a Campaign Goal: If you are currently running a HOLLOW WORLD® campaign, the PCs might need to visit Corisa to further their campaign goal (whatever that goal might be). Maybe they need information from one of the NPCs, such as Senator Tibernos, the mage Xanthipon, or the philosopher Epaminos. Any of these characters can bring the PCs into the quest for the Milenian Scepter.

Strange Vision: The PCs are the chosen heroes of the Immortal Halav. He might send them a vision in their sleep, revealing that they are needed in Corisa. If so, read the following to the players:

You dream you are a mighty eagle, flying in the sunlight high above a city. Suddenly, the sun dims and winks out, leaving you in utter darkness. Confusion and vertigo grip your mind. You plummet toward the screams of frightened citizens.

Finally, there is a light in the darkness. You swoop toward it and see that it is a man holding an iron scepter that glows like the sun. He raises his arm and you land upon it with a flutter of wings. With sad eyes, the man looks at you and says, "Corisa." A blinding light bursts before your eagle eyes and you awake.

The man in the vision is the dead Emperor. If the PCs own Milenian coins (which are stamped with Emperor Adronius's profile), or have seen him before, they recognize him.

If the PCs are on the surface of the Known World, getting them into the Hollow World can be a bit more tricky. The most direct way is to have the Immortal Halav intrude upon the PCs' lives and whisk them to the Hollow World. This could occur on any normal day, or while the PCs are in the middle of an adventure.

A huge hand of pure energy rises from the ground and engulfs the adventurers. It draws them harmlessly down through the planet's crust and deposits them in the Hollow World within

sight of the city of Corisa. The hand vanishes. If you wish, as the PCs descend rapidly through the earth in the hand's grasp, they have the same vision as described previously.

To overcome the language barrier, you may assume that Halav enchants the PCs, giving them the ability to understand and speak any language spoken to them. This power lasts until they complete the adventure.

The Scene

If this is the PCs' first visit to the Hollow World, be sure to stress its peculiarities:

- The sun hangs eternally at high noon. It emits a reddish light, quite different from the yellow light of the Known World.
- Miles above, huge land masses float through the air, circling the crimson sun. As they pass over, the Floating Continents cast shadows upon the land. Milenians use these to mark the passing of time.
- There is no horizon, only plains, hills, mountains, lakes, rivers, and oceans continuing as far as the eye can see. The world eventually curves upward and its terrain features become blurred by atmospheric haze.

As the PCs approach the city, read the following boxed text aloud:

The metropolis sprawling before you is surrounded by an immense stone wall that stands at least 50' high. The wall is so wide that you can see soldiers driving chariots along the top.

Spaced along the impressive wall are towers reaching a height of about 60'. On top of the towers you can see catapults and ballistae.

Gates in the wall consist of iron double doors and iron portcullises. The gates stand open, allowing people to pass in and out. Soldiers dressed in hardened leather armor and carrying spears watch the gate traffic, and tax collectors levy fees on merchandise coming and going.

Beyond the walls, you can see the tops of towering stone buildings and the heads of titanic statues. Toward the center of the city is a flat-topped hill, upon which stand three elaborately constructed buildings.

People are everywhere: buying, selling, or trading their wares, or going about their own errands. The city is obviously a place of great wealth and power.

The PCs will not be stopped by the soldiers at the gate. Adventurers are not uncommon, even those from foreign lands.

The following are just a few of the things the PCs might notice about the Milenians and their city:

- Corisa is a city of wonder. Milenians are talented architects and builders. They construct airy buildings with long colonnades of towering stone pillars, much like those of the ancient Greeks of our own world. They also erect huge, graceful, realistic statues of gold, silver, and marble. In the poorer districts, homes are made of wood or mud-brick with shingled or tiled roofs. Everywhere, the streets are paved with cobblestones. People gather in large plazas paved with colored cobblestones that form intricate mosaics to gossip and market their wares.
- The majority of Milenians have brown hair and eyes, and olive-colored skin. Few have blond or red hair. It seems blue eyes are very rare. Most are of average height and in good health. Few Milenians are overweight or sickly.
- Men typically wear their curly hair short, often with beards and mustaches or with beards and no mustaches. Though the women have long hair, it is usually worn up in a variety of styles from simple pony-tails to complex and elegant coils.
- Milenian women wear long, sleeveless gowns of linen or silk. Men wear thigh-length, short-sleeved linen tunics with a belt and leather sandals. The colors and decorations of a Milenian's clothing denote his or her wealth and

social status. The tunic or gown of a slave is made of coarse linen dyed a bland gray or brown. Milenians of higher status dye their clothes with increasingly gaudy colors and decorate them with vivid patterns and embroidered pictures of mythical beasts or animals. Milenians of both sexes are fond of jewelry, typically necklaces and bracelets. Even slaves wear cheap adornments of beads or seashells.

- Soldiers are seen escorting work gangs of sour-faced slaves and patrolling the streets in chariots or on foot. They wear an unusual type of armor. It consists of a leather cuirass (torso armor) boiled in wax for strength. This armor, called cuir-boulli, conforms to the wearer's shape. Soldiers also wear metal helmets, and leather vambraces and greaves on their arms and legs. They carry round shields about four feet in diameter painted with images of fierce monsters. The average soldier is armed with a spear and short sword. Others carry pikes or long bows
- The PCs notice that outside of many shops and homes candles of various sizes and shapes have been left burning. Since the sun always shines, these candles are obviously not burning for light. Should they ask someone, the adventurers learn that the candles are lit in honor of the dead Emperor Adronius, and are meant to guide his soul through the darkness of Limbo.

Staging Hint: Try to establish a general feeling of discomfort and oppression among the populace of Corisa. People go quickly about their business with grim faces. The PCs might come upon a group of children laughing and playing in the street, only to see them hushed and hurried home by their parents. People tend to glance at the sun anxiously—before the Sleep of Darkness, they took its warmth and light for granted.



Events

As the adventurers explore the city, they happen upon the following events.

Up With the New...

Three street gates pierce the city wall. This event takes place at whatever gate the PCs choose to enter.

A small crowd has gathered at a monument near the gate. Five craftsmen are laboring to cut an elaborate statue from a huge chunk of obsidian. They are over halfway finished, which must have taken weeks of work.

The obsidian statue is 30' tall. It resembles a woman in torso armor that conforms to her muscular body. The figure wears greaves and vambraces, and holds a round shield and spear. On the shield is emblazoned a black sun shining black rays. Her head is protected by a helm adorned by a flowing black plume. From the eye slits in the helmet, her eye glow red, obviously set with some sort of gemstone.

As the craftsmen send obsidian chips flying, about 20 people watch quietly. A young boy looks up at an older man and says, "Is she really an Immortal, father?" You cannot quite hear the old man's whispered reply.

The woman depicted by the statue is Vix, a warrior and ally of Emperor Caracanomnos. For more details about her, see the "NPC Roster."

The PCs will likely have a few questions for the old man and his son. The town Milenians, named Old Hesiodius and Theognus, respectively, answer the adventurer's questions after a formal introduction. Hesiodius introduces himself as a master craftsman and merchant who has been given the commission of overseeing the construction of the monument. He has taken his son here today to observe the craftsmen under his employ, and to check on their progress.

The most likely questions and answers are the following ones.

Who does the statue represent? "Her name is Vix," says Hesiodius. "She is a warrior without equal. Recently, I watched her soundly beat

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Brutius of Laxan in an unofficial bout. Brutius is the reigning boxing champion. If Vix should enter the Games, as I hear she may, I am certain she will fare well."

What are the Games? "The festival runs all week," says young Theognus. "The best athletes from all over the Empire will be there! Father has promised to take me to the stadium next sleep to watch the chariot races. That's my favorite event!"

Why is the statue being built? "The Emperor plans to present it as a gift to Vix," says the old man. "It is rumored that she will soon become the Emperor's bride."

Is Vix an Immortal? "Some say that she is the mortal daughter of the Immortal Zargos," says Hesiodius. "I do not doubt this myself, for I have seen her in the flesh when she posed for the sketches I made when planning the statue. Her skin is as black as the obsidian yonder, and her eyes do indeed glitter with a crimson light. I am no coward, but it took all of my courage to steady my hand when drawing her portrait. To be in her presence is to know the vital majesty of the Immortals."

What does the sun emblem mean? "I do not know for certain what the black sun means," says Hesiodius. "I've only seen it worn by Vix. Perhaps it is worn in honor of her father, the Immortal Zargos."

Who is Zargos? "I know only that he is an Immortal," whispers Hesiodius. "His followers are called Zargosians. They are greatly feared. The Emperor himself is a follower of Zargos. Although I am a loyal Citizen, and would never admit to uttering a traitorous word, I fear dark times await the Empire."

Hesiodius: AC 9; Lvl 0; hp 5; MV 120' (40'); #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg 1 (punch); Save as Normal Man; ML 7; AL L.

Theognus: AC 9; Lvl 0; hp 2; MV 120' (40'); #AT nil; Dmg nil; Save as Normal Man; ML 5; AL L.

...Down With the Old

When and if the adventurer's approach the Acropolis, read or paraphrase the following:

The Acropolis is a high, flat-topped hill surrounded by a wall. Atop it is the palace of the Emperor.

A large crowd has gathered at the northern side of the hill, just outside the protective wall. Here, soldiers, slaves, and engineers labor to topple an immense marble statue that stands before a gate in the wall. The statue is of a stately man of about 50 who wears a simple tunic and a crown of olive leaves. Wreaths of flowers have been laid at the statue's base, but have been trampled into the mud by the workers. In the crowd, women weep openly and men shake their heads sadly. Many of them hold burning candles.

One of the male citizens says, "His body was never found. I say Emperor Adronius still lives!"

A woman beside him replies, "Hush, my husband, if you value the light." Both look anxiously toward the red sun.

If the adventurers received the vision from Halav described earlier, they recognize the statue as the image of the same man they saw in their dream—Emperor Adronius.

If the PCs introduce themselves to the couple, the man says, "I am Citizen Alexar of Corisa, and this is my wife, Thesna."

Alexar and Thesna will answer the PCs' questions to the best of their ability. The following are the most likely questions.

How did the Emperor die? "Alas, with the death of the sun," says Alexar, "death came also to our proud Emperor. During the Sleep of Darkness, madness swept through the city like a plague. People took to the streets in fits of rage and murder. On his way to the Senate, our Emperor was struck down by a horde of madmen."

What is the Sleep of Darkness? "For one sleep, the sun died," says Thesna. "Darkness swallowed the world. We thought it was the end of life. The new emperor restored the sun."

Why do you think the Emperor is still alive? Thesna puts her hand on her husband's arm, and he takes it into his own hands. "I must say what I believe," he says to her. Turning to the PCs, he continues, "The Emperor's body disap-

peared. In the confusion, is it not possible that he escaped? I have heard rumors that Emperor Adronius lives, and will soon return to reclaim his throne. I pray it is true, for Caracanomnos, the new emperor, is an evil man. During the Sleep of Darkness, he came before the Senate and said that his magic had taken away the sun, and he would only return it if he was elected Emperor. The frightened Senators agreed, and now Caracanomnos has power over us all."

Do others feel the same way you do? "Yes," says Alexar, "but most fear the power of Caracanomnos, and believe he controls the sun as if it were the mere flame of a candle. I do not believe this. I think the Sleep of Darkness was an omen from the Immortals, but as to what it foretells, I cannot guess."

"Shortly we are going to the Senate," says Thesna. "The philosopher Epamino plans to speak about these matters. You may join us."

Alexar and Thesna: AC 9; hp 5, 3; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg 1 (punch); MV 120' (40'); Save as Normal Man; ML 5; AL L.

The Rat-Man

This encounter can take place while the PCs are headed to the Senate with Alexar and Thesna, or at any other convenient time. When you are ready, read the following to the players:

While you are walking down the street, you hear a cry for help. Looking, you see a grimy human hand and arm sticking up between the bars of a sewer grate. The person is frantically trying to unlatch a pin that holds the grate closed.

"Someone p-p-p-please help me!"

People are forming a crowd around the grate, but no one is moving to help the man. Leaning on his spear, a burly Milenian soldier says, "Ha! The dirty rat-man has caught himself in his own trap."

The man trapped under the grate is Kleom. He makes a meager living by catching rats and other vermin in the sewers, then selling the animals for their hides and meat. Kleom speaks with a stutter.

Kleom: 4th level thief; AC 9; hp 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger) or 1d6 (spear); MV 120' (40'); Save as T4; ML 6; AL N; THAC0 19; SA spear (+2 to hit, +1 damage). More detailed information about this character can be found in the "NPC Roster" at the end of this book.

If the PCs do nothing, Kleom manages to unlatch the grate and scramble onto the street. "Run! It's c-c-coming!" he says. The next moment, the tentacles of the monstrosity coil through the grate and rip it from its hinges. Citizens scream and run as the creature starts pulling its massive body up from the sewer.

If the PCs help Kleom, they pull him from the sewer just before the monstrosity arrives as described above.

During the battle, the bystanders flee. However, one Milenian soldier named Bornos remains to help the PCs fight the monstrosity. After 1d10 + 4 rounds, four more soldiers arrive to join in the fray.

Bornos: 3rd level fighter; AC 6 (cuir-boulli); hp 22; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword or spear); MV 90' (30'); Save as F3; ML 9; AL L; THAC0 19; SA spear (+2 to hit, +1 damage).

Soldiers (4): 1st level fighters; AC 5 (cuir-boulli and shield); hp 8, 7, 6, 6; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword) or 1d6 (spear); MV 90' (30'); Save as F1; ML 8; AL L; THAC0 19; SA spear (+2 to hit, +1 damage).

Kleom is not known for his bravery; he hides and watches nearby. It is suggested that he not engage in combat. Kleom has important information for the PCs, and if he should die, he won't be able to relate it to the adventurers.

This monstrosity, the lyadrachnus, was created through magical experimentation at the Academy of the Arcane, from which it recently escaped. It is a hybrid, combining the worst features of a caecilia, giant leech, and octopus. The creature has only one thought—to grasp and devour anyone it can catch.

Lyadrachnus: AC 6; HD 6*; hp 40; 8 tentacles/1 bite; Dmg 1d6 each/1d8; MV 60' (20'); Save as F3; ML 12; AL N; THAC0 14; XP 500. More detailed information about this creature can be found in the "Milenian Magic and Monsters" chapter of this book.

ПОЛІТОМІЯ



Questioning Kleom

After the battle, the PCs will probably have several questions for the grimy little man they rescued from the sewer. Kleom has nothing to hide, and answers their questions.

Where did that *thing* come from? "It was in the m-muck and t-tried to g-g-grab me with its t-t-tentacles," says the rat catcher. "I d-don't know where it c-c-c-came from."

What were you doing in the sewer? "It's w-where I live and w-work. Somebody has to c-catch the r-r-rats, don't they?"

Can you show us where it attacked you? "Yes. I s-suppose that would be best, s-s-since there might be more of them in my s-sewer."

Into the Sewer

It's possible that the players will want to solve the mystery of the lyadrachnus, and send their characters into the sewer. Because the creature left no trail, it is virtually impossible to trace it back to the Academy of the Arcane. The PCs will probably never discover its origin, but they may find something more important—the forgotten crypt beneath the Acropolis, wherein lies the *Milenian Scepter*.

For a description of the sewer, and what might be encountered there, see Chapter 6. Note that if Alexar and Thesna are with the PCs, the couple will not accompany them into the sewer.

Tale of the Griffon Rider

This event takes place when the PCs enter any of the three plazas in the city. The plazas are where merchants sell their wares and Citizens gather to trade goods and gossip.

When you are ready to run the following event, read the following aloud:

The plaza is set with multi-colored cobblestones forming intricate mosaics. The patterns are difficult to see, however, because of the many people crowding the plaza. Hundreds of Citizens have gathered here to buy, sell, and trade goods of all sorts. It is a noisy place, with merchants shouting prices and proclaiming the quality of their wares.

There is not only an abundance of sights and sounds, but also of smells. With every few steps you take, another scent fills your nose, whether from perfumes, incense, spices, or freshly cooked foods.

Toward the center of the plaza stands a wooden stage. On the stage, a burly Milenian man is in the process of auctioning seven slaves, all of whom are also Milenian. At the back of the stage is a cage of iron bars covered by a tarp. It is impossible to see what is inside. Six guards holding long spears form a circle around the cage.

Curiosity will likely lead the PCs to investigate the mysterious cage. The guards prevent anyone, including the PCs, from getting close enough to the cage to look under the tarp. However, noticing the PCs' interest, a bystander speaks up. "There's a griffon in the cage," he says. "I hear it was the very mount flown by Daskus himself."

The adventurers will probably have a few questions for the bystander, a young merchant named Laertius. The most likely questions and answers are the following ones.

Who is Daskus? "He was the leader of the Griffon Riders, and a proud warrior. He and his men would not acknowledge the election of Emperor Caracanomnos, and were ordered to disband by the Emperor. They refused, and tried to flee the city. Daskus stayed behind to fight so that his men might escape. Both he and his mount were captured, but Daskus soon managed to escape. I hear he has left Corisa for Laxan, where his men await him."

Who are the Griffon Riders? "They were a fighting unit, brave men who flew through the air on the backs of fierce griffons. The Griffon Riders have always been known for their loyalty. It does not surprise me that they refused to submit to Emperor Caracanomnos."

Why is the griffon here? "It will be auctioned momentarily. Though I am certain it is trained well, I can see little value for such a creature. The beasts are said to be notoriously loyal to the Griffon Riders. I suppose it will meet its fate as a stuffed trophy in some wealthy citizen's estate."

Laertius the Merchant: normal human; AC 9;

hp 7; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); MV 120' (40'); Save as Normal Man; ML 8; AL L.

After the PCs have spoken with Laertius, it is time for the griffon to be auctioned. Read the following to the players:

The burly Milenian man on the stage says, "And now it is time for a very special item!" With a flourish he jerks the tarp off the cage. Surprised, the griffon screams its eagle-roar, causing the crowd to chatter excitedly and the guards to step back from the cage nervously.

"Who shall make the first offer," continues the large man jingling a ring of keys, "and take the key to this magnificent beast's cage?"

In the next instant, a man wearing a hooded cloak jumps onto the stage. His hood falls back to reveal short, curly black hair and piercing blue eyes. Emblazoned on his leather torso armor is a yellow eagle claw. Someone near you cries, "It's Daskus!"

The warrior grabs for the keys, but they are batted out of the auctioneer's hand, and land right at your feet!

The PCs have several options: toss the keys to Daskus, toss the keys to the auctioneer or the guards, or do nothing.

If the PCs aid Daskus, the auctioneer (named Perse) cries, "Traitors! Stop them!" The guards attack Daskus and the adventurers. The crowd begins cheering for Daskus and the PCs. When the cage is unlocked, either by Daskus, a PC, or some other friendly NPC, such as Laertius, the griffon emerges. Daskus climbs upon its back, and the pair fly away. The PCs can easily disappear into the crowd before more guards arrive.

If the PCs toss the keys to Perse or the guards, Daskus fights to get the keys. He does not attack the PCs, unless the PCs attack him. The crowd cheers for Daskus. Some of the bystanders actually help. Assuming the PCs do not attack the bystanders, the guards are quickly overwhelmed by the mob, and Daskus flies away on his griffon.

If the PCs do nothing, Laertius tosses the keys to Daskus. Others in the crowd help as described above, and the griffon rider escapes on his fierce mount.

Perse the Auctioneer: normal human; AC 9; hp 4; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg 1 (fist); MV 120' (40'); Save as Normal Man; ML 5; AL L.

Soldiers (6): 1st level fighters; AC 5 (cuir-boulli and shield); hp 8, 7, 6, 5, 4; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 1d6 (short sword) or 1d6 + 1 (spear); MV 90' (30'); Save as F1; SA spear (+2 attack, +1 damage); ML 8; AL N.

Daskus the Griffon Rider: 6th level fighter; AC 5 (cuir-boulli, Dexterity); hp 40; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 + 1 (short sword, Strength) or 1d6 + 1 (javelin, Strength); MV 120' (40'); Save as F6; SA javelin (+2 attack, +1 damage); ML 10; AL L; THAC0 17; S 15, D 15, Co 13, I 10, W 11, Ch 13.

The Stoning of Epaminos

This event takes place on the steps of the Senate, preferably after the PCs have encountered Alexar and Thesna near the Acropolis. Read or paraphrase the following to the players when their characters approach the Senate building:

The Senate is a tremendous building made of engraved stone blocks and columns. Steps lead up to the second floor, where the main entrance is located.

At the moment, a crowd of about 100 Milenians has gathered at the base of the steps. Most are common citizens. Some are soldiers. However, one person appears quite different. He wears a hooded, black robe and black gloves. None of his skin, including his face, is exposed. Everyone in the crowd has given this man a wide berth; no one stands within 10' of him, except eight soldiers who form a ring around him.

About midway up the steps, an elderly man wearing a dark green tunic is addressing the audience.

"Behold our glorious sun," says the man with a wave toward the sky. "Can any mortal hold dominion over such a wonder? I say no!"

Several young men and women, who also wear dark green tunics, applaud and cheer. "Heed Epaminos!" they cry. "He speaks with a heart of wisdom and truth!"

Other people shake their heads doubtfully, and look fearfully toward the mysterious man in the black robe. Some simply watch and listen.

Epaminos continues his speech, "When the Sleep of Darkness befell us, the sorcerer Caracanomnos claimed it was his doing. Our elected representatives believed him without question. How could this happen? Why were the oracles not consulted? Why were the words of Caracanomnos taken as truth? I say our Senators were tricked by the sorcerer's guile and threats! I say the oracles must be heard! I say another election must be held!"

Suddenly, utter blackness engulfs you. You hear the screams of the crowd. Just as suddenly, light returns to the world, and you see a globe of darkness streaking up toward the sun.

The man in black robes says, "Behold the anger of Emperor Caracanomnos! The words of Epaminos have offended your Emperor!"

A woman screams, "The philosopher has brought doom upon us all!"

A young man cries, "Death to Epaminos!" He hurls a stone at the old philosopher, striking him in the shin. Others in the crowd begin to gather stones.

The man in the black robe is a Zargosian cleric named Icademus. He caused the darkness by using the innate ability of all Zargosian clerics to cast a *darkness* spell. He cast the spell on a sling stone, then hurled it into the sky. This trick has turned the crowd into an angry mob out to kill Epaminos.

When Epaminos is struck by the stone, he drops to one knee and tries to shield himself with his arms. The philosopher's five students (the young people wearing green tunics) move to protect him with their own bodies. They will not fight back, as they are pacifists. The students have the same game statistics as typical Milenians (see below).

When the stoning begins, most of the people leave out of fear and repulsion. They simply don't want to take part in murder, or risk the Emperor's wrath by interfering. However, 16 of

them are angry enough to remain and stone the philosopher. If the PCs should attack them, the people flee—they're brave enough to stone an old man, but not to fight an armed party of adventurers.

Also in the crowd are eight soldiers. They are under the command of Icademus, and stand in a circle around the cleric to protect him. When the PCs interfere, whether or not Icademus orders the soldiers to attack them is up to you. The cleric's main objective was simply to turn the people against the philosopher, which he has done. Icademus does not necessarily want to see Epaminos killed (which could make the philosopher a martyr), and might allow the PCs to rescue him.

Epaminos the Philosopher: normal human; AC 9; hp 5; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg 1 (fist); MV 120' (40'); Save as Normal Man; ML 5; AL L.

Typical Milenian Citizen: normal human; AC 9; hp 6; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg 1 (fist) or 1d3 (thrown rock); MV 120' (40'); Save as Normal Man; ML 5; AL L.

Icademus: 3rd level cleric of Zargos; AC 9; hp 13; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 1d4 (sling) or 1d6 (short sword) or by spell; MV 120' (40'); Save as C3; ML 6; AL C. Spells: 1st level—*cause fear*, *cause light wounds*. Icademus also has the innate ability to cast a *darkness* spell three times per sleep. He wears heavy robes because, as with all Zargosians, direct sunlight burns him, causing 1 hit point of damage per round.

Soldiers (8): 1st level fighters; AC 5 (cuir-boulli and shield); hp 8, 8, 7, 6, 6, 5, 4, 4; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 1d6 (short sword); MV 90' (30'); Save as F1; ML 8; AL N.

If Epaminos should be killed, the students take his body away. Icademus (assuming he is alive) orders the crowd to depart, saying that Emperor Caracanomnos has been appeased by the philosopher's death. The students allow the PCs to accompany them to Epaminos's home, which is not far (the exact location is up to you).

If the PCs rescue Epaminos, he and his students flee with them to the nearby home of one of his pupils (the exact location is up to you). Icademus will likely allow them to escape, as he has accomplished his mission of discrediting the philosopher. However, if the PCs have killed citizens or attacked him, the cleric may try to hunt them down. How

Icademus reacts is up to you.

In either case, if Alexar and Thesna accompanied the PCs to the speech, you must decide what has become of them. They are not warriors; when the fighting begins, it is most likely that they disappear into the crowd. However, as a twist, you might decide that they are so overcome with fear of Icademus that they take part in the stoning of Epaminos!

Staging Hint: If the PCs have killed anyone, or attacked Icademus, you might consider them to be hunted fugitives. Try to bring about a feeling in the players that their characters are being watched and pursued. In the streets, citizens point at the PCs and talk about them in hushed whispers. Most people avoid the adventurers like the plague. Groups of soldiers are looking for the PCs, and will try to capture them if possible.

Speaking with Epaminos

The PCs will have several questions for the philosopher. Since they risked their own lives to save him, Epaminos is willing to trust them and answer their questions. If Epaminos was killed, his students will answer their questions.

Who was the man in the black robe? "His name is Icademus," says the philosopher. "He is a cleric among the Followers of Zargos. He has tried to persecute me on many occasions, and now that I have spoken publicly against Caracanomnos, he will have me arrested."

Who are the Followers of Zargos? "They honor Zargos, an evil Immortal who desires only darkness and death. It is through him that they have gained power over light, darkness, and shadow. However, they pay a high price for this magic, for the sun burns them like fire. This is why they wear robes to cover their faces and skin. Zargosians are an evil, manipulative order, and have managed to place one of their number as Emperor. Woe to us all!"

What is the Sleep of Darkness? "Not long ago, the sun vanished from the sky for one sleep. With the darkness, madness came to the Empire. Our wise and good Emperor Adronius was killed in a riot while on his way to the Senate. There, the sorcerer Caracanomnos appeared before the Senators and proclaimed that he had taken away

the sun, and that he would only return it if elected Emperor. The majority of Senators foolishly agreed.

"I believe the sorcerer tricked the Senators. I, and others, do not believe he has the power to darken the sun. Only the oracles can say for certain, and they were never consulted."

Who are the oracles? "They reside at the shrines of the Immortals. Oracles have the power to see the future, and to tell truth from lies."

Who else feels the way you do? "Alas, the resistance is small, but it continues to grow. One sleep, Caracanomnos will be overthrown. However, it is difficult, for his spies are everywhere. They watch our every move. Perhaps someone such as you would be able to operate without suspicion. Will you help us?"

How can we help? "It is not for me to say. Go to the Bathhouse of Lucratia. I will send a messenger ahead of you. You will be expected. May your destinies bring freedom to the Empire!"

Where Next?

If the PCs went into the sewer with Kleom, you should continue immediately with Chapter 6. When they return to the city streets, finish the encounters in Chapter 1.

After the encounter with Epaminos, the PCs should be headed to the Bathhouse of Lucratia. Continue with Chapter 2.



Chapter 2: A Secret Meeting

Excerpt from *Prophecies of Phaistos*, as written by the scribe Hestios of Corisa:

"The oracle would take no food this sleep. He declared that he will not eat until the heroes arrive. I pray they hurry, for Phaistos is not a large man, being mostly sun-weathered skin and jutting bones. I must have faith that he knows best. Perhaps fasting will heighten the clarity and intensity of his visions."

"The following prophecy he spoke while lying on his sleeping mat. Whether he was awake, or speaking his dreams aloud, I do not know. 'The fog is warm and soothing,' he said. 'Tibernos awaits within. He is a wise man; never fooled by the slippery words of Caracanomnos. With Halav's blessing, Tibernos shall set the heroes upon the right path. But the sorcerer has many eyes. They are discovered! The waters of the bath flow red...'"

"To my frustration, the oracle spoke no more of this. It seems danger has found the heroes in Corisa. I pray for their victory."

How They Get Here

After speaking to the philosopher Epaminos in Chapter 1, and agreeing to help the resistance, the PCs were instructed to go to the Bathhouse of Lucratia. The philosopher tells them how to find this place, sending one of his students as a guide if the PCs wish.

If the PCs never encountered Epaminos, you can still get them to go to the bathhouse. Senator Tibernos needs a group of adventurers to recover the *Milenian Scepter*. After the events in Chapter 1 (especially if the PCs killed the lyadrachnus), the Senator becomes aware of them and sends a messenger. While the adventurers walk down the street, a boy bumps into them and passes one of the PCs a crumpled bit of parchment. It reads: "The soothing waters at the Bathhouse of Lucratia await you."

The Scene

When the PCs enter the bathhouse, read the following aloud:

The first thing you notice upon entering the bathhouse is the moisture in the air and the strong smell of scented oils and lotions. It is pleasant and peaceful here.

From her position on a stone sofa covered with silk cushions, a very large woman with long hair done up in a huge coil calls to you. "Welcome to my bathhouse," she says. "If you would be so kind, please leave a tribute before proceeding to the changing rooms." Gold and silver bracelets jingle on her flabby arm as she gestures toward a stone pedestal. A slot has been cut in the top of the pedestal for coins to be dropped inside.

The woman is Lucratia. She watches closely to see what types of coins the PCs drop into the pedestal. The minimum of one silver piece is required for a bath. Lucratia gladly accepts coins of greater denominations without offering to make change.

If the PCs begin asking her questions about the Emperor or the resistance, she waves an arm to silence them. "I know nothing of these matters," Lucratia says. "I run an honest business and always pay my taxes without delay. I don't want any trouble. All I can offer you is a warm bath and soothing massage."

The Bathhouse

The following numbered areas correspond to the numbers on the map of the bathhouse. An archway in the west wall leads to the men's locker room.

1. Foyer: This is where Lucratia greets her customers and accepts payment. The simple furnishings consist of two stone sofas covered with silk cushions and a small stone pedestal. Coins are dropped into the top of the pedestal, and are removed by unlocking a small iron door set in it near the bottom. (Currently there are 1,230 sp, 645 ep, and 287 gp in the pedestal.) An arch in

THORNY WORLD



the north wall leads into the lounge. In the east and west walls arches open onto changing rooms, one for men and one for women.

2. Men's Changing Room: Wooden benches line the walls. Linen loincloths hang from pegs. These are as bathing suits, but are optional; nude bathing is not frowned upon. In the north wall, an archway opens onto the bath chamber.

Currently, there are three men here in various states of undress. They ignore the PCs unless spoken to, and know nothing about matters important to the adventurers.

Typical Milenian Citizens (3): normal humans; AC 9; hp 6, 5, 3; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg 1 (fist); MV 120' (40'); Save as Normal Man; ML 5; AL L.

3. Men's Locker Room: Dozens of stone chests sit in wall niches. The lids of empty chests are open with a key on a copper chain inside. Each customer places his belongings inside a vacant chest, and wears the key around his neck. Guarding the locker room against thieves is a burly Milenian man named Byzrat.

Byzrat: 4th level fighter; AC 9; hp 27; #AT 1; THAC0 17 (+ 2 due to Strength); Dmg 1d6 + 2 (short sword, Strength); MV 120' (40'); Save as F4; ML 9; AL L.

4. Women's Changing Room: This chamber has the same features as the men's changing room (see above). No one is here now.

5. Women's Locker Room: This chamber has the same features as the men's locker room (see above). The belongings are guarded by an athletic woman named Myrtia.

Myrtia: 5th level fighter; AC 9; hp 33; #AT 1; THAC0 17 (+ 1 due to Strength); Dmg 1d6 + 1 (short sword, Strength); MV 120' (40'); Save as F5; ML 8; AL L.

6. Lounge: Several comfortable benches and chairs line the walls of this chamber. A young boy sells flagons of chilled wine for 1 sp from a tall clay urn. A man and two women are sitting here, gossiping quietly. No one pays much attention to the PCs. An archway in the south wall leads to the foyer, and another in the north wall

opens onto the bath chamber.

Typical Milenian Citizens (4): normal humans; AC 9; hp 7, 6, 6, 4; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg 1 (fist); MV 120' (40'); Save as Normal Man; ML 5; AL L.

7. Bath Chamber: The stone walls of this chamber are covered by an arched wooden ceiling that reaches a height of 30 feet. In the center of the room is a stone pool filled with clean water to a depth of 10'. The pool is warmed by a natural hot spring, and smells thickly of minerals.

Along the walls are several niches containing stone tables. Customers lie on the tables to lounge about or receive a massage.

Sitting by the pool, bathing in the water, or having a massage are 11 normal citizens. Also in this chamber are five of Senator Tibernos's bodyguards. To the PCs, the bodyguards look just like typical Milenians.

Typical Milenian Citizens (11): normal humans; AC 9; hp 7, 7, 6, 6, 5, 4, 4, 4, 3, 2; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg 1 (fist); MV 120' (40'); Save as Normal Man; ML 5; AL L.

Bodyguards (5): 3rd level fighters; AC 9; hp 21, 17, 16; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); MV 120' (40'); Save as F3; ML 9; AL L. The bodyguards have concealed daggers by rolling them in linen towels.

8. Steam Bath: This stone chamber is 10' tall. Stone benches rest against the walls. A brazier in the center of the room contains smoldering coals and hot rocks. Next to it is a clay urn filled with water. To create steam, bathers dip water from the urn and pour it on the rocks.

Currently enjoying a steam bath (and waiting for the PCs) are Senator Tibernos and a lady cleric of Halav named Tassia.

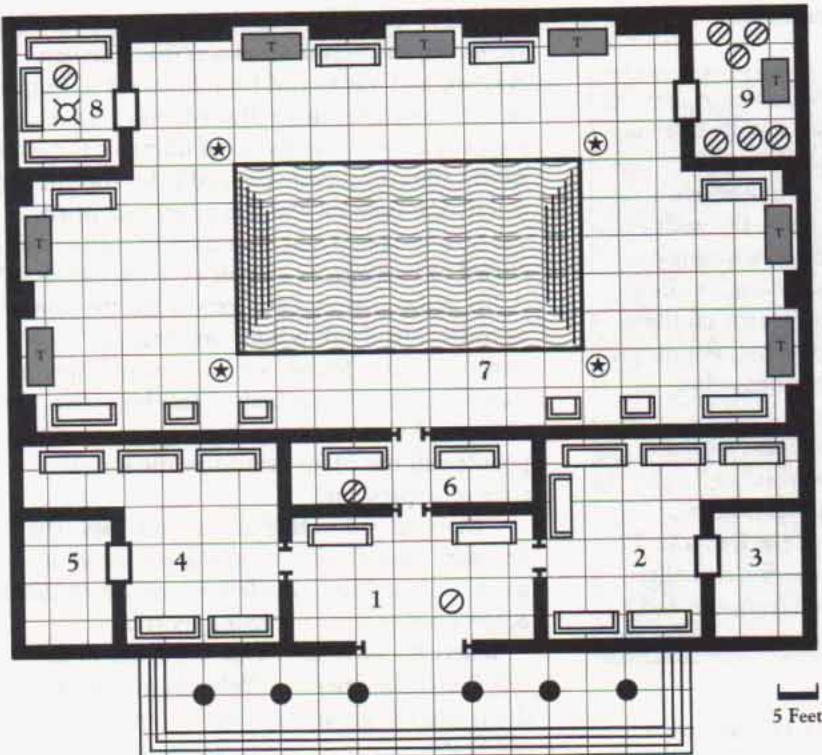
Senator Tibernos: 7th level fighter; AC 4 (*ring of protection* + 3 and Dexterity bonus); hp 47; #AT 1; THAC0 15 (+ 1 due to Strength); Dmg 1d4 + 1 (dagger, Strength) or 1d6 + 2 (*short sword* + 1, Strength); MV 120' (40'); Save as F7; ML 9; AL L; S15 I16 W13 D16 Co10 Ch17. His dagger is concealed on his person, but his sword is secured in the locker room. More detailed information about this character can be found in the "NPC Roster."

A SECRET MEETING

Bathhouse of Lucratia



KEY	
	Stairs
■ ■	Archway
[Door]	Door
●	Pillar
○	Pedestal
○○	Urn
□□□	Bench
■■■■■	Table
★	Statue
○○○○	Brazier
~~~~~	Water



**Tassia "Red-Hair":** 6th level cleric of Halav; AC 2 (*cuir-boulli +1, shield +1, Dexterity*); hp 31; #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg 1d6+2 (*spear +1, Strength*) or 1d6+1 (*short sword, Strength*); MV 120' (40'); Save as C6; ML 9; AL L; SA spear (+2 attack, +1 damage); S 15, I 14, W 16, D 13, Co 12, Ch 16. Spells: 1st level—*cure light wounds, remove fear*. 2nd level—*bless, resist fire*. 3rd level—*striking*. Note that all of Tassia's armor, weapons, and equipment is locked in the women's locker room. More information about this character can be found in the "NPC Roster."

**9. Storage:** The door to this room is locked. Inside are pots and urns filled with scented oils used for massage, stacks of fresh linen towels and loincloths, and brushes used to clean the floors and pool.



### Events

Allow the PCs some time to enjoy the bathhouse. Perhaps they would like to bathe, take a massage, or speak with some of the people here.

If the adventurers begin talking about "dangerous" topics (such as Emperor Caracanomnos, Emperor Adronius, or the philosopher Epaminos), assume that one of the bodyguards overhears and interrupts the conversation. "Perhaps a friend of mine can enlighten you on these matters, good Citizen," says the bodyguard. "Why don't you join me in the steam bath?"

Eventually, if the PCs have not explored the steam bath on their own, one of the bodyguards approaches them. He invites them into the steam bath as described above.

### In the Steam Bath

Senator Tibernos and Tassia are waiting to speak with the PCs in the privacy of the steam bath. The bodyguards wait outside, in the bath chamber (area 7), discreetly keeping other bathers from entering the steam bath.

When the PCs enter the steam bath, read the following aloud:

Steam fills this chamber with a thin, hot fog. A stone brazier in the center of the room contains smoldering coals and hot rocks. Standing next to it is a clay urn filled with water. Stone benches rest against the walls.

Sitting beside one another on a bench is a middle-aged man and a young woman. Both wear linen loincloths. Sweat glistens on their muscular bodies. The woman's hair is a deep red color; its coils droop wetly about her shoulders.

Looking at you, the woman says with a smirk, "Our heroes have come at last."

The man says, "Welcome. I am Senator Tibernos, and this is Tassia of the Order of Halav. We must talk with you, for we believe only you can steer our Empire from the dark path it has taken!"

The Senator motions for the PCs to have a seat. Tassia adds a dipper of water to the brazier, creating a cloud of steam.

Tibernos and Tassia answer the PCs' questions, and explain what they need of them. Note that you may have to alter the answers to some of these questions, depending upon the PCs' previous actions.

**Why have you chosen us?** "I have heard of your bravery in defeating the creature from the sewer and in rescuing Epaminos," says the Senator. "The Empire needs heroes such as yourselves if Caracanomnos is to be deposed, and the rightful Emperor restored to the throne."

**What do you want us to do?** "You may have heard that during the Sleep of Darkness Emperor Adronius was murdered," says the Senator, "but his body vanished. This is not entirely true, for the corpse of our wise Emperor Adronius is in my possession!

"I have seen to it that his body is preserved from decay," continues Tibernos. "And I have done this for a good reason, for with your help, I plan to bring Emperor Adronius back from the land of the dead!"

At this point, Tassia continues the tale. "Long ago," she says, "the wise Halav created a power-

ful tool to be wielded by the first Emperor. This sacred object became known as the *Milenian Scepter*, and was passed from Emperor to Emperor over the circles that followed. Alas, when the scepter passed to the hands of Emperor Olynthos nearly 100 circles past, he used it for corrupt and evil deeds; both he and the scepter vanished, never to be seen again. Some say Olynthos was cursed to become the scepter's eternal guardian."

"It is also said that the scepter has the power to restore the dead to life," says Senator Tibernos. "If it is found, we can return Emperor Adronius's soul to his body. With him alive, the election of Caracanomnos becomes void. The people will rise up to overthrow the sorcerer's yoke of oppression!"

"We need you to find the scepter," says the Senator. "Tassia will accompany you on your quest, for she knows the legends of the *Milenian Scepter* better than any living mortal."

**Where do we look?** "That is for you to decide," says the Senator. "Rely upon your wisdom, and the guidance of Halav, and you shall not fail!"

**What do we do with it once we find it?** "I will be waiting for you at the Tower of Xanthipon, here within the city," says the Senator. "Bring the scepter to me. Tassia can show you the way."

**What's in it for us?** "So, Tibernos, your brave heroes have the hearts of merchants," says Tassia. "As I have told you, I do not need their help. I shall find the scepter alone!"

"Please, Tassia," says the Senator, "understand that their request has precedent, for all heroes of the past have received their just reward."

Turning to the PCs, Tibernos says, "I assure you, upon his return to life, Emperor Adronius will be most generous to his saviors."

### Discovered!

While the PCs are finishing up their discussion with Senator Tibernos and Tassia, shouts are heard outside the steam bath. With dagger in hand, one of the bodyguards opens the door to the steam bath and cries, "Soldiers! We are discovered!"

When the PCs exit the steam bath, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

As you leave the steam room, five men whom you saw bathing before move to protect the Senator, daggers in hand. Obviously, they were bodyguards all along.

On the other side of the pool, 10 soldiers have formed a single rank in front of the exit. Their spears are leveled toward you. Standing behind them is a man in a black robe; he looks very familiar. Next to him is a warrior wearing a crested helm and round shield emblazoned with the image of a black sun shining black rays. He raises his short sword above his head and cries, "Surrender, traitors, or die!"

The warrior is named Tyrion. The man in the black robe is a Zargosian cleric named Icademus. (Note that if Icademus was slain in Chapter 1, a different cleric called Asternom is here instead.)

**Asternom:** 5th level cleric of Zargos; AC 9; hp 23; #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg 1d6 (mace); MV 120' (40'); Save as C5; ML 8; AL C. Spells: 1st level—cause light wounds, cure light wounds. 2nd level—blight, resist fire. Asternom has the innate power to cast a darkness spell three times per sleep. As with all Zargosians, he suffers 1 hit point of damage per round if exposed to direct sunlight.

**Tyrion:** 5th level fighter; AC 5 (cuir-boulli and shield); hp 32; #AT 1; THAC0 17 (+2 for Strength); Dmg 1d6 + 2 (short sword, Strength); MV 90' (30'); Save as F5; ML 10; AL C.

**Soldiers (10):** 1st level fighters; AC 5 (cuir-boulli and shield); hp 8, 8, 7, 7, 6, 5, 5, 5, 4, 4; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 1d6 (short sword or spear); MV 90' (30'); Save as F1; SA spear (+2 attack, +1 damage); ML 7; AL N.

If the PCs do nothing, Senator Tibernos makes an impassioned speech. "We are not traitors to the true Emperor," he says. "You are the traitors. I would rather die than surrender to the minions of Caracanomnos!"

Tyrion replies, "So be it." Unless the PCs act, the warrior says, "Soldiers, raise spears!... Throw!" The soldiers hurl their weapons at the PCs, the Senator, Tassia, and the five bodyguards.

If the PCs attack, Tibernos, Tassia, and the bodyguards join them in the fight. The soldiers

hurl their spears before drawing their short swords. They have orders to hold their position in front of the exit, and will not break ranks.

If the PCs surrender, Tibernos interferes by ordering his bodyguards to attack the soldiers. The Senator knows that to surrender is to die, and tells the PCs to fight for their lives.

Because the PCs have probably left their armor and weapons in the locker room, they may find themselves losing the battle. They may also find help from an unexpected source—Lucratia, the owner of the bathhouse. She is loyal to Senator Tibernos. Assume she orders her own bodyguards, Byzrat and Myrtia, to attack the soldiers. The two warriors approach from the lounge, catching the soldiers from behind. This distraction might allow the PCs to break through the soldiers' formation and reach the locker room. Alternatively, you may assume that Byzrat and Myrtia had the foresight to bring the PCs' weapons with them (the guards have a master key to all of the stone chests in the locker room).

### The Prophecies of Phaistos

After the battle, Tassia goes to the women's locker room to don her armor and gather her weapons. Be sure to relate to the players that her torso armor is emblazoned with a sword upon an anvil, the sign of the Order of Halav.

Tassia also takes a magical book from her locker called the *Prophecies of Phaistos*. The book is protected by a cover of hinged bronze plates engraved with the title and the emblem of a sword upon an anvil. The pages are thick parchment.

Tassia's book is identical to the book being written by the scribe Hestios at the Shrine of Glory. It is enchanted such that as Hestios writes in his copy, the words also appear in Tassia's copy. Currently in her book are the prophecies listed at the start of the Introduction, Chapter 1, and Chapter 2.

Because it is a holy object, Tassia does not give the book to the PCs; she keeps it with her. However, she will let the adventurers read from the book.

Every time a new prophecy is entered, Tassia feels the hair stand up on the back of her neck.



You must decide exactly when each prophecy is entered. Use the book to add drama and mystery to the adventure. For example, during the next chapter, Tassia realizes a prophecy is being written (the same prophecy given at the start of Chapter 3). She (you) reads it to the PCs just before Vix attacks the party.

If Tassia should be killed during the adventure, one of the PCs may take the book. That character then feels the same strange sensation when a prophecy is written.

## Where Next?

After the battle, Senator Tibernos and his bodyguards part company with Tassia and the adventurers. Where they decide to go next is largely up to them. However, Tassia can make some useful suggestions.

Unless the PCs think of it themselves, Tassia suggests that they begin their quest by visiting the oracle of Halav at the Shrine of Glory. "The oracle should be able to tell us where to look for

the Scepter," she says.

Realizing that they will certainly be hunted by more soldiers, the PCs should be willing to leave the city and journey to the shrine. If so, continue with Chapter 3.

**If the PCs already have the Scepter,** Tibernos and Tassia are surprised and elated. The Senator suggests that they proceed immediately to the Tower of Xanthipon and revive Emperor Adronius. Continue with Chapter 7 in this event.

**If the PCs don't have it, but saw the Scepter in the sewer,** Tassia goes with them to get it. Tibernos goes to the Tower of Xanthipon to prepare the Emperor's body. When the PCs enter the sewer, continue with the events of Chapter 6.

**DM's Option:** You may not want the PCs to skip Chapters 3, 4, and 5. If so, assume the PCs cannot use the Scepter until they learn the proper command phrases. The only person who can tell them is the oracle. Thus, they must still make the journey to the shrine (Chapter 3), meet the oracle (Chapter 4), and return to Corisa (Chapter 5).

# DAUGHTER OF ZARGOS

## Chapter 3: Daughter of Zargos

Excerpt from *Prophecies of Phaistos*, as written by the scribe Hestios of Corisa:

*"As I write this, the wise Phaistos is within the circle of bones, kneeling before the Icon of Halav. Though I know his eyes are blind, I swear upon all that is holy that it seems he stares into the eyes of the statuette. The Icon is a wondrous thing. It is said that Phaistos made it himself, using his mind's eye to guide his hands and shape the clay into the image of Halav. It is so finely crafted and painted that it looks like a living person, a tiny Immortal."*

*"Earlier, the oracle spoke to me of the heroes and their journey to us. 'I see an unyielding evil descending upon them,' he said. 'It takes the form of a warrior woman. Though she is mortal, the blood of an Immortal surges through her veins, feeding her dark heart. Death pulls her through the sky in a chariot of silver and gold. Lo! The battle is joined. Light clashes with darkness . . . Alas, I see nothing more.'*

*"Phaistos has spoken nothing since. The future is a fickle thing, taunting with visions of what might be, and what should never be. Though I fear for the heroes, my heart is filled with hope, and a longing to see them safely arrived."*

a straight line toward the Shrine of Glory. She avoids the roads in order to avoid soldiers.

As the PCs continue on with their journey, be sure to describe the following features of the countryside:

- The weather is warm and pleasant; it is always like a summer day in this region of the Hollow World.
- The party travels across lush pastures of short-cropped grass and wild flowers.
- Low stone walls divide the land into fields of different shapes and sizes.
- Sheep and huge shaggy aurochs graze in the pastures. Aurochs are ancestors of modern oxen, with forward-curving horns. They are known for their bad tempers.
- Shepherds wearing simple tunics and leather sandals tend the herds. Many have the aid of yapping Amorian hounds, which look like canines with scaly hides. (Shepherds are usually armed with a sling and staff. Many play musical instruments, such as pan pipes or the flute, in order to pass the time.)
- Not all of the fields are pasture. Rows and rows of grain are grown in some. Vineyards and orchards of apples and citrus fruits thrive in others.
- Occasionally, the party comes within sight of stone cottages with thatch roofs. Sometimes these dwellings stand alone, and sometimes they are clustered into small villages.

**Staging Hint:** Relate to the players that the Milenians toiling in the fields, even the weary slaves, seem content with their labor. There is little evidence here of the evil gnawing at the Empire's core back in Corisa.

The shepherds, farmers, and villagers the PCs encounter are generally friendly, and may even offer the party food and shelter. This is especially true if they are with Tassia, as she is a cleric of Halav, whose followers are greatly respected.

## How They Get Here

The events of this chapter unfold as the PCs journey toward the Shrine of Glory. They should be in the company of Tassia, a female cleric of Halav who knows the way to the shrine.

## The Scene

Refer to the map of the Milenian Empire on the cover of this product. The Shrine of Glory lies about 140 miles (or seven sleeps of marching) southeast of Corisa.

Tassia plans to lead the party across country in

## Events

The following two events occur as the party travels toward the shrine. Feel free to present them in any order, to modify them to suit your needs, or to add more of your own creation.

### The Coming of Vix

Spies lurk everywhere. News of the PCs' journey reached Emperor Caracanomnos shortly after their departure. The sorcerer sent one of his agents, the mighty warrior Vix, to slay them. Vix is said to be the mortal daughter of the Immortal Zargos.

Vix rides a magical chariot pulled by a manticore named Dracion, who acts as if *charmed* with regard to Vix. The chariot can be flown through the air or driven on the ground at twice Dracion's normal movement rates (240' (80') on the ground or 360' (120') flying).

Vix also has a small bag containing eight *cyclops'* teeth. The same round these magical teeth are thrown to the ground, each tooth grows into a 20' tall, skeletal cyclops. These are enchanted constructs (similar to golems). They are not true undead and cannot be turned by clerics.

**Vix:** 9th level fighter-avenger; AC 0 (*cuir-boulli* + 1, *shield* + 1, and Dexterity bonus); hp 73; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 + 4 (*spear of Vix*, Strength) or by spell; MV 120' (40'); Save as F9; ML 12; AL C; THAC0 15; SA spear (+ 2 attack, + 1 damage). Spells: 1st level—cause *light wounds*, *resist cold*. Magical Items: *spear of Vix*, *chariot of Vix* (see the "Milenian Magic and Monsters" chapter for details), *cuir-boulli armor* + 1, *shield* + 1, and a *potion of ethereality*. More information about Vix can be found in the "NPC Roster."

**Dracion the Manticore:** AC 4; HD 6 + 1*; hp 38; #AT 2 claws/1 bite or 6 spikes; Dmg 1d4/1d4/2d4 or 1d6 each; MV 120' (40') or 180' (60') flying; Save as F6; ML 9; AL C; THAC0 13; XP 650.

**Skeletal Cyclops (1 per PC):** AC 2; HD 7*; hp 56 each; #AT 2; THAC0 13; Dmg 2d8/2d8; MV 120' (40'); Save as F7; SD Immune to non-magical weapons, gases, cold, and *sleep*, *charm*, and *hold* spells; ML 12; AL N; XP 850 each.

### The Attack

When Vix attacks, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

You are approaching the top of a round, grassy hill when a fearsome roar thunders in your ears. A creature with the body of a lion, the face of a man, black bat-like wings, and a tail studded with wicked spikes flies over the crest of the hill. But strangest of all, the monster is harnessed to a flying chariot made of silver and gold, with wicked-looking scythe blades jutting from its axles!

Riding in the chariot is a woman wearing black cuir-boulli armor and a helm with a green crest. On her shield is the image of a black sun shining black rays. She is obviously not a normal human, for her skin shimmers darkly like glassy obsidian.

As she raises a shining blue spear to throw it, she cries, "The daughter of Zargos is upon you! Doom and death to the heroes of Halav!"

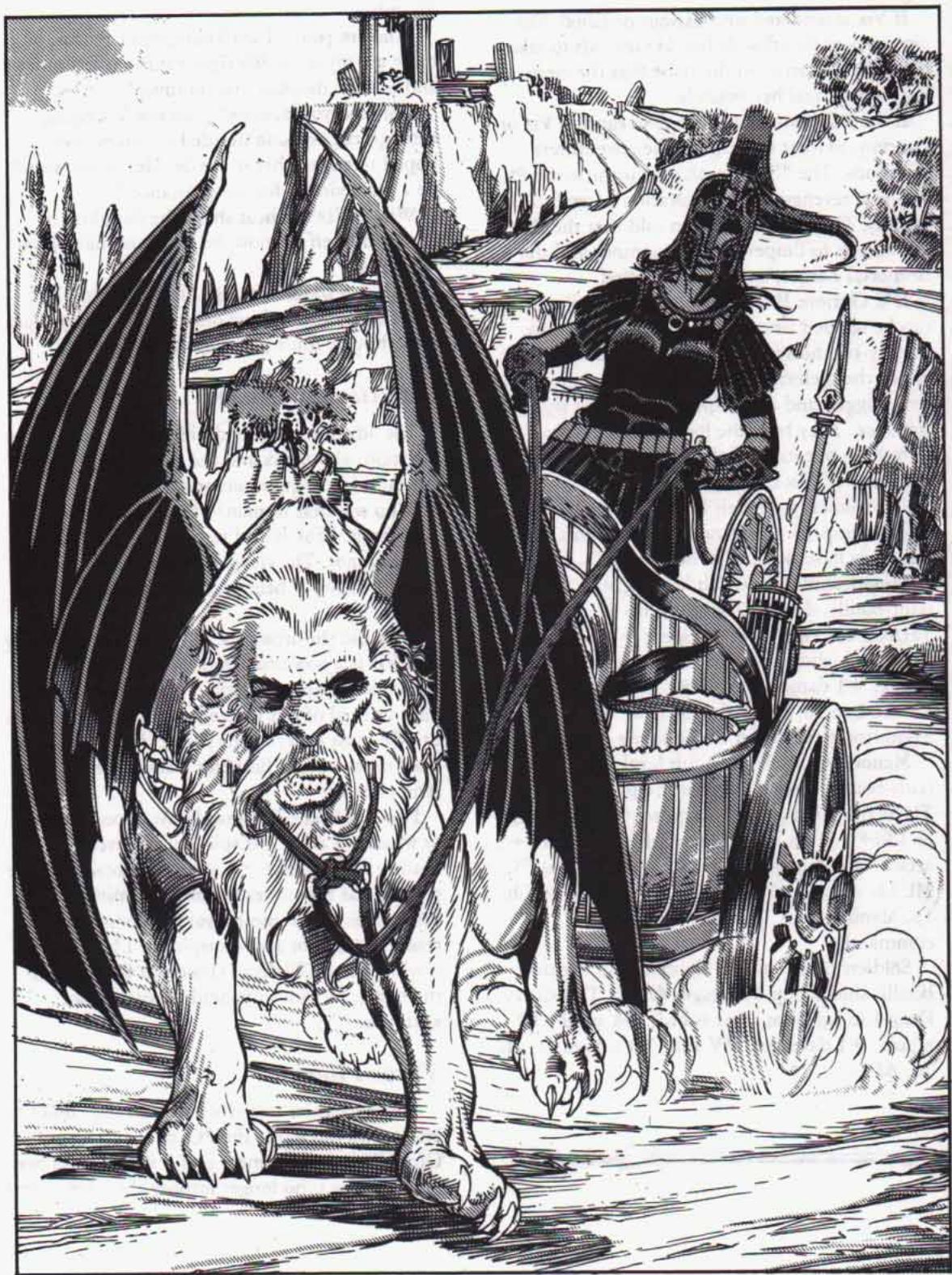
The chariot is flying about 10' off the ground and 75' ahead of the party. Vix hurls her spear, which has the power to return to her hand. After this attack, Vix circles the party at a range of about 50', throwing one of her *cyclops'* teeth for each member of the party, and allowing Dracion to fling his tail spikes.

Vix may also try to drive past a player character, making a slicing attack with blades extending from the chariot's axle. To maneuver into position, Vix must succeed at a Dexterity check (she has a Dexterity of 18). If successful, she must then make a normal attack against the PC's Armor Class. If hit by the blade, the character suffers 4d6 points of damage.

Vix is far too smart to battle the party head-on. After driving past the party and sowing her *cyclops'* teeth, the daughter of Zargos flies up and out of range of the party's missiles and spells. Here, she observes the fight with the skeletal cyclopes. If the PCs defeat them, Vix wisely flies away, eventually returning to Corisa.

If Dracion is slain, the chariot's magic keeps it from crashing; it descends gently to the ground

DAUGHTER OF ZARGOS





and comes to a smooth stop. However, it cannot be driven or flown without a suitable beast pulling it.

If Vix is rendered unconscious or killed, Dracion tries to fly off with her. He intends to take her back to Corisa, in the hope that the clerics of Zargos will heal her wounds.

If the PCs somehow manage to capture Vix or Dracion, neither will answer the adventurers' questions. The NPCs speak only to curse the PCs and vow revenge. Vix and Dracion know little anyway. They have only been told that the PCs are traitors to Emperor Caracanomnos and the Immortal Zargos, and must be killed.

**DM Option:** If the PCs are faring badly, they can be rescued by a group of Milenian cavalry. Twenty-two horsemen thunder over the hill and attack the skeletal cyclopes. Their formation is a little ragged and their equipment shows signs of hard use. They have the look of soldiers that have been out in the field a long time. With their arrival, Vix retreats.

The soldiers are rebels loyal to officials who oppose Emperor Caracanomnos. Recognizing Vix, they have decided to help the PCs.

**Tisandros of Portos:** 7th level fighter; AC 3 (cuir-boulli, shield, Dexterity); hp 60; #AT 1; THAC0 15; Dmg 1d6 + 3 (*spear* + 1, Strength) or 1d6 + 2 (short sword, Strength); SA spear (+ 2 attack, + 1 damage); MV 180' (60'); Save F7; ML 11; AL L; S 16, D 16, Co 13, I 12, W 11, Ch 15. Tisandros is the leader of the rebels.

**Menodorus of Demtor:** 5th level fighter; AC 4 (cuir-boulli, shield, Dexterity); hp 38; #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg 1d6 + 2 (*spear* + 1, Strength) or 1d6 + 1 (short sword, Strength); SA spear (+ 2 attack, + 1 damage); MV 180' (60'); Save as F5; ML 11; AL L; S 15, D 14, Co 15, I 10, W 9, Ch 13. Menodorus is Tisandros's second-in-command.

**Soldiers (20):** 1st level fighters; AC 5 (cuir-boulli, shield); hp 6 average; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 1d6 (spear or short sword); SA spear (+ 2 attack, + 1 damage); MV 180' (60'); Save F1; ML 10; AL L.



### Questioning Tisandros

The PCs will probably have a few questions for Tisandros.

**Who are you?** "I am Tisandros of Portos, and these are my men. We fight for the true Emperor and not the despot Caracanomnos!"

**Why did you help us?** "We saw Vix flying through the sky, and decided to follow. We hoped to engage her in battle. Her death would be a great victory for the resistance."

**Who is Vix?** "I hear she is the daughter of Zargos himself. I know she has slain many loyal Milenians."

**Will you travel with us?** "In pursuing Vix, I've already delayed my orders for too long. I am sorry, but we must part company."

### Questioning Tassia

The adventurers may decide to ask Tassia a few questions about Vix and the manticore. Here are the most likely questions and answers.

**Who was that woman?** "Her name is Vix," says Tassia. "She is said to be the mortal daughter of Zargos. The creature pulling her chariot is called Dracion, I believe, and is her loyal companion."

**Why did she attack us?** "I know for a certainty that Vix is a powerful agent of Emperor Caracanomnos," says the cleric. "The sorcerer must have learned of our mission, and sent Vix to stop us. We must hurry to the shrine, for who knows what other horrors Emperor Caracanomnos will send after us?"

**How could the Emperor know of our mission, or where we are?** "His spies lurk in every shadow," says Tassia. "It is also rumored that the sorcerer has the power to bend the minds of mortals. Even the most loyal members of the resistance are not above suspicion. I believe this is why Senator Tibernos chose you for this worthy quest, for you were neither with us nor against us."

### Three Pilgrims

This encounter introduces three NPC clerics of Halav who can guide the PCs to the Shrine of Glory. This event is most useful if Tassia has been killed, if she is no longer leading the adventurers

for some other reason, or if she was never with them in the first place.

This encounter is also important for another reason: The three clerics received a vision, which they interpreted to mean that they should make a pilgrimage to a sacred spring, and then take its healing waters to the oracle at the Shrine of Glory. The water is indeed magical, and has the power to heal the poisonous bite of the Zargonian hydra, which the PCs will encounter in Chapter 4.

When you are ready to introduce this event, read the following aloud:

The trail runs through a copse of willow trees. The breeze whispering through the drooping boughs smells sweet and warm.

Suddenly, three men come running and stumbling down the path toward you. The cuir-boulli armor they wear is emblazoned with the image of a sword upon an anvil. Their helmets are adorned with crests of red hair. Two of them are struggling to carry a large bronze pot with silver handles.

Four huge insects swarm around the men, buzzing and stinging — giant bees! Screaming, one of the men drops the pot to swat madly at a bee that has landed on his back.

The three men are clerics of Halav named Eion, Flammon, and Grannus. If Tassia is with the PCs, be sure the players realize that the emblem worn on the mens' armor (a sword upon an anvil) is the same emblem worn by Tassia. Perhaps Tassia says something like, "They are of my order. We must help them!"

The clerics are being attacked by four giant bees, like those described on page 160 of the *Rules Cyclopedia*. However, the poison of these bees is different from that listed there. A character who is stung and fails a saving throw vs. poison does not die at once, but loses 1 hit point per round until the poison is neutralized or the character dies. The bee will lose its stinger and die.

**Eion:** 2nd level cleric of Halav; AC 6 (cuir-boulli); hp 10; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 1d6 (spear); MV 120' (40'); Save as C2; SA spear (+2 attack, +1 damage); ML 9; AL L. Spells: 1st level—protection from evil.

**Flammon:** 1st level cleric of Halav; AC 6 (cuir-boulli); hp 5; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 1d6 (spear); MV 120' (40'); Save as C1; SA spear (+2 attack, +1 damage); ML 9; AL L.

**Grannus:** 3rd level cleric of Halav; AC 6 (cuir-boulli); hp 14; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 1d6 (spear); MV 120' (40'); Save as C3; SA spear (+2 attack, +1 damage); ML 10; AL L. Spells: 1st level—cure light wounds, remove fear.

**Giant Bees (4):** AC 7; HD 1/2; hp 4, 3, 3, 1; #AT 1 sting; THAC0 19; Dmg 1d3 + poison; MV 150' (50'); Save as F1; ML 9; AL N; XP 6 each.

### Questioning the Clerics

After defeating the bees, the PCs will likely have some questions for the three clerics.

**Who are you?** "I am Grannus," says one of the clerics. "These are my brothers, Eion and Flammon. We are followers of Halav. Who might you be?"

**What is the bronze pot for?** "My brothers and I were blessed with the same vision," says Eion. "Halav himself has instructed us to make a pilgrimage here. Nearby, inside a cave, a sacred spring bubbles. We are to take its healing waters to the oracle at the Shrine of Glory. The pot we carry is to be the vessel for this sacred fluid."

"Alas," says Flammon, "as we neared the cave, the bees attacked us. The sacred bees have always been docile before."

"Sadly," says Grannus, "our pot remains empty and several of the precious bees are slain."

Upon closer examination, the PCs see that the bronze pot is covered with bas-relief (i.e. raised) images of sickly and injured Milenians drinking from a natural spring. The pot has a bronze lid lined with oily leather. The lid has hinges and a latch, making the pot watertight. A pair of large handles made of ornately engraved silver are fixed to the pot. The vessel has an encumbrance value of 500 cn and a monetary value of 2,500 gp.

**Why does the oracle need the water?** "We do not question the wisdom of Halav," says Grannus. "Our vision did not reveal the reason for our pilgrimage, but only that it is needed."



## Into the Cave

In their vision, the three clerics were aided in their quest for the magical water by a pride of golden lions. They believe these lions symbolized the PCs. Thus, the clerics trust the adventurers enough to guide them to the Shrine of Glory. However, they must first fill their bronze pot with the sacred water. They expect the PCs to help them.

The cave entrance is a sinkhole surrounded by thick-trunked willow trees. Their roots form a natural ladder down into the cave. Near the sinkhole, the sweet scent of honey fills the air, as well as the ominous buzzing of many bees.

The cave is roughly circular with a diameter of about 30'. The roof is 20' above the floor, and is covered with dripping stalactites. In the center of the cave is a pool of golden yellow water about 5' in diameter and 3' deep.

Hanging among the stalactites above the pool is a hive of giant bees. Globs of honey drip slowly into the pool with a loud *plop!*

Buzzing around three black bears are eight giant bees and the massive queen bee. Even though the bears have thick hides, they can be stung. However, all of the bears have drunk from the magical pool, and are currently immune to the bees' poison. The insects and bears angrily attack anyone who enters the cave . . . unless the PCs have taken precautions. One of the bears is a lycanthrope (werewolf).

The adventurers may have decided to smoke out the bees. This can be done by gathering bundles of grass, lighting them, and using them as smoking torches. Smoke quickly makes the bees dormant and harmless. However, smoke only angers the black bears, which charge out of the cave and attack.

When the PCs enter the grotto, they discover the bees lying dormant or crawling sluggishly along the cave floor—the characters can fill the bronze pot without being attacked.

**Black Bears (2):** AC 6; HD 4; hp 30, 22; #AT 2 claws/1 bite; THAC0 16; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d6; MV 120' (40'); Save as F2; SA hug for 2d8 damage; ML 7; AL N; XP 75.

**Werewolf:** AC 2; HD 6*; hp 36; #AT 2 claws/1 bite; THAC0 14; Dmg 2d4/2d4/2d8; SA hug for 2d8 damage; MV 120' (40'); Save as F6; SD

harmed by silver or +1 or better magical weapons; ML 10; AL N; XP 500.

**Giant Bees (8):** AC 7; HD 1/2; hp 4, 4, 3, 3, 2, 2, 2, 1; #AT 1 sting; THAC0 19; Dmg 1d3 + poison; MV 150' (50'); Save as F1; ML 9; AL N; XP 6 each.

**Queen Bee:** AC 7; HD 2*; hp 14; #AT 1 sting; THAC0 18; Dmg 1d3 + poison; MV 150' (50'); Save as F1; ML 9; AL N; XP 35. The queen can sting repeatedly without losing her stinger and dying.

## The Healing Waters

Water from the pool has healing properties, due partly to the bees' magical honey, and partly to the pool's legendary origin: The clerics of Halav believe that a proud warrior sought shelter in the cave long ago after receiving a mortal wound in battle against a many-headed dragon. The brave hero died, and the pool sprang from the ground where his blood spilled.

Anyone drinking the water receives the benefits of both a *potion of healing*, restoring 1d6+1 lost hit points, and an *antidote* that negates any poisons currently affecting the character and makes him immune to future poisoning for 1d6+6 turns.

Remember that the pool is sacred to the clerics of Halav. They will not allow the PCs to drink directly from the pool, or to put its water in their own containers; only the bronze pot can be used to carry the water. However, the clerics will allow the PCs to drink from the bronze pot. The clerics have an ornate silver dipper with them expressly for this purpose. Through the NPC clerics, you have control over the magical water.

## Where Next?

After seven sleeps of marching (or three sleeps if riding horses), the party reaches the rocky hills and canyons where the Shrine of Glory is located. Trails used by herdsmen and hunters twist through the hills in a tangled maze. However, the clerics of Halav know how to find the shrine, and lead the PCs there quickly and safely. Continue with Chapter 4.

# EYES INTO THE FUTURE

## Chapter 4: Eyes Into the Future

Excerpt from *Prophecies of Phaistos*, as written by the scribe Hestios of Corisa:

*"Phaistos was high atop his scaffolding, painting his grand murals as usual, when the creature struck. The sound of cracking wood and flapping wings awoke me from my slumber. I emerged from the cave, squinting my eyes against the light of day, and felt my heart quiver within my chest at the sight before me.*

*"I have never seen a dragon, but surely that must be what this creature was. It left Phaistos dangling from the ruin of his scaffolding. With its many heads snapping, the monster tried to devour the oracle. But, praise Halav, at that very moment the heroes arrived.*

*"A terrible battle ensued, and the creature was defeated. If not for the heroes, all may have been lost.*

*"Now, they are speaking with Phaistos. I must listen closely and record their words . . ."*

### How They Get Here

The adventurers have been led to the Shrine of Glory by Tassia, or by the three clerics of Halav (Eion, Flammon, and Grannus) encountered in the previous chapter.

### The Scene

The numbered areas below correspond to the numbers on the map of the shrine.

**1. Scaffolding:** Standing against the east wall of the canyon is a rickety wooden scaffolding. It is 40' tall, and consists of four levels of platforms spaced 10' apart and connected by ladders.

The scaffolding is used by the oracle to paint the walls of the canyon. Fantastic murals of brilliant colors run north from the scaffolding around the wall to the storage cave (area 4). These murals show the visions the oracle has seen

of the many battles of Halav. Huge, lifelike images depict the Immortal defeating hordes of gnolls, goblins, and other humanoids.

**2. Ring of Bones:** Many centuries ago, before the shrine existed, a small force of Milenian soldiers was trapped in the box canyon by a tribe of Beastmen. A cleric among the soldiers prayed to Halav for a glorious death in battle, not out of fear, but with a courageous heart. Halav heard his follower's plea, and watched the fight. The Milenians fought valiantly. Reinforcements arrived and wiped out the Beastmen, but it was too late for the trapped soldiers: Halav granted their prayers, and they did indeed die in battle.

The bones of the Beastmen still litter the ground, forming a circle around the *Icon of Halav*. Here can be seen complete skeletons, still clutching their rusted weapons. The dead Milenian soldiers were given proper burials by their comrades; their bones are not here.

Note that the icon has the power to *animate* dead (see the "Milenian Magic and Monsters" chapter). If this power is used, 40 Beastmen skeletons rise up to defend the shrine.

**Beastmen Skeletons (40):** AC 7 (6 with shield); HD 1; hp 5 average; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (battle axe) or 1d6 (hand axe, javelin, mace, short sword, or spear) or 1d4 (club or dagger); MV 60' (20'); Save F1; ML 12; AL C; THAC0 19; XP 10 each.

**3. Icon of Halav:** The icon stands in a clearing at the center of the ring of bones. It is a 2' tall clay statuette of Halav wearing Milenian cuir-boulli armor. It is painted to appear lifelike. The icon does not seem to be magical, but it does possess awesome powers (see the "Milenian Magic and Monsters" chapter).

**4. Storage:** This small cave is used by Phaistos and Hestios for storage and as a workroom. On a table are pots filled with the various types of plants, berries, shells, and oils the oracle uses to make his paint. There are also brushes of different shapes and sizes.

**5. Living Area:** This cave is where the oracle and his scribe sleep. A brazier of hot coals keeps the chamber comfortably warm. A pair of wooden



bed frames covered with down mattresses rest against the walls.

**6. Rock Columns:** Natural rock columns form an avenue down the heart of the canyon. The columns range in height from 30' to 50'. The faces of the Milenian soldiers who died here long ago have been carved into the columns by the oracle.

Stairs have been cut into the column nearest the icon, and spiral around to its flat top 50' above. Sometimes the oracle sits here meditating for hours, "listening to the words of the wind."

**7. Crevices:** In several places, natural crevices extend back into the canyon wall. They are just large enough for a man to enter. The PCs might decide to seek shelter in them from the Zargosian hydra (see "Events" below).

**8. Boulders and Rubble:** Piles of rubble and boulders litter the canyon floor. They range in height between 5' and 10'.

**9. Elevated Ledge:** A natural ledge extends from the canyon wall here. The ledge is 60' above the canyon floor and 40' below the top. There are sufficient handholds for any type of character (not just thieves) to climb up to the ledge (see page 145 of the *Rules Cyclopedia* for guidelines on climbing).

In nooks and crannies along the ledge are seven vulture nests. If a character climbs up to the ledge, he finds 16 vultures staring at him balefully, or prancing around with their wings extended. The creatures will not attack unless the PCs mess with their nests, which contain several eggs apiece, but no treasure.

**Vultures (16):** AC 7; HD x; hp 3 each; #AT 2 claws/1 bite; Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d3; MV 30' (10'), fly 180' (60'); Save as Normal Man; ML 5; AL N; THAC0 19; XP 5 each.

**10. Sinkhole:** A natural sinkhole is in the canyon floor here. It reaches a depth of 20'. Hestios and Phaistos use it as a refuse dump. Vultures occasionally peck around in it.

## Events

There is only one major event in this chapter, which occurs immediately after the PCs arrive.

### The Horror That Is Karakos

As the adventurers proceed toward the heart of the shrine (probably down the avenue between the rock columns), read the following to the players:

You are walking along the boulder-strewn floor of a wide ravine. To either side, the cliff walls rise up at least 100'.

Ahead of you, two rows of immense rock columns form a broad avenue. The huge faces of warriors have been carved into the columns and seem to stare at you gravely.

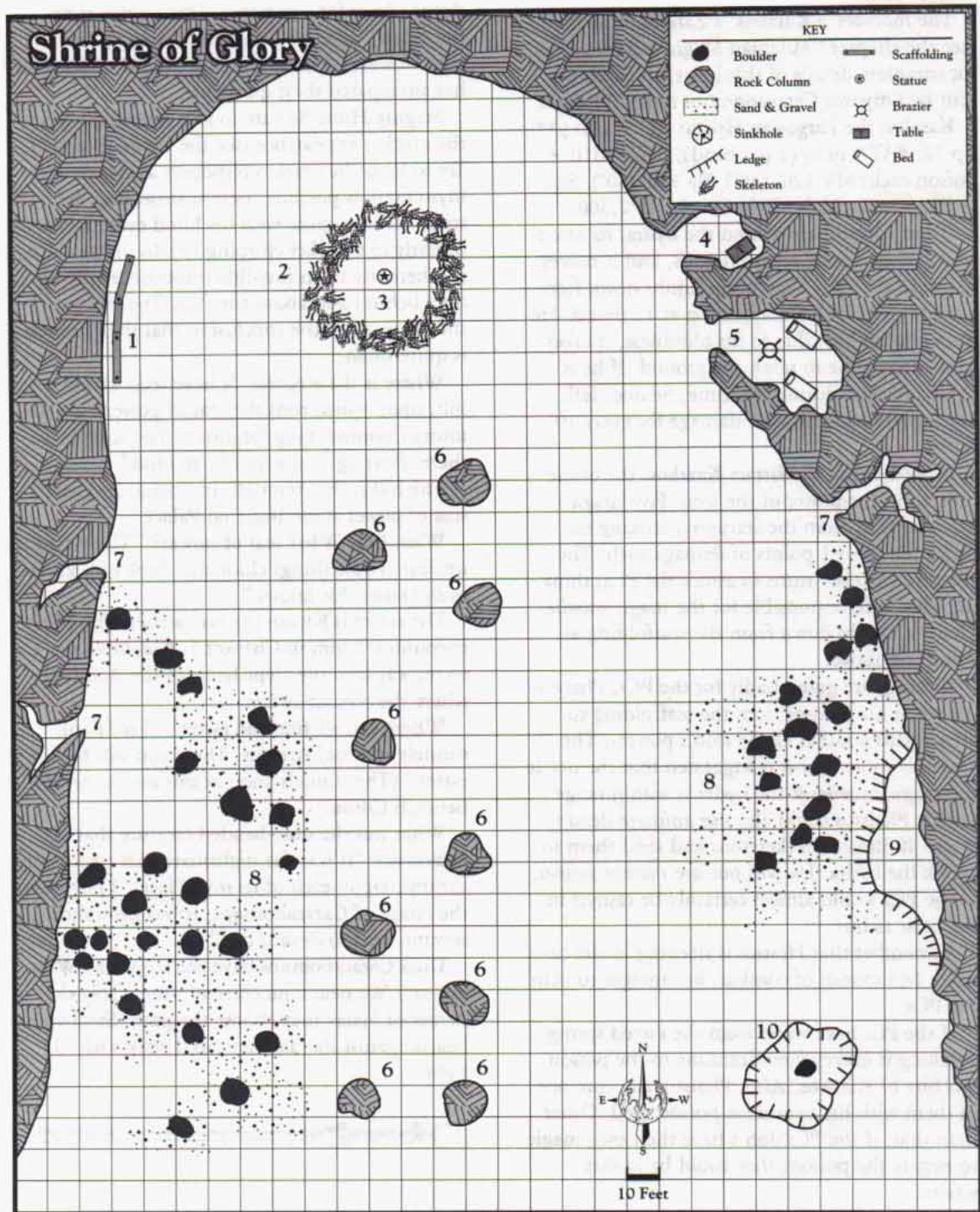
Beyond the columns, the cliff walls meet, forming a box canyon. To your amazement, you see that the back wall has been painted in bright colors. Huge images of gnolls, trolls, and other evil humanoids appear on the wall, all battling a tremendous Milenian warrior. The valiant hero is depicted in many different scenes, and is always victorious.

Along the east wall, where the mural seems to end, stands a tall wooden scaffolding. From this distance it is difficult to see, but their definitely appears to be an old man perched on the rickety structure.

As you move toward the center of the shrine, a titanic shadow passes overhead, blocking out the sun. It is a horrid monster with the body of a dragon and nine snake-like heads! It folds its leathery wings and begins to swoop down upon the old man sitting on the scaffolding. The man seems totally unaware of his approaching doom.

The creature beats its wings furiously as it hovers beside the scaffolding. Its many jaws snap like thunderclaps, ripping into the wooden structure. The old man dangles 40' above the rocky ground.

# EYES INTO THE FUTURE



The man on the scaffolding is Phaistos, the oracle. If the PCs ask, Tassia can tell them so. Hestios, the scribe, is napping in a nearby cave (area 5). Their statistics can be found in the "NPC Roster."

The monster is Karakos, a Zargosian hydra (see the chapter "Milenian Magic and Monsters" for complete details of this beast). It has been sent by Emperor Caracanomnos to slay Phaistos.

**Karakos the Zargosian Hydra:** AC 5; HD 9**; hp 72; #AT 9 bites (1 per head); Dmg 1d10 + poison each; MV 120' (40'), fly 180' (60'); Save as F9; ML 11; AL N; THAC0 11; XP 2,300.

If the adventurers wound the hydra, its attention is drawn away from Phaistos, and it moves to attack the PCs. The oracle climbs down from what remains of the scaffolding at 1'/round. He does not fall but, due to his blindness, it takes him a long time to reach the ground. If he is again attacked during this time, he does fall, and suffers 1d6 points of damage for every 10' fallen.

If the PCs fail to distract Karakos, the oracle calls upon the power of the icon. Five *magic missiles* burst from the statuette, striking the hydra for 1d6 + 1 points of damage each. The creature viciously turns to attack the PCs, thinking they were responsible for the *magic missiles*. Phaistos climbs down from the scaffolding as described above.

If things are going badly for the PCs, Phaistos pauses in his descent from the scaffolding to attack with another of the icon's powers. The choice is yours, but it is suggested that the oracle use *magic missiles* if the hydra is within range (300'). Phaistos could also use *animate dead* to create 40 Beastmen skeletons and send them to attack the hydra. He will not use *meteor swarm*, as the PCs would almost certainly be caught in the blast radius.

Remember that Hestios is sleeping in the cave. After 1d3 rounds of combat, he emerges to help the PCs.

If the PCs have water from the sacred spring, drinking it makes them immune to the poisonous bite of Karakos. Also, Phaistos can cure one of them with his *neutralize poison* spell. Other than that, if the PCs don't have their own magic to negate the poison, they could be in dire straits.

## Questioning Phaistos

After defeating Karakos, the PCs have the opportunity to consult the oracle. Typically, asking questions of an oracle requires several sleeps (days) for a response. During this time, the oracle "listens" for omens from the Immortals. However, Phaistos is expecting the PCs, and has anticipated their questions.

**Staging Hint:** Be sure to give a description of the oracle's appearance (see the "NPC Roster"). Try to keep the oracle's responses as cryptic and mysterious as possible. Before answering, he stares off into space with his blind eyes, or listens intently to a cricket chirping nearby, or mumbles incoherently to an invisible someone (really no one) behind and above the PCs. The players should come to the conclusion that the old man is quite insane.

**Where is the scepter?** "I have seen within a hill, upon which rests the seat of power, into a musty chamber, long forgotten. The scepter is there, floating in the air like the sun."

The hill is the Acropolis in Corisa, and the seat of power is the Imperial Palace.

**What hill? What seat of power?** "The vision is unclear. These things elude me. Seek him known as the ratter. He knows."

The ratter is Kleom the rat catcher. The PCs encountered him in Chapter 1. Kleom knows a secret way into the crypt beneath the Acropolis where the scepter awaits.

**Where can we find the ratter?** "I see dank tunnels and foul streams. There you will find the ratter." (The tunnels and streams are the sewers beneath Corisa.)

**What was the nine-headed creature that attacked us?** "It was the nightmare that haunts my dreams. Upon each of its many faces, I have seen the visage of Caracanomnos. It was his unholy servant, sent to devour me."

**Does Caracanomnos have the scepter?** "Who can say? We near a juncture in time. Only the heroes of Halav may choose the path. Steel your hearts against the darkness, and walk with the light."





**Does Caracanomnos really have the power to extinguish the sun?** "Who can say? We near a juncture in time. Only the heroes of Halav may choose the path. Steel your hearts against the darkness, and walk with the light."

**Will you come with us to find the scepter?** "Who will tend the shrine? Who will listen to the mutterings of the icon? Only upon my time of dying will I leave this place."

**What is the icon?** "It is the holy vessel of the power and glory of Halav, praise him. Through it, my blind eyes see what will be, what might be, and what should never be."

### Questioning Hestios

The PCs may decide to ask the scribe for more information. Here are the most likely questions and answers.

**Who are you?** "I am Hestios of Corisa, a scribe and cleric among the order of Halav. I

have been given the honor of recording the prophecies of Phaistos in my journal."

**Where is the scepter?** "I only know what Phaistos has seen in his visions."

**Who is the ratter?** "I have heard of him. He is an ugly little man who lives in the sewers beneath Corisa. It is said that he catches rats and makes them his pets. I have even heard it said that his mother was a rat."

**Will you come with us to find the scepter?** "I cannot, for my duty lies with the words of Phaistos. I go where he goes."

### Where Next?

The PCs should realize that the scepter is hidden beneath the Acropolis. They should also realize that Kleom may be able to help them find it. Thus, the adventurers should be on their way back to Corisa. Continue with Chapter 5.

## Chapter 5: The Griffon Riders

Excerpt from *Prophecies of Phaistos*, as written by the scribe Hestios of Corisa:

*"The heroes have been gone for several sleeps now. Though he has not said as such, I believe Phaistos is optimistic about the future. The oracle has performed his duty well, setting the heroes upon the path of light. Soon they will have the scepter, and with it they can end the tyranny of Caracanomnos. But many dangers yet lie ahead . . ."*

### How They Get Here

The events of this chapter take place as the PCs travel from the Shrine of Glory back to Corisa. By this time they should be planning how they will get into the city and contact the rat-catcher Kleom.

### The Scene

Once again, Tassia leads the PCs across country. For a general description of the landscape, refer to Chapter 3.

### Events

The following two events can occur in any order. Both are optional; you do not have to play them if you don't want to. You may, if you wish, add some more events or encounters of your own choosing.

#### *Clodius the Drunkard*

When you are ready to play this event, read the following aloud:

As you pass between two grassy hills, you see a mud-brick cottage with a thatch roof about 50 yards to your left. Lying near the cottage is the body of a man. He is obviously dead; his head has been staved in. Lying on

the ground around him are three dead sheep dogs.

Sitting in the shade with his massive back against the cottage is a cyclops. Two empty stone urns lay at his feet. From a third, he takes a huge gulp, spilling a red liquid down his chin. Wiping his face on his ratty sheepskin tunic, he glares at you with his single, bloodshot eye and says in a booming voice, "LEAVE YOUR WINE AND GOLD OR FACE THE SAME FATE AS THE SHEPHERD LYING YONDER!"

The cyclops is named Clodius. He has come down from the mountains to steal sheep and wine. Not very bright, Clodius is very drunk and spoiling for a fight.

**Clodius the Cyclops:** AC 5; HD 13*; hp 54; #AT 1; Dmg 3d10 (club) or 2d6 (thrown urn); MV 90' (30'); Save as F13; ML 9; AL C; THAC0 9 (-2 due to naturally poor depth perception and -2 due to drunkenness); XP 2,300.

The cyclops can throw the stone urns up to a range of 200' (60/130/200), inflicting 2d6 points of damage per hit. He also carries a huge wooden club.

In a large sack, Clodius has the leg of a sheep that he has been gnawing on, as well as a variety of apparently worthless trinkets: pretty rocks, a snail shell, walnuts, berries, a dead sparrow, and a lump of iron crudely formed in the shape of a man.

The lump of iron is actually a magical item called a *talisman of the statue*, and has the power to control living statues (see the "Millennium Magic and Monsters" chapter).

**Staging Hint:** Clodius is incredibly stupid, especially when he has been drinking. If the players come up with a good trick, the cyclops will likely fall for it. For example, the PCs might get him to drink a poisoned flagon of wine, or a magical potion (such as *diminution*) if they have one.

If the PCs comply by offering their wine and gold, Clodius is not satisfied. He demands something else, such as food, more wine, or more gold. Eventually, the PCs will not be able to comply, and the cyclops will have what he really wants—an excuse to kill them.

# THE GRIFFON RIDERS

If the PCs run, Clodius hurls an urn at them as a parting shot. He is much too lazy to chase after them—besides he still has plenty of wine to drink and sheep to eat.

If the PCs attack, the cyclops lumbers to his feet and throws an urn before getting his club ready to bash someone.

After defeating Clodius, the adventurers might decide to inspect the cottage. There is nothing of value inside. Apparently, the shepherd lived alone.

## Flight of the Griffon Riders

This event is free-floating, meaning you should play it during another event when you feel the time is right. The basic idea is that the griffon riders arrive just in time to help the PCs defeat an enemy (either the cyclops, or opponents from an event of your own design). This gives you the perfect opportunity to "rescue" the PCs from a fight if they are in trouble, or to congratulate them on their success if they win.

The griffon riders are an elite fighting force of the Milenian military. They are highly trained warriors, and are skilled at flying griffons into combat. Griffon riders develop a special bond with their flying mounts—either would die defending the other. These griffon riders have been driven from Corisa.

At the moment of your choosing, 11 griffon riders swoop down from the sky to help the adventurers. They are an impressive sight with yellow griffon claws emblazoned on their torso armor and crests of griffon feathers flowing from their helmets. Their leader is a Milenian man named Daskus.

**Daskus:** 6th level fighter; AC 5 (cuir-boulli, Dexterity); hp 40; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 + 1 (lance, Strength) or 1d6 + 1 (javelin, Strength) or 1d6 + 1 (short sword, Strength); MV 120' (40'); Save as F6; ML 10; AL L; THAC0 17; SA javelin (+2 attack, +1 damage).

**Griffon riders (10):** 3rd level fighters; AC 5 (cuir-boulli plus Dexterity bonus); hp 26, 23, 22, 20, 20, 17, 16, 15, 13, 10; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 + 1 (lance, Strength) or 1d6 + 1 (javelin, Strength) or 1d6 + 1 (short sword, Strength); MV 120' (40'); Save as F3; ML 10; AL L; THAC0 19; SA javelin (+2 attack, +1 damage).

**Griiffs (11):** AC 5; HD 7; hp 56, 53, 42, 40, 39, 37, 30, 25, 23, 20, 19; #AT 2 claws/1 bite; Dmg 1d4/1d4/2d8; MV 120' (40'), fly 360' (120'); Save as F4; ML 9; AL N; THAC0 13; XP 450.

## Questioning the Griffon Riders

When the PCs meet the griffon riders, they will certainly have some questions for the flying warriors.

**Who are you?** "I am Daskus, and these are my men. We were Imperial Griffon Riders, now we are renegades, for we do not acknowledge the election of Caracanomnos."

**Why did you help us?** "We have heard of the heroes of Halav and their noble quest," says Daskus. "We have taken it upon ourselves to seek you out and offer our assistance."

It is also possible that the PCs helped Daskus rescue his griffon from the auction in Chapter 1. This gives Daskus even more incentive to aid the adventurers, as he owes them a favor.

If the PCs tried to prevent Daskus from rescuing his griffon, he is willing to forgive them. He realizes the importance of their mission, and has put any thoughts of revenge behind him.

**What have you heard about us?** "That you are going to seek the wisdom of the oracles in order to find a way of killing Caracanomnos."

**Where is the Milenian Scepter?** "What is that? We know nothing about any scepter."

Daskus is telling the truth. He and his men do not know anything about the Scepter.

**Will you take us to Corisa?** "Of course. We would be honored to fly you there on the backs of our mounts."

By flying on the griffons, the PCs can cover 72 miles per sleep, rather than 20 miles marching or 40 miles on horseback.

## Where Next?

The adventure continues when the PCs arrive at Corisa. Proceed with Chapter 6.



## Chapter 6: Guardian of the Scepter

Excerpt from *Prophecies of Phaistos*, as written by the scribe Hestios of Corisa:

*"And so, the heroes of Halav came upon the glorious Scepter . . . and its fearsome guardian. The oracle told me of Emperor Olynthos the Undying, who is cursed to defend the scepter until defeated by those worthy of the sacred relic. Olynthos is a powerful opponent, for death will not easily claim him. I pray the heroes have the strength of mind and body to prevail . . . "*

### How They Get Here

If you came to this chapter directly from Chapter 1, skip to the event below called "Into the Sewer."

If you came to this chapter from Chapter 5, there are several ways the PCs might arrive at Corisa: marching, riding horses, or flying with the griffon riders. Note that the griffon riders will not fly the adventurers into the city because this would cause too much of a commotion. Instead, they land within a mile or so of the gates, drop off the PCs, and fly away.

Once the adventurers reach the city, they must decide how to enter.

If the PCs enter through one of the gates, play the event below called "Incident at the Gate."

If the PCs try to climb the wall, before they make the attempt, be sure the players realize that the city wall is 50' high and 30' wide, and that anyone trying to climb it will almost certainly be spotted: The PCs can see patrols of Milenian soldiers riding along the top of the wall in chariots.

If the PCs look for another way into the city, Tassia remembers that there is a sewer construction site along the River Corius outside the city walls. Play the event below called "Workin' on a Chain Gang."

### The Scene

The "feeling" the PCs get when they enter the city has changed very little from when they left, in spite of the urgency of their mission. There is still an undercurrent of oppression. For a reminder of what the Milenian city is like, refer back to Chapter 1.

### Events

#### Incident at the Gate

If the PCs approach one of the city gates, read the following aloud:

A steady stream of traffic flows through the huge, iron gates of the city. You see farmers carting their fresh produce to market, lines of shackled slaves headed for the auction block, and travelers of all ages and social classes entering and leaving. You also see tax collectors taking fees on all merchandise coming into the city. Soldiers watch everything closely.

The players might come up with a plan for their characters to enter Corisa unnoticed. For example, hiding in a farmer's cart. If their plan is a good one, you should allow them to enter unchallenged—skip this event.

The soldiers at the gate have been given descriptions of the PCs. If the adventurers simply walk through the gate (or have a very bad plan for entering unnoticed), one of the soldiers recognizes them. "You there," he cries. "Stop in the name of the Emperor!"

Twenty soldiers oversee the gate traffic. They are led by a warrior named Thalus.

If the alarm is raised, the soldiers move to surround the PCs and block their escape. Thalus demands that the adventurers surrender.

If the PCs put up a fight, allow it to go on for a couple of rounds. At some point, a young man grabs a pot filled with silver coins from the table of a tax collector, and hurls it into the street. Mayhem ensues as the crowd scrambles for the money. Soldiers break off from combat to quell the growing mob, giving the PCs the perfect opportunity to escape into the city.

The young man is an agent of Senator Tibernos. He has been loitering around the gate for just this purpose—to make sure the PCs stay out of trouble. During the riot, he blends into the crowd, never confronting the adventurers.

If the PCs surrender, the young man performs the same stunt described above. The PCs escape into the city.

The adventurers should now be looking for a sewer grate in order to enter the sewer and find Kleom the rat catcher. Continue with the event below called "Into the Sewer."

**Thalus:** 3rd level fighter; AC 5 (cuir-boulli and shield); hp 21; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 1d6 (short sword); MV 120' (40'); Save as F3; ML 9; AL N.

**Soldiers (20):** 1st level fighters; AC 5 (cuir-boulli and shield); hp 4-8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword); MV 120' (40'); Save as F1; ML 8; AL N; THAC0 19.

### Workin' on a Chain Gang

About 200 yards up the River Corius from the city wall is a small construction site. Slaves are working to build a flood gate connected to the sewer. It is to be used to keep a steady stream of clean water flowing from the river into the sewer system, and to protect the sewer against flooding during times of heavy rainfall.

Currently, 50 slaves and 10 soldiers are here. However, if the PCs secretly watch the site for a few minutes, they see the slaves being lined up and marched back to the city. The soldiers are returning them in order to get a fresh work gang. Only two soldiers are left behind to guard the construction site. By overpowering the guards, the adventurers can enter the sewer.

**Soldiers (10):** 1st level fighters; AC 5 (cuir-boulli and shield); hp 8, 8, 7, 7, 6, 6, 6, 5, 5, 4; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword); MV 120' (40'); Save as F1; ML 8; AL N; THAC0 19.

**Slaves (50):** normal humans; AC 9; hp 3-7; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (pickaxe) or 1d4 (pry bar or shovel); MV 120' (40'); Save as Normal Man; ML 6; AL N; THAC0 20.

### Into the Sewer

The sewer beneath Corisa is a huge maze of twisting tunnels and subterranean streams. Sewer grates on the streets are marked on the fold-up map of Corisa. Exactly how the tunnels twist and turn between the grates is for you to decide. Generally, the main sewer tunnels follow the streets, with occasional side passages branching off. In this way you can easily generate a map for the players as their characters travel along the tunnels.

The sewer is a place of many dangers: packs of ravenous rats, even larger creatures such as giant leeches, and explosive pockets of natural gas. While the PCs explore the sewer, you may wish to check for random encounters. Roll 1d6; on a result of 1, an encounter occurs. To find out what the encounter is, roll 1d10 and consult the following table.

To avoid delays during play, it is suggested that you only check for random events once or twice during the time the party travels through the sewer. Note that too many encounters can weaken the characters too much or divert them from the main goal.

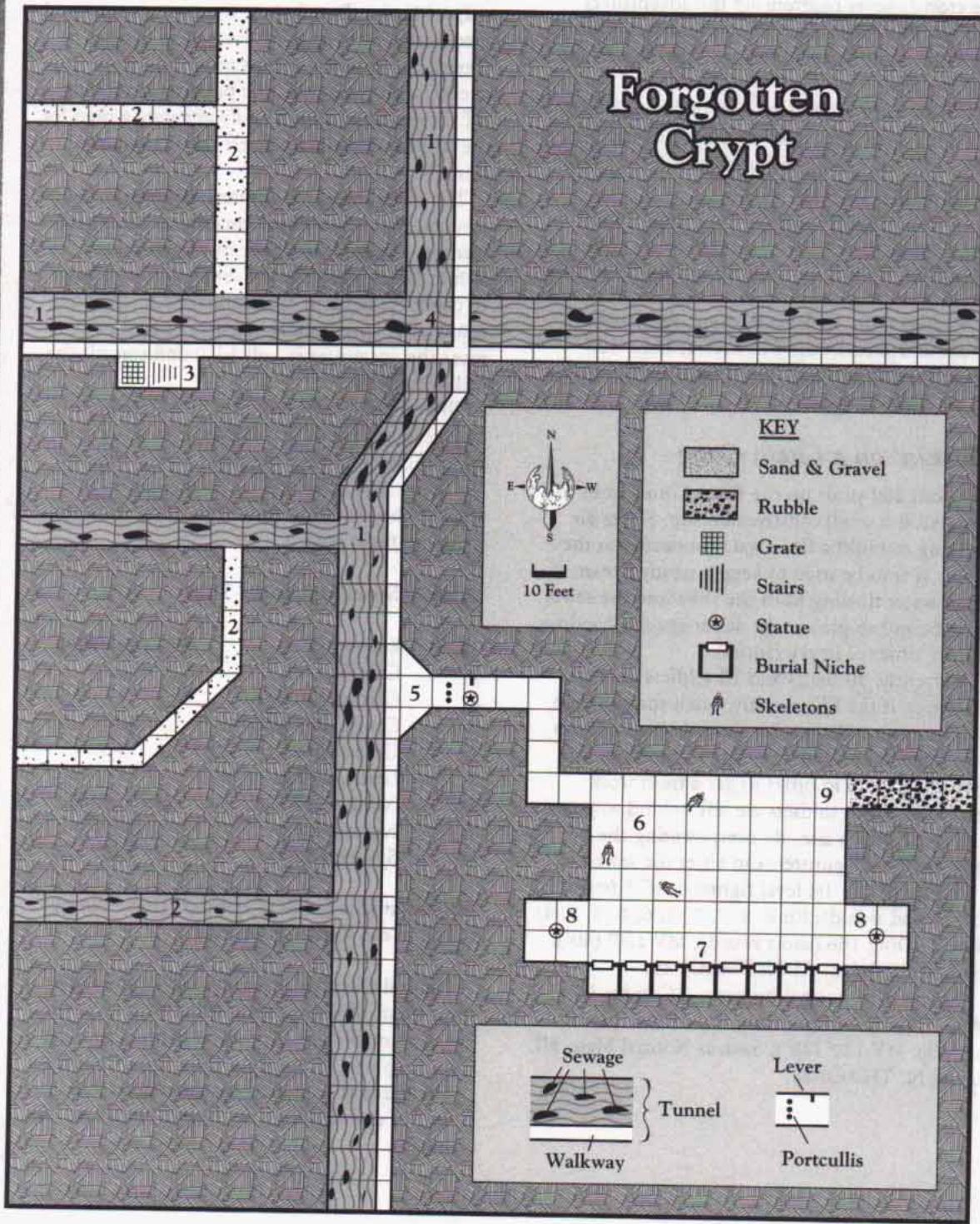
#### Random Sewer Encounters Table

1d10	Encounter	No. Appearing
1	Caecilia	1
2	Carrion Crawler	1
3	Centipede, Giant	2d4
4	Green Slime	1
5	Leech, Giant	1
6	Natural Gas	(see below)
7-9	Normal Rats	1d10 × 5
10	Spider, Crab	1d2

Game statistics for all of these creatures can be found in the Rules Cyclopedia.

**Natural Gas:** An encounter with natural gas means part of the tunnel is filled with an invisible, flammable gas. Any open flames cause the gas to explode. Everyone within  $1d10 \times 10$  feet of the flame that ignited the gas suffers 3d6 points of damage (save vs. dragon breath for half damage).

# ADVENTURE MAPS



# GUARDIAN OF THE SCEPTER

## Investigating the Lyadrachnus

If you are playing this chapter after having come directly from Chapter 1, the PCs are probably exploring the sewer with Kleom the rat catcher in order to find out where the lyadrachnus came from.

Kleom leads the adventurers to a four-way intersection of main tunnels (area 4 on the map; see below). The rat catcher tells them that while crossing one of the bridges here, the lyadrachnus arose from the muck below and tried to grab him. There are no signs of the creature, and no trail to follow.

If the PCs discover the platform (see area 5 below), they can ask Kleom about it. Unfortunately, he doesn't know very much.

**What is this place?** "I d-d-don't know," he says. "I tried to squeeze through the b-b-bars once, b-b-but couldn't."

**Where are we in relation to the city above?** "We're beneath the Acropolis."

**What is that statue for?** "How should I know? Why d-d-does anybody make a statue?"

When the adventurers leave the sewer, even if they have the *Milenian Scepter*, go back and finish up Chapter 1.

## Searching for Kleom

If you have come to this chapter after running Chapter 5, the PCs have most likely entered the sewer to find Kleom. According to the oracle at the Shrine of Glory, the rat catcher knows where the scepter is located.

If the PCs explored the sewer in Chapter 1 and discovered the platform (area 5), but did not enter the crypt (area 6), they may realize from the oracle's clues that the scepter is here. In this case, they probably do not need to find Kleom, and will proceed directly to the crypt without him—skip this encounter if you wish.

Once the PCs begin searching, assume it does not take them very long (1d10 turns) to find Kleom. The adventurers find him on a walkway along one of the main tunnels. He is pulling a rope up from the stream of sewage below the walkway. At the end of the dirty rope is a rat in a trap.

Even if the PCs befriended him in Chapter 1, Kleom is still a bit apprehensive about them being in *his* sewer. "What d-d-do you want?" he

asks. "I d-d-don't have any m-money!"

If the adventurers reassure the ratter that they are not after his money, he answers their questions as best he can.

**Where is the Milenian Scepter?** "W-w-what's that?" he says. "I d-d-didn't take it! I d-d-don't even know w-what it looks like!"

If the PCs describe the scepter, and mention that it glows like the sun, Kleom gives them another clue. "A l-l-light? I have s-seen a strange light," he says.

**Will you take us to the light?** "It is dangerous," says the rat-man. "If I die, who w-w-will buy my m-mother's freedom? You have m-money . . ."

If the adventurers pay him at least 1 gp, Kleom leads them to the platform (area 5).

## Map of the Sewer and Crypt

This map depicts the crypt where the scepter is located, and a portion of the sewer. From this, and the following text, you should get a good idea of how the sewer system is laid out.

The numbered areas below correspond to the numbers on the map of the sewer and crypt.

**1. Main Tunnels:** The biggest tunnels are circular and 20' in diameter. They are lined with grimy bricks. They correspond to major streets above ground. Tunnel intersections are connected by archways made of large, roughly cut stone blocks.

All of the main tunnels have brick walkways built along one side that are 5' wide. At the sewer intersections, the walkways form arched bridges, connecting the tunnels.

Flowing down the middle of the tunnels is a stream of sewage. The current is very slow; the flotsam and jetsam on the surface does not even seem to be moving at first glance. The streams range from 3' to 9' (2d4+1 feet) in depth.

Some main tunnels actually cross beneath the River Corius. Thus, any point in the city can be reached by walking through the sewer; the river is not an obstacle.

**2. Side Tunnels:** Smaller passages branch off from the main tunnels. These are usually 10' in diameter, but can be as small as 5' around.

Side tunnels do not have walkways. However,



many of them have only a trickle of sewage, or none at all.

When side tunnels meet the River Corius, they do not flow under it like main tunnels. Instead, they extend out from the river's bank for 5', spilling their contents into the stream.

**3. Grate:** At this point, an alcove is built in the wall of the tunnel. Stone steps lead up to a square sewer grate measuring 5' on each side.

Typically, grates are held closed by iron pins, which can be opened from the within sewer by reaching through the bars. However, this grate is secured by an old, rusty lock (-5% penalty to Open Lock rolls) because it opens onto the east slope of the Acropolis, and not a city street.

**4. Intersection:** Here, the main tunnels form a four-way intersection. The walkways become arched bridges, spanning the stream of sewage beneath. It was here that Kleom was attacked by the lyadrachnus (in Chapter 1).

**5. Platform:** Built into the tunnel wall here is a small chamber that forms a platform above the stream of sewage. A dungeon corridor exits the platform to the northwest. Blocking the corridor is a heavy iron portcullis.

Ten feet down the corridor can be seen the crank mechanism that lifts the portcullis. Standing opposite the crank is an iron statue. At the end of the corridor, where it turns to the west, a dim, golden light is visible (this is the glow of the *Milenian Scepter*).

The iron statue is sculpted to resemble a well-muscled athlete, a man wearing a simple tunic and sandals. It is not painted, and shows no signs of rust.

The sculpture is actually a living statue. It was created long ago by the Imperial Magister of Emperor Olynthos as a guardian of the crypt. The statue's primary function is to raise and lower the portcullis. It only responds to the following phrase: "In the name of Emperor Olynthos, turn the crank."

If the PCs mess with the portcullis, the living statue does nothing. However, if any character passes beyond the portcullis without giving the proper command phrase (which they won't know), the statue attacks.

Note that if the PCs found the *talisman of the statue* in Chapter 5, they might be able to take control of the living statue. To give them a clue, you might tell the player of the character who is carrying the talisman that it suddenly feels very heavy.

**Living Iron Statue:** AC 2; HD 4*; hp 22; #AT 2 punches; Dmg 1d8/1d8; MV 30' (10'); Save as F4; ML 11; AL N; THAC0 16; XP 125. Note that if a non-magical metal weapon strikes the statue, the attacker must succeed at a saving throw vs. spells or the weapon becomes stuck in the statue's body, and can only be removed when the statue is killed.

**6. Crypt:** The arched ceiling of this chamber is 20' above the floor. The crypt is illuminated by the golden glow of the *Milenian Scepter*.

When the PCs enter this chamber, read the following aloud:

You are looking upon an ancient crypt. Sealed burial vaults line the west wall. All of the vaults are ornately engraved with emblems and runes which you cannot see clearly from here.

But the vaults draw your attention for only a moment, for there is something more. Hovering 10' above the floor in midair is an iron rod about 2' long. It is etched with glowing runes and set with an abundance of glittering gemstones. The light from the runes fills the chamber with a golden glow that feels warm and good against your face.

Standing directly beneath the floating scepter, and bathing in its golden glow, is a warrior. He wears leather torso armor and a shield; both emblazoned with the image of a griffon. The warrior's head is covered by an iron helmet decorated with a yellow plume. In his hand is a short sword with shimmering runes etched along its blade.

Lying on the floor nearby are three skeletons. They wear rotted leather armor, and still clutch rusted weapons.

As you take all of this in, the warrior speaks. "Behold the folly of those who came before you," he says, gesturing with his sword

# GUARDIAN OF THE SCEPTER



toward the three skeletons. "They were not worthy of the scepter. Are you worthy? Can you end the torment of Olynthos the Undying? Let us find out!"

With his flashing sword upraised, the warrior rushes toward you!

Roll for initiative. If the PCs win, they can attack before the warrior attacks them.

The warrior is Emperor Olynthos the Undying. He is *cursed* to guard the *Milenian Scepter* forever, or until someone defeats him and claims the artifact. Olynthos cannot move more than 50' away from the scepter. He has no need of food, water, or air. He does not age.

**Olynthos the Undying:** 8th level fighter; AC 0 (*cuir-bouilli* +1, *shield of Olynthos*, and Dexterity bonus); hp 53; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 +6 (*sword of Olynthos* and Strength bonus); MV 120' (40'); Save as F8; ML 12; AL N; THAC0 15 (+2 due to Strength). More detailed information about this character can be found in the "NPC Roster."

Although Olynthos is not a particularly exceptional fighter, defeating him is not so easy. If he is reduced to 0 hit points, Olynthos drops dead.

On the following round, however, the scepter swoops down, touches Olynthos lightly on the head, and casts a *raise dead fully* spell upon him. The undying warrior jumps up, ready to fight again.

Each time the scepter *raises* Olynthos, it must spend 85 Power Points. The artifact has 380 Power Points. Thus, it can use this power four times, leaving it with 40 Power Points until it regenerates more (at the rate of 20 per turn; see the "Milenian Magic and Monsters" chapter for more details).

If the PCs kill Olynthos after he has been *raised* for the fourth time, the warrior falls dead, and is not immediately brought back to life. The scepter remains hovering at the center of the chamber, 10' above the floor. It is recharging at the rate of 20 Power Points per turn. If it regains enough points, it *raises* Olynthos again.

However, there are several ways the PCs can put an end to this cycle of death and rebirth.

Smart players will remember the legend Tassia told them about the scepter (in Chapter 2). She revealed that Olynthos was *cursed* to be the artifact's eternal guardian.

If one of the PCs casts a *remove curse* or *dispel*

evil spell upon Olynthos at any time, the enchantment is broken. The centuries swiftly catch up to the ancient Emperor—he crumbles to dust before the adventurers' eyes! The scepter then floats gently to the floor, waiting for the player characters to claim it.

There is also another way for the player characters to keep the scepter from raising Olynthos. As it swoops down to touch the warrior, one of the adventurers might try to grab it. Doing so requires a successful Dexterity check with a -3 penalty.

If the scepter is grasped, either as it swoops toward the warrior or as it hovers in the air recharging, the player characters have won. Olynthos crumbles to dust, and the adventurers may take the *Milenian Scepter*.

Note that the three skeletons lying in this chamber are not undead creatures. They are simply adventurers who discovered the scepter and never lived to tell the tale. Whether or not they have any treasure is for you to decide.

**7. Vaults:** Long ago, Emperor Olynthos had the crypt secretly built. He was known as a sore loser; his rivals always seemed to vanish. Olynthos had them assassinated, then hid their bodies in the vaults.

There are 40 vaults built into the west wall, arranged in eight columns five vaults high. Each vault measures 4' × 4' × 10'.

The vaults are sealed with heavy stone plugs. Only a character with a Strength of 18, or two characters whose Strengths add up to at least 18, may remove a plug.

If Tassia is with the party, she objects to opening the vaults. The heroes of Halav are supposed to be *heroes*, not tomb robbers.

Only 13 of the vaults hold corpses; the rest are empty. It is unlikely that any treasure is in the vaults, as Olynthos and his cronies would most likely have taken it long ago. However, if you wish to add some, turn to page 225 of the *Rules Cyclopedia*. For each vault opened that contains a corpse, simply pick a treasure type that you feel is appropriate and roll randomly to determine what is inside. Feel free to alter the results in order to preserve the game balance of your campaign.

**8. Statues:** These two statues are identical to the living statue near the portcullis (area 5). How-

ever, they are not enchanted creatures, but merely iron sculptures.

Carved into each statue is an ominous warning: "Let him who disturbs the dead bring forth his own demise." This is merely a bluff to frighten away thieves.

**9. Collapsed Stair:** A stair used to lead up to a secret door (which has been long forgotten) in the Imperial Palace. Over 50 circles ago, the ceiling caved in, filling the passage with tons of rock and dirt. It is totally impassable.

### Dealing with Defeat

If the player characters are forced to retreat from the battle with Olynthos, there are a couple of ways you can get them back on track.

If you are playing this chapter right after Chapter 1, the players do not yet know about the curse affecting Olynthos. When the PCs retreat from battle and exit the sewer, go ahead and finish the events of Chapter 1. Later, when the PCs meet Senator Tibernos and Tassia in Chapter 2, they learn about the curse, and should realize the undying warrior's weakness. Armed with this knowledge, the party spellcasters can learn *remove curse* spells, return to the crypt, and ultimately defeat Olynthos. If for some reason none of the PCs can cast this spell, Tassia is willing to do so.

If you are playing this chapter after Chapter 5, the players should already know about the curse. If they don't seem to make the connection, use Tassia to remind them of it. "How can we possibly defeat Olynthos," she says, "if he is cursed to live forever?"

As described above, the players should come up with the obvious answer: remove the curse.

### Where Next?

If you came to this chapter during the events of Chapter 1, go back and finish up Chapter 1 when the PCs exit the sewer.

If you came to this chapter after playing Chapter 5, the PCs should be headed for the Tower of Xanthipon to meet Senator Tibernos and raise Emperor Adronius with the scepter. Proceed with Chapter 7.

# AT THE TOWER OF XANTHIPON

## Chapter 7: At the Tower of Xanthipon

Excerpt from *Prophecies of Phaistos*, as written by the scribe Hestios of Corisa:

"The oracle was very talkative this sleep, even excited. He told me the heroes have the scepter!

"But their greatest trial awaits, for they must yet face Caracanomnos. Phaistos has seen visions of the confrontation, which he described as taking place high atop a mountain of marble. Alas, he said nothing of the outcome . . ."

### How They Get Here

If you came to this chapter from Chapter 2, the PCs have the scepter and have come to the tower with Senator Tibernos and Tassia to raise Emperor Adronius.

If you came to this chapter from Chapter 6, the PCs have the scepter and have come to the tower to meet Senator Tibernos and give him the artifact. Tassia is probably with the PCs, guiding them to the tower. If she is not with them for some reason, the adventurers can find the tower by asking a citizen or Kleom the ratter for directions. Xanthipon is well known, and his tower is one of the city's marvels.

Remember that patrols of soldiers are still looking for the PCs. If you wish, check once to see if the adventurers encounter a patrol on their way to the tower. Roll 1d6; on a result of 1, the PCs meet 10 soldiers.

**Soldiers (10):** 1st level fighters; AC 5 (cuirboulli and shield); hp 8, 7, 7, 7, 6, 6, 5, 5, 4, 4; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword); MV 120' (40'); Save as F1; ML 8; AL N; THAC0 19.

Knowing they are being hunted on the streets, the PCs may decide to travel the sewer tunnels and emerge from a grate near the tower. In this case, they will not be spotted by soldiers, and enter the tower secretly. You might also wish to check for random encounters in the sewer (see Chapter 6).

**Staging Hint:** If the PCs openly display the glowing scepter on the streets, you may decide that this causes an uproar among the populace. People stare in wonder. An old scholar recognizes it. "Behold the Milenian Scepter of legend!" he cries. "Can this mean a return to better times?"

If the PCs are fighting soldiers when this occurs, the warriors back off—they know better than to oppose the magic of the Immortals.

A cheerful crowd forms around the PCs, and follows them to the tower. As more soldiers arrive to arrest the PCs, the citizens form a barrier between the PCs and the soldiers. A revolt might erupt while the adventurers are inside the Tower of Xanthipon!

### The Scene

When the PCs arrive at the tower, read the following aloud:

Rising before you is the awesome Tower of Xanthipon. It is obviously a magical construction, for it seems to be made from a single, huge piece of marble. The entire surface is covered with bas-relief images of mythical beasts and mystical symbols.

The tower is widest at the base, narrowing to a flat top. It must reach a height of at least 50'.

Wide stone steps lead up to a pair of massive copper doors. As you watch, they swing silently open.

### Events

When the PCs enter, the copper doors swing closed behind them. The doors are *wizard locked* at the 18th level of ability.

### Map of the Tower

As the PCs explore the tower, refer to the descriptions below to see what they discover. The numbers correspond to the numbers on the map of the Tower of Xanthipon.

1. **Foyer:** This passage is 10' wide and 10' high with an arched ceiling. Along the walls are six



clay statues painted to appear lifelike. Each is of a famous Milenian magus or philosopher; all have been dead for many circles. An elaborately engraved archway leads into the reception hall.

**2. Reception Hall:** Stone pillars support the arched ceiling 15' above. Carved in bas-relief, dragons and serpents spiral around the pillars. The eyes of some emit bright, friendly glows, which fully illuminate this chamber.

Between the rows of pillars are a pair of stone benches. Silk curtains embroidered with exotic patterns conceal exits at the four corners of the reception hall. Archways lead to the foyer at the east end and stone stairs going up to the next floor at the west end of the room.

At the center of the chamber is a gurgling marble fountain. On a dais at the heart of the fountain lounge a pair of statues. They are sculpted from green crystal and resemble beautiful Milenian women. They are living statues, serving as guardians of the tower.

**Living Crystal Statues (2):** AC 4; HD 3; hp 24, 22; #AT 2 punches; Dmg 1d6/1d6; MV 90' (30'); Save as F3; ML 11; AL L; THAC0 17; XP 35.

When the PCs enter the reception hall, the living statues greet them in sing-song voices. "Please be seated, mighty heroes," says one. "The master will come shortly," says the other.

If the PCs sit, the statues entertain them by singing a love ballad. Their voices are wonderful.

If the PCs head toward the curtains or stair, the statues warn them off. "You are not to go there," says one. "For it is our duty to entertain . . . and to protect," says the other.

The players should get the idea, and have their characters take a seat. Even if the PCs disobey them, however, the statues will not attack unless attacked themselves.

Soon, Senator Tibernos descends the stairs. "Your arrival is most timely," he says, "for Xanthipon tells me the Floating Continents are nearing the perfect conjunction for removing the Emperor's body from stasis. Please follow me to the roof."

If the Senator is already with the PCs, the archmage Xanthipon comes down to greet them himself. After a brief introduction, and a short lecture on the importance of the intensity of

sunlight for reviving a body from stasis, Xanthipon leads the party to the roof.

**DM's Option:** Rather than having the living statues tell the PCs to sit and wait, you may choose to let the adventurers wander around the tower. This gives them the opportunity to explore more of the structure.

In this case, the statues tell the PCs to make their way to the roof. "The master awaits you there," they say.

**3. Bath Chamber:** This room holds a bathing pool filled with the warm water of a hot spring. At the moment, Lymara is enjoying the bath. If the PCs enter, she looks quite embarrassed. Glancing toward her gown, which lays on a stone bench against the south wall, she says, "Oh! Who are you?"

**Lymara:** 0-level human; AC 9; hp 6; #AT 1 slap; Dmg stings for a minute; MV 120' (40'); Save as Normal Man; ML 5; AL N; THAC0 20; S9 I9 W10 D11 Co9 Ch17.

**4. Dining Room:** This chamber doubles as a kitchen and dining room. A long stone table holds clay bowls and urns filled with fresh fruit and wine. Stone platters are piled with cheese and bread. A smaller table holds cooking utensils and pots. An iron brazier full of hot coals is used to boil and roast food.

**5. Paricles' Chamber:** Xanthipon's apprentice, Paricles, calls this chamber home. The room is furnished with a comfortable bed, a pair of stone benches, an iron brazier, and a stone table. Parchments, ink bottles, and alchemical and magical instruments (alembics, retorts, a device to measure the passage of the Floating Continents, etc.) clutter the table. There is nothing of great value, and no one is here.

**6. Lymara's Chamber:** The thick scent of perfume is the first thing the PCs notice upon entering this room. It is furnished with a very large bed, a stone bench covered with silk cushions, an engraved wooden table and chair, and an iron brazier. On the table are vials, small bottles, and jars containing makeup and perfume. Hanging on the wall above the table is a mirror. There is nothing of great value, and no one is here.

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**7. Hall of Emperors:** Stone stairs on the ground floor (area 2) lead up to this hall. The walls are covered with colorful murals of every Milenian Emperor since this culture's arrival in the Hollow World. However, Emperor Caracanomnos is not portrayed.

A wooden door in the south wall opens onto Xanthipon's bed chamber. Another door in the north wall allows access to the main laboratory.

Standing in the archway at the east end of the hall is what appears to be a man made of chiseled obsidian. Behind him, stone stairs lead up to the next floor.

The man of black glass is actually an obsidian golem. He guards the stair, and will let no one pass who does not first utter the proper command phrase. Both Senator Tibernos and Paricles have been entrusted with the command: "Dants Edisa" ("Stand Aside" backwards).

**Obsidian Golem:** AC 3; HD 6*; hp 48; #AT 1 punch; Dmg 2d4; MV 120' (40'); Save as F3; ML 12; AL N; THAC0 14; XP 500.

**8. Xanthipon's Chamber:** The gleeful singing of song birds greets the PCs if they enter this room. The archmage keeps a pair of them as pets in a cage of iron mesh. A bed, stone benches, an iron brazier, and a long wooden table can also be found in this chamber. Books and scrolls covering many topics—from agriculture to zoology—litter the table. None of them are magical. No one is here.

**9. Main Laboratory:** This chamber smells acrid and smoky. Four rectangular stone tables are covered with a tangle of alchemical and magical apparatus: alembics, a balance with weights, beakers, bottles, bowls, crucibles, decanters, flasks, glass lenses, missing rods, mortars and pestles, prisms, retorts, tongs, tripods, vials, and so on. The containers hold a variety of colorful contents: ash, bark, bone, cinders, crystals, gelatins, grains, grease, insect husks, oils, pastes, powders, etc. All of these things are common laboratory furnishings, and are not magical or exceptionally valuable.

Other objects of interest in this chamber include a circle scribed on the floor, an iron furnace, two iron braziers, and a long wooden bookcase. The bookcase is jammed with scrolls,

parchments, and books. If a PC magic-user spends 1 turn searching the bookcase, he finds 1d4 magical scrolls. Roll randomly (or pick) to see what they are on page 229 of the *Rules Cyclopedia*.

Currently, Paricles is busy at one of the tables copying a spell from a scroll to his spell book. He is intent upon his work, but stops to speak with the PCs.

"May I see it," says the apprentice. He is referring to the *Milenian Scepter*. If the PCs show it to him, he stares at it in awe. Paricles then escorts the PCs past the obsidian golem in area 7 if they ask him to.

**Paricles the Apprentice:** 3rd level magic-user; AC 7 (Dexterity bonus); hp 10; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); MV 120' (40'); Save as M3; ML 8; AL L; THAC0 19; S 10, I 17, W 13, D 16, Co 11, Ch 14.

**Spells Carried:** 1st level—analyze, detect magic. 2nd level—locate object.

**Magical Items:** None.

**10. Treasure Room:** This secret chamber contains a pair of large stone chests. Standing between them is an amber golem shaped like a roaring lion. It only allows Xanthipon into the room, and attacks anyone else who enters.

**Amber Golem:** AC 6; HD 10*; hp 60; #AT 2 claws/1 bite; Dmg 2d6/2d6/2d10; MV 180' (60'); Save as F5; ML 12; AL N; THAC0 10; XP 1,750. Note that it can detect invisible creatures within 60'.

Each chest is *wizard locked* at the 18th level of ability. Inside is the archmage's treasure, as well as his spell books. To find out what is in the chests, either choose yourself, or roll randomly on page 225 of the *Rules Cyclopedia*. Consider one chest to be treasure type A and the other to be treasure type M.

**11. Private Laboratory:** A square chamber on the tower's roof serves as Xanthipon's private lab. Four engraved pillars support the arched ceiling, which has a 5' diameter hole cut in the center allowing the sun's rays to fill the room. Archways in the north, south, and west walls open upon the roof itself. A fourth archway in the east wall leads to stone steps that descend to the tower's middle floor.

**SECRET**

On a stone table in the middle of the lab lies the body of Emperor Adronius. Standing next to the table is a strange apparatus. It consists of glass globes filled with bubbling gases and liquids fixed to a metal frame that supports a huge rotating prism above the Emperor. As sunlight streams through the hole in the ceiling, it passes through the prism, bathing Adronius in multi-colored light.

The archmage created the device, which he calls the *preserver*. Any organic material kept in the oscillating light does not decay. Thus, the Emperor's corpse has not rotted.

As the PCs watch, Xanthipon busies himself with the apparatus, adjusting knobs, levers, and dials which seem to alter the rotation and elevation of the prism. Occasionally, he uses a hand-held device similar to a navigator's astrolabe to observe and calculate the positions of the Floating Continents.

At this point, continue with the next event, "And Now . . . Caracanomnos!"

**Xanthipon:** 18th level magic-user; AC 6 (*ring of protection +2* and Dexterity bonus); hp 33; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+3 (*dagger +3*); MV 120' (40'); Save as M18; ML 9; AL L; THAC0 13; S 9, I 18, W 15, D 15, Co 10, Ch 12. More information about this character can be found in the "NPC Roster."

**Spells Carried:** 1st level—analyze, darkness, detect magic, hold portal, light, read magic. 2nd level—detect evil, knock, levitate, locate object, wizard lock. 3rd level—create air, dispel magic, fly, haste, protection from normal missiles. 4th level—polymorph other, polymorph self, remove curse, wall of fire. 5th level—dissolve, harden, passwall, woodform. 6th level—anti-magic shell, move earth, stoneform. 7th level—ironform, statue. 8th level—polymorph any object.

**Magical Items:** The archmage wears a *ring of fire resistance*, a *ring of protection +2*, and a *dagger +3*.

**12. Roof:** The roof is open to the sky. A 3' high wall runs around the circumference. From up here, the PCs can see the entire city.

### **And Now . . . Caracanomnos!**

After the PCs have been in the private laboratory (area 11) for a few minutes, and probably presented the scepter to Xanthipon or Senator Tibernos, read the following aloud:

Xanthipon frantically twists dials and pulls levers on his strange machine, causing the huge, spinning prism to slow down. As it does so, the multi-colored lights flashing over the Emperor's body slow also.

"My instruments reveal that the Floating Continents have reached the proper conjunction," says the old archmage. "Now is the perfect time to remove the Emperor from preservation. Soon, with the aid of the Scepter, he will live again!"

Suddenly, you hear the flapping of huge wings as a shadow passes over the hole in the ceiling. The prism goes dark for a moment. "The process was nearly ruined!" cries the archmage. "If the sun is blocked again, the Emperor's body may be destroyed, and not even the Scepter will help him then. Get thee outside and see that the creature does not again block the light!"

You hear the flapping coming closer.

When the PCs go out onto the roof to have a look, read the following to the players:

Flying toward you is an apparition from your darkest nightmares. It is a gigantic bat with a long reptilian tail and blazing red eyes. A purple-red tongue darts between its needle-like teeth, dripping green froth.

Perhaps most frightening of all is the man riding upon its back. He wears a hooded black robe and black gloves. His face is mostly concealed by the hood and a black veil; only his piercing eyes can be seen, glaring at you from sunken sockets.

In one hand the man holds reins fixed to metal rings piercing the bat's ears. In the other hand he grasps a bone staff topped with a leering skull.

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Swooping at you, the man cackles madly.  
"There can be only one Emperor!" he cries.  
"And that shall be me . . . Caracanomnos!"

The man is indeed Caracanomnos. He is riding a Zargosian bat, a type of giant vampire bat bred by the Followers of Zargos at the Tower of Night.

**Zargosian Bat:** AC 6; HD 4+3*; hp 24; #AT 1 bite or 1 spit; Dmg 1d8 + paralysis; MV 30' (10') or 180' (60') flying; Save as F2; ML 8; AL C; THAC0 15; XP 200. The bat can spit its venom up to 30' (10/20/30). If hit, the victim must succeed at a saving throw vs. paralysis or become unconscious for 1d10 rounds. Anyone bitten by the Zargosian bat must also succeed at a saving throw or suffer the same effect.

**Emperor Caracanomnos:** 15th level magic-user; AC 4 (*ring of protection* +3 and Dexterity bonus); hp 42; MV 120' (40'); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 + 2 (*staff of Caracanomnos*) or by spell; Save as M15; ML 10; AL C; THAC0 15; S 12, I 17, W 15, D 16, Co 13, Ch 5.

**Spells Carried:** 1st level—analyze, detect magic, darkness, light, shield. 2nd level—knock,

levitate, phantasmal force, wizard lock. 3rd level—dispel magic, fly, infravision, lightning bolt. 4th level—curse, remove curse, wall of fire, wizard eye. 5th level—animate dead, passwall, wall of stone. 6th level—anti-magic shell, flesh to stone. 7th level—magic door.

**Magical Items:** The sorcerer wears a *ring of protection* +3 and wields the *staff of Caracanomnos* (see the "Milenian Magic and Monsters" chapter).

## Battle Above the City

This section suggests what the various NPCs might do during the battle.

- **Caracanomnos:** The sorcerer is smart enough to realize the importance of the sunlight streaming into the lab. In which case, he might land on top of the lab, forcing the bat to cover the hole and block the sun. The sorcerer can then dismount from the bat, freeing his hands to cast spells.

If the PCs have not driven the bat away from the hole after 4 rounds, Emperor Adronius crumbles to dust! Alternatively, you might assume that Xanthipon casts *polymorph other* on

the bat, changing it into a butterfly. In this way, Adronius is not utterly destroyed, and can still be *raised*. Note that the sorcerer's main objective is to destroy the body of Emperor Adronius and steal the *Milenian Scepter*. If he is losing badly, Caracanomnos is not above retreating to fight another day.

- **Kleom:** If the rat catcher is with the party, you can assume he is utterly horrified at the sight of Caracanomnos. He runs for cover, probably down the steps into the tower.
- **Lymara:** She is probably in the bath chamber or her bed chamber and doesn't even realize there is a battle going on. If for some reason she is on the roof, Lymara runs screaming in terror. Perhaps she is so scared that she runs the wrong way, and is in danger of tumbling off the tower. One of the PCs must save her.
- **Paricles:** Most likely he is still in the main laboratory, lost in his spell book and unaware of the battle. If he came up with the party, he is helping Xanthipon operate the *preserver*. Paricles should refrain from combat.
- **Senator Tibernos:** The Senator fights alongside the party. If things are going badly for him, you might make a morale check to see if he continues fighting. Remember that he has his own political goals, and is not necessarily willing to die for Emperor Adronius.
- **Tassia:** The cleric fights beside the PCs. However, as with the Senator, you might attempt a morale check to see if she continues fighting if she is badly injured.
- **Xanthipon:** The archmage is too busy operating the *preserver* to join in the fray. However, if it looks like the PCs are losing, Xanthipon might help them with a *haste* spell or some other spell.

## Where Next?

What happens next depends upon whether or not Caracanomnos is defeated.

### The Return of Emperor Adronius

If the PCs have defeated Caracanomnos, and Adronius's corpse has not been destroyed, they can *raise* the dead Emperor. Senator Tibernos presents one of the PCs with the honor of using the scepter. All the chosen character must do is touch the artifact to the Emperor's forehead, and the magic of the scepter does the rest—Adronius rises fully healed and alert.

"The sun is shining," says Adronius with a smile. When he was killed, the sun was gone.

Emperor Adronius gladly uses the scepter to *raise* any characters killed during the adventure, as long as their bodies are present, of course. He also promises more rewards to both the PCs and NPCs when he is restored to his throne.

You must decide exactly what these rewards are, taking the players' requests into consideration. Perhaps the Emperor grants the PCs land, money, magical treasures, or a favor. Don't be pressured into going overboard, however. You must find a balance where the players are left wanting more, but not utterly dissatisfied with what they've received.

Restoring Adronius to the throne is not as difficult as it might seem. From atop the Tower of Xanthipon, the revived Adronius calls out to the populace. A huge, cheering crowd gathers. After a brief speech, Adronius invites the PCs to join him as he leaves the tower.

With a wild throng (including cheering soldiers) surrounding them, the party makes their way to the Senate. As they approach, the PCs see scores of the Followers of Zargos retreating from the city in all directions upon the backs of flapping Zargasian bats. Some of the Zargasian sorcerers and clerics are not so lucky, and are lynched by the mob.

Adronius addresses the Senate with a gripping speech. He is reinstated as Emperor among cheers, applause, and happy tears.

### Caracanomnos Triumphant

The PCs have been defeated if the sorcerer destroys Adronius's body or makes off with the scepter. However, there is still a way for them to thwart him. Go to Chapter 8.

## Chapter 8: The Games

Excerpt from *Prophecies of Phaistos*, as written by the scribe Hestios of Corisa:

*"The Games are always a festive time. Even more so this circle, as the people celebrated the victory of brave champions . . . and the overthrow of a tyrant!"*

### How They Get Here

If Caracanomnos stole the scepter or destroyed Adronius's corpse in the previous chapter, the players may believe their characters have been defeated. However, Senator Tibernos (or Tassia or Xanthipon, if the Senator is dead) proposes another plan.

"The Emperor will be at the Games next sleep," says the Senator. "Traditionally, the champion of each event may ask a boon of the Emperor. This gives us the chance to disgrace him before the entire assembly at the stadium. One of you must win an event, then demand that Caracanomnos extinguish the sun!"

The PCs probably have some questions for the Senator about his plan.

**Why ask the sorcerer to extinguish the sun?** "I do not believe he has the power he claims," says the Senator. "When the people see that the sorcerer has no hold over the sun, they will also see that he has no hold over them. The people will rise up and overthrow the tyrant."

**How do we enter the Games as contestants?** "Some of the officials at the stadium dangle from my purse strings," says the grinning Senator. "I can buy your way into the events. But you must rely on your skills to become champions."

**What events can we choose from?** "Archery, boxing, running, and wrestling are scheduled for next sleep. You may enter any of these contests, and more than one if you wish."

**Can we use magical items?** "Magic is not allowed in the Games. It is considered cheating and severely punished."

Note that the *Milenian Empire D&D®* game supplement has much more information about

Milenian sporting events. If you have this book, you can elaborate upon the Games as much as you like. You might give the players more contests to choose from, such as chariot racing, discos throwing, horse racing, javelin throwing, and the pankration (a combination of boxing and wrestling).

Assume the PCs have 12 hours to prepare for the Games. If they need healing, Tassia or Senator Tibernos can summon clerics from the order of Halav. They gladly cast clerical healing spells to aid the PCs.

### The Scene

When the PCs finally arrive at the stadium for the Games, read the following aloud. Note that you might have to change this boxed text slightly, depending upon the events of the last chapter. For instance, if Caracanomnos stole the scepter, the PCs see that he has it in hand.

Note that if the sorcerer should try to use the scepter's powers, the artifact immediately slays him because he is Chaotic (see the "Milenian Magic and Monsters" chapter). However, this does not mean that Caracanomnos cannot hold the scepter.

Those of you participating in the Games are currently parading around the stadium track with the other athletes. The seats are filled with cheering Milenians, who throw wreaths of flowers at your feet. This is obviously an important festival; the people actually seem happy for once.

Those of you who are not taking part in the events are seated with Senator Tibernos at the north end of the stadium. This section is reserved for politicians and other wealthy citizens.

The south end of the stadium is reserved for the Emperor and his retinue. There you can see about 20 figures in heavy black robes. If not for his bone staff, it would be impossible to distinguish Caracanomnos from the others. An awning has been erected above them, shading them from the sun.



As the parade draws to an end, trumpets blare and all eyes turn toward the Emperor. Caracanomnos rises slowly, and calls out in his raspy voice: "Let the games begin!"

Even though Caracanomnos recognizes the PCs, he does not try to stop them from taking part in the festival. Since he defeated them before, he no longer views them as a threat.

## Events

This section gives you suggestions on how to run the sporting events. To keep things simple, in each contest, assume any one participating adventurer has made it to the final round. Thus, only one PC and one NPC are left, with the winner being the champion. If more than one PC takes part in the same event, they must compete against each other to see who goes on to meet the final NPC.

**Archery:** The contestants take turns shooting long bows at three waterskins hanging from spears. The three targets are spaced at 50' (+1 bonus to hit), 100' (no modifier to hit), and 150' (-1 penalty to hit). The closest target is worth 1 point, the middle target 2 points, and the farthest 3 points. Each contestant may shoot a total of six arrows at any combination of targets. For example, he could shoot all six at the farthest target, taking a greater chance of missing for the chance of more points. The archer who ends up with the most points wins. The leather waterskins have an Armor Class of only 7, but due to their small size, there is an additional -1 penalty to hit them.

You may wish to run this event with short bows, or even spears or javelins, if the players prefer. In this case, you should adjust the ranges of the targets accordingly.

**Actius of Tyrnus:** 5th level fighter; AC 9; hp 32; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (long bow); MV 120' (40'); Save as F5; ML 9; AL L; THAC0 17 (+2 with bow due to Dexterity) S 12, I 9, W 10, D 16, Co 12, Ch 8. Actius is the archer the player character must beat.

**Boxing:** Milenian boxing is different from that of our own world: there are no rounds, no ring, and it is not unfair to hit a man when he is

down. The fight goes on until one boxer admits defeat or is knocked out (not merely stunned). Use the striking rules on pages 111-112 of the *Rules Cyclopedia*.

Armor and weapons are not allowed. Boxers may wear sharp thongs, strips of ox hide worn around the fists and forearms. These act as cesti (*Rules Cyclopedia*, pages 62 and 64).

**Brutius of Laxan:** 6th level fighter; AC 9; hp 41; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3 + 3 (cestus plus Strength bonus); MV 120' (40'); Save as F6; ML 12; AL N; THAC0 17 (+3 due to Strength); S 18, I 7, W 9, D 12, Co 16, Ch 6. The PC must defeat Brutius, the current champion.

**Running:** This is simply a foot race around the stadium track. To determine the winner, each runner must attempt a Constitution check. The one who succeeds by the most (or fails by the least) is the winner. Characters with the Endurance skill may add a +1 bonus to the roll.

**Demistocles of Corisa:** 0-level human; AC 9; hp 7; #AT 1 punch; Dmg 1; MV 120' (40'); Save as Normal Man; ML 8; AL N; THAC0 20; S 12, I 9, W 9, D 15, Co 18, Ch 10. The PC must outrun Demistocles to become champion.

**Wrestling:** This event takes place on a patch of muddy ground at the middle of the stadium. Use the wrestling rules in the *Rules Cyclopedia*. The winner is the first to pin his opponent. Biting, gouging, punching, and kicking are forbidden.

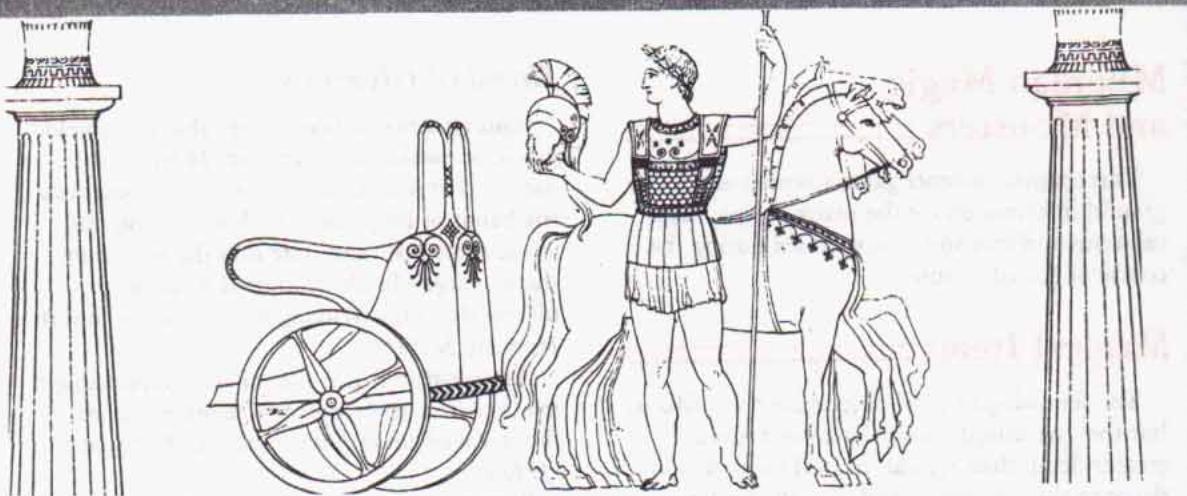
**Jason of Xarda:** 7th level fighter; AC 6 (Dexterity bonus); hp 46; #AT 1; Dmg 3 (punch plus Strength bonus); MV 120' (40'); Save as F7; ML 10; AL N; THAC0 15 (+2 due to Strength); Wrestling Rating 18; S 16, I 11, W 12, D 18, Co 14, Ch 13. The PC must defeat Jason to be named champion.

## Champions!

At the end of the day, the champions are paraded before the Emperor. Each is given a crown of olive leaves, and may ask a single boon of the Emperor.

It is possible that more than one PC is a champion. Each may make a request. Here are the most likely ones.

If you truly have the power you claim, extinguish the sun! A gasp passes through the crowd. Utter silence follows.



Caracanomnos slowly rises. "I am Emperor!" he cries. "I need not prove my power to anyone! For this insult, you shall be put to death!"

Angry murmurs pass through the crowd. Give the PCs a chance to stir up the people by making a speech. If they do nothing, Senator Tibernos says, "Has death ever been the prize of champions? There has been nothing but death since Caracanomnos crawled from the shadows! I say he has no power over the sun! I say it is time to rise up and be done with this tyrant!"

Mayhem takes the day as the angry crowd storms the Emperor and his retinue. The evil Caracanomnos is smart enough to know when the jig is up; he tries to escape with a *fly or magic door* spell.

However, if you wish, the sorcerer puts up a fight. Assume his retinue of clerics and magic-users are swiftly overwhelmed by the mob, leaving the PCs to deal with Caracanomnos.

If you want a more dramatic ending, and Caracanomnos has the *Milenian Scepter*, assume he tries to use its powers. He is instantly obliterated with a deafening thunderclap. Only the scepter remains.

I ask for my boon—the *Milenian Scepter*! If the PCs have Adronius's body, but lost the scepter to Caracanomnos in Chapter 7, they may ask for it instead of calling his bluff about his power over the sun. This is not a good idea.

"The scepter is not mine to give," says the sorcerer. "It is a symbol of the Milenian people, and no single man's property. As Emperor, I refuse your request. You have the right to ask of a different boon."

From the whispers in the crowd, it is obvious that the people agree with Caracanomnos. They do not expect him to give the scepter to the player characters.

### Defeat

Even if the PCs fail to win any events, they might still be able to bring about the sorcerer's downfall. Two other things they might try are:

**Make a speech.** During the awards ceremony, the PCs can still challenge Caracanomnos to extinguish the sun. If they make a good speech revealing the highlights of their quest—meeting the oracle, finding the scepter, and trying to raise Adronius—they can persuade the crowd to revolt. Events unfold as described above under "Champions!"

**Attack the sorcerer.** The PCs can start a revolt by simply attacking Caracanomnos. The people join in. They have had enough of him, and are just looking for an excuse to riot.

### Where Next?

Unless the PCs fail badly, Caracanomnos will be overthrown. If Adronius's body has been destroyed, he cannot be *raised*. Thus, the Empire may be without an Emperor.

In this case, the Senate is swiftly convened, and the PCs are called upon to relate their story. Because of his unfailing loyalty to Emperor Adronius, even after death, Senator Tibernos will be elected the next Emperor of the Milenian Empire.

## Milenian Magic and Monsters

This chapter presents game statistics and background information for the many unique magical items and monsters encountered during the course of the adventure.

### Magical Items

The following magical objects are not artifacts, but they are unique. They have been given greater detail than typical magical items to add flavor to the adventure, and to make finding, investigating, and using them more interesting for the players.

#### *Chariot of Vix*

**History:** Vix is the mortal daughter of the Immortal Zargos (alias Nyx, see the *Wrath of the Immortals* boxed set). She is a powerful warrior and favored by Zargos, who has indirectly given her several magical items, including the *chariot of Vix*.

The origin of the chariot remains a mystery. Some scholars believe it was created by Zargos while he was still a mortal sorcerer many circles past. Others claim it was stolen from Ixion, Immortal Patron of the Sun, and was once pulled by his fiery steeds.

**Appearance:** The chariot is constructed with a wooden frame covered with bronze plates, which are in turn overlaid with designs in silver and gold. Wicked blades of blackest obsidian extend from its axle, sticking out perpendicularly from the wheels. The chariot can carry two human-sized passengers.

**Powers:** While a beast is hitched to the chariot, the creature receives the benefit of a *haste* spell, doubling its normal movement rate. However, the beast cannot make twice the normal number of attacks; it can only move twice as fast.

If the beast has the ability to fly, it can still fly while pulling the chariot. This is because the chariot has the power to *levitate*, making it virtually weightless and easily pulled.

### *Shield of Olynthos*

**History:** Ancient texts record that this shield was once owned by a legendary Milenian hero named Bachileos before it eventually came into the hands of Emperor Olynthos the Undying. These same texts also state that the legendary shield, forged by the Immortal Palartarkan, ultimately vanished along with Olynthos and the *Milenian Scepter*.

**Appearance:** It is a normal-sized round shield made of iron and covered with oiled leather. Emblazoned upon it is the image of a fearsome griffon.

**Powers:** It acts as a *shield +3*. In addition, once per sleep the wearer may call upon a special power. One claw of the griffon emblazoned on the shield appears to come to life, emerging from the surface of the shield to slash at one opponent. If struck, the victim suffers 2d4 points of damage and must succeed at a saving throw vs. spells or suffer the effects of a *cause fear* spell.

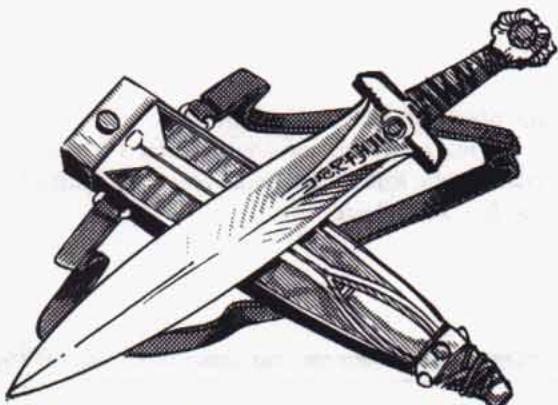
The claw strikes with a THAC0 of 13, and can make any number of attacks (but only once per round) until it finally hits, at which point it merges with the shield once again.

### *Spear of Vix*

**History:** As the daughter of the Immortal Zargos, Vix holds a place of honor among the Followers of Zargos. The fabled *spear of Vix* is said to have been enchanted by Emperor Caranomnos himself, and presented to Vix as a gift of betrothal. Though it is known Vix accepted the gift, it is believed she rejected the Emperor's offer of marriage.

**Appearance:** The spear is made of a strange alloy of iron and glows with a bluish light. The haft is ornately engraved with magical sigils and runes.

**Powers:** The spear has a weapon modifier of +3 to hit and damage. It also has the power of *returning*, meaning it returns to the thrower's hand if it misses its target. Finally, once per sleep the spear may be commanded to *blind* the next creature it strikes, who must then succeed at a saving throw vs. spells or be unable to see for 12 turns.



### Sword of Olynthos

**History:** Emperor Olynthos was renowned for his skill at combat and athletics, and his willingness to do anything to win. The sword is yet another example of his hunger for victory. It was enchanted by the mages of the Academy of the Arcane, and presented to Emperor Olynthos many circles ago. It remains with Emperor Olynthos to this sleep in a crypt beneath the Acropolis, where Olynthos stands as eternal guardian of the Milenian Scepter.

**Appearance:** The sword of Olynthos is a short sword with a well-honed iron blade. The handle is also made of iron, wrapped with leather, and fashioned in the shape of an eagle's claw clutching a large ruby (worth 7,500 gp).

Written along the blade in Milenian script are runes that translate as: "We call upon Palar-tarkan that this blade might bring health and victory to our courageous Emperor Olynthos!" Palar-tarkan is the Immortal patron of magic within the Milenian Empire. By speaking aloud the Immortal's name, it is possible to invoke the sword's healing power.

**Powers:** The sword has a weapon modifier of +4 to hit and damage. Once per sleep, it may be commanded to heal the wielder by the same amount of damage it inflicts on the next strike. For example, if the wielder hits his opponent for 10 points of damage (including all modifiers for Strength, weapon mastery, and the sword's +4 weapon modifier), the wielder recovers 10 lost hit points. The user cannot gain more hit points than his normal maximum. These hit points are not permanently lost by the victim, who may heal normally.

### Staff of Caracanomnos

**History:** It is believed that Caracanomnos created this staff from the bones of his own father, who was himself a powerful sorcerer. Over the circles, the staff has gained a reputation for its destructive power, having been the doom of several Milenian heroes who sought to defeat Caracanomnos.

**Appearance:** The staff is made of fused bones topped by a leering skull. The eye sockets of the skull are filled with obsidian.

**Powers:** The staff is only usable by magic-users. It may be wielded as a staff +2. Additionally, it may be used to duplicate the following magical spell effects:

- *Curse*, black beams from skull's eyes, 30' range, 2 charges.
- *Darkness*, 1 charge.
- *Magic missile*, four missiles per round, 1 charge.

### Talisman of the Statue

**History:** Talismans are a common type of magical item created by Milenian magic-users. There are many different types, not only *talismans of the statue*.

**Appearance:** There are three varieties of this talisman, each corresponding to a different kind of living statue (crystal, iron, or rock). Each talisman looks like a 1" tall statue, and is made of the same material as the type of living statue it affects (an iron talisman affects iron living statues, etc.).

**Powers:** The wearer of the talisman can attempt to control one living statue of the appropriate type within 60'. The living statue is allowed a one-time saving throw versus spells. If successful, that living statue can never be controlled by that talisman. If the save is failed, the living statue must obey the commands of the wearer. It can be ordered to walk, attack, guard, and so forth. Once given a command, the wearer need not remain within 60' for the living statue to fulfill its duties. Once a talisman is "attuned" to a living statue (meaning the statue failed its saving throw), it cannot be used to control other living statues until the original statue is destroyed.

## Artifacts

The following items were both made by the Immortal Halav and hold very potent magic. Only one of each exists. They are not to be taken lightly, and should not permanently come into



### Milenian Scepter

Sphere of Thought

**Greater Artifact:** The scepter has 380 Power Points with a recharge rate of 20 per turn.

**History:** Long ago, when the Milenians were whisked from the surface of the Known World into the Hollow World, the Immortal Halav created the *Milenian Scepter* to help them rebuild their Empire. It passed from Emperor to Emperor for many generations.

However, when the scepter came into the possession of Emperor Olynthos, he used it for evil deeds, and was cursed to be the artifact's undying guardian. Olynthos and the scepter disappeared, and were believed lost forever. In truth, the scepter rests within a forgotten crypt beneath the Acropolis, waiting for someone worthy enough to defeat its guardian.

**Vessel:** The scepter is made of iron and is 2' long. Glowing runes are etched into it, and it is set with a variety of glittering gemstones.

**Monetary Value of Vessel:** The scepter is worth 20,000 gp.

**Powers:** The following powers may be used by the wielder of the *Milenian Scepter*:

- *Cause Critical Wounds* (35 PP), touch only.
- *Detect Lie* (50 PP).

the possession of the adventurers.

For more information about artifacts in general, see the *Rules Cyclopedia* and the *Wrath of the Immortals* boxed set.

- *Mind Barrier* (80 PP).
- *Protection from Evil* (10 PP).
- *Raise Dead Fully* (85 PP).
- *Remove Geas* (45 PP).

- *Victory* (75 PP), +25 to War Machine Combat Results Roll (*Rules Cyclopedia*); loss results on CRT limited to 91-100 results.

**Handicaps:** Any character of Chaotic alignment who attempts to use the scepter's powers dies immediately with no saving throw. The wielder of the scepter suffers from weak magic; spells cast by him inflict less damage (-2 per die rolled) and are more easily resisted (+2 to the target's saving throws). The user also suffers a -2 penalty to all attack rolls.

**Penalties:** Each time an attempt is made to use any of the scepter's powers, there exists a 20% chance of the wielder fumbling and dropping it to the ground, negating the attempt to use the power. Whenever the *cause critical wounds* power is used, there is a 25% chance it has the opposite effect, acting like a *cure critical wounds* spell instead. Each time the *raise dead fully* power is used, there is a 75% chance the wielder ages 1d6 years. While the *mind barrier* is in effect, there is a 70% chance the user suffers an extra 1d4 points of damage from physical attacks.

## Icon of Halav

### Sphere of Thought

**Greater Artifact:** The icon has 310 Power Points with a recharge rate of 20 per turn.

**History:** An icon is a special type of artifact that is made by the hands of an oracle and enchanted by an Immortal. The Icon of Halav was crafted by the ancient oracle Phaistos over 500 circles ago. The artifact stands at the Shrine of Glory.

**Vessel:** The icon is made of red clay and stands 2' tall. It is fashioned in the shape of a warrior (i.e. Halav) wearing Milenian cuir-boulli armor. The icon is painted to appear lifelike. For an artifact, it does not look exceptional or magical.

**Monetary Value of Vessel:** As a work of art, the vessel is worth perhaps 30 gp.

**Powers:** An icon's powers can only be used while it remains in its shrine. Removing an icon causes it to cease functioning (though it still radiates magic) until it is returned to the sacred ground.

Icons do not have to be handled to be used. As long as the user remains within the boundaries of the shrine, the icon's powers may be called upon by speaking command phrases. Only the oracle knows these commands.

The Icon of Halav has the following powers, all of which are cast at 40th level:

- *Animate Dead* (50 PP).
- *Create Food* (35 PP).
- *Create Water* (20 PP).
- *Cure Critical Wounds* (35 PP).

- *Magic Missile* (15 PP), same as 1st level magical spell; each use fires 5 missiles that inflict  $1d6 + 1$  points of damage each.
  - *Meteor Swarm* (100 PP).
  - *Protection from Evil* 10' radius (25 PP).
  - *Dispel Magic* (55 PP).



**Handicaps:** *The oracle suffers no ill effects from using the icon.* Others who take possession of the icon without the consent of the oracle or Halav automatically shrink to the size of the icon—2' tall. Those who have taken the icon also lose 1d6 points from each of their ability scores. Finally, the possessors of the artifact suffer a -3 penalty to all saving throws. Even if the characters "throw away" the icon, these three handicaps continue to plague them, and cannot be negated until the artifact is returned to its shrine.

**Penalties:** *The oracle suffers no penalties when using the icon.* Others who attempt to use the icon must first succeed at a saving throw versus spells or be confused for 12 rounds. If trying to use the icon's *dispel magic* power, there is a 45% chance it affects the user. If attempting to use its *magic missile* power, there is a 5% chance the missiles strike the user. When the *meteor swarm* power is used, there is a 90% chance that all magical items touched by the user (except the artifact) become permanently non-magical.



## Monsters

This adventure introduces two special monsters. Both are unique to the Milenian Empire and to this adventure in particular. For general details about other monsters that you can put into the Milenian Empire setting, see the HOLLOW WORLD® accessory *HWR3, The Milenian Empire*.

### Karakos the Zargosian Hydra

Armor Class: 5  
Hit Dice: 9** (L)  
Hit Points: 72  
Move: 120' (40')  
flying: 180' (60')  
Attacks: 9 bites (1 per head)  
Damage: 1d10 + poison each  
No. Appearing: 1 (1)  
Save As: F9  
Morale: 11  
Treasure Type: Nil  
Alignment: Neutral  
Intelligence: 2  
THAC0: 11  
XP Value: 2,300

Karakos is a nine-headed hydra that has undergone changes through experiments by Zargosian sorcerers. Karakos has the dragon-like body common to other hydras. However, it also has huge bat-like wings. It can fly, and can make special swoop attacks with up to three of her heads at a time.

Anyone bitten by Karakos must make a saving throw vs. poison. A successful saving throw means the attack has special effect no effect. Failure means the character has been poisoned, and begins to lose Strength points at the rate of 1 per round. Note that characters will lose any Strength bonuses, and acquire Strength penalties as their ability scores drop (see page 9 of the Rules Cyclopedia).

A character whose Strength drops to 0, dies immediately. If the poison is neutralized (by spell, potion, etc.) before the victim dies, the character will regain lost Strength points at the rate of 1 point per turn.

### Lyadrachnus

Armor Class: 6  
Hit Dice: 6* (L)  
Hit Points: 40  
Move: 60' (20')  
Attacks: 1 bite/8 tentacles  
Damage: 1d8/1d6 each  
No. Appearing: 1 (1)  
Save As: F3  
Morale: 12  
Treasure Type: Nil  
Alignment: Neutral  
Intelligence: 0  
THAC0: 14  
XP Value: 500

The lyadrachnus was accidentally created by Zargosian sorcerers, who infiltrated the Academy of the Arcane after Caracanomnos came to power. (Long ago, Zargosians were banned from attending the Academy.) Only one lyadrachnus exists, but the Zargosians have probably created other experimental creatures.

The lyadrachnus is a hybrid, combining attributes of a caecilia, giant leech, and octopus. It is 9' long with a gray, slimy, worm-like body. At the front are a pair of huge round eyes and a beak-like mouth, similar to that of an octopus. Four suckered tentacles extend from each side of its horrid body. It moves by sliding along the ground, and can even climb over low walls with the aid of its tentacles.

The lyadrachnus attacks by grasping with its eight tentacles, each of which are 20' long. Once it grasps a victim, the creature holds on and drains blood through the suckers in its tentacles, inflicting 1d6 points of damage per round *from each tentacle*. A human-sized victim can be entangled by a maximum of four tentacles at one time (for a maximum of 4d6 points of damage per round). The lyadrachnus can also bite with its beak-like mouth for 1d8 points of damage.

An entangled victim can attempt to break free. Each round, the character may roll one Strength or Dexterity check (player's choice) as his action for the round, with success meaning he has escaped from one tentacle. Alternatively, a tentacle can be severed by inflicting 8 points of damage with an edged weapon.

## NPC Roster

This chapter presents game statistics and background information concerning the adventure's major non-player characters.

### Emperor Adronius

**History:** Adronius was born into a wealthy family in Corisa 60 circles ago. After studying with the most esteemed scholars of his time, the young Adronius became a prosperous landowner and later entered the military. Though he quickly became a talented officer, Adronius was not satisfied with soldiering. He pursued a political career, and was elected Senator at the age of 30 circles.

Adronius achieved popularity in the Senate, and reached the pinnacle of success five circles later when he was elected Emperor.

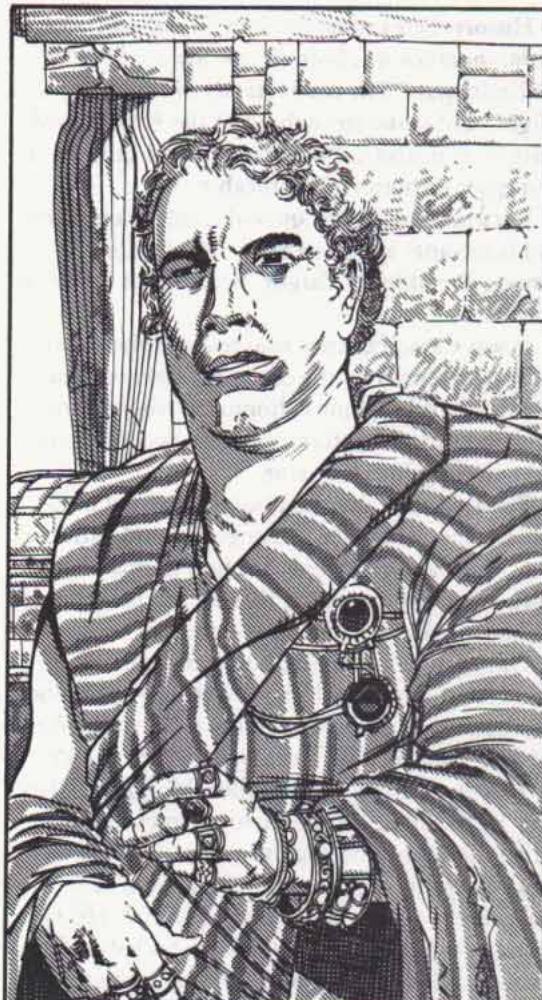
Adronius the Emperor became renowned for his fabulous building projects, which included roads, dams, civic buildings, and towering statues of himself. The people prospered under his leadership, making him a well-liked Emperor. Many statues have been raised in his honor across the Milenian Empire.

However, during the coming of the Sleep of Darkness, Emperor Adronius was slain by a mob of terrified citizens. Now under the oppressive yoke of Emperor Caracanomnos, the people greatly mourn the loss of the wise Adronius.

**Personality:** Adronius thinks of himself as a talented musician, and spends much of his free time composing songs for the lute. However, he is not very good. Even so, he expects honest reviews from his listeners, and seems to take criticism well. In truth, Adronius holds grudges against anyone who gives him a bad review, and may even attempt to wreck his critics' careers.

As an administrator, Adronius is both tactful and intelligent. Before his death, he had a strong relationship with both the Senate and his military leaders.

**Appearance:** Adronius possesses a noble bearing, and is a skilled public speaker. He is somewhat below average height and nearly 20 pounds overweight. He wears bright tunics with perpendicular stripes to conceal his weight, and many pieces of exquisite jewelry to distract the eye.



**DM Notes:** Though Adronius was well-liked, he still had enemies. Several members of the Senate, as well as Emperor Caracanomnos, would like to see him remain dead.

**Combat Notes:** Adronius is a 4th level fighter; AC 9 (3 in armor and shield); hp 20; MV 120' (40'); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 + 3 (*short sword* + 2 plus Strength bonus); Save as F4; ML 5; AL N; THAC0 17; S 13, I 12, W 15, D 10, Co 11, Ch 14. **Languages:** Milenian, Neathar. **General Skills:** Acting (Ch), Leadership (Ch), Military Tactics (I), Riding (D).

**Magical Items:** For combat, the Emperor dons *cuir-boulli armor* + 2 and a *short sword* + 2.

## Emperor Caracanomnos

**History:** Screaming and howling like a fiend, Caracanomnos was born in the Tower of Night 53 circles past. The tower stands in the Valley of Night, and is the stronghold of the Followers of Zargos. It is magically concealed, and purportedly a place of horrors unnameable.

Caracanomnos grew up with undead creatures as his servants and playthings. He excelled among the order of Zargos, becoming a powerful sorcerer.

It was Caracanomnos who realized the opportunity presented by the Sleep of Darkness and the death of Emperor Adronius. Claiming power over the sun, the sorcerer blackmailed the Senate into electing him Emperor.

**Personality:** Caracanomnos is a twisted individual. He delights in causing pain and suffering. And he is not alone, for his oppression and wickedness are spreading through all branches of Milenian government and society.

**Appearance:** At 6', he is tall for a Milenian, but very thin. Like all Zargosians, Caracanomnos has been malformed due to exposure to the *Book of Zargos*, a dreaded artifact that holds the key to utterly destroying the Hollow World's sun (see the *Milenian Empire* game supplement for details). Because sunshine burns him, the sorcerer must keep his skin covered. Thus, he is very pale. He is so thin as to appear skeletal. His face is gaunt and haggard; his lips are pulled back from his teeth, giving him a permanent grimace. Those who have been so unfortunate to see his face believe Caracanomnos to be the undead, though this is not true.

**DM Notes:** The sorcerer's ultimate goal, and that of all Followers of Zargos, is to destroy the sun, transforming the Hollow World into a land of nightmares. Though this power exists within the pages of the *Book of Zargos*, the clerics and sorcerers of the order have not yet unraveled its mysteries.

**Combat Notes:** Caracanomnos is a 15th level magic-user; AC 4 (*ring of protection +3* and Dexterity bonus); hp 42; MV 120' (40'); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 + 2 (*staff of Caracanomnos*) or by spell; Save as M15; ML 10; AL C; THAC0 15; S 12, I 17, W 15, D 16, Co 13, Ch 5. Languages: Milenian, Neathar, Nithian. General Skills: Alternate



Magics (I + 2), Magical Engineering (I + 2), Deception (Ch), Detect Deception (W).

**Spells Carried:** 1st level—analyze, detect magic, darkness, light, shield. 2nd level—knock, levitate, phantasmal force, wizard lock. 3rd level—dispel magic, fly, infravision, lightning bolt. 4th level—curse, remove curse, wall of fire, wizard eye. 5th level—animate dead, passwall, wall of stone. 6th level—anti-magic shell, flesh to stone. 7th level—magic door.

**Magical Items:** The sorcerer wears a *ring of protection +3* and wields the *staff of Caracanomnos* (see the "Milenian Magic and Monsters" chapter).

## NPC ROSTER

### Hestios the Scribe

**History:** Hestios was born into a family of commoners near Corisa 36 circles ago. His father was a potter, but Hestios was not content with the thought of spending his life spinning, molding, and baking clay. Against his father's wishes, Hestios left for the city and enrolled in college.

The young man became obsessed with his studies. When he learned that his father had fallen ill, Hestios put off returning home until it was too late—his father was dead.

Overcome with grief and guilt, Hestios joined the order of Halav, becoming a cleric. He showed an aptitude for copying written works, and gained a position in the order as a scribe.

Hestios became so talented that he was given the prestigious task of traveling to the Shrine of Glory to document the prophecies of the oracle Phaistos. He has been living and writing at the shrine for nearly a circle (year) now.

**Personality:** Hestios is an intelligent, good-hearted man. He is a devout follower of Halav, having never wavered in his faith or convictions. Hestios would willingly die to defend his order and its principles.

The scribe greatly admires Phaistos, the oracle. While food and water are magically supplied by the *Icon of Halav* at the Shrine of Glory, Hestios tends to the oracle's other needs, ensuring the old man stays clean and healthy. By caring for Phaistos, Hestios is coming to grips with the guilt he feels for not aiding his dead father.

**Appearance:** Hestios is a Milenian man of average height and weight. He keeps his curly, brown hair short, and wears a beard with no mustache.

Like all members of his order, Hestios wears red somewhere on his person to honor Halav. The scribe has chosen to wear a red tunic emblazoned with the symbol of Halav (a sword upon an anvil) in white. He also wears leather sandals and a leather pouch holding his ink pots, writing quills, and journal.

**DM Notes:** Hestios takes an instant liking to the PCs. He has been hearing of their exploits from the oracle, and greatly admires them for their bravery and willingness to help the Empire.

**Combat Notes:** Hestios is a 4th level cleric of Halav; AC 3 (cuir-bouilli and shield plus Dexterity bonus); hp 20; MV 120' (40'); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword); Save as C4; ML 8; AL L; THAC0 19; S 10, I 15, W 15, D 17, Co 13, Ch 12. Languages: Milenian, Neathar, Traldar. General Skills: Ceremony (Halav, W), Healing (I), Knowledge (Milenian theology, I), Music (pan-pipe, Ch), Profession (scribe, I).



Spells Carried: 1st level—*cure light wounds*, *protection from evil*. 2nd level—*bless*.  
**Magical Items:** None.

## Kleom the Rat Catcher

**History:** Sixteen circles ago, Kleom was born a slave in the town of Portos. His master owned a foundry where metals were melted and cast into various shapes to be used for making tools and weapons. Kleom was put to work stoking the furnaces. It was a hot and miserable existence. The boy longed for freedom.

Misfortune granted Kleom's wish. Due to his master's negligence, one of the furnaces exploded, horribly scarring the boy. Out of pity, his master gave Kleom his freedom at the age of 12 circles.

Kleom found his mother in Corisa, where she was living as the slave of a merchant. Determined to buy his mother's freedom, but lacking any skills needed for employment, Kleom resorted to petty theft and begging. He was able to avoid the law, but not the public, who viewed him with disdain for his deformities and pilfering. One sleep, Kleom was nearly stoned to death.

The hapless Kleom retreated below the city, and discovered the world of the sewers. He made the dank tunnels and putrid waterways his home. He became skilled at catching rats, and made money selling them for their fur and meat.

Because of his deformities and uncleanliness, Kleom became known as the "Rat Catcher," the "Ratter," or the "Rat-Man." On the streets, people openly scorn him. Some throw rotten vegetables or even stones, forcing Kleom to scurry back to his sewer. But the rat catcher continues to horde his money, and someday, he swears, he will prove his worthiness by buying his mother's freedom.

**Personality:** Kleom is a paranoid recluse. He is slow to trust anyone, believing that everyone wants to know where in the sewer he has hidden his money.

**Appearance:** Kleom is only 4'10" tall and thin. His hair is long and matted, and his unkempt beard consists only of splotches of hair. Kleom's face (what can be seen of it under dirt and hair) is horribly scarred from burns he received in an explosion. He wears a ratty tunic and walks about barefoot. He carries an old spear, a rusty dagger, and a sack full of squealing rats.



**DM Notes:** Kleom speaks with a st-st-stutter. For the PCs, he can be a useful source of knowledge concerning the sewers.

**Combat Notes:** Kleom is a 4th level thief; AC 7 (Dexterity bonus); hp 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger) or 1d6 (spear); MV 120' (40'); Save as T4; ML 6; AL N; THAC0 19; SA spear (+2 attack, +1 damage); S 10, I 9, W 9, D 16, Co 11, Ch 6; OL 30% FT 25% RT 25% CW 90% MS 35% HS 24% PP 35% HN 45%. Languages: Milenian, Neathar. General Skills: Danger Sense (W), Caving (W), Hunting (I), Snares (I).

**Magical Items:** None.

## Olynthos the Undying

**History:** Nearly 143 circles ago, Olynthos was born in Demtor. At an early age he showed a natural talent for athletics, particularly wrestling. By the time he was 16, Olynthos was good enough to become a professional wrestler, and lucky enough to find a wealthy citizen to sponsor him.

Olynthos became renowned for his tenacity and lust for victory. In the Games, he did very well, making it to the final round, but during the match he cheated and was caught. He was forced to pay a fine and expelled from the Games, but the humiliation was the worst punishment of all. Disgruntled with athletics, Olynthos joined the military.

With the Imperial Army, Olynthos learned many talents. Here, victory was king, and the means to getting it were not always questioned. Olynthos learned to manipulate the Empire's bureaucracy. He was becoming a politician.

At the age of 32, Olynthos was elected Senator under questionable circumstances—his main opponent was found murdered. Olynthos served several terms in the Senate before being elected Emperor.

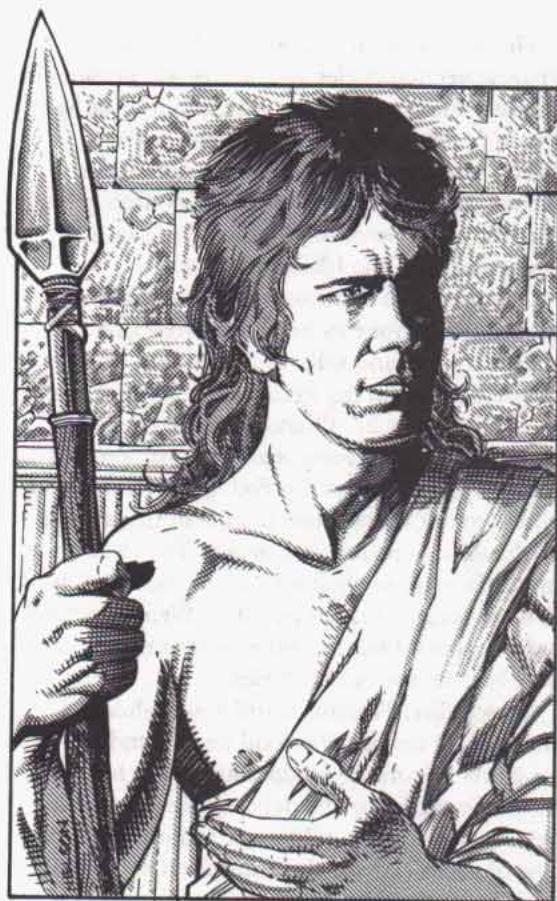
Though on the surface it appeared wholesome, Olynthos's entire political career was built upon bribery, blackmail, and assassination. Winning was everything to the former athlete.

Olynthos was a poor Emperor. He abused the position by increasing taxes for his own gain. He slowed the Empire's expansion; new building projects stood unfinished. He neglected the military; many of his soldiers deserted to form mercenary bands. Soon, several provinces of the Empire were in rebellion.

Olynthos made the ultimate mistake of using the *Milenian Scepter* to aid him and his soldiers in battle against rebellious villagers. The townsfolk were systematically slaughtered.

For his evil ways, Olynthos was *cursed* to be the undying guardian of the scepter. Both he and the artifact vanished, leaving only legends behind.

**Personality:** At one time, Olynthos cared only about winning. Now, he wants only to die. He has been the undying guardian of the scepter for over 100 circles, long enough to drive any man insane.



**Appearance:** Olynthos is of average height and weight. His curly brown hair is worn long. He has a very muscular build.

**DM Notes:** As the undying guardian, Olynthos has no need of food, water, or air. He does not age.

**Combat Notes:** 8th level fighter; AC 0 (*cuir-boulli +1*, *shield of Olynthos*, and Dexterity bonus); hp 53; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+6 (*sword of Olynthos* and Strength bonus); MV 120' (40'); Save as F8; ML 12; AL N; THAC0 15 (+2 due to Strength); S 17, I 15, W 10, D 15, Co 12, Ch 16. Languages: Milenian, Neathar. General Skills: Bravery (W), Cheating (D), Intimidation (S), Leadership (Ch), Military Tactics (I), Wrestling (S).

**Magical Items:** The undying warrior wears *cuir-boulli +1*. He also wields the *sword of Olynthos* and the *shield of Olynthos*. (See the "Milenian Monsters and Magic" chapter.)

## Phaistos the Oracle

**History:** Phaistos was born in the town of Pharos over 500 circles ago. There was nothing in his early life that gave any hint about what he would become. He left his father's house as a young man for reasons that have been lost to history. He traveled for several years, finally becoming a shepherd, tending his flocks on the grassy slopes of the Island of Amora.

The shepherd Phaistos was a kind man, willing to help anyone in need. He often gave sheep, cheese, and milk to the hungry. People respected him for his wisdom and good nature.

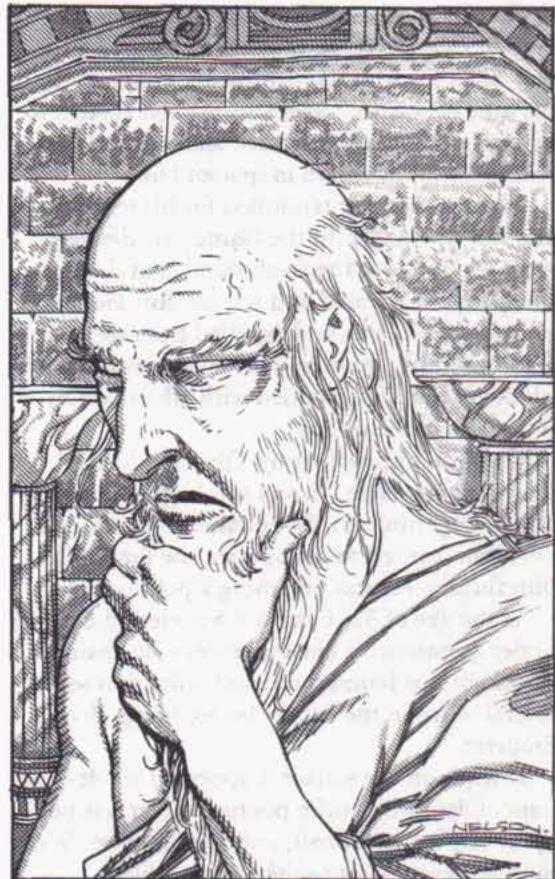
At the age of 27, Phaistos received a vision from Halav. The young man was instructed to make a pilgrimage to the *Fountain of Tomorrow*, which stands outside the Temple in Corisa, and to drink from its magical waters. The fountain is an artifact; those chosen by an Immortal to drink from it become oracles (see the *Milenian Empire* supplement). Phaistos did so without question, and became the oracle of Halav.

**Personality:** Phaistos is still a good-hearted man, using his powers to aid people and animals. As the oracle, he does not abuse his power to divine the future by delving into trivial matters, but takes this ability very seriously. He does not travel or care for the acquisition of material goods. In all, Phaistos is content with his life.

**Appearance:** Although he is over 500 circles old, Phaistos appears to be only about 75 circles old. Like all Milenian oracles who speak for the Immortals, Phaistos has not aged as swiftly as other mortals.

Phaistos is average height, but very thin. He is mostly bald, and what hair he has hangs down to his shoulders in scraggly locks. He is also blind, with his eyes glazed milky white. Some say Phaistos has a crazy look about him, which becomes most pronounced when he speaks for Halav..

**DM Notes:** Phaistos can divine the future by "listening" to omens. Exactly how he answers any question is for you to decide. The omens usually involve cryptic messages, hint, or clues, and not a simple yes or no (like the famous Greek oracle at Delphi).



**Combat Notes:** 11th level cleric; AC 9; hp 38; #AT 1; Dmg 1 (punch) or by spell; MV 120' (40'); Save as C11; ML 10; AL L; THAC0 15; S 10, I 15, W 18, D 12, Co 12, Ch 15. Languages: Milenian, Neathar. General Skills: Art (painting, sculpture, W), Ceremony (Halav, W), Healing (I), Nature Lore (mountain/hill, I), Persuasion (Ch), Storytelling (Ch).

**Spells Carried:** 1st level—cure light wounds, protection from evil, remove fear, resist cold. 2nd level—bless, resist fire, silence 15' radius, speak with animals. 3rd level—locate object (× 2), striking. 4th level—cure serious wounds, dispel magic, neutralize poison. 5th level—cure critical wounds, dispel evil.

**Magical Items:** Phaistos may call upon the powers of the *Icon of Halav*. (See the "Milenian Magic and Monsters" chapter.)

# NPC ROSTER

## Senator Tibernos

**History:** Tibernos was born 40 circles ago, in the northern coastal city of Tyrnus. His family has a long tradition of being wealthy land-owners. Acres of good timber have made many in his family rich.

Tibernos was able to afford the best education available. He also served in the military for five circles, becoming a junior officer. He went on to become a Magistrate of his province, and eventually the High Magistrate of Tyrnus. During this time, Tibernos made many influential contacts. By the age of 31, he had the money and sponsors to win an election for Senator.

Money and contacts were not the only reasons Tibernos was elected. He had established a reputation as a fair and strong leader. His accomplishments were many, making him a favorite of the people of his province.

Tibernos's reputation carried him through several terms in the Senate. He brought about many reforms, and was one of Emperor Adronius's strongest supporters.

During the Sleep of Darkness, Tibernos greatly mourned the death of Adronius. The Senator did not quell before the fearsome presence of Caracanomnos, and voted against electing the sorcerer Emperor. He even went so far as to "steal" the body of Adronius, seeing that it was magically preserved in the hope of restoring the dead Emperor to life.

**Personality:** Tibernos is the ideal Senator, placing the needs of the people above all else. However, he does enjoy political power, but seldom abuses it. He remains loyal to Adronius, even though it might be possible for him to place himself as Emperor after Caracanomnos is deposed. If for some reason Adronius should be permanently dead, Tibernos will not hesitate to try to take the throne for himself.

**Appearance:** At 6' 2" tall he is above average height for a Milenian. He is in excellent shape with an athletic body. Tibernos wears his curly hair short, and is clean shaven.

**DM Notes:** The Senator is an important NPC contact for the PCs. He has the money and influence to help them in many ways, such as buying expensive equipment, gaining access to otherwise



restricted areas, and bailing them out of trouble with the law.

**Combat Notes:** 7th level fighter; AC 4 (*ring of protection +3* and Dexterity bonus); hp 47; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 + 1 (dagger plus Strength bonus) or 1d6 + 2 (*short sword +1* and Strength bonus); MV 120' (40'); Save as F7; ML 9; AL L; THAC0 15 (+1 due to Strength bonus); S 15, I 16, W 13, D 16, Co 10, Ch 17. Languages: Milenian, Neathar, Nithian, Traldar. General Skills: Bargaining (Ch), Detect Deception (W), Law and Justice (Milenian, W), Leadership (Ch), Military Tactics (I), Persuasion (Ch), Profession (politician, I).

**Magical Items:** Tibernos owns a *ring of protection +3* and a *short sword +1*.

## Tassia Red-Hair

**History:** Twenty-three circles past, Tassia was born into a family of fishermen living in the town of Phos, which stands on the banks of Lake Agrisa. She spent much of her childhood mending nets and cleaning fish. It was a difficult time, for her family was poor. Life on the mysterious lake is both hard and dangerous: Two of her brothers vanished in the lake's twisting fog banks, never to be seen again.

When Tassia was 13, clerics of Halav came to her town to sponsor an athletic festival. For her young age, Tassia did quite well at the games, catching the eye of a cleric named Myria. After speaking with Myria about the ways of her order, Tassia returned with the clerics to their temple at Demtor. There, Tassia was initiated into the order, and in time became a cleric herself. In spite of her duties, she has always made a point of keeping herself exceptionally fit.

Tassia received an education at the temple. She most enjoyed studying ancient Milenian legends, for which she had a gift, and eventually she became known as the foremost scholar of the early history of Milenia. She has made a detailed study of the most powerful royal relics of the Milenian Empire, and the *Milenian Scepter* in particular. Her studies, though unobtrusive and discreet, have brought her to the attention of Senator Tibernos, who has persuaded her to come to Corisa and begin a quest to recover the artifact.

**Personality:** Tassia is a strong-willed young woman. She does not take orders easily, but tends to give them instead. Even so, she is a devout follower of Halav, and sees recovering the scepter as her life's goal. At the start of this adventure she has not yet come to the attention of the Zargosians.

**Appearance:** Tassia is beautiful with a trim, athletic body and deep brown eyes. To honor Halav, she has dyed her long hair blood-red.

**DM Notes:** Tassia's role in this adventure is to keep the PCs on the right track. Her main objective is to find the scepter, and she will risk her life (and theirs) to do so.



**Combat Notes:** 6th level cleric of Halav; AC 2 (*cuir-boulli* + 1, shield + 1 and Dexterity bonus); hp 31; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 + 2 (spear + 1, Strength) or 1d6 + 1 (short sword, Strength); MV 120' (40'); Save as C6; ML 9; AL L; THAC0 17; SA Strength (+1); spear (+2 attack, +1 damage); S 15, I 14, W 16, D 13, Co 12, Ch 16.

**Languages:** Milenian, Neathar, Traldar. **General Skills:** Ceremony (Halav, W), Craft (weapon-making, I), Healing (I), Knowledge (Milenian legends, I), Leadership (Ch), Military Tactics (I), Riding (D).

**Spells Carried:** 1st level—*cure light wounds*, *remove fear*. 2nd level—*bless*, *resist fire*. 3rd level—*striking*.

**Magical Items:** Tassia owns *cuir-boulli* + 1, a shield + 1, and a spear + 1.

## NPC ROSTER

### Vix

**History:** The history of Vix is steeped in myth and speculation. It is believed that the Immortal Zargos coupled with a female cleric of his order at the Tower of Night. When her time came, the woman was so wracked with labor pains that she died screaming while giving birth. Some legends even claim that Vix was born a fully grown adult!

Whatever the truth, it is a fact that Vix is no ordinary human. She was born with skin as black and shiny as obsidian, and smoldering red eyes. She became a legendary warrior among the Followers of Zargos, defeating numerous heroes who sought to oppose the order.

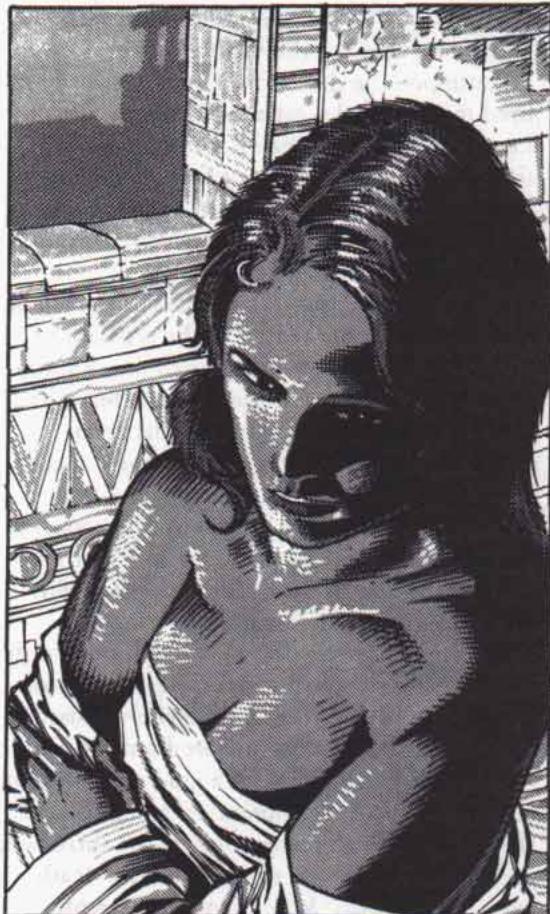
Vix is certainly a favorite of Zargos. She has received several magical items as the result of circumstances indirectly arranged by the Immortal. It is likely that Zargos will one day steer Vix upon the path of Immortality.

**Personality:** Vix is a grim warrior who grants no quarter and expects none herself. She is totally devoted to the order of Zargos, and proudly claims to be the daughter of the Immortal. Her ultimate goal is to become an Immortal herself.

**Appearance:** Vix is of average height and weight, but that is where her similarities to normal mortals ends. Her skin is unnaturally black and shiny. Her eyes glow red. She is muscular and quick. Those near her can almost feel the power and determination that she continuously emits.

**DM Notes:** Unlike the other Followers of Zargos, Vix does not suffer damage from exposure to sunlight. Because she is the daughter of an Immortal, you might give her a special power or two. However, be sure to keep your PCs' abilities in mind because they will have to fight her.

Also, because she is a favorite of Zargos, if the PCs should kill Vix, the Immortal might seek retribution. Perhaps he sends powerful followers or monsters to hunt them down. He might invade their dreams with nightmarish visions. Use your creativity to come up with some interesting encounters, which could even lead to an entire adventure or quest.



**Combat Notes:** 9th level fighter-avenger; AC 0 (*cuir-boulli + 1, shield + 1*, and Dexterity bonus); hp 73; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 + 4 (*spear of Vix*, Strength) or by spell; MV 120' (40'); Save as F9; ML 12; AL C; THAC0 15; Strength (+2), spear (+2 attack, +1 damage); S 16, I 13, W 10, D 18, Co 15, Ch 9. Languages: Milenian, Neathar, Nithian. General Skills: Alertness (D), Bravery (W), Ceremony (Zargos, W), Deception (Ch), Endurance (Co), Intimidation (S), Leadership (Ch).

**Spells Carried:** *cause light wounds, resist cold.*

**Magical Items:** See the "Milenian Magic and Monsters" chapter for details on her spear and chariot. She also has *cuir-boulli armor + 1* and a *shield + 1*.

## Xanthipon

**History:** Xanthipon was born 62 circles ago on a farm outside Corisa. His father was a wealthy vintner and brewer, who valued books.

Xanthipon cared little for farming. He enjoyed reading books, especially those relating to theories of magic. Realizing the boy's aptitude, his father enrolled him in a school in Corisa. After several circles, Xanthipon's general education was complete. He then entered the Academy of the Arcane to study magic.

He was a gifted pupil, and received the honor of becoming the apprentice of the academy's High Magus. After several more circles, Xanthipon became a teacher at the academy himself.

The archmage gained fame for his breakthroughs in *polymorphing* magic. These spells (*polymorph other*, *polymorph self*, and *polymorph any object*) were not previously known to Hollow World spellcasters. These spells are still very rare, as Xanthipon only shares them with his apprentices or closest allies.

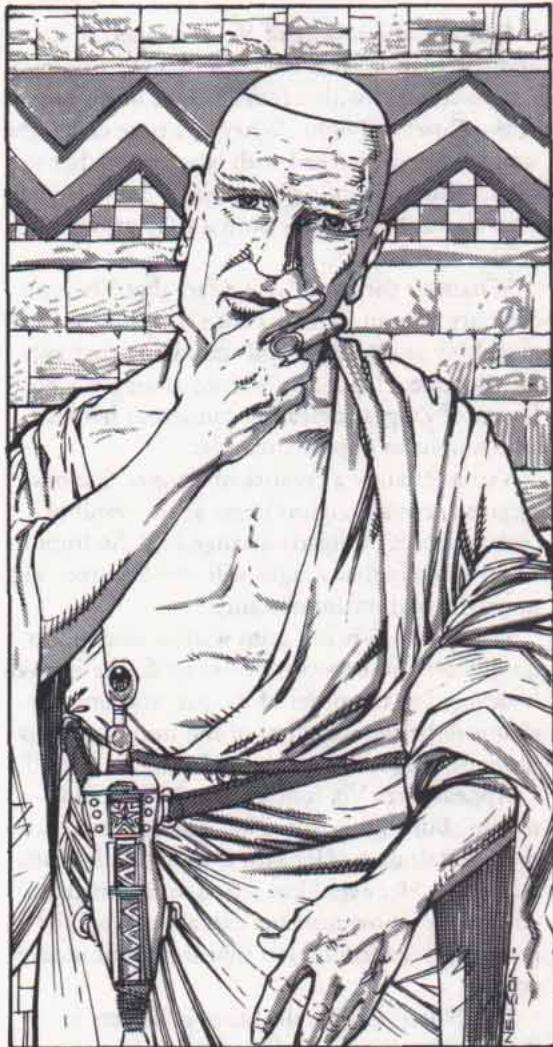
Xanthipon also created an apparatus called the *preserver*, which has the power to prevent organic matter from decaying. This device was used to keep Emperor Adronius's corpse from rotting.

**Personality:** Xanthipon is a kind man, but can be demanding of his apprentices and associates. His curiosity for all things magical is unmatched, and upon occasion has nearly led to his death from lab accidents. More than one apprentice has been known to meet an untimely demise in Xanthipon's tower.

**Appearance:** The mage is thin and of average height; totally bald and clean shaven. He wears sandals, a white tunic, and a white skullcap.

**DM Notes:** Xanthipon might be talked into sharing a few spells with PC spellcasters, especially if they know rare types of magic or succeeded in *raising* Adronius.

**Combat Notes:** 18th level magic-user; AC 6 (*ring of protection + 2* and Dexterity bonus); hp 33; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 + 3 (*dagger + 3*); MV 120' (40'); Save as M18; ML 9; AL L; THAC0 13; S 9, I 18, W 15, D 15, Co 10, Ch 12. Languages: Milenian, Neathar, Nithian, Traldar, Jennite. General Skills: Alchemy (I + 2), Alternate Magics (I + 2), Art (sculpture, W), Engineering (I), Magical Engineering (I + 2).



**Spells Carried:** 1st level—analyze, darkness, detect magic, hold portal, light, read magic. 2nd level—detect evil, knock, levitate, locate object, wizard lock. 3rd level—create air, dispel magic, fly, haste, protection from normal missiles. 4th level—*polymorph other*, *polymorph self*, remove curse, wall of fire. 5th level—dissolve, harden, passwall, woodform. 6th level—anti-magic shell, move earth, stoneform. 7th level—ironform, statue. 8th level—*polymorph any object*.

**Magical Items:** The archmage wears a *ring of fire resistance*, a *ring of protection + 2*, and has a *dagger + 3*.



# Key to Corisa

**Sewer Grates:** These are marked on the streets of the city map by black rectangles. Each sewer grate is a mesh of iron bars. The grate is hinged and latched by metal pins; not locked. Beneath each grate, stone steps lead down into the sewer tunnels.

**1. Wall and Towers:** The imposing wall surrounding the city stands 50' high and 30' wide. Towers stand 60' high and consist of six floors above ground and one dungeon floor below ground where prisoners are incarcerated. Each tower holds 300 soldiers, and is topped with a heavy catapult and two ballistae.

**2. Gates:** Iron double doors and a heavy iron portcullis block each gate. They are only closed during times of trouble.

**3. River Gate:** This consists of an iron portcullis only. Most of the time it is closed, but can be raised to allow river traffic to pass underneath.

**4. Lighthouse:** A 50' tall stone lighthouse guides vessels to the harbor. Because the sun always shines, the lighthouse is seldom needed. However, thick fog banks and the deep shadows of thunderstorms make the lighthouse a necessity.

**5. Harbor:** The entrance to the harbor is protected by a chain of huge bronze links. It is normally lowered deep underwater to prevent ships to pass, and is raised only to defend against seafaring invaders.

**6. Public Docks:** Fishing and merchant vessels dock here. Only those ships receiving official permits (and paying a toll) may pass up the River Corius through the city.

**7. River Corius:** The river twists sluggishly through the city. It is not very clean, as the city's sewers spill their contents into it.

**8. Imperial Docks:** Military vessels and the Emperor's personal galley dock here. Only authorized ships may stop to unload cargo or passengers at these docks.

**9. Acropolis:** The Acropolis is a flat-topped hill. On it stand the Imperial Palace, a temple to Halav and Petra, and a garrison housing the Emperor's personal guard of 500 elite troops.

**10. Statue of Adronius:** A 30' tall marble statue of Emperor Adronius stands here. It will be toppled during the events of Chapter 1.

**11. Senate:** The political hotbed of the Empire is a huge three-story building. Steps lead up to the second floor, where the main entrance is located. Inside, elected officials gather in the broad Senate Chamber to debate issues. An observation gallery runs around the Senate Chamber, where visitors may gather to watch. The rest of the building contains the offices of the Senators and their associates.

**12. The Temple:** Although the city contains many temples, only one is known simply as "The Temple." It is dedicated to both Halav and Pe-

tra, and can seat 5,000 in the main hall. The Temple is manned by a staff of 500 clerics and 1,000 servants and slaves. Before the steps of The Temple stands the glorious *Fountain of Tomorrow*, an artifact created by Petra. Chosen clerics who drink from it become oracles (see the *Milenian Empire* supplement).

**13. Academy of the Arcane:** Corisa holds many colleges and schools, but the Academy is the most renowned, for its students study the art of magic. The building contains many laboratories, a vast library, gardens, and so on. Currently, it has been taken over by the Followers of Zargos, who are using its facilities to perform dark, dangerous experiments.

**14. Agora:** This plaza, known as the *Plaza of Asterius*, is made of multi-colored cobblestones forming a mosaic of the Immortal Asterius, Patron of Merchants. Milenians gather here to buy, sell, and trade for all sorts of goods. The plaza is always crowded, noisy, and a favorite spot for pickpockets.

**15. Stadium:** The stadium is a depression carved into the bedrock, and seats 10,000. Sporting events are held here, as well as theatre: comedies, dramas, and tragedies penned by Milenian playwrights. During the week the adventure takes place, the Games are being held in the stadium; for seven sleeps the place is filled with a cheering throng.

**16. Gymnasium:** Athletes gather here to train, take baths or massages, and gossip. The PCs may also come here to use the facilities if they plan to take part in the Games (see Chapter 8).

**17. Tower of Xanthipon:** This marvel appears to be made of one huge piece of marble. It is covered with bas-relief images of monsters and mystical symbols. The tower stands 50' tall.

**18. Twin Plazas:** These plazas are made of colored cobblestones forming beautiful mosaics. Citizens gather at all hours to gossip and conduct business.

**19. Bathhouse of Lucratia:** The PCs will likely visit this establishment. Chapter 2 has a complete description and map of the bathhouse.

## Other Temples of Note

20. Temple of Asterius
  21. Temple of Faunus
  22. Temple of Ixion
  23. Temple of Khoronus
  24. Temple of Koryis
  25. Temple of Matera (major temple)
  26. Temple of Palartarkan
  27. Temple of Protius (major temple)
  28. Temple of Tarastia
  29. Temple of Twelve Watchers
  30. Temple of Valerias
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# Random Building Generator

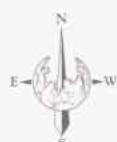
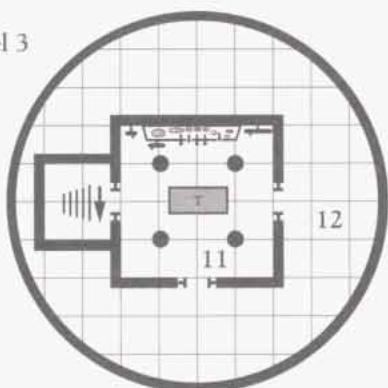
To randomly determine what any average building in the city contains, roll on the following table.

1d100	Building Purpose/Resident	1d100	Building Purpose/Resident
1	Alchemist	61	Moneylender
2	Apothecary	62	Netmaker
3	Armorer	63	Official's Home
4	Bakery	64	Physician
5	Bathhouse	65	Ropemaker
6	Boat/Sandalmaker	66	Sage
7	Brewery	67	Sailmaker
8	Candlemaker	68	School
9	Carpenter	69	Scribe
10	Cartographer	70	Smithy
11-20	Citizen's Home	71	Soapmaker
21-30	Commoner's Home	72	Stable
31	Costumemaker	73	Stonecutter
32	Dyemaster	74	Tailor
33	Embalmer	75	Tavern
34	Foundry	76	Shrine of Asterius
35	Fletcher	77	Shrine of Faunus
36	Furrier	78	Shrine of Halav/Petra
37	Gambling House	79	Shrine of Ixion
38	Gemcutter	80	Shrine of Khoronus
39	Government Office	81	Shrine of Koryis
40	Jeweler	82	Shrine of Matera
41	Legalus (Lawyer)	83	Shrine of Palartarkan
42	Leatherworker	84	Shrine of Protius
43	Locksmith	85	Shrine of Tarastia
44	Merchant (herbs)	86	Shrine of Twelve Watchers
45	Merchant (incense)	87	Shrine of Valerias
46	Merchant (oils)	88	Warehouse (leather or cloth goods)
47	Merchant (nautical supplies)	89	Warehouse (grain)
48	Merchant (fruits/vegetables)	90	Warehouse (nautical stores)
49	Merchant (salted/dried meats)	91	Warehouse (common goods)
50	Merchant (pottery)	92	Warehouse (weapons and armor)
51	Merchant (candy/sweets)	93	Warehouse (wine or beer)
52	Merchant (toys)	94	Warehouse (spices or trade goods)
53	Merchant (livestock)	95	Warehouse (deserted)
54	Merchant (novelties)	96	Warehouse (false front*)
55	Merchant (weapons/armor)	97	Weaponmaker
56	Merchant (adventuring gear)	98	Weaver
57	Merchant (clothing)	99	Wheelwright
58	Merchant (slaves)	100	Winemaker
59	Merchant (art)		
60	Monastery		

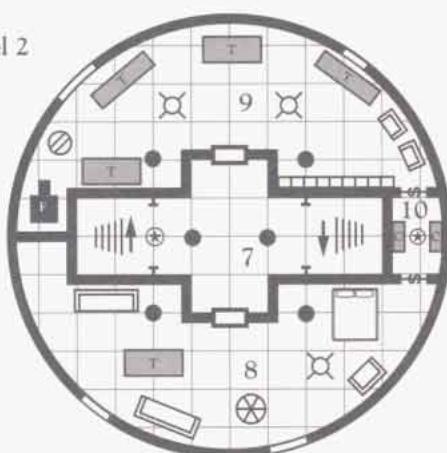
* For secret society or smugglers

# Tower of Xanthipon

Level 3

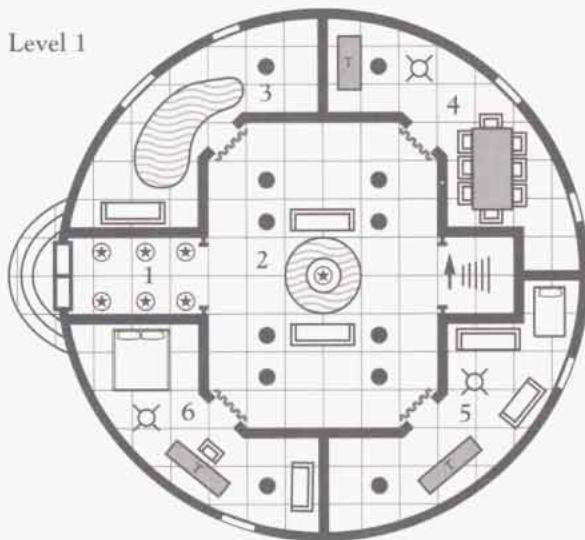


Level 2



5 Feet

Level 1



## KEY

- Stairs ↑(up) or ↓(down)
- Door
- Double Door
- Secret Door
- Archway
- Walls with Archway
- Window
- Pillar
- Pedestal
- Urn
- Bird Cage
- Statue
- Brazier
- Bench
- Table
- Chest
- Furnace
- Book Shelves
- Bed
- Curtain
- Apparatus
- Water
- Fountain



# HOLLOW WORLD®

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