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THE SAVAGE WORLD OF
**SOLOMON
KANE**

Travelers' Tales

BASED ON THE WORKS OF ROBERT E. HOWARD



TRAVELERS' TALES

BY

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THE UFFINGTON DRAGON

The following adventure is for the *Savage World of Solomon Kane Roleplaying Game*. It is best suited for characters of Novice to Seasoned Rank. It is set in southern England, in an area known the Berkshire downs.

THE OLD WAYS RETURN

On a steep escarpment among the Berkshire downs in England, amid a landscape inhabited for many thousands of years, lies an ancient, stylized monument. Cut from turf to reveal the white chalk beneath, the monument takes the form of what many believe is a horse.

Some antiquarians claim it is of Celtic origin and honors Epona, goddess of fertility. Others prefer to credit the Romans, ignoring the fact they did not utilize this artistic style anywhere else in the Empire. A small minority claim the chalk figure was cut by the Saxons to honor the great chieftain Hengist. Not only is the nearby site known as Uffington Castle actually the remnants of an Iron Age hill fort reused by the Saxons, but Hengist's standard depicted a white horse.

THE LOCALS' TALE

The locals, however, have a different slant. Local legend holds that after the Romans abandoned Britain, a dragon began to terrorize the landscape. The beast relentlessly devoured livestock and crops to feed its insatiable appetite. Eager to ensure their settlements survived, the locals offered a virgin to the beast each spring. An unholy pact was sealed, a pact which turned the locals away from the fledgling Christian faith recently come to the island and toward worship of the dragon.

On hearing of the strange pagan practices, a priest journeyed to Uffington to spread the good word of the Gospels. Appalled by the practice of human sacrifice he discovered, he summoned the

dragon in the name of God and set to battle, pitting his faith against the dragon's Satanic might. After an epic struggle, the beast was slain. As it lay dying, its fell blood hissed and boiled, corroding its flesh and bone, and forever marking the hillside with its outline.

The priest remained in the village until his dying days, devoting his life to reestablishing Christianity among the pagan natives. Upon his death he was buried beneath Dragon Hill, where, legends say, God allowed his spirit to remain so as to protect the village and ensure the dragon never rose again. (In a charter dating back to the 10th century, the hill is recorded as *Eccles Beorb*, or "Church Barrow.")

BLOOD ON THE HILL

Several months ago, livestock around Uffington began to vanish and crops were trampled in the field. The local priest, mindful of the legend, set out onto the hill one dark and stormy night to call the resurrected beast to battle. (In truth, he put no faith in the old superstitions, but swift action was required before panic ensued.) He was never seen again.

Harvest drew nearer and the thought of famine over winter played heavily on the inhabitants' minds. Talk of the dragon's wrath grew each day, for many believed the ancient pact, so long broken, was the reason for the dragon's return. Knowledgeable in the old legends, the locals knew in their hearts what must be done to safeguard their homes.

As the sun sets across the downs, the locals gather near to the chalk figure's head to make their peace with the dragon as their ancestors did in days or yore. A maiden, her name drawn by lot, whimpers and cries at the fate which awaits her while menfolk erect a wooden stake and lash her to it.



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It is onto this scene the wanderers come, for their travels across England carry them along the Ridgeway path. Their attention attracted by the feminine cries for mercy and the flickering light of many torches, the party hopefully goes to investigate. Across the hilltop they spy a dozen men surrounding a solitary female, her white garments fluttering in the evening breeze.

As they approach or should they give hail, one of the men hurriedly walks forward to meet them, a cocked musket cradled in his arms. Twenty yards from the wanderers he stops, holds up his hand, and calls out.

“Come no further, strangers!” he calls, his voice deep and menacing. “Whatever business you have in these parts is yours and yours alone, but this matter is not your business. Things are bad enough this night without further blood being spilled. Follow the Ridgeway and you’ll find shelter soon enough.”

Should the heroes act belligerently or make it clear this business has now become theirs, the man whistles loudly, summoning his comrades.

“No trouble will befall you if you leave now,” the man says loudly. “Go about your way with haste, and leave matters you don’t understand well alone. We have no quarrel with you.”

The man refuses to elaborate further or provide any explanation to the strange activities taking place. Refusal to leave leads directly to violence. Deal initiative cards.

VILLAGERS (12)

Though not men of fighting caliber, the locals are petrified of what will happen if the dragon is not appeased. As a result, they fight tenaciously, though not suicidally. Once half their number is disabled, the rest turn and flee toward Uffington, leaving the girl tied to the stake.



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The spokesman of the party, one Thomas Wade, the village blacksmith, carries a short sword and a wheellock musket, two others are armed with wheellock pistols, while the rest have axes and assorted farming implements.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Edges & Hindrances: —

Gear: Assorted hand weapons (Str+d6), short sword (Str+d6), wheellock musket (Range: 10/20/40, Damage: 2d8, 2 actions to reload), wheellock pistol (Range: 5/10/20, Damage: 2d6+1, 2 actions to reload), shot & powder (5)

THE MAIDEN RESCUED

After the thugs have been dispatched or sent running, the heroes can turn their attention to the girl. She is badly shaken and in a state of shock, but otherwise unharmed. Should Thomas Wade have been slain, the girl rushes to his side on being freed, crying loudly as she cradles the man's head in her lap. Otherwise, she slumps to the ground in tears. Through heavy sobs she thanks the party for their assistance.

"Thank you, kind sirs," she sobs, "but I fear you have done more harm than good. My name is Martha Wade. The man who first approached you with words of warning is my father, Thomas. He is a good man, a kindly man, though events here may make it look otherwise. What he did, well, tried to do, was for the best."

Martha then relates the local tale of the Uffington Dragon (paraphrase the introductory story, leaving out anything in parentheses). She ends with how her name was chosen at random and how her father, with great reluctance and heavy heart, swore to carry out his duty.

Once her tale is told, she asks the party to accompany her back to the village of Uffington. She cannot guarantee a warm welcome (especially if any villagers escaped), but she promises them a meal before they continue on their way. Hopefully the adventurers have other plans and stay around to investigate the possibility of a dragon inhabiting the region.

HORSE OR DRAGON?

Once Martha has been rescued and has told her story, show the players the image of the chalk figure. Allow the characters to make up their own minds as to whether the chalk figure is a horse or a dragon.

British characters with a background in anti-quarianism, which includes treasure hunters, may make a Common Knowledge roll to know of the other theories regarding the site. Other heroes must make a Knowledge (History) roll, with a -4 penalty if they are not English.

One thing all the heroes notice are patches of red among the white chalk pieces. A cursory inspection reveals the droplets are blood. Martha comments that the blood spatters are growing in size each week, a clear indication the dragon is returning to life.

UFFINGTON VILLAGE

If any villagers escaped they immediately relate the story of how they were stopped from carrying out their duties, by armed strangers no less, to their kith and kin. Word spreads like wildfire and a mob quickly forms. As the heroes descend the hills into the village, they encounter the mob heading back up the hill. On spying Martha and the strangers, a voice cries out, *"That's them! Offer them to the beast!"*

Should the party have killed all the villagers, Martha leads them to her house. Unfortunately, the heroes are soon spotted and a hue and cry alerts the locals that something has gone terribly wrong with their plans.

THE ANGRY MOB

Violence is not inevitable. The mob is far enough away and lacks ranged weapons that the heroes can try to placate the crowd before any more lives are lost. The wanderers have one chance to calm them enough to listen before they are set upon.

One character must make a Persuasion roll at -2 (Intimidation only convinces the crowd the strangers mean trouble). His comrades may assist by making a Cooperative roll. With success, crowd calms. Though very wary of the strangers and quick to take up arms again, they will at least listen to what the heroes have to say before cutting them to pieces. Adventurers who offer to hunt down and kill the dragon placate the crowd enough to end hostilities. After all, the death



TRAVELERS' TALES



of the dragon should, if the legend is true, give them another thousand years of peace. A failure means the party face a mob of 25 villagers, men and women. Use the stats on page 5, but they are armed only with hand weapons.

After two rounds of any combat, gunshots rip through the night air. The mob halts, looking rearward toward the sound of the shots. Sitting upon a black steed is a portly man, a smoking pistol in his hand. Behind him, similarly mounted, are half a dozen men, all dressed in black and with pistols drawn. One holds a lantern aloft.

In the event no combat occurs, allow the characters a few minutes to talk to the locals before the black riders appear out of the dark. On no event should the locals reveal anything beyond what the heroes already know—other information will be revealed later.

THE SQUIRE

One of the villagers (one who was on the hill if possible) rushes over to the mounted figure and quickly relates the tale of the evening's activities. The mounted man listens, his face growing redder and redder. As the villager ends his story, the man cuffs him across the face, sending him staggering back. The rider urges his horse forward through the crowd until he draws near the wanderers.

"I am Squire Richards," he says, nodding his head slightly. As he nods, you notice his face is heavily scarred. "I have been away in London, and only just returned. You must forgive these people, strangers. They are superstitious fools and believe in old legends. I shall have the ringleaders flogged. Martha," he smiles, a thin smile breaking his otherwise stern features, "I trust no harm has befallen you?"

Martha shakes her head. "No, Squire Richards," she replies quietly, turning her face from the squire's gaze. "No harm at all, sir. These gentlemen..."

"I thank you for saving young Martha from freezing to death on the hill," the Squire remarks, cutting off Martha in mid-sentence. He then turns to the crowd. "Give these fellows food and a bed for the night. Their road is undoubtedly a long one, and we won't hold them up any longer than we must to show our thanks."

With that, he whips his horse hard and gallops into the night. His men follow quickly behind, one coming close enough to force you to take a step backward to avoid being crushed.

STORIES AND RUMORS

At the inn the villagers are treated to hot soup and warm bread. Cowed by the squire's orders, the villagers are subdued and avoid the heroes' gaze as much as possible. Convincing them to talk requires a Streetwise roll. Spending £0.50 on drinks and bribes opens mouths without requiring a die roll.

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Over the course of the night, the following information can be learned. Don't hand this out as matter-of-fact statements. Instead, roleplay the villagers speaking in hushed whispers to the characters and furtively glancing over their shoulders as if afraid someone will overhear them.

"Bab, that squire ain't half the man his father was. His pa may have been a hard man, but he was a fair man with it. Many wept the day he died of pox. Since that whelp got here all he's done is raise taxes and leech at our women. Pab! Who'd look twice at him, I ask, with his face like Satan's rear?"

"We'd put our sheep in Uffington castle for safety, only the place is haunted. Some say the castle was created by the dragon as it curled around the priest who finally defeated it."

"The squire calls them men he keeps around his 'Companions.' Bunch of bullies and thugs the lot of them. Last month they tore apart an elderly widow's house looking for taxes they said she'd withheld. Beat her half to death, they did."

"As God is my witness, I was out hunting rabbits one night back along with my dog when I saw the beast. I never saw it clearly, but I did see its fiery maw and burning eyes. And it made a noise like thunder as it moved. Next morning, we found the crops nearby burnt and trampled flat. I thank the Lord it never saw me."

"My father told me of the dragon when I was a lad. He said it was a bane from old times, a thing of legend sent by Satan to trouble the righteous and lead them astray. Now my father knew a thing or two, and he said the priest what slew the beast used the same lance blessed by Saint George. Reckoned it was buried in Dragon Hill, he did. He was an old fool, God bless his bones!"

"Sheep and cattle we've lost! We found some blood, but no remains. I reckon the dragon ate them whole. Squire Richards said it was a wolf, but there haven't been any wolves hereabouts for many a good year now."

GATHERING OF EVIDENCE

In the morning, the wanderers can explore the surrounding landscape for further clues. Should they elect to go at night, there is a -2 penalty because of the moonless night. Likely areas the party will seek to explore and detailed below.

THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER

There is no dragon troubling Uffington. There may have been in the past, but the current problems are very much the work of man.

Squire Richards suffered terrible burns as a youth. The fire melted his skin and blackened his soul, for although the flames removed his ability to feel pain, he quickly discovered a love of inflicting pain on others. Throughout his youth he was always being reprimanded for inflicting pain on his fellow children and animals. Eventually, his father, disgusted at what he had sired, sent him away to London.

Upon reaching manhood, the disfigured nobleman found it impossible to attract a wife, possessing neither the money nor appearance to marry well. Even prostitutes shied away from his visage. As time passed, his urges went from finding love to something far darker. His appetites are altogether unwholesome, combining the dark lusts of Gilles de Rais with sadistic pleasures which will later be epitomized by the writings of the Marquis de Sade.

The reemergence of the dragon is solely down to him. Free of his father's gaze and eager to explore new pleasures and assert his control over the villagers, he ordered his men to slaughter the livestock and trample and burn the crops. The local priest was something of an annoyance, but fate led him to the hilltop and the squire's Companions ensured the meddlesome priest would remain forever silent. Peasant superstition did the rest, and a few whispers by a paid lackey in the right ears ensured the villagers returned to the old practice.

Richards' plan was to take the maiden down from the hilltop and use her in unimaginable ways, before killing her slowly. In time, the dragon would strike again, leading to yet another sacrifice. A flawed plan perhaps, but madness and reason rarely work well together.



TRAVELERS' TALES

A number in parentheses indicates how many pieces of evidence exist. These are useful in the next chapter.

UFFINGTON HORSE (1)

Aside from the blood spatters noticed the night before, there is little of interest about the chalk figure. A Tracking roll at -2 reveals faint droplets of blood leading toward the edge of the Manger, a steep channel cut thousands of years ago by glacial action. At the bottom are dense gorse bushes.

Any hero investigating the gorse must make an Agility roll or suffer numerous cuts and grazes. He suffers a level of Fatigue for an hour afterward. Within the bushes is the carcass of a sheep. Though it has suffered broken bones from the fall, even an idiot can deduce its throat has been cut with a blade.

The squire's Companions killed the sheep atop the hill, spread its blood around to fool the superstitious locals, and then dumped its carcass in the Manger to conceal their activity.

UFFINGTON CASTLE (1)

The castle is actually a hill fort and was built during the Iron Age. Comprised of a single ditch and rampart, it never housed stone buildings, and calling it a castle was more a reference to its "moat" than historical accuracy.

It isn't haunted, but it is the highest point in the region. The wind, which whistles across the hilltop, has convinced locals brave enough to walk the downs at night that the site is home to ghosts.

Within the castle grounds an area of soil has been disturbed. A few feet beneath the soil is the decomposing body of the village priest. He was slain by Squire Richards' Companions. Fearing the villagers might summon the courage to support their priest and follow him onto the hill, the murderers hastily buried the body in the castle, knowing the local legends of specters would keep the locals away. Sadly, they forgot to come back and better conceal the body.

DRAGON HILL (1)

There are clear indications of digging in the side of the hill. A Survival roll indicates the cause is more likely to be badgers than humans.

The legend about the priest being buried here is false. Although the mound's near perfect conical shape and flattened top give it the appearance of

a burial mound, it is in fact a natural feature. The top was smoothed flat in prehistory, but the hill does not contain any bones (or grave goods).

Carefully searching the surrounding area (this must be stated) allows the heroes to make a Notice roll at -2. Whoever rolls highest finds a small silver button marked with a heraldic crest. Judging by the threads of cloth still attached, it was torn from a coat. A Knowledge (Heraldry) roll reveals the design to be that of Squire Richards' family. On a failure, other characters may make a Common Knowledge roll at -2 to recall the livery on Richards' horse. The priest managed to grab one of his assailants before he died, tearing off the button.

FIELDS AROUND UFFINGTON (2)

Many of the fields around the village are littered with burnt and trampled crops. The majority were destroyed weeks ago and heavy rains since have washed away clues. One, however, is more recent, having been devastated only a few days before the adventurers arrived in the region.

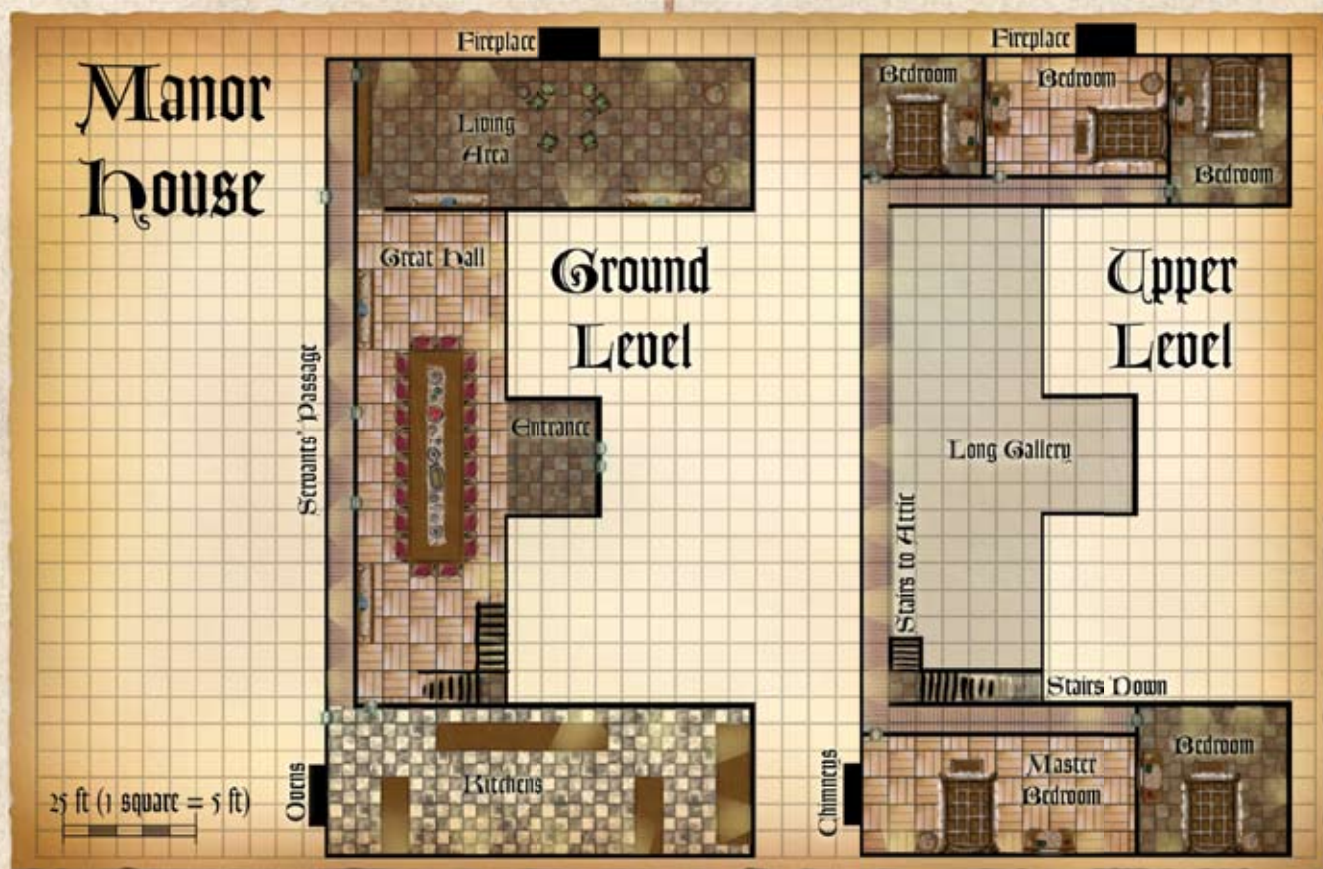
Characters making a successful Smarts roll at -2 deduce the burn patterns are unusual. Rather than being long tendrils of initial burning, as one might expect from a dragon breathing fire, the epicenters are much smaller and well spread. A Notice roll at -2 (no penalty if a character states he is actually kicking aside debris) locates a burnt out torch in one of the scorched areas, evidence that the supernatural may not have been the cause.

A successful Tracking roll at -2 (modifiers for multiple individuals, mud, and the passage of time) locates multiple sets of hoof prints. There is no way of deducing exactly where they lead, but the general direction is toward the squire's manse.

The Squire's Demise

Squire Richards wants Martha, but he isn't totally stupid. So long as the wanderers are in the area, he makes no moves to capture her. All the evidence points toward Richards, though. If the heroes want to bring the Squire to justice, they'll have to act on the evidence they have gathered rather than wait for him to make an overt move.

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RAISING A MOB

The heroes may certainly decide to go up against the squire on their own, but they are greatly outnumbered and likely face defeat. Though fearful of rebellion, an act which carries the death penalty, the citizens of Uffington will join their cause if presented with enough evidence.

Rallying the peasants requires a Persuasion roll. This can be a Cooperative roll, but only one roll is allowed. Each piece of evidence gained above adds +1 to the roll. Having no evidence subtracts two from the roll. Each success and raise nets the party five villagers willing to bear arms. They have the same stats as on page 5 and carry only assorted hand weapons (and burning torches).

DEATH TO THE SQUIRE!

The callous squire's manor house is detailed in the map, above.

Richards and his Companions are in the dining hall eating. Four of the noble's hired thugs guard the main hallway, while the other four are scattered around the house as the GM wishes.

Arrogant and cocky, Richards taunts the heroes on the first round.

"Armed rebellion? Well now," he smirks, "that carries a death sentence in this country. Oh, I will enjoy carving you into tiny pieces."

He rises to his feet, casually tossing aside his food. "And when your screams of agony have ended, the cacophony will be carried on by the villagers. You see, I am the lord of this land, and I can do anything I damned well please!"

Richards fights to the death. He knows that if he is arrested his reputation in London as a debaucher will ensure his head is neatly severed from his body. His guards and Companions are not so brave, however. Make a Group Spirit roll for each band when their numbers are reduced to 50% or below. With failure, they try to flee the mansion.

Assuming the squire is dispatched, the threat of the dragon ends there and then. A hidden cellar, reached from the great hall, contains all manner of torture devices, further proof of the squire's insanity.



TRAVELERS' TALES



SQUIRE RICHARDS

Depraved beyond redemption, Squire Richards revels in inflicting pain on others, drawing from it gratification that he cannot find any other way. When he has finished with his subjects he throws them to his Companions before taking back what is left and slowly ending their misery.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Riding d10, Shooting d8, Taunt d8

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 9; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Arrogant, Cocky, Mean, Ugly, Vengeful (Major)

Edges: Block, Combat Reflexes, Command, Dodge, First Strike, Noble, No Mercy, Spot Weakness, Sweep, Two Fisted

Gear: Rapier (Str+d4, +1 Parry), short sword (Str+d6), wheellock pistol (Range: 5/10/20, Damage: 2d6+1, 2 actions to reload), shot & powder (5)

Special Abilities:

• **No Feelings:** Squire Richards cannot feel pain. As such, he never suffers wound penalties.

RICHARDS' COMPANIONS (6)

Sons of minor gentry and military officers, Richards' Companions share his love of pain and perversity. They hang around their master like a pack of dogs, eager for the scraps he throws them. Though they like to act tough, each is totally subservient to the squire.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Riding d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Greedy, Mean

Edges: Marksman, Musketeer, Noble, Two Fisted

Gear: Long sword (Str+d8), dagger (Str+d4), two wheellock pistols (Range: 5/10/20, Damage: 2d6+1, 1 action to reload), shot & powder (10)

Hired Thugs (8)

Richards' hires a number of out-of-town ruffians to guard his estate. They are paid for their muscles, not their brains. Few have any idea what Richards gets up to at night down in his dungeon, and in truth few would care.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Mean

Edges: —

Gear: Short sword (Str+d6), dagger (Str+d4)



VON GOTTLIEB'S HORROR

The locals claim a terrible monster once lurked in the Black Forest near Leichendorf. They say it was made from the corpses of the dead, held together in an unholy marriage of dark sorcery and blasphemous science.

Hundreds of years later, Mary Shelley would bear tales of this creature and write her novel, Frankenstein. Tonight, those memories will be written in blood...

The following adventure is for the *Savage World of Solomon Kane Roleplaying Game*. It is best suited for characters of Novice to Seasoned Rank.

A DATE WITH DESTINY

Johann Morganson was abandoned by his vagabond father, and taken in by his wealthy uncle, Gunter. The already wild teen resented Gunter's discipline and grew mean and spiteful. Two months ago, after his 19th birthday, he forced a local debtor to pledge to him his lovely daughter, Greta. But Greta could not go through with it, and broke up with Johann in his uncle's orchards, swearing she would take her own life rather than marry him. The jilted lover flew into a rage, and throttled the poor girl to death.

Gunter beat his errant nephew within an inch of his life. He was furious, not just for the deed itself, but also because he knew the common folk were already resentful of the landowners and close to revolt. The last few harvests had been poor and the taxes were high. Gunter feared the death of this beautiful young girl would be the spark which finally caused the people to rise up. The Morgansons would lose their land, their honor, and their dwindling fortune.

But Gunter is a clever fellow. The ruler of the province was the unpopular Baron Wilhelm von Gottlieb. The Gottliebs have a dark past. Wilhelm's grandfather Heinrich was accused of necromancy, he was charged with creating an unliving creature

from the parts of the dead! Many tales were told of the monster, though only one man still living in Leichendorf claims to actually see the thing.

Gunter and Johann, accompanied by members of Gunter's "Hunting Club"—in case things turned sour—drove Greta's body into Leichendorf and claimed a loathsome horror had attacked the two lovebirds in the Morganson groves. They claimed Johann fought bravely, but was beaten nearly to death. When he regained consciousness, poor Greta lay dead and the fiend was gone.

Gunter allowed the townsfolk to jump to their own conclusions, prompting them with the odd comment or question. Within minutes, they were convinced Baron Wilhelm had continued his grandfather's dark work, and raised the Gottlieb monster from the dead. Gunter, leading a mob of angry villagers armed with pitchforks and torches, and his skilled rifle-armed companions, stormed the Gottlieb castle.

The battle was furious and brief. The Gottliebs were caught completely off-guard. The Baron's family died in a fire set by the mob, and his most his soldiers fled in the chaos. Baron Wilhelm himself escaped via a secret route to the family cemetery—and his one hope for revenge.

DESTINY AWAITS

The heroes find themselves in a field southwest of Leichendorf—the edge of the Black Forest rising like a wall before them. It is almost the witching hour. A light rain and a heavy wind forewarn of a heavy storm, clouds scud across the full moon high above. From the forest the sounds of scattered gunshots can be heard.

The wanderers will almost certainly heed this clarion call to adventure, and investigate. They find Gunter Morganson and an angry mob at the base of a steep hill. A small group of the Baron's men are trapped on the slopes above. Gunter knows he must track down the Baron and kill

TRAVELERS' TALES

him as quickly as possible. If he is allowed to escape, he will flee to some ally and return with more soldiers.

CORNERED

The wanderers approach the rear of the mob—simple peasants who do not attack the strangers, but flee if threatened. The peasants are a mixed lot—feel free to inject some personality into them as you see fit. A deranged Igor type or a simple honest woodsmen will add great flavor to the encounter. Those who first see the heroes approach run to Gunter with news of these new faces. The landowner quickly moves to meet and sum up this possible threat.

“Ho, strangers. What business have you in these parts?”

After the party gives their answer, Gunter hastily continues.

“I’m afraid you have stumbled upon a bloody night’s work. The men we pursue up yonder hill are far more than brigands. They serve Baron Wilhelm Von Gottlieb. Yes, that’s right, I said ‘Baron.’

“Before you judge us, please allow me to explain. Everyone in these parts knows the Gottliebs consort with dark powers. When I was a lad, Heinrich Von Gottlieb was rumored to have created a creature from the limbs of the dead. His grandson Wilhelm has continued his grandfather’s work—for I have seen the creature with mine own eyes. It did this very night slay the beloved of my nephew, Johann, and we have tracked it back to the Gottlieb keep. Their home now burns on the mountain, but the Baron himself, and some of his murderous guards, escaped.

“This day the people of Leichendorf say no more. We have destroyed the Baron’s castle, and now seek to end this evil tyrant’s life. The coward slipped away while his soldiers fought his battle for him, now he hides here with his most loyal henchmen. We must find him tonight. He is no woodsman, and will not easily travel these tangled hills in darkness.

“We are simple men, but we are not afraid and our cause is just. Will you strangers help us bring Baron Gottlieb to justice before he slips away in the dawn light?”

Gunter won’t mention that Wilhelm’s wife and children were slain in the initial assault (an unfortunate accident). However, the party may discover this if they investigate the ruins. If the

wanderers start to interrogate the landowner, he stridently repeats his need to catch the Baron before dawn.

TAKING SIDES

The wanderers are almost certain to take the mob’s side, though perhaps with some misgivings. The trapped guards above almost certainly ensure this—they are terrified and won’t parley. They attack anything they see and fight to the death. The mob believes Gunter’s tale. They are over-zealous, however, and show the guards no quarter.

If the villagers are asked why they fight with such zeal, they speak of the Baron’s oppression, high taxes, and poor crops. They speak of their children starving while the Gottliebs host lavish parties. There is some truth to this—as there always is in this quasi-feudal society—but the villagers are excited and over-prone to exaggeration and hyperbole.

THE FIGHT

Whatever the wanderers do, the Baron’s panicked guards attack with a volley of musket fire. If the wanderers seem hesitant to get involved, a “stray” round from the soldiers hits one of the party—almost certainly getting their blood up.

The mob charges forward as soon as they’re able—preferably after the party has moved forward toward the trapped soldiers.

FIREFIGHT

The soldiers have taken cover uphill from the villagers behind some trees and rocks, giving them Medium Cover (–2) in Dark lighting conditions (–2). They absolutely refuse to surrender. The mob is scattered around the cover to the south. Gunter and the Hunting Club are somewhere at the front of the group using the scattered trees for cover.

The Baron is not present, and his men have no idea to where he vanished. They fled when the estate fell and were hoping to avoid the angry mobs until morning.

The Baron Soldiers (8): See page 18.

The Mob (10): See page 19.

Gunter Morganson: See page 19.

The Hunting Club (4): See page 19.

VON GOTTLIEB'S HORROR

FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN

After the battle on the hillside, Gunter suggests the two groups split up to cover more ground. He wishes to commit the Baron's murder away from outsider's eyes. If the heroes refuse, Gunter continues his search, but to no avail. Whatever they do, be sure to occasionally mention the ominous sight of the fire on the hill that marks the Gottlieb castle. If they don't investigate, start having them make Fatigue rolls every hour. Gunter and his group won't go to the ruins—they're intent on finding the Baron before he slips away and have already thoroughly searched there.

The Gottlieb Castle

There's little left of the Gottlieb estate except for stone walls and smoking rubble. The fire consumed most anything of value, and the mob looted what remained. Some clues as to what really happened here tonight can be found, however.

1) Butchered Remains: Outside the gates are the remains of two soldiers. They have literally been hacked to bits. These men weren't just slain in battle—they were butchered—further proof that the townspeople hated the Gottliebs and their minions.

2) The Gottlieb Children: In one part of the smoldering ruin can be found the huddled remains of two children and an adult (the Gottlieb children and their nanny—the mother was killed in the main building). The mob didn't kill them—they were caught in a collapse of the western wall—but the sad scene might cause the wanderers to question what's really going on here.

3) Servant's Quarters: The servants were largely spared the mob's wrath. No remains are found here, though a Notice roll detects hurried evacuation. It seems the staff fled when the fighting began.

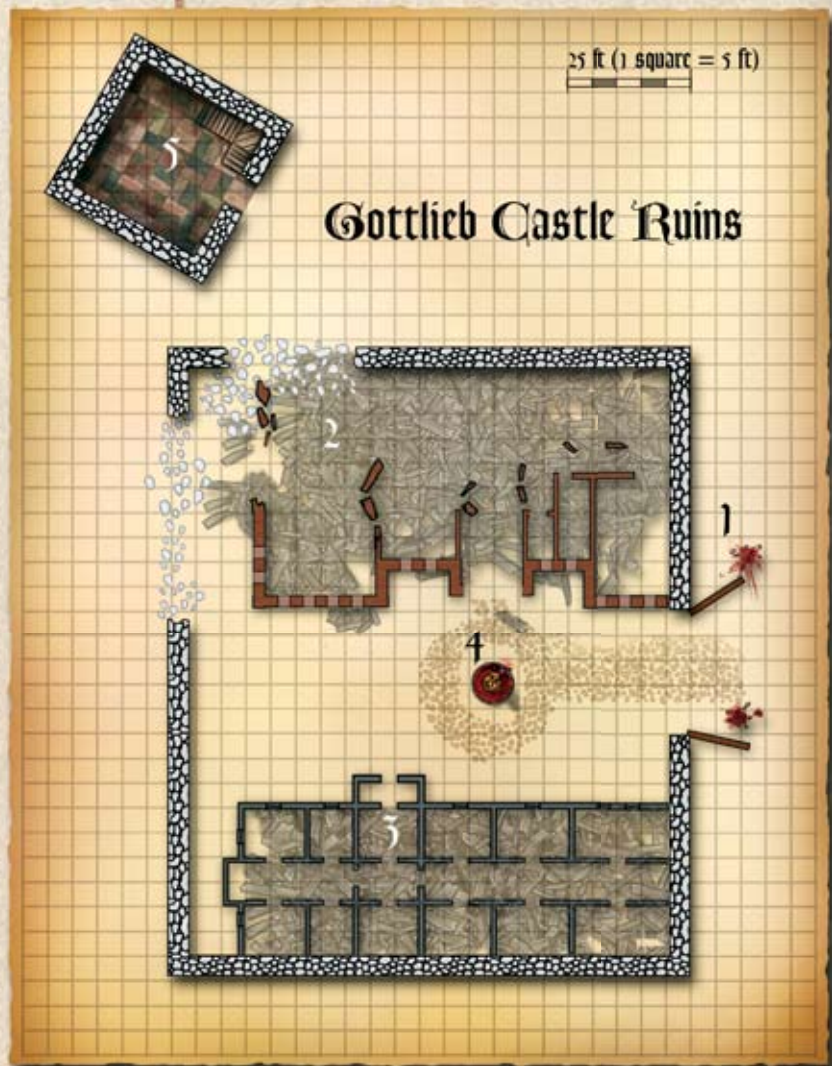
4) Fountain: At the center of the roundabout is a statue of Heinrich Von Gottlieb himself, resplendent in his military uniform. He holds a sword in one hand while the other

pets the head of a large hunting hound sitting upright at his feet. The fountain itself is full of blood, and the decapitated body of a soldier lies within.

5) Heinrich's Tower: At the rear of the ruins is a tall, crooked tower; detached from the rest of the estate (see below).

The Tower

Heinrich von Gottlieb, the current Baron's grandfather, was indeed a foul necromancer who created a Frankenstein-like creature. This tower was his laboratory. When the locals threatened revolt, Heinrich's son—Wilhelm—locked his father in the tower and had his grave-robbing minions executed.



TRAVELERS' TALES

But Heinrich was on the verge of a dark breakthrough and his son foolishly allowed him to keep his equipment. The necromancer using the corpses of his slain minions completed his final creation.

His attempt to animate the thing ended in disaster. Lightning struck the equipment as planned but jumped from the collecting device into Heinrich himself. He suffered a massive stroke—and the creature did not draw breath.

Heinrich spent his last three years in the feather bed on the third floor, his near-paralyzed form leaving a permanent indentation in the mattress.

EXPLORING THE TOWER

Gaining entrance isn't easy. There's a single door barred shut *from within*. Only two windows can be seen—a shuttered window near the top, and a barred window at the highest point. Someone skilled in Climbing can reach the lower window and enter the tower, alternatively an adequate tool to pry the door loose can be found in the rubble (Notice at -2 and 20 minutes.) Hopefully, one of the wanderers will ascend the tower and enter the window alone. Although there is actually no danger, play up the suspense.

Reaching the window requires two successful Climbing rolls, or a single roll with a raise. Failure results in 2d6 damage for the first roll, or 3d6 for the second. The window leads to Area #2, described below.

Wherever entry is made, a single spiral staircase runs around the walls to each landing. Old torch sconces—now empty—and dripping rain water are the only other features.

1) Entry: The bottom floor of the tower is completely empty, save for a large puddle of pooled water and thick mold from the constant rain leaking from above. A narrow spiral staircase leads up into the darkness.

2) Servant's Quarters: A collapsed bed, empty dresser, and a few odds and ends rest here, all covered in decades of mold and fungus. This is where Heinrich's loyal servants slept before they were dragged away by his son.

3) Heinrich's Quarters: The mad scientist's large feather bed still remains in this chamber. His impression—left as he lay paralyzed and dying in his final years—may lead the wanderers to believe an invisible presence still occupies the bed.

A once-grand dresser, wardrobe, and desk fill the rest of the room. The clothes have collapsed into moldy rags, but a Notice roll with a raise

finds a few odd pieces of jewelry, a silver comb, and so on (collectively worth 2d6 x &5). A large number of papers and old books cover the desk, but the water from above has completely ruined them. What few titles are visible make it clear these were books on anatomy and medicine.

4) The Laboratory: The upper floor of the tower looks exactly like one would expect for a Frankenstein-like mad scientist. There are odd electrical machines, hundreds of glass beakers and tubes, and a single slab connected to a hatchway above via pulleys and chains. It's important that you describe this area in a very stereotypical way which reinforces the legend of the Gottlieb monster. Players are smart, and many will doubt the Morgansons from the beginning. This laboratory should convince them the existence of a golem is at least a real possibility.

Scattered about are more ruined books and papers. Some of the titles concern something called "electricity." Certain odd pieces of scientific apparatus, such as a weird copper coil and a spinning disk on a metallic rod, twitch and move occasionally. They are picking up odd electrical currents from the coming storm, but don't tell the players that.

The chain and slab device works just like one might imagine. If someone wants to ride it to the top, it makes it about halfway before a rusted link breaks and sends them toppling 20' feet for 2d6 damage. (There is nothing of further interest on the roof should someone make it up there.)

Visible from the roof and the highest window is the town of Leichendorf. A few stray lights stand out against the dark night. This should be the party's next destination. If they aren't interested in heading there, don't push them too hard. Try to let it be their idea. Just let them wander the mountain looking for the Baron for a bit, making Fatigue rolls and realizing they have no idea where to look. The people in the town might have some guidance, however. Suggest that some might know old trails, caves the Baron might use if the players aren't inclined to head to Leichendorf on their own.

LEICHENDORF

The small town is silent except for a few quiet noises coming from a small tavern, the *Sheep's Head*. Two other locations of note are the Church and the Stable, both described below.

VON GOTTLIEB'S HORROR

The Sheep's Head

Inside this small rectangular tavern are four men, three veterans of the night's battle (Otto, Frederick, and Herman) and the tavern's owner (Adolf). The former trio are unarmed, but an old sword and two pitchforks rest against the back wall.

The men are sharing a quiet cup of ale to warm their bones after the cold battle at the castle. They're initially short with strangers, but warm up quickly if treated with respect, or someone buys them another round. All three were in the fight and bear minor wounds from the fracas.

If asked, Otto tells the following tale.

"You want to know what started all this, eh? It was Greta. Such a lovely girl. Betrothed to Johann Morganson. A good match for her. The Morganson's own good land a day's ride south of here. Johann and Greta were there when the Gottlieb monster struck. It beat Johann to within an inch of his life, then killed the poor child."

"The Morgansons brought Greta immediately to the village here. Her father was stricken with rage and was one of the first to fetch his old musket to storm Gottlieb's castle. Unfortunately, the old man didn't survive the fight. A shot hit him square in the heart. His young son works and sleeps in the stable, poor lad. He has no one now, I reckon. If you're rich men, the boy could use a few coins or some kindness."

If the wanderers ask to see Greta's body, the request is met with some disgust. However, a Persuasion roll or a sincere expression of respect along with a reasonable explanation quickly pushes the issue aside.

Greta's corpse lies in the small church (see below). Otto adds the following when the subject is mentioned:

"I prepared her myself. Beautiful girl. I worked as undertaker for the Gottliebs themselves many years ago. It was I who finally put Heinrich in his crypt in the family cemetery above the castle."

It shouldn't take much prodding for the wanderers to realize the cemetery is the likely hiding spot of the Baron and his men. If the group does realize this and decides to rush off, Otto helpfully suggests they visit the stable and "commandeer" some horses to get there quickly.

If the newcomers ask if Johann could have killed Greta, the villagers shake their heads. It's clear they aren't entirely convinced, but given

their murderous rage this red night, they will not allow themselves to believe such a thing. At least not for some time.

The Stable

Greta's brother, Nicholas, is in the stable cleaning horses taken from the Gottlieb's castle earlier. He's wide awake regardless of the hour, having lost his entire family in a day (his mother died many years ago).

Though initially shy, Nicholas opens up quickly if someone takes a parental attitude with him. If he's asked about Johann and Greta, he says the following:

"Pfft. Johann was a monster. He bit me many times. Greta would fight with him when he did, but father insisted she stay with him. It was the only way she would gain wealth, papa said."

The vital information here is that Johann is violent and Greta likely didn't love him. Nicholas knows that, but does believe in the monster. If it is mentioned, he begs the heroes to venture out and kill it for his poor sister. He also happily



TRAVELERS' TALES

offers the horses brought in earlier as well. They are not his to give, but neither was he given any real instructions when the veterans of the fight returned.

The Church

The church is closed and the priest nowhere to be found, but it's a fairly simple matter to force the door open. Inside is an eerie scene, but no dangers present themselves. Four men lie covered with sheets in the floor, waiting for preparation and burial the following day. One of the men is Greta's father—an obvious musket shot directly to his heart. The other three are also shot in various locations.

On a table at the center of the church is a covered feminine form—Greta. Should anyone investigate, it's obvious the poor girl was very pretty in life. Her features now are twisted, however, for she was throttled about the throat until her eyes bulged and her neck snapped. Have whoever pulls back the sheet make a Guts check.

The Ambush

The wanderers should now have figured out that the Baron is likely holed up in the cemetery above the castle. With their own horses, or those borrowed from Nicholas at the stable, they can race along the road quite quickly.

Old Jonas is the Baron's loyal friend of many years. When Wilhelm was a boy, Jonas taught him to hunt, track, and shoot. He slipped away with his master earlier this night, but has since gone his separate way so that he can harry the pursuers. Jonas waits in the road on his horse, a barely visible silhouette against the darkness of the forest. As the heroes approach, he fires a single shot at the lead character—aiming to kill if he can—and races up toward the castle.

Pursuers are in for a terrible surprise. Along the road, hidden by the mud and darkness, is a strong trip line. On the other side of the trip line are dozens of sharpened stakes.

Anyone chasing the mysterious sniper must make Riding (-2) rolls. Players who state they are progressing cautiously roll normally. The riders likely think they're making rolls to catch the attacker—that's fine. They're actually rolling to see how badly they suffer from Jonas' trap. However the cautious riders avoid the trap, they just roll for show, not to give away the trap.

Use the results below to determine how badly Jonas' trap has mauled them.

Raise: The horse and rider go down in a tumbled heap. The horse recovers, however, and the rider suffers trivial bumps and bruises.

Success: The horse and rider fall badly. The horse suffers 2d6+2 damage from the combined fall and the stakes, while the rider takes a level of Fatigue for two hours from the bad landing.

Failure: The horse and rider tumble end over end. Both suffer 3d6 damage from this terrible spill. If the horse is Incapacitated, assume it breaks at least one leg and must be put down.

Critical Failure: A character rolling less than a 1 (due to modifiers) or "snake eyes" suffers the worst fate. His horse rears up from the pain and falls backward, crushing and then pinning him for 4d6 damage. The horse suffers 3d6 damage and is injured as above.

This is a horrible trap, and it's designed to be not only lethal but spectacularly messy. Play this one up for the true carnage it wreaks. Describe the fate of each rider in turn—starting with those in front, then working your way back through the formation. The first few trip the wire and slam into the stakes. Those behind trample over them, then fall hard as their horses' legs are tangled and broken in the kicking throng.

Use the horror of the moment to shock your players. Describe the mad screams of the horses, bones jutting from their tangled legs, sharpened stakes through the flesh of man and beast, and dark blood mixing with the rain and mud.

This grim act should set the wanderers burning with red rage and push them toward the adventure's climactic finale.

The Monster

Old Jonas isn't slowed down by a trap and he is able to collect his dogs and return to his master. His trail leads back to the smoldering Gottlieb Estate where the group earlier investigated the ruins. Along the way the ever-threatening storm finally breaks. By the time the wanderers reach the ruins, they are soaked to the skin.

Allow the heroes to make a Tracking roll to follow Old Jonas and his dogs. Even with a failure the tracker is able to discern he went toward the estate. A success notes several pairs of dog tracks off the side of the road as well. A raise denotes four distinct sets of paw-prints, all suitably large enough for hunting dogs.

VON GOTTLIEB'S HORROR

THE PATH

At the estate, the trail meanders through the now-muddy ruins before vanishing at an old rocky trail leading up to the cliffs overlooking the house. This trail leads to the Von Gottlieb Family Cemetery, and the conclusion of our tale.

The moment the wanderers set foot upon it, they hear occasional musket blasts and distant voices, muffled by the storm, but still audible.

PARLEY

The scene begins as the adventurers enter the area from the southern trailhead. In the small cover below the raised cemetery are Gunter and Johann Morganson and their followers (see below). Two men are down, obviously hit by musket fire.

The mob is stationed in the rocks and trees in the southeast. Johann, Gunter, and the Hunting Club are left of the trail facing north, behind some rocks. This gives them Medium Cover (-2).

In the cemetery, occasionally silhouetted by flashes of lightning, are more of the Baron's soldiers. They lurk behind the tombstones making great use of cover (-4) and the darkness (-2 unless a character fires during a flash of lightning, which requires a Hold maneuver).

The Baron himself can be heard ranting from somewhere beyond (in the crypt of the church), just out of sight of the mob's position. Intermittently, he says things like:

"Dirty peasants! First my grandfather, now me!"

"I know it is you, Morganson. I will have my revenge soon enough!"

"Do not talk to them, men! They have shown no mercy tonight, and now neither will we!"

"Tonight you will learn the true secret of the Gottliebs!"

The party will likely try to parley with the Baron and his men and reach some sort of peace. Unfortunately, that is not to be. Morganson's men have shown no mercy and closed that particular line of resolution.

The investigators are also likely to confront Gunter and Johann over the death of Greta. Gunter tries to argue the point, but Johann sulks—and looks for an opportunity to strike. Play this one as cagey as you can. Johann wants to attack with the Drop, perhaps distracting the hero by slowly turning away in shame—discharging his lowered musket as he does so. Or if the Baron should call

out and the victim turns to answer, Johann might strike from behind. He's a dirty, wild fighter—play him that way and get at least one terrible strike in against your heroes if possible.

If neither of the above occurs, the group will likely be planning their assault or maneuvering for a better position. Allow them to do so. The soldiers hold their fire until they have a clear target or are rushed. The moment a wanderer approaches the cemetery gate or a shot is fired, start the fight.

TRIGGERS

Three things happen during the ensuing struggle.

1) Old Jonas waits at his Hunter's Perch. He lies behind the boulders in a perfect notch and snipes at anyone who seems like a leader, or whoever seems the most credible threat to his master.

2) Whenever it seems dramatically appropriate—such as when most of the heroes rush the gates—he blows a silent dog whistle which triggers the attack of his hounds. They rush up the trail into the fray and pair up on one of the heroes and one Extra (preferably one of the Hunting Club).

3) The moment a hero gets inside the cemetery, he sees a crypt near the rear has been broken open. The stone door lies in ruins and the ranting Baron can be heard from the darkness within. Metal cables run from the iron fence down the steps into the crypt. Allow the player a moment to digest the scene—then describe a tremendous flash of lightning that hits the fencing with a terrible crash. Everyone on the map must make a Vigor roll or be Shaken. (Roll for the soldiers and the mob as well.)

Move on to **The Gottlieb Secret** immediately after this roll.

Gunter Morganson: See page 19.

Johan Morganson: See page 19.

The Hunting Club (4): See page 19.

The Mob (12): See page 19.

The Baron's Soldiers (6): See page 18.

The Jaeger (Old Jonas): See page 19.

Jonas' Dogs (4): See page 19.

TRAVELERS' TALES

THE GOTTLIEB SECRET

After the lightning flash, those within the cemetery hear a low moan from the crypt. Allow a moment for the dread to build, and then have the Baron race up out of the darkness, two pistols in hand. Finish the nod to Frankenstein with the Baron's mad shout: *"It's alive! It's ALIVE!"*

Resume the action now. The Baron rushes blindly toward whoever violated his family plot, firing both pistols.

At the end of the round, after everyone else has gone, the Gottlieb Horror stalks from the crypt to finish off whoever remains. The Horror is mad with rage and attacks any living thing it can find other than the Baron. It will attack the soldiers, but only after all other visible intruders are dead as it vaguely remembers their uniforms from its first resurrection decades past.

HAZARDS

The Rain: Anytime a black powder weapon is fired, a roll of 1 on the Shooting die means the rain has fouled the powder. It must be reloaded to fire again.

The Mud: Anytime a character runs, have them make an Agility roll or they slip and fall.

The Cables: Strewn throughout the cemetery are the cables Gottlieb used to spark the monster to life. On any given round that a black deuce comes up, the lightning strikes and instantly surges through these lines. Any character standing on a space with a cable in it suffers an immediate 3d10 damage.

The Mob: If the wanderers haven't confronted Gunter and Johann already, they turn on the heroes once the Horror attacks. Gunter knows these strangers can't be allowed to leave and tell others of their revolt. If the adventurers have been relatively friendly toward the mob, only Gunter and Johann attack them (perhaps sniping or pretending to miss their intended targets—be as sneaky and confusing as you wish here). If the relationship is more antagonistic, feel free to have Gunter yell something like *"They're agents of the Baron! Kill them!"* or, *"They killed Johann! Kill them!"*—whatever seems most appropriate for your particular situation.

Baron Wilhelm von Gottlieb: See page 20.

The Gottlieb Horror (4): See page 20.

AFTERMATH

The Baron, his soldiers, and the Horror fight to the death. The mob flees if the truth about Johann is revealed, or the Morgansons are defeated. The Hunting Club gives up the fight only if Gunter or Johann admits the truth.

When all the wanderers' foes are defeated, read the following.

You stand looking at the horrible carnage around you. The thunder and lightning have almost stopped, but a cold drizzle continues to soak through to your bones.

You hear footsteps from the trail to the south. Slow, scraping footsteps. You turn, alarmed... but it is simply Otto, the old caretaker from Leichendorf. He limps up to you and eyes the horrible creature now lying limp in the graveyard. "The creature was real," he says quietly. "These are dark times. This is a dark place. The Black Forest earns its name.

"But what you have done here today will be remembered. Years from now, someone will bear the tale of the Gottlieb Horror. Someone will write about your great adventures, and the monster you defeated.

"This will not be forgotten."



HEROES & VILLAINS

Following are the statistics for the various friends and foes the heroes will face in the course of the adventure.

THE BARON'S SOLDIERS

Throughout the adventure the heroes will encounter the Baron's soldiers. They are not particularly loyal, but realize the peasants are out for blood and so fight to the death. The guards speak only German.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5
Edges: Musketeer

Gear: Wheellock musket (Range: 10/20/40, Damage: 2d8, AP 2, 1 action to Reload), bayonet (Str+d6, Reach 1), shot & powder (10)

VON GOTTLIEB'S HORROR

THE MOB

The mob is armed with hand weapons such as pitchforks and cleavers. They have become quite bloodthirsty this night and tear into the guards violently, leaving no survivors.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d4, Notice d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Gear: Hand weapons (Str+d4)



GUNTER MORGANSON

Gunter is the leader and chief conspirator. He is an exceptional shot, leader of the Hunting Club, and very charismatic.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Knowledge (Agriculture) d8, Language (English) d8, Language (French) d8, Notice d8, Shooting d10

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

Hindrances: Loyal

Edges: Attractive, Marksman, Musketeer

Gear: Wheellock musket (Range: 15/30/60, Damage: 2d8, AP 2, 1 action to reload), 2 x wheellock pistol (Range: 5/10/20, Damage: 2d6+1, AP 1, 1 action to reload), saber (Str+d6), shot & powder (10)



JOHANN MORGANSON

Johann was abandoned by his father, Gunter's brother, when he was 13, adding to his natural mean and spiteful nature. He slew poor Greta, a good girl who would never think of pairing with such a loathsome firebrand.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6

Charisma: -6; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Mean, Vengeful

Edges: Improved Frenzy

Gear: Wheellock musket (Range: 15/30/60, Damage: 2d8, AP 2, 2 actions to reload), 2 x wheellock pistol (Range: 5/10/20, Damage: 2d6+1, AP 1, 1 action to reload), saber (Damage Str+d6), shot & powder (10)

THE HUNTING CLUB

A few of Gunter's closest friends know exactly what's going on. The rest believe Gottlieb should go, regardless of whether they believe in the "monster" or not. They are all fairly wealthy and successful, though the last few years have been very hard on them due to crop failures and Gottlieb's taxes.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Greedy

Edges: Marksman, Musketeer

Gear: Wheellock musket (Range: 10/20/40, Damage: 2d8, AP 2, 1 action to Reload), large knife (Str+d4), shot & powder (10)



OLD JONAS

Jonas is a veteran hunter and packmaster for the Gottliebs. His skill at hunting is unmatched, and his dogs are amazingly silent until they are released for the kill.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d10, Notice d10, Shooting d12, Stealth d12, Tracking d12

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Loyal

Edges: Alertness, Marksman, Woodsman

Gear: Wheellock musket (Range: 15/30/60, Damage: 2d8, AP 2, 2 actions to reload), 2 x wheellock pistol (Range: 5/10/20, Damage: 2d6+1, AP 1, 2 actions to reload), large knife (Str+d4), shot & powder (10), dog whistle.

JONAS' DOGS

The dogs are incredibly well-trained, and can move silently or issue a sudden and jarring barking which terrifies most who hear it. Jonas has a "silent" dog whistle he uses to control them.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d10, Notice d12

Pace: 8"; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 5

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Str+d4
 - **Improved Frenzy:** Each dog makes two attacks per round at no penalty.
 - **Go for the Throat:** With a raise, the animal hits the target's most lightly armored location.
 - **Fleet-Footed:** The dogs roll d10s instead of d6s when running.
 - **Pack Bark:** Usable only with surprise. Every character within 18' of the pack must make a Spirit test at -2 or be Shaken. Wanderers need only make 1 roll despite how many dogs are barking, however every two dogs inflicts a further -1 penalty on the roll.
- Size -1:** Large for dogs, but still only dogs.

TRAVELERS' TALES



BARON WILHELM VON GOTTLIEB

Incensed into lethal rage by the destruction of his property and family, the Baron has little left to lose.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Knowledge (Anatomy) d6, Shooting d8

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Arrogant, Death Wish, Outsider (disliked)

Edges: Frenzy, Marksman, Noble, Two Fisted

Gear: Long sword (Str+d8), 2 x wheellock pistol (Range: 5/10/20, Damage: 2d6, AP 1, no reloads).



THE GOTTLIEB HORROR

The monster is made of 30-year old corpses stitched together into a hulking brute of rage and dark sorcery. It has little intelligence, and wishes only to take out its pain on any living creature it can find.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10+2, Notice d4

Parry: 5; **Pace:** 6; **Toughness:** 11

Special Abilities:

- **Berserk:** The Monster is permanently berserk. It gains +2 on its attack rolls, +2 Toughness, +2 damage, and -2 on its Parry. Its stats have been altered to reflect this.
- **Fearless:** The creature's primitive brain knows no fear.
- **Chains:** Str+d6+2. The creature strikes with its manacled fists and broken chains.
- **Improved Frenzy:** The Horror strikes with frenzied rage, making two attacks each round at no penalty.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 to recover from being Shaken, no additional damage from called shots, no wound modifiers, immune to disease and poison.



THE LAST IMMORTAL MAN

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan

A stately pleasure-dome decree:

Where Alph, the sacred river, ran

Through caverns measureless to man

Down to a sunless sea.

—Samuel Taylor Coleridge

In the waning years of the 18th century, Coleridge wrote the poem “Kubla Khan, or A Vision in a Dream. A Fragment.” Though Coleridge claimed this as an original work, in the Savage World of Solomon Kane he learned of the story of a group of wanderers who discovered the last immortal man in Xanadu. Their story is about to be told.

ANCIENT WARRIORS

Three hundred years ago, the Mongols ruled much of Asia, Russia, and the Middle East. History records Kublai Khan as their last, great leader. According to the ancient records, Kublai died in 1294. His passing was not to death, however, but to an altogether different state.

Following a vision, the elderly Kublai and a select band of his warriors traveled into the depths of Cathay in 1271. Kublai found the ruins of a mighty city, its cyclopean walls crumbling and its once ornate gardens choked with weeds.

Following a female voice, which called to him and spoke of war, Kublai descended into a dark opening in a hill. Here, in caverns measureless to man, Kublai discovered a golden dome standing on an island in an endless, subterranean sea. A woman of Abyssinian descent, or so the khan thought, greeted him and offered him immortality. All he had to do was eat the honeydew and drink the milk she offered him. The khan, whose empire had been divided by civil war, accepted her offer, for as an immortal he could rebuild the empire of his grandfather, Ghengis Khan, and

rule for eternity. The Divine Mandate in which Kublai believed was, apparently, handed to him on a plate.

But immortality came with a heavy price, as the khan was soon to learn.

Mighty Kublai had become a prisoner, unable to leave the caverns lest he immediately wither to dust. He tried in vain to rule his empire from Xanadu, the name he gave to the ruined city, but he was too far from the true seat of power to be effective. His enemies, unaware of the khan's status, formed a plan. A double was found and poisoned. Across the empire the news rang out—Kublai Khan was dead!

Unable to respond in person, the khan had little to do but study the ancient texts he found in the golden palace, fume over the cruelty of fate, and grow steadily more insane.

Four centuries have passed and the khan grew bored of his life and the endless solitude. His brave warriors stayed with him until the end of their days, and beyond. Their silent shades are tied to their ruler through oaths of eternal loyalty. Threats against the mysterious woman achieved nothing, for the secret of the honeydew and milk could not be pried from her lips, and strange forces prevented the Mongols from harming her. The woman still haunts the golden dome, but she and the khan have not spoken in centuries.

Weary of life and eager for death, Kublai remained a warrior at heart, and refused to commit suicide. He would accept only a warrior's death, and for that he needed suitable adversaries. In a vision (perhaps one given him by N'Longa) he learned of a small band of wanderers who traveled the earth in search of evil to slay. These brave men and women were surely a match for the khan in mortal combat and, if given the right impetus, would free his tortured spirit.

Through necromantic texts located in the library, Kublai learned to animate the corpses of his followers, binding their spirits into unhal- lowed flesh and brittle bones. He sent his undead

TRAVELERS' TALES



Mongol warriors out into the world to pillage and destroy everything and everyone they encountered. Though several years have passed since the vision, the khan has learned the travelers are finally coming to find him. In order to test their true worth, he dispatches a squad of his soldiers to battle his would-be slayers.

MONGOL HORDES

So it is the wanderers have journeyed across Cathay in search of a mysterious warlord terrorizing a rural backwater. The heroes have been following a narrow valley for many days, heading ever northward toward an area natives further south highlighted as the likely headquarters for the warlord. The peasants whispered the name "Xanadu" and spoke of ancient ghosts.

Suddenly, the still air is shattered by a ferocious war cry. Hurtling down the shallow valley slopes is a band of armored warriors mounted atop small ponies. Without warning they open fire, their arrows falling only marginally short.

The Mongols are relentless and fight to the death. They have no inclination to parley. As each warrior succumbs to his wounds both the fighter

and his mount crumble to dust. A faint black wisp can be seen departing the corpse and drifting rapidly north, against the wind.

UNDEAD MONGOLS (2 PER HERO)

These Mongols served Kublai Khan in life and swore oaths to remain by his side until his death. Though their bodies withered, their spirits remained in Xanadu to fulfill their vow. Spirit and flesh, what little remains, have now been knitted back together through Kublai's necromancy.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Riding d8, Shooting d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 9(2)

Gear: Chain hauberk (+2), saber (Str+d6), bow (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6), 10 arrows

Special Abilities:

- **Steady Hands:** Suffer no Shooting penalty for an unstable platform when mounted.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; Immune to poison and disease; no additional damage from Called Shots.

UNDEAD PONY (1 PER MONGOL)

Near-skeletons clad in dried, withered flesh, these Mongolian steppe ponies continue to carry their masters in death as they did in life. They are not trained for war.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d4, Notice d6

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 9

Special Abilities:

- **Fleet Footed:** Rolls a d10 running die, instead of a d6.
- **Kick:** Str.
- **Size +1:** Steppe ponies are smaller than European horses.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; Immune to poison and disease; no additional damage from Called Shots.

THE CRAZY OLD MAN

A day further up the valley, the scent of cooking meat catches the party's attention. Resting against a large boulder further up the trail is an elderly Chinese man. He pokes and prods a rabbit spit roasting over a small fire, muttering to himself quietly.

He looks up as the band approaches, waving to them to come join him. The man only speaks Chinese. However, if communication problems arise he reaches into a small sack and withdraws a pendant. Holding up the amulet by a thin chain,

THE LAST IMMORTAL MAN

he flicks it with his index finger, causing the disc to spin rapidly. As the amulet begins to spin faster and faster, the heroes discover they can understand his speech (as through the *Speak Language* spell).

“Do not be afraid. It’s just an old trick,” the man laughs loudly. “What brings you along this road, hmm? Only the very brave or very foolish tread this way. Or the dead. Yes, I saw the Mongol warriors pass by yesterday. Long overdue is their rest, long overdue.”

The man, Dao Lung, is a sorcerer, and slightly eccentric. He knows the way to Xanadu, having visited it many times in his long life. The dusky-skinned lady offered him immortality, as she did Kublai, but Dao Lung did not accept. He sought immortality of spirit, not of the flesh, and so made his way back to the realm of the truly living.

“Six days north along the valley and you will reach the city of Xanadu, or what is left of it. Look to the earth. That will guide you to your goal. But be warned, immortality comes at a heavy price.”

With that, Dao Lung ends his spell. Even if a party member speaks Chinese, or casts *Speak Language*, the old man has nothing more to say on the subject, though he makes polite small talk. As the sun begins to set he offers the wanderers a place beside his fire for the night. Come morning, the old man is gone, leaving no sign he ever existed. (Even an alert sentry fails to notice his departure—he simply vanishes when the guard is looking elsewhere for a moment.)

XANADU

The once mighty city of Xanadu, raised in distant days by the sons of Atlantis, is now a crumbling, overgrown ruin. Great walls, which once stood dozen of yards tall and stretched around the site for forty miles, have been worn down to stubs and piles of stone. Colossal towers lie shattered, their stones broken like wooden building blocks pushed over by some gigantic child in a petulant rage, the gardens of fragrant incense trees are choked with weeds, and the forests, once home to game animals, have spread to engulf much of the site.

Through the decay of Xanadu runs Alph, a river declared sacred by the khan because of its origins. In the southwest corner of the city, near to where the adventurers arrive, is a dark chasm. Like the beating of an enormous heart, a steady thump-thump-thump can be heard nearby.

Each time the unseen organ beats, a torrent of water gushes forth from the cavern, spraying the surrounding ground with droplets the size of large hailstones. From here, the water drains into the river channel and flows northeast through the tangled morass of undergrowth and trees.

Any hero trying to enter the steep-sided chasm finds his progress hampered within a few seconds by a tremendous surge of water gushing out. The character is flung high into the air and comes crashing down to earth, taking 2d6 damage on impact.

Some five miles along the river bank, the water vanishes into a dark cavern in the side of a large hill. It can be heard tumbling through the darkness. It is through here one enters the true heart of Xanadu.

CAVERNS MEASURELESS TO MAN

The heart of Xanadu, the golden dome, lies five miles beneath the surface. Were the path straight, the adventurers could hope to reach it in a few hours. But alas, the trail twists and winds through immense caverns with multiple exits and labyrinthine tunnels. Dead ends also force the party to backtrack, sometimes for over a mile at a time. The air is cold, the darkness numbs the soul, and the chance of becoming lost forever a constant worry.

To find the correct path the heroes need to make a cooperative Smarts roll at –4. Clever plans, such as marking passageways already explored, earn a +2 bonus. With success, they find the correct trail. Four hours later, they emerge on the shores of the endless sea. A failure means they have wasted four hours, but may roll again.

After the trials and tribulations of the caverns, the wanderers eventually enter a downward-leading tunnel. A pale, golden glow can be seen in the distance. Following the light, the heroes emerge onto a beach. Yet the grains on which they stand are not sand, but ice, for the entire chamber is covered in thick, glistening hoar frost. A layer of ice stretches from the shore to the edge of the island. There is no sign of any bridge or boats.

The light the adventurers followed emanates from a large golden dome, which sits upon an island of ice several hundred yards off the shore. The light, strong and bright, illuminates the area for over a mile, yet fails to highlight the distant walls and ceiling of the cavern.

GMs should note the sea is effectively endless for the purposes of this adventure—heroes who want to go exploring beyond the island are likely

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to die of hunger before they reach another shore. However, GMs who want to set up a subterranean kingdom, perhaps the degenerative remnants of some elder race, like the serpent men, now have the perfect opportunity to do so.

A TREACHEROUS PATH

The ice is thick enough to support the party's weight near the beach or the island, but is thinner in the middle. Use The Treacherous Path map for this encounter. The map has white, dark blue, and light blue squares. If you use a battlemat, don't mark these squares in any way—the heroes cannot tell which ice is fragile at a glance.

White squares indicate areas of very thick ice—the heroes have no chance of falling through these areas. A character stepping onto a dark blue area must roll a d10, and onto a light blue area a d6.

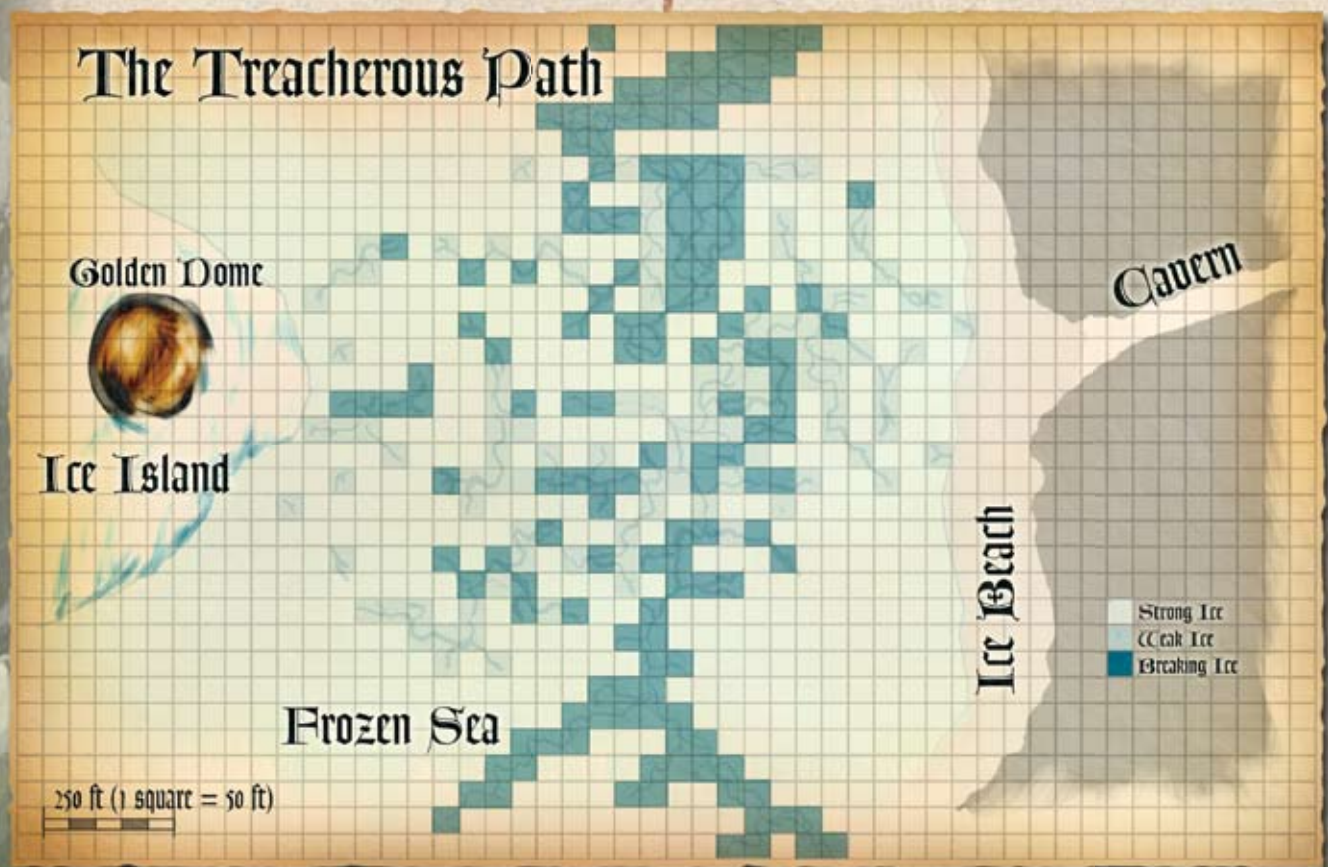
On a roll of 1, the ice breaks and the character falls through into the icy water. There is no current, so heroes won't be swept away, but they quickly begin to suffer intense chills. At the start of each round, the wanderer must make a Vigor

roll or suffer a level of Fatigue as if from Cold. This can lead to Death. Wearing furs or thick skins is no protection against total immersion.

Start the heroes at one end of the map (it doesn't matter which one). Each hero should move his normal Pace, one square at a time. As soon as movement is finished, the ice ahead of them (pick any central square) explodes upward as a massive serpentine head erupts from the watery depths below. Check for Surprise.

The serpent can punch through the ice in any square, attack, and withdraw into the water each round if it so wishes. Punching through the ice uses 2" of movement and retreating uses normal movement. While ducking back into the ice, the beast is counted as Withdrawing from Melee. Contrary to popular belief, bullets do not travel well through water. Once submerged, the creature cannot be hit.

Any square the serpent emerges through becomes open to the water thereafter. Stepping into it automatically plunges a character into the icy-cold liquid.



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The serpent can be easily avoided. All the heroes need do is move to off the opposite edge of the map, where the ice is too thick for the beast to puncture. It has no ability to crawl onto the ice and pursue them.



ANCIENT SERPENT

How long the serpent has lurked beneath the ice is unknown, but it was likely here long before the Atlanteans came to Cathay. Normally it feeds on fish, but today it hunts a rarer meat.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d8, Strength d12+2, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Stealth d8, Swimming d8

Pace: —; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 12(2)

Special Abilities:

- **Aquatic:** Pace 8.
- **Armor +2:** Thick scales.
- **Bite:** Str+d8. The serpent's long neck gives it a Reach of 2.
- **Frenzy:** May make two attacks each round, with a -2 penalty to both.

- **Ice Breaker:** When a serpent erupts through the ice, victims must make a Notice roll opposed by the creature's Stealth. If the creature wins, it gains +2 to attack and damage that round, +4 with a raise.

- **Immunity (Ice):** The creature is immune to all forms of ice and cold, even supernatural effects.

- **Infra-vision:** Halves darkness penalties against living targets.

- **Quick:** Ancient serpents possess fast reflexes, able to turn in an instant and whip their long necks to attack passing prey. They redraw all action cards of 5 or lower.

- **Size +4:** The serpent measures over 20' long.

THE LAST KHAN

Kublai, having detected the heroes' approach over the ice, casts *invisibility* and *speak language* just before the wanderers enter the courtyard. He can thus understand what they are saying and follow them around unseen, at least for a few minutes.



TRAVELERS' TALES

After two minutes of voyeurism he retreats to an empty chamber to cast *summon spirit*. The spell is successful and brings forth a hellhound, which the khan instructs to immediately attack the party (see *The Savage World of Solomon Kane*).

While distracted by the beast, the khan makes use of the rest of his *invisibility* (assume he has a minute left—that's 10 rounds) when the fighting begins. He also summons the last of his undead guards from their resting place (his *zombie* spell is of the improved variety, and so allows for the creation of permanent undead).

Use the map of the golden dome on the next page for this final encounter. Kublai activates his spell in any chamber not explored by the heroes. Likewise, the undead Mongol warriors emerge from an unexplored area of the Game Master's choice.

Kublai fights to the death. He spares no mercy to the heroes, for his death must be worthy of a grandson of Ghengis Khan. Their victory must be hard won.

Mongol Warriors (1 per hero): See page 22.



KUBLAI KHAN

Treat Kublai as a Heroic level spellcaster.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d12, Intimidation d10, Magick d10, Notice d6, Stealth d10, Taunt d8

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 10(2)

Hindrances: Death Wish, Overconfident, Stubborn

Edges: Arcane Background (Sorcery), Arcane Resistance, Command, First Strike, Frenzy, Hard to Kill, Improved Sweep, Improved Tough as Nails, Iron Jaw (+2 to Soak rolls), No Mercy (can spend bennies on damage rolls), Noble, Strong Willed

Powers: *Dispel, invisibility, speak language, spirit servant, summon spirit, zombie* (improved)

Gear: Gilded chain hauberk (+2), gilded saber (Str+d6)

EXPLORING THE DOME

Once the heroes enter the dome they have approximately five minutes before Kublai and his minions attack. For the first two minutes they are under constant surveillance.

After his death, the wanderers will have all the time in the world to explore Kublai's domain (depending on the choices they make, perhaps literally).

LESSER ROOMS

Rooms not detailed contain beds, chests stuffed with clothes from various ages and lands, furniture of varying fashion and antiquity, and other such paraphernalia.

DINING HALL

Decorated with a mosaic floor depicting ancient heroes and with busts and statues from various eras of mankind's history, the dining hall is dominated by a black marble table, around which are a dozen chairs and place settings. Bowls of what appear to be honey and jugs of milk sit beside each place.

Thirsty and hungry wanderers find the food and drink tastes like ash. It provides no nourishment, either. Only one who accepts the gift of immortality (see **The Library**) can savor the sweet tastes and benefit from the substances.

LIBRARY

The library of Xanadu makes that of ancient Alexandria look like a paltry collection of scribbled notes. Thousands of scrolls lie in small niches, while groaning shelves support hundreds upon hundreds of tomes. Alas for heroes who browse the collection, every book and scroll appears completely blank!

After a few minutes, the dusky maiden who inhabits the site enters through the door and addresses the party. She appears whether the khan is alive or dead.

"A marvelous collection of the works of man. Some of these scrolls were old when the Romans learned how to march to war. Others were faded with age before the first stones of the pyramids were laid. All the knowledge of the world is here, both what you might call good and evil, though in truth knowledge has no morality.

"As you have noticed, the books are blank. Only a true immortal can read these works, learn their forgotten wisdom, absorb the power they promise. What say you? Would you become an immortal to learn their secrets? Think carefully, for once you leave this dome the offer shall not be repeated."

The lady is trying to tempt the heroes into accepting immortality. Those who express any interest are told they must simply eat the honeydew and drink the milk the laid out in the dining hall.

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Suspicious wanderers may inquire as to any drawbacks. At this, the woman smiles, and says, "Everything in life comes with a price. The greater the reward, the higher the price. You shall never be forced to accept the offer. The decision must be yours; made of your own free will."

Some heroes, due to their backgrounds or Hindrances, may think the woman a witch or demon in disguise. Should these opinions be raised openly, the girl smiles sweetly and chuckles.

"Because I live beneath the earth and offer you immortality you think me a witch or a demon? You have much to learn. Mankind was blessed with free will, the ability to be good or evil as he chooses. The decision to be immortal is likewise a free choice. I cast no spells or use charms to seduce you. I simply offer a choice, as I have done to all who find me."

Explorers who have visited the former Atlantean colonies of the world may suspect she is a distant descendant of that ancient race. To such queries, she replies...

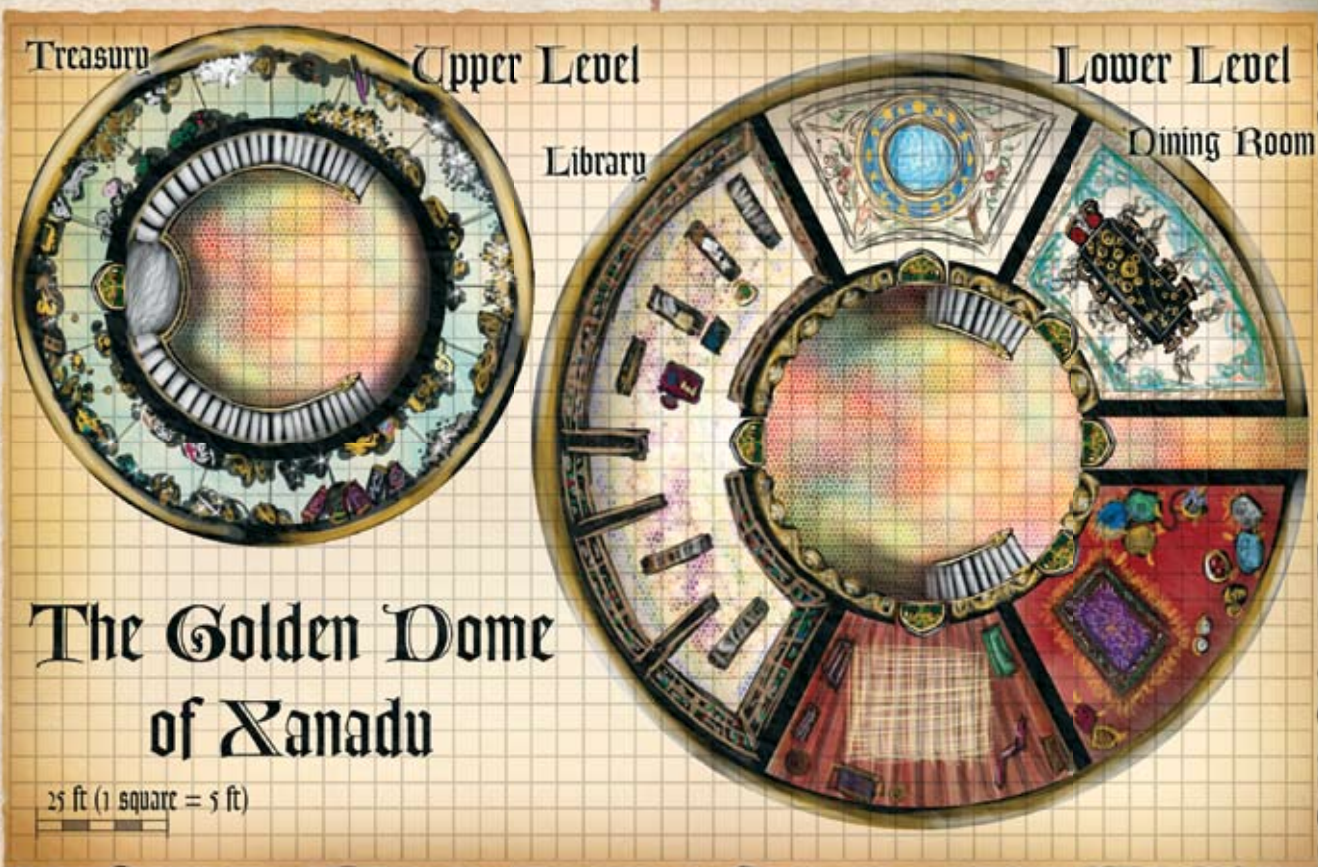
"I knew of the old ones of which you speak, but I was here before them. They raised the city above in my honor, though I craved

naught from them. I have played host to kings of Rome who would conquer the world, Greek heroes your races call legends, Crusader knights claiming to be on holy quests, Egyptian pharaohs who believed themselves living gods, and Mongol warlords following a heavenly mandate alike in my time. You are not the first to visit me, neither shall you be the last."

The woman cannot be harmed, even by magic. She shrugs off spells automatically, weapons appear to pass through her, and even Tricks and Tests of Will fail. She is simply here to offer immortality, and always will be. The only way to prevent others falling foul of her gift is to seal the cave mouth. Exactly how the characters achieve this is up to their ingenuity.

TREASURY

Over the millennia, visitors to the dome brought with them great quantities of coin and precious stones so as to buy immortality, little knowing it was freely given. The lady, having no need for pretty baubles, stores the loot in a single chamber, which brims to bursting.



TRAVELERS' TALES

The GM, depending on the needs of his game, can handle the treasury in one of three ways. First, he can rule the heroes can only take enough to fill their pockets. How much this equates to in pounds is left the individual GM to decide, but a few hundred is a fair reward. Second, he can allow them to take enough booty back to invest wisely and gain the Rich Edge. The Edge isn't given free—unless a hero takes it with his next advancement the treasure he plundered is

deemed lost, spent, or stolen. Third, he can deny the heroes any material rewards by having the goods crumble to dust as soon as they reach the surface.

ACCEPTING IMMORTALITY

As with Kublai Khan, and others who came before him, accepting immortality results in the hero becoming a prisoner in Xanadu. Sure, he can learn a lot of wisdom (basically he has access to knowledge allowing him to purchase any Edge, skill, or spell), but his adventuring days are over. He's also condemned to subsisting on honeydew and milk for eternity, for no other food or beverage gives him nourishment.

Acceptance requires nothing more than the character to ask for immortality and to eat and drink. There is no showy display of lights, no feelings of euphoria or supernatural power, and no strange visions.

Immortals who try to leave Xanadu can get as far as the cave mouth in safety (the serpent, if still alive, does not bother them). A step further, however, and they crumble to dust. This occurs regardless of how long the hero has been immortal, for a curse is a curse.

The End

When the wanderers reach the surface once more they can never find the golden dome again.

Locating the ruined city of Xanadu is easy enough, but no matter what path they travel through the Caverns Measureless to Man they can never find the right route to the island. The way is shut to them forever.



SAMPLE CHARACTERS

EDUARDO MONTOYA

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Boating d4, Fighting d6, Healing d4, Knowledge (The Inquisition) d6, Notice d4, Riding d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d4

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Vow (Minor: repay Kane), Wanted (Minor: by the Inquisition)

Edges: Jack-of-all-Trades, Luck, Musketeer, Two Fisted

Gear: Rapier (Damage Str+d4, +1 Parry), 2 wheellock pistols (Range: 5/10/20, Damage: 2d6+1, AP 1, 1 action to reload), shot & powder (20), locket with painting of sister inside, poor clothes, basic traveling kit, 10 marks

The Inquisition is a travesty against God. You know that first-hand, for you were a guard serving in Madrid at the Grand Inquisitor's side. You watched hundreds of "witches" burn. A few had indeed consorted with Satan, but most were whores, Jews, or innocent school girls.

The last straw was a beautiful young woman named Carmelita. Your sister.

You fled with her through France, running from the dogs who hounded you. You slew a few, fled from the rest, and somehow wound up cornered on the French side of the Rhine. The mercenaries and bounty hunters overwhelmed you and began to turn on your sister.

When the night seemed darkest, a tall stranger appeared. Solomon Kane. His saber flashed and his pistols roared. When the smoke cleared, the dogs were dead and you and your sister were saved.

Afterward, you and Carmelita began to wander. Strange dreams followed. An African juju man gave you visions, guiding you to other places—where your skills could begin to repay the debt you owed Kane. At first you resisted the

strange requests, but with nowhere else to go, you placed your sister in a convent in France and followed the dreams.

XP: 15

SERIOUS CHAPEL

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Riding d4, Shooting d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Arrogant, Mean, Stubborn

Edges: Arcane Resistance, Berserk (righteous fury), Florentine

Gear: Long sword (Damage Str+d8), dagger (Str+d4), wheellock pistol (Range: 5/10/20, Damage: 2d6+1, AP 2, 2 actions to reload), well-thumbed Bible, plain cross, 25 marks

You know this Kane. This Solomon Kane. He is arrogant and self-righteous. As are you.

But you are arrogant only because you know you have the power of the Lord behind you. Those who similarly have God's favor have no cause to fear you. Those who spurn His Almighty gaze had best beware.

Kane is one of those who may have lost his way. After helping him destroy a cult of diabolists in northern France, you began to have visions from a witch-doctor named N'Longa. This blasphemous pagan said that he was a friend of Kane's and called you one of his "Wanderers."

Indeed.

The devil's work is afoot, without doubt, but the visions were clear. There is evil in this world, and By God you will stamp it out.

XP: 15

TRAVELERS' TALES

ESMERELDA KIRIVASI

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Taunt d8

Charisma: +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5
Hindrances: Big Mouth, Poverty, Vengeful (Major)

Edges: Acrobat, Strong Willed, Very Attractive

Gear: Dagger (Str+d4), silver necklace (werewolves have -1 to attack you), deck of Tarot cards, gypsy clothes, 3 marks

The gypsies have always been hounded by those who do not understand them. Several years ago, your band found itself in northern Germany, performing for the locals. The people had little money, and said their lord, Baron Von Ramstein, had taxed them beyond their ability to pay. You made jokes at the Baron's expense, and found it pleased the crowd greatly. Your father warned you not to go too far, but you have always been outspoken.

Soon Ramstein's men got word of your slander. They approached the camp and several of your brothers quickly turned a disagreement into a fight. Blades were drawn, blood flew, and in the end, one of your brothers lay dying and two others were brutally beaten.

A tall stranger entered the scene, blood on his hands from a previous fight and terrible wounds on his arms and in his side. Yet still he intervened. He stopped the bloodshed and disarmed one of the Ramstein men who would not back down. This champion bade you and your band leave, and you heard no more of him, except that his name was Kane, an English wanderer.

Soon after, you began to have strange dreams. An African juju man said you were now one of the Wanderers, and you would one day be given the opportunity to repay Kane for saving the rest of your family.

XP: 15

FATHER GIOVANNI CARLUCCI

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d6, Healing d8, Intimidation d4, Knowledge (History) d8, Knowledge (Occult) d8, Persuasion d4, Riding d6, Shooting d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 4

Hindrances: Anemic, Habit (Major: alcohol), Stubborn

Edges: Berserk, Connections (the Church), Healer, Scholar

Gear: Axe (Str+d6), crossbow (Range: 15/30/60, Damage: 2d6, AP 2, 1 action to reload), wine-stained Bible, silver crucifix, basic traveler's pack, 15 marks

Rome has long held a secret order of monster slayers. You are not one of them. But you were sent to accompany a grim warrior named "Il Lobo," "the Wolf", on a mission to slay a terrible creature called a *nosferatu* on the isle of Corsica. Il Lobo was slain by the creature and you quickly found yourself running for your life along rocky island coast.

God was with you, for a rangy wanderer named Solomon Kane happened upon you. In a terrible battle you will never forget, he slew the monster. You talked for some time into the night, and the stranger revealed to you many of the awful things he had seen and battled across the world.

As you awaited a ship back to Rome, you began to experience strange dreams. An African juju man named N'Longa said that you were now one of Kane's Wanderers, and that you had a debt to pay. You refused at first—disbelieving the dreams and refusing to follow a witch doctor's instructions. But when you didn't heed the dreams, terrible night terrors visited you instead. Sleep became impossible. Your health spiraled out of control, as did your temper and your faith. The sacramental wine gave you solace for some time, but slowly N'Longa's magic overtook the power of the bottle.

Finally you gave in. The nightmares ceased, and for the first time in months you felt a moment of inner peace. You still battle with the demon drink, but for the most part have resolved yourself to following N'Longa's instructions to see what comes to pass.

XP: 15

JOHN FURLONG

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Law) d6, Notice d6, Riding d6, Stealth d4, Streetwise d6

Charisma: -1; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7
Hindrances: Curious, Habit (says "And no mistake" after stating a fact), Loyal

SAMPLE CHARACTERS

Edges: Brawny, Command, Fleet Footed (d10 running die)

Gear: Club (Str+d4), rapier (Str+d4, +1 Parry), manacles, average clothes, average riding horse, basic traveler's pack, 20 marks

The Wanderer named Solomon Kane was a rare sight in your hometown of Truro in Cornwall, where you held the rank of constable. On his last visit, he spoke of his wanderings and heartened you. The small town you call home had its share of darkness, but the Puritan inspired you to travel the world and fight greater evils than pickpockets and grave-robbers.

Soon after, you were visited in your dreams by a strange African juju man named N'Longa. Something about the little man made you trust him, and he called you one of his "Wanderers."

XP: 15

BORIS OSACOSKI

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d6, Notice d6, Riding d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d8, Tracking d8

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 6 (1)

Hindrances: Bad Luck, Loyal, Outsider

Edges: Steady Hands, Woodsman

Gear: Heavy leather and fur coat (+1), saber blessed by shaman (Str+d6, does d8 damage with a raise when fighting lycanthropes), matchlock musket (Range 10/20/40, Damage: 2d8, AP 2, 2 actions to reload), shot & powder (10), spare match, excellent if spirited steppe pony, warm clothing, basic traveler's pack, 5 marks

The cold steppes of Poland have been home to you and your Cossacks for hundreds of years. They have also been home to stranger things—things that run on all fours and howl at the moon, yet take the shape of men as well. On a dark night some years ago, your hunting party cornered such a creature. You were accompanied by a stranger named Solomon Kane, an Englishman who had accepted the Cossack's hospitality.

Only you and the Wanderer survived the attack. You parted ways, and though you admired his strength, hoped to never see him again—lest you be reminded of that terrible night.

But weeks later, your dreams were visited by a strange African juju man. He claimed to be a friend of Kane, and said that you were now one

of the Wanderers. For some reason, you accepted these strange circumstances and left your tribe behind to follow N'Longa's visions.

XP: 15

MANNERED VON RAMSTEIN

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d12, Guts d4, Intimidation d4, Knowledge (Heraldry) d6, Notice d6, Riding d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Arrogant (best swordsmen in the land), Stubborn, Vow (Minor: make right your wrongs)

Edges: First Strike, Lunge (increase Reach 1"), Noble (landless), Sweep, Trademark Weapon (gilded saber)

Gear: Gilded saber (Str+d8), fine clothes, travel kit, high quality stallion, 300 marks

Several years ago, your obsession to prove yourself the best fencer in all of Europe got the better of you. You maimed dozens, justifying it to yourself by saying no one had forced them to duel you. But then desire got the best of you. One of your villagers, a cavalryman, was applauded for his skill with the saber. He also had a beautiful young fiancé named Gerta. Through your less scrupulous minions, you maneuvered the reluctant cavalryman into a duel of honor—and killed him. The girl was far from impressed, and her cause was soon taken up by a stranger you know now as Solomon Kane. The wanderer came directly to your door and quickly maneuvered you into a fight to the death. The stranger fought like a demon. You fled like a dog with your tail between your legs.

Over the following weeks, the relentless pursuer trailed you. Finally, you were cornered. During your plight, you became truly repentant of your misdeeds, and offered no resistance when the man named Kane cornered you. He accepted your repentance, but before leaving you with your life, made you promise to use your amazing skill for the good of the innocent.

Soon after, your dreams were visited by an African juju man named N'Longa, who claimed to be Kane's friend. Calling you one of Kane's "Wanderers," the strange witch doctor guided you to trouble with visions and subtle signs. Since then, you've given up your lands and titles to right the wrongs you once inflicted on your own people. Perhaps one day you will atone for your misdeeds

TRAVELERS' TALES

enough that you can return to your family holdings. For now, however, there is much work to be done.

XP: 15

PIERRE THESSAULT

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Boating d8, Climbing d4, Fighting d8, Gambling d4, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Greedy (Minor), Mean, Vow (Major: give up evil ways)

Edges: Close Fighting (bonus to Parry equal to enemy's weapon Reach +1), Musketeer, Two Fisted

Gear: Wheellock pistol (Range: 5/10/20, Damage: 2d6+1, AP 1, 1 action to reload), shot & powder (10), cutlass (Str+d6), dagger (Str+d4), rough clothes, weighted dice (+1 Gambling), basic traveler's pack, 30 marks

Though you are now the feared "Red Reaver," a decade ago you were little more than a deck hand aboard the *Bawdy Wench*, a pirate ship

sailing the Spanish Maine. One black day, your captain attacked the wrong ship, for in its crew was a rangy fighter named Kane. He led the target's men in bloody resistance and succeeded in slaying your captain in an epic duel you will never forget.

Far from shore and with few provisions, Kane allowed you and a handful of other survivors to live—after you vowed to atone for your past misdeeds. "Return to your black hearted ways," he said with a voice as cold as iron, "and I will hunt you down and send you to Lucifer myself." Something in the stranger's eyes made you believe him.

Yet still you strayed. The habits of old sea dogs die hard.

Terrible nightmares followed. In them, a weird African juju man calling himself N'Longa told you the only way to stop the night terrors was to fulfill your vow.

You struggle with your true nature constantly. Your life has not turned around, but it has at least deviated from the highway to damnation it was on before meeting the wanderer.

XP: 15

