

GOLDEN IDOL

TABLETOP ACTION ADVENTURE GAME

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Golden Idol is an archeological thriller action-adventure game set in the modern world.

You are members of LARA (Legendary Artifacts Recovery Agency), charged with discovering and finding valuable artifacts around the world in remote places, among the vestiges of lost civilizations.

In the depths of rainforests, among the world's highest mountains, in the hidden oases of deserts, on plateaus, in the depths of the sea. Ancient ruins are hidden everywhere.

But beware. Secret societies and enemy agencies will get in your way!

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System Reference Document v.0.9.0

OVERVIEW

Golden Idol was written with the following design philosophies in mind:

NEUTRALITY

The Referee's role is to portray the rules, situations, NPCs, and narrative clearly, while acting as a neutral arbiter.

DEATH

Characters may be powerful, but they are also vulnerable to harm in its many forms. Death is always around the corner, but it is never random or without warning.

FICTION FIRST

Dice do not always reflect an obstacle's difficulty or its outcome. Instead, success and failure are arbitrated by the Referee in dialogue with the players, based on in-world elements.

FOREGROUND GROWTH

Characters are changed through in-world advancement, gaining new skills and abilities by surviving dangerous events and overcoming obstacles.

PLAYER CHOICE

Players should always understand the reasons behind the choices they've made, and information about potential risks should be provided freely and frequently.

PRINCIPLES

The Referee and the players each have guidelines that help foster a specific play experience defined by critical thinking, exploration, and an emergent narrative.

SHARED OBJECTIVES

Players trust one another to engage with the shared setting, character goals, and party challenges. Therefore, the party is typically working together towards a common goal, as a team.

PRINCIPLES FOR REFEREES

INFORMATION

- Provide useful information about the game world as the characters explore it.
- Players do not need to roll dice to learn about their circumstances.
- Be helpful and direct with your answers to their questions.
- Respond honestly, describe consistently, and always let them know they can keep asking questions.

DIFFICULTY

- Default to context and realism rather than numbers and mechanics.
- If something the players want to do is sincerely impossible, no roll will allow them to do it.
- Is what the player describes and how they leverage the situation sensible? Let it happen.
- Saves cover a great deal of uncertain situations and are often all that is necessary for risky actions.

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PREPARATION

- The game world is organic, malleable and random. It intuitively and makes sharp turns.
- Use random tables and generators to develop situations, not stories or plots.
- NPCs remember what the PCs say and do, and how they affect the world.
- NPCs don't want to die. Infuse their own self-interest and will to live into every personality.

NARRATIVE FOCUS

- Emergent experience of play is what matters, not math or character abilities. Give the players weapon trainers and personal quests to facilitate improvement and specialization.
- Pay attention to the needs and wants of the players, then put realistic opportunities in their path.
- A dagger to your throat will kill you, regardless of your expensive armor and impressive training.

DANGER

- The game world produces real risk of pain and death for the player characters.
- Telegraph serious danger to players when it is present. The more dangerous, the more obvious.
- Put traps in plain sight and let the players take time to figure out a solution.
- Give players opportunities to solve problems and interact with the world.

ARTIFACTS

- An Artifact is specific to the environment from where it is recovered. It tells a story.
- An Artifact is highly valuable, almost always bulky, and rarely useful beyond its worth and prestige.
- Use Artifacts as a lure to exotic locations under the protection of intimidating foes.

CHOICE

- Give players a solid choice to force outcomes when the situation lulls.
- Use binary “so, A or B?” responses when their intentions are vague.

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- Work together using this conversational method to keep the game moving.
- Ensure that the player character's actions leave their mark on the game world.

DIE OF FATE

- Occasionally you will want an element of randomness (e.g. the weather, unique character knowledge, etc.).
- In these situations, roll 1d6. A roll of 4 or more generally favors the players.
- A roll of 3 or under tends to mean bad luck for the PCs or their allies.

PRINCIPLES FOR PLAYERS

AGENCY

- Attributes and related saves do not define your character. They are tools.
- Don't ask only what your character would do, ask what you would do, too.
- Be creative with your intuition, items, and connections.

TEAMWORK

- Seek consensus from the other players before barreling forward.
- Stay on the same page about goals and limits, respecting each other and accomplishing more as a group than alone.

EXPLORATION

- Asking questions and listening to detail is more useful than any stats, items, or skills you have.
- Take the Referee's description without suspicion, but don't shy away from seeking more information.
- There is no single correct way forward.

TALKING

- Treat NPCs as if they were real people, and rely on your curiosity to safely gain information and solve problems.
- You'll find that most people are interesting and will want to talk things through before getting violent.

CAUTION

- Fighting is a choice and rarely a wise one; consider whether violence is the best way to achieve your goals.
- Try to stack the odds in your favor and retreat when things seem unfavorable.

PLANNING

- Think of ways to avoid your obstacles through reconnaissance, subtlety, and fact-finding.
- Do some research and ask around about your objectives.

AMBITION

- Set goals and use your meager means to take steps forward.
- Expect nothing. Earn your reputation.
- Keep things moving forward and play to see what happens.

PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD

ADVENTURE

- The team is a group of characters seeking out new and exciting experiences.
- They band together to overcoming challenges and obstacles.
- The world is full of unknown and dangerous locations, lost civilizations and their remains.

ARTIFACTS

- Lost civilizations and other parties left behind mysterious and powerful artifacts.
- They are sought after by others for their inscrutable purposes.
- Artifacts must be recovered and protected before they fall into the wrong hands.

LOST CIVILIZATION

- Human history is a mystery of which only a few pieces are known.
- There have been dozens if not hundreds of civilizations that have disappeared into oblivion.
- Many of them remain unknown to the public. Their remains await exploration.

SECRET SOCIETIES

- There are secret societies and organizations sometimes malevolent sometimes enigmatic.
- They collect artifacts to study them and reveal their mysterious powers.
- They are often entrenched in society and will serve any means to achieve their purposes.

GLOBETROTTING

- Artifacts are scattered in exotic and remote locations around the world.
- The team must face the unique challenges and opportunities of each location.
- It is necessary to adapt to and immerse oneself in different cultures and environments to succeed.

THE UNEXPLAINED

- The team will often find itself investigating and seeking answers to mysterious and supernatural occurrences.
- They will study the extraordinary and bizarre events and phenomena in the world.
- With they work they protect the world from the malicious use of these phenomena.

CHARACTER CREATION

▯ ABILITY SCORES

Player Characters (PCs) have just three attributes:

Strength (STR), **Dexterity (DEX)**, and **Willpower (WIL)**.

When creating a PC, the player roll 4d6 keeping the 3 highest results for each of their character's ability scores, in order. They may then swap any two of the results.

▯ HIT PROTECTION

Roll 1d6 to determine your PC's starting **Hit Protection** (HP), which reflects their ability to avoid damage in combat. HP does not indicate a character's health or fortitude; nor do they lose it for very long (see **Healing**). If an attack takes a PC's HP exactly to 0, the player must roll on the **Scars** table.

☐☐ *STARTING GEAR*

All PCs begin with:

- Civilian clothes
- Expedition clothes
- Bulletproof vest
- Standard firearm
- Smartphone
- 3d6 x 500 \$

The group also have an adequate transport for the mission.

☐☐ *NAME*

Choose or roll (1d20) your PC's **name**

Female Names

1	Abigail	6	Scarlett	11	Leah	16	Jodie
2	Ava	7	Sabrina	12	Jimena	17	Amy
3	Elsie	8	Quinn	13	Zariah	18	Lily
4	Maria	9	Aimee	14	Coraline	19	Janessa
5	Kayla	10	Isabella	15	Mila	20	Vivian

Male Names

1	Daniel	6	Emmitt	11	Mason	16	Deandre
2	Connor	7	Ronan	12	Alfie	17	Ahmad
3	Jenson	8	Kaleb	13	Sebastian	18	Justus
4	Bradley	9	Lennon	14	Jamie	19	Keith
5	Callum	10	Abram	15	Charlie	20	Chris

Surnames

1	Gordon	6	Drake	11	Stevens	16	Morse
2	Johnston	7	Avery	12	Lewis	17	Grant

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3	Morales	8	Bowman	13	Patel	18	Yates
4	Bell	9	Floyd	14	Carter	19	Decker
5	Knight	10	Cooper	15	Castillo	20	Vasquez

▣▣ **ARCHETYPE**

Choose or roll (1d6) to determine your PC's **archetype**. This informs their potential knowledge and skills.

1. Soldier
2. Archeologist
3. Scientist
4. Specialist
5. Pilot
6. Hustler

▣▣ **AGE**

Finally, roll for their **age** (2d20+10).

ARCHETYPES

SOLDIER

The Soldier is a trained combatant with experience in various military operations. They excel in fighting and handling weapons, and are well-equipped to handle dangerous situations.

Starting Gear

The soldier begins the game with a combat knife, a special firearm, and a helmet as additional equipment.

What your background taught you

1. Cool-mindedness.
2. The use of an exotic weapon.
3. The mastery in closed quarter combat.

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4. To be a master tactician.
5. To be a master survivalist.
6. To be a natural born leader.

In the past, I...

1. Fought in a nasty war or conflict.
2. Trained in a special forces unit.
3. Completed high-stakes operations.
4. Suffered physical or mental injuries during my service.
5. Built strong relationships with my comrades.
6. Developed a particular area of expertise or specialty.

Why do you joined LARA?

1. They chose me, I accepted.
2. I wanted to use my skills and training in a meaningful way.
3. I wanted to travel and see new places.
4. I love the thrill of adventure.
5. LARA is the best covert ops team in the world.
6. My sense of duty urged me to do so.

ARCHEOLOGIST

The Archeologist is a character who is passionate about history and is skilled in uncovering and studying ancient artifacts. They are experts in their field and bring a unique set of skills to the team.

Starting Gear

The archaeologist begins the game with a map, a compass, a pick, and a journal as additional equipment.

What your background taught you

1. Carefully excavate and study ancient artifacts.
2. Accurately record and document findings.
3. Analyze and interpret historical data.

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4. Work with a team of researchers and professionals.
5. Navigate and travel to remote locations.
6. Stay safe in potentially hazardous environments.

In the past, I...

1. Studied a specific lost civilizations nobody believe exist.
2. Conducted field research and excavations.
3. Published papers or articles about my findings
4. Worked for a university or research institution.
5. Built a reputation as an expert in my field.
6. Made important discoveries or contributions to the field of archeology.

Why do you joined LARA?

1. I love history and making new discoveries.
2. There is a mystery concealing the truth. I want to unveil it.
3. Artifacts are historical evidence of a lost past. I must protect them.
4. I eager to explore uncharted territory.
5. I love the potential of this team.
6. At the university, the pay was not as good as here.

SCIENTIST

The Scientist is a highly educated and analytical individual, with expertise in a particular field of study such as biology, chemistry, or physics. They are skilled at conducting research, analyzing data, and solving complex problems.

Starting Gear

The scientist begins the game with a laptop, a lab coat, a set of test tubes, and a calculator as additional equipment.

What your background taught you

1. Design and conduct experiments and research studies.
2. Analyze and interpret data.
3. Effectively communicate findings through papers and presentations.

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4. Work with a team of researchers and professionals.
5. Stay up-to-date on current developments in their field.
6. Think critically and solve problems creatively.

In the past, I...

1. Conducted research and experiments in a specific field.
2. Published papers or articles about my findings.
3. Worked for a university or research institution.
4. Built a reputation as an expert in my field.
5. Specialized in a fringe science.
6. Made a risky experiment fail spectacularly.

Why do you joined LARA?

1. I wanted to learn more about fringe science.
2. Artifacts are the new frontier of science.
3. I wanted to work with the state of the art in science and technology.
4. LARA offers the ultimate puzzle and mystery experience.
5. After years in a basement, I wanted to put myself at the service of something greater.
6. The university does not pay as well as LARA.

SPECIALIST

The Specialist is a highly trained individual with a specific area of expertise, such as language skills, medical knowledge, or technical expertise. They are able to bring a unique perspective and set of skills to the team, and are valuable members of any expedition.

Starting Gear

The specialist begins the game with a specialized kit relevant to their area of expertise, such as a hacker's laptop or a medic's first aid kit as additional equipment.

What your background taught you

1. Identify and capitalize on unique opportunities

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2. Adapt to changing circumstances and think on my feet
3. Stay resourceful and find creative solutions to problems
4. Communicate and negotiate effectively
5. Stay physically and mentally fit
6. Maintain discipline and focus under pressure

In the past, I...

1. Developed a unique skill or ability.
2. Worked as a freelancer or contractor.
3. Completed high-stakes or dangerous missions.
4. Built a reputation as an expert in my field.
5. Made enemies or rivals through my work.
6. Suffered physical or mental injuries while working.

Why do you joined LARA?

1. I wanted to use my unique skills in a meaningful way
2. I wanted to make myself available to an experienced team for the greater good.
3. Adventure and danger are my middle names.
4. LARA makes you see the world.
5. Government pay for special operations is very good.
6. The mystery of the Artifacts intrigues me.

PILOT

The Pilot is an experienced and skilled aviator, with expertise in operating a variety of aircraft. They are able to navigate difficult terrain and conditions, and are comfortable working under pressure.

Starting Gear

The pilot begins the game with a flight suit, a map, and a radio as additional equipment.

What your background taught you

1. Operate and maintain aircraft skillfully.

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2. Navigate and fly in different conditions
3. Make quick and accurate decisions.
4. Communicate effectively with air traffic control and other pilots.
5. Stay calm and level-headed under pressure.
6. React appropriately in emergency situations.

In the past, I...

1. Trained as a pilot and gained experience flying various aircraft.
2. Worked for a commercial airline or military unit.
3. Completed high-stakes or dangerous missions.
4. Built a reputation as a skilled pilot.
5. Made enemies or rivals through my work.
6. Suffered physical or mental injuries while flying.

Why do you joined LARA?

1. Air is my element. And the planes make me dive into it.
2. They said they needed pilots, so I thought I'd start settling debts with society.
3. Excitement and danger are like a drug to me
4. There are still corners of the world I don't know....
5. A freelance pilot earns significantly less than what LARA offers.
6. I enjoy working in teams and transporting my teammates wherever they need.

HUSTLER

The Hustler is a smooth talker and skilled negotiator, able to get what they want through charm and persuasion. They are comfortable working independently and as part of a team, and are skilled at adapting to new environments and situations.

Starting Gear

The hustler begins the game with a set of clothes suitable for a variety of situations, as well as a small amount of cash and a set of lockpicks as additional equipment.

What your background taught you

1. Spot and take advantage of opportunities.

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2. Think on their feet and improvise.
3. Negotiate and communicate effectively.
4. Stay one step ahead of opponents and rivals.
5. Stay calm and composed under pressure.
6. Adapt to changing circumstances and think creatively.

In the past, I...

1. Ran scams or conned people.
2. Worked as a freelancer or contractor.
3. Built a reputation as a cunning and resourceful individual.
4. Made enemies or rivals through my work.
5. Lived a fast-paced and unpredictable lifestyle.
6. Suffered setbacks or failures in my past endeavors.

Why do you joined LARA?

1. They know that if they don't pay me enough I might sell everything back to the highest bidder.
2. I have the opportunity to make amends for my dissolute and criminal life.
3. The adventures that LARA offers are unparalleled.
4. Hey man! Here you get paid to travel the world!
5. I was tired of being a lone wolf. There are extraordinary people here.
6. There is something mysterious and ominous about the folds of the past. And I want to know about it.

INVENTORY

Characters have a total of 10 inventory slots: a backpack with six slots, one slot for each hand, and two slots for their upper body (such as the belt, chest, or head). The backpack can also double as an emergency sleeping bag but only if emptied of its contents.

Most items take up one slot, and small items can be bundled together. Slots are abstract and can be rearranged per the Referee's discretion.

Bulky items take up two slots and are typically two-handed or awkward to carry. Anyone carrying a full inventory (i.e. filling all 10 slots) is reduced to 0 HP.

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A PC cannot carry more items than their inventory allows. Carts (which must be pulled with both hands), horses, or mules can increase inventory. **Assistants** can also be paid to carry equipment.

EQUIPMENT

Body Protection

Protection	Cost (\$)
Assault Shield (+1 Armor, bulky)	200
Bulletproof Vest (Armor 2)	220
Helmet (+1 Armor)	730
Impact Panel (+1 Armor, single-use)	130
Riot Armor (Armor 3)	700
Stab panel (+1 Armor, single-use)	60
Stab Vest (Armor 1)	130

Melee Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Cost (\$)
Tonfa	1d6	25
Combat knife	1d6	175
Fighting knife*	1d6	100
Fists**	1d4	-
Staff	1d8	20
Sword	1d8	200

Ranged Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Range	Cost of (\$)
Crossbow	1d6	Nearby	200
Crossbow, pistol	1d6	Nearby	50
Longbow	1d6	Nearby	160
Shuriken	1d4	Close	3

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Slingshot	1d4	Close	10
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Standard Firearms

Weapon	Damage	Range	Cost
Pistol, light	1d6	Nearby	400
Pistol, med	1d8	Nearby	500
Pistol, heavy	1d10	Nearby	800
Machine pistol	1d6	Nearby	1,200
SMG	1d8	Nearby	2,000
Rifle	2d10	Distant	1,000
Assault Rifle	2d10	Distant	5,000
Shotgun	2d6	Nearby	300

Special Firearms

Weapon	Damage	Range	Cost (\$)
Sniper rifle	1d10	Distant	5,000
Sniper rifle .50	2d10	Distant	8,000
Light MG (blast)	2d8	Distant	10,000
Heavy MG (bulky, blast)	2d10	Distant	15,000
Rocket Launcher (blast)	4d10	Distant	2,200

Explosives

Weapon	Damage	Range	Cost
Molotov Cocktail	d6	Nearby	50
Flashbang (blast)	blinds	Nearby	100
Grenade (blast)	d8	Nearby	100
IED (blast)	d6	Nearby	200

Gear & Tools

Item	Cost (\$)
Alarm Bypass	500

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Bear Trap	100
Binoculars	100
Blow Torch (welding)	250
Body Bag	25
Bolt Cutters	40
Car Opening Kit	75
Chain & Lock	50
Chainsaw	200
Climbing Gear	150
Climbing gear	500
Comms: Ear pieces	500
Comms: Walkie Talkies	200
Directional Microphone	200
Drone / Advanced Drone	200 / \$1,000
Duffle Bag	50
Electrical Tool Kit	150
Emergency Medical Kit	50
Emergency Surgery Kit	100
Fake ID	200
Flare	20
Flash Suppressor	150
Flashlight	80
Forgery Kit	150
Glass Cutting Tools	150
Good Camera	400
Grease	30
Handcuffs	50
Head Lamp	25
Laptop	1,000

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Laptop	1,000
Laser sight	200
Lighter	10
Locksmith tools	150
Marbles	20
Mechanical Tool Kit	150
Metal Ball Bearings	40
Night Vision Goggles	200
Pharmacist Kit	150
Portable Ram	75
Portable Winch	100
Pulley & Rope	25
Road Spikes (caltrops)	50
Rucksack (35ltr capacity)	50
Scuba Gear (wetsuit, fins, tank etc)	300
Sledgehammer	40
Smartphone	300
Spike Strip	150
Spray paint	15
Tablet	400
Tent, 2-4-8 person	100 – 300 - 600
Thermal goggles	800
Wire Bug	25
Zip Ties	25

VEHICLES

Like creatures, vehicles have three abilities used to make saves. - **Integrity** (INT): General stability, used to crash safely, smash through things, and resist Critical Damage. Equivalent to STR for creatures. - **Engines** (ENG): Ability to move, speed up, dodge, and stunts. Equivalent to DEX for creatures. - **Gauges** (GAU): Mechanical

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control components. Used to maintain routes, stabilize assets, etc. Equivalent to WIL for creatures.

Vehicles also possess: - Hull Points (**HP**) which reflect their ability to avoid damage in combat. - **Armor** which reduces damage (max 3) before affecting HP. - **Load**, the capacity of the vehicle: - 1 slot per person or 100lb of weight. - Exceeding the total value of Load, the vehicle is overloaded and it is unable to recover HP or ability scores.

Damage that reduces a target's HP below zero decreases a target's INT by the amount remaining. - They must then make a INT save to avoid critical damage. - Any vehicle that suffers critical damage trudges and spits oil. If left unrepaired, it is destroyed within the 1d20 minutes. - A vehicle with zero INT is totaled.

Type	Armor	HP	INT	ENG	GAU	Load	Cost (\$)
Compact car	-	6	10	6	6	6	18,000
Humvee	3	10	16	10	8	8	100,000
Luxury car	1	7	8	6	10	6	80,000
Police car (s/h)	1	6	10	12	8	6	20,000
Small car	-	3	4	4	4	6	10,000
Sports car	-	3	8	14	10	4	50,000
SUV	2	9	10	10	10	6	40,000
Helicopter	2	4	4	14	10	6	500,000
Military Helicopter	3	10	16	14	14	4	7,000,000
Motorcycle	-	2	4	12	10	4	20,000
Lear Jet	2	11	20	12	12	10	3,000,000
Mini-Sub	2	4	6	8	12	4	60,000
Speedboat	-	4	6	14	10	6	15,000

RULES

ABILITIES

Each of the three **abilities** are used in different circumstances (see **saves**, below).

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Strength (STR): Used for saves requiring physical power, like lifting gates, bending bars, resisting poison, etc.

Dexterity (DEX): Used for saves requiring poise, speed, and reflexes like dodging, climbing, sneaking, balancing, etc.

Willpower (WIL): Used for saves to persuade, deceive, interrogate, intimidate, charm, provoke, manipulate spells, etc.

SAVES

A save is a roll to avoid bad outcomes from risky choices and circumstances. PCs roll a d20 for an appropriate ability score. If they roll equal to or under that ability score, they pass. Otherwise, they fail. A 1 is always a success, and a 20 is always a failure.

***Example** Bea encounters a group of heavily-armed Goblins standing guard before a tunnel entrance. Her player carefully plots a course, recognizing that her 13 DEX makes sneaking past the guards the best option. She rolls a d20, and resulting in a 10 – a success!*

HEALING

Resting for a few moments and having a drink of water restores lost HP but leaves the party exposed. Ability loss (see **Critical Damage**) can usually be restored with a week's rest facilitated by a healer or other appropriate source of expertise. Some of these services are free, while magical or more expedient means of recovery may come at a cost.

DEPRIVATION □ FATIGUE

A PC **deprived** of a crucial need (such as food or rest) is unable to recover HP or ability scores. Anyone deprived for more than a day adds **Fatigue** to their inventory, one for each day. Each Fatigue occupies one slot and lasts until they are able to recuperate (such as a full night's rest in a safe spot). PCs can also gain Fatigue by **casting spells** or through events in the fiction.

ARMOR

Before calculating damage to HP, subtract the target's **Armor** value from the result of damage rolls. Shields and similar armor provide a bonus defense (e.g. +1 Armor), but only while the item is held or worn.

No one can have more than 3 Armor.

Shields, gauntlets, and helms may provide additional benefits according to their use.

REACTIONS

When the PCs encounter an NPC whose reaction to the party is not obvious, the Referee may roll 2d6 and consult the following table:

2	3-5	6-8	9-11	12
Hostile	Wary	Curious	Kind	Helpful

MORALE

Enemies must pass a WIL save to avoid fleeing when they take their first casualty and again when they lose half their number. Some groups may use their leader's WIL in place of their own. Lone foes must save when they're reduced to 0 HP.

Morale does not affect PCs.

ASSISTANTS

PCs can hire **Assistants** to aid them in their expeditions. To create an assistant, roll 3d6 for each ability score, then give them 1d6 HP and a simple weapon (d6), then roll on the **Character Creation** tables to further flesh them out. Assistants cost between 1-3gp per day, or a share of whatever treasure the party obtains.

WEALTH □ ARTIFACTS

The common currency is the dollar (\$).

An Artifact is highly valuable, usually bulky, and rarely useful beyond its value. It can be a lure, taking PCs to exotic and even dangerous locations, and is often under the protection of intimidating foes.

COMBAT

ROUNDS

The game typically plays without strict time accounting. In a fight or circumstance where timing is helpful, use rounds to keep track of when something occurs. A **round** is roughly ten seconds of in-game time and is comprised of turns.

ACTIONS

On their turn, a character may move up to 40ft and take up to one action. This may be casting a spell, attacking, making a second move, or some other reasonable action.

Each round, the PCs declare what they are doing before dice are rolled. If a character attempts something risky, the Referee calls for a save for appropriate players or NPCs.

URNS

The Referee will telegraph the most likely actions taken by NPCs or monsters. At the start of combat, each PC must make a DEX save to act before their opponents.

ATTACKING ▯ DAMAGE

The attacker rolls their weapon die and subtracts the target's armor, then deals the remaining total to their opponent's HP. Unarmed attacks always do 1d4 damage.

MULTIPLE ATTACKERS

If multiple attackers target the same foe, roll all damage dice and keep the single highest result.

ATTACK MODIFIERS

If fighting from a position of weakness (such as through cover or with bound hands), the attack is **impaired** and the attacker must roll 1d4 damage regardless of the attacks damage die.

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If fighting from a position of advantage (such as against a helpless foe or through a daring maneuver), the attack is **enhanced**, allowing the attacker to roll 1d12 damage instead of their normal die.

DUAL DAMAGE

If attacking with two weapons at the same time or the the weapon grants more than one damage dice, roll all damage dice and keep the single highest result.

BLAST

Attacks with the **blast** quality affect all targets in the noted area, rolling separately for each affected character. Blast refers to anything from explosions to huge cleaving onslaughts to the impact of a meteorite. If unsure how many targets can be affected, roll the related damage die for a result.

CRITICAL DAMAGE

Damage that reduces a target's HP below zero decreases a target's STR by the amount remaining. They must then make a STR save to avoid **critical damage**. Additionally, some enemies will have special abilities or effects that are triggered when their target fails a critical damage save.

Any PC that suffers critical damage cannot do anything but crawl weakly, grasping for life. If given aid and rest, they will stabilize. If left untreated, they die within the hour.

ABILITY SCORE LOSS

If a PC's STR is reduced to 0, they die. If their DEX is reduced to 0, they are paralyzed. If their WIL is reduced to 0, they are delirious. Complete DEX and WIL loss renders the character unable to act until they are restored through extended rest or by extraordinary means.

SCARS

When damage to a PC reduces their HP to exactly 0, they are sometimes changed irrevocably. See the **Scars** table for more.

UNCONSCIOUSNESS □ DEATH

When a character dies, the player is free to create a new character or take control of an assistant. They immediately join the party in order to reduce downtime.

DETACHMENTS

Large groups of similar combatants fighting together are treated as a single **detachment**. When a detachment takes critical damage, it is routed or significantly weakened. When it reaches 0 STR, it is destroyed.

Attacks against detachments by individuals are **impaired** (excluding blast damage).

Attacks against individuals by detachments are **enhanced** and deal blast damage.

RETREAT

Running away from a dire situation always requires a successful DEX save, as well as a safe destination to run to.

SCARS

When an attack reduces a PC's HP to exactly 0, they are uniquely impacted. Look up the result on the table below based on the total damage taken:

- 1 Lasting Scar: Roll 1d6
- 2 Rattling Blow: You're disoriented and shaken. Describe how you refocus. Roll 1d6. If the total is higher than your max HP, take the new result.
- 3 Walloped: You're sent flying and land flat on your face, winded. You are deprived until you rest for a few hours. Then, roll 1d6. Add that amount to your max HP.
- 4 Broken Limb: Roll 1d6
- 5 Diseased: You're afflicted with a gross, uncomfortable infection. When you get over it, roll 2d6. If the total is higher than your max HP, take the new result.
- 6 Reorienting Head Wound: Roll 1d6

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- 7 Hamstrung: You can barely move until you get serious help and rest. After recovery, roll 3d6. If the total is higher than your max DEX, take the new result.
- 8 Deafened: You cannot hear anything until you find extraordinary aid. Regardless, make a WIL save. If you pass, increase your max WIL by 1d4.
- 9 Re-brained: Some hidden part of your psyche is knocked loose. Roll 3d6. If the total is higher than your max WIL, take the new result.
- 10 Sundered: An appendage is torn off, crippled or useless. The Referee will tell you which. Then, make a WIL save. If you pass, increase your max WIL by 1d6.
- 11 Mortal Wound: You are deprived and out of action. You die in one hour unless healed. Upon recovery, roll 2d6. Take the new result as your max HP.
- 12 Doomed: Death seemed ever so close, but somehow you survived. If your next save against critical damage is a fail, you die horribly. If you pass, roll 3d6. If the total is higher than your max HP, take the new result.

GOBLETROTTING

GET INSPIRED

Here are some suggestions for building your adventure: 1. **Research the places involved:** Get a sense of the culture, history, and geography of the places the characters will visit. This will help you create a believable and immersive setting for the adventure. 2. **Make use of the Pointcrawl model:** This model emphasizes the use of points of interest, rather than a linear path, to guide the players through the adventure. This allows for greater flexibility and player agency in the way the adventure unfolds. 3. **Create a variety of challenges and obstacles:** As the players travel to different locations, they should encounter a variety of challenges that reflect the unique aspects of each location. These can include environmental hazards, cultural barriers, or conflicts with locals. 4. **Incorporate artifacts and lost civilizations:** The primary goal of the players is to discover and recover artifacts, so make sure to include opportunities for them to do so in the adventure. Lost civilizations and their remains can also be a source of interesting puzzles and mysteries for the players to solve. 5. **Consider the impact of secret societies and organizations:** These groups can provide a source of conflict and tension

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throughout the adventure, as they may be working against the players to acquire the same artifacts.

ADVENTURE CREATION GUIDELINES

If you run out of ideas use the guidelines below for inspiration or make your adventure from scratch: 1. **Determine the location of the adventure:** Roll a d100 to randomly select a location from a list of possible locations around the world. Some examples could include: - 1-10: Amazon Rainforest - 11-20: Antarctica - 21-30: Egypt - 31-40: Himalayas - 41-50: Iceland - 51-60: Madagascar - 61-70: New Guinea - 71-80: Norway - 81-90: Sahara Desert - 91-100: Underwater (shipwreck or underwater city) 2. **Determine the main objective of the adventure:** Roll a d20 to randomly select a main objective for the adventure. Some examples could include: - 1-2: Recover a powerful artifact from a lost civilization - 3-4: Investigate strange supernatural occurrences in the area - 5-6: Rescue a team member or ally who has gone missing - 7-8: Stop a secret society from acquiring a powerful artifact - 9-10: Map an uncharted area - 11-12: Discover a lost city or civilization - 13-14: Find a valuable resource - 15-16: Rescue hostages or prisoners - 17-18: Sabotage enemy operations - 19-20: Escape a dangerous situation 3. **Determine the challenges and obstacles:** Roll a d12 to randomly select a type of challenge or obstacle that the players will encounter during the adventure. Some examples could include: - 1-2: Environmental hazards (e.g. extreme temperatures, treacherous terrain) - 3-4: Conflicts with locals (e.g. hostile tribes, bandits) - 5-6: Puzzles and riddles to solve - 7-8: Traps and obstacles to navigate - 9-10: Conflicts with other teams or organizations - 11-12: Supernatural or unexplained phenomena 4. **Incorporate secret societies or organizations:** Roll a d6 to determine if the adventure will involve a secret society or organization, and if so, roll another d6 to determine which one: - 1. The Brotherhood of the Dragon - 2. The Cult of the Mummy - 3. The Order of the Phoenix - 4. The Society of the Serpent - 5. The Brotherhood of the Obsidian Moon - 6. The Children of the Celestial Flame 5. **Repeat steps 2-4 as necessary** to generate additional challenges and obstacles.

By using these mechanical rules, you can randomly generate a unique and exciting globetrotting adventure in Golden Idol that incorporates the key elements of the game, such as artifacts, lost civilizations, secret societies, and the unexplained and supernatural.

A MORE CINEMATIC GUIDELINE

Golden Idol is a “fiction first” game where events and situations interacting with characters through their actions make a narrative emerge. This is why I strongly advise against writing a “plot” for the characters to follow: create situations and obstacles and let events unfold. But if you can’t resist the temptation to at least give the adventure an outline, consider the following suggestions for a classic three-act story.

I just urge you not to consider them rigid or mandatory.

1. Introduction:

- Establish the main objective of the adventure clearly and concisely.
- Provide the players with enough information about the location and any relevant background information to immerse them in the setting.
- Introduce any key NPCs or organizations that will be involved in the adventure.
- Provide the players with a sense of urgency or motivation to start the adventure.
- Give the players a clear starting point and a general idea of where they should go next, but also leave room for exploration and player agency.

2. Middle:

- Allow the players to explore the location and discover points of interest on their own.
- Introduce challenges and obstacles that are appropriate for the location and the main objective of the adventure.
- Provide opportunities for the players to discover and recover artifacts.
- Incorporate secret societies or organizations as appropriate and make sure they have clear motives and goals.
- Keep the players engaged by providing a sense of progression and by keeping them on their toes with unexpected twists and turns.

3. Conclusion:

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- Provide a satisfying resolution to the main objective of the adventure.
- Allow the players to reflect on their accomplishments and the impact of their actions on the world.
- Provide a sense of closure, but also leave room for the possibility of further adventures.
- Reward the players for their actions and provide opportunities for them to advance their characters and acquire new abilities or artifacts.
- Provide the players with a clear idea of what happens next and what their next steps should be.

THE DICE DROP POINTCRAWL

Take the World Map provided with the rulebook and roll a full set of polyhedral dice (d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, d20) on it. Then consult the tables below to inspire the situations, objectives or obstacles the heroes will face in that place in the world.

- D4: The Opening
 1. A mysterious letter arrives, inviting the player to a secret location.
 2. A wealthy patron hires the player to find a lost artifact.
 3. The player stumbles across a map to a hidden treasure.
 4. A long-lost friend or family member asks the player for help on a dangerous mission.
- D6: The Enticing Incident
 1. The players are ambushed by a rival organization.
 2. The players discover a secret passage leading to an ancient temple.
 3. The players are confronted by a powerful guardian protecting the artifact.
 4. The players must solve a complex puzzle to proceed.
 5. The players are caught in a dangerous trap that must be disarmed.
 6. The players discover a hidden cache of valuable resources.
- D8: The Artifact
 1. The Spear of Destiny
 2. The Amulet of the Phoenix

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3. The Crown of Avalon
 4. The Armor of the Gods
 5. The Scepter of Time
 6. The Staff of Osiris
 7. The Ring of the Dragon
 8. The Ruby of Fire
- D10: The Clue
 1. A cryptic map with obscure markings and symbols.
 2. A small, intricately-carved figurine that seems to point the way.
 3. A torn piece of parchment with a vital clue.
 4. A fragment of an ancient tablet with a mysterious inscription.
 5. A piece of jewelry or ornament with a hidden meaning.
 6. A strange artifact with unknown powers.
 7. A set of ancient keys or codes that unlock hidden doors.
 8. A book or tome with vital information.
 9. A compass or navigational device with unusual properties.
 10. A rare gemstone or mineral with special properties.
 - D12: The Artifact Location
 1. A remote island.
 2. The depths of a forest.
 3. A desolate heathland.
 4. A frozen waste.
 5. Ancient ruins.
 6. A sprawling city.
 7. A jungle.
 8. A mountain range.
 9. An abandoned city.
 10. Wilds.
 11. Plains.
 12. The coast of a hidden island or continent.
 - D20: The Enemy Operative Base
 1. A hidden fortress in the mountains.
 2. An underground labyrinth of tunnels and chambers.

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3. A sprawling compound in the jungle.
4. A floating base hidden in the clouds.
5. An abandoned temple or ruins.
6. A heavily-guarded mansion or estate.
7. A secret laboratory or research facility.
8. A military stronghold or base.
9. A hidden dock or harbor.
10. A hidden cave system.
11. A high-tech headquarters in a populous city.
12. A secluded monastery or temple.
13. A hidden city in the desert.
14. A hidden base on a remote island.
15. A massive, underground bunker system.
16. A sprawling network of catacombs and sewers.
17. A heavily fortified castle or fortress.
18. A hidden base on a massive airship.
19. A hidden base on a massive sea vessel.
20. A floating base in the middle of the ocean.

SITES EXPLORATION

GET INSPIRED

Here are some suggestions for building your exploration site: 1. **Research the site:** Just like with globetrotting adventures, research the history and culture of the site to create a believable and immersive setting. 2. **Incorporate puzzles and mysteries:** Many lost civilizations and ancient sites are full of puzzles and mysteries for the players to solve. These can include deciphering inscriptions, navigating mazes, or solving riddles. 3. **Create a sense of danger:** The players are exploring ancient and potentially dangerous ruins, so make sure to include hazards and traps that can put them in danger. 4. **Incorporate supernatural elements:** The unexplained and supernatural is a key element of the game, so consider including elements of the supernatural in the adventure, such as cursed artifacts or supernatural guardians. 5. **Incorporate conflicts with secret societies and organizations:** Just like in globetrotting adventures, these groups can provide a

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source of conflict and tension as they may be working against the players to acquire the same artifacts.

SITE CREATION GUIDELINES

If you run out of ideas use the guidelines below for inspiration or build the site from scratch: 1. **Determine the type of site:** Roll a d12 to randomly select the type of site the adventure will take place in. * 1-2: Abandoned Temple * 3-4: Underwater City * 5-6: Lost City * 7-8: Tomb * 9-10: Laboratory * 11-12: Cave system 2.

Determine the main objective of the adventure: Roll a d20 to randomly select a main objective for the adventure. * 1-2: Recover a powerful artifact from the site * 3-4: Investigate strange supernatural occurrences in the site * 5-6: Rescue a team member or ally who has gone missing * 7-8: Stop a secret society from acquiring a powerful artifact * 9-10: Map the site * 11-12: Discover the purpose or history of the site * 13-14: Find a valuable resource * 15-16: Rescue hostages or prisoners * 17-18: Sabotage enemy operations * 19-20: Escape a dangerous situation 3. **Determine the layout of the site:** Roll a d6 to randomly select the layout of the site. * 1: Linear * 2: Maze-like * 3: Open with multiple levels * 4: Split into multiple connected areas * 5: A mix of the above * 6: Roll twice and combine 4. **Determine the challenges and obstacles:** Roll a d12 to randomly select a type of challenge or obstacle that the players will encounter during the adventure. * 1-2: Environmental hazards (e.g. flooding, cave-ins) * 3-4: Conflicts with ancient guardians or traps * 5-6: Puzzles and riddles to solve * 7-8: Navigation challenges (e.g. dark, underwater) * 9-10: Conflicts with other teams or organizations * 11-12: Supernatural or unexplained phenomena 5. **Incorporate secret societies or organizations:** Roll a d6 to determine if the adventure will involve a secret society or organization, and if so, roll another d6 to determine which one: 1. The Brotherhood of the Dragon 2. The Cult of the Mummy 3. The Order of the Phoenix 4. The Society of the Serpent 5. The Brotherhood of the Obsidian Moon 6. The Children of the Celestial Flame 6. **Repeat steps 2-5** as necessary to generate additional challenges and obstacles.

You could also make the society's headquarters or one of their hidden bases the location of the Site Exploration, with the objective to infiltrate, steal information or artifact from them, or sabotage their plans.

THE WALLET SITE METHOD

Create the site by rolling a handful of d6s and assemble based on results:

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- 1: Dead End: Cannot touch more than 1 die
- 2: Passage: Cannot touch more than 2 dice
- 3: Split: Cannot touch more than 3 dice
- 4: Crossroads: Can touch up to 4 dice
- 5: Tower: Stack all, must touch at least 2 dice
- 6: Hall: Merge all, can touch up to 4 dice

For each die, add its value to all neighboring dice to determine its room. Halls and Towers are single rooms with all their dice summed. - 3: Quarters - 4: Jail - 5: Sepulchre - 6: Statuary - 7: Store Room - 8: Courtyard - 9: Kitchen - 10: Forge - 11: Armory - 12: Garden - 13: Guard Post - 14: Library - 15: Arboretum - 16: Crypts - 17: Shrine - 18: Gallery - 19: Workshop - 20-22: Temple - 23-25: Throne Room - 26-28: Laboratory - 29-31: Menagerie - 32+: Labyrinth

Place an entrance where it makes sense.

For extra detail, modify each room based on lowest/highest neighboring die.

- 1,2,3: Lowest
 - 2: Secret Exit
 - 3: Trapped
 - 4: Crumbling
 - 5: Flooded
 - 6: Damp
- 4,5,6: Highest
 - 1: Ornate
 - 2: Pristine
 - 3: Opulent
 - 4: Hidden Alcove
 - 5: Locked

Roll an **encounter** in each room: 1. Threat: Active harm 2. Obstacle: Passive harm 3. Nothing: A moment of respite 4. Nothing: A moment of respite 5. Opportunity: Obstacle + Boon 6. Boon: Helpful or valuable

Tower: Roll an encounter for each floor, then order them from lowest to highest.

Hall: Roll an encounter for each die in the Hall and combine them.

▮ ARTIFACTS

1. **The Heart of Fire:** a legendary ruby said to contain the power of the sun. Those who hold it are said to be immune to fire and able to control flames with their will.
2. **The Staff of Moses:** a wooden staff imbued with the power to part seas and control the elements.
3. **The Spear of Destiny:** a weapon said to have pierced the side of Jesus Christ, giving it the power to control the fate of nations.
4. **The Holy Grail:** the cup used by Jesus at the Last Supper, said to have miraculous healing powers and the ability to grant eternal life.
5. **The Elixir of Life:** a potion that grants immortality and eternal youth to those who drink it.
6. **The Sword of Kings:** a powerful sword said to have been wielded by great rulers throughout history. It is said to grant its wielder strength and wisdom.
7. **The Ring of Power:** a golden ring said to grant the wearer great strength and the ability to control the minds of others.
8. **The Amulet of the Phoenix:** a magical pendant said to grant its wearer the power of flight and the ability to be reborn from the ashes.
9. **The Cloak of Invisibility:** a cloak that renders its wearer invisible to the naked eye.
10. **The Crystal Ball of Truth:** a crystal sphere that allows its user to see into the past, present, and future.
11. **The Crown of Avalon:** a golden crown said to possess the power to control the elements and command armies.
12. **The Staff of Osiris:** a staff made of pure gold and encrusted with diamonds, said to grant the wielder the power of life and death.
13. **The Sword of Paradise:** a sword said to have been forged in the fires of Mount Olympus, with the power to cut through any substance.
14. **The Armor of the Gods:** a suit of armor said to have been worn by the greatest warriors of ancient Greece, imbued with the strength of the gods.
15. **The Scepter of the Sphinx:** a scepter said to hold the key to unlocking the secrets of the pyramids and the mysteries of the ancient world.

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16. **The Book of Thoth:** an ancient book said to contain the knowledge of the gods and the secrets of the universe.
17. **The Chalice of Immortality:** a chalice said to hold the elixir of life, granting eternal youth and vitality to whoever drinks from it.
18. **The Amulet of the Phoenix:** an amulet said to hold the power of the mythical phoenix, allowing the wearer to be reborn from the ashes.
19. **The Ring of the Dragon:** a ring said to grant the wearer the power of the dragon, allowing them to breathe fire and command armies of dragons.
20. **The Mirror of Truth:** a mirror said to reveal the true nature of anyone who gazes into it, exposing their deepest secrets and hidden motives.
21. **The Heart of the Sea:** a glowing, pearl-like gem that is said to grant its wielder the power to control the oceans and their inhabitants.
22. **The Book of Infinity:** an ancient tome that is said to contain the knowledge of the universe and the secrets of time and space.
23. **The Mirror of Soul:** a mysterious mirror that is said to reveal a person's innermost thoughts and desires, and can be used to manipulate their emotions and actions.
24. **The Golden Chalice of Life:** a golden cup that is said to grant eternal youth and vitality to those who drink from it.
25. **The Staff of the Elements:** a powerful magical staff that can control and manipulate the four elements of earth, air, fire, and water.
26. **The Ruby of Fire:** a glowing red gem that is said to grant its wielder the power of pyrokinesis, allowing them to control and manipulate flames.
27. **The Scepter of Time:** a golden scepter that is said to allow its wielder to control the flow of time and manipulate events in the past and future.
28. **The Diamond of Souls:** a diamond that is said to contain the souls of the dead and can be used to communicate with the spirit world.
29. **The Sword of Destiny:** a powerful sword that can only be wielded by the true hero and is said to possess the power to defeat even the greatest of foes.
30. **The Shield of Virtue:** a magical shield that is said to protect its wielder from all harm and deflect any attack, physical or magical.

LEGENDARY PLACES

1. **The City of Zalthor:** a lost city said to be hidden deep in the Amazon rainforest, filled with treasure and ancient technology.

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2. **The Isle of Eden:** a mysterious island said to be the site of the Garden of Eden, hidden away from the rest of the world.
3. **The Valley of the Kings:** a hidden valley said to be the final resting place of powerful ancient rulers, filled with treasure and magical artifacts.
4. **The Mountains of Shangri-La:** a range of mountains said to be the home of a hidden paradise, where the inhabitants live in peace and harmony.
5. **The Forest of the Fairies:** a magical forest said to be home to a race of fairies, with secret paths and hidden glades filled with wonder and mystery.
6. **The Kingdom of El Dorado:** a lost city of gold said to be hidden in the depths of the South American jungle, guarded by fierce warriors and exotic beasts.
7. **The Land of Mu:** a sunken continent said to have been the home of an advanced civilization, with ruins filled with ancient secrets and treasures.
8. **The Island of Lemuria:** a lost island said to have been the home of a powerful and mystical civilization, with temples and artifacts of immense power.
9. **The Caverns of the Djinn:** a hidden network of underground caverns said to be the home of the djinn, powerful genie-like creatures with the power to grant wishes.
10. **The Garden of the Hesperides:** a mythical garden said to be the home of the golden apples of immortality, guarded by a hundred-headed dragon.
11. **The City of the Sun:** a mystical city said to be located high in the mountains, where the sun never sets and the inhabitants live in eternal happiness.
12. **The Vale of Avalon:** a hidden valley said to be the final resting place of King Arthur and the location of the mythical sword Excalibur.
13. **The Land of Lemuria:** a lost continent said to have sunk beneath the waves, home to a civilization of advanced beings with incredible psychic abilities.
14. **The Kingdom of Shangri-La:** a hidden paradise said to be located deep in the Himalayas, where the inhabitants live in perfect harmony with nature.
15. **The City of El Dorado:** a city of gold said to be hidden deep in the Amazon rainforest, filled with treasure and guarded by fierce warriors.
16. **The Island of Mu:** a sunken island said to have been the home of an advanced civilization with incredible technology and knowledge.
17. **The Valley of the Kings:** a hidden valley said to hold the tombs of powerful ancient rulers, filled with treasure and magical artifacts.
18. **The Desert of Dreams:** a vast desert said to hold the key to unlocking the secrets of the universe, and a gateway to other dimensions.

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19. **The Forest of Shadows:** a dark forest said to be home to mythical creatures and magical beings, and a portal to the spirit world.
20. **The Mountain of the Gods:** a towering mountain said to be the home of the gods, and the source of all life on Earth.
21. **The Kingdom of El'hara:** a once-great civilization that flourished in the depths of the jungle, until it was mysteriously wiped out by a massive natural disaster.
22. **The Empire of the Golden Sun:** a powerful civilization that ruled over a vast empire, until it was conquered and destroyed by a rival empire.
23. **The Republic of the Crystal Seas:** a technologically advanced civilization that lived on a network of floating cities, until it was destroyed by a massive tidal wave.
24. **The Clan of the Shadow Wolves:** a warlike civilization that lived in the frozen north, until it was overwhelmed by a massive horde of invading barbarians.
25. **The Temple of the Star Gods:** a mysterious civilization that worshipped powerful, god-like beings from the stars, until it was destroyed by a massive solar flare.
26. **The Confederation of the Iron Mountains:** a powerful and industrious civilization that lived in a network of underground cities, until it was destroyed by a massive earthquake.
27. **The Council of the Wise Elders:** a peaceful and wise civilization that lived in harmony with nature, until it was destroyed by a massive volcanic eruption.
28. **The Kingdom of the Eternal Flame:** a powerful and mystical civilization that worshipped powerful, fire-based deities, until it was destroyed by a massive fire that swept across the land.
29. **The Empire of the Jade Dragons:** a proud and noble civilization that ruled over a vast empire, until it was destroyed by a massive invasion of barbarian hordes.
30. **The Confederation of the Wind Dancers:** a civilization of highly advanced, winged beings that lived in a network of floating cities, until it was destroyed by a massive storm that swept across the land.

CREATURES* □ *FOES

APE

6 HP, 1 Armor, 12 STR, 10 DEX, 8 WIL, Claws (d6)

- A massive, muscle-bound ape with a powerful build and long arms ending in sharp claws
- Known for their intelligence and problem-solving skills, apes are often used as guards or laborers by unscrupulous individuals
- On a critical hit, the ape will grab its victim and attempt to squeeze the life out of them, requiring a STR save to break free.

BEAR

6 HP, 0 Armor, 10 STR, 10 DEX, 8 WIL, Claws (1d8)

- A massive, furry predator with sharp claws and teeth
- Known for its strength and ferocity in protecting its territory
- On a critical damage save failure, the bear will maul its victim until they are no longer a threat

BOA CONSTRICTOR

4 HP, 0 Armor, 15 STR, 10 DEX, 6 WIL, Constriction (1d6, incapacitation on critical damage)

- A long, muscular snake with smooth scales and a powerful grip
- Known for its ability to squeeze and suffocate prey with its coils
- On a failed critical damage save, the victim is incapacitated as they struggle to break free from the boa's grasp

COUGAR

6 HP, 1 Armor, 10 STR, 15 DEX, 6 WIL, Claws (d6, agile)

- A sleek, agile predator with piercing green eyes
- Known for stalking its prey and waiting for the perfect moment to strike

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- On a critical damage save failure, the cougar will latch onto its victim and continue to attack until the victim breaks free or the cougar is killed

CROCODILE

8 HP, 3 Armor, 12 STR, 6 DEX, 6 WIL, Jaws (d8, bite)

- A massive reptile with scaly skin and a powerful tail
- Known for lying in wait and ambushing prey with a sudden burst of speed
- On a critical damage save failure, the crocodile will drag its victim into the water and hold them underwater until they drown

ELEPHANT

20 HP, 3 Armor, 18 STR, 8 DEX, 6 WIL, Tusks (d10, enhanced attack on critical damage)

- A massive, gray-skinned animal with long tusks and a powerful trunk
- Known for its strength and ability to charge at enemies with its tusks
- On a critical damage save failure, the elephant will use its tusks for an enhanced attack

GORILLA

8 HP, 1 Armor, 12 STR, 8 DEX, 8 WIL, Claws (d8)

- A massive, powerful ape with thick fur and sharp claws
- Known for its intelligence and strength, gorillas can be both protective of their family and aggressive towards outsiders
- On a critical damage save failure, the gorilla will relentlessly attack until it or its victim is defeated

GRIZZLY

10 HP, 3 Armor, 14 STR, 6 DEX, 6 WIL, Claws (d8, enhanced attack on critical damage)

- A massive, powerful brown bear with shaggy fur and sharp claws

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- Known for its ability to stand upright and size itself up against potential threats
- On a failed critical damage save, the grizzly swipes with both claws for an enhanced attack

HIPPOPOTAMUS

10 HP, 2 Armor, 14 STR, 8 DEX, 8 WIL, Jaws (d10)

- A massive, barrel-shaped mammal with thick skin and sharp teeth
- Known for their aggression and territorial nature, hippos can be incredibly dangerous
- On a critical damage save failure, the hippo will bite and crush its victim with its powerful jaws

HYENA

8 HP, 0 Armor, 10 STR, 12 DEX, 6 WIL, Teeth (d6, pack hunter)

- A scavenging mammal with a cackling laugh and sharp teeth
- Known for hunting in packs and scavenging on carrion
- On a critical damage save failure, the hyena will latch onto its victim's throat and not let go until the victim breaks free or the hyena is killed

LION

12 HP, 1 Armor, 14 STR, 12 DEX, 8 WIL, Claws and teeth (d8, pack hunter)

- A large, tawny-colored feline with a distinctive mane and sharp claws
- Known for hunting in packs and coordinating attacks on prey
- On a critical damage save failure, the lion will latch onto its victim's throat and not let go until the victim breaks free or the lion is killed

PYTHON

6 HP, 0 Armor, 12 STR, 10 DEX, 6 WIL, Constriction (d6)

- A long, muscular snake with smooth scales and a powerful grip
- Known for its ability to squeeze and suffocate prey with its coils

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- On a critical damage save failure, the victim is incapacitated as they struggle to break free from the python's grasp

RATTLESNAKE

2 HP, 0 Armor, 10 STR, 8 DEX, 6 WIL, Bite (1d4, poison on hit)

- A venomous snake with a distinctive rattle on its tail and a quick strike
- Known for its ability to inject deadly poison with its bite
- Any successful attack from the rattlesnake injects poison, requiring a WIL save to avoid taking additional damage

RHINOCEROS

20 HP, 4 Armor, 18 STR, 10 DEX, 6 WIL, Horn (d8, enhanced attack on critical damage)

- A large, gray or brown mammal with a thick hide and a large horn on its nose
- Known for its powerful charge and ability to use its horn as a weapon
- On a critical damage save failure, the rhinoceros will use its horn for an enhanced attack

SHARK

8 HP, 0 Armor, 12 STR, 12 DEX, 8 WIL, Jaws (1d10, enhanced attack on critical damage)

- A sleek and powerful fish with razor sharp teeth and agile movements
- Known for its ability to sense blood in the water and attack with precision
- On a failed critical damage save, the shark goes in for a second bite with an enhanced attack

TIGER

6 HP, 1 Armor, 10 STR, 14 DEX, 8 WIL, Claws (1d8, enhanced attack on critical damage)

- A muscular and graceful big cat with bright orange fur and sharp claws
- Known for its stalking and ambush tactics

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- On a failed critical damage save, the tiger pounces with a powerful claw swipe for an enhanced attack

WOLF

4 HP, 1 Armor, 6 STR, 8 DEX, 6 WIL, Claws and teeth (d6, pack hunter)

- A lean, muscular predator with piercing yellow eyes
 - Known for hunting in packs and coordinating attacks on prey
 - On a critical damage save failure, the wolf will latch onto its victim's throat and not let go until the victim breaks free or the wolf is killed
-

ASSASSIN

6 HP, 1 Armor, 10 STR, 14 DEX, 8 WIL, Poisoned Blade (1d6, poison on hit)

- A skilled and deadly assassin, armed with a poisoned blade and a variety of tools and gadgets.
- Known for their stealthy tactics and their ability to take down their targets with precision and efficiency.
- On a critical damage save failure, the assassin will use a smoke bomb to escape, allowing them to regroup and return to the fight.

BLACK MARKET DEALER

6 HP, 0 Armor, 8 STR, 12 DEX, 8 WIL, Pistol (d6, black market)

- A shady and unscrupulous individual, with a vast network of contacts and connections.
- Known for their ability to acquire rare and illegal artifacts, but also for their willingness to sell to the highest bidder.
- On a critical damage save failure, the dealer will use a smoke bomb to escape and flee the scene.

CORPORATE EXECUTIVE

6 HP, 0 Armor, 8 STR, 12 DEX, 12 WIL, Briefcase (d4, business savvy)

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- A powerful and influential businessman or woman, dressed in a tailored suit.
- Known for their cutthroat business tactics and ability to manipulate the system to their advantage.
- On a critical damage save failure, the executive will use their vast resources and connections to escape and flee the scene.

CULTIST

6 HP, 0 Armor, 10 STR, 8 DEX, 12 WIL, Ritual Knife (d6, holy)

- A fanatical and zealous member of a cult, dressed in ceremonial robes.
- Known for their devotion to their cause and willingness to sacrifice themselves for it.
- On a critical damage save failure, the cultist will trigger a hidden explosive, causing additional damage to those nearby.

ELITE SOLDIER

10 HP, 2 Armor, 14 STR, 12 DEX, 8 WIL, Assault Rifle (d8, long range)

- A highly trained and heavily armed soldier, dressed in full combat gear.
- Known for their discipline and precision in combat, able to adapt to various situations and environments.
- On a critical damage save failure, the soldier will call for backup, summoning additional soldiers to the battlefield.

MERCENARY

8 HP, 2 Armor, 12 STR, 10 DEX, 8 WIL, Pistol (1d8, quick draw)

- A hired gun, equipped with a pistol and a variety of weapons and gear.
- Known for their quick reflexes and their willingness to take on any job, no matter how dangerous.
- On a critical damage save failure, the mercenary will use a smoke bomb to escape, allowing them to regroup and return to the fight.

MILITARY OFFICER

8 HP, 2 Armor, 10 STR, 8 DEX, 10 WIL, Pistol (d6, accurate)

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- A trained and experienced soldier, dressed in a uniform and carrying a variety of weapons and equipment
- Skilled in tactics and leadership, and willing to use deadly force to protect their country or organization
- On a critical damage save failure, the officer will call for backup, summoning additional enemies or complications for the party.

MILITARY OPERATOR

6 HP, 2 Armor, 12 STR, 12 DEX, 8 WIL, Assault rifle (d8, blast)

- A highly trained and well-armed individual, often wearing tactical gear and carrying a variety of equipment
- Known for their discipline and training, they may be a formidable opponent or a valuable ally
- On a critical damage save failure, the military operator will use their training to incapacitate their foe and call in reinforcements

RELIC HUNTER

6 HP, 0 Armor, 8 STR, 12 DEX, 10 WIL, Pistol (d6, accurate)

- A rugged, experienced adventurer, dressed in practical gear and carrying a variety of tools and weapons
- Skilled in tracking down and recovering ancient artifacts, and willing to use deadly force to protect their finds
- On a critical damage save failure, the relic hunter will use a hidden trap or booby-trap, causing additional damage or complications for the party.

ROGUE ARCHAEOLOGIST

6 HP, 0 Armor, 10 STR, 10 DEX, 8 WIL, Pickaxe (d6, treasure hunter)

- A treasure-seeking adventurer, dressed in rugged, outdoor clothing.
- Known for their determination and willingness to go to any length to uncover ancient artifacts.
- On a critical damage save failure, the rogue archaeologist will use a hidden trap or booby-trap to escape and flee the scene.

CREATING CREATURES

Use the following template to model any more sophisticated Monster or NPC:

Name X HP, X Armor, X STR, X DEX, X WIL, Weapon (dX, special items, qualities) - Engaging descriptor of appearance or demeanor - Quirk, tactic, or peculiarity making this NPC unique - Special effect or critical damage consequence

General Principles

Ability Scores: 3 is deficient, 6 is weak, 10 is average, 14 is noteworthy, and 18 is legendary. Adjust as necessary.

- Give average creatures 3 HP, give hardy ones 6 HP, and serious threats get 10+ HP.
- Use flavor and style to help them stand out. - Use critical damage to lean into the threat or strangeness of any aggressive NPC. - Remember that HP is **Hit Protection**, not Hit Points. It's a measure of resilience, luck, and gumption - not health.

RULES SUMMARY

ACTIONS

On their turn, a character may move up to 40ft and take up to one action. Actions may include casting a spell, attacking, making a second move, or other reasonable activities. Actions, attacks, and movements take place simultaneously. Whenever turn order is uncertain, the PCs should make a DEX save to see if they go before their enemies.

Retreating from a dangerous situation always requires a successful DEX save, as well as a safe destination to run to.

ABILITIES

STR: Brawn, prowess & resistance.

DEX: Dodging, sneaking & reflexes.

WIL: Persuasion, intimidation & magic.

SAVES

- Roll a d20 equal to or under an ability. - 1 is always a success, 20 is always a failure.

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HIT PROTECTION

HP indicates a PC's ability to avoid getting hurt. It is lost during combat & recovered after a few moment's rest.

INVENTORY

PCs have 10 inventory slots: four on their body and six in their backpack (which acts as a sleeping bag if emptied). Most items take up a one slot, but smaller items can be bundled. **Bulky** items take up two slots and are awkward or difficult to carry.

Filling all ten item slots reduces a PC to 0 HP. PCs cannot carry more than their inventory allows, though carts & horses may provide an increase in slots.

DEPRIVATION

Deprived PCs cannot recover HP. If deprived for more than a day, they add a **Fatigue** to inventory. Fatigue occupies one slot and lasts until they can recover in safety. This effect is cumulative.

HEALING

A moment's rest and a swig of water will restore lost HP, but may leave the party vulnerable. **Ability** loss requires a week's rest and the aid of a medic.

COMBAT

The attacker rolls their weapon die and subtracts the target's **Armor**, then deals the remaining total to their opponent's HP.

Before calculating damage to HP, subtract the target's **Armor** value from the result of damage rolls. Shields and similar armor provides a bonus defense (e.g. +1 **Armor**), but only while the item is held or worn.

No one can have more than 3 **Armor**.

Unarmed attacks always do 1d4 damage. If **multiple attackers** target the same foe, roll all damage dice and keep the single highest result. If attacking with **two weapons** at the same time, roll both damage dice and keep the highest.

If an attack is **impaired**, the damage die is reduced to 1d4, regardless of weapon. If the attack is **enhanced**, the attacker rolls 1d12. Attacks with the **blast** quality affect all area targets, rolling separately for each.

DAMAGE

If an attack reduces a PC's HP exactly to 0, refer to the [Scars](#) table.

Damage that reduces a target's HP **below** 0 decreases their STR by the remainder. They must then make a STR save to avoid **critical damage**. Failure takes them out of combat, dying if left untreated.

Having STR 0 means **death**; having DEX 0 is paralysis; having WIL 0 is delirium. ## Acknowledgements This game would not have been possible without the work, inspiration and contributions of the following people: - [Yochai Gal](#) for *Cairn*. - [Simon Washbourne](#) for *Ancient Mysteries & Lost Treasure* as primary inspiration. - [Nick Erickson](#) for some equipment from *Liminal Horror*. - Eugenio Gianniti for the title. - The [Eclectica GDR](#) Italian community for the valuable support and advice. - The [NSR Cauldron](#) community for the kind support on the project. - David Lombardo (aka [Awkward Turtle](#)) for The Wallet Site Method, from [Wallet Dungeons](#) released under CC-BY-4.0 license.

To all of them my deepest gratitude.

APPENDIX A SECRET SOCIETIES

The following secret societies are mentioned in the adventure generation tables. You can consider them as evocative names only, or use the following summaries. They are just simple examples of what you can build by mining from your experience.

ORDER OF THE CRIMSON SUN

The secret society, known as the “Order of the Crimson Sun,” is a centuries-old organization shrouded in mystery and legend. Its members are drawn from the upper echelons of society, including the wealthy and powerful, as well as those with exceptional talent and intelligence. The exact purpose and activities of the Order are known only to its members, and it is rumored that they possess ancient knowledge and technology beyond the understanding of the general public.

The membership of the Order is strictly secretive, with members taking a vow of silence upon joining. Those who attempt to reveal the secrets of the Order are swiftly dealt with, and the full extent of the society's power is unknown. It is said

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that the Order has a network of agents and operatives spread throughout the world, working to further the society's mysterious goals.

The headquarters of the Order is located in a hidden underground complex, guarded by impenetrable security measures. It is said that within the complex lies a vast library of ancient texts and artifacts, as well as advanced technology that is used by the society for its secretive purposes.

Despite its secretive nature, the Order has been known to make its presence known from time to time, sometimes intervening in world events in ways that are not easily understood. Some believe that the Order is working towards a greater good, while others see it as a dangerous and sinister force. Whatever the truth may be, the Order of the Crimson Sun remains an enigma, shrouded in mystery and intrigue.

SILENT EYE

The secret society is called the “Silent Eye” and is said to date back to ancient Egypt. Its members are chosen for their intelligence, cunning, and discretion, and they are sworn to secrecy about the society's existence. The Eye is devoted to uncovering hidden truths and ancient knowledge, and its members are rumored to possess powerful psychic abilities and advanced technologies. They are said to have infiltrated governments and institutions around the world, and to be working behind the scenes to shape global events. The society's symbol is the eye of Horus, and its members are rumored to be able to communicate telepathically through their shared connection to the Silent Eye.

The Silent Eye is shrouded in mystery and secrecy, even among its members. It is said to have been founded by a group of ancient Egyptian mystics who discovered a powerful source of psychic energy. Over the centuries, the Eye has evolved and adapted, always working to protect and wield this mysterious power.

Members of the Eye are chosen for their exceptional intelligence, cunning, and discretion. They undergo rigorous mental and physical training to hone their psychic abilities and develop their senses. The Eye is said to have a complex hierarchy, with each member belonging to one of several ranks depending on their abilities and accomplishments.

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The Eye's ultimate goal is to uncover hidden truths and ancient knowledge, and to use this knowledge to shape the course of human history. Its members are rumored to have infiltrated governments and institutions around the world, working behind the scenes to influence global events. Some say they have even discovered the secrets of time travel and are using this knowledge to further the Eye's goals.

Despite its incredible power and influence, the Eye remains shrouded in secrecy. Its members are sworn to secrecy about its existence, and only a select few outside the society know of its true purpose. The Eye's symbol is the eye of Horus, and its members are rumored to be able to communicate telepathically through their shared connection to the Silent Eye.

THE ETERNAL FLAME

The secret society I will describe is called the "The Eternal Flame". It is modelled after the Illuminati and Freemasonry, and is said to be a powerful and influential organization that operates in secret to shape the course of history.

The Eternal Flame is said to be made up of powerful individuals from various fields, such as politics, business, and entertainment. These members are known as "Flamekeepers," and they are sworn to secrecy and bound by a code of conduct that demands loyalty and obedience to the Flame's goals and principles.

The Flame's ultimate goal is said to be the creation of a global utopia, where peace, prosperity, and justice reign supreme. To achieve this goal, the Flamekeepers are said to engage in various secretive activities, such as influencing political decisions, manipulating financial markets, and conducting covert operations to further the Flame's interests.

The Eternal Flame is said to have a complex hierarchy and organizational structure, with various ranks and titles that reflect the levels of power and influence within the organization. At the top of the hierarchy is the Grand Master, who is said to be the leader of the Flame and the ultimate authority on all matters.

The Flame is said to have its own symbols, rituals, and secret handshakes, which are used to identify members and to convey information and messages. The Flame's symbol is a flame, which is said to represent the eternal nature of the Flame and its pursuit of enlightenment and knowledge.

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Despite its secretive and powerful nature, The Eternal Flame is shrouded in mystery and legend. Some say that it is a benevolent force for good, while others believe that it is a nefarious and dangerous organization that seeks to control and manipulate the world for its own gain. Whatever the truth may be, one thing is certain: The Eternal Flame is a force to be reckoned with, and its influence and power cannot be underestimated.

SHADOW SYNDICATE

The secret organization I will describe is called “The Shadow Syndicate.” It is modelled after the fictional organization SPECTRE from the James Bond franchise, and is said to be a powerful and secretive group that operates in the shadows to achieve its own goals and objectives.

The Shadow Syndicate is said to be made up of highly skilled and trained individuals, who are experts in various fields such as espionage, sabotage, and assassination. These members are known as “Shadows,” and they are sworn to secrecy and loyalty to the Syndicate.

The Syndicate’s ultimate goal is said to be the acquisition of power and control over various aspects of the global economy and political landscape. To achieve this goal, the Shadows are said to engage in a wide range of covert operations, such as espionage, sabotage, assassination, and other nefarious activities.

The Shadow Syndicate is said to have a complex hierarchy and organizational structure, with various ranks and titles that reflect the levels of power and influence within the organization. At the top of the hierarchy is the Syndicate Master, who is said to be the leader of the Syndicate and the ultimate authority on all matters.

The Syndicate is said to have its own symbols, rituals, and secret codes, which are used to identify members and to convey information and messages. The Syndicate’s symbol is a black, stylized hawk, which is said to represent the organization’s stealth and cunning nature.

Despite its secretive and powerful nature, the Shadow Syndicate is shrouded in mystery and legend. Some say that it is a force for good, using its power and resources to protect the world from threats and dangers. Others believe that it is a dangerous and ruthless organization, using its power and influence for its own gain and to further its own agenda. Whatever the truth may be, one thing is certain: the

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Shadow Syndicate is a force to be reckoned with, and its actions have the potential to shape the course of history.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE OBSIDIAN MOON

The Brotherhood of the Obsidian Moon is a secret society that has existed for centuries. Its members are chosen for their exceptional intelligence, resourcefulness, and creativity, and they come from all walks of life. The Brotherhood is dedicated to the study of ancient artifacts and lost technologies, seeking to unlock their secrets and harness their power for the betterment of humanity.

The Brotherhood's headquarters is located in a hidden location deep within a mountain range, accessible only by those who possess the knowledge of its location. Within the mountain complex, the Brotherhood has built a vast laboratory filled with cutting-edge technology and ancient artifacts, all carefully guarded by the society's members.

The Brotherhood operates in complete secrecy, and its membership is strictly controlled. Members take a vow of secrecy and dedicate themselves to the society's goals, which include the preservation of ancient knowledge and the advancement of scientific understanding.

The Brotherhood has been known to intervene in world events when they believe that their expertise can be of use, but they operate in the shadows, careful not to reveal their existence to the world at large. Some believe that the Brotherhood is a force for good, using their knowledge and resources to better the world, while others see them as a dangerous and secretive cabal with unknown intentions.

THE CHILDREN OF THE CELESTIAL FLAME

The Children of the Celestial Flame are a secret society that has existed for centuries. Its members are drawn from the world's wealthiest and most powerful families, and they are dedicated to preserving ancient knowledge and artifacts that they believe hold the key to unlocking the secrets of the universe.

The society's headquarters is located in a hidden location deep within a vast forest, accessible only by those who possess the knowledge of its location. Within the complex, the society has built a massive library filled with ancient texts and

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artifacts, as well as laboratories and workshops where they study and experiment with their discoveries.

The Children of the Celestial Flame operate in complete secrecy, with members taking a vow of loyalty and secrecy upon joining. They use their wealth and power to acquire rare and valuable artifacts, and they will go to great lengths to protect their discoveries from falling into the wrong hands.

The society is known to operate through a network of agents and operatives, spread throughout the world, who work to further the society's goals. The full extent of their power and influence is unknown, but some believe that they hold the key to unlocking the mysteries of the universe, while others see them as a dangerous and elitist organization that seeks to hoard knowledge for their own gain.

APPENDIX B INSPIRATIONAL MEDIA

Below is a list of media that you can use to draw insights and ideas for your own adventures in *Golden Idol*.

BOOKS

- Clive Cussler - Dirk Pitt series
- Dan Brown - Robert Langdon series
- Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child - Relic
- James Rollins - Sigma Force series, Amazonia

MOVIES

- Indiana Jones series (1980-)
- Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Cradle of Life (2003)
- Lara Croft: Tomb Raider (2001)
- National Treasure (2004)
- National Treasure: Book of Secrets (2007)
- Sahara (2005)
- The Mummy series (1999-2008)
- Tomb Raider (2018)
- Uncharted (2022)

TV SERIES

- Alias (2001-2006)
- Blood & Treasure (2019-)
- MacGyver (1985-1992)
- Relic Hunter (1999-2002)
- The Librarians (2014-2018)
- Warehouse 13 (2009-2014)

VIDEOGAMES

- Assassin's Creed series (2007-2022)
- Tomb Raider original series (1997-2003)
- Tomb Raider Legend series (2004-2009)
- Tomb Raider reboot series (2013-)
- Uncharted series (2007-)