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by Flint Dille and Gary Gygax

- #1 THE ICE DRAGON
- #2 THE GREEN HYDRA
- #3 THE CRIMSON SEA
- #4 THE FIRE DEMON

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HERO'S CHALLENGE™

SAGARD

THE BARBARIAN GAMEBOOK™

#4 THE FIRE DEMON

by Flint Dille and Gary Gygax

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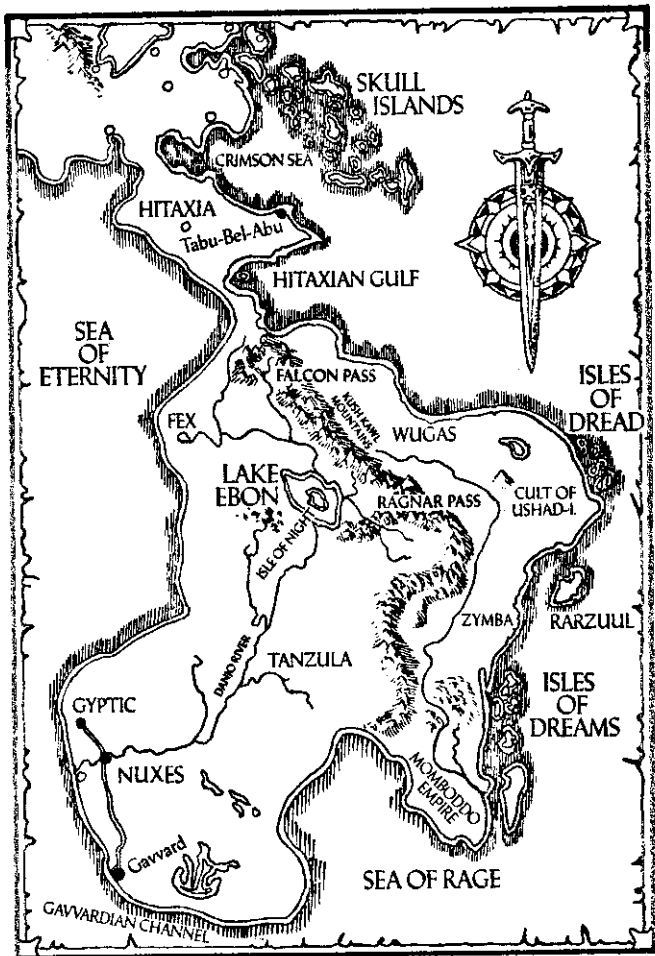
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THE FIRE DEMON



Introduction

After the death of the Sultoon Jazeer, Tabu-Bel-Abu was beset with political intrigue as factions of the Hitaxian aristocracy struggled for control of the great capital.

Sagard, largely forgotten in the shuffle, spent several weeks resting in the city.

However, when the Sultoon Fakkadi and his Holy Scimiters rose to power, a price was put on Sagard's head and his future in the city has become very bleak; thus, he plans his departure.

However, it is not with Sagard, but far to the south, that our tale begins. It is a dark tale of voodoo and sorcery made more sinister by the curse of . . .

THE FIRE DEMON



SECTION 1

Deep in the Zimbian Jungle beat feverish drums.

A tiger, stalking a wounded okapi through the wet darkness, suddenly sniffs the stench of death and, filled with a primal terror, gives up her prey and scrambles for shelter in the thick undergrowth.

Not far away, skeletal hands beat upon a drum.

The drummer averts his eyes from the hideous figure who, illuminated by rising flames, watches over him, for the anatomy of Ushad-I is a ghastly sight.

The sorcerer's body is a crisscrossed network of scars, connecting the lithe, powerful legs of a Zimba tribesman to the torso of a muscled Frusti. From the shoulders come alarmingly small olive-skinned arms and dainty woman's hands, which once belonged to a Chadanesse lute player. Atop his neck is a gaunt Fexian face, unnaturally set off with burning red Vulzar eyes.

The sorcerer smiles slightly as he eyes his captive, tied to a pole. The Aerdian is the most handsome man in the realm, an actor by trade. Now, however, his handsome face is twisted in fear as he struggles with his bonds.

No civilized man would believe the ceremony which follows. Two pale figures, devoid of emotion,

step up to the bound man and carry him forward to the fire, which, although without fuel, rises to a towering height and assumes a vaguely human shape. It is a fire demon.

"The face shall be mine," the sorcerer declares to the demon, "the spirit shall be yours."

A breathy voice from the fire itself responds: "So be it."

Not suspecting that he is to face a fate much worse than burning—the bound man lets out a shriek as he is thrown into the demonic fire.

Unafraid, the sorcerer enters the flame. Uncertain moments follow. The fire turns purple, then slowly dies down, and a blood-curdling reality emerges. The sorcerer now wears the Aerdian's face, and the Aerdian now wears the sorcerer's.

The Aerdian, his soul consumed by the flame, seems not to notice or care.

Moments later the sorcerer gazes into a polished silver mirror, admiring his handsome new face . . . the raw beauty of it marred only by red Vulzar eyes.

"I am nearly complete," he mutters to himself.

Thousands of miles away a hot desert wind brings strange tales to Tabu-Bel-Abu, the city of minarets and treachery. Deep in the bazaar, where swarthy-faced, turbaned men smoke from long pipes and tell tales of fantastic treasures, a man all in black

with a garish golden earring beckons you. "Come, Ratikkan, for I read your mind."

His beady brown eyes stare deeply into yours. "Forget the small plunders you seek here, for there is much greater treasure hidden in the steaming jungles, waiting for one of your strength to wrest it from evil hands."

"I have heard of no such treasure," you respond.

The Gyptic waves his hand for you to sit before him. "Sit for a moment, and I shall tell you of Sanda-Uul, the Lost City of Ivory."

"I have heard many such tales," you say. "But none have been true. They are more fit for superstitious women than for men of arms."

"Hear mine and judge," the mysterious man responds, and takes a long draw off his strange pipe.

"When I was your age, I was a humble slave in Nuxes where the mouth of the Danjo flows into the Gavvardian Channel. My master, though a prince, was in need of money and ordered us on a long journey to the deep jungles of the Wuga.

"For months we trekked down serpentine paths and discovered nothing save for disease, ambush and the sundry other horrors of this teeming jungle. Then, one day, in the black heart of the jungle, we came upon a great granite wall which stretched as far as we could see.

"This wall was unscalable, and we ventured to

find a gate. Curiously, it seemed deserted. . . . We saw no men defending the rampart, until one moonless night we spied glowing, marching figures upon the high parapet.

"We called to the men but received no response. The superstitious among us believed they were ghosts, and their suspicions were not unjustified, for, in places where the great stones had fallen, leaving a gash in the wall, the misty sentinels marched through the empty air!

"Many of my party fled into the woods. Though I do not know what became of them, I must say that bestial roars from the jungle on those nights boded the worst for them.

"Finally we came upon a great gate of massive wood beams. Through cracks between the beams we could see a city. Though deserted, it was a sight I will never forget—it was constructed of carved ivory to an ornateness that would put to shame even the great temples of Wii Shangazza.

"Our master ordered us to cut through the beams, and we set to doing it. The petrified timbers dulled our axes, shattered our swords and sapped our strength."

You become impatient. "Get to it, old man. What did you find inside?"

"We never went inside, for we were discovered by the Ushad-I."

"Who are the Ushad-I?" you ask.

"The Ushad-I is a man, a sorcerer, dark ruler of the jungle."

"You have told a charming story, old man, but have offered no proof of your adventure. I should give you a silver piece and be on my way," you say, standing up to depart.

"My proof," he says, "is here."

As he removes a pair of ornate sandals, you recoil in shock. Instead of a pair of Gyptic feet there stands another, reddish pair, much too large for his legs.

Before you can say anything, the old man looks over your shoulder and shouts, "Look out, Ratikkan!"

With lightning reflexes you dive from your seat as a scimitar cuts the air above your head.

Drawing your sword and jumping to your feet in a single action, you face two Hitaxian Scimiters—dangerous agents of the Sultoon Fakkadi.

One of the men barks out, "Your head is worth two hundred gold pieces, Ratikkan, and we shall have it!" You must fight these men for at least one round before fleeing. They attack first.

If this is your *first* Sagard book, read the rules in Section 97. To give you a fighting chance, you will be given a *broadsword* which allows you to do one

extra point of damage to anyone you strike. You fight at Level 4 and have 500 gold pieces. As this is an advanced book, expect to suffer a lot of damage if you are a novice. Note this on your *status chart*.

If you have played other Sagard books, retain any *weapons* or *armor* you have taken out of the last book. Hardened by vicious battle, and having grown older, you permanently gain 5 *hit points*. You now have 25 *base hit points*.

It is assumed that most players when they reach this book will be Level 4 fighters. However, if you have not reached Level 4 in the other books, fight at Level 3 until you have earned a total of 60 *experience marks*.

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

~~[25]~~ [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]
(You are defeated; go to Section 8.)

SCIMITEERS (LEVEL 3: 1/1, 2/1, 3/2, 4/3)

SCIMITEER #1 [28] [27] [26] [25] [24] [23] [22]
[21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12]

SCIMITEER #2 [28] [27] [26] [25] [24] [23] [22]
[21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12]

When you have defeated the Scimitereers, go to Section 3.

If you successfully flee, go to Section 30.

SECTION 2

At the Mercy of the Scimateers

Knowing that you cannot defeat these dogs of intrigue, you drop your sword. The Scimateers laugh loudly and call you unpleasant names.

"It is a fine sword this Ratikkan dog has yielded to us, but not the weapon of a Scimateer."

For your cowardice, lose *2 experience marks*, with the grim consolation that you are still alive.

The last thing you feel is a swift crack on the head. Go to Section 8.

SECTION 3

Littered Scimateers

With his last gasp, one of the Scimateers shouts "Obduul!" and collapses on the floor. Gain *4 experience marks*.

Seeing that the old man was wounded by a stray scimitar, you grasp his hand. "Life abandons me," he says. Then he pulls you close to him, and in a hoarse voice whispers, "Do not cross the path of the Ushad-I on your quest for the Lost City of Ivory. For if you do, your heart will be torn, beating, from your chest, and your soul will be fed to the fire demon's seering flames.

"Beware, Sagard, for the sorcerer's minions are everywhere. Gray-fleshed, soulless zombies peer from every oozing shadow in the dark heart of the jungle. Everywhere. Watching . . . waiting to do their master's bidding."

As he dies a surge of life energy enters you. Regain *all hit points*.

Suddenly four sharp blades slash through the canvas walls of the old man's shop. Before you can flee, four Scimiteers step through the tattered fabric.

The Scimiteers close in on you. "You are worth four hundred gold pieces to us alive, Ratikkan, and two hundred dead. Thus, we would prefer it if you would surrender. However, should you escape, you will be worth nothing to us. Therefore, you are better dead than gone," one of the Scimiteers says, his face twisted in an ugly smile.

You may surrender (Section 2), fight four Scimiteers (Section 24) or open your belt and throw out 200 gold pieces, hoping the Scimiteers will fight among themselves for them (Section 95).

SECTION 4

The Gates of Fahderium

In the Hitaxian religion, those who die in combat are transported on the great ghost boats down the Ebon River to a temple on the Isle of Night, where they pass through the Gates of Fahderium to the afterworld. The Scimiteers scattered before you have set out on their great voyage. Gain *4 experience marks*.

A throng has gathered in the Casbah and you make haste to the sun-bleached streets of Tabu-Bel-Abu.

Far from the Casbah you stop to rest, realizing that you, too, will be sent on the great voyage if you remain much longer in Tabu-Bel-Abu.

Intrigued by the old man's tale, you resolve to search the southern jungles for Sanda-Uul, the Lost City of Ivory. It will not be an easy journey, and you will have to hire a party of explorers.

A man in good health will cost you 100 gold

pieces in the debtors' prisons of Sin-Dah-Viil, and you will need at *least* 15 men to make the journey. Check your *status chart* and make a decision. You may either use the gold you have to hire the party (go to Section 21), or you may attempt to gain more gold before setting out for the southern city.

There is but one place where you may gain more treasure quickly: the Palace of the Sultoon Fakkadi. You may have been there once before and have slipped over its defenses on a Davanian bat. This time it will be much more difficult. If you want to try, begin your assault in Section 9.

SECTION 5

The Creeper in the Gloom

Sword drawn, you creep slowly into the dense woods, alone. Everywhere you turn, you think you see something moving in the shadows, but there is nothing.

Suddenly you hear a soft crunch next to you and wheel around. Far from the horrible beast you ex-

pected, you discover a small checkered shrew munching on a banana.

Lowering your sword, you let out a hearty laugh and call to your men: "Come and see the terrible beast that caused us so much worry."

Your men carefully venture into the wood. When they come within sight of you and the shrew, they are momentarily embarrassed by their cowardliness.

The shrew lets out a soft squeak as you step softly toward it.

Then, in the flick of an eye, a green blur shoots out of the woods and strikes the shrew.

Jumping back, you realize that the shrew has been devoured by a giant python. Its uncoiled body is as thick as the trunk of an oak and looks over thirty feet long. Its triangular head is nearly the size of your chest.

You raise your sword.

The python coils, preparing to strike. Its sensory tongue flicks like a bullwhip.

Your men flee into the woods. You must fight the python alone!

Flip the pages to see who strikes first. An even number, you do; an odd number, the python does.

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]
(Begin the book again.)

GIANT PYTHON (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

[23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12]
[11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1] (You have
defeated the giant python. Go to Section 50.)

If you successfully flee, go to Section 56.

SECTION 6

Death to the Torturer

The torturer, who sent hundreds to their deaths, has met his own. As you lay down the ax, the Aerdian spy smiles across the dungeon to you. Gain *2 experience marks*.

“Best of luck to you, Sagard. May we fight side by side another time. Drink this ambroth. The Sultoon has your sword.” (Regain *12 hit points* and save the container. You may drink the remainder of the ambroth *at any time* to regain *5 hit points*. Note this on your *status chart*.) Before you can respond, she vanishes up the stairs.

Your brutal battle has awakened the other prisoners and you smash their chains with the torturer’s ax. “Death to the Sultoon!” you shout as they roar out, bent on avenging their long torture.

In moments the royal compound is in turmoil. The escaped prisoners, fighting with unpent fury, set upon the palace guards in a berserk rage.

Reaching the portal to the great dome, you spy

the Sultoon and three of his palace guards running down the steps.

“Bring me their heads!” the Sultoon shouts, and the guards rush toward the besieged building, leaving the Sultoon alone on the palace steps.

Your blood boils as you see your sword in the Sultoon’s hand.

“Now, Sultoon, you may see how I fight,” you shout, charging him with your crimson-stained battle-ax.

A sharp smile creases the Sultoon’s thin lips as he draws his sword and strikes first.

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]
(Begin the book again.)

SULTOON FAKKADI (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

[19] [18] [17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8]
[7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1] (You have killed the Sultoon. Go to Section 7.)

Flee to Section 93.



SECTION 7

Death to the Sultoon

“May you die in agony, Ratikkan,” the Sultoon mutters as he slumps to the ground. Taking your sword from his grasping hands, you regain all of its powers; note this on your *status chart*.

Gain 2 *experience marks* and, tearing an amulet from around his neck, gain 2,000 *gold pieces*.

If you think you have all of the treasure you need, head to Section 21 and leave Tabu-Bel-Abu and the treacherous Scimiters behind forever.

If you want to risk everything you’ve got for yet more gold, investigate rumors of a secret royal treasure trove in Section 9.

SECTION 8

The Dungeon of Sultoon Fakkadi

A scream pierces the dank air as you slowly regain consciousness. Lose your *weapons* and *armor*.

“So this is the proud Ratikkan who so boldly broke into this palace and slew my brother” (in Book #3: *The Crimson Sea*), a voice speaking in regal Hitaxian dialect says. “He does not look nearly so great as legend has him, does he, my dear?”

You open your eyes to a blur of images. Two torturers stand over you. Despite the masks, you can tell they are Fexians—desert men and masters of pain.

Several feet away from them are a dark-haired man and a blond woman. The man is a tall, wiry Hitaxian wearing regal robes and a blindingly brilliant amulet. His face, shadowed in the flickering torchlight, is that of a man of strength and will. He is the Sultoon Fakkadi.

The woman’s tall form is wrapped tightly in a red velvet gown held at her thin waist with a belt of gold. Atop her splendid form is a beautiful Aerdian face, seemingly carved from stone, and accented by two eyes with the luster of emeralds.

“What should I do with you, Ratikkan? Should I have you torn asunder on one of my instruments of torture, or shall I put you in the fighting pits?” the Sultoon ponders.

“You could set me free with a chest of gold for my amusement,” you respond.

“Show the Ratikkan how I deal with sarcasm!” the Hitaxian shouts to the Fexians, and immediately the two torturers turn the wheel. Stubbornly, you insure that not a word issues from your mouth as they tighten the devilish device.

Then, with a snap of the Hitaxian’s fingers, the torture stops.

Feigning unconsciousness, you drop your head to the table, and peek through narrowed eyelids.

“Feed him until he regains strength and place him in the pits,” the Hitaxian commands, stepping away, chain mail clattering as he walks.

Days of darkness pass like phantoms in the night. Chained to a wall, eating disgusting gruel cruelly fed to you by your torturers, your strength grows. Regain *15 hit points*.

Having time for thought, you consider the old man’s tale and resolve to search the southern jungles for Sanda-Uul, the Lost City of Ivory, should you ever get free. First you will have to hire a safari party of able-bodied men who have been in the jungle before.



Knowing that a man in good health will cost you 100 gold pieces, and that you will need at *least* 15 men to make the journey, check your *status chart*. You may either use the gold you have hidden away (from previous books) or try to gain more before setting out. That is, if you ever escape the Hitaxian jail.

Desperately you try your chains, searching for a weakness, but there is none. Certain that you will meet your doom in the Sultoon's fighting pits, you drop off to sleep.

Late at night, soft footsteps whisper through the darkness. Peering around, you see that the other inmates are asleep and a torturer, polished battle-ax in hand, stands guard over the room. The second torturer is fast asleep.

A shadowy form slowly creeps skillfully down the circular stairway and behind the torturer. An instant later a long dagger emerges from behind him and slits his throat.

The torturer drops to the ground, revealing a curvaceous woman dressed in black. As the dim torchlight strikes her face, you realize it is the Aerdian woman. You watch in amazed admiration as she silently steals across the floor, pulls a key from her dark garb, and opens your cold chains.

"You are lucky tonight, Ratikkan, for I am a spy . . ." she whispers.

Turning, you see the black form of a torturer, ax held high. With a diving lunge, you knock her away as the executioner's hideous ax smashes on the stone floor.

Diving across the floor to avoid a second blow, you grab the dead executioner's battle-ax.

You strike first.

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

(Begin the book again.)

TORTURER (LEVEL 3: 1/1, 2/1, 3/2, 4/3)

[18] [17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6]
[5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

When you are victorious, go to Section 6.

You may *not* flee the torturer.

SECTION 9

Breaking into the Sultoon's Treasury

You talk to every brigand you know, trying to gain information about the Sultoon's secret treasury. While most of the information is useless, a retired Shakanian privateer, known as Ergyg the Wastrel, who lives among his 17 wives, tells a most interesting tale and serves a good dinner (Regain *10 hit points*).

His shifty brown eyes staring into yours, the grizzled old Shakanian begins talking. "The palace and treasury were built five hundred years ago by Sultoon Rahman the Magnificent, a man of wisdom and cunning who knew that one day he might be overthrown.

"For that reason, he built a secret passage and treasury below the great dome."

"To where?" you ask impatiently.

"Finish your dinner and you shall see. . . ."

Late that night Ergyg leads you through the sleeping streets of Hitaxia to the docks, where tough sailors of all ages and nations roam.

"What would a sultoon be doing in this slum?" you ask, eyeing the shabby, sinister wharf.

"It is the last place his enemies would search for him. His escape barge is nearby."

Ergyg leads you to the rear portal of a ramshackle boathouse, which is in such disrepair that even beggars shun it, and draws a lock pick from his sleeve.

"Look at the lock, Sagard. It is Gavvardian, not cheap Hitaxian," he says as he expertly picks it.

Then, opening the door just barely wide enough so that you might slip in, he turns. "Quiet, now, or we shall be cut to ribbons."

Slipping in the door, you find yourselves in an ornate boathouse. In the center of the disguised structure sits a small sailing ship surrounded by Hitaxian sailors, who stand at attention should they be called to service in a palace coup.

Stepping through the shadows, Ergyg motions you to a grate in the floor. With a careful eye on the idle sailors, you follow him. Suddenly a sailor looks up and shouts, "Thieves!"

As four Hitaxian sailors charge you, Ergyg flees into the passage. You strike first. (Note: You may attack the Hitaxian sailors in any order.)

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]
(Begin the book again.)

HITAXIAN SAILOR #1 (LEVEL 2: 1/0, 2/1, 3/1, 4/2)

[5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

HITAXIAN SAILOR #2 (LEVEL 2: 1/0, 2/1, 3/1, 4/2)

[7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

HITAXIAN SAILOR #3 (LEVEL 2: 1/0, 2/1, 3/1, 4/2)

[7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

HITAXIAN SAILOR #4 (LEVEL 3: 1/1, 2/1, 3/2, 4/3)

[7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

If you defeat the sailors, go to Section 10.

Flee to Section 93.

SECTION 10

The Hightailing Hitaxians

After the battle you gain 3 *experience marks*.

Grasping a torch from the boathouse, you climb into the passageway. It is a dark, dank corridor which smells of must and worms. Not far ahead you hear Ergyg's plodding footsteps echoing off the stone walls.

Carefully avoiding pools of water which may be traps, you catch up with the old privateer.

"Thanks for the help," you say, making no attempt to conceal your sarcasm.

"Why should I fight," he responds, "when I have a barbarian to do it for me."

You shrug; then you and he set off down the passage.

Go to Section 11.

SECTION 11

The Ancient Passageway

"We may be the first men in this passage in five hundred years," Ergyg whispers as you step down the eerie corridor of stone walls which have been hacked from bedrock.

"No sultoon has ever used it?" you ask.

"Not as far as I know," he responds as you come upon a set of littered bones covered with rich fabric. "But even I don't know everything."

Inspecting the bones, you discover elaborate jewels and golden bands. "It must be Sultoon Gornasse," says Ergyg. "He mysteriously vanished and was never found."

"Until now," you comment. "But why didn't his killer take his jewels?" Holding up the crimson-stained killing tool, you marvel at its workmanship.

"Even the dagger in his back is worth a thousand gold pieces."

"His killer must have been the Sultoon Dinathea. To him this treasure would have been a mere trifle, not worth bothering with."

Pulling the gold and jewels off the skeleton, you each gain *2,100 gold pieces*. This will be enough to pay for the safari. You may either turn back now (Section 21) or push your luck and move onward to the treasury (Section 14).

SECTION 12

The Screams of Ergyg

Ergyg's screams reverberate through the corridor as you flee. Only in your darkest imagination can you picture the fate he is meeting. For abandoning a friend, lose *5 experience marks*.

When you are safely away from the wharf, you feel pity for Ergyg's 17 wives and set off to tell them what has become of their husband. Their impassioned moans touch your heart and you give them *500 gold pieces* worth of the treasure. Deduct it from your *status chart*.

As you step out of Ergyg's house, your senses tingle. Suddenly a shout cuts the air: "There he is! Get him!" Wheeling around, you see two Scimiters and Ergyg, his body dotted with toothmarks.

"You left me to die, Ratikkan dog. Now I shall have revenge!"

You may flee the Scimiters only if you flip a 4.

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]

[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

(Begin the book again, a little wiser.)

SCIMITEERS (LEVEL 3: 1/1, 2/1, 3/2, 4/3)

SCIMITEER #1 [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15] [14]

[13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

SCIMITEER #2 [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15] [14]

[13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

When you have defeated your opponents, gain 3 *experience marks* and go to Section 21.

If you successfully flee, go to Section 21.

SECTION 13

Back Down the Corridor

The hacked Slimer far behind, you carry the injured Ergyg back down the corridor from which you came. "A great friend you are, Sagard, for saving me from that grotesque creature. For your fine deed, I shall give you a hundred gold pieces' worth of treasure."

His cheapness offends you. "You either place very little value on your life, or very little value on my labor. In either case, I wonder if I should carry you any farther. I could have all of your treasure if I wanted it."

Peering around the dank chamber, he reconsiders. "You speak truth, Sagard; I will give you a thousand gold pieces."

At this point, you can do one of two things: Gain 1,000 *gold pieces* to finance the safari or 2 *experience marks* for your act of friendship.

Write your decision on your *status chart* and go to Section 21.



SECTION 14

Onward to the Treasury

Already laden with gold and jewels, you and Ergyg press onward, hoping for an even larger score.

“We’re drawing near to the treasury,” Ergyg says.

Suddenly you hear a loud clatter as Ergyg drops into the darkness with a loud scream. Stopping in your tracks, you watch as Ergyg’s torch bounces down a flight of stairs.

“Ergyg!?” you shout.

Your words echo back in silence, then from below you comes a low moan.

Cautiously stepping down the stairs, you come to a large room littered with the skeletons of horses and tarnished weapons.

As you reach the bottom of the steps, you see Ergyg motionless in a disheveled heap and you hear the grotesque sound of something heavy and slimy being dragged across the floor. As you turn, your torchlight catches an enormous Slimer, which must have lived off of the rotting corpses of the horses and the rodents wriggling across the damp floor.

As it oozes toward you, you have a choice. You may either flee, leaving Ergyg to a terrible fate (Section 12), or fight it (Section 27).

SECTION 15

The Landward Route

In the late afternoon you come upon a small trading town, composed mostly of tents, where you are accosted by Hitaxians in search of gold coins.

A diminutive Hitaxian boldly shoves through the crowd. "Ratikkan . . . I can be of great help to you for one small gold coin."

"I need no help," you say, waving the pest off.

"You need more than you think," he says, drawing a long wooden sword.

Irritated, you draw your own sword. "Think before you strike me, Shorty," you respond.

"Nobody calls me Shorty and lives," he responds, taking a whack at your leg and jumping on your horse. He starts stabbing at you from above, giving him an effective Level 3 fighting strength.

You must fight him. You may *not* flee.

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

(Begin the book again.)

SHORTY (LEVEL 3: 1/1, 2/1, 3/2, 4/3)

[7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1] (When you have defeated Shorty, go to Section 17.)

SECTION 16

On the Road

Leaving the tavern behind, you ride for several hours under the star-filled sky. In the depths of night you spot a line of torches across the road not far ahead. Though you stop to look, you cannot make out who mans the torches. Now you have three options: You may turn back for the tavern (Section 29); you may ride off the road and into the desert (Section 33); or you may ride to the torchmen (keep reading). If you do not ride to the torchmen, do not read any further.

Riding onward, you come upon a line of four Hitaxian soldiers in billowing garb. They are stern-looking men, but unlike most Hitaxians you have come across, they do not look like brigands.

"Halt, Ratikkan, and pay your toll," one of them calls.

"I have heard of no such toll," you respond. "What is the price?"

"For you, for your insolence, it will be one silver piece."

Happily you pay your toll (do not bother to mark such small change off your *status chart*). Ride onward to Section 26.

SECTION 17

Shorty on His Back

A disheveled throng of Hitaxian beggars gathers as the irritating Hitaxian lies on his back with your sword at his throat.

"Spare me and I will give you very important information," he begs.

Annoyed by the miserable character, you consider running him through, not knowing what the throng will do. If you want to dispatch him, gain *1 experience mark* and go to Section 19. If you want to let him live and see what information he might have, go to Section 20.

SECTION 18

Fleeing the Priests

Your body pierced by Khuzar throwing stars, you step back from the sinister priests. With reflexes as quick as the strike of an eastern cobra, the Khuzars jerk more of the deadly throwing stars from their sashes.

Knowing that you have no chance of defeating them, you throw down 1,000 gold pieces and dash to your horse.

The priests, upon seeing the gold, lower their weapons and laugh.

"Had you done this before, there would have been no reason to fight."

Giving no response, you jump onto your horse and gallop into the moonlit night.

Gain *1 experience mark*.

In a short time you are far away from them. As the desert road stretches seemingly forever into the distance, you contemplate, grimly, what lies ahead of you on your journey to Sin-Dah-Viil.

Go to Section 40.



SECTION 19

Southward to Sin-Dah-Viil

By midafternoon you have ridden far beyond the cultivated fields which surround Tabu-Bel-Abu and have the road to yourself.

Having left Tabu-Bel-Abu in a great hurry, you forgot to pack food. Thus, it is with both relief and dread that you come upon a sinister-looking way station.

After tying your horse, you carefully carry your bag of gold into the smoky den filled with gaudy Hitaxians, black-garbed Tehnites and sleazy Medi-gian traders.

As you set down the bag of gold, it lets out a telltale metallic clang. Several eyes look up from their cards and steins of ale and watch you with menace.

At this point you may leave the tavern, keep riding and lose 3 *hit points* for hunger damage (then flip the pages—if you get an even number, go to Section 16; if you get an odd number, go to Section 26). Or you may stay in the tavern (keep reading).

As you eat a revolting, overspiced Hitaxian dish (regain 5 *hit points*), the men pay little attention to you, save for an occasional menacing glance. Go to Section 16.

SECTION 20

Shorty Talks

The Hitaxian stutters and tears moisten his eyes. "You are so kind, O great Ratikkan . . . I shall pray for you on my grandfather's grave . . ."

"Cut the jabber and give me the information you promised," you say, your patience severely tested.

"If you see a crumpled man lying in the great road of our fond ancestors, do not stop for him, no matter what great spirits of famous northern compassion seize your worthy soul. He will do you nothing but harm."

"That's the information?" you ask.

"It may save your mighty life, O great Ratikkan," he responds.

For a moment you consider slitting his miserable throat, but then you ride away like the great southern wind. As you do you turn to see him thumb his nose at you before he scampers away.

Go to Section 19.

SECTION 21

Dark Journeys

Meanwhile, the nightmare drums of Ushad-I beat again. The dark sorcerer rubs a twisted amulet which he retrieved from the depths of the underworld, and the fire demon arises.

"Now what do I need to bring myself to perfection?" the sorcerer shouts.

"You must have animal courage," the flickering demon responds.

"And whence does this force come?" the sorcerer asks.

"From the heart of a brave man!" the flame demon hisses.

With that, the sorcerer utters a dark incantation to unseen spirits and the dirt begins to roll like the waves of the sea.

A skeletal hand appears above the churning ground, and then another. The fingers twitch as they begin digging their bodies from their own

graves. Scarred gray heads emerge looking about darkly with zombie eyes.

Ushad-I's dark forces have risen from their graves.

"Search, my men, and bring me the heart of a brave man!"

In Tabu-Bel-Abu the price on your head has been raised to 4,000 gold pieces, and nearly everybody hopes to gain the reward. Thus, knowing that your life will be short if you stay, and hoping to investigate the legend of Sanda-Uul, you gather your gold (before proceeding, make sure you have tallied up all of your *gold pieces* on the *status chart*), visit a potion giver (regain *all hit points*) and make a hasty midnight exit from the city of minarets and dark treachery on a swift horse.

If you have at least 1,500 gold pieces, you are all right, but if you have less, you will have to try to find some more on the way, or face a very austere safari.

Just a few miles south of the city, you come upon a fork in the road. Both roads lead to Sin-Dah-Viil, where you will exchange your gold for guides and workers.

The coastal route, which follows the Hitaxian shoreline (Section 19), is longer but safer. The inland route is more dangerous but faster (Section 15).

SECTION 22

Terror in Sanda-Uul

After defeating Ushad-I and uniting the spiritless zombies with the ghosts of Sanda-Uul, you become the first potentate of the lost city in centuries.

Though most men aspire to kingship, you are not most men. You are a barbarian and the life of a civilized dandy filled with pomp and perfumes is worse torture than any enemy could have created for you.

And you are filled with loneliness, for Uruthu, your only true friend in the jungle, cannot share the throne with you.

Fortunately, adventure seems to seek you out . . .

One night, as you toss and turn with fitful dreams of the fire demon, you awaken to a pounding on the door. . . .

"Lord Sagard, arise!" says a familiar voice from the other side of the door.

Rising from bed, you see that the Ushad-I's pendant smolders in the cold light of the moon. Then you open the door and there stands Uruthu! There's no time for greeting.

"Look!" And she points behind you.

As you turn you hear a blood-curdling scream from outside and dash to your window. First disbelief, and then horror seize you as . . .

. . . looming over the wall of the palace courtyard is the fire demon, threatening to reduce the city to charred ash! Seeing the deadly ferocity of your antagonist, you have two options:

1. You and Uruthu may fight the demon in normal combat (Section 90).
2. You and Uruthu may attempt to shatter the pendant while the demon strikes at you (Section 92).

SECTION 23

No Help for the Westerner

Leaving the Tsing-Chunian to die, you ride deep into the night. However, you do not get far before you feel a sharp twinge of pain in your side. Reaching down, you find your hand coated in blood and a Khuzar throwing star protruding from your side (take 4 *hit points* no matter what kind of armor you have).

Suddenly your horse, hit by another star, rears up and throws you off. Springing to your feet, you rip your sword from its sheath. You are surrounded by four western priests in long silk robes; however, unlike priests of familiar sects, western priests are trained from early childhood in the arts of killing, thieving and survival—their religions are very strange.

In a thick accent one of them speaks to you in cold terms: "We give you a choice, Ratikkan. Fight against us and die, or pay to us a thousand gold pieces for refusing help to a priest of our sect."

If you pay, go to Section 18. If you fight these small and lethal priests, you strike first.

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)
[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]
(Begin the book again.)

KHUZAR PRIESTS (LEVEL 5: 1/2, 2/3, 3/3, 4/4)
PRIEST #1 [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]
PRIEST #2 [6] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]
PRIEST #3 [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]
PRIEST #4 [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

If you defeat your opponents, go to Section 25.
If you successfully flee, lose 1,000 gold pieces and go to Section 18.

SECTION 24 The Blades of Sultoon Fakkadi

Knowing that the option is slow death, you draw your sword to combat Sultoon Fakkadi's Scimiters. You strike first. You may *not* flee.

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)
[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]
(Go to Section 8.)

SCIMITERS (LEVEL 3: 1/1, 2/1, 3/2, 4/3)
SCIMITEER #1 [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5]
[4] [3] [2] [1]
SCIMITEER #2 [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]
SCIMITEER #3 [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]
SCIMITEER #4 [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5]
[4] [3] [2] [1]

If you are victorious, go to Section 4.



SECTION 25

Remains of the Night Encounter

The last Khuzar priest raises a throwing star. As he is about to hurl it you slash out and sever his arm from his shoulder. He stares stupidly at his arm lying in the dirt. Then he joins his priestly brothers in a heap on the ground. Gain 4 *experience marks*.

A cold moon glares down on you as you search their bodies, hoping never to encounter the exotically garbed priests again. Though the bodies contain a number of weird scrolls, etched with spells in distant languages, you leave them behind. Western mysticism is not to your taste.

However, you do find 6 *throwing stars*. Note them on your *status chart*. You may throw 2 throwing stars per turn. Each one will do 4 automatic hit points of damage to any opponent you throw it at, unless you flip a 1, which is a miss.

Go to Section 40.

SECTION 26

Riding Through the Night

After riding several moonlit miles, you come upon a heap in the road. Suspicious of traps, you approach warily.

The pile is a crumpled man and his horse.

Knowing that such ruses are often used to trick travelers into stopping for an ambush, you consider riding past.

"Please help me, kind man. You will be richly rewarded," says a thickly accented voice.

Drawing closer, you observe that the man is of some western race, perhaps from Tsing-Chu. Though you know that traders and holy men from those distant realms often venture this far south, you know also that they may well be Tsongs, or "banished ones," who, forced to leave their own country, have come here to prey on travelers.

"May the great spirit punish you if you do not help me," the man mutters as you stare down on him.

Knowing that you are vulnerable, you must decide whether to stop and help him (Section 31) or ride into the night (Section 23).

SECTION 27

The Slimer

The Slimer slithers toward you.

In this combat you may do one of three things. You may fight the grotesque slug to the death, flee with Ergyg (if you flip a 4) or flee without him (a flip of 2 or 4), leaving him to a horrible death.

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

(Go to Section 8.)

THE SLIMER (LEVEL 5: 1/2, 2/3, 3/3, 4/4)

[40] [39] [38] [37] [36] [35] [34] [33] [32] [31] [30]
[29] [28] [27] [26] [25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19]
[18] [17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6]
[5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

When you have defeated the Slimer, gain 4 *experience marks* and go to Section 13.

If you flee *without* Ergyg, go to Section 12.

If you flee *with* Ergyg, go to Section 13.

SECTION 28

Helping the Tsing-Chunian

"All right, my friend, I will take you," you say.

"That will not be necessary, for my fellow priests are all around."

Thinking the man delirious, you pick him up, only to discover you are surrounded by Tsing-Chu priests. Thinking yourself tricked, you rip your sword from its sheath and prepare for harsh death.

"That will not be necessary," the priest you have saved says, "for we are friends."

"You have a strange way of showing it," you respond, still gripping your sword.

One of the westerners holds a bag of gold out to you. Add *500 more gold pieces* to your *status chart*.

"We shall eat, Ratikkan." Skeptical of their strange customs, you walk off the road to a small camp with the Tsing-Chu priests.

As you eat strange food by a raging fire, they tell you of their bizarre religion. Regain *all hit points*.

"It is Khuzkan's will that we search the world for good men and reward them. And it is Khuzkan's will that we search the world for evil men and destroy them. A good man will help a stranger in trouble; an evil man will pass him by. If you had passed him by, we would have killed you, but you did not; you helped him, and therefore are a good man, and thus are rewarded."

"Bandits of the road use similar tricks," you say.

"Do not question the will of Khuzkan," a priest says.

As you leave, the westerners offer you one last gift. In a neat carrying pouch are *6 Khuzar throwing stars*. Note them on your *status chart*. You may throw *2* throwing stars per turn. Each one will do *4* automatic hit points of damage to any opponent you throw it at, unless you flip a *1*, which is a miss.

Go to Section 40.

SECTION 29

Bounty Hunters

Two riders appear on the distant horizon. If you want to find out who they are, keep reading. If you choose to hide in the desert until they pass, stop reading this section and go to Section 33.

With one hand on your sword, you approach the riders. As you near them you and they draw to a halt.

"Hello, friend, we ask your assistance," one of them says when you draw close. In the dim light of the moon you eye them. They are from the Vanian

Confederation, but which state—Vane, Yate, Shaka or another—you cannot guess. And though swords hang at their sides, they do not look like fierce or deadly men.

"What assistance can I offer you?" you ask.

"We search for a Ratikkan dog named Sagard. He wears a high bounty on his head."

"I also search for him," you respond, grasping your sword.

"Then perhaps we should ride together," the first one says.

Flip the pages. If you get an even number, go to Section 32. If you get an odd number, go to Section 39.



SECTION 30

Blood in the Casbah

As you jump out of the way a silver blur flashes past you and cuts down the old teller of tales.

Scarcely do you regain your footing when a Scimiteer bears down on you.

Knowing that you have no hope of defeating him, you slash through the canvas wall of the Casbah and dive through the hole, toppling a tall stack of earthen pottery as you land in a shop filled with delicate items.

Regaining your footing, you wheel around to discover that you are surrounded by Scimitears. Four Scimitears close in on you. It was an ambush.

"You are worth four hundred gold pieces to us alive, Ratikkan, and two hundred dead. We would prefer you to surrender, but you are worth more dead than gone," one of the Scimitears says, his face twisted in an ugly sneer.

You may surrender (Section 2), fight the four Scimitears (Section 24) or open your belt and throw out 200 gold pieces, hoping the Scimitears will fight among themselves for them (Section 95).

SECTION 31

Aid to the Tsing-Chunian

The crumpled man gulps water from your canteen and life seems to return to him.

His trembling hand reaches into his belt, and he pulls out a small pouch. "Take this, barbarian. You have saved my life."

The purse contains *500 gold pieces*. (Note this on your *status chart*.)

"You have all of my money, but for a ride to the hostelry, I shall be eternally in your debt, Ratikkan. Good things come to those who are owed by Tsing-Chunians."

Stashing the purse into your belt, you consider taking him up on his offer, for surely he will perish on the road eventually if you do not help. To help him, go to Section 28; if not, go to Section 23.

SECTION 32

The Search for Sagard

You ride for a short time with the two bounty hunters. They know their way about the desert and lead you around Hitaxian tax agents who collect tolls on the road.

After a short conversation you discover the bounty hunters are not very intelligent or, for that matter, very industrious, as they take a rest before you have gone five miles.

Saying that you prefer to keep riding in search of this criminal Sagard, you keep riding. At first you ride slowly away, wishing to avoid suspicion, but when you are out of sight, you take off at a full gallop.

Go to Section 40.

SECTION 33

Desert Filth

You leave the road and ride into the desert. Scarcely have you gone 20 yards when a large stone whizzes past your ear.

Tearing your sword from its sheath, you peer into the darkness. Here and there you see the figures pop up, throw stones and quickly scurry from rock to rock before you can get a fix on them.

Suddenly a rock hits your horse. In panic the poor beast charges blindly into the desert. Struggling to regain command, you ride into a narrow gully littered with the bones of other travelers who have been smashed to death with rocks.

Flip the pages 10 times and take 1 hit point for each 3 or 4 you flip, no matter what kind of armor you have.

After taking a beating, you finally gain control of the horse and charge into the desert.

For hours you ride, with no sense of direction, until finally you find your way back to the road.

Go to Section 40.

SECTION 34

Gold on the Run

A bounty hunter lunges at you, narrowly missing you. Stumbling back, you realize that you are not going to win. Wishing to deprive them of their bounty for your head, you quickly jump upon one of their horses.

One of the bounty hunters dives for your horse and gets a piece of your shoe. Shaking him off like a bad memory, you gallop into the distance, leaving him to munch dust.

"Get back here with my horse, Ratikkan!" comes a shout, and an ineptly thrown dagger clatters on the road next to you.

Mildly amused by your stupid battle, and chewing some food the careless bounty hunter left in his knapsack, you regain 7 hit points.

Fed up with Hitaxia, ride as quickly as the broken-down mare will take you to Section 40.

SECTION 35

Enough of Sin-Dah-Viil

Separating your gold from the remains of the Hitaxian rats, you count your belongings and prepare to leave this wretched town.

If you have less than 1,500 gold pieces, or just want to raise some cash, you may sell your *armor* (if you have any), your *sword* or both in the trading markets in the trading district (Section 37).

If you still have at least 1,500 gold pieces, you may proceed directly to the debtors' prison (Section 42), where you may buy men for your safari team.

SECTION 36

The Lost Bounty

After a good throttling, the bounty hunters dash into the night, leaving their horses and knapsacks behind.

Rifling through their belongings, you find little worth taking. They must not have been very successful bounty hunters.

However, you do gain 3 *experience marks* and find some food (regain 8 *hit points*).

As you mount your horse, you cup your hand over your mouth and shout to the two cowards who still hide in the shrubs: "I've left you with most of your meager surroundings. I heartily suggest that you search for new employment."

Riding into the distance, you hear them call back to you. "Rot, you Ratikkan filth."

For sheer amusement you whip your horse around as if to attack, and gain a good chuckle as the Vanians scramble back into the woods.

Laugh all the way to Section 40.

SECTION 37

The Trading District

Suspicious of every greasy beggar you see, you wind through the hot, stinking streets of the trading district.

After stopping in a few of the dirty, dingy shops, you come to one inescapable conclusion. Sin-Dah-Viil is a very poor city.

Stepping into the flashiest shop on the street, which is a dump by Tabu-Bel-Abu standards, you are offered the following prices for your equipment.

The trader will give you 1,000 gold pieces for your sword and throw in a strong tulwar (a hacking sword which will help you cut through jungle), and will give you 500 gold pieces for any armor you may have.

After haggling, you up him 50 gold pieces on each item, but that is as far as he will go.

Sell whichever items you wish to sell and delete them from your *status chart*.

If you take the tulwar, you fight at your normal combat level. Now go to Section 42.

SECTION 38

The Hitaxian Gate

A great wall marks the southern border of Hitaxia. Once it was a beautiful structure, veneered with marble, but a Hitaxian sultoon stripped it for his palace. Now it is a dun-colored barrier which stretches from the Hitaxian Gulf to the Sea of Eternity.

At the center of the wall is the Great Gate, through which all travelers from south to north must pass.

Before leaving Hitaxia, you must face a tariff collector, and it will be a long wait. For hours the blistering sun beats down on you. Hitaxian noblemen pass ahead of you with a shrewd wink and a quick bribe to their countrymen. Thus, your temper is up as your motley group reaches the tax collector, a man whose face is etched with callousness and arrogance made more unbearable by the presence of two stern guards.

“Your tariff will be three hundred gold pieces. . . .”

If you have the gold pieces left, you may pay this greedy swine (deduct the *300 gold pieces* and go to Section 44). If you have no interest in being fleeced once more in Hitaxia, or do not have the gold, you may try to intimidate him (Section 41).

SECTION 39

The Search for Sagard

You ride with the two bounty hunters, who know their way about the desert and lead you around the Hitaxian tax agents who collect tolls on the road.

The bounty hunters do not seem very intelligent or, for that matter, very industrious, because they stop to take a rest before you have gone five miles.

Saying that you prefer to keep searching for this "Sagard character," you bid them adieu. As you turn to ride away a heavy blow knocks you from your horse.

"How stupid do you think we are, Ratikkan?"

Lying on your back, you see the two Vanians standing over you. "We had hoped to let you think you had fooled us and slit your throat during the night. . . ." one says.

"It would have been a more pleasant death than what you will have now," the other responds.

Kicking outward, you shove the two Vanians back and jump to your feet.

They strike first.

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

VANIAN BOUNTY HUNTER # 1 (LEVEL 3: 1/1, 2/1, 3/2, 4/3)

[17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5]
[4] [3] [2] [1]

VANIAN BOUNTY HUNTER # 2 (LEVEL 2: 1/0, 2/1, 3/1, 4/2)

[16] [15] [14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4]
[3] [2] [1]

When you have defeated your opponents, go to Section 36.

If you successfully flee, go to Section 34.

SECTION 40

The Hostile Hostel

After hours of riding on the dusty road, you arrive in Sin-Dah-Viil. This city is a cluttered slum by comparison to Tabu-Bel-Abu. Its streets are covered in filth, its people, save for wealthy Hitaxians and foreign merchants, are clothed in rags, and its scent is that of a stable.

As it is past dusk, the slave markets are closed. Therefore, you find a place to spend the night. Feeling wealthy, you approach the finest inn in the city but quickly set your horse in another direction upon learning that nightly lodging is 1,000 gold pieces.

After much searching and unpleasant dealings with haughty clerks, you settle on a shabby hostelry near the slave markets which costs a ridiculous 100 gold pieces (deduct this from your *status chart*), but it has a locking door and a bed.

Tired from your journey, you fall quickly to sleep (regain *all hit points*).

In the middle of the night you hear stirrings and awaken with a start to see several Hitaxian peasants, who bear an uncanny resemblance to overgrown rats, rummaging through your bags. Jumping out of bed, you narrowly escape a dagger wielded by one of these Hitaxian brigands.

As you awaken, the miserable swine scramble out of your room. In this fight you will not want to flee, because these creatures are easy to defeat. However, they will be trying to flee. Therefore, after each round of combat, flip to see if each of your opponents is able to flee (by flipping a 4) and deduct 200 gold pieces for each one who gets away. Then flip for the remaining Hitaxian rats as they try to stab you. As you were sleeping when this rude assault took place, do not gain any benefits from your *armor*.

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]
(Begin the book again.)

HITAXIAN RATS (LEVEL 0: 1/0, 2/0, 3/0, 4/1)

RAT #1 [3] [2] [1]
RAT #2 [3] [2] [1]
RAT #3 [3] [2] [1]
RAT #4 [3] [2] [1]
RAT #5 [3] [2] [1]
RAT #6 [3] [2] [1]
RAT #7 [3] [2] [1]

When you have defeated your opponents, go to Section 35.

SECTION 41

No Tribute

Leaning down to the greedy Hitaxian, you look him squarely in the eye.

"I have no gold," you say, "and less intention of paying your tariff."

"Then I will send you to debtors' prison."

Drawing your sword, you respond, "I will reach debtors' prison as you reach the Isle of Night," making reference to the Hitaxian afterlife.

As the guards draw their scimitars the tax collector leans back in his chair and steeples his fingers. "Let us be reasonable. We can work this out for a mere hundred gold pieces." If you want to buy your way out, deduct the *100 gold pieces* and go to Section 44. If not, keep reading.

"If I pay with gold, you pay with your life," you say, angered.

With that, he gestures to the two guards, who

raise their weapons. Anger wells in your heart as you rip your sword from its scabbard.

As the Hitaxian guards charge you, you turn to your men. "I will cause a diversion. You get through the gate."

Chaos breaks out as your men take off in a full run.

As the tax collector dives under his table, calling for more assistance, the guards lunge at you (they strike first).

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]

[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

(Begin the book again.)

GUARDS (LEVEL 2: 1/0, 2/1, 3/1, 4/2)

GUARD #1 [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

GUARD #2 [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

If you defeat your opponents, go to Section 45.

If you successfully flee, go to Section 47.

SECTION 42

The Debtors' Prison

As well as being poor, Sin-Dah-Viil is corrupt. Nearly one-fifth of the population is housed in a massive debtors' prison, where an inmate works for the sultoon until one of his relatives buys his way out or he is purchased by a slaver.

At the great wrought-iron gates to the prison, old women beg in vain and children weep for their imprisoned relatives. It is a terrible sight. Stepping up to a slave seller, you inform him that you wish to buy several able men.

The slimy Hitaxian, with more gold in his teeth and hanging from his ears and around his neck than you have in your pouch, informs you that the price of an able-bodied man is 150 gold pieces.

"I was told it was a hundred!" you shout.

"Prices change," he responds. "However, I might be able to make a special consideration if . . ."

Quickly realizing what he is looking for, you slip him *100 gold pieces* and the price drops to 100 gold pieces per man.

At this point you may buy as many debtors as you can afford for *100 gold pieces* per man, keeping as much as you think you might need for various taxes at the border (and who knows how much that might be?) and deducting *100 gold pieces* for food, water and spears. Mark the number of debtors who are in your party on your *status chart* and deduct the *gold* spent.

Assembling your group of debtors, you are embarrassed as they drop to their knees in thanks.

"What can we do in repayment?" one asks.

"Rise, friends," you say. "We will trek together into the jungles and find the lost city of Sanda-Uul. It will bring us either wealth or death."

One of them, speaking for the others, says, "Anything is better than prison."

Now trek onward to Section 38.

SECTION 43

Defeating the Elite Guards

As the last elite guard tumbles backward he lands on the tax collector's table, snapping it in two and pinning the tax collector under the wreckage. Gain *6 experience marks*.

Meanwhile, the waiting hordes capitalize on the opportunity that chaos brings and swarm across the border without paying tax. Hitaxian guards chase them, and a full-scale melee breaks out.

As you take flight you grab the tax collector's money box and run with the confused throng. Gain *3,124 gold pieces*.

Laughing madly, run to Section 47.

SECTION 44

Buying Freedom

Your load lighter after filling Hitaxian coffers, you leave the land of greed behind. The Hitaxian road ends abruptly at the gate and you find yourself on a barren, dusty plain.

A pall of gloom sets over your men as they see the dismal course their adventure seems to be taking. If you want to make sure they will not desert you, give each man *10 gold pieces*, if you have it. If you do not, flip for each man and lose *1 man* for each 4 you flip. Then update your *status chart*.

Leading your men to the southeast, you cross through northern Fex. Near nightfall you come to a place where two dirt paths meet. Here you pitch camp for the night and treat your men to a feast. Regain *6 hit points*.

Go to Section 46.

SECTION 45

Defeating the Guards

As the second Hitaxian guard drops, the tax collector blows on a golden whistle. Gain 2 *experience marks*.

Elite guards surround you (you strike first).

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]
(Begin the book again)

ELITE GUARDS (LEVEL 3: 1/1, 2/1, 3/2, 4/3)

GUARD #1 [15] [14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7]
[6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

GUARD #2 [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3]
[2] [1]

GUARD #3 [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3]
[2] [1]

GUARD #4 [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3]
[2] [1]

If you defeat your opponents, go to Section 43.

If you successfully flee, go to Section 47.

SECTION 46

A Map in the Dirt

Moonlight illuminates the dusty plain as the feast fire dies. Though you have not yet reached the steaming jungle, you are beset by the scorching heat of the southern realm. If you are wearing *armor*, it will be of no use to you as you travel farther. Knowing this, you bury it at the fork in the road with the idea that someday you might come back to get it. If in another book you pass through the southern Hitaxian gate, dig up the *armor* and gain all of its benefits. Note this on your *status chart*.

Late at night you lie sleeplessly under the canopy of the stars. Staring at the sky, you hear a soft, furtive sound and silently look around. Then you spy one of your party running across the flat, scrubby ground.

You jump to your feet and give chase. The tall and lean figure is nearly as fast as you, but slowly you gain on it.

"Stop!" you shout. "You'll be shredded by wolves out there."

Your words do not slow the figure, but a diving tackle does.

"It is better to be torn by wolves than tortured by the Ushad-I," says the figure, a curiously exotic, bearded creature from the southern lands.

"Then you know of him?" you ask the prone figure.

"I know too that you search for Sanda-Uul. Many northerners do. Few return."

Peering into the crimson eyes, you get a strange feeling and stand up to view the prone slave. Following the curves of the figure sprawled upon the ground, you come to a startling discovery. It is a woman!

Reaching down, you pull a false beard from her face. "Why do you wear this and suffer the lot of a male slave?"

"It is better than the lot of a female slave!" she says, dusting herself off.

"True, but there is more to you than that. . . . Tell me who you really are, and do not spare the truth."

"I am Uruthu, princess of the Momboddo Empire. Had the Hitaxians discovered my identity, who knows what dark fate I would have faced." In the moonlight you are struck by her extraordinary beauty, her features sharp and chiseled, her skin olive and her eyes smoldering like cut rubies.

"You," she says, "are a barbarian, and as such can be trusted not to expose me . . ."

"My trust can only last as long as your loyalty."

"You have my loyalty."

In her eyes you see truth and ask, "What do you know of Sanda-Uul?"

"No living man who speaks truth can say he knows where the lost city is. No man save the Ushad-I."

"Show me what you know of the jungle," you say.

The woman bends down and draws a map, her elegant hands artfully crafting it in the moonlit dirt.

Turn the page for the map.

"You haven't drawn any trails," you say, studying the map.

She looks up. "The jungle, like a hungry lion, eats trails. We must find our own."

She pauses. "You have set out on an impossible quest, Sagard."

"There is no other kind worth making," you say.

As it is late, you return to the camp. All of the men are asleep, thus none might know Uruthu's secret.

Later, as you stare at the stars, waiting to be overtaken by sleep, a cold chill crawls up your back.

You feel watched.



Rising up and peering into the distance, you see nothing—for the eyes of the dead do not glow in the night.

As dawn rises on the following morning you must choose a direction. If you want to head directly for the jungle to thoroughly search it, go to Section 49. If you want to set out for the mountains to the south, avoiding a large stretch of jungle by taking mountain trails and crossing through the Ragnar Pass, go to Section 53.

Remember, this map is in Section 46. Note this on your *status chart*. As you explore the jungle, map the areas you have explored as best you can. It will be easy to get lost on this map if you are not careful.

SECTION 47

Rendezvous with Your Men

Passing through the Great Gate as quickly as your feet will carry you, you leave Hitaxia behind.

Ten feet from the massive portal, the great Hitaxian Road ends on a barren, empty plain, which is streaked with white from layers of salt placed on it by the Hitaxians to kill plants, and thus ensure that no army can creep up to the gate unseen.

When you reach your waiting men, they cheer your courage, for none of them would have stood up to a tax collector. Praising their loyalty for waiting for you, you give each of them *10 gold pieces*, if you have it. If you do not, flip for each man and lose *1 man* for each 4 you flip, for surely he will slip away from the party.

At nightfall you come to an intersection of two dirt paths. After pitching camp, you treat your men to a feast and their morale soars.

Regain *12 hit points* and go to Section 46.

SECTION 48

Falcon Gap

Strange dreams of fiery hands and undead eyes trouble your sleep.

When you awaken, the Medigians are gone, having helped themselves from your supplies. So much for the kinship of Northmen.

However, if their advice was good, it was worth the food they took.

Heading due east, you come upon Falcon Gap, nestled between two steep mountains. As the Medigians had told you, it is a gentle sloping pass which ends in the jungle.

Your instincts tingle as you lead your men into Falcon Gap. The pass does not appear to be a product of nature. There is no overgrowth, as if it has been cleared by the hands of man.

Midway through the path a Tanzulan in your party shouts and points skyward.

Swirling above you is a great swarm of what look to be gigantic birds. As they draw closer, though, you see that they are not birds but men wearing wings strapped to their backs.

"Ambush!" you shout as a flurry of arrows rains down on your men. You are unscathed, but your men are not so fortunate.

Flip 15 times and lose *1 man* in your party for each 4 you flip. (Note this on your *status chart*.)

The winged men drift slowly down to the ground, drop their false wings and brandish spears. "Attack them!" you shout to your men.

As you run to slay one of the winged men, a voice calls to you. "Now, Ratikkan fool, you know why few men know of the Kodokii. None live to tell of them!"

One of the Medigians from the night before stands high on the cliffside, far out of your reach.

You and your surviving men must fight the 15 Kodokii. (Note the number of men you have left. If you have more than 30, make a note of it in the SAGARD'S MEN area below.)

Your men strike first. Flip for each of your men, killing one Kodokii for each flip of a 3 or 4. Then count the remaining Kodokii and flip for each one. They also kill your men with flips of 3 or 4.

After both sides have fought, Sagard *may* fight a Kodokii in individual combat. Kodokii are Level 2 fighters with 10 hit points each. If Sagard's men are all killed, he must fight all of the remaining Kodokii men himself.

The battle rages until either Sagard flees, is dead, or all of the Kodokii have been defeated.

SAGARD'S MEN (1/0, 2/0, 3/Kill, 4/Kill)

[30] [29] [28] [27] [26] [25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20]
[19] [18] [17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8]
[7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1] (Begin again.)

KODOKII MEN (1/0, 2/0, 3/Kill, 4/Kill)

[15] [14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2]
[1]

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

[Reuse Kodokii specs if necessary.]

KODOKII (LEVEL 2: 1/0, 2/1, 3/1, 4/2)

[10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

KODOKII (LEVEL 2: 1/0, 2/1, 3/1, 4/2)

[10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

KODOKII (LEVEL 2: 1/0, 2/1, 3/1, 4/2)

[10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

KODOKII (LEVEL 2: 1/0, 2/1, 3/1, 4/2)
 [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

KODOKII (LEVEL 2: 1/0, 2/1, 3/1, 4/2)
 [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

KODOKII (LEVEL 2: 1/0, 2/1, 3/1, 4/2)
 [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

If you defeat all of the Kodokii, go to Section 57.

If all of your men are killed, you may attempt to flee. If you successfully flee, go to Section 55.

SECTION 49

The Steaming Jungle

The sun grows high as you lead your men into the primal, immortal jungle.

Stepping along a muddy path, you are beset by the disturbing feeling that you are being watched . . . watched by hungry eyes.

Whose eyes, you do not know, for the hushed, fertile jungle is nature's keeper of secrets. Anything could lurk behind any dense bush in the vast, steaming caldron of gloom.

Hours into the jungle, the oppressive heat beating down on your men, you come upon another fork in the path. The southeast fork leads you into Wuga country (Section 58); the southwest fork leads you toward the Gignas (Section 52).



SECTION 50

Snake Meat

The gigantic python lies dead on the ground, slain by your sword. Gain 3 *experience marks*. Sheepishly your men step through the woods toward you.

Uruthu, in the guise of a male, steps up to you. "You are a fierce man of great courage."

Shrugging off the compliment, you order your men to cut up the snake and cook its meat, saying, "Perhaps the meat of a fierce beast will make you brave."

As the men cut the *snake's skin* you wrap a length of it around your waist. Note this on the *status chart*.

The snake's meat tastes good and fills you with strength. Regain 12 *hit points*. As you finish eating you hear footsteps and discover that you and your men are surrounded by extremely small, fierce men with painted faces, brandishing long spears.

Your hand rushes instantly to your sword, but Uruthu stills your hand and begins speaking with the small men.

Words fly back and forth between Uruthu and

the tiny men. Finally, after a long exchange, you ask Uruthu what they are saying.

"They praise you for killing the snake, for it had driven them from their home."

"Is that all they said?"

"The Gignas have a very inefficient language," she responds.

As you prepare to leave, 10 tribesmen approach you, chattering away in their language. Turning to Uruthu, you ask what they said.

"They want to follow you and fight for you. They say that Makamatakamatamakmomatoma, which is their name for Sanda-Uul, is to the south and east of us, though none of them has ever seen it."

Figuring that they must know more than you know, and happy to have 10 new traveling companions (add 10 men to the *status chart*), you take their advice. Go to Section 59.

SECTION 51

The Lonely Victory

Eyeing the corpses of your men and of the enemy, you grimly realize that the brutal attack on your men has been successful. However, there are no enemies left alive to enjoy it.

After burying the bodies of your dead under a great mound of rocks, you head to the jungle, knowing that if any enemies are left alive, they will not pursue you.

A long night passes as you are beset by fitful dreams of dark sorcery and wicked flames.

You remember burying the corpses, and cannot discard the notion that one was missing. Alone and wounded, you manage to scavenge some food and regain 6 *hit points*.

Go to Section 84.

SECTION 52

The Black Heart of the Jungle

The farther you go into the jungle, the more dense the flora gets. In places there is no path at all and your men hack at the exotic plants and trees with machetes.

By late afternoon you spot several abandoned huts in a clearing.

"They look like Gigna huts," Uruthu informs you. "Something must have driven them off."

Surveying the scene, you are struck by the hush that has come over the jungle.

It is deathly silent.

Except for a low hiss.

Your men back into a circle, their hands on their weapons.

Time passes. Dread engulfs you. To the south you hear the rustling of bushes and an odd flicking sound.

More time passes and your men begin to mutter to themselves in a tone that smacks of mutiny. You must never let them question your courage. You may either lead your men southeast (Section 59) or investigate the strange noise (Section 5).

SECTION 53

Trek Through the Mountains

The Fexian plain ends abruptly at the Kush Kavi Mountains where a narrow trail leads to the rocky heights.

For centuries this trail has served as a trading route from Hitaxia to the southern countries of Tanzula and the Momboddo Empire.

Many miles southward is Ragnar Pass, which cuts eastward through the mountains into Zimba and Wuga. Reaching the mountains, you watch warily for an ambush, for narrow mountain trails often serve as bandits' lairs.

For two days you wind through mountain paths which drift and circle through the heights like a bird of prey. You see nobody, save for scattered traders who eye you warily yet greet you fondly.

Late on the second night of your journey, two Medigian traders, bruised and starving, stumble into your campsite. Offering them food, you are startled as they gorge themselves for nearly an hour before speaking.

When filled, one of them grimly looks at you and says, "Do not go to Ragnar Pass, Ratikkan; pass into

SECTION 54

Gold to the Scimiters

Wuga through Falcon Gap. We were robbed by Kodokii in Ragnar Pass and barely escaped with our lives. The rest of our party were not so fortunate.”

“The Kodokii were slaughtered in a battle with the Tanzula twenty years ago,” one of your men, a Frusti, responds.

“Not all,” says the Medigian. “A few lived and retreated to the mountains to rebuild their population. Now there are many bandits. They are filled with a terrible lust for vengeance.”

“Why have I not heard of this?” you respond.

“Few live to speak of the Kodokii,” the Medigian says, staring into the distance. “They are brutish mountain men of Fexian descent who hunt men for pleasure. I would fight Wugas a hundred times before facing Kodokii again.”

“And what of this Falcon Gap?” you ask.

“It was discovered by an Aerdian trading party. They say it is a gentle sloping pass.”

Though the Medigians seem to be telling the truth, you wonder, remembering your first experience with Medigian traders (in Book #1: *The Ice Dragon*).

As the night wind howls through the craggy mountains, you must make a decision. Do you head south to Ragnar Pass (Section 69), or do you take your chances with the unknown Falcon Gap (Section 48)?

“Take two hundred of mine, and return to your homes alive tonight!” you shout. Reaching into the moneybag at your belt, you scatter gold pieces about the small shop.

One of the Scimiters lowers his sword and kneels.

“Stop, Obduul! Do not fall for the Ratikkan’s tawdry tricks. The Sultoon will have our heads if he escapes. We split his gold evenly.”

Losing the *200 gold pieces*, you must make a decision. You may surrender to the Scimiters, knowing that a bad fate might await you in the palace of the Sultoon (Section 2); or you may fight the four Scimiters (Section 24), knowing that you have but scant odds of defeating them.

SECTION 55

Flight into the Jungle

As your men fall you realize that the battle is desperate. Beset by enemies, you turn and flee down the pass and into the jungle, knowing they will not pursue you into the teeming swamp of death.

Gain *1 experience mark* for each enemy you killed.

Once you are safely into the jungle, you make camp for yourself in a small clearing. Though the long night is beset with terrible dreams of dark sorcery and fire, and you watch nervously into the dismal wood, you regain *6 hit points*.

Go to Section 84.

SECTION 56

Distant Hissings

The python wraps its steely coils around you, stopping your breath, and poises its mouth close enough to your head that you can smell its reptilian breath.

In desperation you jab your sword into its side.

For just a moment it twitches and uncoils, allowing you to jump from its grasp.

As you flee, it strikes at you but misses.

Terrified, you dash down the southwest trail, expecting at any second to be caught in its jaws.

After 15 minutes of running you catch up with your men, who had set out as the python struck, and vilify them for fleeing.

Regain *3 hit points*.

Go to Section 59.

SECTION 57

Kodokii in the Dirt

Count the surviving *men* you have and enter the number on your *status chart*. Gain 3 *experience marks*, plus 1 for each Kodokii you defeated in individual combat.

If you have no men left, go to Section 51. If you have men left, keep reading.

Looking up, you see the two Medigian traders fleeing across a stone ledge high above you. Grabbing a Kodokii bow, you let loose two arrows, and the screaming projectiles, guided by your fury, find their marks. The Medigians stagger, then plummet off the ledge.

Descending the last leg of Falcon Gap, you and your men make camp at the fringe of the jungle. Regain 5 *hit points*.

On the following morning you lead your men into the primal, immortal jungle. Stepping along a muddy path, you feel watched . . . watched by hungry, predatory eyes.

Whose eyes they are, you do not know, for the hushed, fertile jungle is nature's keeper of secrets.

Anything could lurk behind any dense bush in the vast, steaming caldron of gloom.

Flip the pages. If you get an even number, go to Section 58. If you get an odd number, go to Section 52.

SECTION 58

Southward to the Jungle

Not far from the fork you come upon a stretch of trail which has been freshly hacked out of the lush jungle. Your barbaric instinct tingles. Suddenly the tingle becomes a scream, and you order your men to draw their weapons—not a moment too soon, for sharp Wuga darts streak out of the wood.

"Wugas!" Uruthu shouts, diving for the ground as one of the devilish black darts whizzes over her head.

Flip the pages 10 times and lose 1 *man* from your party for each 4 you flip. Then adjust your *status chart* accordingly.

Spinning around, you try to spot the hidden killers, but can't. Knowing that the Wugas will attempt to pick off a man at a time, you have a choice.

You may either charge the Wugas, hoping to destroy the enemy now (Section 65), or you may keep going, risking similar harassment (Section 62).

SECTION 59

The Endless Trail

Leaving the Gigna village far behind, your party travels westward, passing south of a large lake on a winding mud path.

The farther you get from the dark center of the jungle, the more sounds you hear. Monkeys chatter in the distance, brightly colored birds squawk for no apparent reason and strange moans seem to come from nowhere.

The serpentine trail eats up two days. Regain *14 hit points*. In the afternoon of the third day, you come to a fork in the path. If you want to go south, where there is rumored to be a Tehnite trading post where you might be able to recruit more men, go to Section 63. If not, keep reading.

After trekking down a long, winding trail, you and your men enter the near total darkness of the

jungle. With sun and moon concealed by the high overhanging foliage, you have no idea what direction the snaking path has taken you until dawn, when the faint light falls upon an ancient, overgrown road, broken by a rushing river. Go to Section 73.

SECTION 60

Flight into the Jungle

Your last man falls. Alone against the enemy, you realize that you cannot win, and flee into the jungle.

You run for nearly an hour, fearing that death stalks behind you. When you can go no farther, you turn around to fight the final battle.

However, no enemies pursue you.

Somehow, you escaped.

Dazed from the battle, and still trembling, you make camp in a small clearing. Though the long night is beset with terrible dreams of dark sorcery and fire, you regain *6 hit points*.

Go to Section 84.

SECTION 61

Defeating the Tehnite Prince

Rarely have you fought a man so skilled in the arts of swordsmanship. For several minutes steel clangs against steel, sending off bright sparks.

Finally you bring your blades together. Your blow is so sharp that it knocks the Tehnite's sword to the stone floor with a dull ring. The Prince, defeated, calmly awaits his death, muttering in disgust, "Take what you have earned, Ratikkan."

"I offer you your life and the *snakeskin* for an explanation of those creatures," you say.

"You are far from home, Ratikkan. You are in the lands of southern magic. Zombie minions of the Ushad-I have been following you. Their master wants your heart."

"My heart?" you ask, a cold chill creeping up your spine as you remember the disfigured man from the Casbah.

"I know not why, but eventually he will have it. You would have had a better death at the end of my sword than at his hands. His agents will follow you day and night, from country to country, from year to year, until they have what they seek," the Prince says.

"Where do I find the Ushad-I?"

"I do not know. He is everywhere and nowhere. He is the jungle. You will only find him if he wants to be found."

"How do I destroy him?"

The Tehnite laughs. "He cannot be destroyed."

"What of his zombies?"

"They are destroyed by contact with salt," he answers.

(If you encounter any areas where salt is mentioned, each of your men may load up a *bag of salt*, which may be used to automatically destroy one zombie each before normal combat.)

Convinced that the Tehnite can tell you no more, you strike a very hard bargain with him. In exchange for the *snakeskin* and the Prince's life, you outfit your men with Tehnite *weapons*, some of the best in the realm. In future combat, your men will kill opponents with a flip of 2, 3, or 4.

Reaching the courtyard, with your sword to the Prince's throat, you lead your men back to the jungle. When you are a safe distance away, you release the Prince.

Two paths lead away from the Tehnites' camp. One goes southwest on an overgrown road toward Mount Dolog (Section 79); another leads west to the gloomy heart of the jungle (Section 73).

SECTION 62

Death on the Wuga Trail

Ordering your men to run, you take flight southward. As you run you hear bare feet keeping pace with you to either side, hidden by the dense growth.

Here and there you see a flash of darkness as a Wuga leaps through the jungle, but for the most part the stealthy jungle men are invisible.

You hear a scream up the trail. Flip the pages. If you flip a 1 or 2, lose 2 men; if you flip a 3 or 4, lose 3 men (note this on your *status chart*).

Rounding a bend, you come upon a hideous sight. Deep in a hole are the remnants of two of your men, impaled on spikes—a simple but deadly Wuga trap. (Note their loss on your *status chart*.)

As your men gather about the hole another flight of Wuga darts streaks from the wood. Flip the pages 10 times. Lose 1 man for each 4 you flip, and take 2 hit points for each 1 you flip.

“There’s only one way we can stop them, Sagard,” Uruthu says. “It is to fight. . . .”

At this point you can either take her advice (go to Section 65), or you can keep running from them (go to Section 67).

SECTION 63

The Tehnite Trading Post

As you trek southward the air grows thick with both moisture and smoke. One of your men sniffs the air and lets out a scoffing sound. “It is the smell of Tehnites,” he says, spitting onto the ground.

For a moment you wonder why the Tehnites would have a trading post this far south, but the answer comes quickly—the snake-worshipping northerners must trade with the natives for slithering gods.

The Yatians in your party, who are cowardly by nature, suggest that you turn back, and you consider their advice. If you want to turn back and take another trail to the Putuma River, go to Section 73. To continue along this path, keep reading. If you read past this point, you may not turn back.

As you draw closer to the Tehnite trading post, the normal drone of the jungle dies away, and the bloodsucking mosquitoes that have plagued you all but disappear.

After stepping down a muddy path, you come to a scorched area where fires are lit by Zimbian slaves under the cruel lashes of Tehnite slavers. As you

cross the scorched area, which you now realize was intentionally burned to keep back the jungle and drive away bugs, you spy the trading post, which is a small Tehnite fortress surrounded by a gray-brown moat and manned by Tehnite archers.

Reaching a small drawbridge, which stretches over the reptile-infested moat and is barely wide enough to take a cart across, you come upon two Tehnite guards wearing black leather and carrying sharp spears.

If you are wearing a *python sash*, go to Section 70. If not, go to Section 80.

SECTION 64

A Shout from the Woods

The last Wuga lies dead on the ground, clutching his blowgun. Taking the *blowgun* and 7 of the *lethal darts*, you have gained a new *weapon*. During your *first round of combat* with any opponent, you may fire a dart. The dart will automatically kill any Level 2 or lower opponent and inflict 5 *hit points* on a higher-level opponent.

Gain 3 *experience marks*, plus 1 for each Wuga Sagard personally defeated.

A pleading cry comes from deep in the wood. "Do not leave us here to perish!"

Knowing that the voice is not that of a Wuga but a northerner, you step carefully in the direction of the call and spy a Wuga village of bamboo and thatch.

From the wood near the village you see several men in a bamboo cage. Thinking that it might be a trap, you creep closer. It is no trap. You have killed the captors.

Hacking the thick twine that holds them in, you let out the prisoners.

"Thank Gak you came. We were convinced that the Wugas were going to cook us for dinner."



After a few moments of introduction you discover the captives are Yatian explorers who, like you, were in search of Sanda-Uul but were ambushed by the Wugas.

Though you have had some contact with Yatians before, you cannot help but be amused by them. Unlike most men of the north, they put on airs of refinement and high civilization to downplay their military impotence and domination by the Hitaxians. Nevertheless, add *12 men* to your safari party.

Searching the Wuga village, you find a small cache of stolen property. Gain *300 gold pieces*.

In gratitude the Yatians make a "civilized" dinner in the middle of the jungle. Though you find the frivolous spices they use repulsive, you regain *10 hit points*.

On the following morning you discover an intersection which leads in three directions.

Ignoring interruptions by the Yatians, who imagine themselves experts on everything but know little about anything, Uruthu informs you that the westward path leads to the dark heart of the jungle (Section 52), while another path leads to the Putuma River (Section 73) and yet a third leads a short distance to a Tehnite trading post (Section 63), where you may be able to pick up some extra men.

SECTION 65

Death in the Jungle

Rising from the ground, you whip your sword from its sheath and charge into the growth, shouting to your men to follow you.

As you do ten Wugas let loose with another blast of blowdarts. Flip the pages 10 more times. Lose 1 *man* for each 4 you flip, and take 2 *hit points* of damage for each 1 you flip.

Surprised by the suddenness and ferocity of your attack, the short, stubby Wugas take flight into the wood. Your men follow in hot pursuit.

You are about to engage in multiple combat with the sneaky but cowardly Wugas. This battle will be fought in consecutive rounds between your men and the Wugas.

Count the number of men you have and flip for each one. Your men kill Wugas with a flip of 3 or 4.

Next, count the surviving Wugas and flip for each one. Wugas kill your men with flips of 4 only.

Before each round of combat, Sagard *has the option* of individually fighting one Wuga per round. Each time Sagard defeats a Wuga, deduct 1 from their force. In individual combat, Wugas are Level 1 fighters with 8 hit points.

GROUP COMBAT

SAGARD'S MEN (1/0, 2/0, 3/Kill, 4/Kill)

~~[29] [28] [27] [26] [25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19]~~
~~[18] [17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6]~~
 [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

If *all* of your men are killed, you may attempt to flee. If you successfully flee, go to Section 60.

WUGAS (1/0, 2/0, 3/0, 4/Kill)

~~[10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]~~

INDIVIDUAL COMBAT

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
 [14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

[Reuse Wuga specs if necessary.]

WUGA WARRIOR (LEVEL 1: 1/0, 2/0, 3/1, 4/1)

[8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

WUGA WARRIOR (LEVEL 1: 1/0, 2/0, 3/1, 4/1)

[8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

If you defeat all the Wugas, note the number of men you have on your *status chart* and go to Section 64.

SECTION 66

Zombie Dust

With a mighty arc, you bring your sword down on the zombie, cleaving him in half. Instead of bleeding, he disintegrates before your eyes, leaving only a pile of dust.

As you stare down in horror you hear the sound of a sword being jerked from a scabbard behind you.

Spinning around, you are face to face with the Tehnite Prince. He strikes first.

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

TEHNITE PRINCE (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

[21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12] [11] [10]
[9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

If you defeat the Tehnite Prince, go to Section 61.
You may *not* flee.

SECTION 67

Running from the Wugas

As you flee down the steaming path you expect another blast of deadly arrows.

But none come.

You have crossed an invisible border and are out of Wuga country.

The night is spent uneasily as the morale of your men drops to a new low. Lose 1 *experience mark*. A night of restless sleep helps you regain 3 *hit points*.

Early the following morning you come upon another fork in the trail. Uruthu informs you that one path leads to the dark heart of the jungle (Section 52), while another leads to the Putuma River (Section 73) and yet a third leads a short distance to a Tehnite trading post where you might be able to pick up more men (Section 63).

SECTION 68

Destroying the Zombies

With a mighty arc, you cleave the second zombie in half. Like his partner, he does not bleed; rather, he tumbles to the ground like a dried husk of corn. Moments after they drop, a terrifying transformation takes place. Their bodies disintegrate, leaving only powder, which scatters, blown by the mountain winds, leaving nothing behind but their two spears and another strange object.

You pick up the odd object. It is a small carved doll. As you inspect it your blood curdles. It is a miniature likeness of you!

Jammed into its hands is a lock of hair. Looking closely at it, you realize that it is yours! Somehow, the zombies had crept up to you in your sleep and cut away a lock of hair. With a cold chill, you realize that they could have easily killed you but did not.

From this, you can only draw one conclusion. Somebody wants you alive.

You head back to camp and soon come to the man you had placed on sentry duty. He stands at the outer edge of the camp holding a spear.

Drawing close to him, you berate him. "You slackard, maintain a better watch; two men slipped past you."

The sentry does not respond. His glassy eyes stare off at nothing. He is dead on his feet. Remove *1 man* from your party.

Not wanting to lower the morale of your men, you bury the sentry. When asked, you will tell your men that he was killed by a camp intruder whom you chased off—a slightly colored version of the truth.

Go to Section 74.

SECTION 69

Ragnar Pass

Ignoring the Medigian traders' tales of Kodokii marauders, you lead your men south toward Ragnar Pass.

Your trek through the Kush Kavi Mountains takes you to great heights atop high, fog-shrouded mountains, and then plummets downward to incredible depths to lush, forgotten valleys.

As night falls you come within sight of the great pass which cuts between two mountains like a sword slash.

Feeling that it would be best to challenge the pass in daylight, you make camp on a high, defensible ledge.



During the night your dreams are beset with ghoulish images of sorcery and flame demons. Awakening with a start, you peer into the night.

Following instincts which have saved your life many times in the past, you slowly rise, grasping your sword.

A slight rustling tickles the air as a figure steps through the nearby scrub.

"Who goes there?" you shout.

Hot blood courses in your veins as you pursue the fleeing figure up a narrow mountain path.

The figure, though small and thin, is not agile. In fact, it is rather clumsy as it stumbles through the night.

As you close in on the figure it spins around.

Though you have seen many horrifying things in your time, you have never seen anything as ghastly as this undead horror. The figure is human, his face charred and his eyes deep, hollow sockets of death.

Raising a sharp spear, the hideous creature hisses at you in your own tongue, "Get away, Ratikkan!" Startled by the undead horror, you have a choice. You may either back off and let the terrible creature flee (keep reading), or you may attack it. If you want to attack it, read no further and go to Section 72.

You let the horror escape. As it shambles into the night you cannot help but think that it was spying on you! As the night passes, you cannot sleep. Lose 2 *hit points* for cowardice and go to Section 74.

SECTION 70

The Specked Sash

With typical Tehnite hospitality, the Tehnite guards ask you, "What do you want here?"

"We wish to trade gold for men and supplies," you respond.

"How much gold have you?" one of them brusquely asks.

"That depends on how many men and supplies you have."

"You are cagey like a Hitaxian, Ratikkan. We will do no trading with you."

However, as the guard speaks another Tehnite, dressed from head to foot in black snakeskin and wearing a cold silver diadem atop his head, steps to the door.

"At ease, guards," he says with a regal accent. "You have something that is worth much more than gold to me, Ratikkan: your sash. Won't you come with me? Your friends should not mind waiting." He gestures for you to join him in the palace.

As you step past the guards they abruptly cross their swords in front of you. "You may not enter with your sword."

"Without my sword I will not enter at all," you

respond, remembering past dealings with Tehnites where your sword has saved your life.

"Allow him to enter," the Tehnite leader says.

After entering the compound, you are led up a narrow stairway to an upper chamber, which, in the Tehnite fashion, is cold and barren save for iron chairs and a stained wooden table.

"Let me examine the sash," the Tehnite demands, his hands trembling with the thrill of a snakeskin so large. "I must make sure it is real."

You remove the sash and hand it to the Tehnite. "It is real. I killed the python in a Gigna village. The Gigna with me will testify to it."

The snake worshiper rubs his hand over the spotted skin and his eyes glass over. Then he calmly looks over your shoulder and says, "He is yours now."

Wheeling around, you spy two horrible creatures behind you. They wear tattered clothes and carry strange stick weapons. Their faces appear to be covered with a layer of dead skin, their hair is disheveled and their eyes are those of the dead. They are zombies!

As you jerk your sword from its sheath you notice that the living dead creatures do not seem intent on killing you. Rather, they seem to want to jab you with their sticks.

While the Tehnite strokes his new possession, you must fight them. In this battle you want to avoid being jabbed. You fight normally, but the zombies fight as follows: In each round of combat, flip for each zombie. If either of them flips a 4, flip again. If he flips a second 4, go to Section 87.

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

ZOMBIE #1

[9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

ZOMBIE #2

[9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

If you defeat the zombies, go to Section 66.
You may *not* flee.

SECTION 71

Waiting for the Monkey King

Both sides stand alert, their weapons drawn, anxiously waiting for the monkey king as he is carried up on his palanquin. In grotesque parody of a human king, the monkey wears a crown and elaborate garb of silk and zebra skin mostly taken off the bodies of luckless humans.

His palanquin, carried by several guards, stops not 20 feet from you and is gently lowered to the ground. For several long minutes he eyes you and your men. Then, he speaks in a language you have never heard before.

Uruthu turns to you in stunned amazement. "He is speaking flawless Momboddanese—my language. He asks what we are doing in this part of the jungle."

"Tell him we search for Sanda-Uul."

Uruthu repeats your message in Momboddanese, and a short discussion between Uruthu and the ape follows.

"What did he say?" you ask.

"I would rather not tell you," Uruthu responds.

"Tell me," you demand.

"He asked what a civilized person, a Momboddan, was doing with a pack of barbarians."

"What did you tell him?" you ask.

"I said you purchased me. . . . It is the truth. However, I also told him that you are my friend."

The great ape chuckles when you seem to take offense, and you cannot help but get the impression that he also knows northern languages but isn't letting on. Then he speaks again.

Uruthu translates: "He says that you should give him a gift, Sagard."

"Why?" you ask. "I owe him nothing, and his insults are hardly tokens of friendship."

The great ape king speaks again. "He says your punishment for not giving him a gift will be death," Uruthu tells you. "It's an old Momboddo custom."

"It sounds very civilized," you say sarcastically.

The ape grunts something else. Uruthu responds. "He says that your gift to him should be me."

"I will not turn you over to this ape."

"It would be the best thing to do," Uruthu responds.

The king eyes you, and you get the feeling he knows what your response will be, even though you do not know yourself.

If you are willing to turn Uruthu over, go to Section 81. If you are not, fight in Section 75. The monkeys attack first.

SECTION 72

The Undead Horror

Suspecting sorcery, you charge the zombie. As you draw near him he lets out a hissing sound. Another zombie jumps from the rocks. Both zombies carry strange spears which are covered with an evil, sticky substance.

In this battle you want to avoid being jabbed. You fight normally, but the zombies fight as follows. In each round of combat, flip for each zombie. If any of them flips a 4, flip again. If he flips a second 4, go to Section 87.

Once in combat these creatures will fight until they are slashed to pulp. Since they are already dead, they have no fear. You may *not* flee.

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

ZOMBIE #1

[7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

ZOMBIE #2

[7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

If you defeat the zombies, go to Section 68.



SECTION 73

Crossing the Putuma

After carefully surveying a path across the tropical river, you begin a slow crossing with your men. While hopping from stone to stone is easy for one who was raised in the northern forests, it is not nearly so easy for the others. With every step your men are conscious of the eyes of reptiles who watch them hungrily from the shore.

Reaching the other side, you watch helplessly as a clumsy Fexian in your party slips from a slime-covered rock into the water. With predatory instinct, several crocodiles dive from the shore and slither toward him, but the primitive monsters are too slow.

Before the Fexian can reach the surface again, the placid river erupts in a bubbling frenzy. Piranha! As you watch the frothing water, you can only imagine what takes place below as he is devoured (lose *1 man*).

As the rest of your men cross the bridge, flip for each man and lose *1 man* from your party for each 4 you flip. (Note the result on your *status sheet* and keep reading.)

On the other side of the river you lead your men into the primal, immortal jungle.

As you step through the jungle, you are disturbed by the feeling of being watched. Watched by hungry, malevolent eyes. Anything could be hiding behind any dense bush in this vast, steaming caldron of gloom. You are in the dark heart of the jungle.

Near nightfall, as the sun drops behind the dense horizon, you hear a soft buzzing to the east. As you walk farther northward, the buzzing grows louder and comes from every side.

First you see one, then another, and you are shocked by their size. These are great bees, each of which is nearly a foot long, with a stinger nearly the size of a dagger. For several minutes they circle around your men, and finally, in a vicious swarm, they dive on your party.

As they do you spot one which is larger than all the rest. It is the queen. As leaders have a tendency to recognize each other, the queen dives toward you. You are about to fight a horrendous battle with the creatures.

Tally the number of men you have before the battle begins.

The battle is fought in consecutive rounds.

1) Roll for the attack as 19 bees attack your men. Flip for each bee. The bees kill your men with a flip of 4. *Each successful kill by a bee also kills the bee itself.*

2) Your survivors counterattack. Flip for each surviving man in your party. Your men kill bees with flips of 3 or 4. Deduct the number of bees killed.

3) Then do one round of combat between you and the queen bee.

4) *All combat* ends when either you or the queen bee is dead. Group combat ends when either your men or the bees have wiped out each other.

5) If all of your men are killed, you may attempt to flee.

GROUP COMBAT

BEES (1/0, 2/0, 3/0, 4/Kill)

[19] [18] [17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

SAGARD'S MEN (1/0, 2/0, 3/Kill, 4/Kill)

[29] [28] [27] [26] [25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

INDIVIDUAL COMBAT

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/1, 3/2, 4/3)

[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

QUEEN BEE (LEVEL 5: 1/2, 2/3, 3/3, 4/4)

[13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

If you defeat the queen bee and some of your men survive, go to Section 76.

If none of your men survive, and you alone are victorious, go to Section 84.

If you flee, go to Section 96.

SECTION 74

The Ragnar Pass

The sun shines brightly as you lead your men through Ragnar Pass. Expecting ambush every step of the way, you are pleasantly surprised to see that no such incident takes place. Instead, it is a rela-

tively pleasant stroll which takes you through the mountains and to the fringes of the southern jungle.

After two hours' walk from the pass, you come upon the Putuma River. It is a small, dirty, brown stream which teems with reptiles.

Walking across its banks, you look for a place to cross, but there is not a good one. Finally, however, you come upon a place where there once was a stone bridge that has long since been washed away.

"My ancestors built that bridge centuries ago, when the world was less wild," Uruthu informs you. You consider attempting the crossing, knowing that with one misstep your men could be devoured by crocodiles.

If you want to cross at the washed-out bridge, go to Section 73, knowing that you might lose some men. If not, continue reading.

Leading southward from the bridge is an overgrown stone road.

"The trail used to lead south to my kingdom from Sanda-Uul. The jungle is not hungry enough down here to cover it, but as we go south it will undoubtedly vanish."

If you want to take the trail, go to Section 79.

SECTION 75

Fighting the Monkeys

The battle is fought in consecutive rounds between your men and 24 monkeys.

Count the number of attackers and flip for each one. You men kill monkeys with a flip of 3 or 4. The monkeys, with trained precision, and despite their size, also kill your men with flips of 3 or 4.

Next, flip for each surviving defender.

Before each round of combat, Sagard *has the option* of individually fighting as many monkeys as he wants to per round. Each time Sagard defeats a monkey, deduct 1 from their force. In individual combat, monkeys are Level 3 fighters with 4 hit points.

GROUP COMBAT

SAGARD'S SLAVES (1/0, 2/0, 3/Kill, 4/Kill)

~~[24]~~ ~~[23]~~ ~~[22]~~ [26] [25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19]
[18] [17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6]
[5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

MONKEYS (1/0, 2/0, 3/Kill, 4/Kill)

[24] [23] ~~[22]~~ ~~[21]~~ [20] [19] [18] ~~[17]~~ ~~[16]~~ ~~[15]~~ ~~[14]~~ ~~[13]~~
[12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

INDIVIDUAL COMBAT

SAGARD (LEVEL 3: 1/1, 2/1, 3/2, 4/3)

~~[25]~~ ~~[24]~~ [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]
(Begin the book again.)

[Reuse monkey specs if necessary.]

MONKEY (LEVEL 3: 1/1, 2/1, 3/2, 4/3)

~~[4]~~ ~~[3]~~ ~~[2]~~ [1]

MONKEY (LEVEL 3: 1/1, 2/1, 3/2, 4/3)

[4] [3] [2] [1]

MONKEY (LEVEL 3: 1/1, 2/1, 3/2, 4/3)

[4] [3] [2] [1]

MONKEY (LEVEL 3: 1/1, 2/1, 3/2, 4/3)

[4] [3] [2] [1]

If you defeat all of the monkeys and your men still survive, go to Section 77.

If *all* of your men are beaten, but you still survive, go to Section 84.

You may attempt to flee. If you successfully flee, go to Section 96.

SECTION 76

Death to the Queen

With a deft swipe of your blade, you cleave the queen bee in two. As she tumbles to the ground you spin around to fight the other bees who buzz around you and your men in a swirling torrent. However, they do not attack. Two drones drop to the ground, pick up the severed halves of their queen and fly away. Gain 2 *experience marks*.

In moments the jungle erupts with an unnerving buzz. Bees swarm up from the west and circle about in a frenzied cyclone.

"It is called the dance of death," Uruthu informs you. "Upon the death of their queen, they will leave their hive. Then their princesses battle for queenship."

As quickly as they had risen from nowhere they vanish to the east, and the jungle is again silent.

"Follow me to the hive," Uruthu says. "Their honey will heal our wounds."

Not far into the jungle you come upon the 50-foot-tall remnants of the beehive. Approaching it warily, you discover that it is abandoned, and drink heartily of the honey inside. Regain *all hit points*. You fill an urn with *honey*. You may drink this honey at any time to return yourself to *full hit points*.

As night falls you trek deep into the jungle and pass the night without incident. At dawn you set out for the black heart of the jungle and in the morning pass through two enormous moss-covered mesas known as the Gates of Death. Go to Section 88.

SECTION 77

Defeating the Monkeys

The last monkey falls, and the great ape king flees into his palace. Gain 3 *experience marks*.

As your remaining men re-form their ranks you hear a loud horn sound from the stockade, and the doors open yet again, letting out a swarm of armed monkeys.

Knowing that flight is your only hope for survival, you and your men flee back up the ancient road. As you run through the woods you turn and see the monkeys swinging through the trees above you on long ropes, for ropes to them are what roads are to men.

You must cross the Putuma River before your enemies can catch you.

While running from stone to stone is easy for one who was raised in the northern forests, it is not nearly so easy for the others. The monkeys fling spears at your men, who step as quickly as they can,

keeping careful watch on the reptiles who eye them hungrily from the shore.

Reaching the other side, you watch helplessly as a clumsy Fexian in your party slips from a slime-covered rock into the water. With predatory instinct, several crocodiles dive from the shore and slither toward him, but the primitive monsters are too slow to feed on the Fexian.

Before the Fexian can reach the surface again, the placid river erupts in a bubbling frenzy. *Pi-ranha!* As you watch the frothing water, you can only imagine what takes place below as he is devoured.

As the rest of your men cross the bridge, flip the pages 10 times and subtract 1 man from your party for each 3 or 4 you flip. (Note the results on your *status chart*.) If you have no men left after the flips, go to Section 84. If you have survivors, lead your men into the primal, immortal jungle, knowing that the monkeys will not follow.

Go to Section 52.

SECTION 78

Crawling Hands

The second Mojo zombie tumbles to the ground. Gain 4 *experience marks*. As you sheathe your sword you are shocked to see something moving on the ground. At first you think it is a lizard, but, peering closer, you see that it is a disembodied hand, which, even though the body that held it is destroyed, still crawls toward you.

Repulsed at the stench of sorcery which emanates from the hand, you flee into the wood. As the night grows late you climb a tree and fall asleep. Regain 10 *hit points*.

Your sleep is filled with nightmares of the severed hand slowly crawling across the jungle after you, and as it reaches your neck you awaken in a cold sweat.

Something really is on your chest! Looking down, you see the severed hand slowly crawling to your neck. Instinctively you throw it off, but, undaunted, it crawls after you.

Go to Section 86.

SECTION 79

Trail to North Zimba

You head into the jungle on the overgrown Momboddan road. The ancient stone road leads deeper and deeper into the jungle. As you walk you are beset by the disturbing feeling that you are being watched from above.

Looking up, you are struck by the magnificence of the jungle as the light flowing through the bent trees gives the jungle the look of a distorted cathedral.

You are in the dark heart of the jungle.

Walking farther you become conscious of loud chattering which seems to cut through the clicking of cicadas and baffling birdcalls. The sound is not human, but then again, it is not quite that of an ape.

Not much farther on, you spy a wood stockade, built at about half human scale at the top of a round hill. Sneaking closer, you see that monkeys, wearing zebra-hide armor and carrying short spears, man the wooden parapets.

Turning to your men, you silently call for an



explanation, but none of them, not even Uruthu, has one.

Suddenly the trees above you crackle with activity. You look up, just in time to see two dozen ropes dangling, with agile, armed monkeys swinging down the ropes toward you. Your men fall into a tight circle, their weapons drawn. The monkeys, ordered about by grunting "officers" who are slightly larger than they, surround you with a trained, military precision you had thought only possible of men.

For several minutes both sides silently eye each other. The monkeys neither attack nor retreat. They wait. But for what?

In the distance you hear the crashing of cymbals as a huge gorilla, twice the size of any other monkey, is carried out of the gate of their stockade on an ornately carved palanquin.

As the tension grows you have a choice. You may either attack or wait to see what the "monkey king" has in mind.

If you attack, go to Section 75; your men attack first.

If you want to see what they have in mind, go to Section 71.

SECTION 80

Rude Tehnites

With typical Tehnite hospitality, the guards ask you, "What do you want here?"

"We wish to trade gold for men and supplies," you respond.

"Gold means nothing to us. We trade for snakes."

For several minutes you attempt to bargain with them, but to no avail. Continuing on your journey, you travel a few miles before coming to a fork in the path.

Not knowing which direction to take, and as night is falling, you pitch camp there. Night comes and a crescent moon dimly lights the sky. You place a sentry on watch and lie down for some sleep.

Sleep is not to come. After a fitful hour of lying on the ground, you hear a sharp groan and a tormented cry. Jumping from the ground, you see your sentry desperately holding his throat as two zombies stand next to him. Lose *1 man*.

Hoping to surprise the zombies, you silently creep toward them. As you near them they flee into the thick underbrush.

Wanting to capture one of them, you steal si-

lently through the brush, where nocturnal creatures stalk their prey. You notice a pronounced absence of wildlife, as if all animals, sensing the unnatural horror that is near, have fled.

Surveying the wood, you conclude that the monsters have gotten away. Suddenly you hear the rustling of leaves behind you and see two zombies coming toward you.

Holding back your revulsion, you charge them. Both zombies carry strange spears, which are coated with an evil, sticky substance. While you fight you want to avoid being jabbed. You fight normally, but the zombies fight as follows. In each round of combat, flip for each zombie. If either of them flips a 4, flip again. If they flip a second 4, go to Section 87. You may *not* flee.

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

ZOMBIE #1

~~[7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]~~

ZOMBIE #2

[7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

If you defeat the zombies, go to Section 83.

SECTION 81

Turning Over Uruthu

As Uruthu does not object to living with the apes, you turn her over. The ape king nods and speaks for a long time to Uruthu and then throws a strange-looking article to her. When he is done speaking, Uruthu turns to you.

“He said many things, but the essence of them is this. He says men should not purchase other men. He also says you are wise for a barbarian, and for your wisdom, and because he finds you amusing, he will reward you with a whistle. This whistle shall provide you protection in the jungle.” You may blow it once if you get into trouble in the jungle, and 10 of his men (for the monkeys call themselves that) will come to help you. Therefore, if you blow the whistle in a multiple combat situation while in the jungle, you must wait two combat rounds and reinforcements will arrive. These reinforcements will fight for you in only one battle, and will then leave. In mass combat each monkey kills on a flip of 3 or 4. The whistle only works once. (Note the *whistle* on your *status chart*.)

The great ape then mutters again, and Uruthu’s

eyes light up. “He says that the place for which you search is close by, northward, but to beware of sorcery.”

With that, the great king flicks his hand as if to dismiss you. Shaking hands with Uruthu, you vow that sometime you will meet again. Then Uruthu, joining the king on his palanquin, files back to the miniature compound and your men step onward on the northern trail, knowing that Sanda-Uul is not far off.

It is late afternoon when you reach the Putuma River, and this time you are forced to cross it.

After carefully surveying a path across the tropical river, you begin a slow crossing with your men. While hopping from stone to stone is easy for one who was raised in the northern forests, it is not nearly so easy for the others. With every step, your men are conscious of the eyes of reptiles who watch them hungrily from the shore.

After reaching the other side with a couple of others, you watch helplessly as a clumsy Fexian in your party slips from a slime-covered rock into the water. With predatory instinct, several crocodiles dive from the shore and slither toward him, but the primitive monsters are too slow to feed on the Fexian.

Before the Fexian can reach the surface again, the placid river erupts in a bubbling frenzy. Piranha are at work! As you watch the frothing water, you can only imagine what takes place below.

As the rest of your men cross the bridge, flip the pages 10 times and subtract *1 man* from your party for each 4 you flip. (Note the new number of *men* in your party on your *status chart*.)

On the other side of the river, you lead your men into the primal, immortal jungle. Go to Section 73.

SECTION 82

Waiting for the Attack

Slowly the Ushad-I's men rise from the ground. As their stiff zombie corpses struggle to regain dexterity, the Ushad-I turns his attention to the ground and begins a whole new set of incantations, and an unholy fire shaped like a demon begins to grow.

Knowing that this moment is your last chance to attack, you charge from the wood, your sword held high. As you charge, the demon spies you.

"Destroy him," the demon hisses, his tongue letting out a curling lash of flame.

In this battle you will be fighting both a sorcerer and a demon! However, the demon has not been fully summoned, and therefore will not be accurate with his blows. Therefore, each time you flip for the demon, flip to see whom he will strike. If you flip a 1, he will strike the Ushad-I. If you flip a 2 or 3, he will strike you. And if you flip a 4, he will miss both of you.

The demon, as he is not fully summoned, is a Level 5 fighter (1/2, 2/3, 3/3, 4/4). He strikes first. Then you get two free swings at the entranced sorcerer before the sorcerer responds.

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

THE USHAD-I (LEVEL 6: 1/3, 2/3, 3/4, 4/5)

[22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12] [11]
[10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

If you defeat your opponent, go to Section 89.

You may *not* flee.

SECTION 83

Defeating the Zombies

Two piles of powder lie on the ground where the zombies stood. Gain 2 *experience marks*. So quick was their death that you barely saw it. A cold chill runs through your spine.

"Agents of the Ushad-I," a voice behind you says. It is Uruthu!

She sifts her hand through the powder and comes out with one of the spears. "It is tipped with dahlia oil. They were not here to kill; they were here to capture. It is not safe, Sagard."

"The Tehnites set them on our path," you mutter.

"Perhaps, but all peoples in this jungle must drive some bargain with the Ushad-I." Suddenly Uruthu sees something behind you and gasps.

Turning your head quickly, you spy a pair of glowing crimson eyes in the woods. A low voice, breathy with the fires of the underworld, mutters: "I shall have your heart, Ratikkan."

Stepping backward, you and Uruthu return to camp, but sleep will be impossible.

When the sun rises you mention nothing of this incident to your men. There are enough horrors in the jungle without adding dark sorcery to them.

The paths are two different routes to the same place; both lead to the heart of the jungle, where Sanda-Uul and the Ushad-I are rumored to be. One is due south toward Mount Dolog (Section 73); the other runs deep into the immortal jungle (Section 79).

SECTION 84

Alone in the Jungle

A grim silence pervades the dark heart of the jungle. No paths ease your journey through the somber, primal gloom as you hack your way through the thick vines and buzzing insects. (Regain 5 *hit points*.)

Though it is day, the thick foliage above you obscures nearly all light, save for the occasional shafts of brilliance which strike the ground like golden daggers.

Trudging through the trackless wood, you lose all sense of direction, for there is nothing to guide your way.

At nightfall a distant throbbing begins. You feverishly try to identify the sound. Distant cicadas? An audio mirage? You don't know, but, fixing on the origin of the sound, you set off.

Stopping at a small clearing, you peer up to the sky. A full moon beams down on you, haunting your surroundings with a ghostly glow. Not far away you

see a yellow flash like the glow of fireflies and step toward it. As you do you catch the sound of raspy breathing and stop dead in your tracks, silently drawing your sword.

Slowly a shambling figure emerges from the gloom. Your blood turns to ice. It is a *Mojo zombie*. From behind you, you hear a similar sound; spinning around, you see still another.

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]
(Go to Section 87.)

MOJO ZOMBIES (LEVEL 3: 1/1, 2/1, 3/2, 4/3)

ZOMBIE #1 [15] [14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7]
[6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

ZOMBIE #2 [15] [14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7]
[6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

If you defeat your opponents, go to Section 78.

If you flee, go to Section 86.

SECTION 85

Attacking Ushad-I

The sorcerer, lost in his ritual chanting, does not react as you charge at him from the thick wood.

Your battle with the sorcerer will be desperate, but as you have surprised him completely, you have two free attacks!

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

THE USHAD-I (LEVEL 6: 1/3, 2/3, 3/4, 4/5)

[22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12] [11]
[10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

If you defeat your opponent, go to Section 89.

You may *not* flee.

SECTION 86

Rite of the Dead

Ice creeps up your spine as you flee through the deathly wood (regain 7 *hit points*). Searching for anything that might resemble life, you race toward the throbbing drums. In time you reach a clearing from which you spy distant torchlight and hear a dominating voice crackling orders in a hideous, demonic tongue.

Creeping closer, you see Ushad-I for the first time. Firelight flickers off his body, which is a hideous mix of different traits. The head of a Vanian, the feet of a Gyptic, the eyes of a Vulzar, the hands of a woman and the torso of a heavily muscled Tehnite.

As he raises his arms the dirt below him ripples, and gnarled hands struggle to dig themselves from their own graves. You have caught him at the beginning of one of his demonic rites. He must be destroyed. You may either attack him now (go to Section 85) or you may wait (Section 82).

SECTION 87

Breath of the Fire Demon

Images swirl around your head to the throbbing beat of voodoo drums. Opening your eyes, you discover that you are tied to a stake (minus your *sword* and any *armor*). Strangely, all your wounds are healed. (Regain *all hit points*.)

In the unholy flickering torchlight, you see the Ushad-I for the first time and recoil in revulsion at the sight of a head of a Vanian, the feet of a Gyptic, the eyes of a Vulzar, the hands of a woman and the torso of a heavily muscled Tehnite.

As he raises his arms the field before him ripples, and gnarled hands struggle to dig themselves from their own graves.

Desperately you tug at your bonds, but only succeed in attracting the attention of two zombies, who turn to you with glowing yellow eyes and gray

fleshless mouths that seem to be fixed in permanent sardonic grins.

In moments the fire demon rises to his full height and speaks with the sorcerer in the language of the underworld. The sorcerer then turns and spits out an order to the two zombies. The zombies cut your bonds and lead you toward the flame.

In a desperate measure, you throw the two zombies aside and charge the sorcerer.

This will be the most desperate battle you have ever fought, for you must depend on good fortune. Together, Ushad-I and the demon can easily destroy you. However, the demon, in his fit of rage, may not be accurate with his blows and will hesitate to strike if you are too close to the Ushad-I.

Turn the page to see how this battle works.

1) At the beginning of every combat round, flip to see if the demon fights. He fights only on flips of 4. If he fights, flip the pages to see whom he will strike. If you flip a 1, he will strike the sorcerer. If you flip a 2 or 3, he will strike you. And if you flip a 4, he will hit both of you. Then flip to see how much damage he does.

2) As you have no weapon, you fight one level lower than your present level (the stats for level 3 are included). If you have any special nonweapon items from this or other books, you may need them in this fight.

THE DEMON (1/5, 2/6, 3/6, 4/7)

Fights on a 4. You cannot fight him during this battle.

SAGARD (LEVEL 3: 1/1, 2/1, 3/2, 4/3)

[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

THE USHAD-I (LEVEL 6: 1/3, 2/3, 3/4, 4/5)

[22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12] [11]
[10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

If you defeat Ushad-I, go to Section 89.

You may *not* flee.

SECTION 88

The Immortal Jungle

As you march you notice a thinning of the jungle as the undergrowth gives way to a whitish soil and the foliage becomes taller and more bizarre. Finally you reach a blinding white plain covered with enormous flowers with tall stalks and great heads.

"We have reached the salt marsh," one of your men says.

Kneeling down, you realize that the soil is, in fact, salt.

Suddenly you hear a sharp cry from one of your men and look up to see him carried skyward in the jagged mouth of one of the plants. Lose *1 man* from your party.

Looking up, you are stunned to see another plant, jaws open, diving toward you. "Get out of here, men!" you shout, dodging away from the plant.

Flip five times and lose one man for each 2, 3, or 4 that you flip. If you have no men left, go to Section 96.

Regrouping your men in a clearing far from the man-eating plants, you find another path. Go to Section 91.



SECTION 89

Defeating the Ushad-I

Death swarming about you, you grab Ushad-I's dagger and stab him. He lets out a scream which rings out through the jungle, then dies. A terrible glow surrounds his body, and you step back in horror. Smoke pours from his eyes, nose and ears. He burns from the inside. Finally, when the evil within him is consumed, the outer shell of his body bursts into flame, like parchment, and he is gone.

His master destroyed, the smoke demon silently shrinks to a small candle flame and finally extinguishes. Gain 4 *experience marks*.

You now hold Ushad-I's *magic dagger*. It will do 6 points of damage in the first combat round you use it, 5 points the next time, then 4 . . . 3 . . . 2 . . . 1 . . . and finally it is useless. You may also use it once on any opponent Level 4 or lower and destroy him, but if you use it this way, the weapon is finished forever.

Then you are struck by a horrifying realization. Uruthu is gone!

Sifting through the Ushad-I's ashes, you find *the pendant* he wore about his neck and pick it up. It is still warm to the touch as you put it about your own

neck. Seeing the pendant, the zombies drop to their knees.

"Lead me into Sanda-Uul," you command the amassed throng.

Slowly the zombies rise and silently walk into the night, and you follow them.

When you reach the haunted city, a most startling event occurs: Misty warriors stand high on the parapets. They begin to descend as if upon an invisible staircase, merging their disembodied spirits with the zombies' dispirited bodies and creating whole people.

Though you place no faith in southern magic, you cannot help but be dazzled by the transformation as the spirits inhabit bodies. Intelligence and spirit fill the zombies' eyes, and shortly they step as one to the Great Gate of the city and throw open the door. Thus you enter the lost city of Sanda-Uul.

The inner city is an extraordinary monument. Awe fills your bones as you stand before the immense statue of an ancient king.

Stepping down the straight marble streets, you move confidently, unafraid of things long dead. The great slabs of bone-hued stones which pave the empty streets are covered with creepers and small plants, but here and there the attacking vegetation has failed to engulf the street.

Progress through the deserted, dead metropolis is quite easy, though a shiver creeps from spine to

neck as you observe empty doorways and windows which gape darkly like the magnified mouths and eyeholes of moss-grown skulls.

Near the center of the city stands a great pyramid of amazing size and design. Instead of granite cubes, the fragile-looking structure appears to have been built entirely of intricately carved figurines sculpted from solid rock.

The base is supported by elephants, and on their shoulders stand lions, upon which stand monkeys, and so on with lizards and birds—and finally, at the apex, there stands the statue of a man.

Though probably the work of a twisted megalomaniac, Sanda-Uul fills you with awe. By design, it appears Gundanese or Chardanese. But how or why would those people have crossed half the world to build it?

Slowly the sun begins to rise over the great city, and the ghost-zombie people have begun cutting away the overgrowth. Watching them, you name them Ghozombies.

As the sky grows bright you climb the great pyramid and survey the amazing network of streets, temples, homes and other, smaller buildings whose function you can only guess. One day this was a great civilization. One day it shall be again. Your name shall go down in its history as its new first king after millennia of deathly slumber. Go to Section 22.

SECTION 90

Flaming Death

The fire demon erupts into your chamber through the terrace. You are about to fight the toughest opponent of your entire life, with the aid of only one ally, as your kingdom goes up in smoke around you. You and Uruthu strike first, then the demon attacks, the first turn at Uruthu, the second at you, thereby dividing his attacks evenly between you and Uruthu. If Uruthu is incapacitated, the demon will attack you every time.

If at any time you wish to stop fighting the fire demon and try to shatter the magic pendant, go to Section 92.

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

~~[25]~~ ~~[24]~~ ~~[23]~~ ~~[22]~~ ~~[21]~~ ~~[20]~~ ~~[19]~~ [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]
(You have perished in the flames. Begin the book again, if you have the stamina.)

URUTHU (LEVEL 3: 1/1, 2/1, 3/2, 4/3)

[18] [17] [16] [15] ~~[14]~~ ~~[13]~~ ~~[12]~~ [11] [10] [9] [8] ~~[7]~~ ~~[6]~~
~~[5]~~ ~~[4]~~ ~~[3]~~ ~~[2]~~ ~~[1]~~ (Uruthu is unconscious. You must defeat the demon or Uruthu will perish.)

THE FIRE DEMON (1/5, 2/6, 3/6, 4/7)

~~[41]~~ ~~[40]~~ ~~[39]~~ ~~[38]~~ ~~[37]~~ ~~[36]~~ [35] ~~[34]~~ ~~[33]~~ ~~[32]~~ ~~[31]~~
~~[30]~~ ~~[29]~~ [28] [27] [26] [25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20]
~~[19]~~ [18] [17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8]
[7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1] (The demon is banished. Go to Section 94.)

You may *not* flee the fire demon.

SECTION 91

The Search for Sanda-Uul

For a day and a night you trek through the thick jungle. The closer to the dark heart you come, the more silent it is.

On the second night, when the stars shine with cold brightness, you climb a tall hill to survey the jungle before you.

At first you think you are seeing fantastic rock formations, mesas and buttes twisted into towering chimerical shapes by elemental forces, then carved into further shapes like phantasmagoric art by wind and rain.

But as your eyes adjust and become more discerning, you realize that it is indeed a city! What you first thought to be rocks slowly emerge as colossal towers overgrown with vines, mighty zigurats with trees growing on their tops, huge temples looped with vines and lianas, and other, smaller buildings overgrown with prolific plant life.

Foliage conceals everything, even the towering minarets, whose octagonal sides slope upward to weirdly distorted domes a hundred and more feet above you.

As you look down with your new perspective, you mentally try to map the great city. It is clear that all

is still surrounded by a great wall, which is overgrown and cracked in places, though much of it can still be seen beneath its garment of vivid vegetation.

Awe fills your soul as you wonder who, or what, constructed this grand place. What fate befell them? You cannot guess, and may never know, for the shrouded silence of death surrounds the city just as the great vines struggle to conceal it.

Your men stare silently at the sight, each one lost in his own speculations.

A hideous scream slashes through the air. Wheeling around and drawing your sword, you see that an army of zombies has crept silently and stealthily around your men.

It is not the zombies who turn your heart to fire, however, but another, different figure who fills you with terror.

In the cold moonlight you spy Ushad-I. He is a hideous mix of different traits: the head of a Vanian, the feet of a Gyptic, the glowing red eyes of a Vulzar, the hands of a woman and the torso of a heavily muscled Tehnite.

Seeing you, he chants an incantation in a language spoken only in the deepest pits of the underworld. Slowly a demon-shaped flame grows before you.

You are about to engage in the most important

battle of your life. The battle is fought in consecutive rounds between your men and the zombies, and then between you and Ushad-I. You hope to destroy the demon by killing his host in this world.

1) Your men attack. Count the number of your men and flip for each one. They kill zombies with flips of 3 or 4.

2) Zombies kill your men with flips of 4. If either your men or the zombies are wiped out, finish the individual battle with Ushad-I.

3) You fight Ushad-I and his growing fire demon (see rules below).

4) Repeat process.

GROUP COMBAT

SAGARD'S MEN (1/0, 2/0, 3/Kill, 4/Kill)

~~[29] [28] [27] [26] [25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]~~

THE ZOMBIES (1/0, 2/0, 3/0, 4/Kill)

~~[45] [44] [43] [42] [41] [40] [39] [38] [37] [36] [35] [34] [33] [32] [31] [30] [29] [28] [27] [26] [25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]~~

INDIVIDUAL COMBAT

As you fight Ushad-I the fire demon grows and rages. As he is not fully summoned, his fighting will be erratic. At the beginning of each turn you must flip to see if the fire demon will fight. He will only fight when you flip a 4. If you flip a 4, flip again. If you flip a 1, he hits the Ushad-I; if you flip a 2 or 3, he hits you; and if you flip a 4, he hits both of you (both of you get full damage).

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/1, 3/2, 4/3)

~~[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]~~

THE USHAD-I (LEVEL 6: 1/3, 2/3, 3/4, 4/5)

~~[22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]~~

If you defeat the Ushad-I, go to Section 89.

You may *not* flee.

SECTION 92

Fighting to Shatter the Ruby Pendant

As the fire demon bursts into your chamber you and Uruthu realize there is no escape. Either you or the fire demon soon shall see your last in this earthly realm. While you try to shatter the pendant, the demon attacks you.

The demon strikes first, in this order: The first round he attacks Uruthu, the next round he attacks you. Then both you and Uruthu attempt to shatter the pendant. This continues until you or the demon is finished. If at any time you wish to fight the demon normally, go to Section 90.

SAGARD (Flip the pages; a flip of a 4 followed by a flip of a 3 or 4 shatters the pendant and defeats the demon. Go to Section 94.)

[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]
[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]
(You have perished in the flames. Begin the book again, if you have the stamina.)

URUTHU (Flip the pages; a flip of a 4 followed by another 4 shatters the pendant and defeats the demon. Go to Section 94.)

[18] [17] [16] [15] [14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6]
[5] [4] [3] [2] [1] (Uruthu is unconscious. You must defeat the demon or Uruthu will die.)

THE FIRE DEMON (1/5, 2/6, 3/6, 4/7)

You may *not* flee the fire demon.

SECTION 93

Flight Through the Streets

A sword whips past your head and you know that shortly you are about to die. Throwing pride to the winds, you turn and flee. Coarse laughter follows you through the night air, but, nevertheless, you are alive.

Reaching one of the poorer quarters of the city, you find yourself out of breath and stop, panting.

"Think we ought to roll him, mate?" a voice asks, and you wheel around to see four street thugs carrying metal shafts stepping boldly toward you.

"Naw, he don't have nothin' worth takin'," another responds.

The first one eyes you coldly. "We don't like vagrants around here, but we feel sorry for you," he says as another lobs a handful of mud at you. "You got ten seconds to get out of my sight, Northman . . ."

Under normal circumstances you'd give these guys a serious pasting, but in your present condition you opt to put the poor quarter behind you and race into the night.

Ridiculed for the second time in a single evening, go to Section 21.

SECTION 94

The Curse of Ushad-I

As the sweat and blood course down your body, you tend to the wounds of both yourself and Uruthu. Gain 8 *experience marks*.

"Sagard, I fear you were not cut out to be a king. . . ." Uruthu says.

You let out half a smile acknowledging the truth, and Uruthu continues, her beautiful eyes flashing in the moonlight.

"Will you journey south with me?" she goes on. "A crown awaits me in the Momboddo Empire; I am a princess, soon to become queen."

"Queen? And who is your king?"

"I have none; my empire is a matriarchy . . . women rule. That is why we live in peace. . . ."

"Peace," you mutter. "Bah! Nevertheless, I will accompany you gladly, my friend," you reply, "as long as the crown is bound for your head and not mine—a pox on the life of a monarch! But if that is the curse you desire . . ."

With that you grab your belongings, including the crown jewels of Sanda-Uul (add 5,750 *gold pieces* to your *status chart*), and you and Uruthu jaunt off to the south to claim a new empire.

SECTION 95

Gold to the Scimiteers

"Take two hundred of mine and return to your homes alive!" you shout, scattering gold pieces about the shop.

One of the Scimiteers lowers his sword and kneels.

"Stop, Obduul! Do not fall for the Ratikkan's tawdry tricks. The Sultoon will have our heads if he escapes. We split his gold evenly."

Losing the *200 gold pieces*, you must make a decision. You may surrender to the Scimiteers, knowing that a bad fate might await you in the palace of the Sultoon (Section 2); or you may fight the four Scimiteers (Section 24) knowing that you have but scant odds of defeating them.

SECTION 96

Flight from the Frenzy

A sharp jab creases your forehead, and a red curtain falls before your eyes. Horrified, a primal frenzy takes you over and you dash into the wood, expecting death to strike you from behind at any moment.

Yet time passes and you live.

Running in an unknown direction for an equally unknown amount of time, you finally stop in your tracks. Nothing follows you. You cannot even hear the moans of the dead or dying; in fact, it is strangely silent in the jungle.

Very strangely silent.

Trekking alone in the unnatural gloom, gaining *2 experience marks*, head to Section 84.

SECTION 97

Fighting Rules

Instructions always make things seem more complicated than they really are. If you have made it this far in the book, the fighting rules should be a snap. Basically, they are common sense. When in doubt about anything, consider what would really happen.

BEFORE PLAYING

All you really need to play this game are this book and a pencil. Some players find that a four-sided die will make fighting quicker, but the random numbers on the pages will generate the combat results perfectly well.

If you have gotten to this page, you know the basics of moving from one section to another. Now all that is left to learn is how to *fight* and how to use the *status chart*.

FIGHTING

In a number of places in this book, you will encounter enemies and choose to, *or have to*, fight

them. There can only be three possible outcomes to a fight: You can *win*, *lose* or *flee*.

Winning a fight: You win a fight when you have reduced an enemy's hit points to zero. Or, in situations when you are fighting more than one enemy, you win when you have reduced all of the enemies' hit points to zero.

Losing a fight: You lose a fight when your number of available hit points falls to zero.

Fleeing a fight: When you feel that you might lose a particular fight, or that the fight isn't worth having, you may *try* to flee. Fleeing is a 50-50 proposition. If you flip the pages and get an even number, you have successfully fled.

You may attempt to flee only before your combat turn, and only once per round.

When you have successfully fled, look in the "flee" section of the combat page, and it will direct you to another page.

Be warned: Some adversaries are impossible to flee from. They are specially marked. If you fail to flee, continue the combat normally.

HOW COMBAT WORKS

Combat takes place in rounds and is resolved by generating random numbers from 1 to 4. The tool for doing this is included in the book. Note that

there is a number from 1 to 4 printed on the upper corner of each right-hand page. If you look away and flip randomly through the book, stopping before you get to the end, you have a random number.

To have combat, Sagard and his opponent (or opponents) take turns. Unless otherwise stated, Sagard *strikes first*. After he strikes, the opponent strikes. That completes one round of combat. Combat can go into several rounds and must end when Sagard wins, loses or flees. When this happens, follow the instructions on that page. These will direct you to your next adventure.

Every battle you fight will be different. The difficulty of each battle will be determined by how many hit points your opponent has and what his fighting level is.

Hit points are the number of points of damage a player may take before he is out of the combat. As Sagard, you are given 25 hit points in the beginning of the game. (This number will change in the course of the game, though in this book Sagard may not exceed 25 hit points.) That means you will have to take 25 points of damage before you are out of the game.

A typical battle sheet looks like this:

SAGARD (LEVEL 4: 1/1, 2/2, 3/3, 4/3)

[25] [24] [23] [22] [21] [20] [19] [18] [17] [16] [15]

[14] [13] [12] [11] [10] [9] [8] [7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

(You may fight no more. Hobble to Section X.)

Each time you score a hit or hits on an opponent, cross out the total number of boxes worth of damage you do on his chart, like so:

ORC (LEVEL 1: 1/0, 2/0, 3/1, 4/1)

[7] [6] [5] [4] [3] [2] [1]

(You have successfully defeated the Orc. Go to Section X.)

Combat levels: As illustrated above, different characters have different combat levels. Sagard begins as a Level 4 fighter. Combat levels go from 0 to 6. The higher the combat level, the more dangerous the opponent is. The important fighting information is included in every melee so that you don't

FIGHTING LEVEL TABLE

Flip/Die Roll

	1	2	3	4
Level 0	0	0	0	1
Level 1	0	0	1	1
Level 2	0	1	1	2
Level 3	1	1	2	3
Level 4	1	2	3	3
Level 5	2	3	3	4

need to refer to this chart except when you increase a level.

These numbers refer to hit points, or damage points. For instance, if Sagard, a Level 4 fighter, gets a 4, he does three hit points of damage to his opponent and crosses them off the enemy's chart. Likewise, if a Level 5 fighter gets a 1, he does 2 points of damage. Just to test yourself, what happens if a Level 3 fighter gets a 2?

If you said 1 point of damage, you are correct.

Therefore, the dangerousness of an opponent can be determined by looking at both his fighting level and the number of hit points he has.

Remember, there can only be three possible outcomes to any fight: win, lose or flee. If your number drops to 0, read the section after the hit points and follow those instructions. Hit points are perma-

nent, but Sagard will frequently rest or eat and regain points. Regained points will be clearly stated in the book.

Bear in mind that the number of Sagard's hit points will go up and down in the course of the game. Sagard carries damage from battle to battle. After each battle, mark Sagard's available hit points on Sagard's *status chart* (explanation below). Do likewise when Sagard regains hit points.

BONUSES

Along the way you will pick up bonuses for your journey. These come in three forms: *experience marks*, *weapons and armor*, and *special items*. Each of these bonuses is valuable to you in a different way.

Experience marks are permanent. Sagard will take them with him from book to book. The purpose of *experience marks* is to determine Sagard's combat level. At the beginning of this book, Sagard is combat level 4. However, once he receives 150 *experience marks*, he *immediately* moves up to Combat Level 5.

Weapons and armor are valuable for combat and will give Sagard an edge when fighting. The value of these weapons will be explained when the weapon is awarded.

Special items serve their own purposes. Some special items, such as shields, can be used to absorb hit points; others, such as magic potions, can be used to restore hit points when Sagard needs them.

Bonuses and combat results are recorded on the Sagard status chart below:

SAGARD STATUS CHART

Experience Marks

Level

Gold

Armor and Weapons

Effect on Combat

Special Items

Men

Each time Sagard is involved in combat or regains hit points, update this status chart. Sagard starts out with 25 hit points. Suppose he loses 13 of them—he is left with 12. Then let us say he eats and regains 5 hit points in the next section; therefore, he now has 17 hit points. Next time you go into battle, remember how many hit points you have, and modify the score box on your character page accordingly. Remember, Sagard may never have more than 25 hit points.

Turn the page for the current status sheet.

CURRENT STATUS SHEET

Conflict #

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23
	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22
	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
S	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19
A	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
G	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17
A	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
R	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
D'	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
S	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
H	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
I	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
T	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
P	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
O	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
I	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
N	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
T	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
S	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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